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THE ANGLO-OTTOMAN ENCOUNTER: DIPLOMACY,
COMMERCE, AND POPULAR CULTURE,
1580-1650

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ABSTRACT

THE ANGLO-OTTOMAN ENCOUNTER: DIPLOMACY,
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This thesis examines the foundation of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter and extrapolates the interconnected and diverse ramifications of this unique cross-cultural relationship from 1580 to 1650. By using a diverse array of sources from travelogues, newsletters, political pamphlets, government reports, state papers, and popular plays and sermons, this thesis expands upon earlier works by demonstrating that politics, culture, religion, and diplomacy were mutually reinforcing. By 1650, England's encounter with the Ottoman Empire altered European perceptions of England, the development of English industry and overseas commerce and definitively changed English notions of self-identity and representations of Catholicism and Islam. Ultimately, both English commoners and courtiers were far more willing to accommodate the Ottomans and Islam than the tenets of Catholicism that they found so abhorrent.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Mediterranean World were a time of crisis and reaction: European Christendom divided itself along sectarian lines as the Continent descended into the Wars of Religion during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation; and the ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire following the annexation of Mamluk Egypt was subsequently followed by nearly one hundred years of continuous war with Safavid Iran in Eastern Anatolia and the Hapsburg Holy Roman Empire in Central Europe. Within this complex web of religious and political alliances and animosities, however, there were certain cross-cultural encounters that broke all established conventions. The early modern encounter between England and the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had profound social, cultural, and diplomatic ramifications on English popular culture and England's geopolitical standing in the early modern Mediterranean World.

The complexities of this unique early modern cross-cultural encounter provide the means to reevaluate the diplomacy of early, post-Reformation Europe, popular English perceptions of the Muslim "infidel" other, and the politics of discourse and trade with the Ottoman Empire, the "enemy" of Christendom. These three broad and diverse topics are in fact connected when the Mediterranean World as a whole, including its peripheries, is

analyzed to highlight and uncover the subtle yet intricate mixture of politics, religion, culture, and economics. Diplomacy and cultural representation, and the relationship between the two, is the primary concern of this thesis. To argue that diplomacy alone informed cultural representation or vice versa would, however, be a gross simplification; on the contrary, diplomacy and cultural representation were mutually reinforcing in different ways throughout the time period covered in this thesis. For example: predominant Christian stereotypes about Muslims and Turks altered the way Christian monarchs corresponded with their Ottoman counterparts; or, later, successive waves of English travel writers built upon one another's work and were influenced by the geopolitics of when they traveled which then informed and affected the next wave of travel writers and so on.¹

Between 1580 and 1650, what had begun as a commercial venture with diplomatic and political benefits was wholly transformed with far-reaching domestic and international ramifications for England. England's engagement with the Ottoman Empire, via the Levant Company and the rights and privileges gained by William Harborne, helped connect English society to the wider Mediterranean World. Although still geographically on the peripheries of the Mediterranean World, by the conclusion of the English Civil Wars England's direct encounter with the Ottoman Empire and the wider Islamicate World not only resulted in substantial shifts in diplomacy and commerce

¹ During the early modern period the term "Turk" was used by Europeans to refer to almost any Muslim and was often used interchangeably with the term "Moor." Amongst actual Ottomans, however, no Ottoman would have self-identified as a "Turk" until the very late nineteenth century.

but also demonstrates a distinct change in how the Ottomans and Islam were perceived and considered by English society.² Moreover, the exposure and access to the difference of the Ottoman-other fostered the development of a solidifying English political and religious identity distinct and independent from Continental Europe. In each of the three consecutive periods examined in this study, themselves the reigns of three successive English monarchs, Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I, the Anglo-Ottoman encounter was grounded in England's relationship with Continental Europe, Protestantism versus Catholicism (domestically and internationally), and the political-economy of transcontinental and transoceanic trade. By far, Elizabeth had the worst relationship vis-à-vis the Continent as a result of England's Protestant alignment and political disagreements with the Pope, the Hapsburgs, and the Holy Roman Empire, which prompted a renewed interest in overseas trade and exploration as a solution to political-economic blockade and socio religious quarantine. James, however, for personal and political reasons sought rapprochement with Elizabeth's enemies and downplayed England's relationship with the Ottomans but simply could not substantially alter or terminate his merchants' commercial presence in the Mediterranean because of the incredible profits being made. Finally, Charles's poor administrative and fiscal policies, culminating in his dethronement and execution, incensed English merchants who allied with his opponents; moreover, Charles's regicide changed England's relationship with

² The term "Islamicate" "refer[s] not directly to the religion, Islam, itself, but to the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims." See Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, Volume 1: The Classical Age of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 59.

the Continent which once again viewed England as a clear and present threat to Christendom as a whole.

Religious tension and diversity, both within specific denominations (i.e., Protestantism/Catholicism or Sunni/Shi'a) and between denominations (Christianity/Islam) was an integral but not independent factor in the Anglo-Ottoman encounter and was highly politicized. In the profoundly fractured and sectarian Christendom of the immediate post-Reformation period, the role of social mores, culture, and emerging national-level politics and international diplomacy cannot be easily disentangled from one another to pinpoint a single monocausal factor; instead, these factors were incredibly mutually reinforcing which highlights the interconnectedness of the early modern Mediterranean World.

The historiographies of the Ottoman Empire and early modern England have, thus far, examined the early history of the Levant Company from two entirely different vantage points and angles of interpretation. On the one hand, Ottomanists have lumped the French (1569), English (1580), and Dutch (1612) trade capitulations into a single category; namely, as a discreet set of trade relationships between the Ottoman Empire and Europe without a thorough analysis of the geopolitical and socio religious backdrop of these commercial interactions and their immediate cultural ramifications and manifestations.³ Conversely, current historians of the Levant Company have emphasized that, although the Company was important in that it established commercial and political

³ Halil Inalcik, ed., *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 188.

connections between the two polities, outside of the Mediterranean it was of “modest importance as a trading company when compared with its contemporary and hugely successful rival, the East India Company.”⁴ Between these two gross generalizations the importance and impact of the Levant Company, especially in the late sixteenth through mid-seventeenth centuries, is entirely lost and the world-historical significance of this early modern encounter is thoroughly marginalized.

The illicit English exportation of arms and munitions to the Ottoman Empire, which played a key role in the first three decades of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter, has been all but sidelined by even the most current British studies specifically on the Levant Company. Christine Laidlaw’s 2010 publication, the most current in the field, classifies the foundation of Anglo-Ottoman trade as an outgrowth of “commercial disputes with the Dutch,” which “led to the severance of the comfortable trading through Antwerp [which compelled the English] to look elsewhere for goods from the east.”⁵ Not only does this assertion substantially downplay the complexities of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter, but it disregards basic facts of early modern European history; namely, that the Spanish-Hapsburg *invasion* of the Low Countries led to the disruption of England’s access to Levantine merchandise. Laidlaw’s work is, however, an anomaly in that even the scholars at the forefront of the history of the Levant Company sixty years ago delved further into the political-economic foundations of Anglo-Ottoman trade, even if in

⁴ Christine Laidlaw, *The British in the Levant: Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2010), 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

passing. Writing in 1957, G.D. Ramsay states that Elizabeth I, who continued the development of English heavy industry that her father Henry VIII started, “helped to make England independent of foreign sources for armaments,” which were in turn “purveyed to the Dutch, French and Islamic foes of the king of Spain;” a trade which, Ramsay admits, was “illicit or at least clandestine.”⁶ In a similar vein, Alfred C. Wood, another scholar whose work Laidlaw builds upon, while noting that tin (an essential component of bronze cannons) was exported to the Ottomans and that the English merchants placed heavy emphasis on the secretive nature of their voyages into the Mediterranean to avoid the Spanish, does not elaborate on this explicitly.⁷

Similarly, current scholarship on the Ottoman Empire concurs with the histories of the Levant Company published in the 1950s and 1960s mentioned above. Halil Inalcik, who draws heavily on the works of Wood, Ramsay, and others, asserts that once the Ottoman state “realized that the Protestant nations, the English and the Dutch, had fought against Philip II of Spain and were thus natural allies of the empire and also economically useful, the Ottoman government favored them with capitulations.”⁸ Furthermore, Inalcik posits that, in addition to the said political factors, the Ottoman state

⁶ G.D. Ramsay, *English Overseas Trade during the Centuries of Emergence* (London: Macmillan, 1957), 33.

⁷ Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Frank Cass, 1964), 10-11, 17.

⁸ Inalcik, 195.

was “anxious to establish direct trade relations” with England “in order to obtain vital materials such as English tin, steel and lead.”⁹

Both of these bodies of scholarship, however, only analyze the Anglo-Ottoman encounter from a purely political or economic perspective bound within the confines of two distinct and disparate historical fields. Within the realm of historically based literary studies, however, significant work has been done on the cultural encounter between England and the Ottoman Empire as is shown through the works of Matthew Dimmock, Gerald Maclean, and Nabil Matar. Dimmock states that in the 1590s, the interaction of “notions of status, geo-politics and religion in England” formed a “tangle of alliances” as Elizabeth and English society were confronted by European statesmen about England’s political and economic relationship with the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰ Dimmock suggests that Catholic Christendom (including Pope Sixtus V) represented Elizabeth and the English as more or less aiding the Ottomans in their European campaigns and that, in terms of representation, the English were viewed as the “new” Turks.¹¹ Furthermore, Dimmock states that the playwright and William Shakespeare’s contemporary, Christopher Marlowe (d. 1593), himself a strong supporter of Queen Elizabeth and the reigning English state, incorporated ambivalent views of Ottoman Christian conflict into his plays *Tamburlaine* and *The Jew of Malta*.¹²

⁹ Ibid., 366.

¹⁰ Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), 162-163.

¹¹ Ibid., 163-164.

¹² Ibid., 168-169.

Similarly, Gerald Maclean's work illustrates how English society was already quite fascinated with the Turks and especially, Turkish carpets, since at least the reign of Henry VIII.¹³ Moreover, Maclean states that Richard Knolles's (d. 1610) publication, the *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), a "best-selling" and "much reprinted" book, demonstrates how English society became very interested in Ottoman culture in and around the 1590s; something that would have been impossible without the establishment of Anglo-Ottoman political-economic relations in the 1580s.¹⁴ Furthermore, Maclean and Nabil Matar, who collaborated for the recently published *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713*, show how English society was acutely aware of the power, wealth, and majesty of the Islamic World, which was consistently portrayed in English popular culture.¹⁵ By synthesizing relatively pure economic, political, and socio cultural histories to create a larger, more comprehensive frame of analysis, an overall picture of mutually reinforcing connections becomes startlingly apparent.

Finally, Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, although groundbreaking and crucially important for the study of late eighteenth and nineteenth century European Imperialism, is simply too broad to be wholly adequate when discussing the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of the three interdependent forms of Orientalism that Said

¹³ Gerald Maclean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007), 32-36.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁵ Gerald Maclean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 58.

defines, I primarily refer to “Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” and as a “style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ [and] ‘the Occident.’”¹⁶ In the early modern period and before, both the Christian and Islamic areas of the Mediterranean World continued to cling to a juxtaposed worldview: the *Dar al-Harb* versus the *Dar al-Islam* in the case of the latter; and, prior to the Reformation, Christian Europe versus everything else for the former. While acknowledging that the dichotomy of East versus West and Christendom versus the Islamic World is a highly constructed gross generalization, on the Christian side of this division the religio-political ramifications of the Protestant Reformation significantly altered and complicated this juxtaposition by the creation of an alternative alignment that allowed traditional mores and modes of interaction to be bypassed by newly unbound (Protestant) polities. By and large however, Christendom was in no way aware of a distinct Islamicate but instead projected their own worldview of a politically united coalition of coreligionists onto Islam and Muslims as a whole.

Furthermore, Orientalism as a “Western style” of real and/or claimed domination and authority over the Orient simply does not correlate with the geopolitics of the Mediterranean World in the fifteenth through mid-seventeenth centuries. Although Christendom continued to maintain ideologies and worldviews that could easily be labeled as Orientalist in their unjustified claims to religiously based notions of supremacy and righteousness, these beliefs could only stand if they ignored the political, military,

¹⁶ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Penguin, 2003), 2-3.

and commercial hegemony of the Ottoman Empire. In essence, for the period covered in this study at least, the Ottomans were the dominant force in the Mediterranean World, and, in instances of trans-Mediterranean interaction, business and diplomacy were conducted almost purely on Ottoman terms.

Representationally, that is, the ways in which the Orient and Orientals were perceived, characterized, and explained by Western travelers and social commentators to other Westerners, however, was most certainly an Orientalist system of knowledge production even in the early modern period. Ottomans, and the social, political, and cultural aspects of the Ottoman Empire, were exoticized, digested, and incorporated into the Christian-European worldview in such a way that differences were highlighted and exaggerated in a rational and systematic formulation. When it came to Islam, and the Ottomans specifically, “European fear, if not always respect, was in order” and “until the end of the seventeenth century the ‘Ottoman peril’ lurked alongside Europe to represent for the whole of Christian civilization a constant danger.”¹⁷ For most of Christendom, therefore, representations of the Orient vacillated “between the West’s contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty.”¹⁸ In this sense, Said is entirely correct; however, engagement between England and the Ottoman Empire, for the most part, simply does not fit into this theoretical framework. In many ways, blanket Orientalism is, more often than not, superficially used to analyze the “cultural and historical significance of the Ottoman Empire as the West’s bogey and demonized Other”

¹⁷ Ibid., 59.

¹⁸ Ibid., 59.

without a salient assessment of the “depth and complexity of [Ottoman-European] interactions at various levels—political, cultural, and economic.”¹⁹

In lieu of Said’s work, I choose instead to introduce and deploy Gerald Maclean’s concept of “Ottomanism” as a much more specific form of Orientalism that pertains to early modern Anglo-Ottoman relations and interaction. While nineteenth and early twentieth century Ottomanism was a denigrating and patronizing mode or representation best characterized by European descriptions of the Ottoman Empire as the “sick man of Europe” with the ultimate goal of territorial dismemberment to facilitate imperialist machinations, in the early modern period Ottomanism was a system of “knowledge production” arising from “both lack and desire” which illuminates far more “about the desiring subject than about the object of knowledge,” the Ottoman Empire.²⁰ These systems of “tropes, structures, and fantasies” were the ways that English writers, merchants, and socio-political commentators “sought to make knowable the imperial Ottoman other;” and, from the early seventeenth century, these systems were based on first hand experience in and exposure to Ottoman society, politics, culture, and religion.²¹

¹⁹ Walter S. H. Lim, “Introduction: The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia – Framing the Issues,” in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, eds. Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 4-5.

²⁰ Gerald Maclean, “Ottomanism Before Orientalism? Bishop King Praises Henry Blount, Passenger in the Levant,” in *Travel Knowledge: European “Discoveries” in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 86.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 86.

Ottomanism, therefore, can be best described as a system of “imperial envy,” but it is a system divided into two juxtaposed dichotomies: more often than not English writings on the Ottoman Empire, itself fundamentally associated with the wider Islamicate and vice versa, demonstrate a mixture of fear and fascination and ambivalence and anxiety. What is unique about this representational discourse, however, is that the vacillating dichotomy was wide enough and dynamic enough to allow for a diverse range of interpretations, associations, and conclusions by the English, instead of a single, static, and concrete portrayal. Moreover, in the wake of the Protestant Reformation, English subjects’ access to the Ottoman Empire provided a perfect opportunity to observe and interact with all three of the Abrahamic religions, and their various sects, *simultaneously*. For the English, this unintentionally allowed them to differentiate and define English-Protestantism and national identity from Roman Catholicism and the common corps of Christendom by juxtaposing themselves in relation to both Islam, which was accommodated to a degree, and Catholicism which remained completely abhorrent. English writers and travelers, therefore, deployed the Ottoman Empire and Islam as a foil to critique Catholic/Hapsburg-Spanish hegemony; and, as will be shown, in spite of the deployment of numerous early modern Orientalist stereotypes about the Ottomans and Islam, English writers and travelers always demonstrated far more willingness to tolerate and accept the differences of Islam that they witnessed in Ottoman lands than the superstitious Catholic idolatry that they found so repulsive at home and abroad.

This thesis is a significant departure from earlier works because it places the Anglo-Ottoman encounter within a global context and extrapolates connections within

and between the reigns of these three English monarchs. Moreover, the incorporation of popular culture and the way that it informed diplomacy and vice versa highlights the interconnectedness of the early modern Mediterranean World thereby challenging earlier works with scopes limited to individual nations or states. Finally, by specifically examining the early modern Anglo-Ottoman encounter from a world historical perspective this thesis augments and adds to the existing scholarship by linking disparate fields to draw entirely new conclusions.

The goal of this thesis is to demonstrate the evolution of the diplomatic, political, commercial, and cultural engagement between England and the Ottoman Empire and the ramifications that this cross-cultural early modern encounter had on England and English society. These factors will be shown to be mutually reinforcing, dynamic, and different in the reigns of Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603), James I (r. 1603-1625), and Charles I (r. 1625-1649). Ultimately, the objective of this thesis is to show how this peculiar cross-cultural interaction facilitated and altered the way in which England perceived itself in relation to Christendom and the Muslim Ottoman “other” as well as how perceptions and representations of Muslims and Ottomans by the English, changed over time.

Methodologically, this thesis is divided into three chapters organized chronologically and corresponding to the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I. The documents used in this thesis represent a diverse array of primary source material ranging from political reports, state papers on domestic and foreign events, dramatic plays, captivity narratives, religious sermons, travelogues, correspondence, and anti-government pamphlets and newsletters in addition to numerous academic articles and monographs.

Given the lack of a single determinant factor (i.e., politics, religion, or culture) the sources used are blended in such a way as to highlight just how intertwined and mutually reinforcing all of these variables were. To demonstrate the change in English representations and perceptions of themselves, Ottomans, and Islam in general, this study makes use of many of the leading recent works on the role and place of the culture of print in the public sphere and popular culture in early modern England, and the fact that both commoners and courtiers more or less had equal access to the same news-information albeit disseminated in different ways. These sources are all especially useful because they demonstrate that the idea of the Ottomans and Islam was a profoundly stimulating vehicle for English thought across a broad range of socio-economic demographics, all showing how pervasive this discourse truly was.

