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Trans-Imperial Mediations of the ‘Turk’: Early Modern Depictions of Ottoman

Encounter in English Drama and Non-Fiction Prose

by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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My dissertation will examine the role of the trans-imperial mediator in facilitating literary and cultural interactions between England and the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period. I define ‘trans-imperial mediator’ to mean those travelers who shuttled between England and the Ottoman Empire, on behalf of their employers, for trade, intelligence-gathering, or diplomatic exchange. I argue that these mediators fashioned depictions of the Turk in response to their own trans-imperial anxieties. They imagined themselves to be aliens among the Ottoman subjects whom they encountered daily, despite sharing more in common with these Ottomans than the countrymen to whom they addressed their writing. At the same time, they felt equally uncertain about the prospects of returning home and being accepted as Englishmen, despite their assertions to the contrary. The identity that they created for themselves - Englishmen who were distinctly different from ‘the Turk’ - must be understood as a response to their multiple identities

and complex obligations. I argue that the ‘Turk’ that these mediators introduced to English audiences must also be read as a composite creation – an imaginative response to the obligations of serving English interests while trying to live among the Ottomans. English playwrights recognized the creative opportunities allowed by dramatizing the polyvalent figure of the trans-imperial mediator to fashion their own types of Turks. Dramatists recognized the unique conjunctions between the vilified trans-imperial mediator and the Turk by using the play space to ‘recover’ the imagined voice of the mediator and interrogate what anxieties occasioned the creation of particular types of Turk. English dramatists also introduced the figure of the trans-imperial mediator to a sympathetic audience – those discontented Englishmen who imagined escaping from the limiting social and economic conditions at home. Through lending the trans-imperial mediator a voice of his/her own, English ‘Turk’ plays can be interpreted anew as interpretive paradigms for understanding how mediation functioned literarily in non-fiction accounts. Once we consider the shared investments that linked English trans-imperial mediators to their fictionalized counterparts, we may better understand why particular images of the ‘Turk’ must be interpreted through a web of domestic anxieties.

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## **Introduction**

For the Englishman living in late 16<sup>th</sup>/early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, the figure of the Turk dominated the political events and the literary imagination of the day. Not long after she was excommunicated by the Pope, Queen Elizabeth proposed an imperial trade alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Although they supported their queen, English citizens were slow to accept the notion of a Turkish *détente* as the logical response to both Catholic blasphemy and the paucity of port access to the major trading sites in the Mediterranean. In the wake of these events, the literary Turk who had continued to be defined by the same demonical stereotypes as he was during the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries began to metamorphose in fascinating ways. England's newly formed relationship with the Ottoman Empire opened the door for more tolerant, nuanced, and even admiring representations of the Turk that competed with the stereotypically "terrible Turk" for public attention. This growing political and literary fascination with an ally who had long been considered an enemy led to an epistemic transformation of the Ottoman subject in England. This transformation was specifically carried out through the trans-imperial subject – that cross-cultural traveler who either authored his own direct encounters with the Turk, or whose encounters were fictively recounted on the English stage.

The popular desire to gain exposure to the Turk, either through travelers' accounts that described him or through fictionalized accounts that imagined him speaking and acting for himself, gave birth to an industry that employed dramatists, preachers, merchants, ambassadors, and translators. I use the word 'industry' to denote that each person who was employed in contributing to the Turkish episteme contributed toward the complexity of 'the Turk' as a manufactured product of the English consciousness. A

number of critics (eg: Jonathan Burton, Daniel Vitkus, Gerald MacLean) that I will be alluding to have described this English interest in the Turk by referencing religion, geopolitics, and gender.<sup>1</sup> In my dissertation, I hope to suggest that this particular historical moment of cross-cultural traffic coincided with a revolution in information exchange, prompted largely by the growth of England's lower "classes," and that the Turk, as a contested figure, reveals as much about how English class relations were negotiated as it does about the categories of gender, religion, and international politics. I will propose that "the Turk" that was generated between the Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods was the epistemic product of a service-oriented struggle occurring both within the borders of England as well as along the travel routes that linked England and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>2</sup> One of the primary responses of the subordinated groups in this struggle was to participate in this production of the Turk as a sub-cultural product – a creation of their own dense sociability - even in the apparent service of their masters. Trans-imperial agents had to partner with other agents that they wouldn't normally encounter or befriend simply because those other agents had well placed influence. This web of relations is what I call 'dense sociability.'

By suggesting that we can consider as united all those subgroups (eg: women, Jews, servants) that have been considered separately, I hope to suggest how the English servants' need to improve their social status at home contributed to the shared need for

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<sup>1</sup> See Burton, Jonathan. *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama 1579-1624*. Newark: University of Delaware, 2005; Vitkus, Daniel J. *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; MacLean, Gerald. *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Although I will use 'class' as a short-hand for this service-oriented struggle, I acknowledge that 'class' is an imprecise word. I am more inclined towards E.P. Thompson's description of service as "an indefinite sociological praxis" that came to define relations between servants and their superiors. As Thompson adds, "Class and class-consciousness are always the last, not the first, stage in the real historical process." Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working-Class*. London: V. Gollancz, 1980, 17.



particular types of Turks. Many English writers actively participated in class struggles by fashioning Turks according to various purposes (eg: humorous, polemical, financial, political.) In addition to interrogating these purposes, I will question whether the Ottoman perspective can provide us with any interpretive purchase into understanding the English trans-imperial subjects' perspective.

Just as critics have begun to consider that early modern notions of race and religion were not bound by borders between nations<sup>3</sup>, the trans-imperial mediators allow us to consider that the relationships between masters and servants were not bounded within England (or any other individual nation) during the early modern period. Similarly, any study of the trans-imperial servant is unbounded by modern vocabularies of 'class.' An examination of the trans-imperial mediator who shuttled between England and the Ottoman Empire suggests that these figures utilized cultural exchange to cross class boundaries. These were two-way exchanges, as I shall suggest by translating Turkish and Arabic documents written by Ottoman subjects who encountered Englishmen and Europeans. Considering that these English and Ottoman subjects (both real and fictional) were the only representatives of their nations who actually stood face-to-face with each other in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, I hope to suggest that the trans-imperial subject is a crucial figure for understanding how the mobility of the Turk figure in English literature was a variant of the mobility sought by English servants at home and abroad.

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<sup>3</sup> See Netzloff, Mark. *England's Internal Colonies: Class, Capital, and Literature of Early Modern Colonialism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

All of the English images of the Turk that were generated through both the fiction and the non-fiction of this period were products of a trans-imperial network of information exchange. This is apparent in the non-fictional accounts of travel, pilgrimage, and captivity in the Ottoman Empire. Even the English Turk plays created minor, trans-imperial characters to dramatize information exchanges and mediations which could just as easily have taken place off-stage. English subjects were clearly interested in learning about the lives of these mediating servants, and not just in hearing about them as instruments. Historical and fictional trans-imperial subjects were galvanic figures that seized the English imagination and ushered domestic attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire into England's imperial age.

If as Gerald MacLean notes, an Elizabethan Anglo-Ottoman alliance was motivated by promoting "a divine duty to make war upon the idolatrous Catholic," then that duty was "only ever at best a diplomatic fiction invented to ease trade."<sup>4</sup> I shall argue that this fiction was powerful enough to shape even those source materials which claimed to be non-fiction. Even the first-hand accounts written by travelers who had visited the Ottoman Empire were enmeshed in the ideological imperatives that undergirded England's nascent imperialism.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> MacLean 2007, 47.

<sup>5</sup> England's relationship with Turkey was different than its foreign relations with other European nations, because Turkey was the vanguard of its own world – the Muslim world. Henry Lello, Elizabeth's second ambassador to Constantinople, reminded English organ-maker Thomas Dallam of this fact, when he informed him that his organ was no ordinary gift for an ordinary monarch: 'Yow are com hether wythe a presente from our gracious Quene, not to an ordinarie prince or kinge, but to a myghtie monarke of the worlde.' See Bent, James Theodore. *Early Voyages and Travels in the Levant: The Diary of Thomas Dallam*. New York: Burt Franklin, 1989, 65. To some extent, Anglo-Ottoman mediation always reflected English attitudes towards Islam.

Critics have started to notice how these trans-imperial figures have been dramatized as the product of changing Mediterranean cultural politics. For example, both Jonathan Burton and Daniel Vitkus recognize the importance of *A Christian Turn'd Turk's* Benwash as a Jewish middleman between the Christian renegade and the Ottoman overlord. As one of the benefactors of the aforementioned Christian disunity, Vitkus sees him as "a new kind of caricature, whose characteristics reflect the role of Jewish merchants in the Mediterranean economy, which the English were coming to know more intimately by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>6</sup> Both Burton and Vitkus persuasively discuss the ways in which marginalized groups (such as women, Jews, and Christian renegades) were often imagined working in consort to undermine Christian, male authority. Another set of critics has taken up the issue of the ubiquity of service among early moderns.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, these two schools of critics have had precious little to say to one another about how different types of service made Anglo-Ottoman interactions possible in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Through my dissertation, I hope to show the intersections between these two different avenues of inquiry, only some of which have been noted.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Vitkus 2003, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Every master who employed a servant was probably employed himself by another master, so that early modern service is more comparable to a web of relations, rather than a totem pole of obligations. There were certainly important differences between the service of an earl and that of a kitchen maid. But, as David Evett reminds us, it is difficult to distinguish the qualitative nature of the compliance or the resistance felt by each respective servant. Critics like Judith Weil add that when a dramatist like Shakespeare has a servant like Enobarbus "accept the possibility of abjection in language resembling that which apologists for ideal order prescribed as normal," it behooves modern interpreters not to read the servant's abuse as "typical and inevitable." Instead, she urges that we investigate the dramatic story behind the servant's complaints, and ask why such stories had to be couched in apologetic terms. Weil, Judith. *Service and Dependency in Shakespeare's Plays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 11. See also: Shalkwyk, David. *Shakespeare, Love, and Service*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008. Anderson, Linda. *A Place in the Story: Servants and Service in Shakespeare's Play*. Newark: University of Delaware, 2005. Neill, Michael. *Putting History to the Question*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Evett, David. *Discourses of Service in Shakespeare's England*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> - In both Burton and Vitkus' defense, both critics admit the Western orientation of their scholarship due to their lack of linguistic capabilities in using the available non-European texts. One of the most admirable features of Burton's *Traffic and Turning* is his use of "the experiential inventory...whereby Muslims

My dissertation considers the servile condition of mediators like the fictional Rabshake to be one of those crucially overlooked, participating reagents in this mixture of marginalized groups.<sup>9</sup> Rabshake, after all, performs most of the mediation that is attributed to his master, Benwash. The play acknowledges as much when it precedes its concluding reassertion of Christian, male authority by first having Benwash murder Rabshake, the instrument of the ‘new caricature’ that Vitkus describes, who has been threatening this authority all along. What is often overlooked in critical assessments of Turk plays like *A Christian Turn’d Turk* is the fact that these trans-imperial servants form a broader social stratum within which subordinated women, Jews, and Christian renegades function as featured members. These intermediaries formed their own social relations in between the communities that they were expected to belong to; by studying these intermediaries we can distinguish how the communities that they shuttled between changed. By attending to strict markers of religious, gender, or cultural difference, we run the risk of losing sight of their commonality as Turkish epistemic producers marginalized by the hegemonic interests they served. It is even imprecise to equate these hegemonic interests as strictly male and Christian because, as my fourth chapter shall show, these trans-imperial agents were subordinated even from the Ottoman perspective.

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themselves might effect the shape of English notions of Islam and whereby (if indirectly) the appearance of positive Muslim figures in the drama.” Burton 2005, 22.

<sup>9</sup> Although I am indebted to Gerald MacLean, I don’t agree with his (and Nabil Matar’s) assertion that the “demonization of Islam” carried out by authors such as Kyd, Heywood, Daborne, Mason, Massinger, and Dryden was “largely a process of systematic mystification in which otherwise knowable facts were commonly ignored if they proved inconvenient.” (MacLean, 13) Considering the role played by mediating servants in these ‘Turk’ plays allows us to see how the staging of just those elisions are evidence that knowable facts were not ignored. Instead, they became the most troubling features of the English’d Turk, particularly if the struggle to put a mediating servant in his/her place involved the same effort as confronting the irreducible Turk.

Of the recent scholarly investigations of master-servant mediation, the one that comes closest in intellectual purpose to my dissertation is the collection of essays in *Renaissance Go-Betweens: Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe* (2005).<sup>10</sup> Using the rubric of ‘go-between’, Andreas Höfele, Werner von Koppenfels, and the volume’s other contributors map out how figures as different as John Florio, John Wolfe, and Giordano Bruno demonstrated labile Renaissance notions of mediation through translation, printing, and diplomacy, among other occupations. My dissertation picks up on Hofele and von Koppenfels’ suggestions that the characteristic achievements of the period are made possibly not so much by the ascendancy of Burkhartian individualism as by a pervasive ‘intertraffique of the minde.’<sup>11</sup> Essays by Peter Burke and Richard Wilson gesture toward the fact that this ‘intertraffique’ was often undetectable unless one looked past the text proper and instead at its margins.<sup>12</sup> Yet none of this volume’s seventeen essays even indirectly addresses the relationship between England and the Ottoman Empire – a relationship whose politics affected all the go-betweens discussed in this monograph.

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<sup>10</sup> The essays in this volume note that go-between figures have always been deeply ambiguous figures. “This ambiguity is a basic condition of ‘going between’, which always involves an exposure of the familiar to the unknown, putting the go-between in the precarious position of the stranger or even the outcast. Venturing beyond safe limits, questioning received certainties, he invites curiosity and respect, but also irritation, even hatred.” Hofele, James and Werner von Koppenfels, *The Renaissance Go-Between*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005, 10. Hofele and von Koppenfels announce that “while merchants, couriers, travelers, diplomats and spies have an obvious share in the mapping of the ‘go-between’, the contributions of this volume pay particular attention to the intermediaries of learning and ideas such as translators, migrant scholars, and printers.”

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 9. This is Montaigne’s expression from his letter to John Florio, which Samuel Daniel praises in his commendatory verses prefixed to John Florio’s translation of Montaigne in 1603.

<sup>12</sup> Burke’s essay, ‘The Renaissance Translator as Go-Between,’ discusses the creative nature of translation. Burke points out that a number of translators were responsible for introducing new words into the English lexicon by not Anglicizing foreign words. Wilson’s essay, ‘Another Country: Marlowe and the Go-Between,’ offers a reading of *The Jew of Malta* that proposes Barabas as an anti-hero championing capitalism “not with armaments and fortification, but by means of the informational revolution of the long 16<sup>th</sup> century.” Ibid, 180.

My dissertation nominates these mediating servants as “trans-imperial” to suggest that these subjects were defined by their transitional lives between England and the Ottoman Empire, as well as between the identity markers that they assumed and discarded in their travels. They were not bound by the limitations of class, religion, language, or nationality. What united these trans-imperial subjects was precisely their fraught subject position between two imperial poles. Invariably, these trans-imperial subjects occupied a subordinated social ranking. Sometimes this subordination evidenced itself in explicit complaints about their masters or about issues of class inequality. And at other times, their subordination was adumbrated in descriptions of their own duties and obligations. Regardless of their specific occupation (ambassador, translator), class position (servant, page, merchant) or religion (Christian, Jew, Muslim), these trans-imperial subjects were all defined by their movement between two sets of masters (one English and the other Turkish.) And as a result, their level of agency derived from their ability to mediate relations between these masters.

A number of influential literary scholars and historians have already begun to study the role of these trans-imperial subjects without making explicit reference to how these figures were interconnected. To name just a few: Matthew Dimmock in his nuanced study, *New Turkes*<sup>13</sup> has considered England’s changing role as a nation whose imperial fortunes were tied to succeeding the Ottomans as new arbiters of trade in the Levant. Richmond Barbour in *Before Orientalism* devotes one of his chapters to the dramatic function that the English ambassador (particularly Sir Thomas Roe in India and

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<sup>13</sup> Dimmock, Matthew. *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*. London: Ashgate, 2005.

Turkey) was expected to play.<sup>14</sup> And Nabil Matar's *Islam and Britain* has persuasively demonstrated the ways in which England imagined Islam as a mediating force in its internal conflicts with New World colonization. Even historians who don't take an explicit interest in Anglo-Ottoman interactions, like Helen Bonavita, Natalie Zemon Davis, and Carlo Ginzburg, have approached cross-cultural encounter from the perspective of participants (like trans-imperial subjects) who can narrate 'competing histories.'<sup>15</sup> Davis has convincingly argued for a contrapuntal approach to early modern French history, one that recognizes "forms of associational life and collective behavior are cultural artifacts, not just items in the history of the Reformation or of political centralization."<sup>16</sup> And, of course, Carlo Ginzburg's pioneering microhistory, *The Cheese and the Worms* proposes "the subterranean convergences" that emerge through the figure of Menocchio at a moment in history when "a common store of traditions, myths, and aspirations handed down orally over generations began to emerge"<sup>17</sup> in very unsettling ways in the new written culture.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Barbour questions, "How was the ambassador to distinguish himself when the very qualities required of an ambassador – rhetorical and theatrical persuasions – were arts that impostures were often scorned for, in courtly settings? To prove one's authority, and to make the proving matter locally, was a slippery business.") Barbour, Richmond. *Before Orientalism: London's Theater of the East, 1575-1626*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 2.

<sup>15</sup> This is not to suggest that competition produced a more tolerant account. Writing about conflicting accounts of the siege of Malta, Bonavita argues that different authors set out to "claim" the siege for their own ideological agendas. In pursuit of this goal, some histories of the siege were composed and later translated in such a way as to obscure or even exclude key figures whose religious or political affiliations made them unacceptable to the writer. Bonavita, Helen Vella. "Key to Christendom: The 1565 Siege of Malta, Its Histories, and Their Use in Reformation Polemic." *Sixteenth Century Journal: Journal of Early Modern Studies* (SCJ) 33.4 (Winter 2002): 1021-43.

<sup>16</sup> Davis, Natalie Zemon. *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975, xvi.

<sup>17</sup> Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Cheese and the Worms*. Trans. John and Anne Tedeschi. Penguin: New York, 1988, 117.

<sup>18</sup> Ginzburg also sees notes that this historical 'shift' coincided with "the intensification of social differentiation under the impulse of the price revolution." And that "at that time, while maintaining and even emphasizing the distance between the classes, the necessity of reconquering, ideologically as well as physically, the masses threatening to break loose from every sort of control from above was dramatically brought home to the dominant classes." Ibid, 125-6.

Ottoman historians like Palmira Brummett and Suraiya Farooqi are equally persuasive in suggesting the existence of these mediating voices in the Ottoman Empire. Noting that Ottoman Muslims who settled permanently in Venice traded freely with their Christian counterparts, Farooqi adds:

“Of course the information transmitted via these commercial networks largely concerned trade. However, news regarding thieving mercenaries on a particular route, pirate attacks and bankruptcy in some distant center of trade must also have been passed from merchant to merchant. Some such information was of course exchanged in coffee-houses, but a good part of it was no doubt regarded as confidential and shared only by merchants who were close business associates.”<sup>19</sup>

Palmira Brummett goes even further, seeking to counteract the rhetoric of difference<sup>20</sup>, by considering the routes between Constantinople and the West to be a *Eurasian* space, with its own cultural characters that were neither European nor Turk, neither Christian nor Muslim. Brummett’s foremost achievement in reading Ottoman diplomacy in Europe is her attentiveness to the psychological impact of how correspondences had to be shaped and were likely to be received.

Part of the project of my dissertation is to continue the conversation that these different, but potentially dialogical pieces of scholarship have begun. By organizing these discussions of how the English and the Ottoman subject came to understand one another through the various channels of news exchange, translation, mediation, and fictional representation, I hope to suggest that these cross-cultural exchanges meant different things to different classes of participants. Furthermore, in thinking about the

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<sup>19</sup> Farooqi, Suraiya. *Subjects of the Sultans: Culture and everyday life in the Ottoman Empire from the Middle Ages until the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2000, 73.

<sup>20</sup> In response to the commonly held fallacy that 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman intelligentsia was not attentive to or even interested in news outside of its empire, Brummett counters, “such characterizations are simply not borne out when one considers the active commercial and cultural exchange in which the askeri took part even before the 16<sup>th</sup> century.” Brummett, Palmira. *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994, 243.



complementary ways in which imperialism forced a re-organization of social hierarchy within both England and the Ottoman Empire, we may better understand the mutual and shared effects of these cross-cultural exchanges. I hope to consider these English epistemic productions of the Turk as a product of class conflict between those who needed the Turk to serve their purposes and those who needed to serve the Turk. It is for this reason that ambassadors and other trans-imperial mediators who relied on their malleable identities to flexibly serve multiple employers will be the focus of my dissertation. The fact that we cannot always distinguish one class as a consumer of the Turkish episteme and the other as its producer, makes understanding the circumstances under which England's imperial exchanges with the Ottoman Empire that much more crucial.

#### 'Turk' plays and Trans-Imperial Mediators: An Explanation of Terms

During the course of my dissertation, I will refer repeatedly to the 'Turk' play. By 'Turk' play, I refer specifically to plays that either contained characters who were subjects of the sultan or settings that were occupied by the Ottomans. The Turk play aided in the psychological process of changing English attitudes towards Turkey – attitudes which were predominantly fearful, but hesitantly admiring and occasionally envious as well. Elizabethan 'Turk' plays cautiously accentuated the more noble, courageous, and tolerant attributes of the Turk. They inevitably ended with a confirmation of all the reasons why the Turk still deserved to be feared and treated as an enemy. But after the Anglo-Ottoman trade alliance, English dramatists relied more on the re-writing of Ottoman history in order to show why England was still justified in

retaining its vigilant caution. Just as the *pax Turcica* motivated chroniclers like Knolles and Hakluyt to delve further into Ottoman history in order to inform and entertain English subjects about their new enemy, Elizabethan dramatists were also motivated to expound on that history. The main difference was that dramatists took the liberty to re-write Ottoman history in ways that influenced less informed audiences who might not have been able to read or critique non-fiction accounts of the Turk. Elizabethan Turk plays usually ended with a condemnation of the Turk, despite his positive attributes. Turk plays fueled public fears that the Ottoman Empire would inevitably renege on its promises of peace and safe passage for English trading ships. Ironically, this was accomplished by manipulating Ottoman history in such a way as to *curtail* amicability. The Turk was then condemned at a moment when European doubts (which were recognizably English doubts) about a prolonged peace threatened to reveal themselves. In this way, Turk plays indulged the fantasies of certain segments of their audience who were enthralled with the possibilities for social reform, limitless profit, and religious toleration dramatized outside of England. At the same time, these Turk plays offered familiar stereotypes of the Turk that were necessary in order to condemn such fantasies, and to dampen the call for these revolutionary changes in England by deeming them to be ‘Turkish’ pursuits. In this way, ‘Turk’ plays allowed audiences to consider how their fantasies of ‘external’ contamination and ‘internal’ dissatisfaction were linked together.

‘Mediator’ is an expression that I’ve used to describe a number of early modern social groupings (eg. apprentices, wards, pages, etc.) I’ve used ‘mediator’ as a functional description. All of these figures were involved in some aspect of mediation for their social superiors, whether it was conveying messages between husbands and wives (as

chambermaids were expected to do) or conveying letters (as pages were expected to do,) these mediators facilitated social relations between authority figures. I've avoided using the terms 'master' and 'servant,' in order to differentiate that not all mediators could be labeled 'servants.' For example, an ambassador such as Edward Barton mediated between Queen Elizabeth and Sultan Murad III; however, he was a knighted gentleman. By modern classifications, Barton couldn't be called a servant, even if he chose to do so himself. Modern applications of the word 'servant' come with a host of class-based implications. And so to show that mediators were not always lower-class characters, I would like to state at the outset of my dissertation that I use the word 'mediator' to cover all categories of information and materials facilitators who acted on behalf of social superiors. In the course of my dissertation, I shall distinguish when these mediators were servants and when they were gentleman (who often employed their own servants) even in the course of carrying out mediatory activities on behalf of their social superiors. I hope to use 'mediator' as a pliant description that captures a sense of the interactive role that these men and women played arranging other people's social relations.

My dissertation focuses on the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods because during this interval England went from being a pre-imperial power fearful of Ottoman encroachment westward to a proto-imperial nation that fantasized about replacing Ottoman military and mercantile supremacy. This transition in England's identity took place in response to news and information provided by a network of agents, many of whom resided in the Ottoman Empire. In the broadest application of his duties, a trans-imperial mediator physically shuttled goods and information between England and the Ottoman Empire; or they accompanied and assisted those who were engaged in this

movement. At a deeper level, the trans-imperial mediator played a crucially influential role in defining relations between England and Turkey. The information that they learned during the process of mediation was often of greater value to their employers than whatever it was that they were actually entrusted to deliver.

Conveying goods and services between England and Turkey involved having an intimate knowledge of the routes and people along the roads that connected London and Constantinople. To successfully navigate every leg of the journey that connected London to Constantinople required knowledge of the many people who one encountered on that journey – their shared customs, polyglot dialects, local politics, and motivating beliefs.

In the course of repeatedly making these stops between London to Constantinople, trans-imperial mediators soon established a reputation as uniquely skilled facilitators of exchange. In some cases, their expertise was rooted in personal experiences of travel, trade, and linguistic training. But more often than not, English trans-imperial mediators relied on the influence and information provided to them by the locals whom they employed. These local agents provided trans-imperial mediators with most reliable, timely information about their allies and adversaries. As trans-imperial mediators travelled from parts of Europe where the Turk was viewed with fear and distrust to areas where Ottoman rule was actually preferred over Christian rule, these mediators needed to adapt their own identities in order to preserve valuable alliances along the way. As English mediators moved through eastward, they couldn't rely on common religious identity or political affiliations to preserve their trans-imperial alliances. These mediators had to try rely on mutual profit – that *lingua franca* of all Anglo-Ottoman travelers - in order to cement their trans-imperial alliances. They had to

become temporarily naturalized members of every cultural community that they passed through. This allowed them to become influential pleaders who knew whom to bribe and whom to threaten in order to secure the right alliances for England. Far from being simple delivery men and women, these chameleon-like trans-imperial mediators facilitated all early modern Anglo-Ottoman relations through their daily interactions with one another. And English authorities understood that no one else was as uniquely qualified to traverse the changing landscapes that connected London to Constantinople.

### Overview of chapters

My first chapter and third chapters will focus on Elizabethan and Jacobean prose texts, respectively, that were most responsible for contributing to the Turkish episteme during this period – Richard Knolles’ *A General Historie of the Turkish People*, Richard Hakluyt’s *Principall Navigations*, and a number of the travelers who were included in both Hakluyt’s volume as well Samuel Purchas’s subsequent, *Purchas His Pilgrims*. I shall argue that these non-fictional texts cannot simply be read as source material for the English ideas about the Ottoman Empire. These texts are acts of writing that are invested in securing power between the shifting influences of upper class masters and their subordinate intermediaries. The changing relationship between masters (those Englishmen who authorized national interactions between England and the Sublime Porte), and servants (those lower class English and Turkish mediators who actually engaged in the face-to-face brokering of these interactions) animates all English, non-fictional writing about the Ottoman Empire. Thus, any English writing that reified the figure of the Turk in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century English imagination was imbedded in a

class conflict that only widened as England's imperial fortunes changed for the better. We cannot discuss the development of the Turkish episteme without understanding that its very origins lay in the trans-imperial figure's ability and willingness to either carry out his master's will in the Ottoman Empire or to assert their own counter-hegemonic agency.

The various tracts and documents collected by Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas were used by dramatists, balladeers, and other fiction writers. But this phenomenon was far more complex than simple borrowing. Rather, there were networks of exchange wherein certain values about Turkish qualities would be given privilege over other, available qualities. For example, Thomas Kyd's *Solyman and Perseda* uses the 1522 Ottoman capture of the island of Rhodes as the background for a doomed alliance between a Christian knight and a Turkish sultan. Kyd probably adapted his tale from one of the prose romance tales in Henry Wotton's popular translation of Jacques Yver's *A Courtlie Controuersie of Cupid's Cautels* (1578). Matthew Dimmock notes that Kyd's tale is also remarkably similar to a number of other tales of this type, most notably Painter's translation of 'Mahomet and Hirenee the Greek,' which was similarly dramatized by Peele in the lost *The Turkish Mahamet and Hyrine the fair Greeke*. Dimmock notes that the two tales are not identical, "but rather that they represented a coded and popularly understood narrative of the 'turke' in this type of context. They also represent a source, balanced between romance and history, which readily translated into theater."<sup>21</sup> Dimmock's comments imply that these Turk plays aren't just self-contained literary creations, but statements about which available constellations of Turkish episteme would be circulated and which would not. To this, I would add that these

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<sup>21</sup> Dimmock 2005, 108.

chosen Turkish epistemes were as dependent on the dramatic needs of the play as on the play's utilitarian borrowing of source materials. When, for example, Bordello's homosexualized Turkishness is mocked in *The Turke*, John Mason is both using burlesque and carnivalesque to get his audience to laugh at Bordello's preposterous turning, as well as transforming the Moorish references from his source play, *Lust's Dominion*, into a particularly Turkish stereotype linking pederasty with buggery. These observations are important to consider, especially when arguing that the formation of the Turkish episteme was also tied to the editorial/ print-dependant choices that were made by anthologists and fiction writers.

My second and fourth chapters will focus on the Elizabethan and Jacobean 'Turk' plays, respectively, that were written between the late 1590s and the mid-1630 – the greatest period of production in this genre. As I shall argue, certain foreign figures 'stood in' for English fears and anxieties, although they were ostensibly not English characters. This lieutenancy was an English acknowledgement of not being present in the Mediterranean theater during the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the rest of the Continent was establishing relations with the Ottoman Empire. Sixteenth century English 'Turk' plays imagine these contact zones using European characters that, nevertheless, had tangential connections to England. I see this as a perspectival shift from England's own tangential connections to the Ottoman Empire through France and Italy, for the larger part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Some of these fictionalized, trans-imperial characters were once visitors to England (i.e.: Ruben Rabshake from *A Christian Turnd Turke*); some are former Englishmen themselves who had been either captured or converted in piratical raids (i.e. Eunuchus from *The Turke*.) On very rare occasions, the Englishman spoke for

himself. In Kyd's *Solymon and Perseda*, the token Englishman occupies a stage crowded with European knights gathered together in Rhodes. Admitting his minor role on such an actual stage, Kyd allows him ten lines to announce himself, and thereafter we don't see or hear from him again for the rest of the play.

What I shall attempt to show in my drama chapters is the various ways in which these trans-imperial servants left audience members with contradictory impressions of the figure of the Turk. Sometimes these Turkish representations fell in line with the imperialist agenda of the crown and England's trade companies. And other times, the trans-imperial subject engaged with a Turk who positively responded to the Englishman or Englishwoman's frustrated social immobility. These Turk plays demonstrated that the ideological value of the Turk to England's class conflict could be both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic. These impressions invited audience members to reflect upon the locations of power, the political dimensions of misrule, and the potential for a servant to petition for a willful assertion of the self. Such characterizations left an indelible mark on English audiences, whose conceptualizations of the Ottoman world were shaped by the voices of these trans-imperial figures. Using four dramas written between 1592 and 1630, I shall examine how non-dramatic and dramatic written encounters between Englishman and Ottoman subject interacted to create the figure of the Turk, a brand of radicalization that continues to haunt Christian-Muslim interactions even today.

The non-English and Ottoman sources that English writers drew upon influenced their own writing in ways that we have scarcely begun to imagine because of Western scholars' inability to translate Turkish texts. In my epilogue, I will offer some translations of these primary source materials and suggest avenues for new scholarship.



Unlike the English and Continental accounts, Ottoman narratives about encounters with Europeans have been far more difficult to locate. All the Ottoman narratives I've been able to locate and translate demonstrate a remarkable consistency in form (official documents of Ottoman state governed by very specific genre formulas) and function (reportage about Ottoman principalities or territories intended for Ottoman control.) Despite this fact, they also show that Ottoman interest in Western Europe was no less nuanced or influenced by cultural predisposition. And like the English, Levantine encounters with the Turk, these Ottoman accounts feature the figure of the trans-imperial subject prominently. These trans-imperial agents, like their European counterparts, serve as our first point of narrative contact with the Other.

I expect that my dissertation will raise a number of provocative questions, to which I shall proffer a number of provisional responses. How does adopting the perspective of a trans-imperial narrator who divided (or perhaps doubled) his loyalties between England and the Ottoman Empire give us new points of interpretive access to these texts? How did Englishmen who were constantly being called upon to represent (and be representative) affect domestic notions of nationality and belonging through generating these Turkish epistemes? How did the liminal position of the trans-imperial subject allow for the creation of surveillance-free zones where information, goods, and services could be exchanged? And, as critics, how can we learn more about successful conduct of these medial (as distinct from 'hybridized') exchanges within these zones if their very purpose was to avoid detection and study? This last question, it seems, may be the most crucial of all given that my project intends to understand those discourses of

trans-cultural exchange that even the most ardent political proponents of postcolonial theory are at pains to enunciate.

Any study of the Elizabethan mediators/ambassadors who facilitated early Anglo-Ottoman interactions is necessarily hampered by the very clandestine practices adopted by those mediators. These mediators survived because they were servants, and thus were able to use their social insignificance to travel undetected or at least unregarded. Although they negotiated on behalf of powerful and influential masters, the contacts these mediators made were with other similarly undistinguished servants. Besides serving Queen Elizabeth and King James, England's earliest ambassadors were involved in co-dependant relationships with networks of Ottoman translators, mediators, and spies, relationships that they could not discuss publicly. The irony is that these complex one-to-one interactions shaped the entire arc of Anglo-Ottoman interactions right up to the establishment of the first English embassy in Constantinople. The establishment of this embassy was a statement that unrecognized mediators were no longer necessary because diplomacy was now a matter of trans-national importance. But prior to the explicit demarcation of embassies as the provenance of nations, these earliest proto-ambassadors operated within a complex nexus of social relations that we are just beginning to understand and appreciate. Not coincidentally, the need to monitor these social relations comes at a time when many of the world's most violent regions are in the process of denationalizing. And trans-imperial and trans-national contacts are taking place more and more through the use of informal mediators, rather than agents of state. To understand how these complex social interactions can be successfully negotiated we must turn back and once again listen for the muted voices of those Anglo-Ottoman mediating servants

who were able to successfully operate at a time of proto-imperialism – a period with striking similarities to, and implications for, the political instabilities of our current world.

## **Chapter 1: A Servant to Two Masters: Non-Fiction Narratives of Anglo-Ottoman Mediation During the Elizabethan Reign**

This chapter will examine the non-fiction accounts of Anglo-Ottoman mediators who facilitated relations between the two countries during the *pax Turcica* – that period from 1579 until the end of Queen Elizabeth’s reign during which England and the Ottoman Empire were military and economic allies. The writings of these ambassadors, travelers, pilgrims, editors, and translators contained covert expressions of resistance to their overt service of keeping the tenuous Anglo-Ottoman alliance stable and working.<sup>1</sup> By considering these narrations to be accounts written by trans-imperial mediators, we can recognize these moments of resistance, even in the language of government employees. Recognizing that these moments of resistance are a condition of the trans-imperial agent, and not simply a sign of individual discontent, allows us to find overlaps between particular kinds of service (ambassadorial, editorial, espial) that would otherwise be overlooked. I argue that without this attentiveness to reading the common attributes of trans-imperial writing, we are liable to dismiss them as different because of the different facts and information they provide, rather than the different kinds of Turk mediations they evidence.

The instability of the *pax Turcica* Anglo-Ottoman alliance was due to two goals that were often at odds with one another: England’s desire to secure safety and profit in Ottoman lands, and its need to minimize the perceived threat of Turkish religious and military contamination through such encounters. The mediating servants who functioned

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<sup>1</sup> Often, these mediators would cross categories. For example, officials of the Elizabethan government, including William Cecil, Lord Burghley, and Sir Francis Walsingham, were probably involved in arranging the translation and publication of French news accounts in the mid-1580s. These news accounts comprised a significant percentage of the overall book trade. See Raymond, Joad. *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, 103.

as Queen Elizabeth's representatives similarly struggled with their own identities as the face of the nation, while under constant suspicion of having 'turned Turk.' In fact, during this period, the expression 'turning Turk,' acquired an extra-religious connotation, one associated with changing allegiances from one's own master to a rival master. In tracing such trope shifts, we can become more attuned to the ways in which literary representations of the Turk manifested deep-seated English anxieties about controlling servants. This is ironic because, the fate of England's relationship with the Ottomans would become intrinsically defined by the lives of its mediating servants, those trans-imperial agents who shuttled information, goods, and services back and forth between London and Constantinople. As their narratives show, these servants were in the honored position to shape national success in the Ottoman Empire, despite the fact that their own upward social mobility in England at the time was being challenged and debated.

In this chapter, I shall read the complex narratives of each of these mediating, trans-imperial agents as an attempt to reconcile and understand their status as servants of two masters (often, the Queen and the Sultan), even as they struggled to secure their own social identity as members of a burgeoning working class.

Although it is anachronistic to speak about "classes" during this period, there was an acute awareness of the distinctions between the rich and the poor. At the end of *Holinshed's Chronicles*, William Harrison (1577) wrote about four degrees of people living in England: gentlemen, citizens and burgesses<sup>2</sup>, yeoman<sup>3</sup>, and commoners.

Harrison included day laborers, poor husbandmen, artificers, and servants, or those who had "neither voice nor authority in the commonwealth, but are to be ruled and not to rule

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<sup>2</sup> The distinction between citizens and burgesses was that burgesses, because of their occupation, possessed freedom within the city in which they practiced their trades.

<sup>3</sup> Country yeomen were either freeholders of land to the value of forty shillings, or farmers to gentlemen.

other” among the ranks of the “commoners.”<sup>4</sup> There was even a sumptuary legislation of 1597, which marked each “degree” by income, residence, diet, and dress. Status and prestige could change by the accumulation of power or wealth (although not evidence of ‘nobility.’) At the beginning of the Tudor age, the church had owned nearly a quarter of the country; by the end of Elizabeth’s reign nearly all of that property was owned by successful merchants, manufacturers, yeoman, and investors.

Before England was an international power with its own colonies, it was a community of masters and servants. In the years leading up to the establishment of formal relations between England and the Ottoman Empire (1579), conflicts emerged between members of the English ruling class and their servants that would alter how Anglo-Ottoman interactions would be conducted for the next century. The growth in England’s population from 2.7 million in 1541 to 5.2 million in 1651 resulted in a struggle for resources and available employment.<sup>5</sup> London apprentices were increasingly recruited from the sons of well-off artisans and traders of the southeast, rather than from the sons of poorer upland zones. As a result, traditional channels of upward social mobility became constricted. Around the same time that Elizabeth’s ambassador to France, Sir Thomas Smith, was arguing that a degree of social mobility was necessary for any commonwealth to thrive, England’s lower class citizens were struggling against both their masters and each other for work, financial stability, and social rank.<sup>6</sup> At a time

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<sup>4</sup> Holinshed, Raphael. *The First and Second Volumes of Chronicles*. London: Henry Denham, 1587, C2v.

<sup>5</sup> In agriculture, the change in farming practices from open-field villages and common grazing to enclosed properties resulted in rebellions among the poor. Between 1549 and 1607, thousands were displaced during England’s agrarian upheavals. M.W. Beresford and J. Hurst discuss one such rebellion, which resulted from the engrossing of food in the Cambridgeshire chalkland village of Chippenham. See Beresford and Hurst. *Deserted Medieval Villages*. Lutterworth, 1971, 12-15, 35.

<sup>6</sup> Smith noted in his *De Republica Anglorum* that nations must “turne and alter” to allow an adjustment of the constitution of classes. This mobility was necessary in order to prevent either oligarchical oppression

when the opening of international markets meant that the most industrious servant would have unprecedented opportunities for profiteering and social improvement, many in England's lower classes felt as if their masters were deciding which servants should profit and which should not.<sup>7</sup>

Further exacerbating tensions was Queen Elizabeth's decision to allow thousands of skilled Protestant craftsmen from the Continent to escape Catholic persecution by entering England. The influx of skilled, Dutch and Continental laborers into London created 'contact zones' everywhere in the very heart of England and not only, as Mary Louise Pratt envisaged them, at the margins. There were some 4,700 'aliens' in London in 1567 and for 1583 the figure had risen to 5,650. The various national groups gathered together in particular neighborhoods and London was well on its way to becoming what we call a 'multicultural society. Native English servants considered these foreigners to be a threat to their own employment and treated this threat in class-oriented terms.<sup>8</sup> One of the first speakers in Florio's *First Fruits* speaks thusly about England: 'I wilt el you the truth, the Nobilitie is very curteous, but the commons are discourteous, & especially toward strangers, the which thing doth displease me.'"<sup>9</sup>

For some time before this was occurring, news about the limitless possibilities for profit and social advancement in the Ottoman Empire had been reaching England. As living conditions worsened in England for some, the prospects of Turkish service continued to gain appeal; especially by those servants who saw no more Christian charity

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or the revolt of frustrated servants. *De Republica Anglorum: The maner of gouvernement or policie of the realme of England...* Sir Thomas Smith, (ca. 1562-65, publ. 1583,) Chapter 14, D1v.

<sup>7</sup> Mark Netzloff cites English prejudices against what he calls an 'intermediate class of resident alien merchants,' who were excluded from rights or profits in the commercial arena. See Netzloff 2003, 45.

<sup>8</sup> In the 1590s, these outcries against strangers became so strong that the Privy Council took measures against seditious libels concerning the strangers.

<sup>9</sup> Hofele and von Koppenfels 2005, 38.

at home than they feared would be lost by living in servitude to the Turk. It was these servants – desperate and therefore heedless of rank, religion, or nation – that English authorities feared the most. This fear manifested itself in attempts at ostracism that were at odds its existing power structure; because England was, despite its most recalcitrant servants and despite tensions between these servants, still a service-based society. And so, these servants were treated as the Turks at home.

Although other literary critics have recently pointed out the importance of re-considering the role of servants in early modern literature, my dissertation argues that considering these servants from the Anglo-Ottoman perspective provides unique insights unavailable if England is not considered a proto-imperial nation that dramatically modeled itself on the example of the Ottoman Empire (even as it sought to replace it.) If we only consider the unruliness of domestic servants to be a matter of English critique, we lose sight of the epistemological applications of ‘Turkish’ behavior to link these unruly domestics to trans-imperial servants in Ottoman territories. Literary theorists like Mark Netzloff have done a creditable job charting why English aristocracy counted on strained relations between these foreign workers and English natives in order to secure their own power.<sup>10</sup> While I am indebted to these scholars<sup>11</sup> for showing how English national identity was as much a product of foreign anxiety as domestic class tensions, my

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<sup>10</sup> Netzloff writes, “the scapegoating of resident alien merchants functioned to displace the uneasy similitude of margin and center, differentiating the strangers’ criminal commodification of money from the crown’s ostensible power to redeem money as a measure of value by restoring the English pound to its standard value.” Ibid, 38. Netzloff argues that by doing this, the Royal Exchange was able to represent itself as the epitome of England’s commercial ‘credibility,’ constituting itself as the center of legitimate commerce in contrast to the suspect practices of foreign traders.

<sup>11</sup> See Helgerson, Richard. *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992, 142-165. In addition to discussing various imagined aspects of foreign ‘ness’ that were reified through early modern cartography and chorography, Helgerson’s book gives extensive attention to the promotion of vernacular literature and to the theorizing of the Common Law as agencies of national self-consciousness.



chapter focuses on the unique circumstances attending England's relations with the Ottoman Empire. As I shall argue, the Anglo-Ottoman alliance forced a paradigm shift in the ways that English servitude was imagined. For the first time in European history, English masters and servants were presented with unique opportunities for rule and profiteering – unlike any other in Christendom – which were by turns frightening and enthralling.

These master-servant relations must be understood in the unique light of scripted Tudor-Stuart Anglo-Ottoman interactions; many of the domestic servants who struggled against their English masters also authored written accounts of the Turk that spurred Queen Elizabeth I's alliance with the Ottomans and influenced imaginative texts written thereafter, during the *pax Turcica* period. Actual sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Anglo-Ottoman interactions were shaped by domestic anxieties whose palliatives were sought in a Turkey that was seen by few, but read by many.

The earliest accounts that Queen Elizabeth might have relied upon to prepare an official embassy to Turkey would probably have been written or communicated by English merchants who were dissatisfied with their domestic earning opportunities. There were a number of English residents in Turkey before Elizabeth's first official ambassador, William Harborne, arrived in late 1578.<sup>12</sup> What little we know about these early Anglo-Ottoman encounters is gathered through occasional references in court documents, petitions, and other sources not explicitly concerned with the Ottoman

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<sup>12</sup> We know some of their names – William Dennis, William Malim, and Thomas Cotton – from a number of sources, some scripted others not. Dennis's name was carved inside the Historical Column in Avret Pazari in Constantinople. Malim wrote about his presence in Constantinople in 1564, in a letter to the Earl of Leicester. See Hakluyt, *Principall Navigations*, London: George Bishop, 1599, v, pp. 121, 123. Cotton's newsletters from 1566 are preserved in the Public Record Office. See the Calendar of State Papers, 70/147, ff. 276-7.

Empire. One such document is a 1591 petition brought before the Levant Company.<sup>13</sup>

Three petitioners – Oliver and Nicholas Stile and Simon Lawrence - claimed to have been trading in the Ottoman Empire since 1563, and therefore requested the same exclusive protections recently afforded to the members of The Levant Company. These petitioners even claimed that Harborne’s employers in The Levant Company, Edward Osborne and Richard Staper, were not “the first discoverers of this traffic, and that it was more amply traded by the English 50 years since than now.”<sup>14</sup> If these claims are to be believed, then not only did English merchants learn about the people and policies of the Ottoman Empire through oral networks of trans-imperial intelligence, but the Queen herself may have dispatched William Harborne based on the intelligence provided by trans-imperial subjects.

England’s first ambassador, William Harborne was permitted to enter the country in September 1578. Harborne entered Turkey disguised as a merchant since Queen Elizabethan had not granted him any official permission to travel to the Ottoman Empire. His traveling expenditures were provided for by his employers, The Levant Company. Harborne’s experiences, in trying to establish the first Anglo-Ottoman trade capitulations, provide us with evidence of the trans-imperial servant’s complex endeavor to establish interpersonal relationships as a precursor to national bonds. The difficulties that Harborne encountered in trying to negotiate his position as a servant to two masters, as well as his attempts to secure his own safety and profit through employing mediating

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<sup>13</sup> The Levant Company was also sometimes referred to as ‘The Turkey Company’

<sup>14</sup> The petition can be found in the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*. 1591-1594 (London, 1867), 58. For more, see Skilliter, Susan. *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, 12.

subjects in Constantinople, are a paradigm for how Anglo-Ottoman relations would unfold at the interpersonal level.

When Harborne's presence was noticed at the sultan's court, it aroused suspicion that Queen Elizabeth was attempting to circumvent her dependency on the French in order to negotiate directly with the Ottomans. The French had been offering England and all European nations trading protection for the past thirty years, under an exclusive agreement that it had signed with the Sublime Porte. After the French ambassador, Jean de Germigny, asked Harborne to desist in his attempts to obtain independent trade capitulations from the Ottomans, Harborne hatched a scheme to throw the ambassador off his trail. When de Germigny offered Harborne the chance to forward Queen Elizabeth's dual request for trade privileges and the emancipation of some imprisoned English captives, Harborne forged an abbreviated version of the letter, which he showed to de Germigny. This abbreviated letter contained only the introduction of the Queen's letter and the request for emancipating the slaves. For de Germigny's satisfaction, Harborne presented this letter to Ali, who was the dragoman employed by the French to translate any correspondences intended for the Sultan. Soon afterwards, however, the Englishman bribed Ali into transporting another letter to the Sultan without de Germigny's knowledge. This letter, which had already been translated, presented Queen Elizabeth's actual request for trading privileges that were independent of French protection. The letter first reached the Grand Vizier, a man whom Harborne had learned was open to championing the English cause - for the right price. After receiving the letter, the Grand Vizier conveyed its contents to the Sultan. Mustafa, who was a chavus (Latin translator) for the Sublime Porte, and Harborne's initial point of contact from Hungary into Turkey,

was then given the Sultan's affirmative response to convey to Harborne. Such were the communal machinations employed by chains of servants, translators, and spies who were responsible for mediating England's first diplomatic correspondences with the Ottomans.

These communities of servants - some privileged by both Queen and Sultan, some unknown because their identities were either not noteworthy or clandestine – carried out the daily, interpersonal work of the established Ottoman Empire and its neophyte, English partner. The friendships, promises, betrayals, jealousies, romances, and cleft loyalties that kept these people in a complex web of relationships with each other was more than just the disorder preceding the codified order of seventeenth-century diplomatic channels. These relationships contained their own unique order which we must begin to appreciate if we are to discern both the continuities and ruptures in Tudor-Stuart Anglo-Ottoman interactions. Literary critic Jonathan Burton points out that since a round-trip to an Ottoman city might reasonably occupy a year of a traveler's life, with at least half of that time spent in Muslim territories, Englishmen formed their own, unofficial compacts with local authorities.<sup>15</sup> The efficacy of these relationships shows why no regularized Anglo-Ottoman policy existed, or needed to exist, at the time. These Anglo-Ottoman mediators, who would later be responsible for establishing such policies, still saw one another as members of the same community of servants, albeit a community that was undergoing pressure to change. And the masters who would later seek the standardized protection of an infrastructure of governmental appointees and policies were not yet in a position to demand that their mediating servants abandon the ad hoc arrangements which were, nevertheless, forging a mutually beneficial Anglo-Ottoman alliance.

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<sup>15</sup> Burton 2005, 22.

It is crucial to understand the extemporaneous nature of these first Anglo-Ottoman mediations because part of what was lost in the Jacobean period (and what has been lost in current scholarship about Anglo-Ottoman literatures) are the voices that conducted these extemporaneous relationships.) Harborne served Queen Elizabeth's ends through whatever means would preserve his credit before Sultan Murad III as well. To do this, Harborne was forced to employ a network of servants who were similarly unscrupulous in serving him, while keeping their own, respective positions before the Sultan intact. Harborne's subject position reorients our expectations of English/Turkish difference. Harborne's initial success in Constantinople was not defined by strict adherence to the Queen or to any strictly English or Christian code of loyalty. His agency was defined by the illicit measures he was forced to take in order to escape *European/Christian* espial (e.g., forging a letter with Queen Elizabeth's crest and signature without her knowledge or permission to escape de Germigny's probing investigation) and the Ottoman servants he came to depend on to keep the Queen's secrets.<sup>16</sup>

Harborne's later struggles also force us to consider the subtle commonalities between him and his fellow community of trans-imperial mediators. In late 1580, after Harborne had just recently secured the trade capitulations, he had to deal with the first abuse of those privileges by the Englishmen under his charge. English sailors aboard the *Bark Roe* decided to use the protection afforded by the new English trade capitulations to engage in a bit of piracy. Their targets turned out to be two Greek ships that were flying

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<sup>16</sup> Although welcomed by the Turks, Harborne ironically felt alienated from his co-religionists there. Susan Skilliter notes that Harborne's "natural bluntness" combined with the cunning acquired after so long an apprenticeship in the world of commerce, alienated him from the European community of Pera. Even after his return as a fully accredited ambassador, Harborne was always 'the English merchant' to other ambassadors stationed in community. For more, see Skilliter 1977, 38.

the Christian flag, but were sailing under the protection of the Sultan – an aspect of Ottoman subjecthood that the inexperienced English sailors didn't envision beforehand. At the time, Harborne had been away from Constantinople securing some business opportunities for The Levant Company. On his return, he was surprised to be accused of being an English spy by Qılıç 'Ali Pasha<sup>17</sup>, the High Admiral of the Ottoman navy, and many of the European ambassadors who had been scrutinizing Harborne's clandestine activities. Harborne was held under house arrest, and forced to compensate the Greek merchants for the losses which were seen as an English abuse of trade privileges. Although the three English pirates were tried in London; in Constantinople, Harborne was held accountable for their actions because they were seen as his charges.

