Durham E-Theses

Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Times

BELGASEM, FATIMA,ESSADEK,ALI

How to cite:

BELGASEM, FATIMA,ESSADEK,ALI (2013) *Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Times*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/7384/

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a link is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the full Durham E-Theses policy for further details.

Academic Support Office, The Palatine Centre, Durham University, Stockton Road, Durham, DH1 3LE
e-mail: e-theses.admin@durham.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
http://etheses.dur.ac.uk

Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Times

Submitted by Fatima Essadek

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of English Studies
Durham University

2013

Abstract

The thesis examines the representations of Ottoman sultans in texts produced during the Elizabethan period. The study covers Elizabethan travelogues, historical writing, and drama. The analysis shows that diverse factors related to authors, context and the nature of genres influenced the portrayal of the sultans and generated multiple and inconsistent representations of this Eastern figure. The thesis reads English texts alongside Eastern sources; these include letters sent from members of the Ottoman dynasty to Queen Elizabeth I and an Arabic historical work written by the Mamluk historian Shihab al-Din Ibn Iyas. The inclusion of such material in the study allows for the exploration of an Eastern point of view and provides an alternative narrative that contrasts with, and sheds light on, English perspectives. The thesis also explores the textual characteristics of the genres under discussion and considers critical and cultural issues such as authorial subjectivity, Otherness and cross-cultural encounters.

Declaration

No material in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university.

Statement of Copyright

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. No quotation from it should be published in any format, including electronic and the Internet, without the author's prior written consent. All information derived from this thesis should be acknowledged.

Acknowledgment

My Lord, the uninterrupted flow of
Your graciousness have distracted
me from thanking You.
The flood of Your bounty has rendered
me incapable of counting Your praises.
The succession of Your kind acts has
diverted me from mentioning You in
laudation.
The continuous rush of Your benefits
has thwarted me from spreading the
news of Your gentle favours.
This is the station of her who confesses
to the lavishness of Your favours,
meets them with shortcomings, and
witnesses to her own disregard and negligence.

Notes on Spelling and Transliteration

In the quotations from early modern English publications, the original spelling of j, i, s, v, and y, has been modernised.

In the second chapter the system of the International Journal of Middle East Studies is used in transliterating Arabic words. As a general rule I tried to keep the transcription simple and closer to the original Arabic pronunciation without causing unnecessary difficulties for the reader. For the same reason, the thesis does not reproduce the diacritics used with transliterated Arabic and Ottoman Turkish words in some publications, except if they occur within quotations.

I use both terms Turk and Ottoman to refer to the inhabitants of the Empire since both were used interchangeably in English Renaissance texts.

List of Abbreviations

B. L.	British Library
B. M.	British Museum
CSP	*Calendar of State Papers*
CSPV	*Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy*
HMC Salisbury	*Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury*
EEBO	Early English Books Online
P. R. O.	Public Records Office

Table of Contents

Abstract....................ii
Declaration and Statement of Copyright....................iii
Acknowledgement....................iv
Notes on Spelling and Transliteration v
List of Abbreviations....................vi
Introduction....................1
Chapter I: Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Travel Narratives....................21
Chapter II: Sultan Selim's Conquest of Egypt in Arabic and English Historiography: A Comparative Study....................62
Chapter III: The Sultans' Letters and Anglo-Ottoman Relations 1579-1603............93
Chapter IV: Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Drama.................127
Conclusion....................179
Appendix I: Engraving of Sultan Selim I in *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*....187
Appendix II: The Structure and Components of Ottoman Formal Letters................188
Appendix III: The Reproduction of the Sultan's Signature in *Purchas His Pilgrimes in Five Bookes*....................189
Appendix IV: The Components of *Fethname* Letters....................190
Bibliography....................191

Introduction

In July 2010 the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan presented a letter sent from the Ottoman Sultan Murad III (1574-1595) to the English Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) as a gift to the British Prime Minister David Cameron.[1] As it did five hundred years ago the document once again facilitated and consolidated the understanding between the two countries. The letter still bears witness to the amicable and long-established Anglo-Turkish relations which commenced in 1579. When it was originally sent the world was a different place—it was a world where the Ottoman Sultan was one of the greatest sovereigns on earth. The survival of this witness from the past shows that this Eastern ruler was not a distant figure in Elizabethan England but an individual who had a real textual presence.

Indeed, the presence of the Ottoman sultans during the Elizabethan period was not confined to diplomatic correspondence. Their names were conjured up in English churches, often alongside the Pope, as chief foes of the true Christian faith. Their theatrical representations were familiar on the stage. Several histories were published about their lives and actions, and a number of travellers described them and the world around them. Their letters were translated and disseminated and their portraits were hung in English houses. This visual and textual presence is the subject of this thesis that aims to explore how these Eastern figures were conceived and represented during Elizabethan times. The thesis will start with this introduction that aims to locate the study in its historical and critical contexts. The introduction will begin by providing a brief historical background to contextualise the events which the primary material covers and will also offer a critical review underlying theoretical concepts pertaining to the texts under discussion.

[1] *World Bulletin*, 27 July 2010, last accessed 15 Dec. 2012, <http://www.worldbulletin.net>.

Historical Context

The Ottoman Empire started as one of the small principalities that were formed in Asia Minor after the fall of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum (1077-1307). Osman Bey, or Osman Ghazi, the father of the Ottoman dynasty, established himself in northwestern Anatolia in 1299. In the following century his successors extended their rule at the expense of the other neighbouring principalities and the Byzantine Empire. In 1324 the Ottomans conquered Bursa in the northwest and established it as their capital; by 1338 the Byzantine presence in Anatolia was stamped out. The Ottomans then turned northwest towards Europe and captured lands in Macedonia, Thrace and the Balkans. The year 1389 witnessed the ultimate fall of the Serbian Empire after the Battle of Kosovo and in 1393 Ottoman rule was extended northward as far as the then Bulgarian capital Tarnovgrad. The Ottoman expansion in southeastern Europe was brought to a standstill during the Interregnum period (1402-1413) that was caused by the invasion of the Turco-Mongolian warlord Timur (1370–1405) into the Ottoman territories: the Battle of Ankara (1402) led to the defeat and imprisonment of Sultan Bayezid I (1389-1402), whose later death in captivity triggered a war of succession between his sons. Thereafter the Empire resumed its military incursions into Europe. By 1422 the lands of the former Bulgarian Empire were secured. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 consolidated further the Ottoman presence in the West. Most of Greece was conquered by 1460, Bosnia in 1463, Budapest in 1526, Cyprus in 1571, and the geographical expansion reached its peak in the siege of Vienna in 1529.

The Ottoman military advance in central Europe sent a wave of fear into all Christendom. England was distant from the Ottoman threat but the feeling of dread was nonetheless strongly felt. The Elizabethan Thomas Procter recorded that 'the Turkes in no longe time, have subdued so many kinges and countreyes, and extended their Empyre so farre, into all the three partes of the worlde, & yet prosecuteth and

thrusteth the same further daylie'.[2] The immediacy of the Ottoman danger was conveyed by another Elizabethan, the clergyman Thomas Newton, who, in his history of Arabs and Turks, wrote that the latter 'were (indeede) at the first very far of from our Clyme & Region, and therefore the lesse to be feared, but now they are even at our doores and ready to come into our Houses'.[3] The English response towards this military aggression was similar to the reactions of its Christian neighbours; anxious about the increasing Muslim expansion in Europe, the English joined other Christian voices to call for an end of the religious schism in Christendom in order to facilitate crusades against the Turks. Although England did not participate formally in the military efforts against the Ottoman Empire, there were celebrations for any Christian victory over the Eastern invaders, as the English did at the failure of the Ottoman siege of Malta in 1565 and the defeat of the Turkish navy at Lepanto in 1571. However, simultaneously, a prevailing view deemed the war between Catholics and Turks as ultimately beneficial for the promotion of the Protestant cause.

Encounters between the Ottoman Empire and Europe did not always take place on the warpath. With the Ottoman domination of southeastern and parts of central Europe, European rulers had no choice but to accept the Ottoman sultan as a menacing neighbour and indispensable partner. Consequently, they established political, military and economic relations with the sultans. Catholic and Protestant states had resident ambassadors in Istanbul: Venice since 1454 and France from 1535. Spain opened negotiations with the Sublime Porte and offered many compromises for the sake of peace.[4] The Ottoman military capability made Christian monarchs collaborate with the Ottomans or ask for their aid in times of need. The Genoese either supported the sultans, as they did in 1421 and 1444, or observed neutrality in the wars between the Ottomans and the other European states.[5] In 1494 Pope Alexander VI asked Sultan

---

[2] Thomas Procter, *Of the Knowledge and Conducte of Warres Two Bookes, Latelye Wrytten and Sett Foorth, Profitable for suche as Delight in Hystoryes, or Martyall Affayres, and Necessarye for this Present Tyme* (London, 1578), preface, n. pag.

[3] Thomas Newton, *A Notable Historie of the Saracens* (London, 1575), dedication, n. pag.

[4] For a full account of the Spanish peace envoys to and treaties with Istanbul see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2nd edn. (London: Collins, 1972), 2: 1141-1166.

[5] Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973), p. 134.

Bayezid II for military assistance against King Charles VIII of France after the latter's incursions into Italian territories.[6] After his defeat at the battle of Pavia in 1525, the French King Francis I formed a military alliance with Sultan Suleiman against the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. According to the treaty, Toulon was offered as a military base for the Ottoman navy to attack Italian and Spanish coasts in 1543 and 1544 and a French artillery unit was sent to support the Sultan's attack on Hungary in 1543.[7]

Turkish influence was palpable in many European economic sectors. The Ottoman sultans encouraged European states to trade in their lands by granting them capitulations that guaranteed the security and freedom of travel and trade within Ottoman territories to their subjects. As early as 1352 the Ottomans offered such trading licences for the Italian republic of Genoa; in 1403, they bestowed similar privileges on Venice. The French had their first capitulations in 1536. The sultans even supported their European allies financially. In 1533 Sultan Suleiman 'sent Francis [the French King] a sum of one hundred thousand gold pieces to enable him to form a coalition with England and German princes against Charles V' and his successor Henri II 'borrowed 150,000 scudos from Joseph Nasi, a Jewish tax farmer of the Sultan'.[8]

By the late 1570s England was ready to join its European neighbours in establishing diplomatic and commercial ties with the Ottoman Empire. The first formal contact between England and the Porte commenced with the arrival of William Harborne, who was a factor of Sir Richard Osborne, one of the well-established merchants in London, in Istanbul in 1579. Harborne's visit signals the launching of diplomatic and mercantile relations between Sultan Murad III and Queen Elizabeth. With the growth of English trade with the East and the increase of the number of English merchants who worked or settled in the Ottoman dominions, the English initiative towards the Porte was inevitable. The vast territory of the Ottoman Empire left it in control of Europe's main traditional sea and land trade routes to the East,

---

[6] Clayton J. Drees (ed.), *The Late Medieval Age of Crisis and Renewal 1300-1500* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001), p. 12.

[7] Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), p. 111.

[8] Halil Inalcik, 'The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe', in Kemal H. Karpat (ed.), *The Ottoman State and its Place in World History* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 51-60, at p. 52.

including the three main trading ports of Istanbul, Tripoli and Alexandria. From the fourteenth century Venice was the main trading partner that provided England with oriental goods. The riches of the East 'were conveyed to England by a fleet of merchant vessels known as the "Flanders galleys" which had been dispatched annually from about the year 1317 onwards'.[9] After the discovery of the Cape of the Good Hope, Venice lost its active role in the East/West trade. Antwerp and the Netherlands, which were the final destination of Portuguese ships coming back through the Cape route, replaced Venice as England's provider of Eastern commodities. The commercial squabbles between the English and Antwerp, the Revolt of the Netherlands and the Spanish usurpation of the Portuguese throne were the main reasons that forced the English to conduct their trade by themselves in the Mediterranean.[10]

Before 1580 the English merchants traded in the Ottoman lands under the protection of the French, who enjoyed good diplomatic and commercial relations with Istanbul. The Ottoman capitulations gave France the right to act as a protector of the interests of other Christian merchants. English ships sailed under the French flag and sought the support of the French consuls residing in Istanbul, Alexandria, Beirut and Tripoli. In return, the English paid a tax to the French consuls on the goods they sold at the Empire's ports. The English were, however, determined to gain the right to trade in the Ottoman territories free from French dominance.[11] Arthur L. Horniker directs our attention to patriotic motivations behind the English attempt to trade under their own flag: rising nationalism under Elizabeth made the question of a national flag 'assume great importance in English eyes. Hence this enforced subservience to the French became highly unsatisfactory to England'.[12]

---

[9] Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Cass, 1964), p. 3.

[10] Stanley Mayes, *An Organ for the Sultan* (London: Putnam, 1956), p. 36.

[11] It is worth noting that the first English trader to be granted a privilege to trade in the Ottoman lands was Anthony Jenkinson who received a license from Sultan Suleiman in 1553; however, such a freedom of trade he could exercise only under French protection. Halil Inalcik states that the English did not use this privilege because 'hoping to obtain spices directly and more cheaply, they sought other routes, particularly the road from Moscow, through Iran to Hormuz. A Turkish embassy, sent to the shah in 1562, aimed at preventing this diversion. Finally, in 1578, the Ottomans invaded Azerbijan and Shirvan and gained control of this route.' *The Ottoman Empire*, p. 138.

[12] Arthur L. Horniker, 'William Harborne and the Beginning of Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations', *The Journal of Modern History*, 14/3 (1942), 289-316, at p. 294.

At the same time, the Ottomans were ready to welcome the English initiative. The sultans were interested in having allies within Europe who would either support their own campaigns or remain neutral in any conflict. The sultans also considered the Protestant Reformation as a force to use against their Catholic enemies, thus adopting policies that benefited the consolidation and spread of Protestantism. Calvinist and Protestant groups living under the Holy Roman Emperor were encouraged; the ones who lived in European lands under Ottoman rule were allowed to expand. This induced the Holy Roman Empire to settle on compromises with its Protestant subjects.[13] Besides, the Ottomans, engaged in an arduous war with Safavid Persia, were in need of metals such as tin, lead and copper for their arms industry. The English were ready to supply the Ottoman market with such material, which had become available after the demolition of the monasteries.[14]

The news of the English contact with the Porte was received with condemnation by its Christian neighbours, but Richard Hakluyt, a pioneering propagandist for English trade and exploration, provided a defence for what he regarded as a pragmatic and entirely justifiable step:

> [who can deny that] the French, the Genouois, Florentines, Raguseans, Venetians, and Polonians are at this day in league with the Grand Signior, and have beene these many yeeres, and have used trade and traffike in his dominions? Who can deny that the Emperor of Christendome hath had league with the Turke, and payd him a long while a pension for a part of Hungarie? [...] Why then should that be blamed in us, which is usuall and common to the most part of other Christian nations? Therefore let our neighbours, which have found most fault with this new league and traffike, thanke themselves and their owne foolish pride, whereby we were urged to seeke further to

[13] The Ottoman military presence provided a balance of power that checked the expansion of the Habsburgs and the Papacy: ‘In 1532, Francis I admitted to the Venetian Ambassador that he saw in the Ottoman Empire the only force guaranteeing the continued existence of the states of Europe against Charles V.’ A. Nuri Yurdusev, ‘The Ottoman Attitude towards Diplomacy’, in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 5-35, at p. 22.

[14] See S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578-1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977), pp. 20-28; Michael Allan Cook, *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East: From the Rise of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1970), pp. 226-27.

> provide vent for our naturall commodities. And herein the old Greeke proverbe was most truely verified, That evill counsaille prooveth worst to the author and deviser of the same.[15]

Certainly, the neighbours' objections would not deter the English from venturing into a project that might fulfill not only their economic needs but also their urgent political desires: from the 1560s the Queen's relations with Spain started to deteriorate, with a Spanish military threat becoming ever more apparent. As mentioned above, it was common practice to request Ottoman aid in internal European conflicts; in the same spirit, the English viewed the Ottoman Sultan as the only powerful ally that could support England in its military efforts against Spain.

Theoretical Context

The interest in studying the representations of Turks and Muslims in early modern English texts emerged in the second decade of the last century. Louis Wann's article 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama' (1915) is the earliest attempt to examine systematically English drama which features Eastern characters and themes. Wann assembles a corpus of Elizabethan and Jacobean plays that show Oriental figures: Turks, Moors, Arabs, Persians, Tartars and Egyptians. Through a methodical analysis of this corpus the author argues that the number and type of plays show considerable interest in the East, especially the Ottoman Empire. The author also contends that the average Elizabethan had a wide and accurate knowledge of the Orient. Wann's article was followed by another significant contribution, Samuel Chew's *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (1937). This work still remains unparalleled in its encyclopaedic coverage of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century material about Muslims, especially Turks. Chew provides a detailed analysis of how Muslims were represented in the writings of pilgrims, traders, diplomats and dramatists. He also surveys England's relations with Muslim rulers in the Ottoman Empire, Persia and North Africa. His study highlights the prejudices of English writers towards Islam in the period but it does not analyse their background or precise nature.

[15] Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1903), 1:lxx.

The following decades witnessed the publication of a number of studies which, although they did not specifically focus on the Western portrayal of Islam in the early modern period, constituted a valuable contribution to this field of inquiry. These studies traced Western views towards Islam from the Middle Ages, showing that such views, which have survived well into modern times, are characterised by misrepresentations and prejudice.[16]

The turning point in the study of Western representations of the East came with Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). His investigation of the aims, textual strategies and ideological underpinnings in the writings of European Orientalists about Muslim Arabs provided new critical concepts and interpretive tools for later studies that have engaged with Western representations of non-Europeans. Covering two thousand years of Western cultural production, Said identified an intellectual, academic and institutional tradition he termed 'orientalism', for which he provided a threefold definition. First, any academic discipline that studies the East (linguistics, anthropology, politics, sociology &c.) may be considered 'orientalist'. The second meaning classifies Orientalism as

> the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient [...] by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.[17]

Said ascribes the beginnings of this institutionalised Orientalism to the late eighteenth century. These two forms of Orientalism perpetuate and normalise stereotypical and negative representations of the Orient; they serve, depending on the historical period in question, certain purposes for Western countries.

The third type of Orientalism is defined as a Western intellectual tradition of a more general and imaginative kind. It is described as a way of thinking that depends on the

---

[16] For instance, Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1960); Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967); and R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1978).
[17] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), p. 3.

epistemological and ontological distinction between East and West. Said maintains that the process of demarcation between East and West has taken many centuries: since classical antiquity the East has been constructed as the contrasting image and the 'complementary opposite' of Europe, and after the advent of Islam, its religious and cultural contestant. Said introduces the term 'imaginative geography' to account for the Western conceptualisation of the separation between the two regions: it is man-made rather than a product of nature. This kind of Orientalism accommodates any Western poet, novelist, philosopher, politician, or economist who has 'accepted the basic distinction between East and West as a starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, "mind", destiny, and so on'.[18]

Orientalism is identified as the unconscious accumulation of imagery, fantasies and stereotypes that depict the Orient as strange, static, exotic, despotic, sensual and degraded. According to Said, the Orient became known to Europeans through an imaginative textual tradition which was not related to any actual experience of the East; European writers usually depended on other European texts rather than travelling to the East themselves. As a result, Orientalism depends heavily on literary authority, where every writer relies on and refers to other Western sources to validate his Orientalist views:

> Every writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies. Additionally, each work on the Orient *affiliates* itself with other works, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself. The ensemble of relationships between works, audiences, and some particular aspects of the Orient therefore constitutes an analyzable formation [...] whose presence in time, in discourse, in institutions [...] gives it strength and authority.[19]

[18] Ibid., pp. 2-3.
[19] Ibid., p. 20.

Drawing upon Michel Foucault's idea of discourse[20], Said classifies Orientalism as a discourse that has constructed the Orient as an object of thought, knowledge and colonisation. According to Said, Orientalism is a closely-knit net of Western statements that invents concepts and regulates the knowledge concerning its discursive topic. The repetition of certain statements concerning the Orient and its inhabitants has formed a discourse that has an authoritative voice and at the same time is internally homogeneous and interconnected.

Said sums up the relationship between Orient and Occident as 'a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony'.[21] Consequently, Orientalism is defined as a discourse of power that 'depends for its strategy on this flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand'.[22] The Orientalist's acquisition of knowledge gives him the representational power; hence, Western writing and Oriental silence is interpreted as a sign of the West's cultural domination. The Orientals are supposed to be incapable of representing themselves, and the Westerner from a position of dominance and knowledge entitles himself to speak and write on their behalf.

Said's ideas triggered the field of postcolonial theory. Within literary studies, the application of postcolonial approaches has, since the late 1980s, produced a substantial body of research on a wide variety of topics, ranging from Otherness, race, imperialism and colonialism to the investigation of the representations of, and contact with, non-Europeans in English literary texts.[23] As the East is a recurring theme in Western literary works, there has been a wide range of studies and criticism dedicated

---

[20] Discourse can be defined as a set of statements constituted on a certain area of knowledge, though Michel Foucault himself is not decisive about the exact meaning of the term; he defines it 'sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements'. *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1972), p. 80.

[21] Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.

[22] Ibid., p. 7.

[23] For instance, Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance*, 1545-1625 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Kim Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 1995); Emily Bartels, *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993) and *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008); Ania Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002); and Mary Floyd-Wilson, *English Ethnicity and Race in Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

to test the applicability of Said's ideas; however, not all of this material is relevant to the topic of this study. What interests us here is the critical response from a new wave of Renaissance scholars who have investigated the dramatic and non-dramatic representations of Muslims in early modern English texts. It is not an exaggeration to state that this current critical trend has come into being as a result of the discussion and elaboration of Said's views in *Orientalism*.

In response to Said's notion of a homogeneous and consistent Orientalist discourse, critics have highlighted the complexity of representations of the East in English Renaissance literature. An influential response to Saidian thought emerged with Nabil Matar, who explores Renaissance attitudes towards Muslims in his trilogy *Islam in Britain* (1998), *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (1999), and *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (2005). Matar queries Saidian views of Western representations as homogeneously negative, providing many counterexamples. Matar contends that the promotion of negative stereotypes of Muslims in English Renaissance texts occurred predominantly within dramatic and religious writing, while other types of texts attested to the familiarity, indeed cohabitation between Europeans and Muslims. Matar disapproves of excessive critical reliance on dramatic material to account for English views of Islam because:

> from Kyd to Mason and Goffe, Muslims were portrayed on stage without any uniquely differentiating features; they exhibited the moral, or more frequently the immoral, character of Shakespeare's "superstitious Moor" and Goffe's "raging Turke," but there was no allusion in either the characterization or the dialogue in drama to specific aspects of Muslims that could be traced to actual meetings with them.[24]

Matar contends that very few Renaissance dramatists depicted Muslims accurately or sympathetically because the theatre appealed to people who felt threatened by the presence of Muslims in London, coastal towns and on trading routes. Matar simultaneously argues that documents of a more factual nature (such as diplomatic

[24] Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), pp. 6-7.

correspondence, government and commercial documents, and prison depositions) were free from negative stereotypes. The representations of Muslims in such material depended on the interactors' backgrounds and the nature of the actual encounter the English had in the East. Consequently, Matar suggests that analysing early modern literary sources should be supported by and contextualised within the documentary evidence of memoirs, letters, Privy Council documents, and other material produced as a result of an actual contact between Muslims and Britons.[25]

For Jonathan Burton, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*

> indicates that early modern treatments of the East lack the "internal consistency" which Said finds in eighteenth-century Orientalism. […] 'Immovable stereotypes of the Ottoman Turk as an ahistorical, irrational, despotic, and fanatical "Other" are more characteristic of nineteenth-century Orientalism than of early modern structures of thought.[26]

In *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624*, Burton argues that 'English representations of Islam were complex and nuanced, moved by a variable nexus of economic, political, and cultural forces. New pressures at home and abroad disrupted old stereotypes and forged new and sundry models to make sense of Islam and Muslim people'.[27] He suggests many factors that influenced and unsettled attitudes towards the Muslim Other; these include England's insecure political position within Europe, its new and unstable religious identity, and its aspiration towards an active role in global commerce.

In *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*, Matthew Dimmock points out that 'continuing English encounters with Muslims, both imagined and "actual", multiplied and complicated notions of the "turke" that had been

---

[25] Ibid, p. 7.
[26] Jonathan Burton, 'Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine*', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 30/1 (2000), 125-56, p. 125.
[27] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), pp. 11-12.

contested from their very inception'.[28] He suggests that the attitudes towards the Turks must be understood as responses to certain crises in English Christian society. During the Tudor period English writers refashioned the figure of the Turk in their effort to account for the complex relationship with other Christian nations; England's rift with the Roman church led the English to reconsider their relationship with the Catholic and other non-Christian religions.[29]

In *Britain and the Islamic World*, Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar contend that the English representations of Muslims varied according to region: thus, the English had different perceptions of inhabitants in the Levant, North Africa, India and Persia. While the Levant Muslims were represented as a source of anxiety because of their military power, North Africans had a reputation as aggressive and dangerous pirates. At the same time, English writings about the Safavid and Mughal Empires lack intense polarization because Persia and India did not engage in hostilities with Europe.[30]

Likewise, Said's characterisation of the relationship between East and West as one of power and domination is challenged by some scholars. Matar disagrees with employing postcolonial approaches, including Said's, that 'have projected the military and industrial decline of Muslim countries in the modern period on English drama and travelogue' when in fact the 'the attitude of a Renaissance Briton to the Turks was [...] an attitude of fear, anxiety, and awe'.[31] He observes that during the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods the 'Britons encountered a powerful religious and military civilization which viewed them as an inferior people with a false religion'.[32] Matar's views have been adopted and elaborated by later scholars. Daniel Vitkus remarks that 'English writers began to gather knowledge about the Mediterranean world from a position of inferiority, not power, and so a Saidian "orientalist discourse" based on power and the control of knowledge was not possible'.[33] He explains that the English

---

[28] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 10.
[29] Ibid, p. 206.
[30] Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), pp. 230-31.
[31] Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen*, p. 8.
[32] Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), p. 3.
[33] Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2003), p. 31.

were aware of their isolation and dependency, and they acknowledged the central importance of the Mediterranean in geography, history, civilization and economy.