The time period examined in this thesis, 1580 to 1650, encompasses a crucial formative period in England's history. In chapter 2, covering the reign of Elizabeth I, I explore the foundation of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter in the immediate wake of William Harborne's successful exploratory mission in 1578/79. In particular, this chapter examines the substantial diplomatic and political backlash engendered by England's rapprochement with the Ottomans, as reported by the French, Venetian, Spanish, and Holy Roman ambassadors stationed in Constantinople. Moreover, as the scandalous nature of English activity in the Eastern Mediterranean became well-known, criticism leveled at Elizabeth and England shifted from the diplomatic arena to social, cultural, and religious commentary primarily because of England's position as the only independent Protestant nation. Although by the end of her reign Elizabeth was eventually forced to

more or less back away from the intimate relationship she had established with the Ottoman state, the “Turkey trade” established by the Levant Company continued to thrive and English interest in and awareness of the Ottoman Empire and Islam steadily increased.

In chapter 3, covering the reign of Elizabeth’s successor, James I, I examine how James, although a Turco-phobe and a firm believer in the common corps of Christendom, was nonetheless forced to continue many of the Levantine policies put in place by his predecessor. Additionally, as trans-Mediterranean trade continued to increase, the English body politic gained access to two forms of literature that represented Ottomans and Islam in a juxtaposed way: the publication of travelogues by early modern English travelers to the Levant all highlight the differences and exoticized nature of the Muslim Ottoman other; conversely, the dramatic increase in piracy and the semi-regular seizure of English ships bound for Ottoman lands resulted in the publication of captivity narratives that denounced the savagery of Turks and the corrupting allure of Islam. Consequently during James’s reign we see the emergence of a dichotomous representational discourse on Ottomans and Islam split between ambivalence and fascination, and fear, hostility, and envy that remained present in English popular culture through the conclusion of the English Civil Wars.

Finally, in chapter 4, covering the reign of James’s son and successor, Charles I, I continue to explore the opposing representations of Ottomans and Islam as socio-political tensions in England steady increased. In this period leading up to the outbreak and conclusion of the English Civil Wars the issue of English mariners in Muslim captivity

never abated but the travel writing of this period demonstrates a level of political tolerance and religious accommodation by English Protestants for Islam in relation to Catholicism which continued to remain entirely abhorrent. Additionally, after Charles's execution in 1649 and the triumph of Parliament and the New Model Army led by Oliver Cromwell, the Ottomans and Islam were invoked by both the victors and the vanquished as millenarian protestant-Parliamentarian portent, and as Royalist and Catholic international Jeremiad.

Although England had purchased Levantine goods from Venetian go-betweens since the early fourteenth century, only in the late fifteenth century did English ships begin to sail into the Mediterranean to visit the Venetian trade colonies in Crete and Chios during the reign of King Henry VII (r.1485-1509).²² Henry's son and successor, Henry VIII (r. 1509-1547), greatly expanded England's interactions with Continental Europe by implementing an aggressive foreign policy and by enlarging the Royal Navy.²³ New trade routes were established with the Baltic Countries, Muscovy, and Northeastern Europe to guarantee England's access to high quality masts, keels, and cordage, which had the two-fold effect of increasing military and commercial maritime shipping.²⁴

Commercially, the decline of Venice had already restricted England's access to Levantine and eastern commodities by the 1530s but the exploitation of the overland

²² Laidlaw, 19.

²³ Ronald L. Pollitt, "Wooden Walls: English Seapower and the World's Forests," *Forest History* 15, no. 1 (1971): 6-9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

transalpine routes by the Dutch transformed Antwerp into a trade entrepôt and English merchants “found it considerably cheaper to buy from the Netherlands than to mount expensive and hazardous expeditions to the Mediterranean.”²⁵ By the 1560s, however, the Low Countries were engulfed by religious and political upheaval as the Dutch sought independence from Philip II of Spain (r. 1556-1598) and Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I (r. 1531-1564).²⁶ The outbreak of the Eighty Years’ War between the Dutch and the Hapsburgs in 1568 ended Antwerp’s status as a commercial entrepôt but, in the brief period when the port city flourished, the English merchants who traded there had been abundantly enriched to monopolize England’s imports and exports and to finance future overseas trade ventures.²⁷ Put simply, the collapse of the Antwerp entrepôt created a sudden need to establish new direct routes to gain access to the goods of the Levant and the East. English merchants initially attempted to establish new routes in both Northwestern Africa and Muscovite-Russia where they found markets for kerseys, a sort of fine woolen cloth that was England’s primary export at the time, in addition to exporting arms and strategic materials to these polities on the peripheries of the Mediterranean World.²⁸

²⁵ Laidlaw, 19-20. The decline of Venetian seapower was inversely proportional to the rise in Ottoman seapower during the same period. See Andrew C. Hess, “The Evolution of the Ottoman Seaborne Empire in the Age of the Oceanic Discoveries, 1453-1525,” *The American Historical Review* 75, no. 7 (1970): 1892-1919.

²⁶ Ramsay, 32.

²⁷ Wood, 6-7; Ramsay, 32.

²⁸ T.S. Willan, *Studies in Elizabethan Foreign Trade* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), 93-94, 116.

The English merchants' trade in munitions and weapons with peripheral states, including non-European and non-Christian ones, was to play a paramount role in European reactions to the expansion of English overseas trade as will be demonstrated. Throughout the early modern period, every state in the Mediterranean World placed import restrictions and export prohibitions on strategic materials or, *merces prohibita*e, in order to protect state-sanctioned monopolies on the production and consumption of gunpowder-based weapons and other war-related commodities.²⁹ As a result, the export of these types of goods was conducted clandestinely, particularly when these goods were transported to non-Christian polities, and these activities had to have had the approval of Queen Elizabeth and her Privy Council. Apart from the increased profits to be gained from the export of arms and munitions, this trade served as a way to open foreign markets to other English goods in addition to checking Iberian/Catholic hegemony and expansion and the development of overseas allies.³⁰ The inadequacies and failures of the new trade

²⁹ Gábor Ágoston, "*Merces Prohibitae: The Anglo-Ottoman Trade in War Materials and the Dependence Theory*," in Kate Fleet ed., *The Ottomans and the Sea, Oriente Moderno* 20 (81), n.s. 1 (2001), 177-183; S.A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578-1582* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 22; Charles Ffoulkes, *The Gun-Founders of England* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1969), 74-75; Keith Krause, *Arms and the State: Patterns of Military Production and Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 41. These restrictions had their origins in Roman times with the *Codex Justinianus* and various Popes and rulers in Christendom forbade the export of weapons and munitions to the Islamicate since at least the time of the Crusades. Moreover, England was no different than other European polities and official export restrictions were formally enacted during Elizabeth's reign.

³⁰ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 23-25; Dahiru Yahya, *Morocco in the Sixteenth Century: Problems and Patterns in African Foreign Policy* (London: Longman, 1981), 1-17, 152-153.

routes to North Africa and Muscovite-Russia, themselves initial attempts to break into Islamic markets, however, resulted in an increase in English merchants' efforts to gain direct access to the Ottoman-Levant.

Starting with the conquest of Constantinople (1453), Europe paid close attention to Ottoman exploits in the east as the Empire rapidly expanded into the Hungarian plains. England was no different, and through the duration of her reign, Elizabeth I and her Privy Council received numerous updates on Turkish troop and galley movements, campaign results, the stability of the Sultan's household and rule, and treaties brokered and broken; all forming the early modern world's equivalent of modern-day intelligence gathering organs of government.³¹ For the Mediterranean World as a whole, 1570 and 1571 were critical years: Pope Pius V issued a Papal Bull excommunicating Elizabeth and all of her Protestant subjects (1570); and, moreover, all of Europe rejoiced at the Holy League's victory over the Ottomans at the Battle of Lepanto (1571), even though it was only a minor setback for the Ottomans overall.³² Now unbound from the religious mores of Christendom, English merchants were "free to reap the harvest offered by the infidel [Muslim] market"—a market that was greatly enhanced by the Ottomans' inadequate domestic supplies of strategic materials needed to rebuild their Mediterranean fleet.³³

³¹ For an example of these reports see *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1559-1560* (London, 1865), p. 193-194, Doc. 427, Section 3, 4.

³² Andrew C. Hess, "The Battle of Lepanto and Its Place in Mediterranean History," *Past & Present* no. 57 (1972): 62-63; Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 23.

³³ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 23.

England's newfound release to trade freely fit perfectly with the "active [policy of] diplomacy" that the Ottomans had pursued since the 1520s. By supporting the Moriscos in Spain and North Africa and the Protestant movements in the Low Countries and France, Ottoman sultans were able to maintain a divided Europe and prevent Papal and Spanish-Hapsburg hegemony from coalescing into a concerted anti-Ottoman Crusade.³⁴ While this support was primarily political and diplomatic in nature, the Ottomans principally expressed their favor and support "by granting commercial privileges to friendly nations" which, in the case of the English, the Dutch, and the French, provided the capital, the know-how, and the political motivation for the establishment of their maritime empires in the long run.³⁵ These commercial privileges, typically referred to as trade "capitulations," were formal (i.e., state-approved) bilateral treaties granted to "friendly nations," a practice that the Ottomans co-opted from the Byzantines in the fourteenth century.³⁶ Politically, the Ottomans sought diplomatic advantages through the capitulations in addition to the commercial benefits. Overwhelmingly, the European states that received capitulations from the mid sixteenth century until the eighteenth century were Protestant, which reflected the sectarian politics

³⁴ Inalcik, 21; Andrew C. Hess, "The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth-Century Spain," *The American Historical Review* 74, no. 1 (1968): 1-25. Murad III, the first Ottoman sultan that the English primarily dealt with, even went so far as to write a letter to the "Members of the Lutheran sect in Flanders and Spain" (1574), highlighting the vast number of similarities between Islam and Protestantism.

³⁵ Inalcik, 21.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 21, 193.

of the Mediterranean World.³⁷ Ultimately, England's release from Christendom's trading restrictions allowed English merchants to interact and trade with the Ottomans (and later, the Safavids, and Mughals) in more direct and more lucrative ways than their Iberian competitors.³⁸ Overall, the markets of the Eastern Mediterranean offered England a plethora of exotic goods and spices and Levantine-trade was primarily driven by the import of commodities of conspicuous consumption to England in return for kerseys, arms, and munitions.

Although attempts were made by English merchants in the 1570s to gain direct access to Ottoman markets, the English state's official interest in Levantine trade began in 1578 when Sir Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's Principal Secretary and spymaster, wrote a "Memorandum on the Turkey Trade."³⁹ Walsingham's memo puts England's relationship with the Ottoman Empire into both a global and a domestic context. Anglo-Ottoman trade, according to Walsingham, would maintain and prevent the decay of the English navy, which he and the Privy Council considered to be England's first line of defense for protecting the British Isles from foreign, that is, Catholic, aggression.⁴⁰ Additionally, trade with the Ottomans would provide English merchants with an outlet

³⁷ Ibid., 193.

³⁸ Maclean and Matar, 78.

³⁹ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 18-22.

⁴⁰ Francis Walsingham. Document Three: "Memorandum on the Turkey Trade. 1578," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 28-30.

for English goods without the inconveniences/losses of dealing with middlemen.⁴¹

Furthermore, English participation in Levantine trade would not only provide England with exotic Mediterranean/Near Eastern goods, but English merchants could also provide these goods to continental Europe (a keen observation on Walsingham's part).⁴²

Walsingham's memorandum also indicates an acute awareness of the geopolitics of early modern Europe, and he thoroughly discusses the foreign polities and mercantile powers that could possibly try to impeach/usurp England's efforts to break into the Mediterranean trading sphere.⁴³ Not only does Walsingham indicate his desire to cut out the Venetians, the French, and the Ragusans (a maritime republic in what is today Croatia), but also, in his mind, English merchants would additionally have to evade Spanish-Hapsburg forces who not only waged near-continuous warfare with the Ottomans, but were also Catholic and "not the best effected towards [England]."⁴⁴ Furthermore, Walsingham states that these trading polities would, most likely, try to prevent England's entrance into the Mediterranean by "finesse and by force" in order to protect and secure their own economic interests.⁴⁵ To parry this impeachment, Walsingham proposed that English ships bound for the Mediterranean must go in force, "be well [furnished] in both men and munition," and that for both legs of the journey into

⁴¹ Ibid., 28.

⁴² Ibid., 28.

⁴³ Ibid., 28.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 28.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 29.

the Mediterranean they should pass through the Straits of Gibraltar in “the Winter season;” a clear emphasis on the perilous and clandestine nature of this trade.⁴⁶

Walsingham’s solutions to these complex problems were all hinged upon “some apt man to be sent *with* her Majesty[’s] *letters* unto the Turk to procure an ample safe conduct, who is always to remain there at the charge of the merchants, as Agent to impeach the indirect practices of the said Ambassadors, whose repair thither is to be handled with great secrecy.”⁴⁷ That “apt man” was to be William Harborne (d. 1617). Born in Yarmouth in 1542, Harborne “served his apprenticeship in public affairs as a Member of Parliament,” most likely where he met Edward Osborne (d. 1591) and Richard Staper (d. 1608), two wealthy London merchants and politicians who provided the initiative and the capital for the “Turkey trade.”⁴⁸

Politics, religion, culture, commerce, and diplomacy converged to facilitate the Anglo-Ottoman encounter as will be shown. What initially began as a trade venture that grew out of religious sectarianism quickly blossomed into a cross-cultural engagement that introduced English society to the Islamic World. Far from being caused by any one specific factor, the variables of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship were mutually

⁴⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁸ J.B. Black, *The Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 241; H.G. Rawlinson, “The Embassy of William Harborne to Constantinople, 1583-8,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society Fourth Series*, 5 (1922): 3; Ramsay, 41; Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee, “Osborne, Sir Edward (1530? – 1591), in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XIV, eds. Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917), 1178.

reinforcing, and the shift in English representations and perceptions of Ottomans and Islam was dynamic enough to allow for competing viewpoints which were not necessarily mutually exclusive. In the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I, this peculiar cross-cultural encounter altered English perceptions of themselves, Christendom, and the Muslim Ottoman “other” and the relationship between diplomacy, popular culture, and early modern commerce.

CHAPTER 2

A QUEEN'S SCANDAL

England's diplomatic engagement with the Ottomans was itself an important moment in English history and represents the first instance of a wider, more globalized foreign policy beyond the confines of Christendom; this evolution in English foreign policy, however, was met with strong resistance from Continental Europe resulting in significant levels of both foreign and domestic backlash. The commercial expansion leading up to the founding of the Levant Company was integral to the development of extra-European English foreign policy and demonstrates a clear shift in the diplomatic thinking of Elizabeth and her advisors. England's initial diplomatic engagement with the Ottomans during Elizabeth's reign was the first instance of a real and sustained extra-European relationship, developed in opposition to Catholic hegemony as an alternative alignment.

The Ottoman Empire was the perfect alternative to further integration with an increasingly fervent, predominantly Catholic, Continental Europe for a number of reasons. Although European statesmen and contemporary commentators bemoaned the Ottoman accumulation of empire in Southeastern Europe, particularly after the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Ottoman sultans and administrators were well aware of the importance of maintaining European and trans-Mediterranean trade with European trading polities and vice versa. Only after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt (1517), however, did the empire truly achieve a position of commercial and political hegemony that forced many European polities to interact with the empire on Ottoman terms. With

Byzantium's commercial and capitulatory policies as a foundation, the Ottoman state upheld and renewed Mamluk Egypt's trade agreements with Venice, Europe's preeminent commercial entity in the Eastern Mediterranean. Even with almost continuous Ottoman-European military conflict from 1453 to 1566, trade continued; and, in the case of Venice especially, a healthy commercial relationship with the Ottomans was always maintained even with the Republic joining various anti-Ottoman Holy Leagues on a frequent basis.

Almost immediately after William Harborne's efforts in Constantinople began to bear fruit in March 1579, roughly one year after he left England, a flurry of diplomatic activity ensued. The powers that be, notably France, Venice, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire, used all the resources at their disposal to sabotage Harborne's increasingly rewarding venture and prevent the English from successfully entering the Levant. The reports issued by the ambassadors and representatives of these four states all show a concerted effort to stop a formal relationship between the Ottoman Empire and England, and each diplomat highlighted different facets of the encounter; religious, commercial, and political. With the exception of the Venetians who were obviously concerned about commercial competition in the Levant, however, the European diplomats and representatives who were alarmed by England's engagement with the Ottomans were primarily concerned with the political ramifications of the encounter. England's status as an independent Protestant nation, not merely Protestant factionalism such as the French Huguenots and the adoption of Lutheranism by various German Princes, made Anglo-Ottoman engagement a multi-faceted threat to the status quo of Christendom. All

Harborne had accomplished, however, was successfully petitioning for an audience with the Ottoman Grand Vizier, Sokollu Mehmed Pasha.⁴⁹ In particular, the Holy Roman ambassador, Joachim von Sinzendorff and the French ambassador, Jacques de Germigny, hounded Harborne and threw up whatever obstacles they could in his way.⁵⁰ By the end of May, 1580, Harborne's efforts and two years abroad finally bore fruit when Murad III granted full trade capitulations to England which formed the "basis of all subsequent Anglo-Ottoman relations."⁵¹

Before Harborne skillfully acquired permission to trade in Ottoman lands, however, the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-1595) and Queen Elizabeth I had already developed an extensive and unique correspondence. Curiously, and unlike the vast majority of Ottoman sultans' interactions with foreign heads of state, it was Murad III who started correspondence with Elizabeth - not the other way around.⁵² A rather odd

⁴⁹ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 44.