In desperation, Harborne reached out to his rival ambassador, Jacques de Germigny, for help. Harborne pleaded with de Germigny to advance the securities demanded by the Turks. The French ambassador, for his part, not only advanced the monies to the Greeks, but even asserted that pirates' ships were sailing under French protection at the time of the piracy. (The French ambassador's actions probably had as much to do with securing the close relations that England and France shared at the beginning of 1581. In that year, Henri III had suggested a match between Elizabeth and François, Duke of Anjou.) Anticipating that the Greeks would make inquiries as to the verity of de Germigny's assertions, Harborne rushed bribes to the officials in Chios to

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<sup>17</sup> Skilliter's detailed history of the grudges and coteries of alliances among European ambassadors and Ottoman officials provides invaluable background to how national alliances were often shaped by interactions at a very personal level. Skilliter reports that Pasha's dislike for Harborne began when he lost the galley slaves that Elizabeth had alluded to in her October 1579 letter. Soqullu Mehemmed Pasha had promised him personal compensation in exchange for surrendering the prisoners, who were now political pawns. But three days before their release, Mehemmed Pasha died. And Qılıç 'Ali Pasha was left to fulfill the diplomatic agreement despite receiving no compensation for the English captives. For this, he blamed Harborne. And he continued to take out this enmity of all English ambassadors on Edward Barton, Harborne's successor.

persuade them “to swear that the ship had not shown the English charter at the departure from Chios.”<sup>18</sup>

Harborne’s extemporaneous interactions with Mustafa and de Germigny help us to understand that interactions between communities of trans-imperial agents must be considered as a correlative to national factors which influenced Anglo-Ottoman interactions. Harborne’s extrication from the *Bark Roe* incident was undoubtedly influenced by national factors, such as the Sublime Porte’s willingness to obtain English lead and munitions at any cost, and the French government’s willingness to protect amity between her and England. These national considerations influenced how relationships between trans-imperial mediators would be resolved, but they were not predictive. Before Henri III could convince de Germigny to aid Harborne, the French ambassador had to be assured of the efficacy of the diplomatic mediation himself. Harborne’s cause was aided by the fact that he and de Germigny had been living in neighboring suburbs of Constantinople. Not only were they in frequent contact, but they knew one another in detailed, interpersonal ways.<sup>19</sup> There were enough ambassadors removed from their posts for not following their monarchs’ instructions or for pursuing their own private agendas, that we can consider those successful relationships between trans-imperial mediators to be a contributing factor (at a communal level) to Anglo-Ottoman success - and not simply the acknowledgement of individual relationships when they served national interests.

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<sup>18</sup> For more see Skilliter 1977, 161.

<sup>19</sup> Part of the ambassador’s mediatory powers came from knowing the members of the ambassadorial community within which he lived. Susan Skilliter also points out that Harborne preserved a copy of the secret Ottoman passport issued to Jacques de Germigny’s secretary. Although ambassadors did not often let on that they knew about the behind-the-scenes machinations of their rival ambassadors, “these apparently secret or personal documents circulated, thanks to the dragomans, among the diplomatic coterie in Constantinople.” Ibid, 122.

There are also other indications that Harborne's relationship with his fellow trans-imperial servant was empowered with an informality which might have been absent from the relationships Harborne shared with his English masters. While under arrest for the Bark Roe piracy, Harborne sought financial and political support from Lord Burghley, Lord Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth. In a June 9<sup>th</sup>, 1581 letter, Harborne explained his dilemma to Burghley in terms that are highly suggestive about the trans-imperial servant's attempts to prove his loyalty to one master despite having access to another master's wealth and protection. Harborne complained that, "The said Admirall (Qilich) in favour of these christien tributaries (the Greeks), disgorging his long hidden poizon against me, (termed as accustomable) a Spie here onlie resident to the ruine of this state, as at this instant this fact did confirme required of his Master theire satisfaction..."<sup>20</sup>

Harborne explicitly writes about this aspect of his trans-imperial power abroad to distinguish that he has not abused the Queen's trust in him. Rather, Harborne complains, it is the Queen's English merchants who have jeopardized national interests as well as his new status: "Behould in whatt pittes of perplexitie and snares of unluckiness (almoste inevitable) I am intangled [in]: thoroughe the unchristien and detestable dealings of Peeter Baker, and Edward forster, mariners of Ratcliffe, Edward Clarke and Edward Sellman merchants, in theire voiadge of these partes in the Barke Roe of Newcastle." <sup>21</sup>

Harborne's show of servility barely masks the fact that he must first create an association between Barker and Forster's 'unchristien' behavior and their social positions as mariners and merchants, if he is to defend his own status as an ambassador and a Christian. In the same letter, he writes about the opprobrium of having to justify himself before a 'heathen

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<sup>20</sup> Skilliter 1977, 156.

<sup>21</sup> Skilliter 1977, 155.



prince', as much to assure Queen Elizabeth that he hasn't betrayed one master's trust and protective custody for another's, as to plead for her help.

Harborne's appeal to Lord Burghley can be read as an insurance policy against an English master who had as much ability to punish Harborne were he sent back to London, as the Turkish sultan did if the ambassador remained in Constantinople. If he was allowed to continue at his post in Constantinople, Harborne promised the Queen that he could function as a spy who would be uniquely qualified to report on those English merchants (e.g. Baker, Forster, et. al.) who conspired for personal gain at the cost of Elizabeth's international policies. And were he to be recalled, Harborne reminded Burghley (and by extension, the Queen) that he had fulfilled his obligation as the monarch's ambassador. His abject appeal is proof that he acted strictly on behalf of the trading company that Queen Elizabeth chartered, and that he did not line his own pockets as the pirates attempted to do.

This position of abject humility is both a reminder of Harborne's vexed position between two masters, as well as the necessary play that the trans-imperial had to put on if he were to continue serving. Harborne and de Germigny's actions in support of one another remind us that the ethos of the trans-imperial subject was not simple service, but the prolongation of his/her own terms of service along with those who might favor him. Even if Queen Elizabeth wanted to dismiss Harborne, she was in no position to do so. It took trans-imperial agents like Harborne years to cultivate entry points into those dense social networks of access to the Grand Vizier and the Sultan. As a consequence, finding a replacement for such an ambassador was no easy task. Although Harborne's successors, Edward Barton and Henry Lello, benefited from some of the contacts made

by their predecessors, each had his own unique challenges in assuring that his years of Anglo-Ottoman service would not end in ignominy.

Despite the legitimization of the English ambassador's position in Constantinople and an additional stipend from the Queen, Edward Barton faced intensified challenges to maintaining the Anglo-Ottoman alliance that William Harborne had helped to establish. Barton was Harborne's secretary from 1587 to 1588, and was chosen by Queen Elizabeth to succeed Harborne as English ambassador in 1588. Unlike Harborne, Barton was given a small stipend by the Queen, in addition to the salary he received from The Levant Company. However, the maintenance of the Sultan's favor proved to be a costly affair. As a resident of Pera, the unofficial suburb of Constantinople where all European ambassadors lived, Barton observed that his rivals gained political favor by presenting the sultan and his viziers with ever more elaborate and costly gifts.<sup>23</sup> Barton could not compete with his French, Italian, and Dutch counterparts, given his meager funding. In May 1596, he therefore wrote a letter to John Sanderson, the treasurer of The Levant Company, complaining about being refused Company funds to help strengthen his influence among the Ottoman rulers. Barton was upset with Sanderson because the latter was hesitant about "crossing" (to use Barton's term) George Dorrington, one of The Levant Company's important vice-consuls in Constantinople. Dorrington was responsible for overseeing the Company's expenditures in Constantinople. Barton wrote that there was much more at stake than just money or personal agendas in refusing him the requested funds.

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<sup>23</sup> The presentation of a gift represented an act of homage, as far as the Ottoman Turks were concerned. But they also understood that in receiving a gift or a tribute, they were put under an obligation to reciprocate, just not equally. Part of the reason for getting a gift was the gratification of receiving it. But another important aspect was the gratification in seeing the gift-giver labor hard to find just the right, pleasing bauble. The gift was often more about honor than value.

Barton's letter provides further evidence of the Anglo-Ottoman mediating subject's growing awareness of his own indispensability in promoting an English imperial presence in the Ottoman Empire. If Harborne's letter to Burghley bespoke the need for establishing ambassadorial vigilance against Christian (and even English interlopers) who might compromise the Queen's interests, Barton's letter expanded the import of what it meant to be the Queen's ambassador. The letter began by reminding Sanderson that the ambassador was more than just The Levant Company's representative:

“Yf you duellie regard the authorytie Hir Magestie hath geven me in thes parts, not bound to the consent of your generalities, not limited with the permition to be expected frome the Companye, but fully remitted unto me to govourne my actions accordinge to my owne discreation, which shall alwayes tend (I hope) to the exaltation of Her Magesties reputation in thes parts and inlardgment of the Companies benefitt; in which respect I must plaineleye advise you that you shall waunt in your dutie, yf you shall not consent to the axception of my bills...”<sup>25</sup>

If Sanderson felt in a position of superiority because of his place in The Levant Company, Barton was quick to remind him that it was he who was responsible for “the exaltation of Her Magesties reputation in thes parts.” Part of being the Queen's direct representative was the full remittance to “govourne my actions accordinge to my owne discreation.”<sup>26</sup>

The position to which Barton laid claim – that of a semi-autonomous, political representative and cultural mediator, despite financial bondage to a mercantile master – would propel his unprecedented success in securing English trading privileges well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the course of his career, Barton secured multiple renewals of the trade capitulations that Harborne had engineered, despite the fact that he had to interact

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<sup>25</sup> Purchas 1617, 48.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 50.

with both Sultan Murad and his successor, Sultan Mehmet.<sup>27</sup> His detailed missives to Queen Elizabeth about the importance of England's active participation in the diplomatic gift economy resulted in the successful delivery of Sir Thomas Dallam's mechanical organ.<sup>28</sup> But despite his many political and personal successes, Barton also earned the scornful envy of many of his English rivals.

If an English subject enjoyed unprecedented success in the Ottoman Empire automatically, he or she would be immediately subject to suspicions about his or her loyalty to both the Crown and Christ. Some Englishmen began to regard Barton as an ambassador-gone-native. English merchants in Constantinople were displeased with Barton because of his "meddling in State matters, whereby their goods in Turkey might vppon ill accident be confiscated: for howsoever he bore the name of the Queenes Ambassador, yet he lay thereonly for matter of traffique, and had his stipend of some 1500 Zechines by the yeare paid from the Marchants."<sup>29</sup> English traveler and erstwhile houseguest of Edward Barton, Fynes Moryson also noted that English merchants didn't like the fact that most of the salary that Barton earned was spent on "bribes or presents to the officers of whome they are receiued."<sup>30</sup> The merchants' disdain at seeing Barton employ bribes for certain officers, and not for themselves, quickened their desire to see the ambassador dismissed for malfeasance. Members of Queen Elizabeth's inner circle who had been hesitant about the monarch's decision to ally with the Turk were quick to

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<sup>27</sup> European ambassadors dreaded the expiration of a sultan because that meant that the treaties and promises that they had secured would have to be re-approved. Ottoman sultans were not bound to honor the treaties signed by their predecessors with European monarchs. This was perhaps to allow a re-evaluation of whether those alliances would be equally expedient to a different sultan's interests.

<sup>28</sup> Barton's description of the many gifts that were being presented by other ambassadors led to his presentation of a template to Queen Elizabeth. The many specifications that he listed for a gift that would duly impress Sultan Mehmet (e.g.: that it be ornate, self-propelled, musical) led to commissioning of Sir Thomas Dallam, and his subsequently successful delivery of a mechanical organ.

<sup>29</sup> Moryson 1599, 29.

<sup>30</sup> Moryson 1599, 30.

point out that Barton's close relationship with Sultan Mehmet substantiated their apprehensions about the impossibility of Turkish interaction without the contamination of 'faithlessness' (in every respect of the word). And when, in 1596, Sultan Mehmet asked his English friend to accompany him on a military campaign into Hungary and Barton hesitatingly accepted, his reputation in England was permanently crippled. Although Barton's decision was putatively the final, most egregiously disobedient act of a traitorous Englishman, he was not in a position to refuse the Sultan's request.

If we consider Barton's complex position as a trans-imperial mediator caught between two masters, the subtle implications of his alternatives become more apparent to us. On the surface, participating in a military campaign against fellow Christians was not part of his job description. Besides that, Barton didn't want to add fuel to the glowing embers of speculation about his increasingly personal relationship with Mehmet. Nevertheless, this trans-imperial servant had invested too much time, money, and effort into his Anglo-Ottoman mediations to risk jeopardizing his position with one master especially since he felt that he might eventually be able to placate the other. Barton agreed to the journey, explaining to both Sultan Mehmet (and in his dispatches back to England, to Queen Elizabeth and his countrymen) that he would only be acting as an "observer", and not a participant.

Barton documented his journey, as much to preserve the factuality of what occurred as to shield himself against forthcoming calumny. In a 1596 letter to George Sandys, Barton remarked that although he was favored with a retinue of 28 people by Sultan Mehmet, the ambassador afterward returned the retinue, with thanks.<sup>31</sup> After he returned to Constantinople from the campaign, Barton noted to his English readers, "God

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<sup>31</sup> Purchas, Samuel. *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, London: William Stansby, 1617, 315.

be thanked, and his holy and blessed Name, for this, and our perseveration in so dangerous a voyage.”<sup>32</sup> His secretary, Sir Thomas Glover, was also duly diligent in recording what transpired. Despite being Barton’s aide, Glover probably wanted to assure that his own future political career would not be jeopardized by his master’s actions. Glover’s personal accounts were a constant reminder to Barton that the ambassador’s every action was available for scrutiny, and his every word subject to cross-verification.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, Glover’s accounts of Barton’s involvement unequivocally defended the English ambassador’s fidelity and judgment in the face of potentially compromising conditions.

What Barton’s English critics did not understand about the ambassador’s trans-imperial condition, and what Glover’s account of his master makes clear, was that the 16<sup>th</sup> century ambassador had to preserve the protective custody that was afforded to him by one master, especially if his/her other master couldn’t benefit from that servant’s subjection. I suspect that Glover’s unique perspective – that of one trans-imperial servant observing his master, who was in turn a servant to both Queen and Sultan – makes Barton’s perspective clearer to us than Edward Barton’s own accounts of the Hungarian expedition.<sup>34</sup> This may be because the trans-imperial mediator’s position never allows him the perspective or the liberty to fully disclose the terms of his servitude to either master.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 320.

<sup>33</sup> Glover’s foresight was well founded, because he did eventually become England’s fourth ambassador to Turkey. Glover’s detailed accounts of his travels with Barton and the Turkish sultan provide a wealth of information about Ottoman military customs. For more, see *Purchas, His Pilgrims*, 307-320.

<sup>34</sup> See Glover’s “The Journey of Edward Barton Esquire, her Majesties Ambassador with the Grand Signior, otherwise called the Greate Turke, in Constantinople, Sultan Mahumet Chan,’ in *Purchas* 1617, 304-320. Glover’s narrative is a fascinating account of both Barton, as well as the English ambassador’s witnessing of the Turk. Glover not only captures the immensity of the Sultan’s military force as it fills the plains of Egri, but also Barton, “who to have a full view of them, mounted a small Hill...from whence beholding them with great wonder.” *Purchas* 1617, 310.

Glover notes in his account that the Sultan had asked his bassa to tell Barton to salute him at the moment of the sultanic departure from Constantinople. Glover noted that Lello and all his men were instructed to do so because “the Grand Signior was desirous to see the Ambassadour [Barton], which was the cause that the Bassa willed the Ambassadour to doe as aforesaid.”<sup>35</sup> The public display was as much to impose sultanic authority over Barton as it was to impress the Turkish troops. Barton’s public demonstration of respect towards Sultan Mehmed galvanized the awe his own troops felt towards him. The janissary corps understood the message – if an enemy mediator showed such respect to the sultan, that meant that he held his Muslim master in greater regard than his own, Christian master. Barton appeared to the janissary corps as more than just the English ambassador. He was being claimed by the sultan as one of his own servants – a trans-imperial mediator wrested from his transitional identity and displayed by one master as a prize claimed from another.

Glover’s qualifying statement “the Bassa willed the Ambassadour to doe as aforesaid,” leaves open the possibility that Glover felt that it wasn’t just the Sultan who wished to stage Barton’s respectful gesture. The Grand Seignior, the Bassa and Glover all seem to be aware of the significance of this gesture. If Sanderson and other members of Queen Elizabeth’s coterie were trying to convince her that Barton’s involvement with the Hungarian expedition was a possible sign of treason, Glover’s comment suggests that Sultan Mehmed also had his own coterie of advisors trying to use the English ambassador’s presence to legitimize the Turkish leader’s power over the Queen. Although it is impossible to say whether the Bassa’s comments were made independently of Sultan Mehmed’s instructions or as an echo of those instructions, the point may be

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<sup>35</sup> Purchas 1617, 309.

moot. Glover's narration, his comment about the Grand Seignior and the Bassa, and even his description of Barton's cautious, deferential acquiescence gives a strong indication that each of these participants recognized this display as a co-optation of the representational power of the trans-imperial subject.

In fact, it was Barton's status as a servant to two masters that necessitated his accompaniment with the Turkish forces, a fact that Sultan Mehmet understood and employed to his own advantage. What Glover's account also makes clear about Barton's bold involvement in the Hungarian campaign was that the ambassador knew that Queen Elizabeth was in no position to second-guess her ambassador's judgment. Barton's personal contacts at the Sublime Porte, his knowledge of the Ottoman gift economy, his shrewd anticipation of the success of Dallam's organ, even his fluent knowledge of Turkish and ability to verify diplomatic translations were all incontrovertible evidence that Barton's judgment was sound, despite initial appearances to the contrary. Barton's tenuous position as an unprotected English servant in Constantinople was counterbalanced by his secure position as an Ottoman subject with important contacts and connections beyond English influence.<sup>36</sup> The English ambassador understood full well that his initial actions could not be questioned, because only he knew their probability for success and the appropriate people and procedures to consistently increase those probabilities.

Was Barton ultimately successful in assuaging his English critics about the necessity of living among foreigners in order to successfully mediate on behalf of his

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<sup>36</sup> As Machiavelli advised, if a republic desires that her ambassador shall be honored, they cannot do a better thing than to keep him amply supplied with information; for the men who know that they can draw information from him will hasten to tell him all they know. Ed. Berridge, G.R. *Diplomacy Classics: Selected Texts from Commynes to Vattel*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 42.



native land? Barton's fellow traveler, Fynes Moryson, observed that Barton's journey to Hungary with the Sultan "made the Queene of England much offended with him." Moryson noted that the repercussion of Barton's behavior was both domestic and international opprobrium. Moryson wrote that Barton had "borne the English Armes vppon his Tent, whereof the French Ambassador accused him to the Emperour, and the French King, who expostulated with the Queene that her Armes should be borne in the Turkes campe against Christians." Moryson tried to come to his friend's defense by stating that, "though indeed in that iourney, he intended and might haue had many occasions to doe good vnto the Christians; but had neither will, nor meanes to doe them hurt."<sup>37</sup> Moryson's defense notwithstanding, neither the Queen nor Barton's critics cared that neither the ambassador's own "will" nor "meanes" had been hamstrung.

What neither the Queen nor Moryson noted (nor what current scholars about Barton have observed) was that the 16<sup>th</sup> century English ambassador's response to Sultan Mehmet's request was the only option available to any successful Anglo-Ottoman mediator at that time. Despite being called an "ambassador", Barton was not yet the agent of state that we associate with Jacobean and later 17<sup>th</sup> century English servants who held the title. We must consider Barton in light of the conditions faced by 16<sup>th</sup> century trans-imperial agents – forever caught between homes, existing as transitional, extemporaneous identities, and reliant on underground networks of similarly trans-imperial servants – if we are to avoid labeling him with epithets (e.g. 'traitorous,' 'unprincipled,' 'unchristian') that were inflected through the political biases of Barton's contemporaneous critics. We remember that the most vocal contemporaries who labeled Barton a 'traitor' were rival merchants of The Levant Company. Understanding the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 29.

conditions faced by trans-imperial agents like Barton is crucial to understanding how Tudor-Stuart, Anglo-Ottoman interactions were engineered in the streets rather than in palaces. It is these interpersonal interactions that modern scholars must study if we are to avoid confusing the finished products of diplomacy with its mutable producers.

Barton's death illustrates how inadequate it is for us to explain the dichotomous expectations of the Tudor ambassador (e.g. that he could serve either "English armes" or the "Turkes campe,") without considering that his role as a trans-imperial mediator challenged every such dichotomy. After Barton returned from the Hungarian expedition, he was distrusted by many of the English merchants that looked to him for protection and political representation. When an epidemic of the bubonic plague struck Constantinople in 1598, Barton fled the city – perhaps as much to escape death as the company of his countrymen. He succumbed to the effects of the plague that same year. On the ambassador's death, the sultan ordered his body to be carried in full state pomp to Heybeli-ada, one of the Princes' islands in the Sea of Marmara. Barton's English masters became concerned that the lingering image of the English ambassador lying alongside the Turks in death, just as he had in life, would cripple the reputation of future ambassadors. And so the Queen requested that Barton's grave be moved to an English graveyard in Istanbul. But the reputation of Barton as a Turk would not go away. English missionary William Biddulph described the ambassador's burial spot in a letter to Richard Hakluyt. Biddulph noted that Barton "hath left an immortall fame behind him, and lieth buried at an Iland of the Greekes, within twelve miles of Constantinople, called Bartons Iland to this day."<sup>38</sup> Even after his death, the representative value of the trans-imperial mediator

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<sup>38</sup> Purchas 1607, 259-60.

was still being debated.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps poetically, the only place where Barton seemed to belong was on an island.

If we consider Barton to be a trans-imperial mediator, we are guided in our search to those contrapuntal sources which illuminate the ambassador's liminal position. For example, Richard Hakluyt noted that during Barton's involvement in the siege of Egri incident, "the Hodjee or Schoole-master of the Great Turke, encouraged him in this extremitie to get upon his Horse, wrapping himselfe in Mahomets flag, and to take these three arrowes, and shoot them towards the Christians campe, using these words following, 'Bismilla Rohmane Roheim', which hee did."<sup>40</sup> Barton's apparent act of affiliating himself as a Muslim came with an explanation in his journal and letters to Sanderson - that his actions were performed "in this extremitie" of service. Given the fact that Sanderson had earlier refused Barton's request for a pension increase, it is hardly surprising to find that when Sanderson included Barton's communications in his travel accounts, the ambassador's mitigating statement was omitted. Sanderson also chose not to include the fact that Barton negotiated the release of a number of English captives in exchange for accompanying Sultan Mehmet to Hungary.

To glean these details, we need to compare Sanderson's account to that of Richard Hakluyt. Hakluyt felt the need to justify Barton's accompaniment of the Turk with the

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<sup>39</sup> Many diplomatic treatises of the early modern period registered this plight of the trans-imperial ambassador. The Italian writer, Guicciardini in his *Ricordi*, noted, "It is seen that ambassadors often take the part of the prince to whose court they are sent; and this makes them be suspected either of having received bribes, or of looking for them, or at least of having been won over by the civilities and attentions paid them. Yet it may also be, that having the affairs of the prince with whom they are living constantly before their eyes, and their attention less drawn to any others, these seem to them of more than their true importance. But as this reason does not operate with the prince who sends them, by whom all the circumstances needing to be considered are equally known, he speedily sees his minister to be at fault; and often ascribes to dishonesty what in truth results from want of judgement. Let him who goes as an ambassador note this well, for it s a matter of much importance. " Dictum 153. See *Diplomacy Classics*, 51.

<sup>40</sup> Purchas 1607, 320.

following marginalia, before introducing Sanderson's letter: "These two letters written by the Ambassador his owne hands, I have for his sake and their inserted."<sup>41</sup> Only within Hakluyt's later project – of explaining and justifying the Anglo-Ottoman accord to his English readers - do we gain the added perspective of Barton's own mitigating comments.

We find similar lacunae in the lives of other trans-imperial servants. Englishmen didn't learn about William Harborne's Bark Roe incident until eight years after the fact. Once again, Hakluyt included the incident in his *Principall Navigations*. By the date of this publication, the Turkey trade was so firmly established that there was evidently no restriction against recording the failure of England's own merchants to uphold the treaty signed with the Turks. Although Hakluyt mentions the chagrin Harborne experienced after the Bark Roe debacle, he doesn't include the major detail of the French ambassador Jacques de Germigny's intercession on behalf of Harborne. We only learn about this assistance through de Germigny's ambassadorial dispatches back to France. We also learn added details about the English piracy that Hakluyt does not provide. Hakluyt's elision also reminds us that restrictions of information pertaining to the dilemmas faced by Anglo-Ottoman mediating servants were often kept from the public eye.

Appropriately, since people like Barton and Harborne were mediating, trans-imperial subjects, we need to assemble and weigh evidence from those English and non-English sources which observed the ambassador's mediations but who were not obligated by the same constraints of service that bound the English ambassador to his master(s.) By looking for such sources, we can interpret the trans-imperial subjects' own words and action in light of those who observed him. actions from the perspective of authors who

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<sup>41</sup> Purchas 1607, 313.

were not trans iagency. When we do this, we learn that those trans-imperial agents who often were forced to fend for themselves were left without any social support mechanism to seek alternative recourses. And even when those support mechanisms were in place, trans-imperial agents often had to compete against one another for them.

Barton's successor, Henry Lello would soon learn that even after the Anglo-Ottoman accord was firmly established, English ambassadors would face interfering challenges from other mediators; and the ambassador's mediation would increasingly depend on other unauthorized, uncooperative trans-imperial subjects who were not bound to the same set of commitments as he was. By juxtaposing Lello's accounts against those of unauthorized English mediators, we can understand how crucial it is to listen for the lost voices of the trans-imperial agent. These voices emerge when we take notice of the tensions between official and non-official accounts of Anglo-Ottoman interaction.

Because Henry Lello assumed the post of English ambassador in Constantinople immediately after Barton, he began his diplomatic career from a disadvantaged position. Lello's movements were very carefully monitored, despite the fact that he had been forewarned about not letting his career trajectory follow that of Edward Barton.<sup>42</sup> Despite wanting to escape Barton's shadow, Lello found that the conditions prepared by one ambassador inevitably affected the terms under which his successor could begin his ambassadorial assignments. And so, one of the first business items that Lello had to undertake was the successful delivery of the mechanical organ which Edward Barton had pleaded for, but had not lived long enough to see.

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<sup>42</sup> Although people like William Biddulph did defend Lello. Biddulph, who had described Barton's "immortall fame" among the Turks, wrote that "in many things [Lello] exceeded [Barton], especially in his religious carriage and unspotted life." Purchas 1607, 259-60.

Further complicating matters was the fact that Lello became ambassador during a transitional stage in the Ottoman sultanate. The death of Sultan Murad III on January 7, 1595 meant that the organ that Queen Elizabeth had intended for one sultan had to be delivered to his successor, Sultan Mehmed III, a man whose favors towards English mercantile protection had to be curried separately despite the gift. Because Lello had to sue for a renewal of new trade capitulations in defiance of French claims that would include diplomatic control over Dutch shipping in Ottoman ports, he desperately needed to win the new sultan's favor.<sup>43</sup> From the ambassador's perspective, Dallam and his organ were crucial for the upcoming, fraught negotiations. But Lello's professional reputation was equally important to him. The ornate organ not only represented Queen Elizabeth amidst other European monarchs vying for favorable mercantile dispensations, but it was the means for Lello establish his reputation as the bearer of unrivalled gifts.

Lello's lofty ambitions were grounded soon after Thomas Dallam arrived in Constantinople in 1599. Lello was unimpressed with the disassembled organ. It did not meet his expectations of the munificent gift that Edward Barton had promised Sultan Murad. Additionally, the long sea journey had damaged several key components of the organ. So Lello worried that the organ might not even be able to create a musical impression, much less an aesthetic one. It's likely that Lello's vision was compromised by how much was personally at stake for him; and his consequent disappointment was with an object that he had built up in his own imagination. As with Harborne and Barton, we cannot fully understand Lello's mindset without examining him through the perspective of other trans-imperial subjects. Lello never made his personal feelings about

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<sup>43</sup> Gerald MacLean has written a fascinating account of the tensions between Dallam and Lello. See MacLean 2004, 103-154.

the organ or its maker known in his diplomatic dispatches. Fortunately for us, Thomas Dallam kept a detailed, private journal of his entire journey; and he wrote about the English ambassador's reactions with a circumspect, yet pithy, honesty.<sup>44</sup> Dallam relates that:

“When our Imbassader, Mr. Wyllyam Aldridge, and other jentlmen, se in what case it [the organ] was in, theye weare all amayzed, and sayde that it was not worthe iid. My answeare unto our Imbassader and to Mr. Aldridge, at this time I will omit; but when Mr. Aldridge harde what I sayede, he toulde me that yf I did make it perfitt he would give me, of his own purss, 15li. So about my worke I wente.”<sup>45</sup>

Lello's relationship with Dallam began on the wrong foot because the organ was little more to him than an instrument; whereas, for Dallam, the organ was “my worke.” We are reminded that the organ maker was a different kind of mediator, certainly not one under the same pressures as Lello was to earn Sultan Mehmet's personal favor.

Although Dallam joined the company of Henry Lello as a deputed agent of Queen Elizabeth, he did not write official correspondences about his trip to Constantinople. Instead, he chose to keep a diary that he resolutely refused to publish.<sup>46</sup> Dallam's account serves as reminder for the ways in which ambassadors were often at odds with other trans-imperial agents that Queen Elizabeth was recruiting to secure the Anglo-

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<sup>44</sup> Jonathan Burton has also noted that Dallam's travel account was decidedly unofficial. He cites Dallam's inclusion of a hilarious incident involving one of his English traveling companions getting tangled up in his own garter during a nighttime visit to the privy, and screaming about the attacking Turk. Burton astutely notes, “Anecdotes such as this never appear in official accounts and documents. Writing in his private journal, Dallam is less compelled to censor out instances of English folly.” Burton 2005, 48.

<sup>45</sup> Aldridge, who was the Consul at Chios, accompanied Lello to Constantinople on the occasion of the organ mission. Dallam's journal is found in Bent 1989, 58. The original manuscript is in the British Museum (Additional Manuscript 17, 480). The diary was finished too late to appear in Richard Hakluyt's anthology of travel manuscripts, nor did it appear in Purchas' "His Pilgrimes". Samuel Purchas continued to publish Hakluyt's documents posthumously. From the time Dallam's diary was completed in 1600 until the late 19th Century its history is unknown.

<sup>46</sup> Gerald MacLean observes that Dallam had his own occupational safety as an organ-maker to consider. “He had not come all this way to allow his organ to be snubbed, and certainly not without vigorously speaking up on his own behalf, fully confident that he could set things right.” MacLean 2005, 35.

Ottoman alliance. Dallam's self-conscious withholding of the trenchant remarks that he made to Lello remind us that these newly competitive groups of trans-imperial subjects shared complex relations which can only be discerned by examining their accounts as supplementary records of one another's lives. Craftsmen, merchants, and diplomats were all trans-imperial agents that came to rely on the different areas of expertise provided by the other.<sup>47</sup> In the case of Lello and Dallam, because they were co-dependents, they had to withhold any public critique. But privately, each kind of trans-imperial agent considered the other to be a competitor.

Traces of this power struggle can be discerned from Dallam's observations about an encounter with Lello the night before the organ-maker was to perform. Dallam was summoned to Lello's chamber. And according to Dallam, Lello began to remind the citizen that,

“Yow are com hether wythe a presente from our gracious Quene, not to an ordinarie prince or kinge, but to a myghtie monarke of the worlde,” and therefore, “you muste louke for nothings at his handes. Yow would thinke that for yor longe and wearrisom voyage, with dainger of lyfe, that yow weare worthy to have a litle sighte of him; but that yow muste not loake for nether.”<sup>48</sup>

Dallam's description shows us a Lello who was anxious and intimidating, in equal measure. Lello was anxious about his own self-representation by this non-ambassador. So much so that, according to Dallam, he even instructed the organ-maker about his own previous experiences in approaching the sultan: how he was “lede betwyxte tow men holdinge my handes downe close to my sides, and so lede into the presence of the Grand

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<sup>47</sup> MacLean notes that by the early 1580s, the composition of Anglo-Ottoman travelers began to change. There were fewer pilgrims and crusaders who were “replaced by commercially-minded pirates, merchants, entrepreneurs, and diplomats – all of them variously seeking to profit from the expansion of English trade and influence.” Ibid, 64-65.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 65.



Sinyor, and I muste kiss his kne or his hanginge sleve.”<sup>49</sup> At the same time, Lello also warned Dallam about not harboring any monetary expectations that exceeded his social station. After all, a lowly organ-maker did not deserve the “sight” of a sultan, much less a personal reward from him; the implication was that an ambassador did. Lello attempted to mitigate his intimidation through a façade of concern. But the organ-maker was perceptive enough to note this when he wrote,

“[Lello told me,] ‘I thoughte good to tell yow this, because yow shall not hereafter blame me, or say that I myghte have tould yow so muche; lett not your worke be anythinge the more carlesly looked unto, and at your cominge home our marchantes shall give yow thankses, yf it give the Grand Sinyor contente this one daye.’”<sup>50</sup>

Although Lello’s speech was intended to instruct the Queen’s unauthorized mediator in the protocols of approaching this “myghtie monarke of the worlde,” the effect of Dallam’s description conveys something far more subtle. After Lello gave his ominous advice, Dallam diplomatically crafted his rebuttal.

“After I had given my Lorde thankses for this friendly spetche, thoughe smale comforte in it, I tould him that thus muche I understoode by our marchantes before my cominge oute of London, and that he needed not to Doubte that thare should be any faulte either in me or my worke, for he hade sene the trial of my care and skill in makinge that perfickte and good which was thoughte to be uncurable, and in somthinges better than it was when Her Maiestie sawe it in the banketinge house at Whyte Hale.”<sup>51</sup>

About this passage, Gerald MacLean notes that Dallam invoked the figure of Queen Elizabeth for the first and only time in his diary account of the mission, allying himself and his mission with an authority higher than Lello’s. MacLean observes that, “amidst this jockeying for place and position, Dallam’s mention of his Whitehall

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 65-6.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 66.

performance boldly placed him closer to royal authority than Lello.”<sup>52</sup> I would add that his reminder about “my care and skill in making that perfickte and good which was thoughte to be uncurable, and in somthinges better than it was when Her Maiestie sawe it,” is a class-based response to the superiority of a capable craftsman over a helpless ambassador.<sup>53</sup> Dallam was reminding Lello that diplomacy would be of no use without the actual organ. And it was Dallam, not Lello, who not only repaired that object of mediation, but improved it.

Both trans-imperial mediators were providing evidence of the ways in which the Ottoman Empire, more than any other site of English imperial fascination, was a domain that offered a genuine alternative to English spheres of dominion and influence. If there was keener competition between “noble” ambassadors and “lowly” craftsman for social esteem in the Ottoman Empire, it was because Ottoman rulers did not care about any such distinctions. In the case of Lello, the Ottoman authorities that both he and Dallam were answerable to were predisposed against the ambassador for the same reasons that Queen Elizabeth had selected him – his staunch, self-conscious commitment to preserve English interests at all costs. By contrast, Dallam was perceived to be a man whose interests could be swayed by Ottoman allurements. Lello and Dallam’s struggle was a microcosm of the conflicts between those who sought to escape English hierarchies of authority in the Ottoman Empire and those who clung to those hierarchies as the only remnant of self-identification.

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<sup>52</sup> MacLean 2005, 39.

<sup>53</sup> MacLean provides a perceptive reading of Dallam’s ironic usage of ‘My Lord,’ as a term of address that he uses whenever he wishes to indicate that the English ambassador was attempting to intimidate him, and failing. See MacLean 2005, 39.

Dallam noted in his journal that, on the day of his performance, he journeyed through the various stages of the sultan's seraglio. As he advanced past another set of doors that demarcated an outer room of the seraglio from an inner room, he approached Sultan Mehmet. Dallam was already entering places into which the merchant-turned-diplomat, Lello had never been admitted.<sup>54</sup> And this knowledge certainly contributed to the envy that occasioned Lello's warnings to Dallam the night before. Though highly active, essential, gainfully employed, the Anglo-Ottoman ambassador's ambiguous status subjected him to enormous social pressures oddly analogous to those felt by his social superiors. Lello's certainly wasn't assuaged by being made to wait outside of the sultan's seraglio while Dallam performed inside, and then learning later that Dallam had been rewarded with 14 or 15 gold pieces following his performance.<sup>55</sup> The paradoxical position shared by these two English trans-imperial mediators reveals that despite their differences in class and accessibility to the Sultan, they were charged with promoting "common", national interests.

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1599, after successfully restoring the organ to its original working order, Thomas Dallam successfully performed before Sultan Mehmet III. Dallam's performance was so well received that he was offered an opportunity to remain

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<sup>54</sup> The literary resonances of this privileged access would become imaginative fodder in Jacobean and post-Jacobean Turk plays. Most prominently, in Philip Massinger's *The Renegado*, the lowly merchant, Vitelli is allowed to enter through a succession of rooms in the Sultan's palace, straight to the bedchamber of the Sultan's niece.

<sup>55</sup> Henry Lello recounted his chagrin at having to please both an English and a Turkish mistress during the occasion of Thomas Dallam's visit to Constantinople. It was on this trip that Lello was entrusted with delivering the Queen's gift of an ornate carriage to the Sultan's wife, Sultana Safiye. So excited was the Sultana by the news of the carriage's impending arrival that she sent Lello "two horses, out of hir owne stable, to draw the same."<sup>55</sup> Lello was irritated at having to stable and feed the horses while the carriage was being repaired and repainted. See Lello to Cecil, September 8, 1599, Public Records Office, Calendar of State Papers 97/4, f.45. See also Mayes, Stanley. *An Organ for the Sultan*. London: Putnam, 1956, 171, 183; and Peirce, Lesley. *The Imperial Harem*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 225-228.

as a permanent member in the Sultan's household.<sup>56</sup> Dallam was continually given tours of the sultan's seraglio, promised a wife from the sultan's harem, and shown a wealth of treasures as a means of winning him over. The preference that Sultan Mehmet showed to Dallam over Lello only served to encourage English expectations that the Ottoman Empire truly was a locale where the social order that kept craftsmen, laborers, and merchants as "second-class" citizens at home could be productively upended.

Although Dallam was flattered by the attention that he received, he had no intentions of leaving England permanently. He maintained his intentions to return home. And when Sultan Mehmet III decreed that "yf the workman that sett up the presente in the surralia would not be perswaded to stay behind the shipe, the ship muste stayer until he had removed the presente unto another place,"<sup>57</sup> Dallam was furious. Extricating himself from the overbearing persuasion of the sultan and his servants proved to be more than Dallam could handle alone. One of Elizabeth's trans-imperial subjects was forced to ask another for assistance.

The strained relationship between Dallam and Lello made a renewed alliance difficult. Lello had already advised Dallam to never flatly refuse the Sultan's offers to stay, and instead to "tell them that yf it did please my Lorde that I should stay, I should be the better contented to stayer; [and Lello told me that] by that meanes they will not go about to stayer you by force, and yow may finde a time better to goo awaye when you please."<sup>58</sup> In his journal, Dallam never records how he handled Lello's advice. But upon

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<sup>56</sup> Within days of the performance, Dallam notes that he was "sente for againe to the surralia" where "those two jemoglans which kepte that house made me verrie kindly welcome, and asked me that I would be contented to stay with them always, and I should not wante anythinge, but have all the content that I could desire." Bent 1989, 73.

<sup>57</sup> MacLean 2005, 43.

<sup>58</sup> Bent 1989, 72.

hearing that Lello's response to the Sultan's decree was to urge complicity and patience, Dallam could barely contain his outrage and contempt:

"I was in a wonderfully perplexitie," Dallam wrote, "and in my furie I tould my lorde that that was now come to pass which I ever feared, and that was that he in the end would betray me, and turne me over into the Turkes hands, whear I should Live a slavish Life, and never companie againe with Christians, with many other suche-like words."<sup>59</sup>

Despite Dallam's success as the more persuasive English mediator, he was bound to accept the Sultan's authority and Lello's advice to accept that authority.

For his part, Lello attempted to convince Dallam that it would just be a matter of time before the organ-maker would be allowed to return to England. Lello reminded him that the ship that was leaving Constantinople would likely return shortly because the threat of plague in Iskenderun, one of its ports of call. "My Lorde did speake this so friendly and nobly to unto me, that upon a sodon he had altered my mynde, and I tould him that I would yeld my selfe unto Godes hand and his."<sup>60</sup> Dallam grudgingly conceded in his diary that Lello might be correct in urging diplomacy and patience. After forty-six days of waiting, a vessel returned for Dallam, and the organ-maker was finally given permission to leave. Gerald MacLean conjectures that Lello had to pay Sultan Mehmet III in order to ensure Dallam's return home. But even without evidence of this, the ambassador was undeniably influential in securing Dallam's release. Although Dallam was not conferred any official title by Queen Elizabeth, and he was placed under Lello's authority, the organ-maker was an important figure in Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic matters.

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<sup>59</sup> Bent 1989, 76.

<sup>60</sup> Bent, 1989, 77.

The extent of that importance, beyond the bald fact of creating the organ that won Sultan Mehmed III's favor, can only be ascertained by examining Dallam's writing for the tensions that it reveals about Lello's position as an official Anglo-Ottoman mediator and between the two as competing mediators. Dallam's observations about Lello give a much clearer sense of how official trans-imperial agents were often forced to distinguish their own legitimacy from that of pseudo-official and unofficial mediators than Lello's own observations are capable of giving. By reading Dallam's account with a sensitive acuity toward the shared condition of both men as English servants without the protection of a master, we appreciate the ad hoc alliance that had to emerge to challenge Mehmed III's will. By reading Dallam's account for the ways in which it betrays Lello's insecurities while not openly betraying Lello's authority, we better understand how official and unofficial mediators needed to protect one another despite their tensions because their relative positions of mastery and servitude over one another might change from one day to the next. It is this cautious tension that Dallam and Lello's accounts evidence jointly and in response to one another. It is as if the voice of trans-imperial mediator becomes most recognizable when submerged voices of individual limitations emerge through mutual acts of desperate innovation.

Lello's term as English ambassador is punctuated with several notable instances of such interaction with these non-professional mediators. Each incident provides a different perspective from which to consider the complicated relationships between ambassadors and unofficial trans-imperial mediators in the open Ottoman Empire. One such upstart English mediator was Sir Thomas Sherley, brother to Sir Anthony Sherley, Elizabeth's ambassador to Persia. Sherley's reckless ambitions to establish himself as a

notable trans-imperial mediator (on the order of his more famous siblings, Anthony and Robert) landed him in Turkish captivity in January 1602.<sup>62</sup> The exact events that led to his capture were disputed, but Sherley's repeated assertions that he was not the thief he was accused of being; and Lello's tepid mediation on behalf of his fellow Englishmen, indicate that Sherley might indeed have stolen some goods from Greek Turks on the island of Gio. For the three years of Sherley's Ottoman captivity, the ambassador and the self-appointed Anglo-Ottoman mediator engaged in a war of words that was played out before their English and Ottoman masters. It is their series of letters back home, referencing one another and their attempts to win the favor of Sultan Ahmed, that provide us with further insight into the resistances between official and non-official trans-imperial mediators. When read alongside one another, Lello and Sherley's competing trans-imperial perspective show us how English mediators competed with one another in their appeals to authorities back home, answered charges of moral weakness in the face of Turkish servitude, and tried to position themselves as the most knowledgeable official sources about the Ottoman Empire.

In his February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1602 correspondence<sup>63</sup> with Sir Robert Cecil, Henry Lello took exception to Sherley's inexplicable explanation for his capture. Lello wrote that Sir Thomas and his men must have "used no friendly and lawful means" of procuring food from the islanders. Therefore, it was not surprising that Sherley's repeated missives to Lello, to plead for his freedom before the Bashaw, were met with polite sympathy and dilatory assurances of aid. The English ambassador knew that there was an inherent

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<sup>62</sup> The lives of the three Sherley brothers, as well as the entire episode of Sir Thomas Sherley's Turkish captivity are recounted in Nixon, Anthony. *The Three English Brothers*. Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970.

<sup>63</sup> *Calendar of State Papers*, Foreign, Turkey, 4, f. 209.

danger to his own credibility before Turkish authorities, if he defended a countryman who might have been guilty of thievery, and who might further have been charged with spying.

Despite Lello's promises to help, Sherley recognized the English ambassador's hesitation and (in a countermove anticipated by Lello) wrote to complain to his brother Anthony. The letter was intercepted by Lello, who then wrote marginal notes responding to Sherley's accusations and then sent the letter to the aforementioned Robert Cecil. Although the letter is lengthy, it is worth quoting in full, along with Lello's marginal comments:



<p>Lello's comments:</p> <p>Never any unless they be demaunded</p> <p>myselfe</p> <p>meaning myself w<sup>ch</sup> in right he should have said his frend</p> <p>That is most untrew I never omitted non this Burton is a clocke maker, whome for a disordered fellow I sent out of my house</p> <p>Never had any but his Mat<sup>y</sup> &amp; yor hon<sup>rs</sup></p> <p>(To prove his allegacon for Mr. Glover I wish yo<sup>r</sup> honr would opunyne him (if he be an honest man ( ) wil speake yt way: but I meuse it be Sr Thom<sup>as</sup> Hum<sup>r</sup> first I feel his brothers lres advised him to...stly upon non, but y<sup>e</sup> French &amp; and now another.</p>	<p>Sherley's text<sup>64</sup>: [All bracketed comments are mine] All italicized words are Sherley's</p> <p>“My most honorable deare brother: I muste needes impute it to one of my worst fortunes that yow doe not receave my letters, for I doe assure yow that I never lett carrier passe without sending of duble packets unto yow, Th' one by the Englishe Embassador (<i>w<sup>ch</sup> is ever suppressed</i>) th' other by myne assured friend the fryer: And I feare that his [the friar's] confidence in the Frenche Embassador hathe bine the cause that they haue ever myscarred of late, for since his cominge to Constantinople I reposed a greate hope and confidence in him upon yo<sup>r</sup>: commendacons and assurance. (But to use fewe wordes and leave all circumstances) I find noe kinde of comforte from him, but a right frencheman he hathe shewed himselfe in betrainge bothe yo<sup>r</sup> secrits and myne. First he delivered your open letter to the man (<i>you may imagen</i>) and since tould him all the complaints and exclamacons w<sup>ch</sup> the fryer used agaynste him [Lello] in my behalf: Now (brother) I prairie yow to judge what hope there is of my libertie when you especte yt by the meanes of only 2 men, of whome th' one carethe not for me, <i>th' other is myne enemy</i> as marke the sequel, and yow will plainlie perceive <i>firste hee never tooke hould of any opertunitie to ease me</i>, but hathe geven waye to all meanes to ruine me, as Mr. Burton can tell yow. Nexte, he [Lello] hathe ever written in to England of stronge hopes for my libertie, when hee had none at all. Therby preventinge all further and new meanes, yt should there be effected for me, and to increase his hatred to me my father hathe shewed my letters (written against him) to suche as have certified him of yt. You wryte to me that you have bound him, yf any thing can bind a man, my deerest Brother, w<sup>th</sup> greefe I speake yt he is not a man to be bound w<sup>th</sup> benefits, but to be forced wth sharpe threatates and terroures, like a dull horse that must ever be spurred. When he receaveth a freshe letter from the kinge or any councler then he rampeth like a beare for two or three dayes, and then, as Sir Drue Drurie was wonte to saie, finger in mouthe and no more newes: these are my present hopes here, unlesse you, or some other of my frinds can helpe me to some better succor out of Christendom then any that Turkie dothe yet afforde. I am verie glad that you have spoken wth Mr. Glover he is a true honest gent and (I am sure) hathe confirmed what I have formerlie written. I praye you use Mr. Burton wth that respecte that his love to me dothe deserve w<sup>ch</sup> (you see) is exceeding greate. And so I commend [him?] to you this laste of Maye 1605.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yo<sup>r</sup> moste affectionat loving poore brother, To: Sherlie”</p>
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<sup>64</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Turkey, 5, f. 17.*

Both Sherley's letter and Lello's comments represent the ways in which English trans-imperial mediators competed with one another in their appeals to authorities back home. Sherley writes to his brother, but his appeals are ultimately aimed at those who have administrative authority over Lello. In essence, Sir Thomas gives his brother the necessary information that Sir Anthony needed (the news of suppressed correspondences; suspect affiliations with the French ambassador; the confirmation of his own account by Sir Thomas Glover, James' impending choice to succeed Henry Lello as English ambassador in Constantinople) to argue for Lello's removal, which Sir Thomas hopes may be the next step in procuring his own release. Lello's marginal notes reflect a measured response to each allegation of dereliction of duty. Lello never sinks to the level of counter-accusation, at least not in this letter's marginal notes. Instead he emphasizes that he has been faithful in the duties of his office as ambassador. He has served as a facilitator of communication between the Crown and the subject, except where his Turkish host demanded to see Sherley's letters. He has served as a "frend" to the English subject. He has represented his expectations about Sherley's release faithfully to King James, and the accusations of a "disordered clocke maker" cannot prove otherwise. Finally, he trusts that Glover will disprove Sherley's allegations and render a favorable "opunyne" about his fellow ambassador. This last point, about who is most trustworthy about vouching for a person's character, a "disordered fellow" or Glover himself, strengthens the claims of Lello's penultimate marginal comment, that (as Sherley must himself grudgingly admit, Lello "is not a man to be bound w<sup>th</sup> benefits.")

Lello does not comment on the accusation here, but he did send Sir Robert Cecil another letter where he made his own opinions on the Sherley captivity clearer. In that letter, Lello speaks of Sherley's "harsh and malicious dealinge" towards him, who has been "the best friend hee had in his present state."<sup>65</sup> The war of words between the two men is an indication of how obligations that competing trans-imperial mediators had to common English masters would alter Anglo-Ottoman relations between the end of Elizabeth's reign and the beginning of James.'

By the early 1580s, when the Levant and Barbary Companies formally opened up numerous entrepreneurial possibilities, religiously inspired pilgrims and crusaders started to be replaced by commercially minded pirates, merchants, entrepreneurs, and diplomats – all of them variously seeking to profit from the expansion of English trade and influence. The fact that all of these trans-imperial mediators, both new and outmoded, competed with one another for a share in the 'Turk business' was a reminder to Englishmen of their own nation at its most contradictory and contestatory self - in its transition into nationhood.

During this period, official trans-imperial mediators were beginning to position themselves as the most knowledgeable sources about the Ottoman Empire by distinguishing their class difference from unofficial trans-imperial subjects. Ambassadors like Lello were becoming more cognizant of emphasizing their class difference from non-sanctioned trans-imperial agents. And through this emphasis, they aimed to show that the kinds of Turkish knowledge that they provided was more national

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<sup>65</sup> Lello's letter continues: "[Sir Thomas Sherley] sent to mee for a trifling matter, which not being founde for him at the present burst out into such a raging and rayling fury that it was wondered at by the barbarous turkes in prison." See *Calendar of State Papers*, Foreign, Turkey, 5, f. 18. This letter was composed within three months of the composition of the aforementioned Sherley letter, and addressed to Cecil (then Viscount Cranbourne).

and therefore more valuable to English authorities at home. Lello was not the only one who forged this affiliation between class and nascent English imperialist interests in the Ottoman Empire. For example, John Sanderson's position as an employee of The Levant Company gave him access to Ottoman sources that might not have been accessible to non-sanctioned English subjects. In a report entry dated May 25, 1600, John Sanderson wrote to the Levant Company:

"Now am accasioned to put Your Worships in mynd that order hereafter may be taken that no English ships of warre trouble the Strets, expect you purpose to geve over your merchandizinge in thes parts of Turkey; for of latte *great rumors* [emphasis mine] and lamentations hath bin made at this Port by Turks and other that the English robbe, spoile, and kill Mussellmen. The sam hath ben published at Sultan Sullimans church in the pulpit by a learned man in ther religion,<sup>66</sup> who afterward was rebuked by the Vizer and others for the sam. Yett continuall complaynnts com to the publique duan;<sup>67</sup> and, to make all wourse, chauses and others are littlie arrived from Petrasse, [who] afferme the newes of two English ships in that port with a price [i.e.: prize], and say that pepper is ther sold at 30 aspers the oke, and other comodoties very cheape."<sup>68</sup>

In pointing out this kind of information access, Sanderson revealed himself to be knowledgeable about how the Turks viewed the English. The implication was that such knowledge would make Sanderson England's best advisor for shaping its international reputation. Sanderson likened merchants acting in their self-interest to servants who demanded more rigorously authoritative control. And trans-imperial servants like Sanderson (and Lello) were beginning to position themselves more closely with those authoritative masters – a trend that England's leaders would begin to adopt for their own purposes in the Jacobean period and beyond.

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<sup>66</sup> Probably referring to what Sanderson had overheard in a sermon given during weekly Friday prayers.

<sup>67</sup> divan: the Ottoman council of state.

<sup>68</sup> Sanderson, John. *The travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584-1602 : with his autobiography and selections from his correspondence*. Ed. Sir William Foster. London: Hakluyt Society, 1931, 203.

Official trans-imperial mediators also had to adjust how they wielded their social power over non-official mediators because their shared masters had not yet recognized such hierarchies. Although Lello had the ability to censor or suppress Sherley's outgoing letters of complaint against him, the proliferation of epistles and writings from within the Ottoman Empire meant that if Sherley were not allowed to speak for himself, someone may have done it for him without Lello's knowledge. The unimpeded passage of Sherley's letters to and from England ensured that Sherley wouldn't self-censor; it also assured that Elizabeth's official trans-imperial mediator could monitor unofficial reports about himself. Lello's anxiety is indicative of the specific vigilance that official trans-imperial mediators employed against unofficial mediators; but it is also evidence of a prevalent awareness among both official and unofficial mediators that print media was supplanting oral testimony as a means of securing favor among common masters. This transition was not without its inherent tensions.

