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"TURN'D TURK": ISLAM AND ENGLISH DRAMA, 1579-1624

by

JONATHAN BURTON

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in English
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York**

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Abstract

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by

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In the period between 1579 and 1624 nearly sixty dramatic works featuring Islamic themes, characters, or settings were produced in England. Though not all of their Islamic references are specifically Ottoman, I am calling this group of works the “Turkish Plays” for two reasons. First, Islam and “Turkishness” were considered synonymous in early modern English parlance. Second, the plays’ understanding of Islam is mediated by England’s commercial and political connection with the Ottoman Empire. I offer close readings of non-dramatic, archival sources pertaining to those relations, before bringing forward several rarely discussed plays and placing them alongside canonical works by Shakespeare and Marlowe. Rather than attempting to reconstruct an “authentic” Islamic subject to be later juxtaposed with “fictionalized” Muslims, this method intends to recover the Islam-related imagery and tropes that dominated the early modern social imaginary and pervaded the drama, regardless of their accuracy. I hope to establish relationships between works we traditionally consider Renaissance drama and the rarely discussed closet dramas and Lord Mayor’s Day Pageants. This recovery and re-location of texts has four goals: First, it tries to illustrate the range of treatments of extra-European experiences, challenging the Manichean assumptions that underlie analyses of “The Renaissance Humanist and his Other.” Second, it seeks to introduce religious difference into current discussions of otherness in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Third, it attempts to demonstrate the importance of lesser known works by writers like

Robert Daborne, Fulke Greville, John Fletcher, John Mason, Philip Massinger, and Thomas Middleton, illustrating how these authors participated in the transformation of English culture. Finally, in conjunction with my assertion of England's multiple configurations of Eastern otherness, it is intended to enable new and sometimes radical readings of familiar works like *Tamburlaine*, *Jew of Malta*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Othello*. For if we recognize a greater complexity in English relations with the East, it follows that the numerous Islamic figures and locations in Tudor and Stuart drama can be read in more complex and provocative ways than has been allowed.

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Introduction

Delighted with the success of his "Mousetrap," Hamlet asks his friend and confidant Horatio, "Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with two Provençal roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players?" (3.2.253-4). Hamlet's question, freighted with obscure theatrical references and obsolete idioms, leaves most audiences puzzled. What is this "forest of feathers?" Who wears "razed shoes?" And what does any of it have to do with the Turks? There are simple answers to these questions: a "forest of feathers" and "razed shoes" were costumes worn by actors on the Elizabethan stage; to "turn Turk" was to commit an act of betrayal. Thus Hamlet jokes that if good fortune deserts him entirely, if he loses both wealth and position, he can always support himself in the theater. Yet there is more to Hamlet's conjunction of the theater and "turning Turk" than this simple explication suggests. Indeed, it is the argument of this dissertation that in early modern studies, and particularly in examinations of the period's drama, we have too quickly dismissed the crucial question: what does it have to do with the Turks?

The idiom *turn Turk* first appeared in the English vernacular early in the sixteenth century, concurrent with a growing incidence of Englishmen choosing to abandon Christian England to pursue their fortunes in the Islamic world. Those who converted to Islam were described as having "turned Turk," with the term *Turk* representing any Muslim, not just a subject of the Ottoman sultan.¹

¹Of course, few Englishmen would have recognized the terms "Muslim" or "Islam." Islam was more commonly known as "Mahumetanism" or "Mohammedanism," misnomers based upon the misconception that Muslims placed the prophet at the center of their religion in the same way Christians centralize Jesus Christ.

From the perspective of Christianity, conversion to Islam amounted to an act of betrayal and subversion. Thus the term could also be used metaphorically, as in Hamlet's locution, to describe any form of duplicity or faithlessness.

Turkishness often functioned as a negative mirror to European Christian virtue. In Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV*, Hal assures his apprehensive subjects: "This is the English, not the Turkish court, / Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds, / But Harry Harry" (5.2.46-9). For one traveler, the Turks were "all pagans and infidells, Sodomites, liars and drunkardes" (Sherley 2). Another account found "collusion and deceit" (Greville, *Poems*, 230) the bedrock of Turkish belief. To turn Turk was to turn from Christian virtue. Individuals who turned Turk were very often those whose fortunes had metaphorically turned Turk. Like the theater, as Hamlet imagines it, Islam offered destitute Englishmen a new world of opportunities. Yet also like the theater, it was a world frequently associated with corruption, violence and devilish treachery. Nevertheless, the very possibility of turning Turk calls attention to the proximity and attraction of the Islamic world, not just its otherness.

Both the literal and figurative meanings of "turning Turk" are active when an enraged Othello demands of his brawling troops, "Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that / Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?" (2.3.170-1). In Othello's question, betrayal and conversion are collapsed into each other so that disorder within the ranks of Christendom becomes a form of apostasy, a turn against the Christian divine. The Turk is rendered a faithless enemy to Christian Europe, but the greatest danger is located within the "imagined community" (Anderson) of Christians, in the ease with which Christians might blur the distinctions separating themselves from the Muslim Turks. Othello's is less a concern of wartime than of an era of trafficking, when piracy, diplomacy, and mercantilism brought England and the Ottoman Empire into increasingly

friendly and bilateral relations. It betrays an anxious recognition that the walls separating the English from the Turks were not made of stone and threatened by cannons, but made instead of words and threatened by commerce.

Sixteenth-century England was never at war with the Ottoman Empire. Rather, the English engaged the Turks in extensive diplomatic and trade relations and regularly spoke of military alliance. Like Shakespeare's Moorish general, however, they remained concerned with the negative implications of any association with Islam. Continental ambassadors saw Anglo-Ottoman relations as an English betrayal of "the common corps of Christendom," and the Ottoman Grand Vizier was said to remark "that there was nothing lacking for the English to become Muslims, except for them to raise their forefingers and recite the confession of the faith" (Skilliter 37).² The issue then was how to turn *to* the Turks without "turning Turk." The result was a mixed rhetoric, apparent in church liturgy, guild records, travelers' narratives, diplomatic correspondence, histories, ballads, pageants, poems, and plays. The prevalence of references to the Turks testifies to both the scope of English concerns with the Turks and the complexity of response. Rather than providing a systematic catalogue of English representations of Islam, my intention is to examine the structures of thought within which they were produced. The prevailing belief among scholars is summarized in Nabil Matar's recent pronouncement that "simplification and stereotyping were the rules by which Britons represented Muslims" (Matar, *Turks* 116). Yet I will show that English representations of Islam were complex and nuanced, moved by a variable nexus of economic, political, and cultural forces. Just as--and perhaps to some extent because--notions of race in the period were "neither stable nor transcendental" (Hendricks 86), notions of religious

²See Baumer for a discussion of sustained ideas of a "common corps of Christendom."

difference were fluid and inconsistent. Not only were the English coming into increased contact with religious otherness in their ventures overseas, English Christianity itself was fissured and insecure. Economically speaking, England's future was uncertain. Militarily, it was weak, and politically, it was isolated and short of allies. It would not be until the eighteenth century that English representations of Islamic peoples could be disciplined to *discursive consistency*, the term Edward Said uses to characterize Orientalist discourse. The numerous images of Islam and Islamic peoples produced by English authors of the early modern period instead ranged from the censorious to the laudatory, from brothers to others. This study is therefore intended both as a resource for scholars interested in the prehistory and development of British imperialist rhetoric, and as an introduction to what I am calling the "Turkish Plays."

In the period between 1579 and 1624 nearly sixty dramatic works featuring Islamic themes, characters, or settings were produced in England. Though not all of their Islamic references are specifically Ottoman, I am calling this sub-genre the "Turkish Plays" for two reasons. First, Islam and "Turkishness" were considered synonymous in early modern English parlance. Second, the plays' understanding of Islam is mediated by England's commercial and political connection with the Ottoman Empire. Isolated incidents of trade took place earlier in the century, but the turning point for Anglo-Ottoman relations was 1579, when the English and Turks opened official trade relations. Over the next two decades "the Levant Company became the most important and the only successful English overseas venture" (Inalcik and Quataert 371). England was becoming involved in other non-European ventures at the time, but no other people seems to have captivated playwrights like the Turks. The failed voyages in search of the Northeast and Northwest Passages inspired no dramatic works, and ventures to the Americas absorbed authors only later. During the 45

years of the period under study (from the establishment of Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic relations to the death of James I), four times as many works about the East appeared than about the New World, and for each play with even ambiguously New World characters or settings (e.g. *The Tempest*) there are at least twenty with Eastern, and especially Turkish, elements. The purpose of this dissertation is to identify and assess this important but overlooked category in early modern English drama.

Several aspects of this project are intended to intervene in ongoing discussions in the field of literary studies. Above all, the numerous dramatic works featuring Islamic characters and settings constitute an unrecognized sub-genre within which significant tropes and meanings in each play become newly apparent. Tracing the emergence of this category to the expansion of English relations with Islamic peoples, I offer close readings of non-dramatic, archival sources pertaining to those relations, before bringing forward several rarely discussed plays and placing them alongside canonical works by Shakespeare and Marlowe. Rather than attempting to reconstruct an “authentic” Islamic subject to be later juxtaposed with “fictionalized” Muslims, this method intends to recover the Islam-related imagery and tropes that dominated the early modern social imaginary and pervaded the drama, regardless of their accuracy. I hope to establish relationships between works we traditionally consider Renaissance drama and the rarely discussed closet dramas and Lord Mayor's Day Pageants. This recovery and re-location of texts has four goals: First, it tries to illustrate the range of treatments of extra-European experiences, challenging the Manichean assumptions that underlie analyses of “The Renaissance Humanist and his Other.” Second, it seeks to introduce religious difference into current discussions of otherness in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Third, it attempts to demonstrate the importance of lesser known works by writers like Robert

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It may be useful at this point to briefly consider the decline of the crusader's colloquialism *Saracen* as a catch-all for Islamic peoples. With the sixteenth century ascendancy of the Ottoman Turks, *Saracen* was slowly being replaced by the term *Turk*. The name *Saracen* was first used to describe "nomadic peoples of the Syrian and Arabian deserts which harassed the borders of the Roman Empire" (Brown II, 2687). During the time of the Crusades it came to represent the opponents of Christian re-conquest. By the sixteenth century, not only was the term *Saracen* superannuated, the set of ideas it signified--derived primarily from an experience of armed conflict--was recognizably outdated to the point of ridiculousness. Describing the signs in the shape of a Saracen's head identifying the doors of English inns, seventeenth-century jurist and historian John Selden explains,

When our Countrymen came home from fighting against the Saracens and were beaten by them, they pictur'd them with huge bigg terrible faces (as you still see the Signe of the Saracen's head is) when in truth they were like other men, but this they did to save their owne creditts. (qtd. in Chew 146)

Selden's observations indicate that English representations of Islam were

historically biased and frequently drawn in compensation for English weakness. More important, Selden makes apparent that the English often recognized their fictions as fictions. Like the sign of the Saracen's head, the figure of the Turk too was a sign manipulated in the service of ideology. Yet as the range of English interactions with Islamic peoples grew, so too did the range of fabrication. The image of the warlike Saracen could not be reconciled with the complex relationships developing between England and Islam in the sixteenth century. The Turk, on the other hand, was a figure of both war and commerce, vitally interwoven with domestic and global concerns in the complex fabric of English culture. To treat the Turk as one might have treated the Saracen was clearly a mistake. When, for example, Erastus hesitates to beg sanctuary from Sultan Solyman in Thomas Kyd's *Solyman and Perseda* (1592), the Turk chides him for his unfounded misgivings:

[T]hough you Christians
 Account our Turkish race but barbarous,
 Yet we have ears to heare a iust complaint
 And justice to defend the innocent,
 And pitie to such as are in povertie,
 And liberall hands to such as merit bountie (3.1.58-63)

Solyman makes good on his claims, adopting Erastus as a friend, granting him "libertie to live a Christian," appointing him Captain of the Janissaries, and graciously allowing him to forego the attack on his native Rhodes. This is a Turk made of generosity, wisdom, and mercy, to set in contrast with the ethnocentrism of Henry King's monstrous sultan that governs "by settled rules of tyrannie, not Law" (King 113). For a time, Erastus "must confesse that Solyman is kinde" (4.1.7). Yet this impression will not stand. Solyman's forces go on to attack and brutally pillage Rhodes. As his desire for Perseda consumes

him, the sultan descends into a lustful, caricatured tyrant. He rants violently, betrays his closest companions, and thoughtlessly murders his loyal friends and counselors. It may be argued that Solyman's transformation evidences the way in which English dramatists undercut and warned against images of Turkish nobility. By this argument, Solyman's nobility may be dismissed as the false machinations of an unscrupulous villain. Instead, I believe we need to recognize the ways in which interanimating discourses of race, gender, class, and religion, as well as economic and political contexts, inform the grounds of representation. We need to ask what purpose Turkish villainy serves at the point it appears and examine how it interacts with the various cultural forces present at a given moment. How, for example, might fears of emasculation and conversion amongst travelers, and especially impoverished sailors, provoke anti-Islamicism? What aggravating effects might be derived from domestic concerns over apostasy within English Christianity? How instead might English trade interests discourage such prejudices? What limits might arise restricting tolerance in the interest of maintaining patriarchal prerogative, or various racial and gendered notions of "Englishness"? What symbiotic relationships developed in English representations of Muslims and other non-Christian figures? Finally, how might Islamic ideas and agents have challenged those representations themselves? The difficulty in examining the Turkish plays is that we must consider all of these questions at the same time, as well as taking into account our own *loci of enunciation* as scholars in the Western academic tradition.³ The importance of examining the Turkish plays is not simply in their indication that the English turned *to* the Turks, but that they could not help but do so. Both culturally and

³I borrow the idea of a *locus of enunciation* from Walter Mignolo. Mignolo uses the term to emphasize that any interpretive position is socially grounded and produced in relation to a certain audience.

politically, the Ottomans were a superpower of the period, and their influence on European culture came with or without European consent. Conquest and conversion were distinct impossibilities for the English. England's jerry-built military would have been no match for Ottoman (or Mughal, or Persian, for that matter) forces⁴, and what religious conversions did come out of English contact with the Turks more often than not involved Christians embracing Islam, or turning Turk. Though I concentrate on the ways in which the English sought to control the Ottomans discursively, their practices were generally compensatory rather than controlling. This was still the era of the Ottoman, not the British Empire.

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The place of the Ottoman Empire in European history and culture has often been underestimated. As Jason Goodwin explains in a 1999 history entitled *Lords of the Horizons*, the Ottomans are a people who no longer exist, and “the word ‘Ottoman’ does not describe a place”(xiii). In the period under study, however, the Ottoman Empire stretched from Algiers to Baghdad, and from Mecca to the walls of Vienna. Descended from a minor fourteenth-century Anatolian estate, the Ottomans established their empire in the place of the decaying Byzantine Empire. After conquering Constantinople in 1453, they expanded their empire for the next two hundred years, until the failed siege of Vienna in 1683. In effect, the Ottoman Empire formed an enormous horse-shoe around the Italian peninsula that is often considered the cultural heart of

⁴England possessed no capacity for siege warfare or initiating any kind of advance that would result in a significant shift of territorial control. At a time when Mehmet III was leading a force of 100,000 into Austria, England's army was only 30,000 strong. Among the European powers Spain alone could match Ottoman forces in the field with an army of 200,000. For a fuller discussion of comparative military strength in the early modern period see Kennedy 1997 and Black 1996.

Renaissance Europe. When, in 1595, Abraham Hartwell worried that the Ottoman crescent would “grow to the full, and breede such an inundation as will utterly drowne al Christendome in the West” (Hartwell A3v-4r), his image was no metaphorical exaggeration. Not only did the Turks rule more territory and a larger population than any European power, their cultural influence extended far beyond their expanding borders. Where Hartwell erred was in imagining an Ottoman empire whose relationship with Europe was solely antagonistic and martial.

Hartwell’s mistake is regularly compounded in contemporary literary criticism, where it is often assumed that early modern Europe sustained “an immovable stereotype of the raging and expansionist Turk” (11), as Anthony Parr suggests in his 1995 introduction to *The Three English Brothers*. Certainly there were numerous instances where English authors “took up the cudgel against the Muslims” (Matar, *Turks* 14). Castigating images of violent and lascivious Turks abound in English literature of the early modern period. However, xenophobia was just one among several approaches to Islam. In arguing for a greater range of response, I do not wish to undermine the power and significance of English ethnocentrism. Rather, I want to emphasize the multi-faceted power and significance of the Ottoman Empire. The martial reputation of the Turk survived well into the seventeenth century, but it was tempered as early as the mid-sixteenth century by the Ottoman Empire’s evolving mercantile strategies. The Ottoman Turks were understood differently from various English perspectives. On one hand there was Richard Knolles’ 1603 assessment of the Turks as the “present terror of the world” (1), a raging threat to Christian welfare and morality. This is the figure looming offstage in the opening moments of both Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *Othello* when the action is interrupted by the threat of a Turkish invasion. The Ottoman

military had threatened Europe throughout the previous century, capturing Belgrade, Rhodes, and most of Hungary in the 1520s, and later attacking Vienna, Southern Italy and Corfu, Western Italy, Malta and Poland, and capturing Cyprus. Yet as revisionist historians such as Palmira Brummett and Halil Inalcik have illustrated, Turkish strength was also manifested in the continued Ottoman mercantile growth and control of some of the most important trade routes to the East, particularly those seized with the annexation of Egypt in 1516. At the same time the Turks were negotiating a trade agreement with the English, they were also pursuing one Ottoman geographer's proposal to cut a channel from the Mediterranean to Suez to capture the ports of India and Sind, "chase away the infidels and bring the precious wares of these places to our capital" (qtd. in Lewis, *Cultures* 33). On the other hand, then, Turks were understood to be a respected and important trading power, especially as they developed commercial relations with English merchants. This image of the Turk is revealed in S. A. Skilliter's documentary history of William Harborne, England's first ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. Skilliter illustrates how an Anglo-Ottoman allegiance provided both essential markets for England's cloth industry and a powerful counterpoise to the threats of Catholic Spain. As a result, Muslims appeared in London throughout the period under study not as invaders, but as trade representatives and diplomatic envoys. Even more significantly, they permeated English print culture, appearing as tyrants, scoundrels, pirates, and sybarites, but also as successful merchants, devoted soldiers, pious religionists, and brilliant statesmen.

In examining dramatic representations of Islam and Islamic peoples, one discovers a corresponding inconsistency in the discourse. Although Nabil Matar maintains that Muslims on the English stage were portrayed "without any uniquely differentiating features" (*Turks* 6), I shall show that there is variety even

within single plays. In Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, for example, the nobility of Selim Calymath distinctly contrasts the villainy of Ithamore, both of whom are identified as Turks. As I will illustrate in the first chapter, the complexity of characters like Tamburlaine and Bajazeth makes it impossible to see English representations of Islamic figures as exclusively one-dimensional. Muslims were, in some cases, the simplest of characters, and in others they were among the most complex. Depending upon the situation, Islamic difference was strategically activated or muted in the works of Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists. Muslim figures might be fashioned in contradistinction to idealized versions of Christianity and Englishness in attempts to reify these abstractions. On the other hand, Muslims might be fitted with the attributes of the ideal Christian in order to sanction Anglo-Ottoman relations. The various and shifting economic interests of Englishmen played an important role in determining the ways in which Islamic difference was shaped both on and off the stage, and constitutes a significant premise of this study. Yet it is important to recognize the complex nexus of conditions from which any cultural artifact is produced. The part of various structuring forces, including nationalism, race, class, and gender, must be admitted to a discussion of these plays, and much of this work has begun in the work of Matar, Ania Loomba, Jack D'Amico, Margo Hendricks, Jean Howard, Emily Bartels, and Barbara Fuchs.⁵ These scholars are part of a

⁵Since Loomba's 1989 pronouncement that racial difference remained "largely missing as a theoretical and analytical category" in recent Renaissance historiography, a great deal of work has been done in this area. The essays collected by Patricia Parker and Margo Hendricks for *Women, "Race" and Writing in the Early Modern Period* provide an outstanding introduction to the field. See also D'Amico; Hall, *Things*; Hall, "Guess;" Bartels, *Spectacles*; Palmer; and "Constructing Race: Differentiating Peoples in the Early Modern World," a special issue of *The William and Mary Quarterly* 54:1. Recent work dealing more specifically with Islam includes Matar, *Turks*; Matar, *Islam*, McJannet; Brotton; and Vitkus; as well as unpublished work by Boerth and Cirakman.

movement interested in racializing the early modern period, or illustrating the dependence of “Renaissance” identities on ideas and people who were marginalized in European discourse, peripheral in European cartography. This project has been one of the most important developments in the field, and my work seeks to extend it by employing recent historical studies and a closer examination of the Anglo-Ottoman documentary record to call attention to historical accounts and dramatic representations that allow more agency to non-European peoples. Thus I share with Jerry Brotton, the author of a 1997 analysis of Ottoman mapping, a desire “to reorient an understanding of early modern Europe and its boundaries [by placing] the Ottomans as central, rather than peripheral, to the political and intellectual preoccupations of the period” (Brotton 91).

As an examination of early modern European representations of the East, my dissertation is, in one sense, an expansion of Edward Said's *Orientalism*--arguably the establishing text of postcolonial theory--into a period prior to the nineteenth century. Yet my work differs considerably from Said's in as much as I set my examination of dramatic works against records of mercantile relations (as opposed to Said's focus on the academic tradition) to illustrate how early modern relationships between Europeans and Islamic Easterners were characterized by compromise and exchange, rather than Western “dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient” (Said 3). In my examination of the documentary records of the first Anglo-Ottoman trade relations, for example, I illustrate how Queen Elizabeth I and Sultan Murad III stress their political similarities and shared difference from Catholicism to provide ideological support for what became an infamous but profitable arms trade. Finding comparable moments in the drama, I argue that at this earlier point in history, European images of the Turk, at least, if not all “Orientals,” were more

multiple, fluctuating and susceptible to Eastern influence than in the period Said studies.⁶ This assertion motivates my introduction of a term to this discussion: I propose that we consider *trafficking* as a new paradigm to supplement (not replace) the overtaxed and unidirectional term *colonialism* in our representations of the period's various cross-cultural relations. I believe that the English experience in the East was so significantly different from that in Ireland or the Americas that it requires its own distinctive nomenclature. Therefore, my purpose in introducing this model is to represent the significant mercantile and cultural exchanges obscured by the disproportionate attention given to early colonialism but essential to the construction of a European "Renaissance."

English representation of non-Christian cultures has been the subject of numerous politically-charged studies in the twenty-year period since the publication of Said's *Orientalism* and the advent of post-colonial studies. In the field of early modern studies, two important effects of this interest have been the generation of new models for the study of colonialism and the employment of these models in revisionist studies of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.⁷ While such endeavors are favored by the academy's Anglo-American location and historical perspective, they produce a distorted image of England's inter-cultural relations. John Archer reminds us that "during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth

⁶For a related critique of Said see Bhabha 66-92.

⁷See, for example, Greenblatt, *Marvelous*; Greenblatt *New World*; Hulme; and Fuller. One important exception to this movement is Barbara Fuchs, who argues that the "critical privileging of America as the primary context of colonialism for the play obscures the very real presence of the Ottoman threat in the Mediterranean in the early seventeenth century and elides the violent colonial adventures in Ireland, which paved the way for plantation in Virginia." Unfortunately, Fuchs remains, like the others, focused exclusively on *Tempest*, herself eliding the predominant concerns of English playwrights interested in the ways in which early modern Europe experienced other civilizations.

centuries, England remained captivated by the Old World even as it turned with the rest of Europe toward America" (Archer 15). Similarly, Ania Loomba has suggested that "the *theoretical parameters* within which cultural domination and resistance are understood in Renaissance studies are still overwhelmingly informed by ideas of difference that have emerged from New World materials" (*Shakespeare* 171). Loomba indicates how the relative subordination of Eastern materials produces a monolithic picture of non-European peoples as linguistically and materially overpowered. This problem is only aggravated when scholars adopt the Orientalist model delineated by Said without taking account of the difference of political relations between the East and West in the period before English imperialism. As Nabil Matar argues, the idea of "Islam 'dominated' and 'taken possession of' might be applicable in the post-Napoleonic history of the Middle East; to apply it retroactively to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is historically inaccurate" (*Islam* 13). The schemata of domination and difference in both Orientalist and New World models are simply incompatible with the Anglo-Ottoman experience in the early modern period.

Said's Orientalist enjoys a "positional superiority which puts [him] in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand" (Said 7). Elizabethan England, on the other hand, never enjoyed the upper hand in its dealings with the East.⁸ Elizabeth herself was forced to endure the Sultan's command that she "be steadfast in submission and obedience" (Skilliter 116). Neither she nor her subjects dared to challenge the Ottomans. As Daniel Goffman, the leading historian on British expatriates in the Ottoman Empire, argues, Britons throughout the early modern period prospered in their dealings with the Turks only "by learning to live with, rather than trying

⁸See also Matar, *Islam*, 11-13; and Loomba, "Shakespeare and Cultural Difference."

to recast" Ottoman civilization (24). Of course, the English were welcome in Ottoman markets as their trade became an important source of revenue for the Ottomans at the close of the sixteenth century. It is therefore advantageous to think of Anglo-Ottoman relations in terms of mercantile *trafficking*. The term *traffique*, as it appears in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, entered English usage in the sixteenth century to describe the transportation of merchandise for the purposes of trade between distant or distinct communities. Yet in a wider sense it was used to signify any form of intercourse, communication, or business involving an exchange, sometimes with illicit connotations like those that attached themselves to travel and trade. While etymologists agree that the term arose in the context of sixteenth-century Mediterranean commerce, they advance equally reasonable arguments for a Latin derivation from *tra/trans* (across) and *facere* (to do or make), and an Arabic origin from *traffaqa*, which can mean "to seek profit" or *tafriq*, signifying distribution (Arnold 105). This disputed etymology makes "trafficking" all the more attractive as a descriptive term aimed to supplement and add nuance to unidirectional colonial models with an understanding of how Eurocentric principles such as Christian superiority and entitlement were never universally held and often challenged and even re-shaped by their Muslim counterpart. As a paradigm for cultural intercourse, *trafficking* takes into account the ways in which cultural production occurs at an axis of various and even conflicting forces, an *entrepôt* if you will, from which those forces invariably come away changed. Finally, a trafficking model recognizes the Ottoman state-- as I believe numerous English authors of the period did--as the "inheritor of Euro-Asian trading networks and participant in the contest for commercial hegemony on the economic space stretching from Venice to the Indian Ocean" (Brummett 175).

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As a contextualized examination of the Turkish plays, this dissertation is intended as a supplement to existing work on Islam and early modern culture. The seminal text in this field has been Samuel Chew's 1937 study *The Crescent and the Rose*. Although Chew was interested in the whole range of documents concerning Anglo-Islamic relations, his methods were largely limited to the identification of possible dramatic sources. Typical of source studies of this period, his work does little in the way of analyzing the *uses* to which various dramatists put voyaging materials, concluding that as a measurement of "the general knowledge of Moslem history. . . the drama is a fairly accurate reflection of the popular mind" (Chew 538). Thus despite his obvious admiration for the drama, Chew's study views the playwright as collage artist, cutting and pasting from his sources to produce an entertaining patchwork of otherwise undigested material. Implicit in this elision of the dramatist's acts of interpretation is a sense of the traveler's tale as a naively accepted account of other worlds, a construction belied by the overt skepticism of Ben Jonson's *Peregrine* who proclaims them "gulled stor[ies] registered for truth" (5.4.6). Chew's study remains valuable as an encyclopedic reference work, but must be supplemented by scholarship concerned with the ways in which the drama departed from as well as reflected travelers' narratives.

Two recent works by Nabil Matar have emerged in response to Chew's pioneering work. In *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (1998), and *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (1999), Matar extends Chew's project by indicating not only the extent to which Muslims appeared in English writings but also that they "represented the most widely visible non-Christian people on English soil in this period" (*Turks* 3). In addition, his examination of captivity narratives, prison depositions, and accounts of English soldiers in the armies of

Islam demonstrates the inappropriateness of retroactive applications of *Orientalism* by showing that forces of political power were more balanced prior to the eighteenth century. Yet Matar argues that in spite of the various meetings between Englishmen and Muslims, “there was no allusion in either the characterization or the dialogue in drama to specific aspects of Muslims that could be traced to actual meetings with them” (*Islam* 6-7). Instead, he finds the drama void of anything but “simplification and stereotyping” (*Turks* 116). Concurring with Elliot Tokson and Anthony Barthelemy, he argues that “not a single play about the Muslim Levant and North Africa that appeared in the Elizabethan, Jacobean, or Caroline periods showed the Muslim in a morally heroic and favorable light” (*Turks* 14). Instead, Matar sees the emergence of stock characters: “Eleazer and Othello become the defining literary representation of the “Moor,” and Bajazeth, Ithamore, and Amureth of the “Turk” (*Turks* 13).

I find several aspects of this position problematic. First, the suggestion that no traces of “specific aspects of Muslims” appear in the drama betrays a desire to find “specific aspects” at the risk of overlooking others. Traces of “actual meetings” are apparent in the very distortions of the Turkish plays. In Wilson’s *Three Ladies of London*, Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turke*, Rowley, Day, and Wilkins’ *The Travailes of Three English Brothers*, Massinger’s *Renegado*, and Middleton’s *Lord Mayor’s Day* pageants the characterization of Muslim figures is designed to compensate for actual experiences. While they may not accurately reflect actual meetings, they certainly depend upon them. Furthermore, the dynamics and effects of actual meetings are essential to the range of representation that marks Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* plays. It is arguable that Bajazeth, Ithamore, and Amureth present a certain type. However, to extend this type onto all the period’s Muslim characters in arguing that none appeared in a favorable light erases the nobility of Greville’s *Mustapha* and *Camena*,

Marlowe's Orcanes and Selim Calymath, Heywood's Joffer, Wilson's unnamed judge, and Peele's Abdelmelec. Likewise the conflation of Eleazer and Othello into a single type requires that one see little more in these characters than their skin color.

Jack D'Amico argues for a more complex practice of representation. His study of *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (1991) is informed by a study of commercial relations and the emerging discourse of "race." D'Amico's principal concern lies with illustrating how plays were capable of challenging cultural assumptions and their authors willing "to do more than trade in dead stereotypes" (213). Like D'Amico, I find a great deal more than "simplification and stereotyping" in the drama. However, my project seeks to supplement D'Amico's by placing a greater emphasis on the Ottoman Turks and the reciprocity of relations they developed with England (D'Amico chooses Morocco as his focal point). Thus I will illustrate how both sides, rather than just open-minded dramatists, were responsible for shifting perceptions of Islam.⁹

It has previously been argued that the relationship between early modern Christianity and Islam was considerably more complicated than the simple prejudice and antagonism found in some works of the period might suggest.¹⁰ In her recent work on Marlowe's "spectacles of strangeness," Emily Bartels (whose work I will have occasion to address more fully later) has shown how "the Renaissance vision of the East was markedly double-sided" (Bartels, "Double" 4). Even attitudes toward the Turks, she points out, tempered fear and condemnation with admiration. "For while the demonization of Oriental rulers

⁹This will be particularly apparent in my final chapter treating the European-based, Moorish historian Leo Africanus, a figure D'Amico dismisses as having "echoed the assumptions and expectations of his [Christian] readers" (51).

¹⁰See also McJannet and Parr.

provided a highly charged impetus for England's own attempts to dominate the East, their valorization provided a model for admiration and imitation, shaming or schooling the English into supremacy" (Bartels, "Double" 5) This notion of the Elizabethan period marking "a critical beginning in the drive toward domination" (*Spectacles*, xiv) strikes me as a position that depends upon the hindsight of the post-colonial era. Though it is important to see English relations with the East along a continuum, it is a mistake to attribute such retroactive logic to early modern peoples. On the other hand, Bartels' indication of the fluidity of representations undergirds my own sense that the bilateral traffic between cultures challenged and re-shaped notions of otherness.

Trafficking and representation come together in the first chapter of this study, which examines the rhetoric of legitimation in the first diplomatic correspondence and trade agreement between England and the Turks. (When speaking of a rhetoric of legitimation, I refer to the shifting values assigned to a rival depending upon the prominence of mitigating issues of commerce, country, religion and/or gender.) In this chapter, I turn from the letters of Elizabeth I and Murad III to Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays, to illustrate a similar legitimating rhetoric and fluidity in representations of religious difference that encourages alternative readings to those which deem the "Turkish Plays" simple reflections of their society's prejudices.¹¹ More specifically, the chapter indicates how the two parts of *Tamburlaine the Great* resonate with early nationalist/mercantile rhetoric by capitalizing on the fluidity of the anti-Islamic or anti-Turkish stereotypes. Recognizing this aspect of the play helps to produce a new reading of the *Tamburlaine* plays where *Tamburlaine's* shifting religious

¹¹Robert Cawley, for example, argues that though Elizabethan playwrights may have varied in their knowledge of the East, they were generally unexceptional in sharing the prejudices of their contemporaries (215-53).

identity is not merely “ambiguous”--as numerous critics suggest--but instead strategically reflective of the period’s conditional suspension and activation of anti-Islamic prejudice.¹² Finally, this reading enables a new understanding of the relationship between the original play and its sequel, as well as contributing to the ongoing critique of the notion of “early Orientalism.”

Chapter Two examines representations of Islam in the little-noted Lord Mayor’s Day pageants and closet dramas of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. The infusion of these two very different forms with “Turkish” materials indicates an interest that crossed the boundaries of class and literacy. For though the closet drama was rarely seen outside of a limited circle of elite readers with access to circulated manuscripts, pageant dramas paraded through the city before throngs of Londoners of every conceivable background. In the first half of this chapter, I illustrate how the Muslims of Lord Mayor’s Day Pageants were specifically constructed to counter the notion of the anti-Christian “Mahumetan” descended from medieval religious drama and early modern travelers’ narratives. These pageants were traditionally sponsored by guilds which stood to profit from trade with the Ottoman Empire and lands farther east. Consequently, the pageants have a tendency to cast overseas ventures in a Christian light, mitigating anxieties produced by travelers. They most often accomplish this by a strategic conflation of New World and Eastern Indians. Thus rather than negotiating difficult terms, the Indian or Moor of the Lord Mayor’s Day pageant is typically found generously tossing spices and riches to the crowd. Rather than tempting Christians into sin and apostasy, he expresses thanks for his own conversion to Christianity. The second half of Chapter Two examines the positive Islamic figures in Fulke Greville’s *Mustapha*. Unlike the

¹²For the “ambiguity” of Tamburlaine, see esp. Bevington 211-17; and Bartels, *Spectacles*, 60.

dark kings and queens of Middleton's pageants, Greville's saintly others have not been converted to Christianity. Indeed, there is no intercourse between Christians and Muslims in Greville's play. I look at this play alongside the pageants to illustrate the way in which context -- here economic interests -- divergently affected the representation of Islam in the "Turkish Plays."

Because one of its objectives is to illustrate the scope of the Turkish plays, Chapter Three is by far the longest of my dissertation. This chapter presents two of the genre's most common (and interrelated) tropes by looking at occasions of interdenominational desire and the threat of apostasy in twelve plays. As Kim Hall has argued, "associations between marriage, kinship, property and economics become increasingly anxiety ridden as traditional social structures (such as marriage) are extended when England develops commercial ties across the globe" (Hall, "Guess" 93). Hall's work helps to explain the regularity of this chapter's focal trope, but I hope to extend her argument by positioning skin color--Hall's principal focus--within a nexus of structuring forces, not the least of which is religious difference. For in the Turkish plays, religious difference and its potential conversion become paramount to the working out of the plot. I demonstrate that in the Turkish plays, a pair of substitutions are deployed in the re-establishment of masculinity, Christianity, and patriarchy, all of which are threatened in Jacobean England's increasing encounters with Islam and concurrent gender debates. In the drama of the Jacobean era, dislocated Christian women act as proxies for the compromised Christian male bodies of travelers' tales. This substitution enacts a displacement of threatening homosocial onto more manageable heterosexual relations. But because this substitution has the potential to threaten patriarchy as it shores up Christianity, Muslim men are, in turn, enlisted as straw-men in the domestic gender struggle. They provide male figures answerable for the disenfranchisement and

mistreatment of women, while exonerating English men of the same charges. In addition, I illustrate how fears of Islamic conversion were interlocked with contemporary debates surrounding apostasy within Christianity, as English Protestants defected to Catholicism and Catholic clergymen were similarly lured to Protestantism.

Although I do not count *Antony and Cleopatra* among the “Turkish Plays,” a Jacobean audience might be likely to set Shakespeare's play in that tradition given its unmistakable thematic, geographic, and socio-linguistic correspondences. Like the “Turkish Plays,” *Antony and Cleopatra* features a European whose travels in the Levant seem scandalous to others. His conduct is considered decadent, idle and irresponsible, and he is seen as risking captivity and emasculation in his relationship with an exotic woman. Indeed, these are the principal concerns voiced by those who censure Antony. And they are given prominence from the very outset of the play, where Philo laments seeing “The triple pillar of the world transform'd/ Into a strumpet's fool” (1.1.12-13). Thus the third chapter ends by considering the significance of moments like Antony's admission, “I' th' East my pleasure lies” (2.3.39), in the context of trafficking, apostasy, and the Turkish plays.

In his recent book *Shakespeare and the Jews*, James Shapiro begins with a similar recognition of how a nexus of structuring forces complicates the ways in which a culture sees itself and others, whether in actuality or on the stage. The English, Shapiro submits, “turned to Jewish questions in order to answer English ones” (1). He argues that “a closer look at some of the Jewish questions that were a by-product of the English Reformation will also show that to write about nation and race in the sixteenth century independent of each other (and of theological paradigms) is to underestimate how racialized nationalism was, and how nationalized racial thinking was, at this time” (3). My work moves within a

similar set of concerns, for the relationships Shapiro identifies in his study of early modern Judaism are akin to those involving Islam. Indeed, I argue in Chapter Four that it is impossible to treat “Jewish questions” separately from “Islamic questions.” Thus where Shapiro ultimately turns his research onto a single play, Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, I examine the interdependent relationship between representations of Jews and Muslims in seven different plays from the period, including *Merchant*. These plays are all set in or involve trafficking with the Islamic world, and demonstrate how the tangle of economic, political, and religious impetuses involved in Anglo-Islamic relations had potent consequences for English representations of the Jew. Typically, where Jews are subjected to a legacy of prejudice, Muslims are afforded new respect and positions of relative authority. At the same time, this chapter also indicates how the drama could acknowledge both the spuriousness of anti-Semitism and the ways in which otherness could be appropriated and exploited by the Other, not just the English/Christian.

The fifth and final chapter extends the conclusions of the fourth by treating issues of mimicry, authorship, and authority. More than any other, this chapter demonstrates the bilateral influence and exchange motivating my argument for a trafficking model. At the center of this chapter is a text whose religious significance is drained as it is consistently pigeon-holed into the role of analog in readings of Shakespeare's *Othello*. Apart from a few recent exceptions, scholarly interest in the sixteenth-century Moorish traveler and author John Leo Africanus has followed Shakespeare's lead, discussing little more than those passages of his 1526 *Geographical History*--Europe's principal source for the study of Africa for 150 years--which resonate with others in *Othello*. What interests me in this text is the manner in which Africanus undermines many of those anti-African and anti-

Islamic shibboleths which gain him admission to the ranks of authoritative European historians. This chapter therefore attempts to disentangle Africanus and Othello in order to read Shakespeare's text with a sense of Othello's religious difference and to acknowledge the subversive nature of Africanus. Thus I argue that the *Geographical History* reproduces some of the fantastical and anti-Islamic tendencies of earlier works on Africa as a form of textual mimicry that, in Homi Bhabha's terms, "is potentially and strategically an insurgent counter-appeal, because its identity effects are always crucially split" (Bhabha 91). Finally, I try to suggest ways in which Africanus, when extricated from the umbra of criticism unconcerned with religious difference, emerges as a critical exponent of African social, political, and religious history that can inform our postcolonial assessments of Renaissance texts like *Othello* with a greater and more fruitful complexity.

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The complexity and range of representation I argue for in the drama is not meant to be emblematic of all the period's writings about Islam and the Turks. In the poetry of the period, the Turk is typically a vehicle of metaphor or one element of an intricate conceit, rather than the actual subject discussed. In Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* 30, for example, the question of "Whether the Turkish new Moone minded be / To fill her hornes uppon the Christian coast" (1-2), is merely one of several questions dismissed as unimportant to the passionate lover. The actual importance of the Turkish threat is, of course, essential to the conceit, but what is more significant is that the poem's idea of the Turk depends upon a denial of the emerging idea of Turks as trading partners and allies. This same denial is apparent in the handful of poems written in the period directly interested in the Turks. Indeed several, including King James' "Lepanto" (1585) and Francis Sabie's "The Fisser-mans Tale" (1595), hark back

to a time prior to Anglo-Ottoman relations, rendering the Turk demonic, lecherous, and military. Phineas Fletcher's poem "Upon the picture of Achmat the Turkish tyrant" and Henry King's "To my Noble and Judicious friend Sir Henry Blount upon his Voyage" concentrate with comparable narrow-mindedness on the overweening pride of the Turks. Why then was the situation different in the drama? Returning to my opening citation, we may ask again what lies beneath Hamlet's conjunction of the theater and turning Turk.

The idea of *turning Turk* was a critical feature in attracting the attention of playwrights and theatergoers to Turkish material. Unlike the New World, which was more often represented as a site of easy Christian dominance, the Islamic "old worlds" of Africa and Asia were often figured instead as a locus of creedal threats where Europeans risked corruption and apostasy.¹³ Travelers commonly spoke of forced conversions as well as abductions of Christian boys to be made into eunuchs or *Janissaries*. The theatrics of religious conversion and the histrionic recollections of travelers' narrow escapes made apostasy at once dramatic and familiar in a culture still very much undergoing its own kind of religious debate that--certainly in the case of Elizabethan and Jacobean England--could be threatening, even deadly. It also bears consideration that the charges to which English actors were regularly subjected in the climate of religious debate--of falsehood, lewdness, and other sins that lured Christians away from the church--were uncannily similar to those leveled against Muslims.

Like religious renegades, actors were considered treasonous counterfeiters, "the Arch-agents, Instrument, and Apparitors of their originall

¹³The threats of New World cannibalism and sodomy most often appeared in early Spanish texts used to justify "protecting" helpless races. For a discussion of this "common colonialist topos," see Hulme. When English writers do mention cannibalism they rarely seem to consider themselves actually at any risk. For a discussion of New World sodomy, see Goldberg, *Sodometries* 179-246.

Founder and Father, the Devill" (Prynne 134). In the theater, Christian actors were commonly "converted" by means of make-up, props and costume into stage "infidels" who, in turn, were frequently "converted" into Christians before their audience. Yet critics of the theater tended to focus only on the first of these "conversions" and substitute for the latter a dangerous "conversion" undergone by the audience.

It was argued by various clergymen that imitation could lead to identification, that playing evil persons corrupted the actor who, in turn, became an agent of the devil, corrupting youthful minds. One writer insisted that "lively representing the lewde demeanour of bad persons doethe worke a great impression of waxing like unto them; next to the spectators, whose maners are corrupted by seeing and hearing such matters so expressed" (qtd. in Gras 181). *The Mirror of Monsters* (1587) placed players in the ranks of blasphemers, "when they take upon them the persons of Heathen men, imagining themselves (to vainglory in the wrath of God) to be the man whose persons they present, wherein by calling on *Mahomet* . . . they approche the devill so neere in condition, that they cunningly present hys person" (qtd. in Gras 182). In these acts of impersonation, the actor was considered comparable to the renegade who, having fallen from the path of righteousness, seeks to lure others into damnation with worldly spectacle and carnal delight. Plays are thus determined "the inuentions of the deuil . . . the roote of Apostacy" (Gosson G8v) and audiences taken in by them recall the travelers to Islamic lands tempted by wealth, luxury, and the promise of an indulgent afterlife. As a former playwright, Stephen Gosson figures himself as one redeemed in his *Playes Confuted in five Actions* (1582). He explains,

The diuel is not ignorant how mightely these outward spectacles
effeminate and soften the hearts of men, vice is learned [in]

beholding, sense is tickled, desire pricked, & those impressions of mind are secretly conueyed ouer to the gazers, which the players do counterfeit on the stage . . . And they that came honest to a play may depart infected. (Gosson G4v)

In the conclusions of Gosson and others like him, stage plays were “the doctrine and inuention of the Deuill,” and “to mainetaine the Doctrine and inuention of the Deuil, is a kind of Apostasie & falling from the Lorde” (B4r).

Rather than discouraging associations between acting and apostasy, the Turkish plays appropriate the analogy in the interest of defending the theater. Thus in staging acts of apostasy, they tend to emphasize the “staging” of apostasy. The plays call attention to the artificiality of transformation in repeated scenes of false conversion. Whereas Muslim women may be brought to Christianity in sincere acts of conversion, no representation of a Christian man or woman’s genuine conversion to Islam exists in the canon. Instead, we repeatedly find Christians *acting* the part of the apostate. In *Renegado*, for example, Paulina feigns conversion as she tells Asambeg that she regrets having “barr’d [her]self from pleasure” and pronounces she “will turn Turk” (5.3.147, 152). Rather than being tempted to similar actions, the audience recognizes that her “apostasy” is merely a ploy and delights in her successful performance of a stereotype. In this case, acting the part is not only obviously different from being the part, it is instrumental to the rescue of Vitelli and Donusa. In *Solyman and Perseda*, Basilisco recounts the ceremony wherein he was circumcised and paraded about town on a white ass, but he is clearly unchanged and insists on the emptiness of the ceremony:

I now am Christian againe,
 And that by naturall meanes; for as the old Cannon
 Saies very pretily Nilis est tam naturale,

Quod eo modo coligatum est:

And so forth.

I became a Turke to follow [Perseda]

To follow her am now returned a Christian (5.3.15-21)

In moments like this, the Turkish plays seek to deconsecrate acts of conversion, separating a counterfeitable ritual from a sincere and damning change of heart, distinguishing performance from life.

The same distinction is particularly important to the most elaborate staging of apostasy in all of the Turkish plays, the conversion of John Ward in *A Christian Turn'd Turke*. Henk Gras has shown that "Elizabethans focused on the actor's disappearance in the world of illusion rather than his ability to be master of it" (197). In moments like the conversion of Ward, however, the audience's attention is drawn to the very act of "playing." The action of Daborne's play is interrupted two-thirds of the way through with the entrance of a chorus. Preparing the audience for unspeakable acts, the chorus warns that "The deeds we have presented hitherto, are white / Compar'd unto those blacke ones we must [now] write" (F2). Yet by presenting such acts unspoken, the play carefully conditions their reception and significance. What follows is a meticulous dumb show of Ward going through the rituals of conversion to Islam as they are described in several travelers' narratives of the period.¹⁴ The introduction of pantomime into a play that otherwise involves speech generally creates a play's most self-consciously theatrical moment. Costume, gesture, posture, and expression tend to be exaggerated beyond their typical mimetic application. The effect is to make the spectator momentarily attentive to his or her location in a theater where actors perform artificial shows for the entertainment of an

¹⁴See, for example, Arthur Edwards' 1568 account in Hakluyt, *Principall I*: 418; Schiltberger 74-5; and *Policie* 24.

audience. Thus as audience members watch Ward change from his “Christian habit” into “the habit of a free-borne Turke” (F2), they are simultaneously made aware that they are watching a mere act. Nothing more has occurred than an actor’s harmless change of costume. As the play itself resumes, we learn that no one has truly undergone a conversion. Those who believed in the dumb show are instructed to think otherwise. Ward, we learn, has faked the ritual of circumcision, “*play’d the Jew with ‘em, / Made ‘em come to the cutting off an Apes taile*” (F3, emphasis mine). Only the fool who fails to distinguish performance, or playing, from reality mistakes acting for apostasy. By playing the part of the Jew -- the deceiver and false convert -- Ward actually preserves his Christianity. By the time he is condemned, Ward is a sympathetic figure, and his punishers, on the other hand, are the enemies of Christianity.

Regarding the staging of conversion, it has been pointed out “how very picturesque and exotic an idea this was for playwrights to present on stage, especially if the character they intend to have turn Turk should be a villain” (Sha’ban 123). This study is intended to demonstrate that there was far more than entertainment at stake in English representations of Islamic peoples and conversion. For actors, playing the apostate might provide an opportunity to defend themselves against charges of apostasy. For the English patriarchy, staging resistance to apostasy was a means of shoring up notions of English masculinity. In the context of English religious instability, the same resistance compensated for real acts of apostasy, both within English Christendom and in the Ottoman ports of North Africa. Finally, in the context of Anglo-Ottoman relations, representations of Islam had the potential to exert powerful socio-economic forces, whether in support or in condemnation of the traffic. Simply put, the theater was one of the many sites in which early modern English culture both turned *to* the Turks and strenuously asserted it had not *turn’d Turke*. The

five chapters that follow are connected by their attention to English concerns with that turn. In addition, they represent a turn within the field of early modern studies to materials once considered beyond the realm of English studies, but now recognized as essential to the construction of English culture. As the culture of early modern England turned to the Turks, so now do we.

Chapter 1

“A friendly parle might become ye both”: Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine*

I. “A friendly parle”

Most readings of Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* plays rely on the assumption that early modern Europe sustained “an immovable stereotype of the raging and expansionist Turk” (Parr 11). The result is a tendency to find ambiguity in plays that deliberately employ contextual detail to suggest a complex range of positions. Immovable stereotypes of the Turk as an ahistorical, irrational, despotic, and fanatical “Other” are more characteristic of nineteenth-century Orientalism. Yet their intermediary location between the early modern period and our own encourages a backward imposition of Orientalist ideas onto early modern subjects. Examined in the light of revisionist histories of Anglo-Ottoman relations, Marlowe’s two plays reveal that the image of the raging Turk is just one variation within a rather elastic set of representations. The implications of this discovery are significant both for our understanding of the plays and our development of trafficking as an alternative to colonialist and imperialist paradigms for the study of early modern Europe’s experience with other civilizations.

Recognizing the importance of the Turks in early modern European culture helps to produce a new reading of the *Tamburlaine* plays where *Tamburlaine*’s shifting religious identity is not merely “ambiguous” but instead strategically reflective of the period’s conditional suspension and activation of anti-Islamic prejudice. This new reading has important consequences for further investigations of the many Turkish plays which imitated *Tamburlaine* as well as

for the study of “early Orientalism.”¹ It indicates that in its treatment of the East, the early modern period lacks the “internal consistency” which Edward Said finds in eighteenth-century Orientalism. According to Said, the essence of Orientalism lies in “the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority” (Said 42). In Marlowe’s plays Islamic strength is shown to threaten a relatively weak Europe. Several critics argue that this strength is used by Marlowe as a mirror for burgeoning English imperialism. Yet while this understanding of the plays is not inconceivable, it fails to acknowledge the period’s pervasive awareness of the Ottomans’ actual expansionist power and controlling influence over East-West trafficking. I argue instead that Marlowe’s representation of Turkish strength is representative of actual Turkish strength, and that the two Tamburlaine plays interrogate European responses to that power. This interrogation is particularly evident in *Part Two’s* rewriting of *Part One* in ways that complicate audience identification with the protagonist and scrutinize the period’s approaches to religious otherness.

The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great begins with a meeting of the opposing Turkish and Hungarian armies’ rancorous leaders. The opposed kings approach each other with the bombast and posturing we might expect, all but daring each other to the field. Orcanes seems a faithful version of the immovable stereotype described above. He boastfully recounts how he “with the cannon shook Vienna walls,” forcing Sigismund, “then County Palatine,” to beg for a

¹I choose to begin with Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* plays precisely because of their popularity and influence on so many later works. When *Tamburlaine* was published in 1590 its title page described it as “sundrie times shewed vpon stages in the citie of London.” E.K. Chambers (3: 422) finds evidence for fifteen productions of *Part One* between 30 August 1594 and 12 November 1595, and seven of *Part Two* between 19 December 1594 and 13 November 1595. *Tamburlaine’s* cage remains listed in Henslowe’s inventory of props for the *Admiral’s Men* in 1598, and the play was republished again in 1592, 1597, 1605, and 1606.

truce and forfeit “wagons of gold.”² Yet in an equally inflated response, proud Sigismund describes the enormousness of his present force, rhetorically echoing the boasts of Cosroe, Bajazeth, and the Soldan of Egypt in *Part One*. Indeed, none of the Christian leaders speak without including a threat in their words. It is the Viceroy of Byron -- a leader among the supposedly “raging” Turks -- who must point out that such saber-rattling runs counter to the purpose of their meeting and “a friendly parle might become ye both” (1.2.40). Clearly, the Turks and Hungarians are unaccustomed to “friendly parle.” Yet the circumstances require diplomacy. The Turks, we learn,

all are gluttred with the Christians' blood,
And have a greater foe to fight against,
Proud Tamburlaine, that now in Asia,
Near Guyron's head doth set his conquering feet,
And means to fire Turkey as he goes. (1.1.14-8)

The Europeans, on the other hand, are doubtless wary of losing more of said blood. They have suffered cruel defeats in Bulgaria and Hungary and “almost to the very walls of Rome” (2.1.9). They nevertheless “rage” at least as much as the Turks who are here more concerned with defending themselves than initiating conflict. In short, the complexities of the political world prove more powerful than dogmatic antagonism. A new rhetoric is required, one through which infidels become allies and peace becomes an acceptable alternative to holy war. Accordingly, Sigismund consents to a truce when his Turkish counterpart, Orcanes, suggests he “Speak as a friend, and stand not upon terms” (1.2.46).

²Christopher Marlowe. *Tamburlaine*. (Ed.) J. W. Harper. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992) 1.2.9-10, 17, 22. All further references to this work will be cited within the text.

While the infamous Treaty of Varna alluded to in this scene is anachronistic, the sentiment expressed in Orcanes and Sigismund's mutual capitulation is not.³ Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire regularly spoke as friends and learned to "stand not upon terms." As Palmira Brummett has shown in her groundbreaking study, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*, "Alliances were formed across communal lines and were motivated by attempts to preserve the traditional balances of power. The profit motive, the competition for commercial hegemony, and sometimes expansionist ambitions prompted states to alter or accept alterations of these balances" (Brummett 179). Like the treaty sworn to by Orcanes and Sigismund, the association of England's Queen Elizabeth I and the Ottoman Sultan Murad III was conditioned by a recognition of how a staunch contraposition of Christianity and Islam failed to address the growing complexities of early modern global economics and geopolitics. Whereas Tamburlaine stands threateningly poised just beyond the scene of Orcanes and Sigismund's meeting, Elizabethan-Ottoman relations were similarly actuated by the presence of Spain to the West and Persia to the East. Thus if the Turks remained infidel dogs in some Elizabethan contexts, to English diplomats they became tactical allies in the long struggle against Spain.⁴ A similar set of circumstances motivated the Turks. They had begun a war with Persia in 1578 and the difficulties of the first few campaigns promised a long and bitter conflict. As the Venetian ambassador to the Porte noted in 1586, the Turks were "pleased at this English alliance as a counterpoise

³A treaty was signed and betrayed by the Christian forces opposing Murad II at Varna in 1444, nearly forty years after the death of Temur.

⁴It should be pointed out that economic concerns similarly suspended England's anti-Spanish prejudices. For a discussion of England's continued trade with Spain during the Armada War, see Loomie.

to Spain while they are occupied with Persian affairs" (CSP Venetian VIII, #368). Thomas Sherley, held captive by the Ottomans between 1603 and 1605, was quick to point out another significant factor motivating the Turks. He wrote that "the Janissaries had not one corne of good powder but that whyche they gett from the ouerthrone Christians, or els is broughte them out of Englande" (7).

Marlowe's two Tamburlaine plays provide both example and examination of the strategic maneuvering I am describing. They interest me primarily for the ways in which they register changeable Elizabethan appraisals of Islam and Islamic peoples, and the inadequacy of simple "Self-Other" polarizations. English representation of "the Turk" were often rehearsals of conventional stereotypes, but they also could and did shift to accommodate different historical moments and even go so far as to legitimate the arming of the Turks. This is not to say that Marlowe wrote his plays as a justification of an alliance with the Turks. What emerges from his construction of the Tamburlaine⁵ legend is less an articulation of the author's feelings concerning Islam than a perspective on early-modern England's need to produce a rhetoric that would justify its controversial commercial alliance with the Turks. When speaking of a rhetoric of legitimation, I refer to the shifting values assigned to a rival depending upon the prominence of mitigating issues of commerce, country, religion and/ or gender. In other words, how the admixture of these determinants could activate or suspend difference and/ or prejudice. At the same time, I hope to indicate that a recognition of the complex representation

⁵Throughout this essay, the name of Tamburlaine will always be spelled as it is by the writer being discussed at the time, in order to highlight the manifold ways in which early modern Europeans, Marlowe among them, appropriated and transformed their subject.

of Islam in the Tamburlaine plays suggests a re-assessment of the plays themselves, both individually and together.

Critics are beginning to recognize that the relationship between early modern Christianity and Islam was considerably more complicated than the simple prejudice and antagonism found in some works of the period might suggest.⁶ Emily Bartels has shown how “the Renaissance vision of the East was markedly double-sided” (Bartels, “Double” 4). The Turks, she argues, were approached with a mix of abhorrence and admiration. “For while the demonization of Oriental rulers provided a highly charged impetus for England’s own attempts to dominate the East, their valorization provided a model for admiration and imitation, shaming or schooling the English into supremacy” (Bartels, “Double” 5). While Bartels’ notion of the Elizabethan period as marking “a critical beginning in the drive toward domination” (*Spectacles* xiv) seems to me a backward projection of the later British Empire, her indication of the fluidity of representations undergirds the present argument. I wish to extend Bartels’ argument about multiple representations while uncoupling it from notions of imperial domination.

England was not always an imperial power, and the growth of its international power and prestige varied from place to place. For much of the seventeenth century, Englishmen traveling in the Ottoman world “were but feeble and barely countenanced outlanders and could hardly have aroused, much less co-opted, the massive and refined Ottoman state and its people or economy” (Goffman 221). Elizabethan England had no plans or prospects for dominating the East. When it opened official relations with the Turks in 1579, England possessed no territory outside of the British Isles and was a bit player on

⁶See, for example, McJannet; and Parr.

the world stage, a latecomer seeking a niche in a mercantile economy which had left her behind. This belatedness is reflected in Richard Eden's and Richard Hakluyt's separate calls for English voyaging to match ongoing Iberian ventures.⁷ Likewise, England's naval weakness meant that it could not seriously challenge Spanish control over established routes to the East and was forced to pursue the treacherous Northeast and fruitless Northwest passages. That same military weakness meant that England could not possibly imagine itself in any way "dominating" the Ottoman Empire, a relative superpower of the age, and the only regional power with a standing army.⁸ To join the scramble for Eastern riches required that England be more flexible than rival powers with entrenched positions. Her willingness to do so, combined with an auspicious compound of religious, economic, and political conditions, yielded a relationship whereby

⁷In his Preface to *The Decades of the New World* (1555) Eden exhorts his English readers "how much I say shall this sound unto our reproach and inexcusable slothfulness and negligence both before god and the world, that so large dominions of such tractable people and pure gentiles, not being hitherto corrupted with any other false religion (and therefore the easier to be allured to embrace ours) are now known unto us, and that we have no respect neither for god's cause nor for our own commodity to attempt some voyages into these coasts" (Eden 55). Over thirty years later, Hakluyt's dedication of his *Principal Voyages* to Sir Francis Walsingham recounts his embarrassment before continental companions regarding the lack of English enterprise. For a discussion of Hakluyt's effort to promote England's expansion abroad, see Helgerson.

⁸European acknowledgements of Turkish military superiority are quite common in the period. One important authority in this matter is Ogier Ghiselin De Busbecq, the Archduke Ferdinand's ambassador at Solyman's court. Busbecq's assessment of Ottoman forces was the source for numerous later works translated into English, including Botero, Giovo, and Gyorjevic. Busbecq admitted, "I tremble when I think of what the future must bring when I compare the Turkish system with our own . . . On their side are the resources of a mighty empire, strength unimpaired, experience and practice in fighting, a veteran soldiery, habituation to victory, endurance of toil, unity, order, discipline, frugality, and watchfulness. On our side is public poverty, private luxury, impaired strength, broken spirit, lack of endurance and training . . . Can we doubt what the result will be?" (112-13).

Christians and Muslims could “speak as friends and stand not upon terms.” Thus, before turning to Marlowe's plays, I would like to review the circumstances surrounding the establishment of Elizabethan-Ottoman relations in the 1570s and 80s as a congener to the conditional treatment of Islam presented in the drama. More specifically, my examination will be focused on the rhetoric of legitimation in Elizabeth's correspondence with Murad.

II. Elizabethan-Ottoman Relations

When opportunities for establishing profitable relations put pressure on assumptions nurtured by fear and inexperience, those assumptions often crack and admit new figurations. The correspondence between Murad and Elizabeth is just such a moment. As the first official exchange between England and the Porte, the correspondence between the English and Ottoman rulers may be considered a watershed moment and a benchmark for practical English assessments of Turks and the threat of Islam. Richard Hakluyt deemed the letters important enough for inclusion in both versions of his *Principal Voyages and Navigations of the English Nation*, and the image of the Turk they contained was thus widely broadcast and available to people at all levels of English society. While several literary critics, including Bartels, have gestured toward this correspondence, none has examined its implications for the ways in which religious rhetoric could be strategically employed to stress similarities and provide ideological support for what became an infamous trade. S. A. Skilliter's documentary history of the correspondence, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578-1582*, uses the documents to reveal “the great story of a brave man's journey into an unknown and hostile territory and the almost incredible success of his mission there” (Skilliter xvii). My own interest in the correspondence has less to do with its reflection of any individual's accomplishments than with its

broader cultural repercussions. Brummett argues that “[t]he use of religious rhetoric, as illustrated by the conduct of sixteenth-century diplomacy, was a strategy employed by all the contenders for power in the Euro-Asian sphere. It served to legitimize sovereign claims, rally military and popular support, and disarticulate the competing claims of other states” (180). The slippery rhetoric of legitimation employed in this particular correspondence confirms Brummett’s suspicion and furthermore illustrates the inadequacy of colonial paradigms which imagine an “Other” denied subjectivity. The Turk is not only granted subjectivity in Elizabeth’s letters, he is treated as a respected equal whose acceptance and approval of the English are paramount.