Vitkus accepts the presence of English proto-colonial fantasies from the late sixteenth century onwards but believes that these ambitions cannot be considered as an actual exercise of power over non-European people.[34] Richmond Barbour, too, criticises Said's idea of a constant Western domination over the East: Said 'studies the discourse of the age of high imperialism. To project his findings backward, to read precolonial ethnography as if its rhetoric bespoke European dominance of the world, or its defensive tropes necessarily foretold aggressive expansion, is anachronistic'.[35] In his study of English commercial and diplomatic relations with the Moghul Empire, Barbour points out how English efforts to impress the Moghul authorities and to gain commercial concessions contest Said's theory of a European material and representational dominance: 'Moghul India was an empire of immense cultural complexity, sophistication, opulence, and power. It had small need of England's goods, and its state pomp eclipsed analogous English shows'.[36]

Many critics disagree with Said's belief that the Oriental is denied self-representation. As Burton has shown, during the early modern period Muslims often challenged and even reshaped Eurocentric principles such as Christian superiority and entitlement.[37] Burton's analysis of the correspondence between Sultan Murad III and Queen Elizabeth highlights 'the slippery rhetoric' that 'illustrates the inadequacy of colonial paradigms which imagine an "Other" denied subjectivity. Not only do Elizabeth's letters acknowledge Turkish subjectivity, they treat the Turks as respected equals whose acceptance and approval of the English are paramount'.[38]

MacLean's views are in full agreement:

> Acknowledging that the winners write history and that the very instruments of knowledge production were complicit in structures of

---

[34] Ibid.

[35] Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), p. 3.

[36] Richmond Barbour, 'Power and Distant Display: Early English "Ambassadors" in Moghul India', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 61/3,4 (1998), 343-68, at pp. 346, 343.

[37] Burton, *Traffic and Turning*, p. 15.

[38] Ibid., p. 58.

> power and authority, scholars of the Renaissance and early modern period soon noticed how Said's analysis of imperial discourses was inappropriate for the era before the Europeans set out to rule over and colonize Eastern lands.[39]

Taking the argument further, MacLean claims that, in fact, the Ottoman Empire contributed to the initiation and growth of English imperial fantasies and ambitions which later transformed England into a great colonial nation. According to MacLean, English 'views took shape within a series of contradictions that I will describe as "imperial envy", varying from fantasies about "Turks" wanting to be English, to admiration for specific features of the great empire: its power, potency, military might, opulence and wealth'.[40] Therefore, 'the notion of imperial envy better suits the pre-colonial period. It involves identification as well as differentiation, of sameness as well as otherness, of desire and attraction as well as revulsion'.[41] The English admiration of, and attraction towards, Oriental culture is also noted by Vitkus, who observes that English plays about Turkish themes and characters show 'Islamic culture as powerful, wealthy, and erotically alluring. For these playwrights, Islam is a religion of temptation'.[42]

Current critical practice aims to explain Eastern/Western relations within a multicultural and interactive framework, as a result of emerging concepts in contemporary cultural and postcolonial theory. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha argues for the cultural and historical hybridity of the postcolonial world. He proposes the presence of a third space of enunciation that questions the notion of a homogenising cultural identity which is authenticated by 'the originary Past' and survives through national traditions:

> It is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation, that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims

[39] Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 10.
[40] MacLean, pp. 19-20.
[41] Ibid., p. 22.
[42] Vitkus, p. 108.

> to the inherent originality or 'purity' of cultures are untenable, even before we resort to empirical historical instances that demonstrate their hybridity.[43]

Developing Bhabha's theory of hybridity further, scholars have questioned previous essentialist views of cultural identity and race. Robert Young inquires

> whether the old essentializing categories of cultural identity, or of race, were really so essentialized, or have been retrospectively constructed as more fixed than they were. When we look at the texts of racial theory, we find that they are in fact contradictory, disruptive and already deconstructed. Hybridity here is a key term in that wherever it emerges it suggests the impossibility of essentialism.[44]

Pnina Werbner regards the 'boundedness' of culture as illusory: 'cultures evolve historically through unreflective borrowings, mimetic appropriations, exchanges and inventions. There is no culture in and of itself'.[45] Contemporary critics interested in representations of Muslims in English Renaissance texts are not exempt from the influence of these modern concepts of hybridity, multiculturalism and globalisation. Drawing on these new critical terms, they have started to question the Saidian dualistic model and highlight the importance and extent of cultural interaction between the English and Eastern people such as Moors, Turks, Moghuls and Persians. They also emphasise the presence of unstable identities and cultural hybridity.

Calling for a new critical paradigm to analyse Renaissance cultural identities, Vitkus recommends a multicultural framework to replace the dualistic model of self versus the Other. He contends that the representations of the Mediterranean world on the English stage were constructed within a cultural space similar to Bhabha's 'third space of enunciation'; early modern English culture can be approached through Bhabha's concept of ambivalent alterity which 'is produced, not by blending of

[43] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 37.
[44] Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 27.
[45] Pnina Werbner, introduction, in Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood (eds.), *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 1-29, at pp. 4-5.

"native" and "colonial", but by a mixture of a "native", pre-colonial English culture with various "imported" foreign practices or "translated" discourses'.[46] Indeed, he goes so far as to state that ' "Islam" or "Turkishness" was a layered conglomeration that enfolded Christians, Jews, Muslims, and renegades within a sprawling and expanding cultural mix'.[47]

Vitkus encourages borrowing from the theoretical paradigms introduced by scholars such as Daniel Carey and Timothy Powell. Carey explores travel writings in the early modern period; he highlights the risk of misunderstanding the complexity of early modern travel if it is analysed in terms of incommensurability. His analysis is concerned with examining the influence of travel and foreign commodities such as herbs, medicine and tobacco on a stable English identity. Carey warns against neglecting the material level of interaction where cohabitation facilitated the circulation of foreign customs, goods and manners. He concludes his study by suggesting that 'the forms of travel and the conditions of exchange were sufficiently diverse and complex in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to play havoc with any straightforward structural model of binary opposition'.[48] In *Beyond the Binary: Reconstructing Cultural Identity in a Multicultural Context*, a volume that questions the validity of a variety of binary oppositions, such as male/female, white/black, coloniser/colonised, or able/disable, Powell advocates 'moving beyond binary forms of analysis and inventing new critical paradigms that will help scholars to theorize the fluidity, multiplicity, and intricate contradictions that characterize all forms of cultural identity'.[49]

As a consequence, Renaissance scholars are increasingly contesting the concept of a stable cultural identity and emphasising the notion of exchange and communication between early modern nations. For Barbour, the real challenge is to grasp how societies interacted and shaped each other: 'to efface hybridity, and reduce multiple alliances and antagonisms to an overriding dualism, is [...] to miss what is essential

[46] Vitkus, pp. 13-14.
[47] Ibid., p. 130.
[48] Daniel Carey, 'Questionting Incommensurability in Early Modern Cultural Exchange', *Common Knowledge*, 6/2 (1997), 32-50, at p. 49.
[49] Timothy Powell, ed., *Beyond the Binary: Reconstructing Cultural Identity in a Multicultural Context* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1999), p. 2.

about precolonial engagements'.[50] Burton uses the term 'trafficking' to account for cross-cultural interaction between the English and Muslims. He suggests that 'trafficking' does not only denote the commercial but also cultural communication and exchange; moreover, the term takes into account the conflicting elements in the exchange which produce a mutual change in the participants in the interactive process. In *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (2008), Emily Bartels adopts the same theoretical model to examine the cultural interaction between England, North Africa and the Ottoman Empire:

> Where before the organizing cornerstone of our interpretations of cross-cultural contact were self-authorizing *nations* mapping their boundaries against 'other' cultures, now we think in terms of 'worlds,' charted more loosely across bodies of waters and boundaries of nations-states, configured dynamically as transnational and international economies, and defined by mixed and ethnically intermixed population.[51]

Bartels emphasises the proximity and even 'openness' of Turkishness to the English people in the early modern world: she highlights 'early modern England's awareness of the inclusiveness of the Turks' cultural politics and practices, the permeability of their image, the variability of their heritage, and the all too realizable prospect that, with a switch of a blade and a religion, almost anyone could "turn Turk" '.[52]

My survey has shown a growing, stimulating area of research within early modern studies. I aim to locate my analysis of the representations of Ottoman sultans within this critical context. As we have seen above, numerous studies have investigated the perceptions and representations of Muslims in Western texts. However, a full study of Ottoman sultans does not yet exist. My dissertation is intended as a comprehensive coverage of the writings about sultans in Elizabethan texts. In the period, sultans were widely mentioned but of course not every source offers sufficient substance to warrant

---

[50] Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 5.
[51] Emily Bartels, *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2008), p. 13.
[52] Ibid., p. 14.

closer analysis; for example, a sermon that mentions the Great Turk in passing, may simply be inadequate. I have therefore focused on genres that include a significant amount of material about sultans: these turned out to be travelogues, histories, correspondence, and drama.

The first chapter will explore the writings of Elizabethan visitors to Istanbul. It excludes texts that mention the sultans cursorily (as some captive narratives do), and concentrates on accounts that contain a sufficient amount of information about the sultans: the travelogues written by Richard Wrag, John Sanderson, Thomas Dallam and Fynes Moryson.

The second chapter engages with historiography. Numerous Elizabethan works chronicled the lives of Ottoman sultans. I discounted translations from other European histories, looking instead at the first history of the Ottoman Empire originally written in English, Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603). Due to its colossal size, an all-inclusive coverage of Knolles's volume is not possible. Therefore, this chapter will focus on Knolles's account of the conquest of Egypt by Sultan Selim I (1512-20) and compare his version with a sixteenth-century Arabic chronicle written by Shihab al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmed Ibn Iyas (1448-1524). The comparative analysis aims to explore the textual characteristics of both sources and representations of the Sultan in each.

Any research on texts related to the sultans during the Elizabethan period cannot be considered complete without examining a significant body of material that is ascribed to the sultans themselves: letters sent to Queen Elizabeth I from Sultan Murad III, Sultana Safiye (Murad's favourite concubine and mother of the heir-apparent), and Sultan Mehmed III (1595-1603). The primary material of this chapter consists of the English translations of sultanic letters that were published in diverse sources during the last five centuries.

The search for drama that featured the sultan produced a long list of plays; yet in many cases, the full text of such plays has been lost, or the sultan in question is non-Ottoman (ruling over Egypt or Babylon). As a consequence, the number of relevant texts has narrowed down to seven plays which include the anonymous *Solymannidae*, Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great I*, Robert Greene's *The Comicall*

Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon, Greene's *The First Part of the Tragicall Raigne of Selimus*, Thomas Kyd's *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda*, George Salterne's *Tomumbeius*, and the anonymous *John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon*.

The search for primary data, especially the sultans' letters, has taken some time and the process was sometimes challenging, but it revealed a sizable, diverse body of material about the Ottoman sultans. The diversity and amount of data will help in producing a significant, comprehensive analysis that illustrates how the sultan was imagined and represented in texts produced during the Elizabethan era.

Chapter I
The Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Travel Narratives

The Elizabethan age witnessed a sudden surge in the English interest in travel and exploration. The overseas adventures of the Spanish and Portuguese inspired and encouraged Englishmen to venture further beyond the confines of their isolated island. Elizabethan voyagers—among them Francis Drake, Walter Raleigh, Humphrey Gilbert, John Hawkins, Martin Frobisher and Richard Grenville—managed for the first time to circumnavigate the globe, explore the north of Europe, or venture to Russia, Persia, India, America and Africa. These early adventures widened the English horizon and motivated the literate elite to read about foreign nations and places; hence the increase in the number of published materials related to travel during Elizabeth's reign. The significant proliferation in travel publications during this historical period can be illustrated by comparing the number of printed materials concerning overseas travel that were issued in the period from the start of printing to 1557, amounting to thirty-nine publications, with the works produced during the Elizabethan era estimated at one hundred and twenty-three.[53] This increase in the quantity of travel publications was accompanied by substantial improvements in the written material. The travel texts took a step back from the realm of imagination and fabrication; travelogues became dependent more on personal observations and eyewitness testimony.[54]

---

[53] John Parker, *Books to Build an Empire: A Bibliographical History of English Overseas Interests to 1620* (Amsterdam: Israel, 1965), pp. 243-256. For more statistics about travel publications printed in England during the early modern period, see Edward Godfrey Cox, *A Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel: Including Voyages, Geographical Descriptions, Adventures, Shipwrecks and Expeditions* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969).

[54] In her study of English travel writing Barbara Korte remarks that 'in Europe, more specifically in England, our contemporary understanding of the travelogue as the account of authentic, autobiographical travelling experience does not emerge until the Early Modern period'. *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations*, trans. Catherine Matthias (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 21.

These developments in early travel literature can be clearly demonstrated by the expanding Elizabethan travel writing about the Ottoman Empire. These publications introduced original travel experiences offered by Englishmen who were able for the first time to see the sultan, to walk in his palace and to witness thrilling events in Istanbul. The rise in the number of Englishmen heading towards the Ottoman lands was closely connected with the establishment of diplomatic and commercial contact with the sultans. The appointment of an English ambassador to the Sublime Porte in 1582 and the launching of the Turkey Company in 1581 facilitated travel to the Ottoman territories and enabled a greater number of English people to trade, visit and reside in the Grand Signior's dominion.

Four travellers to Istanbul, Richard Wrag, John Sanderson, Thomas Dallam and Fynes Moryson, demand our attention in the following discussion that looks at the representations of the Ottoman sultans in Elizabethan travelogues.[55] Three of our four travellers went to Istanbul to serve their own or their sovereign's interests; only one of them, Moryson, chose to go to Istanbul for the sake of pure 'tourism'. This fact clarifies the nature and purpose of English travel during this historical period; it shows that venturing away from home was commonly motivated by utilitarian goals rather than by curiosity or love of adventure. The travellers we deal with came from different walks of life: a diplomat, a merchant, a craftsman and a student. The diversity extends to the travellers' written work. Wrag's text is a report or 'relation' that records the important events in his journey, while Dallam's composition is a personal diary that provides an intimate and detailed autobiographical narrative. Sanderson's travel documents are a compilation of miscellaneous material, including his travel accounts, correspondence, business documents and other sundry jottings and trivia. Moryson's volumes were written as travel books and were intended for publication from the beginning. His books contain his travel observations in addition to extensive descriptions of the social, economic and political situation in the countries he visited; therefore, his work is the closest to our modern notion of a travelogue.

[55] A limited number of Elizabethans recorded their travel experiences in the Ottoman Empire; even fewer included significant information about the sultans; my choice of primary texts privileges Elizabethan travel accounts whose comments and observations on the sultans offer substantial material for discussion.

This textual diversity is not unexpected since, over the centuries, travel literature has been known as a fluid genre that includes various kinds of material and adopts different written styles and forms. The heterogeneous nature of travelogues has triggered an ongoing debate on the nature and scope of travel literature.[56] Critics find it difficult to define and classify travel texts because this type of writing may overlap and intermingle with other well-defined written genres. In a travelogue we may come across diary-style entries, fictional elaborations, poetical compositions or scientific observations that blur the line between a travelogue and other texts like an autobiography, novel or an ethnographical report. For the purpose of this study we content ourselves that our primary material is a quasi-autobiographical account that records a travel experience, a 'varied body of writing which, whether its principal purpose is practical or fictional, takes travel as an essential condition for its production'.[57]

The following discussion explores how the above-mentioned Elizabethan travellers represented the Ottoman sultans in their writing. The reading of these texts naturally leads to the examination of the textual characteristics of travel narratives in the late sixteenth century. Travel writing deals with the encounter between the self and Others and it tries to represent those Others to the readers at home (if the piece of writing is intended for publication); therefore, critical issues such as representation, subjectivity, individual and collective identity, and nationalism are expected themes in the discussion of our primary texts.

One of the early visitors to the Ottoman Empire was Richard Wrag, who was a member of the English diplomatic delegation that delivered the royal gifts sent from Queen Elizabeth to Sultan Murad III in 1593. Wrag was an eyewitness of the presentation of the royal offerings and the ceremonial kissing of the Sultan's hand. He

---

[56] On the debate over the definition and scope of travel genre, see Jan Borm, 'Defining Travel: On the Travel Book, Travel Writing and Terminology', in Glenn Hooper and Tim Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writings* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 13-26; Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe', *Journeys*, 1/1 (2000), 5-35; Mary B. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World*: *Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991), p. 6; Zweder von Martels, 'The Eye and the Eye's Mind', in Zweder von Martels (ed.), *Travel Fact and Travel Fiction: Studies in Fiction, Literary Tradition, Scholarly Discovery and Observation in Travel Writing* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), xi-xviii, at p. xi; and Tim Youngs, *Travellers in Africa*: *British Travelogues, 1850-1900* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1994), p. 8.

[57] Rubiés, 'Travel Writing', p. 6.

spent eleven months in Istanbul and wrote a brief description of the city. He concluded his visit to the Levant with a trip to Syria, where he delivered a command sent from the Grand Signior to the Pasha of Aleppo to recommend the kind treatment of English subjects. Wrag's travel account was published in Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations*, first published in 1589.[58] What interests us in Wrag's narrative is his account of the presentation of Elizabeth's gifts and the circumstances surrounding this event; this section sheds light on the person of Murad III and his world as well as on the author and his text.

The main theme of the 'discourse', as Wrag labelled it, was to describe a visit that symbolised the Queen's friendly contact and cooperation with Sultan Murad; consequently, the portrait of the Grand Signior as England's friend is a taken-for-granted premise in this travel text. The configuration of the Sultan in this new light—which had become inevitable in light of the new realities dictated by Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic and economic contacts—certainly destabilised the Renaissance cliché of the sultan as the inveterate enemy of Christians.

The diplomatic delegation from England arrived in Istanbul in September 1593. The Grand Signior used to visit his seaside mosque twice or three times a week to perform religious duties; therefore, the English ship *The Ascension* waited for a suitable time when the Sultan would be in his mosque to approach his palace and salute him. When that opportunity came, 'the shippe set out in their best maner with flagges, streamers and pendants of divers coloured silke, with all the mariners, together with most of the Ambassadours men […] [and] discharged first two volies of small shots, and then all great ordinance twice over'.[59] Wrag noted proudly that the Sultan was delighted to watch 'the shippe in such bravery'.[60] The text's straightforward narration of this episode clarified the balance of power between Murad and his guests and showed that the English were in need of the Sultan's acceptance and approval.

The delivery of the present was delayed due to a dispute between the Grand Vizier and the English ambassador Edward Barton. According to Wrag the row was triggered

[58] Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1903), 6:93-113.
[59] Ibid., 6:95-96.
[60] Ibid., 6:95.

when an Englishman called John Field was imprisoned and threatened with the death penalty after the escape of some Genoese prisoners. Field had frequented the prison and had been detected delivering a letter to one of the prisoners days before the escape. When Barton intervened to free the Englishman the Vizier insulted him. In turn, the ambassador decided to make a complaint to the Grand Signior against the Vizier through using a popular way whereby the plaintiffs boarded a boat and sailed close to the Sultan's seraglio. They held their petitions to their foreheads so they could be seen by the Sultan, who used to send his servants to collect people's appeals. This anecdote destabilises the commonplace of a sultan's cruel regime. The fact that ordinary people used informal means to reach their sovereign and present their concerns directly to him subverts the notion of the sultan as an unapproachable tyrant.

In the petition Barton wrote:

> that except his highnesse would redresse this so great indignitie, which the Vizir his slave had offered him [Barton] and her majestie in his person, he was purposed to detaine the Present until such time as he might by letters over-land from her majestie bee certified, wither she would put up so great an injurie as it was.[61]

Wrag related that the ambassador received the answer within a short time, requesting him to go to the divan, where the Vizier presented him with a gown of cloth of gold, embracing him with courteous, conciliatory words. A dispatch sent to Venice by Matheo Zane, the Venetian ambassador in Istanbul, dated 6 September 1593, offers a different scenario of the incident. Zane identified Field as Barton's barber; the English Ambassador 'being questioned by the Grand Vizir on this subject was the object of violent threatening language; so much so that his Dragoman fled in terror lest he should be arrested; and the Ambassador himself on his departure felt the same alarm and appealed to the Sultan'.[62] Barton pleaded for his personal safety and the Sultan granted him immunity against the Vizier's threats. Meanwhile the Vizier

[61] Ibid., 6:97.

[62] *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy (1592-1603)*, ed. Horatio F. Brown (London, 1897), 9:104.

presented a note to the Sultan accusing Barton of disobedience because he refused to hand in the suspect. Barton was detained later by the Vizier and, because he had no other option, the ambassador sent for Field and delivered him to the Vizier. Barton was set free.

The two versions of the story differ significantly. Zane did not mention the reconciliation between the Vizier and Barton and the warning in the latter's petition, but it is probable that Wrag, who was an insider within the English diplomatic community, had close access to such information. However, a basic knowledge of the nature of Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic dealings during the sixteenth century would show that it was not likely that the English ambassador would dare to use such strong and threatening language in his petition to the Sultan. The discrepancies in the details prove that the English diplomat introduced a rather selective narrative. Wrag chose to talk about the complaint and reconciliation and disregarded the other information concerning Barton's refusal to hand over Field, his subsequent detention and final surrender of his barber. By looking at emphases and omissions in this account, it can be concluded that the author strove to depict the English ambassador as an innocent, dignified and brave victim.

By this stage in the narrative the nationalist[63] sentiments in Wrag's text become discernible. His national pride in narrating the details of *The Ascension*'s salutary display is evident. It has also been demonstrated how he overplayed the English ambassador's innocence, dignity and courage. Indeed, Wrag considered the anecdote that related the clash between the ambassador and the Vizier as not 'dishonourable for

[63] The word 'nationalism' is used in this thesis to denote the 'sentiments of attachment to and pride in the nation'. Anthony D. Smith, 'National Identity: Modern and Medieval?', in Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murrey (eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds: University of Leeds, School of English, 1995), 21-46, at p. 24. The discussion, then, does not focus on the modern ideological and political uses of the word. On the contentious views about when a nationalist consciousness in England originated, see Anthony D. Smith, p. 35; Liah Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Harvard UP, 1993), p. 42; and Adrian Hasting, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 5. I propose the sixteenth century. This opinion is based on Benedict Anderson's argument that attributes the rise of nationalist consciousness to three factors: the Reformation, the esotericization of Latin and the spread of vernaculars as instruments of administrative centralisation. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 39-42. All these elements were present in sixteenth-century England and they helped in the formation of a distinctive national identity.

our *nation* [emphasis added], or that worthie man the ambassador'.[64] Accordingly, the rationale behind the inclusion of this event in the narrative seemed to be the boosting of a nationalist pride. Wrag deemed it a daring move from Barton to complain about the Vizier who was the second most powerful person in the Turkish Empire after the Sultan himself. Wrag's text displayed a patriotic feeling that celebrated Englishness, whether in the ship's spectacle or in the actions of the man who represented the English nation in Istanbul. The factor that made the articulation of nationalist sentiment more vocal in this text was the author's position in an alien terrain. Travel involves contacting and confronting the Other, which inevitably leads to a heightened sense of one's own ethnic and cultural difference. Wrag, for example, mentioned that Barton's deed received 'the admiration of all Christians that heard of it, especially of the French and Venetian ambassadors'.[65] Thus, the awareness of these Others, including the Christians, helped the author to realise and express his Englishness.

On 7 October 1593 the ambassador with seven of the embassy men, all apparelled in rich clothes, headed to the Sultan's palace for the formal occasion of kissing the Sultan's hand. Wrag described the grand reception offered to the English delegates. The English visitors were provided with 'very richly furnished' horses to carry them to the palace and were welcomed into a grand court which was prepared with 'great pompe' for the guests.[66] The author chose to convey the splendour of the occasion in terms of figures: he estimated that two thousand palace staff greeted them, and that their banquet consisted of about one hundred dishes served by up to fifty servants. According to the Sultan's orders, gowns of cloth of gold were presented to Barton and his companions; the ambassador received two gowns, one of gold and the other of crimson velvet. The Queen's gift was brought in. It consisted of '12 goodly pieces of gilt plate, 36 garments of fine English cloth of al colors, 20 garments of cloth of gold, 10 garments of sattin, 6 pieces of fine Holland, and certaine other things of good value'.[67]

---

[64] Hakluyt, 6:96.
[65] Ibid., 6:97.
[66] Ibid., 6:98.
[67] Ibid., 6:100.

Wrag's account of the reception highlighted the formal splendour of the ceremonies, and the wealth and luxury surrounding the Ottoman Sultan, but a closer look reveals the author's motive: his detailed description of Murad's magnificent world accentuated the esteem and generous welcome given to the Queen's representatives at the Porte. Here again Wrag's propagandistic and nationalist agenda comes to the surface to highlight the English achievements in Istanbul. Indeed, Wrag's account is similar to a news report that hails the successful completion of the English mission to deliver the royal presents. The author spent several months in Istanbul, travelled to Aleppo, and had an interesting return trip that took him to Cyprus, Italy, Germany and France, but he wrote little about these adventures. Instead one single event that took a few hours occupied the lion's share in his account. The title of this piece of writing, '*A description of a Voiage to Constantinople and Syria, begun the 21. of March 1593. and ended the 9. of August, 1595. wherein is shewed the order of deliuering the second Present by Master Edward Barton her maiesties Ambassador, which was sent from her Maiestie to Sultan Murad Can, Emperour of Turkie*', clearly illustrates the author's main interest in this account.

After the banquet, the ambassador and his companions moved to another stone-paved court, where the Grand Signior's marble house was situated. The *Bustangi-bassa*[68] with another pasha stood at the door of the Sultan's reception room, where the Sultan was sitting in state, dressed in a gown of cloth of silver. Murad sat on a platform covered with a green satin carpet embroidered luxuriously with silver, oriental pearls and great turquoises. The rest of the room was covered with a carpet of carnation satin embroidered with gold. The two pashas at the door held each diplomat by the arms and led them one by one to where the Sultan was sitting. After kissing Murad's hand they moved backwards to the door with their faces towards the Sultan. Afterwards Barton delivered his requests and the Sultan 'answered in one word, Nolo, which is in Turkish as much as, it shal be done: for it is not the maner of the Turkish

[68] *Bustangi-Bassa*: the head-gardener, a formal title; his actual responsibility was the management of the imperial household.

emperor familiarly to confer with any Christian ambassador, but he appointeth his Vizir in his person to graunt their demaunds if they be to his liking'.[69]

The audience with Murad was then brief and formal. The European sources relate with wonder and unease the ceremony of meeting the Grand Signior. In his reading of an audience given to an envoy sent from Emperor Maximilian II to Sultan Selim II in 1567, Richmond Barbour describes meeting the Sultan as an elaborate ceremony of humiliation.[70] The above-mentioned audience is similar to the one described by Wrag, except that the diplomat speaking for the Emperor kissed the hem of the Sultan's garment, not his hand. In this case, the ceremony was carefully designed to set the balance of power between the Ottoman Empire and the Europeans to the former's advantage. The projection of an image of a silent immobile ruler was cultivated by Ottoman protocol to elevate the sultan's person and to widen the distance between his godlike figure and the visitors' inferior status.