We cannot discount how much there is to be learned about the anxiety felt by the ambassador who recognized that his authority *back home* was as rooted in the written account of his encounters with the Turk abroad, as his authority abroad was with his oral interactions with that Ottoman subject. The effect of Sherley's appeals to English authorities strengthened Lello's resolve before Sultan Ahmed, an irony that the unofficial, trans-imperial subject pointed out. In 1605, when King James's letter to Sultan Ahmed requesting Sherley's release arrived, Lello's response was, as Sherley had described it, "like a beare for two or three dayes." In his presentation of the King's letter to the Sultan, Lello advised the Sultan and his ministers "to take good notice of his Majesties letters, which weare not for so small matter to be lightly regarded, the same

being from a potent and greate Prince, able to requite yt.”<sup>69</sup> Lello, in his notations about the letter, noted that it was also accompanied with “some 1,100 dollers (which Sir Thomas hath promised his father shall repay)...” Sir Thomas Sherley was finally released from prison on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1605. Both he and his father wrote appreciative letters to Lord Salibury, an ardent champion of their cause before King James. In this letter, both men were also obligated to express their gratitude to Henry Lello. Although Sir Thomas, the younger, did add that “thoughe heed yd mutche for mee in Christian charitye: yet hee did force more for your lordshippes sake than eyther love or pitye of mee could have moved him unto.”<sup>70</sup>

Sherley’s account, like Dallam’s, provides evidence of the contrapuntal voice that resists servitude to England’s masters even as it takes refuge in that shared, official anti-Turk position. We must search for these contrapuntal sources, especially in those texts which thus far have only been read as hegemonic pronouncements of faith in English service. By listening for these shared voices, we may begin to recognize how the voice of trans-imperial mediation weaves through sources which have traditionally been placed across genre divides, such as Hakluyt’s national history and Sanderson’s autobiography, or within national literatures such as de Germigny’s epistles and Mustafa’s (Harborne’s contact) epistles. Only by developing an acuity to the linguistic resistances of servitude shared by trans-imperial mediators can we begin to discern individual moments of agency within those complex relationships.

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, written documents were being archived more regularly and meticulously than they were at anytime in the previous century. This

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<sup>69</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Turkey*, 5, f, 44. Lello to Salisbury, dated 19<sup>th</sup> December, 1605.

<sup>70</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign, Turkey*, 5, f, 46.

indicates an increasing English interest in making the Turk a subject fit for organized observation. The battle of words between Lello and Sherley was a manifestation of how the fascination with the Ottoman Empire was contemporaneous with the desire to archive written records about the Turk. At the governmental level, papers of the secretaries of state began to be deposited in the State Paper Office from 1578 onwards. Lello's decision to leave the text of Sherley's original letter untouched shows his awareness of heightened English interest in foreign affairs; and the potential for that account to be preserved within a growing Turk archives that Sir Robert Sherley, Lord Burghley, and Queen Elizabeth were all aware of. Lello's response to the Sherley's text from the margins is a visual manifestation of dynamics of archived Turkish experiences between competing classes. Lello's words begin where Sherley's end. The effect is that once the reader finishes reading Sherley's words from left to right, he/she must begin reading that same line once again, only this time with Lello's comments on what has just been written. The effect of such marginal commentary is that Lello makes himself prior to, privy to, and beyond Sherley's accusations, even in deigning to let them stand untouched. Literally standing at the margins of English and Turkish servitude, Lello defends himself by supplying information which Sherley could not see. Although Sherley was Lello's social superior, Sherley was not authorized to be in Istanbul. Lello's marginal comments allow Sherley the respect of voicing an aristocrat's complaints, but they also demonstrate the rectitude of the ambassador's marginal position. Although Lello succeeded in asserting his own kind of authority over the noble, yet unauthorized, Thomas Sherley, other unofficial mediators were quite successful in profiting from the English public's appetite for a first-hand perspective on the Ottoman Empire. The quickening of

mercantile and literary interest in Turkey meant that any English traveler with a first-hand understanding of how to profit in the Ottoman Empire had an immediate audience.

English travelers of every occupation and background tried to position themselves as the best source of trans-imperial mediation. Whether they were former captives, such as Edward Webbe or William Haselton, traveling missionaries such as John Foxe or William Biddulph, or adventuring scribes such as Thomas Coryate or Fynes Moryson, these English travelers sought to distinguish their accounts from one another, despite sharing common travel paths and sources.<sup>71</sup>

Irrespective of their occupation, all of these trans-imperial subjects faced two paradoxical tasks. They had to assert their singular qualifications as authoritative narrators, while needing to rely on other trans-imperial subjects in order to substantiate the truthfulness of those claims. Additionally, their travel accounts were based on claims of an intimate knowledge of the Ottoman Empire, while simultaneously needing to refute suspicions that they had turned Turk themselves. Examining different trans-imperial subjectivities reveals the multifarious dilemmas that these mediators were enmeshed in. A captive slave like Edward Webbe, who was enslaved as an Ottoman oarsman and kept in captivity for six years before being ransomed by William Harborne in May 1589,<sup>72</sup> wrote his captivity narrative as a proof of his loyalty to Queen Elizabeth. His ulterior motive behind this assertion of loyalty was to seek employment from her. Another

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<sup>71</sup> Jonathan Burton notes as much, when he observes that Tudor-Stuart travel accounts contain a pattern of the compulsive repetition of tales of moral collapse in an attempt to distinguish oneself from the taint of Levantine travel. Burton 2005, 156.

<sup>72</sup> Webbe was a gunner on an English ship when it was captured by the Turks. The ship was returning from a mercantile trip from Alexandria to Leghorn. Webbe was spent five years of captivity in Tartary, and another five years as a Turkish galley slave. Webbe, Edward. *The Rare and Most Wonderfull things which Edward Webbe an Englishman borne, hath seen and passed in his troublesome trauailes in the Cities of Ierusalem, Damasko, Bethlehem, and Galely*. London: Printed for William Wright, 1590.



traveller, William Lithgow, introduced the frame of fiction in order to serve the spiritual needs of a particular audience as well as aid in the author's self-healing. And when John Sanderson, treasurer of the Levant Company and a resident of Ottoman-occupied territories from 1584 to 1602, turned his Ottoman correspondences over to Samuel Purchas for publication, he imagined that his correspondences were an intellectual biography that justified the life of an English Christian among the Turks.<sup>73</sup>

In the case of Webbe, the trans-imperial mediator tried to position his years of Turkish enslavement in the positive light of an informant. Because he had had intimate involvement with Turkish leaders such as Sinan Bassa, Webbe felt eminently qualified to serve as a Queen's advisor to the Ottoman Empire. He closed his Epistle Dedicatory by stating that "My desire is that I may be employed in such seruice and affaires, as may be pleasing to God, and found profitable to my Prince and Countrey." He repeats a very similar message with the final words of his narration: "...that I will be glad, and do daily desire that I may be imployed in some such seruice as may be profitable to my Prince and Countrey."<sup>74</sup> His captivity account is both a proof of his knowledge of places where the Queen needed employable, loyal servants, and a statement that he is just such a loyal English servant. Webbe reminds the Queen that if he had turned Turk, he would not be seeking the Queen's employment:

"I doe in all humblenesse prostrate my selfe and this plaine discourse of my trauels, to your most excellent Maiestie: wherein may bee seene that if in Turkey I would haue denied my Christ, or in my trauaile would haue forsaken my Prince to

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<sup>73</sup> In a 1623 letter, he wrote, "since in my conceipt, Master Purcus, you have so axceptably received the former papers presented, thes also I doe bringe to your other [sic]; which, put together, you may please at your laysure to peruse over. Therin shall you perceiue that this John Sanderson hath happily, by Gods permission, traced part of the Holy Land in the lifetime of his pilgrimadg; who now drawes neere the period [i.e.: the end], being paste 63. I pray God to graunt me a chierefull conclusion..." Sanderson 1931, 276.

<sup>74</sup> Webbe, Edward. *The Rare and Most Wonderfull things which Edward Webbe an Englishman borne, hath seen and passed in his troublesome trauailes in the Cities of Ierusalem, Damasko, Bethlehem, and Galey.* London: Printed for William Wright, 1590, 13.

haue serued for Spaine, thereby to haue become a Traytour to your Maiesty & my natie Countrey, I needed not to haue liued in want, but in great prosperity.”<sup>75</sup>

While wishing to distinguish his position of unique service to the Queen, Webbe could not help but rely on other trans-imperial subjects to strengthen the verity of his own narration. So while he could assert, in his Epistle to the Reader, that “[I protest], that in this booke there is nothing mentioned or expressed but that which is of truth, and what mine owne eyes haue perfectly seene,” he needed the backing of other companions to substantiate his “truth claim”: “He whosoeuer he be, that shall so finde fault and doubt of the truth hereof, let him but come and conferre with me or make enquiry of the best and greatest Trauelers and Marchantes about all this land: and they doubtless shall be resolved that this is true which is here expressed.”<sup>76</sup>

One of the reasons why trans-imperial mediators like Webbe felt compelled to make such a “truth” claim was that printing was beginning to supplant oral testimony and manuscript-based communiqués. Not only was England beginning to formalize ties with the Ottoman Empire, those ties were being formalized at a time when modes of record preservation were making the oral conveyance of messages obsolete. The artfulness of the mediator’s speech was giving way to the preserved, facticity of the mediator’s writing.<sup>77</sup> Before print became the accepted medium for these travel accounts, it was not

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, Epistle Dedicatory.

<sup>76</sup> Webbe 1590, 56.

<sup>77</sup> My statement is a generalization of sorts. As historians like Elizabeth Eisenstein have pointed out in *The Printing Press as an Agent for Change*, the movement from oral accounts to written texts was by no means abrupt or without transition. (E.g.: “Spoken words would be conveyed by printed messages without being replaced by them. While often transposed in print, sermons and public orations thus continued to be delivered orally.” Eisenstein, Elizabeth. *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980, 129. However, as Eisenstein later acknowledges, this trend towards the privileging of the written record was a historical fact.

uncommon to find narrators appropriating evidence or even claiming stories that were written by each other.<sup>78</sup>

However, once print became the pro forma method of communicating and recording communications, trans-imperial mediators began to be taken more seriously, and began to depend on one another differently. Where once mediators were viewed as potentially unscrupulous prevaricators attesting to each other's false claims, now they became co-witnesses to the verity of one another's claims. Readers of Anglo-Ottoman encounters began to see trans-imperial mediators as a coterie of co-witnesses, each of whom built on the written testimony of the other. Thomas Coryat, in his travel accounts *Crudities*, is very open about the need to borrow from fellow travelers: "For seeing I made a very short abode in divers faire Italian cities...and thereby was barred of opportunity to note such things at large as were most memorable; I held it expedient to borrow some few notes from a certaine Latin booke printed in Italie."<sup>79</sup> Thus, even in "first-hand accounts", we cannot easily separate literary interpretation from literary creation, except where the author himself takes note of his production methods. The "truth claim" that Webbe made was as much a product of the growing value of the written testimony, as it was to any belief that the trans-imperial agent conveyed an "objective truth."

These trans-imperial subjects became entwined in shared webs of information exchange. Edward Webbe served as an apprentice to Capt. Anthony Jenkinson, one of

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<sup>78</sup> William Lithgow's account of Fez depended heavily on the earlier account given by John Leo Africanus. Lithgow could have consulted one of a number of translations of Africanus' work. Lithgow's description of coffee consumption in Aleppo is also suspiciously similar to that of William Biddulph, who was there just seven years earlier. Even ambassadors were not above taking such creative licenses. William Harborne was accused of taking the accounts of a Catholic recusant, Sir Anthony Standen, and rewriting the information as his own.

<sup>79</sup> Coryate, Thomas. *Coryate's Crudities*. London: William Stansby, 1611, 4.

Queen Elizabeth's trans-imperial mediators in Russia. On the Turkish side, he probably encountered Edward Barton, since both men were interacting with the chief counselor to Sultan Murad during the same span of years. It was also not unusual for trans-imperial mediators to appeal to the same masters. The narrative account of Richard Haselton's escape from Ottoman servitude, for example, was dedicated to the same Richard Staper who employed William Harborne and Edward Barton.<sup>80</sup> Trans-imperial mediators operated within shared constellations of influence and knowledge.

Just as ambassadorial accounts revealed as much about official behavior as they did about how travelers in the Levant described one another, written accounts penned by these non-sanctioned travelers provide us with different perspectives on the interactions between England's official and non-official trans-imperial agents.<sup>81</sup> Unofficial travelers who wrote about their encounters in the Ottoman Empire voiced a different kind of anxiety, and enjoyed a different kind of freedom, than England's official ambassadors. These travelers included merchants, clerics,<sup>82</sup> ex-captives, and private fortune seekers. Writing became a means for trans-imperial agents of different occupations to emphasize or distinguish their particular occupation as worthy of social note because of their access to "the foreign."<sup>83</sup>

One of the most prominent occupations for the introduction of these Anglo-Ottoman mediators was the compiler of trans-imperial accounts. As much as the writers

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<sup>80</sup> Haselton's narration alternates from one episode of Turkish imprisonment to another of the narrator's hairbreadth escapes.

<sup>81</sup> Burton 2005, 156.

<sup>82</sup> *The Travels of Certain Englishmen* (London, 1609), which contains the observations of the Protestant chaplain William Biddulph during his 1600 journey through Aleppo, challenges previous travel accounts. But Biddulph still observes the Ottoman world through a highly prejudicial lens of biblical knowledge.

<sup>83</sup> Douglas Bruster notes that, "At the end of Elizabeth's reign, we perceive for the first time a significant number of readers and publishers placing as much importance on who had written a work as they did on what was in that work." Bruster, Douglas. *Shakespeare and the Question of Culture: Early Modern Literature and the Cultural Turn*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 75.

themselves, editors like Richard Knolles and Richard Hakluyt imagined themselves as a domestic go-betweens for the culling and transmission of proper accounts of the Ottoman Empire. When Anglo-Ottoman trans-imperial agents wrote, they did so with an eye to what these publications specialists valued. Although they didn't mediate directly between English and Turkish masters, these compilers acted as a receptual filter for which Anglo-Ottoman accounts would influence public opinion in England. The public taste for all things 'Turk' can be imagined to be a mutual product of reading public demand and publications supply.

As "underground" news suppliers became more mainstream in the demand for first-hand accounts about the Ottoman Empire and its surrounding territories, the mediatory role of editors, and compilers became more pronounced.<sup>84</sup> In 1603, Richard Knolles "digested" (to use his term) many of the vernacular translations of Turkish source materials that were circulating in Europe at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, in order to compose the popular *General Historie of the Turks*.<sup>85</sup> Knolles incorporated Augustine Curio's work, and thus enabled Caelius Secundus Curio's account of the siege to pass into mainstream English prose. Linda McJannet points out that some of the texts that Knolles drew upon were themselves intermediate texts (for example, Leunclavius's translation of the anonymous *Annals of the Ottoman Sultans Written by the Turks in Their Own Tongue...*)<sup>86</sup>, translated from Turkish to a Continental language (usually Italian or

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<sup>84</sup> The inclusion of Anthony Jenkinson's travels (1558-1561) through Tartar territories in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1589) seems to be one such shift in attitudes towards the Islamic east.

<sup>85</sup> See McJannet, Linda. "History written by the enemy": Eastern Sources about the Ottomans on the Continent and in England." *English Literary Renaissance*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2006.

<sup>86</sup> Another such intermediate text is ibn Hasanjan, Sadeddin Mehmed. *Tac üt Tevarih* or *Tadj et-Tevarih*. *A history of the Turks commissioned by Murad III (reigned 1574-1595)*. Latin: Lewenklaw, Frankfort, 1588. Partial English trans.: Seaman, *The Reign of Sultan Orchan* (1652); French, De Mézeray, Paris (1662). The original Turkish translation was done by an interpreter named Spiegel (Johan Gaudier). Sadedin's Latin edition is based on the German translation of this Turkish translation.

Latin) and then translated again into English from French, or directly into English. Knolles, like all editors, emphasized the value of reading history through his own predisposition. His account of the siege of Malta, for example, focused on what we might term the “human interest” of the siege, its drama and narrative impact. This is quite distinct from another account, Vendome’s *Della Historia di Malta*, with which Knolles was also familiar. Vendome’s account depicts the siege as an exemplar of God’s love for man and a proof that He will never desert his faithful followers.

In the process of his compilation, Knolles never left England or learned Turkish – a fact that has earned Knolles an undeserved amount of critique.<sup>87</sup> Richmond Barbour’s reading of Knolles, for example, argues that Knolles recommended the kinds of binarisms – a “fundamental enmity between Islam and Christianity - that later came to characterize orientalism. Barbour argues that Knolles’ polarized attitude towards the Turk – one that alternates between “indulgence” and “repudiation”<sup>88</sup> – stems from a linguistic ignorance about the mistranslations actually employed by many of the humanist writers that Knolles cites. I argue that if we consider Knolles’ position as a trans-imperial mediator with a partial knowledge of the import of his selected histories, we may better be able to appreciate his contributions to the larger scope of Anglo-Ottoman interactions. We can avoid concentrating on Knolles’ polarizations if we read Knolles’ editorial choices, narrative asides, and marginal comments as records of how early modern compilers thought first-hand accounts of the Ottoman Empire *ought to be* understood and received. By doing this, we can better understand their influence on, and interaction with, the trans-imperial agents stationed abroad and the English readers at home.

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<sup>87</sup> Barbour, 2003, 17.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 17.

Compilers like Knolles and Hakluyt played an active role in mediating which of the Turks which were sent from abroad would actually influence English readers. Hakluyt aided in the formalization process of Anglo-Ottoman interactions by including a history that justified such present interactions based on previous encounters with the Turk. Englishmen were aware that as early as 1553, Anthony Jenkinson received a grant to trade independently throughout the Ottoman Empire. However, there was no extant text of Jenkinson's original writings from Turkey. Richard Hakluyt changed that when he published Jenkinson's first trade grant.<sup>89</sup> Hakluyt introduced the text, which was written according to his own translation, as "The very originall hereof was deliuered me Richard Hakluyt by Master Ienkinson in the Turkish and French tongues." The editor/compiler's mediation, it seemed, was between what the public was already aware of through these non-sanctioned sources – tales from abroad, rumor, unpublished translations that were circulated through allusion and word-of-mouth – and what they needed to be aware of, in order to understand the Turkish archives *as part of* the English project of nation-building. By extension, these editors and compilers assisted in imagining England as a nation constructed in opposition to (or at least relative to) the Ottoman Empire. One of the most prominent exclusions in Hakluyt's *Principall Navigations* was the episode involving English trade in armaments with the Ottoman Empire. This was a fact acknowledged by the ambassadors of every other European nation with a 16<sup>th</sup> century presence in Constantinople. Richard Hakluyt made no secret

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<sup>89</sup> Hakluyt, Richard. *The Principall Navigations*. 1<sup>st</sup> edition. London, 1589. 82-3; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London: 1598-1600, Vol. 3, I, 114.

of the fact that he wouldn't publish any accounts that might shed light on English governmental policies which might be construed as unpopular.<sup>90</sup>

The mediation of these editors also occurred through how they chose to comment on those incidents that they included. When discussing the conversion of mariners, Richard Hakluyt notes how "howe divers have bene undon by their servauntes w<sup>ch</sup> have become Renegadoes, of whome by the custome of the Contrie their M<sup>rs</sup> can have no manner of recoverye, neither call them into Justice."<sup>91</sup> In making this observation, Hakluyt casts apostasy as a loss of human property in the form of the servants who have become renegades and placed themselves under the protection of foreign leaders, instead of English ones. Hakluyt attributes the English cessation of Mediterranean trade in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century to the increasing Turkish influence there, culminating in the seizure of Chios in 1566 and of Cyprus in 1571. However, Fernand Braudel points out that this theory is hardly tenable, since the English had left long before 1566 and reappeared soon after 1571.<sup>92</sup> The work of compilers like Hakluyt seems to have been to translate between the event in the past and the viewer's act of looking in the present. No less than the ambassador, the traveler, or the playwright, the compiler participated in the creation of a fiction of reportage that constituted a relation between the past and the present.

Hakluyt's comment and other such editorial expositions are another way that we can determine that English conceptions of the Turk were influenced by anxieties that permeated master-servant relations. In particular, Hakluyt's comments show how the

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<sup>90</sup> For the unpopularity of the Turkish alliance in Tudor and early Stuart England, see Baurner, F. L. 'England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom,' *American Historical Review*, 1 (1944-5), 26-48.

<sup>91</sup> "Discourse of Western Planning" (1584) in Hakluyt, Richard. *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, 2 vols., Ed. E.G.R. Taylor. London: Hakluyt Society, 1935, 2.218.

<sup>92</sup> Braudel prefers, instead, to find the explanation in an economic crisis in England in the middle of the sixteenth century.



mediation of master “class” concerns was shared by those who, like himself, treated the compilation of *The Principall Navigations* as a project beneficial to national interests. Hakluyt argued that colonization could address the chronic unemployment and underemployment problem that plagued English society. Hakluyt argues that the colonies would not only be a good place to dispose of unwanted people, but a good place where miscreants could play the role of consumers as well as producers. Hakluyt imagines a new social order in England based on who should stay and who should go.

Hakluyt justified his detailed inclusion of so many accounts of English travel to the Ottoman Empire under the same national project. “If any man shall take exception against this our new trade with Turks and misbelievers, he shall show himself a man of small experience in old and new Histories, or willfully lead with partiality, or some worse humour,” Hakluyt argued. Like the Eastern model of King Solomon, English involvement with the East and Islam was logical:

“For who knoweth not, that king Salomon of old, entered into league upon necessity with Hiram the king of Tyrus, a gentile? Or who is ignorant that the French, the Genoese, Florentines, Raguseans, Venetians, and Polonians are at this day in league with the Grand Signior, and have been these many years, and have used trade and traffick in his dominions?”<sup>93</sup>

As increasing varieties of Anglo-Ottoman accounts made stereotyping “Turkish” behavior more challenging, document collectors like Hakluyt and Purchas would come to privilege certain perspectives in these accounts over others (eg, one of the more recurrent motifs was the sense of entitlement associated with English trading privilege in North Africa.)<sup>94</sup> Part of the reason for including these incidents, Hakluyt argued, was so that Englishmen could be re-acquainted with a longer history of traffic and exchange.

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<sup>93</sup> Hakluyt, *Principal*. 1:lxix-lxx

<sup>94</sup> MacLean 2003 has suggested valuable links between the development of the Turkish episteme and the kinds of editorial and print-dependant choices that were made by writers and anthologists.

Hakluyt argued for this long view, and for an interpretation of English success in the Ottoman Empire as a sign of imperial legitimation.

This ambivalence about the ‘terrible Turk,’ who nevertheless offered military protection and financial gain, led to the fortification of certain stereotypical accounts over others. For example, the increase in piracy along the North African coast during the early 17<sup>th</sup> century led to more negative characterizations of the Turk as a slave-trader. These characterizations were motivated, in large part, because Turkish piracy posed a serious competitive threat to English piracy, which was at least as feared among European sailors. We can see how different investments in certain Turkish stereotypes conjoined the interests of editors like Purchas and Hakluyt, who sought to sell their publications, with merchants like Sanderson, who might influence public opinion (and thereby trade policies) through those publications. Although Purchas and Hakluyt certainly included tolerant and nuanced depictions of Turkish bravery and intelligence, the episteme of the “terrible Turk” found in their texts was a reflection of the mingling of internal, English economics and external, cultural encounters.

Although English reading and playgoing audiences also shared many of the same ambivalent stereotypes (eg: the admirable, terrifying Turk) as the trans-imperial mediators, these mediators typically learned more pliant, polyvalent attitudes toward various “others.” It didn’t matter whether these mediators were ambassadors or non-sanctioned travelers settled in the Ottoman Empire, or editors and compilers based in England. Essentially, travel writing about encounters in the Ottoman Empire was not committed to normative, official expectations, with perhaps the exception of monetary considerations such as living stipends, ransom monies or publication sales. Yet, these

writers had to maintain a particularly “English” voice that constantly reminded readers that any sympathy towards the Turk was only conditional, and made so that the English could improve themselves. Although agents committed to sustained negotiations in the Ottoman Empire survived by their acceptance of heterogeneity, they had to be very careful about how polyvalent they made themselves out to be. As literary critic Jonathan Gil Harris notes, the concept of English’ness’ during this period was troubled by the realization that nearly everyone involved in the universe of global trade was “tainted by the multiple traces of transnationality.”<sup>95</sup>

Although I have been arguing for the importance of listening for the marginal or lost perspective of trans-imperial mediating servants, it is also important to realize that these servants also carried notions of the “taint” that Gil Harris refers to, into England from outside of its borders. Fynes Moryson’s travel narrative, for instance, is distinguished by its begrudging envy of the organized infrastructure of Ottoman administration and statecraft.<sup>96</sup> The effect of this envy is to reveal a longing for an English identity similarly untroubled in its acceptance of others. If, as a number of critics have noted, post-Reformation England was motivated by a desire to fashion an empire in the image of a second, improved Troy, Anglo-Ottoman texts like Moryson’s reveal the dangers inherent in such self-fashioning. Procuring the positive elements of the Turkish episteme entailed setting aside a century’s worth of prejudices engendered by English insularity.

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<sup>95</sup> Harris, Jonathan Gil. *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism, and Disease in Shakespeare’s England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003, 81. Harris also point out that mercantilist discourse was at pains to try to disavow this taint.

<sup>96</sup> Moryson voices wonder at how well the Turks manage to run their Empire: the two-way hierarchical checks and balances to power; the ways in which Christian/Turk interaction is permitted only when Christians pay more taxes and cannot bear witness in court, so that the Turks have no reason to object to Christian presence. See Moryson 1599, 61-2.

The subject position of Anglo-Ottoman trans-imperial subjects made them uniquely qualified to make these observations. Because these mediating servants acted as mediums, their subjectivity was shaped *through* their travels. Yet whatever psychic obligations there were to the concept of a “home,” colored the perceptions of the trans-imperial subject. Although an intermediary could ingratiate himself into a foreign culture, he could never really belong. This barrier blocked his acceptance in both his native country as well as his port of call. Therefore, we must consider the trans-imperial mediator as a vital figure worthy of her/his own field of study.

Considering the transformational lives of each of these mediating servants provides us with the briefest glimpse of an England on the cusp of becoming the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Mediterranean’s military and economic *sine pari*. Examining the differences in how 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century English servants mediated relationships between their English and Ottoman masters is crucial to understanding transitions in Anglo-Ottoman mutuality. Only by examining the shift in language and the deployment of Turkish tropes in these varied accounts can we detect how these accounts were eventually normalized as official documents of state. It is crucial to recognize that the promotion of these protean, multiply-obligated servants to the ranks of diplomats and salaried employees was as much a matter of domestic necessity, as international efficacy. England’s imperial involvement with the Ottoman Empire, then, was not simply the manifestation of international ambitions, but the attempts by particular, competing, domestic polities to differently manipulate the scripted Turk in order to preserve their own authority and interests.

Early modern historians and literary scholars have already begun to examine how changing notions of service and mediation defined the growth of England's class of merchants, apprentices, and laborers. This renewed interest in how transformations of service at the communal level shaped early modern ideas of employment, nationhood, and love has also given theorists of cultural materialism and new historicism fresh avenues for considering 'the lived experience' of early modern subjects. If the transformation of the earliest Tudor Anglo-Ottoman interactions into the later Stuart interactions was marked by the progressive loss of the communal relations between masters and servants, the decreased flexibility of trans-imperial mediators to rely on extemporaneous exchanges, and non-textual means of information transfer, we might lead us to assume these "archives of repression" might have been vanishing quickly.<sup>97</sup> In my next chapter, I will suggest that the silence(d) voices of Anglo-Ottoman mediating servants instead found expression on the English stage.

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<sup>97</sup> Ginzburg 1980, 155.

## **Chapter 2 – The Hauler or the Chain?: Alternatives of Service in The Elizabethan**

### **Turk Play**

Elizabethan ‘Turk’ plays took advantage of the public fascination with the polyvalent identities of the trans-imperial mediators I’ve discussed in my previous chapter in order to imagine how the tensely ambiguous position of these ‘servant to two masters’ might have played out on the Ottoman stage – where English obligations and Ottoman inducements to escape those English obligations were in constant conflict with each other. Playwrights seized upon the fascinating duality of the trans-imperial agent – his ‘insider’ status as a Christian intelligencer reporting from within the Ottoman Empire counterbalanced against his potential to turn renegade and become the perpetual ‘outsider’ – to question what might happen to Anglo-Ottoman relations if these malleable mediators shifted their loyalties one way or the other. The trans-imperial mediator’s labile identity was undeniably fascinating for all social strata of Englishmen – some who felt that monitoring his changing identity was crucial for protecting their own authority, and others who imagined being able to emulate the mediator’s adaptability and consequently improving their social and financial standing.

The transformation of Anglo-Ottoman interactions from the Tudor to the Stuart periods was marked by the progressive loss of the communal relations between masters and servants, the decreased flexibility of trans-imperial mediators to rely on extemporaneous exchanges, and the non-textual transfer of information. Under such conditions, the ability of trans-imperial mediators to comment on how particular stereotypes of the scripted Turk were being used to preserve the interests of particular English authorities was being compromised. English playwrights sensed this trend, and

often sought to imaginatively recover or re-create these powerful counter-hegemonic voices.

Unlike travel accounts that competed with one another to convey a ‘true’ Turk that their readers would have to trust because they would never set foot in the Ottoman Empire themselves, playwrights experimented with what would happen if the absent Turk actually could be represented at home. These experiments yielded two valuable insights on the mediators who were ‘lost’ in first-person, travel accounts. Staging Turk characters and settings allowed dramatists to re-imagine actual trans-imperial figures like the pirates Ward and Dansiker, and to show how the interactions these figures had with the Turk could be manipulated in such a way as to serve particular interests of England’s master classes. More crucially, these plays could recreate the thoughts and actions of those nameless servants who mediated on behalf of actual trans-imperial figures, many of whose voices were excluded when some of these travelers wrote about the Ottoman Empire. Turk plays utilized the imaginative power of the stage to present ‘living’ Turks to its audience that it could then contrast with its written Turks. Turk plays did not challenge the authenticity of travel accounts by claiming that the ‘living,’ stage Turk was more truthful or real than the printed, fact-based Turk; rather Turk plays claimed relevance because they dramatized *how* the representational Turk could be differently manipulated to serve different ends.

In contrast to non-fiction accounts, Turk plays allocated a more visible, vocal role for trans-imperial mediating servants to play. Audiences would have recognized the powerful opportunity that fiction was providing – by reinvigorating the fading voice of the actual trans-imperial servant through his/her fictional counterpart – to understanding

how the English'd Turk was changing in response to conditions of domestic servitude. Many of those 'lost' Anglo-Ottoman mediators belonged to the same strata of servants who were struggling to receive recognition and compensation from their English masters at home. So dramatizing a more active roles for trans-imperial servants to play on the Turk stage became a means to empower servants who were disenfranchised at home.

By letting these servants speak for themselves, playwrights accessed the representational power of a dramatic figure that aroused as much English terror and fascination as the 'terrible Turk' him/herself; but instead, playwrights used the lost voice of the trans-imperial servant to show why particular deployments of Turk stereotypes needed to be reinforced and why others needed to be challenged. Dramatists used the trans-imperial mediator to challenge audience members into questioning why they might be willing to countenance certain types of Turk characters and yet damn others, based on their own position relative to the servant's plight. The dramatized figure of the Anglo-Ottoman mediating servant served as a lightening rod for English masters and subordinates to simultaneously work through their own volatile beliefs about the Ottoman Empire and their changing social relations with one another.

Turk plays were interested in showing the ways in which domestic service and foreign expansion were woven around similar anxieties of the unfaithful allies (both Ottomans and servants.) As I've argued in my previous chapter, Queen Elizabeth's decision to allow Protestants from the Low Countries to enter England sparked a xenophobic response from within England's laboring class that was couched in ideas of faithful and unfaithful service. In May 1593, during a period of mounting hostility toward London's immigrant Dutch community, a libelous poem was affixed to the wall



of one of the city's foreign Protestant church. It directly addressed foreigners living in London. "As we will doe just vengeance on you all / in counterfeiting religion for your flight / when 't is well knowne, you are loth, for to be thrall your coyne, & you as countrys cause to flight with Spanish gold, you all are infected and with yt Gould our Nobles wink at feats." The poem goes on to critique those nobles who "wound their Countries brest, for lucre's sake and wrong our gracious Queene & Subjects good."<sup>1</sup> Certain segments of England's servant population accorded foreign laborers little more place in society than to serve as a "buffer group situated between the landless poor and their social superiors."<sup>2</sup> Mark Netzloff notes, "this process splintered potential alliances among lower-class groups, providing token exemptions whose social mobility could be used to minimize the effects of an overall structural erosion of the position of laborers."<sup>3</sup> Netzloff also notes that "this limited possibility of social mobility served to reinforce the impression of English "liberty," and legitimated, in the propaganda of the day, the tolerable abuses of domestic class hierarchies by distinguishing them from the comparably more severe conditions found in European cultures."<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of these conflicts, the ability of servants to advance economically and socially came from their affiliations with the master class based on commonalities of race, religion, or sexuality. Since these craftsman and skilled laborers often assumed positions held by English apprentices, domestics, and other kinds of servants, the influx of foreign laborers created fissures within the ranks of servants, as well as between masters and servants. These inter-class disputes appeared as racism, nationalism, and

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<sup>1</sup> Netzloff 2003, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Everitt, Alan. "Social Mobility in Early Modern England." *Past and Present*. 33 (1966), 57.

<sup>3</sup> Netzloff 2003, 49

<sup>4</sup> Netzloff 2003, 49-50

sexism.<sup>5</sup> Here, it might be useful to invoke the thinking of sociologist, Theodore W. Allen. Although Allen wrote about the origins of Anglo-American racial oppression, his conceptualization of the static markers of race needed by authoritarian figures is what is most universal and relevant to my chapter. In *The Invention of the White Race*,<sup>6</sup> Allen argues that the reconstitution of class in America served to justify emergent policies of indentured servitude. A corollary part of this process entailed a recuperation of the status of subaltern classes, who were recruited to the service of the state due to a common racial and national identity, an emphasis upon their position as both “white” and “English.” According to Allen, “primary emphasis upon ‘race’ became the pattern only where the bourgeoisie could not form its social control apparatus without the inclusion of propertyless European-Americans.”<sup>7</sup> Allen’s observations point to the necessity of the intermediary in order to help create and sustain racial difference. As I argue, this same necessity was found in late Tudor England in order to distinguish Turk service from English service. This, despite the fact, that the Elizabethan servant’s second-class status may have been the result of some indistinguishable amalgam of racial, religious, and sexual subordination.

### Dramaturgy of Service

Playwrights used the figure of the trans-imperial mediator to dramatize how Elizabethan authorities attempted to control domestic upheaval, by imaginatively policing

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<sup>5</sup> Benedict Anderson notes that racial categories “have their origin in ideologies of class.” Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso, 1991. 149. Foucault observed that discourses of race emerged out of an early modern context of “social war, a process wherein the social struggle between classes was reinscribed as a conflict between distinct “races.” Foucault, Michel. “Society Must be Defended” in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: The New Press, 1997. 59-65.

<sup>6</sup> Allen, Theodore W. *The Invention of the White Race: Volume One: Racial Oppression and Social Control*. London: Verso, 1994, 19.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 135.

difference and dissent ‘abroad.’<sup>8</sup> During the Elizabethan period, the troubling aspects of how foreign matters had affected domestic peace, and the importance of establishing foreign accord despite this domestic trouble was a major preoccupation. In a January 8<sup>th</sup> 1580 letter, Queen Elizabeth informed Sultan Murad III that she had intended to send an embassy to the Sublime Porte, “had not princes hostile to us, who are making a disturbance within our Kingdom with their own external soldiery and the influenced minds of certain people who are conspiring for civil destruction, diverted us from that plan and purpose.”<sup>9</sup>

Responding to this dual challenge of maintaining civic harmony while forging international alliances, dramatists set anxieties about domestic peace in Ottoman-controlled locales in order to better parse contiguities of the ‘foreign’ and the ‘domestic.’ The plays of Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Kyd were set in cities associated with Ottoman control, such as Malta, Cyprus, and Rhodes. In each of these plays, concerns that English audience members would have been intimately familiar with, such as scarce employment, limited social mobility for domestics and servants, and unfair legal rulings favoring aristocrats and noblemen color ‘foreign’ settings with domestic hues. These Turk plays vividly dramatize how the international resided within England by grappling with domestic anxieties in settings that offered alternative solutions to the ones found at home. Such dramatizations allowed playwrights to create, without the threatening accusation of treason, foreign characters who were projections of the abuses of power found at home. It is for this reason that interpreting Shakespeare’s Cyprus or Kyd’s Rhodes *only* in terms

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<sup>8</sup> If Elizabethans believed in a Great Chain of Being that connected Man to God, the debates between masters and servants suggested that ‘nobles’ and ‘men’ occupied potentially interchangeable places on that chain.

<sup>9</sup> Skilliter 1977, 143.

of the actual city's historical associations with the Ottoman Empire risks disregarding the imaginative terrain that these foreign settings allowed for re-thinking domestic problems.

### Peculiarities of the Turk play

I will argue that the Turk plays of the Elizabethan period used Ottoman settings and the figure of the Turk to comment on uneven exchanges between English masters and servants. In the process of staging Turkish characters and settings, these plays prepared English travelers for the dangers abroad and warned English residents about the dangers at home. Turks were allowed to imaginatively 'enter' England long enough to pique the curiosity of the adventurous and suffer the punishment desired by the righteous. The figure of the Turk thus served an English proto-imperialist agenda that was indistinguishable from domestic mechanisms of control.

Unlike plays set in Christendom, Turk plays domesticated particular anxieties of foreign'ness,' particularly those related to serving non-Christian masters. English audiences were aware that the opportunities available for servants to prosper in Ottoman lands were based on a Turkish social order that was non-hierarchical. The most popularized image of the Christian renegade was that of former European servant who secured high rank and affluence in the Ottoman Empire. Because Turks valued skilled service and loyalty to the Sultan over and above national or even religious identity, English master worried about whether their servants would remain loyal to them once they entered the Ottoman Empire. English dramatists of the Turk play picked up on this anxiety.

The Turk play re-locates domestic anxieties of disenfranchisement within a setting that also offered a social climate of redress to servants living under European and Christian control. The vicarious appeal of the Ottoman Empire to English audiences was that it was an alternative to those who saw little difference between Catholicism and Protestantism's respective moral and economic bankruptcy. This was especially so for European servants who sensed, in the hierarchies of Ottoman service, the absence of any inimical link between serving God and serving one's masters or between serving one's nation and serving one's master.

It was for these reasons that, among the many categories of servants that dramatists showcased serving both Christian and Turkish masters, the intermediary was the most prominent. Mediating European servants in Turk plays imagined a different kind of 'home' for themselves, one that they didn't have to leave or return to, but could instead inhabit simply by changing the terms of their service. In this regard, Turk plays were written as much with an eye to making England a more acceptable place to live as they were about the dangers of the Ottoman elsewhere.

Intermediaries of every subordinate, social group in England were vocal players on the stage of the Turk play. From handmaidens and pages to shopkeepers and messengers, the Turk plays gave these domestic mediating figures a heightened visibility by placing them in locales where they could choose between Christian and Turk masters. By giving a voice to those mediators who were suspected of 'Turk' service at home, English dramatists could imaginatively recover how 'unfaithful' service at home might be damned as a desire for the impermissible; but it might also expose English masters to a critique for their own tyrannical, 'Turk' practices. Recovering the mediating voices gave

English dramatists a chance to provocatively let audiences make associations between Turk(s) at home and abroad.

Because Turkish settings allowed the staging of non-hierarchical alliances, English dramatists were also able to imaginatively recreate relationships between servants and those masters who might also have been servants to other masters. Playwrights were able to recreate the mutuality between members of master and servant communities – a facet of interaction that can only be detected in travel writing if we can juxtapose different perspectives from different sources next to one another. By allowing a voice of complaint to those masters who felt themselves to be no better than servants of their own lords, playwrights were able to convert Ottoman settings into what sociologist, James Scott has called an ‘offstage scene of hair-letting down.’ English masters who sympathized with characters like Piston and Perseda could acknowledge that the system of service that they employed was flawed because they, too, were being subjugated by the Turk. Rather than taking ownership of the flaws of English servitude, the presence of the domineering Turk was used to absorb some of this blame. Christian masters, instead, imagined their affiliation with their servants at the level of being tempted by the same forbidden delights and resisting that coercion. Only in the staging of such difference between Christian masters and servants through the available trope of the Turk was there a possibility for normalization within ‘the English nation.’<sup>10</sup> To that extent, both servants and masters stood to benefit from making the Turk an agent to prove their faithfulness

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<sup>10</sup> Different subordinated groups (and differently subordinated) group were often blamed for domestic discord. Mark Netzloff gives the example of how sites of legitimate commerce in London attempted to blame foreign merchants and the poor for the Royal Exchange’s history of discreditable economic practices.<sup>10</sup> He cites the example of William Camden’s account of London’s Exchanges to show how foreign merchants had established the integrity of the nation’s currency, whereas the crown extracted a quick profit through manipulation of the proportion of silver content. See Netzloff 2003, 37.

and restore Christian order to a nation that was quickly secularizing. Elizabethan servants and masters used the Turk to different ends, of course. But the idea was the same – a recognition of the legitimacy of service within the rubrics of the emergent nation, and beyond the insular communities of the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The four ‘Turk’ plays that I am focusing on in this chapter examine how different types of mediators helped to shape the Turk for English audiences. Picking up from my travel chapter, I will examine the dramatization of ambassadors in both parts of *Tamburlaine* and *Soliman and Perseda*, as well as the slave in *The Jew of Malta*.

*Tamburlaine (Part 1, ca. 1587. Part 2, ca. 1587-8)*

The two parts of Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* re-imagine imperialist militarism as dependant on an ambassador’s mediation of faith. Marlowe synchronizes the rise and fall of Tamburlaine with the competing demands for faithful ambassadorial service that both the Scythian lord and his enemies rely on. In both its parts, *Tamburlaine* encourages its audiences to dissociate religious identity from the idea of faithfulness.<sup>11</sup> The play meticulously points out both the necessity and the danger of ambassadors to propel imperial aspirations. *Tamburlaine* creates a Scythian protagonist who staunchly resists being “reclaimed with princely lenity,”<sup>12</sup> despite recognizing the importance of ambassadorial loyalty. *Tamburlaine* resists all attempts to make him an

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<sup>11</sup> I agree with Daniel Vitkus’s assessment, that *Tamburlaine*’s Scythian identity allows the audience to both associate with the protagonist’s military defeat of the Turk, while putatively dissociating itself from *Tamburlaine*’s barbarism, precisely because he’s not Christian. But, Vitkus notes, if “this pleasing fantasy is initially what pull the English audience in, once [audiences] are implicated in *Tamburlaine*’s actions, they are then made increasingly uncomfortable by his cruelty and pride, and by his blasphemous defiance or appropriation of divinity.” Vitkus 2003, 50.

<sup>12</sup> All subsequent quotations from *Tamburlaine* are from Marlowe, Christopher. *Tamburlaine*. London: Richard Jhones, 1590. Book 1: 2.2.47. Daniel Vitkus is even more explicit in stating that Edward Alleyn’s *Tamburlaine* was an “English fantasy of upward social mobility articulated by a masterless man.” Vitkus 2003, 67.

agent of any state or religion, and instead uses the agents and ambassadors of the Turks and the Persians against them. Tamburlaine's evaluation of a servant's faithfulness enunciates a new definition of faith - devoid of all cant and ideology, and instead is rooted in a servant's loyalty to his master's boundless military ambitions.

*Tamburlaine* establishes, from its outset, a resolute disinterest in how its Christian and Muslim characters act according to religious edict.<sup>13</sup> Both groups repeatedly invoke religious symbols and figures that are outside of their faith proper. Bajazeth the Turk laments how Tamburlaine's success "countermands the gods, more than Cimmerian Styx or destiny."<sup>14</sup> Upon learning that Sigismund has broken his inviolable oath of solidarity against Tamburlaine, Orcanes, the king of Natolia points out that God, even if he be Christ, will punish those who are traitorous while proclaiming himself to be faithful.<sup>15</sup> Later, after Sigismund dies, Orcanes's happiness is mixed with a ruminative reflection on Christ's power.<sup>16</sup> Tamburlaine, like Orcanes and the rest of the Turks, is similarly non-denominational in his lack of adherence to any one religion. Mahomet and Christ are interchangeable for him. Tamburlaine's commitments suggest that faithfulness – specifically, a servant's unwavering duty to whatever military conquests his leader pursues – replaces any kind of religious identity or affiliation.

Tamburlaine is able to conquer his foes precisely because his belief in military conquest, and the faithful service that enables it, remains constant even if his religious

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<sup>13</sup> Jonathan Burton has noted that Tamburlaine is less concerned with "the author's feelings concerning Islam than a perspective on early modern England's need to produce a rhetoric that would justify its controversial commercial alliance with the Turks." Burton 2005, 56.

<sup>14</sup> Part 1: 5.2.169-174

<sup>15</sup> "Thou Christ that art esteemed omnipotent, if thou wilt prove thyself a perfect god, worthy the worship of faithful hearts, be now revenged upon this traitor's soul." Part 2: 2.2.55-58

<sup>16</sup> "Yet in my thoughts shall Christ be honoured, not doing Mahomet an injury, whose power had share in this our victory: and since this miscreant hath disgraced his faith, and died a traitor, both to heaven and earth, we will both watch and ward shall keep his trunk..." Part 2: 2.3.33-38



affiliations do not. From his earliest moments, Tamburlaine refuses service to the Turks and even suborns the Turks' own servants for his own ends. His ability to turn the Turkish servant, Theridamus against Mycetes at the beginning of part one marks the start of the Scythian's rise to military power, just as Callapine's successful bribe of Almeda, Tamburlaine's appointed jailor, marks the decline of the leader's military strength in part two. By dramatizing military engagements where personal loyalties, and not religious adherences, fuel the Scythian's grandest successes, *Tamburlaine* de-privileges the polemics of religion in favor of the faith that servants and masters place in their shared commitment to military success.

In doing so, the play emphasizes the role played by its seemingly 'minor' characters – those mediating ambassadors who populate both armies – to reveal how pieties of religion and national identity camouflage self-serving military agendas. When Orcanes addresses the ratification of peace between the Turks and the Hungarians, he notes that it must be done “on these conditions specified before, / *Drawn with advice of our ambassadors.*”<sup>17</sup> The play points out that when a master's will is carried out, it is because a good ambassador has proven to be a credit to that master's military stance. Yet when a master fails, it is because his mediating servants/ advisors have proven to be unfaithful in their own service. It is this seeming paradox that both parts of *Tamburlaine* expose to its audience's scrutiny. As a spy for Queen Elizabeth, Christopher Marlowe had a wealth of resources to draw upon, to convincingly dramatize ambassadors who were distrusted by their peers. Most prominent among these resources was England's first ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, William Harborne. Like Marlowe, Harborne was employed as a spy by Sir Francis Walsingham in the 1570s, to determine England's

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<sup>17</sup> Emphasis mine. Part 2: 1.2.48-9

potential allies on the Continent. Umunc Himmet, a Turkish historian, has even detailed evidence to suggest that Harborne and Marlowe might have known and been influenced by one another.<sup>18</sup> Harborne's alienation in Constantinople, documented in his letters back home, was well known among Walsingham's network of spies and agents.<sup>19</sup> Susan Skilliter attributed this alienation to "his [Harborne's] natural bluntness combined with the cunning acquired after so long an apprenticeship in the world of commerce."<sup>20</sup> For Marlowe, it was these 'minor' ambassadorial figures that deserved a dramatic spotlight for being entrusted with such important governmental responsibilities, despite receiving opprobrium for spying and mediating on behalf of their masters.

Marlowe creates mediating servants like Theridamus, Baldwin, and Basso who either become agents for war or negotiators for peace. When Tamburlaine asks Bajazeth's servant, Basso, if his army look intimidating enough to conquer all of Africa, Basso conveys Bajazeth's resolve using a military language that promotes the Turk's martial intent. "My lord, the great commander of the world, / Besides fifteen contributory kings, / Hath now in arms ten thousand janizaries, / Mounted on lusty Mauritanian steeds, / Brought to the war by men of Tripoly," Basso insists. And if that doesn't dissuade Tamburlaine, Basso adds that Bajazeth "can from his garrisons / Withdraw as many more to follow him."<sup>21</sup> Tamburlaine's own servants respond by asserting their own readiness. Usamcasane tells the Turkish mediator, "Let him bring millions infinite of men, / Unpeopling Western Africa and Greece, / Yet we assure us of

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<sup>18</sup> See Himmet, Umunc. "On Her Majesty's Secret Service: Marlowe and Turkey." *Belleten - Türk Tarih Kurumu*. 70.259 (2006), 903-918.

<sup>19</sup> Harborne lived isolated and alienated from the European community of ambassadors in Pera, a neighborhood in Constantinople. He was disdained by colleagues like Jacques de Gernigny, French ambassador in Constantinople, to whom Harborne was always 'the English merchant' and never one of themselves, even after his return as a fully accredited ambassador. See Skilliter 1977, 80, 82.

<sup>20</sup> Skilliter 1977, 38.

<sup>21</sup> Part 1: 3.3.15-22.

the victory.” Theridamus adds, “Even he [Tamburlaine], that in a trice vanquish'd two kings / More mighty than the Turkish emperor, / Shall rouse him [Bajazeth] out of Europe, and pursue / His scatter'd army till they yield or die.” Instead of staging this as a scene of grandstanding between two military leaders, Marlowe instead diverts audience attention onto the ambassadors and their ability to fortify dominant discourses. If the ambassador was mistrusted in England because he was always suspected of betraying the authority that he was entrusted with, Marlowe imagines an alternate space in *Tamburlaine*, where ambassadors could be agents for fortifying dominant discourse.

Moments like these allow Marlowe to stage the stakes of mediation dialogically. Unlike an ambassador's epistles or a work of non-fiction, drama offers the opportunity for imagining how different forms of mediation confront one another through the voice of characters that we might otherwise never see or hear. By giving 'secondary' characters like Baldwin, Basso and Frederick their own unique voice, Marlowe is able to imagine a servant's voice without the interpreting, containing effects of a dominant narrative voice. The audience is given the latitude to sympathize or to judge according to its own estimation. The speech of these mediating ambassadors is unexpected bold, and certainly more substantial than what we would expect to hear from a minor, servant character. Theridamus, Baldwin and Basso's exchange is marked by a high sensitivity to each others' tropes and terms of address. Like their masters, these servants participate in competitive hyperbole and mockery.<sup>22</sup> This exchange shows how servants can speak for themselves in ways that uphold conventional pieties. In doing so, the audience must

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<sup>22</sup> As linguist, Mikhail Bakhtin notes, dialogue is not limited to agreement or disagreement. It is an act of consciously engaging with another's speech and world view.

make its own determinations about the faithfulness and faithlessness of respective servants, irrespective of religious differences.<sup>23</sup>

Tamburlaine who has until now only been observing this exchange between the ambassadors, commends his men on out-voicing Bajazeth's servant: "Well said, Theridamas! speak in that mood; / For 'will' and 'shall' best fitteth Tamburlaine, / Whose smiling stars give him assured hope / Of martial triumph ere he meet his foes."<sup>24</sup> Tamburlaine's commentary dramatizes how a servant's speech may be just as important in building his master's convictions as in conveying them. Here, Tamburlaine approves of Theridamus' 'will' and 'shall' to impress the inevitability of his success to Basso. The "assured hope" that Tamburlaine receives doesn't just come from his "smiling stars," but from the "mood" of his mediators. Usamcasane and Theridamus's intervention on behalf of their master is more than just a verbal harbinger of Tamburlaine's military defeat of Bajazeth, it is an act of faith in Tamburlaine that contributes to that victory. Throughout the play, such acts of faithful service remain the only discernible constant as Tamburlaine's ongoing militarism consumes territories as rapidly as it obliterates religious and ideological differences.

If Tamburlaine's servants dramatize how military conquest is enabled through faithful service, the machinations of the play's other servants show how it can be disabled as well. When Frederick of Hungary, a peer (or mediating ambassador) of Sigismund urges his master to break the peace accord that he had signed with Orcanes and join

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<sup>23</sup> As Linda McJannet astutely observes, since there are no identifiably Christian characters in *Tamburlaine*, the audience must choose which non-Christian characters it can identify with. I would add that although no individual voice in the play can be said to reflect an English perspective, audiences still had to search for some characters with which to identify. McJannet, Linda. *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006, 79.