⁵⁰ Joachim von Sinzendorff, *The Imperial Ambassador Reports*: "(a) Translation of part of the Imperial ambassador in Constantinople Joachim von Sinzendorff's report of 21 and 24 March 1579 to Rudolf II," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 60-63; Jacques de Germigny, *The French Ambassador Reports*: "Translation of part of the French ambassador in Constantinople Jacques de Germigny's report of 17 March 1580 to Henri III," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 78-79; Jacques de Germigny, "Report to Henri III, May 1580," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 25; Jacques de Germigny, "Report to Henri III, June 1580," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 25.

⁵¹ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 89, 90. The capitulations had to be renewed upon the ascension of a new monarch in either polity which allowed for the terms and conditions to be revised. The capitulations of 1580 remained in effect until the capitulations of 1675 which became the basis of Anglo-Ottoman political and diplomatic relations until the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 50.

letter, dated 7 March 1579 (8 Muharram 987), most certainly written after Harborne's petition to Sokollu Pasha, has Murad III addressing Elizabeth directly and he repeats the basic formula of his claim to universal sovereignty by saying that his court was always open to "friend and foe."⁵³ Furthermore, Murad extended safe-passage and protection, as he and his predecessors had granted to the French, the Venetians, and the Polish, following the same basic patterns and procedures of the Ottomans' diplomatic policy: first and foremost, it was conducted on Ottoman terms. Finally, and unusually as Susan Skilliter points out, Murad's letter ends with his wish that, once his letter had arrived in England and was read by Elizabeth, "let not your love and friendship be lacking (and) may your agents and your merchants never cease from coming with their wares and goods, whether by sea...or by land...carrying on trade (and then) going away [Parentheses added by Skilliter]."⁵⁴

Prior to this moment, "England [had been] a complete newcomer to extra-European relations;" but Elizabeth, building on her foreign policy experience in Morocco and Muscovy, developed innovative ways to engage with the Ottomans and achieve her own goals over the course of nine letters between her and Murad.⁵⁵ Moreover, while

⁵³ Sultan Murad III, Document Six: "Translation of the Registry copy of Sultan Murad III's command to Queen Elizabeth I, promising security by land and sea to all English agents and merchants trading in the Ottoman dominions, and requesting her friendship in return. [Constantinople, 8 Muharram 987/7 March 1579]," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 49-50.

⁵⁴ Sultan Murad III, Document Six, 50. See also: Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 50-51.

⁵⁵ Yahya, 78.

engaging with the Ottomans, Elizabeth, her advisors, and Harborne cleverly deflected and neutralized the backlash levied against her by Spanish, German, Portuguese, and French diplomats. English merchants' export of munitions and strategic materials to the Islamicate was, particularly, a hot-button issue for Christendom as a whole even from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.⁵⁶ For Christendom's statesmen, England's engagement with the Ottomans, by itself, was particularly egregious, for political and religious reasons related to English-Protestantism, because nearly every Christian European state interacted and traded with the Ottomans in one way or another. The issue of arms and munitions exports to the Ottomans, however, was considered reprehensible by all who were aware of it and rapidly became powerful political ammunition for use against Elizabeth and English-Protestantism. Two particular incidents, the first in 1581 and the second in 1582, were tantamount to a modern-day diplomatic and political crisis for Elizabeth, England, and the future of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship. Although both of these incidents were relatively insignificant in terms of the actual events that took place, they both exposed parts of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship that Elizabeth and her advisors had tried to keep hidden and provided potent propaganda for Elizabeth's critics.

In April, 1581, the *Bark Roe*, an English flag-bearing ship under the command of Harborne's subordinates engaged in acts of piracy in Ottoman waters against Greek ships (that is, Greeks who were Ottoman subjects under Ottoman protection) and was forced to

⁵⁶ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1562* (London, 1867), p. 9, Doc. 18; *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1562* (London, 1867), p. 54, Doc. 103, Section 6; *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1562* (London, 1867), p. 75, Doc. 157; *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1562* (London, 1867), p. 75-79, Doc. 158, Section 1, 3-6, 9-10.

sail to Malta where the crew delivered themselves into the hands of the Knights of St. John and the Roman Inquisition.⁵⁷ Almost immediately, Ottoman authorities revoked the English capitulations and when Harborne arrived in Constantinople to deal with the incident he found “that the common rumor that he was a spy working to ruin the Ottoman Empire” was now thought to be true.⁵⁸ Although Harborne was able to regain the trade capitulations (augmented by a personal letter from Elizabeth to Murad), the ramifications of the *Bark Roe* incident continued to reverberate around the Mediterranean World throughout the summer of 1581.⁵⁹

The second incident, in May, 1582, occurred when another one of Harborne’s ships, the *Bark Reynolds*, was accosted by Italian or Maltese galleys while en route; a shot was fired and the *Bark Reynolds* was escorted to Malta where the crew were again interrogated by the Roman Inquisition.⁶⁰ The crews’ depositions were sent to Rome along with their cargo manifesto, their Ottoman-issued safe-conduct, and trade privilege documents, which were examined by none other than Pope Gregory XIII (r. 1575-1585). Strangely, the crew was freed and they were encouraged to trade freely in Malta, whether

⁵⁷ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 150-159. See also: William Harborne, Document Twenty-Six: “Letter from William Harborne to Lord Burghley. Pera, Constantinople, 9 June 1581,” as cited in Skilliter (1977), 154-158.

⁵⁸ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 160.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 160-162. See also Jacques de Germigny, The French Ambassador Reports: “Translation of part of Jacques de Germigny’s report of 10 June 1581 to Henri III,” as cited in Skilliter (1977), 162-163.

⁶⁰ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 106, 195-196.

on the *Bark Reynolds* or any other ship, and they were urged to bring and sell munitions to the island itself.⁶¹

Given that the very nature of England's contact with the Ottoman Empire set off klaxons throughout Catholic Christendom, it is not surprising that the Papacy perceived the actions of the *Bark Roe* to be the vanguard of a joint Anglo-Ottoman campaign to attack Italy. The *Bark Reynolds* incident, combined with Sinzendorff's reports and the reports of Bernardino de Mendoza, Philip II's ambassador in London, Zuan Francesco Moresini, the Venetian ambassador to Spain, and Paolo Contarini, the Venetian ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, seemed to confirm the fears of many diplomats and statesmen in Catholic Christendom that a military alliance between England and the Ottoman Empire existed and that a combined Anglo-Ottoman assault on the continent was in the works.⁶² Even though there was an element of truth to the reports, that the

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 196.

⁶² For Sinzendorff's reports see Joachim von Sinzendorff, *The Imperial Ambassador Reports*: "(b) Translation of part of von Sinzendorff's report of 4 April 1579," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 63-64; Joachim von Sinzendorff, *The Imperial Ambassador Reports*: "Translation of an extract from Joachim von Sinzendorff's report of 17 September 1580 to Rudolf II," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 126-127. For Mendoza's reports see Bernardino de Mendoza. "Report to Philip II, 25 September 1579," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 51; *Cal. S.P. Spain (Simancas), Volume 2: 1568-1579* (London, 1894), p. 704-706, Doc. 609; *Cal. S.P. Spain (Simancas), Volume 3: 1580-1586* (London, 1896), p. 63-69, Doc. 52; *Cal. S.P. Spain (Simancas), Volume 3: 1580-1586* (London, 1896), p. 69-71, Doc. 57; *Cal. S.P. Spain (Simancas), Volume 3: 1580-1586* (London, 1896), p. 103-119, Doc. 86. For Moresini's reports see *Cal. S.P. Spain (Simancas), Volume 3: 1580-1586* (London, 1896), p. 71-82, Doc. 59. And for Contarini's reports see The Venetian Senate, "Instructions to Paolo Contarini, January 14, 1581," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 145; Paolo Contarini, *The Venetian Ambassador Reports*: "Translation of the last paragraph of Paolo Contarini's dispatch to the Doge and Senate 26 November 1580," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 138; The Council of Ten, "The Council of Ten to the Bailo [Contarini], 23 June 1581," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 164.

English *were* actively trading munitions and strategic materials with the Ottomans, Elizabeth and her advisors denied all of the accusations leveled against England. This was incredibly significant: in order to maintain English independence and Protestantism, Elizabeth utilized her (and England's) excommunication to her advantage to pursue a course of action that served her interests. This course of action, however, could not be pursued publicly as it would delegitimize her and her government and provide fuel for Catholic Christendom's charges that Protestantism threatened to destroy Europe.

Relations between England and Spain (and Catholic Christendom in general), which had been rapidly deteriorating since the 1570s, therefore, caused Elizabeth to seek Ottoman support if for no other reason than to hold Philip II back with the mere threat of a real Anglo-Ottoman alliance. This is best demonstrated by the address delivered by Harborne to Murad III when he returned to Constantinople in 1583 as the first English ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. In particular, the geographical and political information that Harborne presented to Murad is worth noting due to its incredible level of exaggeration almost certainly geared to present the feasibility of England being a legitimate counterweight to Spanish hegemony and a strong and natural ally for the Ottomans.

England comprises 1,200 leagues in circumference; it has a great many splendid cities, of which the capital London is the same size as Istanbul; this has 200,000 armed men in readiness. Within the country are 416 fortified towns, apart from castles. ...its mines produce gold, silver, copper, tin, lead, bronze, iron, steel, saltpetre [sic]. It abounds in wood, both for constructing ships as for the fire, and sustains infinite craftsmen of every kind. ...From [the islands], when need arises, 830,000 fighting men can be levied with great ease...a fleet of ships and galleys larger

and better equipped than those of all other Christian princes, so that their strength and power can hardly be described unless seen. The people are quick and ferocious in avenging wrongs, most scrupulous in observing leagues and peace-treaties, and renewing them very generously.⁶³

By exaggerating English strength, which the Ottomans would have no way of accurately gauging, Elizabeth presented her state as strong and warlike; similar in many ways to contemporary representations of the Ottomans, and most certainly with the goal of extracting further Ottoman support. In terms of English foreign policy, Elizabeth's skillful use of a man such as Harborne to represent England to one of the early modern world's superpowers demonstrates a high level of pragmatism. Even if it was only moral support, the benefits of diplomatic and political rapprochement with the Ottomans outweighed the costs.

The deployment of an English ambassador to Murad's court also had more direct benefits. During his tenure, Harborne continued to pursue an anti-Spanish agenda at the Ottoman court at the behest of the English state. For example, in 1585 Harborne received "instructions from Walsingham to incite Turkey to war with Spain" and from 1585 through the end of his appointment in 1588 "he worked energetically to prevent the renewal of the [1581 truce between Spain and the Ottoman Empire] thus obliging Spain to keep forces in the Mediterranean."⁶⁴ Going even further, Harborne was also ordered to

⁶³ Susan Skilliter, "William Harborne, the First English Ambassador: 1583-1588," in *Four Centuries of Turco-British Relations: Studies in Diplomatic, Economic, and Cultural Affairs*, eds. William Hale and Ali İhsan Bağış (Yorkshire: The Eothen Press, 1984), 22-23.

⁶⁴ Susan Skilliter, "The Hispano-Ottoman armistice of 1581," in *Iran and Islam: in the memory of the late Vladimir Minorsky*, ed. C.E. Bosworth (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 1971), 503.

“persuade the Sultan to provide a fleet to attack Spain or the Spanish dominions of Apulis, Calabria and Catalonia simultaneously with an attack by England from the Atlantic.”⁶⁵ To accomplish this, Harborne was advised by Walsingham to involve himself in Ottoman foreign policy by urging the sultan to end the long and stagnant war with Safavid Iran “which had drained Turkish resources.”⁶⁶ Although the combined Anglo-Ottoman attack on Iberia never materialized, Harborne did succeed in preventing the renewal of the Spanish-Ottoman armistice in 1587 which “may have helped to prevent the sending of the Armada against England that year” due to the insecurity Philip faced on his Mediterranean border.⁶⁷ Thus, unlike any English government preceding it, Elizabeth and her ministers established an English presence on the world stage; and, with little to no experience in extra-European relationships, Elizabeth’s government implemented a successful foreign policy that protected English independence through groundbreaking diplomacy. Finally, as if to solidify the Ottomans’ differentiation between Protestants and Catholics, and their burgeoning support of the (English) former, Harborne was himself incorporated into the Ottoman *millet* system as “Luteran elçisi, the Lutheran ambassador responsible...for the citizens of Protestant states [in Ottoman lands] not yet in treaty with the Sultan.”⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Ibid., 503.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 503.

⁶⁷ Skilliter, “William Harborne, the First English Ambassador: 1583-1588,” 23.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 12-13.

The “Turkey Company,” the immediate precursor to the Levant Company, was chartered by Elizabeth on September 11, 1581, while Harborne was en route to England to deal with the ramifications of the *Bark Roe* incident.⁶⁹ The actual “Levant Company,” however, was chartered in January 1592 through the incorporation of the Turkey and Venice companies when their charters expired that year.⁷⁰ Moreover, for the future of English overseas expansion, the Levant Company’s charter expanded the Company’s monopoly “through the countries of the said grand signior [the Ottoman Sultan] into and from the East India lately discovered by John Newberie, Ralph Fitch, William Leech and James Storie.”⁷¹ Thus, many of the Levant Company merchants had already set their sights on expanding their trade beyond Ottoman lands eight years before the East India Company was founded in 1600, including Thomas Smythe, a Levant Company merchant who became the first governor of the East India Company.⁷² The chartered “joint-stock” business-model, as the Muscovy, Levant, and East India companies (amongst others) were organized, was a significant advancement over earlier guild or state-centered approaches to commerce. The decentralized nature of England’s (and most other European polities) political-economy during the early modern period made the state dependent upon entrepreneurial commerce to break into new markets and to act as a catalyst to opening diplomatic channels with previously unknown or unrecognized states.

⁶⁹ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 176.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁷¹ Wood, 21.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 21.

In the case of the English chartered joint-stock companies, the English state had nothing to lose by encouraging the privatization of commerce as the companies floated all the costs themselves. Moreover, since these trade ventures were carried out by non-governmental entities, should a state denounce the actions of another state's merchants, as was the case with the Levant Company, the merchants' status as non-state actors granted a degree of plausible deniability to minimize or defuse potential blowback.

During Elizabeth's reign it seems that the medieval idea of the "common corps of Christendom" broke down: although nearly all significant European polities had sent ambassadors to the Ottoman court by the end of the sixteenth century, they "continued to measure the [Ottomans] by conventional standards;" what Elizabeth had done, however, was nothing short of a "diplomatic revolution."⁷³ Elizabeth's emancipation from the conventional mores of Christendom, via her (and England's) excommunication in 1570, allowed her to walk an ideological razor: on the one hand representing herself and the English to the Ottomans as the most powerful state in Christendom; and on the other, to denounce any association with the Ottomans to the Muscovites, the Germans, and the Spanish. For Elizabeth and England, however, the Anglo-Ottoman relationship was a direct response to the religious and political conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism. It seems that, for the most part, Elizabeth's diplomats and statesmen were willing to set aside religious and ideological sentiments for realistic political objectives. Elizabeth herself seems to have had no problem establishing relations with the Ottomans

⁷³ Franklin L. Baumer, "England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom," *The American Historical Review* 50, 1 (1944): 26-27.

(via Harborne) in the 1580s and continuing the export of strategic materials to the Islamic World that began in the 1560s. Only after 1588, with the defeat of the Armada, did she clearly go “out of her way to placate public opinion.”⁷⁴ It was “as though she belatedly grasped the fact that European public opinion still regarded [any Christian-European rapprochement with the Ottomans] as a scandal and that not to take that fact into account would constitute a serious political blunder on her part.”⁷⁵

Domestically, the most sustained attack on Elizabeth’s Ottoman connection came from Richard Verstegan (d. 1620/40?).⁷⁶ This attack, however, was not so much an attack on the actual facets of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship; on the contrary, Verstegan’s attack was primarily an association between England and the idea of “Ottomans” and the “Ottomanization” of English society because of intimate contact. Verstegan’s March 26, 1592, pamphlet/essay, *A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles*, directly addresses Elizabeth’s relationship with the Ottomans with the goal of scandalizing and delegitimizing her and her government by substantiating the

⁷⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 33-34.

⁷⁶ Alexandra Walsham, “‘Domme Preachers?’ Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print,” *Past & Present* no. 168 (2000): 83-85, 90, 122. Verstegan was a leading layman in a group of Jesuits and priests who published doctrinal and satirical Counter-Reformation works attacking and denouncing Protestantism as heresy, and his work was geared towards fomenting discontent amongst English Protestants and insurrection amongst English Catholics. Verstegan was also known as Richard Rowlands.

perceived sinister collusion between England and the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁷ *A declaration* was, therefore, a sustained attack by Catholics to use the Ottomans as a foil for critiquing a Protestant state.

Prior to 1517, contemporary European socio political commentators could easily justify a juxtaposed view of the Mediterranean World as being Christendom versus the Islamic World. The Protestant Reformation, however, challenged this paradigm, and the introduction of an alternative Christian alignment, released from the hegemonic traditions and mores of Catholicism that had reigned supreme for a millennia, presented a serious challenge. For a commentator such as Verstegan, essentially a mouthpiece for Catholic anti-disestablishment sentiments, the dichotomy continued to hold: Christendom was still locked in a clash of civilizations with the Turks who represented all of Islam in a simplistic way; Protestantism, as an alternative alignment different from Catholicism could not fit into this model. While more often than not Protestantism and Protestant movements were simply considered to be heresy and were dealt with as such, Elizabeth's diplomatic, political, and commercial engagement with the Ottomans presented anti-Protestant polemicists with the perfect opportunity to categorically denounce the heresy of Protestantism. Elizabeth's and England's Ottoman connection, as it is presented in Verstegan's work, was used as an extreme example of what can and will happen to states and actors that break away from the flock.

⁷⁷ Richard Verstegan, *A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles, presupposed to be intended against the realme of England Wherein the indifferent reader shall manifestly perceave, by whome, and by what means, the realme is brought into these pretended perills. Seene and allowed*, 1592. Pamphlet/Essay. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-39, p. 1-77.