Elizabethan-Ottoman relations were not formally opened until March of 1579, but the events instrumental to their occasion may be traced to developments considerably earlier in the decade. In the first few years of the 1570s, English imports of silks and spices, through the Antwerp market or via French and Venetian shipping, were disrupted. Antwerp fell to the Spanish in 1572 and Venetian shipping had been crippled by the Ottoman-Venetian War. Since they were considered neutral, English ships were encouraged to make some of these trips. “Also, in order to obtain vital materials such as English tin, steel and lead, as well as to give a fatal blow to the Venetian economy, the Porte was anxious to establish direct trade relations with the Northerners” (Inalcik and Quatert 366).⁹ England was equally concerned with establishing new trade relations since Spain had recently annexed Portugal’s overseas empire and shipping lanes, creating difficult conditions for the export of woolen cloth essential to the English economy.¹⁰

⁹ For a discussion of Turkish military use of imported English lead and tin, see Davis; and Parry 124-6.

Another critical event in the establishment of Anglo-Ottoman relations came with the accession of Sultan Murad III in 1574. According to Ottoman law, the accession of a new sultan required that all treaties and agreements be renewed. Though the French pressed for a recapitulation of their traditional right of consulage over most European shipping to Ottoman lands,¹¹ the Porte was slow to grant the same. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre alienated the Turks from the increasingly "papist" French. By contrast, Akdes Nimet Kurat argues in his *Short Survey of Turko-British Relations* that "because England was a Protestant country she was considered by the Turks as an enemy of 'idolatry,' i.e., of the Roman Catholics" (Kurat 18). This was a particularly significant issue whereas "[i]n the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries support for Protestants and Calvinists was one of the fundamental principles of Ottoman policy in Europe" (Inalcik, *From Empire* 117).¹² In addition, Murad was a man to whom spectacle and ritual were extremely important, and he had been insulted by France's reluctance to acknowledge his recent coronation with a lavish gift. Yet Murad was not motivated strictly by personal and religious matters. As Wallerstein, Decdeli, and Kasaba together illustrate,

Population expansion led to larger demands on the state institutions for grain. At the same time, the European price inflation encouraged contraband trade, thus raising internal prices. This meant that state revenues became insufficient, and the

¹⁰For assessments of the importance of the cloth trade to the English economy, see Fisher, "London's Export Trade"; Davis; and Hill.

¹¹The Venetians and Ragusans (inhabitants of what is now Dubrovnik) alone were excepted from this rule. English ships were required to sail under the French flag and part with a two-percent consulage fee.

¹²For arguments that Ottoman pressure on Habsburgs helped extend Protestantism in Europe, see Fischer-Galati; and Kortepeter .

traditional redistributive function of the Ottoman state were threatened. (Islamoglu-Inan 90)

The expansion of capitulatory rights to other foreign merchants was one of the fundamental policy changes implemented to counteract this revenue squeeze. Thus Ottoman economic needs combined with prickly relations with France to provide just the opening English merchants were seeking, and in 1578 Francis Walsingham, then stationed in Venice, sent to London his “Memorandum on the Turkey Trade” considering the potential of trade with the Ottomans.¹³ Walsingham organizes his memo around the premise that “In all trades two things are princypally to be Considered, profite and suertie” (Skilliter 28). Yet it is “suertie,” or security, which Walsingham identifies as “the principall matter we ought to have care of” (28). “We are first to consider,” he explains, “who will seake to impeache the trafficque” (28). The dangers he foresees will not come from increased contact with an Islamic culture, but rather from the “fines[se]” and “force” of European rivals. In terms of force, Walsingham identifies the Spanish and Italians as potential problems. Concerning “fines,” or intrigue, he instructs that some merchant-ambassador be sent to the Porte to “impeache the indirect practises of the [other] Ambassadors” (29). The embassy of this representative, Walsingham advises,

is to be handled with grett secrecie, and his voyage to be perfourmed rather by lande than by sea, for that otherwise the Italians that are here will seeke under hande that he may be disgraced at his repayre thither, and therefore it shalbe verey well done to geve owt that in respect of the daunger of the trafficque her

¹³There is also a memorandum by Burghley on the advantages of a trade with Turkey in The British Library, Lansdowne MS., 34, fol. 177.

majestie cannot be induced that hir subiectes shall trade thither.

(29)

Thus, from its foundation, England's policy on trade with the Ottoman Empire depended upon saying one thing and doing another. It had no genuine concern with religious difference, only one that was sometimes given out depending upon the party to whom it was given or made available.

England's duplicitous policy went into effect when, later in 1578, William Harborne, a merchant of the Poland Company, was dispatched overland to Constantinople. To cloak his arrival and purposes, Harborne and his companions traveled the last leg of the journey in Turkish costume. Upon arrival, he gave out that he was simply a merchant involved in the Poland trade hoping to sell in Constantinople those wares he had been unable to find a market for in Poland. His initial contact with Ottoman officials and the fact that he was not carrying a great deal in the way of goods were attributed to an alleged robbery which Harborne skillfully advertised. Yet Harborne was not empty handed, and his more private petition of March 1579 to the Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha tells of his having with him "certain merchandise, such as Kersey cloths, tin and lead" (Skilliter 44). This information was, however, considered better concealed from the other Europeans in Constantinople. Even a year after his arrival, Harborne was still being instructed to mute notions of an Anglo-Turkish alliance and not to "entermeddle towching the amitie, but rather stand as ignorant what to say" (Skilliter 76).

The English ruse was largely ineffective. Although it was some time before they could produce documentary proof for the authorities to whom they answered, the ambassadors of Venice, France, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire recognized Harborne's purposes almost immediately. Without exception they reported their concerns with and inability to check the progress of

negotiations.¹⁴ The French and Venetians were principally concerned with mercantile competition and the danger posed to their own profitable traffic by the increase of English cloth in the Levant market. Spanish and Austrian concerns were more tactical. Both branches of the Hapsburg family remained anxious about Ottoman expansionism and feared (rightly) the establishment of an Anglo-Ottoman arms trade. This concern may also help to explain both England's desire and its inability to keep the negotiations secret. It is reasonable to imagine the Turks receiving from the English a saint's statue to be melted down for use as a cannonball by real-life equivalents of Orcanes in the wars against Catholic Hungary. And it is also reasonable that the pope and Catholic Europe would be outraged. For the Turks, however, knowledge of even a potential alliance could be enough to keep the Spanish in check while the Ottoman army concentrated its efforts on the Persian front. Thus while the English strove to hush the affair, someone -- presumably in the Ottoman court -- leaked copies of the correspondence between Elizabeth and Murad to the other ambassadors.

The response of the ambassadorial community was universal censure, and the concern voiced most often was that England's trade would aid the Turks' military efforts against Christendom. For in a decade that witnessed numerous battles between European and Turkish forces on the Mediterranean, an Anglo-Ottoman alliance could be received as scandalous and, more significantly, treasonous to the "common corps of Christendom."¹⁵ This situation was further aggravated by Elizabeth's status as a "heretic" to the Catholic Church ever since

¹⁴See, for example, CSP Venetian Vol. XVIII: 93 and CSP Spanish Vol. II: 705-6.

¹⁵For a discussion of the persistence of this concept in spite of Reformation differences, see Baumer 1944.

her excommunication by Pius V in 1570. Excommunication positioned her, with the Turks, against the “papists.” It also made it easier to ignore papal injunctions against the exportation of lead, tin, steel and other materials for munitions to the “infidel.” Meanwhile, the continued dismantling of Catholic churches and abbeys meant that these materials were in particular abundance in England. English cargoes included broken bells and images . . . iron and steel, lead, [and] copper,” as well as the more obviously military “arquebuses, muskets, sword-blades, brimstone, saltpetre and gunpowder” (Parry 124). The term “bell metals” soon came to denote the prohibited goods England would ship furtively to Turkish territories, as in *The Three Ladies of London* (1581) where the unscrupulous merchant Mercadore boasts in his broken English of having “sent ouer [to the Ottomans], bell mettell for make ordinance” (Wilson 12).

When, in March of 1580, the French ambassador, Jacques de Germigny, wrote of his inability to check English progress, he attributed his lack of success to the same clandestine traffic in munitions. “What has given the greatest favour to the said Englishman in the eyes of these people,” he explained, “is that he has brought in a large amount of steel and bits of broken images of brass and latten to cast ordnance, and promises to bring in a great deal more of it secretly in future, which is a form of contraband hateful and pernicious to all Christendom” (Skilliter 84). If such promises were made, the English were careful not to make them public. None of the correspondence between Elizabeth and Murad mentions the arms trade. However, Elizabeth's first letter to Murad was carried aboard the *Prudence*, a ship that Bernardino Mendoza, Spain's ambassador to England, alleged, in a report of December 1579, to be carrying a cargo of “bell-metal and tin to the value of twenty thousand crowns” (Skilliter 75). In May of

1582, Mendoza continued to warn King Philip of the growing danger and defiance of the Anglo-Ottoman trade.¹⁶ He writes:

Two years ago they opened up the trade, which they still continue, to the Levant, which is extremely profitable to them, as they take great quantities of tin and lead thither, which the Turk buys of them almost for its weight in gold, the tin being vitally necessary for the casting of guns and lead for the purposes of war. It is of double importance to the Turk now, in consequence of the excommunication pronounced "*ipse facto*" by the Pope upon any person who provides or sells to infidels such materials as these.
(CSP Spanish III)

The concerns of the other ambassadors were certainly legitimate, and in comparing their complaints with the rhetoric produced by the English and the Turks, we begin to recognize conflicting rhetorics of legitimation. In Mendoza and de Germigny's letters, the Turks are figured as a dangerous religious other, "infidels," while Elizabeth's actions are figured as blasphemous--"hateful and pernicious to all Christendom." In Elizabeth and Murad's writings we often see a very different rhetorical strategy. Religious difference is muted or qualified as doctrinal identity is emphasized. Murad made substantial use of this strategy from the beginning of his reign. In a letter to "the members of the Lutheran sect in Flanders and Spain," written soon after his accession in 1574, Murad wrote as follows.

As you, for your part, do not worship idols, you have banished the idols and portraits and 'bells' from churches, and declared your faith by stateing that God Almighty is One and Holy Jesus is His

¹⁶Mendoza first wrote concerning English negotiations in November of 1579 and a second time in January of 1581.

Prophet and Servant, and now, with heart and soul, are seeking and desirous of the true faith; but the faithless one they call Papa does not recognize his Creator as One, ascribing divinity to Holy Jesus (upon him be peace!), and worshipping idols and pictures which he has made with his own hands, thus casting doubt upon the Oneness of God and instigating how many servants of God to that path of error. (Skilliter 37)

While he mistakenly attributes to Protestants an Islamic understanding of Christ as a prophet and servant of God (like Muhammad), Murad otherwise succeeds in finding as much sameness as he can in Protestantism. By de-emphasizing Protestantism's conception-- shared with Catholicism -- of Christ as simultaneously the son of and one with God, Murad is able to find a similar belief in the unity of God. Likewise, he repeatedly emphasizes a shared condemnation of idolatry to distinguish Protestants from Catholics and simultaneously from the "faithless" pope.

Ultimately, Murad's attempt to establish religious sameness is motivated by an unspoken political sameness. With the Protestants of Spain and Flanders, Murad shared an enmity toward the Spanish king and government. This was particularly true after Spain's conquest of Portugal in the summer of 1580. When the Venetian Ambassador, Gianfrancesco Moresini, explained the situation several years later, he recalled de Germigny telling him that "The Sultan said he would never expel from his Porte the foes of his foes. That the Queen of England was the foe of the Pope and of the King of Spain. . . [and] that it suited him to have her Ambassador at his Porte, for the Ambassador would keep him informed of the designs of his foes and had already begun to do so" (CSP Venetian VIII, #216). Responses such as this fed Catholic anxieties surrounding

the Anglo-Ottoman trade and countered English efforts to hush the alliance before Europe.

Matters may have been made even more difficult for the English by the tone Murad's government took with Catholics. The 1577 treaty with Poland, for example, begins with a lengthy Islamic invocation. The treaty is thus offered, [b]y the infinite grace of His Majesty the Lord of glory (exalted is His Power and elevated is His Word), and by the miracles, full of divine blessings, of our apostle His Majesty Mohammed Mustafa (the blessing and peace of Almighty Allah be upon him!), the sun of the heaven of prophecy, the star of the sign of magnanimity, the captain of the company of prophets, the guide of the division of the elect, the pride of the two worlds" (Skilliter 94).

Murad again made no effort to conceal his religious difference when refusing France's request that he break off negotiations with the English in the summer of 1580. In his letter to Henri III he explained, "our felicitous Porte is always open, with the praise of Allah, exalted be He!, and whether it be for friendship or enmity, there is absolutely no refusing or repulsing to the coming and going of anybody" (Skilliter 120). The reverence found in these two documents is quite common in Murad's various writings. It is notably absent, however, in his correspondence with Elizabeth. Murad often left out his traditional Islamic epithet in his letters to Elizabeth, styling himself simply "Murad Shah, son of Selim Shah Khan, he who is granted victory always" (Skilliter 123).

In a similar fashion, Elizabeth adjusted her own epistolary titles in her correspondence with Murad. Elizabeth began most of her letters with the phrase, "Elisabetha, Dei Gratia Angliae, Franciae et Hiberniae regina, fidei defensor, et cetera."¹⁷ That is, "Elizabeth, by the grace of God, Queen of England, France

and Ireland, defender of the faith, et cetera.” In her correspondence with Murad, however, she elaborates considerably on her ambiguous “et cetera.” Here she presents herself as nowhere else in her correspondence: “Elizabetha Dei ter maximi et vnici Coeli terraeque Conditoris gratia Angliae Franciae et Hiberniae Regina fidei Christianae contra omnes omnium inter Christiano degentium [sic] et Christi nomen falso profitentium Idololatrias invictissima & potentissima defensatrix.” Translated to English, Elizabeth’s title reads: “Elizabeth, by the grace of the most mighty God, the three part and yet singular Creator of Heaven and Earth, Queen of England, France and Ireland, the most invincible and most mighty defender of the Christian faith against all the idolatry of all those unworthy ones that live amidst Christians, and falsely profess the name of Christ.”¹⁸ In her self-portrayal, Elizabeth emphasizes what sameness she can find -- doctrinal and political --- in Islam and Protestantism. With the phrase “et unici,” meaning “and yet one and only” she stresses the notion that Anglican belief in the Trinity is a form of monotheism. This point is supported by her subsequent opposition to Catholics (who “falselie professe the name of Christ”) and unusual profession of anti-idolatry. Each of these components help to link Protestantism and Islam together in ersatz kinship. This similarity is activated again when Elizabeth asks for the release of “certaine of our subiects who are detained as slaves and captives in your gallies” (Skilliter 71). In return for this favor, she assures Murad that she will beseech

¹⁷This is true of all 40 letters in Kouri.

¹⁸Hakluyt’s translation of 1589 omits the trinitarian reference completely, offering, “Elizabeth, by the grace of the most mightie God, and onely Creatour of heaven and earth, of England, France and Ireland Queene, the most invincible and most mightie defender of the Christian faith against all kinde of idolatries, of all that live among Christians, and falselie professe the name of Christ” (Skilliter 229).

God (who onely is above all things, and all men, and is a most severe revenger of all idolatrie, and is ielous of his honor against the false gods of the nations) to adorne your most invincible imperial highness with all the blessings of those gifts, which onely & deservedly are accounted most worthie of asking. (Skilliter 71)

Elizabeth's repeated emphasis on shared doctrine accents her opposition to Murad's Christian "foes," Spain and the Papacy. These entities, not the Turks, are thus implicitly charged with polytheistic idolatry and condemned as blasphemers.

It should be recalled here that the context in which Elizabeth wrote this letter was one in which Continental writers, often translated into English, were calling for Christian unity and opposition to Turkish Islam. Three years earlier, in 1576, Thomas Newton translated Augustine Curio's *Notable Historie of the Saracens* warning that the Turks

were indeed at the first very far off from our clime & region, and therefore the less to be feared, but now they are even at our doors and ready to come into our houses, if our penitent hearts do not the sooner procure the mercifull hands of God, an unity, peace and concord among the princes, potentates, and people of that little portion of Christendom yet left, which through division, discord and civil dissension hath from time to time enticed and brought this Babylonian Nabugadnazar and Turkish Pharao so near under our noses. (Newton C3v-C4r)

When presented to an English readership, the doors at stake become English doors to English houses, and Elizabeth is included among those Christian princes who must join together in opposition to the Turk. The same sentiment courses through prayers commonly used throughout the realm. In one such form, the

Turks are figured as “Infidels, who by all tyranny and cruelty labour utterly to root out not only true religion, but also the very name and memory of Christ, our only Saviour, and all Christianity” (Clay 527). Given this context, we begin to see why Walsingham advised that lies be “given out,” why Harborne’s mission was cloaked in ambiguities, and just how flexible English representations of Islam could be. Rather than acknowledging Christian unity in the face of an Islamic threat, Elizabeth’s letter transforms Catholicism into Christianity’s principal threat while rendering the Turks as a valuable ally. For Elizabeth’s government recognized that it was not the Muslim Turks who stood threateningly at England’s door, but rather the Catholic Spaniards. As Fulke Greville would point out many years later, in his *Life of Sidney*,

Besides which reputation given to her name by the Grand Signior in this particular, she generally got power to keep this fearfull standard of the halfe-moon waving in such manner over all the King of Spaine’s designes, as he durst move no where against his neighbour-Christian princes, for feare of being incompassed within the horns of that heathen crescent. (Grossart III: 212).

If praiseworthy to some Englishmen, Elizabeth’s defiance of the Pope would be nothing less than treason to Christianity in the eyes of an Austrian statesman.¹⁹ The reaction of the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire, Joachim von Sinzendorff, thus provides a clarifying example to illustrate an opposing rhetoric of legitimation. In March of 1579, Von Sinzendorff wrote to Rudolf II to apprise him of the developments of Harborne’s negotiations. His assessment of the situation is conditioned by a very different compound of

¹⁹Similar concerns were voiced by expatriate recusant authors including William Allen, Joseph Cresswell, William Reynolds, Richard Rowlands, and William Giffard.

circumstances. He is ambassador of a Catholic empire whose doors truly are threatened and, in some cases, have already been broken down. All things considered then, Von Sinzendorff is surprisingly forgiving when he hopes for Elizabeth “that She may realize such temporal and eternal ruin of hers, do penance in time, mend her ways, and ponder more deeply about how to resist the same with His help!” (63). Von Sinzendorff’s diplomatic lenity toward Elizabeth suits his contrasting condemnation of the Turks. Though he marvels at Harborne’s wiliness, the ambassador ultimately sees the Englishman’s success as evidence of Murad’s desire to divide Christendom. The Ottoman, he explains,

wherever he cannot come by sword and might . . . applies himself and strives to gain ground with all kinds of false, deceptive intrigues, cunning, and speed, in order to weaken and destroy the Christian rulers, still more to divide them by this means. . . . Thus, as I report, it appears clearly from the Sultanic letter how mildly, sweetly, and with relaxation he offers great friendship to Royal Majesties by kindness, mildness, and good offices; and the hellish wolf walks beneath the sheepskin and behaves as if he would like, in the meantime, to get this Christian kingdom also, like Poland, into his claws, and by means of false offers bring dangerous protection, destroying souls, lives, and property for all who participate in it” (Skilliter 63).

Though Von Sinzendorff makes no mention of the munitions issue, it doubtless contributes to his concern. More than a century of devastating conflict with the Turks entitled the Holy Roman Empire to a degree of anxiety in the face of an Anglo-Ottoman alliance. This history may also account for the ambassador’s activation of a familiar anti-Turkish prejudice which sees Turks as dangerous perverters of Christendom. Von Sinzendorff thus transforms Christ’s warning of

false prophets “which come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7: 15-16), substituting Turks for false prophets. At the same time, England is transformed into its most famous product--sheep--and figured as the naive victim of a devouring Islamic monster. Other ambassador's were less forgiving of the English, however, and accusations charging them with aiding the Turks in the *jihad* continued through the end of Elizabeth's reign.²⁰

Not surprisingly, the English described the association in altogether different terms. For years to come they would carefully put a favorable, often Christian, spin on information that was given out concerning trade with the Turks. Thus the charter of the new Turkey Company, granted in September of 1581, notes that second only to the political advantages of the trade, “there is a good and apparent hope and likelyhoode both that many good offices may bee done for the peace of Christendome, and reliefe of many Christians that bee or may happen to bee in thraldome or necessitie under the sayde Grand Signior, his vassals or Subjects” (Skilliter 177). The charter's emphasis on the liberation of Christian captives stands in distinct contrast to Continental assessments of the alliance as well as Walsingham's private memorandum. In this public document, the trade is seen as aiding, rather than threatening Christianity and Christians. Likewise, the company's petition of the same year for sending an ambassador to Constantinople points out that

²⁰ Following the Bark Roe affair of 1581, when an English ship violated the newly granted privileges and piratically seized two Greek ships subject to the sultan, the Spanish began circulating rumors that Elizabeth and Murad were conspiring to launch an attack on Malta. For later accusations of Elizabeth see CSP Venetian VIII: 352. See also Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Salisbury preserved at Hatfield House V: 522 and VII: 273, where Elizabeth and the King of Navarre are accused of being “the troublers of all Christendom and the stirrers up of the bloody enemy, the Turk.”

Her Magestie shall hereby presearve her subiects (geven Free by vertue of this lycence) from future Captiveties, in his domynions, the redemption of which within thees twentie yeares (noe doubt) hath Coste this Realme above fowre thowsand pounds, and yett divers to this daie remayne there unrescated, of which some (the more to be pittyed) have turned turks, for avoydinge the greate extermytie of moste miserable barbarouse Crueltie. (Skilliter 184)

One indication of the actual weight of religious concerns in England's Turkish affairs lies in the petition's assessment of the value of redeeming captured and renegade Christians. Though the benefits are purportedly religious, they are measured in wholly economic, not spiritual, terms.

Eight years into the trade, when Hakluyt decided to include Elizabeth and Murad's correspondence in his first edition of the *Principal Navigations*, trade with the Muslim Turks still required careful presentation. Thus, as S. A. Skilliter has pointed out, Hakluyt's version of Murad's 1580 diploma incorporating the privileges for the English nation avoids the word "Muslim" in his translation of articles 11 and 18, using "our holy faith and religion" and "the holy religion" instead (101). Hakluyt thus obscures what could be a controversial marker of religious difference.²¹ What is perhaps even more notable is the absence of Murad's letter of 21 June 1580 informing Elizabeth of his granting of privileges. The letter, whose original is lost, ends with a statement of what the English queen owes in return for this grant:

And you, for your part, shall be steadfast in submission and obedience to our door of felicity, and never cease from continually

²¹See also Note 18.

submitting and imparting the items of news which have occurred
in those parts and of which you have been informed.(116)

Did Hakluyt choose to omit the letter or was it destroyed before he had a chance to include it? In either case, it was determined inappropriate for giving out, and without the recently located Turkish registry copy we would have no record of it.²² Both the tone and content of Murad's command could have caused a stir. As Skilliter explains, the letter "at once places [Elizabeth] implicitly as an Ottoman ally and co-operator, and, quite firmly, as the Sultan's inferior" (117). This was just the interpretation the English were struggling to circumvent.²³ England wished to enjoy all the benefits of a Turkish alliance while accruing none of the adverse religious implications.

III. The Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine, Part One*

The preceding review of the early days of Anglo-Ottoman trafficking demonstrates that England's "double-sided" relationship with Islam was activated by more immediate and realistic concerns than imperialist "domination." Commercial and political interests were interlocked with and impinged upon what were ostensibly issues of religious difference. In addition, individuals with more personal motives stood to advance themselves through the establishment of the trade and therefore worked to insure receptiveness. One such individual was the sultan's Latin translator, Mustafa Beg. That Mustafa took advantage of his position as translator to put himself into a place of prominence has already been suggested. Skilliter points out that in his

²²Skilliter explains that the original letter is lost. The document is known only from an abbreviated text preserved in the official Register of the Ottoman Chancery in Istanbul.

²³See also Wittek.

translation of the diploma incorporating the privileges for the English, Mustafa's translation is strategically imprecise. In order to avoid antagonism, Mustafa softens a clause describing a renegade from "still persisting in his infidelity" to "still persisting in his Christianity." In addition to this muting of anti-Christian prejudice, Mustafa is careful in his deployment of religious terms and titles in his personal correspondence with Elizabeth. Hoping to gain status as the facilitator of a prosperous new association, Murad suggests that "if it will seem good to the Sacred Royal Majesty, I shall strive that a league and most holy alliance commences and is maintained between our Most Mighty Emperor and the Sacred Royal Majesty" (Skilliter 59). Mustafa's repeated emphasis on Elizabeth's religion stands in sharp contrast to his simultaneous description of Murad's secular power. In Mustafa's distinction, then, we see that prejudice has no single provenance, and neither does the desire to suspend it from time to time.

Of course, the situation was never simply bilateral. Third parties -- whether individual, national, or ideological -- constantly complicated the apparent binarism of England versus Islam. Thus as we consider Anglo-Ottoman relations we must always broaden our view to the pressures imposed by the world system within which those relations were set. By this precept, in order to fully appreciate the rhetoric of legitimation in the case of England and the Turks, we must briefly consider the interrelated case of Europe and Persia.

Persia's Islamic Empire sat directly beside the Ottoman, but it was considerably smaller and often seen in contrast to its neighbor and rival. These two powers alternated between periods of war and tension in similar fashion to modern Iran and Iraq. The Ottomans practiced Sunni Islam while the Persians were Shiites, a division which had produced incendiary conflicts since the second Caliphate of the seventh century. European understanding of this schism was extremely limited. As Anthony Parr explains it, Europeans were compelled "to

look at, and seek correspondences with, the Islamic culture that they chose to support" (Parr 12). Thus the split led them most often to imagine Persian Islam as somehow less corrupt, especially when Persian troops were distracting Ottoman forces from their advances into Christendom. One traveler found the Persians "without comparison, more noble, more civil, more liberal and of better spirit and judgment than the Turkes" (Nicholay Q1).²⁴ Another explained, "The Persians differ much from the Turkes, in nobilitie, humanitie and activitie and especially in poynts of religion: who by contention think each other accursed" (Lithgow, *Discourse* K2r). A third went so far as to describe the Persian calling the Prophet Muhammad "a bondeman, and a vyle bowghte drudge. The books of his lawe wheresoever he founde theym, as false heresies & divilysh doctrine he brent them" (Giovo I2). European histories of Persia were characterized by a relative de-emphasis of its Islamic heritage, and commonly looked back, via classical literary sources, to the pre-Islamic empire of the fifth century B.C. Although Marlowe's plays are set in early modern Persia and reflective of current Persian affairs, his Persian characters refer anachronistically to figures such as Jove and Cyrus. A pamphlet written by Thomas Middleton in 1609 to promote Robert Sherley's subsequent embassy to Europe goes so far as to omit entirely "from its description of Persia any reference to Islam and almost all suggestion of hedonistic luxury. This is a spartan state in which Persians 'seem more like Protestants than like Turks in their religion' and customs" (Parr 11). European histories of the Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, invariably included (and were sometimes dominated by) stories of the origins of Islam. An

²⁴In an appendix to Africanus' *Geographical Historie of Africa* entitled "Of Mahumet, and of his accursed religion in general," John Pory divides Islam into four sects: the "libertine" and martial Turks; the simple Tartarian, the "most superstitious and zealous" Arabian; and the Persian, who "stand[s] more upon reason and nature" (1006-10).

anonymous work entitled *The Policy of the Turkish Empire* (1597), for example, begins with the story of Muhammad's birth and proceeds through a detailed discussion of Muslim beliefs and rites. Similarly, *The Offspring of the House of Ottomano* (1553) spends more time discussing Islam and Muhammad than its titular subject. In short, European fear of Ottoman incursions and gratefulness for Persian distractions frequently combined to render the Turks consummate representatives of Islam in all of its corruption.

The outrage expressed over English overtures to the Turks obscures the fact that England was not the first to engage the Ottomans in this manner. In the first volume of the *Principal Navigations*, Richard Hakluyt defends the trade in just these terms:

[I]f any man shall take exception against this our new trade with Turkes and misbeleevers, he shall shew himselfe a man of small experience in old and new Histories, or wilfully lead with partialitie, or some worse humour. For who knoweth not, that king Salomon of old, entred into league upon necessitie with Hiram the king of Tyrus, a gentile? Or who is ignorant that the French, the Genouois, Florentines, Raguseans, Venetians, and Polonians are at this day in league with the Grand signior, and have beene these many yeeres, and have used trade and traffike in his dominions?

(Hakluyt, *Principal I*: lxix-lxx)

Hakluyt's reference to the French treaty is the most pertinent here. For King Francis I sought out a treaty with Suleiman, in spite of Suleiman's history of Christian conquest, specifically for the tactical counterbalance it would provide against his rival Charles V. Indeed, as Timothy Hampton points out, Francis's "encouragement and his affirmation of his support are generally acknowledged as factors behind the sultan's second invasion of Hungary" (Hampton 63) in

1527, when thousands of Hungarians were slaughtered at the Battle of Mohács. In pamphlets all over Europe, Francis was denounced as a traitor to Christendom. This history did not, however, keep the French from protesting the English alliance. Clearly, what was at stake for the French in the Anglo-Ottoman relations of the 1580s was not the welfare of Christendom but the valuable right to assess European consulage fees, a right whose recapitulation seemed less and less likely.

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The conditional activation and suspension of religious prejudice I have been describing is apparent in and essential to Marlowe's Tamburlaine plays. Taken together, the two plays have often bewildered critics interested in religious difference. Gods of four different faiths are invoked, sworn by, and/or forsworn resulting in what Harry Levin calls a "pantheistic immanence [approaching] Spinoza's doctrine that the existence is the essence of God" (51). At the center of this interpretation is Tamburlaine, alternatively defending and attacking Christendom, swearing by Muhammad at one moment and defying him the next. More than one critic therefore find the plays "morally ambiguous."²⁵ Yet when examined against the shifting allegiances of the world system invoked by the plays, Marlowe's representation of Tamburlaine is better understood as conditional than ambiguous. To fully understand Marlowe's shifting representation of Tamburlaine, one needs first to understand the

²⁵Assertions of Tamburlaine's ambiguity range from David Bevington's argument, throughout *From Mankinde to Marlowe*, for moral ambiguity as the distinctive feature of Marlowe's artistry to Emily Bartels' claim that the play "provides no stable comparative standard through which we can judge his relative civility or barbarity and situates him instead within a dramatic landscape that 'swarms' with figures whose nationalities (Persian, Turkish, Egyptian, Natolian, and so on) and whose 'incivil outrages' are at least as incriminating as his" (*Spectacles* 60).

shifting circumstances in which he is placed. In this context, Marlowe's contradictory representation of his title character is in fact no more ambiguous than his queen and country's curious relationship with Islam and the Ottoman Empire. Tamburlaine's religious identity simply shifts with the plays' shifting circumstances.

The two *Tamburlaine* plays become "ambiguous" only when their events are dislodged from the complex world system in which Marlowe steadfastly places them. As numerous critics have indicated, the plays -- and especially *Part Two* -- are packed with geographical references carefully culled from early modern cartography and Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* in particular. The result is a drama that, like its central character, insists on its place within a global frame of reference. It bears recalling, though, that the frame of reference invoked belongs to Ortelius and Marlowe, not Temur. Accordingly, the logic that allows Tamburlaine to be at one moment the redeemer and the next the bane of Christians belongs to the world of Marlowe and Ortelius, the world of Elizabeth and Murad.

We have seen how Elizabethans could either mute or amplify religious difference depending upon audience and/or circumstances. The dreadful Turkish Islam of histories, travelers' accounts, and sermons could be entirely defanged in the interests of politics and trade. Similarly, in Marlowe's hands, Tamburlaine's religious identity, as well as the events resulting in his unlikely rise to power, is crucially shaped by European interests.

Before Tamburlaine first appears on stage in *Part One*, the audience has been introduced to the principal characters of an impending civil war in Persia. Recent events are altogether apparent in the presentation of a weak Persian court, threatened by both internal divisions and the imminent invasion of Turks and Tartars. Political upheaval in Persia in the late 1570s had drawn both Turkish

and Uzbeki invasions through the 1580s. To much of Europe, the massing of Turkish forces on the Persian front meant a diminished Turkish naval presence in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, it also signaled further Turkish designs on the still-important overland route to the Indies.²⁶ European merchants and statesmen therefore anxiously watched the decade-long conflict.

Marlowe's Persian unrest likewise has important repercussions for Europe. On one side stands the unsure and ineffective king Mycetes, whose inability to unify the nobility jeopardizes all of Persia, the proven counterbalance to Turkish expansionism. Opposed to him, Prince Cosroe is persuaded of how easily he may defeat his brother and then go on to "subdue the pride of Christendom" (1.1.132). Cosroe imagines an absolute control over the East, and seethes over the fact that while his brother Mycetes has reigned,

Men from the farthest equinoctial line,
Have swarmed in troops into the Eastern India:
Lading their ships with gold and precious stones. (1.1.119-21)

The consequences of the Persian conflict and Cosroe's plans become clear only after we identify his "men from the farthest equinoctial line." Curiously, exegetic commentary on this line has been scarce and inadequate. In many editions, the line is left unglossed. In others, the equinoctial line is simply identified as the equator. The inadequacy of this gloss lies in the fact that --

ruling out the possibility that Marlowe is referring to aliens from the celestial

²⁶In an important revision of Ottoman history, Palmira Brummett supplements the notion of the empire's basis in territorial conquest and suggests how this picture only reflects Europe's experience of the Ottomans. Brummett's work challenges the Eurocentric "Age of Discovery" theme that figures the Ottomans as little more than an obstacle to be circumvented or negotiated in the quest for eastern trade. Instead, she argues, the Ottoman state was the "inheritor of Euro-Asian trading networks and [a] participant in the contest for commercial hegemony in the economic space stretching from Venice to the Indian Ocean" (175).

equator -- there is only one equator and Cosroe speaks of the "farthest." David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen address this problem in their suggestion that the line may be understood to mean "from the farthest equatorial regions" (404). Though it has the merit of grammatical lucidity, this translation ultimately brings us no closer to identifying the swarming men or their homeland. Una M. Ellis-Fermor alone proposes an explanation in her suggestion that "[t]he reference here is to the inhabitants of the southern districts lying about the equator who have advanced north into Eastern India" (74).

Several complications cast doubt on Ellis-Fermor's reading. First, if we understand "the farthest equinoctial line" to mean the farthest point along the equator, Cosroe -- standing in Persia -- would seem to be speaking of those "late-discovered isles" (1.1.166), the Americas. Yet in his announced plans to "march to all those Indian mines, / My witless brother to the *Christians* lost" (2.5.41-2, emphasis mine), Cosroe provides a clue that the men in question are neither "inhabitants of the southern districts lying about the equator" nor of the Americas. Who then are these fortune-hoarding Christians? The question requires further contextualization. To the English, a reference to the farthest point along the equator would seem to signify Australasia. Yet as Ethel Seaton has carefully demonstrated, Marlowe's geographic frame of reference in the *Tamburlaine* plays combines elements of medieval geography with sixteenth-century advances in cartography. More specifically, she indicates how, while *Part Two* evidences a close study of Ortelius, *Part One* generally "follows medieval authority" (Ribner 171-2). Thus, as the American idiom imagines digging a hole to China regardless of geographical (let alone geological) realities, Medieval Europeans imagined that

they that be toward the Antarctic, they be straight, feet against feet,
of them that dwell under the Transmontane; also well as we and

they that dwell under us be feet against feet. For all the parts of sea and of land have their opposites, habitable or trespassable, and they of this half and beyond half. . . And wit well, that, after that I may perceive and comprehend, the lands of Prester John, Emperor of Ind, be under us . . . For our land is in the low part of the earth toward the west, and the land of Prester John is in the low part of the earth toward the east." (Mandeville 121-2)

Medieval geographic reports placed Prester John and his Ind in various places, including both East Africa and Asia. This is not surprising considering the collapsed space between India and Africa on most medieval maps. Within the same epistemological purview, Persia and the Indies were often conflated for their legendary riches. If we therefore consider Europe and Persia in an antipodal relationship, Cosroe's antipodes -- his "farthest equinoctial line" -- is located in Europe, and his swarming men are Europeans. This being the case, the ascent of Cosroe puts in dire jeopardy the dream of Englishmen lading *their* ships with Indian treasures.²⁷

Enter Tamburlaine. Though his original was responsible for the brutal conquest and despoiling of Delhi in 1398, Marlowe's Tamburlaine enters the play with no designs on India. When he first speaks of the East it is in scorn of "all the gold in India's wealthy arms," preferring the worth of Zenocrate. Moreover, when Tamburlaine does speak of his plans for the East in *Part One* they generally protect the interests of European trade. In his enticing Theridimas to join his

²⁷Godshalk (107) points out that the name Cosroe is derived "from the Golden Legend, where Cosroe or Cosroes, a Persian King, attempts to keep the true cross from the Christians. He is defeated in battle and slain, while the Cross is returned to Jerusalem." Considering his Cosroe's threat to European trade, Marlowe seems to make use of this allusion, substituting riches for relics and Tamburlaine for a Christian crusader.

ranks, for example, Tamburlaine imagines “Christian merchants that with Russian stems/Plow up huge furrows in the Caspian Sea,/ Shall vail to us, as lords of all the lake.” What is significant in this passage is that here, as elsewhere in the play, Tamburlaine does not envision himself interrupting Christian shipping on the Caspian, only accepting homage as a sort of protector of free trade. In effect, Tamburlaine champions European mercantile interests, first by eliminating the threat of a weak Persia, and then by seizing the Persian crown and redirecting its course from uncontested mastery of India. For Marlowe's audience, the contest for control of the Caspian had contemporary relevance. In the 1580s the Caspian had become “the new focus of Turkish ambition” (Braudel II: 1174), providing as it did a route to the inland shores of Persia and Turkestan, and thus access to internal routes of Asia, including the silk route. There was even talk of renewing a stalled Turkish project for the construction of a canal connecting the Don and the Volga, and thus the Black and Caspian Seas. The Ottomans had already gained control of most spice routes with the annexation of Arab territories between 1516 and 1550. How their control of the Caspian might affect Europe's growing trade to the East remained uncertain and a cause for anxiety among groups like the English Muscovy Company, whose ships sought profit plying the Caspian. To Europe, Marlowe's Tamburlaine therefore represents continued and protected access to the wealth of the East.

Appropriation and transformation are characteristic of Temur's treatment in early modern European culture. Thus Marlowe's Tamburlaine was not the first version to exhibit curiously little interest in Indian conquest. Indeed, none of the histories available to Marlowe even refer to this milestone of Temur's career. Instead, they generally choose to focus on his opposition to the Turks and other moments when the Scythian's actions promote the interests of European Christendom. Petrus Perondinus' *Magni Tamerlanis Sytharum Imperatoris Vita*, for

example, lavishes attention on the Byzantine Emperor Manuel's offer of the empire to Temur for aid against the invading Turks. In spite of his cruel tactics, Temur is figured throughout as a merciful, pitying savior. His acts of cruelty are visited exclusively upon non-Christians, and especially Turks. Likewise, the *Chronicorum Turcicorum Philippus Lonicerus* figures a magnanimous Tamburlaine who refuses the offer of Constantinople after saving it from certain Turkish subjugation.²⁸

Marlowe, too, places conflict with the Turks at the center of his Tamburlaine plays. Turkish interests overshadow the Persian conflict, and once the Turks formally enter in the third Act of *Part One* their influence on the action remains pivotal. Moreover, the status of Europe vis-à-vis Turkish interests emerges as a determining condition for the representation of Tamburlaine.

The Turkish Sultan Bajazeth enters the play an ardent confirmation of Europe's anti-Turkish, anti-Islamic fears and stereotypes. In his first speech of the play, the Turk reminds his subject kings and "bassoes" of their great power.²⁹ With characteristic bombast, he announces his awareness of Tamburlaine's presence, but holds the Scythian's challenge a mere "bickering." Contained within Bajazeth's confidence are the components of Europe's fear of Ottoman power. He holds his army "invincible" and boasts:

As many circumcised Turks we have,
And warlike bands of Christians renied,
As hath the ocean or the Terrene sea
Small drops of water, when the moon begins

²⁸For excerpts of these works, see Thomas and Tydeman.

²⁹"Bassoes" is probably intended to indicate "pashas," the highest official title of honor bestowed by the Ottoman sultans. The term was regularly mispronounced as "basha" by Europeans.

To join in one her semi-circled horns (3.1.7-12)

In Bajazeth's hyperbolic accounting of his forces, he employs a simile suggestive in more ways than one. The grounds of the simile, suggesting an army as numerous as the drops of the Mediterranean at high tide, confirm European fears of immense Ottoman armies. In addition, the vehicle depends upon the figure of a crescent moon, the icon of Islam. A further indication of Bajazeth's specific religious difference occurs in the tenor of his simile, where the image of circumcised and converted men raises the most basic Christian fears of Islam. (*Fears of conversion and the enormous Turkish force are later combined when "ten thousand janissaries" are included in a description of Bajazeth's forces.*) Most importantly, Bajazeth's vast army is encamped before Christian Constantinople, with no plans to end his siege until "the Grecians yield, / Or breathless lie before the city walls" (3.1.14-15). Thus, when some forty lines later Bajazeth refers to "holy Mahomet" his Muslim identity is already firmly in place with Marlowe's audience.

The immediate amplification of Bajazeth's Muslim identity distinctly contrasts and helps to explain Marlowe's treatment of Tamburlaine's religion. As Elizabethan diplomacy overlooked Turkish Islam while establishing relations with the Porte, so is Tamburlaine's Islam silenced as he emerges as the protector of Europe, who seeks, in Bajazeth's words, to "rouse us from our dreadful siege / Of the famous Grecian Constantinople" (3.1.5-6)). Historians argue the degree to which Temur followed Islam but wholly agree that he was, indeed, a Muslim.³⁰

³⁰Beatrice Manz (17) argues that though his campaigns against the Christian kings of Georgia, the Shiite sayyids of Amul, and the non-Muslim populations on his route to India were all justified as defenses of the sharia, Temur was "above all an opportunist; his religion served frequently to further his aims, but almost never to circumscribe his actions. . . It was in the justification of his rule and his conquests that Temur found Islam most useful." If Manz is right, we would do

Those pledging allegiance to Temur upon his coronation in Samarkand were asked to swear on the Qur'an. He kept with him an official Islamic counselor, and on two occasions massacred the Christian population while sparing the Muslims of a resisting garrison.³¹ This brand of detail is wholly missing from Marlowe's play. Instead, the play seeks to distance Tamburlaine from Islam, figuring him in contrast to Bajazeth who antithetically claims Muhammad as a kinsman and swears "by the holy Alcoran . . . [that Tamburlaine] shall be made a chaste and lustless eunuch" (3.3.76-7).

If Bajazeth is immediately tailored to represent Islam's threat to Europe, Tamburlaine contrastingly exemplifies the way in which Muslims could be strategically aligned with European interests as long as their religious difference was either silenced or recast as sameness. Throughout the first two Acts, issues of religious difference are significantly muted. Like the Persians he swiftly overcomes and assimilates, Tamburlaine speaks of Olympian gods long since abandoned. He fancies himself protected by and modeled after Jove.³² In conversation with Theridimas the two men speak of Hermes and Apollo, and more than once "the gods" are invoked. The curiosity of this anachronism does not fully emerge, however, before the entrance of the bellicose sultan Bajazeth. Bajazeth's overt Islamicism confounds any developing sense that religious

well to consider Temur an example of conditional prejudice from the other direction.

³¹Not surprisingly, Marlowe's sources tend to focus on Fortune rather than any specific religion. The twenty-third chapter of the *Chronicorum Turcicorum Philippus Lonicerus* does, however, treat "the religion which engaged his mind," admitting Tamburlaine's Islamic leanings as evidenced by the fact that he did not destroy mosques.

³²For a discussion of the association of a thundering Jove with Atheism, see Elton. This work is enormously influential in shaping Jonathan Dollimore's argument that Tamburlaine's aspiration "really does approximate to the self-determining hero bent on transcendent autonomy" (112).

difference will not be an issue in the play. From this point on, the conditional representation of a Tamburlaine aligned with European interests becomes quite plain.

Historically, Temur postponed conflict with the Turks. His clash with the Ottomans was finally occasioned by irreconcilable claims to Anatolia, or western Turkey. In Marlowe's treatment, European repercussions which were historically incidental become the conflict's cause. Tamburlaine shows no interest in accepting Bajazeth's initial offer of peace. Rather than seeking to spare the lives of opposing Muslims, Marlowe's Tamburlaine defies Bajazeth and his faith, seeking to "rouse [the Turk] out of Europe" (3.3.38). Quite simply, Tamburlaine's primary objectives are projections of Christian Europe's Mediterranean anxieties; above all, he seeks to re-secure Europe's trade to the East. Thus as he outlines his plans Tamburlaine enumerates several of Europe's chief concerns with the trade, and proposes to eradicate their causes:

I that am termed the Scourge and Wrath of God,
 The only fear and terror of the world,
 Will first subdue the Turk, and then enlarge
 Those Christian captives which you keep as slaves,
 Burdening their bodies with your heavy chains,
 And feeding them with thin and slender fare,
 That naked row about the Terrene Sea,
 And when they chance to breathe and rest a space,
 Are punish'd with bastones so grievously
 That they lie panting on the galley's side,
 And strive for life at every stroke they give.
 These are the cruel pirates of Argier,
 That damned train, the scum of Africa,

Inhabited with stragglng runagates,
That make quick havoc of the Christian blood. (3.3. 44-58)

Tamburlaine's demonstrative pity for Christian galley slaves is notable in contrast to his own treatment of prisoners. Tamburlaine's captives, who repeatedly affirm their Islamism with appeals to Muhammad, are treated to heavy chains, slender fare and grievous beatings like those he remonstrates against here. Equally anachronistic is Tamburlaine's attention to safety on the Mediterranean. This concern is emphasized by the play's assertion of Turkish suzerainty over Barbary in the identity of Bajazeth's contributory kings, Argier, Fez, and Morocco.³³ In spite of the fact that Temur's militarism was almost never naval, Marlowe suggests that in defeating the combined Turkish forces, Tamburlaine will control the Mediterranean water routes.³⁴ Furthermore, in the "pirates of Argier" and the renegades of Africa, with their connotations of vice and apostasy, Tamburlaine chooses for his foes two of European Christendom's great seagoing bogeymen.

That Tamburlaine's preoccupations more befit a European traveler than a Scythian conqueror is evident in their affinity to one French traveler's description of Barbary. He explains,

The most part of the Turkes of Alger, whether they be of the King's household or of the Gallies, are Christians renied, or Mahumetised,

³³D'Amico argues that in *Tamburlaine* Barbary is given attention much out of proportion to its actual geographical importance on account of English interest in the North African saltpeter trade.

³⁴The *Chronicorum Turcicorum Philippus Lonicerus* (1578) describes Tamburlaine giving orders for "a garrison and squadron of ships, which were intended to keep the Caspian Sea clear of pirates and bandits for the sake of merchants and their cargo ships" (Thomas and Tydeman xx) There is, however, no evidence of such a fleet.

of all nations, but most of them Spaniards, Italians, and of
 Provence, of the islands and coast of the Sea Mediterane, given all
 to whoredome, sodometrie, theft, and all pilling at the seas, and the
 island being about them: and with their practick art bring daily to
 Alger a number of poor Christians, which they sell unto the Moors,
 and other merchants of Barbary for slaves. (Nicholay B4r)

When Tamburlaine later announces his global aspirations, they too are curiously focused on Christian maritime trafficking. This point is overlooked by Emily Bartels in her argument that Tamburlaine, Cosroe, Bajazeth, and Callapine are comparable in their “project[s] for subduing half the world regardless of lives lost or tactics used” (*Spectacles* 60). When, for example, Tamburlaine predicts that Indian kings will “[o]ffer their mines (to sue for peace) . . . And dig for treasure to appease my wrath” (3.3.264-5) he has already distinguished himself from Cosroe, Bajazeth, and Callapine by establishing his plans to neutralize the forces interfering with European trade:

. . . from the East unto the furtherest West,
 Shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant arm.
 The galleys and those pilling brigandines,
 That yearly sail to the Venetian gulf,
 And hover in the straits for Christians' wrack,
 Shall lie at anchor in the Isle Asant,
 Until the Persian fleet and men-of-war,
 Sailing along the oriental sea,
 Have fetched about the Indian continent:
 Even from Persepolis to Mexico,
 And thence unto the Straits of Jubalter:
 Where they shall meet, and join their force in one,

Keeping in awe the Bay of Portingale,
 And all the ocean by the British shore. (4.1.246-59)

Tamburlaine's imperial vision here predicts his later promise to "confute those blind geographers/That make a triple region in the world" (4.4.73-4). With plans to encircle and master the post-Columbian globe, Tamburlaine imagines an empire beyond anything in Marlowe's day, let alone his own. Yet what is meant by his plans to keep the seas "in awe?" Is Tamburlaine bent on domination? I would suggest instead that in his emphasis on policing brigandage, Tamburlaine forecasts that all of the sea routes to the East will be protected for trade. His concluding focus on the Atlantic is particularly noteworthy for its special treatment of British waters which, in Marlowe's day, were well within the reach of Islamic pirates.

In contrast, Bajazeth's Islamism and his threat to European Christendom are steadily broadcast throughout the play. His subject kings remind him of how their lances "glided through the bowels of the Greeks," and Bajazeth himself recalls how his forces "lately made all Europe quake for fear" (3.3.135). The effect of such boasts combined with the Turks' repeated appeals to "Mahomet," is a *de facto* rendering of their foe, Tamburlaine, a non-Muslim and the defender of European Christendom. These roles particularly emerge when Bajazeth's wife Zabina and Tamburlaine's love Zenocrate "manage words" (131) as their male counterparts do arms. Zabina's first volley is an expression of disgust at having Tamburlaine's "[b]ase concubine" placed beside her. Concubinage is counted among the vices of Islam throughout European literature of the period.³⁵ One of Heywood's devices for the early establishment of Mullisheg's Islamism in *Fair Maid of the West* is to have him immediately call for the congregation concubines

³⁵See, for example, Gjorjevic G8r; and Lithgow, *Discourse* I3v.

for “his pleasure.” When Zenocrate contrastingly insists upon her lawful betrothal to Tamburlaine, she thus contributes to his distancing from Islam. This same contrast is insisted upon earlier in Zenocrate’s immediate recognition that Tamburlaine has no plans to “enrich [his] followers/ By lawless rapine from a silly maid.” In both instances, Tamburlaine is distinguished from the cruel and lascivious Turks in European histories of the conquests of Constantinople (1453), Rhodes (1522), and Famagusta (1571).³⁶ Similarly, whereas Zabina appeals to Mahomet to “solicit God himself” to aid him who “offered jewels to thy sacred shrine,/ When first he warred against the Christians,” Zenocrate calls upon those ambiguous but distinctly non-Muslim “gods and powers that govern Persia” (3.3.189). Finally, as the battle comes to a close, Zenocrate precedes her betrothed in his disdain for Islam, proclaiming that even

If Mahomet should come from heaven and swear,
My royal lord is slain or conquered,
Yet should he not persuade me otherwise,
But that he lives and will be conqueror. (3.3.208-11)

Tamburlaine is neither slain nor conquered, nor does Muhammad come from heaven. When Theridimas wonders if “Mahomet will suffer” Tamburlaine’s abuse of Bajazeth, Techelles’ retort is that he is powerless to do otherwise. Indeed, Muhammad comes off as either indifferent or impotent in *Part One* as the Turks unavailingly entreat his aid until Zabina is left to wonder “is there left no Mahomet, no God . . . ?” (5.2.175). Throughout acts four and five of *Part One*, each amplification of the Turks’ Islamism is followed by a muting of Tamburlaine’s religious difference. Thus when Bajazeth calls upon “holy priests

³⁶Representative European accounts of Turkish conquests can be found in Hakluyt, *Principal* 5: 1-60 and 118-52. A more balanced account of Ottoman conquests is available in Inalcik, *Ottoman Empire* 5-23, 104-29, and 231-49.

of heavenly Mahomet" (4.2.2) to poison Tamburlaine, the conqueror insists upon his safety from such curses as the scourge of the ambiguously nominated, "chiefest god" (8). Yet if Tamburlaine never clearly identifies himself with any particular religion, a defeated Bajazeth recognizes and gives voice to *Part One's* conflation of Tamburlaine and European Christendom. He realizes that Tamburlaine's victory is Christendom's victory, and correspondingly,

Now will the Christian miscreants be glad,
 Ringing with joy their superstitious bells,
 And making bonfires for my overthrow. (3.3.235-7)

If *Part One* ended with the defeat of Bajazeth, the play might be considered an unqualified example of how rhetorics of legitimation are employed. Tamburlaine would remain, unhistorically, the savior of Christendom, while Bajazeth would be contrastingly figured as the Turkish Antichrist. Audiences could easily answer Peter Ashton's question in the epistle to his translation of Paolo Giovo's *Shorte Treatise Upon the Turkes Chronicles*: "May we not be glad to hear tell that Tamburlaine took the great Turk Bajazet prisoner and all his life after used him like a vile drudge?" (qtd in Shepherd 150). As it is, the manifestation of Tamburlaine's savagery, marked by a contrasting humanization of Bajazeth and Zabina, closes the play with an implied sense of misgiving. It has been a commonplace of *Tamburlaine* criticism that Bajazeth's defeat, captivity, and abuse at the hands of Tamburlaine would have been agreeable to Marlowe's audience.³⁷ This may be true up to a point, but the

³⁷Robert Knoll argues that "our sympathies are not for a moment aligned with the Turks" (49). Along with Gerald Pinciss (27), Knoll dismisses the scene of Bajazeth's braining as "ludicrous," and goes on to claim that "no doubt certain hardy Elizabethans laughed uproariously" (54). More recently, Matthew Proser has argued that "in this classic example of sadistic wish-fulfillment, the playwright, his chief character, and the audience share the thrill of his cruel triumph" (Proser 81).

affective power of Bajazeth's final lamentation and Zabina's mournful hysteria should not be overlooked. In Bajazeth's last speech we have no ranting tyrant but a broken man of ample nobility. It is hard to believe Marlowe's audience would have felt no compassion for the vanquished Sultan as he confides in Zabina his remorseful final wish,

That in the shortened sequel of my life,
I may pour forth my soul into thine arms,
With words of love: whose moaning intercourse
Hath hitherto been stayed, with wrath and hate
Of our expressless banned inflictions. (5.2.214-18)

These are certainly not the words of a cruel or lascivious man and hardly enjoin the violence with which they are followed. Marlowe's treatment of Bajazeth disallows an understanding of Turks as necessarily barbaric. Zabina is no less pitiable in her unflinching desire to prolong her husband's life in spite of their suffering. Thus she is driven to madness by the sight of "His skull all riven in twain, his brains dashed out" (5.2.242). Could Marlowe's audience have been delighted with the same sight? Could they have been unmoved when, upon finding her husband brained against his cage, Zabina wails poignantly,

O Bajazeth, O Turk, O emperor, give him his liquor? Not I, bring
milk and fire, and my blood I bring him again, tear me in pieces,
give me the sword with a ball of wildfire upon it. Down with him,
down with him! Go to my child, away, away, away! Ah, save that
infant, save him, save him! I, even I speak to her, the sun was
down. Streamers white, red, black, here, here, here! Fling the meat
in his face. Tamburlaine, Tamburlaine, let the soldiers be buried.
Hell, death, Tamburlaine, hell, make ready my coach, my chair, my
jewels, I come, I come, I come! (5.2.245-254)

Following hard upon the scene of Tamburlaine's ruthless slaughter of Damascus' virgin emissaries, the effect of Zabina's remarkable, disjointed images of desperation and brutality is to highlight the perverse cruelty of Christendom's adopted hero.³⁸ The Sultana's verbal collage amounts to a traumatic recollection of horrors suffered at the hands of Tamburlaine. It suggests that she has witnessed bloody sieges, feared for the life of her child, and humbled herself by appealing to the woman she once called "base concubine." More importantly, it functions as a sort of shorthand by which Marlowe can gesture toward atrocities beyond those already depicted on stage.

As the audience grows less and less comfortable with Tamburlaine's brutality, Zenocrate gives voice to its anxieties and activates a degree of religious difference, creating a buffer between the audience and Tamburlaine. She too is distressed by the slaughter of "heavenly virgins and unspotted maids" (5.2.261), the sight of "streets strowed with dissevered joints of men" (258) and finally the "bloody spectacle" (275) of Bajazeth and Zabina. In her anguish, she turns to the heavens to seek a pardon for Tamburlaine, but, oddly, her addressee this time is "mighty Jove and holy Mahomet" (5.2.299). This is the same Zenocrate who earlier defied the power of Muhammad while soliciting the "gods and powers that govern Persia" (3.3.189), but I don't believe this is a slip on Marlowe's part. Rather, Zenocrate's shift strategically distances Tamburlaine from Christianity as his brutality becomes more conspicuous. This implied reversal is borne out

³⁸Perhaps if Richard Jones had not edited the play for publication in 1590 we would have greater insight to Zabina's allusions. Yet Jones claims that his expurgations were limited to "some fond and frivolous gestures, digressing (and, in my poor opinion) far unmeet for the matter" (To the Gentlemen Readers 9-10). Whereas Jones goes on to characterize his purposeful omissions as lures for fools, it seems most likely that the matter was comedic and unrelated to Zabina's agony. The best discussion of Jones' omissions remains David Bevington's chapter on *Tamburlaine* in *From Mankinde to Marlowe*.

when, quite uncharacteristically, Tamburlaine refrains from wrangling over the defeated Soldan's attribution of Tamburlaine's victory to "God and Mahomet" (5.2. 415). As Temur's Islamism becomes visible in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, his shaping by ideology becomes more apparent: when he is Europe's protector, Tamburlaine is distanced from Islam. When Europe is secure, Tamburlaine's brutality and Islamism emerge together as if congenitally linked. The play's pattern of conditional representation thus reproduces the conditional activation and suspension of Turkish religious difference apparent in Elizabethan-Ottoman affairs.

IV. The Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine, Part Two*

The relationship between the first play and its sequel has been subject to a great deal of debate. Yet the question has never been approached from the crux of the central character's religious identity. When we begin from the fact that Tamburlaine enters the second play a Muslim, we immediately recognize an important complication. Critics who would see Tamburlaine's Islamic references as a marker of providential deterioration following his defeat of Christendom's traditional enemies fail to account adequately for Tamburlaine's continuing appeal and rely upon what may be a too literal interpretation of the play's prologue. The prologue to the second play has often been cited as an indication of the unity of the two. Its first three lines are not, however, as unambiguous as they may seem in explaining Marlowe's motives for writing a sequel. We are told that "The general welcomes Tamburlaine received,/ When he arrived last upon our stage,/ Hath made our poet pen his second part" (Prologue 1-3). These lines have generally been understood to signify Marlowe's concession to the demands of audiences eager for more *Tamburlaine*.³⁹ Yet the concept of a

deliberate crowd-pleaser fits oddly with Marlowe's reputation for iconoclasm and variety. Furthermore, if Marlowe was simply giving the people what they wanted, why is the Tamburlaine of *Part Two* so unlike that of *Part One* as to be found by Una Ellis-Fermor "sunk down to an oriental despot, savage, extravagant, half insane; a type of which history furnishes enough records" (Ribner 147)? One possibility is that Marlowe saw the sequel as an opportunity to comment on "the general welcomes Tamburlaine received." This possibility may help in formulating a response to both Ellis-Fermor and the series of critics who opposed her.

Records of repeated performances found in Henslowe's *Diary*, as well as a host of contemporary allusions, attest to the popularity of the Tamburlaine plays. What they do not indicate is precisely *why* Tamburlaine was so popular or how Marlowe might have responded to that popularity. Richard Levin's survey of contemporary responses to Tamburlaine documents a particular cultural fascination with Tamburlaine's titanic might and Bajazeth's oppressive captivity.⁴⁰ Additional indications of what made Tamburlaine so popular are found in the numerous plays which imitated Marlowe's. In *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1588) and *Selimus* (ca. 1591-4), for example, Muslim characters tend to be two-dimensional caricatures, treacherous and lascivious, and bombastically pronouncing their violent ambitions. This tendency is particularly evident in *Selimus'* three Turkish brothers who embody the principal types of danger about which travelers to Muslim lands were always forewarned: religious, sensual, and

³⁹This interpretation is treated as a premise by Duthie and Leech.

⁴⁰Levin argues that contemporary commentary and allusions provide no sense that the life of Tamburlaine was seen as an admonitory lesson or that the audience understood Tamburlaine as an evil temporarily licensed and justly punished. Indeed, several commentators complained at the play's failure to lead its audience to a condemnation of its protagonist.

martial. Plays like this suggest that Elizabethan audiences enjoyed the demonization of Islam in much the same way that twentieth-century American culture has thrived on cartoonish distortions of communism and the continued misrepresentation of Islam.

Ian Gaskell claims that the problems Marlowe faced in writing a sequel included “the problem of maintaining and even surpassing the aesthetic impact of the first play” and the fact that he really had “nothing else to write about” (178, 9). Another possibility is that Marlowe was seeking neither to maintain nor to add, but rather to amend. Upon turning over his play to a company of actors, a playwright, more than almost any artist, relinquishes control over the way in which his art signifies. A sequel, however, offers an opportunity to reclaim -- albeit momentarily -- one’s creation from popular and theatrical interpretation. That Marlowe may have considered this incentive is suggested by the considerable differences between the two parts of *Tamburlaine*, and especially the second play’s efforts to scrutinize the stereotypes and disable the rhetoric of legitimation often allowed by the first. Over the course of the play Marlowe undoes the muting of religious difference that allows for Tamburlaine’s Euro-Christian absorption in *Part One*. Then, having allowed his protagonist religious difference, he refuses to allow him easy categorization in a self-Other paradigm. The result is not only a worthy sequel, but a work of art more ideologically complex and mature than its predecessor.