What is intriguing about Wrag's report on the delivery of the Queen's presents is that it is narrated from the third person perspective, although the English diplomat was an eye-witness. It is noticeable that the travelogue derived from an author who recorded the observable experience but did not often feature in the narrative himself, and on the few occasions when he inserted himself into his text he did so just to relate information concerning his arrival, deparure or meeting with certain people. This textual strategy absents the author from his narrative and leads naturally to the minimisation of his subjective[71] presence in almost the whole text—except on one occasion when his individualistic voice emerges briefly in his final advice to his countrymen, which we will turn to shortly. Mary Fuller has found a noticeable absence of the authorial voice in early modern travel writing; in her view, these travelogues appear to be directed towards the external world and were thus incapable of speaking

---

[69] Hakluyt, 6:101.

[70] Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), p. 32.

[71] Edward Finegan defines subjectivity as 'the expression of self and the representation of a speaker's (or, more generally, a locutionary agent's) perspective or point of view in discourse – what has been called a speaker's imprint'. 'Subjectivity and Subjectivisation in Language: An Introduction', in Dieter Stein and Susan Wright (eds.), *Subjectivity and Subjectivisation: Linguistic Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 1-15, at p. 1. Despite the fact that Finegan deals with subjectivity as a linguistic term, I find his definition most suitable to express the notion of subjectivity as it is conceived in this thesis.

about the self.[72] She ascribes this lack of personal voice to the writers' intention to be as transparent as possible: 'the task of the writer is almost more to transcribe or to copy *from* the world of objects and events rather than to author a text as such.'[73]

Fuller's explanation is relevant to our text where Wrag's elimination of his autobiographical presence gives his account the impression of a disinterested narrative. This detached authorial stance is discernible throughout the text; for example, at the end of his travelogue he gave an account of Hinduism[74], which he heard from a Jew he met on the ship that took them from Cyprus to Venice. Wrag related a dispassionate report of the beliefs and practices of the Hindus without expressing any personal opinion or judgement. It is worth noting that the goal of giving a comprehensive, authentic account was on the mind of our author, who addressed his dedicatee, his uncle Mr. Rowland Hewish, Esquire[75]: 'If for lacke of time to put it in order I have not performed it so well as it ought, I crave pardon, assuring you that to my knowledge I have not missed in the trueth of any thing.'[76]

After attending this formal event, Wrag remained in the Ottoman capital for several months and witnessed the preparations of the Turkish army to attack Hungary. Hearing that Murad threatened to lead the army in person, Wrag commented for the first time directly on the Sultan in what happened to be a sarcastic vein: 'but like Heliogabalus, his affections being more serviceable to Venus then to Mars, he stayed at home.'[77] Unlike other travellers, especially Sanderson and Moryson, who wrote about Murad's numerous concubines and children, Wrag did not refer to the Sultan's private life but with this fleeting comparison he gave away much about Murad's personality. The comparison to the Roman Emperor Elagabalus, who was known for his sexual excess and decadence[78], exposed the Sultan as a decadent lustful ruler. The fact that Murad

---

[72] Mary Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), p. 8.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Hakluyt, 6:110-12.
[75] Rowland Hewish, or Huyshe, was one of the landed gentry in Devonshire. John A. Burke, *Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1863), p. 760.
[76] Hakluyt, 6:93.
[77] Ibid., 6:103.
[78] See David S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay, AD 180-395* (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 156-57 and Fik Meijer, *Emperors Don't Die in Bed*, trans. S. J. Leinbach (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 78.

never led his army in any war was common knowledge, often repeated in European sources. However, Murad's perceived lack of military prowess fell short of developing into a sultanic stereotype as it was destabilised by his successor's invasion of Europe at the beginning of his reign in 1596.

Wrag added, in what looks like a postscript, that in spite of the magnitude of the Turkish army, the Christians achieved a victory and struck terror in the Turkish soldiers who, according to many reports, fled the field of battle. It is worth noting how rapidly a sultan can be transformed from being a friend of a Christian monarch into an enemy to Christianity. The two paradoxical sultanic representations are determined by their narrative context. The first framework demanded a neutral depiction of Murad as he was the recipient of England's friendly overtures, while the other context was related to the campaign against Hungary, which naturally invoked anti-Ottoman sentiments. These heterogeneous representations are a clear indication of the complicated dualistic nature of the relation between early modern Europe and the Ottomans, which was reflected in contemporary publications.

Wrag's propagandistic and political agenda became apparent with a final advice, which he gave to his English addressees after he had witnessed the chaos wrought by Turkish soldiers in Istanbul. According to the author, the army had committed crimes against the inhabitants of the city for a full two months. He prayed that similar atrocities might not be seen in England, where his fellow Englishmen were unaware of and ungrateful for the blessings they were enjoying. He addressed his countrymen reproachfully:

> I could wish, that such amongst us as have injoyed the Gospel with such great and admirable peace and prosperity under her Majesties goverment this forty yeeres, and have not all this time brought forth better fruits of obedience to God, and thankfulnesse to her Majesty, were there but a short time to beholde the miserable condition both of Christians and others living under such an infidell prince.[79]

[79] Hakluyt, 6:103.

Religion played a pivotal role in defining identities in the early modern world, where the internal discord between Catholicism and Protestantism and the friction and conflict between Christianity and other religions, especially Islam and Judaism, fed into the formation of opposing religious communities.[80] Thus, Protestantism enabled Elizabethans to articulate their individuality and realise their difference from Catholic Spaniards and Muslim Turks. It is not surprising, then, that Wrag, upon encountering the chaos in Istanbul, instantly invoked his religious belief to establish his difference from the 'infidel' Turks and credit his own faith with the prosperity, stability and security in his native land. In a cosmopolitan city like Istanbul, where people of diverse races and religions interacted and intermingled, Englishness was, according to Wrag, distinguished mostly by the 'true religion of Christ' and the English Queen. The author's identification with established authorities is another manifestation of the presence of an English nationalist identity in this text. The Queen's leadership is considered as an identifying English characteristic that starkly contrasts with the Sultan's chaotic, irreligious rule.

Undoubtedly, there is an embedded political message that Wrag wished to impart to his readership. Wrag acted as a propagandist who manipulated his experience abroad to find favour with his sovereign, whom he considered 'so wise and godly a prince'.[81] The English diplomat was in the service of the English government so it is not unexpected that he had this political agenda. The author found in the figure of the Sultan a ready-made foil to Elizabeth but he seemed to exaggerate the disadvantages of living under Murad's rule to promote her Majesty's image.

As mentioned previously, Wrag dedicated his travel account to his uncle Mr. Rowland Hewish, Esquire. It was a common practice for Elizabethan writers to dedicate their works to individuals of higher social rank because by 'addressing a person of status writers hoped to gain protection and reward for their work, either in money or kind, endorsement of their composition, and gain kudos for themselves'.[82]

---

[80] Helga Quadflieg observes that religion is the most important site for renegotiating early modern identity. 'As Mannerly and Civil as Any of Europe', in Glenn Hooper and Tim Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 27-40, at p. 29.
[81] Hakluyt, 6:103.
[82] Nigel Wheale, *Writing and Society: Literacy, Print, and Politics in Britain, 1590-1660* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 63.

Wrag used formal rather than familiar language in his dedication. For example, he drew upon *excusatio propter infirmitatem*[83], a rhetorical trope which demeaned the writer and thereby exalted the addressee; he addressed his uncle: 'Sir, considering the goodnesse of your Nature which is woont kindely to accept from a friend, even of meane things being given with a good heart, I have presumed to trouble you with the reading of this rude discourse of my travailes into Turkie'.[84] This formal, ingratiating language indicates that Wrag had already enjoyed some favours or was intending to get more from his relative. The author's flattering remarks on the Queen should be seen in this light; Mr. Hewish, who was from the privileged class that identified itself with the Crown,[85] would have welcomed any favourable comments on his sovereign.

Wrag's style and the message he addressed to his fellow Englishmen reveal that he intended his work to be circulated for a wider readership. Sixteenth-century readers would expect a confirmation of the ascendancy of the English moral, religious and political system, and Wrag had to satisfy those expectations. The author thus assumed a higher moral and religious ground towards the Turks. Wrag was aware that England could not match the wealth and power of the Ottoman state; he personally observed the splendour and affluence of the Sultan's palace and described Istanbul as a vibrant, strong and rich city[86]. Therefore, he resorted to religious criteria to establish the pre-eminence of the English nation and to fulfil his readership's anticipations. Wrag's final remarks on his prosperous home country living under the Gospel also reaffirm the author's own religious adherence. Jonathan Burton maintains that 'English readers were likely to see the actions of any Christian in the Levant as suspect and potentially unregenerate'.[87] Travel writing of the period often dwelt upon the transgressions

---

[83] *Excusatio propter infirmitatem* (an excuse for mental weakness) is used by writers to express the insignificance of their theme and their lack of talent to handle the subject properly, leaving their addressees to average everything out fairly. Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), pp. 207-8.

[84] Hakluyt, 6: 93.

[85] Arnold Hauser refers to the political alliance between Elizabeth and the landed gentry when he explains how, in the sixteenth century, 'the rich bourgeoisie and landowning or industrially active nobility formed the new ruling class. The stabilization of society is expressed in the alliance between the Crown and this new class.' *The Social History of Art: Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque*, 3rd edn. (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 75.

[86] Hakluyt, 6: 105-6.

[87] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), p. 156.

committed by English sojourners in the Ottoman territories, such as moral decadence and religious conversion.[88] This may explain Wrag's emphasis on his own Protestant steadfastness and his reason for telling his dedicatee Mr. Hewish 'If you aske mee what in my travels I have learned, I answere as a noble man of France did to the like demaund, Hoc unum didici, mundi contemptum: and so concluding with the wise man in the booke of the Preacher, that all is vanitie'.[89] This disclaimer seemed to be aimed to guard against any suspicion entertained by his readers that his travel experience had any effect whatsoever on him. The appeal to the book of the Preacher projects an image of the man as a stoic Protestant who was not lured by worldly vanity. However, it is not clear whether vanity here is attached to the knowledge he acquired from his travels or to the world he saw on his journey. What he learned was not vain; had it been, he would not have been interested in recording it, but he might have intended to impart that the world he had encountered was all vanity; dismissing the Ottoman world of wealth, luxury and power as illusory and evanescent might be interpreted as an attempt to compensate for feelings of imperial envy or inferiority.

During his visit to Istanbul Wrag most likely met John Sanderson, who was in the service of the English ambassador, William Harborne. Sanderson had first arrived in Istanbul in 1584 to stay for four years serving the Levant Company. He was then employed by Harborne as the 'maister of his howse', and he also worked as assistant to an English factor called William Shales in Egypt.[90] He returned to Istanbul in 1591 to work again for the Company for a further eight years. He even acted as a deputy for Barton for six months during the latter's absence on the Sultan's military campaign against the Holy Roman Emperor in 1596. Sanderson made his third and last visit to the Ottoman capital in 1599. Sanderson was not a brief visitor as Wrag, Dallam and Moryson, and, although he was in Istanbul at different intervals, he was a resident, so he spent more time in the Ottoman capital than the other travellers discussed in my

---

[88] One of our travellers, John Sanderson, commented on the great alteration in the behaviour of the English ambassador after he had spent many years in Istanbul. Apparently, Edward Barton turned 'from servinge God devoutly and drinkinge puer water' to drinking much wine and frequenting prostitutes. *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584-1602*, ed. William Foster (London: U of Cambridge P, 1931), p. 10.
[89] Hakluyt, 6:93.
[90] John Sanderson, *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584-1602*, ed. William Foster (London: U of Cambridge P, 1931), pp. xii-xiii.

dissertation did, and it is highly likely that he met the three of them. Sanderson was serving Barton when the diplomatic mission that included Wrag visited the Porte, and he was on the same ship that transported Dallam to Istanbul in 1599. Likewise, Moryson's two visits to Istanbul were contemporaneous with Sanderson's residence there. Sanderson travelled extensively in the Levant and Europe, and in 1590 he joined an expedition that intended to head south through the Cape route to India—a commercial venture that would eventually fail. Portions of Sanderson's travel writings were published in Samuel Purchas's *Purchas His Pilgrimes*.[91] Sanderson was a first-hand witness of many incidents that took place in Istanbul, and his account of contemporary events related to the sultans is of particular interest for the present inquiry.

During his second visit to the Ottoman capital Sanderson witnessed 'the cruelltie of that government' following Sultan Mehmed III's accession to the throne in 1595, when he 'strangeled all his living bretherin, which weare in nomber 19. They ar brought one by one before him, and he seeth them both alive and dead. I did see them caried to buriall the next day after thier dead father.'[92] Murad left five of his concubines pregnant, and when two of them had male babies the infants were killed instantly but the female siblings were left alive. This account of the massacre certainly contributed to shaping the image of the Ottoman sultan in the English imagination. The elimination of rival successors to the throne was not unheard of before Mehmed's reign, but this particular incident received more publicity in England because English merchants and diplomats were able for the first time to see it for themselves or hear first-hand reports thereof.[93] With such events related by immediate English observers the fratricidal stigma became intrinsically linked to the sultan's character. It is not surprising then to see how regal fratricide became a stereotypical sultanic feature in early modern English texts. Shakespeare certainly knew of the gruesome habit regulating Ottoman succession, and apparently assumed his audience to be familiar

[91] A wider collection of Sanderson's autobiography, correspondence and other miscellaneous documents assembled from manuscripts found in the British Museum was edited by William Foster in *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584-1602*.
[92] Sanderson, p. 58.
[93] Three of our four travellers mentioned this fratricidal massacre; the only exception was Wrag, who visited the Ottoman capital prior to Mehmed's reign.

with it as well. In the second part of *Henry IV,* Prince Hal assures his brothers by saying:

> Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear.
> This is the English, not the Turkish court;
> Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
> But Harry Harry. (5.2.164)

However, it is worth noting that the three parts of Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, which dramatise the history of Hal's successor, show a struggle for power that does not lack fratricide, parricide and cross-families killings. Hence, conjuring up a barbaric violent Turkish court to contrast it with a supposedly moderate, principled English court, is a subtle Shakespearian irony that negates the claim that there is a difference between the two courts and satirises Hal's assumption of a higher moral ground.

Sanderson provided the English reader with shocking statistics regarding the number of Murad's offspring: thirty children died during his lifetime, and he had twenty-seven daughters, so Sanderson estimated that the late Sultan had eighty-one children. The total figure serves as an index to the overindulgence in the Sultan's lifestyle with a clear reference to his unbridled libidinousness. Despotism, moral decadence and sensuality are typical Orientalist representations of Eastern rulers in numerous European texts; however, Sanderson's account does not constitute a conscious, systematic attempt to misrepresent or stigmatise the sultanic figure. The author did not invent or exaggerate facts that illustrated the darker side of Ottoman sovereigns in the last decades of the sixteenth century. The sultans' perceived sexual excess and fratricide could not easily go unnoticed and undocumented by Istanbul's residents.

One of the events that Sanderson considered worth documenting was a soldiers' uprising during Murad's reign. According to Sanderson, the soldiers asked for a pay rise but their demand was not granted[94] so they

[94] This uprising which is called *beylerbeyi vak'ası* (The Beylerbey Event) took place in 1589 and was in fact instigated by the government's attempt to pay the soldiers' salaries in debased coins. Ahmed Akgündüz and Said Öztürk, *Ottoman History: Misperceptions and Truths*, trans. Ismail Ercan (Istanbul: IUR Press, 2011), p 204.

> made an uprore in the court, that the viseroyes weare glad to hide themselves in the Turks lodginges for feare of thier lives, and most of the houshould servants of the meaner sort came out with spits, tonges, and other kitchen tooles to end the fray; who cleared the Seraglio of the Spahies.[95]

Two hundred people were killed. The riot ended with the execution of the Beglerbey, whom the Sultan loved, and the parading of his severed head in the court. During his third and last visit to Istanbul in 1599, Sanderson witnessed yet another outbreak by the soldiers under Mehmed's rule. This time the target was a Jewish woman, Esperanza Malchi, a servant of Safiye Sultan, Murad's favourite concubine and Mehmed's mother. Malchi conducted Safiye's business transactions; consequently she exercised a great influence in the capital and accumulated great wealth, for which she became very unpopular.[96] Sanderson reported that she

> was brought out of hir house and stabbed to death in the Viseroys yeard; thence, *by a window in the Serraglio wall, where the Grand Signior, Sultan Mahomet, stood to see, shee was* drawne with ropes to the publiquest place in the citie, and ther, between a peramide pillor erected by Theodotiouse and the brazen tripled serpent, laid for the doggs to eate.[97]

The public place Sanderson referred to is the Hippodrome, renamed Sultanahmet Meydanı, which was a central square in Istanbul used for centuries as a site to show dissent, implement justice or to celebrate.[98] The soldiers, then, meant this execution to be publicly staged to send a clear message to the royal family, especially the Queen mother: Sanderson explained that 'This was an acte of the Spahies [palace cavalry], in spight of the Great Turkes mother; for by the hands of this Jewe woman she toke all

---

[95] Sanderson, p. 57.

[96] Caroline Finkel, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (London: John Murray, 2005), pp. 191-92.

[97] Sanderson, p. 85.

[98] Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State UP, 2009), pp. 136-37.

hir bribes'.[99] However, it is worth noting that such a method of execution for women was not common in those days; women were usually dispatched discreetly by placing them into sacks and hurling them into the sea.[100] Malchi's macabre murder and mutilation was most likely connected with a graver offence since 'the *sipahis* accused her of interference with the business of rule'.[101]

Moryson added that Esperanza's son was executed too because the soldiers accused the whole family of corruption. The soldiers then moved to assassinate the Capi Aga, the head of the staff in the palace, who was a favourite of the Sultan. The intervention of the Grand Admiral, Cigala-oghlu, and the payment of 50,000 ducats to the soldiers prevented the execution of the Capi Aga, at least for the moment. As Sanderson was informed later, the soldiers killed the Capi Aga after all, and several others with him, and forced the Grand Signior to watch the execution.

Sanderson's text reveals aspects of the personalities of both Murad and Mehmed that add nuance to the way sultans were depicted in English travel literature. Sanderson related two revolts and described the Sultans' reaction to each. What is curious is that both Sultans appeared powerless in the confrontation with their soldiers: Murad was out of sight while his soldiers played havoc in his palace and killed his beloved Beglerbey, and Mehmed, hidden behind a window, watched helplessly the brutal murder of his mother's favourite servant. Moreover, he later attended, under duress, the execution of the head of his household. These rebellious incidents subvert the conventional image of the Grand Signior as an absolute supreme sovereign. Sanderson's narrative illustrated that the Great Turk was not always the omnipotent ruler who enjoyed unquestionable obedience from his subjects.

Another event that Sanderson deemed worth mentioning in his memoirs is Mehmed's procession out of the city to launch an offensive against Hungary in 1596. Sanderson recorded that the march proceeded with 'wonderfull great solemnitie and notable order' and accompanied by 'lions and olifants, with other beasts of many sorts'; he admired the giraffe in particular and considered it as the prince of all

[99] Sanderson, p. 86.
[100] Rudolph Peters, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005), p. 101.
[101] Gábor Ágoston and Bruce Masters (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2009), p. 369.

beasts.[102] Many English travellers to Istanbul commented on the exotic animals kept in the sultans' menagerie. Gerald MacLean observes that 'majestic, powerful and exotic beasts […] served as familiar signs of imperial might and so were very much part of the magnificence and splendour that made the Ottoman world enviable'.[103] Indeed, displaying a collection of exotic beasts collected from diverse places in the world appears as a deliberate parade of the extensive geographical reach of sultanic power.

Justin Stagl observes that early modern travellers adopted a deliberately plain, dry and realistic style as a principal strategy to authenticate their travel tales.[104] This tendency is evident in the memoirs of Sanderson and the other travel writers under discussion here, which confirms that a matter-of-fact style was a generic textual feature rather than an authorial peculiarity. Recording the bare facts concerning the events that happened during the journeys in a simple language was best suited to convince readers of an account's reliability—a choice relevant for times when the authenticity of tales brought home by seafarers and adventurers was often questioned. In fact, during the sixteenth century, travellers were openly ridiculed and accused of lying.[105] This may explain why Sanderson tried to affirm his credibility by stressing the fact that he was there in person and he witnessed everything with his own eyes. Sanderson reminds us that he 'did see them [Mehmed's slain brothers] caried to buriall'.[106] As for the horrible execution of the Jewish woman, he asserts that 'I did so see' a part of her body after she had been mutilated.[107] These emphatic personal testimonies reveal a sense of anxiety on the part of the narrator, who seems eager to substantiate the authenticity of his stories and, at the same time, make them lurid and gripping.

On his last trip to Istanbul in February 1599, one of Sanderson's fellow passengers on *The Hector* was the organ maker Thomas Dallam. Dallam was ordered by the

---

[102] Sanderson, p. 59.
[103] Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 145.
[104] Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel, 1550-1800* (Chur: Harwood, 1995), p. 51.
[105] For a discussion of the link between travellers and lying, supported by examples from early modern texts, see 'The Sport of Comedies: The Fool and the Liar' in Sara Warneke's *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England*, pp. 249-76, and Samuel Chew's *The Crescent and the Rose*, ch. 1.
[106] Sanderson, p. 58.
[107] Ibid., p. 85.

merchants of the Levant Company to manufacture a special organ worthy to be sent as a gift from Queen Elizabeth to Sultan Mehmed. Dallam's mission was not just confined to the production of the mechanical organ but extended to the delivery and setting up of the device in the Sultan's palace. To make sure of the suitability of the present the Queen had personally inspected the gift at Whitehall before it was sent to the Grand Signior. The organ was a musical instrument that combined a clock and organ, in addition to other entertaining features. The strike of each hour was followed by diverse audiovisual effects such as bell-ringing, drum beats, and birds singing and flapping their wings. All these effects could either function manually or were set up to play automatically. There is no doubt that sending such a curious and sophisticated gift was intended to impress the Sultan.

Throughout his journey Dallam kept a diary that recorded the events of his trip. His travel experience is distinctive because this ordinary English craftsman had a chance to see the Sultan in close proximity. MacLean has already identified Dallam's meeting with Mehmed as the first and most intimate direct encounter between an ordinary Englishman and an Ottoman sovereign.[108] Furthermore, Dallam had the exceptional opportunity of seeing the Sultan's harem, which was a forbidden area for both Ottomans and foreigners. His narrative is equally unique because he did not write it for publication, hence the fact that his diary was not published until 1893. For this reason, his autobiography acquires those rare qualities of simplicity and genuineness which are the characteristics of any work intended as a private memoir. This personal dimension is also reflected in the author's lack of interest in the political circumstances that motivated and surrounded his mission. Dallam was mainly concerned with accomplishing the task assigned to him and returning home.

In Istanbul Dallam spent weeks in Mehmed's palace assembling the organ. He was aware of the privilege he had as a Christian: to be allowed into the seraglio and to dine there for a month. He expressed his admiration for the place with its luxurious gardens and buildings. In the course of his daily business at the palace, he became acquainted with the interpreter, who was an English convert originally from Cornwall, and two

---

[108] Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 41.

jemeglans[109]. The day before the delivery of the gift, the English ambassador Henry Lello met Dallam to instruct him regarding his duty and to enlighten him about what to expect. The ambassador started by giving the organ-builder an idea about the person the gift was sent to; he told Dallam that the Sultan was not an ordinary prince or king but 'a myghtie monarke of the worlde […] an infidel, and the grande Enymye to all Christians'.[110] He warned Dallam that if the Sultan did not like the organ at first sight or if the device failed to operate, he would 'cause it to be puled downe that he may trample it under his feete'.[111] Dallam should not expect a reward from the Grand Signior, who had never given any gifts to Christians. Lello ascribed the Sultan's reluctance to the latter's belief that Christian monarchs sent presents to him only 'in dutie or in feare of him, or in hoppe of som greate favoure we expeckte at his handes'.[112] He told Dallam not to expect to be allowed to see the Grand Signior either. The ambassador then gave an account of the ceremonial kissing of the Sultan's hand:

> I com to his gates I shalbe taken of my horse and seartcht, and lede betwyxte tow men holdinge my handes downe close to my sides, and so lede into the presence of the Grand Sinyor, and I muste kiss his kne or his hangginge sleve. Havinge deliverede my letteres unto the Coppagawe[113], I shalbe presently ledd awaye, goinge backwards as longe as I can se him, and in payne of my heade I muste not turne my backe upon him, and therefore yow muste not louke to have a sighte of him.[114]

With his detailed description Lello meant to illustrate to the simple artisan what an exclusive yet fraught privilege it was to meet the Sultan in person. Having been treated in this aloof manner despite his status as the Queen's ambassador, Lello clearly intended to give Dallam an idea of how short and unrewarding the latter's audience

[109] *Jemeglans*: [sons of strangers] The Christian children who were taken from their parents as a levy on Christian families or were captured in wars. They were raised up as Muslims and had special training to work as servants in the sultans' seraglio.
[110] Thomas Dallam, 'Master Thomas Dallam's Diary', in Theodore Bent (ed.), *Early Voyages and Travel in the Levant* (London, 1893), 1-98, at pp. 64-65.
[111] Ibid., p. 66.
[112] Ibid., p. 65.
[113] *Coppagawe* or *Coppagaw*: the Capi Aga, the chief white eunuch.
[114] Dallam, p. 65.

would be. The ambassador's speech was couched in a patronising, supercilious tone towards the organ-maker, which may explain why Dallam replied curtly 'that thus muche I understoode by our martchantes before my cominge oute of London'.[115] The organ-maker made Lello understand that he was not as ignorant as presumed: Lello had not given him any new information. Dallam did not need to be highly educated or even literate to know these basic facts about the Grand Signior. He could easily have obtained such commonplace knowledge about the Great Turk from visiting his local church or theatre back in England. There, sermons, plays and prayers regularly condemned the cruelty and aggression of the infidel, terrible Turk whose army was massacring innocent Christians. News by word of mouth, as Dallam's example shows, was equally effective in early modern cultures that depended heavily on the oral transmission of information. The shared knowledge between the two interlocutors about the Sultan as an arrogant infidel monarch who insisted on his greatness in ceremony was very widespread in common English discourse of the period.