Ostensibly, the work is a defense of King Philip of Spain and a denouncement of Queen Elizabeth and Protestantism in general, which Verstegan intimately associates with the devil and the anti-Christ. Verstegan, a historian and linguist by training, grounds all of his examples of English-wrongdoing in the thirty-three years that he discusses (the number of years that Elizabeth had reigned at the time of his writing) in examples within living memory and contemporary current events. *A declaration* principally addresses the unrest in France (the Huguenots) and the rebellion in the Low Countries in addition to the Protestant Reformation in general, and numerous contemporary political figures are referenced throughout the text: Prince William of Orange; the Duke of Anjou; Francis Walsingham, William Cecil, and Nicholas Throckmorton; as well as the mariner-adventurers of the day, John Hawkins and Francis Drake.

Verstegan maintains that, “diverse [English] ministers, did at diverse times insinuate unto the people. And one of them in a sermon at Paules cross, affirmed that it was a more better act to assist Turks, then Papists” and that the “superintendent of Winchester” published “in a printed book, that it was better to swear unto the Turk and turkery [sic], then unto the Pope and popery, and that the Pope is a more perilous enemy to Christ, then the Turk.”⁷⁸ He then levels his first charge against the English that relates to the Islamic World: “These preparations [the ideological/intellectual acceptance of the Turks mentioned above] being thus made, the *Moors* that inhabited the kingdom of *Granada*, were excited to rebellion. Unto whom, although the English would not openly

⁷⁸ Ibid., Image 11, p. 20-21. Note that Verstegan jumps from topic to topic in *A declaration* and his associations are over-dramatized and flimsy at best.

send forces of men, yet they sent them succors of powder, shot, artillery, & other munition of war.”⁷⁹ Undoubtedly referencing the Morisco uprising of 1568, Verstegan insinuates that that rebellion (which was suppressed quite bloodily) was instigated by the English along with the “widespread political and religious movement against the Hapsburgs and Catholic Christendom” that occurred in that year - the same year that the Dutch rose up in rebellion as well.⁸⁰ Moreover, Elizabeth’s support for the Portuguese pretender, Antonio, is presented as yet another example of her resistance to a united Christendom in favor of a divided Europe. Verstegan’s implications are quite clear: Elizabeth was actively and willingly undermining Christendom (in this case, the efforts of Philip II and the Pope) to divide Europe and open the door for Islamic-Ottoman conquest in a sort of counter-Crusade against Christendom instead of in defense of it.

In defense of Spain, Verstegan lists King Philip’s “firm resolutions” for “the general defense of Christendom” including his peace treaties with France and Italy, his defense of Malta, and his participation in “league against the *Turk* with the Pope, & the *Venetians*, whereof followed the great victory, obtained by *Dohn John de Austria* his general, at *Lepanto*.”⁸¹ All of which “serve for a demonstration of his princely resolution, to maintain the concord of Christians, and to offend their common enemy.”⁸²

⁷⁹ Ibid., Image 11, p. 21.

⁸⁰ Hess, “The Moriscos,” 4, 5-25.

⁸¹ Verstegan, *A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles*, Image 18, p. 35.

⁸² Ibid., Image 18, p. 35.

Verstegan concludes this first section of *A declaration* by blatantly stating that England's league with "the great Turk the king of Fez, and Morocco, and other infidels," is one of the primary obstacles in the way of "universal peace."⁸³ After posing a series of rhetorical questions to remind the reader of Elizabeth's and England's sinister intentions, Verstegan addresses England's self-imposed isolation from Christendom and speculates on Elizabeth's new allies. "But if we look what new confederates they have chosen, instead of the old, we shall see them to be the great *Turk*, the kings of *Fez*, *Morocco*, and *Algiers*, or other *Mahometains* and *Moors* of *Barbary*, all professed enemies to *Christ*. Against whom, some of the most noble and famous kings of England, went in person with great armies, & obtained such victories, as will for ever recommend their glory to all posterities."⁸⁴ Thus, England was in league with infidels (mentioned above), heretics (the Dutch), and rebels (the Huguenots/the Moriscos) - a triumvirate of evil that would surely result in Elizabeth's fall from power, England's ruin, and God knows what in the hereafter. Verstegan ends this section with speculation that "the great *Turk* and his consorts, may be by the English excited to invade some parts of Christendom, near unto them adjoining" and that the English will "exchange their *Geneva Bible*, for the *Turkish Alcoran*."⁸⁵ Once again, Verstegan uses contemporary events and analysis to show how Elizabeth was actively dividing Christendom through a variety of clandestine campaigns,

⁸³ Ibid., Image 20, p. 38.

⁸⁴ Ibid., Image 25, p. 48. Verstegan refers to the Second Crusade and the famous exploits of King Richard the Lionheart.

⁸⁵ Ibid., Image 25, p. 49.

all of which, he speculates, were geared towards opening the door for apostasy and conversion to Islam at the tip of an Ottoman, or, more alarmingly, an English sword.

Verstegan's work was a direct attack on Elizabeth, England, and English Protestantism and the exposé apparently made it to many European courts in addition to the English public.⁸⁶ Verstegan's goal for composing *A declaration* was simple: by cataloguing many of the dramatic religious, social, and political events in Europe and correlating them with Elizabeth and English Protestantism and exposing England's Ottoman connection, Verstegan was trying to represent the English as Ottomans or "new" Turks and was playing off of the anti-Muslim views of his audience.⁸⁷ In many ways, however, Verstegan was correct in his perception of the increasing "Ottoman-ness" of the English population, and, although *A declaration* was a polemical discourse, Verstegan understood his audience and he played on contemporary public anxieties.

In particular, the English and Scottish subjects who had visited the Levant and returned to England brought back with them a taste for Turkish fashion, specifically turbans.⁸⁸ Elizabeth herself was "fascinated by different national clothes" and a "result of the queen's constant changing of fashion [was that] English men and women started to imitate their monarch."⁸⁹ Although she implemented strict sumptuary laws governing

⁸⁶ Baumer, "England, the Turk, and the Common Corp of Christendom," 34.

⁸⁷ Dimmock, *New Turkes*, 198-200.

⁸⁸ Nabil I. Matar, "Renaissance England and the Turban," in *Images of the Other: Europe and the Muslim World Before 1700*, ed. David R. Blanks (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1997), 42-43.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

“wearing clothes that were either above or below [her subjects’ social] status,” no such rules applied to turbans or “Turkish costume” and the trend lasted until the beginning of the eighteenth century.⁹⁰ This socio cultural pollution via sustained contact with the Ottomans and the Islamic World, as Verstegan obviously viewed it, was, however, a popular fear both within England and Europe.

Throughout the 1580s, the early years of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship, rumors and stories abounded of (English) Christian mariners “turn’d Turk,” many of which were true. A crewmember of a pre-capitulation attempt to trade in the Levant, “the son of a certain Francis Rowlie, merchant of Bristol,” had, by 1586, risen through the ranks of the Ottoman administrative system as a convert to Islam and a eunuch eventually to become the treasurer for the provincial governor of Algiers.⁹¹ A more famous example, however, was that of Englishman John Ward (d. 1622), who converted to Islam, assumed the name Yusef Reis, and actively committed acts of piracy in the Western Mediterranean against *both* Christian and non-Christian shipping for nearly two decades.⁹² Ward’s exploits eventually became the subject of Robert Daborne’s well-known play, *A Christian Turn’d Turk* (1612) “which punitively stages Ward’s violent death when it was known he was still alive, [and] contributed to, rather than detracted from, Ward’s reputation as a popular

⁹⁰ Ibid., 43.

⁹¹ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 21-22.

⁹² Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield, “The Devil Citing Scripture: Christian Perceptions of the Religions of the Book,” in *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660*, eds. Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 12-13; Maclean and Matar, 43.

rogue-hero.”⁹³ Although the threat of pollution via the conversion of mariners was relatively minimal during Elizabeth’s reign, by the reign’s of James I and Charles I, as will be demonstrated, popular perceptions of this sinister Ottoman fifth column increased dramatically.

The vacillating ambiguity of English thought on and about the Ottomans, moreover, can clearly be seen in contemporary English religious sermons. From the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to 1570, the English clergy advocated Christian unity against the Turk, which should come as no surprise. Such was the extent of this common sentiment that the Bishop of Salisbury, John Jewel (d. 1571), an “apologist of the English church against Roman Catholicism,” wrote a standardized prayer, “for Wednesday and Friday services” in response to the Ottoman Siege of Malta (1565).⁹⁴ Jewel’s prayer, which associates Turks with Muslims and vice versa, was written at the same time that Elizabeth was denying to the Portuguese that her merchants were selling arms in Barbary; however, post-1570, it is relatively unclear who leading English Protestants thought was the real common enemy to the maintenance of English independence and English Protestantism, the Turk or the Pope.⁹⁵ Such ambiguity can also be seen in a report made

⁹³ Maclean and Matar, 43. See also Robert Daborne, *A Christian turn'd Turke: or, The tragicall liues and deaths of the two famous pyrates, Ward and Dansiker As it hath beene publickly acted. Written by Robert Daborn, Gentleman.* London: 1612. Play. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-38, p. 1-70.

⁹⁴ . Baumer, “England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom,” 31; John Jewel, “A fourme to be vsed in common prayer, euery Sunday, Wednesday, and Fryday, through the whole realme,” 1566. Prayer. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 8-9, p. 15-17. See also Maclean, *Looking East*, 1-2.

⁹⁵ Baumer, “England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom,” 31.

by Sir Henry Norris, the English ambassador to France and a close friend of the Queen, in his letter on September 22, 1570:

[Henry Norris] Hopes that the war with the Turk may long continue, for the Ambassador of Venice declared that if the King of Spain could have peace with the Moriscos, he minded to invade England, and that the Duke of Alva had commission to have in readiness secretly great numbers of Burgundians and other soldiers for that purpose.⁹⁶

One particular sermon delivered by Thomas White in 1589, which Verstegan directly referenced in *A declaration*, demonstrates an unusual amount of ambivalence on England's true enemy.⁹⁷ White preached that, "for this cause, the *Pope* is more [odious] unto us than *Turke*, or *Jew*, and *Popish Princes*...and therefore is it, that [we] say of *Philip of Spaine*, as the *Lacedemonians* said of *Philip of Macedonie*, we would not have him to come into our Country neither a *Friend* nor a *Foe*."⁹⁸ Thus, England's growing relationship with the Ottomans reflected "England's relationship with Spain" and England's "perceived association with the Ottomans" by Continental Europe.⁹⁹ Another sermon that demonstrates the vacillating ambivalence of the English clergy towards the Turks can be seen in Thomas Nelson's eulogy for Sir Francis Walsingham upon his death

⁹⁶ *Cal. S.P. Foreign, 1569-71* (London, 1874), p. 345, Doc. 1290, Doc. 1291.

⁹⁷ See Verstegan, *A declaration of the true causes of the great troubles*, Image 11, p. 20-21.

⁹⁸ Thomas White, "A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the 17. of Nouember An. 1589 Inioyfull remembrance and thanksgiuing vnto God, for the peaceable yeres of her maiesties most gracious raigne ouer vs, now 32," 1589. Prayer. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 34, p. 59-60.

⁹⁹ Dimmock, *New Turkes*, 199.

in 1590. Nelson ends his eulogy with the hope that Queen Elizabeth will continue to have royal advisors of Walsingham's abilities to keep England "free, From Turke, from Pope, from sword, from fire, and force of enemie;" the irony of course being that it was Walsingham's "Memorandum on the Turkey Trade" that laid the foundation of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter.¹⁰⁰ Again, this is an example of polemically playing on public anxieties about Turks and Islam but with the addition of Catholicism.

Fashion trends, sermons, and dramatizations of captivity aside, to save face and to defend Elizabeth's foreign policy at a time of increasing unpopularity due to food shortages, rising prices, and tax increases from the war with Spain, a response was needed. As a result, the English government commissioned Francis Bacon (d. 1626), the philosopher-statesman, to compose a work that would refute Verstegan's polemic. Bacon's response, entitled *Certain Observations Upon a Libel*, was also written in 1592, presumably within months of Verstegan's *A declaration*.¹⁰¹

Before delving fully into Bacon's response to Verstegan in Elizabeth's defense, it is necessary to address the growing social and political role played by print in early modern England, as evidenced by the importance of the many pamphlets that appeared on

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Nelson, "A memorable epitaph, made vpon the lamentable complaint of the people of England, for the death of the right honorable Sir Frauncis Walsingham Knight principall secretarie of estate, chauncellor of her Maiesties court for the Dutchy of Lankaster, and one of her highnesse most honorable priuie councill. Who decessed at his house in London on the 7. day of Aprill last past. Anno. Dom. 1590," 1590. Eulogy. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ Francis Bacon, *Certain Observations Upon a Libel*, in *The Works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England*, Vol. II, ed. Basil Montagu Esq. (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1841): 242-265.

the issues of Protestantism versus Catholicism and England's burgeoning interactions with extra-European polities. Beginning in Elizabeth's reign and continuing thereafter, a distinct public sphere and culture of print including pamphlets, manuscripts, plays, broadsides, and newsletters developed in England and was politicized in the post-Reformation period as a "mode of political maneuver."¹⁰² Typically oppositional, this growing public sphere was initially "the work of Protestant opponents of the Catholic regime [i.e., Mary I] and then of Catholic opponents" of a Protestant regime, geared and aimed to "address promiscuously uncontrollable, socially heterogeneous, in some sense 'popular,' audiences."¹⁰³ The religious turmoil of the post-Reformation period created a space where conflicting appeals could be made to various audiences; and, although not initially a "normal or regular feature of political life," the use of print to stimulate "public debate and petitioning" became "normal, though unacknowledged" officially.¹⁰⁴

During her reign, for instance, 160 different plays were performed at Elizabeth's court, and "politically engaged drama" in her reign and in her successors' reigns, offered advice and encouraged the Tudor and Stuart monarchs and their courtiers to explore "broader issues."¹⁰⁵ At the royal court, "counseling plays, sermons, art, and letters" were

¹⁰² Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England," in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, eds. Peter Lake and Steven Pincus (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 3.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 3, 6.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 6, 8.

¹⁰⁵ Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 128, 129.

all present, but royal courtiers, those individuals with political, diplomatic, and commercial ties to the Crown, were themselves integrated into oral and written networks that disseminated and circulated news from at home and abroad for consumption.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, recent studies demonstrate that “there was not necessarily a clear-cut distinction between ‘elite’ and ‘popular’” audiences: while the literate gentry would have had greater access to the culture of print, oral communication via servants was a common mode of disseminating news-information; for commoners, news was also circulated orally through church services, inns and taverns, and literate children reading to their parents, relatives, and neighbors.¹⁰⁷

Pamphlets and broadsides, small, cheap, transportable, and easily distributed, were initially viewed as “disreputable, potentially dangerous works that needed to be monitored” at the end of the sixteenth century, and royal proclamations were issued to prevent the importation of Catholic/anti-Elizabeth propaganda, exactly like Richard Verstegan’s broadside.¹⁰⁸ From the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, the availability of pamphlets on domestic and international events continued to increase as “more and more pamphlets commented on political matters.”¹⁰⁹ By 1641, the year before the outbreak of the First English Civil War, the first “true periodicals” began to circulate;

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 134, 143.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 161-163, 171-172.

¹⁰⁸ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 9.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 100.

and during the political upheaval of the 1650s and 1660s English rulers and statesmen began to make formal use of censorship, “now recognized as a necessary and useful element of practical statecraft,” to monitor, moderate, and control an increasingly politicized body politic.¹¹⁰

From the mid seventeenth century onwards there was a “massive expansion of book printing,” especially in Europe, as the proto-globalization spurred by transoceanic trade created a vacuum of knowledge about the world that needed to be filled.¹¹¹ The “construction of knowledge” about current events, politics, cross-cultural encounters, travelogues, and early modern ethnographies made possible by recently established cultures of print was, however, not merely a European phenomenon.¹¹² Although the “production and format of Asian and European” texts were profoundly different, on a basal level they all sought to understand and “comprehend ‘the other’” including but not limited to “all the unfamiliar and strange peoples, social customs, and philosophical ideas” encountered between and within different cultures, nations, and states.¹¹³ Within all of these texts, however, “all writers conveyed a mixture of fascination and revulsion

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 100.

¹¹¹ C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 19.

¹¹² Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 206-207.

¹¹³ Ibid., 210.

with foreign societies as early modern ethnography [and print culture in general] both demonized the unfamiliar and glamorized the exotic.”¹¹⁴

Bacon’s response is itself a masterpiece of analytical argumentation and he quite literally addresses Verstegan’s charges and accusations point-by-point and page-by-page (even including Verstegan’s original page numbers). The majority of *Certain Observations* is geared towards deflecting Verstegan’s personal attacks on Elizabeth and her domestic policies towards Catholics and Ireland/Scotland, in addition to challenging portrayals of Philip as the defender of Christendom. With the exception of a few brief sections that will be discussed, Bacon does, for the most part, ignore Verstegan’s accusations of England’s purported alliance with and support of the Turks because he could not address them directly. For the English body politic, both the Turk and the Pope were seen as threats; however, in spite of the truth behind Verstegan’s accusations of arms trading and collusion, Bacon could not acknowledge that Elizabeth and her advisors had pursued such policies as doing so would legitimize Verstegan’s charges. The cleverness of Bacon’s response, therefore, is not necessarily what he says, but what he does not say.

Verstegan charged that the English gave the Moroccans the weapons and munitions necessary to defeat the Portuguese army and kill Sebastian I; on this issue Bacon simply labels Sebastian’s campaign “the unfortunate journey to Afric [sic],” sidestepping the accusation and discussing Philip’s tyrannical invasion and annexation of

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 210.

the prosperous and “opulent kingdom” of Portugal.¹¹⁵ Verstegan’s allegations, however, were true, and the English *had* exported munitions to Morocco. But, if Bacon had acknowledged this, even with his masterful argumentative and analytical skills, Verstegan’s point would still, nonetheless, have rung true. Therefore, the best course of action, which Bacon obviously followed, was simply to deflect Verstegan’s charges and turn them around by attacking Philip and his actions.