Roy Battenhouse was among the first critics to restore credit to the often maligned *Part Two*, regarding it as the second half of a single ten-act tragedy. He was later joined by Helen Gardner, G.I. Duthie, and Harry Levin, each of whom saw the “deterioration” of the protagonist as part of a larger tragic conception examining the force and limits of the human will. In rightfully defending the merits of *Part Two*, this group of critics goes too far in controverting Ellis-

Fermor's assessment. At the same time, Ellis-Fermor herself fails to explore the significance of the type she identifies; for in Marlowe's day the exemplar of the oriental despot was, more often than not, a Muslim. And whereas *Part One* only briefly confronts the audience with its conditional embrace of a Muslim conqueror, the second play sets up that embrace as a premise before proceeding to anatomize it.

The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great begins with a conflict that seems to replicate the early dynamic of *Part One*. Tamburlaine is again off-stage, and Europe is again threatened with Turkish conquest and the prospect of "Turkey blades . . . glid[ing] through all their throats" (1.1.33). Envisioning his victory over his Christian enemies, the Natolian king, Orcanes, imagines the Danube and Aegean glutted with the bodies of fallen European soldiers:

Danubius' stream that runs to Trebizon,
 Shall carry wrapped within his scarlet waves,
 As martial presents to our friends at home
 The slaughtered bodies of these Christians.
 The Terrene main wherein Danubius falls
 Shall by this battle be the bloody sea.
 The wandering sailors of proud Italy,
 Shall meet those Christians fleeing with the tide,
 Beating in heaps against their argosies,
 And make fair Europe mounted on her bull,
 Trapped with the wealth and riches of the world,
 Alight and wear a woeful mourning weed. (1.1.35-41)

As Ethel Seaton has explained, "Marlowe sees the waters of the Danube sweeping from the rivermouths in two strong currents . . . the one to bring proof of victory to the great Turkish town, the other to strike terror to the Italian

merchants cruising round the Isles of Greece" (Ribner 184). The consequences of that terror are indicated in Orcanes' Ovidian reference. Europe, it is suggested, crosses the seas laden with "the wealth and riches of the world." Yet the Turkish threat is greater than a simple interruption of European trafficking. The very freedom of Christians is ventured as a stake in the conflict when the imprisoned heir to the Turkish Empire, bribes his jailer with promises, sworn "by the hand of Mahomet" (1.3.65), of a "thousand galleys manned with Christian slaves" (1.3.33). As in the first play, Tamburlaine appears to protect Europe and her mercantile interests from Ottoman rape. He plans to assault the central Turkish realm of Natolia, "and for that cause," Orcanes decides, "the Christians shall have peace" (1.1.57). Before he even makes his first entrance, Tamburlaine thus defends Europe and indirectly motivates the treaty with which I began. This, however, is where the similarities between the two plays end.

If Tamburlaine's religious difference is generally missing from the first play, it is foregrounded in the second. Though he vows, in his first appearance, to defeat the Turks, he now swears "by sacred Mahomet" -- a gesture of religious identification entirely absent from the first play. Furthermore, Tamburlaine is now a father of three sons whose contrasting violence and voluptuousness recall standard anti-Turkish stereotypes, while Tamburlaine's gentlemanly seduction of Zenocrate resisted such stereotyping in the first play. When his generals report their conquests, we learn that Tamburlaine's armies are no longer concerned with protecting Christian European interests. Instead, they actually seem to place Europe and her traffic in jeopardy. Usumcasane has seized control of two of Europe's most important mercantile footholds, the Straits of Gibraltar and the Canary Islands. Techelles has forcefully taken the triple mitre of "the mighty Christian priest, / Call'd John the Great" (1.4.60-1), thus squelching Europe's myth-bred hopes of joining Prester John's armies in a two-sided assault

on Islam. Finally, Theridimas has actually “left the confines and bounds of Afric / And made a voyage into Europe” (1.4.80-1) where he has subdued and fired several Black Sea communities. Although Seaton attributes Theridimas’ departure from the African continent to Marlowe’s desire to add variety to his play (Ribner 180), it seems more likely that Marlowe sought to disallow the kind of European identification with Tamburlaine found in many of Marlowe’s sources and correspondingly encouraged by the first play. At the same time, Marlowe does not allow a simple demonization of Tamburlaine. Tamburlaine retains the power of stirring language and continues to captivate even as he repels the audience. His passionate lamentation over Zenocrate’s death acts as his disquisition on beauty does in the first play. In each case, Tamburlaine’s remarkable poetry forestalls the impulse to condemn his offenses.

Unlike the first play, which figured Tamburlaine as the protector of Europe, the second admits European characters to represent their own interests. These characters would seem to suggest a reason for Marlowe’s religious distancing of Tamburlaine. If, as Battenhouse argues, Tamburlaine’s “usefulness as Scourge may...be regarded as at an end” following the destruction of Babylon (Ribner 196), the European army imported across time and into Tamburlaine’s “history” seems apt to bring the scourge to his end. But this is not the case. Instead, the Europeans behave despicably and are routed from the play long before the conquest of Babylon. On the grounds that an oath made “with such infidels, / In whom no faith nor true religion rests” (2.1.33-4) may be dispensed, the Christian leaders grossly betray their newly made allegiance. Although Sigismund is at first hesitant to break an oath made in Christ’s name, he is quickly persuaded not only that “’tis superstition / To stand so strictly on dispensive faith” but that they are obliged to take advantage of an “opportunity / that God hath given to venge our Christians’ death / And to

scourge their foul blasphemous paganism" 2.1. 49-50, 51-3). Faced with such specious reasoning, the audience is likely to join Orcanes as he takes up the role of God's scourge licensed to denounce and punish his sinful foes as "[t]raitors, villains, [and] damned Christians . . . [that] care so little for their prophet Christ" (2.2.29, 35).

The pious Muslim king who sets up the battle as a test of Christ's power is strangely sympathetic. Orcanes recognizes that these Christians, who "in their deeds deny him for their Christ," should rightly be punished for their perjury. He challenges Christ to prove "a perfect God/Worthy the worship of all faithful hearts,/[And] be revenged upon" (2.2.56-8) his wayward followers. He even encourages his army of Muslim men to call on Christ, reasoning that "[i]f there be Christ, we shall have victory" (2.2.63-4). The ensuing Turkish victory against all odds seems to confirm the truth of Christianity. Yet Orcanes is uncertain, determining only that "Christ or Mahomet hath been my friend" (2.3.11). He will go no further than resolving that "in my thoughts shall Christ be honoured,/Not doing Mahomet an injury,/Whose power had share in this our victory" (2.3.33-5). It is possible that Marlowe had in mind the fact that Islam reveres Jesus as a prophet, but what seems more to the point is that the contest determines nothing about the ultimate authority of either Islam or Christianity. Orcanes' piety is contrasted to and undermined by Gazellus' refusal to admit any force greater than "the fortune of the wars . . . Whose power is often proved a miracle" (31-2). Men, it is suggested, may attribute the events of their lives to the forces of one or another deity, but their suspicions will remain as unconfirmed as their often violent assignments of difference are arbitrary and unsanctioned.

Interestingly, it is at this point that Europe exits from the play. No European characters appear from this point on, nor are the stakes of the ensuing conflicts repeatedly figured, like those of *Part One*, as potentially troublesome to

European mercantile interests. Without obvious European interests at stake, the audience is asked to choose between Tamburlaine and the Turks, recognizing that either choice marks a compromise. It is as if Marlowe, having suggested the constructed, human foundations of religious difference, challenges his audience to approach the play's conflicts without recourse to simple partitioning or the notion of an Islamic conqueror as a divine scourge.

On one side is the Islamic Tamburlaine; on the other, the Turkish forces reunited under Callapine at the opening of Act 3. If, in their conflict with the Hungarians, the Turks seemed more Christian than the Christians, they are now reintroduced under the banner of Islam. In oaths, threats, and their very organization, Marlowe produces an unmistakably Islamic Turkish force. The admirable Orcanes arranges the troops in "the figure of the semi-circled moon," imagining the horns of the Islamic crescent goading the power of Tamburlaine. He and his comrades recognize Callapine as "successive heir to the late mighty emperor Bajazeth, *by the aid of God and his friend Mahomet*" (3.1.1-3, emphasis mine). Though they occasionally refer to God as Jove, they imagine Jove accompanied by Muhammad (3.5.56).⁴¹ Callapine swears "by Mahomet" to transform the battlefield into "the Persians' sepulchre, and sacrifice / Mountains of breathless men to Mahomet" (3.5.54-5), and later, quite stereotypically, promises to render Tamburlaine a slave, "tied in chains / Rowing with Christians in a brigandine" (92-3).

In the first play, Tamburlaine's responses to Turkish threats tend to distinguish him from Islam. In the second it is more difficult to demarcate the two until, finally, Tamburlaine and those about him appear to out-"Turk" the Turks. Before Tamburlaine and Callapine have a chance to meet in arms,

⁴¹The OED records no English usage of the word "Allah" before 1702.

however, their subordinates engage in a telling conflict at Balsera, the Turks' "chiefest hold,/ Wherein is all the treasure of the land" (3.3.4). Here Theridimas and Techelles lead a force of "barbarous Scythians full of cruelty,/ And Moors, in whom was never pity found" (3.4.19-20). The resisting force is led by a valiant Captain whose wife, Olympia, proves no less admirable. Both identify themselves as Muslim, the Captain through his reference to "holy Mahomet" (3.3.36) and his wife in a plea to "sacred Mahomet" (3.4.31). Thus we are presented with a conflict of the cruel and the Muslim from which the Muslim emerges as the praiseworthy object of sympathy as the Captain and his forces are slaughtered. While Turkish histories often figured filicide as a characteristic of Turkish cruelty (as in Suleiman's notorious murder of his son Mustapha), Marlowe proffers a sympathetic counter-example in Olympia's desire to spare her son from Scythian cruelties. Olympia's desperate act both prefigures and serves as foil to Tamburlaine's cruel murder of his eldest son, Calyphas. Though in both cases the murdering parent turns to God and Muhammad for approval or absolution, neither is answered and the two are significantly distinguished by the reactions of their witnesses. Techelles leads the audience in recognizing that Olympia's act was "bravely done" (3.5.38). Responses to Tamburlaine's public execution of Calyphas are another matter entirely.

Tamburlaine's sons represent the extremes of Europe's anti-Turkish stereotypes. Two are bloodthirsty warriors, prepared to swim seas of blood, the third a dissolute sybarite who will not "care for blood when wine will quench [his] thirst" (4.1.30). Unlike his father and brothers, Calyphas has no taste for war. When they go to battle he remains behind, fantasizing about "a naked lady in a net of gold" (4.1.66-7) and wagering over "who shall kiss the fairest of the Turks' concubines first" (62). Upon finding Calyphas absent from the ranks of his victorious troops, Tamburlaine deems him a "coward," "villain," and "traitor

to my name and majesty" (4.1. 87-8). Swearing "by Mahomet, thy mighty friend" (119), he goes on to slaughter his son despite the pleas of his generals and younger sons.⁴² Afterwards, Tamburlaine's Turkish prisoners are the first to respond with horror. The Turks are shocked and appalled, suggesting that Tamburlaine's cruelties exceed any enacted by the Turks. The King of Jerusalem finds Tamburlaine a "damned monster, nay a fiend of hell" (4.1.166), and Orcanes plainly indicates that Tamburlaine "showest the difference 'twixt ourselves and thee / In this thy barbarous damned tyranny" (4.1.136-7). The Natolian king's designation of difference places the audience in a peculiar position in relation to the figures on stage. On the one hand, they may continue to side with Tamburlaine against the Turks. If, on the other hand, they find themselves unable to endorse Tamburlaine's brutality, they are in sympathy with the Turks, whose misfortunes they are accustomed to celebrating. In this case, the audience is asked to share a sense of difference with the Turk and recognize Tamburlaine's previously muted difference. In short, the first play's divisive rhetoric of legitimation is entirely absent in the second, leaving characters to act as individuals rather than types.

The Tamburlaine of *Part Two*, like the character of *Part One*, is never without response to those who condemn him, but the difference lies in his credibility. Tamburlaine's answer for Orcanes is one the audience has grown accustomed to at this point, having heard some version of it four times already. He insists that "these terrors and these tyrannies . . . I execute, enjoyn'd me from above, / To scourge the pride of such as Heaven abhors" (4.1.146-7). But Tamburlaine's repeated recital of this explanation throughout *Part Two* begins to ring of pretext, as if he is trying to convince his auditors of his divine sanctioning

⁴²For a psychoanalytic interpretation, see Kuriyama 29.

at every opportunity. Indeed, what Emily Bartels calls “the situational nature of Tamburlaine’s identities” (*Spectacles* 65) means that he will be scourge to “what god soever” (2.4.109) serves the moment. Orcanes seems to recognize his foe’s rhetoric of legitimation when he refers to Tamburlaine not as the scourge of Jove, but rather as “he that *calls himself* the scourge of Jove” (3.5.21, emphasis mine). Tamburlaine’s use of religion is not out of keeping with his historical original, who was, “[i]n religion as in other aspects of his life. . . above all an opportunist; his religion served frequently to further his aims, but almost never to circumscribe his actions” (Manz 17). Yet Marlowe’s aim was never historical accuracy. The effect of his repetition is to foreground Tamburlaine’s manipulation of a rhetoric of legitimacy. Tamburlaine practically admits as much himself when he claims that “since I exercise a greater name, / The scourge of God and terror of the world, / I must apply myself to fit those terms” (4.1.151-3).⁴³

As the play progresses Tamburlaine will describe himself as a divine scourge five more times before his death. Like a salesman desperately pitching defective merchandise, he becomes less convincing with each unsubstantiated assertion. Indeed, his loss of credibility is marked by the inclusion of several

⁴³Bartels notes that “these claims to divine sanction further undermine the situational nature of Tamburlaine’s identities, for like his awesome civility and awful barbarity, his relation to otherworldly influences, which support these postures, shifts also as occasion warrants. Sometimes he is endorsed by the “stars,” sometimes by the fates, sometimes by Jove, sometimes by a Christian God -- and sometimes he puts his power above and beyond all these, depending on who is watching and why” (*Spectacles* 65) Bartels’ argument that this makes Tamburlaine an imperialist, “strategically constructing a self of remarkable ignominy or nobility from his spectators’ expectations, showing us that civility and barbarity are only skin deep” seems to me harmful to her position that Tamburlaine provides a model for English imperialism. In the sequel, the actions of Tamburlaine and his henchmen are repeatedly figured as monstrous and nothing worthy of emulation.

scenes that seem to rewrite similar ones from the first play as failures.⁴⁴ In numerous instances, Tamburlaine and his minions are portrayed as having the power only to destroy, and sympathy is regularly elicited for Muslim characters. Tamburlaine's alliance with Theridimas and conciliation of the Soldan are rewritten as Almeda's betrayal and Callapine's unflagging opposition. His seduction of Zenocrate is likewise rewritten as Theridimas' failed seduction of Olympia. Unlike the seduction of Zenocrate, so carefully distinguished from coercion, the case of Olympia is unmistakably placed under the sign of violence. When grieving Olympia will admit no discourse of love, Theridimas warns "I'll use some other means to make you yield,/ Such is the sudden fury of my love,/ I must and will be pleased, and you shall yield" (IV. ii. 50-3). Theridimas' rape of Olympia is precluded only by her tragic self-sacrifice. When the play does allow rape to occur, it is in another scene that re-writes a moment of the first play; the scene shows that the force of the "divine scourge," the hero of European Christendom, is more corrupt than anything even imagined by the play's Turkish characters.

Following the Turkish defeat, Tamburlaine orders that the Turks' "concubines" be brought to his tent where he plans to "dispose them as it likes me best" (4.1.164). It is a commonplace of Renaissance works on the Turks that women were forbidden from accompanying Turkish armies, and no precedent for this episode exists in the various histories of Temur available to Marlowe.⁴⁵

⁴⁴A similar argument has been made by Clifford Leech who suggests that the general effect of the parallelisms "is to make Tamburlaine's stature shrink even as he tries to regain it" (275). Leech's argument, however, is concerned with defending the merits of Part Two as a successful *de casibus* narrative, illustrating the decline of a princely hero. It neglects to consider how the religious identity of Marlowe's protagonist also shapes the narrative.

Why then, does Marlowe include this scene? Who are these women? When the captive Turkish women implore Tamburlaine, "O pity us" (4.3.83) they precisely echo the unavailing suit of the virgins of Damascus in *Part One*. The effect of the virgins' slaughter is tempered in *Part One* by Tamburlaine's disquisition on beauty that immediately follows. *Part Two*, in contrast, highlights Tamburlaine's brutality by questioning the status of these women he deems "harlots" and "trulls," and whom he turns over to his soldiers to "serve all [their] turns" (IV. iii. 73). He puns that these queens are merely "such queens as were kings' concubines" (71), but Orcanes insists that they are "guiltless dames," worthy of the respect enjoyed by Zenocrate, not "the violence of thy common soldiers' lust" (4.3.79-80). When the women plead Tamburlaine to "save our honours" (4.3.83), they too insist that they are not the whores Tamburlaine names them. Yet he is equally insistent upon believing them "trulls" whose honor was "lost long before [they] knew what honour meant" (87). The confounded King of Jerusalem wonders at Tamburlaine's "merciless infernal cruelty!" (4.3.85), indicating again that Tamburlaine's cruelties exceed anything that the Turks -- famous in European histories for their merciless, sadistic rapes at the siege of Famagusta -- might devise.

Emily Bartels has pointed out that Tamburlaine is repeatedly identified in the second play as the King of Persia, despite the fact that his Persian conquest was only the first of many. One important effect of this identification is a disabling of Europe's simplistic identification of Shi'a and Sunni as Good and Bad Muslims (left intact in the first play) -- an understanding that often went so

far as to transmute the Shi'a into opponents of Islam.⁴⁶ At the siege of Babylon Tamburlaine indiscriminately doles out further atrocities and continues to identify himself with Persia. One Babylonian citizen is hopeful that "Tamburlaine may pity our distress" since the city's inhabitants include Christians "Whose state he ever pitied and relieved" (5.1.32). The Babylonian citizen and his Christian neighbors unfortunately find themselves in the wrong play. Tamburlaine calls for the death of every inhabitant of the city. He has the governor of the city hung in chains, drowns all its citizens, and, in what is perhaps the most hotly debated moment of the play, orders the Qur'an burned, challenging the wrath of the prophet:

In vain, I see, men worship Mahomet.
 My sword hath sent millions of Turks to hell,
 Slew all his priests, his kinsmen, and his friends,
 And yet I live untouch'd by Mahomet,
 There is a God, full of revenging wrath,
 From whom the thunder and the lightning breaks,
 Whose scourge I am, and him will I obey.
 Now Mahomet, if thou have any power,
 Come down thyself and work a miracle. (5.1.177-85)

Tamburlaine's command is regularly analyzed in conjunction with what occurs sixteen lines later, when he remarks that he feels himself "distempered suddenly" (216). The cause of Tamburlaine's sudden illness has been the subject

⁴⁵One of the most common sources of knowledge about the Turkish army was Giovanni Botero's *The traveler's breviat*. In a frequently paraphrased passage on the awesome discipline of Turkish armies Botero points out, "You shall never see a woman in their armies" (48). See also Setton 46.

⁴⁶See, for example Giovo I2.

of great debate.⁴⁷ Its proximity to his act of blasphemy invites the possibility of divine punishment. Tamburlaine's doctor suggests a more mundane, humoral explanation, one predicted earlier in the play by the King of Soria. No explanation seems certain given the lapse of time between Tamburlaine's blasphemy and his illness. Given the uncertainty in which this episode is wrapped, Stephen Greenblatt proposes that "The effect is not to celebrate the transcendent power of Mohammed but to challenge the habit of mind that looks to heaven for rewards and punishments, that imagines evil as 'the scourge of God'" (*Renaissance* 202). But what happens if we consider Tamburlaine's command in conjunction with what occurs just before it, only two lines previously? Although the "revenging wrath" and thunder-hurling of Tamburlaine's God differentiate him from Christian notions of a merciful supreme being, Tamburlaine's burning of the Qur'an is, as Greenblatt puts it, an "action which the Elizabethan churchmen themselves might have applauded" (*Renaissance* 202). Yet Tamburlaine is made to perform this, his most anti-Islamic act, when he is at the height of his repellent viciousness: he has just issued the order to "drown them all, man, woman, and child" (5.1.168). The effect is to equate virulent anti-Islamicism with the sort of cruelty and violence early modern Europeans associated with Islam. Tamburlaine thus continues to elude

⁴⁷Before weighing in on the question, Ian Gaskell provides a useful survey of the range of positions on the cause of Tamburlaine's sudden illness. Gaskell argues that "any existence of a divine cause must acknowledge the existence and power of Mahomet. However, Mahomet's status has been carefully linked in opposition to the one true Christian God. If the audience sees Tamburlaine's seizure as divine retribution then not only must they now imaginatively accept the power of the god whose holy writ has been enthusiastically burned . . . they must also logically deny the power of the God Tamburlaine asserts in his stead. Marlowe imposes several choices on his audience. They can undergo an imaginative but nevertheless unthinkable conversion to Mohammedanism; they can, like Orcanes, hover in doubt; or, like Gazellus they can reject divine interference entirely" (185-6).

the grasp of both simplistic stereotyping and rhetorics of legitimation, typifying the aspiring mind of European selfhood even while he seems so threateningly Other. For the audience of the second play it is impossible to assimilate Tamburlaine, impossible to fully distance Tamburlaine by attributing his actions to Islam, and impossible to see Christianity as an exemplary negation of Islam.

The play's refusal to accept the lines of division generally perpetuated by its predecessor remains subtly in place through the death of Tamburlaine. The Turks are once more figured as unmistakably Muslim. As their foe sickens, they continue to rebuild their forces under Callapine who trusts in victory "if God or Mahomet send any aid" (5.2.11). The young Sultan implores "sacred Mahomet" to be revenged on Tamburlaine and is encouraged by the King of Amasia, who sees "great Mahomet/ Clothed in purple clouds, and on his head/ A chaplet brighter than Apollo's crown,/ Marching about the air with armed men, / To join with you against this Tamburlaine" (5.2.31-5).⁴⁸ On the face of it, the Christian audience seems to be faced with its enemy. On the other hand, Tamburlaine confronts death lamenting his failure to achieve universal monarchy as he pores over a map. Unlike *Part One*, *Part Two* shows Tamburlaine envisioning the world in terms of mercantile commodities, lamenting his failure to seize "all the golden mines, / Inestimable drugs and precious stones" (5.3.151-2) and to "cut a channel" (5.3.135) connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas. Both Bartels and Greenblatt understand Tamburlaine's interest in trade as reflective of English mercantile affairs. Greenblatt sees a reflection of the "acquisitive energies of English merchants, entrepreneurs and adventurers" while a slightly more

⁴⁸As the play's earlier divine attributions are questioned by a skeptic's secular explanation, so too these reverent visions are tempered by the claims of an unnamed Turkish captain who identifies the army's strength in men, insuring a victory "Though God himself and holy Mahomet/ Should come in person to resist your power" (5.2.37-8)

cautious Bartels sees a “model” to teach “supremacy” to the English. In fact, the plans Tamburlaine discusses *are* reflections, but not of the English. Turkish plans for a Suez Canal had been discussed since the days of Suleiman. Such a canal would permit voyages to the Indies in half the time of any of the current European sea routes. In effect, the Turks hoped thereby to dominate trade to India by both land and sea. By assigning this aspiration to Tamburlaine, Marlowe completes his undoing of *Part One*. Notwithstanding his opposition to Turkish Islam, the protector of European trade becomes Europe’s greatest threat.

That Marlowe’s work drew many imitators has been shown before.⁴⁹ An outpouring of plays set in Islamic lands and featuring Islamic characters followed *Tamburlaine*. That Marlowe’s iconoclastic approach to Islam drew others is more difficult to prove. Yet Marlowe is not alone in illustrating the conditional estimation of Islamic figures. There is still a great deal to be said on this subject. For the time being, however, I will merely indicate the influence of Marlowe’s work by looking briefly at how George Peele’s *The Battle of Alcazar* (1589) likewise presents a provocative intertwining of religious difference and national politics. In this play we see how the double vision of Islam is activated by a concern with threats of Catholic invasion. The play treats a battle for the crown of Barbary which, a decade earlier, resulted in the death of the intervening Prince Sebastian of Portugal. The death of the heir to the Portuguese throne precipitated a succession crisis ultimately resolved in Philip II’s union of Spain and Portugal, an event considered by Elizabethan commentators to be a portentous and warlike thrust. Furthermore, the numerous casualties of the “Battle of the Three Kings,” as it was known, included Captain Thomas Stukely,

⁴⁹For a fine survey of this movement see Chew, Chapter 11, “Moslems on the London Stage” 469-540.

the English Catholic adventurer who had plans to invade Ireland with an Italian force supported by the Pope.

Peele's play re-presents these circumstances to mediate concurrent English anxieties over growing mercantile relations with the Islamic East and creedal distance from Catholic Europe. In short, Sebastian is presented as good-hearted but naive as he foolishly aligns himself with the wicked Muly Hamet and is encouraged by a calculating Philip to believe in his ability to "plant religious truth in Africa" (3.1.767). Yet the power and tenacity of Islam is far greater than Sebastian imagines. At the same time, the surprising nobility of Abdelmelec disables sweeping anti-Islamic stereotypes and suggests that an allegiance with carefully chosen Muslims may be justifiable. Above all, it is made clear that opposing the Turks, as Catholic Europe continually badgered Elizabeth to do, was foolish. This is no call for imperialist expansion, but rather a warning against believing European Christendom stronger than the cultures of the East. Stukely, the English traitor who does oppose the Turks, dies at the hands of his Catholic compatriots, forced to recognize, like a good Calvinist, that "from our cradles we were marked all/ And destinate to dye" 5.1. 133-4).

V. Unsettling Orientalism

As we enter the twenty-first century and the works of Marlowe and Peele move into their fifth century, Western representations of Islam continue to thrive on the sort of demonization that these plays complicate and disable. As Elizabethan England did four-hundred years earlier, late-twentieth-century America quietly sells arms to Islamic countries and, at the same time, lustily denounces Islamic violence. This was precisely the scenario enabling the United States' ongoing "war" against Iraq. By recognizing the potential of Elizabethan playwrights and playgoers to question or even oppose anti-Islamic stereotypes in

their culture, we are forced to recognize the continuing relevance of Elizabethan drama for our own. Rather than reading the prejudice of plays like Marlowe's in self-affirming tones of contempt, we may begin to recognize ways in which such contempt is anticipated by early modern interrogations of the very stereotypes that continue to poison our struggles with religious difference today. Such a recognition can occur only when we approach the literary archive with both the interpretive models of contemporary theory and a critical practice that regularly tests those models against specific historical circumstances.*

The value of Said's *Orientalism* has been its indication of the complex distortions of American and European discourses of the East that textually restructure foreign cultures and traditions in the interest of establishing and maintaining Western superiority. The danger of Said's work is its availability as a matrix to be applied to any East/West encounter. As I have attempted to illustrate, the conditions for Orientalism did not exist in the England of the sixteenth century. Orientalism sprang from a specific conjunction of socio-economic and political circumstances that had not yet occurred in the early modern period. The ahistorical application of Said's or other post-colonial theories to this period has the potential to produce distorting, reductive arguments. Marlowe's plays are not examples of early Orientalism. Rather, they are illustrations of a separate, but equally complex and unsettling, European relationship with Islam.

Chapter 2

Exemplary Muslims: Lord Mayor's Day and the Closet Drama

I. Expectations

In the previous chapter, I began to document Tudor England's complex relationship with Islam as witnessed by the appearance of Turkish subjects on the theater stage. The chapter which follows is intended to point toward a larger taxonomy of early modern English plays concerned with Islam and the East. This chapter examines two very different forms -- the mayoralty pageant and the closet drama -- as a means of both measuring the genre's scope and further apprehending its contextual vicissitudes. I have chosen the Lord Mayor's Day Pageants because they are early modern England's most public form of drama; and I have chosen closet drama because it is, perhaps, its most private. The infusion of each with "Turkish" materials indicates an interest that transcended the boundaries of class and literacy; for though the closet drama was little known beyond a limited circle of readers with access to circulated manuscripts, pageant dramas paraded through the city before throngs of Londoners of every conceivable background.

In acquainting myself with these two rarely studied forms of early modern drama, I was most struck with the appearance of Eastern and Islamic figures that -- far from being demonized as I expected -- induced admiration and empathy. I was forced to abandon what I recognized as simplistic expectations of derisive prejudices. This is not to say that closet and pageant dramas are void of such sentiments. Rather, I discovered that prejudices could be subjugated to other needs. I learned that occasions arise when prejudices interfere with the desires of even their most fervent supporters.

Thomas Middleton's pageants and Fulke Greville's closet drama *Mustapha* constitute the subject of the following discussion. In both cases, we find authors venerating Eastern and Islamic figures they would elsewhere condemn. Middleton, for example, populates his tedious account of Sir Robert Sherley's travels to the East with "the common enemy," the Turks, also rendered "the hell hound brood of Mahomet" (Middleton VII: viii, 87f). In his Lord Mayor's Day Pageants, however, the East is a place of beneficent and noble peoples eager to embrace Christianity. Greville's work betrays similar contradictions. In the *Life of Sir Philip Sidney*, he describes Murad III "asleep in his Seraglia; as having turned the ambition of that growing monarchy into idle lust; corrupted his martiall discipline; prophaned his Alcoran in making war against his own Church, and not in person, but by his Bashas; consequently by all appearance, declining into his people by such but more precipitate degrees, as his active ancestors had climbed above them" (Grossart 86). In the play *Mustapha*, however, Greville imagines an Ottoman prince who fits the description he gives elsewhere of "God's own elect/Who liv[e] in the world, yet of it are not" (Bullough I, 276).

How did such contradictions come to inhabit the works of these authors? What forces motivated their construction? In pursuit of answers to these questions, I will try to elucidate the ways in which religious difference is inextricably linked with various other discourses of difference, producing a surprising range of Islamic figures in the drama.

I. From Mankinde to Lord Mayor's Day (via Constantinople)

In what remains the standard work on English civic pageantry, David Bergeron argues that "Late Tudor and early Stuart street pageants are almost barren of any patently religious theme or setting" (*English* 7). The first speaker of

the first elaborately developed civic pageant suggests otherwise. George Peele's *Device of the Pageant Borne Before Wolston Dixie, Lord Mayor* (1585) is memorable for several reasons. As Bergeron notes, it is best known as the first occasion upon which a narrative structure was imposed on the civic pageant. Yet it is also remarkable in that the first speaker is "apparelled like a Moor" (Peele 351). As the Lord Mayor's Day pageants grew more elaborate over the next four decades, Moors and Indians became stock characters in the unfolding drama. As non-Christians or recently converted Christians, their religious difference was fundamental to the political designs of the guild sponsored pageants.

Bergeron's claim that Elizabethan mayoralty pageants began "to shake off [their] initial religious content" is characteristic of the tendency in recent criticism to disconnect race and religion. It implies that skin color did not "patently" mark religious difference, and that Judeo-Christian material alone merits the descriptor "religious." Yet the speeches of the Moors and Indians of Lord Mayor's Day indicate that dark-skinned characters immediately aroused religious interest and/or anxiety. Eldred Jones has pointed out that Africans moved from being "merely decorative" figures to playing a significant part in the pageant drama (28). Yet Jones leaves unclear the dynamics of and motives for this evolution. By indicating the dual inheritance of the pageant tradition -- from late medieval religious drama and early modern travelers' narratives -- I will attempt to account for the movement Jones describes and illustrate how racial otherness has a specifically religious valence in the Lord Mayor's Day pageants of Thomas Middleton, one of the principal creators of the pageants in the first two decades of the seventeenth century.

The Lord Mayor's Day pageants of Elizabethan and Jacobean England were held each October 30th to mark the installation of London's new chief executive. Under Elizabeth they were typically simple processions, often focused

as much on the unifying character of the Queen as on the installation of the Mayor. The early Stuarts were no less concerned with the public manipulation of image Stephen Greenblatt calls *privileged visibility*, but typically found means requiring fewer personal appearances. James and Anne preferred court masques to public processions and the number of royal entries during their reign decreased significantly. At the same time, the Midsummer Marching Watch, the great civic pageant Stow recalls from his childhood, had also waned. London's appetite for spectacle was thus turned upon the Lord Mayor's Shows which, freed from crown interests, became elaborate celebrations and expressions of the economic, political and religious concerns of the particular year's sponsoring guild.

My examination will focus on the ways in which medieval religious drama informed and was mediated by the emerging pageant tradition. Thus I will be expanding David Bevington's argument in *From Mankinde to Marlowe* that traces the marks of the late, or hybrid, morality play on the structure of late Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. David Bergeron has similarly pointed out that the pageants recall medieval religious drama in their prevalent use of allegory and guild involvement. This chapter will attempt to complicate the patrilineal line of descent suggested by such works. I will examine the ways in which travelers' narratives stand between late medieval religious drama and early modern pageant drama, *re-orienting* Islam and the Vice tradition to create an image of the East troublesome for and thus demanding redress from mercantile-minded guilds.

In periods of limited contact between English and Muslim peoples, Islam could be easily flattened into unqualified heresy. Throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when relatively few commercial links remained from the days of the crusades, there were scant opportunities for English men and

women to learn about Islam. Nevertheless, the followers of “Mahound” appeared on English stages well before the establishment of the first permanent theaters on the northern edge of London in the 1570s. Medieval religious drama made substantial, if curious, use of the “infidel’s” faith:

[T]he employment of Mahomet's name to represent...everything inimical to Christ's religion was not infrequent. This device, used without the slightest regard for logic or historical accuracy, frequently brings the most incongruous figures to a professed reverence for the faith of Islam. A blind desire to connect such persons as Herod and Pilate with everything hateful and unchristian excuses, for example, the attachment of these characters to the Prophet.
(Rice 272)¹

The authors of the mystery plays were apparently untroubled by anachronism. While Old Testament figures invoked the name of Christ in their oaths, New Testament figures often swore by Muhammad, who was born some three centuries after the New Testament was composed. Thus, in the Towneley, York and Coventry cycles, Pilate, Herod, and Christ's torturers are all heard swearing violent oaths by “Mahowne” or “Mahound.” In the Towneley play *The Conspiracy*, Pilate even claims descent from the prophet, a relation stressed by his recurring oaths “by mahown's bloode.” As Robert Weimann explains, Herod and Pilate, were, like Noah's wife and Mak the Shepherd, created with a naturalistic mimesis lacking in most of the two-dimensional characters with whom they shared the stage. Thus “such figures were capable of fully exploiting the dramatic potential of anachronism because they established a broad range of

¹For a brief survey of the references to Islam in medieval religious drama, see Rice pp. 269-82.

links with, and realized the most affective tensions between, the world and time of biblical myth and the world of and time of contemporary England” (Weimann 65).

One might expect to find references to Islam and/or Muhammad in the encounters of the Christian protagonist with personified sins in medieval morality plays. Surprisingly, this is not the case. However, the structural features of the moralities make them no less influential in the early modern European framing of Islam. Like a traveler's narrative, the morality play is customarily structured as a journey. In the course of his journey, the typical everyman character encounters the seven deadly sins, falls from grace and lives in sin, repents and is pardoned. In later moralities, however, a structural transformation occurs. Bevington explains that “[a]s the intermediate morality in the 1560s and 70s became increasingly secular with the introduction of more and more social types to replace the allegorized abstractions, it evolved a formula of spiritual defeat rather than spiritual victory” (197). While Bevington goes on to point out the consequences of the transformed morality play for subsequent homiletic tragedies, I would like to call attention to a similar pattern in the writing of travelers such as Nicholas de Nicholay, Thomas Dallam, and William Lithgow. In the accounts of these authors, allegorical figures like the Seven Deadly Sins are transposed into a very real, very Muslim chief Vice whose influence over the traveler is treacherous.

The “Mahumetan,” as understood principally through stories of Sultans and Janissaries, is made to embody Envy, Pride, Ire, Gluttony, Sloth, Lechery, and Greed. Furthermore, he performs the role of the Vice in his attempt to lead the Christian traveler away from the one true faith with temptations of wealth, power and sensual luxury. (It bears recalling here that the Bad Angel of *The Castle of Perseverance* tries to lure Mankind from home with offers of wealth and

luxury. In addition, the depravity of the title character of *Mankinde* is figured as a *conversion* to vice.) Thus the Muslim in travel writings inherits much of his fierce anti-Christian bearing from the mystery and a degree of his Vice-like qualities from the morality.² A conflation like this was a logical extension of the mid-sixteenth-century hybrid morality as described by Bevington, combining realistic characters with abstracted vices.

The most commonly described Muslims in English works were representatives of Islam's most prominent temporal power, the Ottoman Empire. The favorite subject of works like Richard Knolles' *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603) were the Sultans, and they were typically figured as one of two types: those like Muhammad III (1595-1603) who were noted for their cruelty and greed; and those like his predecessor, Murad III (1574-95), who were characterized as weak voluptuaries.³ In either case, European travelers were warned of the sin and danger into which such men might lead them. The second most common subjects of European accounts of Islam were the Janissaries who served the Ottoman Empire. The Christian origins and notorious ferocity of the Janissaries made them an object of particular fascination and anxiety whereas they seemed to embody an absolute submission to Islam. Their example provided a living reminder that the lives of Christians in foreign lands were subject to temptation. Moreover, it was expected that many Christians would lack the moral fortitude to resist their seducers. Thus, after describing the various abuses of Christian travelers he has encountered, William Biddulph

²Further research seems warranted to determine whether a similar argument may be made for earlier Continental authors such as John Mandeville and Johannes Schiltberger and their relationship to Continental religious drama.

³See also Moryson 5-10. The resilience of these two types in the European imaginary is apparent in their uncritical rehearsal by Chew.

laments that “these are the virtues which many Christians learn sojourning long in heathen countries” (81).

It is a commonplace of European Christian literature about Islam from as early as the thirteenth century to depict Christians in Asia -- including Europeans, Armenians, Syrians, and Copts -- as being under threat. Europeans returning from Islamic lands often felt compelled to affirm their uncorrupted sanctity.⁴ Following his own profession to this end, the fifteenth century German traveler Johannes Schiltberger, enslaved in 1396 by Suleiman and six years later later by Timur, attempts to account for the phenomenon of Christian apostasy. Schiltberger describes it as a Muslim policy “that when they overcome Christians they should not kill them; but they should pervert them, and should thus spread and strengthen their own faith”(73). Likewise, the author of *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* warns that

the Turkes doe desire nothing more then to drawe both Christians and other to embrace their religion and to turn Turke. And they do hold that in so doing they doe God good seruice, bee it by any meanes good or badde, right or wrong. For this cause they do plot and devise sundry wayes how to gaine them to their faith. (19-20)

He and several travelers suggest that Christians are most often taken in with temptations of wealth and sexual looseness.⁵ The merchant-poet Baptist Goodall therefore notes,

Such have I seen in giddiness depart

⁴In his “Essay of the Meanes How to make our Travailes, into forraine Countries, the more profitable and honourable,” Thomas Palmer (1606) advises the returning traveler first “that he manifest unto all men his uncorrupt and unspotted religion and zeal therein” (129).

⁵ For a fuller discussion of the various motives for conversion, see Matar, “Turning Turk.”

From a good settled course & some foreign part,
 Squander their means in fruitless lawless life,
 Uncalled forsaking families and wife (Goodall H4).

The story of the notorious renegade Pirate Ward served as a confirmation of such beliefs and was played out before London audiences in Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*. Ward's example was not an exception. Indeed, the Scottish traveler William Lithgow, who cautiously refused Ward's invitation to lodge with him in Algiers in 1616, was concerned enough with this moral degradation to fit out the relation of his own Levantine travels with a stern warning:

This I intimate to all travelers in general, that if they would that God should further them in their attempts, bless their voyages, and grant them a safe return to their native countries that they would constantly refrain from whoredom, drunkenness, and too much familiarity with strangers: For a traveler that is not temperate and circumspect in all his actions, although he were headed like the Herculean serpent Hydra, yet it is impossible he can return in safety from danger of Turks, Arabs, Moors, wild beasts, heat, hunger, thirst and cold (Lithgow N2).

The Levantine expedition is here figured into a test of Christian restraint and fortitude, combining elements of the vice-beset journey of the morality everyman with the heroic journey of classical mythology. As the only human pitfalls mentioned, the Muslims listed here are implicitly held responsible for leading the traveler astray from the path of Christian temperance. None of the intervening gods suggested by Lithgow's classical reference are admitted, and animals, weather, and appetite could hardly be held accountable for "whoredome" and

“drunkenness.” At the same time, grouping Muslims with animals and elemental dangers serves to naturalize the “danger” of Islamic figures. Muslims, it is suggested, corrupt Christians *by nature*. Thus the Turk, Arab and Moor are rendered unmistakable threats to Christian sanctity and no less menacing than the allegorical Vice figures who tempted the everyman of the morality stage.

The currency of morality-inflected warnings like Lithgow's is apparent in the account of Thomas Dallam, the organ maker sent to Constantinople aboard the *Hector* to deliver the Levant Company's accession gift to Muhammed III in 1599.⁶ Throughout his report Dallam is convinced by even the slightest shows of Turkish attention and acceptance that fatal snares are being set for his entrapment. During the trip to Constantinople, Dallam marvels at the number of renegades in Algiers and mistakenly thinks his party is assaulted by a group of Turks when one of his companions becomes tangled in his own garters one windy night. When, in Constantinople, he is asked to manually play the mechanical organ brought for the Sultan, Dallam balks, certain that because “the Grand Signior sat so near the place where I should play that I could not come at it but must needs turn my back towards him and touch his knee with my britches, which no man, in pain of death might do” (Brent 70). Dallam's hesitancy occasions some laughter from the Sultan's *coppagaw* who must push the fearful organmaker into place. Dallam recalls the Sultan sitting so close behind him that “in his rising from his chair, he gave me a thrust forwards, which he could not otherwise do, he sat so near me, but I thought he had been drawing his sword to cut off my head” (71). Later, when he is invited by the delighted Sultan to prolong his stay as a musician of the court and offered his choice of concubines

⁶The gift was four years late due largely to a dispute over its funding, the company believing the Crown should be responsible for the cost.

and luxurious quarters, Dallam is aghast at what he imagines to be the temptations of a depraved life.⁷

Some of Dallam's fears may come from his awareness of the Turkish practices of royal fratricide, of levying Christian children into Islam, and the jihad, or the stories which circulated England of conversions, forced and otherwise.⁸ Yet when we see that Dallam's Turkish acquaintances must pry him away from a voyeuristic scrutiny of the Sultan's concubines, another source of temptation suggests itself. Dallam's fascination with "exotic" alien practices makes him weak in the face of Islam. His experience suggests that the European taken beyond the constraints of his own culture may himself have been a more potent Vice-figure than the Turk. Indeed, Dallam suggests as much when he directs his attention to the numerous renegades who had turned their backs on Christianity. He explains that

in process of time, these renied [i.e. renegade] Christians do become most barbarous and villainous, taking pleasure in all sinfull actions; but that which is worst of all they take most delight in, and that is, they prowle about the coasts of other countries, with all the skill and policy they can, to betray Christians which they sell unto the Moors and other merchants of Barbary for slaves (Brent 14-5).

The truth is that most conversions which took place in Ottoman lands were voluntary and occasioned by pragmatism: Ottoman law exempted Muslims from

⁷Dallam's recollection indicates his awareness of the travel writing tradition as it essentially paraphrases Mandeville's description of the Sultan of Egypt, who offers his daughter to Mandeville if he will convert.

⁸In his *Relations of Africa* (1619), later reprinted by Purchas, J.B. Gramaye notes the presence of 300 English apostates in Barbary between 1609 and 1619 (Purchas 6: 281). No such figure exists for the Ottoman Empire as a whole.

property taxes.⁹ Nevertheless, stories of forced conversion seem to have had considerable currency among travel writers. In Dallam's case, a combination of hearsay and paranoia has the power to transform any other traveler into a potential apostate with designs on vulnerable Christians. Thus, upon being advised by Henry Lello, the English ambassador, to remain at the Ottoman court, he becomes hysterical. In a recollection that illustrates Dallam's readiness to see treacherous renegades everywhere, he relates that "in my fury I told [Lello] that that was now come to pass which I ever feared, and that was that he in the end would betray me, and turn me over into Turkish hands, where I should live a slavish life and never company again with Christians" (76).

The triple threat of captivity, conversion, and corruption is everywhere in early-seventeenth-century English discourse on Islam. Nowhere is that threat more concentrated, however, than in the figure of the apostate himself. One writer describes these men as "given to all whoredome, sodometrie, theft, and all pill[ag]ing at the seas" but, most important, as corrupters of Christians "with their practick art" (Nicholay B4). Similarly, Goodall's curious epic poem, *The Tryall of Travell*, places the renegade atop a hierarchy of dangers. He warns,

No Jew or Turke can prove more ruinous
 Then will a Christian once apostulate thus
 Avoid as death a reconciled foe,
 Nor ever with him reconciled go.
 The sore smooth'd up not cured out will fly,
 And soon'st infect a careless stander by.

⁹The *Policie of the Turkish Empire* explains that after a Christian is converted and circumcised, "diuers gifts and rewards [are] bestowed vpon him, [and] he is made free for euer after from all tributes and exactions. Through the desire of which gaine & priviledge, many of the Greeks. . . and manie Albanezes. . . doo willingly offer themselues to be circumcised" (24).

Man of a cross religion do not trust,
 He hath evasion t'be with thee unjust (Goodall I2).

As Goodall's image of "the sore smooth'd up" suggests, the traveler could be deceived and consequently "infected" from even the most casual contact with the apostate. Unlike the New World, which was often figured as a site for the Christian proselytism of tabula-rasa natives, the East was figured as a mise-en-scène of temptation, where the potential converts were Christians. The traveler was at risk from Islamic figures of both Muslim and Christian origins. And the latter were, perhaps, the more frightening in so much as they represented the ease with which the traveler might fall from the religion of the cross to "a cross religion."

As I will elaborate more fully in the third chapter, the English fascination with and fear of Eastern apostasy is apparent in the drama of the period. Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*, Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*, and Thomas Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West* are only three of the many plays which present Christians imperiled by the deceptions of Islamic or renegade Vice-figures. That Islamic figures informed by the medieval dramatic tradition also turn up regularly on late Elizabethan and Jacobean pageant stages should come as no surprise. The civic pageant came into its own as a sophisticated art form as the religious pageants of medieval drama were receding. Popular elements, of course, remained and were redeployed in the emerging drama. Just as we may see elements of the Vice retained in Shakespeare's Falstaff, the Muslim was retained for many of the guild-sponsored pageants held each Lord Mayor's Day. His role on the late-Tudor pageant stage was, however, nothing like what it had been on the medieval pageant stage or in travelers' narratives. In fact, the Muslims of Lord Mayor's Day pageants -- whether they were silent emblems of the East, or exotic mouthpieces for the English guilds -- were specifically

constructed to counter the notion of the travelers' Vice-like, anti-Christian "Mahumetan."

II. "Take of our pepper"

London's Lord Mayor was annually elected by the City Aldermen to serve a single term. He was chosen from among the twelve great companies, and the pageants held to commemorate his installation were traditionally sponsored by the guild of the Mayor-Elect. On the morning of his investiture the Mayor was escorted to Guildhall for his installation and then to Westminster where he took his oath before the Barons of the Exchequer. He would typically return by the Thames, landing at St. Paul's where he was met by the first pageant of the procession.

A route was cleared by fencers, masked "wildmen" bearing fireballs or flaming wheels, and the mounted City Marshall. Yet the crowds were typically swollen and boisterous, running the gamut from courtiers in windows above the street to beaming guild members clad in their livery and ordinary citizens below. The Venetian Ambassador, Horatio Bussino described in some detail the crowd attending the show in 1617. He reports, "It was a fine medley: there were old men in their dotage; insolent youths and boys . . . painted wenches and women of the lower classes carrying their children, all anxious to see the show" (CSP Venetian XV: 60). The noise of the crowd -- combined with trumpeting, ringing church bells, and the shooting off of ordnance by the gunners of the tower -- probably made many of the speeches inaudible and may explain the introduction of printed programs. In one such program, Anthony Munday complained that the "weake voyces" of the children in his 1609 pageant could not be heard "in a crowde of such noyse and uncivill turmoyle." Authorial prefaces to these programs provide a more complete, if somewhat biased, picture of the pageants'

broad appeal. Thomas Dekker, for example, asserts in the preface to his 1612 show that “so inticing a shape they carry, that Princes themselves take pleasure to behold them; they with delight; common people with admiration” (Dekker III: 230).

In 1613 Thomas Middleton prefaced his show with a justification he would repeat in 1623 and again in 1626. He writes,

Search all chronicle, histories, records, in what language or letter soever; let the inquisitive man waste the dear treasures of his time and eyesight, he shall conclude his life only in this certainty, that there is no subject received into the place of his government with the like state and magnificence as is the Lord Mayor of the city of London. This being, then, infallible -- like the mistress of our triumphs -- and not to be denied of any, how careful ought those gentlemen to be, to whose discretion and judgment the weight and charge of such a business is entirely referred and committed by the whole Society, to have all things correspondent to that generous and noble freeness of cost and liberality. (Middleton VII: 233)

While Middleton's boast may be somewhat hyperbolic, his concern with the guild's financial backing was not unwarranted. The pageant that year cost the Grocers an unprecedented £1300, hundreds more than some of the most lavish court masques of the period. The escalating expenses may be explained in part by inter-guild rivalries and a desire to broadcast the success of the sponsoring guild. In addition, many of these guilds had overseas concerns and found it in their best interests to use the pageants to promote such ventures and elicit popular approval by distributing products of the trade among the spectators. On one occasion a ship named for the recently constructed Royal Exchange appears “laden with spices silk and indico.” Its captain orders his men to “Take of our

pepper, of our cloves and mace,/ And liberally bestow them about" (Bergeron, *Pageants of Anthony Munday* 5) This same open-handedness is apparent in almost all Jacobean era pageants. Guild charges regularly include fruits, sugar, and spices that were cast into the crowd. Rarely would a show pass without featuring some Moor, Turk, or Indian perched atop an exotic animal such as a camel, lion, leopard, or elephant. These figures seldom speak, unless to praise English proselytism and cloth. Meanwhile English privateers, and especially Sir Francis Drake, are repeatedly celebrated as English Jasons "that brought home gold" (Webster 318).

The Merchant Tailors, Cloth Workers, and Drapers all stood to profit from trade with the Ottoman Empire and lands farther east. By the first decade of the seventeenth century, the English textile industry had begun to produce lighter weight fabrics for Mediterranean climates and looked forward to increasing profits by developing these new markets rather than remaining focused on the glutted markets and stagnating economy of northern Europe.¹⁰ Textiles accounted for 7/8 of London's exports, but several other guilds were considerably invested in overseas concerns. The Grocers, for example, supervised the sale of all food and drugs. Thus the fruits and spices that English merchants acquired in Aleppo in return for kerseys and broadcloth all passed through the Grocers' hands. It is not surprising then to learn that the Levant Company was their creation and the East India Company included several grocers among its founding members. Nor is it surprising to find in the pageants sponsored by guilds like the Grocers a strategic conflation of the New World Indian and the Asian Indian. Nabil Matar has argued that New World models were superimposed onto Muslims "to legitimate Christian/European moral

¹⁰For a more complete account of the introduction of 'the new draperies', see Fisher, "London's Export Trade."

superiority and to prepare for holy war" (Matar, *Turks* 127). In the Lord Mayor's Day pageants, conflation is instead used to present Muslims as domesticated partners in trade. Thus, rather than negotiating difficult terms, the Indian or Moor of the Lord Mayor's Day pageant is typically found generously tossing fruit, spices, and riches to the crowd. The beneficence of such figures has several important effects. It "suggests that the trading wealth of London is not restricted to the oligarchy but filters down to the whole populace" (Knowles 168). The distribution of fruit and spices in these shows might also be linked to the pastoral ethos of innocent and abundant consumption Raymond Williams locates in poems like Jonson's "To Penshurst" and Marvell's "The Garden." In addition, the blithe Eastern figures of the pageants suggest "the willingness of the other to enter into a transaction with the West" (Loomba, "Shakespeare" 183). Thus, in transforming mercantilism into munificence, pageantry counteracts the anxieties over apostasy produced by the traveler's vision of the corrupting East and increased English contact with the Turks.

The conflation of the New World and the East is likewise apparent when the pageant Indian or Moor makes no attempt to lure Christians into sin and apostasy, but instead expresses thanks for his/her own conversion to Christianity. For while ventures to the New World were always outfitted with the justifying rhetoric of proselytism, travelers to the East spoke contrastingly of the danger of "turning Turk." No equivalent fear exists in New World narratives. Likewise while English factors often complained of the outrageous bribes they were forced to pay Eastern potentates just to establish relations, the natives of the New World were often considered innocents who, like Othello's "base Indian [who] threw a pearl away / Richer than all his tribe," were happily duped into exchanging riches for trinkets.¹¹ James Rosier, for example, gleefully

describes an exchange with the natives of New England whereby “for knives, glasses, combs and other trifles of the value of four or five shillings, we had forty good beaver skins, otter skins, sables and other small skins, which we knew not how to call” (Burrage 371). This figure of the innocent Other provided guilds with a far more reassuring image than the fierce and cunning Muslims so often featured in narratives of travels to the East.

Like “Orientalism” as it has been described by Edward Said, the Lord Mayor’s Day pageants bear no resemblance to reality and seek to restructure and posit authority over the Islamic East. They depend upon a “flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand” (Said 7). Yet where Said imagines the Orient putting up very little in the way of resistance, the pageants are, in fact, a response to the Eastern resistance which they strategically efface. Furthermore, Said describes Orientalism as using difference to set off European culture against the Orient. In effacing resistance and imagining an acquiescent East, the pageants instead erase Islamic difference.

In 1613 Thomas Middleton was commissioned by the Society of Grocers to celebrate the installation of one of their number as Lord Mayor. Curiously enough, the mayor-elect that year was also named Thomas Middleton. The interests of this Middleton in overseas trade are written boldly across his biography. He was an intimate of Sir Francis Walsingham,¹² an adventurer in

¹¹The earliest descriptions of native Americans consistently told of such lopsided exchanges. The best-selling first letter of Columbus as well as the letters of Amerigo Vespucci established this tradition by the first decade of the sixteenth century. In a fuller discussion contrasting early modern representations of the New World and the East, Ania Loomba (“Shakespeare” 176) reads the linguistic difference between Caliban on one hand, and Cleopatra and Othello on the other, as a reminder that while “New World natives were placed within a discourse of primitivism, the peoples of the East -- Turkey, Egypt, India and Persia -- were embedded within a discourse of cultural excess.”

the East India Voyage of 1599 and a member of the company in its incorporating charter of 1600. Furthermore, he is widely assumed to be the author of a pamphlet entitled "A Discourse of Trade from England unto the East Indies." Accordingly, the pageant produced for Middleton's installation, *The Triumphs of Truth*, contains an abundance of Eastern material. On the river, for example, there stood "five islands artfully garnished with all manner of Indian fruit trees, drugs, spiceries, and the like" (Middleton VII: 239). Yet in light of its sponsors' mercantile concerns, the pageant casts Eastern ventures in a Christian light, mitigating anxieties produced or sustained by the travelers' rhetoric of danger. The only acknowledgment of such dangers comes in the author's opening prayer of thanksgiving for the lord mayor's preservation "from many great and incident dangers, especially in foreign countries, in the time of [his] youth and travels" (Middleton VII: 231). As such an admission ran counter to the producing guild's aims, this prayer was printed, but not spoken before the assembled crowds.

Following Dekker's innovative use of the morality play structure in the previous year, Middleton's pageant initially takes on the appearance of medieval religious drama as the audience is introduced to a Vice-figure known as Error. Recalling his morality play archetypes, Error invites the Lord Mayor to take advantage of his position, to "make use on't, lord, / And let thy will and appetite sway the sword" (242). After offering as servants his sergeants, "Gluttony" and "Sloth," Error is scourged by Zeal, making way for Truth. Thus, when a ship next approaches carrying a royal party of Moors, they are specifically *not* the Vice

¹²Better known for his staunch Protestantism and network of spies, Walsingham was also an enthusiastic supporter of England's overseas ventures. He subscribed to Edward Fenton's voyage to the Moluccas and China in 1582 and in the same year wrote "A consideration of the trade into Turkey." In addition, he acted as patron toward virtually all the chief writers on exploration and trade of his time, including Richard Hakluyt, Richard Grenville, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert.

but rather shepherded in by Truth. Indeed, their ship flies a white silk streamer adorned with two golden words, *Viritate* [sic] *gubernor* -- I am steered by Truth.

Anticipating an audience that might wonder at this apparently contradictory emblem standing before them in the yard of St. Paul's, the King of Moors immediately sets about reassuring the assembled crowd.

I must confess many wild thoughts may rise,

At my so strange arrival in a land

Where true religion and her temple stand;

I being a Moor, then, in opinions lightness,

As far from sanctity as my face from whiteness (Middleton VII: 248)

The king's speech systematically interrogates the assumptions and assuages the anxieties of the audience. His opening confession is an immediate recognition of the tripartite equation many Londoners would make between blackness, Moorishness, and religious error. In this arithmetic, darkness is a measure of distance from Christian sanctity. Yet whiteness--here notably paired in rhyme with "opinions lightness"--is swiftly dislodged from its position as the unique signifier of sanctity. Indeed, those who would judge the Moorish King as corrupt at first glance are gently chastised when he reminds his audience of the classical topos of appearance and reality:

I forgive the judgments of th'unwise,

Whose censures ever quicken in their eyes,

Only begot of outward form and show;

And I think meet to let such censurers know,

However darkness dwells upon my face,

Truth in my soul sets up the light of grace. (248)

The notion advanced by Middleton's king, that sanctity might be found among Moors, ran counter to the popular belief that Moors were irredeemable heretics.

In 1617 Thomas Shirley was among the number who warned that “conversation with infidelles doeth mutch corrupte” (Shirley 11) and that with each moment spent among Muslims Europeans moved closer to apostasy. Likewise, Richard Eden claimed sixty years earlier that “like as they that go much in the sun are colored therewith although they go not for that purpose, so may the conversation of the Christians with the [New World] gentiles induce them to our religion, where there is no greater cause of contrary to resist as is in the Jews and Turks who are already drowned in their confirmed error” (Eden 57). Thus while “conversation” was seen spreading Christianity in the New World and working to its detriment in the East, Middleton's Moorish king nevertheless proclaims,

My queen and people all, at one time won
 By the religious *conversation*
 Of English merchants, factors, travellers,
 Whose Truth did with our spirits hold *commerce*
 As their affairs with us: following the path,
 We all were brought to the Christian faith
 Such benefit in good example dwells,

It oft hath power to convert infidels (Middleton VII: 248, emphasis mine).

Interestingly, in the sixteenth century vernacular “conversation” could signify conversion, as well as its more common usage denoting an exchange of words. The slippage between these two meanings helps somewhat in explaining Goodall's earlier fear of effortless heretical “infection.” Middleton's Moorish king suggests, however, that conversation would inevitably occasion conversion to rather than from Christianity. Thus in spite of the fact that Eastern voyages were generally devoid of a missionary agenda, English trafficking with Islamic lands is figured as a blessed “commerce” in spirituality as much as spicery. Rather than acting as threatening figures of temptation and corruption, as they so

often did on the theater stage, the inhabitants of Islamic lands are themselves converted for the guild-sponsored pageant stage.¹³ Furthermore, the king's reference to the "good example" of the English abroad conjures up a reassuring image of incorruptible Christian merchants. Finally, in confirmation of the virtues of Eastern trade, Error laments the betrayal of his "sweet fac'd devils" as the Moors bow low and kiss their hands in reverence to St. Paul's, one of Truth's "fair temples." The movement of the pageant, with its dark and tempting figures through the streets of London serves to suggest an English temperance impervious to Eastern temptation. By means of representation, Islam is effectively captured, converted, and controlled in the pageants. London, it is implied, may retain its virtues in spite of her contact with Islamic lands. Thus, as the mists of Error are lifted from a final pageant figuring London, we find Religion sitting in the most eminent place.

A second pageant sponsored by the Grocers Guild similarly seeks to lessen anxieties over the transformation of English travelers with an insubstantial vision of the "infidel" redeemed. In *The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue* (1622), also written by Middleton, there is featured "a black personage representing India, called, for her odours and riches, the Queen of Merchandise" (Middleton VII: 358). Her Eastern origins are established as her attendants cast sugar, dates, ginger, almonds, and nutmeg into the crowd, and like the Moorish king of 1613, she begins by challenging her audience to reconsider their first impressions:

You that have eyes of judgment, and discern

¹³Alternatively, the pageant Turk might still be portrayed as an instigating aggressor who *must* be opposed. This was often the case in the popular naumachia, or water-fights, staged in honor of royal occasions such as the Prince of Wales' accession in 1610 or the marriage of Princess Elizabeth in 1613. Regardless of whether the Muslim of the pageants was converted or reprobate, the English presence in Muslim lands was ultimately represented as pious and upright.

Things that the best of man and life concern,
 Draw near: this black is but my native dye,
 But view me with an intellectual eye,
 As wise men shoot their beams forth, then you'll find
 A change in the complexion of the mind:
 I'm beauteous in my blackness. (Middleton VII: 358)

Like the King of the Moors' claim for sanctity among Moors, India's equally radical assertion of black beauty must also be explained to a skeptical crowd. The dark queen recalls here the paradoxical Bride from the Song of Songs whose assertion "I am blacke . . . but comelie" (1:4 [Geneva Bible]) presented numerous difficulties for early modern exegetes. As Kim Hall has expertly indicated, Jacobean scholars like Joseph Hall maintain that "it is the favor of Solomon that lightens the Bride's blackness and effaces her foreign difference" (Hall, *Things* 110). Middleton's India explains her own assertion of beauty similarly:

Oh ye sons
 Of Fame and Honour! through my best part runs
 A spring of living waters, clear and true,
Found first by Knowledge, which came first by you,
 That by *exchange* settles such happiness.
 Of gums and fragrant spices, I confess,
 My climate heaven does with abundance bless,
 And those you have from me; but what are they
 Compar'd with odours whose scent ne'er decay?
 . . .
 All wealth consists in Christian holiness.
 To such celestial knowledge I was led,
 By English merchants first enlightened.

In honor of whose memory, only three

I instance here, all of this brotherhood free (Middleton VII: 358-9,
emphasis mine).