<sup>24</sup> 3.3.35-50.

forces with Tamburlaine's forces so that "we may discourage all the pagan troop that dare attempt to war with Christians,"<sup>25</sup> Sigismund is hesitant. The noble emperor doesn't want to renege on his promise to the Turk, especially since he had publicly sworn by Christ that he wouldn't. However when another peer, Baldwin advises him,

"No whit my lord: for with such infidels, in whom no faith nor true religion rests, we are not bound to those accomplishments, the holy laws of Christendom enjoin: but as the faith which they profanely plight is not by necessary policy, to be esteemed assurance for ourselves, so what we vow to them should not infringe our liberty of arms and victory."<sup>26</sup>

Sigismund agrees and is consequently killed; and his army defeated by the Turkish troops. The dramatic effect of having two unfaithful servants advise their Christian master to renege on a solemn oath is to make Sigismund's actions no different from that of the treacherous Turk.<sup>27</sup> In other words, it is because of the opportunistic servants' faithless mediation (e.g.: their unbinding of Sigismund's religious 'accomplishments') that the master's Christianity can resemble his enemy's Islam without Sigismund's knowledge. By showing these two ambassadors advocating such perfidy under the 'enjoinment' of 'the holy laws of Christendom,' Sigismund's actions are mitigated. The dramatic effect of such ambassadorial perfidy is to deflect blame away from the type of Christian belief that convinces Sigismund that he should uphold his solemn oath. Frederick and Baldwin's faithless perversion of Christianity provides an escape from the faithful service that they owe to God through serving Sigismund, so that the peers become free to profit from military service and the spoils of war.<sup>28</sup> Their

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<sup>25</sup> Part 2: 2.1.4

<sup>26</sup> Part 2:2.1.33-41

<sup>27</sup> About Frederick and Baldwin, Daniel Vitkus observes, "their sleazy arguments in favor of oath-breaking constitute a cynical perversion of providentialism." Vitkus, 2003, 58. My argument focuses on their dramatic role as advisors, rather than their function as perverters of providentialism.

<sup>28</sup> Orthodox Anglican homilies ransacked the Gospels for text and parables to demonstrate that "obedience...is the principle virtue of all virtues, and indeed the very root of all virtues, and the cause of

actions represent multiple threats that were contemporaneously felt within English society as well: a threat to existing social hierarchy through faithless servants, and a threat to national safety through the willful misrepresentation of religion in the cause of mercantile or military profit. These are the English anxieties that *Tamburlaine* enunciates, once we tend to its ‘minor’ characters - its opportunistic ambassadors. In dramatizing these international ambassadors as simultaneously invaluable and cunning, Marlowe raises the vexing question of how England was to entrust their ambassadors with engineering international military alliances when those same men were being found untrustworthy by their fellow Englishmen.

*Tamburlaine* dramatizes the conflict between England’s perception of its ambassadors as potentially perfidious, and its reliance on those ambassador to serve national interests. In *Tamburlaine*, servants don’t just undermine their masters. They utilize the selective historical moments that were traditionally used in anti-Turk texts in order to pose military and imperialist aggression as justifiable when it serves their own purposes. When Frederick reminds Sigismund, “Your majesty remembers, I am sure, what cruel slaughter of our Christian bloods these heathenish Turks and pagans lately made betwixt the city Zula and Danubius, how through the midst of Varna and Bulgaria and almost to the very walls of Rome, they have not long since massacred our camp,”<sup>29</sup> he relies on historical events that all Englishmen who were opposed to the Anglo-Ottoman accord certainly would have remembered. Playgoers would have recognized the irony of condemning Baldwin for his evocation of such history, since the Elizabethan alliance with Turkey called for such troubling, Crusader history to be de-emphasized.

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all felicity.” Michael Neill notes that servants were, therefore, urged to obey their masters as an expression of their Christian duty of glad submission to a Lord “whose service is perfect freedom.” Neill 2000, 24.

<sup>29</sup> Part 1: 2.1.4-10

The play dramatizes the apprehension and the discomfort that accompanied such purposeful forgetting.

Marlowe dramatizes the muted concern among some of Elizabeth's subjects, that the Pope was justified in condemning Elizabeth as a heretic, especially for forming a partnership with the Ottoman Empire. Similarly, *Tamburlaine's* unfaithful Frederick and Baldwin voice individual discontent with Sigismund's decision to honor his peace pledge to Orcanes. 'Minor' characters like Frederick and Baldwin are a reminder that England's own ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, William Harborne, had a similar capacity to mediate based on historical precedence or to persuasively word religious rhetoric in order to further his own ends.<sup>30</sup> Like Harborne, who was able to acquit himself of accusations of diplomatic malfeasance despite lingering suspicions, Marlowe uses Baldwin and Frederick to reveal how ambassadorial powers can simultaneously support and undermine the national agenda.<sup>31</sup> Baldwin and Frederick, although they cite religious reasons to Sigismund for resisting Tamburlaine, are motivated by their own personal loyalties. The play ultimately punishes these ambassadors for compromising national

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<sup>30</sup> In several letters to Sultan Murad, Harborne reinforced England and Turkey's shared history of iconoclasm. In 1581, Harborne pleaded with Murad to assist English forces against the Spanish Armada: "Do not let this moment pass unused, in order that God, who has created you a valiant man and the most powerful of all worldly princes for the destruction of idol-worshippers, may not turn his utmost wrath against you if you disregard his command, which my mistress, only a weak woman, courageously struggles to fulfill." Horniker, Arthur Leon. "William Harborne and the Beginning of the Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations." *Journal of Modern History* 14:3 (September 1942.) 309-310. Harborne's interests were not strictly national. As Susan Skilliter points out, Queen Elizabeth's general request for English trading privileges were altered, quite possibly by Harborne himself, to make it appear as if the Queen were asking for specific trade capitulations for Harborne and the merchants of the Levant Company. See Skilliter 1977, 52.

<sup>31</sup> Prior to 1593, English ambassadors were allowed to invest their own capital as merchants, even while working for the Crown. In September 1580, Harborne was accused by several resident, European ambassadors of using his diplomatic contacts in order to orchestrate business ventures which offered large returns on his own investments. Harborne was able to acquit himself of these charges before both Queen Elizabeth and Sultan Murad III, but only after personally bribing several officials in Chios to cover up the piracy of the English ship, *Bark Roe*. Harborne didn't have a stake in the *Bark Roe*, but he was afraid that accusations of English piracy conducted under his watch could threaten his potential trading ability. Although Harborne was able to salvage his reputation in official quarters, many of his fellow merchants were convinced of his duplicity.

interests, although William Harborne was decorated for his loyal service by Queen Elizabeth. However, in making Frederick and Baldwin's fate different than Harborne's, *Tamburlaine* continues to hold the ambassador up to scrutiny. *Tamburlaine's* ambassadors are positioned as the type of untrustworthy figures whose perfidious service can threaten their masters, but not their master's ideological beliefs. Such a dilemma captures the complicated role that both real ambassadors like Harborne and fictitious ones like Frederick and Baldwin played - necessary agents whose faithful service could never be counted on.

In the second part of *Tamburlaine*, when the Scythian overlord's power is threatened by the faithful service that he has come to rely on, the play once again draws our attention to how the mediatory relationship of servants remains crucial to maintaining a tenuous balance of power with their masters. Part two of *Tamburlaine* deals with the titular protagonist's efforts to protect his empire from the vengeful militarism of Callapine, Bajazeth's son, and the enervated domestication of his own son, Calyphas. The social order that *Tamburlaine* had established at the end of part one is upended. And part two revels in the irony of what follows. Like Bajazeth, *Tamburlaine* turns into an authoritarian ruler who has to ward off threats to his power. This "base-born" shepherd of part one accuses his derelict sons of "blot[ting] our dignities / out of the book of base-born infamies."<sup>32</sup> He equates them with bastards, in an inversion of the first half, where he dismissed the importance of lineage in pre-determining greatness. Instead, it is Callapine who proves himself to be loyal to his father, and remains anxious to regain

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<sup>32</sup> Part 2: 3.5.19



Bajazeth's territorial losses.<sup>33</sup> Tellingly, Callapine temporarily achieves this by using the mediatory capacity of a military advisor in order to challenge Tamburlaine's power. But, as a disinherited claimant to Tamburlaine's throne, Callapine must mediate from the position of a subordinate who needs Tamburlaine's suborned servants to restore him to power.

When Callapine wins the support of Almeda, the jailor entrusted by Tamburlaine to keep Bajazeth's son under lock-and-key, the Turkish master uses promises of Turkish wealth to help him affect Almeda's religious conversion. The nobleman begs the indulgence of the servant by promising to mediate on his behalf. "Ah, were I now but half so eloquent To paint in words what I'll perform in deeds, I know thou wouldst depart from hence with me!," he promises his jailor. He urges Almeda to take an imaginative journey with him "twixt the isles of Cyprus and of Crete, We quickly may in Turkish seas arrive. Then shalt thou see a hundred kings and more, Upon their knees, all bid me welcome home. Amongst so many crowns of burnish'd gold, Choose which thou wilt, all are at thy command." He piques the servant's interest by speaking of an Ottoman Empire where servants are made into kings. Callapine merges the exotic and material benefits of Turkish service with a religious oath to transform a servant into an equal.<sup>34</sup> The Turk

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<sup>33</sup> When Callapine's assumes the Turkish throne, it is ("in grievous memory of his [royal, lord and] father's shame") Part 2: 3.1.25.

<sup>34</sup> The Ottoman Empire is a place where a thousand fully stocked galleys await him that will "bring armadoes, from the coasts of Spain, Fraughted with gold of rich America: The Grecian virgins shall attend on thee, Skilful in music and in amorous lays, As fair as was Pygmalion's ivory girl Or lovely Io metamorphosed: With naked negroes shall thy coach be drawn, And, as thou rid'st in triumph through the streets, The pavement underneath thy chariot-wheels With Turkey-carpets shall be covered, And cloth of arras hung about the walls, Fit objects for thy princely eye to pierce: A hundred bassoes, cloth'd in crimson silk, Shall ride before thee on Barbarian steeds; And, when thou goest, a golden canopy Enchas'd with precious stones, which shine as bright As that fair veil that covers all the world, When Phoebus, leaping from his hemisphere, Descendeth downward to th' Antipodes:-- And more than this, for all I cannot tell." Part 2: 1.2.34-38

swears, “As I am Callapine the emperor, And by the hand of Mahomet I swear, Thou shalt be crown'd a king, and be my mate!”

Later, when Callapine references this promise, he stresses his role as a mediator who rewards his servant for faithfully serving the right master. Callapine crowns Almeda in front of temporarily-bested Tamburlaine, pronouncing, “Well, in despite of thee [Tamburlaine] he [Almeda] shall be king: come Almeda, receive this crown of me. I here invest thee King of Ariadan, bordering on the Mare Roso near to Mecca.”<sup>35</sup> After Almeda is crowned, Tamburlaine suggests that the new king’s standard include a keychain to “put him in remembrance he was a jailor.” The scene reminds audiences of the ways in which faithful and unfaithful servants could demarcate shifts in authority between masters who, nevertheless, had to rely on the same servants in order to remain in power. When Tamburlaine is successful in defeating Callapine, he instructs his soldiers to identify and kill Almeda on the battlefield. “Remember Almeda’s face,” he tells his troops, “lest he hide his crown as the foolish King of Persia did.”<sup>36</sup> If Callapine’s temporary success in procuring Almeda’s services garnered him victory over Tamburlaine, the Scythian wants to be sure that his agents do not trust his unfaithful jailor’s crown as a marker of his identity, but instead remember the face of a traitor. It is the faithless servant’s face that should be recognized, Tamburlaine suggests, and not the transposable crown. The Scythian lord continually resists the idea of fixed identities (whether it be through a Christian/Turk distinction, or the wearing of a crown), even when Callapine’s coronation of Almeda temporarily unseats him from power. Instead, he

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<sup>35</sup> Part 2: 3.5.128-30

<sup>36</sup> Part 2: 5.1.150

continues to value his own servants' constancy – a belief that ultimately restores him to power.

My reading of the play seemingly argues against a number of critics who have read Tamburlaine himself as a kind of English mediator of Turkish acceptance, albeit with the Scythian's military might standing ready to punish the Turkish military. However, reading Tamburlaine's religious polemic through its minor, mediating servants actually refracts readings of Tamburlaine-as-mediator without absolutely dismissing them. Daniel Vitkus, for example, notes that, "in Marlowe's drama, Tamburlaine accomplishes what the Christians hoped to achieve, but the Scythian conqueror does so by asserting his own, indomitable will in the place of God's will."<sup>37</sup> To some extent, I agree with his analysis of Tamburlaine's role as a divine mediator. My hesitation with Vitkus's assessment comes at moments when Tamburlaine announces himself to be "the wrathful messenger of Jove, that with his sword hath quailed all earthly kings."<sup>38</sup> By pinning his faith to whatever God it is that grants military victory, Tamburlaine is showing evidence of some sort of faith. It is not religious faith, to be sure. However, by imagining that his power is derived from some approving, divine master, the Scythian leader fashions a servant's faith-based identity for himself that would have endeared him to his own servants. Through his self-identification as a loyal, faithful servant (at different moments, to Jove, Jesus, Mahomet,) Tamburlaine demonstrates his understanding of why a leader needs to fashion himself as a servant chosen by providential design. If by setting such an example he engenders loyalty among his own

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<sup>37</sup> Vitkus 2003, 54-5.

<sup>38</sup> Part 2: 5.1.93

servants, that will be enough to convince his servant that his military ambitions fit within a providential design.

If victory is contingent, perhaps it is not might itself that is right, but the agent of whatever might it is that grants victory. It is such self-fashioning that allows others like Theridamus and Usamcasane (who are initially servants of Tamburlaine's rivals) to attach themselves to Tamburlaine. Such a reading, I argue, avoids interpreting Tamburlaine's appeal as other-worldly or a fantastical conglomeration of religious and cultural identities. Instead, Tamburlaine becomes a figure that English audiences can identify with – a person who believes in an alternative form of servitude, contingent and anti-homiletic.<sup>39</sup> Tamburlaine is Jove's messenger because he has been successful in his conquests, not because Jove will make him so. However, fashioning himself as Jove's messenger, allows Tamburlaine to attract followers who can accept that his success occurs within a providential framework. Tamburlaine is not bound to any faith that doesn't lead to conquest. By not tying his identity to any one earthly master or religion that may fail him in achieving military victory, Tamburlaine is free to re-invent himself as often as necessary. All markers of religion – even when Tamburlaine temporarily shows himself to be a Turk – are provisional and subordinate to the larger concerns of empire and conquest. But the support needed for such military conquest is always dependent on a servant's loyalty to his master.

So, even though Tamburlaine certainly voices many English concerns, the Scythian lord cannot ultimately be interpreted as England's mediator. The play imagines Tamburlaine's end occurring when he ceases to be a master and cannot trust any of his

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<sup>39</sup> For more on Tamburlaine as an anti-homiletic play, see Bevington, David. *From Mankind to Marlowe: growth of structure in the popular drama of Tudor England*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1962.

servants to carry on his mission. If Tamburlaine's fate remains unknowable at the end of the play, it is partially due to the fact that he can no longer convince his sons of his military vision. His final exhortation to them – “and shall I die and this unconquered? / Lo here, my sons, are all the golden mines / inestimable drugs and precious stones, / more worth than Asia and the world beside”<sup>40</sup> – is never realized after his death. He ends up being neither England's servant, because he cannot be subjectified as a mediator, nor a self-sufficient master – since he dies as a man incapable of even convincing his sons of his military vision.

Tamburlaine dies as a character that imagines a new kind of faith – not one that places him in a pagan hell or a Christian paradise – but instead, a faith upheld by a servant's loyalty to his master and tied to whatever religious symbol serves his/her immediate needs. Unlike Frederick of Hungary and Baldwin, whose military advice to Sigismund is motivated by their own selfish motives, Tamburlaine never hides his military ambitions behind the cloak of religion. His faith is in the loyalty that he and his men share to conquest; and their god is whatever deity rewards such faith. In this way, *Tamburlaine* challenges its audiences to see the ways in which the play's putatively anti-Turk polemic is dependant upon defining faithfulness as service that supports the political goals of the State.<sup>41</sup> And in doing so, the play necessitates that its audience parse hegemonic discourse which depends upon faithless Turks from counter-hegemonic discourse that enforces faithful servitude under the guise of military obedience.

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<sup>40</sup> Book 2: 5.3.150-153.

<sup>41</sup> This thinking did not begin in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Fifteen and early sixteenth century historians, such as Salutati, Manetti, and Bessarion emphasized the political over the religious, thereby reducing the string of previous perceptions of the Turk which were dominated by religious antagonism.

*The Jew of Malta*<sup>42</sup> (1589-90. First performed, 1592)

Like *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta* was written during the Elizabethan period of the ‘pax Turcica’ – that moment in English history when its alliance with the Ottoman Empire promised the opportunity for national profit, despite national apprehensions about Turkish conquest westward. Englishmen would have remembered that it was their offer of military assistance to the Ottoman Empire which was one of the chief inducements for Sultan Murad III to grant the 1579 Trade Capitulations.<sup>43</sup> The play imagines a time immediately after the dissolution of a Christian-Turk accord, in order to imaginatively reflect upon what might become of the new Anglo-Turkish alliance that Queen Elizabeth and Sultan Murad III had just finalized. English fears about the tenuousness of their new alliance were based on two distinct, but contemporaneous concerns. Englishmen worried that their new trading privileges would be abrogated once the Sublime Porte ceased to need England’s assistance against the Safavids, the Hapsburgs, and the Spanish. The English public also feared that their own mediating agents in the Ottoman Empire could not be relied on to salvage weakening diplomatic ties because that agent’s private profit in Turkey would prove to be his prime concern.<sup>44</sup> *The Jew of Malta* dramatizes the paradox of the Anglo-Ottoman peace accord through focusing on those mediating servants who assured Christian success in Malta through their face-to-face dealings, but

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<sup>42</sup> All references to the play are taken from Marlowe, Christopher. *The Jew of Malta*. London: John Beale, 1630.

<sup>43</sup> Foreign ambassadors resident in London and Constantinople commented, in their diplomatic reports back home, on the secret English export of munitions and metals to the Ottoman empire.

<sup>44</sup> Historian Gary Bell points out that many a courtly career at home was launched by fortunes amassed in the Ottoman Empire. Bell points out that besides receiving a English allowance, ambassadors received presents which usually took the form of gold chains or collections of plate. These items often had great value. And once ambassadors returned to England, these gifts were often used as collateral for loans. Bell, Gary M. “Elizabethan Diplomatic Compensation: Its Nature and Variety.” *The Journal of British Studies*. 20.2 (Spring 1981), 12.

who were nevertheless perceived as a national threat because of their constantly shifting identity in the Ottoman Empire. The play's concluding victory over the Turk who has reneged on his promise of trade protection to the Christians can only be read as an English triumph if the audience is willing to admit that the price for such success is the destruction of the communal bonds among Malta's Christian, Jewish, and Turkish characters. *The Jew of Malta* creates the fiction necessary for imagining Protestant success in the Ottoman Empire. And more importantly, it asks its audience to consider whether such imperial triumph doesn't come at too costly an expense? In this regard, *The Jew of Malta* can be read as a harbinger of the transition from the Elizabethan period, when the bonds of dense sociability that connected communities of trans-imperial mediators determined Anglo-Ottoman successes, to the Jacobean period, when these communal bonds were sacrificed to the protocols and policies of official exchanges.

From its outset, *The Jew of Malta* dramatizes the disintegration of tolerant communal relations among the play's mediating Christian, Jewish, and Turkish characters to suggest that England's Anglo-Ottoman mediating servants were similarly threatened by their nation's new imperial ambitions in the Ottoman Empire. The play cautions its audience that once a city like Malta becomes the site of imperial contestation, the communal relations among the mediating servants who actually arranged international relations on behalf of their masters would be irreversibly damaged. Subsequently, the only way to recognize such mediating servants would be as instruments in the nation's imperial agenda.

In dramatizing this historical shift from the communal to the imperial, the play charts what happens to the chain of intermediaries that are necessary for profiting in the

Ottoman Empire, but who also threaten English authority at home. *The Jew of Malta*, like a number of Turk plays, domesticates the exoticism of the Ottoman Empire by introducing it in England through a host of mediating servants. These servants would be familiar to English audiences. Ithamore and Pilia Borza would have been recognized as a cutpurse and a conycatcher, respectively. These types of ‘masterless men’ were troubling English authorities during the later part of Queen Elizabeth’s reign.<sup>45</sup> So the familiarization of the Ottoman Empire in *The Jew of Malta* is carried out through rendering mediating servants who were already familiar. English audiences would have recognized that these mediators were powerful conveyors of information and goods. But their social status was being contentiously debated at home because their criminal activities could not be policed sufficiently, or re-directed into socially acceptable pursuits. The play makes the rather bold pronouncement that, by relying on masterless men and untrustworthy mediators to help secure such legitimacy and build its imperial presence abroad, England must be willing to promote its servants from within. The varying degree to which this promotion of mediating servants is carried out within the play can be gauged by how closely the ‘external’ threat of the Turk mirrors the ‘internal’ threat of the untrustworthy servant. Literary critics like Jonathan Burton have pointed out that England’s imperial status is as much a product of what it imagined to occur outside its borders as its internal response to that imagining.<sup>46</sup> What *The Jew of Malta* and the other Turk plays that I’m discussing in this chapter make clear is that the ‘outside’ figure of the Turk meets its doppelganger ‘inside’ England, in the familiar figure of the mediating

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<sup>45</sup> See *The Elizabethan Underworld*. Ed. A.V. Judges. New York: Octagon Books, 1965.

<sup>46</sup> Jonathan Burton discusses how an Englishman’s “sense of normative selfhood could be drawn upon to make sense of Islamic otherness, although the domestic might just as readily draw on Islamic otherness in order to shore up its defining hierarchies, axioms, and boundaries.” *Ibid*, 24.



servant - that man or woman whose social status was in a state of hierarchical indeterminacy that Englishmen were trying to determine, much as they were trying to determine their own relationship to the Ottoman Empire.

Marlowe uses the figure of Barabas to dramatize how an intricate social network of mediating servants within Malta must be used in order to create Christian, imperial hegemony by the play's conclusion. At the beginning of the play, Barabas has little concern for whether Malta is under Christian or Turkish rule, so long as his reputation there allows him to continue making money. By the end of the play, Barabas seeks reconciliation with the Christian patriarchs of Malta whom he had once reviled. Judging that it makes little sense for him to be a virtual exile in the community where he was once begrudgingly accepted, Barabas decides to assist Ferneze regain rule of Malta. Ferneze persuades Barabas to help him by promising to restore the Jew to his old role as Malta's richest moneylender: "Deal truly with vs as thou intimatest, and I will send amongst the citizens, and by my letters priuately procure great sommes of mony for thy recompense."<sup>47</sup> Barabas's decision to help Ferneze ultimately stems from helping both Maltesians recover their place in society. As Barabas states, "In Malta here, that I have got my goods, and in this city still have had success...For as a fiend not known but in distress I'll rear up Malta now remediless."<sup>48</sup> What he doesn't understand is that the Malta that he seeks to "rear up" has changed from a multi-cultural community of profiteers into a battleground for imperial dominance.

Malta has become a city that is strategically important to the Spanish and the Turk. We are reminded of this through Martin Del Bosco and Selim Calymath. The

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<sup>47</sup> 5.1.37-9

<sup>48</sup> 5.1.46-7.

Spaniard, Martin Del Bosco is a politically savvy strategist who urges the same kind of crusader rhetoric and historical interpretations of the Turks that Baldwin and Frederick did in the first half of *Tamburlaine*. Del Bosco tries to convince the Governor that the Turk doesn't deserve respect, but rather disobedience: "Will Knights of Malta be in league with Turks, and buy it basely too for sums of gold? My lord, remember that to Europe's shame, the Christian isle of Rhodes, from whence you came, was lately lost, and you were stated here to be at deadly enmity with Turks."<sup>49</sup> For his part, Selim Calymath is much less circuitous in stating Malta's imperial significance to Ottoman interests. The Turkish leader states that the necessity of taxing the Maltesians stems from the depleted Turkish coffers. Given the expenses involved in Turkey's military wars against the Persians, Malta must be taxed - both immediately and retroactively for the past decade of Turkish clemency. So Malta, which was once a community that benefited from liberal and tolerant relations between Christians, Turks, and Jews is now undergoing political pressure as a site of imperial contestation. The Governor's response to these new geo-political pressures is to hesitatingly adopt the Crusader rhetoric urged by Del Bosco. Ferneze agrees to the sale of the Del Bosco's slaves in Malta if the Spanish will intercede to rid Malta of the Turks. When Del Bosco agrees, Ferneze who earlier had cowered before Selim Calymath, agrees with the words: "We and our warlike knights will follow thee, against these barbarous misbelieving Turks." English audiences would have recognized, in Ferneze's compromised position, their own fraught position as a Protestant nation caught between the Pope (Del Bosco) and the Sultan (Calymath.) Ferneze's hesitant acceptance of Del Bosco can thus be read as an alliance forged more on Spanish military strength, than on the empty crusader justification that he uses.

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<sup>49</sup> 2.2.27-33

The remainder of the play dramatizes how extricating Ferneze from under the thrall of Selim Calymath (and more subtly, the governor's alliance with Del Bosco) depends turning Barabas into an instrument for a new imperial, social order in Malta – one that was familiarly English. By having Ferneze experience England's worst nightmare (in seeing a Turk that he trusted turn against him,) the play enacts the laborious work that will allow a successful manipulation of the imbalance of power between the two nations. Through its resolution, *The Jew of Malta* imagines an English presence in Ottoman lands that is predicated on controlling chameleon-like characters such as Barabas in order to serve England's own proto-imperial ambitions. Domestic anxieties about intractable mediating servants are allayed by initially making those servants tools for Turkish success. Later, in promoting Ferneze to an imperious position where Selim Calymath becomes his captive, those same agents are redeemed as tools for hegemonic re-stabilization. Because disobedient servants and threatening Turks are part of the same problem, *The Jew of Malta* imagines, they can be neutralized through a common solution that clearly illustrates the dangers of serving the wrong master. *The Jew of Malta* shows this through the Barabas and Lodowick/Mathias plot lines.

Barabas promises Abigail's hand to both Lodowick and Mathias, in an attempt to take revenge against Governor Ferneze. The Jew's Machiavellian designs work out as intended when both suitors kill each other. Since Don Mathias is also dead, Ferneze can only wish for some outsider to blame for his son's death. He laments, "Oh Lodowick! Hadst thou perished by the Turk, wretched Ferneze might have venged thy death."<sup>50</sup>

Given the absence of any logical explanation for why their children have been found dead together, all Ferneze and Mathias's mother can do is to form their own league

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<sup>50</sup> 3.2.14-15

of commiseration. Ferneze and mother Mathias's decision to let their children be monumentalized together as if they had lived in peace is a reminder to the play's audiences of the narratives that must be constructed in order to preserve Christian harmony. Later, when Pilia Borza reveals to Ferneze that it was Barabas who was behind the Mathias-Lodowick murders, Ferneze abandons the communal ties of grief that he had shared with Doña Mathias and instead renews his earlier desire for revenge. Once Pilia Borza and Ithamore provide him with the justification that he had already been seeking, Ferneze can engineer Selim Calymath's capture through Barabas. Moreover, Ferneze is able to pronounce the capture of Calymath as "a Jews courtesie: for he that did by treason work our fall, by treason hath delivered thee to us." No longer in search of a reason to hate Don Mathias, Ferneze is able to use the "Jews' courtesy" to exact revenge against Selim Calymath and deliver the sought-after Turk that secures Malta's Protestant hegemony. In stark contrast to Barabas's vow to "rear up Malta now remediless" because Maltesian Jews and Christians hadn't recognize the Turk as a "fiend", Ferneze's statement shows that he's retained control of Malta not as a former community member but as its new imperial master. Ferneze's pronouncement of the long-standing financial support that Barabas had provided to his fellow Maltesians as 'a Jews courtesie' is an indication that such relationships are a thing of the past – a remnant of a time where cooperation allowed co-existence, but which has now been devalued to a mere 'courtesy.' 'Courtesy' has been replaced by a new social order where Barabas is deemed 'treasonous.' His subsequent manipulation, to effectively deliver the Turk to Ferneze, re-establishes Malta's rightful masters.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> We are reminded that since Ferneze and the Maltesians no longer need Del Bosco's mediation, the conclusion of the play is more subtly a Protestant, rather than a pan-Christian, victory over the Turk. This

Such authoritarian revenge (and the fiction of the Turk who instigates Christian disunity and deserves this revenge) is carried out by convincing Barabas to finally serve the Maltesian Christian, his rightful authorities. Barabas's mediation in delivering Selim Calymath to Ferneze counteracts the inter-Christian strife that he had exploited earlier. By the end of the play, only Marlowe's audience is aware of the strife that existed between Don Mathias and Lodowick.<sup>52</sup> Marlowe delivers the deceiving Turk to Ferneze in a manner that de-emphasizes religious difference (between Protestants and Catholics.) The Jew's ability to adopt multiple identities is used to Protestant advantage. By taking the Barabas who has ostensibly agreed to serve as Selim Calymath's governor in Malta, and imagining Barabas's betrayal of the Turk as an act of the 'Jews courtesy', the play fixes the otherwise labile quality of Jew. *The Jew of Malta* dramatizes how such fictions must be deployed in order to topple Barabas's ability to seditiously exploit inter-Christian suspicion and animosity. Although Barabas' punishment would have satisfied many of Marlowe's audience members, I argue that some in the audience may have been less enthusiastic. These audience members may have identified more closely with Barabas by imagining that he resists the illusions of belonging that Ferneze promises him even as he is forced to accept those illusions. The manipulation that leads to Barabas being hoist in his own petard would have reminded audiences that accepting such fantasies was an

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is how Marlowe creates an affiliative link between his audience and Ferneze.

<sup>52</sup> *The Jew of Malta* repeatedly reminds its audience of the inter-Christian strife that lingers even at the end of the play – an unsettling anxiety that requires the constant figure of the threatening Turk to allay it. In the Abigail sub-plot, Barabas's daughter aligns Lodowick and Mathias through their shared identity as Christians, even though they were two very dissimilar rivals for her hand in marriage. The differences that made Mathias and Lodowick distinct figures during their lifetime – Mathias was a young gentleman; Lodowick was a privileged politician's son; Mathias was the favored suitor; Lodowick was the smitten opportunist – are collapsed by Abigail when she interprets Don Mathias and Lodowick's mutual aggression as the murder of fellow Christians.

uncomfortable pre-condition for establishing England's Christian order and proto-imperial agenda as well.

Marlowe uses the Barabas/Ithamore plotline in order to plot the myriad relationships between servants and the masters they serve, and between private masters such as Barabas and the imperial masters that he must serve: the Maltesian government (Ferneze) and the Sublime Porte (Selim Calymath.) Barabas, who has been robbed by Maltese authorities and forced to form an alliance with a mediating, Turkish slave, finds himself being robbed by another set of subordinates who have set their sights on his wealth. Later, the Courtezan and Pilia Borza recruit Ithamore, Barabas's slave, into their own coterie of blackmailers in order to extort money from Barabas in exchange for remaining quiet about the Jew's complicity in the double murders. Ithamore's mediation consists of little more than posing a single question to Abigail. In response to her inquiry, "and was my father furtherer of their [Mathias and Lodowick's] deaths?" Ithamore counterquestions, "Am I Ithamore?" Ithamore response directs Abigail to question who she is, and the role she has unwittingly played in the double murders. "Hard-hearted father, unkind Barabas," she concludes, "was this the pursuit of thy policy? To make me show them favor severally, that by my favour they should both be slain?"<sup>53</sup> Her seemingly peculiar decision to become a Christian, because Jews are 'pitiless' and Turks 'piety-less', becomes less odd when we consider that Abigail's redemption is affected by Ithamore's – one Turkish mediator who has accepted his rightful Christian masters (i.e. Pilia Borza and the Courtezan) affecting the conversion of another Turk mediator. Ithamore, like his master, voices a critique of Christian disunity. His dialog with Abigail points out the class differences and animosity among the play's

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<sup>53</sup> 4.2.68-71.

Christian characters, and how easily Barabas was able to exploit those differences. Ithamore's faithless service associates him as a Turk who is no less threatening than Selim Calymath. It is this dramatized manipulation of how the Turk's mediating servant can be redeemed as a Christian mediator that results in Abigail not being punished as the unwitting tool for the death of Mathias and Lodowick, but instead being redeemed as a fellow Christian. Only Barabas, the Machiavel who has been using all of these intermediaries in order to line his own pockets, is punished outright by Ferneze. And that punishment too comes after Barabas has renounced his loyalty to Selim Calymath and sought the community of the Christian Maltesians he had betrayed earlier.

The pressures that attend to Malta as an imperial site are manifested in how communities break apart (Ferneze and Barabas), reform (Barabas and Ithamore), and then are broken apart again (by Pilia Borza and the Courtezan). This concatenation of dependencies and the alignment that an imperial presence occasions force Barabas to seek re-incorporation back into the Maltese community from which he feels himself excluded.<sup>54</sup> But by this time, all that is left of that former community is an illusion. Indeed, the main inducement that Ferneze uses to lure Barabas to deliver the Turk to him one last time is the promise that the Jews' former foes will be urged to respect Barabas's new position as their new governor. Ferneze also promises that Barabas's former Maltesian associates shall be made to love him as one of their own.<sup>55</sup>

By dramatizing Ferneze's return to power through this illusion of belonging - this return to a communal unity that has actually been replaced by the hegemonic demands of

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<sup>54</sup> As Ithamore explains to Abigail, "why the devil invented a challenge, my master writ it, and I carried it, first to Lodowick, and *imprimis* to Mathias. And then they met, and as the story says, in doleful wise they ended both their days." (3.3.17-21)

<sup>55</sup> The governor promises that "I will sends amongst the citizens and by my letters privately procure great sums of money for thy recompense: nay more, do this, and live thou Governor still." (5.2.88-90)

imperium - Marlowe forces his audience to consider what is at stake for England (and her mediating servants.) The only way for Christian order to be re-established is to propose an idea of empire where mediators can only serve their masters, and not disobey them. Only then, the play suggests, will authority figures not have to rely on co-religionists that they don't entirely trust (like Martin Del Bosco,) or have to sever relations with Turk entirely. As literary scholars have pointed out, *The Jew of Malta* does not end with the disappearance of Turkish threat. Instead, Selim Calymath's position of power over the Maltese Christians is overturned. England's success in the Mediterranean depended on maintaining peace with the Ottomans, which was a slightly more realistic goal than destroying the Ottoman Empire. What the play points out is that such peaceful co-existence can only be acceptable to English interests if the threat of Turkish thralldom is neutralized.

And the only way that this can happen is if Ferneze's ability to manipulate Barabas is superior to Selim Calymath's. This is why Barabas's estrangement from Ithamore is necessary in order to restore Protestant order at the end. It is not just Barabas as Jewish Other who must be incorporated back into the hegemony of Malta as a Christian city, but Barabas as a figure who must *respond* to his own mediating servant's betrayal by begrudgingly serving Ferneze. It is this cooptation of the diffident Jewish outsider that finally allows Ferneze to finally have the upper hand over Selim Calymath.

The Barabas plotline enacts many of the issues of English upper-class resistance to those mediators who facilitated English interactions in the Ottoman Empire. Ferneze is willing to tolerate Barabas and the rest of the Maltesian Jews so long as they continue to siphon trade and capital into the city. Marlowe's English audiences knew that,



historically, Jews in the Mediterranean functioned as indispensable money-lenders, factors, translators, and cross-cultural mediators in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>56</sup> Their adaptability made them invaluable, although often mistrusted, citizens of the Mediterranean. The Governor notes as much when he tells the Jew, “Yet Barabas, we will not banish thee, but here in Malta, where thou got’st thy wealth, live still; and if thou canst, get more.”<sup>57</sup> To early modern Englishmen, Jews were seen as both necessary mediating figures, as well as absolutely different outsiders.<sup>58</sup> It is the former of these two qualities that made depicting the latter such a vexed endeavor. How could one rely on a mediator, but at the same time consider him/her to be alien in every way? Marlowe’s creation of Barabas is an attempt to answer this question. His complex representation of the Jew forces *The Jew of Malta*’s audience to consider their own second-class status as interlopers on the Mediterranean (and Ottoman) stage.

*The Jew of Malta* outlines the many narrations of England’s mediating servants that English audiences had to either accept or manipulate, in order to imagine a successful imperial partnership with the Turk. *The Jew of Malta* dramatizes how this

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<sup>56</sup> There has been a wealth of recent historical scholarship that has examined Jews not in terms of their religious exclusion at pariahs, but as cultural and linguistic mediators who held the Ottoman state apparatus together by buffering interactions with Europeans. See Stein, Sarah Abrevaya. “The Permeable Boundaries of Ottoman Jewry.” *Boundaries and Belonging*. Ed. Joel Migdal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 51. Stein writes about Jews occupying “vectors of belonging that unsettle our assumptions about the relationship between minority communities and the multiethnic empires in which they lived.” See also Braude, Benjamin and Bernard Lewis, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The Functioning of a Plural Society*. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982, 171-84. Marlowe shows an attuned attentiveness to the embedded’ness’ of Barabas by repeatedly referencing the Mediterranean Jew’s linguistic capabilities.. Barabas’ adaptability in the many languages of the Mediterranean are mentioned in 2.1.38, when he speaks in Spanish dialogue, in the last lines of act 2, scene 1, in 4.1.20 when he swears an Italian oath, in 4.3.5 when he promises that “if I get him [Ithamore], coupe de gorge for that, and in act 4, scene 4, when Barabas actually dresses as a French musician and speaks in French so he can get to Ithamore without either Pilia Borza or the courtesan suspecting him.

<sup>57</sup> 1.2.103-5

<sup>58</sup> There are repeated instances of English travelers relying on Jews as intermediaries in Ottoman territories. During his imprisonment in Constantinople, Sir Thomas Sherley almost trusted the advice of a Jewish merchant not to pay his own ransom to Sultan.

shift from the communal to the geo-political brings with it a need to demonize the Turk in order to divert attention away from Christian strife and communities of pan-religious belonging. These two precursors are necessary for the establishment of an imperial hegemony that is based on unified cultural and religious identity, and a rigidly maintained hierarchy of social obligations.

The play challenges English audiences to recognize that the fiction that Ferneze employs to incorporate Barabas into the Christian, imperial machinery must also be employed by England if it is ever to incorporate Anglo-Ottoman intermediaries into its own imperial machinery, instead of depending on them for information about the Ottomans. In the play's final act, Marlowe asks us to imagine that the only fate possible for an ally such as Barabas, who has helped to temporarily disable the Turk and made an alliance with the Catholic unnecessary, is elimination. The play's conclusion is an ironic comment on the domestic reality of policing mediating servants who were seen as national threats, and the international reality of needing those same mediators to assure national security. Marlowe's audience saw how the servant-master tensions that were threatening to undermine patriarchal authority at home could be normalized in the Ottoman lands to English advantage. Plays like *The Jew of Malta* imagined that the same mediating agents who threatened English authority at home because of their polyvalent identities could defuse that threat abroad, by assisting in the creation of Jewish and Turkish stereotypes which would stabilize England's imperial status and justify its involvement with the Ottomans. The play creates subtle, but tangible, associations between the application of illicit servant activity abroad in the service of English imperial activity, and the control needed to subsume that same activity at home within the

mechanisms of hegemony. Non-hierarchical opportunities for English mercantile advancement which were allowed in the Ottoman Empire depended upon the maintenance of hierarchical hegemony at home. And the maintenance of such hegemony depended upon co-opting the flexible identity of the mediating servant. Mediators like Barabas were not simply instruments or tools for hierarchical control, but one link in a chain of trans-imperial figures who both stabilized authority at home and justified England's imperial presence abroad.

*Soliman and Perseda* (1592)<sup>59</sup>

Thomas Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* also directs audience attention to those master- servant relations which affected Anglo-Ottoman interactions. However, unlike *The Jew of Malta*, Kyd's play focuses on another type of trans-imperial agent - the military figure who joined alliances between European nations and the Ottoman Empire. By re-writing the role played by the historical general of the janissary corps in the 1522 siege of Rhodes, *Soliman and Perseda* fashions another type of Turk figure that the English needed in order to control their own trans-imperial mediators in the Ottoman Empire .

Written after Queen Elizabeth had signed a formal trade agreement with the Ottoman Empire, *Soliman and Perseda* dramatized two inter-related issues about whether the sultan's promises of friendship and protection could be trusted. Through its re-writing of the life of Sultan Suleyman I and his involvement in the 1522 siege of Rhodes, Kyd's play raises the question of how England could have a successful relationship with

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<sup>59</sup> *Soliman and Perseda* was registered to Edward White in 1592, and first performed in 1599. All references to the play are taken from Kyd, Thomas. *Soliman and Perseda*. London: Edward Allde, 1592.

the Ottoman Empire if it couldn't bring itself to trust its own trans-imperial mediators who were living there?

The play initially dramatizes the fulfillment of the sultan's promises of amity, but later shows his treachery against his Christian partners. In this way, *Soliman and Perseda* appeals to both an audience who saw the Turk as an expression of its most ardent desires, as well as an audience who saw him as reflection of its greatest fears. The play initially begins with a noble and charitable sultan and a Turkish general who admire Erastus, the young Rhodian knight. But by the end of the play, Erastus is dead because of the Turkish characters' reversion to an inherent and latent perfidy. The play charts this movement from trust to mistrust by drawing audience attention to Piston and Brusor, the respective Christian and Ottoman mediating characters of the play. Kyd's alteration of the role played by Suleyman's general alerts us to how Englishmen imagined that debates over Ottoman loyalty were inimically tied to whether trans-imperial mediators who once were instrumental to advancing Christian interests in the Ottoman Empire could continue to remain so. The play's response to such anxieties is two-fold. First, Kyd dramatizes how the Piston character is altered into a model of Christian fidelity, despite the fact the page is unabashed loyal only to himself throughout the first half of the play. Second, Kyd contrasts Piston's transformation into a symbol of Christian constancy with Brusor's transformation from a Christian-like mediator for Erastus to a self-serving Turkish opportunist. The play asks its audience to consider whether these transformations of Ottomanized Christians and Christian-like Turks 'back' to their more familiar roles isn't the only possible outcome for an Anglo-Ottoman alliance as well?

I shall argue that despite an affirmative response to the previous question from many aristocratic playgoers in Kyd's audience, *Soliman and Perseda* offers a defense of the loyalties of Brusor, and a critique of the 'Turk'ing<sup>60</sup> of both Soliman and Brusor. I shall argue that such a transformation of the sultan and his general into stereotypically villainous Turks villains was actually a subtle critique of those members of the English aristocracy who sanctioned 'Turk' plays about social and economic improvement in the Ottoman Empire only as long as those hopes were dashed by the end of the play. I will argue that Kyd encouraged audiences who might have been dissatisfied with such a conclusion to consider that the demonization of the play's Turk characters exposed how English authorities also relied on such stereotyping to deflect their own anxieties about partnering with the Ottomans, even as they outwardly supported the Elizabethan Anglo-Ottoman trade partnership.

The play establishes tolerant relations between Christians and Turks as the norm in Rhodes and Constantinople; it then charts the failure of that amity by re-staging an altered version of the 1522 Ottoman siege of Rhodes. *Soliman and Perseda* connects the failure of that initial Christian-Turk amity directly to the actions of its two trans-imperial mediators. Despite the fact that none of the play's characters were English, this depiction of failed relations between the play's Ottoman-friendly Christians and Christian-like Turks struck a nerve with English audiences. The success of the newly established Anglo-Ottoman trade capitulations was dependent on England's ambassador, Edward Barton. As I've already discussed in my previous chapter, both Barton and his predecessor, William Harborne, were often suspected of compromising national security

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<sup>60</sup> I use this shorthand expression to describe the transformation of a recognizably human Ottoman subject into a representative for stereotypical negative 'Turk' behavior and qualities.

and Levant Company interests in the pursuit of personal profit in Constantinople.

Although both Harborne and Barton adamantly asserted their English loyalties, they also acknowledged the strains of having to please Queen Elizabeth, while ingratiating themselves to the sultan that they lived under. They complained of a lack of financial support from Crown and Company, and reminded Queen and countrymen that only their English loyalties prevented them from partaking in illicitly acquired Turkish wealth.

Kyd's audiences would have been recognized, in all of the ways that I've just described, the similarities between Piston and Brusor and England's own ambassadors in Constantinople. Debates about whether Barton was doing all he could to secure the trading and travelling privileges that Turkey had promised were raging in England at the time. The main debaters were those merchants and traders who were hopeful of the opportunities that the new trade capitulations might allow and those who feared that England had entered into an alliance that could only end disastrously .

Kyd positioned *Soliman and Perseda* as his dramatic contribution to this debate, by focusing on the character of the trans-imperial mediator – that pivotal figure around whom both supporters and opponents of the Anglo-Ottoman accord based their hopes and fears. Piston and Brusor are created as characters that invite the play's audience to reflect on their own investments in either wishing to see Christian-Turk amity succeed or fail. The play rhetorically asks, if the fidelity of England's own ambassadors in Constantinople couldn't be trusted, then how could England continue to trust the Turk himself?

At first blush, the play seems to answer the previous question by narrowly defining the polyvalent identity of the trans-imperial mediator in order to define the Turk

as an ultimately deceptive figure. *Soliman and Perseda* vocalizes inter-class frustrations at home (in Christendom,) but imaginatively transfers the responsibility of punishing such deviant behaviors ‘abroad’ to the Turk. ‘The Turk’ becomes a necessary figure of punishment that normalizes domestic anxieties by urging Christian commonality across classes. To accomplish this, *Soliman and Perseda* places its mediating characters under the authority of both Christian and Turkish masters, and then associates loyalty to serving a Christian leader and disloyalty to serving the Turkish sultan, in order to question whether such affiliations are tenable.

The play updates the events of the 1522 Ottoman siege of Rhodes to question whether late 16<sup>th</sup> English anxieties about imperial involvement with the Turk could be assuaged. *Soliman and Perseda* promotes an association between Rhodes as 1522 Europe’s ‘last bastion of Christendom’, and England as the same in 1592. This was especially important considering that the Spanish Armada had just been defeated, and some members of England’s aristocracy were now beginning to view their Ottoman allies as more of a potential military threat, than a viable trading partner.<sup>61</sup> For those members of the English aristocracy who had opposed an Anglo-Ottoman alliance even while the threat of Spanish conquest existed, the Ottoman alliance was now a partnership that was just too dangerous to maintain. Just as *The Jew of Malta* was affected by England’s complex image of itself as both imperial ally with/rival to the Ottomans, *Soliman and Perseda* also imagines a new English subject position defined in opposition to the Turk. In *Soliman and Perseda*, the city of Rhodes is associated with the virginal body of its female protagonist, Perseda. By its conclusion, the maiden’s fair body and the

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<sup>61</sup> England attempted to forge amicable relations with the Persian Shah during the 1590s; no doubt as a precautionary measure against a Turkish ally that might forswear its promise of peace and its assurance of trading security.

geographical body of Rhodes become virtually indistinguishable as objects of desire and competition for its Christian and Turkish master-class characters.

*Soliman and Perseda* adapts and updates the historical figures of the 1522 capture of Rhodes to comment on England's late Elizabethan relationship with Turkey. Kyd drew upon the same historical account of Sultan Soliman, the Turkish leader who led the capture of Rhodes in 1522, which was cited by Richard Knolles several years later in his *The General Historie of the Turkes* (1603). However, unlike the 'historical' Soliman, whom Knolles depicts as a calming, steady influence over his troops, Kyd's Soliman is a splenetic leader, as prone to being misguided by his servants as to punishing them for their disobedience.

To satisfy that constituency of his audience which was suspicious of England's continued alliance with the Ottoman Empire, Kyd created a new Turk that would be useful after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The play dramatizes this shift in Christian-Turk relations from its first half (when Soliman is a tolerant protector and ally of the Rhodian knight, Erastus and his beloved Perseda) to the second half (when, in a fit of passionate rage and jealousy, he has Erastus killed.) The fictional sultan dramatically returns to his splenetic 'nature,' fortifying the play's putative message that England's existing détente with the Ottomans was imminently threatening. The play makes an implicit connection between the Rhodes of 1522, which was perceived to be the last bastion of Christian defense against the Turk, and London of 1592.

However, *Soliman and Perseda* also appeals to those audience members who might have been concerned with England that placed itself in this new proto-imperial role. If the play is read with an attentiveness to its two main, mediating servant



characters, *Soliman and Perseda* also raises the possibility that authority figures in England posed as great a risk to national security as the ‘terrible Turk.’

It is important to consider *Soliman and Perseda* from the perspective of both its servants and masters because Kyd expanded the servants’ role from an earlier version of the play. We remember that a skeletal version of the ‘Soliman and Perseda’ playlet was first included in his earlier play, *The Spanish Tragedy* (1588). In the earlier drama, Kyd dramatized a Spanish desire for bloody vengeance in order to rally national and Protestant fervor against the common enemy of both England and Turkey. In the earlier play, it was the master figure, Hieronimo, who played the role which is played by the Ottoman servant Brusor, and carried out his own vengeance against Don Lorenzo.<sup>62</sup> Kyd’s expanded version of the playlet gives Brusor a speaking role, and adds a slew of mediating servants to the original story (i.e.: the Lord Marshall, and all the false witnesses during *Soliman and Perseda*’s trial scene and execution of Erastus,) to emphasize the many ‘hands’ through which Turkey had now taken the place of Spain, as England’s new foe. *Soliman and Perseda* deepens the Turkish threat by accentuating the chain of mediating servants through which England’s ally potentially posed a threat to national security.<sup>63</sup> Kyd’s decision to add mediating characters to *The Spanish Tragedy* playlet in order to write a ‘Turk’ play wasn’t coincidental.

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<sup>62</sup> In *The Spanish Tragedy* version of ‘Soliman and Perseda,’ the Brusor character did not have a name. Hieronimo played the role of the general, and famously uttered the lines: ‘Erasto, Soliman saluteth thee, ... / And lets thee wit by me his highness’ will, / Which is, thou shouldest be thus employed’ before stabbing the Erastus character. [4.4.50]

<sup>63</sup> Brusor nearly mimics Hieronimo’s lines. However, the Turkish general speaks them to the Lord Marshall, who has also served as one of the mediators for facilitating Erastus’s murder. Unlike Hieronimo, who (in character as the Turkish general) dismisses Erastus, Brusor kills the Lord Marshall, who has assisted in the plot to kill Erastus. “Lord Marshall,” Brusor says, “it is his highness pleasure that you commend him to Erastus soule.” And with these words, Brusor stabs the Marshal. The difference between the two plays is the added emphasis of mediating links in the Turkish chain of command, *each* of whom possess a threat to the Christians.

In his updated *Soliman and Perseda*, Kyd was very deliberate in fashioning distinct identities for mediating servants who would ultimately define the differences between Christians and Turks. Kyd's portrayal of his Sultan Soliman was quite different from the historical Turkish sultan because Kyd changed the Turkish master's relationship with his mediating servant. Kyd drew from many of the same historical accounts that Richard Knolles would use approximately a decade later. If we compare Kyd's dramatization of Sultan Soliman to Richard Knolles' account of the same, we can see these distinct differences. Knolles' Soliman accuses his general, Mustapha of being "an *vnfaithfull counselor*, and *cheefe persuader* of that vnluckie warre; who flattering him in his vaine humour, by extolling his forces aboue measure, & falsely extenuating the power of the enemye...had drawne him [Soliman] into that dangerous expedition [Rhodes]." <sup>64</sup> Despite his poor advice in advocating a military campaign that costs the lives of more than ten thousand Turkish soldiers, Bassa Mustafa was spared by the historical Soliman after Rhodes had been successfully captured. Knolles noted that the historical Bassa Mustafa's life was spared because of the pleas of the Sultan's soldiers who pleaded that "the enemies ground had already drunke too much of the Turkish blood." <sup>65</sup> Kyd, who also based his Turkish general, Brusor, on the historical figure of Bassa Mustafa, however does not let his mediating general go unpunished. If Knolles' history shows one set of competent Turkish mediators apparently rescuing an incompetent one, Kyd seemed to have a different agenda in mind in letting Brusor die alone and undefended.

Kyd's Brusor suffers an ignoble death that punctuates his faithless service to an unworthy master. When Soliman condemns Brusor to his janissaries for execution, he

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<sup>64</sup> Knolles, 588.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 593.

reverses the terms of who had power over whom: “How dourst thou ungratious counsellor, / first *cause me* murther such a worthy man [Erastus], / and after *tempt* so vertuous a woman / be this therefore the last that ere thou speake: / janissaries, take him straight vnto the block, / off with his head, and suffer him not to speake.”<sup>66</sup> Kyd’s Soliman is transformed from a man who forgave his general, despite his ‘unfaithful counsel,’ to a new Turk who exemplifies faithlessness because he abuses those servants most responsible for his evil empire’s success. Soliman condemns Brusor’s power of speech, which he equates with ‘causing’ Erastus’ death and ‘tempting’ Perseda. His punishment of Brusor is as much a disavowal of his own weak leadership as it is a punishment for the Turkish general. His order, “and suffer him not to speake,” prevents Brusor from betraying his master’s complicity in the murder plot against the Christian prince, Erastus. Instead Brusor, who has spoken for Soliman for much of the play, is denied the voice to even speak for himself before his death.