In chapter seven, “Of diverse particular untruths and abuses dispersed through the libel,” Bacon directly addresses England’s engagement with the Ottoman Empire.¹¹⁶ This chapter, which contains Bacon’s page-by-page rebuttal of Verstegan’s points, is clear and succinct. Verstegan, who views England’s acceptance of Ottoman trade capitulations as a scandal, is deflected via comparison:

Page 48, he saith, England is confederate with the great Turk: wherein, if he mean it because the merchants have an agent in Constantinople, how will he answer for all the kings of France, since Francis the First, which were good Catholics? For the emperor? For the King of Spain himself? For the senate of Venice, and other states, that have had long time ambassadors liegers [sic] in that court? If he mean it because the Turk hath done some special honor to our ambassador, if he be so to be termed, we are beholden to the King of Spain for that: for that the honor, we have won upon him by opposition, hath given us reputation through the world: if he mean it because the Turk seemeth to affect us for the abolishing of images; let him consider then what a scandal the matter of images hath been in church, as having been one of the principal branches whereby Mahometism entered.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Bacon, 248.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 262-264.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 263.

Once again, Bacon entirely sidesteps Verstegan's actual accusation (that of the sale of strategic materials) but his response is a well-argued deflection. The presence of Catholic European ambassadors at the Ottoman court was a logically sound justification for the placement of an English ambassador as well. Granted, Bacon's reasoning that England's opposition to Spanish hegemony had given the English "reputation through the world" is a blatant distortion of the timeline of Anglo-Ottoman engagement; nevertheless, English Protestantism was reputation enough in the late 1570s through early 1580s for the Ottomans to give English merchants preferential treatment versus their (Catholic) counterparts. Finally, Bacon echoes Elizabeth's first letter to Murad III and his translator Mustafa, in which the Queen describes herself as a destroyer of idols; idolatry, according to Bacon, was so abhorrent to the Muslim Ottomans that it was a key reason people converted to Islam, or as the impetus for the Ottoman expansion into Europe. Bacon's response and Elizabeth's actions, overall, can be seen as the beginning of some sort of Protestant secular-political accommodation with Islam.

So it seems, the diplomatic truth was simply too scandalous to publish or publicize and deflection and the use of partial (un)truths and logically sound (albeit reductionist) but propagandized justifications was the only recourse available. Such was the extent of Elizabeth's attempts to limit the spread of these rumors that William Harborne's successor, Edward Barton, received instructions from the Queen herself to do all that was in his power to persuade Murad from invading the Holy Roman Empire. On April 22, 1593, Elizabeth wrote to Barton saying:

We have a great desire to use all means in our power possible to stay this intended war; and though our advices may come somewhat late, yet if it

might be as in like former times hath been used, [assurance] or truce might be made on both parts for some time...by treaty betwixt ambassadors indifferently upon their frontiers... And you shall not forget also to let [the Sultan] understand that although at all times our care have been exceeding great to stop any course soever that may tend to the effusion of blood, yet now have we more cause than ever to have sensible feeling of this important matter, for that in divers parts of Christendom, as well amongst our friends as others, especially in Germany, *there have been divers malicious and lying pamphlets published, wherein the only and chief imputation of this his intended invasion of Christendom is thrown upon us, as though we had been the principal workers or kindlers of this flame which is like to consume so many multitudes on both sides* [Emphasis added].¹¹⁸

In a complete turn of events, Elizabeth was, surprisingly, instructing Barton to tell Murad that his invasion of Austria was detrimental to her political image. Moreover, she acknowledges the propaganda campaign aimed at her which, judging from this letter, has linked the outbreak of what would become the Long War (1593-1606) to her somehow. Finally, even though Bacon's response seems to have been enough for domestic audiences, Elizabeth's letter to Barton demonstrates that anti-Elizabeth and anti-English pamphlets were being published and distributed within the Continent at such an alarming rate as to warrant the Queen's direct attention and personal involvement in stopping their spread. Thus, with minor exceptions, the backlash against the close relationship between England and the Ottoman Empire and the "Ottoman-ness" of the English population, true or manufactured, was significant enough to cause a shift away from the successes of the 1580s.

¹¹⁸ *Cal. Cecil Papers, Volume 4: 1590-1594* (London, 1892), p. 301-302, "The Queen to Mr. Barton." 1593, April 22.

Elizabeth's death in 1603 was, in a way, the end of England's close relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Her successor, James I, was a firm believer in the "common corps of Christendom" and his attitudes and policies towards the Ottoman Empire were "much more consistent" than Elizabeth's.¹¹⁹ Motivated by a combination of both religion and statecraft, James wished to improve relations between England and Continental Europe and be seen as a *Rex Pacificus*, a King of Peace. Such was James's disapproval of Elizabeth's diplomatic engagement with the Ottomans that, seven months into his reign in December, 1603, the Venetian ambassador to England reported to the Doge and Senate that James "was expecting a cavass [sic] from Turkey, via France, and was not at all pleased, as he did not approve a Turkish alliance, though the present position of affairs would compel him to receive the Turk."¹²⁰

Overall, England's diplomatic engagement with the Ottomans was a watershed in English history and represents the development of a wider, more globalized foreign policy beyond the confines of Christendom. Although Elizabeth and her government were initially faced with significant foreign and domestic backlash as a result of this engagement, the English state responded in innovative ways. Additionally, England's engagement with the Ottoman Empire introduced English society to the Islamic World resulting in social changes; English society, however, was also perceived differently as a

¹¹⁹ Baumer, "England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom," 36.

¹²⁰ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 10: 1603-1607* (London, 1900), p. 116-126, Doc. 169. "Cavass" is an anglicized variant of the Turkish *Kavass*, a courier.

result of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter and the English began to be associated with the Ottomans and Ottoman-ness.

CHAPTER 3

CAPTIVES, TRAVELERS, AND KINGS

Although Elizabeth backed away from the relationship she had established with the Ottoman Empire towards the end of her reign and successive English monarchs almost entirely downplayed the diplomatic relationship as a whole, the expansion of the English consciousness beyond Christendom and Continental Europe to the wider Mediterranean World can be seen in the ways that English playwrights, travel writers, and captives represented Ottomans and Islam in early modern English popular culture. Queen Elizabeth's successor, King James I (r. 1603-1625), displayed far less enthusiasm about England's burgeoning diplomatic and political relationship with the Ottoman Empire. In the late 1580s, while still King of Scotland, James broached the possibility of forming a "common corps of Christendom" with the Danish government that would consist of Scotland, Denmark, and various German Protestant states; invitations to the alliance were also to be extended to Spain, France, and England but, should any of these polities refuse to join, a "counter-league" would be formed against them.¹²¹ Even in 1601, two years before his accession to the throne, James had already reached out to the Safavid Shah, Abbas I (r. 1571-1629), "complimenting [him] on his military success against the Turk and hinting at assistance at the earliest opportunity."¹²² Above all,

¹²¹ Baumer, "England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom," 43-44.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 37. James also praised the work of the Shirley brothers, Robert and Anthony, who actively traded in Iran in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

however, James pursued a diplomatic course of action geared towards establishing and maintaining peace with Spain, and he formally ended England's alliance with Morocco and altered the way that English merchants traded in the Mediterranean.¹²³

Moreover, James was hesitant to continue to grant royal patronage to the Levant Company. Nicolo Molin, the Venetian ambassador to England, reported in October, 1604, that James "had no wish to continue friendly relations with the Turk; if the Company found an Ambassador necessary for their own interests they must pay for him themselves" which apparently caused an "uproar and commotion" from Levant Company agents and representatives.¹²⁴ Although James did end up keeping the Company's Consul at Constantinople in addition to expanding their field of operations to Italy, he also promised to send 6,000 English and Scottish troops to fight the Ottomans in Hungary; granted, he would only do so "when he saw the other Christian Sovereigns acting" cooperatively towards the destruction of their common foe.¹²⁵ The expansion and growth of the Levant Company, however, outweighed James's sentiments; in the first decade of the seventeenth century, the Company acquired powerful domestic allies

Anthony Shirley even acted as Shah Abbas I's (r. 1587-1629) envoy and beseeched Queen Elizabeth to aid the Safavids against the Ottomans in 1599.

¹²³ Maclean and Matar, 43.

¹²⁴ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 10: 1603-1607* (London, 1900), p. 184-189, Doc. 278.

¹²⁵ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 10: 1603-1607* (London, 1900), p. 264-269, Doc. 408.

including many Members of Parliament as the Company's trade had "become crucial to the development of English exports and power."¹²⁶

Thus, in spite of James's vocal Turco-phobia (himself an amateur poet, he composed stanzas praying for the downfall of the Ottoman state) individuals such as Sir Thomas Smythe, a close friend of the King's, a Member of Parliament, a former Governor of the Levant Company, and the first Governor of the East India Company, was instrumental in swaying James to see the benefits of expanding Levantine trade.¹²⁷ Just as Sir Francis Walsingham had done thirty years earlier, Smythe emphasized that large trading companies with large fleets maintained at private cost "increased [England's] naval resources."¹²⁸ Moreover, in a preview of the conflicts that would arise between the Crown and Parliament in the years to come, as long as the Levant Company continued to expand, James could impose royal taxes/tariffs that would augment his personal/the Crown's finances.¹²⁹ Consequently, English trade with the Ottoman Empire, via the

¹²⁶ Lee W. Eysturlid, "Where Everything is Weighed in the Scales of Material Interest: Anglo-Turkish Trade, Piracy, and Diplomacy in the Mediterranean," *The Journal of European Economic History* 22, no. 3 (1996): 617. Including costs, a typical voyage from England to the Levant produced profits of up to 300 percent.

¹²⁷ Wood, 31; Eysturlid, 617.

¹²⁸ Eysturlid, 617.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 617. Only Parliament had the authority to impose new taxes but the Crown could circumvent this via the terms and conditions of company charters as well as the imposition of tariffs on specific goods such as dried currants.

Levant Company, boomed after 1605 and English cloth rapidly overtook the market replacing similar French and Venetian goods.¹³⁰

The juxtaposed dichotomy of English attitudes towards the Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire, however, was still present in English thought: on the one hand, the Anglo-Ottoman relationship was easily the most lucrative commercial enterprise that England had until the East India Company overtook the Levant Company in profitability; and, on the other, English merchants were still intimately interacting with the hated adversary of Christendom. At the very beginning of James's reign in 1603, the Oxford historian Richard Knolles (d. 1610) published his epic *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, a "monumental compilation from foreign sources" that provided the literate English public with a survey of Ottoman history.¹³¹ Although Knolles was clearly ideologically, morally, and religiously hostile towards the Ottomans whom he characterized as they who "holdeth all the rest of the world in scorne, thundering out nothing but still [blood] and warre," his work nonetheless "provided dramatists and poets with exotic characters, remarkable scenes, and ingenious plots" that resulted in an explosion in English literary works and interest in all things Ottoman.¹³²

The publication of plays set in the Levant/Mediterranean with Ottoman/Muslim characters almost entirely coincides with the publication of numerous travelogues as well.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 618.

¹³¹ Maclean, *Looking East*, 4.

¹³² Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 1603. History. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 5; Maclean, *Looking East*, 4.

The first decade or so of James's reign saw the publication of Thomas Coryate's (1611), William Lithgow's (1614), George Sandys's (1615), and Fynes Moryson's (1617) travelogues and "fame, if not fortune, awaited those prepared to undertake the arduous journey beyond the edge of Christian Europe" and publish their experiences for the English public.¹³³ In terms of plays, *The Travailes of the three English brothers* (1607; a dramatization of the exploits of the Shirley Brothers), Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke* (1612), and Thomas Goffe's *The Raging Turke* (1613-1618?) and *The Couragious Turke* (1618) not only correlate with the publication of the above travelogues, but both bodies of literature came in the immediate wake of Knolles's *Generall Historie*.¹³⁴ Unlike the ambiguities of Robert Greene's *Selimus* (1594) and Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1587-1588) and *The Jew of Malta* (1589), all tragedies which lambasted and stereotyped Turks and Christians (and Jews in one case) and demonstrated a certain level of indifference towards the sectarian divides of the Mediterranean World, Goffe's works "replaces the ambiguities of these earlier plays with a one-dimensional Ottoman stereotype."¹³⁵ A perfect example of this from Goffe's *The Raging Turke* has Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) declare: "I'll ransack Christendome,

¹³³ Maclean, *Looking East*, 5.

¹³⁴ Maclean and Matar, 43; Dimmock, *New Turkes*, 201.

¹³⁵ Dimmock, *New Turkes*, 201.

Kings Daughters I'll [dis]embowell for a Sacrifice," and other similar early modern tropes about the monstrosity, cruelty, and warlike nature of the Turks.¹³⁶

Three of these travelogues, George Sandys's *A Relation of a Journey begun An. Dom. 1610* (1615), William Lithgow's *Total Discourse of the Rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteene Yeares Travayles, from Scotland, to the most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica* (1614), and Fynes Moryson's *An Itinerary* (1617) are of particular interest because of the focus of the authors in addition to what they do and do not say.¹³⁷ Each of these works covers the religions, histories, geographies, and peoples of Anatolia, Greece, Ottoman-Palestine, Egypt, Sicily, and Naples to name but a handful of the locales that these travelers describe. Moreover, each typically begins its accounts of a new area or region with a detailed historical description, often beginning in Biblical and/or Classical times, but when it comes to the history of the Ottomans themselves it is clear that they all rely heavily on Knolles's *Generall Historie*.

¹³⁶ Thomas Goffe, *The raging Turke, or, Baiazet the Second A tragedie written by Thomas Goffe*, 1631. Play. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 54. Note: the publication date listed on EEBO is in fact inaccurate and most likely indicates an additional publishing date after the play was first written.

¹³⁷ George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey begun in An. Dom. 1610*, 1615. Travel Narrative. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-164, p. 1-309; Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary*, 1617. Travel Narrative. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-457, p. 1-888; William Lithgow, *Total Discourse of the Rare Adventures, and painefull Peregrinations of long nineteene Yeares Travayles, from Scotland, to the most Famous Kingdomes in Europe, Asia, and Affrica*, 1614. Travel Narrative. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-68, p. 1-126. Lithgow's travelogue is often cited as having been published in 1632 but a very rare first edition was in fact published in 1614.

Although Sandys describes Sultan Ahmed I (r. 1603-1617) as a sort of exoticized, philandering, Ottoman-Caligula in a mixture of condemnation and disgust, the reader is still left with an image of admiration for the power and strength of the Ottoman Empire in comparison to fractious and sectarian Christendom:

[Consider] the amplitude of [the Sultan's] dominions: being possesst of two Empires, above twenty kingdoms, beside divers rich and populous Cities; together with the Red, most of the Mid-land, the Aegean, Euxine, and Proponticke seas. But it may be imputed to the barbarous wastes of the Turkish conquests: who depopulate whole countries, and never reedifie [sic] what they ruine. So that a great part of his Empire is but thinly inhabited, (I except the Cities) and that for the most part by Christians: whose poverty is their onely safety and protectresse.¹³⁸

The Turks were powerful but still a plague upon the mostly Christian space that they had conquered. To Sandys the power and majesty of the Ottomans were impressive but fleeting in a way similar to Palmira Brummett's discussion of the "iconography of possession." That is, from 1453 onwards, Christendom continued to perceive and assert possession of all Christian space occupied by the Ottomans and "historical claims and imagined possession were just as valid as actual occupation in determining whose space was whose."¹³⁹ For Sandys, like many in Christendom, "the vision of the Ottomans as heretical marauders rather than legitimate rulers [suggests] a notion of the empire as

¹³⁸ Sandys, *A Relation*, Image 44, p. 76-77.

¹³⁹ Palmira Brummett, "'Turks' and 'Christians:': The Iconography of Possession in the Depiction of the Ottoman-Venetian-Hapsburg Frontiers, 1550-1689," in *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660*, eds. Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 114.

transitory, an imposition on Christian space that would not be permitted to stand” - an imposition that is, that could eventually be retaken through Christian vigilance.¹⁴⁰

Moreover, the travelogues of Sandys, Lithgow and Moryson show how the expansion in the English worldview, made possible by a regular flow of English visitors to the Levant, especially Jerusalem and Christianity’s other Sacred Cities, and their exposure to the religious tolerance found in Ottoman lands (as part of the larger *Pax Ottomana*), served as a model for English-Protestant identity and notions of English exceptionalism. Although all three travelers articulated the same mixture of anxiety and admiration as expressed by Sandys, they all expressed far more animosity towards Catholicism and the Catholic (Jesuits and Franciscans in this case) caretakers and tour-guides of Jerusalem’s sites, shines, and monuments, all of which were “entirely under the care of non-Protestants.”¹⁴¹ Exposure to Ottoman society, furthermore, subsequently resulted in all three travelers’ captivation with the “sophistication, order, and strength” that they witnessed, which served as a “foil to a divided and corrupted Christendom” personified by the ultra-idolatrous habits and practices of Jerusalem’s Catholics which were naturally abhorrent to any and every self-respecting Protestant Englishman.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 118.

¹⁴¹ Daniel J. Viktus, “Trafficking with the Turk: English Travelers in the Ottoman Empire during the Early Seventeenth Century,” in *Travel Knowledge: European “Discoveries” in the Early Modern Period*, eds. Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 39. For Sandys, see Images 86-94; for Lithgow, see Images 47-61; and for Moryson, see Images 121-133, Part I, p. 216-241.

¹⁴² Viktus, “Trafficking with the Turk,” 39.

Even though Jerusalem had been under Ottoman control for nearly 100 years when these travelers made their respective journeys to the Holy City, the city and the sites around it remained prominent pilgrimage destinations. Moryson, Sandys, and Lithgow however, were no pilgrims; quite the opposite, they were “anti-pilgrims.”¹⁴³ Although all three travelers at times felt compelled to worship and make donations at particular sites, more often than not they were “moved to contempt and scorn” and they all expressed their “skepticism and [testified] to the false ‘idolatry’ or ‘superstition’ of the other Christians who continued to uphold the importance of pilgrimage and the cult of saints.”¹⁴⁴ Moryson, for example, complains about the “many Christians and Jewes [who] brought us divers [toys], to buy and carry with us, being of no worth, save onely that they were far fetcht, namely, beades for Papists to number their praiers.”¹⁴⁵ Sandys, additionally, commented on the materialistic and rapacious nature of Jerusalem’s supposedly Christian keepers:

O who can without sorrow, without indignation behold the enemies of Christ to be the Lords of his Sepulcher! Who at [festival] times sit mounted under a Canopie, to gather [money] of such as do enter: the profits arising thereof being farmed at eight thousand Sultanies [sic]...due at the gate of the Citie: but the Christians that do subject to the *Turk*, do pay but a trifle in respect thereof.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Ibid., 41.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 41.