Beauty, it seems, is hidden within the Indian queen in so much as her black skin encases a potential Christian. Yet that potential Christian may only be found through the offices of “you” -- the white Christian merchant who exchanges spirituality for spices.¹⁴ Thus as the English merchant is transformed from apostate to apostle, Eastern trafficking is presented as both financially and spiritually profitable and hence worthy of not only admiration but investment. Furthermore, the implicit elision of Christianity’s eastern origins render the beauty of the dark queen a measure of both the merchant’s piety and the transforming power of Christianity. Yet as Yumna Siddiqi points out, “the depiction of an exchange of knowledge for wealth can only be read as a staging of an English mercantile ideology and as a fantasy of wish fulfillment” (Siddiqi 155). The pageant presents the conversion of easterners to Christianity, rather than the apostasy, or “turning Turk,” that English men and women were warned against in travel books, histories, and church sermons. Later in the same pageant, figures of Commerce, Adventure, and Traffic are divorced from associations with greed and libertinism and presented as agents of proselytism in league with three English merchants (who we later learn are to represent the Lord Mayor and sheriffs). As Siddiqi concludes, “we have here the rudiments of colonial economic ideology: the colonial body/ land becomes more productive under the control of the occupying power” (Siddiqi 157).

¹⁴Yumna Siddiqi reads this as a moment of phallic penetration whereby “the Indian queen has been injected with the seeds of Western knowledge” (157). If this is so, she indicates, “the violence of this penetration is elided by an ideology of exchange.”

The strategic conflation of Eastern and New World Indians is even more apparent here than in Middleton's earlier work. A "Globe of Honour" bearing the streamers of the City, the Lord Mayor, the Grocers, and the East India Company, provides a fitting emblem for the conjunction of overseas guild interests and the Lord Mayor's Day pageants which I have been attempting to describe. On the globe itself is "the world's type in countries, seas and shipping, whereon is depicted or drawn ships that have been fortunate [sic] to this kingdom by their happy and successful voyages; as also that prosperous plantation in the Colony of Virginia and the Bermudas, with all good wishes to the Governors, Traders, and Adventurers unto those Christianly reformed islands" (Middleton VII: 366). Of course, the grocers looked forward to enormous profits from the development of interests in the New World. But in the application of this coda to the presentation of a very Eastern Indian queen, the reassuring missionary rhetoric of New World colonization strategically accompanies images of Eastern trafficking. The result is a mobile tableau of authority. The temperance exercised in the company's Eastern ventures and represented in the pageants is promised, through the person of the Lord Mayor, to endow the city with equivalent commercial and spiritual profits.

Central to the conflation I have been describing is a displacement of English mercantile propaganda onto the voice of the Eastern Other. The Indian Queen described above resembles the squeaking boy Shakespeare's Cleopatra dreads watching in Caesar's Roman pageant. Both present one culture's accommodation of another's difference into an amenable, self-affirming scheme. In most cases, however, Eastern figures are given no voice in the pageants. Instead they are used as elements in the construction of icons of authority, prompting David Bergeron to describe the pageants as "the quintessence of emblematic theatre" (Bergeron, *English 2*) This is the case in Middleton's 1617

pageant for the Grocers entitled *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry*. This show, celebrating the election of Sir George Bowles, begins with a display Middleton describes as follows:

A company of Indians, attired according to the true nature of their country, seeming for the most part naked are set at work in an Island of growing spices; some planting nutmeg-trees, some other spice trees of all kinds; some gathering the fruits, some making up bags of pepper, every one severally employed. These Indians are all active youths, who, ceasing in their labours, dance about the trees, both to give content to themselves and the spectators.

(Middleton VII: 298)

Though Middleton wrote no lines for the Indians of his 1617 spectacle, the actions of this group speak to the same concerns addressed in 1613 and 1622. The spice trees as well as the guild charges including 50 sugar loaves, 36 pounds of nutmegs, 24 pounds of dates, and 114 pounds of ginger to be cast into the crowd (MSC III: 92) clearly indicate that these “Indians” are meant to be Eastern. Their being “set at work” however, clearly positions them as subordinate to an unseen European force. Furthermore, the fact that no overseer is visible indicates that the Indians' subordination has been voluntary, a suggestion further intimated by their contented dance. The scene posits an assiduous and tractable population of natives, thus inviting mercantile ventures.

The spectacle of dancing Indians is followed by a pageant wherein “a rich personage presenting India, the seat of merchandise” is flanked by figures of Industry and Traffic who “holds a globe in her hand [and] knits love and peace amongst all nations.” Raymond Tumbleson (Zeller 60) points out that India, like the Indians of the previous scene, remains mute throughout, voice being reserved for the figure of Industry. Yet voice is also withheld from the figure of

an Englishman in the ensuing pageant of nations. Perhaps what is more significant, then, is the import of Industry's speech. Explicating the emblem to which she belongs, Industry explains that her power

. . . gets both wealth and love, which overflows

With such a stream of amity and peace,

Not only to itself adding increase,

But several nations where commerce abounds

Taste the harmonious peace so sweetly sounds. (Middleton VII: 299)

Like the King of Moors and the Queen of India, the testimony of Industry suggests that eastern trafficking will yield riches and happiness not only for England but for the world. Mercantilism is thus figured as munificence, and the presence of a book-bearing figure called Grace suggests that traffic carries love, peace, and liturgy to the non-Christian world.

While it lacks the explicitly religious content of *The Triumphs of Truth* and *The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue*, *The Triumphs of Honor and Industry* nevertheless acts in conjunction with its predecessors by presenting a silent, tractable East. Yet what is perhaps most notable in this pageant is how it seemingly contradicts so much of Middleton's work for the theater stage. As Gail Kern Paster explains, "merchandise [and] the traffic of getting and spending, are unrelentingly singled out in the city comedies as reasons for the absence of 'love and peace' within London itself, let alone among all nations" (Paster 60) The city comedies may have provided a space in which Middleton could work through the distress caused his own family when his widowed mother's fortunes were jeopardized by a manipulative and venturesome second husband. Guild-sponsored pageants, on the other hand, allowed no room for a proto-Marxist critique, even in 1617 when the cloth industry was suffering from a crisis of over-production and

unemployment in the aftermath of the failed Cokayne Project.¹⁵ Instead mercantilism is yoked to an idea of global Christian exchange.¹⁶

The apparent contradictions in Middleton's context-specific relationship to nascent mercantilism suggest a model for his culture's representation of Islam and the East: Next to the dangerous Muslim of the travelers' narratives stands the generous, tractable puppet of civic pageantry. The two could co-exist because they separately appealed to the divergent needs of the early modern English population. Whereas early modern England required a troublesome, dangerous Muslim to shore up its emergent sense of national and religious identity, it also required a munificent, converted Muslim to vindicate and encourage its mercantile interests. As we turn next from representations of Islam and Islamic peoples in the period's most public drama to those found in its most private form, we will find a distinctly different set of representations. Greville's Turkish characters are shaped in an altogether different crucible, relatively void of mercantile interests. All the same, a number of Greville's Turks manage to elicit an even greater degree of empathy than Middleton's Indians and Moors.

III. Inadvertent Tolerance

Mustapha has little to recommend it to modern sensibilities. Its adherence to the injunctions of the Aristotelian unities drains the play of the naturalism and

¹⁵In 1614 Alderman William Cokayne led a group in convincing James to ban the export of unfinished cloth, hoping to stimulate the English finishing industry and break the merchant adventurers' monopoly in cloth export. The finishing industry could not keep up and England was glutted with unfinished and therefore unexportable cloth. The "Cokayne Project" was blamed for the widespread lay offs and trade crisis which ensued.

¹⁶In Raymond Tumbleson's formulation, "next to Middleton the author of cynical comedies stands Middleton the apologist for emergent bourgeois imperialist ideology" (67).

energy to which lovers of the English stage are accustomed. Its Senecan verse often sounds stiff and didactic, and its most interesting moments are typically recounted rather than enacted. My own interest in the play is almost entirely political, in its illustration of the way in which Islamic characters and settings could be used as devices for the easing of English anxieties. In this respect, Greville's play differs significantly from the Lord Mayor's Day Pageants. Here Islam and the accompanying threat of conversion are of almost no consequence. As I will illustrate, this difference has a great deal to do with a generic difference, between the constraints and demands of public, performed drama and contrastingly private, non-performed drama. Yet in spite of these differences, Greville's play shares with Middleton's pageants the property of marking the degree to which English notions of Islamic peoples could sometimes bypass and even contradict simple prejudice. That this tolerance was sometimes entirely inadvertent, does nothing to qualify its effect on British culture. In *Mustapha*, then, we witness English culture as a work-in-progress, expanding its frame of reference vis-a-vis Islam even in its efforts to assert boundaries and treat current affairs in English politics.

In order to understand how the generic features of *Mustapha* affect its representations of Turks, we must briefly treat the genre of closet drama. It is difficult to grasp the appeal of the closet drama. Anyone who has taught conventional drama knows that without the gesture, intonation and corporeal personality of performance, a play is simply not a play as we typically understand it. This explains why most people are more likely to attend a Shakespearean play than to read the same play. Why then did the authors of early modern closet drama choose a form that strikes us as incomplete? Part of the answer lies in Sir Philip Sidney's discussion of drama in *The Defence of Poesie*. In that essay, Sidney complains that English drama observes neither the rules "of

honest civillitie nor of skilfull Poetrie." Sidney's binding of poetry and civility points toward what G.F. Waller has identified as a larger "attempt on the part of the Sidneys to instigate a revival of English aristocratic culture" (Waller 39). The prescription, in the *Defense*, of Senecan drama, a form unsuited to the tastes of public theater audiences, further testifies to this desire. As unpopular as Sidney's notorious complaints about classical unities and "mingling Kings and Clownes" might have been with most playwrights and theatergoers, they had an undeniable resonance among the gentry.

The gentry's reception of Sidney's mandate is evident in the drama produced in the circle of readers and writers which formed around Mary Sidney at Wilton in the years following Philip's death. The closet drama translated, inspired or sponsored by Mary conforms to the Senecan criteria laid out in the *Defense*. As Margaret Hannay has pointed out, Mary chose in 1590 to translate Robert Garnier's *Marc Antoine*, a play that, like *Goroboduc* (the only play Philip deemed exceptional), treats "the danger to the state of the ruler's private passions." The same is true of Elizabeth Cary's *Tragedy of Mariam* and Greville's three plays, *Mustapha*, *Alaham*, and *Antonie and Cleopatra* (all encouraged by Mary). By adhering to the precepts of the *Defense*, dramatists could distinguish their work from the popular drama Sidney described as "not without cause cried out against." For Sidney's sister and his closest friend, it could also have served as a means of maintaining an active relationship with their beloved Philip.

There were, however, less personal attractions to the closet drama. Rehearsing a commonplace of early modern rhetoric, Sidney argues that "tragedies maketh kinges feare to be Tyrants and Tyrants manifest their tiranicall humors" (177). The estimate of this statement is evidenced in the success of the "Mousetrap" in *Hamlet* and Lala Schahin's "Masque of Alexander" in Goffe's *The Courageous Turk*. Yet there was a danger in the tendency to see contemporary

personages portrayed, with flattery or contempt, in the characters of a play.

Elizabeth, for example, ordered the suppression of a 1601 performance of *Richard II* commissioned by the supporters of Essex exclaiming, "I am Richard II. Know ye not that?" The danger of arousing the monarch's ire or, for that matter, the Master of the Revels' expurgating pen could, however, be circumvented by containing such material in the more private genre of closet drama.

In the *Life of Sidney*, Greville says that he made *Mustapha* and *Alaham* "no Plaies for the Stage" (Grossart 224). The de facto academy of letters at Wilton was probably the group for whom these plays were written. Indeed, had it not been for a pirated edition of *Mustapha* published in 1609, Greville's plays would probably have remained available only to this limited, elite readership until their posthumous publication in 1633. The group aimed to produce readable dramatic poetry for those evenings when no other entertainment was planned at Wilton. This does not, however, mean that they avoided controversial issues. On the contrary,

The closet drama was an essentially private form, and could be regarded as more politically responsible than the public theatre. Whereas seditious views expressed in public might stir up public disorder, a neoclassical verse drama was unlikely to stir up the multitude. But the dramatic form also made it possible to explore some radical ideas without publicly committing oneself to them. (Norbrook 169).

Even the most severe Puritan critics of the theater were more permissive toward closet drama. It was felt that "a man may read a Play with detestation both of its vanity, ribaldry and prophanesse; but he can neither pen, nor play, nor yet very

willingly behold it, as all Play-haunters doe, without approbation and delight” (Prynne 929-30).¹⁷

While the closet drama escaped censure and censor more easily than staged drama, Greville's own experience indicates the limits of that immunity. Following Mary Sidney and Samuel Daniel, Greville created his own closet drama on the subject of Antony and Cleopatra's fatal love. The manuscript was, however, “sacrificed to the fire” by its own author. Greville explains that it was [n]ot that he conceived it to be a contemptible younger brother to the rest: but lest while he seemed to looke over much upward he might stumble into the Astronomers pit. Many members in that creature (by the opinion of those few eyes, which saw it) having some childish wantonnesse in them, apt enough to be construed, or strained to a personating of vices in the present Governors, and government (Greville, *Poems II*: 5).

In the course of his discussion, it becomes clear that the play could be read as an unflattering allegory for the vexed relationship of Essex and Queen Elizabeth. That Greville destroyed the play indicates the danger of that possibility as well as the potential for even closet drama to occasion disquiet. *Mustapha*, however, is doubly safeguarded. Even when published without permission in 1609 it met with no significant obstacles. English Christians, from the monarch down, were unlikely (or perhaps unwilling) to recognize themselves in the picture of an Islamic Sultan and his subjects. It is one thing for Elizabeth to claim “I am Richard II.” It would be another thing entirely for her to admit “I am Sultan

¹⁷Rebecca Bushnell (1990) similarly points out Stephen Gosson's contention that George Buchanan's *Baptistes, Sive Calumnia, Tragoedia* (1578) is not subversive precisely because it is meant to be read rather than performed.

Soliman." Setting a drama of tyranny and insurrection in the Ottoman Empire was thus one way to defend otherwise sensitive issues from critical response.

Modern criticism of the play has not been so reluctant to recognize the applicative nature of an Ottoman setting. Indeed, the recognition of parallels between the English and Ottoman courts now opens most discussions of the play. Within this relationship, interpretive aims tend to be unidirectional: Greville's Ottoman court is taken as a portal to the intricacies of the English court. As a commentary on Islam and the Ottoman Empire it remains unattended to.

With the exception of Peter Ure's study of character, most of the criticism on Greville's two extant plays has, not surprisingly, focused on the author's political and religious polemics. Greville's own explanation of his motives in writing *Mustapha* has encouraged this response. In the *Life of Sidney*, he claims that his purpose was "to trace out the high waies of ambitious Governours, and to shew in the practice, that the more audacity, advantage and good successe such Sovereignties have, the more they hasten to their owne desolation and ruine" (Grossart 220). Critics have taken him at his word. Geoffrey Bullough, for instance, calls *Mustapha* "a study in statecraft" (Greville, *Poems* 2:21). Bullough's argument is expanded by Ronald Rebolz who argues that "Greville's choice of subject . . . was almost certainly determined by his worry about the succession" (101). In the tragic story of jealousy-plagued Soliman, Rebolz argues, Greville found a veiled analogue to the suspicions and factionalism in the court of his own aging monarch. Joan Rees finds that even as the play develops its political plot it also manifests its "ultra Protestant" author's Reformation context, studying "what happens when men are confronted with a straight choice between God, on the one side, and the world and the flesh on the other" (170). In

its various corrupt clerics and its saintly prince, she argues, *Mustapha* contributes to a condemnation of “the visible church” running throughout Greville's works.

More recent commentators on Greville's writings have rushed to correct the view of Greville as a strict apologist for monarchy and Calvinism by emphasizing his inclusion of the radical and/or seditious. David Norbrook points out that though “Greville's writings come down on the side of obedience and resignation. . . . He kept touching on ideas more radical than those to which he was officially committed; he constantly revived the dreams of freedom and equality which his political caution made him regard as dangerous and delusory” (169). Jonathan Dollimore sees Greville's radicalism as specifically religious, arguing that in *Mustapha* “it becomes progressively clearer that religion itself is being brought into question” (128) as Greville “brings to the fore the most provocative tenets of Calvinism” (130).

What all of these critics have in common is an interest in the way specifically English concerns are projected onto an Other space. For none of them is the play a commentary on Islam or the Islamic state. Because it was not primarily intended to describe the settings and peoples it produced does not mean, however, that *Mustapha* did not do so *in effect*. Regardless of authorial intention, one cannot come away from a play set in the Turkish court with no thoughts about that setting. For, though the specific religion of the play's characters may not be the play's primary concern, that concern is given prominence only through the imaginary rendering of non-Christian peoples and spaces. Thus if the play breaks with convention in its characterization of Islamic peoples, this radicalism lodged in Greville's play escapes notice because it is considered an inadvertent consequence. One is reminded of Achebe's notorious condemnation of Conrad: “Can nobody see the preposterous and perverse arrogance in thus reducing Africa to the role of props for the break-up of one

petty European mind?" (Achebe 12) Similarly, we must be wary of ourselves reducing the Ottoman court to the role of backdrop for the interrogation of European ideological structures.

There is little question that Greville's attraction to the story of Soliman's 1553 execution of his son Mustapha had much to do with its pertinence to dynastic anxieties in England in the 1590s when Greville began work on the play.¹⁸ Elizabeth was visibly aging and stubbornly refused to name a successor. By his claim of primogeniture, James Stuart was the most likely heir, and he was an outspoken proponent of divine right and the incontrovertible authority of kings.¹⁹ A play like *Mustapha*, that addresses questions of monarchy with such direct didacticism, is bound to occasion some comparisons to a king who would argue that "if you will consider the attributes to God, you shall see how they agree in the person of a king" (McIlwain 307). Greville's awareness of the tendency to draw such correspondences is illustrated by his notorious destruction of his *Antonie and Cleopatra*. In addition, Greville says of *Mustapha* and *Alaham* that

he that will behold these Acts upon their true Stage, let him look on that Stage wherein himself is an Actor, even the state he lives in, and for every part he may perchance find a Player, and for every Line (it may be) an instance of life, beyond the Authors intention, or

¹⁸For a discussion of Greville's revisions and the probable dating of the four versions, see Rees 161-71.

¹⁹Though James did not publish the *Trew Law of Free Monarchies* or the *Basilikon Doron* until 1598, Maurice Lee, Jr. (63-91) argues that his consolidation of power in Scotland in the last fifteen years of the century put his doctrine of kingship on display for all of Britain. In practice, Elizabeth had espoused no less, but in policy she was far less vigorous in her assertions of absolutism. See, for example, C. Levin; Montrose "Shaping Fantasies" and "The Elizabethan Subject"; and Neale.

application, the vices of former Ages being so like to these of this Age, as it will be easie to find out some affinity, or resemblance between them (Bullough IV: 223).

Like Greville, I would like to speak of that which is “beyond the Authors intention.” First, however, I wish to recognize, in his use of the conditional tense, an emphasis on possibility, rather than certainty. For Greville, the text is somewhat protean, fastening itself to the conditions of a reader's mind and taking on shapes previously fashioned there. Having provided attractive material, the author must relinquish control and leave “application” to the reader.

In the case of early modern drama, the process I have described often takes place twice. Plays were rarely conceived *in toto* in the imagination of their authors. Most were adaptations of earlier texts, and thus emanate from an author who was initially in the reader's role. No exception, Greville seems almost certainly to have based his work primarily on a reading of Hugh Goughe's translation of Bartolomeus Gyorjevic's *The Offspring of the House of Ottomano* (1570), a work containing the first account by the Burgundian Nicholas Moffan of Prince Mustapha's execution.²⁰ A comparison of the source and its dramatic rendering reveals the “affinities” Greville describes between the English and Ottoman courts, but it also makes plain the existence of exemplary Muslims in English drama.

In Greville's version of the story, several significant changes have been made. Greville creates a more sympathetic Soliman, and from a parable of gender and class contention fashions a study of monarchy. This is not to say that issues of gender and class drop out of Greville's play entirely. Rather they are

²⁰For a discussion of possible supporting sources, see Bullough 1945: 8-20.

subsumed within and essential to the study of proper kingship. The basic scenario remains. Here, too, a monarch is convinced by an ambitious wife of his loyal heir's treachery. Yet numerous characters are introduced or developed to recast the event as an exemplum of political and religious corruption. Moffan's account is focused on the figure of Rosa, "a craftye and desceitfull woman, from whome no guile was hidden" (Goughe J7r). Soliman, on the other hand, is presented in accordance with stereotypes of Turkish corruption, most often emphasizing his uxoriousness. He is "blinded beyounde all measure with sensuall appetite" (J8r), and "drowned passinge all moderation, in an unbridled desyre and lust of Rosa" (J7r-v).

In *Mustapha*, Greville preserves little of Rosa's history--her rise from bondwoman/ concubine, her manipulative pose of piety, her attempts on the life of Mustapha. Instead, he shifts the focus to the monarch's conflict of interests and abuse of power. In Greville's play, Soliman's persona and dilemma are recast with greater complexity and moral solemnity, particularly in the first three acts, in which Soliman is influenced, in turns, by good and bad counselors. The difficulty and gravity of his situation is best understood by Soliman himself. He explains,

In what strange ballance are man's humors peised?
 Since each light change within us, or without
 Turnes feare to hope, and hope again to doubt.
 If thus it worke in Man, much more in Thrones,
 Whose tender heights feele all thinne aires that move,
 And worke that change below they vse aboue.
 For on the Axis of our humors turne
 Church-rites and Lawes; Subiects desire, and wit
 All which, in all men, come and goe with it" (Greville, *Works* III: 302)

Yet Greville's Sultan is not easily swayed. Though misled concerning its architect, Soliman is aware of a plot to raise his doubts of Mustapha. He elicits advice from rival parties, and at the end of the first act dismisses Rossa with the assertion that "You move me; yet remoue I not" (Greville, *Works* III: 312). Indeed, it is only Rossa's stunning coup de theatre in the murder of Camena that convinces Soliman, wrongly of course, of her loyalty and Mustapha's treason. It is an understandable error and one which does little to tarnish the Soliman's initial majesty.

Critics have already pointed out Greville's emphasis on the dilemmas of obedience experienced by the counselors of a tyrant (Rees 162-7; Larson 56-64). By contrast, no counselor appears in Moffan's account before "one Achmat, a Paschan . . . aswaged and kyndled the corages of the souldiers" (Goughe P8v) in the uprising that concludes Greville's play. Greville's expansion of this character and close study of his predicament in the "Chorus of Bashas" may reflect his own experience in the Elizabethan court. In Achmat we are presented with a good counselor forced to recognize that "while none dare shew Kings they goe amisse, / Euen base Obedience their Corruption is" (Greville, *Works* III: 324). He therefore braves the wrath of tyranny by advising Soliman not to fear his son but instead "[f]eare false stepmother's rage, woman's ambition" (Greville, *Works* III: 329). A beglerbey, or court official, provides a polar contrast in an admission of his own sycophancy: "Knowledge a burden is, obedience ease; / Who loues a good name is free to follow it, / Who seekes kings' loues, he must their humors fit" (Greville, *Works* III: 421). While it would be a mistake to see either of these figures as correspondent with Greville, Sidney, or Essex -- each of whom complained of his treatment in the Queen's service -- they nevertheless experience comparable frustrations with the vagaries and demands of monarchy.

The characterization of Mustapha, the royal prince, and the introduction of his half-sister Camena further suggest a projection of English concerns onto an Islamic setting. Camena is entirely absent from Moffan's account. While "Chameras" appear in several later accounts, these have little in common with Greville's saintly princess-martyr. Like the admirable counselor Achmat, Camena is troubled by a conflict of loyalties. Bound both to her father Soliman and her husband Rosten (who would advance in Mustapha's fall), Camena nevertheless cannot abide her brother's wrongful murder. "Drawne diverse wayes with Sex, with Time, with State" (Greville, *Works III*: 334) she boldly confronts her father. What distinguishes her plea from Achmat's, however, is its conveyance in the terms of Christian kingship:

Besides the gods, whom kings should imitate,
 Haue plac'd you high to rule not ouerthrow;
 For vs, not for your selues is your estate:

Mercie must hand in hand with Power goe. (Greville, *Works III*: 340)

In Camena's vision of kingship, mercy lies at the heart of government. Justice, she advises, belongs only "Where Loue despaires, and where God's promise ends: / For mercie is the highest reach of human wit" (Greville, *Works III*: 341). Mercy is by no means an inherently Christian virtue, but it is entirely absent from early modern European descriptions of Ottoman kingship which emphasize instead the Turkish Sultan's monstrous cruelty and terrifying power. It is his basis in power, rather than divine right, that characterizes the Turkish monarch in European accounts, and correspondingly, his subjects enjoy "no right, law nor common-wealth compact, but only the will of the Lord and segnior" (Smith 21). Greville's awareness of this conventional critique of sultanic power is evident in his 1633 "Treatise of Wars," where he describes how

The Turkish empire thus grew unto height,

Which, first in unity, passed others far;
 Their church was mere collusion and deceit,
 Their court a camp, their discipline a war. (Greville, *Poems* 230)

By Greville's own standards, then, Camena's advice is extraordinarily out of place in the Turkish court.

If in her advice Camena echoes the teachings of the Gospels, her half-brother, Mustapha, seems to enact them. Mustapha, as Joan Rees argues, "in spite of the Mohammedan setting of the play, is a Christian saint, one who lives so much in the light of spiritual things that the world has no hold on him." (Rees 169) Nothing prepares us for this characterization in historical accounts of the prince. In Moffan, Mustapha is

a younge manne of a noble corage and a passynge witte, no lesse excellling in his coragious hart, then in strength by reason of the multitude of his souldiers, whiche also throughe his magnanimity and fortitude was in wouderfull estimation with the souldyers, and for hys graue wisdom and upright iustice, marveilously fauored of the people" (Goughe K1r).

While certainly admirable, this Mustapha is in no way Christianized. Indeed, Moffan tells of a dream in which Mustapha is presented a vision of heaven and hell by the prophet Muhammad. Greville omits this dream from his play and instead infuses Mustapha's speech with echoes of Christ as his analogous martyrdom becomes imminent. Unlike Moffan's Mustapha, Greville's Prince specifically refuses to flee his father. Instead he seeks to learn forgiveness (382) and assures mercy to a despairing priest compromised by deference to "False Mahomet" and his "lawes monarchall" (Greville, *Works III*: 380). Greville concentrates Mustapha's goodness by omitting from the drama altogether the tutor who, in Moffan's account, advises him toward this submission. Instead,

he develops the character of a priest, aptly named Heli, who earlier brands himself “the diuill's friend, Hell's mediator” (Greville, *Works* III: 381), and argues for sedition. In response, Mustapha echoes Christ's rejoinder to Satan when, in the temptation of the mount (Matthew 4: 1-11), he offers him all the kingdoms of the world: “Tempt me no more” (Greville, *Works* III: 386). Achmat's description of Mustapha's execution completes the Prince's tacit canonization. “In haste to be an angell,” Mustapha bids his wavering executioners to fulfill their charge and calls out

O Father! now forgiue me

Forgiue them too, that wrought my ouerthrow:

Let my graue neuer minister offences.

For, since my father coueteth my death,

Behold, with ioy, I offer him my breath. (Greville, *Works* III: 403)

Despite Heli's corruption and the contrasting righteousness of Mustapha and Camena, Greville's play shows little concern with the status of Islam. An ostensibly Muslim priest advises people to “Beleeue in God” but qualifies his assertion with a characteristically Calvinist warning that priests “are vntrue,/ And spirituall forges under tyrants' might:/ God only doth command what's good for you” (Grossart 3: 381). The play ends on a similarly Calvinist note: “When each of vs in his owne heart lookes,/ He findes the God there, farre vnlike his bookes” (Greville, *Works* III: 417). Studded as it is with denunciations of “the outwarde church,” its “irreligious rites,” and “gilded lies,” as well as assertions of man's essentially errant nature, Greville's play may swipe at institutional Islam but seems far more interested in questions concerning Reformation Christianity.

Greville's apparent disregard of his Islamic setting cannot be explained away by mere ignorance. It is unlikely that Walsingham would have

commissioned a report from Greville on the trafficking of Spain and Portugal in the East as part of the 1599 inquiries leading to the establishment of the East India Company if he was not considered informed. Elizabeth's swift granting of permission for a first venture following this report testifies to his authority. In the case of *Mustapha*, however, Greville was simply not interested in the significance of his setting. Unlike the public pageants designed to engage Islam in the popular imagination and extricate the merchant class from the taint of the Islamic East, Greville's play was produced for the consumption of an elite readership. Thus the orientation of the play's setting is primarily dictated by the interests and cultural proclivities of court culture. Neither its author nor its readers were likely to have the kind of direct involvement in the trade which occasioned anxieties such as those targeted by Middleton's pageants. Rather, this was a class that might be more likely to foster such suspicions as successful members of the merchant class began to form a mercantile *noblesse d'epee*.

Thus far I have attempted to sketch out the manner in which a specifically Islamic context could be virtually ignored. I have intentionally deferred a discussion of the effect of such an incurious use of Islam in acknowledgment of the priority of the play's explicit content over its implicit effects. Having done so, I would now like to consider the consequence of the play for early modern notions of Islam in general and the Ottoman Empire in particular.

One of the most common elements of Islam in the European imaginary was a charlatan prophet whose ascendancy was contrived to serve his various lusts. This is Heli's "False Mohamet" around whom much of the early modern prejudice against Islam convened and found reinforcement. Goughe's *The Offspring of the House of Ottomano* (1569) was one of numerous texts that upheld medieval slurs describing the Qu'ran as a patchwork of religious doctrines stitched together by Muhammad to serve

his personal desires for sexual license, honor, wealth, and estimation.

Muhammad's

fainting spells and visions are correspondingly rendered dreams of a "false deceiver" who is "well tyled with wine" (D7v). Another account explains that "sundry times before his death [Muhammad] altered and changed, added and detracted many of his precepts and institutions: according as the variety and vanity of his passions and lewd conceits did induce and lead him" (Policy C1). This distorted figure of the prophet -- created as early as the twelfth century by Christian clerics concerned with the conversion of captured crusaders -- continued to be used throughout the early modern period as an archetype of Islamic actions. It helped to justify condemnations of Muslims as scheming, irrevocably ambitious and "in moste vile and filthy maner. . . subiecte, aboue all other nations" to their "libidinous lusts" (Goughe J8v).

There is a great deal in Greville's play to reinforce this prejudice. Perhaps the most apparent theme running through the play is the political expedience of religion. As in the delegitimization of Muhammad, piety and divinity are not called into question here, only the religious apparatus constructed by men to "worke immortall things to mortall ends" (Greville, *Works* III: 318). Yet this charge is specifically levelled at Islam when a chorus of Muslim priests admits that

though we make not idols, yet we fashion

God, as if from Power's throne He tooke His being;

Our Alchoran, as warrant vnto passion;

Monarches in all lawes but their owne will seeing (Greville, *Works* III: 348).

The chorus suggests that manipulation of the sacred text is an ongoing tradition in Islam, and it is thus that Turks "make the Church our Sultan's instrument." Soliman further recalls Christendom's image of the charlatan prophet when he

confesses to “no superior power” save “what I will conceiue” (Greville, *Works* III: 370).

At the heart of Greville's play is the question of obedience to a tyrant. The play's indication that religion is the prop upon which such obedience is fixed returns us to the contemporary discourse on Islam. Richard Knolles and Fynes Moryson separately note the enviable discipline and obedience of the Turks that binds them and makes them such a powerful enemy. Knolles describes,

such a rare unitie and agreement amongst them, as well in the manner of their Religion (if it be so to bee called) as in matters concerning their State (especially) in all their enterprises to be taken in hand for the augmenting of their Empire as that thereof they call themselves Islami, that is to say Men of one minde, or at peace amongst themselves; so that it is not to be marvelled, if thereby they grow strong themselves, and dreadfull unto others. Joyne unto this their courage, . . . their frugalitie and temperatenesse in their dyet and other manner of living; their carefull observing of their antient Military Discipline; their cheereful and almost incredible obedience unto their Princes and Sultans. (“The Author's Induction to the Christian Reader”)

The obedience described by Knolles is traced to two contradictory sources in the various European accounts of Islam. Some argue that the Muslim beliefs in the jihad and a sybaritic afterlife yield a fearlessness in the face of death and thus an absolute submission to authority. Others, such as Greville's source Goughe, argue that “There neuer chaunceth amonge [the Turks], eyther diuisions, mutual slaughters, seditions, or treason. For they are fourthe with beheaded, being but for a trifeling offence conuicted” (B7r) The counselor Achmat is not obviously moved by either of these motives when he acts to stay the forces of rebellion. Yet

his actions reinforce notions of the celebrated Ottoman obedience. The same may be said of Mustapha's argument of kings that "Our gods they are, their God remaines aboue./ To thinke against annoynted Power is death" (Greville, *Works* III: 385). In this the Prince speaks the principles of divine rightists anywhere, but as a Turk he reinforces the notion of the Turks' slavish obedience. At the same time, Mustapha's loyalty exposes the corruption behind Soliman's willful acceptance of error. Soliman explains the choice before him as follows:

The Earth drawes one way, and the skie another.

If God worke thus, kings must looke upwards still,

And from these powers they know not, choose a will.

Or else beleue themselues, their strength, occasion;

Make wisdom conscience; and the world their skie:

So haue all tyrants done; and so must I. (Greville, *Works* III: 370-1)

When, two scenes later, Soliman swears by "Mahomet" that his son shall die, it is apparent that he has chosen to cloak his earthly concerns in the garb of piety.

Soliman's decision could be easily assimilated into European notions of Islam and the Ottoman Empire that emerged from European accounts of Turkish conquest in the Mediterranean. Within such accounts we repeatedly find the two types of Sultan allowed by European writers: the bloody tyrant and the libertine. Accounts of the taking of Famagusta (1571) such as the one in Hakluyt emphasize rape, pillage, and various acts of sadism. William Biddulph's description of the fall of Constantinople in 1453 tells how "Mahomet [II] was not contenting himself with the violating and deflowering of the Emperor's wife, daughters, and other ladies of honor, by a savage cruelty, caused them in his presence to be dismembered and cut in pieces. During the time of the sacking," he continues, "there was no kind of fornication, sodometry, sacrilege, nor cruelty by them left unexecuted" (Biddulph 22). The notion of bloody and lascivious

tyrants could also be traced to Europe's compulsive retelling of the story of the strangulation of the sultan's nineteen brothers as well as an apocryphal tale of an entire harem full of women bound in sacks and drowned.

Soliman's suspicion, condemnation, and witnessing of the murder of Mustapha make an easy fit with such tales. Furthermore, his tyranny is partially attributed to his lust for Rossa, recalling accusations of Muhammad's fraudulence for lust's sake as well as the uxorious Turks of various chronicle histories. Despite their reputation for fierce loyalty, the Turks were figured in most European histories as perfidiously bloody within their own families. This notion finds dramatic representation in Rossa's machinations, her murder of her own daughter, and her cool admission that "My brother, father, mother and my God, / Are but those steps which help me to aspire" (Greville, *Works* III: 360).

The interanimation of Greville's play and the early modern discourse of Islam is, however, more complicated than the reflection and reinforcement I have thus far described. For in the Christ-like Prince Mustapha and the martyred Princess Camena, Greville submits the possibility of the saintly Muslim. And in the uncertainty of Achmat we are presented with an interrogation of the notion of absolute Turkish obedience. Interestingly, Goughe's text prefaces Moffan's account of Soliman with lengthy discussions of "the officers pertaining to the great Turkes Court" and "the miserable affliction of those Christians which live under [Turkish] captivity and bondage" (A1r). Bashas, like Achmat, we learn, are "chosen by the Emperour himselve, of the multitude of those, which haue forsaken Christ, and of Christians are become Turkes" (Goughe B7v). Yet Greville chooses not to explain Achmat's redeeming qualities as the residual good of a former Christian. As there is no indication that Mustapha or Camena has had "conversation" with Christians, there is likewise no indication that Achmat is a renegade. When Greville does choose to employ renegade figures in

his play, they are specifically identified as such, as in the fourth chorus of "Conuerts to Mahometisme." Curiously, the subject of this chorus is not apostasy but the failures of the outward Church (leading one to wonder why they would convert at all). In effect then, this specifically identified chorus affirms the "Mahometisme" of the three characters who least affirm anti-Islamic prejudices. Even if Greville's "tolerance" is an accident of the story, the reader is effectively positioned to admit the possibility of an admirable Muslim.

Unlike the dark kings and queens of Middleton's *Lord Mayor's Day* pageants, Greville's saintly others have not been converted to Christianity. Indeed, there is no contact between Christians and Muslims in Greville's play. It is not in Greville's interest, as it is in the interests of mercantile guilds, to challenge anti-Islamic prejudices. Even when Greville seems to challenge prejudices, it has more to do with a disinterested use of the Islamic setting than any iconoclastic impulse in the author. For while admitting the possibility of a good Muslim, Greville figures an Islamic society in which good is doomed to martyrdom, much as the well-intentioned courtier is often doomed to frustration in the English court.

On the other hand, the possibility exists that Greville's training as a dramatist--articulating competing voices and viewpoints--may have broadened his mind and allowed him to approach some stereotypes with a degree of skepticism. In the *Life of Sidney*, Greville defends his female characters. He explains, "I have not made all women with Euripides, so have I not made them all evill with Sophocles, but mixt of such sort as we find both them and ourselves" (Grossart 221). What is revealed in Greville's clarification is a capacity for empathy. Perhaps, then, Greville did not make his Muslims necessarily corrupt with the travelers as he did not make them all benign with Middleton. Perhaps instead he made them too "mixt" as he found both them and himself.

IV. Repercussions

Recent critics have been virtually unanimous in the conclusion that “not a single play about the Muslim Levant and North Africa that appeared in the Elizabethan, Jacobean, or Caroline periods showed the Muslim in a morally heroic and favorable light” (Matar, *Turks* 14).²¹ In fact, that was not the case. The diverse Muslims of Greville’s *Mustapha* and Middleton’s pageants illustrate that early modern readers and audiences were often as receptive to Muslims portrayed in a positive light as they were to demonization and stereotype. In the case of the Lord Mayor’s pageants, it is no exaggeration to claim that the English could not do without positive representations. As Stephen Greenblatt has argued the various joint stock ventures with overseas interests were “committed for their survival to attracting investment capital and . . . depended on their ability to market stories that would excite, interest, and attract supporters” (Greenblatt, *Shakespearean* 148). This is not to argue that English dramatists necessarily concerned themselves with disabusing their audiences of fantasy and prejudice. Indeed, it was more often the case that they chose to substitute one fantasy for another.

Although their concerns may not have been with the equitable representation of Islam, English dramatists inadvertently moved their culture toward a more balanced, if no more accurate, view of Muslim peoples. Setting aside the intentions of Greville and Middleton, we must consider instead the cultural repercussions of their works. Both *Mustapha* and the Lord Mayor’s Day pageants contain Muslim figures that betray notions of an English culture unwilling to accept positive representations of non-Christian peoples.

²¹See, for example, Barthelemy; and Tokson.

Furthermore, Greville's work, in particular, makes it impossible to conclude that English drama produced only stock figures of Islamic depravity. The Turks of Greville's play range from wicked to saintly, and, most importantly, often fall somewhere between these two extremes. They struggle with decisions, lament the existence of evil, and seek moral means of addressing their misfortunes. They are objects of admiration and pity as often as they are objects fit for condemnation and disgust. As such, they push the limits of their cultural boundaries, including stereotypes, and expose their audiences to Muslims who have little in common with the lustful, bloodthirsty Turk of travelers' accounts.

Cultural change rarely occurs as a result of an artist's intentions. Indeed, works of art often engage and secure their place in a culture in ways unforeseen by their creators. There is no way to measure the impact of Greville or Middleton's work on their culture. What we can do, however, is recognize that in the age of trafficking, English culture came to accept the possibility of exemplary Muslims. As I have tried to illustrate, the degree to which such tolerance might be extended was often determined by economic and political interests. Economics and politics were not, however, the exclusive gatekeepers of English tolerance. As English playwrights explored more complex Islamic figures and grappled with the increased contact between English Christianity and Mediterranean Islam, issues of gender were often strong enough to halt and even overturn the cultural expression of economic interests.

Chapter 3

A Christian [Not] Turn'd Turke: Patriarchy, Conversion, and the English Theater

I. "Thou shalt presently bee made Turke"

A curious appendix to Bartholomeus Gjorjevic's *The Offspring of the House of Ottomano* (translated for English readers by Hugh Goughe in 1569) provides a brief lexicon designed for the traveler in Islamic lands. Arranged like a phrase book, the appendix imagines snippets of "a dialogue conteininge questions, and aunsweres of a Turke with a Christian" (G3r). Since the text was published in octavo, it could be carried in a traveler's pocket and provide a script for encounters with the Ottoman Turks. The Christian of the dialogue is traveling in Turkish territory either to "exercise marchandise" or because his "business is into Asia" (G3v). These are the only options imagined necessary for the user of the phrase guide. No non-commercial reasons for relations between Christians and Turks are admitted. Trade alone justifies association, and association must be carefully limited to that which promotes the venture. Accordingly, the Christian reader is taught traditional Islamic greetings and idiomatic niceties, enough to be respectful and facilitate understanding.

Above all, the situation anticipated by the brief dialogue suggests the danger of establishing relations with the Turks. The traveler must show only as much interest in the Turk as is necessary to peacefully dismiss him and his treacherous invitations. Throughout the exchange, the Turk is imagined in the interrogative mode, eager to ascertain the Christian's plans, his business, and any news "spoken of in your partes." The suggested replies are terse and guarded. Thus when the Turk learns that the Christian is alone and extends to him an invitation to his lodging, the traveler is taught to respond with suspicion. He

shows polite interest and commits the Turk to Allah, but ultimately decides “I will not go that way” (G4v). Mocking the Christian’s suspicion, the Turk asks “Oh whom do you feare? Why come you not?” (G4v) But the Christian is firm in his refusal, asserting “My journeye is not that waye” and bidding the Turk a “prosperous nyght” (G4v).

The tacit prescription of the phrase-book is to maintain as great a distance as possible from the Turks while pursuing trade in their lands. Yet the nature of the threat posed to the dialogue’s traveler is never made clear. What exactly was the Turkish threat? Why is the Christian so stout in his refusals to go “that waye?” What would it mean to turn from his path and business to enjoy the seemingly agreeable Turk’s hospitality as he might that of a Christian? The appendix never provides a clear answer to these questions. We know only that the author considers such exchanges a necessary evil as he explains his inclusion of the dialogue so that “thou maist understand, how grosse and barbarous [Turks] be” (G4v). Ironically, the dialogue contains no evidence of gross or barbarous behavior. It is almost as if the author wishes to gesture toward, without actually acknowledging, some heinous wrong. One possibility may be suggested in the following appendix detailing “[t]he Lamentable affliction, as well of the captive Christians, as of them which live under the most grievous yoke of Tribute.” While this next section of Gjorjevic’s text--and the fact that an average of three thousand Europeans were taken captive each year between 1520 and 1660¹--suggests one of the dire consequences of pursuing relations with Turks, I believe that the unspoken danger of the phrase-book dialogue is made perfectly apparent in the accounts of travelers to the Ottoman Empire, those men for whom the dialogue is ostensibly intended.

¹Wolf 151.

Bernard Lewis has recently argued that the twin European fears of conquest and conversion were characteristic of the medieval conflict between Islam and the West, but that “in the second great confrontation, this time between Renaissance Europe and Ottoman Islam, few were tempted to change their faith” (Lewis, *Islam* 14). Although Lewis’ argument may be supported by a decrease in the actual number of conversions, fear of forced conversion did not diminish. On the contrary, increased English presence in the Mediterranean in the early modern period² combined with the greater circulation of traveler’s narratives to keep current the threat of Islamic conversion. These sustained anxieties are no better evidenced than in the period’s frequent idiomatic usage of the phrase “turn Turk,” as in Hamlet’s musing over his fortunes turning Turk. Yet “turning Turk” was more than just a colorful expression for the English. It was a serious concern with multiple cultural repercussions: to “turn Turk” was to turn from Christianity, Englishness, and masculinity.

Works like Gyorjevic’s phrase book tacitly acknowledged that men could not be dissuaded from pursuing their fortunes in Islamic lands, especially while the term “Turkey merchant” was becoming synonymous with financial success. At the same time, however, it was believed that “[i]n every 3 yeere that they stave in Turkye, [Christians] lose one article of theyre faythe” (Sherley 11). This kind of recognition of Islam’s proselytizing efficacy necessitated warnings, like Baptist Goodall’s, that

With piety our travels must agree

² English presence in the Mediterranean particularly increased in the Jacobean period due to James’ peace-seeking foreign policy. The 1604 treaty with Spain decreased the risk of Spanish depredations of English shipping and led to the movement of decommissioned English privateers into North African corsair fleets. See also Chew 342-5. For general discussions of English piracy in the early modern period, see Wolfe; Senior; Lloyd; and Lucie-Smith.

Nor must our gain religion's ruin be
 That Proteus like, we as a feather change
 Nor through religions as through realms we range. (H2r)

The phrase-book provides a script whereby the Christian traveler may perform his proper part and maintain his piety as Goodall recommends. Yet travelers' accounts of the period suggest that avoiding religious confrontations was not always so easy.

Thomas Sanders' account of the crew of the *Jesus* in the Ottoman protectorate of Tripoli in 1584 makes explicit the indistinct danger of Gjorjević's phrase book. Recognizing that no single traveler's narrative may be taken as representative of the Anglo-Ottoman experience, I have intentionally chosen a narrative of conflict in order to explore the limits of the compromise and tolerance established in the first two chapters of this study. Over the course of Sanders' narrative, made widely available in Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589), the Muslims of Tripoli are transformed from collegial trading partners into sexually aberrant oppressors and the enemies of God's people. The account begins with European merchants enjoying the entertainment of the court and trading with Tripoli's Muslim king. The scene of peaceful trafficking dissolves when one of the merchants' factors, a Frenchman named Romaine Sonnings, grows too confident in his safety and jeopardizes the crew. Sonnings' scheme to smuggle a French debtor aboard the *Jesus* results in his being sentenced, along with the ship's master, to execution while the crew are "condemned slaves perpetually unto the great Turke and the shippe and goods. . . confiscated to the use of the great Turke" (Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations V*: 195). Yet neither forfeiture of goods, enslavement nor even execution is figured as the gravest danger faced by the *Jesus* crew. That danger is

embodied by the king's son, coincidentally visiting from the Island of Jerba.

Seeing the captive Englishmen,

he greatly fancied Richard Burges our purser, and Iames Smith: they were both yong men, therefore he was very desirous to have them to turne Turkes, but they would not yeeld to his desire, saying we are your fathers slaves, and as slaves we will serve him. Then his father the king sent for them, and asked them if they woulde turne Turke; and they saide: If it please your highnes, Christians we were borne, and so we wil remaine, & beseechd the king that they might not be inforced thereunto. The king had there in his house, a sonne of a yeoman of our Queenes guard, whom the kings sone had inforced to turne Turke, his name was Iohn Nelson: him the king caused to be brought to these young men and then said unto them: will you not beare this your countreyman company and be Turke as he is: But it fell out, that within a moneth after, the kings sonne went home to Gerbi againe, being six score miles from Tripolis and carried our two foresaide yong men with him. . . [and] within three dayes after they were violently used, for that the kings sonne demaunded of them againe, if that they would turne Turke: Then answered Richard Burges, a Christian I am, and so I will remaine. Then the kings sonne very angerly saide unto him: by Mahomet thou shalt presently bee made Turke, and they did so, and circumcised him, and would haue had him speake the wordes that thereunto belonged, But he answered them stoutly that he would not: and although they had put on him the habite of a Turke, yet said he, a Christian I was borne, and so I will remaine, though you force me to doe otherwise.

And then he called for the other, and commanded him to be made Turke perforce also: but hee was very strong, for it was so much as eight of the kings sonnes men could doe to hold him, so in the ende they circumcised him and made him Turke (Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations V*: 197).

As an indication of English concerns with the increased contact of Christian Englishmen with Islam, Sanders' relation is a telling addendum to Gyorjevic's phrase-book. His description of Burges and Smith's plight occupies nearly half of the account and manifests the danger of going "the way" of the Turk. In short, to turn from one's business is to risk "turning Turk" and yielding to all of the depravity associated with Islam. Daniel Vitkus has shown that in the early modern period conversion to Islam "was considered a kind of sexual transgression" (146). This relationship is apparent in the language of Sanders' account which suggests a simultaneous threat to English Christianity and masculinity. Though the narrative's enforced conversions are initially motivated by a transgression of the law, they are linguistically attributed to aberrant Islamic sexuality as the story unfolds. We learn first that the prince "greatly fancied" the two Englishmen, Burges and Smith. While "fancying" could indicate a platonic affection, it was frequently used in the period to indicate a sexual attraction.³ This sense of "fancy" as carnal appetite is supported in the repeated characterizations of the prince's passion for converting "young men" as "desirous." The prince's fancy uncomfortably positions Burges and Smith as effeminized objects of desire who refuse to "yeeld" their bodies. Seeking to

³In declaring his passion to Cressida, Shakespeare's *Troilus* uses "fancy" as a synonym for love: "I love thee in so strain'd a purity / That the blest gods, as angry with my *fancy*, / More bright in zeal than the devotion which / Cold lips blow to their deities, take thee from me" (4.4.24-7).

redefine themselves in a more masculine register, they insist upon their status as the king's slaves. Yet the king's presentation of the previously converted John Nelson and suggestion that Burges and Smith bear him company frustrates the effort, conflating slavery with concubinage. That Nelson is the "sonne of a yeoman of our Queenes guard" implies, also, a threat to the masculine forces surrounding the English monarchy. Soon thereafter, we learn that Burges and Smith are taken away and "violently used" by the prince. Again, the term is one with strong sexual connotations, as in Reginald Scot's description in *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) of men "so betwitched that they cannot *use* their own wives." Perhaps most importantly, Sanders' descriptive emphasis on the physical coercion involved in circumcising the English captives is suggestive of male-male rape. Within this scenario, the Muslim prince is cast as the aggressor while the overpowered and genitally-violated Englishmen are forced by an eight-man gang into the more "feminine" role of overpowered victim.

That conversion's threat lay largely in its assault on the male Christian body is further evident in Gjorjevic's lamentation that while some Christian captives are made Janissaries by the Turks,

the reste (Oh enuious act) in whome a greater grace of bewtie appeareth, ar so mangled that no manlines is to be sene in all their bodyes, with no small daunger of leeing their lives: but if they escape, yet from thence fourth safty and sauegard maye they not obtain, untill they are made pertakers of their unnatural lust and lecherye, or their comly bewtye wearynge away, ar made Eunuchs.
(Gjorjevic G7v-8r)

The Islamic threat was thus twofold, a combined assault on the male Christian body and soul. Worse still, Europeans were relatively powerless to resist. When, for example, William Harborne learned of the fate of "Assan Aga" (Samson

Rowlie), the son of a Bristol merchant made eunuch and treasurer to the King of Algiers, he could do little more than encourage the desperate "Assan" to maintain his piety "in such sort that notwithstanding your body be subject to Turkish thraldom, yet your virtuous mind free from those vices" (*Principal Navigations V* 283).

Harborne's advice gives some indication of the English understanding of conversion. Even if one's mind is not converted, one's body is indelibly marked by circumcision. Part of the horror of conversion, forced or unforced, was therefore the difficulty of re-integration; for not only was the individual body inscribed with a taint, English culture was inscribed with a polysemous understanding of conversion. In early modern English usage, the term "Turk" was, first and foremost, used to describe a subject of the Ottoman Sultan. But the term was also used synonymously with "Mahumetan" and "Mohammedan," regardless of the subject's homeland. To "turn Turk," therefore, was to turn not only from Christianity, but also from Englishness. This understanding of the term was especially pertinent in the seventeenth century as English renegades joined Barbary pirates preying on English shipping. Because of their treasonous association with the enemies of Christian Europe, renegades were slain on sight in some parts of Europe, regardless of their desire to return to Christianity. Even where those who returned to Christianity were treated with greater understanding, no means was agreed upon to "uncircumcise" the apostate, or erase (either physically or metaphorically) the stigma of conversion.⁴

In England, ceremonies were devised especially for the public re-integration of apostates.⁵ Even men whose conversions came forcefully were

⁴See Shapiro 128-30 for a discussion of "uncircumcision" and the debates over Pauline doctrine.

compelled to perform some public reclamation of their faith. In its repeated quotation of Burges' mantra-like refusals, Sanders' published account seeks to perform a similar re-affirmation of the four English captives' abiding devotion to Christianity. Thus, we learn of Burges' insistence that, contrary to the belief of many, assuming "the habite of a Turke" was no marker of spiritual deviation if one "stoutly" refused to "speake the wordes."⁶ Nevertheless, the possibility for re-integration is complicated by that fact that circumcision transforms the male body, permanently differentiating it with the imprint of conversion. Thus Burges, Smith, Nelson, and the other unnamed English captive are nearly enslaved anew by the Greek crew that discovers them circumcised. Only word of the ardor with which "they did enterprise at sea to fight against all the Turks" (199) and avenge themselves against their assailant redeems them. In Sanders' treatment, this ardor acts as a means of wresting back and asserting English manhood. It attributes any desires deemed inappropriate within the heterosexual economy to the Muslim man who is fit within stereotypes of Islamic lechery and corruption, effectively exculpating the Christian of reciprocity. Finally, this assessment is confirmed in Sanders' report of various "plagues and punishments" (198) sent down by God to afflict the king and his people, not the least of which is a military coup here interpreted as divine punishment.

Strictly speaking, Muslims are discouraged by Qur'anic injunction from forcing conversions of "infidels." European Christians of the early modern period were not entirely unaware of this doctrine. George Sandys' account of renegades' motives for conversion, for example, tells that they are drawn by money, clothes and freedom from tax and tributes, and carefully points out that

⁵See Netzloff.

⁶For a discussion of the sartorial markers of conversion, see Matar, "Renaissance England and the Turban."

Muslims “compel no man” (Purchas VIII: 134).⁷ Sandys’ balanced learnedness is exceptional, however, and obscured by the great number of cases presented by men like Sanders. Examples of forced conversions, usually administered as a punishment for piracy or infractions of local laws, made it easier to ignore the more disturbing cases of voluntary conversion and lent support to spurious accounts of Muslim missionary doctrine. Works like the anonymous *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* (1597) proposed that

The Turkes doe desire nothing more then to drawe both Christians and other to embrace their religion and to turn Turke. And they do hold that in so doing they doe God good seruice, bee it by any meanes good or badde, right or wrong. For this cause they do plot and deuse sundry wayes how to gaine them to their faith. And many times when they see that no other means will prevail, then they will frame false accusations against them (19-20).

An earlier continental work went so far as to claim that it was Muhammad’s decree “that when they overcome Christians, they should not kill them; but they should pervert them, and should thus spread and strengthen their own faith” (Schiltberger 73). In actuality, many Muslims who took Christian captives preferred to allow them to maintain their Christianity; if they converted they could not be enforced to hard labor or galley slavery.⁸ Still, in the face of the

⁷Samuel Chew explains further that, “the general impression in England that Moslems practiced forcible conversion was probably founded upon the reports of escaped or ransomed captives who hid under the plea of compulsion their voluntary lapse from Christianity for the sake of ameliorating their condition” (375). Chew’s conjecture is supported by the fact that a Christian man found visiting a house of prostitution in Constantinople was given the choice of death or “turning Turk.” Few would have chosen death; fewer would have admitted their choice of conversion.

⁸See the Encyclopædia Britannica (1935 ed.) entry on Barbary Pirates.

Islamic threat described above, the story of Burges and Smith becomes a parable of English fortitude and devotion. This kind of narrative redemption was not always possible. In many cases, European Christians required no coercion to become “busormen” and “turn Turk,”⁹ and felt no desire to return to Christianity through a violent display of devotion or otherwise.

II. “There is not a sailor of that nation but is a pirate”

Fuad Sha’ban’s study of “The Mohammedan World in English Literature” suggests Burges and Smith’s resistance was typical of travelers in Islamic lands. He argues that English travelers were

steadfast in their religious beliefs and patriotism. They suffered torture and drew down the wrath of kings and rulers upon themselves because they would not yield in arguments of a religious or patriotic nature. Sometimes they were tempted with rich rewards, often women, but that was not enough to sway them from what they believed in. (Sha’ban 71).

Accounts of early modern travelers, however, suggest just the opposite and illustrate that Englishmen not only yielded in arguments of a religious nature, they were often tempted by rich rewards and women. As disturbing as the few cases of forced conversion might be for English readers, incidents of voluntary apostasy were even more shocking because they marked a willing subjugation of English masculinity and Christianity. Sanders, therefore has little to say about the “very unhappie boy” who deserts from the crew of an English ship called the

⁹The word “busorman” does not appear in the OED. Richard Willes’ account of a 1568 voyage into Persia seems to be the earliest use of the term, and, fortunately, provides the definition, “one that hath forsaken his faith” (Hakluyt, *Principall I*: 418)

Green Dragon to live with the prince on Jerba. We learn only that he did so “understanding that whosoever would turne Turke should be well entertained of the kings sonne” (197). The meaning of “entertainment” here remains unclear and requires some investigation. Most European explanations for cases of apostasy in the period suggest the motive of greed and worldly rewards. *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* insists that those who do turn are “not only rewarded with store of money, livings and other necessaries for their maintenance, but commonly they are preferred and advanced to great offices” (20-1). The same notion prevails in Dekker’s *If This Be Not A Good Play The Diuel Be In It* (1612), when Barteruile, dressed as a Turk, is asked “what ist turnes you into a Turke?” His reply: “That for which manie their Religion/ Most men their Faith, all chaunge their honestie,/ Profit” (Dekker III: 4.1.6-9). R.W. Bulliet urges a cautious reading of such explanations, reminding us that in cases of conversion “the religion that is losing members must rationalize what is occurring in a manner that will strengthen the faith of the steadfast members of the community” (Gervers and Bikhazi 6). Yet as Halil Inalcik explains, in the Ottoman social system, “to be born non-Muslim and non-Turkish was an essential qualification for entrance into [the] dominant elite” (Cook 103). The only office beyond the reach of those who were converted as young men was emperor. Janissaries, provincial governors, governor generals, *viziers* (royal ministers) and even the grand *vizier* came from the ranks of the *ajemioghlanlar*, or foreign youths recruited from the Empire’s Christian population. Though most who rose to such heights were converted while still adolescent boys, European commentators regularly described, in contending tones of envy and disgust, the rewards enjoyed by those Christian men who renounced their faith for Islam. Having turned Turk, one author explained, the apostate could expect to be

carried about al the quarters and streetes of the Cittie, with great triumph and ioy of the people, who haue drummes and trumpets sounding before them; & besides diuers gifts and rewards bestowed vpon him, he is made free for euer after from all tributes and exactions. Through the desire of which gaine & privedge, many of the Greeks . . . and manie Albanezes . . . doo willingly offer themselues to be circumcised." (*Policie* 24)

The Greeks and Albanians were not alone in viewing apostasy as a means of advancing their station in life. A significant number of Englishmen willingly forsook their homes and faith in hopes of greater financial success. Perhaps the best known of this lot were those who took up the Mediterranean corsair's life when James pursued a policy of peace with Spain and proclaimed an official suspension of privateering in June of 1603. As I will later indicate, this change in policy would influence the drama in direct proportion to its effect on English sailors. Fifteen years of war had created an entire class of men who thrived on Spanish plunder and had few skills they could take ashore. "The total number of the English maritime population (including fishermen and wherry-men), had stood at some 16,000 in 1582. This number had been trebled by two decades of war, so that by 1603 there were about 50,000 seamen who had either to find a job or starve" (Senior 9). Those who chose to work the land could often find only seasonal employment. Those who joined the merchant fleet or navy endured abject living conditions for subsistence wages that did not rise from 1585 until 1625.¹⁰ Joining Turkish corsairs, on the other hand, offered those same men the opportunity to quickly amass fortunes by preying on rich cargoes Christian privateers left undisturbed. By 1610, reports of the wealth of English renegade

¹⁰Senior 17

pirates were common enough to prompt plays on the subject as well as a royal pardon to any renegades who chose to return. Yet the draw of a pardon could not compete with the lures of wealth and advancement. Indeed, the defection of Englishmen to the largely Turkish crews of Barbary in the first decade of the seventeenth century was substantial enough to prompt the Venetian governor of Zante, Maffio Michiel, to say of the English, “there is not a sailor of that nation but is a pirate” (Senior 83).¹¹ Indeed, in 1607 English piracy was such a problem in the Mediterranean that the Turks sent their first ever emissary to London to lodge a formal complaint.

Christians converted to advance their station, avoid taxes or even to protect themselves after breaking the law. Indeed, one of the more curious documents included in Hakluyt’s *Principall Navigations* is an article drawn up “allowing merchants to imprison such who committed crimes then became busormen.” Regardless of their reasons, these renegades were considered even worse than the men who had converted them; they had known the true faith and abandoned it. Thomas More’s *Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* (1534), claimed “there is no borne Turk so cruell to Christian folke as is the false Christen that falleth from the fayth.” Seventy years later, a French visitor to Tunis in 1606, Le Sieur de Brèves, was correspondingly aghast as he observed of the English that “every kind of debauchery and uninhibited licentiousness is allowed them: even that which is not tolerated among the Turks themselves” (Senior 95-6).

No first-hand accounts of renegades exist. This should not, however, encourage us to rely solely upon the words of their detractors. These accounts

¹¹Michiel’s statement is understandably hyperbolic given the fact that the Venetians suffered the depredations of the corsair fleets more than any other merchants.

never admit the possibility of sincere religious conversion, or conversion, in Peter Lamborn Wilson's term, as "social resistance."¹² Yet Wolfe reports on one Italian renegade who built a public bath and mosque as a gift to Algiers.¹³ This hardly seems the act of a spurious convert. Others may have seen conversion as an act of rebellion against the rigid confines of primogeniture and the class system. I have already indicated how reductions of the English naval and privateering forces at the turn of the century left many of the working class without incomes. When they could find work, English sailors were notoriously underpaid and brutalized. Apostasy presented them an opportunity to break with a class system that kept them impoverished. Likewise the servants of merchants were often tempted by apostasy for its economic benefits. Richard Willes, who traveled in the Islamic near East in the 1560s to set up trade relations with Persia, complained that "there was great occasion of naughtie servants to deceive and rob their masters, that under the colour of professing that religion, they might live among them in such safetie that you might have no lawe agaysnt them, either to punish them or to recover your goods at their hands" (Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations I*: 417).