Dallam did not expect to appear before the Grand Signior, but because he was the only person familiar with the workings of the device he was summoned to perform for the Sultan. When Dallam was allowed into Mehmed's presence he was amazed by his entourage with their exquisite clothes and appearance; he commented that 'the sighte whearof did make me almoste to thinke that I was in another worlde [...] I stood daslinge my eyes with looking upon his people that stood behinde him'.[116] Four hundred people surrounded the Sultan: two hundred young principal pages, one hundred deaf and mute, and one hundred dwarfs. They were all dressed in rich golden clothes with different types of caps to differentiate each group. Approaching Mehmed, Dallam observed that the Sultan, who was sitting on a rich chair of state, was wearing a half-inch square diamond ring on his thumb and had on his side a scimitar, a bow and a quiver of arrows.

The incidents that took place during Dallam's short appearance in Mehmed's presence prove that Lello's expectations about the Sultan were mistaken. Contrary to Lello's claim that the Sultan never gave a reward to a Christian, Mehmed offered

---

[115] Ibid., p. 66.
[116] Ibid., p. 69.

Dallam a generous financial gift. On the spot the Sultan gave the Englishman forty-five golden coins for his performance. Moreover, the gift had a very personal touch because the Sultan granted it by his own hand and from his own pocket rather than ordering one of his men to take charge of rewarding the organ-maker. Lello's insistence on the impossibility of having a 'litle sighte' of the Sultan proved erroneous too. Dallam did not only see the Grand Signior but he also got so close to him that his breeches touched the Sultan's knee. In his speech to Dallam, Lello had indicated how it was perilous to turn one's back on the Sultan. Dallam was aware of this information; so when the Capi Aga bade him to go and play the organ he refused because it meant he had to turn his back to Mehmed who was sitting directly behind him. Amused by Dallam's hesitation, the Capi Aga 'with a merrie countenance, bid me go with a good curridge, and thruste me on'.[117] Although Dallam turned his back on the Grand Signior twice, this action did not prove as fatal as the two Englishmen had imagined. This episode demonstrates that Lello, who had lived in Istanbul for many years and thought he knew how the Sultan would react, was wrong in his assessment of Mehmed's personality. The discrepancies between what was expected from the Sultan and what actually happened illustrates that the Sultan's actions were not as predictable or standardised as the English had believed. Dallam's text thus demolishes preconceptions and presents a sultanic figure that subverts homogeneity.

Dallam was given an exceptional glimpse of the women's quarters in Mehmed's palace. One of the *jemeglans* he had befriended allowed him to peep through a tiny window into the Sultan's harem. Through a hole, gridded with strong iron bars, Dallam saw thirty women playing with a ball. Dallam gave a rare description of Mehmed's harem, who

> wore upon theire heades nothinge bute a little capp of clothe of goulde […] faire cheans of pearle and a juell hanginge on their breste, and juels in their ears; their coats weare like souldier's mandilyon,[118] som of reed sattan and som of blew, and som of other collors, and grded like a lace

[117] Ibid., p. 70.
[118] 'Mandilion: a soldier's cloak'. Dallam, p. 74n.

> of contraire collor; they wore britches of scamatie,[119] a fine clothe made of coton woll, as whyte as snow and as fine as lane[120]; for I could desarne the skin of their thies throughe it. These britchis cam doone to their mydlege; som of them did weare fine cordovan buskins, and som had their leges naked, with a goulde ringe on the smale of her legg; on her foute a velvett panttoble[121] 4 or 5 inches hie.[122]

Dallam considered them as very pretty and admitted that the sight pleased him 'wonderous well'; staring raptly, he ignored his companion's beckoning to leave, which made the latter angry.[123] Dallam's gaze at the harem appears as an embryonic example of a subsequent Western obsession with peeping into this forbidden domain, and his voyeuristic pleasure was similarly experienced by later Western artists and travellers. In commenting on the Western fascination with this oriental site, Reina Lewis remarks that 'from the eighteenth century on, whether you wrote about living in one, visiting one, or escaping from one, any book that had anything to do with the harem sold'.[124] The mystery, secrecy and exoticism surrounding the harem helped to create Western fantasies, preconceptions and myths around it. Therefore, when Edward Said launched his attack on Orientalists for misrepresenting the Orient and its inhabitants, his criticism was particularly relevant with regard to the harem. Its representation as an Eastern site saturated with sex, violence, oppression and incarceration has a long tradition in Western literature and the arts.[125] As Said argues, they resulted from a sense of Western superiority towards the East; he links the

---

[119] '*Scamatie*, from Italian *scamatare*, to beat off the dust of wool.' Dallam, p. 74n.
[120] 'Muslin or lawn'. Dallam, p. 74n.
[121] Penttoble is a type of shoes made of 'yellow Morocco leather a few inches high in front. For use in the garden these shoes might be made of velvet and other similar material.' N. M. Penzer, *The Harem: An Account of the Institution as it Existed in the Palace of the Turkish Sultans, with a History of the Grand Seraglio from Its Foundation to the Present Time* (London: Harrap, 1936), p. 171.
[122] Dallam, p. 74-75.
[123] Ibid., p. 75.
[124] Reina Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (London: Tauris, 2004), p. 12.
[125] Following Said, scholars produce extended studies that focus on the Western misrepresentations of Eastern women; see Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986); Judy Mabro, *Veiled Half-Truths: Western Travellers' Perceptions of Middle Eastern Women* (London: Tauris, 1991); Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000); Rana Kabbani, *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient* (London: Pandora, 1994); and Sarah Graham-Brown, *Images of Women: The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East, 1860-1950* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988).

constructed Western images of the Orient with the later European domination over this region.

Nevertheless, Dallam's depiction of Mehmed's harem hardly qualifies as a typical Orientalist representation. As a lowly English craftsman, Dallam was yet all too aware of the wealth and power of Topkapi's residents. Sabine Lucia Müller draws our attention to the way Dallam imagined how the ladies of the harem might look back at him: 'Although I louked so longe upon them, theie saw not me, nether all that whyle louked towards that place. Yf they had sene me, they would all have come presently thether to louke upon me, and have wondred as moche at me'.[126] Müller comments that Dallam

> seems to have wished to be seen, despite the danger pertaining to such a discovery. This pipe dream is strikingly close to the position English diplomats and traders held in the Ottoman Empire at the time: admiring, kept in a distance, stealing glances, desirous to get closer to the splendour, to be drawn into it, to find recognition in others' eyes.[127]

Dallam's gaze was far from being a superior gaze as he wished the women to see him; furthermore, he desired to engage in a communication with them. Neither was his gaze a Western exclusive one that alterises and exoticises its object since, by imagining himself as an object of wonder to them, he was aware that he too would look exotic to them.

The lack of any hidden ideological or political agenda further disqualifies Dallam's narrative from being an example of Orientalist rhetoric. This sixteenth-century representation of the harem is distinct from ideologically-driven eighteenth- and nineteenth-century narratives that often portrayed Eastern women as oppressed and enslaved. A Victorian traveller described the lives of Egyptian women in the harem as 'a complete state of captivity. They are slaves to their husbands, and allowed to see no

---

[126] Dallam, p. 75.
[127] Sabine Lucia Müller, 'Striking the Right Note: Thomas Dallam's Negotiation of Alterity in Istanbul (1599)', *Paragrana*, 19/2 (2010), 77-89, at p. 82.

other persons at home than their families or relations'.[128] This nineteenth-century view stands in total contrast to the positive portrait Dallam depicted of the Sultan's women and their surroundings. The seraglio's female inhabitants did not seem demoralized or incarcerated; on the contrary, the narrator represented them as carefree girls who were playing and enjoying themselves.

It is noticeable that the author's conception of the Sultan did not seem to undergo a process of reconsideration after his face-to-face encounter with the man himself. In this respect Jonathan Burton's conclusion that Dallam eventually became aware of the fact that he had been mistaken in his views of his Turkish hosts is not convincing. Burton refers to one of Dallam's final visits to the Sultan's palace when one of the friendly *jemeglans* lifted him up and literally carried him inside the building to stop him from leaving the palace. When Dallam asked his interpreter for the reason behind this action, the interpreter answered that the *jemeglan*, who was laughing heartily, was aware of Dallam's unwillingness to stay: he simply wanted to see how he would react if he was detained by force.[129] Burton concludes that 'Dallam's relation of the incident and his own laughter[130] amounts to an implicit admission of misrepresenting the Turks'.[131]

However, there is no indication in the text that intimates the narrator's adjustment of his conventional views of the Ottomans and their sovereign. In spite of the good treatment he received from his Turkish hosts, Dallam suspected their actions and doubted their motives. When Dallam was told he had to stay to remove the organ to another location in the palace, his reaction was one of panic and confusion:

> I was in a wonderfull perplixatie, and in my furie I tould my lorde [Lello] that that was now com to pass which I ever feared, and that was that he in the end would betray me, and turne me over into the

[128] William Rae Wilson, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land* (London, 1823), p. 119.
[129] Dallam, p. 78.
[130] Dallam in fact did not laugh at the prank, he did 'louk merrely' after he was carried into the building and when the interpreter explained to him the reason behind the *jemeglan*'s action, his reaction was telling the *jemeglan* that he did not need to keep him by force because he would willingly stay longer to offer any service for the Sultan, p. 78.
[131] Burton, p. 51.

> Turkes hands, whear I should Live a slavish Life, and never companie againe with Christians.[132]

Although he did not feel well, Dallam insisted on travelling back to England because he was afraid of being forced to stay with the 'infidels' in Istanbul. Describing his situation in terms of 'wonderfull perplixatie' gives a sufficient clue as to how he felt. Dallam was not satisfied with depicting his state as perplexed, but added 'wonderful', which attached astonishment or enormity to his perplexity.[133] Dallam's reaction towards the Turks can be diagnosed as phobic. Dallam definitely met with and heard stories of Christians who were enslaved by the Ottomans but those slaves were captured at wars or taken as children from their parents as a form of a tax, but detaining the visitors to Istanbul against their will or enslaving them was not a common practice in the Ottoman state. Thus, Dallam's fears seemed to be exaggerated and unwarranted. His dread of the prospect of being held back in Istanbul made him a laughing stock for the *jemeglans*; his tension seemed to be so obvious that they thought of inventing the above-mentioned prank to mock his fears. The other interesting episode that reveals another aspect of Dallam's turcophobia happened during his musical performance when the Capi Aga moved the Sultan's chair to one side to enable him to see Dallam playing on the organ. During this shift Mehmed gave an unintended thrust to the Englishman which made Dallam think that the Sultan was drawing his sword to cut off his head.[134] Dallam's reaction seems to expose his view of the Sultan as a brutal unpredictable tyrant, despite the fact that Dallam's account of his short appearance before the Sultan demonstrated the ease and friendliness in Mehmed's demeanour and reactions.

Compared with the other travellers discussed here, Dallam, on many occasions, managed to be a subjective narrator—especially in moments of emotional intensity, for example, describing his 'wonderfull perplixatie' when he was told he had to stay

---

[132] Dallam, p. 76.

[133] In early modern times the word 'wonderful' had the meanings of 'full of wonder; such as to excite wonder or astonishment; marvelous; sometimes used trivially=surprisingly large, fine, excellent, etc.' J. A. H. Murray, et al. (eds.), *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888-1933), 10: 255.

[134] Dallam, p. 71.

longer in Istanbul or his raptured state when he watched the harem—nonetheless, Dallam was not an author who gave away much of his views and reactions. He was sharp in observing and describing the world he encountered but he did not often express what he thought of the people and events he described. In this travel memoir there is an absence of what Casey Blanton describes as 'a mediating consciousness that monitors the journey, judges, thinks, confesses, changes, and even grows'.[135] This textual tendency has already been observed in Wrag's account, as well as the other texts under discussion. Authorial self-representation in Elizabethan travel writing seemed as yet subdued compared to that in later ones. A Romantic, Victorian or modern travel writer might pursue his narrative judging, criticising and thinking with a loud voice; yet our sixteenth-century travellers—regardless of the diversity of their cultural, social and economic backgrounds—withdrew themselves into the shadow and turned the spotlight on the observed world.

Fuller makes a point when she attributes the absence of the authorial self-representation in early modern travelogues to the authors' effort to produce transparent narratives. However, the absence of subjectivity seems more of an unconscious authorial characteristic in these travel texts; even in Dallam's travelogue, which was a personal diary not intended for publication, it is palpable that the focus of the narrative was often the outside, not the inner world of the narrator that encompassed his thoughts and emotions. I would suggest that producing disinterested objective narratives was not the only reason that made our travellers-writers keep their personal involvement with the topic of their texts to the minimum. I propose that individual self-expression as an authorial entitlement did not seem to be fully realised or developed in these texts. Looking at the era when these travelogues were produced, it should not be expected that the notion of individuality itself existed. Indeed, as modern criticism has shown, the idea of a centred, self-conscious, and self-determining individual originated during the seventeenth century and was given theoretical foundation by the work of philosophers such as René Descartes.[136]

---

[135] Casey Blanton, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 4.

[136] See Roy Porter, introduction to *Rewriting the Self*: *Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), 1-14, at pp. 3-4, and Timothy J. Reiss, 'Revising Descartes: On Subject and Community', in Patrick Coleman, Jayne Lewis and Jill Kowalik (eds.), *Representations of*

In the above travel texts, I argue, the travellers' individuality is eclipsed by the collective consciousness of belonging to a nation or religion. The sense of religious or national identity is more visible in these texts than the awareness of the self, hence the fact that the few personal views expressed by the travellers were actually deployed to articulate their religious or national sentiments. As we have seen above, the only instance when Wrag voiced a personal opinion was when he endorsed his Queen and his faith. Dallam's subjective comments were often intended to convey his religious outlook. Expressing his pride for the salute *The Hector* gave to the Grand Signior, Dallam vigorously used the first person singular: 'I noteed, which perswaded my simple consaite that this great triumpte and charge was verrie evile bestowed, beinge done unto an infidel'.[137] After a dispute between the Englishmen on the ship and the deputy of the Pasha at Rhodes, Dallam wrote, 'Heare you maye se the base and covetus condition of these Rude and barbarus doged Turkes, and how little they do Regard Christians'.[138]

These strong religious views draw attention to Dallam's anti-Islamic sentiments. Obviously, Dallam went back to England still believing that the Sultan and his people were the wicked enemies of Christians. The occasional outbursts of his underlying convictions, usually buried under more immediate concerns and events, indicate that this English traveller did not show signs of understanding or tolerance towards the Ottomans although he was very close to them and was treated with kindness and generosity. Several recent studies that focus on Anglo-Islamic interaction during the early modern period[139] strive to highlight how important and extensive the interaction

---

the Self from the Renaissance to Romanticism (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 16-38, at p. 16. Although the idea that the rise of individualism originated in the Renaissance era goes back as far as 1860—when the Swiss cultural historian Jacob Burckhardt located Renaissance Italy as the setting where man became conscious of his individuality—such a Burckhardtian thought has become highly contested nowadays. Peter Burke found flaws in Burckhardt's argument. Burke argues that the examples of the self discussed in Burckhardt's study are the upper-class male Italian minority. 'Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1997), 17-28, at p. 18. John Jeffries Martin expresses his disagreement with Burckhardt and argues that the notion of the self before the end of the sixteenth century was far removed from the understanding of the individualistic self that emerged during the seventeenth century in the Puritan sermons, the writings of the neo-Stoics and Descartes's philosophical work. *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 124.

[137] Dallam, p. 59.

[138] Ibid., p. 39.

[139] See the Introduction of the thesis, pp. 15-18.

was, but they risk overstating the cultural impact of this encounter; the Anglo-Ottoman exchange discussed here shows that, although the contact achieved its material benefits, it had limited effects on the attitudes of the people who engaged in it.

Another notable traveller to the Ottoman Empire during Elizabeth's reign was Fynes Moryson, a well-connected and well-educated young man. After receiving his B.A. and M.A., he was awarded a fellowship in civil law at Peterhouse, Cambridge, but because Moryson was keen on travelling he suspended his study in 1589 and obtained a license from his college to go abroad. In comparison with Wrag, Dallam and Sanderson, he contributed a more extensive account of life in the Ottoman Empire because, unlike the former, he aimed at a full and detailed coverage of his journey right from the start. He was also different from the aforementioned travellers because venturing to the Ottoman lands was his personal choice. While other Elizabethan travellers were obligated to go to Istanbul, Moryson had, as he put it, an 'itching desire' to see 'Constantinople, of old the seate of Christian Emperours, and now the seate of the Turkish Ottoman'.[140] Moryson was a precursor of today's tourist, who enjoyed seeing other countries and observing the life and customs of other nations. He wholeheartedly advocated overseas travel during a time when venturing abroad was not unreservedly endorsed.

A methodical writer, Moryson was interested not only in exploration but also in the documentation of his experiences. He supplies a plethora of information which seemed to be collected from personal observations and accredited sources and it is presented in a systematic form. He also dedicated a considerable space to give detailed advice and instructions to the prospective travellers. For example, he advised the would-be traveller to guard against a failing memory: 'Let him write these notes each day, at morne and at even in his Inne, within writing Tables carried about him, and after at leasure into a paper booke, that many yeers after he may looke over them at his pleasure'.[141] These instructions give us a glimpse of the conditions of producing

[140] Fynes Moryson, *An Itinerary Written by Fynes Moryson Gent. First in the Latine Tongue, and then Translated by him into English: Containing his Ten Yeeres Travell Through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turky, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1617), 1:198. The *Itinerary* is not paginated consecutively as it consists of three parts with each one starting at number 1.
[141] Ibid, 3:12.

travelogues in this era. It seems that the travellers used to keep a record of their observations during their travels. There is no specific information concerning how Wrag or Dallam collected or wrote their travelogues, while Sanderson's manuscript, which consists of miscellaneous material, was written down during his stay in the East by the author and with the help of his apprentice John Hanger.[142] The collection and embellishment of the material seemed to take place after the travellers' return to England. For example, the writing of Moryson's work took place many years later when he managed to have free time after the death of his employer the Earl of Devonshire.

Moryson recorded his travels in Europe and the Levant in his *Itinerary*, which describes the social, economic and political conditions in the countries he visited. While three books of the *Itinerary* were published, the fourth[143], which this discussion is based on, did not see the light during Moryson's lifetime.[144] In this book the author dedicated one chapter to the Turkish commonwealth that included ample material on the Ottoman sultans.

Moryson gave a comprehensive account of the personalities and lives of the sultans who ruled during the last decades of the sixteenth century. He depicted Murad III as a cheerful, courteous and kind ruler, a depiction at variance with the conventional Renaissance notion of the sultan as a formidable, cruel tyrant. Moryson commented that Murad

> did willingly read histories, causing some to be translated into the vulgar tongue, and was said to be an excellent Poett [...] He greedily affected Noveltie, and built the greatest part of his Imperiall Serraglio or Pallace. He loved Musick, but had not the patience to attend the tuning of instruments.[145]

---

[142] Sanderson, p. ix.
[143] The manuscript was published last century as *Shakespeare's Europe: Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, Being a Survey of the Condition of Europe at the End of the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Hughes (London: Longman, Sherratt & Hughes, 1903).
[144] Although Moryson got a license from the State Paper Office to publish his manuscript, the book was not published; the editor Charles Hughes conjectures that the reason might be some trouble the author had with his publisher. Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. xli.
[145] Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. 4.

The text provided a new perspective on the Sultan's personal traits which were not usually highlighted in contemporary English publications. Murad was presented, uncharacteristically, as a cultured, sophisticated ruler, not just as an adversary with nothing on his mind except attacking and subduing Christian territories. However, Moryson noted that, in spite of his soft and pleasure-seeking nature, Murad succeeded in his wars against the Persians and conquered kingdoms in Africa and Hungary. There is a degree of inconsistency between the portrayal of Murad as gentle and supposedly peaceful monarch and his launching constant wars on different fronts. Indeed, this personality profile introduces many facets of the Sultan's character which are neither homogeneous in themselves nor compatible with conventional ideas about Ottoman rulers in early modern English culture.

Murad lived for twenty years with one woman without taking other concubines; however, the Sultan afterwards took an unknown number of women to avoid the risk of having the future of the dynasty dependent on one son. Moryson's specific information on the Sultan's sexual relationships definitely destabilises the image of the lascivious sultan that featured in English contemporary publications. One of these publications wrote of the sultans' sexual habits:

> to satiffye their pleasures, and libidinous lustes (wherunto in moste vile & and filthy maner, they are subiecte, as bove all other nations) they have ravished virgines frome all partes of the worlde, bewtifull and in favour the most excellent, whom princesse like, and honorablelye, they nourishe in the kinges palaice (whiche [?] is called Sarai).[146]

Yet, Moryson's text seems to absolve the Sultan from the stigma of libidinousness and links his sexual activity to political concerns associated with the continuity of the dynasty at the summit of power. Moreover, it supplies the evidence of Murad's temperance with the fact that he had lived with one woman for twenty years.

Moryson was in Istanbul when Murad died. According to Moryson's narrative, when the Sultan's successor and son Mehmed III arrived in Istanbul, 'his 19 brothers

---

[146] Bartolomej Georgijevic, *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno*, trans. Hugh Goughe (London, 1569), *EEBO*, images, 73-74.

were brought to kisse his hands, at which tyme, he was said to have wept. And in detestation of the horrible lawe to beginn their raigne with the cruell murther of their brothers'.[147] Under the pretence that they would be taken for circumcision the brothers were taken into the next chamber where they were strangled by the Sultan's mutes. Mehmed then sent away his father's concubines to another palace where they would be later allowed to marry. The pregnant concubines were kept apart; if they gave birth to male children the latter were to be killed instantly. Moryson provided statistics of Murad's offspring, estimating that Murad had twenty-seven daughters and twenty sons.[148] Like Sanderson, Moryson was very interested in the number of the deceased Sultan's children. This is not uncharacteristic of travel writers, who always focus on the unusual facts they come across in other lands, and English travellers in the sixteenth century were not an exception. Moryson added that the new Sultan 'sent out his fathers Sodomieticall[149] boyes [...] Also he sent out of his Pallace the dumbmen and dwarfes, in whom he tooke noe such delight as his father did'.[150] These decisions taken by the new Sultan show that Mehmed was different from his father; he announced his individuality by cutting his links with the past and removing all signs of softness and idleness in his palace. In this travel account, then, the Sultans were configured as individuals, each with his own personality and behaviour.

Moryson described the Sultan as tyrannical and absolute. He also highlighted the extent of power enjoyed by the imperial harem. As he noted, Ottoman sultans did not marry the mothers of their eldest sons because this would have excessively increased their status: after a sultan's death, a widowed mother, or Valide Sultan, enjoyed great respect and power during her son's reign, in particular, if her son was still very young. Any elevation by marriage might have, it was suspected, induced the sultans' spouses to plot their husbands' death in order to gain the coveted status of a Valide Sultan.

[147] Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. 6.
[148] Moryson's is different from Sanderson's count of eighty-one children. Moryson obviously did not include thirty of Murad's children who died naturally during the Sultan's lifetime.
[149] There is no information in the historical sources about the Ottoman Empire indicating that Sultan Murad was bisexual. The proliferation of the stereotype of homosexuality, or sodomy, as a widespread practice among Muslims in English Renaissance writings received an insightful discussion in Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), pp. 112-27.
[150] Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. 7.

Moryson explained that 'so great is this power of the mother in the state matters, as the king of Persia not long before sent a woman to this Court for his Ambassador, as most fitt to treat with the Sultana and her women'.[151] This special knowledge of the imperial household sheds light on the actual balance of power inside the Grand Signior's abode. With these references to the imperial harem the text affirms the influence of the Sultan's women and highlights the limitations of the Grand Signior's power. The information specifically unsettles the then conventional view of the Sultan's power as exclusive and absolute.

Moryson recorded that each Ottoman sultan had a certain manual skill. The idea of the sultan using his own hands in manual labour might have come as a surprise to English travellers, who were not used to monarchs practising a handicraft. Mehmed was skilled in archery and making arrows, and he gave his handiwork as special gifts to reward distinguished subjects. The reference to the Sultan's skills shows an unexpected humble facet of Mehmed's personality that curiously contrasts with other representations that depict him as an arrogant, ostentatious monarch: elsewhere in his travelogue, Moryson related that Mehmed seldom spoke to his subjects but was understood by his looks, especially by people nearest to him, such as his concubines, favourite boys and mutes. He never sought the friendship of other princes and kings until they asked for an alliance, nor did he address any foreign diplomat directly: 'If he admitt any Ambassadors to his presence, he gives them no answer, or at most in a word referres them to the cheife Visere, not thincking it for his dignity to have any particuler conference with them.'[152]

Moryson mentioned that Mehmed was known for obstinate bravery: 'surely he gave good testimony of his Courage in the said expedition into Hungary, when all his men flying, he alone catching the gowne of his Prophett Mahomett in his hand as a holy Relick, stood boldly at his tent dore.' The narrator did not let this episode stand alone but instantaneously added, 'except you will rather call it pride then Courage, he being taught to thinck himselfe deare to God and greater, then whome fortune could hurt'.[153] This complex portrayal of Mehmed is worth contemplating. Moryson's anecdote of the

[151] Ibid., p. 5.
[152] Ibid., p. 13.
[153] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

Sultan's daring at war might have been based on fact—the source was probably the English ambassador Barton, a credible witness[154]—but Mehmed's courage was tempered by Moryson's personal opinion. Like our other travellers-writers, Moryson was not an over-individualistic author; we rarely come across moments when he verbalised his personal views. Even in the above example he did not use the first-person 'I' but conveyed his opinion by way of addressing his imaginary reader. As narrator, he usually assumed the position of a distant observer; however, when he came close to expressing a subjective view, he was inclined to project a negative assessment of the Sultan. This tendency can also be found in Wrag's and Sanderson's accounts. We have already recorded Wrag's sarcastic comment about Murad while Sanderson, often a detached narrator, emphasised the Turks' cruelty when he expressed his own views.[155] It seems that on the few occasions when they voiced their personal opinions, our travellers felt the need to alienate and demonise the Turks. These sporadic antagonistic attitudes seem to be symptomatic of a need to be in line with the expectations of their addressees who were accustomed to the conventional image of the Ottomans which, more often than not, happened to be negative. This may explain why Moryson promptly cast aspersions upon Mehmed's heroism because the idea of a courageous enemy fighting fellow Christians might not be palatable to his English readership.