Kyd repeatedly draws audience attention to the ways in which mediating servants who faithfully carried out their masters’ will were Christians, and servants who participated in a hierarchy of faithless service were Turks. If ‘Turk’ was a mobile signifier that could as easily be attached to a Christian character as to a Turk character, then we must look for some non-religious reason for its movements. Kyd suggests that service is ultimately what determines a character’s nomination as ‘Turk’ (or by contrast, ‘Christian.’) At the beginning of the play, the cultural Turk, Brusor, is admirably represented as equal to a Christian in valor and honor. By the end of the play, we learn that this positive image was due more to the faithful service that he rendered to Erastus than to Soliman. By the end of the play, Kyd attaches the Turk label to Brusor because of

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<sup>66</sup> 5.2.58-67.

his disloyal service to Erastus; and not because of his religious beliefs per se. The character of Erastus was created by Kyd to re-interpret the 1522 siege of Rhodes. Allegiances which were historically owed to Sultan Suleyman I during that siege were imagined turning in the Christian's favor. Even in having Brusor admire Erastus, Kyd is pointing out the Christian fantasy of the Turk passing over one of his own generals in favor of the more admirable Rhodian knight. By contrast, Piston *becomes* associated with a type of Christian service because he remains loyal to Erastus even after entering Turkey. After Erastus loses the carcanet entrusted to him by his beloved Perseda, he employs Piston to scour the black market for its whereabouts. The servant employs a 'crier' to retrieve the pilfered carcanet, but not before Erastus is forced to flee to Turkey after killing a man he accuses of stealing the necklace. Once Erastus is gone, Piston must wrestle with the moral dilemma of whether to safely deliver the jewel to his master in Turkey, or to sell it for his own profit in Rhodes. After initially being tempted with the worth of the necklace, he recognizes that the chain will be a 'halter' around his neck if he is caught selling it without a master to vouch for him. Piston decides to follow Erastus into Turkey, reasoning, "'for this once, Ile be honest against my will.'" <sup>67</sup> Piston's decision to remain in Erastus's faithful service despite personal inducements to the contrary, both in Rhodes and Constantinople, imbue his character with a Christian identity despite the opportunities to advance socially and monetarily in Turkey. His faithful service acquires a religious association after his master, Erastus, has been killed. Because Erastus represents 'the flower of Christendom' (as he is deemed by Perseda) after his death, Piston's service becomes associated with a Christian fidelity.

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<sup>67</sup> 3.3.48-9. Italics mine.

Near the conclusion of *Soliman and Perseda*, after both Erastus and Perseda have been killed, Piston is once again given the opportunity to serve his self-interests by allying himself as Soliman's new servant. Piston declines, this time choosing instead to stay by his mistress, Perseda's side. Soliman dispenses him, with the lines, "[if you loved her], then wait off her thorough eternall night."<sup>68</sup> Soliman's choice of words links Piston's grudging loyalty and service - "waiting" upon his mistress even after her death just as he had waited upon Erastus while he was alive - to a Christian death. Unlike Soliman's deceitful Turkish servant, Brusor, Piston chooses not to venture beyond the bounds of the Christian service, despite repeatedly being given the opportunity to do so. Kyd's audiences would have recognized that this affiliation between a servant's faithful service and his Christian duty to God was a constitutive feature of early modern service.<sup>69</sup> Piston's body lies next to the martyred Perseda for the duration of the play's final scene. Kyd associates Piston as a Christian character because of his faithful service. This is in distinct contrast to Brusor, who is fashioned into a Turk because of his unfaithfulness towards his master.

After Erastus defects to the Ottoman Empire and Brusor successfully besieges Rhodes, Soliman rewards Erastus with the city's governorship. The jilted Turkish general wonders aloud, "Must he [Erastus] reape that for which I tooke the toile? Come envie then, and sit in friendships seate, How can I love him that injoyes my right?"<sup>70</sup> The curtailment of the Ottoman general's ambitions is the narrative moment at which Brusor,

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<sup>68</sup> 5.3.78-9.

<sup>69</sup> Every person who had read the Tudor Book of Common Prayer was familiar with the paradoxical phrase, "service is perfect freedom." Michael Neill notes the English commentators, I.M. comparing mercenary servants to "Judas, that false traitor, [who] even for the covetous desire of coin, betray[ed] his own master, Christ." Neill 2000, 40.

<sup>70</sup> 2.3.12-20.

the admirer of Christian military valor, is fashioned into a jealous traitor and unfaithful Turkish servant. Brusor convinces the Sultan that he should not deny his own passion for Perseda. The jilted servant convinces Soliman that he has given up exclusive rights to both a woman and a city – something that a Turkish sultan need never do. Brusor uses Soliman's desire for Perseda to plot a recapture of the city under his own governorship, by convincing the Sultan to eliminate Erastus.<sup>71</sup> At the conclusion of the play, before the sultan is killed himself, Soliman kills Brusor for his faithless service,.

On the surface, *Soliman and Perseda* seems to reinforce the idea that Turkish perfidy is carried out through a chain of masters and servants, each of whom must be punished before Christian order can be restored. Unlike *The Jew of Malta*, Kyd's play stages the servants' final murder as a Turkish act because an onerous master shifts his own guilt and complicity back to his mediating servant. Soliman's final words to Brusor before he kills him are, "How dourst thou ungratious counsellor, / first *cause me* murder such a worthy man [Erastus]."<sup>72</sup> Earlier in the play, Soliman had similarly shifted his own guilt back to his mediating servants. After Governor Erastus was recalled to Constantinople, Soliman watched from a distance as his mediating servants staged a trial scene against the Rhodian. Erastus was subsequently strangled by two janissaries, for trumped-up charges of treason against the state. At that moment, Soliman suddenly began to grieve over the loss of the Rhodian knight, "whose life to me was dearer than

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<sup>71</sup> It is interesting to note how Kyd takes the Soliman history and subjects it to the edicts of an inherited Western humanism. Soliman's failure to heed the advice of the good brother is tied to his deficiency in heeding Brusor's advice. We are reminded of Machiavelli. "...that a prince who is not wise himself will never take good advice, unless by chance he has yielded his affairs entirely to one person who happens to be a very prudent man. In this case indeed he may be well governed, but it would not be for long, because such a governor would in a short time take away his state from him." Machiavelli, *The Prince*. London: Peter Whitehorne, 1592, Chpt. 23, 'How Flatterers are to be Avoided.'

<sup>72</sup> 5.4.98-6.

mine own.”<sup>73</sup> Invoking the need for vengeance to dispense justice, he ordered that “at Erastus’ hand let them [the janissaries] receive the stroake of death, whom they have spoiled of life.” Then noting that Erastus’ hand was “too weak” to exact its own revenge, Soliman concluded, “then mine shall helpe to send them down to everlasting night.” Soliman then killed his two janissaries. Were that not enough, Soliman continued to exact revenge on behalf of Erastus as if the dead Rhodian were giving him instructions. “But soft, me thinkes he is not satisfied,” Soliman whispered. “The breath doth murmur softly from his lips, and bids me kill those bloudie witnesses by whose treacherie Erastus died.”<sup>74</sup> The Lord Marshal is then ordered to put the false witnesses to death. The two witnesses protest. “Your self procured us,” one argues to Soliman. And the other witness exasperatingly asks, “is this our hier?” But at that time, Soliman would have his witnesses believe that it is Erastus who is working his revenge *through the sultan*. Both witnesses are dispatched, leaving only the marshall remaining. Soliman then ordered Brusor to stab the marshall: “Brusor, as thou louest me stab in the marshall, / least he detect vs vnto the world, / by making knowne *our* bloody practices.” [italics mine]. Soliman’s final murder of Brusor is Kyd’s dramatization of the final link in this chain of Turkish perfidy.

English authorities clamoring for a severing of ties with the Ottomans would have found, in the updated 1522 Rhodes narrative as well as in Piston’s devoted, Christian service to his masters, enough evidence to sanction the play’s staging. However, it is my contention that Kyd’s play also contained a strong counter-hegemonic narrative criticizing these authority figures and their investments in England’s new imperial order.

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<sup>73</sup> 5.4.103-6.

<sup>74</sup> 4.3.123-45.

The play's dramatization of Turkish mistrust exposes English master class anxiety about losing control over their own servants at a time when the Ottoman Empire offered genuine alternatives to social and economic injustices at home. .

We recall that, initially, Brusor is characterized as a figure that is empathetic to his Christian counterparts. Kyd dramatizes Brusor as precisely the sort of trans-imperial mediator who historically shuttled back-and-forth between Christendom and darul Islam (the lands of the Muslims) and therefore had to adopt tolerant attitudes towards the Turk. Kyd even goes one step further by making Brusor the spokesperson for amity, not just tolerance.

As *Soliman and Perseda* opens, Brusor has been sent to Rhodes as a spy, to ascertain military fortifications in Rhodes. If Kyd were to use Continental accounts of Turkish spies in Europe as his source material, we might have expected Brusor to be a despicable misanthrope whose intelligence gathering was motivated by anti-Christian sentiment. Instead, when Brusor returns to Constantinople, his report to Soliman is characterized by a respectful admiration of Erastus. Brusor reports back on the details of a friendly international joust for the hand of Princess Perseda. He admiringly recounts the military prowess of the young Rhodian knight, Erastus: "and had he [Erastus] worshipt Mahomet for Christ, He might have borne me throughout all the world, so well I loved and honored the man."<sup>75</sup> Given this promising description of the trans-imperial mediator, why did Kyd choose to convert Brusor to a more perfidious Turk figure? The answer, I will argue, is tied to the desperate measures he feels he must take in order to receive the boons of Ottoman imperialism. It is this conversion – from a military advisor who faithfully reports on the admirable Christian to one who faithlessly manipulates his

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<sup>75</sup> 1.2.57-9.



master into eliminating Erastus so that he can have Rhodes for himself – which makes Brusor a useful Turk figure for English audiences. Kyd's conversion of Brusor, from one type of military advisor to another marks his fashioning of a particular type of Turk in response to the character of the trans-imperial mediator.

In order to recognize how Kyd's play encourages such an interpretation, we must consider how the characters of Brusor and Piston – the play's two most prominent mediating figures – might have been perceived by lower-class audience members. Brusor's lionization of Erastus piques Soliman's curiosity about the Rhodian knight. Inadvertantly, Brusor plants the seeds for his own demotion by telling Soliman why Erastus was worthy of special regard. Brusor's conversion from a Christian servant to a Turk servant depends on Soliman's changed attitude from an ally to an enemy of the Christians. The play turns English indecisiveness about its alliance with the Ottoman Empire into an Ottoman indecisiveness about whether to love the Christian or fear and envy him. We can only see this if we recognize English and Ottoman masters as interchangeable. Like the English master who couldn't decide whether to trust the Turk or fear him, Soliman's earlier indecision about whether to love Erastus or have him killed is a pointed critique at English masters. Soliman's splenetic decision to order Erastus's execution and then to execute his 'hands' by taking up the dead hand of Erastus is a dramatic re-enactment of the schizophrenia that plagued English masters – especially those masters who abused their trans-imperial servants.

When we attend to the issue of Soliman and Brusor's change from the first half of the play to the second half, we realize that the play encourages its audiences to interpret its Turkish sultan as a master anxiously divided between his dependency on his servants,

and his desire to eliminate each of those servants in order to regain some measure of control over his imperial concerns. There would have been merchants, travelers, and other traders in Kyd's audience who might have sympathized with the plight of Soliman's mediating servants.<sup>76</sup> To these socially ambitious Englishmen, Brusor would have been perceived as a rightly aggrieved intercessor who was unjustly treated by his master after rendering him faithful service. English merchants and profiteers were being urged, by their own masters, not to trust the Turk that promised vast fortunes in the Ottoman Empire. These English servants would have recognized that Kyd was addressing concerns about of being labeled 'unfaithful' by English authorities who were using the 'Turk' label defensively – as a maneuver to mask insecurities about losing Englishmen to Ottoman masters.

While it is possible to read the fickle Soliman's susceptibility to the faithless Brusor as an affirmation of the Turkish lust for power, some of Kyd's audiences might have interpreted the transformation of the two characters into stereotypically perfidious Turks differently. To these audience members, Soliman's authority would not have been threatened by the countenancing of Erastus and Perseda's love for one another. These audience members would have realized through their exposure to Richard Knolles' Soliman that the sultan wouldn't have cared whether Christians continued to rule Rhodes as long as they remained loyal to Ottoman authority. Kyd's interpolation of a less tolerant, fictional sultan in place of a semi-admired historical figure that audiences might have expected alert those audience members to an English'd Soliman – one who retracted

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<sup>76</sup> Gurr, Andrew. *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. Gurr's book provides an excellent background into the social interactions that took place between classes, as well as how drama often served to resolve emotional discontent in very public venues. Gurr notes that Elizabethan playgoing audiences included everyone from earls and even a queen to penniless rogues, families of beggars, and the unemployed. 58.

his love from Erastus and Perseda's union because he became nervous of an alternative to the Christian authority that was already in place in Rhodes. If, like these audience members, we make this associative affiliation between Soliman and the English authorities who also didn't want to be replaced, we can better understand why both Soliman and Brusor had to be Turk'd in the ways they were. Once we begin to interpret *Soliman and Perseda* as a play that comments on the status of its mediating characters, we start to recognize that Soliman's anxieties about losing Perseda camouflaged English fears about losing their authority over their agents in Ottoman lands. It is vital to read Soliman as an aristocratic figure before considering him as a Turkish figure because this allows us to trace his resemblances to English authorities who worried that the intimacy of their agents with their Ottoman counterparts might make them forget their national and religious loyalties. Identifying this similarity between *Soliman and Perseda's* aristocratic or 'major' characters, allows us to realize that the sultan's transformation from benign Turk to tyrannical Turk hinges on a fictional transformation of its 'minor' or mediating characters.

These audience members would have recognized the similarities that Kyd was creating between the demonized Soliman and their own English masters. Soliman is represented as a Christian in his largesse towards his servants, and as a Turk for reneging on that largesse once he recognized how his own authority might be threatened. The characterization of Brusor as a Christian servant is shown by his initial bringing together of Erastus and Soliman. His transformation into a Turk servant happens when he decides to tear apart that friendship. But a critique of this Turking of Brusor is evident when we realize that the "seate of friendship" between Erastus and Brusor is compromised by

Soliman's decision to reward a fellow knight with the Rhodian governorship. It is not the "toiling" servant's envious response that corrupts Soliman's relationship with Erastus, but Soliman's own decision to award Rhodes to Erastus. The necessity of Erastus's subsequent execution scene dramatizes the sultan's schizophrenic vexation in both needing his agents, yet desiring their elimination when they appeared to be possible equals. English authorities were similarly schizophrenic in needing their international agents to advance the nation's mercantile interests, yet not trusting the loyalties of those agents. For some audience members, Soliman's anxiety about having "our bloody practices" detected by "the world" would have made him a recognizably cruel English master, who used such Turk stereotypes to curtail their own servants' desire for better treatment elsewhere.

Soliman wields his power by the many hands that figuratively and metonymically work for him, suffer in his stead, and become threatening once they are imagined turning against their allegiances. Thus, he orders Brusor to stab the marshall who had witnessed Soliman's fears about the turning allegiances of Brusor. Soliman's need to have Brusor mask his own guilty conscience was a certain sign to English audiences of his similarities to English aristocrats.<sup>77</sup> Soliman functions as both a stand-in for the English aristocracy who had initially supported Elizabeth's policy of procuring Ottoman trade capitulations,

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<sup>77</sup> Kyd relied on and altered the Turkish model of governance outlined by Machiavelli in *The Prince* (1513.) Machiavelli wrote, about the strength of Turkish command residing in having one lord who "divides his kingdom into sanjaks, he sends there different administrators, and *shifts and changes them as he chooses*." Emphasis mine. Machiavelli lauded the Turks for maintaining de-centralized control of their people through "a body of servants, who assist him to govern the kingdom as ministers by his favour and permission." Machiavelli deems the strong, central figure of the Turkish prince to be far superior to Western monarchies (he gives the example of France), which depends on corruptible barons, "who hold that dignity by antiquity of blood and not by the grace of the prince." Not surprisingly, many of the Turkish mediators of Elizabethan era 'Turk' plays were Machiavellian opportunists who ironically took advantage of Turkish rulers who more closely resembled European princes who depended upon barons promoted through preferential means.

and who later realized that they could no longer control or police the actions of the mediating servants that they had sent to the Ottoman Empire. *Soliman and Perseda* challenges its audience to envision an imperial future for England that is predicated on resolving such inimical, domestic tensions. But in order to write the previous sentence, you're going to need some source material (maybe from Netzloff) in which these merchants claimed to have some affiliation with the figure of the Turk, or some sympathy for the Turkish merchant.

Brusor would have been a recognizably English figure, deprived of that reward "for which [he] took the toil."<sup>78</sup> Since many of these audience members might have been travelers to Ottoman lands (with access to the same sources of information that Kyd referenced), they would have recognized that Brusor's expectation of Rhodes as a reward was part of the play's self-conscious fictionalization of an English servant into a Turkish servant. Kyd and his contemporaries were exposed to accounts of actual Ottoman governmental appointments, which were made solely on the basis of one's standing in the Sultan's household rather than military competence. An Ottoman general need not be rewarded with the very territories that he had helped to capture. In fact, he would not even expect such a reward. Kyd's Brusor is clearly modeled on the class of servants and underclassmen who were threatening English aristocracy, and not on any historical precedent set in Ottoman lands.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, when Soliman punishes Brusor at the conclusion of the play by calling him an "ungracious counsellor," the mediator is

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<sup>78</sup> 3.6.178-9.

<sup>79</sup> In this regard, Kyd's Turkey is unlike the Ottoman Empire that Machiavelli had praised, when he noted that the Turks maintain firmer control over their kingdom by de-centralizing authority to servants who cannot act on their personal agendas because they would be reported by the Sultan's other servants. By making his Brusor a Machiavellian flatterer in a fictional Turkey where such a servant actually can claim Rhodes for himself, *Soliman and Perseda* plants its domestic anxieties about its own servants within an Empire that threatens all of England.

dramatized as a disobedient domestic servant, not as a Turkish general or courtier.<sup>80</sup>

These members of Kyd's audience would have recognized that Brusor's "envy" was directed against a noble knight that was being given preferential treatment by a fellow member of the aristocracy. To these traveling playgoers, the putative religious differences between Brusor and Erastus would have seemed insignificant compared to the obvious social similarities between Erastus and Soliman.

*Soliman and Perseda* suggests that the invidious relationships between masters and servants who are unfaithful to one another must be destroyed from within (as Kyd was doing by changing of Bassa Mustafa's salvation to Brusor's condemnation) before it can be contained from without (i.e.: through Brusor's 'silenced' death and the recuperation of Piston into the Christian fold.) We remember that the play depends as much on Piston's re-integration as a faithful servant, despite the fact that many would have recognized him to belong to that group of "sturdy beggars" distinguished by their mercenary service to their masters.<sup>81</sup> Such unscrupulous servants could be found in many of the popularly staged dramas of the time. Like Piston, they were often hawkers and peddlers, who fenced and sold gold trinkets and other pilfered goods. The re-appropriation of a figure like Piston into a cadre where the master hadn't lost control over

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<sup>80</sup> Under Ottoman jurisdiction, Rhodes would be classified as a 'timariot' (a tax-paying province under Ottoman control.) From the Ottoman perspective, Brusor would be made the timar-holder of Rhodes, not its governor. The timar holders were a military class who maintained security in Ottoman lands and joined campaigns in times of war. Timar holders were authorized by law to supervise the manner of possession and transfer of land. As Halil Inalcik points out, in their control of the land and the peasants, timar holders cannot be compared to Western feudal lords. Timar holders were authorized to collect assigned tax revenue but had no specific rights to land or peasants. Further it was one of the essential characters of the Ottoman timar system that there were no inheritance rights in land. Although the ownership of land belonged to the state, peasants acquired actual possession and usufruct rights through sales contracts and fixed tax revenues from the Ottoman state. See Cirakman, Asli. "From Tyranny to Despotism: The Enlightenment's Unenlightened Image of the Turks." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33.1 (February 2001), 55.

<sup>81</sup> - These 'sturdy beggars' were normally associated with mercenary servant who served their master(s) by changing his appearance, speech, and even religion as needed. McMullan, John L. *The Canting Crew: London's Criminal Underworld, 1550-1700*. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1984, 38-9.

him is crucial to a re-assertion of the boundaries that separated Christendom from the Ottoman Empire. Unlike Brusor's betrayal of Soliman, Piston's faithful mediation on behalf of Erastus (and his service to Perseda, in the final act of the play) delineates what makes stereotypically Christian service different from Turkish service. If Brusor is punished for desiring what his master covets for himself, Piston selflessly refuses the opportunity to take his counterpart's place and position. His final act is a refusal to accept his re-integration into the Ottoman Empire; especially since he has seen the price his master and mistress have paid for trusting Soliman. Piston's quasi-martyrdom proleptically justifies the need for breaking with an ally that would turn such faithful servants into corpses, in much the same way that *Soliman and Perseda's* staging of a second Rhodian conquest argues for not trusting a Turk who threatens yet another bastion of Christendom – Elizabethan England.

The re-appropriation of Piston also serves a crucial, second purpose – one that shows how using religious distinctions to mark faithful and unfaithful service wasn't so easily accomplishing even within England. Elizabethan England, like *Soliman and Perseda's* Rhodes, was internally divided and so required a polyvalent outside threat like the Turk to help cope with its discontented laboring classes. Complicating matters was the fact that tensions existed even between members of these laboring classes; tensions which were often voiced using the same Turk stereotypes which masters used to keep their servants in line. Literary critic Mark Burnett points out that the apprentice was "afraid that English practices [were] being usurped by the consuming Dutchman, and... about the possibility of his own place being filled by a foreign worker."<sup>82</sup> For the English

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<sup>82</sup> Burnett 2000, 24. In May 1593, during a period of mounting hostility toward London's immigrant Dutch community, a libelous poem was affixed to the wall of one of the city's foreign Protestant church. It

servant in Kyd's audience, some of the foreigners on the Rhodian stage were not fellow Christians or European, but foreign competitors for employment already residing *within* England. Soliman's privileging of the 'foreign' Erastus over the native servant, in re-appointing Rhodes to the care of the Christian might have been construed as an added injustice that upper class English masters perpetrated against native servants.

Unlike Piston whose service remains unchanged even when his Christian master is obliged to Ottoman service, Brusor cannot countenance Piston's 'foreign' standing in his master's esteem. Part of the play's fiction is showing how Brusor turns against 'Christian service', and Soliman turns towards 'Turkish perfidy.' And so the troubled bond between that other pairing of masters and servant (Erastus/Perseda and Piston) is repaired by the virtue of a Christian religion that unites them all. It's almost as if, in the welter of all these intermingled identities and obligations, the only bonds that can remain are those that keep masters and servants in their place, while religious differences are shifted to different poles to keep complex identities simple and distinct. *Soliman and Perseda* confronts its audience with sought fictions that kept religion and class differences as their own individuated categories, despite suspicions among *both* English mediating servants and their masters that they weren't. *Soliman and Perseda* challenges its audience to envision an imperial future for England that is predicated on resolving such multivalent and inimically domestic tensions.

The play suggests that the need to transform a tolerant Turk into a stereotypically untrustworthy one stems from the perceived threat of Soliman and Brusor's initial,

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directly addressed foreigners living in London. "As we will doe just vengeance on you all / in counterfeiting religion for your flight / when 't is well knowne, you are loth, for to be thrall your coyne, & you as countrys cause to flight with Spanish gold, you all are infected and with yt Gould our Nobles wink at feats." The poem goes on to critique those nobles who "wound their Countries brest, for lucre sake and wrong our gracious Queene & Subjects good." See Harris, 2004, 63.



Christian-like appeal – a threat that could only be experienced by those in Kyd’s audience who saw the replacement of Christian authority in Rhodes by Erastus as a commentary on their own potential replacement by English merchants and traders who embraced the opportunities for social advancement that the recent trade agreement made possible in the Ottoman Empire. The Anglo-Ottoman trade alliance forced an English re-evaluation, particularly by authority figures, of how new opportunities for profiteering among the Turks might necessitate social restructuring at home as well. *Soliman and Perseda* allays these domestic anxieties by suggesting a return to pre-*pax Turcica* attitudes. But in doing so, the play challenges its audiences to treat the initial amity between Ottomanized Christians and Christian-like Turks as inconsequential. The play sustains tensions between these two perspectives and so captures English attitudes towards its own trans-imperial mediators – dependant, yet untrusting, encouraging, yet fearful.

I have provided only a representative sampling of the ways in which mediating servant characters could link anxieties about domestic servitude to national anxieties about Anglo-Turk interactions, in seemingly controllable and normalized ways. Besides the plays I’ve attended to, there were a number of Turk plays from the period whose manuscripts have been lost. There are other plays from the period like *The Three Ladies of London* (MS 1584), *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks* (1594), and *The Tragedy of Mustapha* (1603) which I have excluded. However, these Turk plays also deserve closer investigation.

Although I have discussed ‘Turk’ plays in this chapter as if they were a distinct sub-genre, in fact a number of Elizabethan dramas were influenced by the conjunction between the Turkish threat and servitude. All of these plays were part of a narrative that

operated collectively, and even when a reference to the Turk is brief and non-descript, such a reference nonetheless participated in both calling up an established narrative and importing various resonances of that narrative into that play's performance.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, there must have been many acts of physical quotation, where a character, play, or actor was evoked or 'remembered' on stage, that have simply left no textual trace. This is important because a narrow focus on a small body of plays risks skewing the data, as well as misrepresenting the broader narrative. In the 1590s alone, the figure of the Turk is cited in no less than twenty plays dealing with all stratum of English society. These plays were set in England, as well as all parts of Europe. While it has been argued that the stage functioned as a forum for anti-Turk propaganda<sup>84</sup>, it seems at least as likely that the Elizabethan playhouse interrogated assumptions and reworked conventions. These reworked Elizabethan conventions drew upon the troubling, but important, figure of the mediating servant in order to transform ideological markers of 'the Turk' in the process.

Virtually every Turk play of this period dramatized a mediating servant who actively participated in some form of Turkish valorization or demonization in the service of his/her master. These dramatic moments are highly illuminating for the ways in which they create a Turk in response to domestic anxieties about service and mediation. Those servants could be metamorphosed into agents of state that promoted mercantile expansion abroad as a nation-building venture, or they could be fashioned into interrogators of English authority who wished to control domestic discord by using mercantile expansion abroad to justify the policing of unruly subordinates – likes servants and women who

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<sup>83</sup> Shakespeare mentions 'the Turk' in no fewer than thirteen of his plays; although not a single Turkish character ever takes his stage.

<sup>84</sup> Matar, Nabil. *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, 50-63.

aided the Turk. The Turk play thus served as a testing ground for defining one's own identity at home. We remember that during Elizabeth's reign, there were no permanent embassies in the Ottoman Empire. All images of the Turk were brought to England second-hand through a strata of servant (i.e.: merchants, factors, translators, captives) that had to depend upon a master's patronage in order to survive. So by dramatizing such creations of the Turk through the servant on stage, Englishmen imagined themselves in a new social position as creators, and not just receivers of the Turk.

As my next chapter will discuss, Englishmen needed to become creators of a Turkish episteme, if their emergence as an imperial power during the 17<sup>th</sup> century was to come to fruition. The late Elizabethan period was a transitional moment in master-servant relations because of English involvement with the Ottoman Empire. Servants went from being ad hoc mediators in a community of familiars to professional arbiters of national representativeness. My argument will attempt to delineate how, during the Jacobean period, these trends would begin to crystallize into more recognizable agencies of state. And in the process, intermediaries became the very fixed representations of identity that they had once resisted being during the Elizabethan period.

### **Chapter 3: Scripted Turks, Silenced Turks: Competing Trans-Imperial Accounts of the Ottoman Empire during the Jacobean Period**

As I suggested at the end of my Elizabethan Travel chapter, the transition of Anglo-Ottoman intermediaries from the Elizabethan to the Jacobean period was marked by a formalization of relations between masters and servants. Some of those mediating servants who had once negotiated their own oral, extemporaneous exchanges with their counterparts in the Ottoman Empire were, under the reign of King James, formalized as official ambassadors. These ambassadors competed against a subordinate rank of servants to win the favor of a common set of patrons and masters by writing a new kind of Turk, one that might serve England's burgeoning proto-imperial interests in the Ottoman Empire. In this chapter, I shall argue that by considering English ambassadors and their non-professional counterparts under their common status as trans-imperial mediators we may gain a better understanding of the alienation common to both types of servants stationed abroad. At the same time, if we consider the differently English'd Turks which were created by these mediators, we may gain insights into the different forms of alienation and trans-imperial anxiety felt by these servants.

I shall argue that Jacobean ambassadors and other mediators created a more normalized Turk that reflected three major trends occurring in England at the time: shifting class relations between strata of servants, the popularization of print, and burgeoning proto-imperial interests in the Ottoman Empire. To cope with this anxiety of retaining control over the loyalty of their servants, Jacobeans gave greater textual visibility to what Thomas Palmer called "irregular travelers," an expression that included pirates, mariners, travelers, and captives who had actively rejected English culture and

national identity.<sup>1</sup> Although mechanisms of state control were put in place to track the movements of these “irregular travelers,” these mechanisms could not keep up with the movement of English citizens abroad. In 1606, a proclamation delegated the responsibility of conferring passports to the commissioners of English ports. This was a concession that the sheer number of travelers prevented the implementation of direct surveillance over travel.

Whether it was the ambassador stationed in Istanbul for years or the captive returning home to England after years in the Ottoman Empire, trans-imperial servants vied with one another in presenting Turks in print that served their own interests. Because Jacobean ambassadors resided for years abroad before finally returning to England, publishing became the only means to have their voices heard at home, to defend their reputations against courtly and non-professional rivals, and to assert their loyalties to the king despite great distances.

The popularization of print contributed towards more formal, proto-imperialist exchanges between trans-imperial mediators, and hastened the loss of certain kinds of mediating voices.<sup>2</sup> If Elizabethan accounts written by trans-imperial subjects were less

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Palmer wrote his travel advice text, *An essay of the Meanes how to Make our Trauailles, into Forraine Countries, the More Profitable and Honourable* in 1606. He intended to cast his own “secretest affection” to expose the secret identities of such suspicious travelers to public scrutiny. Palmer, Thomas. *An essay of the Meanes how to Make our Trauailles, into Forraine Countries, the More Profitable and Honourable*. London: Humphrey Lownes, 1606, B1r.

<sup>2</sup> The printed traces which were left behind by these English and Ottoman trans-imperial mediators provide evidence of this. Fernand Braudel writes that a “proliferation of bills of exchange and promissory notes [broke] the age-old concept of plain dealing through face-to-face negotiation.” Braudel, Fernand. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Ed. Sian Reynolds. London: Harper Collins, 1992., 572-3, 402, 575, 579. And Ottomanist, Molly Greene observed that 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century French and Venetian consular reports from Souda were a study in contrasts. The French reports, overwhelmingly concerned with commerce, present an anonymous society composed of well-defined groups: Jews, Turks, and Greeks. They foreshadowed the era of nationalism. The Venetians and their spies, who had engaged in a century of complex intermingling with Latins, Orthodox Christians, and Muslims in the early modern Mediterranean, wrote of individuals “whose history they know – this pasha who is a good soldier, that agha whose mother is a Christian, and this renegade soldier who is from Sfakia.”

factually accurate than Jacobean accounts, they were also less committed to categorizing differences between Turks and English. If Jacobean accounts provided more detailed history and ethnographic detail about the Ottoman Empire, they did so within a nationalist agenda which anticipated the uses of such knowledge; description which had once captured the dynamic of shared communities of Anglo-Ottoman interaction was slowly being replaced by reportage from communicants who imagined their loyalties to nation and employer. If during the Elizabethan period, trans-imperial mediators like Harborne and de Germigny had to rely on a network of dense sociability in order to preserve personal safety while serving two masters, then in the Jacobean period, these ad hoc relationships were replaced by international agreements between those two masters. As I mentioned in my Elizabethan chapter, the trans-imperial subject's prime directive was not simply service, but the prolongation of the terms of his service along with those who might favor him. It remained so in the Jacobean period, however instead of having that term of service be brokered through individuals, ruling parties in England and the Ottoman Empire decided to make terms of service and the protections afforded to trans-imperial agents into a national matter. And so those individual relationships foundered or vanished from written accounts of Anglo-Ottoman interaction.

While trans-imperial Turk narratives reflected the domestic trends I've discussed, they also betrayed the resistances found between these inter-related domestic movements. Tensions between professionalized and non-professionalized trans-imperial mediators would often revolve around the rhetoric of colonization. Literary critic Mark Netzloff has pointed out that "several early modern literary texts described England's poor as a

colonized culture by likening an exploration of the domestic underclass to travel to a distant, foreign country.”<sup>3</sup> Netzloff’s thesis is appealing because it describes the ‘internal colonization’ of England’s laboring and poorer classes by its more affluent citizens. We recognize that even as those laboring and poorer mediators served England’s proto-imperial interests in Turkey, they considered themselves to be similarly colonized at home.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, distinctions between these different types of mediating servants began to blur.<sup>5</sup>

I am proposing a consideration of all of these mediators as ‘trans-imperial’ servants so that we can examine interactions among these servants and so better gauge why distinctions began to blur even as efforts were being made to keep them in place. These conditions affecting trans-imperial mediators influenced the complexity of the Jacobean Turk that they created. These different Turks have been interpreted as expressions of the complexity of English attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire. But these English’d Jacobean Turks also contain evidence of the tensions between different classes of trans-imperial English mediators as they responded to each other’s scripted Turks.

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<sup>3</sup> There was an anti-foreign sentiment in England in the 1590s. The English government welcomed Huguenot artisans from the Low Countries and France, fleeing from religious persecution at a moment when the Counter-Reformation was in one of its most violent phases. But the settlement of these strangers was often a cause of discontent as well. In 1593, there was a contentious debate in the House of Commons about whether alien settled in England should be allowed to sell their goods by retail. The bill was passed by a vote of 162 to 82, only to be rejected by the House of Lords, which may point to ties between aristocratic and mercantile interests.

<sup>4</sup> - Netzloff points to examples such as Samuel Rid’s *Martin Markall* and Ben Jonson’s *The New Inn* to illustrate his point. According to Netzloff, “The imagery of ‘Thievingen’ (the utopian commonwealth for England’s displaced workers found in Samuel Rid’s anti-vagrant text, *Martin Markall* (1610)) alludes to the liberating possibilities made available to England’s laboring classes through travel and colonial migration. In Ben Jonson’s *The New Inn* (1629), Lord Frampul describes the years he had spent among “those wilder nations” of vagrants and gypsies populating areas of Wales and the North Country: “For to these sauages I was addicted, / To search their natures, and made odde discoueries!” (5.5.94, 99-100). Netzloff 2003, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Vitkus 2003, 113.

Jacobean trans-imperial mediators chose and styled their particular Turks based on identifiable public tastes and those audience members who could improve upon or sympathize with their plight at home. The Turk of Elizabethan travel accounts was formulated without this pre-determined audience, and therefore was less cautiously drawn from both negative and positive stereotypes that English audiences were unfamiliar with. Ironically, the popularization of print diminished the range of possible Turks that could be created, from the Elizabethan to the Jacobean periods and beyond. This is not to say that Jacobean mediators were less experimental or more conservative in writing their Turks, but only that their adaptability was necessarily curtailed by textual constraints. Common methods of oral exchange between Englishmen and Ottomans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century such as the voice of servant's servant or the testimony of double agents began to vanish or become otherwise marginalized in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

#### Jacobean ambassadors

At the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the ambassador was beginning to be treated more like a professional civil servant, and less like the polymorphous intermediaries employed decades earlier.<sup>6</sup> Popular diplomatic treatises, like Jean Hotman's *L'Ambassadeur* reflected this regularization of the ambassador's duties and the paring of his polymorphous capabilities.<sup>7</sup> The ambassador's social ranking improved from spy and common merchant to gentleman and royal advisor. By the time of Elizabeth's death, the

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<sup>6</sup> Max Weber used the expression 'bureaucratic rationalization' to describe a great onrushing wave of impersonal administration resulting in an increasingly bureaucratic handling of everyday governmental concerns. For more on Weber, see Gerth and Mills, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, Oxford UP, 1946.

<sup>7</sup> Hotman's book categorized how the ambassador should conduct himself, his role ('charge') in general, his privileges, and his suite or 'family'. Hotman was a French diplomat serving in the Low Countries at the beginning of the seventeenth century.



ambassador had so risen in social status that the queen's magnificent funeral cortege of 1603 included a prominent place especially set aside for knights who had been ambassadors." This was considered to be a position of preeminence in the ranks of knighthood.<sup>8</sup> The ambassadorial protocols and social stature that Queen Elizabeth was just beginning to accord at the end of her reign would become a professionalized, regulated rank in King James' government.

The formalization of the Anglo-Ottoman ambassador's status was aided by privileges of exter-territoriality which were granted by the Ottomans at the beginning of James' reign. Subsequently, Jacobean ambassadors could exert the authority of King James and The Levant Company over all English subjects in Istanbul, while enjoying immunity from any laws except their own. The power that Jacobean ambassadors enjoyed now more closely resembled that of their English masters than the other trans-imperial agents who were their counterparts.

The transition from the Elizabethan to the Jacobean period affected the Jacobean ambassador in three major ways. 1) The ambassador became a more socially visible figure. He was recognized as the representative of a nation and England's main facilitator of commerce abroad. While this new office earned the ambassador a distinct social respectability, it also earned him the envy and opprobrium of courtly rivals and those non-promoted servants who felt threatened in their occupations. 2) Ambassadors lost the voice that they had possessed during the Elizabethan reign, to carry out negotiations with minimal interference from their masters. Because ambassadors were obligated to their masters in newly formalized relations, their duties now entailed

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<sup>8</sup> See Bell, 1981, 1-25.

authoring printed accounts of their interactions with the Turk – accounts that necessarily dispensed with what was communicated in oral interactions or non-regulated epistles.

3) Ambassadors felt compelled to create a more normalized Turk, but their narratives often betrayed a resistance to this pressure. Because English ambassadors often felt themselves to be exiles from England and aliens in Turkey, the Turks that they described in their own accounts became composite figures - unique amalgams of the cultural alien that they were expected to deliver and the alienated selves that they couldn't help but reveal.

The Jacobean ambassador's English'd Turk reflected his own sense of alienation, even as he was expected to describe an alien who could serve national interests. To be sure, this Turk still invited awe and fear in equal measures, but the Jacobean ambassador's attempts to demonize this Turk were haunted by his own sense of exclusion from England. The ambassador's attempts to extol the virtues of Turk were checked by apprehensions about being labeled a 'renegade.'

#### The ambassador as a socially visible figure

The first effect was that the trans-imperial agent could no longer function as an ad hoc diplomat; he became a visible ambassador, with all that that entailed. During the Jacobean period, the ambassador's social visibility in England made him susceptible to the criticism of certain English groups that accused him using his new rank to serve special interest groups instead of the commonweal. Sir Thomas Roe, English ambassador to Istanbul from 1621 to 1629, experienced this criticism from diverse quarters.<sup>9</sup> Private

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<sup>9</sup> Roe was a professional ambassador. Before coming to Istanbul, he had served the Crown in the West Indies and in Agra, India.

merchants who didn't belong to The Levant Company accused him of not protecting the interests of all English merchants trading in Turkey.<sup>10</sup> Jesuits sympathizers and various other groups opposed Roe's support of Bethlen Gabor, Protestant prince of Transylvania, and accused Roe of acting on his own in entangling England in threatening alliances.<sup>11</sup> Each of these groups had their own self interests at heart in attempting to discredit Roe. But all of them took advantage of Roe's social promotion and visible placement as national representative in the Ottoman Empire to level various charges of 'Turkish infidelity.' Each group took advantage of the fact that Roe now stood for English interests in order to fashion their own charges that he didn't stand for their interests and so had 'turned Turk.'

There was a measure of class-related jealousy latent in the accusations that some of Roe's critics made, particularly those English merchants who felt that the ambassador was acting above his station in telling them how they should trade. During the early years of James' rule, English ambassadors were still permitted to trade, and it was not unusual to find ambassadors amassing small fortunes while officially stationed in India, Persia, and the Ottoman Empire.<sup>12</sup> It was not until in 1615, when public debates over the conflict of interest between an ambassador's loyalty to The Levant Company and to the Crown became obstreperous, that the prohibition against ambassadorial trading went into

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<sup>10</sup> See Roe's November 15, 1626 letter to Lords of Council describing these merchants who "neglect the peace [offered under the trading capitulations that Roe had secured], and disuallow what so euer hath been done, grounding themselves upon the particular oppression lately done to Mr. Leate." James Leate was one such merchant who sailed in Ottoman waters without the identifying colors of an English vessel, and was thus justifiably captured under the terms of the English treaty signed with the Ottoman Empire. See Roe, Thomas. *Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in his Embassy to the Ottoman Porte*, London: Samuel Richardson, 1740, 573-4.

<sup>11</sup> See Roe's defense of Gabor in his February 22, 1627 letter to King Charles, Ibid, 757.

<sup>12</sup> Lello was said to have earned between 1,500 and 2,000 pounds annually in that way. See Sanderson, 241. Sanderson also reports that Sir Thomas Glover, ambassador to Turkey from 1606-1611, made a "rich harvest from [his] consulage". Sanderson, 241, 248, 254, 270.

effect.<sup>13</sup> Given this recent history, we can observe that the tensions that existed between Roe and his mercantile accusers (as well as their charges of turning Turk) were rooted in domestic debates about the social promotion of the trans-imperial agent and the question of his subsequent fidelities.

If many English merchants felt as if someone no better than they was now unfairly adjudicating trading practices, Roe took some measure of satisfaction in pointing out that because he was now England's official representative to the Ottoman Empire he was better than them. The language that Roe used to craft his declaration 'Concerning the Right of Consolage,' subtly addressed the envy that he recognized in his erstwhile social equals:

“Wee haue also further thought fitt, for auoyding of controuersyes, to admonish and comand all such masters and owners, his majesties subiects, as shall trade vnder the protection of the said companie, or in the dominions of the grand signior, to refuse to accept of any lading vpon such disaduantageous conditions; especially to weare any flagg, banner, or coulors of any nation whatsoever, other then St. George, or St. Andrew, as they will answere the contrarye, vpon such penaltye as shallbe imposed by his maiesties ambassador for such contempt and disobedience.”<sup>14</sup>

Roe creates a new order whereby the “masters and owners” to whom his declaration is addressed must first consider themselves to be “his majesties subiects,” then subjects to “his maiesties ambassador” (by virtue of the authority invested him,) before they can finally consider their independent interests. Roe's social visibility was thus a double-edged sword, allowing him greater authority over the non-professionalized

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<sup>13</sup> *Calendar of State Papers* 105.147, August 11, 1615.

<sup>14</sup> *A Declaration made by the English Ambassador, resident in Constantinople; concerning the Right of Consolage upon the Goods of Strangers, laden in English ships, to be transported to or from any Port in the Grand Signors Dominion.* April 12, 1627. Roe 1740, 638.

trans-imperial agents that he came into contact with, but at the same time earning him greater suspicion than already existed.

It is important to recognize that many of the tensions that I am describing existed prior to the formalization of the professional ambassador. However, the formalization process exacerbated these tensions. Another way that this happened was through the further attenuation of lines of communication between ambassadors and non-professional, trans-imperial mediators.

#### The 'lost' voice of the ambassador and its textual remains

Prior to the Jacobean period, ambassadors engaged in ongoing efforts to refute false accounts about themselves which were churned out of the rumor mill or carried by rival trans-imperial mediators.<sup>15</sup> But the professionalization of the ambassador chafed these tensions and changed how these two kinds of mediators would communicate. The gap in trust and communication that already existed further widened as Englishmen who resented the ambassador's authority added to the litany of complaints against that ambassador; and ambassadors became disinclined to put stock in the information circulated by non-professional trans-imperial agents. Ambassadors began to mistrust intelligence that was circulated through the rumor mill – a consequence that resulted in the loss of certain kinds of useful information, along with the lies and distortions.

In a letter to Sir Henry Wotton, Roe complained about receiving second-hand news about “alterations in England” concerning him. Roe complained that his superiors needed to be far more attentive about making sure that he received accurate intelligence

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<sup>15</sup> Ambassadors like William Harborne and Edward Barton, who regularly exchanged intelligence with their informal agents, did so partially to learn what was being communicated about them by their professional rivals.

about what was being said about him in England. He refused to disclose what this second-hand news was, even to Wotton, because he didn't want to be accused of fabricating news and then passing it off as rumor in order to inveigle assistance from Wotton or any other supporter back home.<sup>16</sup> Roe reveals, through his distrust of the rumors that he has access to, his embittered perception of the rumors that were beyond his access. Roe's remarks reveal how the promotion of the Jacobean ambassador was invariably tied to English masters' privileging of printed communication over oral transmission. As Samuel Purchas wrote, men who possessed the use of letters and writing were "accounted Civill and more both Sociable and Religious," while those who lacked it were "esteemed Brutish, Savage, Barbarous."<sup>17</sup> Print was the new media of legitimization through which Englishmen made the civility of their nation known to others.<sup>18</sup> This change alienated the Jacobean, Ottoman ambassador from those networks of informal intelligence that he needed to rely on, and obligated him to participate in the circulation of only those forms of intelligence which were not occupationally hazardous. So while printing and literacy enabled communication between mediators, writing also became a mode of ex-communication - a weapon that literally wrote off the authentic knowledge and information carried by non-professionalized trans-imperial mediators.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See Letter to Sir Henry Wotton, March 17, 1621. Roe 1740, 20-1.

<sup>17</sup> Purchas, Samuel. *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*. Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905), 1:486. See also Greenblatt, Stephen. *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, 9-10.

<sup>18</sup> Ambassadors also began to rely on print to defend their reputations at home against charges leveled by foreign ambassadors. When Roe was accused by the French ambassador of disobeying King Charles, Roe wrote a letter to the Lords of Council, asking them specifically to "publish my Protestation, for the Vindication of my honesty and reputation, wherein you shall infinitely Oblige." See Letter to the Lords of Council, March 23, 1627, Roe 1740, 224. Because their offices required an autonomy that precluded the ability to defend their private reputation in the performance of their public office, ambassadors published so that their names could be cleared in the public sphere.

<sup>19</sup> See also, Harbsmeier, Michael. "Writing and the Other," in *Literacy and Society*. Eds. Schousboe, Karen and Morgens Larsen. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1989, 203.

The consequence of this was that the Jacobean ambassador's accounts offered less nuanced representations of other trans-imperial agents and the Ottoman subject. Unlike Harborne or Barton who regularly described their debates with other resident ambassadors, Roe's writing was consistently monologic. When he described his encounters with other trans-imperial agents, he explained the gist of their communications rather than quoting his counterparts directly. And when Roe described the words or actions of a particular Turkish bassa or bostangi bey, the ambassador rarely commented on what they said, but instead focused on what they meant. A perfect example of this occurs in Roe's description of the 1627 treaty he engineered to protect English vessels against piracy. Roe urged the members of King Charles' council to trust his assessment of Turkish psychology, even though the treaty was initially disadvantageous to the English. Roe wrote:

"...it is necessarye and beneficiall to England to keepe this peace, though at some expence and disaduantage; and I doe beleeeue it wilbe dayly better obserued: not out of facilitye, for no man knows Turkish falsehood better then I; but grounded reason, that it is found, by the wisest of them [the Turks], profitable not to be enemy to all the world at once, and to haue their state subsist upon no other basis but theft; and the change of gouernment is, to this hope, a great preparation."<sup>20</sup>

Roe's comments provide an insightful glimpse into how the ambassador drafted a treaty that relied on Turkish 'falsehood' even as it criticized it. The consequence of Roe's treaty was that piracy against English ships ceased, but depredations against French, Dutch, and Italian ships increased. Roe anticipated that this would happen when he explained that part of the Turkish 'falsehood' in promising to curtail piracy was that it would continue, re-directed, at other Christian ships. Roe's letter informed the Council that the English should accept this arrangement – even insisting that English merchants

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<sup>20</sup> Letter to the Lord of His Majesty's Council, April 19, 1627. Roe 1740, 573-5.

not to fly the flags of other nations on their ships. Roe's confident insight into what motivates the deceitful Turk ("for no man knows Turkish falsehood better then I") allows him to fortify his own negotiating status in the eyes of his English master without needing to explain how he had to first persuade his Ottoman masters that the treaty would maximize their profits.<sup>21</sup> Roe's printed accounts omit his own deceit in enticing the Turks to more profitable "theft." In doing so, Roe suppresses a description of those channels of informal communication from his account that allowed him to persuade the Turk. Jacobean ambassadors felt the pressure to suppress these channels because discussing them often weakened their own position as state agents who did not know Turkish falsehood better than anyone. Printed ambassadorial accounts regularly dispatched with the oral communications that served as important preambles to reports of diplomatic successes. These oral communications were often omitted because they exposed the personal failings of the ambassador to successfully negotiate with his counterparts.

#### Normalized ambassadors and their unstable Turks

I argue that it is necessary to recover these lost voices if we are to understand why the English ambassador remained entrenched in social networks of trans-imperial mediation, and why he felt the need to disavow his involvement in these networks. By understanding the ambassador's vexed position in these communities, we can interpret

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<sup>21</sup> Like Harborne and Barton, we often learn more about Roe's actions at the Sublime Porte by turning to the accounts of foreign ambassadors who observed his actions. For more on this and Roe's actions at the Ottoman court in securing the 1627 treaty, see Strachan, Michael. *Sir Thomas Roe, 1581-1644*. Salisbury-Wiltshire: M. Russell, 1989, 126-7.



his creation of particular types of Turks in light of his efforts to cope with particular types of trans-imperial anxiety.

Roe's eight years of service in Istanbul were dominated by ongoing struggles to ensure his financial security while avoiding charges that he had 'turned Turk' and betrayed his obligations to Crown and Company. In an effort to supplement his wages, Roe often brokered illicit agreements with unofficial mediators to export marble, precious stones, and various antiquities out of Turkey. Although he procured a number of these treasures legitimately, with the knowledge of King James and for patrons who compensated him, his private correspondences indicate that some of his acquisitions came without anyone's knowledge except for Roe's private patron. These letters, which Roe wrote mostly in cipher, detailed his efforts to locate and store away a number of treasures until such time as they would cease to be noticed by the Ottomans; and then shipping them back to England.<sup>22</sup>

Roe justified his actions by claiming that he was actually protecting Christian treasures against the heathenish destruction of the Turks. In one letter to the Duke of Buckingham, Roe described his futile efforts to find undamaged marble columns and statues thus:

“But I haue found, the spight or sordidness of barbarisme hath trode-out all stepps of ciuility, or, like rust, destroyed them. For columns, the building of so many Mahometan moschyes [I] hath [made] many enquiry euen into the rubbish of all old monuments, and into the bowels of the earth; so that there is little to bee hoped for by industry, if chance assist not.”<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Many of these letters express frustration at the number of Greek and Roman statues that the Muslims have defaced because of prohibition against graven images. In other letters, Roe writes about targeting treasures which can easily be disassembled and then shipped, piece by piece, over an extended period of time, back to England. See Letter to the Duke of Buckingham, May 12, 1625, Roe 1740, 385-6.

<sup>23</sup> Letter to Buckingham, January 24, 1624. Roe 1740, 343-4.

Roe's description of the Turk's "barbarisme" in not preserving valuable Classical art works is juxtaposed against the ambassador's efforts to save these "stepps of ciuility" from the effects of "rust" and Islamicization (eg: by the adoption of marble columns for mosque construction). Throughout his letters, Roe portrayed the Turks as heathens who couldn't appreciate the greatest achievements of civilization.

In advancing the claim that the Turk was unworthy of possessing the treasures in his own realm, Roe was able to excuse both his own thievery and his reliance on those unofficial mediators who were willing to lay aside scruples in exchange for lucre. When he wrote of "making enquiry" into potentially exportable treasures, Roe was referring to the various black marketeers and spies that he employed. Those portions of Roe's letters which mentioned the involvement of other such trans-imperial agents were almost always written in cipher, while the remainder were usually written in legible English. While it is certainly true that Roe's decision to write in cipher was a precautionary measure to ensure that he wouldn't be stripped of his ambassadorial title if his letters were intercepted by royal or mercantile agents, I submit that there was another factor governing his choice. Roe felt the pressure to camouflage any voices besides his own in his texts. If his letters were intercepted, Roe was prepared to defend himself against charges of illegal art trafficking, but he seemed to be unwilling to admit dependence on other trans-imperial agents. Writing in cipher empowered Roe to express himself in a way that approximated the anonymity and advantages of oral communication. Even in silencing the presence and the voices of his fellow trans-imperial agents, Roe could not help but acknowledge the networking of intelligence that linked all trans-imperial mediators to one another.