What of the *Green Dragon's* "very unhappie boy" whose discontent Sanders chooses not to explain. Did Islam offer him economic opportunities or spiritual refuge? Sanders does not entertain the possibility. Did it offer liberation to a young man whose sexuality was repressed under English heterosexist mores? Again, the possibility of apostasy as an expression of social resistance is withheld. Boy-love was, in fact, a generally accepted, if scripturally

¹²For a discussion of apostasy as a praxis of social resistance, see Wilson 1995.

¹³Wolfe 148-9

forbidden, practice in Turkish North Africa.¹⁴ Despite the typical attribution of all sexual excess or nonconformity to Muslims in cases of interfaith contact, there is no reason to believe that desire to engage in this practice was limited to Muslims. In a letter of February 7, 1611, John Sanderson urges discretion upon Thomas Glover, the English ambassador in Constantinople, since it is rumored about London that “you keep there a poor boy, which you have put up in fine apparel, and that you lie with the said boy” (Foster 273). Glover would never admit as much, but it is quite reasonable to suggest that both he and the *Green Dragon’s* “very unhappie boy” chose lives in the Islamic Ottoman Empire for the sexual liberality they would be afforded.

The possibility of conversion motivated by unorthodox forms of desire is sometimes occluded by the repeated attributions of apostasy to Turkish trickery or Machiavellian schemers who “treated religion not as a way to eternal salvation but as a way to material prosperity. . . a means to a secular end” (Matar, “Renegade” 491). Yet after enticements of wealth and position, the next most common explanation for apostasy derived from the European understanding of Islam as a sexually loose culture founded by a depraved prophet. Without question, Islam was a more sexually liberated culture than Christendom, and Muhammad did, in fact, speak in favor of sexual pleasure. Certainly this relative liberality could have attracted individuals stymied by Europe’s sexual prudishness and fetishization of chastity. In the hands of travel writers, however, Islam’s validation of pleasure was translated into dissolute hedonism. William Lithgow warns that the Turks are “extremely inclined to all sorts of lascivious luxury; and generally addicted, besides all their sensual and incestuous lusts, unto sodomy, which they account as a dainty to digest [with] all

¹⁴See Wilson 1995: 184-6.

their other libidinous pleasures" (Lithgow, *Total* 145-6).¹⁵ It is hard to say whether observations like Lithgow's are accurate or merely examples of displaced sodomy, like that which Jonathan Goldberg finds in Spanish descriptions of New World natives. As Goldberg puts it, accusations of sodomy "emerge into visibility only when those who are said to have [performed sodomitical acts] also can be called traitors, heretics, or the like" (Goldberg 19). Thus, while at home there was a "reluctance to recognize homosexual behavior" (Bray 76), the English were quick to find it among people, like Turks and renegades, whose actions were considered heretical and disruptive of the Christian heterosexual social order. One traveler claims that renegades are "given all to whoredome [and] sodometrie" (Nicholay B4r), while another decides to "leave their sodomy. . . to the judgment of the just Revenger" (Barker C2) In "The Seaman's Song of Captain Ward," we learn that John Ward's renegade companions spend their time ashore "in drunkenness and letchery [sic], [and] filthy sins of sodomy" (Senior 13).

For the purposes of this study, it is not essential to assess the validity of these claims. Instead, I take them, along with a host of everyday references to the Turks--in histories, drama, pageantry, liturgy, woodcuts, and common speech--as evidence of a widespread anxiety over Islam's apparent menace to English men. Though stories of Turkish cruelty--for example, the story of Muhammad III's strangulation of his nineteen brothers in 1595--were repeated for years, English anxieties concerning the Turks grew increasingly focused on two areas, conversion and masculinity.¹⁶ When speaking of anxieties in this argument, I

¹⁵Similar claims concerning Muslim sodomy are found in Nicholay 02r, and Purchas 9:275. See also Matar, *Turks* 109-27.

¹⁶Interestingly, when the story of Muhammad's Ascension day massacre reached Lord Burghley, it was told that Muhammad had called his nineteen

tend to follow Mark Breitenberg's claim that masculinity is "inherently anxious." Breitenberg argues that "masculine subjectivity constructed and sustained by a patriarchal culture--infused with patriarchal assumptions about power, privilege, sexual desire, the body--inevitably engenders varying degrees of anxiety in its male members" (1). Breitenberg's explanation is most compelling when coupled with more historically-specific reasons for the period's crisis in gender relations ranging from the forty-five-year tenure of a female monarch to new conceptualizations of the English family. As my examples indicate, masculine anxiety in the early modern period has most often been measured in relation to the position of women vis-à-vis patriarchy. To these inquiries I add an examination of the Islamic menace because it seemed to threaten not only the bodies and souls of individual Christian men, but also the very foundations of Christian patriarchy. As Sanders' narrative illustrates, encounters with Islamic men had the potential to disturb the very assumptions Breitenberg identifies as fundamental to patriarchy. In the face of Islam, Englishmen found themselves vulnerable not only bodily, but also in the realms of power, privilege, and sexuality. This vulnerability and the anxieties it produced also helps to explain why it was the Islamic Other, and not the native American, that became such an important figure in early modern English drama.

III. Islam and English Women

Islam and women produced parallel anxieties for English men. But anxiety does not necessarily give rise to fear and paralysis. More often than not, it motivates the reconstruction and defense of those privileges that seem most in jeopardy. Any number of strategies may be identified in the relentless insistence

brothers to be circumcised before revealing his true intention to murder them. The likelihood that Ottoman royalty were uncircumcised is not great. The story indicates, though, the dangers which the English attached to Turkishness.

on patriarchal stability. I have chosen to examine Islam's and women's threats to English patriarchy together because one of those strategies is apparent in the Turkish plays, where these two, apparently distinct, sources of masculine anxiety are strategically yoked and set at odds. This is not to say that the Turkish plays amount to a direct and unified response to travelers' narratives and the situations of women. The concerns of the plays changed considerably over the forty year period I examine.

In the forty years between 1588 and 1625 England struggled through religious debates, gender debates and political debates surrounding the passage of the crown from a female to a male monarch. Its overseas interests and ventures grew, and its foreign policy shifted in focus from war on Spain to peace-seeking and isolationism. While many of the changes in English culture can be traced, at least in part, to the shift from Elizabeth to James, it would be too simplistic to set the Turkish plays into two distinct groups divided by the transfer of the English crown. Elements of the earliest Turkish plays of the 1580s continued to appear through the reign of King James.¹⁷ In plays like *Othello* (1604), *The Turk* (1607), and *The Courageous Turk* (1618), Turks continued to represent a threat of invasion. In numerous plays, from *Jew of Malta*, *Soliman and Perseda*, *Selimus*, and *Mustapha* in the 1590s, to *Lust's Dominion*, *Fair Maid of the West Part II*, *The Turke*, and *The Raging Turk* in the early 1600s, Muslim men are positioned primarily as scheming villains. They were often bombastic and lascivious, qualities apparent in stage Turks since Marlowe's *Bajazeth* (1588) and Kyd's *Solyman* (1591), but still visible in characters in Goffe's 1618 incarnation of Murad I. Yet despite these overlaps, there is a distinct shift of focus in the

¹⁷The continued appearance of the warlike Turk was doubtless encouraged by James' own representation of the Turkish fleet in his poem of 1585, "The Lepanto."

Turkish plays of the Jacobean era. References to the devil, Machiavellianism, and Turkish military power taper off in the Turkish plays of the seventeenth century. They are replaced with images of Islamic lechery as invasion plots give way to an emphasis on intercultural encounters.

By the time James took the throne in 1603 the Levant Company had been sending Englishmen into Ottoman territories for more than twenty years. These men, combined with those who defected to Barbary, amounted to an unprecedented number of Englishmen coming into non-combative contact with Islam. Images of Muslims worshipping a fire-spitting brazen head, as the Turks do in Robert Greene's *Alphonsus, King of Aragon* (1588), were swiftly losing credibility. This is not to say that the Turks of Jacobean drama bear any more significant relationship with the lived experience of actual Ottoman Turks than was the case with Elizabethan representations. It only means that representations had to change. The Turks of the Jacobean stage were not, however, any more complex than those created by Elizabethan playwrights. In fact, they generally became more two-dimensional as their place in the drama shifted from that of leading characters to secondary foils. As increasing numbers of Englishmen traveled to Islamic lands, the protagonist's role in the Turkish plays was almost always reserved for European Christians whose undertakings involved encounters with one or more Turks. Often those Turks were women, and here again we find a significant difference from the Elizabethan plays. It is no mere coincidence that more female characters--both Christian and Muslim--populate the Jacobean Turkish plays. Their presence is essential to the plays' management of the Islamic threat and defense of patriarchal privilege. By re-imagining the traveler's experience in Islamic lands, the Turkish plays commented on the experience of trafficking while simultaneously engaging with Reformation politics and Jacobean gender debates. With some notable

exceptions, they tended to employ the threat of disorder--from women, Muslims, or both-- as a means of shoring up patriarchal ideology. In the amorous relations of fictional Muslims and Christians in particular, they found a site for the assertion of gender hierarchies whose position was becoming increasingly precarious in Jacobean England.

Foreign visitors to London frequently remarked on the relative liberties afforded to Englishwomen, particularly their right to go about town, or "abroad," unescorted.¹⁸ Massinger's *Renegado* calls particular attention to these relative liberties when the Turkish Princess Donusa questions her English eunuch Carazie about Christian women whom, she has heard, "live with much more freedome/Then [*sic*] such as are borne heere" (1.2.17-18). In response, Carazie tells her that English women, for the most part, "live like queens" (1.2.29). Effectively suggesting that further demands would be unchristian, Donusa declares, "We enjoy no more,/That are o' the Othoman race, though our religion/ Allows all pleasure" (1.2.49-51). This subtle foreclosure on English women's appeals for greater liberties was characteristic of the period's anti-feminism. The liberties of English women were regularly denounced by English men. In a letter of February 12, 1620, John Chamberlain reports, "Our pulpits ring continually of the insolence and impudence of women: and to helpe the matter forward the players have likewise taken them to taske" (qtd. in Woodbridge 142). This is not to say that such efforts were successful. Indeed, their frequency suggests that women regularly and strenuously opposed patriarchal constraint. The Turkish plays address the issue of women's liberties in strategic conjunction with the Islamic threat. Rather than dealing with these two anxieties in their separate domains -- (1) domestic, Christian men vs.

¹⁸See Woodbridge 171.

Christian women; and (2) global, Christian men vs. Muslim men -- as they are respectively treated in gender debates and travelers' narratives, the Turkish plays collapse the two realms. This is not altogether unnatural since, as Kim Hall has argued, "associations between marriage, kinship, property and economics become increasingly anxiety ridden as traditional social structures (such as marriage) are extended when England develops commercial ties across the globe" (Hall, "Guess" 93). Yet in bringing together these two issues, the Turkish plays contrive to set the discrete threats of Muslim men and Christian women against each other, and consequently efface the discomfiting aspects of each for English men.

In offering mythologies of its uncontested dominance, the Christian patriarchy invariably leaves uncovered a trace of its anxieties. Gyorjevic's phrase book, for example, relies on a strategy of omission, making no mention of turning Turk and imagining a faithful and resilient Christian traveler. Yet a trace of anxiety remains visible in the injunction to continue on one's path and not *turn* the Turk's "waye." The Turkish plays are similarly marked by a startling omission. Despite the prominence of the expression "turn Turk" and the fact that apostasy and conversion form a central motif in the accounts of travelers like Sanders, there is not a single instance of successful conversion to Islam included in all of the Turkish plays. This is not to say, however, that apostasy and conversion are absent from the Turkish plays. On the contrary, conversion is almost everywhere in the plays *except* where we would expect it. In so much as the Turkish plays address fears of conversion and admit a far greater degree of interaction between Christians and Turks, they provide a more complex and pertinent response to conditions as they are described in travelers' narratives than is available in Gyorjevic's dialogue. The issue of conversion is frequently raised. Fears of apostasy are clearly a preoccupation of the plays, perhaps even

their most important motif. Yet the period's most commonly reported kind of interfaith conversion--European Christian men converting to Islam--is almost entirely absent from the Turkish plays. In the second part of this chapter, I will attempt to account for this peculiarity and examine the ways in which traces of patriarchal anxiety, heightened by the Islamic threat, limit the Turkish plays' treatment of conversion and desire. By identifying the plays I deal with as components of a particular genre I do not wish to seal them off hermetically from other plays with which they share structural or thematic qualities. On the contrary, I hope to show that these plays are not simply strange, non-canonical texts but in fact a group of works in dialogue with each other as well as a range of related materials. The argument which follows therefore attempts, as well, to develop a provisional taxonomy of the genre. Finally, a concluding section will illustrate the importance of recognizing the Turkish play genre for our readings of certain canonical texts such as Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

IV. Gender and Conversion

The Turkish plays imagine a complex and changeable (though ultimately unrealistic) set of relationships between Christians and Muslims. Some times the two live together amicably; at other times they engage in combat. Most significantly, however, the two almost invariably experience desire for each other. Between 1588 and 1624 at least fifteen English plays dramatized Christian-Muslim desire. Christian men and women long for Muslim lovers, Muslim men and women desire Christians, and these passions drive the action of most of the plays. This is not to say that these relationships are devoid of the dangers intimated by Gyorjevic's phrase-book dialogue. More often than not, they figure as the principal source of conflict in the plays as such relationships would in practice in English society. Generally speaking, at the point where desire enters

the play, religious tolerance exists. The Turkish plays thus help to elucidate how religious difference “operates according to the exigencies of various discursive domains, and relates to and interacts with other axes of social formation” (Traub, Kaplan, and Callaghan 4). In their limited permutations of Christian-Muslim relationships, the plays indicate how racial, sexual and especially gender hierarchies intersect with and alter the import of religious difference.

While the plots of the Turkish plays may vary, roles within them witnessed very little differentiation in the Jacobean period. This limitation motivates my treatment of the plays in terms of the roles they suggest, rather than in a strict chronological sequence. Briefly, those roles are as follows: Christian men are repeatedly threatened with religio-moral corruption, ostensibly culminating in circumcision and conversion. They frequently experience desire for Islamic women and possess the exclusive power to redeem Islamic people and lead them to conversion. Christian women, on the other hand, are threatened almost exclusively in terms of the body. The lustful Muslims, both male and female, who pursue them show no interest in their conversion. Unlike their male co-religionists, Christian women have no power to convert the Muslims who prey on them. Their only power lies in the ability to resist Muslim seduction with chastity and devotion to Christian men. In worst-case scenarios, however, they are overcome with a lust for Islamic men that is figured as misguided, demeaning, and often fatal. It is therefore unsurprising that Islamic men are rarely redeemable in the Turkish plays. Exceptions, including Heywood’s Basha Joffer and the Moorish king of Middleton’s *Triumphs of Truth*, do exist, but in most cases Muslim men are lecherous, unattractive and steadfast in their religion if not staunchly, and even violently, anti-Christian. Little or no interest is expressed concerning their conversion to Christianity. Islamic women, on the other hand, are frequently seen as potential converts to

Christianity. They are, however, figured as dangerously desirable. Regularly set on by Islamic men to entrap and convert Christians, Islamic women possess a potentially disruptive sexuality. In the later Turkish plays, however, this threat is managed by imagining Islamic women as anxious for conversion themselves after learning of Christianity from their intended apostate.

Placed alongside accounts, like Sanders', of Anglo-Ottoman interaction, the Turkish plays and the roles they imagine are curious for their inclusions and cruxes. Why, for example, are the plays invariably concerned with interfaith desire? Why does conversion figure so prominently in these relationships? Why is conversion always associated with desire, rather than faith or politics? Why are the plays' European men virtually unmoved by the temptations of apostasy? Why do so many of the plays involve European women threatened by male Islamic desire where no corresponding threat is present in the travelers' narratives? When there are, in fact, no accounts of women travelers to the Ottoman Empire? What, then, is the source for this recurring trope? Why is the threat of Islam figured as gender-specific, targeting women's bodies and men's souls? Likewise, why is conversion to Christianity so readily available to Muslim women and not Muslim men? How are these various configurations impressed by racial difference?

The above inventory of questions would seem to require a book-length study. Yet all of the questions posed above derive from one: What happens, in the Turkish plays, to the apostasy and conversion so central to travelers' accounts? The answer to this question changes as greater numbers of Englishmen come into contact with Islam in the period under study. The Turkish plays of the Elizabethan era betray little concern with conversion. In their tendency to privilege class over religious difference, they demonstrate a closer affinity to the romance tradition than to travelers' narratives. In Greene's

Alphonsus, Prince of Aragon (1588), for example, the most prominent obstacle to intercultural love is class difference, and that obstacle is overcome through a traditional romantic revelation of clandestine nobility. A similar set of circumstances occurs in the anonymous play *Thracian Wonder* (1599). Here, too, it is the Christian who must prove his worth to his Eastern love. *Alphonsus* and *Thracian Wonder* are less remarkable as poetic works than as indices of cultural breadth. They indicate a capacity, albeit limited, to dismiss religious difference in an age that often approached Islam with suspicion and/or antagonism. Their treatment of Islam is by no means generous. Greene's portrait of vulgar idolatry, in particular, is thoroughly unfounded and insulting. Yet by figuring interfaith unions as their fitting conclusions, both plays admit possibilities quite absent from travelers' narratives. On the other hand, when we take into account the limits imposed by gender hierarchy, we recognize that those possibilities are significantly qualified.

Alphonsus and *Thracian Wonder* are both permissive of interfaith desire, but only a specific configuration of interfaith desire: in each case, a Christian man wins a Muslim woman as his wife. As Linda Boose explains, in order for this kind of union to be acceptable in a patriarchal culture, "women who belong to an otherwise alien group must be perceived as assets whose assimilation will [benefit the] male social alliance" (Hendricks and Parker 41). It would be no surprise to find that the Turkish plays treated only this brand of interfaith desire. As we move into the Jacobean period, however, this is not the case. As many English plays feature the relations of Christian women and Muslim men as the converse. Kyd's *Perseda* is desired by Solyman; Heywood's *Bess* is desired by Mullisheg; Mason's *Julia* is desired by Mulleases; Fletcher's *Orianna* is desired by the Basha of Tripoli; Rowley's *Jacinta* is desired by Mully Mumen; and Massinger's *Paulina* is desired by Asambeg.

Actual English women were far less likely than the “women” on the English stage to come into contact with Muslim peoples. Though the number of English men living and trafficking in the Levant increased during the early modern period, the historical record holds few accounts of English women travelers in the Levant from the time of Margery Kempe’s fifteenth-century pilgrimage to Jerusalem until Lady Mary Wortley Montague’s sojourn in Istanbul (1716-18).¹⁹ A proclamation issued by King James I in 1607 licensing the travel of women suggests that this omission may be a matter of editorial selection rather than non-existence. However, English ships’ rosters record no evidence of English women on merchant vessels, and compilations like Hakluyt’s *Principal Voyages* provide no historical precedent for the kinds of encounters found in the Turkish plays. One of the plays that includes such an encounter, Heywood’s *Fair Maid of the West*, even features a Muslim king who claims to have never before seen “a woman born in England” (5.1.42).

How can we explain the stark contrast between public record and dramatic representation? In many cases, the sources of the plays are Spanish and Italian, cultures with significantly greater proximity to and interaction with Islam. Although continental sources account for the contrast to a certain extent, the appeal of such sources among English playwrights remains unexplained. It is necessary that we seek out the translations and substitutions whereby fictional scenarios are employed in the mediation of material conditions. In the case of the Turkish plays, a pair of substitutions is deployed in the re-establishment of masculinity, Christianity, and patriarchy, all of which are threatened in Jacobean England’s increasing encounters with Islam and its concurrent gender debates.

¹⁹See Robinson; and Melman. Though she cites none specifically, Melman argues that there were tourists and secular accounts of travel before Montague, “but they are episodes and do not form a tradition” (14).

In the Turkish plays of the Jacobean era, dislocated Christian women therefore act as proxies for the compromised Christian male bodies of travelers' tales. This substitution enacts a displacement of threatening homosocial onto more manageable heterosexual relations. But because this substitution has the potential to threaten patriarchy as it shores up Christianity, Muslim men are, in turn, enlisted as straw-men in the domestic gender struggle. They provide male figures answerable for the disenfranchisement and mistreatment of women, while exonerating English men of the same charges. This double displacement of responsibility and vulnerability, as well as its consequent fortification of domestic gender hierarchies is often the *raison d'être* of interfaith desire in the Turkish plays. When ersatz Muslim men and Christian women are brought together in the Turkish plays, English notions of Christian masculinity typically dictate the consequences.²⁰

Lust's Dominion, Othello, The Turke, The Knight of Malta, and All's Lost by Lust all conjoin the threat of unbridled women with the threat of Islamic invasion. This conjunction of international and domestic concerns is historically implausible not only because English women had few opportunities to encounter Turkish men, but because England was never threatened by Islamic invasion. While the occasional alarmist might worry over the depredations of Barbary pirates in the English Channel, no Muslim force ever set its sights on Britain. Quite simply, there would be little to gain.²¹ In the Turkish plays, however,

²⁰The extended argument that follows is greatly indebted to Jean Howard's brilliant analysis of Thomas Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*. Howard argues that Heywood's play reveals how gender and sexuality could at once be mobilized in the service of emergent nationalism and could threaten to undo it; and how a discourse of race could be used to manage the threat and give 'Englishness' a properly patriarchal inflection" (102)

continental anxieties are often appropriated to authorize patriarchal prerogative. The threat of invasion lends urgency to the plot, but also to the demands made on women. In *Knight of Malta*, for example, Orianna's chastity becomes the island's principal defense against the Basha of Tripoli's invasion.

It is no coincidence that the majority of the Turkish plays feature Christian women and are less permissive than *Alphonsus* and *Thracian Wonder* of interfaith desire. In fact, not a single play in the entire period instances a successful relationship between a Muslim man and Christian woman. In the conflicts ensuing from this permutation religious difference is crucial. Relationships between Muslim men and Christian women are invariably treated in one of two ways. Either the Christian woman actively defends her chastity against the repulsive advances of a Muslim suitor, or her desire for a Muslim man is treated as corrupt, foolish, exploitable, and often fatal. In either case, rather than acting on her own behalf, the Christian woman of the Turkish plays restores the sexuality and authority of Christian men incapacitated in travelers' narratives.

The literary division of women into the antithetical misogynist categories of virgins and whores, chaste and licentious, has been recognized as a literary commonplace at least since Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1969). For Millet, as well as more recent critics like Valerie Traub, such imagery is derived from "male anxiety towards female erotic power" (Barker and Kamps 121). This kind of anxiety was certainly current in the early modern period when the prevailing exempla of womanhood were the Virgin Mary and the seducing Eve. Through the reigns of Elizabeth and James, many English readers took an interest in what

²¹The Ottoman military, the only Muslim force capable of large-scale invasions, chose their conquests specifically for their potential to sustain the empire's socio-economic system. Campaigns to the east (Persia) and west (North Africa) were intended to secure and/or maintain valuable trade routes. Likewise, the Balkan and Polish campaigns were used to insure a constant influx of recruits through the *devshirme*, or child tribute. See Inalcik, "The Successors of Suleyman."

has been called the *querrelles des femmes*, a pamphlet war debating the nature of womanhood. Linda Woodbridge argues that though the debate was ostensibly carried on by attackers and defenders of women, in fact “the purpose of such attacks and defenses was . . . the same” (8). Both were undergirded by an orthodox understanding of the “nature” of women, so that

whatever their literary merits, [the defenses] accomplish little more for women’s cause than to create a stereotype of the ‘good’ woman to counter the misogynist’s stereotype of the ‘bad.’ The portrait of Woman as by nature a tender-hearted, homekeeping, obedient, motherly, uncomplaining washer of befouled diapers does little to advance the argument for the equality of women. (Woodbridge 38)

Woodbridge’s notion of a bilateral orthodoxy has come under fire for overlooking the ways in which certain Jacobean women assembled in their writings “a critique of misogyny that moves the gender debate out of its old scorekeeping patterns, its listing of good women against bad ones, defined according to masculine criteria” (Haselkorn and Travitsky 45). No such critique tempers the patriarchal representations of women in the Turkish plays. Good or bad, the women of the Turkish plays somehow always defend patriarchal privilege. I believe that this is because Christian women at home and Islamic men abroad were conceived as equally threatening to Christian masculinity. Each posed a challenge to Christian male prerogative and “manhood,” the Muslim in overpowering the Christian, and the Christian woman by asserting her independence.

The strategic opposition of Christian women and Muslim men that I am describing is structurally similar to the protectionist ploy described by Zakia Pathak and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan in their examination of the 1985 Indian Supreme Court case of Shahbano. Shahbano was a seventy-three year old

Muslim woman driven from her home of more than forty years by her husband, Mohammad Ahmed Khan. Pathak and Sunder Rajan describe the way in which the case witnessed a number of unusual alliances formed “against a common opponent from whom danger is perceived and protection offered or sought” (Butler and Scott 263). Most significantly, Pathak and Sunder Rajan illustrate how such alliances succeed by “effacing [one party’s] will to power” and “the recalcitrant (nonsubmissive) will” of the other (266). The Turkish plays similarly efface the will to power of English men, by posing a requisite subordination of gender difference to religious difference in the face of the Islamic threat.²² Women are asked to set aside their concerns in defense of Christianity, when, in fact, it is Christian masculinity, not Christianity itself, that is at stake. This is not to say that assertive women are quashed in the Turkish plays, nor that the women in these plays are necessarily chaste, silent and obedient. Christian women are generally imagined as devoted to Christianity and repulsed by the Muslim men who threaten it. In their contrived encounters with Muslim men, they are provided with a site in which they may exercise their strength without posing a threat to Christian patriarchy. For English men, such encounters therefore provide a fantasy of unchallenged Christian manhood. They remain physically unthreatened as Muslim men fail to rob them of “their” women, and women’s grievances concern only the acts of Muslim men.

In Philip Massinger’s *Renegado* (1624), the action is generated from two contrasting cases of Muslim-Christian desire set in Ottoman Algiers. For the moment I will treat only the first -- a Muslim man and Christian woman --

²²Jean Howard similarly argues that in *Fair Maid of the West*, “[m]asculine fear of female sexuality leads to idealization of the virginal woman, and through service to her a homosocial community of men is constituted, but one in which, ironically, women themselves will have almost no place” (104).

brought about by the sale of Paulina, “a fayre Christian Virgin” (1.1.115), to the viceroy Asambeg. In spite of “his fierce and cruell nature/ Asambeg dotes estreamely” (1.1.116-7) on the abducted Venetian. Indeed his behavior is repeatedly transformed in her presence to the degree that Asambeg must remind himself, upon exiting her cell, to “take [his] own rough shape again” (2.4.165). As Catherine Belsey has argued, passion in early modern drama regularly “renders men effeminate [and] incapable of manly pursuits” (Barker and Kamps 199). Yet within the Turkish plays, this kind of gender-confusion is experienced by only the Muslim men. Regularly feminized and threatened with conversion in their real encounters with Muslims, Englishmen enjoy a theatrical fantasy of inviolable Christian manhood. As I will later illustrate, Asambeg and Paulina’s brother Vitelli both describe themselves as “ravished” in their interfaith encounters, yet while Vitelli overcomes his passion, Asambeg’s desire ultimately makes him Paulina’s gull. The Muslim man thus stands in for the *haec-vir*, or effeminate man, taken to task in Elizabethan “defenses” of women for failing to “wear the breeches.” He becomes a sanctioned target for women’s self-assertion, a venting site for frustration over their lack of public power, and a foil to what the plays figure as upright Christian manhood.

In the opening scene of Massinger’s play, Vitelli laments his sister’s abduction in terms that recall the traveler’s formulation of the Islamic threat. The contrast between Vitelli’s fears and Paulina’s actual predicament is indicative of the way in which men’s fears are displaced onto women. He imagines his sister “Mew’d up in [the viceroy’s] seraglio, and in danger/ Not alone to lose her honour, but her soul” (1.1.129-30). He imagines Asambeg

by force or flattery compell[ing] her
To yield her fair name up to his foul lust,
And, after, to turn apostate to the faith

That she was bred in (1.1.136-9).

The picture conjured up in Vitelli's imagination seems drawn from accounts, like Sanders', of Christian men's forced conversions to Islam. In fact, Asambeg exhibits no interest in Paulina's conversion, and she, in turn, is far less passive and victimized than Vitelli imagines. When Asambeg suggests he wishes to wed Paulina, she spits at his flatteries and boldly defies his "tortures. . . barbarous cruelty, or what's worse, thy dotage" (2.5.126-7). The customarily grim viceroy "tremble[s] at her softness" and complains that Paulina "robs me of the fierceness I was born with" (2.5.117). It is significant, however, that Paulina is no feminized St. Paul. Though she exercises great influence over Asambeg, she shows no interest in affecting his conversion and salvation. Instead she calls him "falsar than thy religion" (2.5.135), an insult to both his person and faith. Asambeg is nevertheless overcome by his passion. The height of this incapacitating desire comes when, jealous of anyone coming into her presence, he resolves to

Dispose and alter sexes, to my wrong,
In spite of nature. I will be your nurse,
Your woman, your physician, and your fool. (2.5.149-53)

Asambeg's effeminating passion provides a perfect example of what Robert Burton called "love melancholy." In such cases, the subject is "full of fear, anxiety, doubt, care, [and] peevishness, it turns a man into a woman" (qtd. in Breitenberg 3). In short, Asambeg experiences at Paulina's hands the effeminization that Christian men feared suffering in their encounters with Muslims. Vitelli's concerns are therefore unwarranted and inappropriately transposed from the experience of Christian men like the *Jesus'* unfortunate crew. Though cases of European women kidnapped and sold into Muslim slavery were documented in the period, none of those cases involved English

women. The English who were held captive, dominated and forced into conversion were *men*, like Burges and Smith.

In its fanciful treatment of interfaith desire, Massinger's play inverts the dynamic of Sanders' account. Whereas Sanders' Muslim prince overwhelms and emasculates his English captives, Massinger's viceroy finds himself impotent in the presence of Paulina. In spite of her incarceration, the Christian female dominates and renders effeminate her Muslim captor. At the same time, Paulina's "masculine" strength in no way poses a challenge to Christian masculinity.²³ Instead her actions tend to collude with patriarchal imperatives. Paulina's behavior and explanations differ enormously depending upon the religion of the men in her company. In Asambeg's presence she proudly claims herself armed "in the assurance of my innocent virtue" (2.5.136). Before Christian men, in contrast, she is humble and deferential, attributing her salvation to a miracle or the devotions of her Jesuit confessor, Francisco. Francisco has given Paulina a "relique. . . which has the power . . . to keepe the owner free from violence" (1.2.147-9) as long as she wears it. Whether this is a crucifix or some other Christian icon is unclear, but Asambeg himself cites its power as he finds,

Ravish her I dare not;

The magicque that she weares about her neck,

I thinke defends her (2.5. 171-3)

Thus Asambeg must suffer the shame of being overcome by Christianity and femininity, while Christian male authority is contrastingly validated and credited

²³ Likewise in *Fair Maid of the West*, "the Moors are made to embody a dangerous but effeminate otherness that finally renders them inferior to their European visitors" (Howard 113).

with Paulina's salvation. Furthermore, by refusing Asambeg, Paulina presumably preserves herself for a proper, which is to say Christian, husband.

Over the course of the play, Paulina's resistance to Asambeg does put some strain on patriarchal ideas of womanhood. In the play's closing act, however, Paulina is made to perform a "proper" subordination to Christian male authority. Francisco recognizes that "the viceroy's extreme dotage" on Paulina may be used to manipulate the escape of her now-captive brother. His desperate plot jeopardizes not only Paulina's chastity but her very life as she is asked to feign desire for and submission to the loathsome Asambeg. Thus Paulina accepts the role of the "longing woman. . . born high/ On the swift wings of appetite" (5.3.148-50). Her willing sacrifice of independence returns Paulina from her forays into the realm of the "masculine" and restores Christian manhood as well as hierarchical gender roles at the expense of the Islamic masculinity that was historically perceived as threatening both.

Acting in the service of Francisco's "proper" male authority, Paulina's defiance of Asambeg's male authority resembles Portia's transvestitism in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. As Catherine Belsey has illustrated, Portia is one of the comedies' numerous heroines who cross gender lines, disguising themselves as men in order to escape the constraints and the vulnerability of the feminine. They do so to pursue or regain the men they love, thus "love and marriage are saved by the transgression of the opposition they are based on" (Hawkes 179). The heroine must rescue the male Christian body at the expense of the religious otherness that threatens it. In *Merchant*, after rejecting her princely Muslim suitor for an unascertained, Christian husband in the first half of the play, Portia borrows men's clothing and authority in the second half to save her new husband from the Jew's severe justice. Though I will have more to say about the linking of Jews and Muslims in the next chapter, for the moment I want

only to emphasize how the play requires that a Christian woman stand in for a Christian man in opposing the various incursions of Jews and Moors.

That Portia herself is unthreatened by Shylock indicates one of the significant divergences in English representations of Jewish and Islamic difference. Whereas the Jewish man is frequently portrayed as “old and impotent” (Shapiro 132), the Muslim is almost endlessly salacious. Thomas Kyd’s *Solyman and Perseda* (1591) illustrates this property in a scenario that helps to illustrate the generic coherence of the Turkish plays. Like Asambeg with Paulina, Solyman is captivated by his captive. Upon first seeing Perseda, Solyman values her above all the treasures taken from the spoiling of Rhodes. Like Asambeg, Solyman too woos his Christian captive in hackneyed Petrarchisms that remain firmly fixated on the female body. His praise follows a lecherous trajectory from hair, brow, eyes, lips, cheeks, and neck to

Brests, like two overflowing Fountaines,

Twixt which a vale leads to the Elisian shades,

Where vnder couert lyes the fount of pleasure. (4. 1. 84-6)

Like Asambeg with Paulina, Solyman expresses a purely physical interest in Perseda. His disregard for Perseda’s conversion could have some basis in Islamic law, yet what is important here is that, like Asambeg again, Solyman finds himself peculiarly incapable of realizing his desire. According to Islamic law, it was not necessary that a Christian woman convert to Islam upon marrying a Muslim man. On the other hand, Christian men “were forbidden to marry Muslim women under pain of death. The logic of this distinction is that in any religiously mixed marriage Islam must prevail, and the male is the dominant partner” (Lewis, *Race* 86). When Perseda rejects Solyman’s love, claiming her “thoughts are like pillars of Adamant, / Too hard to take a new impression” (99-100), the Turk must reassert his position as the dominant partner. He vows, “die

thou shalt, vnlesse thou change thy minde" (107). Yet desire quickly overcomes anger as Solyman finds "her lookes withould me" (115). Rather than executing her--an act that would surely mark his dominance-- Solyman places his sword at Perseda's feet, entreating "a pardon for [his] rash misdeede" (137). The significance of this symbolic impotence lies in its juxtaposition to the enforced conversions and genital mutilations just performed by Solyman's forces on the vanquished Christian men of Rhodes. In effect, Perseda's strength enacts a reversal whereby Islamic masculinity is overcome by Christian femininity. Her threatened body remains inviolate while he is metaphorically castrated. The historically unlikely opposition of Christian woman and Muslim man thus assuages the male anxieties to which it obliquely, but nevertheless obsessively refers.

A similar opposition of Islamic masculinity and Christian femininity is found in Thomas Goffe's *The Courageous Turke* (1618). Again, we find Christian women capable of overcoming the same Turks who defeat Christian men. In Goffe's play, Sultan Amurath suspends his European campaign to concentrate on his new concubine, Eumorphe, concluding, "I conquered Greece, one Grecian conquered me" (1.1.39). His tutor laments that the great conqueror has been transformed into one of "those Milke-sops which beguile the time,/ With stealing minutes from their Ladies lips" (1.4.328-9). Amurath himself wonders at his transformation, suspecting that "Perchance [the Christians] sent this wretch thus to inchant me!" (2.3.551-2). As long as Eumorphe lives, Turkish swords remain sheathed. That this amounts to a defensive victory for Christendom is indicated in Amurath's later decision to behead Eumorphe in order "to cut off troupes of thoughts that would invade me" (2.5.705). Once he has done so, Amurath resumes his earlier martial demeanor, declaring, "Now . . . shall our swords be exercised,/ In ripping up the breasts of Christians" (2.5.720-1). Again, the sword

operates as a recurring trace of Christian male anxieties in the encounter with Islam, as well as a symbol of masculinity threatened by powerful women.

As Breitenberg argues, the idea of a woman overpowering a man—even an alien man—provokes powerful anxieties within patriarchal cultures. Eumorphe’s power over Amurath is therefore short-lived. Likewise, Perseda’s mastery of a powerful Muslim man is potentially as distressing for Christian masculinity as it is redemptive. If Christian femininity can overcome Islamic masculinity, how can Christian masculinity possibly hope to control it and maintain authority? Although Perseda is able to rebuff Solyman, her Christian lover Erastus is powerless against the Turk’s murderous treachery. Indeed, when Solyman has Erastus falsely tried and executed, the recently-liberated Perseda is at her most “masculine.” Seizing a knife from the cowardly knight Basilisco, she stabs the complicitous Lucina before disguising herself as a man in preparation for the ensuing Turkish siege. Yet Perseda’s actions are set within circumstances that ultimately assuage fears of unbridled women. Like Portia in *Merchant’s Venetian court*, Perseda’s appropriation of masculinity at the siege of Rhodes acts as a defense of Christian masculinity and its exclusive right to Christian women. Appearing as a man, she confronts the Turk “in Erastus[’] name” (5.4.29) and in her wifely martyrdom transforms Solyman from a conqueror of Christian men to a woman-killer. Furthermore, by daubing her lips with poison before allowing the shocked Solyman one parting kiss, she avenges her love and requites the Turk with his own wanton desire. Thus Perseda punishes the lascivious Turk for his incursions on Christian bodies and prerogative without ever really transgressing the parameters of deferential Christian womanhood. Perseda’s apparent transgression is bounded in patriarchal orthodoxy, and as she pronounces herself slain by Solyman “for loving of hir [sic] husband” (5.4.64), the audience is interpellated into a patriarchal admiration of Perseda’s martyrdom.

Though her actions are restricted to those which suit Christian male requirements for female subordination, Kyd disguises them in Perseda's rhetoric of love.

Throughout the genre, Christian women confirm their devotion to Christian lovers by rejecting Muslim men's intemperate desire. Their successful opposition to Muslim men stands in for the weakness of Christian men in their encounters with Islam, and their devotion reaffirms the superiority of Christian masculinity.²⁴ In *Fair Maid of the West*, Mullisheg, the King of Fez, is so taken with Bess that he acquiesces to a slate of conditions restricting his access to her. Although she, in exchange, agrees to a kiss that Mullisheg describes as leaving all his "vitals ecstasied" (5.1.67), Bess carefully preserves her virginity in memory of Spencer and takes advantage of the king's doting to effect the liberation of the various Christian men he holds captive. In other cases, Christian women simply reject their Muslim suitors outright. *The Knight of Malta's* Orianna is aghast at the mere rumor that she would return the love of the Basha of Tripoli. Likewise, in *All's Lost by Lust*, Jacinta considers the Moor Muly Mumen a frightful infidel. Even as a woman raped by her own king and thus disappointed by Christian manhood and devalued as a potential Christian wife, she finds the prospect of marriage to the "infidel" Muly Mumen a "second hell" (4.1.183).

Not all of the women of the Turkish plays are so adamantly resistant to the appeals of Muslim men. A second type of Christian woman populates the plays set in Europe and threatens the same Christian male prerogative protected by the first. This second type finds herself irresistibly, often fatally, attracted to a

²⁴In a related argument, Elliot Tokson argues that, "[w]ith Desdemona as the one exception, women who are not immoral are portrayed as unmoved by the tempting charms of the black man. Yet black men are almost always shown in pursuit of white women" (100).

Muslim man and is figured in relationships that invert the dynamics of those experienced by the first. She willingly betrays Christian ethics for a Muslim lover who typically spurns and manipulates her. The European setting of these plays and their attribution of sexual excess to Christian women, rather than Islamic men, suggests that they are as concerned with domestic gender questions as real interfaith encounters. Muslim men appeared in England only on rare occasions; encounters with English women were historically unlikely. Indeed, the Ottomans declined to even station an ambassador in London until 1793, insisting that others come to them to conduct business and/or diplomacy. This lack of Christian-Muslim encounters on English soil encourages us to ask what kind of ideological work is being done in the production of such encounters? Do the experiences of the “corrupt” Christian woman serve separate ends from the experiences of her loyal sisters?

In several cases, the Turkish plays include both “good” and “corrupt” women—measured as such by their responses to alien men. In John Mason’s *The Turke* (1610), we are presented with three women whose varying qualities become visible in response to the temptations of the Muslim interloper, Mulleases the Turk. Unlike the Muslim men in those plays set in Islamic lands, Mulleases is not a one-dimensional sensualist overcome by his passions for Christian women. Instead, the play treats the more distressing possibility of intemperance generated from Christian women. Not surprisingly, this threat is fused to the threat of Islamic invasion, lending public consequences to what is ostensibly a private issue.

Mulleases’ plans include both the acquisition of the Florentine Duchess Julia and the conquest of all Europe. Yet he places his primary emphasis on winning Julia, making conquest of territory dependent upon the conquest of Christian women. (In Fletcher’s *Knight of Malta*, the same prioritization insures

that the Basha of Tripoli's threat on Malta dissolves without the support of Oriana.) After establishing this relationship between women and territory, *The Turke* introduces into its plot two other women, Julia's cousin Amada, and her aunt Timoclea. Amada and Timoclea are, respectively, the daughter and wife of Julia's debased uncle, Borgias. Eager to win Julia for himself, Borgias offers Mulleases his daughter, Amada, and "commaund vpon the streights [to] land his force on this side of Christendome" (1.3.73-4), in exchange for 40,000 Janissaries, the Kingdom of Italy, and the poisoning of Borgias' wife, Timoclea. Mulleases agrees, but surreptitiously drugs Timoclea to a sleep that merely counterfeits death, hoping to rouse her to revenge. When she awakens and learns of her husband's treachery, Timoclea not only seeks vengeance, but finds herself lustfully enraptured by her Turkish preserver.

In Timoclea, Amada and Julia the play presents three possible responses to the attractions of Muslim men. Timoclea's wanton passion violates all propriety. Usurping the male role, she becomes the wooer rather than the wooed, offering to court Mulleases naked and inviting him to rest on her breast. Yet unlike the gender transgressions of Paulina and Perseda, Timoclea's actions serve a Muslim man and are consequently figured as foolhardy, repulsive and ineffective. Yet even more importantly, Timoclea's transformation is figured as unnatural when she agrees to commit the murder of her own daughter in hopes of securing the Turk's love. Mulleases is unmoved by Timoclea and takes advantage of her blind desire to further his anti-Christian machinations. Characterizing such a woman as monstrous, he defends patriarchal prerogative and rejects Timoclea as "a lustfull time-spent murderous strumpet" (4.2.52). He insists that

The prostitution of your knowne Bordellos
Where every itching letcher vents his blood

Is not so loathsome. (4.2.53-5)

While the dynamics of desire are reversed in this case, we again find Muslim men set in opposition to Christian women for the benefit of Christian patriarchy. As Timoclea suffers from Islamic treachery, she not only serves as a proxy for the sexually dominated Christian man of the travelers' narratives, but also illustrates that the only place for a Christian woman's affections is under the loving supervision of Christian men. Christian men, in turn, are kept from having to scold unbridled women as long as a Muslim man can be set up to do so. Yet *The Turke* also admits the possibility of corruption within the patriarchy. In his relations with Mulleases, Borgias enacts the very corruption Gjorjevic's phrase book hopes to forestall in Christians encountering Turks. Convinced that "al's vacuum about a crowne" (1.3.92), he scorns religion and jeopardizes all of Christendom in his own self-interest. In his desire for power and his betrayal of Christianity, Borgias proves no less dangerous than the Turk who prays to "Mahomet" for freedom from morality and the "pent room of conscience" (2.1.11). Both use women as expedients in their debased stratagems.

Timoclea's and Amada's encounters with the Turk both come as a direct result of Borgias' corruption. Yet Amada's response to Mulleases contrasts greatly with her mother's. Upon learning of her father's offer she announces her preference for death and hopes "not to liue to see those tapers burne,/ That leade me to [Mulleases'] bed" (1.2.434-5). Like Perseda, she becomes her play's admirable martyr who will die before submitting to a Muslim. Chaste and obedient, she goes to her fate reminding herself to "[b]e silent yet for duty stops thy mouth" (1.2.71). She is a victim of a corrupt patriarchy that must purge itself even as it purges the threats of unbridled women and alien men. To that end, Julia is left to act as Borgias should, in opposition to the encroaching Turk. In

response to Mulleases' advances, Julia calls the Turk a "heathen" and insists on their religious incompatibility:

If thou beest gentel leave me Mahomet,
Our loues like our religions are at warres
And I disclaime all peace (5.3.41-3).

Although Julia appeals to Mulleases' nobility to keep them apart, he is transformed, in the face of her "proper" Christian resistance, into the familiar figure of the Muslim sensualist. He attempts to force himself on Julia, but cannot prevent her from crying out for help. In the ensuing confrontation, Borgias and Mulleases kill each other, leaving Julia to marry the Duke of Venice and unite the two Christian states. In Mason's play, then, once again finds the defense of Christian patriarchy is entrusted to Christian women. If, like Timoclea, they give in to their impulses, they risk not only their lives, but all of Christian Europe. On the other hand, if they resist their sexual urges, as Julia does, they preserve both Christendom and their own bodies for the "proper" governance of Christian men.

Elliot Tokson notes a similar division of proper and corrupt women in his study of black peoples in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English drama. Employing Thomas Dekker's *Lust's Dominion* as a prominent example, Tokson argues that

the extent of a white woman's decency appears often to be measured by her appraisal of and reaction to proposed miscegenation. . . . [M]ost writers. . . allowed only the oversexed, corrupted white female to give herself willingly to a black man. (Tokson 94-5).

Tokson's argument is an important one and has been instrumental in more recent analyses of the early modern emergence of "race."²⁵ Yet by limiting the scope of his examination to plays including black characters, Tokson overdetermines his analysis, wrongly discounting Christian fears of and representational practices toward Islam. The Turkish plays reveal how skin prejudice worked in conjunction with anti-Islamicism, not, as Linda Boose argues, as a superceding force "written over oppositions that had been posited by the religio-political landscape of Muslim vs. Christian." Together the corroborating discourses of religious and racial difference are used in the Turkish plays' theatrical re-authorization of Christian patriarchy. Representations of women are key in working out problems of religious and racial difference; religion and skin color are key in working out problems of gender difference.

In *Lust's Dominion*, Eleazer, the captive Prince of Fez, is repeatedly called a devil, but the precise significance of this term is difficult to determine. Tokson generally attributes the association of the black man and the devil to the former's "seemingly deliberate rejection of the white man's faith [that] could easily be contorted into his preference for an anti-Christ" (Tokson 106). Without a doubt, Dekker's poor understanding of non-Christian religions seems apparent when his Moorish Prince swears "by all our Indian gods" (Dekker IV: 4.2.85). Yet Moorishness was commonly associated with Islam, and Islamic figures -- especially the Turks -- were regularly identified as minions of the devil (if not the devil himself). Eleazer's Fez was decidedly Muslim and, in fact, an Ottoman protectorate since 1576. That no direct allusion to these facts is included in Dekker's play, however, leads Tokson to explain the play exclusively in terms of racial politics. By examining *Lust's Dominion* alongside Mason's *The Turke* (1610),

²⁵See, for example, the essays in Parker and Hendricks 1994; and Hall 1995.

I hope to illustrate that authors of the period were unlikely to treat race and religion separately. Dekker's and Mason's plays both concern the responses of Christian women to strangers, or non-European men. Although the otherness of Dekker's villain is predicated upon his racial difference and Mason's Turk is more clearly on his religion, the likenesses of the two encourage their parallel examination. Furthermore, *Lust's Dominion* gestures toward the overlap of racial and religious difference when one character explains that the Moor "hath damnation dy'd upon his flesh" (Dekker IV: 5.2.19).

Both plays include "corrupt" and "proper" women -- qualities measured by their responses to alien men. In *Lust's Dominion*, this contrast is again provided by three women. Among the women are the queen mother, for whom the play was subtitled "The Lascivious Queen," and her daughter Isabella. Their generational difference becomes essential to the affirmation of proper gender relations. It insures that the mistakes of one generation may be righted by the next. As the play opens, Eugenia fawns lecherously on Eleazer while her husband, the Spanish King, lies fatally ill. That the Queen seeks Eleazer's bed while her husband lies on his death-bed marks the extent of a corruption Tokson attributes entirely to her "voracious sexual appetite seeking satisfaction where tradition already determined it could be found -- in the embraces of a black man" (Tokson 95). Yet black men were not alone in being hypersexualized in the English theater. Characters like Kyd's Solyman and Heywood's Mullisheg indicate that Muslim men of all skin colors were treated as libertines. Eugenia's son, Philip, in fact, invokes the discourse of religious difference in his opposition of the "devil," Eleazer, to his father who "tyr'd his strong armes/ In bearing christian armour, gainst the Turks" (Dekker IV: 1.2.112). The comparison works like Hamlet's measurement of his "satyr" uncle against his "Hyperion" father. In each case, the sexually active woman is condemned for the irreligiousness of her

lecherous turn of affection. In *Lust's Dominion* however, the comparison also works to distinguish Christian men, as proper objects of desire, from demonized Muslims.

This distinction tragically eludes Eleazer's wife Maria, the daughter of a Spanish courtier. Though Maria does not display the same lechery as Eugenia, she is ultimately revealed as naive and misguided in her loyalty to the Moor. Eleazer treats his wife with icy contempt, at one point even suggesting that she poison herself. Maria's misplaced loyalty becomes especially apparent when the new king, Fernando, offers to banish all Moors and make her his wife, encircling her

. . . *white* forehead with the Crown
Of Castille, Portugall, and Arragon,
And all those petty kingdoms which do bow
Their tributarie knees to Philips heir" (Dekker IV: 3.2.1520, emphasis
mine).

Fernando's appeal to Maria's racial identity licenses her betrayal of wifely obligations. It suggests that Eleazer is not worthy of the respect she offers him, respect which is due, instead, to a white, Christian husband. Maria is murdered almost immediately following her refusal of the king's proposal. Yet by assigning this act to Eugenia, Dekker displaces the patriarchal punishment of "misguided" women from the Christian men it serves.

Examined in the context of the Turkish plays, *Lust's Dominion* becomes one of numerous English plays making use of exotic, interfaith desire as a proving ground for domestic gender politics. In this case, the opposition of Christian women and Muslim men takes up anxieties over unruly women, managing an Islamic threat only secondarily. Like the "good" women of *Solyman and Perseda* and *Renegado*, "corrupt" or foolish women like Eugenia and Maria

ultimately serve the cause of Christian patriarchy. Though the play acknowledges the attractions of Muslim men in ways elided in Kyd's and Massinger's plays, the Christian women enticed by Muslim men invariably suffer and/or repent as a lesson to all Christian women. After killing Maria, Eugenia, condemns herself even as she identifies Eleazer as the villain

Who through enticements of alluring lust,
And glory which makes silly women proud
And men malicious, did incense my spirit

Beyond the limits of a woman's mind. (Dekker IV: 5.3.119-22).

If the play fundamentally concerned itself with Muslim men's seductive power over Christian women, rather than using such fictions for the restoration of Christian manhood and patriarchy, Eugenia would not need to call attention to her own transgressions and limitations. Yet the play is equally concerned with Muslim men's and Christian women's separate challenges to Christian male authority. As a result, their distinct contentions are set in opposition, enabling the exaltation of Christian men. The admittedly demonic Eleazer, for example, denounces Eugenia's improper lechery, repeatedly calling her "strumpet" and condemning the "Lascivious Queen" to "[u]npitied dye, consumed with loathed lust, / Which thy venereous mind hath basely nurst" (IV: 5.3.7-8). With the unbridled woman punishing the misguided woman, and the Moor reprimanding the unbridled woman, Philip is left to exercise comparative mercy in pardoning his mother.

If Eugenia and Maria represent the foolishness and tragedy of Christian women's desire for dark, Muslim men, Isabella -- who is almost entirely silent for the first half of the play -- ultimately represents the rewards of proper devotion to Christian patriarchy. While the queen occupies herself with telling bawdy jokes and forcing kisses on the indifferent Moor, Isabella remains "at [the king's]

beds-feet confounded in her tears" (IV: 1.3.327). Upon the death of her father, she defers the proffered love of Maria's brother, Hortenzo, to enter a period of mourning. Nevertheless, like Perseda, Bess, and Paulina in their encounters with Muslim potentates, Isabella maintains her devotion to her lover over the course of the play and resists the seductions of a powerful alien man. At the height of his power, Eleazer recognizes that a compliant Isabella will validate his rule of Spain and advises her, "it's best for thee / To love me, live with me, and lye with me" (IV: 5.5.478-9). In response, she claims, "I'll first lye in the arms of death" (IV: 5.5.480). Like the other heroines who defy Muslims for the sake of Christian men, Isabella's silence is broken only in defense of her chastity and loyalty to a Christian lover, and returns again once she has insured the restoration of Christian patriarchy. In the end, she is to be married to Hortenzo, a proper Christian husband. The Queen, on the other hand, must retreat to "some solitary residence" to "spin out the remnant of [her] life in / In true contrition" (IV: 5.3.174-6). The lesson is almost too obvious to merit pronouncement: loyalty, chastity, and silence bring to Christian women the reward of a Christian husband. Lust and activity, on the other hand, result in exclusion and regret. In either case, the maintenance of Christian commonwealth is secured through the management of women's bodies. As Kim Hall puts it, "women's bodies become the site of struggle between, on the one hand, the need for both colonial trade and cultural assimilation through union and, on the other, the desire for well-recognized boundaries between self and other" (*Things* 125).

V. Conversion and the Male Christian Body

Hall's identification of the ideological inscription of women's bodies tells, I believe, only half the story in the Turkish plays. In the Jacobean theater, representations of interfaith couplings involving Christians and Muslims always

figure the Christian as somehow threatened. The nature of the threat, however, is not always what a reader of travelers' narratives might expect. Neither is that threat uniformly defined, or gender neutral. As I have illustrated above, Christian women are threatened in terms of the body. They effectively stand in for the physically menaced Christian man of the travelers' tales and struggle to preserve their loyalty and chastity in the face of lascivious Muslim men. The most common threat to Christian men in the Turkish plays is contrastingly non-physical and non-coercive. In spite of what we find in accounts like Sanders' tale of the *Jesus* crew, it comes in the form of a feminized Islam that allows Christian masculinity ultimately to emerge as resolute, virtuous, and inviolable.

While women's bodies are the explicit site of struggle in those plays featuring the relationships of Muslim men and Christian women, men's bodies are the implicit site of conflict throughout the genre. Preservation of the inviolable, male Christian body motivates the displacement of a physical threat onto women's bodies, just as it generates a significantly different treatment of Islam's threat to Christian men. In plays bringing together Muslim women and Christian men, it is the Christian man's religious identity that is contested. Yet the threat of conversion is strangely non-physical, in stark contrast to the threat described in travelers' narratives. In the Turkish plays it is not the Christian man's body that is threatened, but instead his incorporeal and thus unmarkable, "soul." By positioning conversion as paramount to the working out of the drama, the Turkish plays argue for the continued importance of religion as a corroborating discourse of difference with the emerging terms of racism. Both discourses set limits on "proper" couplings in ways that establish hierarchies within their nominal domains, as well as fostering a more general male supremacy.

In the more martial Turkish plays, Christian soldiers are threatened by defeat at the hands of supremely bellicose Turks who, like Goffe's Amurath, live to "dung the Earth,/ With Christians rotted trunckes" (3.2.799-800). This, however, is a relatively uncommon scenario in the Turkish plays. Although English readers consumed numerous works describing the Turkish military might, playwrights seem to have sustained greater interest in imagining the relationships in which Englishmen could become entangled if they failed to follow the advice of the numerous treatises on proper, Christian travel. Works like *An Essay of the Meanes How to make our Travailes, into forraine Countries, the more profitable and honourable* and *The Tryall of Travell* were particularly concerned with travelers avoiding even superficial contact with other religions. Yet contact was inevitable and sometimes intentional. It follows that the most common threat faced by the male heroes of the Turkish plays is apostasy -- a threat to the Christian body and soul. In the plays, however, the Christian male body remains largely unthreatened as apostasy is most often figured as spiritual dissolution rather than ritualistic conversion.

The concern with spiritual dissolution found in the Turkish plays can be directly linked to contemporary representations of both the official and criminal activities of Englishmen in the Levant. Accounts of travelers to the Levant repeatedly contrast the sinful capitulation of other Europeans to their own strength in the face of temptation. Any number of examples might be presented in illustrating this point, but a particularly telling one is available in the various materials concerning the second English ambassador to the Great Turk, Sir Edward Barton. In his journal, the Levant Company official John Sanderson recalls noting a great alteration in Barton over the course of his tenure in Constantinople. Upon Sanderson's return to Constantinople after some time in England, he notes that Barton has gone, "frome servinge God deuoutly and

drinkinge puer water, nowe to badnes stoutly and much wine (the wits hater). Ther to live I perceaved great temtation" (10). To others in the company of Barton, Sanderson attaches epithets like "atheist", "fool", "filthy", "knave", "drunken," and "rogue." Barton, however, insisted Sanderson stay with him. In return, Sanderson claims that the room in which he was lodged Barton "had built for convayance of whores" (Sanderson 10). Sanderson further impugns the ambassador's character by telling of Barton's having accompanied the Sultan to a battle against a Christian army from which the Turkish troops returned with 500 staked Christian heads. This incident, together with Barton's apparent moral decline, led Sanderson and several others to question the ambassador's fitness in resisting the temptations of the east and "turning Turk." William Biddulph, an English preacher in Aleppo, describes Barton's successor, Sir Henry Lello, by contrasting the two, finding the new ambassador "in many things exceeded [the old], especially in his religious carriage and unspotted life" (Purchas 259). Chew adds, "some correspondence ensued with his successor on 'the insolent courses of excesse and ryot' of which Barton had been guilty, exceeding all reasonable bounds; and Lello was cautioned that a curb must be kept upon the expenses of the embassy" (Chew 160).

Closely examined, the materials regarding Barton reveal less about the ambassador than they do about how travelers in the Levant described one another. For all his criticism of Barton's intemperance, we learn that Sanderson himself joined a group of riotous sailors and "became drunke and so sicke that, had not Anthony Marlo put his finger into my throate and caused me to cast, I had died that night most assuredly" (Sanderson 9). Barton's second accuser, William Biddulph, is accused of gross immorality and drunkenness in a letter to Sanderson from a friend in Aleppo, John Kitley. Finally, upon his return to England, Sanderson is compelled to write to the third ambassador, Sir Thomas

Glover, of scandalous rumors circulating London that Glover had grown fat, complacent, and corrupt in matters fiscal and sexual.²⁶ What emerges is a pattern of travelers compulsively recalling tales of moral collapse in an apparent attempt to distinguish themselves from what appears to have been a prevailing notion that those who went to the Levant returned tainted from their experience.²⁷

An even more prominent source of the Turkish plays' concern with moral dissolution is the increase of English piracy in the Mediterranean during the reign of King James. Descriptions by Andrew Barker (1609), Henry Mainwaring (1618), and John Smith (1629) all attest to the degeneracy of English corsairs. Of course, not all of those Englishmen who joined the Turkish corsairs embraced Islam.²⁸ When, in Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke* (1610), one corsair chooses to convert, his comrades are appalled. Still, the behavior of Englishmen who went to live among Muslims was regularly denounced. If they had not

²⁶ Sanderson warns Glover that it is said in London that Glover keeps "a poore boy, which you putt upp in fine aparill, and that you lie with the said boy" (273).

²⁷ See especially Anthony Nixon's pamphlet on the Sherley brothers. Nixon was a pamphleteer commissioned by Anthony Sherley to give an account of his and his brothers' travels in the Levant. By the time this account was published in 1607, Sherley's reputation in England was generally notorious. Nixon's account attempts to cast Sherley's travels in a more favorable light, at one point by the comparative method noted above. Nixon contrasts Captain Thomas Stukely's motives with Sherley's illustrating, "The one having his desire upon a luxurious, and libidivous [*sic*] life: The other having principally before him, the protect [*sic?*] of honour" (G1).

²⁸ Nabil Matar points out that English soldiers also sought financial advantage by becoming gunners in the Turkish army. Yet, common to all these men "was their depiction in contemporary histories and drama as honorable Englishmen: first, they never fought against fellow compatriots -- they were with the Turks but not of them; second, they remained devoutly committed to their religion, and practiced it even in the midst of the Muslims -- they were among the Muslims but not of them" ("English Renaissance Soldiers" 82).

traded their souls in committing apostasy, they had, nevertheless, jeopardized them in the indulgences associated with Islamic lands. Barker, an English ship's master taken captive by English renegades who captured his ship, indicates the disgust with which such men were held:

Unlawfully are their goods got and more ungodly are they
consumed, in that they mix themselves like beasts with the enemies
of the savior; so that he that was a Christian in the morning, is
bedfellow to a Jew at night. (Barker C2)

It was this "mixing" that particularly absorbed the attention of English playwrights whose Turkish plays invariably link the threat of apostasy with interfaith desire. In the hands of Jacobean playwrights, however, Barker's concern with the potentially homoerotic alliance of Christians and Jews is frequently displaced onto the heterosexual "mixing" of Christians and Turks.²⁹ "Mixing" with Turks, and especially Turkish women, becomes the Christian man's avenue to apostasy in plays like *A Christian Turn'd Turke*.