As with the late Murad, Moryson had a keen interest in Mehmed's sexual and family relationships. In the same way as his father before him, Mehmed swore not to have other women except his main favourite concubine, who was at the time the mother of his eldest son. With a sarcastic tone, Moryson added what happened to this resolution:

> yet after few dayes he [Mehmed] received 50 virgins presented to him, and within few moneths, by that tyme I came to Istanbul, had

[154] It is most likely that Barton, who had accompanied Mehmed on his expedition, informed Moryson, who was his lodger during his stay in Istanbul, about this incident.

[155] Sanderson commented 'Other strainge acctions I could speake of, and of thier cruelties, but I am loth to weary you with many particulers', pp. 57-58. On another occasion he remarks 'And some strainge actions, other then formerlie the like had happened in thier most cruell executions, I noate not', p. 85.

> 500. Concubines for his owne saddle, whereof that somer going to the war in Hungary, he was said to leave 40 great with childe.[156]

Moryson reported that each female inhabitant in the harem was given fifteen aspers a day for maintenance and two sets of clothes every year. An old woman served as a supervisor over them and the chief eunuch, porters and other officers took charge of the place. Concerning the Sultan's choice of a bedmate, Moryson recounted that 'When it pleaseth the Emperor to take viewe of them they are all sett in order, and as he passeth by he casts his handkercher to her whome he will have brought to his bed'.[157] The chosen girl was then taken to be bathed and dressed in rich clothes. The sultan gave her ten thousand aspers for sharing his bed. If he was pleased with her he would grant all her demands and promote her kinsmen or friends to higher positions in the government. The favourite concubine would also be separated from other women, given a larger stipend and treated with greater respect, especially if she became pregnant with the Sultan's child.

In this study we have come across two accounts of the harem, Dallam's and Moryson's, but the two are of a quite different nature. While Dallam's description of Mehmed's harem does not properly fit an Orientalist framework, Moryson's account has much in common with Orientalist rhetoric. To start with, Dallam wrote an eye-witness description while Moryson gave a second-hand report which cannot be authenticated; hence, Moryson's story, as other contemporaneous European accounts about the harem, was a Western fantastical tale. In her study of the imperial harem in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Leslie P. Pierce remarks that 'very little is known about the internal functions of the harem and the relationships among its residents in the period under study. Ottoman narrative sources are virtually silent with regard to life within the harem.'[158] What is certain is that neither Turks nor Europeans were able to obtain first-hand reliable information about the sultans' harem because

---

[156] Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe*, p. 6.
[157] Ibid., p. 7.
[158] Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993), p. 113.

this institution was a strictly forbidden area.[159] European second-hand accounts of the harem were, then, based on fantasies, speculations and rumours.[160]

Moryson's account repeated and consolidated the conventional tropes about the harem. The author must have availed himself of other English or European publications. Moryson was a well-read writer, thus it is likely that he might supply the missing information in his coverage of the harem from other contemporary sources. Indeed, the extent of data in his volume about the Turkish commonwealth suggests that he had recourse to other publications. This suggestion can be confirmed by a comment in his preface to the reader in the *Itinerary* when he mentioned that 'I lost fully three yeers labor (in which I abstracted the Histories of these 12 Dominiõs thorow which I passed, with purpose to joyne them to the Discourses of the severall Commonwealths, for illustration and ornament'.[161] Moryson's description rehearses common stories about the harem and its mode of living: the old woman, the eunuchs and the handkerchief, which was a standard element in Renaissance accounts and possibly a European legend (at least it was discredited as entirely fictitious in Lady Wortley Montague's mid-eighteenth-century account which was based on reliable authority).[162] In borrowing from or repeating conventional tales about the harem to validate his narrative, Moryson's technique brings to mind the characteristics of Orientalist discourse that, according to Said, depends on referentiality and repetition.

---

[159] As late as 1910 a professor called Cornelius Gurlitt who was hired to draw a plan of the Ottoman Sultan's seraglio was not allowed to see the harem; therefore, the harem's area on the plan was left blank. Penzer, p. 51.

[160] Ruth Bernard Yeazell goes so far as to argue that, 'in fact, there is no such place as "the" harem, though collective fantasizing often proceeds as if there were'; as she explains, 'there are only harems, as various as the individual households, of many different countries and times, in which separate quarters have been set aside for the seclusion of the women'. *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000), p. 1.

[161] Moryson, *An Itinerary*, n. pag.

[162] The myth of the sultan's handkerchief was a recurring popular theme for English travellers to the Ottoman lands. Robert Withers included it in his account of the seraglio, in Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumus*, vol. 9, p. 340. Paul Rycaut in *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* did not forget to refer to it (p. 39). George Sandys too documented the story of the legendary handkerchief in his *Sandys Travailes*, p. 58. An eighteenth-century source with some authority casts doubt on the legendary handkerchief: according to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Sultana Hafiten, the favourite of the late Sultan Mustapha II (1664-1703), confirmed 'that the story of the Sultans' *throwing a handkerchief* is altogether fabulous'. *Letters of the Right Honourable Lady My W---y M----e*, vol. 2 (London, 1763), p. 155.

While Moryson consciously included a detailed account of the harem—which reminds us of later European travelogues where the harem constitutes an indispensable ingredient in the narrative—Dallam's description of the harem was accidental. Although he spent a whole month visiting the seraglio, the organ-maker did not mention the women in the palace except on that one occasion when he peeped through the harem's window. His tale is genuine here, not crafted by the standard tropes of Orientalist story-weaving. Moryson's choice, on the other hand, was no different from later Western travellers who keenly imparted as much detail as they could of this mysterious and captivating space, to satisfy their eager audience at home.

Conclusion

As we have seen in the above discussion, Elizabethan travellers viewed the Grand Signior, his personality and actions from different angles. Wrag provided a variety of personal observations and eye-witness testimonies related to the Sultan and his world, but his stance was predominantly formal. His presence on an official mission and his attendance at the ceremonial occasion of the kissing of Murad's hand allowed him to see the more rigid aspects of the Sultan's court and character. With Wrag we see the silent, immovable figure of a wealthy, powerful and arrogant monarch. In contrast, Dallam's informal experience inside the seraglio offered a close-up of the Sultan's personality and way of life. The representation is so intimate and vivid as to disclose the intricate details of his ring or his women's clothing. Through Dallam's eyes we see a relaxed, generous and ostentatious ruler who enjoyed music and archery. The third Elizabethan adventurer discussed in this chapter, Sanderson, chose to concentrate on a few select events that attracted his attention during his long residence in the Ottoman lands: a brutal massacre, a lavish procession, and bloody revolts that exhibited the cruelty, affluence, power and weakness of the sultans. Moryson provided a more comprehensive survey of the sultans, with details that were hardly mentioned by other travellers, including a wide range of information concerning the rulers' personalities, way of life, and mode of government.

In these accounts the sultanic figure was projected in a highly diverse manner, to the extent that it becomes difficult to identify a distinctive tradition in the representation of Ottoman sultan in Elizabethan travel writing. The authors of these travelogues take account of multiple layers of situations, events and roles. As a result, the portrayal of the sultan in these texts varies to the degree of contradiction: we see a sultan who was too arrogant to look at or speak with foreign envoys, and who at the same time sat beside a simple organ maker, listening to his music and rewarding him from his own pocket. He was the brave warrior who led his mighty army to victory but he was also the one who watched helplessly the rage and disruption caused by his own soldiers in his palace. He was a brutal murderer who enjoyed music, poetry and reading histories. The notion of his absolute power is contradicted by the acknowledged political influence of his harem.

The heterogeneity in these representations is due to the nature of the genre. The above texts consist largely of factual material obtained from real experiences. In real life, and especially in a different culture, experiences can neither be predicted nor standardised. For instance, when Dallam performed for the Sultan, Mehmed did—contrary to the Englishman's expectations—not draw his sword to kill him but gave him gold coins as a reward. The engagement with real events made these texts provide unpredictable, multiple and inconsistent images of the sultans that did not fit any predetermined category.

By reconfiguring the sultan as England's political and commercial partner, these late sixteenth-century travelogues liberated the sultan from the static traditional mould of a mere antagonist. Such a significant change in the representations of the sultan was reflected more conspicuously in travel writing than in other early modern written genres. It was more likely to come across references to the friendly relations between the Queen and the sultans in a travel text than in other contemporaneous works. Indeed, in Wrag's, Sanderson's, Dallam's and Moryson's time, the commerce between England and the Ottomans was not a familiar topic in Elizabethan texts. For example, the theme of Anglo-Ottoman contact was an improbable ingredient in the plot of any Renaissance drama. Samuel Chew notes that there 'are few allusions to the Levantine

merchants in Elizabethan literature'.[163] Likewise, church prayers and sermons did not allude to the exchange of friendly overtures between the Queen and the Sublime Porte; the antagonistic religious rhetoric towards the Turks and their rulers remained dominant: thus, preaching at Paul's Cross on 17 November 1589, Thomas White grouped the '*Turke*' with the Pope and other tyrants who were considered England's heretic enemies.[164] Sermons might be the last place to expect an agreeable depiction of rulers of a different faith; still, it is significant that the realities of England's friendly diplomatic contact with the sultans was not in the slightest acknowledged or reflected in sermon literature.

The texts under discussion presented the Ottoman rulers in this new light because of the same reason mentioned above, which is the genre's factual material that gave it a licence to circulate and normalise information that was not common in other types of early modern genres. Indeed, the travelogues under discussion could not avoid the reality of the political and economic partnership between England and the sultans since the travellers' motive for heading towards the Ottoman capital was often related to the affairs of the Turkey or Levant Company[165] and the English embassy in Istanbul. Wrag and Dallam were on official missions to deliver the Queen's presents to the Grand Signior while Sanderson served the Levant Company.

The analysis of sultanic images in Elizabethan travelogues has uncovered several characteristics of this genre. A plain, factual style was generally preferred so as to endow the travel narrative with authenticity and credibility. Authorial subjectivity was largely absent. There is no clear expression of the self in these travel texts; therefore we should be cautious about labelling them as autobiographical works where the self forms the centre of a lived travel experience: we should not read Wrag in the same way as we read Edward Lear, Rebecca West or Bruce Chatwin. Fuller argues that early

---

[163] Samuel C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965), p. 181.
[164] Thomas White, *A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse the 17. of November An. 1589* (London, 1589), *EEBO*, last accessed 12 Sept. 2011, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>, p. 18.
[165] On 11 September 1581 the Queen granted a charter to Edward Osborne, Richard Staper, Thomas Smith, William Garret, and other twelve members to form the Turkey Company and to trade with the Ottomans for seven years. When the charter of the Turkey Company expired it was integrated with the Venice Company in what was later called the Levant Company, whose charter was issued on 7 January 1592.

modern travel authors adopted this technique to give their narratives the impression of objectivity. Although Fuller's explanation is relevant to the texts that were intended for publication, it does not account for texts that were not originally written for wider circulation, such as Dallam's diary. Accordingly, the disscussion has suggested that the lack of authorial self-representation is rather a typical mode in these sixteenth-century texts where the self was conceived first and foremost as a member of a wider ethnic and religious community. The occasional personal comments expressed by our travellers-writers were actually statements that articulated their religious or nationalist identity. These sporadic statements show that Wrag, Sanderson, Moryson and, to a certain degree, Dallam conceived of themselves primarily as subjects of Protestant England, not as individuals.

When voiced, their opinions indicate that Elizabethan travellers were unlikely to appreciate the cultural differences of their host country. Despite living in close contact with the Turks, they hardly changed their prejudices about the Turks and their rulers. Dallam, who is a case in point, relayed episodes which illustrated the intimate friendly contact he had with Turkish people of different social rank, including the Sultan himself, but these cultural interactions did not modify his deep-rooted negative opinions about the Turks. Indeed, in material terms the contact might be rewarding for both sides but it seemed that it had little impact on the attitudes of the interactants.

Chapter II

Sultan Selim I's Conquest of Egypt in Arabic and English Historiography

A Comparative Study

During the Elizabethan period numerous English works were published on the history of the Turks.[166] These publications were mostly translated from continental histories. Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603) was the first volume authored in English on the history of the Ottoman Empire. As Ottoman history was traditionally organized chronologically according to the reigns of individual sultans, the major part of Knolles's *Historie* comprises detailed chapters dedicated to the lives of all Ottoman sultans from the rise of the Ottoman dynasty to the time of Mehmed III, who was the reigning Sultan when the author finished writing his book. The present chapter juxtaposes Knolles's Elizabethan history with an Arabic chronicle from the sixteenth century; it focuses on one historical event, Sultan Selim I's conquest of Egypt. My study compares the representations of Selim I in the two sources and explores the nature of these texts as well as the historiographical traditions that produced them.

The Arabic source, *Bada'i' al-Zuhūr fi Waqa'' al-Duhūr* [The Wonders of Rising in the Proceedings of Ages], was written by Shihab al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmed Ibn Iyas (1448-1524). Ibn Iyas was a member of the *ulama*, the religious scholars. His great grandfather was a Mamluk emir and he inherited *iqta*, a land holding, which enabled him to live comfortably and to find time to study and write history.[167] His chronicle is particularly significant because it is a major historical text written by an eye-witness of the downfall of the Mamluk Sultanate[168] at the hands of Sultan Selim.

[166] For a survey of Elizabethan publications on the history of the Ottoman Empire see V. J. Parry, *Richard Knolles's History of the Turks*, ed. Salih Özbaran (Istanbul: Economic and Social History Foundation of Turkey, 2003), pp. 92-102.

[167] Sami G. Massoud, *The Chronicles and Annalistic Sources of the Early Mamluk Circassian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), p. 69.

[168] The Mamluks were slaves brought mainly from the Caucasus and Black Sea areas. They became an important component in Muslim armies and had a status above the ordinary slaves because they were

For Jane Hathaway, the account of Ibn Iyas 'forms the basis for most present-day accounts of the conquest'.[169] P. M. Holt describes it as 'the sole reliable first-hand account in Arabic of developments from the appearance of the Ottoman threat to the events immediately following the death of the viceroy, Khā'ir Bey [Khair Bek]'.[170] As this chronicle gives detailed accounts of events that are also narrated in Knolles's version, a comparison of both would seem obvious.

The German Orientalist Hans Ernest, who edited *al-Dur al-Musan fi Syrat al-Mudhfar Selīm Khan* (1962), a modern edition of an Arabic history of the life of Sultan Selim, comments on the availability of numerous historical sources written in Arabic, Ottoman and European languages regarding Selim's invasion of Egypt, but he observes the lack of studies that examine and compare these sources.[171] My research seeks to fill part of this gap.

An English translation of Ibn Iyas's history has been provided by W. H. Salmon, but as it is partial and eclectic, all translations in this chapter are mine. My translation transcribes Arabic proper names in closer agreement to the original Arabic pronunciation; it is therefore different from the spelling used in Knolles's text. Knolles uses a Latinized form of Arabic names by attaching '-us' at the end of every person's name. However, he was aware of original forms because he records names such as '*Campson Gaurus* (or as the Turkes call him) *Cansaues Gauris*,'[172] and '*Tomombeius* (of the Turkes called *Tuman-bai*)'.[173] What Knolles calls 'Turkish' names are the ones that give the correct transliteration. Knolles follows the transcriptions he found in his Latin sources. His habit seems to originate from Byzantine historical tradition.[174]

---

professional soldiers. The Mamluks reached their zenith of power during the Mamluk Sultanate (1250-1517) that ruled Egypt, Syria and Hejaz, the coastal Western part of the Arabian Peninsula that encloses the Muslim holy cities Mecca and Medina. During their rule the Mamluks held political and military power and had a higher status than the freeborn local people.

[169] Jane Hathaway, 'Mamluk "Revival" and Mamluk Nostalgia in Ottoman Egypt', in Michael Winter and Amalia Levanoni (eds.), *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 387-406, at p. 398.

[170] P. M. Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London: Cass, 1973), p. 152.

[171] Hans Ernest, *Al-Dur al-Musan fi Syrat al-Mudhfar Selīm Khan* (Cairo: The House of the Restoration of Arabic Books, 1962), introduction, n. pag.

[172] Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603), p. 524.

[173] Ibid., p. 533.

[174] Steven Runciman remarks that the Byzantine historian 'is apt to apologize for introducing barbarian names; which, indeed, he usually transliterates into an almost unrecognizable form. There was a fashion, from the tenth century onwards, for giving foreign peoples some classical name'. 'Byzantine Historians

Our primary material belongs to two distinct historiographical traditions. The sixteenth-century Arabic chronicle has its roots in Arabic Islamic historiography that can be traced back to the beginnings of Islam in the seventh century. Early Islamic historical writing started with the urgent need to document and authenticate the sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad; what was recorded from his life forms, together with the Quran, the source for the Islamic religion. The other incentive that drove Muslims to write their history was the meteoric rise of the early Islamic states, with their civil conflicts, wars and conquests.[175] Religious and secular motives, coupled with the rapid development in scholarship during the eighth and ninth centuries, led to the evolution of Arabic historical writing. Arabic historical literature is distinctive both in its quantity and quality. More histories were written in Arabic than in any other language in the first millennium; 590 historical manuscripts were composed in this language before the eleventh century A.D.[176] Muslim scholars invented and refined diverse categories of historical material: these included local and universal history, *akhbar* [news], *tarajim* [biographical dictionaries],[177] annalistic historiography, *siras* [biography] and memoirs.[178]

Knolles's *Historie*, on the other hand, was the product of Christian and humanist historiographical traditions. During the Middle Ages, English historical literature chiefly consisted of Latin chronicles and a considerable number of annals, largely composed by religious scholars. During the sixteenth century, Renaissance humanistic ideals, as well as political and religious factors, had a major impact on English historiography. Early Tudor historical writing was encouraged by the Tudor family to legitimise their claim to the throne while the Reformation sparked the interest in

---

and the Ottoman Turks', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 271-76, at p. 271.

[175] Tarif Khalidi emphasises that 'the painful birth of the early empire was the single most important motive for the emergence of Islamic historiography' *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994), p. 14.

[176] Nisar A. Faruqi, *Early Muslim Historiography: A Study of Early Transmitters of Arab History from the Rise of Islam up to the End of the Umayyad Period, 612-750* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1979), p. 1.

[177] Arab historians invented new forms of biographical dictionaries, such as *Tabaqat*—which includes the biographies of homogeneous groups of distinguished individuals (poets, singers, scholars, jurists, kings etc.)—and *Wafayat*, a dictionary that arranges the biographies of people according to the dates of their death.

[178] For a survey of the forms and content of Muslim historical writing see Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), pp. 66-175.

historical research of the past to prove the corruption of the Catholic Church in medieval times and to establish the existence of reformers in previous centuries.[179]

English historiography was influenced by developments in historical scholarship on the Continent, so much so that 'towards the end of the [sixteenth] century the impact of Italian and French historiography became irresistible'.[180] Writing history in England depended, in technique and outlook, on European historical authorities. Renaissance authors such as Machiavelli or Guicciardini taught English historians to consider not only the 'when' but also the 'why' and 'how', thus contributing to historical analyses that did not merely recount one event after another, year by year, in the medieval chronicle fashion but also sought to analyse circumstances and motives and draw broader conclusions therefrom.[181] The Renaissance also witnessed scholars' interest in evidence, which led to the examination of forgeries and 'the careful editing of important sources [...] in simple historical narrative'.[182] Still, the most notable changes are apparent in the format and organisation of the material as sixteenth-century historical publications started to assume a thematic and narrative unity and to take a more organised chronological form. Knolles's work must be understood in this context. It depends mostly on continental European sources and adopts a systematic approach that bestows on the author 'if not the name of the first historian in England, certainly the credit of making, in his *History of the Turks* (1604) [*sic*], a step from the loose miscellany of the chronicle to the ordered structure of the true historic style'.[183]

Not only in terms of content but also in the quality of presentation, the *Historie* can be considered as an enhancing contribution to early modern English publications. The volume shows numerous illustrations of the important historical figures mentioned in its accounts. The book ends with an elaborate index that contains the names of people

---

[179] Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England* (London: Routledge, 1974-82), 2:470-72.
[180] Gransden, 2:479.
[181] This is not the place to discuss the full history of sixteenth-century European historiography; for a fuller approach see Gransden; James W. Thompson, *A History of Historical Writing: From the Earliest Times to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1942); Fred Jacob Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967); and D. R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and 'The Light of Truth' from the Accession of James I to the Civil War* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990) on English historiography, and on Machiavelli see Sydney Anglo, *Machiavelli: A Dissection* (London: Paladin, 1969) and 'The Reception of Machiavelli in Tudor England: A Re-Assessment', *Il Politico*, 31 (1966), pp. 127–38.
[182] Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Arnold, 1969), p. 50.
[183] George Saintsbury, *A History of Elizabethan Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1920), p. 49.

and places arranged alphabetically. The entries in the index record the important facts about a person or place accompanied by the number of the page where the information is mentioned.

It should be noted that the two historical texts under comparison in this chapter belong to different genres. Ibn Iyas's work is an annalistic chronicle that constitutes a detailed, year-by-year historical record containing narrative, description and explanation of events. The author also dedicates subsections to short biographies of important figures like Selim, and the Mamluk sultans, Tumanbay and al-Ghuri. The Mamluk historian documents historical events that took place in Cairo in particular and the Mamluk Sultanate in general: deaths, crimes, marriages, court scenes, celebrations, festivals, markets, conquests and wars. Knolles's work is a continuous narrative history that, while following, by and large, the chronological order of events, places greater emphasis on themes and a larger perspective on events. The section examined here pertains to Knolles's account of Sultan Selim's life. It is a self-contained uninterrupted narrative. The material from Ibn Iyas's work, however, is taken from different places in his chronicle. This is due to the nature of annalistic historiography where the historical narrative groups together diverse events that took place at the same time but were not topically related. Ibn Iyas's annalistic narrative does not have a central topic. The historical episodes in Knolles, on the other hand, are arranged thematically around the developments of the Ottoman-Mamluk war.

The Ottoman-Mamluk war in 1516-1517 forms the historical background of my comparative analysis. After minor provocations, Ottoman-Mamluk tensions escalated with the decision of the Mamluk Sultan Qansuh al-Ghuri to lead his army to Syria[184] while the Ottoman Sultan Selim was engaged in a war with the Persian Shah Ismail. Consequently, Selim suspended his war with the Persians and moved against the Mamluks. He gained a decisive victory at his very first battle in Merj Dabiq, near Aleppo, on 24 August 1516. Thereafter Selim extended his rule over all Syria peaceably as the Mamluk governors of the main cities in this region acknowledged his authority without resistance. After the defeat in Merj Dabiq and the death of al-Ghuri

[184] Syria is used in this chapter as a reference to Greater Syria that included the modern regions of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan and Israel.

the defeated Mamluk army returned to Egypt, and the Mamluk political elite chose Tumanbay ('Tomombeius' in Knolles) as their new sultan. Tumanbay lost his first battle with Selim at al-Ridania on 22 January 1517, which enabled Selim to take Cairo and establish his rule over all of Egypt. Tumanbay was captured and executed; his death signals the end of the Mamluk Sultanate.

Knolles starts his account of Selim's life with a visual representation of the Sultan. Knolles includes a half-page engraving of all Ottoman Sultans mentioned in his *Historie*; he aimed to surpass previous English literature about the Turks and to take his publication to the level of the most elaborate European histories of his time. The lavish inclusion of visual material, borrowed from his Continental sources,[185] brought him closer to fulfilling his ambition. It is worth noting that Ottoman sultans were visually present in European culture during the early modern period. As far back as 1480 the Venetian painter Gentile Bellini made an oil portrait of Sultan Mehmed II. The interest in painting the sultans increased during the reign of Mehmed II's successor, Sultan Bayezid II, that witnessed the production of the first series of Ottoman sultan portraits in Europe. These have been attributed to Felix Petancius, 'who painted the portraits by relying on the information provided by the Hungarian Embassy delegation that came to Istanbul in 1495. In this series, in scroll form, portraits of the first seven Ottoman sultans up until Sultan Bayezid II are placed in medallions.'[186]

Henceforth, the interest in depicting Ottoman sultans never abated, as sultanic images proliferated on European medals, oil paintings and in printed material.[187] Sixteenth-century England was not exempt from this artistic vogue. Susan Foister notes that 'Sir Ralph Waren in 1554, John West in 1569 and Thomas Key in 1572 all owned pictures of the Sultan or Great Turk'.[188] What is remarkable about this group of

---

[185] On the sources of the sultans' engravings used in Knolles' history, see Parry, *Richard Knolles*, pp. 105-07.

[186] Gunsel Renda, 'The Ottoman Empire and Europe: Cultural Encounters', Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilisation, Dec. 2006, last accessed 21 Jan. 2012, <www.belgeler.com>.

[187] For an illustrated chronological survey of European portraiture of Ottoman rulers that covers the period from the reign of Mehmed II to the sixteenth century see Julian Raby, 'From Europe to Istanbul', trans. Priscilla Mary, in Selmin Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*: *Picturing the House of Osman* (İstanbul: İşbank, 2000), 136-63.

[188] Susan Foister, 'Paintings and Other Works of Art in Sixteenth-Century English Inventories', *The Burlington Magazine*, 123/938 (1981), 273-82, at p. 278.

portrait owners is their belonging to different cultural and social backgrounds: a London mayor, an Oxford tutor, and a commoner from Warwickshire.[189] Their acquisition of such paintings indicates that the sultans' portraits were disseminated across a broader section of late Tudor society.