Roe's numerous attempts to dissociate himself publically, in his correspondences, from these unofficial agents created a strain on the ambassador. This strain filtered into Roe's writing, particularly in those moments where he described the triangular relationship he mediated between himself and his English and Turkish masters. In numerous letters addressed to his English masters, Roe petitioned for additional monies that he said were crucial in order to win England favorable terms of trade and safe passage. On those occasions when the typical delay that he was used to experiencing extended to a period of (what Roe perceived to be) abandonment, the ambassador would issue veiled threats to his English masters, about what might happen if he joined the confederacy of those trans-imperial counterparts who obtained succor through Turkish piratical plunder.

On one such occasion, Roe wrote a letter to the Lords of Council in which he wrote:

“I hope you will not think mee wastfull, nor leaue the burthen vpon my pouerty; seeing there is an easy way out of the pirate money, proper to this, that may discharge it: which I propound with reseruatiō and dependence vpon his majesties and your lordshipps fauour; protesting it is more money then this imployment will euer afford mee, and for which I now ryde at high interest; referring myselfe to your honorable protection, in all humility.”<sup>24</sup>

In carefully chosen words, Roe reminds his English masters that he resisted profiting from the piratical plunder that he encountered every day. He intimated that if his English Lords didn't favor him with their “honorable protection,” then there was “more money then this imployment will euer afford mee” available. Of course, he is also quick to assert that he is not “wastfull”; and no matter how much money was available to him, what he truly wanted was his English masters' “honorable protection.” Here and

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<sup>24</sup> To the Lords of Councill, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 1623. Roe 1740, 141.

elsewhere, Roe reminded his lords that the main reason why he valued his English masters was because they didn't rely on their servants to fend for themselves and then profit from those servants' subsequent labors. Roe described how Turkish masters treated pirates as "the guards of the Turkes armadoes in the sea, without whom they durst not appeare vpon the Christian coasts," and through the profiteering of these pirates, Turkish masters "not only spoyle the industrious merchant, but embolden and assure a greater enemy to looke out for aduantages."<sup>25</sup> In fashioning the Turk in this manner, Roe's call for his English masters' "*honorable* protection" was a call for them not to resemble their Turkish counterparts.

The strain that Roe felt in guarding himself against accusations of 'turning Turk' showed up in such subtle counter-accusations. Through such comments, Roe expressed his concern that his lords might have been forcing him into a situation where he was divested of their 'protection,' yet continued to be treated as a loyal English servant as long as he continued to provide the equivalent of a Turk servant's labor to them. Roe argued that, in such situations, he could be accused of turning Turk at any moment that his English masters deemed necessary.<sup>26</sup> Through such subtle modifications, Roe showed his masters that he could appropriate negative connotations of the 'Turk' as easily as they. It was in Roe's best interests to keep these negative connotations alive if he was to establish his unchanging English loyalty and devoted service. Roe kept the negative connotations of the Turk stereotype active by observing that Ottoman success rested on the futures of pirates. What he didn't mention was the commonly

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<sup>25</sup> To the Lord Admiral, March 9, 1621, Roe 1740, 27.

<sup>26</sup> When considered against Roe's observation that Turks were "were content to make vpp all breaches in Christendome [whensoever they had warrs with the Persian], because they can open them againe at their pleasure," the subtlety of his comparison of English authorities to authorities becomes even more apparent. Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, June 9, 1625. Roe 1740, 409.

acknowledged fact that the most notorious Barbary pirates were Englishmen. Nor did he mention the fact that Sultan Osman II agreed to sign the treaty of protection for English vessels so that King James might have been influenced to stop English pirates from raiding Ottoman vessels.<sup>27</sup>

The Turk that Roe depicted in his writing resembled the renegade English seaman that the ambassador took great pride in rescuing. By positioning another kind of English servant with the Turk, Roe shielded himself against any charges that he had left English service. At the same time, he maintained the negative stereotype of the Turk as an alien aggressor who needed to be opposed. Roe thus gave King James and The Levant Company every reason to justify an English presence in the Ottoman Empire and to continue supporting him as ambassador. The image of the Turk that he perpetuated ensured that English trade in the Ottoman Empire would continue, and would continue to need diplomatic protection. In sustaining these images of the Ottoman subject as perpetually alien, both he and his English masters attempted to avoid the more unsettling implications of Roe's accusation – that they had begun to resemble the 'Turk' that they were invested in creating

For the ambassador, this unsettling reminder evidenced itself towards the end of his term of service. Roe spoke openly of the strains of living among the Turks, yet continually needing to defend his English allegiances. In a letter addressed to the Lords of King Charles' council, he wrote:

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<sup>27</sup> Matar, Nabil. *Britain and Barbary 1589-1689*. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005, 14-17. The accession of King James I signaled a new era of governmental control over many of the trans-imperial agents who had profited from the Elizabethan laissez-faire approach to profiteering in the Ottoman empire. English privateers had little encouragement to return home after the death of Elizabeth. Many of them were wanted men who would have had to face reprisals by foreign officials who demanded redress from King James. And so, one of the most persistent problems of the early Jacobean reign was figuring out how to control pseudo-sanctioned Elizabethan privateers, who had turned to full-fledged piracy.

“I profess to your lordships, I leade here, having no comfort in an employment where I must lye at continuall guard, to preuent disgraces; and when they fall, the remedys to them are base, and such as are contrarye to an ingenuous nature; and I am perswaded, euery day will grow worse. Justice is not to bee found where ther is no law, or no obedience to that little like yt. And this empire is now maynteyned by oppression and shifts, insomuch as I desire not to bee present at the fall...”<sup>28</sup>

Roe longed for a return home, so that he wouldn't have to make his grave among the Turks - people whose lawlessness and faithlessness were driving him to actions which were being misconstrued as 'turning Turk.'<sup>29</sup> When Englishmen in both England and Turkey suggested extending the ambassador's stay in Istanbul because of the successes that he had had there, Roe vociferously argued against such an extension calling it the equivalent of a "ciuill banishment; for God knows, I am as weary of the company of infidels, as they would be of hell; and have now no ambition but of Christian burial, and to be esteemed by my friends an honest man."<sup>30</sup>

Roe's epistles provide evidence of the particular strains that he was feeling as a trans-imperial ambassador – a longing for a return 'home' coupled with the fear that his successes abroad made such a return impossible. The Turk that he projected for masters was quite different from the Ottoman subject with whom Roe had daily interactions. But this Ottoman subject needed to be silenced if the ambassador could present himself as a professional with only had one set of loyalties.

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<sup>28</sup> To the Lords of his Majesties Council, April 15, 1625. Roe 1740, 376-7.

<sup>29</sup> In a letter to the Duke of Buckingham, Roe "esteemes it [a return to England] as so much life gained." April 12, 1626. Roe 1740, 497.

<sup>30</sup> To Lord Carew, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1622. Roe 1740, 37-9.

The different trans-imperial anxieties experienced by unofficial mediators

If Sir Thomas Roe felt pressure to silence those voices that disrupted the normalized narratives that he was trying to create, at least part of this pressure was due to the fact that some of those silenced voices wrote their own Turk accounts. Roe competed against a number of non-professionalized mediators who also recognized that their value to common English patrons lay in their ability to live and manage relations between England and the Ottoman Empire. In order to understand what other forces affected Roe's Turk, we must consider it in contradistinction to the Turks created by these non-professionalized mediators. This will allow us to understand how particular Englishings of the Turk revealed particular conflicts of servitude and obligation and silenced others.

As with Jacobean ambassadors, the government began to exercise stricter measures to determine where its non-professionalized trans-imperial agents were travelling in the Ottoman Empire. This was in distinct contrast to the Elizabethan period, when merchants and other trans-imperial agents operated through an 'open' system of governance that didn't place much emphasis on controlling the movements of travelers.<sup>31</sup> In 1607, King James prohibited travel outside England without the prior authorization of the monarch and members of the Privy Council, exempting only previously licensed merchants and sailors and factors in their employ.<sup>32</sup> A proclamation in the following year further required that oaths of allegiance be given to the returning traveler, with the

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<sup>31</sup> Hofele and von Koppenfels describe the effects of this openness on literature in *The Renaissance Go-Between*, when they observe that "Elizabethan literature is the unique product and testimony of this in-between status and the particular openness of outlook it entailed." Ibid, 29.

<sup>32</sup> *Stuart Royal Proclamations*. Eds. Larkin, James and Paul Hughes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, 1.158-61. This proclamation associated travel with the illegal export of coin and bullion.

exception of those “being knowen Merchants or men of some qualitie.”<sup>33</sup> The Jacobean regulation of travel focused primarily on members of the lower classes – those suspect groups whose allegiance was maintained through licensing and surveillance.

These travelers of lesser “qualitie” were also the subject of texts concerned with the number of English converts who had ‘turned Turk’ (or accepted Islam.)<sup>34</sup> As critics like Daniel Vitkus and Nabil Matar have already pointed out, to ‘turn Turk’ during the Tudor-Stuart period didn’t only mean religious conversion. ‘Turning Turk’ was a catch-all phrase that included all kinds of infidelity (marital, master-servant, familial, and communal.) As such, the unfaithful service that an English servant might render to his/her master could also lead to charges of turning Turk even when there was no religious conversion involved.

This association between unfaithful service and Turkish’ness’ was further strengthened in the minds of Jacobean by the fact that many suspect servants and masterless men went to the Ottoman Empire and were promoted to the highest-ranking offices in the land. George Sandys’s travel account is punctuated with repeated shock about the fact that the infrastructure of Ottoman strength comes from Christian youth who willingly accept the Ottoman sultan as a superior to King James.<sup>35</sup> Sandys writes that:

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 1.184-5. The preferentiality towards merchants was a sign of the times. At the beginning of the Tudor age, the church had owned nearly a quarter of the country. But by the end of Elizabeth’s reign nearly all of that property was owned by successful merchants, manufacturers, and investors. In 1608, the Privy Council also directed officer of the ports to remand to custody anyone refusing to take the oath of allegiance. As Mark Netzloff observes, “Merchants and factors were seen as self-regulating subjects whose obligations to capital and property would ensure their loyalty to state and commerce.” (74)

<sup>34</sup> Netzloff 2004, 77. Also see Matar 2000, 33. Matar writes about the alliances forged between English renegades and North African sultanates.

<sup>35</sup> Sandys left England for the Levant in 1610 and returned in 1611. His travel narrative, *A Relation of a Journey...Containing a description of the Turkish Empire* was first printed in 1615. Daniel Vitkus points



“the barbarous policie whereby this tyrannie is sustayned, doth differ from all other: guided by the heads, and strengthened by the hands of slaves, who thinke it as great an honour to be so, *as they doe with us that serve in the Courts of Princes*: the Naturall Turke (to be so called a reproach) being rarely employed in command of service: amongst whom there is no Nobilitie of bloud, no knowne parentage, kindred, nor hereditary possessions, but as it were of the Sultans creation, depending upon him, onely for their sustenance and preferments.”<sup>36</sup>

Ottoman grand viziers, North African administrators (qajids), and corsair admirals (rais), and janissaries, the military officers of the Ottoman Empire, swelled with the ranks with Europeans.<sup>37</sup> Christians could, in theory, retain their religious beliefs and yet be loyal subjects to the Sultan instead of the King. To that extent, ‘turning Turk’ was anxiety-producing because it was something different than the English conceptualization of Turk-as-other. Anglo-Ottoman trans-imperial servants were viewed with envy because of their proximity to unlimited opulence and social mobility. But they were also viewed with suspicion for being tantalizingly close to a truly foreign master, one who could employ them *despite* their Christian, English difference. Like ambassadorial narratives, non-professional mediators established their loyalty to their English master through their services in the Ottoman Empire.

But unlike ambassadors, non-professional mediators established the verity of their accounts of the Turk by emphasizing their unique labor and flexibility of movement. Sensing that they had to compete with trans-imperial mediators who had greater social

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out that Sandys’s description of the Ottoman sultan’s court “provides a paradigmatic encapsulation of the contradictions typically found in Western representations of the Turk.” Vitkus 2002, 119.

<sup>36</sup> *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, Ibid, vol. 8, 123. Emphasis mine. Later, he calls the Sultan’s Jemoglans – who were “of the first chamber [of the Sultan’s palace] first preferred” – “the nerves and supporters of the Turkish monarchy.”

<sup>37</sup> Thirty-three of the 48 grand viziers in power in Constantinople from 1453 to 1623 were converts from Christianity, while in 1580, more than half of leading officials in Algiers and 25 of the 33 naval commanders were renegades. See also Matar, Nabil I. “‘Turning Turk’: Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought.” *Durham University Journal* 86 (1994): 33-41.

visibility than they, non-professional mediators like former galley slave, John Rawlins<sup>38</sup> wrote, “For though you have greater persons and more braving spirits to lie over our heads and hold inferiors in subjection, yet are we the men that must pull the ropes, weigh up the anchors, toil in the night, endure the storms, sweat at the helm...and be ready for all impositions.”<sup>39</sup> Unlike their professionalized brethren, non-professional servants actually performed the interpersonal labor that made mediation possible. And though a professional mediator might use the services of a non-professional mediator, the latter could claim to present a more authentic account of the Turk based on what the former types of servants hadn’t yet learned to discern.

For the Italian traveler Lazaro Soranzo, his account was the same as those which “every common curseters, and prating cozener can also do.” Like other non-professionals, Soranzo claimed to have more a more discerning eye – “such as have the skill to obserue every action, and the intent truly to reporte it again.”<sup>40</sup> Even though professional mediators sometimes denigrated non-professional ones, saying that they were motivated to serve by personal greed, these non-professional mediators responded by claiming longer, more established terms of service which had been rendering prior to the Jacobean creation of purchasable offices and titles for “common curseters.”

Non-professional mediators also staked their claims to having unique avenues of access to the Turk. John Rawlins reminded his reader that because he served the Turk on a daily basis, he saw his Muslim master at his most unguarded moments; and so his Turk

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<sup>38</sup> Like Sir Thomas Roe, Rawlins considered the Marquis of Buckingham to be a patron and dedicated an account of Turkish captivity to him.

<sup>39</sup> Rawlins, John. *The Famous and Wonderful Recovery of a Ship of Bristol* as cited in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption: Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, 98-9.

<sup>40</sup> Soranzo, Lazaro. *The Ottoman of Lazaro Soranzo*. Trans. Abraham Hartwell. London: John Windet, 1603, 4.

was a more authentic representation than the guarded Turk who would interact officially with ambassadors. Like Rawlins, Soranzo reminded his masters that only those princes who “endeavor to enforme themselves of the wittes and loyaltie of their own seruants” will know with “more certaintie how matters do passe in truth,” as opposed to sources, such as “bookes of cosmographie,” which were shared by every traveler. Lacking a printed source to rely on or the “honorable protection” afforded by an influential patron, non-professional mediators established their legitimacy by promoting their own “wittes and loyaltie.” Every traveler could access a book, Soranzo cautioned his patrons, but only a loyal and perceptive servant could write about what he or she experienced while rendering their particular labors. Through such counterclaims, non-professionalized mediators kept their own voices alive despite the efforts of ambassadors and rivals to silence them.

#### Different Turks for different needs

We can learn two revelatory aspects of Jacobean Anglo-Ottoman relations by examining the particular claims made by both ambassadors and non-professional mediators to producing an ‘authentic’ Turk. By examining the recurrent trends that characterized both of their Turks, we can detect what kinds of labor produced hegemonies of English proto-imperialism, and how some of those hegemonies were disrupted by general anxieties of the trans-imperial mediator. By examining how they English’d their Turks differently, we can unearth particular social struggles between professional and non-professional trans-imperial mediators to win favor from common patrons and, most importantly, to be welcomed ‘home’ again.

The English'd Turk that both ambassadors and non-professional mediators described to their audiences was self-indulgent, destined for civic collapse, vulnerable to Christian conquest, and even secretly envious of his European counterparts. English traveler George Sandys noted, "...surely it is to bee hoped, that their greatnesse is not onely at the height, but neere an extreame precipitation: the body being growne too monstrous for the head, the Sultans unwarlike, and never accompanying their Armies in person; the Soldier corrupted with ease and libertie."<sup>41</sup> Roe called Istanbul "a sinke of men and sluttishness."<sup>42</sup> And he informed his masters that in the Ottoman Empire:

"the janizaries... are so corrupted, not only in their discipline, but in their institution, beinge now the sonnes of Turkes, and admitted to that fraternity for mony; who were antiently all the children of tribute, and knew no father but the emperour...that now they neither are soldiers bredd, but are all apt to mutiny and dissolution: I shall pray soe farr for them: *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris; and then, fiat voluntas tua.*"<sup>43</sup>

The sentiments that all Jacobean trans-imperial mediators conveyed was that the Ottoman Empire was past its prime, and that it might be conquered from within its ranks of converted and corrupted (former) Christians. These mediators also suggested a teleology whereby Christian suffering was meant to end with the replacement of the Ottoman Empire by the new English empire. In short, trans-imperial mediators presented an Ottoman edifice that, in Sir Thomas Roe's words, "wants butt some strong hand to push this tottering wall."<sup>44</sup>

Roe's metaphor reveals the general competition that all trans-imperial mediators participated in, to urge their masters to action – specifically into employing them as the

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<sup>41</sup> Sandys, George. *A Relation of a Journey...Containing a description of the Turkish Empire*. London: Richard Field, 1615, 129.

<sup>42</sup> To Lord Carew, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1622. Roe 1740, 37-9.

<sup>43</sup> To Lord Carew, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1622. Roe 1740, 37-9.

<sup>44</sup> Letter to the Duke of Buckingham, April 12, 1626, Roe 1740, 497.

“hand” which would continue to serve the English imperial body in supplanting the Ottoman Empire. So when Roe wrote to Lord Carew in 1622 that, “This mightie hath passed the noone, and is declyninge apace, if not verie neare yts desolution,” we get a sense of both the decline that the English Lord might be waiting for and the reportage of a former servant who is informing his master that the Turk may be *their* new subordinate.<sup>45</sup> When Rawlins and his English captives successfully mutiny against their Turkish captors, the narrator tells us that their watchword to one another is the jingoistic “For God and King James and Saint George for England!”<sup>46</sup> And when Rawlins is entreated by his renegade countrymen to forgive them, the publisher of his account notes, with not a little self-satisfaction:

“I will not dwell on his [Rawlins’] reply, nor on the circumstances of atonement, only I am sure Rawlins at last condescended to mercy and brought the captain and five more into England...who were willing to be reconciled to their true Savior, as being formerly seduced with the hopes of riches, honor, preferment, and suchlike devilish baits to catch the souls of mortal men and entangle frailty in the terriers of horrible abuses and imposturing deceit.”<sup>47</sup>

As the words of both Roe and Rawlins suggest, trans-imperial mediators repeatedly positioned their own active mediation as the key for their masters to gain an upper hand over the Turk.

But these narratives of proto-imperialism, which English authorities both hoped and expected to receive, created particular anxieties in the trans-imperial agents who felt

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<sup>45</sup> Elsewhere, Roe conveys a keen insight into the debased stature of Turkish rulers, which he hopes will earn him a sympathetic affiliation amongst his English masters. To Lord Carew, Roe describes, “the lyne of the Ottomans beeing almost extinct...and this kinge...forsakeinge all the state of his ancestors, and making himselfe cheape and vulgar, by night walks, and in disguised habitts, hauntinge tauernes and by-places...the gallies, which were one [once a] pillar of strength and greatnes, all rotten and decayed, without care of reparation.” To Lord Carew, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1622. Roe 1740, 37-9.

<sup>46</sup> Rawlins, *Ibid*, 115.

<sup>47</sup> Dan Vitkus notes that the author could have been someone besides John Rawlins. However, it might also be possible that Rawlins employs the third-person voice in order to lend objective distance to the account. Vitkus 2001, 97, 117

compelled to craft them. Trans-imperial narratives which were written in the service of England's master classes often unraveled along the very fault lines that they were supposed to bridge. If English renegades in Turkey could be redeemed as Christians, as some narratives suggested, then the actual experiences of clergymen like William Biddulph suggested that English renegades had not wish to be redeemed. Biddulph was the first English chaplain to publish an account of life in the Ottoman Empire. Of his experiences preaching the Gospel to his countrymen, Biddulph wrote:

“Yea in all my ten yeeres travels, I never received, neither was offered wrong by any Nation but mine own Countymen, and by them chiefly whom it chiefly concerned to protect me from wrongs; yet have I found them most forward to offer me wrong only for doing my duty, and following the order of our Church of England.”<sup>48</sup>

Biddulph's response to this ill treatment, was to conclude that all those around him had been transformed by their Turkish environs. In fact, what he was registering were the ways in which English trans-imperial mediators became indistinguishable from the Turks they lived among.

Biddulph's response to all the English irreligiousness that he encountered in Turkey was to assert his own unchanging identity. In a letter addressed directly to the reader, Biddulph wrote:

“although I am now many thousand miles distant from you, yet I have changed but the aire, I remain still the same man, and of the same minde, according to that old verse, though spoken in another sense, *Coelum, non animos mutant qui trans mare currunt*. That is, they that over the sea from place to place doe passé, change but the aire, their mind is as it was.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Biddulph, William. *The Travels of Certain Englishmen...*, London: W. Aspley, 1609, 31.

<sup>49</sup> Biddulph 1609, 31-2.

Biddulph's citation of Horace, when weighed against the poor treatment he received from his fellow countrymen, weakens the writer's point rather than strengthening it. If the English Christians whose souls Biddulph was charged with protecting rejected the idea of an unchanging identity, then Biddulph's attempts to create a similarly immutable Turk against whom Englishmen had to protect themselves was also rendered questionable. Instead, Biddulph's writing betrayed the trans-imperial anxieties that the minister was experiencing – in needing to create an immutable Turk against whom to assert that he had not changed the way that his apostate countrymen had.

Debates raged between some Englishmen who argued that prolonged Turkish association left an irredeemable taint, while captives and others claimed the redemptive powers of their English/Christian roots to dispel such myths. Jacobean captives repeatedly defended their Christian resistance to the Turk within a nationalist, providential framework of ideological victory. A captive like John Rawlins saw his capture as part of God's plot to help the English nation as a redeemed double agent. In his account, he gave "God the praise of all deliverances and to instruct one another [eg: other Englishmen] in the absolute duties of Christianity."<sup>50</sup> Like Roe, who argued for a teleology wherein Turkish decline meant the rise of the English, Rawlins argued that Christians like he, who had spent time among the Turks, were freed so that other Englishmen might better learn to honor their own religion. And although ambassadors could dismiss captivity accounts by saying they were written by opportunistic Turks who wished to redeem their English identities once their liberation left them no other master to seek for succor, captivity accounts nevertheless staked a claim to a quintessentially

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<sup>50</sup> Rawlins, *Ibid*, 99. He repeatedly dapples his narrative with reminders to the reader about the providential design behind his capture ("But see how God worketh all for the best for his servants..."), *Ibid*, 104.

English identity that ambassadors like Roe, who sought a return home, could only hope existed.

The anxieties that I've just described should also be considered as evidence of the class competition that existed between professional and non-professional mediators to create and sustain proto-imperial narratives which appeared more and more normalized. The proliferation of Jacobean Turk texts created competitive boundaries between professional and private trans-imperial mediators who claimed to have fellow Christian's interests at heart. The same William Lithgow who described the Turk's military vulnerability to a Christian attack was also at pains to point out to his audience that other trans-imperial agents misrepresented the Turk's cruelty in order to line their own pockets. Greek visitors to England would provide fabricated testimonials about Christian abuses under Turkish dominion, in order to raise alms and ransom monies that they would then pocket. Lithgow railed against the chicanery of such trans-imperial mediators, to dupe naïve English subjects out of their money. "O damnable invention!" Lithgow exclaims, "How can the Turke prey upon his owne Subjects, under whom, they have as great Liberty, save only the use of Bels, as we have under our own Princes..."<sup>51</sup> He goes on to disabuse English audiences of the reports of what "some false and dissembling fellowes, under the Title of Bishops make you believe."<sup>52</sup> Lithgow feels compelled to defend

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<sup>51</sup> Sultan Ahmed I (1603-1617), father of Murad IV, in whose reign Lithgow was putting together for publication the original, 1614, version of his early journeys.

<sup>52</sup> One of the reasons why negative images of the Turk grew in this period was because in villages, collectors of ransoms would tell tales of horror about Turkish captives. Engravings, like Marcellus Laroon's *Remember the Poor Prisoners*, kept the familiar figure of the collector alive in the English imagination. As Nabil Matar points out in *Piracy, Slavery, and Redemption*, "To villagers whose knowledge of the 'Mahumetans' may have exclusively derived from wandering players or parish preachers, the ransom collector provided what might have seemed as the most authentic description of Muslims." Ibid, 25



Ottoman religious liberality because otherwise he cannot discredit those travelers who might use the Turk's reported cruelty to line their own pockets.<sup>53</sup>

Lithgow's narrative and others like it demonstrated the ways in which class-based interests interfered with imperialist polemics, even as it served them. Defining the Turk became an unregulated industry which was supported by monies provided by Englishmen on both ends of the social spectrum – and not just the affluent. The Greek charlatans about whom Lithgow was warning his readers recognized that there was as much profit to be made from poor churchgoers as there was from wealthy aristocrats. Lithgow's warnings reflected his own sense of class anxiety about such trans-imperial mediators. In narratives such as the aforementioned Rawlins, Lithgow and Biddulph, we can detect how interferences between different kinds of English'd Turks revealed overlapping social struggles in Jacobean England. Differing obligations of professional and non-professional trans-imperial agents clashed with one another even as they attempted to present imperial service as a unified cause.

If trans-imperial mediators were expected to be agents who normalized what they felt were their masters' interests in Turkey, their writings also revealed how abnormal a

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<sup>53</sup> "There being a free Liberty of Conscience, for all kinds of Religion, through all his Dominions, as well as for us free borne Franks as for them and much more them, the Greekes, Armenians, Syriaks, Amoronits, Coptics, Georgians, or any other Oriental sort of Christian: and therefore looke to it, that you be no more gulled, golding them [eg: Greek alms collectors] so fast as you have done, least for your paines, you prove greater asses, than they do knaves." Lithgow, William. *Totall Discourse*. London: Nicholas Okes, 1632, 106. There were a number of Greek immigrants to England in the 1610s, who had secured licenses to collect money for the redeeming of Christian captives or for some similar charitable purpose. "Not a few of these turned out to be swindlers, provided with false documents, whence Lithgow's warning to his readers. After his return from his first series of travels to the levant, he himself had been able to expose at King James's court in Whitehall "a knavish Greek" who had been soliciting money for the repair of the Monastery of the Holy Cross outside Jerusalem and had been patronized by the Spanish ambassador Gondomar and the 'Spanish faction' at court. A group of skeptical courtiers arranged for Lithgow to interrogate this Greek on the topography and the holy sites of Jerusalem; Lithgow revealed him as a fraud who had never been in the Levant at all, but not before the Greek had got away with over 1200 British pounds sterling given by the credulous. See *Totall Discourse*, 244-5, and Chew, Samuel. *The Crescent and the Rose*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937, 135-8.

situation they felt themselves in by trying to do this. Writing to fellow English traveler, Sir Maurice Berkeley, about travelling to Turkey, Roe provides revealing insights into what might occasion an Englishman to be accused of unfaithfulness. Roe tells his countrymen to:

“nourish not a spiritt of contradiction [among the Turks], but rather curbe it. Wee are by nature prone enough to liberty, and euery suggestion of that should be suspected to vs. I concurre with yow, that new courses should not be taken: but when we see that the old by some ill genius, or darnell, and tares sowed by the enemye, hath not taken wished and necessarye effects, wee must not too strictly beyond ourselues to rules, but obey occasion, and vse the present with moderation.”<sup>54</sup>

Given this state of constant alarm, Roe advises Berkeley, the best course of action is to hew close to English rules and laws. Although occasion might make it tempting to bend one’s allegiances, Roe warns:

“there is a meane, which is the soule of wisdom, not to digge downe the foundation, which are the lawes, nor to breake downe the walls to lett in the enemye to doe it, for want of fitt supplies...so wee must the distempers of state, and trust in God, and his majestie, that the conclusion shalbe good, rather then in the common enemy, which will bring in both confusion of lawes and religion.”<sup>55</sup>

Roe’s observations reveal that the machineries of “lawes and religion” keep Englishmen safe from the Turks because it allows servants the recourse to seek the protection of their English masters. If the frail bounds of “lawes and religion” are not maintained, then the trans-imperial agent loses his only access to a protective master in the event of need. Although there are temptations to exercise one’s own “liberty,” Roe reminds his countrymen that “occasion” must be obeyed in making sure that he is not disciplined

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<sup>54</sup> Letter to Sir Maurice Berkeley, May 26, 1627. Roe 1740, 648.

<sup>55</sup> Letter to Sir Maurice Berkeley, May 26, 1627. Roe 1740, 648.

either by his English master or by his Turkish one – impossible advice that every trans-imperial agent was nevertheless bound to follow.

Roe's advice reminds us that the complexity of the different Turks which were created by different trans-imperial mediators (much like the English laws and religion they attached themselves to) forces us to consider the pressures felt *amongst* trans-imperial mediators, as well as between masters and servants, to create this Turk. In such a way, we may appreciate this Turk as the composite creation of social pressures felt within England and projected 'out' to Turkey as well as trans-imperial English responses to that pressure felt within the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the hybrid figures or the native informant, this composite Turk was the product of a unique consciousness which was neither English nor Turk, yet reflective of the mediator who was supposed to bring Englishness and the Turk together, literally and conceptually. Reading these non-fiction accounts for the tensions that held together their narratives allows us to access the unconscious or repressed voices that were also contained therein. Such a reading agenda also allows us to consider how these lost voices may have evidenced anxieties about a Turk who could speak for himself, and who didn't need the voice of the mediator.

This new paradigm for considering the Jacobean Turk will allow us a broader perspective from which to appreciate the intricately involved relations which necessitated the creation of these new Turks. These Turks, like the Englishman who conveyed them, were the product of a new kind of subjectivity – one that only had a transitional existence between the home from which one had been excluded and the home to which one could never really belong.

## Conclusion

Part of what I have been arguing in this chapter is that despite the formalization that converted Jacobean trans-imperial mediators like Sir Thomas Roe into agents of state, their condition remained decidedly *trans*-imperial. Although Roe was presented to Sultan Osman II as if King James spoke through him, Roe felt himself as belonging neither to England nor to the Ottoman Empire.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, his words and deeds must be read as those of a trans-imperial agent struggling with the terms of his servitude. This general struggle is what justifies my consideration of Roe along with other Anglo-Ottoman mediators, irrespective of their class differences, as agents caught between two imperial masters. It is Roe's specific, written responses to these struggles that make his situation as a professional trans-imperial agent unique. In re-reading these ambassadorial accounts with an attentiveness to the conditions that affected the ambassador as a trans-imperial mediator, those oral traces of resistance to the terms of one's servitude begin to re-emerge in provocative ways. One of the more provocative emergences was through the creation of the Turk. Because trans-imperial agents might be as likely to denude the ways in which their own situation resembled the alien Turk they were supposed to write about, rather than the English masters they were writing to, it is best to imagine the Jacobean Turk as a floating signifier, and as an index to the internal tensions between members of overlapping social groups.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> In his letter of introduction to the Sultan, James wrote, "And in all other things and occasions, wherein he hath or shall receive our commands, *as if our selfe did communicate them to you* (italics mine), which we doubt not shall redound to the Great Utility and Honor of both our Empires." Knolles, Richard. *A General Histories of the Turkes*, London, 1603, 966.

<sup>57</sup> A number of critics have already pointed this out. For example, literary critic, Matthew Dimmock points out how a number of English enemies (e.g. Irish rebels and Algerian pirates) were conflated through a reliance upon the "dominant and external trope of the 'turke'." Dimmock, Matthew. *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*. London: Ashgate Press, 2005, 125.

If the non-fiction accounts of Jacobean Anglo-Ottoman mediators were distinguished by the disappearance of certain unofficial, unsanctioned voices, then the Turk plays of this period were equally distinguished by an attempt to keep these voices alive. I shall suggest in my next chapter that these Jacobean Turk plays provided a means to represent 'Turk' servants and Ottoman characters as interchangeable and indistinguishable threats to audiences who hadn't yet decided whether they agreed to English imperial aspirations.

The stage had precisely what print lacked - the testimony of the spoken word and those moments of pregnant pause which required audiences to consider how the created Turk was being utilized to stir their emotions. This non-textual production of the Jacobean Turk allowed audiences to imaginatively recuperate those unofficial voices which had, just a generation earlier, consistently questioned the Turk that they created.

The transitional period between the reigns of Elizabeth and James I were marked by a schizophrenia brought on by simultaneous attempts to mimic the flexibility of trans-imperial mediators while trying to establish a distinct and national identity bereft of individual attributes. The drama of this period demonstrates this more distinctly than its prose. And so it is to the Jacobean Turk play that I now turn.

#### **Chapter 4: Equivocating Servants: The Function of the Mediating Servant in the Jacobean ‘Turk’ Play**

Jacobean Turk plays sought to imaginatively recover the voice of trans-imperial mediator which had been lost or silenced in contemporary travel accounts. The stage provided the perfect setting to re-create these servants and dramatize how they might have served both a Christian and a Turk master. Jacobean playwrights accorded these characters crucial roles in facilitating their masters’ respective plots in the Ottoman Empire. Almost every Turk play of the Elizabethan and Jacobean period gave these servants time alone on the stage or the spotlight of a soliloquy to express their attitudes towards their masters and their reflections on their own conditions of servitude. The insights provided during these moments helped to illuminate why certain punishments were doled out to the staged Turk at particular moments in these plays. Because many of these Turk plays ended either with the punishment of the (naturalized or converted) Turk or the redemption of the central Christian protagonist, we may better understand how English anxieties about untrustworthy domestic servants and threatening Turks were often commingled by considering the trans-imperial servants who were dramatized in these plays. These characters have been critically overlooked in recent interpretations of these Turk plays because, reflecting the attitudes of the authority figures in the plays themselves, they have been treated as merely ‘instrumental.’ In this chapter, I will argue that these Turk plays become an index into understanding public attitudes towards ‘lost’ servants (both at ‘home’ and in trans-imperial flux,) if we examine these plays through the lens provided by their mediating servants characters.

It is my intent to show how these staged Jacobean Turks also reflected a change in attitude towards the very trans-imperial agents that made Anglo-Ottoman relations possible during the Elizabethan period. In doing so, I will argue that the transition from the Elizabethan to the Jacobean period was not just marked by changes in public policy and religious toleration for the Turk, but by a replacement of polyvalent Turk with a more textually grounded, state-oriented Turk. And English drama of the Jacobean period was attentive to the kinds of mediating, trans-imperial voices which were needed to either create this new Turk, or who were dramatized challenging its creation. ‘Turk’ plays became a powerful tool for English servants and masters to work out the numerous social changes that were transforming their own society, by imagining possible resolutions for those transformations in the promiscuous elsewhere of the Ottoman Empire.

In the Jacobean period, changes in the dispensation of wealth and the hiring practices of the aristocracy shifted nobility’s perception of their own servants, who were viewed as progressively less privileged and exclusive. There was an interest in the dramatization of the steward or gentleman usher who attempts to overcome the handicap of his ‘low estate’ through political preferment. Such was the perceived threat of the ‘upstart’ officer, moreover, that myths about the ‘false steward’ were reactivated: a development specific to the English Renaissance found a suitable representational niche in an older literary stereotype.”<sup>1</sup> The reactivation of this myth coincided with the need to find a new place for the Turk in the English imagination. For aristocratic families, a belief in the dissembling character of their chief representatives, coupled with a need to depend upon them, placed master-servant relations under considerable strain and lent

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<sup>1</sup> Burnett 1997, 184.

support to engrained assumptions. English representations of the Turk were regularly fitted to the measure of domestic concerns. As Jonathan Burton notes:

“While the Turkish plays may not accurately reflect actual meaning, they certainly respond to actual experiences. And while the “Turks” on English stages may not reflect actual Muslim peoples, they are no less varied in their fictions. Our task then is to understand the various ways in which Muslim figures might be fashioned in contradistinction to idealized or failed versions of Christianity and Englishness in efforts to correct faults and reify abstractions of good.”<sup>2</sup>

The relationship between masters and servants changed radically during the Jacobean period, and so did the contradistinctive ‘Turk’ of the Elizabethan period. Many of the ‘masterless men’ and servants who introduced or facilitated interactions between Christians and Turks during the Elizabethan period became respectable gentlemen during the Jacobean period. The changing status of servants was accompanied by a different type of Turk that they began to present to their masters. Relationships between masters and servants were dramatized in such a way as to educate audiences about Turks who were closer to home, rather than just regurgitated stereotypes of a threatening, distant enemy.<sup>3</sup>

During the Jacobean period, the pejorative marker ‘Turk’ came to have more than just cultural and religious connotations. The new ‘Turk’ exhibited traitorous tendencies, and was especially resistant to patriarchal or national authorities. And often, when the Turk played the role of the dastardly malefactor, he was linked to disobedient servants in

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<sup>2</sup> Burton 2005, 21.

<sup>3</sup> The incorporation of these mediators into the English state apparatus was a sign of the times. Jacobean travel accounts, news pamphlets, and histories related to the Ottoman Empire also became more self-consciously dedicated to serving the English nation. Jonathan Burton notes, “As English commercial and diplomatic concerns grew increasingly involved with Muslim peoples, tragedy and tragicomedie largely superseded the heroic romance by focusing on the dangers of captivity, conversion, and/or the moral collapse of Christians in Muslim lands.” Burton 2005, 34. Post-Elizabethan Turk plays became more interested in charting a new imaginative space for the Turk – one in which England’s nascent position as a proto-imperialist, pan-European (rather than insularly Protestant) could be successfully weighed against “the dangers of captivity, conversion, and/or the moral collapse of Christians in Muslim lands.”



the play (both Christian and non-Christian.) So when Othello upbraids Cassio and Montano with the words, “Are we turn'd Turks, and to ourselves do that / Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?”<sup>4</sup> he is not just chastising them for their irreligious behavior, but for their failure to render peaceable *service* to Cyprus and its citizens. Cassio's punishment for ‘turning Turk’ is to be relieved of his service to the state, his lieutenancy. Even Othello's suicide is vocalized using this service-based rhetoric: the need to punish ‘the Turk’ who “beat a Venetian and *traduced the state*.”<sup>5</sup>

Creating this association between traitorous service and the ‘Turk’ behavior allowed playwrights to critique English nobles and servants who desired private profit at the expense of national interests, by dramatizing them in direct partnership with the Ottoman subject. One of the clearest enunciations of this comes from a character in John Mason's 1609 play, *The Turke*. Borgias, a Machiavellian schemer who intends to allow Mulleases, the titular Turk, access to Florence's ports and so Europe announces, “and loyalty I owe unto the stares, should there depend all Europe and the states christened thereon: ide sinke them all to gaine those ends I have proposed my aimes. Religion (thou that ridst the backs of slaves into weak mindes insinuating feare and superstitious cowardice) thou robst man of this chief blisse by bewitching reason.”<sup>6</sup> Borgias's servant, Eunuchus, also refuses to see any difference between serving a Christian and serving a Turk, so long as one's private motives are achieved. Interestingly, though, Mason's play emphatically draws audience attention to the punishment of Turkish traitorousness through the character of Eunuchus. And in doing so, the play provides an invaluable

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<sup>4</sup> 2.3.44-46..Cited from Shakespeare, William. *Othello*. Ed. Kim Hall. New York: Bedford St. Martens, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> 5.2.145-8.

<sup>6</sup> 666-668.

primer for understanding why similar ‘Turkish’ behavior was imagined needing policing and punishment in England.

### **The Turke<sup>7</sup> (1609)**

As *The Turke* opens, the Duke of Venice speaks of the numerous ‘state-moules’ in Florence who have become hopeful for power after the expiration of Julia’s father, the last Governor of Florence. Without knowing it, Venice has described Borgias in these lines, and when he notes that, “the tricks of State-moules that work under princes, are at the best, but like the vipers young that how-so-ever prodigious and harmful, to many open and secure passengers, yet do they never live: without the death of him that first gave motion to their breath.”<sup>8</sup> The Duke notes in his comments that the success of these state-moules is tied to those who are open to their suggestions.

Eunuchus, who serves as Borgias’ trans-imperial mediator for the first third of the play, becomes the play’s de facto voice of critical inquiry into the effect of these ‘state moles’ on their underlings and their nation. English audiences would have recognized that Eunuchus’ relationship to Borgias mirrored that of the numerous ‘state-moules’ and their servants who had grown hopeful of political favor under King James. Later, a gallant named Bordello puts an even finer point on it, when he observes that in England, men are “addicted to titles of honor,” and that is why “so many merchants and yeomanns sonnes hunt after [them.]”<sup>9</sup> *The Turke* counterbalances an open critique of the new Jacobean order of aristocratic servants with a newly imagined, hegemonic role for these

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<sup>7</sup> All subsequent references to the play are taken from Mason, John. *The Turke*. Ed. Joseph Q. Adams. Louvain: A. Uystpruyst, 1970.

<sup>8</sup> 275-285

<sup>9</sup> 1133-4

servants within society. By the end of the play, the play imagines Bordello, a stand-in for this new, aristocratic servant, to function as a buffering figure that can help his masters identify and neutralize invisible servants, like Eunuchus, who threaten the nation by helping traitorous state moles like Borgias.

*The Turke's* recognition of the complex machinations between a nation's traitorous nobles and servants allows it to create a new kind of Turk figure – one that is necessary for the re-assertion of hegemonic control. As I mentioned in my previous chapter, the resonance of 'turning Turk' extended beyond the realm of religious discourse to encompass different types of faithlessness towards one's Christian master. In Mason's play, Borgias represents the kind of 'state-moule' who has 'turned Turk' against Florence. And his mediating servant, Eunuchus, represents the kind of opportunistic servant who figuratively 'turns Turk' twice, first by serving the Ottoman, Mulleases, and then by agreeing to serve Borgias' plot to turn Florence over to Turkish control. Like Borgias, Eunuchus sees the chance to act on a private agenda – the opportunity to unfetter himself from the bonds of his current servitude – as a higher calling than any national allegiance. That is why he is willing to assist Borgias in betraying Christian Florence to the Mulleases. Eunuchus justifies his actions by saying, "He kils by law that kils men for a state."<sup>10</sup> If those 'meaner' sorts of English servants who provided unsatisfactory or suspect service to their masters were equated with foreigners or outcasts, then Mason's play and others of the 'Turk' genre provided the sorts of imaginative spaces where domestic and internal English order might be restored simultaneously by the identification and punishment of these new, domestic Turks.

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<sup>10</sup> 475-481

Mason's play opens with anxieties of impending civil discord. Borgias has been entrusted by his late brother to oversee the affairs of his daughter, Julia. Borgias has promised Julia's hand in marriage to the Duke of Ferrara, while the Florentine Senate has made the same promise to the Duke of Venice. In the first scene of the play, the Dukes of Venice and Ferrara are about to duel over who has the more legitimate claim to wed Julia. Unbeknownst to anyone, Borgias has struck a deal with Mulleasses, the Turk, to help the former assume the governorship of Florence by marrying Julia.<sup>11</sup> In exchange, Borgias agrees to let Florence be used as the port city that the Turks need to launch an attack into the heart of Europe. *The Turke* dramatizes the kinds of civil discord that result from power-hungry civil servants countermanding the authority they've been entrusted with, by monarchs and the government – a situation allowed by the internecine strife between the Italian dukes. The play associates Borgias's traitorous behavior with an external, Turkish threat that imperils Italy and, by consequence, Christendom.

Borgias's traitorous designs depend upon Eunuchus, a castrated Turkish slave, serving him. Just as the Dukes of Ferrara and Venice are about to come to blows, Borgias tells them that Julia has suddenly died. His intent is to stage a funeral that will send both suitors home. Borgias employs Eunuchus to find a body to stuff the coffin of his recently 'deceased' wife, Timoclea. At the same funeral, Borgias plans to stage Julia's burial with a coffin containing the actual body of Timoclea, whom Mulleasses has apparently killed. Borgias has covertly imprisoned Julia. Eunuchus targets Bordello, a

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<sup>11</sup> Adams 1970, Xix: "Mason seems to have taken the name Mulleasses directly from Knolles, who devoted considerable space to the greatness, the cruelty, and the treachery of this prince, who murdered his elder brother, the rightful heir to the throne, executed 17 of his other brethren, "and three others, Barcha, Beleth, and Saeth, with more than barbarous crueltie, with a hot yron of their sight depriued." Quincy says, though, that the plot surrounding Mulleasses was Mason's own. And only the name was borrowed from Knolles."

court gallant, whom the servant will kill in order to ‘stuff’ Timoclea’s coffin. What none of these characters know is that Mulleases has only simulated Timoclea’s death. He intends to revive Timoclea and compel her to kill Borgias. When the ‘ghostly’ Timoclea does make her return to the Florentine court, everyone assumes that it is the ghost of Julia. Confusion ensues and the Duke of Ferrara, thinking Eunuchus to be Julia’s murderer, kills the slave before he can eliminate Bordello. Ferrara, now suspicious, dons Eunuchus’ garb intending to unravel Borgias’s plot. By the end of the play, Borgias murders Timoclea and fakes his own death in order to fool Mulleases. When the disguised Ferrara is ordered by Mulleases to dispose of Borgias’s corpse, Borgias kills the man he thinks is ‘traitorous Eunuchus.’ *The Turke* ends with the arrival of the man Eunuchus failed to kill. Bordello discovers the body of Timoclea, and accuses the Duke of Venice of murdering her. Venice, suspecting that the ghost of Julia he had seen earlier was actually Timoclea, rushes to Julia’s chamber. There, he finds Mulleases about to rape the princess. Mulleases is apprehended, along with Borgias. And in the final scene of the play Borgias kills Mulleases, before being killed himself by Ferrara’s servant, Phego. Florentine hegemony is finally restored as the Duke of Venice marries Julia, and becomes the city’s governor.

Mason structures the play’s restoration of domestic order around the two ‘deaths’ of Eunuchus. The elimination of the slave keeps alive suspicions of Florentine treason that Borgias sought to lay to rest (literally and figuratively.) The elimination of Ferrara-as-Eunuchus clears the path for Venice to assume the position of governor without needing to have the play’s initial, internecine conflicts resolved through violence. This seemingly ‘minor’ figure becomes a linchpin for the restoration of Christian, patriarchal

hegemony that Mason's audiences would have expected. However, as I am arguing, Eunuchus is more than just a utilitarian, minor figure. His two murders draw our attention to his background, his psychology, and his vexed position as a trans-imperial mediator. We risk losing sight of a very important social and literary aspect of the play if we deem Eunuchus to be minor, and therefore beneath our sustained critical attention. In fleshing out the character of Eunuchus, Mason was writing for a Jacobean audience that was profoundly interested in hearing the voice of mediation between a Christian and a Turk master. 'Minor' figures like Eunuchus were, to Jacobean audiences, akin to trans-imperial mediators like Harborne's Mustafa, Lithgow's Finche, and the many more nameless servants who enabled relations between official Anglo-Ottoman ambassadors. There was no way of recovering the mediatory voice of the trans-imperial figures except by re-creating their imagined lives, if only fleetingly, on the stage. Part of the provocation for doing this was to participate in the debate over whether these 'missing' figures were the first architects of England's pseudo-imperial position abroad, or counter-hegemonic voices which might have been co-opted or otherwise silenced by English 'state-moules' with their own private interests in the Ottoman Empire.

*The Turke* resolves the debate over whether the trans-imperial servant aided or hurt England's imperial position by deciding against Eunuchus. Because Christianity was disunited, the Turkish motif on the Jacobean stage could not operate at the binary level. It had no natural antagonist. So Eunuchus' intervention functions, as England imagined itself doing, to efface Christendom's 'internal' and 'external' threats while simultaneously conflating them. It is in this new world order, where Catholic and Protestant interests can begin to speak about *their* differences from the Turk that *The*

*Turke* charts a new space for English Levantine involvement.<sup>12</sup> By eliminating Eunuchus, *The Turke* is able to both vocalize its own interests as well as to defuse the discord between the Italian states in a pan-European move that neutralizes the Turk and all of his treasonous allies.

Mason's play broaches these complex issues by giving Eunuchus a resonant voice of dissent in a play which is just beginning to be appreciated by literary scholars, postcolonial critics, and cultural historians. The fact that the character of Eunuchus continues to be critically overlooked, even after the recent revival of *The Turke* criticism, is regrettable; especially since considering him may open new in-roads of inquiry for the very critics who have overlooked him.

Eunuchus is killed before even a third of the play is over, but his spectral presence throughout the rest of the play suggests that the dramatized trans-imperial mediator's role is as crucial to the resolution of Florentine discord as any of the play's masters or 'major' characters.

Before he sets himself to killing Bordello, Eunuchus reflects on his own history and his nomination to "poison a groome to stuffe a coffen"<sup>13</sup> thus:

"How so'ere my fortunes make me now a slaue I was a free borne  
Christians sonne in Cyprus, When Famagusta by the Turks was  
sackt: In the delusion of which Citty spoyles, My fortunes fell to  
Mulleasses lot: Nor was it Tyranny inough that I was Captive, My  
parents robd of me, and I of them, But they wrongd nature in me,  
made me a Eunuch, Disabled of those masculine functions, Due  
from our sex: and thus subiected, These sixteen years vnto the vilde  
command, Of an imperious Turke, I now am given To serve the  
hidden secrets of his lust, Vnto Timoclea, the wife of Borgias,

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<sup>12</sup> Jonathan Burton also describes how one of the effects of the Jacobean rapprochement with Spain was an increasing English fascination with Spain's efforts at purging the assimilated Muslim elements from its nascent nation. See Burton 2005, 95.

<sup>13</sup> 30-5.

Whose priuate mixtures<sup>14</sup> I am guilty of: Betwixt these three I stand  
 as in a maze, I eg'd to al their sinnes, and made a baud To lust and  
 murder: Mulleases first Giues me vnto Timoclea, that without  
 suspect I might procure their loues security: For which they promise  
 me my liberty. But Borgias whether iealous of his wife, Of (sic)  
 reaching at some further policy, bindes me with golden offers to his  
 trust And first comaunds me rumour it abroad Timoclea his wife  
 was sicke, when at that instant She was in health and dauncing with  
 her Turk Now I must second that report with death, And say abroad  
 Timoclea is dead.”<sup>15</sup>

By giving the servant his own back story, and the spotlight to voice objections to being made a baud and ‘egged’ to his Turkish masters’ sins, Mason shows audiences how the trans-imperial mediator’s character carries a knowledge of perfidious behavior that transcends religions, cultural differences, and national affiliations. Eunuchus’s dialogue reminds audiences that although *The Turke* contains only one cultural Turk, the fact that Borgias and Mulleases share a common set of motives, means, and ends points to the existence of two Turk figures. Although Eunuchus is the lower-class architect of such cross-cultural relations, he finds himself caught in a triangular “maze” between his masters – a situation echoed by a number of other trans-imperial mediators in a number of other Turk plays as well. This reminds us that the mediating servant’s frustration here is as much about class inequity (“for which they promise me my liberty” and “bind [him] with golden offers”) as it is about cultural difference. Eunuchus’s speech also alerts us to the individual servant’s duty and his relationship to the ‘policy’ of the state. This class iniquity draws our attention to the paucity of distinguishable differences between Christian and Turkish masters save those epistemic markers of Turkishness – his perfidy, his lasciviousness, his imperial ambitions – that the intermediary participates in

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<sup>14</sup> Glossed in the OED as unlawful or promiscuous sexual unions.

<sup>15</sup> 89-119.



circulating. Eunuchus' mobile employment gives occasion for the juxtaposition of a known form of Turkishness (eg: Mulleases' clandestine machinations to gain access to the Christendom through its weakest members) against an unknown Turkishness (eg: the subterfuge of Borgias, the European 'state-moules'.)

Eunuchus's speech reveals how the betrayal of Florence to the Turk is presaged by the betrayal of abject servants by unscrupulous, putatively Christian, masters. Although Mulleases presents Eunuchus as a gift to Timoclea, Borgias suborns the servant to advance his own attempt at Florentine rule. Borgias' plot is predicated on service from a formerly Christian servant who has been figuratively and literally emasculated into serving the Turk and his renegade allies against Florence.<sup>16</sup> Literary critic Clare Jowitt points out that Borgias is dependent on the forces of the Grand Turke precisely because he is not able to deal with his European rivals on his own.<sup>17</sup> To this I would add, that Borgias not only relies on Mulleases to capture Florence for him, but for Eunuchus to unfaithfully turn against his former master in order to eliminate any threats to his exclusive control over Florence. The association of Borgias as a type of Christian 'Turk' with Mulleases, the cultural Turk, is made through the fact that they are willing to get in bed with the same object of desire (here, provocatively dramatized through the alluring Timoclea.) Borgias aspires to be what Mulleases calls "a state-villaine [who] must be

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<sup>16</sup> For more on the relationship between Eunuchus's sexual identity and his subordination, see Burton 2005 and Bly 2000. Eunuchus' reflection on his personal plight thus becomes the occasion to reinforce the popular cultural image of the lustful Turk who emasculated Christian youths and used them in order to populate their servants' quarters and janissary corps. Another topos of the Turk plays is the way in which Turkish sexual appetites are dramatically emphasized by being practiced against Christian youth, such as Eunuchus and *Soliman and Perseda's* Erastus. These 'flowers of Christendom' – as Perseda calls them – are too innocent to realize that their status as procurers or intermediaries is indispensable to the lascivious Turk.