¹⁴⁵ Moryson, Image 130, Part I, p. 234-235.

¹⁴⁶ Sandys, Image 88, p. 160-161. By “Sultanies” Sandys most likely refers to the early modern Ottoman currency, the *akçe*.

Lithgow, finally, uses the harshest language to condemn the non-Protestant practices in Jerusalem and he denounces the City's Christians (and non-Protestant Christians in general) as being worse than Muslims:

Yet succeeding Popes, and the [Roman] Empire being divided in East and West, introduced again the dregs of their old Heathenish and *Roman* Idolatry: and yet they will not be content with the bare name of Images, but they impose a surname or epithite of sanctitie, terming them holy Images. Truly I may say, if it were not for these Images, and superstitious Idolatries, they assigne to them, the *Turks* had long ago bene converted to the *Christian* Faith.¹⁴⁷

Thus in all three travelogues the dominant English Protestant stereotypes and tropes about Catholicism are reinforced and solidified via first-hand experience. From Moryson's lamentations about materialism/cultish consumerism to Sandys's indignation at Catholic racketeering to Lithgow's outright attack on idolatry, these three travelers' disgust at the practices or their quasi-coreligionists is almost palpable. Yet, the above passage from Lithgow's narrative is perhaps the most powerful as he seems to imply that pre-Reformation Christian idolatry was the principle factor in preventing the triumph of Christianity over Islam. Even at the beginning of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter Queen Elizabeth was careful to present herself as the defender of Christianity against the idolatry of Catholicism, an unmistakable appeal "to the basic religious tenets of her Islamic correspondents" and a means by which she could differentiate England, herself, and Protestantism as a whole, from the Papacy and the Hapsburgs.¹⁴⁸ Lithgow's

¹⁴⁷ Lithgow, *Image* 83, p. 150.

¹⁴⁸ Skilliter, *William Harborne*, 74-75. See also, Queen Elizabeth I, Document Eleven: "Translation of the letter from Queen Elizabeth I to Mustafa Beg. Greenwich, 25 October 1579," as cited in Skilliter (1977), 73-74.

reasoning could have been further influenced by Sultan Murad III's well-known open letter to the "Members of the Lutheran sect in Flanders and Spain" in which he commended and paid his respects to Protestantism:

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 stating that God Almighty is one and Holy Jesus is His 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 to that path of error.¹⁴⁹

While it is certain that no lack of idolatry on the part of Christendom could have ever caused the Turks to turn Christian, Lithgow's travelogue indicates that, overall, English Protestantism was much more willing to accommodate Islam than Catholicism and that the discourse between Islam and Protestantism was much more fluid and "accepting" even if only on a very basal level.

This shift in perception and representation, even with a new monarch with vastly different prerogatives than his predecessor, nonetheless did not substantially change the basis of the relationship between England and the Ottoman Empire. Throughout James's reign but particularly in the early years, European diplomats and ambassadors continued to compose reports exposing the scandalous details of the commercial side of the relationship. In January 1606 for instance, the Venetian ambassador to Constantinople

¹⁴⁹ Sultan Murad III, Letter to the "Members of the Lutheran sect in Flanders and Spain," 1574, as cited in Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 62.

reported that “the English are accustomed to bring into Constantinople at least five hundred barrels of powder every year.”¹⁵⁰ Moreover, it was not merely an issue of English merchants showing up in the Levant with cargo-holds full of gunpowder and munitions; on the contrary, it was a two-way street. In August 1607, the Venetian ambassador to England reported that a certain Ottoman agent had arrived in England, via France, and was “being entertained by the Company of Turkey Merchants,” the purpose of his journey being to “deal with the question of the damage inflicted by the English *bertons* on shipping in the Levant and to secure the export of powder and arms for the Turks.”¹⁵¹

Another scandal for the English, in both the Islamic and Christian areas of the Mediterranean, was that of piracy. Privateering had been official state policy under Queen Elizabeth as a result of Anglo-Spanish rivalry but the lucrative nature of the enterprise prevented the practice from ever being extinguished.¹⁵² Aided by a growing English diaspora in Northwestern Africa and friendly ports along the Southern coast of the Mediterranean that was under de facto Ottoman control, English privateers terrorized the Mediterranean shipping lanes preying on Muslim and Christian shipping alike (recall

¹⁵⁰ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 10: 1603-1607* (London, 1900), p. 307-317, Doc. 470.

¹⁵¹ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 11: 1607-1610* (London, 1904), p. 18-28, Doc. 43. A “berton” is a type of ship, also referred to as a barque, barc, or bark.

¹⁵² Eysturlid, 618.

the *Bark Roe* incident and the exploits of John Ward).¹⁵³ Piracy, so it seems, “represented an outlet for the numerous individual investors who wished to trade in [the Mediterranean and the Levant] but were excluded due to the [Levant] Company’s monopoly,” and the Company actively petitioned both the Crown and the State to suppress this disruption of trade even though many Company captains actively engaged in piracy on their own accord.¹⁵⁴ The end result of this debacle was that, even though James did not want to engage with the Ottomans at all, he was now forced into the difficult position of explaining to the Ottoman, Spanish, French, and Venetian governments that the English State was “not directly involved, and therefore not responsible.”¹⁵⁵ In November 1613 for example, the English ambassador to Constantinople, Sir Paul Pindar (d. 1650), was called before the Grand Vizier to account for the “damage inflicted by English [vessels]” against Ottoman shipping “amounting to 300,000 [ducats].”¹⁵⁶ English piracy against Ottoman shipping had in fact become such a serious problem that that same year the Ottoman Imperial Council “sent five galleys of lumber to Egypt for construction of a fleet” to put an end to the matter.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Nabil Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Viktus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 2.

¹⁵⁴ Eysturlid, 619.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 620.

¹⁵⁶ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 13: 1613-1615* (London, 1907), p. 62-71, Doc. 135.

¹⁵⁷ Inalcik, 247.

The explosion in English piracy, however, renewed fears of cultural pollution through extended contact with the non-Christian other. Commercial seafaring, in the early modern period as today, has encouraged pluralism and caused the breakdown of social and religious barriers. Just like the diverse ethnic/religious composition of Ottoman galley crews, English pirate and merchant vessels were often crewed by a mixture of Europeans and Muslims although always captained by an Englishman.¹⁵⁸ The abandonment of religious hostility towards one another by these seafarers, combined with his efforts to improve England's reputation vis-à-vis Continental Europe, consequently, led James to adopt a sort of zero-tolerance policy towards "mariners with reputations for illegal activities" who were denied the "right of return."¹⁵⁹ Piracy aside, the common fear that was central to James's policy was that returning mariners "had most likely been contaminated by Islam:" in at least one instance, when a handful of returning mariners were caught in England, they were "hanged from the docks at Wapping, where their bodies were repeatedly drowned and revealed with the shift in the tide" as a "grim warning to all returning mariners."¹⁶⁰

An unintended consequence of this expansion in English piracy, however, was a reciprocal expansion in Islamic piracy. The decline in Ottoman naval activity in the Western Mediterranean following the Battle of Lepanto gave the Ottoman tributaries in

¹⁵⁸ Giancarlo Casale, "The Ethnic Composition of Ottoman Ship Crews and the 'Rumi Challenge' to Portuguese Identity," *Medieval Encounters* no. 13 (2007): 122-144; Eysturlid, 620.

¹⁵⁹ Maclean and Matar, 43; Eysturlid, 620.

¹⁶⁰ Maclean and Matar, 43.

Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia enough autonomy to become proverbial dens of thieves, and pirate captains “always had the official support and cooperation of the [local] *diwan* and the *basha*” who obviously received a cut.¹⁶¹ The expansion of Islamic piracy also coincided with the second expulsion of Moriscos from Spain (1609-1614), and the Moriscos who settled in North Africa brought with them a “hatred of Christians that did not always distinguish Protestant from Catholic, [or] English from Spanish;” subsequently, the number of Englishmen and Scotsmen captured, imprisoned, and/or sold in North African slave markets skyrocketed in the early seventeenth century and remained a hot-button issue that captivated the English public through the century’s end.¹⁶²

While the travelogues in question were always set in and around the Levant, Anatolia, and the Balkans, captivity narratives were almost exclusively set in North Africa and the Barbary Coast. In both bodies of literature, however, the terms “Turk,” “Mosalman/Musulman,” and “Moor” are used interchangeably: religion, pure and simple, was the defining criteria for these ethnic/racial descriptions; but, in captivity narratives at least, there appears to be more differentiation due to a different and more intimate captive/captor relationship which is further blurred by the pluralistic composition of

¹⁶¹ Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 6-7.

¹⁶² Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 71-73; Maclean and Matar, 136; Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 4-8.

Barbary pirate ships and Ottoman subjects living in and operating out of North Africa.¹⁶³ Religiously, moreover, the captivity narratives of this period convey an unjustified validation of Christian superiority in the face of “monstrous” and corrupting Islam in a deeply rationalized way. In fact, all captivity narratives that contain examples of conversion by captives to Islam all end with the “triumph of Anglo-Christianity and victory over the cruelty, allure, and exoticism of North Africa” and the overall theme that “Englishness and Christianity could not be defeated.”¹⁶⁴

For the captives and the vast majority of the English population (and Christendom for that matter), albeit with the exception of the travel writers and agents of the Levant Company, the monstrosity of the Turks and of Islam in general was “embodied in their ‘race’ and inherent in [Muslims’] religion” as an extension of prevailing Medieval/Crusading attitudes updated and retrofitted for the geopolitical context of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁶⁵ These wider English abstractions and representations of Islam, therefore, become “merely a facet of a Christian self-image, a manifestation of sin within a Christian moral universe,” which performed the function of pointing out “danger and theological divergence, while simultaneously recognizing Islam as a manifestation of the will of a Christian God” where both Prophet and religion were

¹⁶³ Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen*, 57-58; Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 7-12.

¹⁶⁴ Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 39.

¹⁶⁵ Matthew Dimmock, “‘A Human Head to the Neck of a Horse’: Hybridity, Monstrosity and Early Christian Conceptions of Muhammad and Islam,” in *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660*, eds. Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 81.

characterized as “monstrous birth, as scourge of God, as an infectious plague or as a beast of *Revelation*.”¹⁶⁶ While these representations sought to uphold and reinforce a classic dichotomy of “us” versus “them,” they also served a more practical purpose when it came to the captives themselves.

Of the various means that English captives could be liberated from their state of bondage such as escape, military rescue, or renouncement of Christendom (still a state of captivity but closer to the social role of the Janissaries), ransoming was a popular option.¹⁶⁷ Established during the reign of Henry VIII, the Corporation of the Trinity House was a semi-governmental body charged with overseeing sailors’ affairs including the extension of mediation services to the families of captives.¹⁶⁸ The Trinity House would issue “certificates” to “collectors” who would visit churches, towns, and villages and tell “tales of horror about the captors, thereby projecting a frightening image of the Turks and Moors,” and collectors were given a sort of script which “often included a formula warning people that unless they offered money, the captive would remain unransomed and would subsequently ‘turn Turk’ and so be lost to their families and country.”¹⁶⁹

These tropes about Islam, Moors, and Turks, can be found, almost verbatim, in John Rawlins’s captivity narrative, *The Famous and Wonderful Recovery of a Ship of*

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 81-83.

¹⁶⁷ Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 23-25.

¹⁶⁸ Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen*, 131-132.

¹⁶⁹ Matar, “Introduction,” in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, 25.

Bristol, Called the Exchange, from the Turkish Pirates of Argier published in 1622.¹⁷⁰ In November, 1621, Rawlins was employed as a sailor in the Western Mediterranean on a number of ships owned and chartered by the “merchants of Plymouth” when he and his shipmates were accosted and captured off the Straits of Gibraltar by Algerian corsairs.¹⁷¹ What is particularly striking about Rawlins’s narrative is his vivid description of the methods used by his captors to force him, and the “five hundred” other English captives, to convert to Islam. After the local Pasha had chosen “one out of every eight for a present or fee to himself” the rest, including Rawlins, were sold at market.¹⁷² The captives sold into slavery then had two options: “either to turn Turk or to attend their filthiness and impieties,” whereby Rawlins’s account of the slaves’ torment begins.¹⁷³

They commonly lay [the captives] on their naked backs or bellies, beating them so long till they bleed at the nose and mouth, and if yet they continue constant, then they strike the teeth out of their heads, pinch them by their tongues, and use many other sorts of tortures to convert them. Nay, many times, they lay them their whole length in the ground like a grave and so cover them with boards, threatening to starve them if they will not turn. And so many, even for fear of torment and death, make their tongues betray their hearts to a most fearful wickedness and so are circumcised with new names and brought to confess a new religion.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ John Rawlins, *The Famous and Wonderful Recovery of a Ship of Bristol, Called the Exchange, from the Turkish Pirates of Argier* (1622), in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Viktus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 98-120.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 102-103.

Rawlins's sensationalist language fits perfectly with many of the dominant stereotypes about the monstrosity of Islam and Muslims and he was clearly aware of his audience to whom he directly addresses when he states that, "although it would make a Christian's heart bleed to hear of the same, yet must the truth not be hid, nor the terror left untold."¹⁷⁵

While the idea of the cruelty of the Turks was certainly reinforced by Rawlins, his captivity narrative also substantiates another common trope/fear that was, perhaps, more worrying to his audience, that is, the corrupting effects of exposure to Islam. After being brought to market with seven other Englishmen Rawlins was sold to a certain Rammetham Rise, an English renegade who had "turn'd Turk" and whose Christian name was Henry Chandler of Southwark.¹⁷⁶ Chandler, whom Rawlins describes as an "English Turk," was one of many English and Dutch renegades operating out of Algeria who crewed their ships with English, Dutch, and French slaves as gunners, riggers, and sailors due to their maritime experience.¹⁷⁷ By early February 1622, Rawlins and some of the other slaves devised a successful scheme to take over their ship: after slaughtering the Muslim crew and commandeering the ship, Rawlins "brought the captain [Chandler] and five more [English-Turks] into England" along with all the apostate-slaves "who

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 102.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 104. Viktus notes that "Rammetham" was a mis-transliteration of "Ramadan," so Chandler's Muslim name would have been Ramadan Reis.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 104-105.

were willing to be reconciled to their true Savior.”¹⁷⁸ Overall, Rawlins describes the corrupting allure of Islam as a seduction “with the hopes of riches, honor, preferment, and such devilish baits to catch the souls of mortal men and entangle frailty in the terriers of horrible abuses and imposturing deceit.”¹⁷⁹ Rawlins’s captivity narrative perfectly encapsulated many of the popular public anxieties about Islam; and, as the issue of piracy and captivity only became more terrifying and serious as Levantine trade increased, James was obligated to pursue diplomatic, political, and military channels in order to curb the problem or at least present an image of effective policy to a distraught public.

Although James made many attempts to stamp out or at least curb the expansion of Islamic piracy and the dramatic increase in the number of English subjects held in captivity, they were all quite fruitless. Roughly one year before Rawlins was captured, James gave his support to the formation of the twenty-five-ship “Algiers Fleet” with the direct intention of solving the issue once and for all.¹⁸⁰ The fleet eventually returned to England in 1621 (the year Rawlins was captured) without accomplishing anything except “aggravating the pirates, who simply fled the area patrolled.”¹⁸¹ With the dismal failure of the military option (and the £20,700 debt that it accrued), James was ultimately forced to utilize the services of Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador to the Ottoman Empire,

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 117. For the details and development of Rawlins’s escape plan, see pages 109-116.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 117.

¹⁸⁰ Eysturlid, 621.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 621.

to forge a treaty with the Barbary pirates, thus securing the release of hundreds of English subjects held captive in Algeria and Tunisia in 1623.¹⁸² Part of the agreement, however, resulted in the English state paying tribute to the pirates to prevent further attacks. While this was certainly extortion, it remained the only surefire way to keep the incredibly lucrative English trade in the Eastern Mediterranean safe and profitable.¹⁸³

Moreover, even though James vocally supported the idea of a “common corps of Christendom,” his support for his son-in-law Frederick, “the Elector of the Rhineland Palatinate and leader of the German Protestant Union” in the Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648), caused him to do a surprising ideological about-face. In 1623, James also used Roe to prevent the signing of a truce between the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire “in hopes of diverting the Hapsburg military forces then facing Frederick” and also requesting that Parliament and the Levant Company, divert some £1,000,000 in monies generating from Levantine trade to the “proposed Palatinate campaign.”¹⁸⁴

Thus, by the end of his reign at his death in 1625, James’s vacillating relationship with the Ottomans, the Islamic World, and Christendom had evolved in complex and significant ways. In James’s attitudes and actions, much like the travelogues of Moryson, Sandys, and Lithgow, ambivalence, anxiety, admiration, and loathing were all entwined. The English economy needed to trade safely in the Eastern Mediterranean to develop and

¹⁸² Ibid., 624-625.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 625.

¹⁸⁴ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 18: 1623-1625* (London, 1912), p. 571-580, Doc. 791; Eysturlid, 624.

pursue new routes to the Indian Ocean World and to fund exploratory voyages to the New World; however, access to the dominions of the Ottoman Empire also provided the English with a unique opportunity for self-reflection to, ironically, distinguish themselves from other Europeans. Ultimately, for James, and his subjects, the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic World were entities that could not simply be ignored.