Knolles reproduced Selim's portrait from Jean Jacques Boissard's book *Vitae et Icones Sultanrum Turcicorum, Principum Persarum aliorumque Heroum Heroinarumque ab Osmane usque ad Mahometem (III)* (1596).[190] The Sultan's image[191] occupies half of the page; the remaining space is dedicated to eight lines of Latin verse followed by their English translation:

> Lo Selymus, in crueltie exceeding others farre,
> His father, and his brethren both, destroies with mortall warre.
> The Persian fiercely he assailes: and conquers Aegypts land:
> The Sirian, and the Moore likewise, he tam'd with mightie hand.
> But purposing in his mad mood, the Christians to confound,
> And the memoriall of their name to roote from off the ground;
> A loathsome Canker eat him up, and brought him to his end:
> Christ is to his the safest port, when he will them defend.[192]

The organization of this page follows an emblematic tradition, in which an image with title (superscriptio) is complemented with a text (subscriptio) expounding the image's meaning and offering a didactic application. In the case of Selim's portrait, the verse is meant to capture and summarise Selim's life and actions, while at the same time seeking to direct the reader's reaction and moral evaluation. In the lines the Sultan is distinguished primarily for his cruelty and his wars and conquests. Knolles indicates the original source of the verse, Philip Lonicerus's Turkish history, in abbreviated form ('Phi Lonicer. Turc, Hist. Lib. .I.'), a reference which adds authority

---

[189] Sir Ralph Waren was twice appointed the Lord Mayor of London, in 1536 and 1543, and Thomas Key (1505–1572) was an antiquary and college head at Oxford. Susan Foister identifies John West as of Little Bromwich, Warwickshire, p. 281. There is no mention of John West in John Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1863) or in Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994), which ascertains his common status.
[190] Parry, *Richard Knolles*, pp. 106, 108n.
[191] See Appendix I.
[192] Knolles, p. 498.

to Knolles's present endeavour.[193] Selim's engraved monochrome portrait shows a bust draped in a sumptuous mantle, his face in profile, topped by a turban. A decorated circular frame includes the title of the Sultan ('SELYMUS PRIMUS TURCARUM IMPERATOR TERTIUS FlORUIT AN° 1512').

The engravings in Knolles's volume seem to serve an informative purpose rather than an artistic one because they are of mediocre quality.[194] Ostensibly these portraits aim to complement and clarify the text by showing what the sultans looked like. Yet, although they may help in giving a general impression of a sultan's typical appearance, none reflects a realistic depiction of any particular Sultan. For example, in Selim's engraving the Sultan appears as a bearded man; however, historically speaking Selim did not wear a beard. As Julian Raby observes, 'Ottoman painters consistently depicted Selim I with a long moustache and no beard'.[195] Knolles himself mentions this fact in an anecdote when Selim explained to the Persian ambassador why he refused to follow his father's and his day's fashion of wearing a long beard.[196] Indeed, in the sultanic engravings there is no facial expression or otherwise distinctive feature to indicate the individuality of the subject of the portrait. Except for the picture of Sultan Murad III[197], identifiable by his rotund face, the illustrations of all sultans in Knolles follow the same model with minor variations; all appear as bearded men of middle age.

---

[193] Knolles mentions Lonicerus as one of his main sources, p. [ix]. Lonicerus wrote a famous work about the Ottoman history, *Chronicorum Turcicorum* (1578).

[194] The poor quality of illustrations in early modern English books is observed by James A. Knapp, *Illustrating the Past in Early Modern England: The Representation of History in Printed Books* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 35, esp. the footnote.

[195] Julian Raby, 'Opening Gambits', trans. Priscilla Mary, in Selmin Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman* (İstanbul: İşbank, 2000), 64-95, at p. 74.

[196] Knolles relates that the ambassador asked Selim about the reason of not wearing a beard as his father and other men did; the Sultan answered 'That hee liked not to carrie about with him such an unnecessarie handfull, whereby his Bassaes might at their pleasure lead him up and downe the court, as they had done his father: Noting thereby, that *Baiazet* whilest he yet lived, had beene too much overruled by the Bassaes' , p. 517.

[197] According to Parry, Murad III's portrait in Knolles might have been taken from Boissard's *Pannoniae Historia Chronologica* (1596). However, because this portrait is different from the other pictures in Knolles, due to its true resemblance to the Sultan, I suggest that it might have been conveyed to the author by direct verbal description or visual means. It is worth noting that Murad was the first Ottoman Sultan whom English diplomats and traders were able to encounter face-to-face. Indeed, the above proposed methods of transmission are not unlikely because Knolles obtained a picture of another Sultan from one of Istanbul's visitors: he mentions in his 1610 edition that he received 'the lively counterfeit' of Sultan Ahmed (1603-1617) from his cousin Roger Howe, who had lately visited Istanbul, p. 1279.

It seems that the figure in the portrait need not reflect accurately the physical features of Sultan Selim as long as it complies with the reader's (and certainly the historiographer's) expectations of what the Ottoman sultan would look like, which means a turban, facial hair and a visibly luxurious dress—elements shared by all sultanic images in Knolles's *Historie*. The illustration must merely pass the test of recognition that takes place between the viewer and the visual object. Ruth Luborsky, who has studied the transfer and reuse of illustrations in Tudor printed books, points out that the 'picture itself does not relate to the text; it is the reader who does the relating by attending to the fit between text and image'.[198] She observes that in Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*, the same portraits, assumed to represent religious and secular rulers, are reused throughout the book with different identifications: the reader identified them as general illustrations of a type, not of a specific ruler.[199] The reader of Knolles's history might have understood the repetition of nearly identical portraits of sultans in the same manner. From Luborsky's study we can infer that the images were symbolic rather than realistic. Examining royal images in the ancient Near East, Irene J. Winter remarks that 'the image of the king 'in his office of kingship' is a semiotic, rather than a mimetic, representation'.[200] Knolles's images of the sultans, too, might be considered as semiotic rather than mimetic representation; they eschew a life-like imitation of the sultans and instead foreground markers, such as a turban, beard or sumptuous clothes, that symbolise the sultanate.

Ibn Iyas's Arabic text, which survives in manuscript, does not show any illustrations. Painting in Mamluk manuscripts was a highly individual, widely practised art-form.[201] However, it was not particularly common in Mamluk manuscript chronicles during this period; the illustrated works studied by Duncan Haldane belong to the literary genre of *Maqamat*[202], fables, or scientific works, such as zoological,

---

[198] Ruth Luborsky, 'Connections and Disconnections between Images and Texts: The Case of Secular Tudor Book Illustration', *Word & Image*, 3/1 (1987), 74-85, at p. 74.
[199] Ibid., p. 81.
[200] Irene J. Winter, 'What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 153/3 (2009), 254-70, p. 269.
[201] Duncan Haldane, *Mamluk Painting* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1978), p. 4.
[202] *Maqamat*: a sophisticated Arabic literary genre that contains short stories written in rhymed prose and verse and tells the adventures of a trickster who uses his rhetorical skills and wiliness to dupe other fictional characters.

botanical and geometrical treatises. While Ibn Iyas did not manage to provide visual presentation, he gives us a textual description of Selim's physical appearance which he obtained from someone who saw the Sultan in person. Ibn Iyas describes Selim as of medium height, with stocky body, big head, broad chest and taut shoulders. The Sultan has big eyes and a large nose, and he wears a moustache but no beard.[203] None of the physical features mentioned by Ibn Iyas can be discerned in Knolles's engraving of Selim.

Knolles presents Selim with individualistic characteristics, merits and faults. Selim's bad temper and cruelty are two features commonly ascribed to him; in this way, Knolles describes Selim as 'a man of an hot and cruell nature, even when we [*sic*] was nothing at all moved'.[204] He continues with a long register of crimes committed by Selim against members of his family, who

> perished through the unnaturall and execrable crueltie of this most mercilesse man. So that men generally did both feare him and hate him. For as much as he without all feare of God or regard of worldly shame, accounted no practise wicked or devise detestable, that might serve for the better establishing of his kingdome; and had set downe in his mind, (long before corrupted with ambition and tyrannie) That it was farre better for the assurance of his estate, to be feared of all than beloved of many: and therefore spared no mans life, of whom he had but the least suspition.[205]

In Knolles, Selim emerges as a typical tyrant: an ambitious, ruthless despot who believes it is better to be feared than to be loved. This conception of tyranny, widely current during the Renaissance period, can be traced to classical sources.[206] Yet Knolles appears also to justify Selim's tyranny to some extent because 'it was expedient in the exact discipline of that servile government, whereof the greatest

[203] Shihab al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmed Ibn Iyas, *Bada'' al-Zuhūr fi Waqa'' al-Duhūr* [The Wonders of Rising in the Proceedings of Ages], (Cairo: People's Printers, 1960), p. 1032.
[204] Knolles, p. 548.
[205] Ibid., p. 556.
[206] For the origin and familiarity of the concept of tyranny in the Elizabethan era see W. A. Armstrong, 'The Elizabethan Conception of the Tyrant', *The Review of English Studies*, 22/87 (1946), 161-81, and Rebecca W. Bushnell, *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990).

strength of the *Othoman* empire consisteth, to use all rigor and severitie'.[207] Furthermore, Knolles relates some episodes that show the benevolent and charitable side to the Sultan's character. Thus, during his visit to Jerusalem, Selim exhibited commendable piety, even to Christians: he 'reverently worshipped the auntient monuments of the old prophets, and done especiall sacrifice unto his great prophet *Mahomet*; gave unto the Christian priests keepers of the place (as unto good and devout men) money to maintaine them for six moneths'.[208] The English historian also reports how, after the battle of Merj Dabiq, Selim granted greater privileges to the people of Aleppo than they had enjoyed in the past.

The sultanic image is complemented by other attributes that round him off as an ambitious, brave and accomplished leader. Selim, apparently, inspired to 'the greatnesse of *Alexander* of MACEDON'.[209] Knolles's Selim is a competent commander who plans, fights and encourages his soldiers: on one occasion, he devises a plan 'well fitting the greatnesse of his mind' when he deceives the Mamluks by leading his army in the direction of the Persian lands, only to suddenly change direction for a surprise assault of the Mamluks' camp.[210] In the battle of Merj Dabiq '*Selymus*, (who that day in the extreame heat, for his wonderfull paines, courage, and direction, seemed undoubtedly greater than himselfe) riding up and downe, called earnestly upon his souldiours to urge the victorie, and with all speed to pursue their flying enemies'.[211] In another daring action on Selim's part, when the Ottoman army was trying to cross the Nile and the Mamluks fought

> with such furie, that *Selymus* doubting the victorie (although he was by his most faithfull counsellors persuaded to the contrarie) yet doubted not to adventure the bridge, and in person himselfe to go and relieve his distressed souldiours: who by his comming in, encouraged, and [...] repressed the furie of the enemie.[212]

[207] Knolles, p. 515.
[208] Ibid., p. 537.
[209] Ibid., p. 515.
[210] Ibid., p. 526.
[211] Ibid., p. 530.
[212] Ibid., p. 550.

Knolles, then, constructs a neutral portrayal of a historical figure who was, as occasion demanded, bad-tempered, ambitious, charitable, courageous, brutal and competent. The absence of a systematic negative depiction of the Sultan is noticeable; this absence indicates how Knolles's style has shifted from the subjective rhetoric extensively used in the preliminary sections of his book towards a more tempered prose.

In the dedication and induction to the Christian reader we notice the surfacing of a certain passionate crusading rhetoric that is articulated largely through the authorial voice. Knolles dedicated his *Historie* to the 'defendor of the faith', King James I. In his dedication he labelled the Turks as 'the naturall & capitall enemies', explaining to his royal addressee that 'the matter and argument of this Historie and such like so much concerning the state and good of the Christian commonweale in generall'.[213] He envisages his work as a contribution intended to instigate the King and other Christian monarchs to unite their forces to fight the Turks: his volume 'of right unto none so properly belongeth, as unto your most excellent Maiestie, with the rest of the Christian princes, sitting at the helme of your Estates; who onely by your united forces (the barbarous enemies greatest terrour) are able to give remedie thereunto.'[214] Knolles then addresses himself to his readers, starting by forewarning them that the Christian world is vanishing in front of their own eyes:

> *THE long and still declining state of the Christian commonweale, with the utter ruine and subversion of the Empire of the East, and many other most glorious kingdomes and provinces of the Christians, never to be sufficiently lamented, might with the due consideration thereof worthily moove even a right stonie heart to ruth.* [215]

Calling for the war against the Turks, the author assigns himself the mission of diagnosing the reasons of the Christian weakness which he ascribes to the carelessness of Christian monarchs, the divisions between them and the inadequacy of Christian

[213] Ibid., pp. [ii, iii].
[214] Ibid., p. [iii].
[215] Ibid., p. [iv].

armies.[216] In the introduction and dedication Knolles reiterates tropes of Christian unity and the holy war against the infidels. The author in these sections uses his own voice and he seems interested to show that he shares the religious and political viewpoint of both the established authority and his readership.

The main body of Knolles's compilation, however, contains historical data which is relatively free from the subjective discourse that features prominently in the preliminary sections. Knolles seems keen in his effort to produce a balanced, reliable historical narrative. His preoccupation with proving the veracity of his material is manifest in his choice of sources. Knolles informs us that he has based his history on eyewitnesses who 'have left unto us the very truth'. Where eye-witness accounts are not available he depends on accredited second-hand accounts by men who were 'well acquainted with the great and worthie personages of their time, might from their mouths as from certain Oracles report the undoubted truth of many most famous exploits done both by themselves and others'.[217] And the historian's last resort are 'the writings of such other learned and credible authours, as of whose integritie and faithfulnesse the world hath not to my knowledge at any time yet doubted'.[218] Such meticulousness aims at an empirical historical data rather than passionate polemic.

In comparison with the representation of Sultan Selim in Ibn Iyas's history, Knolles's seems more heterogeneous. The Arabic text projects a consistently negative image of the Sultan. Ibn Iyas describes Selim as a bad-tempered man who could easily be infuriated: when the Mamluk Sultan al-Ghuri decided to send a messenger to Selim, none of the emirs of his inner circle agreed to perform this mission, telling al-Ghuri that Selim 'is ignorant and a shedder of blood'.[219] No one trusted Selim's word either because it was his habit to pardon the Mamluk emirs only to kill them afterwards. Selim also kept the wives of the Mamluk emirs in custody to force them to hand over their husbands' wealth. After recounting how Selim had Yunus Pasha, one of his close commanders, executed, Ibn Iyas judges that Selim 'did not acknowledge companionship or friendship, and no pardon could be secured from him to his viziers

---

[216] Ibid., p. [v], [vi].
[217] Knolles dedicated a considerable space to enumerate the names of eye-witnesses and second-hand authorities he depended on, see p. [viii].
[218] All references in this paragraph to p. [viii].
[219] Ibn Iyas, p. 976.

or soldiers, for he was disposed to chaos and injudiciousness'.[220] Every day Selim and his viziers committed new outrages, ranging from murder and theft to imprisonment. Ibn Iyas asserts that Egypt experienced unheard-of atrocities at the hands of Selim, who 'violated the harem of Egypt, looted its wealth, killed its heroes, made its children orphans and held its men captive'.[221]

Ibn Iyas's depiction of Selim as irresponsible, untrustworthy and pleasure-seeking counters Knolles's portrayal of him as a reliable, committed and competent ruler. Ibn Iyas observes that Selim

> never sat publicly on the throne of the king in the Mountain Fortress, and no one saw him. He did not judge fairly between the oppressed and the oppressor. But he was preoccupied with seeking pleasure, drinking alcohol, and passing the time with beardless boys in al-Makas[222]. He left the business of government to his viziers as they chose, hence he did not make any appearance unless there was an opportunity to shed the blood of the Circassians[223]. He neither kept any pardon he had granted [...]. His speech was contradictory and he did not abide by what he said.[224]

Ibn Iyas records other episodes that allude to the kind of life Selim led while he was in Egypt. For instance, during a cruise down the Nile a strong wind capsized Selim's boat so that he fell overboard and fainted; allegedly he almost drowned because he was drunk. In another episode, Selim watched a shadow play that portrayed the death of Tumanbay which he liked; he gave the puppeteer eighty dinars and a golden robe.[225]

---

[220] Ibid., p. 1112.
[221] Ibid., p. 1111.
[222] Al-Maqas was a building on the banks of the Nile which contains a graded ladder that measures the level of the river. The seventeenth-century Arab historian Mohammed Ibn Abi al-Surur al-Bakri relates that, because of the huge number of corpses after the fall of Cairo and the spread of their stench within the city, Selim ordered the construction of a pavilion on top of the al-Maqas, where he stayed during his residence in Egypt. *Al-Minah al-Rahmaniyya fi al-Dawlah al-'Ūthmaniyah*, ed. Laila al-Sabbagh (Damascus: Dar al-Bashaier, 1995), p. 88.
[223] Ibn Iyas refers to the Mamluks as 'Circassians', occasionally even as 'Turks', since they mostly originated from Turkic tribes.
[224] Ibn Iyas, p. 1111
[225] Ibid., p. 1103.

Ibn Iyas's attitude towards Selim is mostly antagonistic but this does not necessarily mean that his account lacks reliability. The idea that historians are shaped by personal and cultural circumstance is now commonplace. In *Telling the Truth about History* the authors offer what they call a late-twentieth-century understanding of historical truth when they state that the standards of objectivity should 'recognize at the outset that all histories start with the curiosity of a particular individual and take shape under the guidance of her or his personal and cultural attributes'; thus, 'our version of objectivity concedes the impossibility of any research being neutral'.[226] Thomas L. Haskell asserts that 'among the influential members of the historical profession the term [objectivity] has long since lost whatever connection it may once have had with passionlessness, indifference, and neutrality'.[227] In Haskell's view, objectivity can be achieved through honesty, fairness and detachment but not disengagement from life.[228] For Maurice Mandelbaum the categories of subjective and objective are irrelevant when we discuss the truth of any form of knowledge. As he explains, objectivity does not necessarily mean that a person keeps his sentiments, reasoning and prejudices separate from his or her judgement because, 'while these forms of objectivity often have a bearing on the truth or falsity of a person's beliefs, it may turn out that a person has judged truly even when he has not, in this sense, been objective; and he may have judged falsely even though he has'.[229] Thus, ' 'objectivity'—when interpreted in this sense—does not provide any test of whether or not a statement or set of statements is true or false'.[230]

Ibn Iyas's source was written during and directly after the Ottoman invasion of Egypt. The experience must have been traumatic to the conquered people. Having witnessed the atrocities of the war, the massacre of innocent people and the loss of his country's independence, Ibn Iyas unsurprisingly painted the Ottoman Sultan in the blackest of colours. Even so, the historian's subjective attitude is not the criterion that decides whether his material itself is true or false. In other words, Ibn Iyas was

---

[226] Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: Norton, 1995), p. 254.
[227] Thomas L. Haskell, *Objectivity is not Neutrality: Explanatory Schemes in History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998), p. 148.
[228] Ibid., p. 155.
[229] Maurice Mandelbaum, *The Anatomy of Historical Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1977), p. 146.
[230] Ibid., p. 147.

emotionally prejudiced against Selim but this does not entail that his account of the Sultan lacks credibility. Coloured as they may be, the information about Selim's severe cruelty, crimes, the breaking of his promises and indulgent way of life is based on the author's eye-witness observations; their intrinsic truthfulness does not depend on whether the author was subjective or objective.

Ibn Iyas emphasises the chaotic, depraved nature of the Sultan and his men. He describes the Ottoman soldiers as 'savages like beasts'[231], having no manners, decency or piety. Examples of their vulgar and impious behaviour follow: they ate while riding their horses, drank alcohol publicly, did not fast during the fasting month and did not perform their prayers at the mosques.[232] The author's hostile attitude towards the invaders is to be expected but his representation of the Ottomans as unfamiliar Other is rather unusual. The Mamluks and Ottomans shared the same religion and culture; moreover, the historian himself was of Turkish origin. When *Bada'i' al-Zuhūr* was written, the Mamluk elites in Egypt still nurtured their distinctive Turkish cultural heritage; they even preferred their native Turkish tongue to Arabic. Nonetheless, the Ottomans' cultural affinity is denied by the Mamluk historian, who considers their behaviour as deviant. Even religion, which should have constituted a distinctive shared element between the two people, proves divisive because the newcomers fail to adhere to what Ibn Iyas considers accepted Islamic practice.

Ibn Iyas expands the discourse of Otherness to the political and military aspects of the Ottoman regime which he considers unfamiliar and inadequate. The author observes that Selim did not follow the rules of previous sultans; neither he nor his soldiers, viziers and emirs had any clear system of governance, and they behaved like a mob.[233] If we compare Ibn Iyas's with Knolles's view of the Ottoman regime we notice a considerable difference. In Knolles's account of Selim's entrance to Damascus the Ottoman Sultan

> would not bring his souldiours into the citie for troubling the quiet and populous state thereof. [...] And in the campe such was the militarie

[231] Ibn Iyas, p. 1111.
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid., p. 1087.

> discipline of that most severe commaunder, that the souldiours [...] suffered the fruitfull orchards and gardens of the citisens, in the most plentifull time of Autumne, to rest in safetie untouched, without any keeper. By which severe and strait government he so politikely provided against all wants, that his campe was in all parts furnished with plentie of all things necessarie, and that at prises reasonable. There taking unto him men skilfull in the lawes and customes of the countrey, and calling before him the embassadours of all the cities of the countrey; he heard and decided the greatest controversies of the Syrians, appointed governours over the provinces and cities, tooke view of the tributes and customes, and abrogated many customes and tributes due unto the old Sultans, which seemed either unreasonable or grievous to the people; thereby to gaine the fame of a just and bountifull conqueror.[234]

Unlike Ibn Iyas, Knolles does not see anything disorderly in Selim's political and military system; on the contrary, he highlights the efficiency and discipline in both government and army. The rhetoric of alterity in the Mamluk text is problematic for Orientalist and postcolonial theorists who invest heavily in the notion of a specifically Western alterity discourse towards the East. The comparative analysis between the two texts shows that the binary of Western versus Eastern discourse seems to erode and lose its significance. Ibn Iyas's Eastern history shares with many contemporary Western texts a view of the Ottomans as Other. The European discourse is even less alienating than the Eastern/Eastern rhetoric; as we have seen above the Ottomans' way of government is depicted as unintelligible and chaotic in the Arabic source while the English historian not only recognises their regime but also admires its efficiency. Here, common religious and cultural characteristics did not prevent the Mamluk historian from perceiving the Ottomans as the Other; this observation raises the question of how much religious and cultural difference contributed to shaping the discourse of alterity in the early modern world.

Ibn Iyas's preoccupation with the fate of the Egyptian people distinguishes his chronicle sharply from Knolles's narrative. Detailed accounts of events in Cairo, sometimes in the form of daily records, show that Ibn Iyas witnessed the devastating

[234] Knolles, p. 533.

effects of the Ottoman invasion in person: the destruction and pillage of Cairo and the massacre of about ten thousand people, many of whom were innocent civilians. After the consolidation of Selim's grip on the country the Sultan ordered that notables, merchants, scholars, judges, and skilled artisans (carpenters, ironsmiths, builders etc.) be sent to Istanbul. Ibn Iyas considered this as one of Selim's most harmful decisions; for him it amounted to sending the whole Egyptian people into prison and exile. Ibn Iyas provides a list of the names of people who left for Istanbul, the total number of whom he estimates at 1,800. He records that Selim

> left Egypt with one thousand camels loaded with gold and silver, not including what he had obtained in the form of antiques, weapons, china, copper, [...] horses, donkeys, mules and other things; he even took from Egypt the fine marble, of everything he took what was best; things that his fathers and grandfathers had never enjoyed.[235]

According to Ibn Iyas, fifty professions disappeared during Selim's devastating stay in Egypt; as a consequence many lost their jobs. The currency became light-weight, losing a third of its value, which had detrimental effects on the people. Another terrible event was the departure of the Caliph[236] to Istanbul, which was greatly regretted in Egypt. It is understandable that the people of Egypt were sorrowful to lose the Islamic Caliphate. The residence of the Caliph in Egypt and his sovereignty, albeit nominal, had a symbolic value, since as long as he was in Egypt the place assumed the prestigious leadership of all Muslim nations. Ibn Iyas considers it as a calamity that Egypt, whose sovereign had been the greatest sultan, became a province annexed to another sultanate. He describes the Ottoman invasion as a disaster of epic proportions,

---

[235] Ibn Iyas, p. 1111.

[236] Caliph (successor) is the religious-political title of the ruler of the Islamic state. The title was adopted by the first four Muslim rulers who were the successors of Prophet Mohammed. It then was assumed by the Umayyad (661–750) and Abbasid (750–1517) rulers as the heads of a united Islamic state. After the Mongol destruction of Baghdad in 1258 the Abbasid Caliphs moved to Egypt but they had nominal authority under Mamluk rule. The last Abbasid Caliph was al-Mutawakkil III, who died in 1543. He was taken to Istanbul after the downfall of the Mamluk Sultanate. Later he surrendered the title to Selim, who became the first Ottoman Sultan to be named the Caliph of the Muslims, and henceforth all later Ottoman Sultans inherited the title until the abolition of the Empire in 1923.

on a par with Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of Egypt which resulted in forty years' desolation, or Hulagu the Tatar's devastation of Baghdad.

Knolles either chose to pass over many of the destructive consequences of the war on Egypt's people, or he was unaware of them. Undoubtedly, the choice of historical material is a personal authorial decision; in a grand narrative of the mortal conflict between the Sultans, the troubles of ordinary Egyptians might have carried little weight with the English historian. Knolles's account privileges the actions of famous individuals, a typical practice in pre-modern historiography when history was habitually understood as a register of the deeds of kings and dynasties. Nasser Rabbat ascribes this lack of interest in the affairs of the lower classes to an early modern assumption that these were 'static, undifferentiated, and largely uninteresting'.[237] Peter Burke remarks that the Renaissance idea of the dignity of history, which had its foundation in Latin and Greek historiography, dictated that expatiating on lowly individuals and events offended decorum.[238] Hence, raised in the traditions of Renaissance humanism, Knolles focuses on noble deeds. Ample space is given to Selim's decisions and actions; the war in Egypt forms a subordinated part in Selim's life story. Knolles also highlights the heroic feats of other notable Ottoman commanders such as Sinan Pasha, Mustapha Pasha and Yunus Pasha, as well as distinguished Mamluk emirs and sultans. This kind of historical narrative was immensely popular. V. J. Parry reminds us that for 'the gentleman of Elizabethan England heroic feats of war and the minutiae of battle were no doubt a subject of great appeal'.[239] Thus, Knolles satisfies a readership who is assumed to be more interested in such martial themes than in how low- and middle-class Egyptians were affected by Selim's victorious exploits.

Ibn Iyas too pays special attention to incidents that affected the Mamluk political elite. He shows the same interest in middle-class religious scholars, a group he belonged to. He always includes obituaries of both scholars and members of the Mamluk elite, and names the persons from these groups who were taken to Istanbul.

---

[237] Nasser Rabbat, 'Representing the Mamluks in Mamluk Historical Writing', in Hugh Kennedy (ed.), *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c.950-1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 59-75, at p. 64.
[238] Peter Burke, *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Arnold, 1969).p. 133.
[239] Parry, *Richard Knolles*, p. 87.