Daborne's play fictionalizes the life of John Ward, a fifty-year-old sailor who, in 1603, led a group of deserters from the English navy to Tunis where he was protected by a privateering agreement with the head of the Janissaries, Cara Osman. According to Andrew Barker, in exchange for the right to sell his booty in Tunis, Ward "vowed he would forever after become a foe to all Christians, be a persecutor to their trafficke, and an impoverisher of their wealth." (Barker B4V). Of course, Barker himself was held captive by an associate of Ward's and was naturally prejudiced against the corsairs. Daborne's account of Ward may have even less basis in fact. His version derives, in part, from stories of Ward and his men running drunk through the streets of Tunis, and from popular songs

²⁹For a discussion of the homoerotics of bedfellowship, see Bray, "Homosexuality and the Signs" 40-3.

that similarly denounced their profligacy. In "The Seaman's Song of Captain Ward, the Famous Pyrate of the World," listeners are assured that his

. . . wicked gotten treasure

Doth him but little pleasure;

The land consumes what they have got by sea,

In drunkenness and lechery,

Filthy sins of sodomy

Their evil-gotten goods do waste away. (Senior 13)

In fact, Ward was spectacularly successful, and managed to save enough money to retire in Tunis an enviably rich man "in a faire palace beautified with rich Marble and Alabaster stones" (Lithgow, *Total* 315). Daborne chooses to make his Ward the dangerous, carousing profligate of legend, but he also endows Ward with complexity and learnedness. This change is particularly apparent in Daborne's treatment of Ward's "turning Turk." In all likelihood, Ward's 1609 decision to convert to Islam and change his name to Issouf Reis was intended as a means of assuring Cara Osman of his allegiance following attacks by Christian corsairs on the Algerian fleet. Daborne's play includes the attacks on the corsair fleet, but proposes an altogether different reason for Ward's apostasy.³⁰

³⁰An important subplot which I do not have space to treat fully follows the fate of Ward's rival Dansiker, a character loosely based on Simon Danser. Danser, also known as the "Old Dancer" or "Diablo" Reis, was "the famous corsair who (according to legend, at least) first taught the North Africans to abandon their outmoded Mediterranean rowed galleys with lateen rigs and take up sailing in 'round ships'" (Wilson 45). Although Danser converted to Islam, he seems to have secretly retained his Christian faith and returned to his family in France in 1609 restored to full citizenship. Daborne's Dansiker also hopes for a safe return but is foiled in his efforts to regain European citizenship and acceptance. In this, as well as in his attempt to burn the corsair galleys at anchor off Algiers, Dansiker also seems based on the life of Richard Gifford, an English adventurer in the service of the Duke of Tuscany, whose attempted to burn the corsair galleys may have been the event which precipitated Ward's conversion in 1609 (Spencer 125-6).

Too much has been made of Ward's corruption and punishment. Nabil Matar, whose work on European renegades has shaped the field, argues that Daborne's play exhibits the "horrid retribution" of a renegade to "frighten . . . his audience away from Islam" (Matar, "Renegade" 492, 495). Yet I will illustrate that Daborne's Ward is not as corrupt as many would have him, and his end is a far cry from hopeless. This is because the play itself is not only concerned with the battle between Islam and Christianity, but equally with the place of Christian men *vis-à-vis* both Christian women and Muslim men.

At the opening of the play, Ward has not renounced Christianity. As the prologue explains, "What heretofore set other pennes aworke, / Was Ward turn'd Pyrate, ours is Ward turn'd Turke" (A4r). Thus the centerpiece of the play is Ward's "temptation and fall," orchestrated by a motley assemblage of Turks and renegades. The process begins when Ward is visited by the governor of Tunis, and the aptly-named Crosman and Benwash. Samuel Chew argues that the name Crosman is a contracted form of Cara Osman, but Daborne's Turk is in no position of authority. Neither is he a man of the cross. Rather, he is, in Goodall's terms, a "man of a cross religion" (Goodall I2), perverse, contrary, and inclined to quarrel. He is prepared to use any means necessary to entice Ward. The name "Benwash" has remained curiously free from commentary. Daborne's Jew has certainly not been "washed" or baptized. On the contrary, he has converted to Islam, and "Ben-" is an Anglicized rendering of the Arabic combining form "ibn," meaning "son of." "Benwash" is therefore the son of "wash," waste water, or stale urine. In early modern English, to wash something also meant to paint it over lightly. Whereas Benwash is referred to as "the Jew" in the *dramatis personae* and throughout the play, his name may also be a reference to the fact that he has only "turn'd Turke all to keep / [His] bed free from these Mahometan Dogges" (D1r).

Faith and conversion are the topics of conversation in Ward's encounter with Benwash, Crosman, and the governor. Though European scholars were encouraged to refute Islam's claims to be the final revelation, engaging in such discussions in Islamic lands was considered wholly ill-advised. Baptist Goodall cautions travelers,

Deal not in points beyond thee with a foe,
Better than wit abusd, is not to know.
And in their land thus fallst thou in a snare,
Of entermedling in beliefs beware. (I2v)

Goodall's advice is the same implicitly suggested by Gjorjevic's phrase book:

Beware

the entrapment beneath Islam's veneer of civility. The three "Turks" who attempt to convert Ward perform their part -- as it is imagined in such works -- to the letter. Indeed, their scheme to convert the pirate follows a predictable pattern, familiar from European accounts of Islam and laid out by Crosman and Benwash just prior to the meeting:

Crosman: All that art can by ambition, lust or flattery do,
Assure your selfe this braine shall worke him to.

Benwash: Nay if the flesh take hold of him, hee's past redemption
Hee's halfe a Turke already, it's as good as done. (E2r)

The response of Benwash, whose conversion came for purely sexual reasons, is particularly telling. He suggests that lust is a more powerful lure to apostasy than ambition or flattery. Nevertheless, upon joining with the governor, they begin by flattering Ward with promises of advancement, suggesting that he might someday be the sultan's admiral. Aware that such positions were given only to those who converted to Islam, Ward slyly replies that were he so employed "[w]hat a poore Christian could, I durst make promise of" (E2). In a

play about a notorious renegade entitled “A Christian Turn’d Turke,” the response is startling, especially as it is offered to the governor, himself a Christian turned Turk and thus living proof of the rewards of conversion.

With careerist lures failing, Benwash tries appealing to Ward’s skepticism, suggesting he is “more wise . . . [than] with religion to confine [his] hopes” (E2-3). The governor, also an apostate, adds,

He’s too well read in Poesie to be tied
 In the slaves fetters of religion.
 What difference in me as I am a Turke,
 And was a Christian? life, liberty,
 Wealth, honour, they are common vnto all?
 If any ods be, ‘tis on Mahomets side,
 His seruitors thriue best I am sure. (E3)

The historical Ward and many like him would have doubtless concurred. The inhabitants of Ottoman lands generally enjoyed a far better quality of life than their European counterparts whom they often found backwards and barbaric, drunken, intolerant, and unwashed consumers of filth.³¹ More to the point, though, renegades in Muslim lands often flourished with no apparent repercussions. Daborne’s Ward, nevertheless, remains cautious about Islam, associating it with captivity in his recognition of “the hooke your golden baite doth couer” (E3). Benwash assures Ward that there is no hook at all, that

If this religion were so damnable
 As others make it, that God which owes the right
 Prophan’d by this would soone destroy it quite. (E3)

³¹For a fuller account of the Muslim perspective on Europe, see Lewis *Islam and the West* 26-7; and al-Hajari.

Again, Ward acts the part of the liturgical scholar, explaining Islam's persistence as an indication of heaven's mercy, and the good fortunes of men like the governor as "the bait to others misery." Ward's responses are almost precisely what one finds opening the period's numerous works written to justify to Christians the overwhelming might of the Ottoman Empire. As he discourages a theater audience which doubtless contained numerous discontented Englishmen, Ward seems safe from the threat of apostasy. For each of the proselytizers' claims he offers a surprisingly learned and pious refutation -- not at all what we expect from the disreputable pirate captain. Yet Goodall's warning to "deal not in points beyond thee with a foe," proves valid when Crosman suggests to the governor to "[w]orke in my sister presently."

Crosman's sister, Voada, is constructed from the same fantastical material found in the writing of many early modern European travelers to the Ottoman lands. While writers of the period are innocent of their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century inheritors' obsession with veiling practices, their representations nevertheless lay the groundwork for the hypersexualized Islamic women of colonial fantasy.³² In the early modern period, European representations of Islamic women are frequently framed by Christian fears of disruptive, non-reproductive female sexuality. One 1585 account of a journey made into Turkey includes a portrait of Muslim women painted in the colors of European, male, heterosexist fantasy where libidinous Muslim women shun the advances of Muslim men. Though Muslim men are described seeking every opportunity to seduce them, Levantine women

³²See Fanon's problematic "Unveiling Algeria" in *A Dying Colonialism* (1965) and the more recent, corrective essays on veiling in Badran and Cooke, eds. *Opening the Gates: A Century of Arab Feminist Writing*. (1990)

become so fervently in love the one of the other as if it were with men, in such sort that perceiving some maiden or woman of excellent beauty they will not cease until they have found means to bath with them, & to handle & grope them every where at their pleasures, so full they are of luxuriousness & feminine wantonness (Nicholay H8r)

In this report, Muslim women are imagined as exhibiting the sexual liberty forbidden their Christian European counterparts. It is important that their desire is specifically figured as lesbian. Thus, despite their overweening sexuality, they remain untouched by lecherous Muslim men, and consequently available to Christian men. From here it is a short step to the European colonial fantasy of “rescuing” Muslim women from Muslim men.³³ Works like the one I have cited here helped to create a notion of Islamic women’s sexual looseness that was frequently cited as a lure for potential apostates. Thus Crosman urges, “What Divels dare not moue/ Men to accomplish, women worke them to” (E3).

Like the bathing women described above, Voada is presented as a dangerously abandoned sensualist. In her first appearance on stage, she counsels her sister, Agar, the wife of Benwash, to cuckold her husband and speaks of her own desire to enjoy the love of a particular slave boy “though quenching of my lust did burn the world besides” (D1v). That her beautiful slave boy turns out to be a disguised Christian woman serves to confirm accounts of lesbianism in Islamic culture. Ward’s similarity to the anonymous writer of the bathhouse description is apparent in his foolish assessment of Voada when she enters, as if on the cue of Crosman’s suggestion. Heretofore resolute, Ward now remarks,

Here comes an argument that would perswade

³³See Spivak for an analysis of “white men rescuing brown women from brown men” (93).

A God turne mortall, vntill I saw her face,
 I never knew what men terme beauty was:
 Besides whose faire, she hath a mind so chaste
 A man may sooner melt the Alpes then her. (E3v)

Ward's ironic misjudgment proves to be his undoing. Voada refuses to love a man "whose religion/Speakes me an Infidell," but proposes, "Turne Turke [and] I am yours" (E4r). Though Crosman's arguments are fruitless, Ward finds that Crosman's sister "is an Orator can turne me easily" (E4), and determines to "take the orders instantly" (E4). Yet in a moment recalling Faustus with his good and bad angels, Ward is urged by a young Christian to recant, while Crosman reminds him of his bond to Voada.³⁴ Once again Crosman's arguments are powerless until Voada re-enters to find Ward "again turn'd" (F1v). In her presence he simultaneously shuns the boy and his soul's salvation. Like Faustus, however, Ward is immediately offered another chance to save his soul. A group of Christians previously sold into slavery by Ward enter and express greater concern with his damnation than with their own liberty. One assures him,

Wee'l forgiue all our wrongs, with patience row
 At the vnweldy oare: we will forget
 That we were sold by you, and think we set
 Our bodies gainst your soule, the deerest purchase
 Of you Redeemer, that we regain'd you so,
 Leaue but this path damnation guides you to. (F2r)

The scene not only contrasts Christian charity with Islamic treachery, it argues that the soul, not the body, was the true stakes of Christian men's encounter with Islam. Ward finds the words "do rip [his] heart" (F2r), but Voada again steers

³⁴Nabil Matar makes a similar argument in his essay, "The Renegade in English Seventeenth Century Imagination."

him toward the rites of conversion, reconfirming her power over him a second time.

The play's emphasis on Voada's power is deliberate and essential to Daborne's misogynist vision of apostasy. It is important to note that, though Crosman hopes to enlist his sister in his conversion efforts, Voada acts upon her own selfish motives before he has a chance. In attributing full responsibility for Ward's conversion to Voada, the play thus rewrites apostasy in the pattern of Renaissance accounts of Adam's loss of Paradise. In effect, the Muslim men who repeatedly overpower Christians in travelers' narratives are again dramatically subdued. They have no power over Christian men and enjoy no more loyalty than Christian men from "their women."

Ward's submission to Voada and conversion to Islam begins a chain of events Matar characterizes as "divine retribution." Instead, I would argue that at this point Ward becomes a sympathetic figure of tragedy. He is scorned and betrayed by Voada who calls him a "false runagate" and continues to lust for her "slave boy." When she next frames him for crimes he did not commit, Ward laments his condition and past, longing for "that content[ment] this soule did know / When a poore Fisherman possest it" (G4r). When he is seized and imprisoned, Ward is transformed back into the Christian polemicist whose arguments confounded the Turks' earlier efforts. Unfortunately, it is too late for disputation at this point. The renegade's doom is sealed and he can do no more than rage against the Turks in the terms of the period's numerous anti-Islamic treatises. He denies the Ottomans credit for their own ascendancy, identifying himself as the foolish European Christian of a commonplace myth who

hath shown you

The way to conquer Europe, [and] did first impart,

What your forefathers knew not, the seaman's art. (I4r)

This commonplace, like the one which explains the strength of the Janissaries by their European origins, desperately seeks to strip Turkish men of any responsibility for Ottoman successes. Ottoman dominance is figured as an accident of Christian failings, and the Turks as a temporal instrument momentarily licensed to scourge backsliders. In works like Paolo Giovo's *Short Treatise Upon the Turkes Chronicles* (1546), this logic enables a sort of benedictory hope that Christian princes will unite against the Turks. Finally reconciled with his origins and recognizing that "heaven is just," Ward spends his last moments expressing similar hopes for a time when "the force of Christendome" is

Reunited, and all at once require
The lives of all that you haue murdered,
Beating a path out to Ierusalem,
Ouer the bleeding breasts of you and yours. (I4r)

Daborne's treatment of Ward is unusual for a number of reasons. For one, he places responsibility for Ward's apostasy squarely and exclusively on a woman, rewriting the sexual dynamic of apostasy from its male-male scenario in the travelers' tales to the more familiar patriarchal model of temptation and fall. Second, he transforms a notorious scoundrel and renegade into a spokesman for Christianity against Islam. Finally, he carries that transformation further by imagining a martyr's death for Ward.

Thomas Dekker was only slightly closer to the facts in a contemporaneous play, *If This Be Not A Good Play The Devil Be In It* (1612). In Dekker's play, Pluto eagerly awaits the arrival of Ward in hell. He is disappointed not because Ward has repented, but rather because his wait must go on:

The Merchants are not pilld nor pulld enough,
They are yet but shaven, when they are fl[ayed], hee'le come
And bring to hell fat booties of rich theeves,

A crew of swearers and drinkers the best that lives. (III: 5.4.90-3)

As embarrassing as it could sometimes be for the English government³⁵, Ward's robbing and pillaging would go on for many years. Although Daborne "killed" him in 1610, Ward lived well into his seventies and is thought to have continued taking a hand in the capture of ships as late as 1622. To make matters worse, reports of his luxurious lifestyle were published and read in London throughout the period. It required strong faith to continue to believe, with Dekker's *Pluto*, that Ward's day of reckoning would come. There were those who sustained such faith. In a poem published a year after Dekker's play and addressed "To a Reprobate Pirat that hath renounced Christ and is turn'd Turke," Samuel Rowlands admonishes his barely veiled subject:

Receiue [*sic*]this warning from thy natiue Land;
 Gods fearefull Iudgements (villaine) are at hand.
 Devils attend, Hell fier is prepar'd:
 Perpetually flames is reprobates Re-ward.

Daborne's play, approaches the problem of Ward's example differently. Ignoring the fact that "now a Turke on shore [he] dost take [his] ease," the play re-scripts Ward's life to allow audiences to find small Christian victories embedded in the resistance of Englishmen to Islamic temptation. In the years that followed, that resistance would be portrayed with greater and greater strength until the threat of apostasy became -- at least in the drama -- an occasion for the celebration of Christian patriarchy.

³⁵In 1609 the British Lord Admiral sent a ship to Barbary to persuade the renegade John Ward and his confederates to "forsake their wicked course of life" (qtd. in Wilson 56). Not only did the mission fail, but all the sailors deserted their captain and joined Ward.

The Turkish plays' growing emphasis on Christian patriarchy's strength in the face of the Islamic threat of apostasy becomes more apparent when we set Daborne's play against later Jacobean Turkish plays such as Fletcher's *Island Princess* (1621) and Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624). In the opening scene of Massinger's play, Gazet indicates the plot's course toward apostasy when he boasts of his ability to counterfeit the faith of whatever country he is in. Concerned with his servant's moral laxity, or perhaps with the safety of his own merchandise, Vitelli puts Gazet in mind of Thomas Palmer's warning to travelers that

as it becometh none to leave the truth, or to exercise any wicked action [in foreign lands]; so neither let any follow the beastly guises, or wicked customs of the country, whereby honesty and good manners may be corrupted. (Palmer 50-1)

He asks Gazet, "And what in Tunis, / Will you turne Turke heere?" (1.1.38-9). The clownish Gazet makes light of the threat of apostasy, and assures Vitelli that he would not turn Turk for fear of losing "[a] collop of that part my Doll enjoin'd me / To bring home as she left it" (1.1.39-40). Vitelli, on the other hand, sounds more like Palmer as he warns his servant to "temper [his] tongue, and meddle not with the Turks, / Their manners, nor religion" (1.1.47-8). All too soon, however, both are embroiled with the Turks in issues specifically concerning their manners and religion.

It bears recalling here that Vitelli is in Tunis to rescue his abducted sister Paulina. As I have already illustrated, Paulina's captor is interested only in her body and shows no interest in her conversion. Her story is only religious in so much as Paulina's "Christian" loyalty is her most effective defense against Asambeg's lecherous advances. By contrast, religion and conversion are the pivot on which Vitelli's story turns. Thus, in the second half of the play, the axis

of conflict turns from the threat to Paulina's body to the threat to Vitelli's soul. This contrast of gender-specific conflicts has some basis in early modern Christian orthodoxy that sought to uphold "a rigid division between the two sexes [whereby] men were designed for sacred functions, women for domesticity" (Crawford 41). Within this doctrine, man was considered a religious subject, whereas a daughter of Eve "represented a constant danger to herself as well as to men because her sexuality inclined her to sin" (Crawford 25). Equally important, however, is the fact that a gender-specific division of conflicts enables the displacement of a physical threat onto Christian women, leaving the male Christian body inviolate.

For the Christian men of the Turkish plays, submission to sexual temptation is figured as symptomatic and redeemable, unlike the taint that permanently separates women like Timoclea and "The Lascivious Queen," Eugenia. Nevertheless, as Vitelli is warned by his confessor, physical temptation is a lure that leads innocent Christians toward apostasy. Francisco's warning is thereupon illustrated with the entrance of the title character, "the shame of Venice, and the scorn/Of all good men, the perjured RENEGADO, Antonio Grimaldi" (1.1.105-7). Grimaldi presents the picture of the loathsome renegade as described in works like *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* and *The Navigations, Peregrinations and Voyages, Made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicholay*. Drunk, rioting, and in pursuit of whores, Grimaldi has come ashore only "to wallow in/ All sensual pleasures" (1.3.52-3). Given his disgust for Grimaldi and assurance that he is "too full of woe, to entertain/One thought of pleasure" (1.3.16-7), Vitelli seems to be in no danger of a similar fall from grace. Yet works of the period warned that men like Vitelli were as likely as any to succumb. Baptist Goodall insists,

Such have I seen in giddiness depart

From a good settled course & some foreign part,
 Squander their means in fruitless lawless life,
 Uncalled forsaking families and wife. (Goodall H4r)

Vitelli has no wife to forsake, but his chance meeting with the beguiling Ottoman Princess, Donusa, quickly puts him in danger of forgetting both his sister and himself. Donusa's effect on Vitelli is at once comical and disturbing. Although she approaches Vitelli's stall disguised as a common woman, bystanders easily see through her disguise. Vitelli, however, does not, and comes off as naive and slow-witted in her presence. When Donusa intentionally smashes some crystal glasses and leaves her name as a shibboleth to enter the palace to receive "full satisfaction" (1.3.161), Vitelli is unable to recognize her passionate intentions. Even when he is in the palace where Christian trespassers would normally be killed, Vitelli is oblivious to the seduction that is plain to all others. Exasperated, the eunuch, Carazie, remarks, "Would I were furnish'd / With his artillery, and if I stood / Gaping as he does, hang me" (2.4.11-3). Vitelli's failure to recognize *double entendres* leads Donusa to wonder, with the audience, that an Italian could "come thus slowly on" (2.4.116). Even as she takes his arm, kisses him and leads him toward her bedchamber, Vitelli remains bewildered. The comedic value of his naiveté is dampened, however, by its moral repercussions, and the audience's laughter is arrested when Vitelli at last recognizes the princess' intentions and follows her to the bedchamber declaring, "virtue's but a word" (2.4.136).

When Shakespeare's Falstaff dismisses honor as "a word" in *I Henry IV*, one discerns a trenchant social critique behind the comic exterior. Vitelli's abandonment of virtue is disturbing for altogether different reasons, not the least of which is that it gestures toward a greater defection. First, it marks a man's submission to female persuasion, a reenactment of original sin. Second, it

distracts Vitelli from his mission of rescuing his sister from the clutches of an Islamic man. Third, and most important, it marks a first step toward the apostasy represented by Grimaldi. As I have already illustrated, men like Grimaldi were said to abandon Christianity and “turn Turk” for material advantages and sexual license. As Vitelli moves deeper into the recesses of the palace, he seems to be on a similar trajectory, confessing himself “ravish’d” (2.3.12) by the splendors of both palace and princess, mistaking the jewels and money-bags heaped up for his pleasure for a “heavenly vision” (2.4.7). This is not to say that Vitelli seems immediately ready to abandon Christendom, turn Turk, and lead the renegade’s life. Nevertheless, the scene suggests that effect of increased European contact with Islam is not to be underestimated.

One European life that was changed radically in its contact with Islam was that of the Somerset farm laborer, Peter Eston. Leaving poverty in England for the chance of prosperity in Muslim lands, Eston swiftly rose to the command of a fleet of forty corsair vessels in 1611. A year later, he exhibited no qualms in attacking the English fishing fleet off of Newfoundland. When later he tired “of the renegade life, he entered the service of the Duke of Savoy, purchased a Savoyard marquisate, and married a lady of noble birth” (Lucie-Smith 83) with whom he lived in the palace he had built. Senior (40) conservatively estimates Eston’s fortune to have reached 100,000 crowns, plus a pension of £4,000 a year. Eston’s experience, like the historical Ward’s, validates the impulse to dismiss Christian virtue. For him, apostasy issued in prosperity and love with neither apparent divine repercussions, nor moral or spiritual anxiety. Massinger does not allow his hero to enjoy the same moral and spiritual ease. Instead, he is promptly scolded by his confessor and “made [to] see [his] follies” (3.2.4). When he sees Donusa next he returns all her gifts lamenting only that he cannot also

“cast up/ The poison I received into my entrails/ From the alluring cup of your enticements” (3.5.45-7).

Concurrent with and thematically parallel to Vitelli's renunciation of Donusa is the redemption of Grimaldi who, betrayed by his Muslim partners, forswears the renegade's life to become Francisco's acolyte. Nabil Matar argues that “at a time when Christians were constantly being lost to Islam, there was a desperate need to present such a make-believe victory on the seventeenth century stage.” (Matar *Renegades* 501). Though certainly uncommon, Grimaldi's story was not entirely fantastic. His experience of redemption parallels that of Sir Francis Verney who left England in 1608 to become a corsair in Algiers. In 1610 Verney was reported to have joined the notorious John Ward and converted to Islam. Five years later he was “desperately sick” but reconverted by an English Jesuit. Another English pirate, Henry Mainwaring, accepted an English pardon and betrayed his former cohorts as an exhibition of loyalty (Lucie-Smith 84).³⁶ Grimaldi's redemption is imbued with English fantasy, however, inasmuch as it involves only the betrayal of Muslims and occasions the redemption of other Christians. The renegade's example leads his reluctant comrades in debauchery toward contrition, and his ship becomes the means of escape from the Islamic threat.

Though Grimaldi works his way back into the good graces of the church through repentance and his aid of captive Christians, actual recreants like Mainwaring and Verney were asked to participate in decreed rituals.³⁷ In “A Recovery from Apostacy,” preached on the occasion of Vincent Juke's 1639

³⁶ As a thanksgiving for his pardon, Mainwaring wrote a discourse on piracy, “Of the Beginnings, Practices and Suppression of Pirates,” presented to the king in 1618.

³⁷ See Netzloff for an analysis of this liturgy.

reabsorption into the Church of England after his defection to Islam, William Gouge indicated the frequency and variety of such rituals, claiming that “this time after time hath beene done in all reformed churches: And that not onely by such as have returned from Paganisme, Turcisme, and Judaisme, but also from Anabaptisme and Popery” (qtd. in Questier 110). Gouge’s commentary calls attention to the fact that when most Englishmen used the term apostasy they were referring to the more local and prevalent conversions within Christianity, between Protestantism and Catholicism. Yet I would argue that apostasy at home and its anti-Christian rendition abroad were thought of together and mutually constituted. Catholics commonly accused Protestants of conspiring with the Turks, while Protestants in turn designated the Pope and the Turk twin anti-Christ³⁸. Movement between the two sects, particularly movement by the clergy, was figured in corresponding terms to those commonly used to describe apostates to Islam. Catholics like Francis Walsingham regularly accused clergymen converted to Protestantism of giving in to temptations of “loose life and women” (qtd. in Questier 40). In addition, they “noted more particularly the maintenance which their renegades could expect in the church of England” (Questier 45). Comparable accusations were made against Protestants who became Catholics and took positions abroad because of the lack of financial prospects at home. Like those who “turned Turk” for the financial opportunities such an act offered in Islamic lands, “considerations of career and patronage were always present in decisions to change religion” (Questier 44), even when such changes remained within the realm of Christianity. Thus, Anthony Champney’s 1613 lamentation that “the heretikes are so readie to entertayne our runegates” (qtd. in Questier 45) could as easily apply to Muslim reception of new

³⁸See Chew 101.

converts described in works like *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* as it did to the Anglican reception of Catholic converts. Likewise, the dramatic reclamation of renegades in Muslim lands was doubly pertinent given the prevalence of apostasy within English Christianity. This point is made most clearly in Robert Wilson's play *The Three Ladies of London* (1581). Here the possibility of a Christian merchant in the Ottoman Empire converting to Islam is conjoined with the assurance of English parson, Peter Pleaseman,

I haue bene a Catholicke, mary nowe for the most part a Protestant.
But and if my seruice may please [Lady Lucre], harke in your eare, sir,
I warrant you my Religion shall not offend her. (938-40)

One question raised by this convocation of apostasies is why one was generally treated on the English stage while the other became more prominent in polemical literature. One reason that I have already indicated in the introduction to this study is the inherent theatricality of conversion to Islam. A second reason may be that there was a literary precedent for the kind of conversions treated in the Turkish plays. We must recall that in the Turkish plays, conversion is an issue for Christian men but not Christian women. At the same time, Christian men are not alone in facing conversion. They are joined by Muslim women in relationships that invert the domination suffered by Christian men in travelers' narratives like Sanders' tale of the *Jesus* crew. Early modern playwrights did not need to create this kind of relationship themselves, for they could find it in medieval romance. In particular, they seem to have revived a trope which F.M. Warren calls the "enamoured Moslem princess," a common element of medieval romances, and most prominent in French treatments of Charlemagne and his vassals, Alexander the Great, and Guillaume of Orange, but also appearing in romances about non-historical figures. The standard plot involves a "Moslem princess who yields to the attractions of her father's French prisoner, befriends

him, discusses religion with him, professes conversion to his creed and offers him hand and heart" (Warren 344) before returning with him to his native land. Interestingly, Warren traces this narrative sequence to a Greek tale with the exception of one element, the conversion. This addition, which would become essential to the Turkish plays, first appears in one of the stories in the *Arabian Nights*. In that story, the conversion is from Magianism to Islam, but in a fine example of early cultural trafficking, Christian writers of the Middle Ages appropriated and converted the story so that the princess is a Muslim converted to Christianity.³⁹

The Turkish plays tend to update this tradition and place it within the context of England's early modern experience in Ottoman territories where a Christian man apprehended in the company of a Muslim woman was compelled to "either turn Turke, or Slaue all his life" (Lithgow, *Discourse* I4r). Thus, when, in *Renegado*, Vitelli returns to Donusa to renounce her love and gifts, he places himself in a perilous position, made more dangerous still by Donusa's late rejection of her former suitor, Mustapha, the Basha of Aleppo. Donusa's comparison of Mustapha's "grimme aspect, or toadepoole-like complexion" (3.1.50) to "a bugbeare to fright children" (60) inserts racial difference into a play generally focused on religious difference. Yet as the play proceeds, we see how one difference works in conjunction with the other as Donusa moves from racist to creedal rejection in the service of a white Christian patriarchy. His suspicions aroused, Mustapha enlists Asambeg, whose frustration with Paulina makes him anxious to punish a Christian man. Together they discover Vitelli with Donusa and imprison him immediately. At this point a version of Warren's narrative

³⁹Popular ballads featuring the story of a Muslim woman affecting the release of a Christian captive include "The Algiers Slaves Releasement" in Ebsworth VI: 447-8, and "The Turkish Lady" in Leach 169.

sequence ensues. Although they admire the “inuincible fortitude [that] this Christian/Showes in his sufferings (4.2.46-7), Mustapha and Asambeg determine that Vitelli must be punished with death unless Donusa

by any reasons, arguments or perswasion, can win and preuaile
with the sayd Christian offending with her, to alter his religion, and
marry her, that then the winning of a soule to the Mahometan sect,
shall acquit her from all shame, disgrace and punishment
whatsoever. (4.2.151-5)

The scene is unlike anything in the travelers’ narratives where, typically, Muslim men seek to convert Christian men. By placing a Muslim woman in the role of proselytizer, Massinger puts the Christian man in a position to overcome both Islam and forceful women. Unlike Daborne’s *Voad*, Donusa’s attempts to convert Vitelli come only at the mandate of Mustapha and Asambeg’s decree, distancing her from the act she commits and allowing her to be more easily redeemed. Consequently, Vitelli’s vehement refusal to renounce his faith, and his disgust with hers, instead win Donusa over to Christian martyrdom and a cursing of Islam. He reviles her “iugiling Prophet” (4.3.115) and determines

I will not foul my mouth to speak the sorceries
Of your seducer, his base birth, his whoredoms,
His strange impostures; nor deliver how
He taught a pigeon to feed in his ear,
Then made his credulous followers believe
It was an angel that instructed him
In the framing of his Alcoran. (125-31)

Donusa quickly determines that “there’s something tells mee I erre in my opinion” (138-9). Though she came to Vitelli to convert him, she “percieves a yeelding in [her] selfe” (148) and “spit[s] at Mahomet” (158), notwithstanding the

fatal consequences of her actions. The princess is thus transformed from a dangerous Islamic temptress to a happy Christian martyr in the vein of Kyd's Perseda. Accordingly, she promises Vitelli: "I dare not doubt you; as your humble shadow;/ Lead me where you please, I follow" (5.3.85-6). She rejoices at her makeshift wedding and baptism and insists that, though she is to be executed, she has been freed "from the cruellest of prisons,/ Blinde ignorance and misbeliefe: [the] false Prophet, / Impostor Mahomet" (5.3.131-3). In sum, the virtuous Christian man overcomes temptation by converting lechery into propriety and the Islamic temptress into a Christian wife. At the same time lechery is displaced from the former temptress onto the Islamic man whose foolhardy obsession with an unattainable Christian woman enables the escape of all his Christian captives.⁴⁰

Throughout the genre, instances of interfaith desire are contoured by the same gender-specific extension of tolerance and conversion. Like *Renegado*, Fletcher's *Island Princess* (1619) turns a feminized threat of Islamic apostasy into an occasion for the buttressing of gender hierarchies and the inversion of actual travelers' experience. The play is set on the bountiful Island of Tidore in the spice-rich Moluccas, where Islam had become predominant since being introduced into the region from southern India in the fourteenth century. This Islamic heritage is indicated in one of the Portuguese sailors' disgust at the islanders' "Mahumet gods" (156) and another's desire to marry the Princess, Quisara, and convert her into a "a sweet soul'd Christian" (97).⁴¹ Yet Quisara

⁴⁰Locating similar instances of Muslim women offered up to Christian men and signifying male Muslim and Jewish defeat in medieval Castilian literature, Louise Mirrer explains, "these women are inventions--pseudoidealizations, or ideal constructions, antithetical to actual experience" (3).

⁴¹Though the islanders' religion is said to contain elements like polygamy and solar worship, Armusia's reference to these as "Mahumet gods" and the play's

determines to marry only that man who rescues her brother, the King, recently kidnapped by the nefarious Governor of Ternata. The situation leads Dias' nephew Pyniero to counsel vigilance toward the islanders. He cautions:

They are false and desperate people, when they find
The least occasion open to encouragement,
Cruel and crafty souls, believe me Gentlemen,
Their late attempt . . . bids us be wise and circumspect. (92)

Pyniero's warning actuates the opening of the play with the admonishing tone earlier noted in Goodall and Gjorjevic. Yet the conflicts in the Turkish plays come from travelers' disregard of such warnings. Like Vitelli with Donusa, Fletcher's Portuguese are too taken with Quisara to recognize the dangers of the situation. One daring young soldier, Armusia, rescues the king and prepares to claim his prize. Yet before he can marry Quisara, the vengeful governor, disguised as a "holy Moorish priest" causes the King and Quisara to postpone the nuptials and suspect the integrity of the Portuguese. In what may be the most openly anti-colonial statement of the period's drama, he urges

These men came hither as my vision tells me,
Poor, weatherbeaten, almost lost, starved, feebled,
Their vessels like themselves, most miserable;
Made a long suit for traffic, and for comfort,
To vent their children's toys, cure their diseases:
They had their suit, they landed, and too th'rate
Grew rich and powerful, sucked the fat, and freedom
Of this most blessed Isle, taught her to tremble;
Witness the castle here, the citadel,

emphasis on apostasy (156) suggest that this is only a measure of Fletcher's ignorance concerning Islam.

They have clapped upon the neck of your Tidore,
 This happy town, till that she knew these strangers,
 To check her when she's jolly. (142)

The governor's allegations are remarkable for their presentation of a trenchant, non-European perspective on European trafficking and early colonialism. He emphasizes that Asian potentates were often quite unimpressed with their European visitors, and that the goods they brought with them were often rejected in favor of specie.⁴² Though the English would not establish a military presence in Africa or Asia like the Spanish and Portuguese until much later, the governor's denunciation of European exploitation, and military and epidemiological encroachments, could certainly be applied to England's New World experience by 1619.

While the governor's concerns with European exploitation insert into the play a powerful anti-colonial sentiment, his credibility is severely undermined by his corrupt motives and religious deception. His continuing hopes to win Quisara and secure dominion over Tidore lead him to abuse his usurped religious authority and link anti-Christian sentiments to his secular, anti-colonial claims. As he compares the Portuguese to "sharp thorns [that] stick in our sides" and "like razors, wound our religion," the governor's accusations move from valid resistance to specious pretense. Rather than pursue the expulsion of the Portuguese, he urges instead the conversion of Armusia, his greatest competitor for the possession of Quisara. Anticipating Armusia's response and taking advantage of his own religious guise, the governor convinces the Princess to take the "chain" of Armusia's affection "[a]nd link it to our gods and their fair

⁴²See Lewis, *Islam and the West* 27 for a discussion of Islamic and particularly Ottoman contempt for a Europe they found backward and barbaric. See also Loomba, "Shakespeare" 176-80.

worships.” Though there is no direct reference to Islam here, the governor’s metaphor is clearly informed by Europe’s association of Islamic conversion with physical captivity. This connection is confirmed in the familiar sequence of events which follows.

Though conversion and captivity are linked in Fletcher’s play, they do not exercise the same power over Christian men that they do in the travelers’ narratives. The Muslim woman of the plays is a deceitful temptress, but—unlike the Muslim man of the travelers’ narratives—she may be overcome by the righteous Christian man. When Quisara commands Armusia, “Worship our Gods, renounce that faith ye are bred in” (154), he refuses, ranting about her devilish religion and despising himself for ever pursuing her. He berates himself and repents in terms that recall Goodall’s warnings about the indiscretions of good-natured travelers led astray by sinful desires:

Have mercy heaven, how have I been wand’ring!

Wand’ring the way of Lust, and left my Maker!

. . . forsook assurance,

Eternity of blessedness for a woman” (154)

When she persists in her efforts, Armusia proceeds to find the Princess hideous and hateful “for all this trap you have laid to catch my life in.” Again, conversion is linked to captivity, but only metaphorically. Armusia shows no acquiescence. Like Vitelli, he is fearless of the consequences as he promises, “where I meet your *Mahumet* gods, I’ll swing ‘em / Thus o’r my head, and kick ‘em into puddles” (156). Having dismissed the threat of willing apostasy, the play turns to the possibility of conversion as Armusia voices his lost hopes for her to “have said, make me a Christian,/ Work that great cure” (155). His expectations are that a woman will naturally follow a man, as a good soul will naturally follow Christ. In fact, the play confirms this fantasy of Christian

patriarchy as Quisara is suddenly transformed. Having shunned his love throughout the play, it is only at this point that she concedes “how [she] love[s] this man, how truly [she] honor[s] him” (157). Again, the distance between the Muslim woman and the task imposed upon her by a Muslim man (the governor) makes her redeemable, whereas Muslim men generally remains beyond the pale of conversion. The King, for example, remains under the spell of the false priest/governor and regretfully imprisons his liberator when Armusia swears to beat down the island’s altars and temples.

In many plays of the period, the function of marriage is to mark the transference of one man’s authority over women and territory to another, insuring the production of legitimate heirs. An entirely separate set of motives activates the narratives of desire, conversion, and marriage customary in the Jacobean era Turkish plays. There is no Christian woman to facilitate the traditional romantic resolution in marriage, and the “redemption” of Muslim women therefore becomes essential. The transference of male authority is frequently a seizure and accompanied by no grant of property. Instead, the Muslim woman herself becomes a transferable property, valuable as a symbol of Christian male authority at a time when that authority seemed particularly unstable. Like Donusa, Quisara realizes her error in terms which seek to legitimate and stabilize male authority:

Your faith, and your Religion must be like ye,
 They that can shew you these, must be pure mirrors,
 When that the streams flow clear and fine, what are the fountains?
 I do embrace your faith, Sir, and your fortune” (163).

The importance of this affirmation is indicated in its immediate repetition. As Quisara submits herself to Armusia’s fate, her maid, Panura presents a secondary instance of interfaith desire and conversion in her meeting with the Portuguese

soldier Pyniero. Panura's tale of the Moorish priest's tyranny over Armusia and her mistress captivates Pyniero. Yet the soldier's desire for Panura never jeopardizes his Christianity. Instead, he takes her disaffection with the priest as an opportunity to win her for Christianity and immediately offers to convert her. When Panura accepts both Pyniero and his faith, he swears to her virtue by her "owne white hand" (5.4.33). Interestingly, this affirmation comes from the same man who, in the play's opening scene, argued that the princess' exceptional fairness, that which distinguishes her from all the other women of the island, comes only because she hides from the sun and "weares her complexion in a case" (1.1.62). Although no further mention is made of Quisara's "fairness," in the whitening of her ostensibly darker maid, the play imagines a curious whitening effect that conversion has on the women of Islamic lands.⁴³ As Kim Hall explains in her brilliant account of the *Song of Songs*,

The change from black to white heralds a new beginning, a Second Coming. Although the Bride's whiteness is read as conversion, it is important to note that her whiteness does not come from within. . . The actual whiteness is brought to her, or imposed on her, by the Bridegroom; thus her whiteness is as much (if not more) a sign of his power as of her acceptance of Christ. (Hall, *Things*114).

Likewise, the Christian men of the Turkish plays are empowered in the conversion and "whitening" of Islamic women. Not only do they resist a feminized Islamic temptation; they exercise a diametrical power over Islamic

⁴³Lynda Boose has argued that "in terms of the ideological assumptions of a culture such as that of early modern England, the black male-white female union is not the narrative that requires suppression. What challenges the ideology substantially enough to require erasure is that of the black female-white male, it is in the person of the black woman that the culture's pre-existing fears both about the female sex and about gender dominance are realized" (45-6).

women that is imagined beyond the reach of Muslim men. In contrast, Islamic women are rendered chaste and tractable paragons of Christian virtue. Quisara comes to embody obedience as she tells Armusia, “[w]hich way you go sir, I must follow” (5.5.41-2). For her part, Panura can do no more than seek the help of Christian men, and “properly” fears for her chastity when leading Pyniero through the dark vault leading back to the palace. In Fletcher’s *Knight of Malta*, the Turkish slave girl, Luscinda, must similarly confirm her conversion with a performance of “Christian womanhood.” Like Donusa and Quisara, her conversion is won by the love of a captive Christian, Angelo. Thinking him still captive, she quietly strives to preserve her chastity and humbly resists the seduction of Miranda. Later, she confirms her conversion upon assuring Oriana that she “shall live/To see [her son] tosse a Turke” (5.1.2-3). Because they must be transformed from dangerous temptresses to obedient Christian wives, Islamic women cannot work the liberation of Christian men in the transgressive manner of Perseda and Paulina. Instead, they are “saved” by Christian men united by the twin threats of captivity and conversion. In their new-found unity, the once petty and divided Portuguese of the play unite to defeat the governor and reveal him as a “false prophet” -- the same charge laid against Muhammad in European accounts of Islam.

In Daborne’s account of John Ward, we witness the potential tragedy of apostasy. In Fletcher’s play, like Massinger’s, we are instead presented with the power of Christianity in Islamic lands. Though English missionaries of the period had little success in converting Muslims to Christianity, the Christian heroes of the Turkish plays are most often successful. The extent of that success is measured in the concluding admission of Fletcher’s King that Armusia and Quisara “have half perswaded [him] to be a Christian” (170). That none of the Portuguese bother to pursue this conversion is telling. The Turkish plays rarely

concern themselves with the conversion of Islamic men. Instead they seek to re-write or erase the experience of conversion prominent in the experience of English travelers in Islamic lands, while simultaneously proffering a fantasy of willing female submission to Christian patriarchy.

The Turkish plays do not, however, entirely displace or disavow the actual physical threat posed to Christian men in their encounters with Islam. Circumcision, often confused with castration, is treated somehow in almost all of the Turkish plays. However, unlike the travelers' narratives, where described circumcisions showcase one of two tragedies--the superior strength of Muslim men or the greed of the apostate--the drama generally relegates circumcision to the realm of comedy. The one exception is Mason's *Eunuchus*, "a free borne Christians sonne in Cyprus" made captive "when Famagusta by the Turke was sackt" (1.2.87-8). Though something of a cipher, *Eunuchus* is the closest the Turkish plays come to representing the lived experience of the circumcised apostate. He suffers not only because he was stolen from his parents, but because

. . . they wrongd nature in me, mad[e] me an Eunuch,
 Disabled of those masculine functions,
 Due from our sex: and thus subiected,
 These sixteene yeares vnto the vilde commaund,
 Of an imperious Turke (1.2.89-93)

In and of himself, *Eunuchus* is a rather uninteresting character. He functions as a vehicle for exposition and provides insight into the characters of *Mulleases* and *Borgias* before dying a victim of their competing machinations. He is most interesting as an acknowledgement of weakness in a genre more prone to comedic denial. His emphasis on the emasculating, physical threat of Islam stands out in a genre prone to displacement and denial.

More typical of the Turkish plays' treatment of Islam's physical threat are Heywood's Clem and Massinger's Gazet. Both are clownish servants who hope to rise in status while in the Ottoman court. The results of such desires are nearly disastrous and instruct the servant class put aside ideas about advancement in Islamic lands. Yet it is important that the results are only *near* disaster, not actual disaster. Clem's appetite for honor makes him volunteer for the office of eunuch, a term he fails to understand. Likewise, Gazet seeks to buy a position in the court and reviews the possible positions with the eunuch Carazie. Unfamiliar with the meaning of titles like *beglerbeg*, *sanzacke*, *chiaus*, and *eunuch*, Gazet decides on the last when he learns that Carazie's duties include being the occasional bedfellow to his mistress. Both Gazet and Clem narrowly evade the circumciser's blade and survive unharmed to entertain the audience with ribald humor. Even those who fail to escape untouched, make endless puns on "stones" and "lightening" like Carazie, or argue, like Kyd's Basilisco, for the insignificance of a little snip. By imagining only physical threats that endangered women and unschooled fools, the Turkish plays create an aura of invulnerability around Christian masculinity. Those few men who run into trouble generally do so out of simple-mindedness rather than genuine physical or spiritual weakness. As a result, circumcision becomes a source of anxiety-dispelling laughter.

VI. "I'th' East my pleasure lies"

Throughout the Turkish plays we consistently find the threat and social consequences of apostasy appropriated, disacknowledged, or displaced. Yet the need for such strategies signifies the existence of considerable anxieties attached to England's increasing traffic in Islamic lands. Even as characters like Clem and Gazet encourage a laughing-off of anxieties, they call attention to the same and heighten the need for further apparatuses of denial and displacement. This is

equally true of travelers' accounts--like John Sanderson's of Edward Barton--that seek to absolve their author by pointing out the weakness of other European travelers. Following his indictment of Barton, Sanderson expresses great concern over his own reputation as a Levant traveler. Loath "to have every Jack to descane [his] meaning" (Sanderson 260), Sanderson wrote home twice to restrict circulation of his papers. In a letter to his cousin, requesting the return of "the booke of my travailes," Sanderson explains, "I would not for all that I am worth it faule into the hands of any fantasticall strainger, for so peradventure I may be basely abused" (Sanderson 261).

Sanderson's caution speaks to his awareness of the fact that seventeenth-century English readers were likely to see the actions of any Christian in the Levant as suspect and potentially unregenerate. It is this tendency that first led me to inquire into the relationship between Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and the Turkish plays. I am not unaware of the fact that over 1500 years lie between Antony and Caesar, on the one hand, and men like John Ward, Edward Barton, and John Sanderson, on the other. Nor do I suggest that an unproblematic analogy can be drawn between the Roman Empire and the emerging nation-states of early modern Europe. For that matter, I also acknowledge that the significance of the term *Europe* changed in relation to historical circumstances. I recognize that at the time of the Battle of Actium, Christianity was a mere fledgling cult, hardly worth notice, and Islam would not be founded for some six hundred years. Nevertheless, I believe that the same cultural forces which activate the Turkish plays have significant effects on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. As Ania Loomba has argued,

to take *Antony and Cleopatra* back to a Herodotean discourse of difference is useful to the extent that it indicates the mobility over centuries of a certain European vocabulary of cultural difference.

But it also folds the play away from a newer English urgency in mapping and staging the East. (Hawkes 168)

Similarly, John Archer's recent work on *Antony and Cleopatra* urges a turn from the study of the play's sources to cultural studies of "Antony and Cleopatra in its shifting discursive setting" (MacDonald 145). Like me, Archer finds the motif of degeneration essential to our understanding of Shakespeare's play. His interest, however, derives from tropes of degeneration in the early-seventeenth-century discourse of Egypt, not in the tales of English travelers. Archer illustrates that although Renaissance scholars venerated Egypt's antique and hermetic tradition, it became necessary in the context of the African slave trade "to 'other' and demean all African civilizations, including Egypt" (MacDonald 149). Shakespeare's play is thus seen as "registering the tendency toward cultural and racial degeneration in the early seventeenth-century discourse of Egypt" (MacDonald 151).

Without discounting Archer's important argument, I wish to emphasize Egypt's status in the early modern period as an Ottoman protectorate, where Christian Europeans could be degenerate and/or enslaved. Although the best known map of Shakespeare's day, *Ortelius his Epitome of the Theatre of the World* (1570), contained few political boundaries, Shakespeare and his audience are likely to have known that Egypt was part of the Ottoman Empire. Its conquest by the Turkish Sultan Selim I, the Grim, nearly a century earlier in 1516, was chronicled in numerous English histories of Islam and the Turks. Furthermore, theater-goers had previously witnessed a Turkish Sultan in the Egypt of Marlowe's enormously popular and oft-revived *Tamburlaine*. Thus, if Shakespeare and his audience were liable to think of Turks when hearing of Egypt, then *Antony and Cleopatra* should be considered in light of the

contemporary associations that an English audience might have with the Egypt of the Ottoman Turks.⁴⁴

By the time Shakespeare was most likely writing *Antony and Cleopatra*, the Levant Company charter had been renewed three times and English merchants made regular trips to Alexandria and Cairo. There they traded English cloth for the pepper and nutmeg of Turkish merchants, and looked on as their fellow Europeans were sold into slavery in scenes like the one included in Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*. John Evesham's and Laurence Alderseys's accounts of travel in Egypt describe the inhabitants as only Turks, Moors, and Jews, never Egyptians. Though Christians were settled throughout the Ottoman Levant, the only Christians in Egypt acknowledged by Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1598-1600) are the overpowered and enslaved Europeans described in a section entitled "The worthie enterprise of John Fox an Englishman in delivering 266 Christians out of the captivitie of the Turkes at Alexandria" (Hakluyt, Principal I: 150). In short, Egypt is figured as Turkish and anti-Christian, a site of degeneracy and danger. Descriptions of its degeneration since the Pharaonic age may thus be attributed not only to the rise of the African slave trade, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to Egypt's Ottoman identity.

Although I do not count *Antony and Cleopatra* among the Turkish plays, a Jacobean audience might be likely to set Shakespeare's play in this genre given its unmistakable thematic, geographic, and socio-linguistic correspondences. In his Egyptian sojourns, Antony would have recalled for an early modern audience

⁴⁴ When considering Jacobean associations with Egypt we must note that scholars as influential as the royal astrologer, John Dee, were fascinated by the hieroglyphics, mystical wisdom, fantastic beasts, pyramids, obelisks, and mummia of Egypt. *Antony and Cleopatra*, however, is largely devoid of references to the burgeoning hermetic tradition. Shakespeare incorporates such interests only in Antony's clever mockery of the drunken Lepidus.

the Levant traveler who risked depravity, captivity, and emasculation. Like the Christian travelers of the Turkish plays, his potential dissolution is pinned to the influence of an exotic woman who, "though not Turkish," owes much of her representation "to contemporary writings about Turks" (Hawkes 175). Indeed, these are the principal concerns voiced by those who censure Antony. Since theirs are not the play's voice, though, it is important to note what qualities Shakespeare's play shares with the Turkish plays, and where it resists comparison.

I will not offer a complete re-reading of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Instead I hope to simply indicate how attention to early modern travelers' narratives and the Turkish plays can reconfigure our ideas about Shakespeare's play. Similarities between Antony and the European travelers of Shakespeare's age are foregrounded in the first lines of the play. In Philo's assessment, Antony's abandonment of martial Rome for "a gipsy's lust," is a kind of apostasy, and his faults are enumerated in terms echoing the crimes of renegades. Thus Philo complains of how Antony's "dotage . . . o'erflows the measure," (1.1.1-2), how his eyes "turn " (1.1.4), and his lustful heart "reneges all temper" (1.1.8, emphasis mine). Antony's excessive affection is here linked to the language of apostasy--turning and reneging. Furthermore, the emasculating aspects of "turning Turk" are invoked as Antony and Cleopatra enter "with eunuchs fanning her," and Philo describes him as "the bellows and the fan/ To cool a gipsy's lust" (1.1.9-10). Fears of castration are suggested throughout the play. In Philo's terms, Antony is designated "The triple pillar of the world transform'd/ Into a strumpet's fool,"⁴⁵ and Caesar complains that Antony "is not more manlike/ Than Cleopatra: nor the queen of Ptolemy/ More womanly than he" (1.4.5-7).

⁴⁵ For references to the eunuchs in Levantine brothels, see Sanderson and Lithgow.

Cleopatra boasts of putting her “tires and mantles on him, whilst/[She] wore his sword Phillipan” (2.5.22-3), and Antony himself complains to Mardian that Cleopatra “has robb'd me of my sword” (4.14..23).

Ironically, Mardian is a true eunuch who, robbed of his “sword,” provides a constant reminder that Antony has only been “turn'd Turk” linguistically, and that the Antony revealed by the play rarely corresponds with others' descriptions of him. Condemnations are undermined almost as quickly as they are uttered, and the Romans who censure Antony are generally as guilty as he of the charges of depravity they raise. Thus, while we hear a great deal of Antony and Cleopatra's gaudy nights, we only *see* a great deal of Roman riot aboard Pompey's galley. Nevertheless, the numerous correspondences--real or imagined--between Antony and English travelers suggests that Shakespeare's play provides the very thing the Turkish plays refuse to acknowledge. In his *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare tells the story of a traveler overcome in his Levantine journey and unable to redeem himself through the “conversion” of the woman he desires. The anxieties and accusations of Antony's countrymen therefore help us to understand the denial and displacement of Shakespeare's countrymen. Like Shakespeare's Caesar, who revels in exposing the sordid details of Antony and Cleopatra's affair, they were at once enthralled and repulsed by the stories of men who left behind their country and faith, men who readily admitted that “i'th'East my pleasure lies” (2.3.39) Yet also like Caesar, they were concerned above all with bringing the threats of Islam and the East home to be transformed as props for patriarchy on domestic stages.

Chapter 4

“It dus me good, dat me have coosend de Iewe” : Christians, Turks, and Jews on the Early Modern Stage

I. “Doggs, Turkes, Jewes, brute beasts [and] filthy villains.”

By concentrating on the place and influence of Islam in early modern drama, this study runs the risk of isolating a single element from the cultural nexus and overstating its importance. I have tried to avoid this result by examining the ways in which England’s encounter with religious difference was interlocked with multiple forms of difference, including race and gender as well as economic interests. I have also indicated how religious differences within Christianity could form a subtext to English representations of Islam. This approach to difference in early modern England is not unusual. Indeed, it characterizes much of the recent work done on Jews in the early modern period. James Shapiro’s *Shakespeare and the Jews* has been particularly instructive in demonstrating the basic premise that “the English turned to Jewish questions in order to answer English ones” (1). Yet in training his sight on “Jewish questions,” Shapiro has sometimes failed to acknowledge ways in which other racialized outsiders also functioned as answers to “English questions,” often in complex relation to each other.

Scholars of early modern Judaism and anti-Semitism have shown little interest in the fact that, typically, where one finds representations of Jews, one also finds representations of Muslims. In *Recantation of a Brownist* (1606), for example, the reformed Puritan Peter Fairlambe includes a list—fairly typical of the period—that even-handedly maligns “Doggs, Turkes, Jewes, brute beasts [and] filthy villains.”¹ Similarly, John Bale’s list enumerating the enemies of the

¹Fairlambe’s list identifies groups to be contrasted with English Puritans that instead “deserve to be better esteemed” (F2v). The account of his return to the

English church includes “so manye Devyls, Pagans, Mahumetes, Turkes, Jewes, Epicures, [and] heretykes” (87).² In the drama of the age, too, Jews are regularly found side by side with Muslims. Seven extant plays from the period between 1581 and 1619 involve both Jewish and Muslim characters. Though three of these plays--Wilson’s *Three Ladies of London* (1581), Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* (1592), and Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* (1596)--have previously been examined together for their representations of Jews, I am aware of no study that recognizes their common Islamic matter. Not only do these plays involve both Muslims and Jews, they, with several others, are all set in or involve trafficking with the Islamic world. *Three Ladies of London* features the newly-established trade of England’s “good commodities” for Constantinople’s “fine trifles,” while Rowley, Day, and Wilkins’ *The Three English Brothers* (1607) dramatizes the Sherley brothers’ unauthorized trade mission to Persia. In Marlowe’s *Jew* Barabas awaits cargoes from Persia and Alexandria, while the fate of *Merchant’s* Antonio rests with the return of his ships from Tripoli and the Indies. Finally, Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turke* (1610) depicts European pirates in Tunis negotiating prices for booty captured from Mediterranean trade ships. All of these plays, as well as *Selimus* (1594), *The Raging Turk* (1613-18), and *Devil’s Law Case* (1623) bring together the figure of the Jew and the Muslim. Yet where lists like Fairlambe’s and Bales’ dehumanize Jews and Turks in similar terms, Islam and Judaism are treated quite distinctly in the drama. This is not to say that dramatic representations of Jews and Turks are unrelated. On the contrary, each is typically shaped or enabled by concurrent representations of the other. Thus

Anglican church expresses great sympathy for persecuted sects such as the Brownists, with whom he associated in England and during his time in Barbary.

²I am grateful to Professor Rudy Almasy for pointing out this reference following a talk I gave at West Virginia University.

early modern drama indicates that English trafficking in the Islamic world made it impossible to treat “Jewish questions” separately from “Islamic questions.”

Scholarship on Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* has frequently recognized a connection between Shylock and Morocco, the Jew and the Moor. Several critics suggest that the play vilifies all non-Christians equally, along the lines of Fairlambe’s and Bales’ lists: Jews and Muslims are non-Christians and therefore marginalized in the culture. Jack D’Amico argues that the play’s tests are designed to “justify exclusion and, if cunningly conceived, reveal the true nature of the alien Jew or Moroccan” (D’Amico 167). Likewise, Alan Rosen argues that Shakespeare’s play enforces a dramatic link between Morocco and Shylock by placing them on the margins of discourse, “a strategy which blurs the boundaries between one outsider and the other” (Rosen 74). The Jew and Muslim are indeed linked and excluded, but the nature of their relationship is not one of sameness. Jews and Muslims are assigned distinct, interdependent roles, and when exclusion does take place it is neither complete nor universal. Where Jews are typically subjected to a legacy of prejudice, Muslims are afforded new respect and positions of relative authority.

Undoubtedly, economic imperatives tempered representations of Islam as Anglo-Ottoman contact increased, but the same situation brought with it new concerns over the spiritual and political allegiances of Englishmen. As I indicated in the previous chapter, these doubts were aggravated by tales of conversion both at home and abroad. Gauri Viswanathan explains that “by undoing the concept of fixed, unalterable identities, conversion unsettles the boundaries by which selfhood, citizenship, nationhood, and community are defined, exposing these as permeable borders” (16). Historically, the most common rhetorical solution to problems of destabilized identity has been the identification and representation of an Other. Yet as positive images entered the

English discourse of Islam, the very otherness of one of England's most powerful and recurrent images of otherness was being challenged--made to appear less foreign, less adversarial, less the negative to English Christianity's positive. In other words, even as Islam continued to appear a nefarious threat to Christianity in certain contexts, it was generally becoming less suitable as an absolute contrast to and assurance of English Christianity's strength and veracity.

The tangle of economic, political, and religious impetuses involved in Anglo-Islamic relations had potent consequences for English representations of the Jew.

Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Muslims and Jews together dominated the role of English Christianity's Other. As images of Islam became more elastic, the figure of the Jew, and particularly the Jewish man, remained rigidly confined by derogatory, oppositional terms, and traditional Christian attitudes.³ Regardless of whether they supported or criticized trafficking in the Islamic world, English Christians found the figure of the scoundrel Jew instrumental to the defense of their position. For those who participated in or supported Anglo-Ottoman relations, anti-Semitism was a means of proving one's faith, as well as an outlet for resentment felt towards the Jewish population that attained some of the profit from mercantile traffic with Islam. For those who feared an infection of infidel corruption and continued to conflate Jews and Muslims, the image of the dangerous Jew resident in Christendom acted as a warning of what the Muslim could become. Whatever position they took,

³Except where I indicate otherwise, my references to Jews in this essay assume a male figure. The figure of the Jewish woman did also appear in the drama, but she played a very different part, sufficiently described by other critics. See, for example, Shapiro 157-62; Boose 38-41; and Hall, "Guess."

English writers regularly brought images of Jews and Muslims together, even if only to draw them apart.

Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke* provides a useful illustration of early modern Christendom's need for a scoundrel Jew. Though he has renounced "the law of Moses [and] turn'd Turke," Daborne's Jewish merchant, Benwash, has clearly not accepted Islam, explaining that he did so only "to keep/[his] bed free from these Mahometan Dogges" (D1r). He is presented as a Jew in the *dramatis personae*, his speech tags are "Jew," and he is regularly addressed as "Jew" rather than "Benwash." Once a Jew, always a Jew; none of the consequences of "turning Turk" seem to apply to the Jew. Why is this the case? Why must Benwash remain "Jew" throughout? The answer lies in the role played by Jews in mediating relations between Christians and Muslims.

The involvement of Jews in the internal trade of the Ottoman Empire "rendered them indispensable as middle-men for foreign exporters" (Arbel 16-7). Benwash is just such a middle-man. He plays a crucial role in the traffic between Christian pirates and a Turkish market. But as a Jew, he is also an essential component in Christian self-exoneration. He becomes central to the plans of the Dutch pirate Dansiker who wishes to return to Christian Europe free from the taint of his illicit traffic with the Turks. In order to earn a pardon for his piracy and affirm his allegiance to Christendom, Dansiker determines to set fire to all the ships anchored in the harbor at Tunis. In order to draw the ships' crews ashore so that they cannot put out the fires, Dansiker first ignites the house of the Jew, who "gives free and open entertain" to them all. Though his plot succeeds, Dansiker's triumphant return to Christendom is thwarted by the death of the French king, who offered him asylum. With no place to turn, he returns to Tunis, and submits himself to the will of the governor, asking how he may "redeem his peace/ And their great losses, all their furies cease" (H1). The merchants of Tunis

are prepared to forgive Dansiker, "And with one voyce demand Benwash the Jew/ As his just ransom" (H1). What I find interesting in this episode is the way in which the Jew becomes essential to the management of any relationship--oppositional or concordant--between Christians and Turks. In the first instance, setting fire to the Jew's house is part and parcel of displaying proper Christian opposition to the Turks. In the second, abusing the Jew is figured as necessary to the maintenance of relations with the Turks. More often than not, this was the case in the English context. If the Turk was to be an associate, the Jew had to be an enemy.