<sup>17</sup> Claire Jowitt. "Political Allegory in Late Elizabethan and Early Jacobean *"Turk"* Plays: "Lust's Dominion" and *"The Turke"*. *Comparative Drama* 36.3/4 (Fall 2002/Winter 2003), 434.

like the winde, that flies unseene yet lifts an Ocean, into a mountainous height.”<sup>18</sup>

Borgias’s attempts to pass off another “groome” in his place also creates a strong dramatic affiliation between his Turkishness and that of Mulleases, who has also staged Timoclea’s death in order to fool Borgias. We cannot overlook the importance of Eunuchus in bringing this association to our attention, not only because of his mediatory responsibilities between Borgias and Mulleases, but also by the fact that his very “liberty” is tied to serving the two Turks.

But before Eunuchus can murder Bordello, the servant is killed in error by the irascible Duke of Ferrara. After realizing his error, Ferrara determines to don the servant’s garb to investigate his suspicions - that Borgias has masterminded Julia’s death. As he dons the servant’s clothes, Ferrara says to Eunuchus’ corpse, “Eunuchus, thy death is but a prologue to induce a plot. Maist thou be blessed, th’art not worth my hate I must reach *higher*, and on thy disguise, lay but the groundwork for revenge to rise.”<sup>19</sup> At first blush, the play seems to be drawing our attention to Eunuchus’ ‘low’ status and the ‘higher’ power behind his actions. But the fact that it is Ferrara who is making this observation alerts audiences to why they shouldn’t accept his reading of Eunuchus’s as merely instrumental. Late in the play, when the disguised Eunuchus (Ferrara) is instructed by Mulleases to bury the body of Borgias, whom the Turk thinks he has poisoned, Borgias comes to life to murder his ‘traitorous’ servant.

The play makes it clear that the obtuse Ferrara hasn’t recognized that by dramatically resurrecting Eunuchus in order to gain access to what the mediating servant knows, he is also assuming the threat that such a servant faces. Ferrara is ignorant of

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<sup>18</sup> 751-6

<sup>19</sup> 3.3.1485-6. Italics mine.

enmeshing himself into the “maze” that Eunuchus had alerted us to earlier. When this ‘second’ Eunuchus is killed by Borgias for his ‘traitorous’ service, we see that even gullible masters like Ferrara can be eliminated by treacherous members of their own religion and class. As if to reiterate the joint threat of both unscrupulous masters and their faithless servants, the play’s eliminates its Eunuchuses twice. And in doing so, audiences are reminded about the complex set of obligations that allowed English ‘state moules’ to rise to power.

Mason’s play comments on the unscrupulous master/servant relations that already existed in England in order to show how domestic ‘Turks’ (from both the ruling and the servant ranks) could betray all of Christendom, were they able to have the freedom allowed in a city like Florence. The play’s forwards an implicit critique of Elizabethan attitudes towards the Turk, which were viewed as naïvely unacceptable. *The Turke* stages punishment not only for Machiavellian turncoats like Borgias, but for the very mediating English servants whose trans-imperial fluidity was highly regarded during the Elizabethan reign.

Unlike Borgias, whose Italianate associations made him a distinctly non-English villain, Eunuchus should have elicited some sympathy among English audiences. Eunuchus’s plight galvanizes three of the most troubling Christian memories associated with the Turk: the 1570 sack of Famagusta (which was seen as the harbinger to the Battle of Lepanto), the castration of Christian boys who were captured in these sieges, and the long periods of Turkish servitude that these eunuchs and janissaries would have to endure. Instead of allowing Eunuchus to finally enjoy his freedom once he has passed into the hands of a sympathetic Christian master, *The Turke* instead turns him over to a

Christian master who is ominously even more ‘Turk’ than Mulleases because his treasonous villainy remains undetected by the play’s Italian authorities. By having Eunuchus accept his freedom at the price of turning Florence over to the Machiavellian Christian, Mason’s play divests sympathy from a servant who might otherwise have deserved it by associating his opportunistic service as another form of Turkishness. Through the characters of Borgias and Eunuchus, *The Turke* dramatizes how the invisible relations between state-moules and their servants make them an invidious threat to the entire commonweal.

*The Turke* associates the servant’s attempt at self-redemption by serving the private machinations of an unscrupulous master as a lesser kind of evil, but a reprehensible action nonetheless. In plotting to fool Bordello into believing that the noble Timoclea desires the courtier for her gigolo, Eunuchus reveals an alarming alacrity for murdering Bordello. Despite having earlier reservations about his own culpability in Borgias’s murderous plot, Eunuchus’s attitude subtly shifts. In one statement, he both distances himself from the action he’s about to carry out and emotionally attaches himself to it: “For mine own parte, my hand shall be cleere from the blood of the goate: and yet I could account it happinesse to be within ear shote of his departure, to hear how lamentably the coxcombe would sigh out ‘Timoclea’: but the best is neither court nor country will much misse the foole: there are elder brothers enough to supplie his room.”<sup>20</sup> We can detect a sadistic glee in Eunuchus’ voice at the prospect of eliminating at least

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<sup>20</sup> 2.3.10-25

one class competitor ‘above’ him, for the approval of Florence’s masters; even though other “elder brothers” stand waiting to replace Bordello.<sup>21</sup>

By dissociating the trans-imperial servant from his once sympathetic place in the labile, Elizabethan interactions between Englishmen and Turks, Mason’s play emphasizes a more formal hierarchy that must be maintained between masters and servants if England is to have a secure standing at home (and consequently in Ottoman lands, as an imperial power.) In de-emphasizing Eunuchus’ cultural relevance as a servant worthy of audience sympathy, *The Turke* replaces him with a more socially acceptable servant - Bordello.

Bordello’s relationship to Eunuchus is vitally crucial for understanding how he participates in both the neutralization of the discontented servant and Mulleases. Bordello is introduced at the beginning of the play as a professional courtier and a gigolo. When an advantageous liaison is offered to him with Timoclea, Borgias’s wife, Bordello sees the opportunity for both financial and social advancement.<sup>22</sup> Eunuchus and Bordello only have one scene of interaction before Eunuchus is killed; however it is crucially

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<sup>21</sup> Elsewhere, Eunuchus says to himself, “I cannot but laugh to see the slave [Bordello] make a lecherous progress towards Lucifer.” 2.3.10-25

<sup>22</sup> Literary critics Mary Bly and Clare Jowitt both identify Bordello’s sodomitical status as being a key element of his Jacobean identity. The difference between the two authors approaches is that Jowitt argues that “*The Turke* questions the differences between legitimate rule and tyranny and the merits of *Rex Pacificus*” as it draws attention to an English sodomite. Jowitt implicitly associates Bordello’s sexual deviancy with King James’ suspect homosexuality. See Claire Jowitt, Claire. Political Allegory in Late Elizabethan and Early Jacobean “*Turk*” Plays: “*Lust’s Dominion*” and “*The Turke*”. *Comparative Drama* v. 36 no. 3/4 (Fall 2002/Winter 2003), 429. While Bly sees Bordello’s sodomitical identity as Jacobean variant that transforms the Moor of *The Turke*’s possible source play into the new threat of the Turk. She conjectures that if *The Turke* was a Whitefriars variant on *Lust’s Dominion*, then the sodomitical elements of Bordello’s identity help to turn the former play’s Moor into the more titillating Turk of the latter play. She also hypothesizes that Mason turned all of *Lust’s Dominion*’s corrupt friars into Bordello, Eunuchus, and Pantofle - three characters defined by their non-normative sexual identities, and thus associated with a popularized Turkish stereotype of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. See Bly, Mary. *Queer Virgins and Virgin Queens on the Early Modern Stage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 59, 78.

important and critically overlooked moment for understanding the social shift in *The Turke*'s many Turks.

Both seasoned travelers compare the differences between Florence and England for the benefit of Madame Fulsome, an old gentlewoman who wants to know how courtiers fare abroad as compared to at home. Bordello explains that, in England, men "use knighthood as rich jewelers desire Jemms rather for trafique then ornament."<sup>23</sup> He says that English men are "addicted to titles of honor," and that is why "so many merchants and yeomanns sonnes hunt after it."<sup>24</sup> In Florence, however, Bordello observes "great enmity between [those of] witt and [those of] clokes lin'd through with velvet." "And yet," Bordello adds:

"[the] beggars and gallants [of Florence] agree together very familiarly. There is no thriving but by impudence and pandarisme: he that is furnished with one of these two qualities shall begg more of a foolish lord at a maribone breakfast<sup>25</sup>, then all the poets in the whole towne shall rime out of him in an age."<sup>26</sup>

Bordello's chafed comments are reminiscent of William Basse's rhyming lament that 'Serving-men' of 'gentle blood' are 'slightly reckon'd' by their 'hard commanders.'<sup>27</sup>

Eunuchus's reply to Bordello captures the tenor of the debate that raged between different classes of servants during the Jacobean period. Eunuchus interrupts Bordello's comparison by saying, "Tut these are but petty observations. I have seene since my coming to Florence the sonne of a Pedler mounted on a foote clothe: a fellow created a Lord for the smoothnesse of his chinne: and which is more; I have seene a cappe most

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<sup>23</sup> 1129-30

<sup>24</sup> 1133-4

<sup>25</sup> This is another humorous turn-of-phrase. Literally, the reference is to a feast where kneelers (or those who profit by begging favors of their superiors) come to dine.

<sup>26</sup> 1146-1150

<sup>27</sup> Cited in Burnett 1997, 176.

miraculously turned into a beaver hatt without either trimming or dressing.”<sup>28</sup> As I’ve already argued in my previous chapter, each level of servant complained to their masters that the level of servant ‘above’ them was in a far more favored position, despite those ‘higher’ servants’ own complaints against their superiors.

The exchange between Borgias and Eunuchus evidences the emergence of a middling order of servant in Florence. Bordello’s privileging of the wit of a poet juxtaposed against Eunuchus’s sumptuary examples indicates the existence of a class tension between servants that Jacobean audiences would have immediately recognized. And Eunuchus’ response about the “mounted” sons of peddlers in Florence indicates that there is less difference between the two countries than the “gallant” will admit. Like a peddler’s son, Eunuchus imagines a greater future for himself despite his humble past and despite not having the wit of a gallant or a poet. Privately, Bordello worries to himself about becoming “enwrapt in the knowledge of these meanest vassals of honour (eg: Eunuchus).”<sup>29</sup> He is concerned that his ‘familiarity’ with these low-born characters might blunt the thrust of his social ambitions. Ultimately, he reckons that “fooles [like Eunuchus] must fall [so] that wise men firme may stand.”<sup>30</sup>

Bordello’s critique would certainly have struck a chord with those audience members critical of King James’ sale of titles and properties in the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. And for this reason, Bordello was a deeply unsettling figure.<sup>31</sup> There’s little

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<sup>28</sup> 1151-56. A cap would be worn by a commoner of lowly rank. A beaver hat would be a sign of wealth and social affluence. For example, when describing the Ghost of King Hamlet, Horatio tells the son, “O yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.” 1.2.225.

<sup>29</sup> 2.1.1157

<sup>30</sup> 2.3.24

<sup>31</sup> Mary Bly has written persuasively on Bordello’s sexual deviancy as a sign of the play’s critique of Italianate practices. To this, I would add that Bordello’s significance to the play is rooted in the fact that he, like Eunuchus, is a recognizable amalgam of those Italianate features that make him unworthy of truly

doubt that the contrast between Bordello's manifestly self-referential English critique and his own morally corrupt plans to 'mount' his own fortunes in Florence would have elicited nervous laughter from *The Turke's* audiences. Nevertheless, the play imagines that Bordello's threat to Jacobean hierarchy may be subsumed by allowing him to mount his fortunes on the backs of trans-imperial servants like Eunuchus, who were viewed with even greater suspicion. The restoration of patriarchal hegemony at the end of the play marks the assumption of servitude by those Jacobean gallants who were once base-born slaves, but whose newfound loyalty to the hegemony of state hierarchy heralds a new kind of accommodation for England's middling order.

The play suggests that the restoration of patriarchal order in Florentine society takes place because social risers such as Bordello are recognized as a viable social class that can play a vital role in maintaining hegemonic order. The play participates in a Jacobean agenda that imagined a hegemonic role for England's *nouveau riche* gallants to play. Instead of resisting the distribution of lands and titles to this new stratum of social risers, King James acceded to their requests. By according these gallants the respectability that came with property and titles, they could be incorporated into the English aristocratic machinery of rule. These 'middling sorts' were expected to make sure that their former acquaintances fell in line with English laws. And when they did not, these gallants often served as a kind of buffer authority that neutralized any non-visible threats posed to the hegemonic order. *The Turke* expands upon the Jacobean topoi of 'Turkish' behavior to include threats to its new hegemony by the most threateningly non-visible of its subjects: its traitorous servants.

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being a noble. But his value to society is that he is the perfect agent to dispense an unfaithful opportunist like Eunuchus.



*The Turke* emphasizes the consolidation of knowledge that is serviceable to the aims of patriarchal hegemony: the identification of ‘state-moules’ like Borgias and his agents. It is only through the punishment of Eunuchus, that trans-imperial mediator who once would have been rewarded for his Mustafa-like ability to serve both an English and Turkish master, that we recognize how formal changes to Jacobean state policy depended upon making the post-Elizabethan Turk more appropriable. Like a more advanced villain figure, the calculating Mulleases is staged as a Turk that is more easily apprehended by patriarchal figures like the Duke of Venice once the internal threat of state moules like Borgias can be uncovered through the failed service of their agents. And at the same time, by reminding audiences that the cultural Turk worked through such slaves, whose grievances (and perhaps, sympathies) might have been similar to their own, *The Turke* is able to police its own audience’s civil discontent by reminding them of the ‘foreign’ place of those grievances in English society. By the play’s end, this ‘foreign’ threat could be punished as exactly that – the elimination of Mulleases, the cultural Turk, at the Florence court.

Fittingly, at the end of the play, Borgias is eliminated by Ferrara’s servant, Phego. In revenging his master’s death, Phego does more than carry out the important function of identifying and eliminating Florence’s ‘state moule.’ By staging Borgias’ death at the hands of the servant, the play points out to its English audiences that faithful servants can help to ferret out ‘Turkish’ treachery, even among their own ranks. Sociologically speaking, the masterless vagabonds exposed the obsolescence of the traditional mechanisms of social reproduction; as a result, they focused upon themselves the anger and anxiety born of a new uncertainty.

The power struggle between the play's two 'major' characters, Borgias and Mulleases, begins with vocalization of Eunuchus' servile aspirations and ends with the realization of Bordello's. As such, we are alerted to the fact that the failure of Eunuchus' ambitions – of emancipating himself from servitude, of mounting his fortunes despite his emasculated condition, of failing to see the 'coxcombe,' Bordello, 'progress towards Lucifer'<sup>32</sup> – are necessary if the fulfillment of Bordello's ambitions are to be realized. Bordello's arrival re-asserts social order by interrupting Mulleases and Borgias' respective plots to unseat each other. Unlike Eunuchus, who is dramatized as an enemy of state, Bordello is installed as the more acceptable servant, a gallant whose interests are protected by the state. When Bordello quivers with fear after alerting Florentine authorities to Borgias's murder plot, he is assured by one of the Lords that he will be guarded against any retribution by Borgias. As the Lord explains, "Meane time be safe in me: nor loue nor life shall turne mine honors current: Ile be your guard: This hand seemes your person, or my sword shall in the Traytours heart make good my word."<sup>33</sup> Bordello's protected status as a citizen is directly the result of exposing the traitor, Borgias. Patriarchal hegemony is restored once the collective 'Turkish' ambition of Christian Machiavels, treasonous servants, and cultural Turks are collectively dismissed by gallants who will faithfully serve the restoration of state order.

The main difference between Eunuchus and Bordello is that Eunuchus, in being wise to turning the tables and using Bordello as Borgias wishes to use him, becomes complicit in the hegemonic power structure even if, with his final words, he claims the role of victim. That drama, suggests, is what is so dangerous about the servant wanting

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<sup>32</sup> 2.3.10-25.

<sup>33</sup> 4.3.125-133

to fill the shoes of his master. He will inherit the master's misanthropy, but won't know whom to direct it against or how to act on it.

To understand the significance of Eunuchus in *The Turke*, we need to recognize him as an archetypal character that was crucial in the composition of most Jacobean 'Turk' plays. One of the reasons why these plays were set in Ottoman-occupied territories was to allow English audiences to establish a correspondence between the servants who narrated their cross-cultural encounters on stage and those English civil servants who introduced Turkey to these same audiences through their travel writings. The sorts of biographical details that fill the travel narrations of Thomas Dallam, John Sanderson, and George Sandys (to name a few) also are voiced by servants who explain European travel to their Ottoman masters or Turkish travel to their European masters. These Turk plays use such mediating servants to remind their audiences of the tendentious positions of the actual travelers that popularized the Ottoman Empire in England. By dramatizing encounters that English travelers described second-hand, play-going audiences were advanced one step further to judging 'the Turk' without mediation, yet another indication that the figure of the Turk was being domesticated in interesting ways.

In imaging the ways in which such servants are composites of actual travelers and dramatists' rendering of those travelers, we are reminded that the Jacobean Turk was a cultural product of these easy slippages between 'truth' of non-fictional accounts and 'fiction' of circulated stereotypes. The trans-imperial servant perspective constantly reminds us of these slippages. For example, when William Lithgow stopped in Tunis in 1614, he noted that "old Waird was placable, and joined me safely with a passing land

conduct to Algiers; yea, and diverse times in my ten dayes staying there, I dyed and supped with him, but lay aboard in the French shippe.”<sup>34</sup> Just two years earlier, Robert Daborne had fictionalized the English pirate, John Ward’s apostasy and lamentable suicide in *The Christian Turn’d Turk*. The relative comfort in which the trans-imperial mediator, Lithgow described the English renegade living provides a striking contrast to Ward’s fictionalized Turk. Lithgow also points out that, at that time, the Flemish-Dutch corsair captain, Simon Danser or Dansiker (as Daborne names him in *A Christian Turned Turk*) had come from Marseilles on a mission from the French king for the release of detained French ships. Once ashore, Dansiker was seized and beheaded in reprisal for the past havoc that he had wrought on Turkish ships. This history is also re-written by Daborne, who dramatizes Dansiker’s suicide alongside Ward’s. Seemingly, Daborne’s re-writing of the pirates’ death is an act of atemporal wish fulfillment - the staging of an act of providential punishment because providence hadn’t yet supplied it. But, if we read *A Christian Turn’d Turk* from the perspective of its prominent trans-imperial servant characters, we find Daborne’s keen interest in staging the fictional deaths of the pirates is motivated by grappling with domestic tensions that were very much present in 1612.

### **A Christian Turned Turk<sup>35</sup> (1612)**

Towards the end of Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk* (1612), Abraham Benwash, the play’s rich, Tunisian moneylender and dubiously erstwhile Jew, asks his servant, Ruben Rabshake, to voluntarily put his head in a hangman’s noose. The request comes just after Rabshake has murdered Benwash’s unfaithful wife and Benwash has

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<sup>34</sup> Lithgow 1632, 315.

<sup>35</sup> All citations to the play are taken from *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England*. Ed. Daniel J. Vitkus. New York: Columbia UP, 2000.

killed her English lover. In order to avoid apprehension, Benwash has Rabshake deliver several superficial knife wounds and then asks for Rabshake's head in order to convince Turkish authorities that the real murderer has wounded Benwash, immobilized Rabshake, and escaped. Rabshake is understandably hesitant. Benwash reassures his servant, "Tush, the best is behind, man<sup>36</sup>: dost think I do not bear a brain about me? Beware a politician<sup>37</sup>, man. Here, bind me, bind me – hard, hard!"

Earlier, Rabshake had witnessed Benwash "vow and swear by Abraham's dust" to forgive his wife, Agar if she just delivered her lover, Gallop, to Benwash so he could have his revenge on the Englishman. "And you would be rid of me [too]," Rabshake objects. "I conceive you, sir, though I am no politician: I have seen the play of Pedringano, sir – of Pedringano, sir."<sup>38</sup> Rabshake's allusion to Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (1589) as a parallel source of information about his master's hidden intentions is arresting. The Kyd reference momentarily diverts audience attention away from the play present in order to cross-reference the actions of another play, specifically interpreted from a servant's perspective. Those in Daborne's audience who were familiar with Kyd's revenge tragedy would remember that Lorenzo, a Castilian nobleman, had promised gold and a writ of deliverance to his servant, Pedringano, if he murdered Serberine, another servant whom Lorenzo suspected of betraying his murder of Horatio to Hieronimo. Pedringano had confidently put his head in the hangman's noose, believing that Lorenzo's pardon had already arrived at the execution site. In actuality, the

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<sup>36</sup> The last time the expression 'The best is behind' was used in the play, Rabshake had tricked Ward and Francisco into turning their backs to him, so that he could escape further interrogation. 13.90.

<sup>37</sup> The OED cites two instances of the word 'politician' to mean 'a schemer, a plotter; a shrewd, sagacious, or craft person'. One is in George Whetstone's *English Myrror* (1586), and the other is in Thomas Nashe's *Pierce Peniless* (1592).

<sup>38</sup> 16.127-9.

box supposedly containing his writ of deliverance was empty. And Pedringano was hanged, much to the delight of Lorenzo's other boy servant who knew that he had only been sent to the gallows with the box to ensure that Pedringano would not reveal Lorenzo's culpability in a last minute fit of desperation. Rabshake's allusion to *The Spanish Tragedy* as 'the play of Pedringano' would surely have shifted the recall of those members of Daborne's audience familiar with *The Spanish Tragedy* away from Horatio, Hieronimo, Lorenzo (and all of that play's central characters) to Pedringano (and the play's other minor, servant-class characters – Serberine and the Boy) who learn too late that a servant's loyalty could just as easily be betrayed with a master's punishment as it could be rewarded with a master's fortunes.<sup>39</sup>

In alerting us to this hierarchy of greater and lesser evil, *A Christian Turn'd Turk* continues a trend that I had shown occurring earlier in Mason's *The Turke*, when Borgias not only attempted to duplicate Mulleases's villainy, but his choice of words as well. In Daborne's play, however, the place of 'greater' and 'lesser' evil seems far more contingent. Earlier in the play, when Ward and Francisco confronted Rabshake and forced him to reveal whether or not Voada had taken a lover, Rabshake escaped punishment with a deception that is proleptically reminds us of what Benwash may now be attempting to accomplish. Rabshake told Ward and Francisco that he would reveal Voada's thoughts and actions through staging a scene where Ward would play Voada, Francisco her dog, and he would play the role of the page [Fidelio]. Rabshake then positioned the two men so that their backs were turned towards him, and then escaped

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<sup>39</sup> Only one other critic, Alexander Leggatt, has linked the importance of Pedringano's mediating role in the play, to the play's linking of master and servant classes. Leggatt observes that two characters in the play pose challenges to the boundaries that define normalcy. See Leggatt, Alexander. "'A membrane has been broken': Returning from the Dead in *The Spanish Tragedy*," in Hofele and von Koppenfels, 2005.

interrogation, exclaiming the lines, “the best is behind” to his erstwhile masters.<sup>40</sup>

Benwash’s use of “the best is behind” shows an awareness of the same kind of staged deception that Rabshake had practiced earlier. In fact, I contend that Rabshake probably used the term after having learned it from Benwash. The wary Rabshake becomes ever more vigilant about the possibility that another staged deception may be signaled through Benwash’s repetition of the words.

Now, having witnessed this oath nullified, Rabshake witnesses his master forswear his Turkish oath not to kill his wife by equivocating intent and identity<sup>41</sup>. “I swear as I was a Turk,” Benwash tells Agar, “and I will cut your throat as I am a Jew.”<sup>42</sup> When Benwash asks him to also have his hands bound, Rabshake hesitates, saying, “I do not desire to wade deeper in, I thank you, sir.” He also repeats his master’s words, telling Benwash, “I am no politician, bear no brain about me, sir.” But he adds, “Yet I can dive into a knave’s pockets as well as any man, your worship knows.”<sup>43</sup> Rabshake picks up on Benwash’s use of ‘politician’ and ‘bearing a brain’ to acknowledge his inferior social status and intelligence, but contrasts that with a servant’s ability to resist cooperating with his master because of his intimate knowledge of his master’s dependence on him.

Benwash asks him to explain his comments about diving into a knave’s pockets. “To rob you as I am a Turk, and cut your throat as I am a Jew. You have forgot your equivocation,” Rabshake complains. “I’ll chop logic with you. Come, your rings, your chain: do you not laugh? Have you not gulled the world fairly?” Rabshake threatens Benwash. Rabshake’s lines represent a moment of opportunity when the equivocating

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<sup>40</sup> 13.90

<sup>41</sup> Benwash effects this equivocation of his Turkish oath by instructing Rabshake, “I will not hurt her, but thou shalt by equivocation.” 16.19-20.

<sup>42</sup> 16.75.

<sup>43</sup> 16.345-9.

skills that an unscrupulous servant has learned from his unscrupulous master can finally be used to blackmail that master. In a 1598 pamphlet entitled *A health to the gentlemanly profession of serving men*, the anonymous author, I.M. complained about the vanishing boundaries between ‘serving-men’ and ‘mere servants,’ due to the presence of an upstart group of servants who was busily inserting itself into the ranks of his own profession, thereby ‘compounding...this pure and refined metal (whereof serving-men were first framed) with untried dregs and dross of less esteem.’<sup>44</sup> I.M. complained that this new category of interloping servants ‘agitate for and receive wages,’ in contrast to earlier servingmen did not receive direct cash payments, but rather favors in kind. Rabshake seems to resemble the new kind of cash-motivated servant that I.M. is describing.

Rabshake can pick a knave’s pocket because he has often been employed by Benwash to carry out this intermediary function as part of his master’s larger ‘politic’ designs. Thus far, the servant has given his complicity to Benwash’s evil designs in exchange for a share in the master’s profits. Since Benwash is now asking Rabshake to bind himself to some larger, unknown scheme to protect them against arrest, the servant decides to liquidate all future monetary rewards immediately. He asks Benwash to give him all ‘the rings and chain’ that have been assured to him. But that still isn’t enough to convince him to slip the noose around his neck. Benwash must assure him that that *all* of the wealth that Rabshake has helped him to accumulate in Tunis is ultimately intended for him. In this moment of apparent tension, we can see a social change being enforced by a servant who is determined not to end up like the Elizabethan Pedringano. “What friend, what kinsman, what heir had I but Rabshake?”, Benwash implores his servant.

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<sup>44</sup> Anonymous. *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Servingmen: or The Servingman’s Comfort*. London: 1598; S.T.C. 17140, sigs. E3<sup>v</sup>, E4<sup>v</sup>.



Rabshake isn't satisfied. He insists that Benwash be more explicit about what the servant will receive. Benwash is forced to concede, "Nay, thou shouldst have had all in [my] possession."<sup>45</sup>

Despite receiving Benwash's assurances that this plot will come off successfully, just as their previous joint ventures had, Rabshake is still hesitant. He finally overcomes his caution with the words, "For once I'll try you. Here, bind me. If you do outreach me, I'll n'er trust Jew more."<sup>46</sup> He overcomes this hesitation by reminding himself of his continued dependence on Benwash's social influence. As Rabshake reasons to himself, "If I should try him, it is beyond my compass if he outsail me."<sup>47</sup>

Not surprisingly, after Rabshake slips the noose around his neck, Benwash hangs him. Benwash punctuates the event by dashing Rabshake's hopes of being made an 'heir' through the equivocal substitution of the homonym 'air'. "I'll hang you up a airing," he sardonically utters. The significance of the scene lies in how Benwash's deception galvanizes his character as one representation of the evil Turk – an ultimately opaque character who can betray his closest confidante for the sake of wealth, by equivocating his identity. The scene dramatizes the direct correlation between the representation of power dynamics on the Turkish stage and the kinds of equivocation needed to transform those lower-class intermediaries who once served as complicit, knowledgeable power sharers and intermediaries into dispensable servants. On the actual Mediterranean stage, a character like Rabshake would be considered indispensable for carrying out his master's will. On Daborne's stage, he putatively appears as a minor character who has outlived his usefulness. On Daborne's stage, equivocation is not just

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<sup>45</sup> 16.135

<sup>46</sup> 16.150-1.

<sup>47</sup> 16.145

Benwash's technique for securing his power among characters of equal social standing, such as Agar, but his methodology for convincing lower-class characters like Rabshake that they will one day be heirs to his power, when all they will get is an airing out.

The scene alerts us to the fact that Ward and Dansiker were not simply major characters whose respective tales of abjuration, compunction, and self-erasure served to caution English audiences against following in their footsteps. Instead, we are reminded that Daborne's fictional Ward and Dansiker were quite different from the historical Ward and Dansiker, who were lapsed Christians. The historical Ward and Dansiker's intermediary status as pirates had an unsettling appeal<sup>48</sup> for English audiences that the play attempts to appropriate and normalize. The historical Captains Ward and Dansiker sailed under the Ottoman flag, intimately acquainted with the poor earning opportunities in Europe that initially prompted their 'turning Turk.' In the Jacobean period, it was the looming threat of piracy that writers turned to in order to link the immorality of 'turning Turk' to the social disorder of threatening one's master. Even in the title of a text like *The Lives, Apprehensions, Arraignments, and Executions of the 19. Late Pyrates* (1610), we can tell how criminal biography is justified by an inevitable final punishment. The anonymous text deals with a number of pirates of noble origins who go to "see the state and fashions of forraine countries, and to inrich understanding with experience."<sup>49</sup> While travel and trade present opportunities abroad, the moral parable ends by reminding its reader that these noblemen have reconstituted themselves as 'pirates' – an absolute and unalterable classification that will ultimately damns them.

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<sup>48</sup> "Although much attention was focused on the scandal of Ward's conversion to Islam, the pamphlets that publicized his exploits were equally focused on the economic losses sustained by England as a result of his piracy." Gil Harris 2004, 153.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, Sig. A3.

Even as the play chastens Ward and Dansiker for abjuring their faith and betraying their countrymen, we are reminded that their intermediary position as Europeans-by-birth, yet Turks-by-choice, more closely resembles the fictional Rabshake than either the play's Ward or Dansiker. As such, reading why Rabshake more closely resembles the historical figures that are supposed to be the putatively 'major' players in this drama allows us to interpret how the play uses its 'minor', intermediary servants.

We are reminded that in Rabshake's seeming indecision about whether to put his head in the noose or not, Daborne was using the trans-imperial servant to educate his audiences about the kinds of resistance to base servitude that could be staged – even if that resistance met with failure. In challenging Benwash - with the character of Pedringano, with his own equivocating logic, with a demand for proof that he be rewarded with jewels and made the Jew's heir – Rabshake stages the kinds of resistance that made trans-imperial servants such transfixing figures for English audiences. These actions serve as a call to outrage, if not Pedringano-like action, to the English audience. And in issuing this call, irrespective of its tragic consequences, Rabshake serves as a reminder for servants' social reform that audiences would not forget, even after the servant's death.

The place of Rabshake's resistance has to be regarded as the by-product of contradictions in and among his different subject-position. Although Rabshake wishes to lay claim to his master's logic and wealth, he is incapable of anticipating Benwash's response to such claims. As we are made aware in Benwash's substituting of an 'airing' for an 'heiring,' to be forcibly reminded that a dependant part of oneself suddenly recognizes itself as having independent power and strength provokes a unique kind of

misanthropy. Rabshake's death is occasioned once this misanthropy manifests itself. This revelation is the resistance that the trans-imperial servant offers.

The experience that the audience gains in watching Rabshake, who has lived the contradictions of being empowered as a trans-imperial mediator, yet hanged for being an unfaithful Turk servant, does allow them to experience facets of their own subjectification at shifting internal distances. Through Rabshake, audiences sympathetic to his plight read one fragment of their own ideological inscription by means of another. A reflexive knowledge so partial and unstable may, nevertheless, provide subjects with a means of empowerment as agents. Rabshake is subjectified as a locus of audience consciousness about social conditions that ultimately exceed their comprehension or control.

The discrepancies between Christian/English principles and praxes are made prominent by characters like Rabshake, who are forced by economic necessity and opportunity to flee to the Ottoman Empire, where the malleability of individual identity is subject to the tenets of a more catholic religion - profit.<sup>50</sup> In response to Agar's question of whether he would consider converting to Christianity, Rabshake scoffs that they "already have Jew enough in 'em." "They shall have more charity amongst 'em first!"<sup>51</sup> before he would even consider accepting Christianity. Rabshake's remarks are noteworthy because they come from a servant to, and observer of, both Christian and Jewish masters. Given this privileged position, his deflation of religious stereotyping is contrapuntal because these very religious stereotypes are reinforced through the play's other noble, master class characters. The effect of conflating the stereotypical greediness

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<sup>50</sup> This philosophy is succinctly explained by the Tunisian governor's exhortations to Ward to convert. He explains that different religious beliefs have no intrinsic superiority over one another. If anything, the financial success of the Turks should prove that God is more inclined to their religious beliefs.

<sup>51</sup> 2.2.61-2.

that is associated with Jews with Christians who already demonstrate this quality allows Rabshake's remarks to become a more generalized critique about penury rather than about Christian/Jewish difference. If anything, hearing a critique about Christian greed from the mouth of a Jewish servant emphasizes that the stereotypes cannot stand independently of vested motive.

Rabshake's voice registered the complaints which would have signaled to Daborne's audiences that his concerns corresponded to those poor Londoners who were constantly in debt because of rapacious lawyers and creditors. Interestingly, these complaints are not voiced by Ward and Gallop, the two Englishman on the stage, but rather through Rabshake and a number of similarly nationless, servant-class characters. In scene ten, for example, a dialogue takes place between two unnamed sailors who are debating whether to rob Benwash or not. The first one says, "There's no remedy that which makes waiting-women punks, and captains panders, that causeth decayed gentlemen become solicitors, and bankrupt citizens sergeants, that makes us thieves – necessity, that which hath no law on's side."<sup>52</sup> He continues, "we were bred in a country that had the charity to whip begging out of us when we were young, and for starving, manhood denies it. You know what must necessarily follow."<sup>53</sup> The sailor's complaints - about poverty at 'home', the insufficiency of laws to protect the poor, and the necessity of going abroad to make one's fortunes by hook or crook - recall Rabshake's earlier lines. These sailors are similar to Rabshake because they are servants whose concerns about poverty are exacerbated by ruthless masters who are afforded protection 'at home' by the

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<sup>52</sup> 10.202.

<sup>53</sup> The Poor Law acts of 1598 and 1601 outlawed begging and authorized cash payments to the old, blind, lame and feeble. But, as Paul Slack observes, "the uneven enforcement of the statutes meant that they met only with partial success." Slack, Paul. *Poverty and Policy in Tudor and Stuart England*. London and New York: Addison Wesley, 1988. 29, 84, 126-7.

law. The other thing that both Rabshake and these men had in common was the fact that they belonged to a masterless group – itself a threat to the social order. During the Jacobean period, there was a moral opprobrium attached to an inability to earn one's living. Working always implied having a master, belonging to a community, and otherwise remaining in sight and hence under control. As A.L. Beier points out in *Masterless Men*, the main danger posed in allowing beggars to roam about was the appearance of rootlessness.<sup>54</sup>

*A Christian Turnd Turk* imagines how this servant class of characters might vocalize and seek to redress complaints which were uncomfortably English - complaints<sup>55</sup> about material and legal insufficiency through access to the wealth, and the opportunities afforded for the same in the Ottoman Empire. Uncomfortably reminiscent of Henry Lello's relationship with Thomas Dallam, Rabshake's struggle with Benwash represented the conflicts between those who sought to escape English hierarchies of authority in the Ottoman Empire and those who clung to those hierarchies as the only remnant of self-identification. In Rabshake's case, his struggle is to believe that he can identify himself as his own master; but his reality is that he cannot escape the kinds of recognizably English hierarchies of master-servant relations that inexplicably show up in the Ottoman Empire.

The first sailor from scene ten also acknowledges that labels of 'Christian' and 'Jew' have little relevance when Christians do not demonstrate the charity that makes

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<sup>54</sup> Beier, A.L., *Masterless Men*. Methuen, London, 1985, 146, 86.

<sup>55</sup> The imagery of 'Thievingen' (the utopian commonwealth for England's displaced workers found in Samuel Rid's anti-vagrant text, Martin Markall (1610)) alludes to the liberating possibilities made available to England's laboring classes through travel and colonial migration. "Drawing on Rid's analogy, several early modern literary texts described England's poor as a colonized culture by likening an exploration of the domestic underclass to travel to a distant, foreign country." For more, see Netzloff 2003, 5.

them different from ‘greedy Jews.’ He advises the second sailor that they might consider robbing hospitals, “[but], our betters have made that a monopoly, but to steal from a rich Jew – it is no more sin then to unload a weary ass.” Jonathan Burton interprets the nameless sailor’s intent to rob Benwash as avoiding the taint of Islam by robbing the Jew instead. He opines that, “In effect, treating the Jew no better than a “weary ass” preserves the Christianity of Englishmen<sup>56</sup> struggling to survive in an alien market dependent upon Jewish translators, merchants, counselors, shopkeepers, and money-lenders.”<sup>57</sup>

I would point out that the Jew is not necessarily stereotyped as rapacious, according to the sailor’s observations. Rather, he describes Benwash as ‘weary’ because the Jew is weighed down by his ducats. According to the preposterous opportunities for wealth accumulation offered in the Ottoman Empire, to rob him is to lighten his load; economic leveling takes place not according to who one is (the sailors don’t speak of robbing Benwash, but rather ‘a rich Jew’), but what one is willing to do for wealth.

While the play’s characterizations of Ward and Dansiker’s ultimately failed Christian redemption hinges on the reinforcement of stereotypes of pan-Christian unity - the conniving Turk, and the rapacious Jew - the dialogue of the intermediary characters who practically act on behalf of these Oriental figures reveal fissures in this polemic. Rabshake and the sailor’s generalized dissatisfaction with Christian (Re: English) failure to provide for its poor despite the play’s pan-Christian affiliations of moral superiority trouble the valence of the play’s master class polemic.

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<sup>56</sup> The play does not give any indication of whether the sailors are English or not. I agree with Burton that they probably are. But only because their complaints about the unfairness of court practices belie a lower class anxiety that was peculiarly English; not because the sailors are necessarily representatives of Christianity or Englishness.

<sup>57</sup> Burton 2005, 218.

Rabshake shares the same dissatisfaction as the historical Ward and the nameless sailors of the play. But instead of finding his ambitions rewarded, Rabshake is punished for his gullibility in believing that the Turk will reward him in a way that the uncharitable Christians will not. Meanwhile, the fictional Ward is ennobled to a master-class character whose ultimate punishment is the lament of religious abjuration. As Gerald Maclean succinctly puts it, “Ward cannot not be an Englishman by the end of the play.”<sup>58</sup> The nobility that English theater-going audiences attributed to Ward was kept intact because it was the same sort of ennobled power and wealth that lent prestige to the play’s patrons.<sup>59</sup> Instead, Ward’s actual status as servant was passed along to Rabshake, who was punished as all servants with upwardly mobile social aspirations should have been.

This tension between a servant’s involvement by proxy and his personal accountability is continually counterbalanced. Despite Rabshake’s assertion that he has served as a faithful servant, the suspicion that he has prostituted Agar never leaves Benwash’s mind. When Rabshake and Benwash are spying on Agar and Gallop immediately before the lovers are confronted and killed, Gallop complains about Rabshake’s role in facilitating the encounter between the two lovers, but not alerting him about the imminent danger of detection. He describes Rabshake is described as a pimp who is “committing a sin in conceit, whilst we are at it in action.”<sup>60</sup> While Benwash and the now-nervous Rabshake listen in, Gallop goes to note, “Hath he [Rabshake] the two qualities of an usher, a good ear, and to endure cold of his feet?” Then Gallop goes even

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<sup>58</sup> MacLean 2004, 80.

<sup>59</sup> Gerald Maclean notes that the play’s reinvention of Ward enables Daborne to “represent Ward’s inevitable death in a morally uplifting, punitive climax following the pirate’s marriage to Voad...By shifting focus from Ward the pirate to Ward the Turk, Daborne constructs a politically convenient moral design similar to the ballads’ structure, one that invites audiences to imagine Ward already on the way to his tragic defeat from the very beginning of the play. This dramatic design efficiently forecloses any possibility of nationalist admiration for Ward’s heroic exploits and achievements.” MacLean 2004, 233.

<sup>60</sup> 16, 493.



one step further in saying that Rabshake comes from a line of such procurers, including his mother. Rabshake quivers to himself, “He’ll (Gallop) make the old Jew believe I was his wife’s bawd.”<sup>61</sup>

The logic that Rabshake threatens to “chop” with Benwash is as preposterous as the first sailor’s re-nomination of robbing the Jew as ‘assistance.’ Yet, both statements of justification reveal the tenuous position that servants have been placed in by their masters.

*A Christian Turnd Turk* counterpoises Rabshake’s role as mediatory servant to Benwash with Fidelio’s role as the same to Ward. Unlike Rabshake who had had former Christian, Turkish and (currently) Jewish masters, Fidelio is a dedicated defender of European, pan-Christian polemic.<sup>62</sup> We can ascribe this difference to the fact that her lines emphasize the stereotypically binary differences between Christians and Turks. When Crosman tries to tell Ward that there is no harm in turning Turk because God has manifestly shown His material favor to the Turks, Fidelio beseeches Ward, “It’s the denial of your redeemer, religion, country, of him that gave you being.”<sup>63</sup> Alizia’s lines treat *A Christian Turnd Turk*’s Ward in much the same way that popular ballads and sermons characterized the historical Ward - as an erstwhile hero whose apostasy doomed him. From behind the guise of a lowly page, Alizia’s words bespeak the play’s master

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<sup>61</sup> 16, 493.

<sup>62</sup> This transition from ‘Christendom’ to ‘Europe’, from a religious to a secular term of identification, did not involve the elimination of the Christian element. Profession of the Christian faith was still a necessary and important part of being European. The real extent of the change was in a general self-identification first with being ‘European’ and second with being ‘Christian.’ Turkish pressure during the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> centuries certainly stimulated this process. And historians like Trevor-Roper have also noted this trend in *The Rise of Christian Europe*. Trevor-Roper, Hugh. *The Rise of Christian Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965. Daborne’s play shows the belated English ‘catching up.’ See also Coles, Paul. *The Ottoman Impact on Europe*. London: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1968, 149.

<sup>63</sup> 15, 143.

class polemic warning all those who might admire the historical Ward against commerce with the Turk.

In contrast to Alizia, Rabshake is caught between the conflicting demands posed by Benwash and other authority figures. When Agar, who suspects that Benwash may be monitoring the progress of her intended tryst with Gallop, asks Rabshake to warn her should Benwash be watching, Rabshake wrestles with his intermediary predicament. “Nay I hold it the best course, too, [to keep a watchful eye on Benwash] for mine own safety,” Rabshake soliloquizes. “My charge is charged; my watch must be now, lest my master know it. If all the world were eyes, women (I see) would to it.”<sup>64</sup> Rabshake’s recognition of his own threatened position as a mediator whose charge is ‘charged’ against him forces him to protect himself before he carrying out Benwash’s orders. When Rabshake notices that Agar isn’t so vigilant, he continues to follow Benwash’s instructions to set up the tryst between her and Gallop. However, his recognition of women who seem to know when anyone might be spying on them, and his need to protect his own safety by keeping an eye on Benwash, derives from the vigilance that other dramatized trans-imperial servants felt as well<sup>65</sup>. Because Rabshake detects this vigilance in Kyd’s Pedringano as well, he cites this other servant to emphasize the shared anxieties of distrusted servants.

In contrast to Rabshake, who tries to determine whether his master’s equivocal promises come from being a Turk or being a Jew, Fidelio’s statement about ‘the hand of heaven’ imagines the elimination of all national differences between the play’s English

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<sup>64</sup> 6.134-6.

<sup>65</sup> Pedringano expresses this vigilance and his reliance on Lorenzo to safeguard him, in the lines “As for the fear of apprehension, / I know, if need should be, my noble Lord / Will stand between me and ensuing harms: / Besides, this place is free from all suspect.” Kyd, Thomas. *The Spanish Tragedy*. London: Edward Allde, 1592, 3.15-7.

and French characters in the cause of pan-European, Christian unity. We remember that in becoming Ward's page, she hides both French nationality as well as her noble status. This is a significant literary interpolation since, historically, the French were one of England's chief competitors for Ottoman trade capitulations.<sup>66</sup> The French also had a history of amicable interactions, compared to England,<sup>67</sup> with the Sublime Porte. So to imagine a French woman trying to convince a English pirate not to convert must have seemed fairly odd to Daborne's audience members. In the play, Ward's religious fate becomes a larger issue than just the threat of a single Christian turning Turk. Like the fictional Ward himself, his religious conversion represents something larger, something of trans-imperial interest and significance.

The juxtaposition between Alizia's council to Ward not to trust the word of a Turkish woman and Rabshake's council to Benwash not to test the fidelity of a Turkish woman indicates how two different varieties of subordinated characters - servants and women - were viewed as similar types of threats and eliminated as soon as they had served their usefulness.

*A Christian Turnd Turk* imagines that these intermediaries, once they actually exerted their influence to affect Christian-Turkish relations, became threatening to

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<sup>66</sup> In March 1586, when English ambassador to Constantinople, William Harborne sent his secretary, Edward Barton, to greet the newly-arrived French ambassador to Constantinople, Savary de Lincosme with a Latin address of welcome that began 'My Master, the Ambassador,' the French Ambassador broke in a rage. Exclaiming, 'Ambassador! Why he is a merchant, your master, Ambassador! I know only one Ambassador at the Porte, and that is myself; out of this at once, and tell your master that he had better mind his trade and not usurp titles like these, or I'll have him drummed out of the place.' Susan Skilliter notes that Barton, greatly disturbed, left without a word. And when he reported back, Harborne responded to the Frenchmen's reaction by noting, 'I think that he won't be quite strong enough to turn me out.' And while Harborne was ultimately correct, he also understood is *arriviste* status in the eyes of the established French consul. Skilliter 1977, 38.

<sup>67</sup> The traditional policy of France had been to encourage the Ottoman Empire to get involved with the adversaries of France, act in concert with the Ottomans when French interests required it, yet never enter into a formal alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Ottoman dispatches had been sent to France. These were "envoys" recruited from heralds, men trained the Palace, or chamberlains.

Jacobean policies towards the Ottoman Empire. Interestingly, in the same year that *A Christian Turn'd Turk* was performed, King James had issued a general pardon for English pirates. The reasons for this are manifold,<sup>68</sup> but what is important to note is that Venetian ambassador, Antonio Foscarini reported that many of the English pirates who were offered this pardon refused to accept it because “in the present state of peace they could not maintain themselves in England.” The statement is a telling reminder of one of the play’s preoccupations – the lack of economic opportunity and legal protection for the mercantile classes in Jacobean England – and the guise of promoting the interests of the upwardly mobile, lower classes even as those interests threatened hegemonic interests.

The fact that Rabshake’s punishment comes at the hands of a Jewish convert allows the play to dwell on an upper class anxiety. It is the anxiety about Jews and Turks being allies and interchangeable enemies to Christian traders. The creation of Abraham Benwash as a bogeyman who conflated both of these English fears about Jews and Turks in the Ottoman Empire reveals the upper-class stakes of imagining the Turk as being an inexplicably rapacious trading partner. Richard Wilson makes a similar observation about Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*. Noting how Barabas’<sup>69</sup> confoundingly splits his loyalties to both Christian and Turkish allies contributes to his malevolence in the eyes of wealthy, English theater-goers, Wilson writes, “Perhaps only an elite would recognize the

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<sup>68</sup> Gerald Maclean points out that James was seeking peace with Catholic Spain, and offered the pardon to the pirates as a means of facilitating this peace. The pardon would also add an estimated three thousand mariners back to the royal navy. Besides this, James’ navy had proven incapable of stopping them by force, since the Grand Duke of Tuscany allowed them to operate from Livorno. MacLean 2004, 231.

<sup>69</sup> Daniel Vitkus, in his introduction to the play, also notes the similarity between Benwash and Barabas. “Marlowe’s Barabas is an important model for Daborne’s Benwash, especially in the scene during which his house burns down. Benwash’s concern for his wife and his wealth are a rewriting of Barabas’s frenzied concern for his daughter and his ducats. But Benwash is not a father figure like Barabas or Shylock; rather, he is a husband and a cuckold. The erotic significance of conversion to Islam is high-lighted in his own conversion.” Ibid, 37. An author’s choice of what anti-Turk stereotype to highlight distinguished his ‘Turk’ play from others.

extent to which Marlowe's Barabas figures the identification of England's global strategy with international Jewish finance.”<sup>70</sup>

Without belying the fact that it is Ward's success as a pirate and not his Turkish conversion that is most unsettling to those upper-class masters who already acknowledged the need for such heterogeneous, trans-imperial subjects, the play tries to pass off Ward's religious conversion as his mark of failure by linking it to his gullibility. The historical Ward of course faced no such quandary. But the fictional Rabshake does. Rabshake has the chance to become the heir to Benwash's fortunes, but his inability to read the Turk as being ultimately duplicitous damns his social aspirations. This tragedy - of Rabshake's dashed dreams for profit - and not that of an ennobled Ward committing suicide, is the play's reflection upon Captain John Ward, intermediary between England and the Ottoman Empire. Rabshake's ability to analyze and profit from the actions of all his masters – Ward, Agar, and Benwash – shows the extent to which this seemingly utilitarian character enables the relationships of all the play's upper class characters. Rabshake's punishment, for his doubts about the ultimately unknowable Jew-turned-Turk-reverted-Jew, is the play's clearest indication of how Benwash shows peculiarly upper-class English anxieties about the rapid advancement of the intermediary servants' influence in the Levant. The deaths of Rabshake and Alizia are evidence of this imagined discipline, which conglomerated the class struggle between male patriarchy and all of its subordinated challengers (including women, Turk, Jews, and intermediaries who could be all of the previous.)

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<sup>70</sup> Wilson, Richard. “Another Country: Marlowe and the Go-Between” in Hofele and von Koppels 2005, 179.

To see a figure like Benwash equivocate his identity as both<sup>71</sup> a Jew and a Turk represented the worst English nightmares about split identities (not only in Benwash's polymorphous personality, but also in his conglomeration of England's two cultural bogeymen.) To see a figure like Rabshake react and be punished in response to this equivocation reveals more about English anxieties about the Ottoman Empire than even the historical Ward could reveal. Such a reading provides some motive behind the need to re-write history<sup>72</sup> and to have both Ward and Dansiker die as repentant Christians. This fear about hybridity lies at the root of the Ward/Dansiker tragedy.<sup>73</sup> The two fictional pirates have trusted the Turk too foolishly, and as a punishment they must immolate their own identities and allegiances in order to stave off any future abjuration.<sup>74</sup> Barbara Fuchs notes something similar when she writes:

“The disclosure of Ward's betrayal of sensitive knowledge at the end of the play reveals the text's real stakes: minimizing the role of the European pirates as double agents vis-à-vis the supreme perfidy of their final conversion. This postponement displaces the narrative's moral and ideological thrust from the troubling technological exchanges that the renegado effects to the religious exchange that ultimately damns him. The emphasis on placing Ward so firmly beyond the bounds of a Christian community as a renegado, however, suggests a kind of textual retribution for the pirate's cultural duplicity. Ward's pitiful death exemplifies precisely that representation of the renegade subject's fragility that I discussed above: although he might betray England, the text suggests, he cannot be allowed to survive his betrayal.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> In fact, one might also note that in needing to equivocate the difference between ‘Jew’ and ‘Turk’, the representation of Benwash was effacing its own particularly English anxieties – namely, that a Jew could not be a Turk. Other European nations were quite used to the Jew as a loyal Turkish subject (e.g.: Solomon Ashkenazi, the physicians in the Sultan's retinue, etc.)

<sup>72</sup> On the same topic, see Gerald Maclean, who writes, “Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* exemplifies a key feature of what we might call Ottoman citationality, the tendency to correct, revise, and re-write the history of what life inside the Ottoman empire meant.” MacLean 2004, 246.

<sup>73</sup> This same fear also fueled interest in figures like Captain Thomas Stukeley. See *The Battle of Alcazar* by George Peele, and the anonymous *Captain Thomas Stukeley*.