But at the same time the author covers the mundane facts of everyday life, such as the Nile's flooding, prices, or crime. In fact, his chronicle is unique in its non-elitist stance as it does not give priority to the upper classes at the expense of the concerns of ordinary people. For example, in the account of the battle of Giza, Knolles focuses on the fighting itself; Ibn Iyas, however, mentions the battle briefly and spends more time on its consequences for ordinary Cairenes. He does not forget to document that 'in these days the goods that used to be brought to Cairo such as cheese, ghee and cattle were blocked, as were other goods which were brought from Giza and its surroundings [...] and the conditions in Cairo were troubled to the extreme because of this conflict'.[240]

The lack of information about the conditions of the conquered people in the English version could be also dictated by the type of information Knolles was able to access. His account is based on *Historiarum Sui Temporis Libri* XLV, written by the Italian Paolo Giovio (1483-1552). Giovio's source was an Italian translation of a Turkish account of the war, written by Selim's ambassador to al-Ghuri whom Giovio called Cadilescher.[241] Giovio had also consulted the Venetian ambassador to Selim, Luigi Mocenigo, and some Venetian soldiers who had fought in the battle at al-Ridania.[242] Some of these suppliers of information clearly were on the Ottoman side and they might have had limited encounters with the local Egyptian population. On the other hand, Ibn Iyas lived among the ordinary Cairenes so he was able to provide a first-hand account of their ordeal.

Ibn Iyas believes that the end of the Mamluk Sultanate and the victory of Selim were inevitable destiny. A divine vision of history was prevalent in Islamic historiography of the period: Allah's will was seen as controlling events and determining the course of human history. Accordingly, the Arabic chronicle treats historical incidents as the outcome of divine decree. The Mamluks' military preparations were in vain because Allah had predestined their defeat. The historian

[240] Ibn Iyas, p. 1089.
[241] Knolles too mentions this source: 'the Cadelescher, a man of great account amongst the Turks, and of them exceedingly reverenced for the opinion they had of his great Mahometane superstition, who afterwards wrote the Commentaries of this warre.' p. 521.
[242] V. J. Parry, 'Renaissance Historical Literature in Relation to the Near and Middle East (with Special Reference to Paolo Giovio)', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 277-89, at p. 286.

compares the Mamluk soldiers who had left Aleppo to fight Selim to 'shining stars' with their weapons and fine horses: 'every one of those soldiers is equal to one thousand of Ibn Othman [Selim]'s soldiers, but Almighty Allah gives victory to whomever He wants'.[243] The historian's views constitute a profound reflection on the limitation of human ability and the inevitability of divine will. For Ibn Iyas, Selim's achievements and easy victories were exceptional, but he acknowledged and accepted this bitter reality because it was Allah's will.

However, the historian is not oblivious to the personal, social, economic and political factors that brought about subsequent events. He is aware of human agency and its role in shaping historical outcomes, as when he highlights how the disputes between the Mamluks led to their defeat or how Selim provoked al-Ghuri on purpose to instigate a war with the Mamluks. Nevertheless, humans are seen as the agents of God's will. As C. F. Robinson observes, in Islamic historiography human actions and natural events

> were symptoms, rather than causes. That the economy or climate worked independently of, much less counter to, God's will, was virtually unthinkable: historians understood the world to be an integrated and ordered whole, all its occupants being subject to God's sovereignty.[244]

Hence, for Ibn Iyas, a larger divine plan arbitrates the end of the Mamluk Sultanate. For this reason a human decision like the treason of Aleppo's Mamluk governor, Khair Bek, who switched sides in the battle at Merj Dabiq, was predetermined by Allah as a setback to the Egyptian army to fulfil the preordained defeat of the Mamluks.[245]

Remarkably, in this respect Knolles's conception of history is not very different from the Muslim historian's. For Knolles it is the will of God that directs the course of events. The stories told in his *Historie* often demonstrate how divine providence, or what he repeatedly calls 'the hand of God', judges, rewards or revenges human pride and tyranny. Knolles gives an example from Selim's life that illustrates divine

---

[243] Ibn Iyas, p. 1039.
[244] C. F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), p. 130.
[245] Ibn Iyas, p. 1029.

punishment: when Selim was ‘strucken with a most loathsome and incurable disease’, so that he ‘ended his dayes in the same place with an untimely and tormenting death, God (as is to be thought) with revenging hand in the same place taking just punishment for his former disloyaltie towards his aged father’.[246] The historian conceives Selim’s premature, painful death as just desert because he plotted the death of his own father.

Knolles’s embracing of this providential model of history shows that Elizabethan historians still adhered to a medieval historical vision. At the same time it illustrates that critics who argued that the writing of history had undergone a revolutionary transformation during the sixteenth century might have overstated their case.[247] The developments in the form and content of sixteenth-century historical material have already been highlighted in this study but, as far as the work of Knolles and his contributors is concerned, it would be an exaggeration to regard the *Historie* as an example of drastic reformation in history writing. Ivo Kamps observes that English Renaissance historians differed from their medieval predecessors ‘in their deeper consideration of natural or secondary causes’ because their ‘new focus accommodated an increased emphasis on human explanations without denying supreme divine oversight’; even so he concedes that ‘the coming of the Renaissance to England, however, did not instantly alter historiographical thought or practice’.[248] According to Fred J. Levy, such a providential pattern of history seemed even to outlast Knolles’s days:

> Men were as strongly convinced in 1625 as in 1480 that they lived in a basically orderly universe […] Everyone knew that God ruled the world in accordance with a plan known in its entirety only to Him, if partially discoverable by men, though they were gradually coming to the conclusion that God’s plan was rational and that He would not alter it capriciously.[249]

[246] Knolles, p. 486.
[247] See for example: F. Smith Fussner, *The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640* (London: Routledge, 1962), and Fritz Levy, ‘The Elizabethan Historiographical Revolution’, *History*, 4 (1961), 25-52.
[248] Ivo Kamps, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), pp. 39-40.
[249] Fred J. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967), p. 287.

Ibn Iyas stresses the importance of another supernatural element, fortune or luck. He believes that Selim was particularly lucky and helped by fate to achieve his goals; Selim's fortune in defeating the Persian and Egyptian kings, taking their lands, money and possessions, and securing Syria without wars had never been achieved before by any king. Knolles too thinks that Selim's good fortune 'alwaies favoured his attempts'.[250] In one episode Knolles recounts that Tumanbay's forces had prepared so thoroughly for the first battle with Selim at al-Ridania that the Mamluks were sure of winning, 'had not fortune which favoured *Selymus* and frowned upon *Tomombeius* […] by the false treacherie of a few, frustrated the great endevors of the Mamalukes'.[251] The only obstacle for the Mamluks was their ill fortune: 'they were of greater spirit & confidence, as men destitute neither of courage or skill, but onely of fortune'.[252]

English Renaissance historians usually use God and Fortune interchangeably to account for unpredictable and inevitable historical processes. The idea of Fortune might have been appealing because, as D. R. Woolf suggests, it 'provided a mode of explanation of events which could easily be reconciled with and subordinated to her Christian counterpart, providence'.[253] In his reading of Polydore Vergil's *Anglica historia*, Fred J. Levy notes that the historian employs both God and Fortune as causative factors, and suggests how the operations of God might be distinguished from those of Fortune: if supernatural intervention was on the side of morality then the cause was God; otherwise, Fortune was perhaps at work.[254] It is illuminating to examine Ibn Iyas and Knolles in the light of Levy's conclusion. Both historians ascribe Selim's achievements to his good fortune, not to God, because they seem to presume that in essence Selim's actions were immoral. As devoted religious men, Ibn Iyas and Knolles would not attribute to God the promotion of a wicked man like Selim, so the culpability can be safely laid at the door of fortune or luck. In both Islamic and

---

[250] Knolles, p. 503.
[251] Ibid., p. 534.
[252] Ibid., p. 539.
[253] D. R. Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and 'The Light of Truth' from the Accession of James I to the Civil War* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990), p. 7.
[254] Fred J. Levy, p. 61.

Christian beliefs of the period, God is considered the source of goodness; it is irreverent to openly attribute to Him the sponsoring of evil.

However, even Fortune's evil machinations seem to be ultimately controlled and manipulated by God to achieve His broader plan; according to the two historical accounts God used Selim as an instrument to implement His divine justice. Ibn Iyas portrays what happened to the Mamluk ruling elite as Allah's retribution for their oppression and injustice. The author declares that 'neither the Sultan [al-Ghuri] nor his emirs looked at the affairs of the Muslims with justice and fairness so they were rewarded for their actions and intentions, and they were afflicted by the son of Othman [Selim]'.[255] When the Mamluk emirs chose Tumanbay they swore their allegiance in the presence of a religious dignitary who told them that 'Allah caused you to be defeated and humiliated, and He inflicted the son of Othman upon you because of the curses of people against you'.[256] Ibn Iyas reports that, at Aleppo, Selim effortlessly gained innumerable riches of money, jewelleries and antique artwork that al-Ghuri had stolen from the coffers of previous Egyptian sultans. The marble that Selim took from the fortress in Cairo had previously been seized unjustly by al-Ghuri from a hall owned by an Egyptian family; in the historian's moral conclusion, the requital befits the transgression.[257] Knolles too views the Ottomans as the scourge of God for wrongdoings, albeit on the part of the Christians. According to Knolles, the first and greatest cause of the Ottomans' aggressive expansion and success 'is the just and secret judgement of the Almightie, who in justice delivereth into the hands of these mercilesse miscreants, nation after nation, and kingdome upon kingdome, as unto the most terrible executioners of his dreadfull wrath, to be punished for their sinnes'.[258] The authorial purpose of utilising the notion of divine punishment was to serve moral and religious edification. This purpose was traditionally associated with the writing of history, as recording past events was supposed 'to teach and inspire by illustrating and exemplifying'.[259] Ibn Iyas illustrates how the Mamluk elite and their Sultan were punished for their injustice, and his message is tailored especially to the existing and

[255] Ibn Iyas, p. 1030.
[256] Ibid., p. 1039.
[257] Ibid., p. 1098.
[258] Knolles, p. [v].
[259] Robinson, p. 12.

future political elite, exhorting them to be fair and conscientious in using their power. Knolles, on the other hand, wishes that the Ottoman scourge might be a warning to those nations which have not yet been subjected to the Ottomans, so that they might repent their sins.[260]

So far we have focused on minor variations between the Arabic and English accounts of Selim's personality and conquest of Egypt; however, there are instances when these histories give totally contradictory versions of the same event. One of these notable disagreements is about how al-Ghuri died and what happened to his body. Knolles records how al-Ghuri fell during the fighting: 'being a corpulent man of great yeares, and beside the heavinesse of his armour troubled also with a rupture, overcome with heat and griefe of mind, fainted in that great presse; and so falling downe, was without regard troden to death'.[261] Al-Ghuri's body was found two days later in a sound condition without any wound. Selim ordered that the body be exhibited in a public place so that people who believed that he was still alive would be sure of his death. Afterwards, 'when the dead bodie began to putrifie and grow noisome, and to convince the fame of his escape, had lien openly to the view of all men by the space of three daies, it was without any funerall pompe or solemnitie simply buried in the most auntient temple of ALEPPO'.[262] The Islamic tradition maintains that the bodies of true martyrs do not putrefy; thus, by indicating a disintegrating, smelling body, the source emphasises that al-Ghuri was not a martyr but rather a fighter for the wrong cause. Such a religiously charged reference was originally meant for an informed Muslim reader. The text also cunningly comments that al-Ghuri's body did not have any wounds, which insinuates a cowardly Mamluk commander who did not participate in the fight. Knolles's account in general is replete with degrading rhetoric concerning the end of the Mamluk Sultan. This particular account can be very likely traced back to Giovio's Turkish source.

According to Ibn Iyas, al-Ghuri had a stroke so he 'was overwhelmed by a hemiplegia that disabled half of his body and caused his jaw to drop […] it was said

[260] Knolles, p. [v].
[261] Ibid., p. 530.
[262] Ibid., p. 531.

that his gall-bladder burst and blood came out of his mouth'.[263] Ibn Iyas's version states that 'since his death there has been no news about him, and no trace was found of him, and his body was not found between the corpses, as if the earth had swallowed him instantly'.[264] If we examine other contemporary Arabic sources we find that they all agree that al-Ghuri's body disappeared. An account by the Damascene historian Shams al-Din Ibn Tulun, who also witnessed Selim's military campaign, considers both possibilities but approves the version that the body went missing:

> as concerning our Sultan [al-Ghuri], his head was cut off and taken to Istanbul, as the army's superintendent told me, and it is said his body was buried at Sheik Daowd at Dabiq, and some say it was taken to Aleppo […] but the truth is that nothing is known about him.[265]

Even more informative is the account of Ibn Iyas's contemporary Ahmed Ibn Zunbul. According to Ibn Zunbul, when two of the Mamluk emirs, 'Alān and Aqbai al-Tawīl, saw al-Ghuri's dead body they decided to cut off his head and threw it away, to make it difficult for the Ottomans to identify his body and to prevent them from taking his head and parading it around in their territories as was their habit. Consequently, one of the slaves of prince 'Alān cut off al-Ghuri's head and threw it in a ditch.[266] In comparison with Knolles's narrative, the Arabic versions seem more convincing, not just because they agree about the fate of al-Ghuri's body, but because Ibn Zunbul explains very plausibly how and for what reason the body was not found.

The remaining question is how these two conflicting accounts came about. There are the possibilities of careless informants or mistaken reports that may unintentionally lead to false historical accounts. However, we cannot rule out authorial predilection for choosing or disregarding a certain version. For example, it can be expected that the Ottoman account, which Knolles's source, Giovio, ultimately depends on, would

---

[263] Ibn Iyas, p. 1029.
[264] Ibid.
[265] Shams al-Din Ibn Tulun, *Mufakahet al-Khlan fi Hawadeth al-Zaman*, *Alwaraq Website*, last accessed 12 Dec. 2011, <http://www. alwaraq.net>.
[266] Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Zunbul, *Akhirat al-Mamalik* [The End of the Mamluks], ed. Abd al-Munaim 'Amar, 2nd edn. (Cairo: Egyptian General Corporation of Books, 1998), p. 103.

prefer and promote the version that assures the Ottomans' decisive victory by getting hold of and parading the body of their enemy al-Ghuri.

There is also disparity between the Arabic and English versions concerning what happened to Sultan Tumanbay, al-Ghuri's successor, after his arrest. Knolles writes that Selim never met Tumanbay: '*Selymus* before resolved to put him to death, and the rather for the injurie done to his [am]bassadours, would not suffer him to come into his presence'.[267] The Arabic version documents a meeting between the two Sultans. Ibn Iyas records that Selim met Tumanbay after the latter's arrest: 'when Selim saw him he rose up for him and reproached him with some words'.[268] In Knolles's *Historie*, Selim ordered the torture of Tumanbay to make him reveal the location of al-Ghuri's hidden wealth.[269] According to Ibn Iyas, Tumanbay was put in prison but nothing indicates that he was subjected to torture. Knolles recounts the humiliating death Tumanbay suffered when Selim

> commaunded him in base and ragged apparrell, with his hands bound behind him as a theefe or murtherer condemned to die, to be set upon a foule leane cammell, and so to be carried in derision through all the publicke and notable places of the citie; that the Aegyptians might see him whom they but a little before had adored for their king, by chaunge of fortune cast into extreame miserie, by most shamefull death to end both his life and empire together. When they had thus despightfully led him as it were in triumph; and brought him to the cheefe gate of the citie called BASUELA, they there openly strangled him with a rope: and that he might be the better seene, and become more contemptible to all that passed that way, they hanged him up by the necke upon an yron hooke in an arch of the same gate and so left him to the worlds wonder.[270]

The above account, remarkably passionate as it is, does not reveal a detached narrator. Knolles owes much to his Italian source, yet he has a pivotal role in shaping the narrative by the choice of details and manipulation of language, as he clearly does

[267] Knolles, p. 550.
[268] Ibn Iyas, p. 1093.
[269] Knolles, p. 550.
[270] Ibid., pp. 555-51.

in the above quotation. In its gleeful detail of Tumanbay's execution, the account verges on the point of vindictiveness towards the fate of the last Mamluk Sultan. Knolles does not confine himself to the mere description of the parade and execution but, deeply involved, dwells on the Sultan's 'extreame miserie' and 'shamefull death', amplifying his loss and humiliation. Certainly, Knolles did not nurse a particularly hostile attitude towards Tumanbay: he, in fact, gave an admiring account of the Mamluk Sultan's personality and actions, highlighting his respectability, common sense, religious devotion and courage.

A closer look at the passage would show that Knolles is trying hard to highlight how one of the greatest sultans in his time met such a dishonourable end. The key phrase is 'chaunge of fortune'. Knolles manipulates this episode to emphasize the evanescence of worldly glory and power. The Mamluk's last moments illustrate Knolles's message forcibly; Knolles juxtaposes the image of the man whom the Egyptians 'adorned for their king' with his depiction as a contemptible thief or murderer, with his hands tied behind him, paraded in the streets, then left dangling from an iron hook on the city's gate. This theme constitutes an essential, recurring element in Knolles's vision; it has its root in a cyclical concept of history, prevalent during the Renaissance: humans and nations go through a cycle of rise, flourishing and decay, and this pattern is repeated throughout human history. It is not surprising that Knolles concludes his work in this spirit with the very last lines: 'yet the greatnesse of this Empire being such as that it laboureth with nothing more than the weightinesse of it selfe, it must needs (after the manner of wordly things) of it selfe fall, and againe come to nought.'[271]

This cyclical concept is not apparent in the Arabic text. In Islamic thought the history of humankind proceeds in a rather linear manner from the Creation to Judgement Day. Muslim historians in Ibn Iyas's time followed this pattern and they were guided by well-known predecessors such as the famous historian Ali Ibn al-Athir who wrote the universal history *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, which broadly traces history from the Creation to the Prophet Mohammed, then continues in a year-by-year fashion to the author's own time. Ibn Iyas adopted a similar approach: he begins with the

---

[271] Ibid., n. pag.

Egyptian ruler al-Muqawqis, who was a contemporary of the Prophet Mohammed, and continues to cover the subsequent Muslim rulers of Egypt. His history takes an annalistic form from 1261 to 1522.

It should, however, be emphasised that the above-mentioned differences between Ibn Iyas's and Knolles's histories should not distract us from the fact that the majority of the historical information in the two sources is very similar. For the purposes of this study I have focused on the discrepancies between the primary material under discussion, passing over the larger proportion of data which is in agreement. This observation urges us to take with a pinch of salt the intellectual debate that questions the credibility of historical data. Robinson argues that 'it is in the nature of representation and history writing that 'departures' from historical reality take place'.[272] He tries to cast doubt on the authenticity of material produced by historians by drawing comparisons between the techniques of writing history and fiction, maintaining that

> imposing narrative form upon disparate materials drawn from memory, oral and written reports and documents, is itself a creative act, and the techniques the historian uses to tell his story, such as characterizing, handling time, introducing and concluding, are akin—some would say *identical*—to those used by fiction writers to tell theirs. [273]

These critical views are, to say the least, exaggerated: it is remarkable how the texts under discussion that were written by people who lived in different cultures, times and places, agree on most of the basic historical material. Ibn Iyas and Knolles obtained their historical material through disparate means and from different sources but still they tell us nearly the same story.

---

[272] Robinson, p. 154.
[273] Ibid.

Conclusion

In this chapter, a comparative study has analysed two historical texts in Arabic and Elizabethan which chronicle the conquest of Egypt by Sultan Selim I. As far as the representations of the Sultan are concerned, it has been demonstrated how Knolles constructed a balanced depiction of Selim that highlighted his merits and defects; he described him as a cruel and bad-tempered despot but also as an ambitious, generous, just, brave and competent ruler. On the other hand, the Arabic source presented a systematically negative portrayal of Selim, exposing his cruelty, untrustworthiness, aggression, injustice, greed, irresponsibility and self-indulgence. The analysis reveals that although European Renaissance writing was predominantly anti-Ottoman, in Knolles's and Ibn Iyas's case, the anti-Ottoman rhetoric towards the Sultan was more manifest in the Eastern Islamic text. Many recent studies that have looked at early modern European representations of the Ottomans are usually one-sided; they engage with Eurocentric concerns and focus on European sources. Such studies highlight the intensity and consistency of an antagonistic and alienating Western discourse towards the Turks. However, when a typical Renaissance historical text—such as Knolles's—is juxtaposed with an Arabic text that deals with the same characters and events, it becomes clear that an alienating anti-Ottoman discourse is not unique to Christian texts of the West; on the contrary, it may feature more prominently in an Eastern text.

Ibn Iyas's account of the Sultan and his men is redolent of the discourse of alterity. The Turks and Mamluks shared the same religion and cultural practices, but the Mamluk historian expressed a remarkable alienating attitude towards the newcomers. This unsettles our understanding of the role and impact of cultural and religious difference on the formation of the discourse of Otherness. The topic would require a more extensive investigation of an adequate number of texts from different textual traditions in the early modern period. The limited scope of this chapter does not allow for a fuller comparative coverage, but at least it puts this issue forward for future study.

My chapter has incorporated Eastern voices in the field of early modern studies. The inclusion of Ibn Iyas's Eastern text in the discussion demonstrates that people in the East were not the mere object of a European historical discourse but had a voice of their own to document their own version of history. Indeed, through engaging with an Arabic chronicle, the study introduces an example of a self-representational account that contrasts with the perspective of Knolles, who figured as an English narrator external to the Eastern events told. What distinguishes the Arabic history from Knolles's is the fact that the former is a subjective record that conveys the feelings and thoughts of people who experienced the events firsthand and were affected by them. It has been argued that 'the point of any scrutiny of texts for evidence of the past […] is to connect one text to another, to retrieve word by word, a forgotten, but never wholly lost moment in time'.[274] Ibn Iyas's historical text records that nearly forgotten moment lived by a contemporary who witnessed the devastating effects of the Ottoman invasion. His work remains a true expression of a transitional period when the Egyptian people still identified with their old masters and were antagonistic to the new rule.

The comparison between the Arabic and English texts exposes two different cultural outlooks and produces a broader, multifaceted reading of historical characters and events. At the same time it reveals the shared characteristics between Arabic and English historiographical traditions. The analysis demonstrates how both accounts share a basic religious vision of human history. Moreover, there is agreement between the two historians in their perception of the role of luck or fortune in historical processes. The similarity in their religious conviction is also responsible for the authors' conceptualisation of the Ottomans as a divine punishment. It is interesting to note that the religious beliefs which polarised Muslims and Christians during the early modern era were responsible for creating an affinity in the historical perspective adopted by our two historians.

[274] Appleby et. al., p. 252.

Chapter III
The Sultans' Letters and Anglo-Ottoman Relations 1579-1603

The letters of the Ottoman sultans represent an exceptional type of written material in the early modern period. In reading the content and context of these epistolary documents, this chapter aims to engage with diverse critical, cultural and historical issues. The existence of these texts as a form of personal correspondence as well as a channel of diplomatic communication cannot be overestimated. These letters are the closest we can get to self-representational accounts of the Ottoman sultans available in English during the sixteenth century. As diplomatic correspondence they shed light on the nature of Anglo-Ottoman contact at its nascent stage. Likewise, the letters provide rich material to assess contemporary critical topics concerning authorial subjectivity and cross-cultural encounters.

The primary material under discussion are English translations of letters originally written in Ottoman Turkish.[275] The translation of the originals into Latin or Italian usually took place in the chancery of the Ottoman court, which provided the Turkish documents accompanied by their translated copies. In most cases the originals and their Latin or Italian versions are still preserved in English archives. Some of the English translations were published during Elizabeth's reign while others were printed in diverse sources in the following centuries. The analysis will focus on the stylistic features and themes in these epistolary texts.

Before moving on to examine the sultanic letters we need to consider the European interest in such documents. European publishers were interested in making the sultanic letters available to the general public. The fact that there is a considerable number of letters published individually as pamphlets attests to their popularity.[276] The interest in

---

[275] Ottoman Turkish was the formal language adopted by the Ottoman court. Written in the Arabic alphabet, Ottoman borrowed extensively from Arabic and Persian vocabulary; as a formal court language it was different from the Turkish vernacular. Ottoman Turkish was considered more refined and thus suitable for literary, administrative and diplomatic purposes.

[276] For example: *Letters from the Great Turke Lately Sent unto the Holy Father the Pope and to Rodulphus Naming Himselfe King of Hungarie, and to All the Kinges and Princes of Christendome*,

such documents in England had started even before the establishment of diplomatic contact with the Sublime Porte and the inception of direct correspondence with the sultans. From the beginning of the sixteenth century, the English followed a European vogue of translating and printing letters which were sent from the Ottoman rulers to the Pope and other European heads of state. Why were these documents considered important and worthy of translation and dissemination? Two different, or rather contradictory, reasons could be suggested to explain Europe's keen commitment to publicising the dispatches from Istanbul: friendship and enmity. English publishers, for example, were eager to print the Turkish letters to document the friendship between their monarchs and a major power such as the Ottoman Empire and to highlight the importance of such relations for English commercial interests. On the other hand, Europe's precarious existence close to the Ottoman military threat triggered the European interest in the enemy's letters. Special attention was given to the dissemination of hostile Turkish dispatches that carried a warning or threat of invasion to their Christian recipients.

A certain type of fake letters which are attributed to the Ottoman sultans but were in fact fabricated by anonymous authors could be regarded as a genre in their own right.[277] One example is a letter published in London in 1643 which was supposedly sent by Amurath 'the Great Turk'. The letter imitates the sultanic style by starting with the sultan labelling himself the monarch of the world, great and mighty God on earth, invincible Caesar and king of kings. This grandiose formula is followed by the conventional list of his territories. The text announces the coming of a massive army of 'sixteene hundred thousand' soldiers, the like of which Christians have neither seen nor heard of before. The letter then produces a sadistic catalogue of the horrific atrocities the Turks would inflict on their Christian victims. The document concludes, 'because we heare that you fall out amongst your selves, therefore we will regulate

STC 207; *True Copies of the Insolent, Cruell, Barbarous, and Blasphemous Letter Lately Written by the Great Turke, for Denouncing of Warre Against the King of Poland*, STC 208; and *A Vaunting, Daring, and a Menacing Letter, Sent from Sultan Morat the Great Turke, from his Court at Constantinople*, STC 18286.