CHAPTER 4

MATTERS OF DIFFERENCE

By the beginning of James's son Charles I's reign in 1625, the Levant Company was securely established in the Eastern Mediterranean having rapidly become an integral part of England's expanding commercial empire. As Charles emulated and exceeded his father's spendthrift personal policies, however, the Company and its agents became

caught between the Crown and Parliament as England inched closer and closer to civil war. Throughout Charles's reign, up to his execution by Parliamentary forces in 1649, the nature of English representation of the Ottoman Empire and Islam changed yet again as Royalists and Parliamentarians entrenched themselves ideologically as is demonstrated by travelogues, captivity narratives, and contemporary English political pamphlets. Whereas heretofore Continental Catholic commentators and English Protestant clergy and statesmen had used the Ottomans as a foil against one another, from the period leading up to the English Civil Wars to the aftermath of Charles's execution the Ottomans and Islam were suddenly invoked by both factions as millenarian Protestant-Parliamentarian portent on the one hand, and Royalist/Catholic domestic and international Jeremiad on the other.

As English merchants began to trade and establish themselves in the Indian Ocean World, beginning in the 1620s with the establishment of factories in Bengal and the official consent of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan in 1634, two different tropes and representations of Islam emerged. In the Mediterranean, although direct visitors to the Ottoman Empire balanced their anxiety with their admiration, Islam still "posed an inescapable danger of conversion and co-option" as was demonstrated by John Rawlins's captivity narrative.¹⁸⁵ In the Indian Ocean World, where Islam also reigned supreme, however, the primary enemies that English merchants faced were the Christians with whom they were competing for trade; namely, the Dutch and the Portuguese.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Maclean and Matar, 138.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

Individuals such as Sir Henry Middleton (d. 1613) and other English merchants resultantly “had little to say about Islam” even after conducting trade and wandering through India’s hinterland and littoral areas because they were competing with other Christians for access and commercial control in Muslim space.¹⁸⁷

Until the beginning of Charles’s reign all captivity narratives had been set in and around the Mediterranean; however, between 1625 and 1640 no new captivity narratives were licensed for publication even though the number of Englishmen held in captivity in the Mediterranean was higher than it had been previously.¹⁸⁸ The lack of newly published captivity narratives, however, has a convenient political explanation: Charles, already facing substantial domestic unrest, “would not have approved of publishing captivity accounts that showed the brutality” of Muslims, whom his subjects were actively trading with throughout the Islamic World which would have also highlighted the “incompetence of his administration and navy.”¹⁸⁹ This explosion in the numbers of English captives touched off a social crisis of sorts as the wives and families of captives “took to the streets and petitioned [Charles], Parliament, the Privy Council, and any body in authority for assistance, warning that if nothing was done about ransoming their sons and husbands, they might convert to Islam.”¹⁹⁰ The fear of conversion and the

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 138.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 138.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 139.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 139.

contaminating and corrupting contagion that Islam continued to represent to English subjects was publicly expressed in church services such as Edward Kellett's March 1627 sermon, *A Returne from Argier*.¹⁹¹ Kellett's sermon was primarily concerned with a "Countryman of ours" who had been captured, "for sooke the Christian Religion, and turned *Turke*," but, after "being made to understand the grievousnesse of his Apostacy," desired "to be reconciled to the Church, unto which he was admitted by the authority of the Lord Bishop of that Dioces" and paid "pennance for his Apostacy."¹⁹²

Even though the unnamed captive had served on a "*Turkish Ship*, which was taken by an *Englishman* of warre," he was not summarily executed and publicly displayed as other mariners had been during James's reign. He was instead allowed (albeit after displaying his penance) to rejoin the flock as a result most certainly of the growing social outrage. *A Returne from Argier*, nonetheless, could not be more negative in its portrayal of the monstrosity of Islam:

Mahomet, that *Rake-shame* of the World. ... the *Rauisher* of his Mastresse. ... Let *Mahomet* be branded for a Juggler, a Mount-bank, a beastiall people pleaser; ingrossing beliefe to him and his contrarie to Truth, Reason, or sound Religion: which Mis-beliefe he hath established by the sword, and not by Arguments; upheld by violence and compulsion; or tempting allurements of the world; forcing, or deluding the soules of men, rather than perswading by evidence of veritie.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ Edward Kellett, *A Returne from Argier*, 1627. Sermon. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 1-42, p. 1-78.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, Image 2.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, Image 13-14, p. 21-22.

Ironically, Kellett's sermon entirely fails to address the issue of Englishmen in captivity or the fact that the unnamed captive's family were elated to have their relative back: instead he chastises him on his transgression for "beleeving in so notorious a monster as *Mahomet* was: And in his law, which is so full of beastly and sencelesse lies."¹⁹⁴

Even though new accounts continued to reinforce existing stereotypes, they also drew attention to Charles's failures as an administrator and his increasingly absolutist policies.¹⁹⁵ Charles's miserable financial situation, in part because of his support of French Huguenots in the Thirty Years' War, led to an escalating series of conflicts between the Crown and Parliament over Charles's attempts to collect and impose taxes. Customs duties on "tonnage and poundage" of imported goods, for instance, had traditionally been granted to the Crown by Parliament, but Charles's first Parliament, worried about his extreme spending, restricted his ability to collect these duties (of which Levant Company imports were a part) to a year-by-year basis, and he subsequently dissolved Parliament.¹⁹⁶

Unfortunately for Charles, the problem simply would not go away and he was inundated with petitions from captives' family members and, in at least one case, some captives themselves. A short petition, written by thirty-eight English captives in Morocco in 1631 and delivered to Charles in 1632, implored Charles's "gracious

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., Image 11, p. 17.

¹⁹⁵ Maclean and Matar, 139.

¹⁹⁶ Derek Hirst, *England in Conflict, 1603-1660: Kingdom, Community, Commonwealth* (London: Arnold, 1999), 114, 125-129.

goodness and princely compassion to commiserate and think upon the distressed estate of...Your Majesty's poor subjects, slaves under the king of Morocus, who have lived here some twenty years, some sixteen, some twelve...[some] seven...in most miserable bondage."¹⁹⁷ Moreover, domestically, in 1635 for instance, Clara Bowyer, Margaret Hall, Elizabeth Ensam, and Elizabeth Newland, along with "a thousand poor women and upwards," petitioned the king directly to rescue their husbands:¹⁹⁸

[The] Petitioners husbands being all seafaring men have been at several times taken by the Sallee [Salé in Western Morocco] men-of-war and taken to Sallee, where some of them have been three years and some more in woful slavery, enduring extreme labor, want of sustenance, and grievous torments, and, which is the greatest of all, in want of the spiritual food of their souls, but of which estate they cannot be redeemed but by death or extraordinary circumstances...¹⁹⁹

With the significant increase in the public's demand that the king and all other semblances of authority take immediate action, Charles's predicament was worsened by the growing tenacity of the Barbary pirates. On 20 June 1636, it was reported that "four sail of Turks" were preying upon fishing boats off the English coast with numerous "lamentable complaints of widows and children."²⁰⁰ Unsatisfied with merely terrorizing the shipping lanes of the Mediterranean, the Barbary pirates now presented a clear and

¹⁹⁷ Richard Martin, Appendix 4: "Petition Sent by English Captives in Morocco to King Charles I" (1632), as cited in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Viktus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 359-360.

¹⁹⁸ *Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1635-1636* (London, 1866), p. 15, Doc. 85.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

²⁰⁰ *Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1636-1637* (London, 1867), p. 4, Doc. 12.

present danger to the littoral areas of England, Ireland, and Wales. This particular report contains two depositions from local fisherman, one from Looe, the other from Plymouth: the former reported that the Turks took “a bark of Bristol with 30 passengers in her, bound for Ireland, besides two boats coming out of Kinsdale, and carried every person of them away;” and the latter reporting that “on the 15th instant three fisher-boats...and about 50 men in them...were taken by the Turks, who carried both men and boats away.”²⁰¹ Thus, not only had four Turkish galleys carried away nearly 100 passengers and fisherman but, in one case, this was the “15th instant” indicating that this was rapidly becoming a systemic and regular problem.

These events finally compelled Charles to act and he “sent his fleet against Salé and ransomed hundreds of captives who reached England in September and October” of 1637.²⁰² Although this action apparently “improved the king’s standing in the eyes of the trading companies and their beleaguered sailors,” it was still feared that many of these returning captives had been corrupted by converting to Islam and, given the increasing public scrutiny and the sheer numbers involved, a procedure to re-enter English society had to be developed.²⁰³ The Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud (d. 1645), composed *A Form of Penance and Reconciliation of a Renegado or Apostate from the Christian Religion to Turkism* which outlined a seven-step procedure “following a excommunication and submission for contrition” that culminated in a “formal

²⁰¹ *Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1636-1637* (London, 1867), p. 4-5, Doc. 12-I, 12-II.

²⁰² Maclean and Matar, 139.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 140.

reconciliation of apostate, church, and congregation.”²⁰⁴ Overall, these proceedings illustrate a distinct change in English attitudes towards Islam over a very brief period of time: whereas, only two decades previously, returning mariners suspected of conversion or collusion with the Turks would have been promptly executed, now they had a chance at reconciliation. Extenuating circumstances required new approaches and if it were not for the unprecedented involvement of hundreds if not thousands of wives and mothers, as the 1635 petition suggests, it is unclear whether or not these returning captives and supposed apostates would have been given a chance at “penance and reconciliation.”

In spite of the lack of licensed captivity narratives during the first fifteen years of Charles’s reign, travelogues describing the Ottoman Empire, such as Sir Henry Blount’s *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636) continued to circulate to great acclaim with Blount’s work republished eight times in English by 1671, and a first edition in German in 1687.²⁰⁵ In *A Voyage*, which details his journey which began in 1634, Blount simply states that his reason for wanting to see the Ottoman Empire was that “I was of opinion, that he who would behold these times in their greatest glory, could not finde a better scene than *Turky*,” a blatant statement of his intellectual curiosity, yet free of pretentious

²⁰⁴ William Laud, Appendix 5: “A Form of Penance and Reconciliation of a Renegado or Apostate from the Christian Religion to Turkism” (1637), as cited in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. Daniel J. Viktus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 361-366; Burton, 150; Maclean and Matar, 140.

²⁰⁵ Leslie Stephan and Sidney Lee, “Blount, Sir Henry (1602-1682), in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. V, eds. Leslie Stephan and Sidney Lee. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1885), 247-248.

denigrations based on commonplace stereotypes.²⁰⁶ Blount then specifically explains his reasons for the trip:

First, to observe the Religion, Manners, and policie of the *Turkes*, not perfectly, (which were a taske for an inhabitant rather then a passenger,) but so farre forth, as might satisfie this scruple, (to wit) whether to an unpartiall conceit, the *Turkish* way appeare absolutely barbarous, as we are given to understand, or rather an other kinde of civilitie, different from ours, but no lesse pretending.²⁰⁷

Thus, even from the very beginning of his narrative, Blount explains to his audience that his journey was a fact-finding expedition to see whether or not the nature of the ‘Turks’ was as it was commonly represented or they were simply “different” in their ways.

Motivations and intellectual curiosity aside, Blount was clearly impressed with what he observed in the Ottoman Empire. While en route to Constantinople, Blount encountered an encamped Ottoman military force “pitch’d on the Shoare of [the Danube River]” and he was invited by “Murath Basha,” the commander, for sherbet and coffee, who asked him if he would like to join the Ottoman army who were then in the midst of a campaign against Poland.²⁰⁸ Blount replied:

[Murath Basha] asked if my Law did permit me to serve under [the Turks] going against the *Polacke* who is a *Christian*; promising with his hand upon his breast, that if I would, I should be inrolled of his Companies, firnished with a good Horse, and of other necessaries be provided with the rest of his Household; I humbly thanked him, for his favor, and told him that to an *Englishman* it was lawfull to serve under any who were in League with our *King*, and that our *King* had not only a

²⁰⁶ Henry Blount, *A Voyage into the Levant*, London, 1636 (Norwood: Walter J. Johnson, Inc. 1977), 2.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

League with the [Sultan], but continually held an *Embassadour* at his Court, esteeming him the greatest *Monarch* in the *World* so that my Service there... would be exceedingly well received in *England*; and the *Polacke*, though in name a *Christian*, yet of a *Sect*, which for *Idolatry*, and many other points, we much abhorred...²⁰⁹

Blount politely refused because his lack of language skills would have made him an incapable commander, but he was nonetheless flattered by Murath Basha's inquiry. Blount's response, moreover, is curious in his willingness to accommodate Islam when compared and contrasted to Catholicism. Just like George Sandys, William Lithgow, and Fynes Moryson, Blount condemned Catholic superstition and idolatry outright; but, unlike those three travel writers of James's reign, Blount appears to have considered the Ottomans as worthy of his respect and admiration.

In spite of his admiration for Ottoman order and military prowess, however, Blount nonetheless represents Ottoman socio cultural traits as a juxtaposed dichotomy. Like many English early modern travel writers, Blount focused on Ottoman punishment, torture, and violence, but also on Islam as a "religion based on sexual license" which allowed polygamy, sodomy, and "instant" divorce.²¹⁰ This dichotomy, with "horrid executions" on one end and the Sultan's harem on the other, however, were not mutually exclusive as "Turkish cruelty was also linked to sensuality, as European authors sought to effeminate the masculine power they feared and envied."²¹¹ To Blount, the management of the "sword," which was the basis of Islamic religion and society, made the "rude" and

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 15.

²¹⁰ Viktus, "Trafficking with the Turk," 47-48.

²¹¹ Ibid., 47. See also, Blount, 52.

the “sensual,” that much more “vigorous” and therefore, powerful.²¹² Blount’s almost exclusive focus on the exotic can be seen, consequently as an Ottomanist perspective, as distinct from wider Orientalism.

As Charles’s rule became ever more absolutist (he governed England without convening Parliament from 1629 to 1640; his so-called Personal Rule), the power wielded by his Ottoman counterpart was something that that he most likely envied. From almost the beginning of his reign, Charles’s gaze fell on the Levant Company in his search for additional revenue. In particular, the “strangers’ consulage,” a fee “paid by foreigners who shipped their wares” in English ships, became increasingly attractive.²¹³ In spite of well-established legal rulings favoring the Crown over Levant Company merchants’ rights such as *Bates’ Case*, the Company had always retained the monies generated by the strangers’ consulage to cover operating expenses such as the consuls’ salaries, accommodations, and so forth, which, by the early to mid seventeenth century were considerable with consulates in Constantinople, Alexandria, Aleppo, and Izmir.²¹⁴

²¹² Blount, 78.

²¹³ Mark Charles Fissel, “Early Stuart Absolutism and the Strangers’ Consulage,” in *Law and Authority in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to Thomas Garden Barnes*, eds. Buchanan Sharp and Mark Charles Fissel (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 186. As English merchants gained ascendancy in the Eastern Mediterranean, the Venetians and others found it increasingly useful to ship goods on English ships and receive the benefits of England’s superior capitulations as well as armed English naval escorts.

²¹⁴ *Bates’ Case* was a landmark English legal decision brought to court in 1606: John Bates, a Levant Company merchant, refused to pay a new import tariff imposed by James I; the Court of the Exchequer, however, sided with the Crown thereby establishing, albeit briefly, a legal precedent favoring the Crown’s over merchants’ rights. See also,

Prior to Charles's reign, the English ambassador to the Ottoman Empire had always been a company-man even though he occupied a position responsible to both Company and Crown.²¹⁵

Charles, however, threw the relationship into disarray when he began appointing courtiers such as Sir Peter Wyche to the ambassadorship in 1633 to collect the strangers' consulage for himself.²¹⁶ The reaction to this incident was severe with both sides utilizing the Ottoman legal system to prevent the seizure of these fees.²¹⁷ This fight between Crown and Company continued until Wyche was removed from his post in May 1639. On March 20, 1640, however, the Privy Council, with Charles presiding, "considered" the issue of the strangers' consulage and decided that the Company had no legal right to these funds which were the property of the king.²¹⁸

Facing significant domestic dissent from all levels of English society and rebellion in Scotland, Charles was finally forced to end his eleven-year Personal Rule and he reconvened Parliament in April 1640, the so-called "Short Parliament" that sat for three weeks and was more occupied with airing grievances against the king than

Pauline Croft, "Fresh Light on Bate's Case," *The Historical Journal* 30, no. 3 (1987): 523-539.

²¹⁵ Fissel, 187-189.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 190-191.

²¹⁷ In this initial incident, the Company merchants in Izmir called upon the regional *kadi* while Wyche went straight to the Ottoman central government.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 198-199.

providing him with funds.²¹⁹ As before, Charles promptly dissolved Parliament. Finally, in November 1640, Charles was forced to convene Parliament again, the “Long Parliament,” as he was entirely bankrupt.²²⁰ By this time Parliament’s view of merchants’ rights and the strangers’ consulage issue specifically, had changed considerably: by February 1642, as England began to split into Royalists and Parliamentarians and both sides armed themselves, the Company was £20,000 in debt as a result of the seizure of the strangers’ consulage but the Company rapidly forged an alliance with Parliament.²²¹

As England descended into the First Civil War (1642-1646) all of the trade companies fully supported the Parliamentarians, and the Levant Company, specifically, bankrolled Parliament’s war effort “including an £80,000 loan to recruit the New Model Army.”²²² The Parliamentary press, for its part, also cast a millenarian slant on the Army’s victories against the Royalists and placed them in relation to advances made by the Ottomans in the Mediterranean as expressed in the 8-15 August 1645 issue of *The Scottish Dove*: “The *Turks* mightie Armie is landed in [Crete]...it is conceived that whole island is lost, and *Italy* in great danger. ... Who knowes, but that the *Turke* shall in these times be Gods instrument, to destroy the *Pope*? and then God will trouble him, and from

²¹⁹ Robert Ashton, *The English Civil War: Conservatism and Revolution, 1603-1649* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979), 95, 130-131.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, 130-145.

²²¹ Fissel, 199-200.

²²² *Ibid.*, 206.