<sup>74</sup> One might even say that this is the anxiety that runs through Othello's mind as well.

<sup>75</sup> Barbara Fuchs, “Faithless Empires: Pirates, Renegadoes, and the English Nation.” *ELH*, 67.1 (2000) 52.

### **The Renegado<sup>76</sup> (1630)**

*The Renegado*'s central plot threads involve the return of two male protagonists to the Christian fold after being tempted by Turkish wealth and sensual delights. Vitelli, the Italian nobleman who has disguised himself as a merchant in order to locate his kidnapped sister in Tunis, temporarily falls under the romantic influence of Donusa, the niece of Sultan Amurath. Meanwhile, Grimaldi, the pirate who has enriched the Turk, is forced to re-evaluate his own apostasy after falling out of favor with Asambeg, the viceroy of Tunis. Francisco, the Jesuit priest, affects a return to faith for both men. Francisco helps Vitelli resist Donusa's sexual allure and her attempts to turn him Turk. With the help of Francisco, Vitelli is able to convert Donusa and have her baptized. The priest also convinces Grimaldi to repent his apostasy, and arrange the means of conveyance for the play's Christian and Christianized characters. Poetically, Grimaldi uses the very laden ships that he had once plundered for the Turk to return the Christian women and their men to Europe. The play ends with Asambeg dreading the prospects of explaining to Sultan Amurath how his niece converted and fled to Europe with both the Turk's captives and booty.

By recognizing the inherent appeal of the Turk, the play affects the sorts of conversions (or affected resistances to conversion) that seemingly downplay Christian/Turk difference and instead emphasize patriarchal and class-based similarities. Critics like Jonathan Burton and Barbara Fuchs have already provided insightful analysis into the play's exploration of patriarchal critique.<sup>77</sup> However, neither has exhaustively

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<sup>76</sup> All textual references are taken from *Three Turk Plays*. Ed. Daniel Vitkus. New York: Columbia UP, 2000.

<sup>77</sup> For more on the conjunction between emasculated, Christian authority and the threat posed by the Turkish woman, see Jonathan Burton's *Traffic and Turning*. Burton writes, "In short, hierarchical gender

pursued the class-based implications of a very similar subordination of the play's servant characters.

The play overlaps the subordination of its female characters with the subordination of its servant characters at several crucial instances. Most prominently, these trans-imperial servants include the maidservant, Manto, the English-born eunuch, Carazie, and the aspiring merchant, Gazet. When Mustafa suspects that Donusa has surrendered her virginity to Vitelli, he corners Manto. In a moment very reminiscent of Lorenzo's intimidation of Pedringano in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Francisco and Ward's intimidation of Rabshake in *A Christian Turnd Turk*, and Governor Phyllipo's intimidation of Piston in *Soliman and Perseda*, Mustafa pressures the servant into revealing private details of her mistress's bedchamber. Mustapha holds Manto under the threat of his sword, calls her 'my lady's cabinet-key' (or the source of what Donusa keeps hidden or away), and asks her who has wooed Donusa away from him. He then baldly asks Manto, "Has she given it up?"<sup>78</sup> When Manto admits that she has, the servant is rewarded with jewels for her betrayal of Donusa. If in earlier plays, military conquest was imagined in conjunction with female conquest, here it is Turkish female surrender that obviates the need for Christian military conquest. Since the sphere of conflict between Christians and Turks has apparently shifted from the battlefield to the boudoir, the voice of the trans-imperial mediator changes as well. By having Mustafa's worst suspicions about the loss of Turkish military and sexual power to the Christian confirmed

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roles are restored not only at the expense of Muslim masculinity but also at the expense of powerful women who were understood as no less threatening to patriarchal sovereignty." Burton 2005, 115. For more on gender and *The Renegado*, see Fuchs 2000.

<sup>78</sup> 5.2.84.



by a female mediator of Donusa's, *The Renegado* prepares its audience for the recuperation of Manto, the unfaithful 'Turk' servant - as twice Christianized.

Manto's unfaithful or 'Turk' service to her Turk mistress is redeemed by the assistance the servant renders to Francisco in rescuing the Christianized Donusa from prison. Manto operates as pseudo fifth-column presence within Asambeg's own palace. Because she had betrayed the news of Donusa's lost virginity to Mustafa, Manto assures Francisco, it will be easier for her to gain access to the imprisoned couple: "I am familiar with the guard; beside, it being known it was I that betrayed him, my entrance hardly will of them be questioned!"<sup>79</sup> Manto uses her reputation as an unfaithful, 'Turk' servant to facilitate her mistress's Christian escape; the play dramatizes how the malleability of the trans-imperial servant's Turkish quality of unfaithfulness can be converted to normalized ends if she can be imagined re-deploying her mediatory powers for Christian service. Manto's decision to return to Europe, along with Donusa, further confirms the play's appropriation of its trans-imperial mediators as part of the imaginative process for recuperating the Turk, rather than imagining his/her destruction.

At the beginning of scene two, Donusa asks Carazie to compare the status of women in England as compared to women in the Ottoman realm.<sup>80</sup> Like Bordello and Rabshake before him, Carazie has traveled to England and is willing to share his cross-cultural insights. Carazie, like a number of trans-imperial, mediating servants, responds by confirming the very cross-cultural images that interest his master. He replies that

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<sup>79</sup> 5.5.30-2

<sup>80</sup> Jonathan Burton notes that this desire "subtly but effectively forecloses on English women's appeals for greater liberties, Donusa's statement is characteristic of the period's antifeminism that figured women's protests as not only unnatural but also unchristian." Burton notes that this was a common concern – the fact "that women had regularly and strenuously opposed patriarchal consent", and would continue to do so unless checked. See Burton 2005, 107.

women in England live like ‘queens.’<sup>81</sup> “Your country ladies have liberty to hawk, to hunt, to feast, to give free entertainment to all comers, to talk, to kiss; there’s no such thing known there as an Italian girdle. Your city dame, without leave, wears the breeches, has her husband at as much command as her ‘prentice, and if need be can make him cuckold by her father’s copy.”<sup>82</sup> Carazie also explains to Donusa that the English court lady is allowed to have a “private friend” besides her husband because “they’ve [the English] grown of late so learned that they maintain a strange position, which their lords with all their wit cannot confute.” They are allowed this ‘private friend’ to ‘ease their husband.’ This has become so much the norm that ‘they have drawn a bill to this good purpose and, the next assembly, doubt not to pass it.’<sup>83</sup>

Carazie’s speech<sup>84</sup> is a none-too-subtle critique of both English noblemen (who can be easily cuckolded) and English noblewomen, who not only manipulate their men, but are perhaps a bit too licentious themselves. The scene works on several levels. At the audience level, Carazie’s speech would have elicited laughter for its lampooning of English moral failings. At the same time, it would have given audiences a satisfactory pleasure in seeing the Turkish admire the exotic appeal of English culture. The effect that Carazie’s speech has on Donusa is to whet her appetite for further contact with Christians.

Donusa’s desire to know how her English counterparts are treated is tied to her sexual frustrations. “Our jealous Turks never permit their fair wives to be seen but at the

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<sup>81</sup> As Daniel Vitkus points out, ‘queen’ is also a homonym of ‘quean’ or the slang term for a whore.

<sup>82</sup> 25-35

<sup>83</sup> 42-47

<sup>84</sup> As Ania Loomba points out, the English women in Carazie’s account are carnivalesque figures, performing acts and enjoying privileges ordinarily reserved for men. Their bodies, like their speech, defy men’s rule and circulate without restriction. Yet, like the figures of carnival, the ascendancy of English women is figured as an unnatural inversion whereby masters are treated like apprentices and women wear men’s breeches. Cited in Burton 2005, 106.

public bagnios or the mosques, and even then, veiled and guarded,” she complains. And she encourages Carazie to “be free and merry,” because she is “no severe mistress.” So although the Turkish mistress expresses her desire for exchanging places with a Christian woman, it is the trans-imperial subject’s testimony that converts that desire into an actual religious conversion.

Massinger’s dramatization of Carazie, like his dramatization of Manto, pivots on the normalization of the servant’s Turkish qualities. Although Carazie makes fun of English lords and ladies, the effect of his description is more in line with the play’s imperial fantasies – that England had replaced the Ottoman Empire, as the most desired seat of culture and religious freedom. At the end of the play, Carazie, like Manto, says as much.

When Carazie is asked at the end of the play whether he chooses to stay as Asambeg’s servant or accompany his mistress, Donusa, back to Italy, he responds by saying, “I ll be gelded twice first; Hang him that stays behind”<sup>85</sup> Being made a eunuch once is enough for the former Englishman. *The Renegado* proposes to its audience that the value of a servant like Carazie rests in his new role to use his trans-imperial knowledge to preserve hegemonic order.

The third trans-imperial mediator who should be assisting the Ottomans, but who ultimately escapes along with Vitelli and Donusa, is Gazet. As Vitelli’s business proxy, Gazet is enamored of his own favorable position after Vitelli is shown preferential treatment by Donusa. And for half of the play, the gullible Englishman seems to be following in Carazie’s footsteps – towards a plush position in the sultan’s household, but at the cost of his manhood.

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<sup>85</sup> 42-3

Gazet asks Carazie, “What places of credit (Turkish offices) are there (for purchase in Tunis)?” Carazie says, “There’s your beglerbeg<sup>86</sup>.” Gazet responds, “By no means that: it comes too near the beggar, and most prove so that come here.”<sup>87</sup> Next, Carazie suggests a ‘sanzacke’.<sup>88</sup> Gazet again puns, “Sans jack!”<sup>89</sup> Fie, none of that.” Next Carazie mentions the chiaus<sup>90</sup>, the chief gardener, and all those Turkish servants who are accredited. Gazet rejects the purchase of each honorable office, until Carazie mentions his own position, as a eunuch. He assures Gazet that all he needs to part with is “a precious stone or two,” which Gazet assumes to mean the jewelry that he is willing to ‘change’ for a place at court. The advantage of being a eunuch, Carazie promises, is that Gazet will not only get to serve a Turkish mistress, but “lie” with her as well. The scene ends with Gazet agreeing to become a eunuch and being led off stage by Carazie.

Like Carazie’s scene with Donusa, this scene draws its dramatic potency from a humorous critique of the English desire for excess. The humor of the scene connects the gullibility of lower-class desire for the financial opportunities offered in the Ottoman Empire to the ignorance of what price that entails (in this case, Gazet’s punning, linguistic ignorance of what he claims to desire.) The play dramatizes how lower-class desire for the wealth and sexual license offered in the Ottoman Empire is controlled through the threat of emasculation. And in doing so, *The Renegado* alerts its audience to

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<sup>86</sup> - The governor of an Ottoman province; next in dignity to a Grand Vizier.

<sup>87</sup> 3.4.35-7

<sup>88</sup> A military governor of second grade.

<sup>89</sup> Gazet’s pun ‘sans jack’ means ‘without a penis.’ Daniel Vitkus mentions in his introductory footnotes to the play that Massinger had relied on George Sandys’ *Relation* as an important source material. Some audience members might also have been familiar with Sandys’ work. But the audience would also laugh at the English ‘without a penis’ reference even if they didn’t know the Turkish word.

<sup>90</sup> Vitkus explains that a chiaus was “a Turkish diplomatic title (from ‘chaus’ meaning messenger) but understood by Gazet to mean a swindler or cheat. The English word “chause” originated in the scheme of a fraudulent Turk who arrived in London in 1609, claiming to have come as a ‘chiaus’ or messenger from the Turkish court. He was received royally and succeeded in swindling London merchants.” Vitkus 2000, 343.

the ways in which a trans-imperial mediator like Carazie could be used to regulate lower-class ambition in England.

Just as it seems that Asambeg will add a new English eunuch to add to his retinue, Gazet's castration is interrupted by his own discovery of what's about to take place and the simultaneous cry that Donusa and Vitelli have been imprisoned. Gazet, who had earlier been hopeful of Turkish favor is converted, like Vitelli and Grimaldi, into a repentant Christian. He laments to Francisco:

“[In the Ottoman Empire] your rich heir seems to mourn for a miserable father; your young widow, following a bedrid husband to his grave, would have her neighbors think she cries and roars that she must part with such a Goodman doing nothing, when ‘tis because he stays so long above the ground and hinders a rich suitor. All is come out, sir. We are smoked for being cunny-catchers<sup>91</sup>: my master is put in prison; his she-customer is under guard, too. These are things to weep for; but mine own loss considered, and what a fortune I have had, as they say, snatched out of my chops, would make a man run mad.”<sup>92</sup>

The equivalency that Gazet wished to establish with Vitelli at the social level is neutralized by the desire to retain his masculinity. Gazet avoids the fate of the eunuch, Carazie, but he cannot rise above his present social position, much less become Vitelli's equal. Gazet's discovery of what his social ambitions will cost him is immediately connected to the opportunity to return him along with Vitelli and Donusa. And the play ends with the Christian servant begrudgingly admitting that the prospects of a return to Europe are far more preferable to the price required to gain promotion among the Turks.

In these later, Jacobean Turk plays, ‘home’ is the place to which one returns once one has compared the manifest social and financial opportunities in the Ottoman Empire, and found them lacking, if not outright threatening. In imagining a ‘return’ to Europe,

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<sup>91</sup> Vitkus footnotes this word to mean “swindlers, but also seducers of women. ‘Cunny’ or ‘coney’ (literally, a rabbit) was a slang term for either a simple-minded, easily-tricked person, or a woman as sexual object. Vitkus 2000, 308.

<sup>92</sup> 4.2.135-147.

plays like *A Christian Turn'd Turk* and *The Renegado* were able to make English social and class surveillance into a 'Turkish' matter; it became easier to regulate social discontent at home when to disobey one's domestic masters became a matter of national safety and not merely class discontent.

*The Renegado* is self-aware about giving prominent roles to those trans-imperial mediators who were gaining social prominence in England: the merchant, the domestic servant, and even the Turkish captive who was returning to Christendom. By dramatizing how these mediating servants now serve in the recovery efforts from the Turkish servitude, *The Renegado* co-opts these servants as part of the hegemonic idea of an English nation. The trans-imperial subject who is supposed to serve as a mediator for Ottoman interests instead makes the play's Christian characters privy to knowledge that will eventually frustrate the Turk.

*The Renegado* would thus have been more recognizable to English audiences, who would have been reminded of double-edged sword of advancement – that if serving one's masters and serving one's nation was part of the same undertaking, then imagining England as a hegemonic power equal to the Ottoman Empire required a promotion of the trans-imperial servants; a promotion that English masters did not truly believe in.

*The Renegado's* self-awareness of this tension reminds us of how changing English definitions of the cultural Turk required uncomfortable changes in normalizing the trans-imperial, 'Turk' servant. Like Mason's Eunuchus, Manto and Carazie are exchanged as servants between their Christian and Turk masters. Asambeg gives the two servants to Paulina as a means of winning her favor. As in the case of Eunuchus, both servants compare their former and current masters; and the comparisons don't paint any

appreciable advantage of serving a Christian master over a Turk one. Once Paulina has these two Turkish servants at her disposal, she warns them about betraying her, as Manto has already betrayed Donusa. Paulina tells them, “Farther off, and in that distance know your duties, too. You were bestowed on me as slaves to serve me and not as spies to pry into my actions and after to betray me. You shall find if any look of mine be unobserved, I am not ignorant of a mistress’s power and from whom I receive it.”<sup>93</sup> Paulina’s threat makes her an interesting foil to Donusa, the mistress who had once encouraged these same servants to “be free and merry” in sharing information about their previous masters, because she was “no severe mistress.” In private, the servants berate their new mistress. Carazie notes that Donusa never used them in this way. He calls Paulina “a proud, little devil.”<sup>94</sup> Manto is a bit more forbearing. He tells herself, “I must be patient, and though ten times a day she tears these locks or makes this face her footstool, ‘tis but justice.”<sup>95</sup>

Privately, Paulina explains to Francisco that “outward pride” is counterfeited “to these appointed to attend me, I am not in disposition altered.”<sup>96</sup> Even though Paulina distinguishes herself as a woman unaltered from a merciful Christian disposition that she must nevertheless keep hidden, *The Renegado* leaves us no more convinced than *The Turke* that the play’s master characters are that different from one another. We are bothered by the fact that Paulina is about to betray Asambeg with the very trusted servants he has put in her charge. And given Paulina’s duplicity with Asambeg and these two servants, it is very difficult to judge the veracity of her admission to Francisco – that her cruelty is only counterfeited.

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<sup>93</sup> 50-57.

<sup>94</sup> 65-7.

<sup>95</sup> 65-7.

<sup>96</sup> 5.2.75-77.

Christian victory is secured because the Turks are not wise enough to trust their own intelligence; while the Christians actually profit from that intelligence.<sup>97</sup> Given the fact that trans-imperial subjects were historically the first source for English knowledge of the Ottoman Empire, Jacobean and post-Jacobean Turk plays like *The Renegado* fantasized about how a shift in power between England and Turkey would happen through these very same trans-imperial mediators betraying their Turkish masters in favor of their Christian (English masters.)

Unlike earlier Elizabethan Turk plays like *Selimus, the Turk* and *Tamburlaine* that fantasized about the destruction of the Turk in fields of battle, the post-Elizabethan *The Renegado* instead imagines the Turk's disempowerment through the empowerment of his servants. At the same time, the play alerts us to the uncomfortable tensions that existed in England about servants that, just a generation earlier were suspected of 'Turkish' unfaithfulness, as socially acceptable and necessary contributors to the English nation.

Examining the role of the trans-imperial servant allows us to see the importance of the Jacobean Turk play's minor characters in disassembling the polemical value of its major characters. As an act of contrition for turning Turk, Grimaldi, the titular renegado of the play, steals back the wealth that he had won for Asambeg, and offers both his ship and navigational expertise in providing an escape route to all of the play's Christian characters. He goes from the financial favor that Gazet dreams of to the spiritual morass

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<sup>97</sup> Jonathan Burton makes a similar observation, when he writes, that *The Renegado*, "while seeing the Empire as a dangerous locale, justifies that Christians have the capability of not only surviving that danger, but actually profiting from it, spiritually and financially." Burton 2005, 113.



that Francisco warns Vitelli about. His plight shows the effects of what might happen to a nobleman like Vitelli if he possessed a servant like Gazet's ambition.<sup>98</sup>

Jacobean Turk plays' fluency with many of the familiar markers of Turkishness allowed them to imagine the roles of the Turk and the trans-imperial subject as equally appropriable during the Jacobean period. This is in marked contrast to the anxieties evidenced in earlier Elizabethan plays, which aligned the intermediary's inscrutability with that of the Turk. In their characterization of the Turk as an enemy mastered, rather than simply understood, these plays imagine Christian victory through a incorporation, rather than a suppression, of the threat that the cultural Turk and the Christian-servant-turned-Turk posed.

The changing figure of the Turk allowed English audiences to consider social changes at home. So one of the broader contexts of reading a character like Amada from *The Turke* or Manto from *The Renegado* is to see how representations of 'Turk' maidservants who engineer various forms of inversion belong to a larger debate about the nature of women's traditional roles in a society that was in a process of diversification and change. Maidservants who were cast in Turk settings could be deployed to elicit questions about the inferior places that had been assigned to women by a patriarchal order that was itself coming under increasing scrutiny. The affiliation of stable social roles at home with the de-stabilized figure of the Turk helped to test beliefs about the close relationship between character and rank. And that why one of the primary

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<sup>98</sup> Jonathan Gil Harris has also read *The Renegado* as a play whose major interests are reflected in the play's subordinate characters. Gil Harris writes, "Massinger's fantasy of Christians' castration in North Africa suggests how the eunuch could serve as a figure not only for Oriental despotic jouissance but also for Christian fantasies of transnational economic competition. Inasmuch as *The Renegado* presents castration as a pervasive Turkish threat, all the play's male Christian characters are potential eunuchs. Gil Harris 2003, 158.

responses of the subordinated groups in this struggle was to participate in this epistemic production of the Turk as a sub-cultural product – a collective product of their own dense sociability, even in the apparent service of their masters.

By focusing on these master-servant relations, it becomes possible to read the Mediterranean, Barbary, and Levantine setting of these plays differently. These settings were putatively chosen because one might expect to find actual Turks there, but they might have also been chosen because the porous boundaries that were associated with these cities made it easier for dramatists to emphasize the mobility and importance of minor characters to the hegemonic resolution of the play. Cultural critic, Emily Hicks reminds us how Mediterranean go-betweens thrived on the ambivalence of porous borders.<sup>99</sup> Dramatists like John Mason, Robert Daborne, and Philip Massinger set their plays in cities known for their porous borders in order to show how the entry of Turks into Christian lands was the product of two-way traffic between various classes of masters and servants who were antipathetic to the interests of the commonweal.

In my next chapter, I shall compare the porousness of these borders from the Ottoman perspective. As much recent scholarship on translation has argued, reading Ottoman source materials on European encounters allows us to better contextualize the two-way conversations that were taking place between Christendom and *dar-ul-Islam* during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Hicks, D. Emily. *Border Writing: The Multidimensional Text*. Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1991, xxv.

<sup>100</sup> See Burton 2005. Also see Matar, Nabil I. *In the Lands of Christians*. New York: Columbia UP, 2005.

### **Epilog: Ottoman Perspectives and Other Recoverable Voices**

Considering Ottoman perspectives on Europe (and especially Ottoman perspectives which were translated from common source materials) provides us with a vantage point from which to appreciate the breadth of interactions that linked the Ottoman Empire to England. By considering Ottoman history, we understand the reasons why Turkey agreed to have peaceful relations with England. England was granted a renewal of trade capitulations in 1580 because at that time because the Venetian-Spanish-Papal coalition endangered vital Ottoman interests in the Mediterranean. The Protestant northerners were not chosen by chance. British and Dutch naval supremacy was an important factor in this preference.<sup>1</sup> A description of Edward Barton's arrival was described in the Turkish chronicle history, *Tarih-i Selaniki* in the following words:

“An enormous ship came to Istanbul from the British Isles bearing gifts and presents. It was an English Ambassador who brought a letter of loyalty along with estimable gifts. He was escorted off the ship to the palace, and a huge feast was prepared in his honor. While the ship was being pulled ashore, the sparkles coming from the eighty-three cannon salutes that were fired caused excitement, and this unsightly ship could only be likened to a ship that looked like a boar, and even today, that's how it is remembered.”

[Vilâyet-i cezâire-i İngiltere elçisi pîş-keş ve hediyesi gelüb çekildi. Gemisi gibi turfa-numûne gemi İstanbul limanına gelmemişdi. Üçbin yediyüz mil deryadan sefer eder ve seksenüçe pare heman top kullanır. Sâir yarakdan ğayri ateş-eşân heyet-i hâriciyyesi şekl-i hincir idi. Ucûbe-i devran idi ki tahrîr olundu.<sup>2</sup>]

Through relationships with England and the Dutch Republic, the Ottomans were able to break up the papal embargo on the strategic war materials of lead, tin, cannon balls and gunpowder. Reading Ottoman state policies alongside the English events I've

<sup>1</sup> Venetian galleys in the Mediterranean were easy targets for English bretonis, which were heavily armed with bronze and iron guns.

<sup>2</sup> Efendi, Selânikî Mustafa. *Tarih-i Selânikî*. Ed. Mehmet İpşirli. Vol. 1. Istanbul: I.U. Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1989, 334.

been describing thus far gives us a barometer with which to contextualize the foreign policies and attitudes that English travelers were encountering.

By reading the Ottoman subject in his own words, we can also liberate ourselves from binaries of Self/Other. Considering the Ottoman perspective also encourages us to consider the importance of women as trans-imperial intermediaries. Sultana Safiye, wife of sultan Murad III and mother of Sultan Mehmed III, wrote three separate letters to Queen Elizabeth offering to mediate in Anglo-Ottoman relations between the English monarch and her husband.<sup>3</sup> Although, the sultana characterizes herself as being in a similarly obedient position to Sultan Murad as Elizabeth and her ambassador, Edward Barton, she also accords Elizabeth an honorific title of address based on her position as a woman of respect - “she who is obeyed by the princes, cradle of chastity and continence, ruler of the realm of England, crowned lady and woman of Mary’s way – may her last moments be concluded with good and may she obtain that which she desires!”<sup>4</sup> Safiye’s letter, in its invocation of the Virgin Mary, makes a inter-religious connection between Christianity and Islam that typified many Anglo-Ottoman correspondences. But unlike early epistles addressed to Elizabeth by the Sultan himself which noted the commonality of respect for Jesus, Sultana Safiye’s letter isolates gender-specific commonality (eg: both Elizabeth and Sultana’s appreciation for their own chastity and their link to the Virgin Mary.)

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<sup>3</sup> The first of three letters sent by Sultana Safiye, wife of sultan Murad III and mother of Sultan Mehmed III, was published by Richard Hakluyt in Italian and English translations in the 1598-1600 edition of *The Principall Navigations*.

<sup>4</sup> Skilliter, Susan. “Three Letters from Safiye to Elizabeth I,” in *Oriental Studies III: Documents from Islamic Chanceries*. Ed. S.M. Stern. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965, 131-2.

The Sultana's Jewish agent, Esperanza Malchi, also wrote took the liberty to write a letter to Queen Elizabeth.<sup>5</sup> Like William Harborne's Turkish contact, Mustafa Ali, Malchi felt that Queen Elizabeth needed to hear the mediating voice which brought her correspondences to the Ottoman monarch, and which could vouch for the correspondences that had taken place between her official ambassador and the sultan(a.) Malchi wrote:

“although being as I am a Jewess by faith and of a different nation from Your Majesty, from the first hour since it has pleased the Lord god to put it into the heart of this our most serene Queen Mother to use me in her service, I have always been desirous that the opportunity may arise for me to be able to show Your Majesty this good will of mine. Now that Your Majesty has sent this most illustrious ambassador to this kingdom with a present for this most serene Queen my lady, in as much as he was wished to make use of me, he has found me ready.”<sup>6</sup>

Malchi points out that she has played a role in facilitating Elizabeth and Safiye's interactions. Malchi even takes liberty to comment on the gifts that the two female monarchs have been exchanging:

“And on account of Your Majesty's being a woman I can without any embarrassment employ you with this notice, which is that as there are to be found in your kingdom rare distilled waters of every kind for the face and odiferous oils for the hands, Your Majesty would favour me by sending some of them by my hand for this more serene Queen; by my hand as, being articles for ladies, she does not wish them to pass through other hands. Likewise, if there are to be found in your kingdoms cloths of silk or wool, articles fantastic and becoming such an exalted Queen as she, Your Majesty will be able to send them, for she will hold this more dear than any jewel whatsoever that Your Majesty might send her.”<sup>7</sup>

We gain several suggestive insights if we consider Malchi's mediation as a woman which are not available to us if we just consider Barton or Mustafa, or even if we

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<sup>5</sup> Malchi's letter was dated November 16, 1599.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 142.

<sup>7</sup> Skilliter 1965, 143.

consider Mustafa as the typical voice of the Ottoman mediator. Like Mustafa, Malchi points out her own mediatory role in the chain of communications between the two monarchs. But unlike Mustafa, she points out feminized items of exchange which the sultana would rather not pass through the hands of Edward Barton (“And on account of Your Majesty’s being a woman I can without any embarrassment employ you with this notice...[Sultana Safiye] does not wish them to pass through other hands”) and presumably even Mustafa. Malchi’s role as a female mediating servant allows her to open alternate channels of communication which de-emphasize affiliations between nobles (Elizabeth and Murad,) between male intermediaries (Henry Lello and the Lord Bostanggi Basi, who normally conveys gifts to the sultan from foreign leaders,) and even between official mediators. Malchi self-consciously refers to herself as a household servant who has been awaiting “the opportunity” to be of use. Her unique position - as an intimate of the sultana, and as a woman – allows her to boldly place herself *alongside* the sultana and the Queen as one of only three people who can appreciate the gifts that are being exchanged. Much like Sultana Safiye, Malchi’s letter suggests that all of these women occupy positions outside of the normative systems of rule. And though all three women are bound to Sultan Murad III in differing degrees of deference, their commonality as women makes them equal sharers on at least one level that men cannot claim to understand. Malchi’s plan suggests as much; after all, it excludes all the men that would normally be involved in the Anglo-Ottoman spectrum of gift exchange.

The men who came into contact with Malchi registered this sense of exclusion. In a letter to Sir Thomas Heneage, Edward Barton noted that all of the presents that he conveyed to Sultana Safiye were not delivered.<sup>8</sup> He suspected that Malchi had probably

“imbeazelled [it], and know none could haue itt but the mediatrix betweene the Sultana and mee, yet because my selfe cannot come to the speech of the Sultana, and all my busines passé by the hands of the said Mediatrix, loosing her freindshippe, I loose the practick with the Sultana, and therefore stirred not in the matter, and now to meddle therein by your honours order, when I am sure to reape noe gaine...”<sup>9</sup>

John Sanderson went so far as to refer to Malchi as “a short, fat trubkin.”<sup>10</sup> Reading Ottoman accounts next to English accounts also allow us to consider unexpected commonalities based on gender that would not otherwise be considered because of preoccupations with religious, cultural, or national difference – preoccupations we realize to be masculine, in some cases.

Reading Ottoman perspectives also allow us to distinguish which negative depictions of the Turk found in European texts were not exaggerated. Fascinatingly, Turkish chronicle accounts are rife with admissions that sultanic promises made to Europeans were often broken. In most cases, reasons for breaking peace treaties or renegeing on trade compacts were either the result of contingency or based on Islamic justification. One of the more notorious examples of a Sultan’s breaking of an *‘ahdnāme*, oath and all, was the Ottoman invasion of Cyprus in July, 1570, despite the renewal of the Venetian capitulation in June 1567. On this occasion a fatwa was sought by Abu’l-Su’ud. Sultan Murad wanted to know, before attacking Cyprus, if a territory that once

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<sup>8</sup> Skilliter 1965, 148.

<sup>9</sup> Sanderson 1931, 223.

<sup>10</sup> Sanderson, John. *The travels of John Sanderson in the Levant, 1584-1602 : with his autobiography and selections from his correspondence*. Ed. Sir William Foster. London: Hakluyt Society, 1931, 86. Trubkin – a little squat woman; also a slut, a sloven; a wanton; an opprobrious term.

belonged to *dar al-Islam* (*land of the Muslims*), but had been taken by the infidel was still protected under the terms of the oath of protection. Abu'l-Su'ud ruled that peace (*sulh*) could be made with the infidel only when it was in the interest of all Muslims to do so. If, after peace (temporary or permanent), it then appeared more profitable (*enfa'*) to break it, then it is was not only permissible to break the treaty, but obligatory (*vacib*.)<sup>11</sup> Only by translating a document like Abu'l-Su'ud do we understand that the doctrine of *pacta sunt servanda* that was so revered by Europeans was unknown in sharia (Islamic law.)

This approach to reading Anglo-Ottoman interactions through the trans-imperial perspective creates an awareness of knowledge about the Ottoman Empire that we cannot learn strictly by looking at Ottoman sources. So, for example, in 'Of Turkish methods for dealing with messenger, Sandys writes, "He that brings the Sultan good newes (as unto others of inferior condition) receiveth his reward, which they call Mustolooke. But this Sultan to avoid abuses in that kind, doth forth-with commit them to Prison, until their reports bee found true or false; and then rewards or punisheth accordingly."<sup>12</sup> This fact is not mentioned in any accounts that I have been able to trace dealing with Ottoman messengers. However, it does seem to strengthen other, verifiable sources that detailed sultanic checks and balances on their foreign deputies. Through such juxtapositions, we can assert that Anglo-Ottoman perspectives mutually enlighten one another – an important idea to remember if we are to avoid treating translated materials with a lack of critical rigor.

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<sup>11</sup> As Bulent Ari has observed, "Ottoman peace agreements with other nations were considered by the Ottomans to be truces rather than bilateral treaties. Since a continuous state of peace with infidels is not permissible according to classical Islamic principles, it was the usual practice for the Ottomans to conclude a temporary truce of ten, twenty, and even thirty years." Ari, Bulent. "Early Ottoman Diplomacy: Ad Hoc Period," in *Ottoman Diplomacy*, Ed. Nuri Yurdusev. London: Palgrave, 2004, 37.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 161.



The sources for examining these Ottoman perspectives exist. But, as literary critic and historian Nabil Matar points out, they have to be sought using a different approach to research than the search for information about Muslims in European books. As Matar writes, “the Magharabi information valorized narratives about individual experiences over descriptions of institutions and landscape, personal intimacies over ethnography and geography.”<sup>13</sup> Because the interest in the European Other was often personal, the information appears in hagiography, jurisprudence, epistles and history, in verse as in prose. With the exception of the travel accounts, there is no continuous narrative about an encounter with Europeans or a description of a region of Europe, nor is there a compendium of consistent, verifiable, and documented data. There were anecdotes, memories, prayers, exegetical reflections, and short exempla about the Euro-Christians. Matar reminds us that if we are to avail ourselves about Arabic writings about Europeans, we must consider the ‘banter’ between Muslims and Christians, and not expect to find “the kind of sequential presentations, titled chapters, or imaginative fiction which characterize European literature.” As Matar’s work suggests, the kind of research required to recover some of these ‘lost’ voices from within archives of the Muslim world has already begun. What I hope my dissertation has suggested is that, for Western scholars who do not have the linguistic or archival access to these sources, there is still much work to be done in recovering those English trans-imperial perspectives which interacted with these hidden or ‘lost’ Ottoman voices. While we undertake the work of understanding Ottoman perspectives on Europe, we must tend to the more immediate,

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<sup>13</sup> Matar, Nabil. “Arab Views of Europeans, 1578-1727: The Western Mediterranean” in *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East*. Ed. Gerald MacLean. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 132.

more imminently achievable task of recognizing these hidden or lost voices in Tudor-Stuart texts that we have not exhaustively interpreted.

### By way of a conclusion

Following the death of Elizabeth and James, many of the instruments that Edward Said details as the precursors to post-Enlightenment Orientalism were already in place. But during the Tudor-Stuart transition and thereafter, the transitions between servants and the English and Turks provide a fascinating test case of imagining Christian/Muslim relations during our present time. The role played by early modern intermediaries is strikingly similar to that envisioned by modern political theorists, who envision mediating natives as the crucial link that will allow a less radical politics to survive in the world's hot spots of religious conflict. As Mary Kaldor has written in *Beyond Militarism, Arms Races, and Arms Control*:

“The job of the new protectionforce is not to defeat an enemy but to protect civilians and stabilise war situations so that non-extremist tolerant politics has space to develop. The task is thus more like policing than warfighting although it involves the use of military forces. Techniques like safe havens or humanitarian corridors are ways of protecting civilians and also increasing the international presence on the ground so as to influence political outcomes.”<sup>14</sup>

Since the attacks on the World Trade Center, there has never been a more pressing need for the recognition of mediating voice between Christendom and darul-Islam; or as these categories have been re-nominated, the Christian ‘West’ and the Islamic ‘East’. Both governmental agencies and NGOs have recognized the importance of ‘safe corridors,’ where there is a space for more tolerant native political voices to emerge amid the din of extremist propaganda from both ends of the spectrum. Literary

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<sup>14</sup> *War and Peace in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and Beyond*. Eds. Lundestad, Geir and Olav Njølstad. Norway: The Norwegian Nobel Institute, 2002, 37.

scholars have also concurred that paying attention to these mediating voices is imperative if we are ever to escape the binaries of East versus West and Christendom versus Islam.<sup>15</sup> My dissertation has attempted to ask what, practically, can be gained from listening to the existence of these mediating voices at a moment in Eurasian history that is strikingly similar to contemporary times?

What I've found is that even under circumstances where a 'safe corridor' existed for these tolerant mediators, their voices do not emerge distinct from the masters they served, but rather as a refracted version of bi-cultural attitudes. That is, the pluralism that we claim to be seeking is but a dilapidated remnant of a mediatory culture of which we have lost sight. Only when we consider our own scholarly perspective – on the fringes of this trans-cultural perspective – can we better to re-evaluate our theoretical cul de sacs.

My dissertation has examined Anglo-Ottoman depictions of one another from the intermediary perspective during the *pax Turcica* period. As I've attempted to show, the paradoxical situation of these mediating servants was that they were in the privileged position to shape international success, despite the fact that their own social mobility in England was being contested by their masters. Understanding how these servants successfully mediated Anglo-Ottoman relations is crucial to understanding why the imagined figure of the Turk was needed to settle matters of domestic discord.

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<sup>15</sup> Michael Neill and Peter Laslett have seen the challenge of re-attuning our ears to listen for these mediating voices as one of the ways in which we can recover what is lost in our current interpretations of early modern literature. Neill writes, "Even what we are now accustomed to reading as an allegory of colonial rebellion can be figured only as the domestic treason of a servant-monster; for, as the dutiful Gonzalo's utopian fantasy of a commonwealth without "the use of service" (2.1.152) reminds us, there is literally no place outside the defining bonds of master and servant...One of the hardest things to re-imagine about what Peter Laslett called 'the world we have lost' is the extensiveness of its notion of 'service.'" Neill 2000, 21.

I began my dissertation thinking of masters and servants as discrete figures. One of the insight that I gained during the process of writing was the fluidity between people who could be called ‘masters’ because of their own servile position in the larger social order of England. Even at the ‘top’ of this hierarchy, there was a dependency between masters who needed a certain kind of Turk to preserve their authority in England, and trans-imperial servants who demanded to be promoted in order to supply such a Turk. Considering master/servant relations from the trans-imperial perspective of the Anglo-Ottoman mediator helped me to realize the non-hierarchical functioning of relations between people that I had simply thought of as ‘masters’ and ‘servants.’

One of the things that I hope my study has done is to prompt a re-consideration of master-servant relations as a class matter. I hope that putting English ‘master-servant’ relations in its trans-national light has forced us to put this binary expression *sous rature* or “under erasure.” We need to both rely on a recognizable term like ‘master-servant’ in order to communicate economically, but at the same time we must point out that this term is misleading, inaccurate and anachronistic. When English servitude is considered in its trans-national light, especially the one provided by the Ottoman Empire, easy divisions between masters and servants break down according to England’s position shift from threatened nation to conquering imperial power. Just as peasant revolutionaries in Germany were aware that conditions in the Ottoman Empire might make a true Christian life possible among the Ottomans, so too were English servants and masters aware that ~~class~~-based social reform at home was predicated on the ‘Turk’ brought home from

English servants in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>16</sup> Considering servants in their trans-national light gives us a way to think about what Peter Laslett has described as less familiar discrimination of status in a “one-class society.” Michael Neill astute notes that this lack of an alternative to class-based discourse is why “dissatisfactions of serviced typically appear not as the anger of an oppressed underclass, but as the envy or resentment of marginal men – figures whose claims to gentility are felt as increasingly compromised by anything that smacks of a servile dependency.”<sup>17</sup>

It is important to consider the ways in which members of the former ‘servant’ classes split from their former affiliates when they realized how much profit there was to be made in the multiplication of negative stereotypes of the Turk. Printmakers, poets, letter carriers, sailors-for-hire, mercenary soldiers, and dramatists all profited from the widespread public fascination with the defeat of this ‘terrible Turk.’ The products supplied by each of these servants provided an antidote of sorts to a demoralized public – a kind of collective illusion that united the classes and was held together by neo-crusader sentiment. My dissertation has tried to explore the social tensions that were felt by members of the lower and upper classes in maintaining the image of the terrible Turk.

By reading the Anglo-Ottoman mediating servant’s position in this way, we are able to re-orient the transitional period between the end of the Tudor period and the end of the Stuart period as part of the *longue durée* that saw the failure of one vision of England – committed to the preservation of a *pax Turcica* – and the establishment of another vision – emboldened by idea of a *pax Britannica*. Considering the condition of

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<sup>16</sup> German peasants were not the only ones who dreamed of a better life under the Sultan. Bavarian farmers also flocked to swell the Ottoman armies based on the rumors they heard of fair pay and opportunities for the private ownership of wealth.

<sup>17</sup> Neill 2000, 41.

the mediating servant in this history reminds us that the designation ‘imperialism’ applies to the conditions of narrative, representation, and knowledge production themselves.<sup>18</sup>

To consider the trans-imperial identity of the mediating servant is to reconsider the ontological presuppositions of ‘imperialism.’<sup>19</sup>

We are forced to consider the Ottoman contexts which preceded and gave rise to Jacobean and post-Jacobean ideas of a ‘Great Britain.’ And although Ottoman accounts of European interaction are meager, scattered, and obscure, this documentation can still be put to good use - to provide a panoramic view of the Anglo-Ottoman relations as constituted from within the experience of the thousands of trans-imperial men and women who lived their lives in the contact zones between Christendom and darul Islam. We can read their accounts as intrusions into larger polemics, and in the subtexts of other texts (hagiographies, histories, and religious expositions.)

The analysis of my dissertation also has ramifications for re-positioning postcolonial approaches to studying early modern literature. By studying Anglo-Ottoman servants, we are better able to trace the origins of Saidian Orientalism back to a period when the ad hoc mediator had to be professionalized in the service of state interests. If, as Leela Gandhi has asserted, “[t]he postcolonial dream of discontinuity is ultimately

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<sup>18</sup> Laura Chrisman notes that, “The process of imperialism is viewed as the precondition of a sense of (European or theoretical) narrative Self, and is predicated on a distorting utilization of the Other. Imperialism then is not only the explicit practice of power. It is also the disavowal of the possession of power through the belief in one’s ability to know and represent the Other; to pursue such a narrative representation is necessarily to turn the Other into a version of oneself. This formulation does not admit of any notion of possible or progressive mediation.” Chrisman, Laura. *Postcolonial Contraventions: Cultural Readings of Race, Imperialism, and Trans-nationalism*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2003, 57. To Chrisman’s observations, I would add that considering the trans-imperial mediator explicitly addresses this exclusion.

<sup>19</sup> Ottomanist Caroline Finkel concurs that, “Holding up the standard of what evolved into western capitalism to analyze Muslim societies like that of the Ottomans, and then asking the ‘what went wrong?’ question, closes our minds to the possibility and value of other ways of being than our own, and shuts off many more avenues of historical enquiry than it opens up.” See Finkel, Caroline. “‘The Treacherous Cleverness of Hindsight’: Myths of Ottoman Decay,” *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East*. Ed. Gerald MacLean. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 151.

vulnerable to the infectious residue of its own unconsidered and unresolved past,’’<sup>20</sup> then my dissertation has attempted to uncover that part of English history and literature which was also a continuous part of Ottoman history. This shared history hasn’t been properly considered part of England’s past because it was reported by those narrators (or dramatized by those servants) who weren’t considered authorized to write history, though they were the ones making it.<sup>21</sup>

The issues and questions that my dissertation has raised suggest provocative avenues for further inquiry.<sup>22</sup> Since we know that Englishmen resided and traded in Ottoman territories before documents acknowledging their official existence were penned, we can consider unofficial sources of news and information to be untapped resources for recovering the lost voices of trans-imperial mediators. Quite a number of letters and correspondences written in cipher currently exist, but which have not been studied. In fact, certain ambassadorial writings dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century have only recently been interpreted.<sup>23</sup> The findings of my dissertation suggest that, besides the reasons already given for studying these ciphers by current scholars, we may gain access to some of those voices which were otherwise lost<sup>24</sup> or unable to speak for themselves.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 7

<sup>21</sup> Scholars such as Gerald MacLean have suggested that pre-colonial English attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire should be considered in light of their ‘imperial envy’, rather than the belated idea of ‘orientalism.’ MacLean 2007, 20. MacLean does a nice job of demonstrating how this ‘imperial envy’ evidenced itself in the borrowing of shared iconography. MacLean traces how both the figure of St. George, the patron saint of England, and the figure of Aeneas’s seed (who would promise a new empire about to flourish in Britain) were both historically Anatolian. Nevertheless, they both became part of a British foundational myth. MacLean cites such genealogical adoption as examples of ‘imperial envy.’

<sup>22</sup> Outside the field of English literature, scholars in art history have already started to plumb the riches of exchange between the Ottoman Empire and Europe. Mehmed II., for example, patronized Gentile Bellini and Constanzo da Ferrara in Istanbul.

<sup>23</sup> Blaise de Vigenère (1523-1596) was a French diplomat and cryptographer. The cipher system that he developed for conveying messages back to Paris was broken nearly two hundred years later. Haldane, R.A. *The Hidden World*. London: Robert Hale & Co., 1976.

<sup>24</sup> Richards, Sheila. *Secret Writing in the Public Records: Henry VIII to George II*. London: HMSO, 1974. See also Churchhouse, R. *Codes and Ciphers: Julius Caesar, the Enigma, and the internet*. Cambridge:

I hope that my close analysis of English non-fiction writing about the Ottoman Empire will also be valuable to Ottoman historians who are searching for ways to add objectivity to their scholarship. The preferred approach of Turkish scholars writing on the Renaissance is the ‘we too’ approach, whereby they set out to demonstrate that the Ottomans matched the accomplishments of Europeans, but that their side of the story has been expunged from the record: after all, it is the winners and not the losers who write history.<sup>26</sup> Showing that the Ottomans did what the Europeans did is one way of investigating the topic, for it reveals that whatever went on in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries was not confined to Europe and could not, therefore, alone account for what followed. Emphasizing that the Ottoman Empire did not share in Europe’s semblance of coherence and common purpose – a strategy that enables many, despite evidence to the contrary, to continue to talk about a continent-wide Renaissance<sup>27</sup> – but that it ‘decayed’ throws into relief the notion of the inevitability of the ‘rise of the West,’ the embarkation of Europe on its path to the modern world, and consigns those beyond its borders to backwardness and ignominy... Showing that the Ottomans in many important respects shared in the cultural and other developments taking place in Europe at this time surely suggests that an explanation for the subsequent divergences in their fates must be sought elsewhere. I hope that my dissertation has given a sense that that ‘elsewhere’ might be the pages of English travel writing and drama.

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Cambridge UP, 2002. Wrixon, F.B. *Codes and Ciphers*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1992. Friedman, William and Elizabeth. *The Shakespearean Ciphers Examined*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1957.

<sup>25</sup> Although Sir Francis Bacon was in King James’ official employ, he provocatively suggested that ciphers allowed writers the ability for additional expression outside of official purview. See Anderson, M.S. *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy: 1450-1919*. London: Longman, 1993.

M.S. Anderson, London: Longman, 1993, 22

<sup>26</sup> Finkel, Ibid, 152.

<sup>27</sup> - Raby, Julian. ‘Picturing the Levant.’ *Circa 1492: Art in the Age of Exploration*. Ed. Jay Al Levenson. Washington, D.C.: National Galleery, 1991, 79.



As Michael Neill has so perceptively noted, the local is by its very nature elusive and evanescent, and in the case of early modern dramatic texts, the conditions of its production render it indeterminate and often irrecoverable. But these texts are dense with other kinds of information about society and culture to which they belonged – information that may sometimes be directly related to conscious authorial intention but that often found its way more or less unconsciously into the work because it was integral to the world the writers inhabited, inscribed in the very language by which they knew it. It is this that makes literary texts (despite the skepticism of many professional historians) among the richest historical repositories that we possess – not because they often have much to tell us about the ‘facts’ of history but because they are unfailingly sensitive registers of social attitudes and assumptions, fears and desires. Neill writes, “In some ways it may actually be more important to understand what people thought was happening to their world than to gauge the accuracy of these beliefs, since what people believe to be true is typically what determines the way they act.”<sup>28</sup> Leah Marcus reminds us that the danger of the kind of “local reading” that Neill has suggested is that “the very discursivity required by our efforts to familiarize ourselves with a distant culture creates an overlay of order and predictability...[that] radically alters the spotty, intermittent, multilayered ways in which topical meaning was likely to be registered by contemporaries.”<sup>29</sup> I believe that my discussion of the vexed position of the trans-imperial intermediary allows us to better apply both Neill and Marcus’s observations.

At the same time, considering the needs of Ottoman historians remind English literary scholars that we cannot simply “use” Ottoman history to gesture towards a

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<sup>28</sup> Neill 2000, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Marcus, Leah. *Local Reading and its Discontents*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988, 28-30.

‘balanced’ perspective. Our scholarship must be cognizant and answerable to the critical dilemmas faced by historians of Ottoman-Euro interaction if we want to avoid falling into the ideological traps that are faced by those scholars as well.<sup>30</sup>

Considering such trans-imperial perspectives force us to adopt new vocabularies for discussing this English *pax Turcica* period. Some of this vocabulary must come from Ottoman sources if we are to ever accurately place trans-imperial mediators within a historical context. Ottoman historian, Nuri Yurdusev points out, that, “Besides the concepts of dar-ul-Islam and dar-ul-Harb (lands of Christians), there is another concept dar al-sulh (where the Muslims and non-Muslims leave in peace.)”<sup>31</sup> Because there was no equivalent of a darul sulh in Christendom, we can better understand why some English trans-imperial mediators could not consider England ‘home;’ and instead felt more at home in areas of dar al-sulh. That is one of the reasons why I’ve argued that Marlowe’s dramatization of Barabas’ communal exclusion from Malta pointed was a consideration of what happens when a dar al-sulh is instead replaced by a Christianized space. Marlowe, of course, could not have used such vocabulary. Yet, his experiences as a spy in the Low Countries after Parma’s conquest of Antwerp might have given him the kind of exposure to a dar al-sulh to be able to dramatize its exploitation in *The Jew of Malta*.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Caroline Finkel has enunciated this challenge succinctly: “The task for the Ottoman historian [thus becomes one of showing] that the specifics of the European case cannot usefully be applied to other societies whose *raison d’être* and rhythms differed from those of Europe. Furthermore, the political contexts in which East and West operated were very different.” Finkel, *Ibid*, 156.

<sup>31</sup> More formally *dar al-sulh* referred to those Ottoman principality which were in vassalage to the Sublime Porte, or which constituted any other type of tribute-paying administration.” Yurdusev, A. Nuri. “The Ottoman Attitude Toward Diplomacy,” *Ottoman Diplomacy*. London: Palgrave, 2004, 15.

<sup>32</sup> Riggs, David. *The World of Christopher Marlowe*. London: Faber and Faber, 2004, 181.

His association with Sir Francis Walsingham's confederacy of spies, some of whom travelled to Ottoman territories, might also have been influential.<sup>33</sup>

Ottomanists and English scholars alike have already started to consider alternate critical vocabularies for describing the trans-imperial mediation that I've attempted to locate in English literature. Andrews and Kalpakli avoid the problem of periodization – how can one speak of a Renaissance Istanbul – by instead “inventing [their own] period called the Age of Beloveds...thereby capturing certain social, cultural, political, and economic phenomena that occurred during the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> centuries in a geographical area that covers a greater Europe including England on one end and the Ottoman empire on the other.”<sup>34</sup>

I hope that the argument I've made, in favor of considering the status of the trans-imperial mediator will take its place alongside other recent critical methodologies that have similarly argued for a contrapuntal reading. The kinds of trans-imperial mediatory relations that I've suggested allow us to consider both English and Ottoman history within a shared perspective that need not rely on terms such as ‘Renaissance,’ ‘East/West,’ or ‘Turkish.’ Like Andrews and Kalpakli's ‘Age of Beloveds,’ like the concept of ‘darul sulh,’ the idea of trans-imperial mediatory relations is as applicable to European history and literature of this period as it is to Ottoman history and literature. My goal has been to suggest a framework (or a number of possible frameworks) in which

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<sup>33</sup> Lisa Hopkins, in her introduction to the Marlowe canon, points out that Tamburlaine's military instructions to his sons in part two of the play were taken from *The Practice of Fortification* – a text penned by fellow Walsingham agent, Paul Ive. Hopkins notes about the scene, “this is only one of the many important scenes in which Marlowe switches the focus decisively from the public events of the first play to the more private, family-oriented ones of the second, which are entirely his own invention and for which no source other than personal observation was needed.” Hopkins, Lisa. *Christopher Marlowe, Renaissance Dramatist*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2008, 24.

<sup>34</sup> Andrews, Walter and Mehmet Kalpakli. *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005, 24.

early modern English literary scholars and Ottomanists can be thought about and talked about together. I hope I have encouraged a mode of thinking that moves away from the particularities of globalization, which seemed to signal the death knell for postcolonial thinking. Instead, I hope that the kinds of comparative and cooperative approaches that I have employed to reading English and Ottoman literatures of the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century will revivify thinking trans-culturally.

## Curriculum Vitae

### Ameer Sohrawardy

#### Colleges Attended

1988-1992	Polytechnic University, Bachelor of Arts, Humanities.
1995-1999	SUNY– Stony Brook, Master of Arts, English.
2001– 2005	Rutgers University – Master of Arts, English.
2001 – 2010	Rutgers University – Doctor of Philosophy, English.

#### Principal Occupation

1992-2001	Columbia University Law School Executive Asst. to the Associate Dean for Alumni Relations
2001-2010	Rutgers University Teacher

#### Publications

“Twin Obligations in Plaatje's *Diphosho-phosho*.” *Native Shakespeares: Indigenous Appropriations on a Global Stage*.  
Eds. Craig Dionne and Parmita Kapadia. Hampshire: Ashgate, 2008.