Of course, English relations with Jews and Judaism were more than simply a by-product of its relationships with Islam and the Turks. First of all, there is a long history of English anti-Semitic libel I will only touch on here. Traditional Christian polemic found Jews false, cruel, and treasonous, usurers, poisoners, and ritual murderers directly descended from those responsible for the death of Christ.⁴ Second, the emergence of Jews in new economic roles during the early modern period caused tensions and renewed prejudices. In his study of *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism*, Jonathan Israel identifies the 1570's, the same decade in which the English began their official turn to the Turks, as a turning point for European Jews. Israel describes the previous century, from 1470 to 1570, as witnessing "the near destruction of Jewish religion, learning, and life in western and central Europe" (23). Jews were first denied admission into guilds and pushed to the margins of economic life. They were then forced by expulsion and Inquisition to flee western Europe for Poland, the Balkans, and the Ottoman Empire. For the Ottomans, admission of the Jews was intended to bring the empire into a more active role in trade and increase internal

⁴See Trachtenberg for a survey of traditional anti-Semitic libel.

tax revenues. Learning of their expulsion from Spain in 1492, Bajazeth II ordered his governors to welcome the Jews, and expressed puzzlement over Ferdinand's reputation for wisdom: "How could he be [wise], he who impoverishes his country to enrich mine!" (qtd. in Goodman 99). To the Ottomans, Jews represented riches. Despite the restrictions on them in most Christian states, Jews had a reputation as experts in funds management and numerous trades, and they brought with them knowledge of markets all over Europe. Not only would they increase Ottoman tax rolls, they would also spend enormous sums securing posts as customs farmers and stimulate the Ottoman economy through their participation in the cloth trade.⁵ The "exodus from the West" (5) brought the migrant Jews unexpected opportunities. In their new homes, Jews were permitted to "perform a far greater range of activities and functions than had been the case in western and central Europe" (Israel 26). As Benjamin Arbel points out, Ottoman economic policies meant that "for the first time in many centuries, a powerful state offered the Jews full protection" (Arbel 176).⁶ The Jews took advantage of their new situation, rapidly assuming control of the booming trade in wool, cloth and camlets, as well as taking an important part in the pepper and alum trades.

Around 1570, with hopes of similarly stimulating their own economies, European states slowly began to invite Jews to resettle in places from which they had been expelled. Though the English would not officially readmit the Jews

⁵See Arbel 18-54.

⁶In addition to Ottoman protections, Arbel attributes the success of the Jews in Mediterranean trading to their dispersal between the East and West; their command of numerous languages; their common legal and socio-religious traditions; their use of Hebrew as an international language of commerce; their use of letters of exchange for the transfer of capital between the Islamic and Christian worlds.

until 1656, the number of foreigners in London during Elizabeth's reign tripled and doubtless included numerous Marranos, or Portuguese Jews converted to Catholicism. David Katz, the leading historian of early modern English Jewry, sees this movement as the genesis of a general trend of "improvement in the Jewish situation in regard to their relations with political authority." Yet, he is cautious to note that in most cases improvements were "achieved behind the scenes and almost secretly" (107). Socially, Jews found little, if any, more acceptance than they had known previously. Economic considerations yielded practical tolerance, "which proved, in the long run, to be stronger than traditional religious attitudes, though without changing them in a significant way" (Arbel 190). Jewish successes in the East could even make Jewish life in the West more difficult. Considering the case of Venice, Benjamin Arbel argues that Jewish control of trade in the Levant meant that "Jews were increasingly viewed as rivals and enemies, an image that was easily extended, aided by traditional Christian attitudes, from the Levantine Jewish merchants to Jews in general" (23). I want to make a similar argument for the image of the Jew in early modern England: improving political conditions for Jews meant that trafficking in the Islamic world brought the English into increased contact with Jews as well as Turks. This was more than the English had bargained for in pursuing an Anglo-Ottoman *entente*. It basically amounted to an alliance with not one but two traditional bogeymen of English culture. The ensuing vilification of Jews helped to assuage anxieties over Anglo-Ottoman relations, as well as venting frustrations over English dependence upon Jewish middle-men. Thus if political conditions improved for the Jews, the maintenance of traditional anti-Semitism remained paramount to a distinct sense of Englishness.

II. "A Jew is not a Jew until he converts to Islam"

In arguing for the distinctiveness of England's Others, I do not wish to suggest that Muslims and Jews were never confused in the early modern period. To do so would mean ignoring some obvious evidence to the contrary as well as the staying power of Christian polemical mythology. Many superficial similarities encouraged the linkage of Judaism and Islam. Both Jews and Muslims rejected the Trinity. Both practiced circumcision and claimed physical descent from Abraham. Both considered Semitic languages their sacred tongues and both dressed in *caftans*, or long robes, and turbans.⁷ These similarities may have helped English writers like George Sandys and William Lithgow to sustain specious allegations that Muhammad was of Jewish ancestry and was assisted in his writing of the Qur'an by a Jew named Abdall. On the medieval stage, the conflation of Jews and Muslims was particularly commonplace. This practice is best exemplified in the fifteenth-century Coventry Cycle, where "Herowde, of Jewys Kyng most reverent" declares anachronistically that "the lawys of Mahounde my power xal fortiefie." Although Herod predated Muhammad by over 600 years, he has apparently converted to Islam but remained a Jew; thus he compounds his antipathy to Christianity and figures the "enemies of Christ" from all ages. In the early 1580s, as English playwrights moved slowly away from mystery plays toward a more verisimilar, social drama, one of the elements that survived the transition was the conflation of Jew and Muslim. Thus in Wilson's *Three Ladies of London*, Gerontus, a Jewish money-lender, swears zealously "by mightie Mahomet" (line 1545). Yet, as I will illustrate, Wilson's play goes on to distinguish Jews and Turks in a manner characteristic of the seven plays treated here.

⁷Cutler and Cutler 92.

When Wilson wrote his play in 1581, the practice of conflating Jews and Muslims as the enemies of Christ was a tradition with nearly eight hundred years of history. As early as the ninth century, Jews were accused of acting as Islamic fifth columnists in besieged Christian cities. Such accusations fit snugly with the idea of Jews as the descendants of the traitorous Judas and were encouraged by Jewish celebrations of Islamic victories in Marseilles (848) and Barcelona (850). Though Jews were often grateful for Muslim victories--as they were typically followed by the installation of relatively tolerant governments--Christian allegations of treason are more than a little suspicious. As Joshua Trachtenberg (84) points out, ninth-century historians accused Jews of betraying Toulouse to the Arabs in the previous century despite the fact that Toulouse had never fallen to anyone but the Normans. Christianity's strongest rhetoricians repeatedly ignored the facts to fuse Jews and Muslims in treachery. In the twelfth-century Toletano-Cluniac corpus, Peter the Venerable goes so far as to proclaim, "A Jew is not a Jew until he converts to Islam" (Cutler and Cutler 2). Peter's allegation depends on the same notion of the Jew as a two-faced traitor, abetting the cause of Islam from within the very walls of Christendom. According to Trachtenberg (186), some four hundred years later, Martin Luther would make the same dubious connection in his frequent allusions to Jewish collusion with the Ottoman Turks. In England, Richard Hakluyt helped to preserve the idea of the conspiratorial Jew in his 1598-1600 compendium by including a French account of the 1522 Ottoman conquest of Rhodes.⁸ The account tells of a Jewish physician, ironically named John Baptista, sent into Rhodes as a spy by Selim I, the Ottoman sultan. In Rhodes, he faked his baptism and worked some cures "whereby he began to be well trusted" (Hakluyt,

⁸"A briefe relation of the siege and taking of the Citie of Rhodes by Sultan Soliman the great Turke" in Hakluyt, *Principal* 5: 1-60.

Principal V: 3). Later, when Suleiman's army besieged the city, Baptista allegedly provided critical information about weaknesses in the walls and ways to enter. By holding a single Jew accountable for the fall of an entire Christian stronghold, the account elides the possibility of a bona fide Christian weakness. On the Elizabethan stage, the sustained notion of the Jew as an Islamic fifth columnist is best exemplified by Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, where Barabas plots with his Turkish slave Ithamore before leading an Ottoman invasion force through a vault beneath the mighty walls of Malta. Over thirty years later, when Webster wrote *The Devil's Law Case*, the idea of the Jewish collaborator remained commonplace enough that Romelio uses it in his impersonation of a Jew, professing his readiness to "betray a towne to'th Turke, or make a Bonfire / A'th Christian Navy" (IV: 3.2.13-14).

Regardless of where Christianity located its enemies, without or within, the fusion of Jew and Muslim helped to justify Christian failures while at the same time creating a local scapegoat. As Alan and Helen Cutler argue, the great outburst of anti-Semitism in the Middle Ages and continuing into modern times "was due *primarily* (though by no means exclusively) to the dynamic expansion of medieval civilization between 900 and 1100" (5). While acknowledging also the importance of socio-economic factors, the Cutlers explain the rise of anti-Semitism as a deflection of exterior conflict onto an interior alien. One instance of this process is discernible in the derivation of a popular anti-Semitic blood libel. The myth of ritualized Jewish malfeasance stood behind numerous stories like Chaucer's *Prioress' Tale*, where a Christian boy is brutally murdered by a group of Jews, but it may originate from myths about Muslims. As Frank Felsenstein explains, Crusaders told tales of ruthless Saracens who used Christian blood in their demoniacal rituals and "it was not difficult . . . to transfer the imputation to the Jews and use it as an excuse to wreak vengeance upon

them" (Felsenstein 32). Trachtenberg (186) cites a Miracle play whose earlier version presents a Turk piercing an image of Mary but whose later version assigns this same role to a Jew.⁹

If, as Cutler and Cutler argue, the dynamic expansion of civilization in the medieval period encouraged the linkage of Judaism and Islam, we should expect to see an even greater linkage of the two in what has come to be termed "the age of expansionism." Yet this is not always the case. In early modern Europe expansionism coincided with religious upheaval, and the rifts produced by Reformation politics had profound implications for representations of Jews and Muslims. An interesting example is available in Richard Eden's preface to Peter Martyr's *Decades of the New World*. Eden chastises the English for "their inexcusable slothfulness and negligence" (55) in regard to overseas ventures wherein they may wed Christian and mercantile aims. He argues that the English must turn their minds from the East where "the Jews and Turks . . . are already drowned in their confirmed error," and consider planting a colony in Florida, where the natives are "simple gentiles living only after the law of nature" (Eden 57). Eden's comparison serves his Christian expansionist aims by fusing Islam and Judaism into a powerful, unified heresy. The natives of Florida are, by contrast, rendered a diffuse, "tractable" group whose conversion is already underway.

Eden wrote his preface during an unusual period in English history. Not only was England's Queen a staunch Catholic, she was married to the Catholic

⁹Shapiro argues that in the context of Reformation doubts and differences within English Christianity "it was important to dispel doubts about Christianity by juxtaposing universally accepted Christian values with those of the stubborn, criminal, and misbelieving Jews" (107). This myth would have become even more important as the Turks became known as English allies against Catholic Spain.

King of Spain, for whom both reconquest in Europe and expansion abroad were figured as battles fought “to the confusion of the devil and the Turkish Antichrist” (Eden 50). Three years later, when Queen Mary died, England’s expansionist practice remained dilatory but depended upon an altogether different view of the Turks, and consequently of the Jews. When the Protestant Elizabeth ascended the English throne and rejected Spanish marriage proposals, an English colony in the Americas would have been construed as a challenge to Spanish hegemony and almost certainly taken by force. Indeed, the English established no colonies in the Americas until Elizabeth died and was replaced by the more conciliatory James. Until that time, English privateers on the Atlantic might, at best, raid Spanish treasure fleets. Such raids had immediate rewards, but did nothing to establish much-needed markets for English cloth. Instead, they contributed to the deterioration of Anglo-Spanish relations and made it more and more important that the English form an alliance with the only power that could put the Spanish in check, Eden’s “Turkish antichrist.” Thus, while Spanish expansionism may have encouraged the conflation of Jews and Muslims, English trafficking required a re-imagination of the Islamic world that would have important effects on representations of both Jews and Muslims. Although seventeenth-century philo-Semitism would be predicated on the idea that Jews were by no means irrevocably “drowned in their confirmed error,” Anglo-Ottoman relations and the economic importance of Jews in the sixteenth century would first vilify Jews to palliate the threat of trafficking with Muslims.¹⁰

III. Traffic Hazards

¹⁰For a discussion of Philo-Semitism, see Katz 123-8.

As we have seen in the correspondence of Queen Elizabeth and the pageants of Lord Mayor's Day, trafficking with the Islamic world made possible new practices of representation to coexist with those already established. Thus one Englishman might practice tilting with a Turk-shaped target while another watched benevolent "Muslims" parade through the streets of London. Raymond Williams has identified this sort of historical process as the "radical instability of culture" whereby "residual," "dominant," and "emergent" aspects of culture coexist. In such a model, new and old are not necessarily in contention. Rather, the emergent often requires the continuation of the residual or dominant. Sometimes innovation occurs most readily in the reassuring presence of tradition. Thus, Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* presents both Selim Calymath and Ithamore, examples of the noble and the depraved Turk. Likewise, *Selimus*, *The Three English Brothers*, and *The Raging Turk* offer reassuring examples of Muslim depravity to balance out even the slightest acknowledgments of Muslim nobility. For the most part, however, it was the figure of the Jew that bore the heavy burden of tradition. Whereas the Muslims on English stages included judges, generals, governors, and princes, Jews continued to appear in the traditional roles of usurer, poisoner, and conspirator.¹¹

Because it has no immediate material or political consequences, tolerance may be more readily shown to a distant alien than to a resident alien.¹² No

¹¹It is important to note that anti-Semitic libels were not the exclusive property of Christendom. The seventeenth-century Muslim traveler Ahmad ibn Qasim al-Hajari recalls being told by a scholar in Cairo who learned from a Jewish rabbi that "In our religion [i.e. Judaism] there is a rule which says that a Jew who is able to kill someone who is not his co-religionist but does not kill him, is an apostate from the Jewish religion" (al-Hajari 189).

¹²I am aware of the problematic nature of tolerance as a social and political goal, given its hierarchical distribution of tolerator and the tolerated. However, precisely because of its hierarchical connotations, I find the term useful for

Muslim community resided in England before the nineteenth century. A small Jewish community, on the other hand, inhabited London throughout the early modern period.¹³ Daborne's play may even gesture toward this community when the Jew Rabshake says of the Christians, "they haue Iew enough already amongst'em" (C4r). Yet because this community was in place before representations of Islam began to outgrow traditional stereotypes, its existence offers an incomplete explanation for the differing treatment of Muslims and Jews. The political change that demanded an ideological shift was England's increased participation in eastern trafficking. As the English pursued an anti-Spanish alliance with the Ottoman Turks, anti-Semitism was important, not merely as compensation for the diminution of anti-Islamicism, but as a perverse form of absolution for Protestant England's "deal with the devil." The image of the demonic Muslim could be more easily foregone when Jewish villainy was prominently displayed and attacked. Thus while Muslims might be treated in secular terms and afforded a relative nobility, the Jew remained caught by and large within age-old anti-Semitism that imagined him as a villain and a ritual murderer, whose red hair was the outward manifestation of his bloody mind. This new differentiation is apparent in *The Three English Brothers*, where an English trade emissary enjoys great favor while urging a "league with Christendom" (2. 241) in a dignified Islamic court. When the same Englishman is later betrayed by a conspiring Jew and Muslim, he protests, "In all my travels I ne'er saw hell till now / Tis here true portrayed set in open view / In an envious knave and a bloody Jew" (11.104-6). What interests me in this outcry is that the

describing the state of affairs in which the English approached Islam and Judaism.

¹³On the Jewish community in late-sixteenth- and early-seventeenth century London, see Katz 1-14; and Shapiro 62-76.

Jew's religious affiliation is emphasized while the Muslim's villainy is described in secular terms. This seemingly minor detail preserves an ecumenical vision of England's Islamic trading partners.

The pattern of representation described here may also be seen at work in the period's best known dramatic treatment of Jews, Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Walter Cohen argues that the play dramatizes the conflict between a dying feudalism and rising capitalism with Shylock representative of feudal economic practices--"a figure from the past--medieval, marginal, diabolical, irrational, anarchic" (Cohen 51). Instead, I argue that Shylock is very much a figure of his time, the Jewish middle-man without whom trafficking in the Islamic world would have been virtually impossible. Thus I agree with John Drakakis that the Jew is "marginal, yet symbolically central to Venice's perception of itself, tolerated, yet repressed" (Drakakis 192). But where Drakakis sees the Jew marshaled into the symbolic center as a denial of usurious practices in Christian culture, I believe that the motivating force of the play is the threat of what Kim Hall calls "foreign difference" (Hall, "Guess" 93) implicit in the new traffic.

The action of Shakespeare's play is framed by the departure and return of Christian ships, trafficking, for the most part, in the Islamic world. The opening discussion of Antonio's ventures establishes a mercantile backdrop for the events to follow, and we later learn that those "ventures" include ships linking England with Muslim India, Barbary, and Tripoli. Antonio is no minor investor. Rather, "all [his] fortunes are at sea" (1.1.176) and "do overpeer the petty traffickers" (1.1.12). Although he claims to have no anxieties concerning his ventures, Salarino and Solanio's lengthy suppositions to the contrary are generally borne out by the play.¹⁴ Antonio's friends discuss the perils of nature and piracy, but

Kim Hall has argued that mercantile wealth is linked “in *Merchant’s Venice*--and Elizabeth’s England . . . with the dangers of cultural exchange” (Hall, “Guess” 97). These unspoken dangers are made apparent early in the play, when Antonio requires a loan from the Jew to finance one last overseas venture, Bassanio’s wooing of Portia. The significance of this bond becomes apparent only when the scene turns to Belmont. Portia’s Belmont represents the unsettling new world of early modern trafficking. It is a place where Christian and Muslim venturers meet in contention, and where Portia is rendered one more commodity in the Mediterranean traffic. Belmont’s commodity attracts venturers “from the four corners of the earth” (2.7.39), Christians and Muslims alike. Thus it is also a place where Christians often depend upon Jews. This is not to say that they actually bring a Jew to serve as an interpreter. Rather the Jew acts as a financier, and, more importantly, as a counterweight to the implications of trafficking with the Turks.

English ambivalence toward such overseas “hazard[s]” (1.1.150)--both in the sense of ventures and perils--is concentrated in the Prince of Morocco’s “hazard” (2.1.45) at Portia’s caskets. Because Morocco, the most prominent of Portia’s suitors, himself calls attention to his dark “complexion,/The shadowed livery of the burnished sun” (2.1.1-2), he has frequently been treated in terms of “race.” Daryl Palmer reminds us, however, that “to raise questions of ‘race’ in this period is to talk not of skin color but of intercultural contact and contracts, the cultivation and exploitation of ethnic differences” (Palmer 37). Morocco gives an equally important indication of his ethnic origin when he swears by his scimitar to have slain “the Sophy and a Persian prince/ That won three fields of Sultan Solyman” (2.1.25-6). In so doing he recalls the fact that sixteenth-century Morocco owed allegiance to the Turks. Not only does Morocco have “the

¹⁴For a related argument, see Engle.

complexion of a devil" (1.2.107), he is a subject of the Ottoman Sultan and almost certainly a Muslim. His suit represents the serious possibility of miscegenation and religious laxity inherent in Mediterranean trafficking. Indeed the play goes on to indicate the seriousness of that possibility when we learn of Launcelot's "getting up of the Negro's belly" (3.5.31). As Kim Hall argues, the Moorish maid's pregnancy "is a reminder of the dangerous result of uncontrolled crossing of borders" (Hall, "Guess" 109) encouraged by trade.

It has been argued that Morocco's grandiloquence makes him ridiculous and no such threat, but at no point does Portia indicate that his tone is inappropriate, or his wooing in vain. Indeed, if the scene is played for comic effect, the sense of a threat to Bassanio's suit is lost entirely. Admittedly, Morocco is no more successful in his courtship than Shylock will be in court. However, he is welcome to the traffic, and where Shylock is reduced to a caricatured villain hunched over his knife and scales, Morocco retains a degree of nobility throughout. Even following his disappointment in the venture, he remains dignified, politely excusing himself with the admission, "I have too grieved a heart,/To take a tedious leave: thus losers part" (2.7.76-7). Morocco may be verbose, but he does not fit the stereotype of the lascivious, blustering "Mahumetan." His proper place in the venture is never in question. On the other hand, his significance as an indication of the dangers inherent in trafficking is apparent in Portia's relieved conclusion, "Let all of his complexion choose me so" (2.8.79). In the changing world of Mediterranean trafficking, the Muslim must be treated "as fair/As any comer" (2.1.20-1), but toleration has its limits and, in the scenes which follow, its repercussions.

The sequence of events in the play's second act is crucial to the events which follow. In 2.1, the intercultural hazards of Mediterranean trafficking are admitted in the possibility of a Muslim suitor winning a Christian wife. In the

two scenes following this we are presented with a double rejection of the Jewish man: in scene two, the clownish Lancelot resolves to desert his master, Shylock, whom he deems “the very devil incarnation” (2.2.20-1). In scene three, Shylock’s own daughter concurs, claiming, “our house is hell” (2.3.2) and deciding to “become a Christian and [Lorenzo’s] loving wife” (2.3.20). In effect, the anxieties raised by the new proximity of Islam are mediated through a local proxy. The rejection of the Jew stands in for the now inadmissible recoil from Islam. Likewise, where a Christian woman is threatened in the first scene, a Jewish woman is moved to convert to Christianity in the third.¹⁵ The implicit division of Jewish men and women is enabled by the fact that Jewish men were physically differentiated by circumcision, a fact that also encouraged their substitution for the circumcised Muslim.

Though Morocco exits the stage for good at the close of 2.8, umbral anxieties remain to shape the play’s remaining three acts. Jessica and Shylock are in turn deemed “infidel” (3.2.217; 4.1.330), and Shylock degenerates from a “gentle Jew” (1.3.170) to “an inhuman wretch” (4.1.4). As Thomas Moisan puts it, “he becomes the most reassuring of villains” (Moisan 194), a blood-lusting usurer, and a “damned, inexecrable dog” (4.1.128). Hoping to persuade him to mercy, the Duke asks Shylock to distinguish himself “from stubborn Turks, and Tartars never trained / To offices of tender courtesy” (4.1.32-3). In his obstinance, Shylock effectively authorizes his substitution for the Turk. But if the Muslim, elsewhere associated with forced conversion, must be tolerated, the Jew is instead forced to “presently become a Christian” (4.1.383). By the play’s end, Shylock is stripped of his daughter, faith, and fortune, but more importantly he is stripped too of the humanity, dignity, and strength he exhibits in the play’s first

¹⁵Kim Hall argues that both Jessica’s and Portia’s marriages validate the play’s resolution and “repulsion of aliens” (Hall, “Guess” 108).

act. Only after this “balance” of aliens has been struck and the imperviousness of Christian culture assured can Antonio’s ships return with the riches of their dubious ventures.

IV. “The Mosaic Nation”

There is no simple inference to be drawn from the diverging courses of anti-Islamicism and anti-Semitism following the increase in English contact with the Islamic world in the second half of the sixteenth century. It takes only a vague familiarity with recent events in the Balkans, East Africa, and the Middle East to know that contact is no guarantee of understanding or acceptance. Like these flash-points of twentieth-century ethnic and religious tension, the case of the sixteenth-century Islamic world is complex and multi-faceted, streaked with economic and political interests. Furthermore, the phrase *Islamic world* is a misleading one in describing the area of increased contact. Compared with Europe, the Islamic world was diverse and pluralistic. Thus, when John Sanderson traveled to Constantinople for the Levant Company he confirmed the estimate of an Italian description of the city finding roughly 281,000 Turks, 200,000 Orthodox and Armenian Christians, and 150,000 Jews as well as 600,000 women and children whose religion was not noted.¹⁶ Reports like Sanderson’s detailing the diversity of the Ottoman world are reflected in Robert Daborne’s vision of Tunis in *A Christian Turn’d Turke*, where the stage is shared equally by various Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Yet, as I will illustrate, Daborne and his contemporaries rarely reproduced the religious tolerance of the Ottoman world.

It should come as no surprise to learn that the Islamic world--a term I will continue to use “under erasure”--was populated by so many different peoples.

¹⁶Translated by Sanderson and included as an appendix entitled Description of Constantinople.

Jews and Muslims both found new homes in the Ottoman Empire as Spain undertook campaigns of ethnic “cleansing” beginning with the 1492 expulsion of Marranos and continuing through the 1609 expatriation of the Moriscos. Likewise, as I have already illustrated, the Ottoman Empire offered opportunities for discontented Christians to advance their fortunes and status. What is important to recognize, however, is the degree to which this diversity contrasted with the comparatively homogeneous English experience. Certainly there were important, even violent, conflicts within English Christianity, and a small Jewish population is known to have lived and discreetly carried on worship in London. However, the Ottoman government actually welcomed diversity, sometimes even calling itself “the mosaic nation” (Roth, *Duke of Naxos* 11). That diversity was most apparent to the English who came to traffic in the Ottoman Empire. William Lithgow was shocked to find

the whole commerce of all commodities in Turkey, is in the hands of Jewes, and Christians, to wit, Ragusans, Venetians, English, French, and Flemings, who so warily menage their businesse, that they enjoy the most profits of any trading there, disappointing the Turkes owne subjects of their due, and ordinary trafficke. (Lithgow, *Totall*: 148)

Lithgow himself was not involved in trade. He was a tourist and seems to have copied much of his description from earlier tourists. As such, his observations betray a complete ignorance of the Ottoman *millet* system. The empire’s non-Muslim populations were divided by religion and ethnicity into groups known as *millets*. Members of *millets* were granted religious freedom and trading privileges, and in exchange paid taxes from which Muslim citizens were exempt.¹⁷ Lithgow was not alone in his observations. European visitors to the

Ottoman Empire regularly commented on the prevalence of non-Muslims conducting the most lucrative overseas trade. Most frequently cited were Jewish traders, though the attention given to them seems to have had as much to do with their numbers as their place in the socio-economic structure. Visiting the Ottoman Empire in the 1550s, the German traveler Hans Dernschwan complained,

In Turkey you will find in every town innumerable Jews of all countries and languages . . . In Constantinople, the Jews are thick as ants . . . There is no spot of the world which hasn't some of its Jews in Constantinople and there are no wares which the Jews do not carry about and trade in. Just as soon as a foreign ship comes in from Alexandria, Kaff, Venice and other places, the Jews are the first to clamber over the side. (Roth, *Dona Gracia* 95)

Dernschwan's hyperbolic description reveals a prejudice nurtured by European exclusion policies. The sixteenth-century expulsion of Jews from much of Christian Europe meant that many Europeans were unaccustomed to seeing Jews commonly accepted in society, let alone occupying positions of prominence. Yet Dernschwan cannot help mixing admiration with resentment as he describes the Jews' preeminence in trade.

The mixture of admiration and resentment in Dernschwan's description is more prominent still in the anonymous account of Constantinople's merchant Jews in *The Navigations, peregrinations and voyages, made into Turkie by Nicholas Nicholay*, which appeared in English in 1585. This description, which also exhibits its author's inexperience with an openly Jewish population, is worth quoting at length for its detailed account of Jewish economic life:

¹⁷For a fuller discussion of the Ottoman millet system, see Goffman 19-23, 45-6, and Braude and Lewis 74-83.

The number of Jewes dwelling throughout all the Citities [*sic*] of Turkie and Grecia, and principally at Constantinople is so great, that it is a thing marueilous and incredible, for the number of these, vsing trade and trafique of merchandise, like of money at vsurie, doth there multiply so from day too daye, that the great haunt and bringing of merchandises which arriue there of all parts aswell by Sea as by land, is such, that it may be saide with good reason that at this present day they haue in their handes the moste and greatest traffique of merchandize and readie money, that is in al Leuant. And lykewise their shops and warehouses the best furnished of all riche sortes of merchandises, which are in Constantinople are those of the Jewes. Likewise they haue amongst them workemen of all artes and handicraftes moste excellent. . . . [T]hey have also the commoditie & vsage to speake and vnderstand all other sortes of languages vsed in Leuant, which serueth them greatly for the communication and traffique, which they haue with other strange nations, to whom oftentimes they serue for Dragomans, or interpretours. Besides, this detestable nation of the Jewes, are men ful of all malice, fraude, deceit, and subtill dealing, exercising execrable vsuries amongst the Christians and other nations without any consciences or reprehention (Nicholay E7v-8r).

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this report is the abrupt transformation of admiration into anti-Semitic calumny. Jewish successes in every aspect of the economy are detailed in terms that can only be described as laudatory: their control of “the moste and greatest traffique,” and production of “all artes and handicraftes most excellent,” makes the Jews “the best furnished” merchants of the entire region. The report suggests that Portia’s famous question--“Which is

the merchant here and which the Jew?" (4.1.170)--depends upon a false binary. The Jew is a merchant. Like Shylock, or even more so, Benwash, who stands at the hub of nearly every commercial and dramatic exchange in Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*, the Jews of the Ottoman world were fundamental to economic life, acting as merchants, as well as warehousemen, shopkeepers, usurers, artisans, customs agents, and translators. Daborne's Jew demonstrates this centrality as he lends money to one Christian pirate, purchases the booty of a second, arranges the courtship of a third, and "gives free and open entertainement" to them all. Yet just as Benwash is suddenly and without explanation driven into the villain's role, the Jews in the Nicholay account are unexpectedly reduced to familiar, diabolical stereotypes. From his sudden vilification of faithless Jews, it is not long before the author has fallen back on the most hackneyed charge of all, Jewish responsibility for the death of Christ, adding that "euen at this day in what region soeuer they are permitted to dwell vnder tribute, they are abhorred of God and menne, and more persecuted of the Turkes" (E8r).

In fact, Jews emigrated to Turkish territories to avoid persecution. Unlike their European counterparts, Ottoman authorities never expelled the Jews, never required their conversion, and did little to restrict their business practices. Rather, as the above description indicates, they became an important component of the Ottoman socio-economic system. And that importance may help to explain the mixed rhetoric of European descriptions of Ottoman Jews. In the Nicholay text's description, the shift from admiration to denigration occurs immediately following the description of the Jews' service as *dragomans*, or translators. The recollection of dependence upon Jewish services seemingly triggers resentment and slander. As Daniel Goffman explains, "Englishmen and other foreigners, at a disadvantage in the Ottoman legal morass, had little choice but to hire natives, whether as dragomans, brokers, or in some other capacity to

represent them" (Goffman 131). Jewish control of the *dragoman's* position meant that European Christians frequently relied upon the service of Jews. The English language was virtually useless in the Mediterranean world, though the drama typically obscures this fact by making its Turks and Italians English-speakers. The one exception occurs, not surprisingly, in *Merchant of Venice*. In the play's second scene, we learn that among the suitors come to Belmont is one "Falconbridge, the young baron of England." Apparently equipped with no translator, Falconbridge "hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian" (2.1. 69-70). Consequently Portia dismisses him, concluding, "He is a proper man's picture, but alas, who can converse with a dumb show?" (1.2. 72-3). If, as Kim Hall argues (Hall, "Guess" 102), Portia's dead father's will turns her into a prize for venturers coming from all over the world, English ventures in the Mediterranean are stalled without a translator's aid.

Bassanio's success in the same venture further indicates the centrality of the Jews to Mediterranean trafficking. His journey to Belmont cannot occur without the assistance of the Jewish moneylender, Shylock. The generous and seemingly harmless terms of Shylock's loan force Antonio to admit "there is much kindness in the Jew" (1.3. 153). But at the same time, he promises to continue thinking of Shylock as a "devil" worthy of no more than scorn and spit. In Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London*, a Jewish moneylender in Turkey suffers a similar fate. Though Gerontus is prepared to forgive all arrears on a two-year-old loan to the evasive Christian borrower Mercadore, he is betrayed and treated with contempt. The traffic between Christians and Turks in Daborne's *Tunis* depends upon the services of Benwash, yet again the Jew is rewarded for his services by being cast as the villain in a plot contrived to restore the good faith between Christians and Turks. In each case, the success of an overseas venture

depends upon the service of a Jew, but upon performing that service the Jew is repaid in libel and antipathy.

In spite of his fate, Benwash represents an exceptional acknowledgment in the drama. More often than not, the drama collapses Christian merchants' various dependencies into debts owed to Jewish moneylenders. The Jew is thus assimilated to nationalistic imperatives, denied his place in the traffic, and transformed into the Christian merchant's greatest opponent. Of the seven plays currently under study, five feature Jewish usurers. None feature Jewish translators, artisans, or shopkeepers. In *The Three English Brothers*, the Sherleys require no translators in the Turkish and Persian courts, and the kindly Jew described as aiding an imprisoned Sir Anthony in a contemporary pamphlet is nowhere to be found.¹⁸ He is replaced in the play by Zariph, a Jewish moneylender who conspires with his Muslim crony against the Englishman and looks forward to "a banquet all of Christians' flesh" (10.20).¹⁹ The play's caricature of a Jew distracts attention from English dependence on Jews, concentrating its focus instead on the crime of usury and myths of Jewish villainy. It recalls an age when guild restrictions effectively barred Jews from participating in most fields and left them with few options aside from usury. The same reluctance to acknowledge the Jew's emergence as an instrumental partner in overseas ventures is exhibited in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Here Antonio accepts Shylock's loan, but advises the Jew to look on him as he would an "enemy" (1.3.127).

¹⁸See Chapter 3, footnote 27.

¹⁹Zariph later looks forward to feasting on the Christian's heart (10. 20). For a discussion of myths of Jewish cannibalism, see Shapiro 104-11.

Shylock is a usurer. So too are Zariph and Gerontus. Barabas claims to have been a usurer, and Benwash counts usury among his several occupations. Yet Benwash is also a reminder that Jews in the Ottoman world were variously active in commerce and frequently held important positions at court. They were so successful in securing influential positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy that Europeans often complained of Jews wielding enormous power in court circles. Indeed, Jews' unusual access to the nucleus of Ottoman politics allowed them to develop "indigenous commercial networks that were intricate and almost impenetrable and with which foreign communities had to associate" (Goffman 126). In 1532, the Venetian consul in Alexandria complained of a Jewish customs-farmer who was "the source of all our troubles . . . [since] the Pasha does nothing without his advice" (Goffman 126). In the second half of the century, English officials in Constantinople would make similar complaints, identifying the Jews as "our adversaries" (Goffman 126) in the seraglio and fixing their attention particularly on men close to the sultan.

Perhaps the best known example of these powerful Ottoman Jews was Joseph Nasi. Born Jaou Miguez in Spain, Nasi was a wealthy Sephardic financier who migrated to the Ottoman Empire and became an important banker, advisor and tax farmer in the Ottoman administration. Nasi was particularly influential at the court of Selim II, who awarded him the dukedom after earlier raising him to the status of *muteferik*, or "Gentleman of the Imperial Retinue." Nasi had visited numerous European courts and was thus a valuable advisor in negotiations with foreign diplomats and dignitaries although he never mastered Turkish himself. A lost play by Thomas Dekker called *Josef, the Jew of Venice* (1592-4) is thought to be based on his life.

Because he was made Duke of Naxos, a Mediterranean island recently wrested from the Christians, and because he was alleged (in François de

Belleforest's *La Cosmographie Universelle de Tout le Monde*) to have persuaded Selim II to undertake the siege of Cyprus, Nasi was once seen as a real-life prototype for Barabas. That he is no longer considered such does not diminish Nasi's importance for understanding the place of Jews in the Turkish plays. He reminds us that the Jews played pivotal roles in Levantine commerce and diplomacy, and that the English could not hope to prosper in the Ottoman world without their cooperation. As Cecil Roth has shown in his two-volume study of the House of Nasi, Joseph was largely the representative of his powerful aunt, Doña Gracia, who ran a large overseas business in wool, pepper, grain, and especially textiles. These were precisely the areas of trade into which the English hoped to enter with the Turks.

The importance of the Jews in the Ottoman world became clear to the English early in the Anglo-Ottoman experience. Throughout the 1580s, Elizabeth and Murad exchanged empty promises. Though frequently pledged, military aid never materialized on either side. For Elizabeth, following through would mean alienating all of Europe. For Murad, there was never enough to gain. These promises were important, however, as a mutual reassurance against pacts with Spain.²⁰ Toward the end of the decade, however, Spanish efforts to court the Ottomans put English diplomats into a panic. Regularly frustrated by the inaccessibility of the sultan and his viziers, the English could do little to turn away the Spanish delegation. Prominent Jews, on the other hand, continued to enjoy access to the sultan. One of these men, Alvaro Mendes (also known as Solomon Abenaes), was created Duke of Mytilene by Murad III and granted the right to farm customs revenues. Mendes was close to the Sultan and spent a great deal of time at court. Jealous and unstrung, the English ambassador

²⁰For an extended discussion of the part of Jews in Anglo-Ottoman negotiations, see Katz 49-106.

Edward Barton sent home a fusillade of complaints concerning the influence of Mendes and David Passi, another prominent Jew. Mendes replied with accusations of his own against Barton, and the results were staggering. Elizabeth recruited Mendes as her unofficial “pointman in the Sublime Porte, often relying on him rather than her official ambassador in delicate matters” (Myers 34). For several years to come, Mendes acted as an agent of both the Portuguese Pretender, Don Antonio, and the English crown, attempting to cement the Anglo-Ottoman alliance and secure English support of Jewish interests in Portugal. Elizabeth recognized that, like it or not, Jewish influence had to be recognized and enlisted. If they hoped to achieve any success in the Levantine traffic, English merchants and diplomats too had to learn “not only enormous flexibility in their business practices and travels but also a tolerance, even if feigned” (Goffman 23), for the indispensable Jewish merchants of the Levant. Rarely is the importance of the Jews recognized in the drama, but there are moments of tacit acknowledgment: Daborne’s Benwash enjoys the friendship of Tunis’ governor. Shakespeare’s Duke of Venice refuses to suspend the law binding Antonio, explaining that

... the commodity that strangers have
 With us in Venice, if it be denied,
 Will much impeach the justice of the state,
 Since that the trade and profit of the city
 Consisteth of all nations. (3.3.27-31)

A second area in which Jews were prominent in the Ottoman world was in the field of medicine. As one traveler explains it, language again provided the Jews with an enviable degree of power:

[T]here are many that are skilfull in Theorica, and experimented in practise, and the reason wherefore in this Arte [the Jews] doe

commonly exceede all other nations, is the knowledge which they haue in the language and letters, Greeke, Arabian, Chaldee and Hebrewes . . .

Hee which in the tyme that I was in Leuant, had the first dignity and authority, amongst the order of Phisitions was of nation an Hebrew called Amon, of age about sixtie yeeres, a personage great of authoritye, and much esteemed, as well for his goods, knowledge, and renowne, as for honour and portlinesse"

(Nicholay N1r)

The Amon described here is Moses Hamon, known as an important influence on Suleiman, whom he served until both men were succeeded by their sons.

Thomas Goffe's *The Raging Turk* and the anonymous *Selimus* both include portraits of this historical figure (though he is renamed Abraham by Goffe). In each case the renowned doctor is distorted into a perversely unrepentant poisoner with no motives of his own. Like Barabas, who claims to have "studied physic" just so he can poison nuns and wells, the Jewish doctor of the Turkish plays is a bald-faced stereotype, drawn in the tradition of medieval blood libels.²¹ Of course, a number of the Muslims in these plays are equally base. It is no surprise to find ambition, betrayal, bombast, machinations, and tyrannical histrionics in a play called *The Raging Turk*. Yet these are not the only qualities of the Turks presented in Goffe's play. Both *The Raging Turk* and *Selimus*, which

²¹The sustained association of Jews, and especially Jewish doctors, with ritual murder is evidenced in an account of William Biddulph's travels in the Levant. Biddulph remarked of the Jews, "They observe still all their old ceremonies and feasts, sacrifices only excepted, which the Turks will not suffer them to do: for they were wont amongst them to sacrifice children, but dare not now for fear of the Turks. Yet some of them have confessed that their physicians kill some Christian patient or other, whom they have under their hands at that time instead of a sacrifice."

dramatized the same series of events, include contrite and studious Muslim princes. No equivalent palliator exists to tone down the degradation of the Jewish doctor.

The two subjects I have been discussing--the image of the Jewish physician and the importance of Jews to English interests in the Levant--came to a head in the famed trial of Elizabeth's personal physician, Roderigo Lopez.²² In 1594, Lopez was tried and executed for treason after it was alleged he had conspired with the Spanish to poison the Queen. Most apparent in the documents surrounding the case is the rehearsal of inherited ideas of Jewish falseness. In his prosecution, Sir Edward Coke described Lopez as a "miscreant, perjured, murdering traitor and Jewish doctor . . . a dearer traitor than Judas himself" (Myers 36). Likewise, Gabriel Harvey says of Lopez,

the Queenes Physitian, is descended of Jewes: but himself Christian, & of Portugall. He none of the learnedest, or expertest Physitians in ye Court: but one, that maketh as great account of himself, as the best: & by a kind of Jewish practis, hath growen to much Wealth, & sum reputation: as well with ye Queen herself, as with sum of ye greatest Lordes, & Ladyes. (qtd. in Katz 58)

Though Harvey begins by asserting Lopez' Christianity, he suggests his own doubts about Lopez' sincerity when he accuses the doctor of achieving his success by "a kind of Jewish practis" of chicanery. The same manner of suspicion seems to have motivated the frequently-noted laughter from the crowd that followed Lopez' assertion on the executioner's platform that "he loved the Queen as well as he loved Jesus Christ." In fact, Lopez' Christianity had been doubted for years. As early as 1584, ten years before the scandal broke, he was

²²See Katz 49-106.

identified as a Jew skilled in the use of poisons.²³ The tacit acceptance of Lopez' Judaism raises several questions: What does it mean that, despite a legislative prohibition, Jews, understood in terms of the worst anti-Semitic libels, were known to live in London? If they were understood as deceitful murderers, why were they permitted to remain and even to maintain positions at court?

David Katz has shown that English toleration of Jews was in part enabled by a growing philo-Semitic movement.²⁴ In the case of Lopez, another explanation is located within the text of Coke's prosecution. Coke describes Lopez' plan "to convey himself . . . to Constantinople with his brood, and there to live amongst the Jews in Turkey, where he has nephews and kinsfolk" (Myers 36). It is no surprise that Lopez had relatives in the Ottoman Empire, but what is less well-known is the fact that those relatives included Elizabeth's agent, Alvaro Mendes. Mendes may have been influential in securing a place at court for his brother-in-law. William Myers goes so far as to suggest that Elizabeth's four-month delay before signing the warrant for Lopez' execution was due to her fear of "jeopardiz[ing] her relationship with Alvaro Mendes" (36).

A more general explanation for the tacit acceptance of Jews in England is that, in their own way, English Jews were as indispensable as the Jews of the Ottoman Empire. They were necessary not only in their professional functions--as physicians, merchants, and musicians--but in their cultural function as a scapegoat upon whom invective might be poured when anti-alien sentiment ran high or English Christianity seemed particularly unstable.²⁵ This role grew

²³Shapiro 73

²⁴Katz 110-28.

²⁵For a discussion of anti-alien rioting and the changing population of London, see I. Archer.

increasingly important as the English pursued relations with the Ottoman Empire. Although trafficking encouraged a more balanced apparatus of representation, long-standing images of Islamic devilry remained powerful in the English imaginary. The result was a conflict in representation to be mediated by the vilification of Jewish men.

A minor, seemingly gratuitous, episode in Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke* further illustrates the importance of maintaining a certain image of "the Jew."²⁶ The scene occurs over halfway through the play, when two sailors are discovered planning to rob the Jew's house. The two men feel as little remorse in robbing the Jew as they would "vnload[ing] a weary asse" (F4r). The first explains, "we were bred in a country that had the charity to whip begging out of us, when we were yong, and for staruing, manhood denies it, you know what must necessarily follow" (F4r). But is robbery what "must necessarily follow?" The sailor's complaint is the same many English renegades would have offered when accused of betraying their faith and country. Many converted under economic pressures. Indeed, for the play's title character, himself a former English indigent, "what followed" was a feigned conversion to Islam. The two sailors choose to avoid the taint of Islam and instead rob the Jew. In effect, treating the Jew no better than a "weary asse" preserves the Christianity of Englishmen struggling to survive in an alien market dependent upon Jewish translators, merchants, counselors, shopkeepers, and money-lenders.

V. Playing the Jew / Representing the Infidel

²⁶I place the term in quotation marks to indicate a strategic image of the Jew that "engulfed and eventually submerged what Jews were *actually* like in favor of a diabolical travesty" (Felsenstein 29).

The earliest Elizabethan play to bring the figures of the Muslim and Jew into strategic conjunction is Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (1584). Written in the same year England established relations with the Ottomans, Wilson's play is something of a "signpost" pointing backward to medieval morality plays and forward to the more human drama of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras (Wilson ii). Yet the appearance of *Three Ladies* at the hinge of medieval and early modern culture is apparent not only in its hybrid form, but also in its correlative treatment of Jews and the Levant trade. In the play, medieval and early modern dramatic forms collaborate in the interrogation of contemporary mercantile practices. Allegorical figures, such as Simony, Fraud, and Lady Lucre, share the stage with more fully drawn characters, including Mercadore, an Italian merchant involved with a Jew, Gerontus, in the trade between Turkey and England. The result is a drama Daryl Palmer calls a "mix [of] Hakluyt with *Everyman* (47).

Mercadore's story takes place within a larger allegorical plot whereby Lady Lucre, with the help of Usury, Simony, Fraud, and Dissimulation, drives the Ladies Love and Conscience temporarily to betray their qualities. The momentary triumph of Lucre over Love and Conscience is reflected in the play's more topical subplot. Here Mercadore schemes to carry "leather, tallow, beef, bacon, belmettel" (line 409) and other "good commodities out of dis little country England" (line 857) in exchange for worthless Eastern "trifles" (line 412) desired by the "Gentlewomen of England" (line 416). Equally devoid of conscience and capital, Mercadore requires the backing of a Jewish money-lender. Like the merchants and travelers I have presented above, Mercadore transforms dependence into abusive anti-Semitism. Thus the play provides a dramatic enactment of the way in which traffic in the Islamic world required not only the

professional Jew, but also a representation of “the Jew” re-shaped by the profit-motive.

I have already illustrated how Gerontus exemplifies the traditional conflation of Jew and Muslim in his self-professed Judaism and unsuitable oaths in the name of Muhammad. In addition, the Jew’s name is evocative of late medieval ballads and mystery plays. “Gerontus” recalls “Gernutus,” the name assigned to a Jew who dances grotesquely beneath the cross in the Coventry Cycle “Crucifixion of Christ,” as well that of a wicked usurer in “The Ballad of Gernutus.” Yet, unlike either of these figures, Gerontus is not a demonic enemy of Christendom. Rather, he is generous and forgiving, not to mention essential to Mercadore’s traffic in the Islamic world. In *The School of Abuse* (22), Stephen Gosson mentions an earlier play called *The Jew*, “representing the greediness of worldly chusers, and bloody mindes of usurers.” Though Gerontus is a money-lender, he shares none of the bloody qualities of the play’s allegorical character, Usury. While Usury murders Generosity, Gerontus allows his loan to Mercadore to remain unpaid for two years, forgives Mercadore for his unexplained absence, and allows him still more time to pay the debt. When Mercadore again fails to make remuneration, Gerontus reluctantly brings the Italian to a Turkish court.

Though several scenes of Wilson’s drama take place in Ottoman settings, the Turkish judge is the play’s only Islamic figure. Unlike Mercadore and Gerontus, the judge is a flat and generally unremarkable character. Though upright and understanding, he mechanically recites the law and represents little more than a setting for the Judeo-Christian conflict. The bland yet noble Turk is not an unusual figure in the plays involving both Turks and Jews. Such figures collude with Judeo-Christian conflicts to deflect attention away from the religious implications of Anglo-Ottoman trafficking. Even where playwrights

acknowledge a Turkish threat to Christendom--as in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*--that threat is often subordinated to a conflict between Jews and Christians.

When Mercadore appears in the Ottoman courtroom wearing a "Turks apparell" (line 1565), the audience is presented with the abhorrent figure of the renegade, the fundamental symbol of Christianity's struggle with Islam. In the various dramas of captivity, conversion, and inter-religious desire I have previously discussed, similar circumstances call for the defamation and defeat of Islam. Wilson's play illustrates instead that the presence of the Jew enabled a change in Christianity's self-defense. It allowed Christians to offset suspect relations with Muslims with self-affirming anti-Semitism. Mercadore can dismiss the meaning of his Turkish costume with the knowledge that his wearing it enables him to fleece "da scall Iewe" (line 1764). That there is, in fact, nothing scald, or contemptible, about Gerontus does not disable Mercadore's strategy. He knows, as impoverished Christian sailors in the seventeenth century also knew, that by Turkish law "if any man forsake his faith, king, / Countrie, and become a Mahometan, / All debtes are paid" (lines 1712-14). Imagining "da scall Iewe" is simply a way for Mercadore to assume a moral basis for acts motivated solely by his greed, or love for Lady Lucre.

Though Mercadore assures himself "it dus me good, dat me have coosend de Iewe" (line 1759), Wilson's play reveals anti-Semitism as a hollow strategy of self-affirmation. Rather than encouraging Mercadore in his careless renunciation of Christianity, Gerontus upsets any expectations of the Jew as an enemy of Christianity. Instead, he makes a series of increasingly generous offers, forgiving first the interest, and then half the principal, if the Italian will just "respect [his] faith" (line 1735). When Mercadore refuses, Gerontus determines, "I would be loth to heare the people say it was long of me/Thou forsakes thy faith, wherefore I forgive thee frank and free" (lines 1739-40). Gerontus' extraordinary kindness

and defense of Christian faith stand in stark contrast to Mercadore's falseness. Only when he is freed of his debt does Mercadore proclaim, "not for all da good in da world, me forsake a my Christ" (line 1747). At this point the Italian's hypocrisy is all too transparent, leading the virtuous Turkish judge to remark, "Jewes seeke to excell in Christianitie, and the Christians in Jewishness" (line 1754). While this conclusion reifies the idea of Christianity as inherently virtuous, it is critical of anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, Mercadore is free to return to England and Gerontus is left to disappear from the play with the selfless hope that his generosity will not "bolden [Mercadore] to serue an other so" (line 1757).

Wilson's play recognizes the way in which Christian interests in the Islamic world generated and often manipulated conflicts between Christians and Jews. Yet the trafficking that simultaneously depends on and demonizes Jews is displaced onto Italians. Samuel Chew (155) has explained that the play was written at a time when a new rivalry was developing between English and Italian commercial interests in the Levant. England's still scandalous desire to engage in trade with the Ottomans is acknowledged only as the appetite of English gentlewomen. This sort of displacement would become less credible as English interests in the Levant grew in the last two decades of Elizabeth's reign, and English culture grew more and more dependent upon anti-Semitism as a means of asserting its inviolate Christianity. If the figure of the Muslim was to obtain greater acceptance, the Jew would be forced to play a compensatory role, designed to assuage fears of moral waywardness.

The Elizabethan play that most readily illustrates the interdependence of representation I have been describing is Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*. Marlowe's drama reflects Europe's complex and contradictory relations with the Islamic world, as well as the consequences of those relations for European Jews. On the one hand, Malta is in league with the Turks, and Maltese merchants, like

Barabas, send cargoes to Muslim territories including Ottoman Egypt. On the other hand, the Turks represent a martial threat, standing at the ready with “a fleet of warlike galleys” (1.1.144) poised to enforce Ottoman authority over Malta. The precarious balance of economic, political, and religious interests involved in this relationship depends entirely upon the representation and deployment of Malta’s Jews. Thus in a play that opens with the threat of Turkish invasion, the principal conflicts are not between Christians and Turks, but rather Christians and Jews.

Understanding the way in which Jews were implicated in early modern relations between England and Islam enables new readings of *Jew of Malta*. Barabas’ villainy can be recognized, at least in part, as a function of the suspect and shifting nature of Christian-Muslim relations. Whether at peace or war, in traffic or discord, the Christian government of Malta recognizes that the Jews are vital components in their relations with the Turks. Thus, even before the Ottoman prince announces the purpose of his visit to Malta at the opening of Marlowe’s play, the island’s Jews are singled out and called to a meeting in the senate house. When the Ottomans explain their intention to collect an overdue tribute, the Jews are already at hand for conscription into the alloyed role of financier-scapegoat. Malta’s Christian governor, Ferneze, requires the Jews to forfeit half of their estates, and threatens forced conversion and an even greater loss of property upon the slightest hint of refusal. Like the Jewish merchants, money-lenders, and translators on whom Englishmen depended in their trafficking in the Islamic world, the Jews of Malta are indispensable and consequently treated with contempt.

While Ferneze’s expedient suggests the corruption of Malta’s Christian authorities, the Turks who set the play’s chain of events in motion are in no way represented as evil or unjust. Rather, the Ottoman prince is the picture of

magnanimous nobility. Where one might expect to find a raging tyrant, Marlowe's Calymath is instead sympathetic and kind, regretting that it is not in his power to forgive the tribute. Where one might suspect the Turks, as Barabas does, of using the tribute as an excuse "to seize upon the town" (1.1.183), Calymath instructs his captains to "keep our galleys under sail,/ For happily we shall not tarry here" (1.2.15-6). When one of his bassoes denies Ferneze's request for time to gather the money, Calymath chides "What, Callapine, a little courtesy" (1.2.23). Understanding that "'tis more kingly to obtain by peace,/ Than to enforce conditions by constraint" (1.2.25-6), Calymath generously agrees to a month's respite and departs peacefully. There is no saber-rattling and no hint of cruelty. The Turk is compassionate, reasonable, and composed. Accordingly, Ferneze respectfully addresses him as "great Selim-Calymath" (1.2.13).

Emily Bartels has argued that Marlowe's play "contextualizes its representation of the Jew amid imperialist conflicts and reveals the stereotype as a product not of religious but of colonialist competitions" (*Critical Essays* 98-9). Stephen Greenblatt also regards the religious components of the play with extreme skepticism, arguing that "the public invocation of Christian ethics or knightly honor is always linked . . . to baser motives" (*Renaissance* 204). Likewise, Thomas Cartelli argues that in *The Jew of Malta*, "Marlowe . . . dissolves difference into identification, uniting the Jew, Christian and Turk in the common motivation a Turkish basso terms, 'Desire of gold'" (256). These critics are right to call attention to the play's economic and political forces, but go too far in dismissing the import of religious convictions. The Turks were never merely a competing imperial power. Like the Jews, they represented a false, competing claim to a common scriptural tradition. Indeed, the religious consequences of Malta's tributary league with the Turks are identified by the same figure who

makes apparent the play's imperial conflict. As the Spaniard Del Bosco will point out, the Knights of St. John were installed on Malta as Christian soldiers "at deadly enmity with Turks" (2.3.33), following the loss of the "Christian Isle of Rhodes." In spite of Calymath's courtesy and goodwill, a league with the Turks amounts to a betrayal of European Christendom. Malta's acquiescence throws doubt upon the rectitude of men who are supposed to be Christianity's vanguard against the Islamic *jihad*. Thus, I argue that the ensuing conflicts of Marlowe's play are generated not only by imperial conflicts but also by anxieties--not unlike those felt in Marlowe's England--over Christian capitulation and allegiance to an Islamic power.

Chagrined by its profane engagement with Islam, Malta shifts its focus to the island's tolerated Jewish population. As a local indication of Malta's concession to non-Christians, the Jewish community becomes vital to its demonstration of Christian integrity. Even before he is submitted to the shame of Del Bosco's opprobrium, Ferneze recognizes that he can "rewrite his relation to the Turks as a conflict between Christians and Jews" (Bartels, *Critical Essays* 104). His use of this strategy is apparent as early as the play's second scene, when he gathers the Jews of Malta to hear his proclamation that "the tribute-money of the Turks shall *all* be levied amongst the Jews" (1.2.68-9, emphasis mine). Ferneze's decree is designed both to maintain the league with the Turks and assuage the concerns it raises regarding Christian probity. In order to perform these two functions, it must transform Jews from accepted "strangers [with] leave. . . to get their wealth" (1.2.60) in Malta, to dangerous infidels, speciously held responsible for the current state of affairs. Confederation with one "infidel" is thus offset by a public performance of opposition to another. Ferneze explains that the money intended for the Ottomans is to come from taxing Jews

. . . like infidels;

For through our sufferance of your hateful lives

Who stand accursed in the sight of heaven

These taxes and afflictions are befall'n. (1.2.62-5)

The Jew is thus essential to Malta's survival, both in his capacity as a merchant and money-maker, and as an "infidel" whose scapegoating shores up a dubious Christianity. By the time Del Bosco arrives, the Maltese have already begun to defend their religious self-image. The Spaniard merely encourages a more daring gesture.

Ironically, Ferneze's anti-Semitic defense of his own suspect Christianity enacts a subversive re-writing of one of anti-Semitism's founding myths. In his insistence that it is "better one want for a common good / Than many perish for a private man" (1.2.99-100), Ferneze recalls the trial and sacrifice of Jesus. Yet in this instance, Barabas is not a criminal but instead the sacrificial figure.²⁷ He is the Jew whose sacrifice works the remission of Christian sins, or, more accurately, alleviates Christian guilt. The possibility of seeing Barabas in this light makes it doubly important that he be deemed villainous and irredeemable. Hence, the Knights of Malta address their Jewish neighbors in the terms of traditional Christian anti-Semitism. They recall the Christian belief that Jews remain unredeemed of man's "first curse" (1.2.108) and attribute the suffering of Malta's Jews to their "inherent sin" (1.2.110). Barabas recognizes that the Christian authorities are "bring[ing] . . . scripture to confirm [their] wrong" (1.2.111). However, when he seeks to argue, he is accused of covetousness, a sin regularly associated with Jews in anti-Semitic doctrine. The Jew is one infidel who will not be permitted to challenge Christian authority. His attempts to do so

²⁷For the original of Barabas, see Matt. 27: 16-26, Mark 15:15, and John 18:40.

merely provide Christians with further opportunities to attack Jews in demonstration of their faith. Thus, the mercenary seizure of Barabas' estate is taken as an opportunity to assert Christian piety as the corrupt knights determine to "*convert his mansion to a nunnery*" (1.2.130, emphasis mine).

Ferneze's decision to trust in Spanish aid and oppose what he now calls the "*barbarous misbelieving Turks*" (2.3.46) does nothing to improve the situation of Malta's Jews. If anything, it instigates a revival of crusade-era conflation and libel. Thus as Barabas enters the slave market that marks Maltese defiance of Ottoman sovereignty, he is identified with the Turkish slaves for sale as one "*cast off from heaven*" (2.3.160). Christian readiness to believe the worst of Jews is typified by Giacomo's response when Barnardine invites him to exclaim against the Jew. Uncertain of why, Giacomo guesses, "*has he crucified a child*" (3.6.49)? The Jew is assumed to be a ritual murderer who reenacts the crucifixion of Christ on the bodies of innocent Christians. Similarly, neither Bellamira nor Pilia-Borza voices surprise to learn that "*the hat [Barabas] wears, Judas left under the elder when he hang'd himself*" (5.1.71-2). Indeed, this outrageous lie does no more to raise an eyebrow than the false allegation that "*he never put on clean shirt since he was circumcis'd*" (5.1.69). Though identification with Judas more obviously defames Barabas, the notion of the Jew as a practitioner of unusual customs exercises a similar power to position the Jew as an outsider, irreconcilable to Christian culture.

Interestingly, the character who voices the greatest number of anti-Semitic slurs is Barabas himself. In a scene that has been understood as accommodating Barabas "*to an abstract, anti-Semitic fantasy of a Jew's past*" (Greenblatt, *Renaissance* 209), Barabas recites a catalogue of libels in introducing himself to his newly purchased slave, Ithamore. The passage is famous for its inclusion of nearly every important anti-Semitic libel of the age. Barabas claims to "*poison*

wells" and "cherish Christian thieves." He recalls a youth when he "studied physic," to become a doctor who would keep the sexton busy "ringing dead men's knells." Next, he claims to have been an engineer who "in the wars 'twixt France and Germany, / Under pretence of helping Charles the Fifth, / Slew friend and enemy with my stratagems."²⁸ Finally, since no catalogue of anti-Semitic stereotypes would be complete without it, Barabas ends by claiming to have also been a usurer skilled in "extorting, cozening, forfeiting, / And tricks belonging unto brokery" (193-4).

The various tales of criminality Barabas delineates were the principle weapons in the arsenal of contemporary anti-Semitism. They were used to justify cultural exclusion and provide a negative reflection for Christian righteousness. What then is the meaning of Barabas' apparent self-indictment? Is it evidence that he is an "unequivocal villain" as many critics contend? Is he a Vice-figure who, as a matter of course, announces himself such? I don't believe so. Instead, I wish to suggest that Barabas' apparent confession be read as a mockery of Christianity's self-affirming anti-Semitism.²⁹ Both within the play and in the assessments of its critics, Barabas is credited with great cunning and policy. He regularly feigns when he speaks, and even instructs his daughter in how best to make "a counterfeit profession" (1.2.291). Nevertheless, he is invariably taken at his word in this self-mythography. We need to be more skeptical than the Christians of Malta who are so prepared to believe anything unusual about the Jew that they find nothing dubious in the claim that "he lives

²⁸As a traitor to Charles V, Barabas would have been aligned with the Turks who aided the French. Yet Barabas makes himself out to be worse still with his claim to have slain "friend and enemy" alike.

²⁹David Katz similarly argues that the play is here "making sport of popular stereotypes of the Jew" (81).

upon pickled grasshoppers and sauc'd mushrumps" (5.1.65-6). Nothing in Barabas' account is borne out by what we have seen of him, and none of what we know of him is included in his account. It contains stereotypes and nothing more, a composite of those stock figures which attempt to fix the Jew as a simple, knowable identity. He is at once the cozening money-lender, the sinister poisoner, the corrupt doctor, the duplicitous intriguer, and the heathen Vice-figure, luring innocent Christians to tragedy. Such stock figures of nefarious Judaism are essential to the management of Christian identity in the wake of the Turkish league and Del Bosco's opprobrium. Yet something unusual occurs when the Jew articulates Christianity's vision of "the Jew." His outrageous history mimics Christian representations of Jews, at once reflecting and mocking them. It "usurps the [Christian's] privilege of complex subjectivity and of movement between subject positions and thus can be read to assume some control over both the construction and flow of. . . knowledge" (Roy 55).³⁰ Barabas forges himself--in both senses of the word--into the aggregate of Jewish mendacity, one identity superseding the next until he is all things and none. Recognizing what critics have not, Ithamore responds in kind, with a history of "setting Christian villages on fire,/ Chaining of eunuchs, binding galley-slaves" (2.3.205-6), crippling pilgrims and cutting the throats of travelers. Following the example of Barabas' catalogue of libels, Ithamore's autobiography restricts itself to Christianity's vision. Like Barabas, Ithamore concedes no history outside of preying upon Christians. In each case, the narrowness of the account mimics a

³⁰Jonathan Dollimore makes a similar argument about Faustus, whom he sees engaged in an act of "transgressive mimesis" whereby the repressed, "even as it imitates, reproducing itself in terms of its exclusion, also demystifies, producing a knowledge which the dominant has to suppress in order to dominate" (61).

narrowness of vision, mocked in the Jew's simplistic conflation: "Both circumcised, we hate Christians both" (2.3.217).