Heaven consume him by the fire of his indignation.”²²³ As before, Catholicism was the ultimate enemy; and if the Ottomans and Catholic-Christendom preoccupied themselves with defeating one another, England would succeed overall.²²⁴

When the First Civil War drew to a close, Charles, from Scottish captivity, ordered Wyche’s replacement, Sir Sackville Crowe, to inform Sultan Ibrahim I (r. 1640-1648) of the civil war and Crowe “was also to remain open to any other form of support, including a gift or loan from the sultan;” Crowe, in the meantime, continued to pillage the Company of the strangers’ consulage.²²⁵ When Charles finally realized how close Parliament and the Company had become in late November, 1646, he “came very close to setting in motion events which would likely have devastated English trade in the Levant, and possibly led to open hostility with the Ottomans.”²²⁶ In an official letter to Ibrahim I, Charles charged the Ottomans with violating the capitulations and maintained his right to the strangers’ consulage and to punish his subjects such as the Company merchants in Izmir: “in effect, he implied that Ibrahim was abetting the rebellion against the Crown.”²²⁷ Although the letter was never sent, “it is indicative of how desperate and

²²³ Laurence Chapman, *The Scottish Dove, Sent Out and Returning*, Issue 95, August 8-15, 1645. Newsletter. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 4, p. 750-751.

²²⁴ Maclean, *Looking East*, 4.

²²⁵ Fissel, 202.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 204.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 204.

strident [Charles] had become in the face of his powerlessness.”²²⁸ As Charles was passed to and fro between various factions, neither the English/Scottish Presbyterians, the Army, nor the defeated royalists could gain advantage over one another and the conflict began anew in 1648 when Scottish forces invaded England and English Presbyterians allied themselves with the remaining Royalists against Parliament and the Army under Oliver Cromwell (d. 1658).²²⁹ Militarily, the Second Civil War (1648-1649) was all but over by Fall 1648: in December, Cromwell purged Parliament of all Members opposed to trying the king for treason and Charles was executed on January 30, 1649.²³⁰

Within months, the well-established culture of print responded to Charles’s execution. John Crouch, a Royalist pamphleteer and polemicist, wrote the following at the very end of his anti-government newsletter *The Man in the Moon*, for the week of May 21-30, 1649: “There is a new Book printed by Authority of [Parliament] called the Turkish Alcharon; worthy your most serious devotions.”²³¹ Given Crouch’s placement of this sentence at the very end of this issue, even following “FINIS,” this was an observation that his audience was meant to linger on: for any remaining Royalists or individuals who may have questioned the ideologies of Parliament and the increasingly

²²⁸ Ibid., 205.

²²⁹ Ashton, 260-300.

²³⁰ Ibid., 340-347.

²³¹ John Crouch, *The Man in the Moon*, Issue 7, May 21-30, 1649. Newsletter. From Early English Books Online (EEBO), Image 5, p. 66.

radicalized Army under Cromwell, the licensed publication of the Qur'an, in English, following the regicide of a Christian monarch, was "no idle coincidence."²³²

Even though the English copy of the Qur'an was itself actually a translation of an earlier French version, for Royalists and Continental governments alike, the licensed publication of such a controversial text led to "rhetoric at home and abroad" that condemned "the new republic for being anti-Christian."²³³ In February, 1650, a representative of Charles's son, Charles II, delivered a letter to the Venetian Senate and Doge describing the horrid state of affairs in England as a portent of Christendom's fate if action was not taken:

The danger to the Christian religion is shown by the sects which have sprung up in the new empire. ...So also by the burning of the sacred liturgy by the hangman and at the same time the publication of the Alcoran, translated from the Turkish, so that the people may be imbued with Turkish manners, which have much in common with the action of the rebels. The church of St. Paul...remains desolate and is said to have been sold to the Jews as a synagogue. The choir will be profaned by the voices of the infidel as soon as they receive possession from the troops of soldiers, horse and foot, who have been lodged there. ...Such is the catastrophe which has overtaken England.²³⁴

The nature and content of Charles II's representative's letter, so it seems, almost entirely confirms the fears put forward by Joachim von Sinzendorff, the Holy Roman ambassador to Constantinople in March 1579, about the "degree the state and condition [that] dear Christendom has reached, its name divided, highly pressed by this enemy, now hanging

²³² Maclean, *Looking East*, 2-3.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 3.

²³⁴ *Cal. S.P. Venice, Volume 28: 1647-1652* (London, 1927), p. 135-141, Doc. 389.

in great jeopardy;” all because of English engagement with the Ottomans.²³⁵ Thus, for many of the European states that were initially outraged and concerned by Elizabeth’s religious, political, and commercial accommodation with the Ottomans who had themselves grown to accommodate the existence of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship, the circle was complete: England had been corrupted by the monstrosity and contagion that was Islam via prolonged contact with the Ottomans resulting in a heinous regicide, the desecration of churches, the proliferation of Judaism, and the “Ottomanization” of the English body politic. As sensationalist and extreme as these sentiments appear, in the context of the social, religious, and political strife of the late sixteenth and early to mid-seventeenth centuries, they were nonetheless concrete and palpable. To many Catholic statesmen and socio political commentators the threat from within Christendom posed by Protestantism was almost if not more alarming than the waves of Ottoman armies pouring through occupied-Hungary and crashing into Austria and Southern Germany. Until the threat of Ottoman hegemony abated following the second Siege of Vienna in 1683 and Christian polities began to take back territory from the Ottomans, the perceived dual-threat of Ottoman armies and Protestant fifth columns remained an ever-present fear.

During the late 1640s and early 1650s, including Charles I’s execution, the Second and Third (1649-1651) English Civil Wars, and the establishment of the short-lived Commonwealth of England (est. 1649), however, there is still the curious case of Robert Bargrave (d. 1661). Bargrave was a staunch Royalist, an admirer of Sir Sackville

²³⁵ Joachim von Sinzendorff, *The Imperial Ambassador Reports: “(a) Translation of part of the Imperial ambassador in Constantinople Joachim von Sinzendorff’s report of 21 and 24 March 1579 to Rudolf II,”* as cited in Skilliter (1977), 62-63.

Crowe, and a loather of Oliver Cromwell; but, most importantly, Bargrave was a Levant Company merchant active in the Eastern Mediterranean and Ottoman domains from 1647 to 1656. Bargrave's travel diary is therefore unique in that it is a window into the mind of a man who seemingly bridges the divide between Crown and Company, Royalist and Parliamentarian, and admirer versus denouncer of the Ottoman Empire and Islam as a religion.

Bargrave, by his own account, was stuck by a "Streame of Grief" when he learned of the "deplorable Tragedie of our King in England," and he also had nothing to say about the turmoil created by Crowe and the strangers' consulage issue.²³⁶ Bargrave, however, never expresses any blatant concerns about the corrupting nature of Islam: while visiting Spain in the 1650s, for instance, he comments on the exquisite collection of relics and antiquities at the royal monastery of San Lorenzo de El Escorial, including a "rare Persian Alcaron" (along with an Ottoman battle standard) captured at Lepanto in 1571.²³⁷ Perhaps the polluting nature of this particular Qur'an was overpowered by the much larger collection of Christian reliquaries; nonetheless, Bargrave's lack of comment on the Holy Book, other than that it was "rare," is an ambivalence that should not be overlooked.

Moreover, on the Ottoman Empire specifically, Bargrave presents the same Imperial envy that can be found in Blount's and other travel writers' accounts. The

²³⁶ Robert Bargrave, *The Travel Diary of Robert Bargrave, Levant Merchant (1647-1656)*, edit. Michael G. Brennan (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1999), 78, 77.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 200.

Ottoman sultan's dominions were vast, containing "72 distinct languages & speeches; most whereof are dayly spoken in Constantinople;" Ottoman "Law is but One; intermingled of morall and divine;" Ottoman justice fair, and based "in matters of weight."²³⁸ The Ottoman military was powerful; and the capital, Constantinople, was well-provisioned with foodstuffs that "exceed the whole world for plenty."²³⁹ Ottoman society was ordered, structured, and regimented, with precise processes for marriages, burials, and divorces.²⁴⁰ Bargrave's one contention, thrown in at the very end of his account of his first journey to Constantinople, was that the Ottomans "have so scornfull an Esteem of *Christians*, that they only admitt of Ambassadors from other Kingdoms, but have none of theyr owne, resident with any *Christian Princes*" - an afterthought of Imperial envy commenting on Imperial arrogance.²⁴¹

Thus, in spite of the turmoil of Charles's reign, the invocation of the Ottomans and Islam as millenarian Protestant-Parliamentarian portent and Royalist/Catholic-international Jeremiad, ambivalence and envy, fear and loathing, were still interconnected in a complex web of representation. Although the plight of English captives held in North Africa was a clear sign of Turco-Islamic military superiority (itself a very real contradiction to contemporary notions of Christian supremacy) in the Mediterranean that had dramatic socio political repercussions in England, the Ottoman Empire was still the

²³⁸ Ibid., 121-122.

²³⁹ Ibid., 122.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 122-123.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 123.

place to visit. Visitors such as Sir Henry Blount, who, upon his return to England, faithfully served Charles, fought for him in the First English Civil War and was subsequently acquitted of treason by Parliament for “remonstrating to them [that] he did but his duty,” and Robert Bargrave, demonstrate that, above all, exposure to the “difference” of the Ottoman Empire, and Islam in general, was not corrupting but provided the necessary setting for the formation of an overarching English national identity distinct and different from Continental Europe and Catholic Christendom.²⁴²

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Over a period of only seventy years, what had begun as a commercial venture with diplomatic and political benefits was wholly transformed with far-reaching domestic

²⁴² Gerald M. Maclean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 121.

and international ramifications for England. England's engagement with the Ottoman Empire, via the Levant Company and the rights and privileges gained by William Harborne, introduced English society to the world at large. Although still geographically on the peripheries of the Mediterranean World, by the conclusion of the English Civil Wars England's direct encounter with the Ottoman Empire and the wider Islamicate not only resulted in a diplomatic and commercial revolution, but also demonstrates a distinct change in how the Ottomans and Islam were represented, and how exposure and access to the difference of the Ottoman-other fostered the development of a solidifying English Protestant identity. In each of the three consecutive periods examined in this study, themselves the respective reigns of three successive English monarchs, the early modern encounter between England and the Ottoman Empire was grounded in the mutually reinforcing relationship between politics, culture, religion, and diplomacy. In the profoundly fractured and sectarian Christendom of the post-Reformation, these factors are entwined to such a degree that it becomes necessary to address them all in relation to one another.

For Elizabeth, the establishment of the Levant Company and the development of her own personal relationship with her Ottoman counterpart would not have been as feasible without her excommunication from the Catholic Church in 1570 as well as the rapid deterioration of relations with Spain. The English merchants' foot-in-the-door into the Ottoman marketplace and their clandestine and illicit arms and munitions exports not only gave them most-favored-nation status at the court of the early modern world's superpower but also provided a means to pursue anti-Hapsburg, anti-Spanish, and anti-

Catholic policies without direct military confrontation. The domestic and international scandal engendered by this relatively unexplored cornerstone of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship, resulting in concerns about what effects a cordial, or at the very least, ambivalent relationship with the enemy of Christendom was having on England, were significant but not entirely unfounded from an early modern perspective. Even at this early stage English travelers to the Levant returned with entirely new perspectives, experiences, tastes, and fashions that were noticed almost immediately by courtiers, statesmen, and social-commentators alike. Although towards the end of her reign Elizabeth was increasingly forced to retreat from and categorically deny the real extent of her diplomatic and commercial ties to the Ottomans, the damage had already been done. Simply in terms of profits Levantine trade could not easily be turned off; and the capital generated by Levantine trade, coupled with merchants' and traders' firsthand experiences with the power and wealth of the Ottoman Empire, provided the intellectual and economic incentives necessary to pursue commercial and colonial ventures in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

Elizabeth's successor, James I, although fond of anti-Ottoman rhetoric and eager to see a unified "common corps of Christendom," was nonetheless forced to acknowledge and acquiesce to the maintenance of a positive relationship with the Ottomans, even if only in terms of trade. The decline in Ottoman naval activity and the increase in trans-Mediterranean shipping beginning at the end of Elizabeth's reign, manifested itself during James's tenure in the form of two alarming yet related problems. Captivity and piracy captivated the English body politic not only because English mariners were being

subdued on an increasingly regular basis, but also because both captives and renegades were converting to Islam as a result of duress and allure. At a time when religious affiliation was a significantly more powerful marker than racial, ethnic, or national identity, the prospect of “turning Turk” thus fulfilled the commonly held stereotypes and tropes about the corrupting nature of Islam. Intellectually, the literate English public began to devour captivity narratives, travelogues, and historical texts such as Richard Knolles’s *A Generall Historie of the Turkes* out of both fear and fascination, which in turn only generated more interest, both positive and negative, in the Ottomans. While captivity narratives were obviously quite biased, the explosion in the number of available travelogues published during James’s reign and the content contained within them is remarkable. What all of these texts indicate is nothing less than an increasingly blatant English Protestant tolerance for Islam only made possible by direct access to Ottoman domains which served as a foil to Catholic-Protestant strife.

Finally, although the beginning of Charles I’s reign saw many of the same representations about the Ottoman Empire and Islam in general, domestically, the situation had changed significantly. Public outrage over the plight of England’s hundreds of captured mariners became a social crisis, changing the discourse between an increasingly discontented body politic and Parliament and the Crown. Although the fear of socio cultural pollution from extended contact with Islam remained present and prominent, the severity of the captivity issue necessitated the creation of processes by which mariners who had been possibly contaminated and outright apostates, could be purified and systematically reentered into English society. Travelogues published during

Charles's reign such as Sir Henry Blount's and the travel diary of Robert Bargrave, both Royalists ideologically, nonetheless confirm that English travelers with direct experience in the Ottoman Empire and exposure to Ottoman society still found the differences of the sultan's domains impressive, fascinating, and worthy of their envy. Charles's execution in early 1649 and the political fracturing of English society during the English Civil Wars, moreover, once again saw the deployment of "Ottoman-ness" and Islam as Protestant-Parliamentarians saw millenarian portents confirming the righteousness and imminent victory of their cause, and Royalists' and international Catholic observers' fears about the insidious decay of English society were equally confirmed because of the publication of an English-language Qur'an and contemporary reports of events in England.

Thus, in spite of the profound social, political, cultural, and ethnic differences between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean, to English observers, with few exceptions, the Ottoman Empire was the Islamic World and vice versa. Islam always remained the "Turkish religion;" Islam's Holy Book, the "Turkish Alcharon;" and English converts to Islam, both from duress and from allure, had always "turn'd Turk." Understandably, this was a direct byproduct of the Ottomans' relentless campaigns in Central Europe and the Mediterranean; and England, on the outer periphery of the Mediterranean World until the late sixteenth century, for the most part only had access to news and accounts of Ottoman, and therefore Turkish, aggression, which stemmed from the fall of Constantinople to Mehmed "the Conqueror" in 1453.

The pervasiveness of the Ottomans' explicit association with Islam does not, however, account for the juxtaposed dichotomy found in English representations. This dichotomy, fear and fascination, ambivalence and anxiety, was not blanket Orientalism but the more specific Ottomanism: that is, a "system of knowledge production" based in both "lack and desire" which illuminates far more about the English, who were just at the start of their imperial adventure, witnessing all of the power and majesty that the accumulation of empire could bestow.²⁴³ For Christendom, the ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire created a series of barriers to its access to the wealth and commodities of the East, but also spurred the "systematic reconstruction" of Europe's "Graeco-Roman [socio cultural] foundations" as part of the wider European Renaissance.²⁴⁴ What Christendom lost in 1453, the Ottomans gained and expanded upon, and the English, clearly, wanted. It is no mere coincidence that the vast majority of investors and charter-members of the English East India Company (est. 1600), including the Company's first governor, Sir Thomas Smythe, himself a former governor of the Levant Company, had earned their stripes working and trading in Ottoman domains; England's laboratory, so to speak, as the Levant Company was one of the first successful chartered joint-stock companies, providing the capital and commercial acumen to break into other markets.

For England, the Anglo-Ottoman encounter and the founding of the Levant Company was a watershed. Not only did the relationship transcend all other European interactions with the Ottomans, but it also provided the impetus and incentive necessary

²⁴³ Maclean, "Ottomanism Before Orientalism?" 86-87.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 87-88.

to continue to embark on overseas commercial ventures. In terms of representation, exposure to the Ottomans and Islam was a mixed bag: on the one hand, as English traffic to the Mediterranean increased, the issue of captives and socio cultural pollution never abated; on the other, however, throughout the time period covered in this study, ambivalence, fascination, hostility and envy were all incredibly entwined. It should also be noted that, if it were not for the English capitulations, the Levant Company, and the outstanding work of English ambassadors such as Sir William Harborne and Sir Thomas Roe, hundreds of English captives would never have returned to England as both of these figures used their political clout at the Ottoman court to negotiate the release of English mariners. Domestically, the establishment of England's first real non-European non-Christian bilateral diplomatic, political, and commercial relationship generated a tremendous amount of interest in Islam and all-things Turkish. While the representational discourse changed considerably from the plays of Christopher Marlowe, which lambasted Christianity, Islam, and Judaism more or less equally, to the works of Robert Daborne and Thomas Goffe, which deployed exclusively anti-Ottoman and therefore anti-Muslim tropes, the ideological vacillation within English popular culture between 1580 and 1650 demonstrates that there existed room for competing viewpoints which were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Ultimately, regardless of which end of the dichotomy representations of the Ottoman Empire and Islam fall, behind all of these representations there existed a vehemently pervasive anti-Catholic discourse. The Ottomans suited this dialectical discourse perfectly, not only as a foil but also under the rather simple principle of the

“enemy of my enemy is my friend.” Although that principle primarily applies only to the reign of Elizabeth, the precedent set by the queen and the political-economic influence of the Levant Company in domestic English politics essentially forced both James and Charles to accommodate and abide by the fundamental foundations of the Anglo-Ottoman relationship. For English travelers, a visit to the Ottoman Empire provided the opportunity to observe the Abrahamic religions of the Mediterranean and their sects in relation to one another; and while they vacillated within the overarching ideological paradigm presented here, they were all far more willing to tolerate if not accommodate the Ottomans and Islam versus the superstitious idolatry of Catholicism.

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