Barabas recognizes the way in which Ferneze blinds himself to the Jew in order to produce "the Jew," a figure that answers his own need for religious affirmation. Yet Barabas also recognizes that by accepting the role of the Jew, and playing to Malta's "need for a knowable 'other'" (Bartels, *Critical Essays* 106), he can both expose and exploit the very thing that constricts him. When Ferneze's son Lodowick expresses a romantic interest in Barabas' daughter Abigail, the Jew seizes the opportunity to avenge himself. He promises Lodowick his daughter's hand in a scheme designed to rouse the jealousy of Abigail's true love, Matthias. When Abigail cries miserably at the engagement, it seems Barabas' ruse will fail. But by playing the role of the Jew as practitioner of strange customs, he draws Lodowick further into his snare. He assures the youth that her tears are no indication of sorrow but rather "the Hebrews' guise/That maidens new-betroth'd should weep a while" (2.3.327-8). Like many of the play's other Christians, Lodowick is prepared to accept anything, no matter how unlikely, as "the custom" of the Jews, and thus he departs fatally "resolv'd" (2.3.331). Shylock is less subtle, but no less dangerous, in his exploitation of his assigned role. He frankly declares, "Since I am a dog, beware my fangs" (3.3.7). The Jews of the drama are, in fact, at their most powerful when they resolve, as Zariph does, "to play the Jew," recognizing, "it is my part" (9. 50-1).

For as long as he "cunningly perform[s]" (3.2.368) his role, embracing the multiple and competing identities of "the Jew," Barabas outpaces a culture that would fix him as a knowable subject. As the Jewish poisoner, he avenges himself on his enemies. As the false Jew professing a desire for conversion, he wins back his riches and spares his machinations from exposure. As the Jewish physician he counterfeits his own death to escape punishment. Finally, as the treasonous

fifth columnist, he wins a governorship by betraying Malta to the Turks. Throughout, Barabas is the consummate actor whose masterful role-playing overcomes his various audiences. Even his co-conspirator, Ithamore, who marvels at “such villainy,/So neatly plotted, and so well perform’d” (3.3.1-2), is finally, and fatally, taken in by Barabas’ performance as a French musician.

The idea of the Jew as a performer has an important cultural resonance. James Shapiro argues that the early modern period witnessed “an increasing sense among English writers that Jewish conversion to Christianity had never been sincere and that baptized Jews would ultimately prove counterfeit Christians” (19). Fears of crypto-Judaism circulated England, leading to a flurry of accusations whereby Christians suspected each other of “Judaizing” practices. The Jews of the stage, on the other hand, are like the Jews of the Islamic world, open in their profession and answering without hesitation to the appellation “Jew.” This is not to say, however, that the Jews of the drama are never dissemblers. Barabas, for one, admits,

We Jews can fawn like spaniels when we please,
And when we grin we bite; yet are our looks
As innocent and harmless as a lamb’s. (2.3.20-2)

Barabas’ confession of falsehood is immediately followed by a recollection of his education in deceit. He explains,

I learn’d in Florence how to kiss my hand,
Heave up my shoulders when they call me dog,
And duck as low as any bare-foot friar,
Hoping to see them starve upon a stall . . . (2.3.23-6)

Barabas’ remembrance implies that Jewish dissembling does not call forth anti-Semitism but rather comes as a necessary rejoinder. The play corroborates his suggestion by withholding its first instance of Jewish counterfeiting until after

the wrongful fleecing of Jewish estates. Abigail's decision to feign a desire for conversion comes from her recognition that dissembling is the only means left to her to gain access to her father's confiscated home. She accepts anti-Semitism's role of the false Jew because anti-Semitism--intent on Christian absolution--leaves her few alternatives. As Barabas explains, "This is the life we Jews are us'd to lead,/ And reason too, for Christians do the like" (5.3.111-2). Similarly, Shylock defends his actions with the explanation, "the villainy you teach me I will execute" (3.1.56), and critics have regularly called attention to *Merchant's* various indications of Christian hypocrisy. Marlowe's play, too, is rife with evidence of Christian deceit, from Lodowick's plan to "insinuate" himself with Barabas "that [he] may have a sight of Abigail" (2.3.33-4), to Ferneze's broken promises, and Barnardine and Jacomo's false piety.

The difference between these acts of dissembling and the Jew's role playing is that the Jew has his part assigned while Christians are at liberty to explore a heterogeneous repertoire of roles and subject positions. Christian actors take up and abandon roles at will, including the part of "the Jew." In *The Devil's Law Case*, Romelio gains access to the body of his intended victim, Ercole, by disguising himself as a "rare Italianated Jew" (Webster IV: 3.2.3). Inhabiting the position of the most demonized alien subject provides psychic satisfactions typically unavailable to the Christian subject. Romelio is thrilled to be so "excellently well habited" (3.2.1), and imagines the various scenes he "could play" (3.2.2) as a Jew, from poisoning a friend and betraying his allies to "eat[ing] a Politician,/ And digest[ing] him to nothing but pure blood" (3.2.15-6). The role of the Jew not only enables Romelio's villainy, it allows him to displace it onto one more criminal than himself, "the Jew." Most importantly, he can imagine himself untainted upon removing his guise.

Contrapositive notions of Jews reassure their Christian disseminators and draw attention away from compromised Christian ideals. It is in this function that the idea of “the Jew” served English culture in the context of Anglo-Islamic trafficking. As I have previously indicated, the Christian ideal considered most at risk was steadfast piety. Thus it is not surprising to find the idea and role of “the Jew” deployed in a crucial moment of potential apostasy in Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turke*. Following his dumb show conversion, we learn that Ward “play’d the Jew with ‘em” (F3), substituting a monkey’s tail during his supposed circumcision. Like Romelio, Ward is a dubious figure. He is a renegade pirate whose Christian faith and virtue are clearly jeopardized in his encounter with Islam. However, by playing “the Jew” at a crucial moment, Ward avoids the physical contamination of conversion to Islam and displaces the act of apostasy with the falseness of the Jew. What is most important here is that Ward is considered to have only “play’d the Jew.” It is a role he has momentarily taken up, but it is nonetheless essential to the fantasy of Christian manhood untarnished by the encounter with Islam.

For the Jew, no comparable passing between roles is possible. Though he may successfully exploit his role, he may not set it down or move beyond its limits. Any efforts to create a new role are re-inscribed within a traditional anti-Semitic role cast by a Christian culture in needs of *its* “Jew.” More than any other character in the drama, Marlowe’s Ferneze represents a Christian culture in need of *its* “Jew.” The Governor’s Christian loyalty is suspect from the moment we learn of the tributary league. Consequently, his actions over the course of the play, and particularly his policies concerning the Jews, set about displacing suspicions of religious compromise. Barabas is able to successfully exploit this situation, and the part of “the Jew” in Ferneze’s self-exonerating drama, as long

as he is willing to remain within its confines. However, as soon as Barabas betrays his part, he loses mastery over his role and instead becomes its victim.

At the opening of the fifth act, Barabas is at both the height of his success and the center of his role as “the Jew.” He is a known poisoner, a false convert, and a fifth columnist for the Turkish invasion, and for those very reasons he is possessed of infinite riches, a great mansion, and the governorship of Malta. Nevertheless he suddenly decides to betray his allegiance to the Turks and engineer an insurrection for Ferneze and the Christians. It is to be his greatest performance, and Barabas busies himself with hiring carpenters to build a theater--complete with gallery and trap--in which he may stage his redemption. He fails to recognize, however, that “he is building a set for Ferneze’s counterdrama”(Deats and Starks 385). Stephen Greenblatt explains Barabas’ decision as a symptom of the repetition-compulsion characteristic of all Marlovian protagonists, their “will to absolute play” (*Renaissance* Chapter 5, passim). I am suggesting instead that the significant compulsion explaining Barabas’ decision is not the protagonist’s, but rather belongs to a culture whose traffic in the Islamic world compelled it to demonize the Jew. Quite simply, there is no part for a Jewish redeemer in the economic, political, and religious scripts circumscribing the encounter with Islam. In seeking integration into Maltese society by positioning himself as a friend to Christians against the Turks, Barabas imagines a Christian culture willing to cast Judas in the role of Jesus. Though he successfully delivers the Turks and returns Ferneze to his position of power, Barabas’ attempts to re-write his role in Christian culture cannot succeed. Instead he finds himself trapped in the snare of his own theater. The Jew can be accepted as a poisoner, a traitor, and even an authority figure as long as his authority comes from his betrayal of Christians and allegiance to the Turks. Each of these roles positions him in contradistinction to the upright, even martyred,

Christian. He cannot, however, be an admitted ally for a culture predicated on and exculpated by his exclusion. Indeed, Ferneze's reversal involves not only trapping Barabas in the cauldron intended for the Turk, but also returning him to the discourse of the "base Jew" who must have his "treachery repaid" (5.5.75-6).

Calymath and Barabas alike are surprised by the latter's fall, but we should not be. The intertwining of English and Ottoman interests in the early modern period meant that the Turk could no longer be so readily cast as a villain. Accordingly, Calymath's nobility is never compromised, and Ferneze goes to considerable lengths assuring the Turk of his opposition to Barabas. Furthermore, an acknowledged allegiance with the Jew puts Ferneze into a position of compromise demanding no less redress than was required by the tributary league. In order to preserve the integrity of his Christian persona and strike a balance between nominal opposition and practical concession to the Turk, Ferneze must reinstate Barabas as the "villain" (5.5.77). Erasing his culpability as Barabas' co-conspirator, the Governor assures Calymath that the Jew plotted alone "to have entrapp'd thy life" (5.5.92) but that he, Ferneze, has "rather chose[n] to save thy life" (5.5.95). The massacre of Turkish troops in a monastery outside the city walls is accordingly presented as an example of "a Jew's courtesy" (5.5. 109) and "the unhallowed deeds of Jews" (5.5.93). Barabas' end does nothing to encourage any doubts the Turk might have concerning Ferneze's account. Boiling to death in a scene intended to conjure images of the Jew suffering in hell, Barabas does something entirely out of character: he confesses. He admits to responsibility for Lodowick's death and the captivity of Malta, as well as to his hopes to "have brought confusion on you all, / Damn'd Christians, dogs, and Turkish infidels" (5.5.85-6). For this one moment, the man and the role are indistinguishable, "the Jew" collapses onto the Jew, and Ferneze's anti-Semitism is apparently justified.

Barabas' sudden, uncharacteristic end is by no means unique. Indeed there is a strange, almost clumsy jettisoning that occurs at the end of virtually all the plays involving both Jews and Turks. Thus it is with the ends of Jews that I will close this discussion. By *ends* I do not refer here to the aims of Jews, as in the phrase *means to an end*, but rather the point beyond which no Jew is admitted. For the Jew is himself a means to an end and must be discarded along the way. For Jewish women, there remains the possibility of conversion and marriage. As Linda Boose (41) has argued, the marriage of Jewish women such as *Merchant's* Jessica, benefits the male social alliance, assuring Christian culture of its dominance over its alien constituents.³¹ For Jewish men, there is no equivalent admission and integration. Instead, the ends of Jewish men come with bizarre reversals, sudden deaths, and situations left awkwardly unresolved.

In *Three Ladies*, Gerontus simply drops out of the play, his extraordinary charity left unrewarded. Abraham, the doctor in *Selimus*, rather inexplicably decides to drink the same poison he has administered to his victims, offering only the lame explanation that he has "not many months to live on earth" (line 1833). Shylock is forced to accept conversion, but betrays his contented acquiescence as he plods offstage complaining "I am not well" (4.1.392). And Benwash, like Barabas, succeeds in all his machinations of revenge only to suddenly die offering a confession of guilt in the murder of his wife and servant. None of these ends is satisfactory to modern readers and a great deal of critical ink has been spent in trying to explain their inadequacy, particularly in the case of Shylock. However, I believe Benwash's death to be at once the most confusing and illuminating of them all. Benwash claims that Dansiker "hath iustly done me vengeance" (I3r), but there are neither stage directions nor clues in Dansiker's

³¹See also Shapiro 132.

final speech to indicate that he has murdered the Jew. It is almost as if no explanation is required for the end of the Jew. He is a mere fabrication, a role to be played until it can no longer be sustained. Because he is merely a role, a means to an end, he does not merit the proper resolution afforded to Christian, or even Muslim, characters. Instead, the Jew is consumed by “the Jew” that Christian culture requires in the burgeoning era of Anglo-Islamic trafficking.

There is no simple trajectory to trace in mapping out early modern representations of difference. The interlocking examples of Islam and Judaism warn us that English experiences in Asia, Africa, North America, and in the British Isles themselves cannot be isolated. Admittedly, this chapter offers a mere gesture, tentative at best, at the complexity and interanimation of cultures. Rather than a final answer, it is offered as an indication of one direction in which early modern studies must continue, and of how great a distance we have left to go.

Chapter 5

"A most wily bird": Leo Africanus, *Othello*, and the Trafficking in Difference

I. The umbra of Shakespeare studies

One of the great shortcomings of many studies of Orientalism is the failure to consider how Europe's others contributed to the discourses by which they were known. Islamic peoples produced texts describing themselves, their beliefs, lands and governments. Likewise, they also produced commentary on Christianity and European peoples. As a study of English drama, this is clearly not the place for a full examination of Islamic discursive practices, nor am I qualified to undertake such a project. However, if we wish to fully appreciate the bilateral nature of a trafficking model it is important to consider, at least briefly, the ways in which Islamic texts could compete with and supplement the European discourse of Islam. This final chapter is therefore intended to chart a course for future studies that recognize the need to consider ways in which European discourses of the Other are produced from the forces of both European and non-European cultures. It takes as its central preoccupation the *Geographical History* of a Moorish traveler named al-Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Wezaz, a text once considered a source for Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Born in Moorish Granada, al-Wezaz left Spain for North Africa in 1497 when the Morisco expulsions were already imminent. He was raised a Muslim in Fez and served as a diplomat, lawyer, soldier, judge, and merchant, all by the time he was twenty. As a representative of the Sultan of Fez, he traveled as far afield as Tabriz (in Persia), Timbuktu, and the countries of the Sudan. While still a young man, al-Wezaz was returning from a trip to Egypt when he was taken captive by Sicilian pirates. He was presented as a gift to Pope Leo X, who

baptised him a Christian with his own names Giovanni Leo, leading to his being known as Leo the African, and later the name by which he is most frequently described, Leo Africanus. It was during his time in Italy that Africanus wrote the *Geographical History*, a work that informed almost every European text on Africa published until the end of the eighteenth century.

Apart from a few recent exceptions, the interest of literary scholars in the sixteenth-century Moorish traveler and author has followed Shakespeare's lead, discussing little more than those passages of his *Geographical History* that resonate with others in *Othello*. When examined in the context of "race" in the early modern period, passages are again carefully mined to support claims like Emily Bartels' that "the text produces an author who seems . . . to be securing his Christian, European self at the expense of his 'Other' identity as a Moor" (Bartels, "Making More" 435). While this is a rather unfair summary of Africanus' considerable work, it is, nevertheless, the abstract that has emerged from an interest that rarely reads Africanus outside of the empire of Shakespeare studies.¹

I want to argue that Africanus, unlike *Othello*, reveals the instability of European discourse about difference by undermining many of those anti-African and anti-Islamic shibboleths which gain him admission to the ranks of authoritative European historians. I believe the *Geographical History* reproduces some of the fantastical and anti-Islamic tendencies of earlier works on Africa as a strategic form of textual mimicry. In other words, Africanus engages in a form of discursive negotiation that Mary Louise Pratt has identified as *autoethnography*. In autoethnography, "colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms. . . . [A]utoethnography

¹For an historian's account of Africanus' contribution to the geographical knowledge of his age, see Hallet.

involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror" (7). This chapter will attempt to identify the *Geographical History's* vexed collaboration with European histories of Africa in order to disentangle Africanus and Othello from a coupling that obscures religious concerns operating in Shakespeare's play as well as the subversive nature of Africanus. When extricated from the umbra of Shakespeare studies, Africanus emerges as a critical exponent of African social, political, and religious history that can inform our postcolonial assessments of early modern texts like *Othello* with a greater and more fruitful complexity.

II. Supplementing the Travelers

Othello's "travells history" (1.3.139), including the story of his captivity before coming to prominence in Italy, has encouraged critics to examine him alongside Africanus, whose own travel history relates similar events and observations. While it has been some time since the *Geographical History* has been treated as a source for *Othello*,² or Africanus himself for Shakespeare's "extravagant and wheeling stranger" (1.1.135), the two continue to be intertwined, often rendering Africanus ideologically conformist and innocuous. In separate examinations concerned with Othello's relationship to Africanus, Emily Bartels and Jack D'Amico each describe an Africanus who willingly slanders his racial and religious origins in like manner to Othello's anxiety-laden denigration of Turks and blackness. Bartels argues that "while [Africanus] insists that his intention is to valorize his African subjects and to affirm and display his loyalty to his African heritage, his strategies work to the opposite effect" since their author is more concerned with his admission into Christendom (Bartels,

²The first critic to argue for Africanus as a source for *Othello* was Whitney. See also Johnson; and Jones.

"Making More" 436). Jack D'Amico similarly finds that "whatever his personal opinions, [Leo] echoed the assumptions and expectations of his reader" (53)³

More recently, Kim Hall has likened Africanus to the text his English editor, John Pory, produced in 1600, calling each "a safe conduit through which readers become protected tourists, enjoying the wonders and promised wealth of Africa while safely distanced from its more ominous and seductive cultural practices" (*Things* 30). While Hall treats Africanus quite separately from Othello, her understanding of him seems nevertheless informed by the same idea of a conforming alien-insider which holds sway in *Othello* criticism. Her specific interest in the relationship between race and gender leads her to consider only a small portion of Africanus' text from which she draws fascinating conclusions about early modern constructions of race, gender, and beauty, but from which Africanus emerges as a toady for European ideology and an historian of nothing more than anecdotal material. She attributes Africanus' censure of the "base" inhabitants of Barbary, and particularly "the failure of the patriarchal family to restrict sexual relations before marriage," to his "imposition of European values of family and marriage" (*Things* 34). Why should Hall assume that bridal virginity is an exclusively European value? Similarly, her contention that the "*Geographical History* gives the reader a sense of Africa as a chaotic and disordered land, one badly in need of a sense of order" (*Things* 38), evidences the same tendency to read Africanus as conformingly anti-African, despite the text's generous treatment of African accomplishments and interest in Islam so prevailing that it leads Pory to surround the text with an introduction and appendices focused on African Christianity.

³ See also Tokson.

The author of the *Geographical History* is, like Othello, 'doubly tainted' and in need of establishing the credibility of his adopted subject-position as John Leo Africanus, an objective, converted-Christian historian for a European readership. For this reason, Africanus declares himself by "the streit law of historie enforced" (L6r) to catalog the ills of an Africa he describes as "infected with the Mahumetan lawe" (A4v), while likening his task to that of an executioner who dutifully beats a censurable old acquaintance.⁴ Nevertheless, a non-archaeological reading of the *Geographical History* reveals that Africanus' text must be distinguished from the Eurocentric travelers' accounts among which it is often discussed. What distinguishes Africanus' text from other accounts of Africa is that which has occasioned his comparison to Othello -- the ability to substantially add to and transform contemporary discourses about Africa. What distinguishes Africanus from Othello is his ability to successfully employ hybridity as a strategy to maintain the resulting compound.

Whereas most travelers' accounts of Africa tell far more of the traveler than his supposed subject, Africanus' far-ranging work of 1523 generally concerns itself with the history, geography, and culture of Africans, thereby populating what had previously been an ideascap or, at best, a landscape. Furthermore, unlike other travelers of the period, Africanus refuses to rehearse the fantastic and preposterous material African historiography had inherited from Herodotus, Pliny, and Mandeville.⁵ Where Africanus does describe the

⁴When quoting from Africanus I am using John Pory's 1600 English translation for its proximity to Shakespeare's *Othello*. The transmission history of this text is admittedly dubious: No manuscript has been confidently identified as an original, and Pory worked from Jean Florian's 1556 Latin translation of Ramusio's 1550 Italian. Zhiri illustrates that the various translators tended to omit details of African history and Arab culture, suggesting that Africanus' original supplement to Europe's knowledge of Africa was even greater than what I will identify.

vices of Africans, he affords equal attention to their “commendable actions and virtues.” Indeed, lists of virtues often directly follow lists of vices in oddly ambivalent narratives of various African peoples. This ambivalence, further evidenced in various moments of autobiography and meta-narration, suggests that Africanus and his work merit reexamination in terms of strategic mimicry and the supplementation of African history. As Homi Bhabha has shown for the post/ colonial era, such mimicry is Janus-faced, “at once resemblance and menace” (86). The menace of the *Geographical History*, enabled by its textual mimicry, lies in the supplementing threat it poses to those accounts of Africa that erased its histories and inhabitants in the project of European self-making.

In a discussion of minority discourse within the nation, Bhabha adapts Jacques Derrida's theory of the supplement to the issue of discursive negotiation. For Bhabha, the supplement is that addition which is simultaneously disruptive and disrupted as it is accommodated into a discourse. Bhabha explains that by “[i]nsinuating itself into the terms of reference of the dominant discourse, the supplementary antagonizes the implicit power to generalize, to produce the sociological solidity.” Thus, the supplement poses as a belated, missing piece, while occasioning a “renegotiation of those times, terms and traditions through which we turn our uncertain, passing contemporaneity into the signs of history” (Bhabha 155). A version of this same supplementary strategy is at work in Leo Africanus' trafficking in the intromissive discourse on Africa.

One indication of permeability and exchange in the discourse on Africa lies in Jean Baptiste Ramusio's decision to place the *Geographical History* first in his *Delle Navigazioni et Viaggi* (1550). As Oumelbanine Zhiri has pointed out, Ramusio's anthology was expressly intended to correct old errors and

⁵Some material of this sort, including descriptions of dragons and hydras, was later inserted into the text by Pory.

misunderstandings (Zhiri 52). The placement of a non-European at the head of such a text speaks to a certain discursive openness. A second indication of the potential for discursive revision appears in Ramusio's preface to the first edition, which predicted of its readers that "having once read this book of John Leo, and thoroughly considered the matters therein contained and declared, they will esteem the relations of all others, in comparison of this, to be but brief, unperfect, and of little moment" (e5v-6r).

We cannot be certain whether Africanus was commissioned to write the *Geographical History* for a readership aware of the obsolescence Ramusio describes, or one that expected a confirmation of the prevailing discourse. (Of course, the very impulse to buttress the status quo suggests at least some recognition of obsolescence.) In either case, Ramusio's comment indicates that increasing European contact with Africa and Africans put new pressures on the prevailing discourse, raising doubts about its ability to stand in the place of "Africa." As this occurred, the *Geographical History* emerged as a "supplement" that, in Derridean terms, "intervenes or insinuates itself in-the-place-of; if it fills, it is by the anterior default of a presence" (Derrida 145). As is the case with any supplement that issues new claims of an absolute ground, Africanus' text will also fail to adequately represent its subject due to its various elisions. I will, for the moment, pass over those elisions, exploring first the way in which, in its over two-hundred year tenure as Europe's principle source of information about Africa, the *Geographical History* "passes as the sign" and thereby reconfigures the discourse through a process of sanctioned antagonism. In short, textual mimicry allows Africanus to move into a restricted position from which he may supplement a wanting discourse. In Bhabha's terms, "The supplementary strategy suggests that adding 'to' need not 'add up' but may disturb the calculation" (155).

By the early sixteenth century, few works had joined Pliny's *Natural History* atop the hierarchy of authorities supporting the dominant European discourse on Africa.⁶ Pliny's work emphasizes features of the landscape and vast multitudes of wild beasts and monstrous hybrids. For most of the text, the African peoples are merely landmarks, described by little more than their location.⁷ Pliny's bestial Africans were reproduced, embellished upon, and further circulated in that enormously popular amalgam of travelers' tales, *The Travels of John Mandeville*. This polyphonic text passes through several narrative strategies. One voice seems concerned with one-upping Pliny's oddities with dragons, cyclopes, ape-men, hound-headed men, mouthless dwarfs, man-eating giants, basilisk-men, incestuous cannibals, blood-drinkers, and Amazons. Another of "Mandeville's" voices more clearly distinguishes itself from Plinian conventions in its concerned awareness of the spread of Islam across North Africa. This voice, therefore, engages in the construction of a religious ideascapè threatened by "heathen" occupation. For this "Mandeville," North Africa is the land of the Old and New Testaments, and his text an appendix to those works, leading the Christian pilgrim through the sites of Judeo-Christian parables, where little or no trace of modern Africans is made apparent. When those "foul peoples" are presented, it is generally in terms of corrupt religious practice and the fact that "because they go so nigh our faith they be lightly converted to Christian law." This textual confirmation of crusader-rhetoric was, arguably, Mandeville's most influential contribution to the European discourse on Africa

⁶Knowledge of Pliny came to early modern Europe largely through translations of Solinus.

⁷Pliny's descriptions of Europe also evidence a lack of interest toward human subjects, but to a lesser extent. Rather than landmarks, they are described in the more human terms of their genealogical ancestry.

since virtually every account of Africa that followed produced its own avatar of a developing anti-Islamicism.

One indication of the dependence of the discourse Africanus found upon the seminal works of Pliny and Mandeville is in Johann Boemus' *Omnium Gentium Mores*, first published in 1520, while Africanus was probably beginning work upon the *Geographical History*. Like its precursors, Boemus' text abounds in hybrids and beasts, traces the corruption of Africa from the corruption of Ham's progeny, and emphasizes the spread of "false" religions like Islam. On the other hand, Boemus' text does evidence a growing interest in certain areas of Africa, particularly Egypt and Ethiopia. These two lands are described in a relative wealth of detail featuring admiration for their strict absolutism and harsh penal systems, and concern with the liberties taken by their women. In short, they are examined in the manner of utopias and dystopias, in terms constructed to reflect upon European culture. Indeed, William Waterman prefaced his 1555 translation of Boemus, *The Fardle of Facions*, with the advice that "using them as present examples, and patternes of life, thou maiest with all thine endeavour folowe the vertuous and godlie, and with as mucche warenes eschewe the vicious and ungodly" (Waterman 13). Beyond the moral and political mirrors of Egypt and Ethiopia, Africa remained as Pliny and Mandeville left it.

Europe's anti-Islamic heritage may help explain why, when introducing his 1600 translation of Africanus to English readers, John Pory feels compelled to begin with a justification of the culturally and theologically suspect author,

Who albeit by birth a More, and by religion for many yeeres
a Mahumetan: yet if you consider his Parentage, Witte,
Education, Learning, Emploiments, Trauels, and his
conuersion to Christianitie; you shall finde him not

altogether unfit to undertake such an enterprize; nor
unwoorthy to be regarded. (unsigned 2)

Pory's defense indicates that, should Africanus have wished to publish a text that overtly controverted Eurocentrism and anti-Islamicism, he could not have done so: an alien author like Africanus would have found himself in a position requiring a degree of ideological conformity toward his audience. Furthermore, he was in either the custody or employ of Giovanni de' Medici, Pope Leo X. In either case, it would, most likely, have been fatal to directly confront certain aspects of a discourse by means of which European Christendom affirmed its own sanctity. It therefore comes as little surprise to find Africanus affirming the descent of Africa's "savage," "wild," and "rude" inhabitants from Ham, or assigning responsibility for architectural, intellectual, and moral decay to the spread of "the Mahometan superstition . . . [when] certaine of *Mahomet's* disciples so bewitched [Africans] with eloquent and deceiueable speches, that they allured their weake minds to consent vnto their opinion" (C2r). Of equal import, however, is the way in which Africanus undermines the very statements, such as these, which gain him admission to the ranks of authoritative European historians. Beginning then from the suspicion that contradictions demand closer investigation, I would like to turn a critical eye to those antinomies in the *Geographical History* which suggest an authorial parallax.

Often, the places where texts make their proclamations of objectivity are the very places that provide us with our clearest insights into their ideological paradoxes. For the very inclination to assert impartiality suggests a point of view under suspicion and obliged to rhetorical strategies of substantiation. It is particularly telling that Africanus makes his first objectivity claims immediately following consecutive sections of the *Geographical History* that Ramusio headed, "The commendable actions and vertues of the Africans" (D2r) and "What vices

the foresaid Africans are subiect vnto" (D3r). Because they so neatly parallel and contradict each other as they catalog both urban and rural Africans, these passages are worth quoting at considerable length. In the first we learn that the people of Barbary are,

greatly addicted vnto the studie of good artes and sciences: and those things which concerne their law and religion are esteemed by them in the first place. . . . The inhabitants of cities doe most religiously obserue and reuerence those things which appertaine vnto their religion: yea they honour those doctours and priests, of whom they learne their law, as if they were petie-gods. Their Churches they frequent verie diligently, to the ende they may repeat certaine prescript and formal prayers. . . . Most honest people they are, and destitute of all fraud and guile; not onely imbracing all simplicitie and truth, but also practising the same throughout the whole course of their liues: albeit certaine Latine authors, which haue written of the same regions, are farre otherwise of opinion. . . . They keepe their couenant most faithfully; insomuch that they had rather die then breake promise. . . . They trauell in a manner ouer the whole world to exercise traffique . . . and whithersoever they goe, they are most honorably esteemed of: for none of them will professe any art, vnlesse hee hath attained vnto great exactnes and perfection therein. They haue alwaies been much delighted with all kinde of ciuilitie and modest behaiour: and it is accounted heinous among them for any man to vtter in company, any bawdie or vnseemly worde. They haue alwaies in minde this sentence of a graue author; Giue place to thy superiour. (D2r-v)

As Africanus' description proceeds, the picture of an intelligent, courteous, hospitable, and industrious people of outstanding modesty, piety, and honesty emerges in overt contradistinction to what, accordingly, become the misrepresentations of "certaine Latine authors." Likewise, despite the author's urban prejudices (which are elsewhere more prominent), rural peoples are here described as "of a more liberall and ciuill disposition: to wit, they are in their kinde as deuout, valiant, patient, courteous, hospita[ble], and as honest in life and conuersation as any other people" (D2v) This portrait is immediately and paradoxically contradicted in its particulars in the section which follows:

Those which we named the inhabitants of the cities of Barbarie are somewhat needie and couetous, being also very proud and high minded and woonderfully addicted vnto wrath. . . . So rustically they are & void of good manners, that scarcely can any stranger obtaine their familiaritie and friendship. . . . So ignorant are they of naturall philosophie, that they imagine all the effects and operations of nature to be extraordinarie and diuine. They obserue no certaine order of liuing nor of lawes. . . . By nature they are a vile and base people, being no better accounted of by their gouernours then if they were dogs. . . . They are vtterly vnskilfull in trades . . . neither is there (I thinke) to bee found among them one of an hundred, who for courtesie, humanitie, or deuotion's sake, will vouchsafe any entertainment vpon a stranger. . . . Their minds are perpetually possessed with vexation and strife, so that they will seldom or never shew themselves tractable to any man. . . . The shepherds of that region . . . are a rude people, and (as a man may say) borne and bred to theft, deceit, and brutish manners. . . . Concerning their religion, the greater part of these people are

neither Mahumetans, Iewes, nor Christians; and hardly shall you finde so much as a sparke of pietie in any of them. They have no churches at all, nor any kinde of prayers, but being vtterly estranged from all godly deuotion, they leade a sauage and beastly life. (D3r-v)

Africanus allows these two descriptions to coexist, indicating no concern with either reconciliation or explanation. Instead, the text takes its first autobiographical turn at this point, anticipating a separate but related concern:

Neither am I ignorant, how much mine owne credit is impeached, when I my selfe write so homely of Africa, vnto which cuntry I stand indebted both for my birth, and also for the best part of my education: Howbeit in this regarde I seeke not to excuse my selfe, but only to appeale vnto the dutie of an historiographer, who is to set downe the plain truth in all places, and is blame-woorthie for flattering or fauoring of any person. And this is the cause that hath moued me to describe all things plainly without glossing or dissimulation. (D4r)

Evidently, it is not the contradictions in a text about Africa which must be justified, but rather the apparent contradiction in an African author's revealing African corruption to a European readership. Thus, Africanus sets about confirming his legitimate position among European geographers and historians by relating the tale of a dutiful executioner. Suggesting that the story illustrates "how indifferent and sincere I haue shewed my selfe" (D3v), Africanus figures himself as the executioner and Islamic Africa the "lewd cuntryman" whose sentence must be impartially dealt. Yet if the dutiful executioner/historian here confirms Eurocentric prejudices and publicly shames his "lewd cuntryman" (D3v), as he does at other points in the text, his "impartiality" also enables him to

supplement those prejudices with notions of African nobility and the possibility of European fallibility.

Could Africanus have asserted African nobility and European fallibility without the consolation of anti-African prejudice? The text promptly supplies an answer to this question in the form of a second “resemblance, or similitude” (D4r), whose protagonist is immediately recognizable as a figure of the author. The tale, ostensibly included to reconfirm the author's *European impartiality*, suggests that Africanus' narrative strategy may be alternatively mimetic and subversive, to the end of producing a supplement, a disruptive yet sanctioned counternarrative of Africa. Thus, after once more pronouncing his position vis-à-vis Africa and Africans, he begins,

There was vpon a time a most wily bird, so indued by nature that she could liue as well with the fishes of the sea, as with the fowles of the aire; wherefore she was rightly called Amphibia. This bird being sommoned before the king of birds to pay her yeerely tribute, determined foorthwith to change her element, and to delude the king; and so flying out of the aire, she drencht herself in the Ocean sea. Which strange accident the fishes woondring at, came flocking about Amphibia, saluting her, and asking her the cause of her comming. Good fishes (quoth the bird) know you not, that all things are turned so vpside downe, that we wot not how to liue securely in the aire? Our tyrannicall king (what furie haunts him, I know not) commanded me to be cruelly put to death, whereas no silly bird respected euer his commoditie as I haue done. Which most uniuert edict I no sooner heard of, but presently (gentle fishes) I came to you for refuge . . . With this speech the fishes were so perswaded, that Amphibia staid a whole yeere among them, not

paying one penie or halfepenie. At the yeeres ende the king of fishes began to demand his tribute, insomuch that at last the bird was fessed to pay . . . but she suddenly spred her wings, and vp she mounted into the aire. And so this bird, to auoide yeerely exactions and tributes, woulde eftsoones change her element. (D4r)

The Amphibia fable, adapted from Aesop's fable of the bat, serves as a peculiar and telling example of the impartiality Africanus first claims it will illustrate. Clearly, the migrant creature of the fable resembles the wayfaring Africanus, who found he could live as well with the Europeans who flocked about him in curiosity as he had among Africans. Yet rather than illustrating impartiality, Amphibia displays a wily mimeticism designed to further her own ends. By taking on the form of her patrons and flattering them ("gentle fishes") in contrast to herself ("silly bird") and her former "unjust" and "tyrannical" acquaintances, Amphibia submits the alien's necessity of deluding fabrications and an ingratiating manner, not an unmitigated candor. Furthermore, the tale suggests the ease with which the outsider may assume and manipulate a pose of impartiality. In other words, Africanus employs a fable drawn from Aesop-- whose tales represent a sort of crossroads of European and African culture--to offer a fable of successful hybridity. Amphibia's doubleness allows her to thrive in two different cultures and avoid subjection in either.⁸ Africanus unabashedly admits that this has always been his own experience:

⁸In *The Arte of English Poesie* (1590), George Puttenham transforms the same fable into an analogue to women's simultaneous occupation of the roles of *virgo* and *mulier*. In Puttenham's version of the story, a "Rattlemouse who in the warres proclaimed betweene the foure footed beasts and the birdes, beyng sent for by the Lyon to be at his musters, excused himselfe for that he was a foule and flew with winges: and beyng sent for by the Eagle to serue him, sayd that he was a foure footed beast, and by that craftie cauill escaped the danger of the warres, and shunned the seruice of both princes" (135-6). Rosemary Kegl has argued that the rattlemouse's evasion of service marks his ability to do what women might if

Out of this fable I will inferre no other morall but that all men doe most affect that place, where they finde least dammage and inconuenience. For mine owne part, when I heare the Africans euil spoken of, I wil affirme my selfe to be one of Granada: and when I perceiue the nation of Granada to be discommended, then I will professe my selfe to be an African. (D4r-v)

That Africanus, like Amphibia, may pass as an objective narrator of alien places and events, and maintain a parallax view of his homeland, may explain the sustained contradictions in his text. As Amphibia promotes her own ends by “chang[ing] her element,” Africanus punishes his “lewd countriman” in European company in order to distinguish this man from himself and his worthy, but overlooked, compatriots. Furthermore, like the unusual hybrid who finally takes flight, Africanus' allegiance to European Christendom ultimately betrays its strategic ends. As Amphibia reveals that she really is a bird passing as a fish, Africanus tells of his plans for further books to be written upon his “being returned forth of Europe into *mine own country*” (Ff2v, emphasis mine). His plans, repeatedly punctuated with locutions recognizing his fortune's deference to the will of God (common in both Islamic and Christian texts), include a work “touching the patrons of the Mahumetan law, and likewise concerning the difference in religion between the Mahumetans of Africa, and of Asia, [which] we will (by God's grace) write more in another several volumes” (C2v). Thus, while mimetically conforming to European views of the corruptions of Islam, Africanus seeks to supplement and redirect those views by assigning corruptions to sects of “heretiks” (N4r). In addition to the inclusion of his plans and a brief

they were not kept from an “awareness of oppression.” He converts his “lack of any coherent position into a simultaneously held multiplicity of positions” (26). Like Africanus, then, Puttenham uses the tale of the hybrid to illustrate how doubleness can be used to destabilize certain subject positions, shore up others, and thus advance its own ends.

history of Islam, Africanus urges his reader to take up Elefacni's discourse on the seventy-two distinct sects of Islam, thereby insisting on a European ignorance in obvious need of remedy. Thus by insinuating himself into a Eurocentric idiom Africanus manages to deflect and interrogate the tendency toward ill- or uninformed generalization in that same idiom.

Africanus' reference to the work of Elefacni is only one among many bibliographic supplements to the early modern discourse on Africa hitherto dominated by Europeans like Pliny, Mandeville, and Boemus. The *Geographical History* cites numerous African poets, cosmographers and historiographers (e.g. Ibn Battuta, Ibn Rachich, and Ibn Khaldoun), simultaneously indicating a space in the discourse requiring antagonistic supplementation and the existence of a rich, lettered culture where foul hybrids and corrupt Muslims had previously been imagined inhabiting geographic and intellectual deserts. The many conquerors of North Africa had, Africanus suggests, rooted out histories before them to spread their own glory and histories (C3r-v). Thus, the *Geographical History* sets about restoring African histories as well as humanizing the Africa bequeathed to Europe by Herodotus and Pliny. It contains none of the hybrids or Amazons his readers would expect, and respectfully but pointedly explains "omitting many things reported by Pliny, who was doubtless a man of rare and singular learning, notwithstanding by the default and negligence of certain authors which wrote before him, he erred a little in some small matters concerning Africa: howbeit a little blemish ought not quite to disgrace all the beautie of a faire and amiable body" (Ff6v). Instead, regions are described in terms of both their histories and present states, highlighting a continuity of traditions and a socio-economically complex and diverse civilization featuring governments, educational institutions, juridical systems, free markets, hospitals and various civic projects. Furthermore, he describes peoples of widely disparate

characters and customs, resisting the tendency toward generalization and demonstrating “that even Africa is not destitute of courteous and bountiful persons” (I1r), while respectfully permitting some prejudices to stand. Indeed, Africanus was so skilled at respectfully but radically supplementing the prevailing discourse that Jean Bodin would reassess the terms of Eurocentrism and call him “the only man by whom Africa, which for a thousand years before had lain buried in the *barbarous and gross ignorance of our people*, is now plainly discovered and laid open to the view of all beholders” (e6v, emphasis mine).⁹

III. “A malignant and a turban'd Turk”

When early modern voyagers encountered non-Europeans in their peregrinations, they tended to describe them according to one of two models: Either they spoke of docile and noble savages eager to embrace Christian empire, or they described menacing agents of deception irrevocably steeped in and tempting Christians toward satanic error. Typically (though not exclusively), the first model was deployed in New World encounters whereas the second was reserved for the various Moors, Turks, and Jews of Africa and Asia.¹⁰ Europe's relative familiarity and antagonistic history with Islamic and Hebraic cultures rendered them less easily dismissed or overwritten.¹¹ Instead they had to be

⁹See Parker 1994 for an acute discussion of discovery and the sexualized rhetoric of “laying open.”

¹⁰See, for example, Richard Eden's preface to *The Decades of the New World* (57) which argues for New World conversion by contrasting those “Jews and Turks who are already drowned in their confirmed error” to “these simple gentiles living only after the law of nature, [who] may be well likened to a smooth and bare table unpainted.”

¹¹See Todorov; Hulme; and Greenblatt, *Marvelous* for discussions of the dismissal and overwriting of native American culture.

engaged and refuted in a Christianized version of their own terms. Thus various scholars and travelers “explained” Islam to their compatriots, basing their exegeses upon their inheritance of a Christian tradition aimed toward delegitimization. As Norman Daniel has argued, “The polemical purpose was to attack the Islamic claim to be the true revelation of God, and to this end it was essential that the character of Mohammed be shown to be wholly and unquestionably incompatible with religion” (244). As a result, writers created a necromancing Mohammed inspired by the devil to found Islam as a license to his own sexual indulgence. Furthermore, lechery was used to explain Christian conversion to Islam, and in justifying the fervor and successes of “fanatical” Turkish armies who, they explained, believed themselves rewarded with sensual afterlives.¹² Thus, whereas European Christendom most often saw the inhabitants of the Americas in terms of pre-Christian innocence, it figured Islam as a religion of sorcery and carnality.

Across the five acts of Shakespeare's play, Othello's contested identity is bandied between these two discourses as Iago locates and activates his community's fears and his master's insecurities as stranger, proselyte and racial Other. In a reading of the play whose insights make superfluous my close examination of the same scenes, Ania Loomba concludes that Othello's “political colour rather than precise shade of non-whiteness is what matters” (Loomba, *Gender* 50). Peter Stallybrass similarly argues that “[f]or Othello to 'gain' . . . there must be a mark against him that will be overcome by his marriage. That mark can be located in the construction of Othello as 'black'” (Stallybrass 135). Without contesting Stallybrass and Loomba's assertions concerning the significance of race, I would add that a significant part of the politics of race is to mark religious

¹²See Matar, “Turning Turk” on conversion to Islam in English Renaissance thought.

difference. Indeed, race often functions as a marker of religious difference in the early modern period, as is indicated by Queen Elizabeth's notorious warrant of 1596 calling for the deportation of eighty-nine black people. Here Elizabeth places "those kinde of people" in contradistinction to her Christian subjects.

In the first scenes of *Othello*, race similarly functions as a marker of religious difference, subtly indicated by Iago's vilification of a cunning, sexualized Othello, and Brabantio's imagination of a conjuring Othello. Thus, before he appears on stage, Othello's irrevocably non-Christian origins are foregrounded in the predominance of the terms of Christianity's narrative of Islamic error.¹³ Yet when Othello first appears before the audience, his impeccable behavior reveals him to be, in some ways, more like the idealized new world savage (tractable but noble) who gratefully embraces Christianity. Indeed, he has become a Christian and defends his adoptive world "against the general enemy Ottoman" (1.3.49) with loyalty apparent enough to convince the Duke to counsel a distraught Brabantio, "Your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (1.3.290).¹⁴ Thus an initially confident and confidence-inspiring Othello successfully enrolls in and simultaneously calibrates the white Christian culture from which he would normally be excluded on the basis of race, religion and citizenship.

¹³My argument has much in common with Vitkus, "Turning Turk." Vitkus argues for Othello as an apostate who loses his faith. My argument does not, however, depend upon Othello's having a Muslim past. What is more important is that Othello can be constituted as *Mahumetan* (and know it) because of his skin color. The extensive signifying range of the Renaissance term "moor" included, among its primary meanings, an individual of the Islamic faith. Indeed, the terms were used interchangeably, as in one traveler's account that explains, "whereas I speake of Moores I meane Mahomet's sect."

¹⁴For an indispensable discussion of dark/ light polarity and the significance of fairness see Hall.

Given his trebly suspicious position as stranger, proselyte, and racial Other, Othello's confidence and the confidence of the community are tragically susceptible to Iago's insidious narrative.¹⁵ With recourse to Fanon, Loomba has illustrated how "Othello moves from being a colonized subject on the terms of a white Venetian society and trying to internalise its ideology, toward being marginalised, outcast and alienated from it in every way until he occupies his 'true' position as its other" (Loomba, *Gender* 48). Yet Loomba's eagerness to refute Stephen Greenblatt's location of Othello's vulnerability in doctrinal guilt for passion or sexual pleasure, by relocating his sexual guilt in color consciousness creates an historically incongruous division between two linked discourses. For both Greenblatt and Loomba underestimate the significance of Renaissance Christianity's sexualized and racialized vision of Islam, or "sexually Moored Islam." As a Christian, Othello is taught the tripartite equation of dark skin, religious error, and sexual excess.¹⁶ As a man of color in a white-dominated society, he is consequently prone to a brand of self-doubt founded in what Fanon terms "affiliation neuroses."¹⁷

¹⁵Bartels (*Critical Essays* 61-2) argues that in Othello we have "neither an alienated nor an assimilated subject, but a figure defined by two worlds." She argues that whereas Moors lived in England in the early modern period, for Othello "to have a dual, rather than divided identity. . . is finally not so strange, so suspect or so charged." Studies of Moors in England during the early modern period have revealed, however, that their lives *were* more often than not strange, suspect and charged; see for example Tokson; and D'Amico.

¹⁶The medieval tradition of Prester John bears witness to the European awareness of non-white Christians in Africa and the Levant. In the early-modern period, however, European reports (including Pory's appendix on the Christians of Africa) invariably pointed out the practice of concubinage, circumcision, and various heresies among non-European Christians including the kingdom of Prester John, thus characterizing their beliefs as somehow debased.

¹⁷As my discussion of Africanus will indicate, I find Fanon's notion of the black man's affiliation neurosis useful only in certain cases, not as a rule.

The notion of an affiliation neurosis may help explain Othello's purple speech, his position at the vanguard of Christendom's forces against the Turks (and verbal positioning as part of the Christian "we" in his question, "Are we turn'd Turks?"), and his marriage to Desdemona, actions which linguistically, religiously, socially, and politically authorize his place in the Venetian community by supplementing the pejorative discourse about the Other. Yet while confirming his place before the community, the very decision to take all of these actions simultaneously indicates the profundity of Othello's self-doubt. Thus, Othello is liable to imagine a sexually excessive Desdemona whereas he may thereby displace questions of his own lascivious "appetite" (1.3.258) raised by the *religious color* of his skin. The ideological incompatibility of his dark skin and Christian faith makes Othello susceptible to a vision of himself as the tainted other for whom no white, Christian woman's affection can last. Desdemona's love thus seems to him "nature erring from itself" and he speculates that she is untrue "[h]aply for I am black" (3.3.229, 265).

As Othello begins to suspect his own irredeemable difference, he is gradually stripped of his ability to supplement the discourse, modify the community and sustain his place therein. Perhaps this is most apparent in his failure to continue seeing Desdemona in supplementary terms. Through the first half of the play he presents her with an Africanus-like ambivalence. In his defense before the Duke, he figures Desdemona as a sly seductress who coyly invites his love and "with a greedy ear/Devour[s] up [his] discourse" (1.3.150-1). But he is also prepared to wager his "life upon her faith" (1.3.295) and finds virtue in the fact that she "feeds well, loves company,/ [and] Is free of speech" (3.3.186-7). In the second half of the play, however, Othello sees his wife only in Iago's terms, as "false," a "devil," and "whore."

As Othello embraces (and ceases to supplement) the discourse of misogyny, the composure with which he supplemented the discourse of the Moorish other also melts away. Lodovico is led to wonder, "Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate/Call all in all sufficient?" (4.1.264-5). Emilia's accusations answer by returning him to the religious calumny of Act I as he is considered a "blacker devil" (5.2.129), and "no more worthy heaven/Than thou wast [Desdemona]" (5.2.160-1). Finally, the discovery of Iago as "devil" confirms Othello's religious Otherness as he comes to understand that the devil has "ensnar'd his soul and body" (5.2.299). He is accordingly stripped of "power and command" (5.2.329) and condemned to prison like an enemy of the state. Consequently, in a simultaneous affirmation of his Otherness and desperate attempt to reclaim his standing, a forlorn Othello delivers his schizophrenic final soliloquy, within which he inhabits the dual role of "a malignant and a turban'd Turk" and the redeeming Crusader who "smote him" (5.2.354-6). Thus, Othello's insecurity leads him to confirm the Christian reading of his skin, but in a way that illustrates the misprision inherent in those semiotics. For Othello's susceptibility to Christian dogma and consequent inability to continue unsettling the meaning of his skin is, finally, evidence of his faith. "In short," Walter Cohen argues, "with the passion of the recently converted, Othello is driven to murder not by reversion to African barbarism but by the adherence to an extreme, perverse version of the logic of Christian society" (Greenblatt et al. 2095).

To win Desdemona and the inclusion she represents, Othello willingly places his "unhoused free condition . . . into [the] circumscription and confine" (1.2.26-7) of what Cohen (Greenblatt et. al. 2094) calls "Christian civilization's secular mores." In this Othello differs distinctly from Africanus' fabulous creation: Amphibia changes her element for "the sea's worth" Othello rejects (1.2.28), but continues to enjoy an "unhoused free condition" by putting her

hybridity to use. Where Othello's faith renders him unable to "affect that place, where [he would] find least damage and inconvenience" (Africanus D3v), Amphibia and, by extension, Africanus succeed because of their ability to "change [their] element" and elude absolute subjection to either realm they inhabit.

IV. The Limits of Difference

It may be fair to conclude that Shakespeare's play produces a troubled and troubling fantasy of containment for a society frightened by the idea of cultural integration. But if *Othello* illustrates the violence with which supplementary strategies could be disarmed and contained, Africanus illustrates the ways in which they could successfully unsettle the defining fictions of European Christendom. For Othello's attempt to supplement the *religious meaning* of his skin is ultimately contained by his inability to recognize ideology as such. What distinguishes Africanus is his ability to apprehend the workings of ideology and redirect its tools to supplement European discourse despite the containment strategies of editors like John Pory. Africanus fashions himself as, at once, both reassurance and menace. Yet his conflation with Othello has obscured the menace and consequently the fact that European discourse was not a stable, unidirectional, and totalizing system, but rather one whose growing coerciveness was never absolutely free from renegotiation and foreign materials.¹⁸ In short, the silks and spices imported into Europe's mercantile economy were

¹⁸I am not implying here that European discourse grew more benign and tolerant. On the contrary, I am suggesting that the discourse about racial and cultural difference may have grown more rigid in an effort to deny its initial and unavoidable porousness.

accompanied by less tangible cultural commodities that found their way into Europe's intellectual economy.

Any acknowledgment of Africanus' achievement in supplementing early modern discourse on Africa must be qualified by the recognition of *which* "Africa" is "plainly discovered." For, the historical and cultural Africa restored by the *Geographical History* to "pass as the sign" is by no means complete. Restoration preresquires an act of selection based on some hierarchical principles that invariably produce a new set of exclusions or misrepresentations in the service of the new discourse. For some, then, Africanus' supplement provided no better representation than what preceded it. First, the *Geographical History's* "Africa" includes only Islamic Africa, excluding the southern half of the continent from African history. Second, though the women of Africa were no longer simply Amazons or non-existent, they were instead most vividly represented as unbridled witches whose sexual perversities and control over their husbands produced a troubling inversion of gender roles.¹⁹ Finally, though Africanus carefully distinguishes between Africans of various religious sects and pigmentary shades to disable religious and national generalizations, his distinctions, in effect, erect and/or enforce a set of racial generalizations: "white, or tawny Moors" are described as steadfast and honorable. The "Negros," on the other hand, "lead a beastly kind of life, being utterly destitute of the use of reason, of dexterity of wit, and of all arts." (42). Furthermore, the "land of the Negros," described in Book VII, is characterized by unequaled crudity, disorder, paganism, and promiscuity.²⁰

¹⁹For an acute discussion of Africanus' representations of African women, see Hall 28-40.

²⁰Concerning Africanus' limits, Zhiri argues similarly: "De l'Afrique qu'il décrit, la partie qui l'intéressée le plus et qui le retient le plus longtemps est l'Afrique

Ultimately, Africanus' supplement benefits the image of Africanus' Africa, an Africa of lighter-skinned Muslim men whose nobility and sophistication are authorized through both linguistic and methodological mimesis. Like Othello in his vilification of Turks, Africanus insinuates himself into the idiom of Eurocentrism and thereby positions himself as a legitimate and objective historian. Unlike Othello, he successfully maintains his position (for over two centuries) and from it proves his contentiousness as an historian, challenging the established discourse, but reproducing its method of elision and misrepresentation through the establishment of women and dark-skinned Africans as a "more other" to nullify the otherness of the lighter-skinned Muslim man.

arabe et musulmane. Tous les compléments qu'il cite la concernent seule. L'Afrique noire, ou du moins les quelques régions que Léon décrit, n'est intéressée par ces textes que dans la mesure où elle est touchée par l'islam" (37). See also Vaughan and Vaughan.

Epilogue

By the end of his brief tenure in Constantinople in 1600, Thomas Dallam enjoyed the friendships of numerous Turks in the court of Muhammad III. Nevertheless, Dallam remained suspicious, convinced that danger lay everywhere in the Ottoman capital. He imagined any show of kindness to be a plot laid for his captivity or conversion, and repeatedly described his horror at the Sultan's notorious (though customary) strangulation of his nineteen brothers. We recall Dallam's reluctance to play the mechanical organ before the court for fear of offending the Sultan and losing his head. On that occasion, Dallam's fears are ridiculed by the Sultan's coppagaw who laughs and thrusts the organ-maker forward. Just prior to his departure, Dallam's fears again draw forth Turkish mockery. On this occasion, his companions embrace him warmly and encourage him to remain in Constantinople. When the nervous Englishman recoils, he is seized and carried forcibly into the "strangling chamber." As Dallam prepares for his worst fears to be realized, his Turkish companion, "laugh[s] heartily, and sa[ys] that he did so but to see how I should take it if they should stay me by force" (Brent 78).

What interests me in this anecdote is how it demonstrates a Turkish response to ideas English had about the Turks. Rather than silently enduring English prejudices, the Turks were known to ridicule narrow-mindedness where they found it. This response is particularly significant in Dallam's case, because the organ-maker returned to England to publish a narrative of his folly. Not only does Dallam's account make apparent the fact that Turks had been misrepresented, it attests to the way in which Turkish objections found their way into English discourse. Turkish assessments of the English are difficult to find. Few English authors included Turkish voices and the Turks themselves seem to

have written very little about their English visitors.¹ Moreover, Turkish accounts of time spent among the English are only now being located and translated. It remains to be seen whether or not Bernard Lewis is justified in his claim that “European movements as the Renaissance and the Reformation awoke no echo and found no response among the Muslim peoples” (*Muslim Discovery* 159). Nevertheless, the distinction I have drawn between Othello and Leo Africanus indicates the importance of listening to actual Muslim voices, not just the voices of English dramatist’s “Turks.” Hopefully, research in this emerging area will enable fuller descriptions of trafficking’s cultural components than I have been able to provide.

In the three years I have spent working on this dissertation, the study of Islam and English literature has emerged as a significant field within early modern studies. Numerous conference panels and journal articles have treated the subject, and two book-length studies have been published. Aside from a few notable exceptions, the bulk of this work has been limited by its dependence on English sources. While a great deal remains to be said about these sources and the place of Islam in English literature, some of the most interesting questions demand ventures beyond our usual disciplinary boundaries. How did Muslims respond to English representations of Islam? How did the Turks see the English? How, for that matter, did they represent themselves? It would be of equal interest to learn of Ottoman literature and its representations of early modern trafficking. One significant challenge will be reconciling the pursuit of these questions with institutional constraints. Entire libraries are dedicated to English literature and history. Electronic databases and concordances allow researchers

¹Following a talk given at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York on February 5, 1999, Daniel Goffman confessed to finding no representations of the English in Ottoman pageantry or literary sources. He pointed out that some images of English people do appear in seventeenth-century painted miniatures and pageant books.

to find the occurrence of the word *Turk* in thousands of English volumes. On the other hand, Ottoman literature is extremely scarce in American libraries, and no database exists for scholars to track occurrences of the word *English* in Ottoman sources. A second challenge will be overcoming the idea that interdisciplinary work must result in new readings of *English* literature. I, for one, have been trained as a scholar of English literature and my own predilections create as significant a limit as any other. Thus, English literature remains the pole to which all things return in my work. Of course, there is nothing inherently wrong with a methodology intended to expand our understanding of English literature. However, Dallam's inclusion of the Turks' mockery of English fears is a reminder that English culture was also informed by non-English voices.

A dissertation is generally considered the blue-print for a scholar's first book. In addition I submit this study as a call for two related projects. The first would approach this dissertation as a resource for the study of the trajectory English representations of the East, from the discourse of trafficking to the era of discursive consistency. The second would more directly respond to this dissertation, taking as its central concern Muslim representations of the English. Each of these projects demands a further venture beyond the traditional bounds of English literary studies and a greater inclusion of Ottoman sources. In short, they will require trafficking between academic disciplines and a further turn to the Turks.

**Appendix: Chronological List of Dramatic Works
With Islamic Characters, Themes, or Settings**

Year	Title	Author	Type*
1579	<i>The Blacksmith's Daughter</i>	Anonymous	HR
1580	<i>The Soldan and the Duke of _____</i>	Anonymous	HR
1581	<i>Three Ladies of London</i>	Robert Wilson	M
1582	<i>Solymanidae</i>	Anonymous	LT
1585	<i>Pageant Before Woolstone Dixie</i>	George Peele	CP
1587	<i>I Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	HR
1587	<i>Alphonsus, King of Aragon</i>	Robert Greene	HR
1588	<i>II Tamburlaine</i>	Christopher Marlowe	HR
1588	<i>Turkish Mahomet and Hire the Fair Greek</i>	George Peele	HR
1589	<i>The Battle of Alcazar</i>	George Peele	FH
1590	<i>Tornambeus</i>	George Salterne	LT
1591	<i>Orlando Furioso</i>	Robert Greene	RC
1592	<i>The Jew of Malta</i>	Christopher Marlowe	T
1592	<i>Selimus</i>	Anonymous	HR
1592	<i>Soliman and Perseda</i>	Thomas Kyd	T
1592	<i>I Tamar Chan</i>	Anonymous	HR
1592	<i>II Tamar Chan</i>	Anonymous	HR
1594	<i>The Four Prentices of London</i>	Thomas Heywood	HR
1594	<i>Mustapha</i>	Fulke Greville	CT
1596	<i>Captain Thomas Stukeby</i>	Anonymous	H
1596	<i>Merchant of Venice</i>	William Shakespeare	C
1597	<i>Frederick and Basilea</i>	Anonymous	R
1599	<i>Old Fortunatus</i>	Thomas Dekker	C
1599	<i>The Thracian Wonder</i>	Anonymous	C
1599	<i>Mully Moloco</i>	Anonymous	FH
1599	<i>Sir John Mandeville</i>	Anonymous	RC (?)
1600	<i>Alaham</i>	Fulke Greville	CT
1600	<i>Lust's Dominion</i>	Thomas Dekker	T
1601	<i>Arabia Sitiens</i>	William Percy	TC
1601	<i>George Scanderborge</i>	Anonymous	FH
1602	<i>The Capture of Stultweissenburg</i>	Anonymous	FH
1604	<i>I The Fair Maid of the West</i>	Thomas Heywood	C
1604	<i>Othello</i>	William Shakespeare	T
1605	<i>The Masque of Blackness</i>	Ben Jonson	CM

* I have followed Harbage in categorizing each work. Abbreviations may be understood as follows: C = Comedy; CM = Court Masque; CP = Civic Pageant; CT = Closet Tragedy; FH = Foreign History; H = History; HR = Heroic Romance; LT = Latin Tragedy; M = Moral; R = Romance; RC = Romantic Comedy; RE = Royal Entertainment; T = Tragedy; TC = Tragicomedy; TP = Topical Play.

Year	Title	Author	Type
1607	<i>The Turk</i>	John Mason	T
1607	<i>Travailes of Three English Brothers</i>	Day, Rowley, and Wilkins	TP
1607	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	William Shakespeare	T
1610	<i>A Christian Turn'd Turk</i>	Robert Daborne	T
1610	<i>London's Love to the Royal Prince Henrie</i>	Anthony Munday	RE
1611	<i>The Tempest</i>	William Shakespeare	C
1613	<i>If This Be a Good Pay the Diuel Be In It</i>	Thomas Dekker	C
1613	<i>The Triumphs of Truth</i>	Thomas Middleton	CP
1613	<i>Heaven's Blessings and Earth's Joy</i>	John Taylor	RE
1613	<i>The Entertainment at Bristol</i>	Robert Naile	RE
1617	<i>The Triumphs of Honor and Industry</i>	Thomas Middleton	CP
1618	<i>The Raging Turk</i>	Thomas Coffe	T
1618	<i>The Knight of Malta</i>	John Fletcher	T
1619	<i>The Courageous Turk</i>	Thomas Coffe	T
1619	<i>All's Lost By Lust</i>	William Rowley	T
1619	<i>The Devil's Law Case</i>	John Webster	TC
1619	<i>A Turk's Too Good For [Him]</i>	Anonymous	T
1619	<i>Osmond, The Great Turk</i>	Anonymous	T
1621	<i>The Island Princess</i>	John Fletcher	TC
1622	<i>The Triumphs of Honor and Virtue</i>	Thomas Middleton	CP
1622	<i>The Two Noble Ladies and and the Conuerted Coniuror</i>	Anonymous	TC
1624	<i>The City Night-Cap</i>	Robert Davenport	C
1624	<i>The Renegado</i>	Philip Massinger	TC
1624	<i>The Unnatural Combat</i>	Philip Massinger	TC

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