[277] Book historians documented some fake Turkish letters; see for example, Carl von Göllner, *Turcica: Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, vols. 1 and 2 (Bucuresti: Editura Academiei, 1961-1968).

you'.[278] The last sentence would not stem from a Turkish source but a Christian author who employed this propagandist cliché to condemn the schism within Christendom. This type of forged letter was intended to arouse religious zeal and to induce the Christian powers to stop the Turkish military advance into Europe. Another fabricated letter was allegedly sent from (the rather vague) 'Great Turke' to the Pope of Rome. The writer refers twice to the 'great god Mahoun' or 'Mahonde'[279]; such references reveal the author's Christian misconception in assuming that Muslims worshipped Mohammed.[280]

The first authentic sultanic dispatch from the Porte to England is dated 15 March 1579. Sultan Murad III (1574-1595) sent this letter to inform the Queen that he had given permission to three English merchants–William Harborne, Richard Osborne and Richard Staper–to trade in his dominions. As previously mentioned, Harborne's visit to Istanbul in 1579 initiated the diplomatic and commercial exchanges between London and Istanbul. Richard Hakluyt introduces Murad's letter to Elizabeth with a short account of Harborne's trip to Istanbul. Departing on 1 July 1578, Harborne had travelled secretly over land via Hamburg and Leopolis[281] in Poland. At this point in the journey he and his companions disguised themselves by dressing 'after the Turkish fashion'. Upon arrival in Istanbul, the shrewd envoy 'behaved himselfe so wisely and discreetly, that within few moneths after he obtained not onely the great Turkes large and ample priviledge for himselfe, and the two worshipfull persons aforesaid, but also procured his honourable and friendly letters unto her Maiestie'.[282] S. A. Skilliter claims that Harborne was in fact a government agent who worked under the direction of the

---

[278] *A Proud and Blasphemous Cahllenge: Given out in Denuntiation of Warre, by Amurath the Great Turk, against all Christendome Coming with an Army of 1600000 men* (London, 1643), *EEBO*, last accessed 28 Jan. 2010, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

[279] Bartholomé de Clere-Ville, *The Copye of the Letter Folowynge whiche Specifyeth of ye Greatest and Mervelous Visyoned Batayle that ever was Sene or Herde of and also of the Letter yt was Sent frome the Great Turke unto our Holy Fad[er] ye Pope of Rome* (London, 1518), *EEBO*, last accessed 17 Dec. 2010, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

[280] The online entry of this letter on ESTC includes Katharine Pantzer's comment on the content of the text which consists of a description of a battle and the abovementioned letter; she observes that 'early 16th century names of places & people are imaginative/sometimes impenetrable, but this item altogether baffles comprehension'; this is not surprising because the text is clearly a fake document.

[281] Modern-day Lviv, now located in Ukraine.

[282] Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1903), 5:168-69.

principal secretary, Dr. Thomas Wilson.[283] Hakluyt's account, which intimates careful planning for a secret mission, supports Skilliter's view. Besides, it is unlikely that Harborne and his employers would have decided to contact the Porte without the Queen's prior knowledge. Elizabeth's familiarity with the endeavour is made clear in Murad's first letter when he mentions that Harborne came 'unto us in the name of your most excellent Regall Majestie, commending unto us from you all kindnesse, curtesie and friendly offices on your part'.[284]

The original Turkish version of this letter and its first Latin translation are lost but copies of the Latin version still exist.[285] Hakluyt used one of these for his well-known version of the sultanic correspondence.[286] Here, Murad's letter starts with a salutation that consists of a string of honorific titles bestowed on the English Queen. She is addressed as:

> most renowmed Elizabeth, most sacred Queene, and noble prince of the most mightie worshippers of Jesus, most wise governor of the causes and affaires of the people and family of Nazareth, cloud of most pleasant raine, and sweetest fountaine of noblenesse and vertue, ladie & heire of the perpetuall happinesse & glory of the noble Realme of England.[287]

The verbose salutation gives us a first glimpse of the formulaic and ceremonial style of formal Ottoman epistolary prose. Stylistically speaking there are few differences between the letters because they were all composed according to the conventions adopted by the Ottoman court chancery.[288] Intended to be appreciated as fine pieces of rhetoric, many sections were written in rhyming prose; however, such effects were lost during the translation process which instead produced stilted, grandiloquent renditions.

---

[283] S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578-1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977), p.76.
[284] Hakluyt, 5:169.
[285] Latin versions of this letter are preserved in the Bodleian Library, Tanner MS. 169, f. 5.; P. R. O., SP 97/1, f. 1.; and in British Library, Cotton MSS. Nero B. VIII, ff. 50-51^{r} and Nero B. XI, ff. 177-178^{r}.
[286] Hakluyt must have obtained the Latin copy from Richard Staper: the preface to the first edition states that 'Master Richard Staper Marchant of London, hath furnished me with divers thinges touching the trade of Turkie', 1:xxix.
[287] Hakluyt, 5:169.
[288] For the structure and components of Ottoman formal letters see Appendix II.

It is noticeable that the 'intitulation', the Sultan's full title, did not appear in Murad's letter. This essential component was included in all important letters; its absence might either indicate that Hakluyt truncated sections he considered negligible—and a sultan's titles would, in his view, have carried less weight than Elizabeth's—or we must assume that the Ottoman court did not attach utmost urgency to the first dispatch to the English Queen. Murad informed Elizabeth that his 'stately Court and Countrey' were open for friends and foes. The Porte as an open destination and refuge for all is a recurring Ottoman trope. An all-embracing strategy was a key principle in the Empire's foreign policy that emphasised the approachability of the Ottoman court to all princes and nations. When the French King Henri III expressed his opposition to Ottoman negotiations with other European monarchs, Sultan Murad reminded him, 'let it not be hidden from your side that our felicitous Porte is always open, with the praise of Allah, exalted be He!, and whether it be for friendship or enmity, there is absolutely no refusing or repulsing to the coming and going of anybody'.[289] Such imperial rhetoric does not only intimate the readiness of the Empire for war or peace but also highlights the self-sufficiency of a great polity not affected by the amity or enmity of other nations.

Murad informs the English Queen that because 'your most excellent Regall Majesty doth abound with good will, humanitie, & all kind of loving affection towards us, so much the rather shall the same our Countrey be alwayes open to such of your subjects'.[290] He refers to the French, Venetians, Poles and the King of Germany [Holy Roman Emperor], who are allied with him as his confederates and neighbours. This shows that the Sultan's criteria of friendship did not depend on religious or ethnic affinity but rather on political and economic collaboration. Murad asks for reciprocal rights for his subjects to trade in Her Majesty's dominion.[291] Skilliter observes that Murad's clumsy request for similar trading rights in England is available only in a Latin copy that originated in England; this request was not included in the original

[289] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, p. 12.
[290] Hakluyt, 5:170.
[291] The change in the translation of the request will be examined later in the discussion of the effect of translators' practices on the accuracy of the translated material.

Turkish letter nor the first Latin version produced by the Sultan's translator.[292] Her findings should not come as a surprise because it is not likely that the Sultan would have asked for commercial concessions for his subjects in England. To start with, the capitulations granted by the Porte to the Europeans were non-reciprocal privileges. This fact is passed over by many scholars interested in the history of the Ottoman Empire. Granting these trading licences was actually an act of Ottoman generosity to reward the Empire's allies.[293] In addition, the Ottoman sovereign would not have been interested in obtaining any privileges for any of his subjects living in England because few, if any, travelled to England for trade or diplomacy at that time.

According to Skilliter, this was not the only attempt to modify the contents of Murad's letter. Having compared the Latin translation as found in Hakluyt with an abbreviated copy of the Turkish original (preserved in the Ottoman chancery), she finds that the Latin translation alone makes specific references to Harborne, Osborne and Staper. As she suggests, 'it is Muṣṭafā's translation, but subtly and skilfully changed, whether by Harborne in Istanbul or by Osborne or Staper in London, in order to make the Sultan's generous grant to the nation seem to be a monopoly for themselves'. Skilliter proposes that the confusion created by the alteration in the Latin translation made the Queen ask Murad to give an inclusive grant to all English merchants, which he had already done in his first letter.[294]

However, Skilliter's assumption that the first trading privilege already was a general grant to all her Majesty's subjects may need further scrutiny. Skilliter depended on inadequate evidence: her text of comparison in the Ottoman registry was an abbreviated version where details and names are not expected to be mentioned. More importantly, in the charter of capitulations, which was issued later in 1580, Murad refers to Elizabeth's previous letter: 'shee requested that we would graunt to all her subjects in generall, this our favour, which before wee had extended onely to a fewe of her people'.[295] The motivation that Skilliter suggested for the deliberate forgery is unconvincing. The three traders must have known that they could not have

[292] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, pp. 52-53.
[293] This aspect of the capitulation will be shortly dealt with in the discussion of the English capitulations.
[294] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, p. 52.
[295] Hakluyt, 5:184-85.

sole control over the trade with Turkey because the Queen would sooner or later ask for a general trading license for her nation similar to the ones already obtained by her Italian and French counterparts. Furthermore, granting readily such a privilege– especially to a commercial agent like Harborne– was not a typical practice in Ottoman diplomacy, which considered formal letters, accredited ambassadors and gifts as imperative to sealing any diplomatic exchange or treaty. Murad's very first grant to the three traders had been due to the Queen's initiative as the letter mentioned that Harborne came in the Queen's name and conveyed her greetings.[296]

Indeed, the Sultan would not give a general grant to the English nation without an official request sent from England. Murad's first letter seems to encourage the Queen to take this step when it cleverly intimates what it takes to issue the general capitulations. The shrewd references in the letter to the cooperative European neighbours who were welcomed and granted privileges show that the Sultan traded capitulations for cooperation. The Queen took the hint and wrote back on 25 October 1579 to thank the Sultan and to ask him to extend his 'singular courtesie' to her subjects in general.[297]

A distinctive feature in this document, and in other original Turkish letters, and one which obviously could not be reproduced in translated European copies was the *tughra* or the sultan's signature. The *tughra* occupies a space of ten to thirty centimetres and is executed in gold, red or blue colour.[298] It is customarily located at the top of the epistolary document and its size sometimes exceeds the space dedicated to the body of the letter itself. These pictographic features indicate that the signature was used not only as an authentication of the document but also as a visual mode of self-representation. As the seal is the emblem of the sultan; its location and magnitude are designed to represent the extent of the Sultan's grandeur and power. Europeans were fascinated by the splendour and sophistication of this calligraphic artwork; for example, Samuel Purchas dedicated a whole page in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* to a

[296] Ibid., 5:169.
[297] Ibid., 5:176.
[298] Jan Reychman and Ananiasz Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomatics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 142.

reproduction of the Grand Signior's seal.[299] Here the sultan's signature was depicted as a hugely complex calligraphic design followed underneath by three lines of unintelligible words, supposed to be Ottoman Turkish.[300] The illustration shows by no means an original sultanic seal, but it can be considered a good attempt by a European artist to replicate the Ottoman original.

Another observation about this text is its existence as a type of Eastern textuality in the English archive during the Elizabethan period. The presence of a corpus of sultanic letters in Elizabethan England challenges the Orientalist and postcolonial claim about the absence or marginalisation of Eastern voices in Western archives.[301] Murad's epistle provides textual evidence that attests to an Oriental voice which was articulated and documented in sixteenth-century Europe. Furthermore, the speaking subject in the above text was far from being a marginalised speaker; his royal status and material power endowed his discourse with subjectivity and authority.

In June 1580 the Porte issued a formal charter of capitulations[302] that offered a general grant to all English subjects to travel and conduct trade securely and independently in the Ottoman territories. The charter starts, as conventional, with the Sultan's full titles. Murad introduces himself as:

> The prince of these present times, the onely Monarch of this age, able to give scepters to the potentates of the whole world, the shadow of the divine mercy and grace, the distributer of many kingdoms, provinces, townes and cities, Prince, and most sacred Emperour of Mecca, that is to say, of Gods house, of Medina, of the most glorious and blessed Jerusalem, of the most fertile Egypt, Jemen and Jovan, Eden and Canaan, of Samos the peaceable, and of Hebes, of Jabza, and Pazra, of Zeruzub and Halepia, of Caramaria and Diabekirvan, of Dulkadiria, of Babylon, and of all the three Arabias, of the Euzians and Georgians, of Cyprus the rich, and of the kingdomes of Asia, of Ozakior, of the tracts of the white and blacke Sea, of Grecia and Mesopotamia, of Africa and

[299] Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes in Five Bookes* (London, 1625), 4: 344.
[300] See Appendix III.
[301] The idea of an inert, silent East originated with Edward Said, who claims that the Orient is not Europe's interlocutor but its silent Other. *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta, 2001), p. 202. Said elaborates this view in *Orientalism*.
[302] The original Latin in P. R. O., SP 103/72, f.3.

> Goleta, of Alger, and of Tripolis in the West, of the most choise and principall Europe, of Buda and Temeswar, and of the kingdomes beyond the Alpes, and many other such like, most mightie Murad Can, the sonne of the Emperour Zelim Can, which was the sonne of Zoleiman Can, which was the sonne of Zelim Can, which was the sonne of Paiizid Can, which was the sonne of Mehemed Can.[303]

The stately formula of the sultans' titles, dominions and ancestors denoted the most elevated register in the sultanic epistolary rhetoric. In the sixteenth century, the sultans' imperial might and affluence was well-known but such sultanic attributes needed a discursive formulation—such as the above grandiloquent intitulation—to articulate them. The formula constitutes a discourse of power and legitimisation. From the beginning, the text establishes an imbalance of power between the correspondents. The list of exotic place names conveys a clear message that the Queen with her sovereignty over a small island kingdom is not equal to the Sultan with his control over vast territories spanning three continents. A closer look at the list reveals that the names of the Sultan's territorial possessions are arranged according to their religious—and thus political—significance. Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem are mentioned first, which indicates their value: Murad's rule over the holy lands of Muslims, Christians and Jews enhanced his claim of universal sovereignty and his legitimacy as a guardian over a religiously diverse population. Next are mentioned the Ottoman territories in the Muslim world, Asia and Africa, while the European possessions are at the bottom of Murad's inventory. The discursive location of the European territories intimates that in comparison with the previously mentioned lands they were considered less significant in the Sultan's estimation.

The capitulations were accompanied by a letter[304] of which no Latin or English versions survive. The original Ottoman text states that the privileges were granted in return for 'offering of obedience and sincerity'.[305] In the letter's problematic conclusion, the Sultan explains what he expects from the Queen: 'And you, for your

[303] Hakluyt, 5:183-84.
[304] Skilliter discovered the abbreviated text of this document in the Ottoman chancery records.
[305] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, p. 115, Skilliter's translation.

part, shall be steadfast in submission and obedience to our door of felicity, and never cease from continually submitting and imparting the items of news which have occurred in those parts and of which you have been informed'.[306] A closer look at the terms of the capitulations may give a rationale for the Sultan's arrogant tone. As mentioned above, the Ottoman capitulations were not a mutual agreement between two countries but a unilateral favour bestowed by the sultans.[307] Hence the Ottoman Porte had the right to rescind or renew them, as it did on the occasions of dethronement, death or accession of sultans. This aspect of Ottoman policy is often overlooked by Eurocentric literature.[308] The Ottomans considered the capitulations as generous gifts for their friends and collaborators. This explains why the twenty-two articles in the English capitulations were primarily concessions bestowed on her Majesty's subjects. Nearly all of them granted liberties, autonomy and exemptions to the English. The patent guaranteed assistance by the Sultan's subjects to English ships in case of shipwreck or plunder. It allowed England to have its own consuls at Ottoman ports; they were authorised to use their own code of conduct to solve disputes between English traders. One article insisted on personal responsibility before the law and prohibited the collective punishment of other English fellow citizens. Furthermore the English were not obliged to pay a poll tax except the customs duty.[309] At the same time no demands or conditions were exacted on the English since the capitulations did not include articles that would have given the same rights to Ottoman subjects in England.

In the world of politics the conferring party certainly expects a return; for the early modern Ottoman polity the return was compliance and alliance. The Sultan did not

---

[306] Ibid., p. 116.

[307] See Halil Inalcik, 'Imtiyāzāt', in B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 3:1179-89; Ahmed Akgündüz and Said Öztürk, *Ottoman History: Misperceptions and Truths*, trans. Ismail Ercan (Istanbul: IUR Press, 2011), p. 368; and Daniel Goffman, 'Negotiating with the Renaissance State: The Ottoman Empire and the New Diplomacy', in Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds.), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 61-74.

[308] English secondary sources still consider the capitulations as a form of treaty between England and the Ottomans; to take a recent publication as example, see Emily Kugler, *Sway of the Ottoman Empire on English Identity in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 22.

[309] English traders benefited from the low taxation in the Ottoman lands in comparison with the high duties they paid in Venice. Mortimer Epstein, *The English Levant Company: Its Foundation and its History to 1640* (New York: Franklin, 1968), p. 26. Their benefit increased when Harborne was successful in reducing the customs duties paid by English merchants to three percent at a time when other European traders were paying five percent.

conceal this fact because he referred to previous capitulations granted to other European monarchs for their cooperation. In the introduction to the articles of the English capitulatory privileges, Murad made clear that he entered into a league with the English Queen similar to the ones already established with other European kings and princes who showed 'their devotion, and obedience or services towards our stately Porch (as namely the French king, the Venetians, the King of Polonia and others)'.[310] Consequently, Murad considered Elizabeth's obedience and collaboration as a return for his generous capitulations. Suraiya Faroqhi notes, in the sultans' correspondence 'foreign rulers were treated for the most part as obedient vassals if relations were reasonably good, and as enemies about to be chastised if they were not'.[311] Murad clearly considered Elizabeth as his subordinate and anticipated her role as an obedient informant.

The English sovereign was aware that the capitulations were favours from the Porte that would benefit her subjects. Indeed, the English gained from these trading concessions more than the Ottomans did. For many decades to come England continued to reap commercial profits from her capitulations. From its inception, the Levant Company was a successful enterprise with an annual turnover of up to 300 per cent.[312] The rise in profit meant that higher customs duties poured into the government's coffers. On the other hand, apart from being supplied with English metal, the Ottomans had limited economic advantage from this deal. Gerald MacLean rightly observes that, 'however significant the Levant trade may have been in the commercial development of seventeenth-century England, it [...] was a minor matter in the economic history of the Ottoman Empire at the time'.[313] Hence, it can be concluded that the symbolic and political significance of this league was more important to the Porte; for the Ottomans, these trading privileges were utilised to create allies within Europe and to keep it politically fragmented.

Critics have already observed that in the capitulations Hakluyt translated the word 'Muzulmanicæ' (in article 11) and 'Muzulmanicam' (in 18) with the phrases 'our holy

---

[310] Hakluyt, 5:185.
[311] Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World around It* (London: Tauris, 2004), p. 7.
[312] Alfred C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Cass, 1964), p. 17.
[313] Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 117.

faith and religion' and 'the holy religion' respectively. In Matthew Dimmock's view, Hakluyt's substitution of these terms indicates a pervasive uncertainty concerning his readers' attitude towards Islam,[314] while Jonathan Burton suggests that the translator tried to obscure 'what could be a controversial marker of religious difference'.[315] It can also be added that using lucid references to Islam would make the English reader painfully aware of the reality of England's league and cooperation with 'infidels'. Hakluyt's interference in the translation of the document might not have been the first. The original Ottoman very likely underwent adaptation during the conversion into Latin, especially if the work was conducted by Murad's translator Mustafa.[316] Paul Wittek points out Mustafa's tendency to soften the language used in original Turkish documents. Thus, Mustafa made 'cosmetic' changes when he translated an imperial command concerning a deceased English merchant whose possessions were confiscated by the French consul in Alexandria: the Sultan's translator improves the simple 'Queen' to 'the Queenes most excellent Majestie'. Mustafa followed, in Wittek's words, 'a tendency common to almost all translators of that time, anxious to dress up the too unceremonious language used by the Porte when referring to Christian princes'.[317]

Hakluyt's and Mustafa's deliberate alterations of the original wording cast a spotlight on translators' impact on diplomatic documents and their outcome. In his study of approaches adopted by Renaissance translators, Peter Burke observes 'a certain free style of translation as especially characteristic of the culture of the Renaissance'.[318] Burke notes the translators' freedom to abridge or supplement the

[314] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 89.
[315] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), p. 68.
[316]About the background and practices of the Ottoman court's translators see Tijana Krstić, 'Of Translation and Empire: Sixteenth-Century Ottoman Imperial Interpreters as Renaissance Go-Betweens', in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London: Routledge, 2012), 130-142, and Pál Ács, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds.), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2000), 307-16.
[317] Paul Wittek, 'The Turkish Documents in Hakluyt's *Voyages*', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 19 (1944), 121–39, at pp. 133-34.
[318] Peter Burke, 'The Renaissance Translator as Go-Between', in Andreas Höfele and Werner von Koppenfels (eds.), *Renaissance Go-Betweens: Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 17-31, at p. 31.

original text; they did so consciously to make texts more intelligible in a different cultural environment.

To return to the serious intervention in the Latin version of Murad's first letter, the Sultan's request to have equal commercial rights for his subjects in England which was not mentioned in the Turkish original, two explanations might be suggsted for this distortion. The modification of the wording could be unintended mistranslation; this can be inferred from Skilliter's explanation of how the original words were translated: the Sultan's clumsy request was caused by 'changing 'your' into 'our' once and 'our' into 'your' twice'.[319] This confusion in translating the pronouns might be attributed to the translator's lack of professional competence or of concentration. Conversely, it could also be interpreted as a deliberate intervention. Andre Lefevere reminds us that translators modify original versions 'usually to make them fit in with the dominant, or with one of the dominant ideological and poetological currents of their time'.[320] During the Elizabethan period there was a prevalent cultural attitude that demonised the Turks, so the deliberate addition to the Latin translation could have been made on purpose to depict interaction with the Ottomans as a mere exchange of material advantages, not an alliance with the infidels offered for a trading licence. However, outside pressure does not seem to have been the only factor that might have influenced translators' choices. For example, Mustafa seemed to have had a more personal motive for rendering the addresses to the English Queen more majestic. Mustafa communicated directly with the Queen and sent her two letters.[321] In these letters he wrote about his role in the negotiations concerning English commercial interests.[322] He seems to have benefited from his collaboration with Harborne. Mustafa's extra services to the English ambassador were normal since the early English embassies to the Porte utilised translators as message-bearers, negotiators, advisors and intelligence gatherers.[323]

---

[319] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, p. 52.
[320] Andre Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 8. On the same topic see also Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 1995).
[321] One of Mustafa's letters is in Latin and is included in Hakluyt 5:258-59; the second in *CSP*. Jan-Jun 1583, p. 718, no. 765.
[322] Wittek, p. 128.
[323] G. R. Berridge, 'Dragomans and Oriental Secretaries in the British Embassy in Istanbul', in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 151-66, at p. 151.

There is no question that the letters were to a certain extent modified during the translation process but large-scale changes as studied and documented by Burke[324] did probably not affect state documents circulated between two monarchs. It seems that the common kind of interference in translating such documents, like Hakluyt's avoidance of the words 'Islam' and 'Muslim' and Mustafa's ornamental touches, can be defined as cosmetic (following Wittek); it does not significantly distort or alter the original meaning.

It is worth noting that there are distinctive characteristics in the sultanic letters that resist such translators' interferences. The English versions still exhibit some stylistic features of the original documents. Ottoman formulas, such as the enumeration of unfamiliar place names or ostentatious qualifiers whenever the sultan's throne, presence or Porte is mentioned, are still discernible in the translated copies. For their unique tone, these epistolary documents can easily be distinguished from other English texts produced in the same period. The presence of these stylistic features made it possible for European counterfeiters to imitate the sultanic mode. Another enduring linguistic element that translation cannot efface is the resonant voice of the first-person speaker. The voice of a translator takes precedence when the text is written from the third-person perspective but not when it emanates from the first person. Furthermore, this first-person speaker is not any subject but one of the Ottoman sultans, not known for their modesty when it came to expressing their imperial self-image; indeed, the translator's presence is silenced by the Sultan's overbearing voice.

The English did not enjoy their first grant of capitulations for long because these were cancelled within a year of their issue due to an act of piracy committed by an English ship called *Bark Roe*. The Queen sent a letter on 26 June 1581, apologising for this crime perpetrated by some of her subjects against two ships belonging to Greek merchants who were subjects of the Ottoman Empire. She explained that the culprits had obtained a warrant from Marseilles, which might have been genuine or forged. Her letter thus suggested that the pirates had been operating under a French licence, not under the privilege the Porte had recently issued to her own subjects. The Queen

[324] See also Burke's other article 'Cultures of Translation in Early Modern Europe', in Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (eds.), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 7-38.

wished that their ‘amitie might be continued, as if this unfortunate hap had never chanced’.[325] But, contrary to the Queen’s hopes, the capitulations were revoked because the charter of the privileges stated that the English could enjoy their capitulary rights as long as the Queen and her subjects respected the terms of the deal. The cancellation of the English capitulations was also facilitated by the fact that Harborne was after all a commercial agent. Despite the fact that he had conveyed Elizabeth’s greetings and letters to the Sultan, Harborne was still not appointed as an official representative of the Queen. Therefore, the Anglo-Ottoman contact was suspended until Harborne reappeared at the Porte as a formal ambassador complete with credentials and gifts to the Sultan and other Ottoman dignitaries. A royal patent issued on 20 November 1582 declared Harborne the Queen’s ‘Orator, Messenger, Deputie and Agent’ in Istanbul; he was granted the authority to take charge, in the Queen’s name, of her subjects’ affairs in the Ottoman Empire.[326]

The Queen’s request for Ottoman aid against Spain was the topic of Murad’s correspondence in summer 1588.[327] In his letter Murad relates that he has been informed by the English ambassador about the war between England and Spain and the Spanish usurpation of the Portuguese throne from Don Antonio. He expresses his awareness of the Queen’s need of Ottoman naval assistance against the Spanish but he acquaints her with the fact that he has been occupied by his war with Persia for many years. Nevertheless, he promises that as soon as this war ends he would fulfil her request. He assures her that as far as she keeps the bonds of friendship she ‘shall find no more secure refuge or safer harbour of good will or love’.[328] Murad adds, ‘In the meane time we exhort you not to loose any opportunitie or time, but to be alwayes

---

[325] Hakluyt, 5:191.
[326] Ibid., 5:223.
[327] The letter is published in Richard Knolles’s *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603), p. 1007. The author does not give information about the history of the document or its translator but it is most likely that the English translation was made by Knolles himself. Skilliter states that the letter’s actual date is 10 August 1588, and that Knolles replicates the erroneous date 1589, included in the Latin copy of the letter, originally published in N. Reusner, *Epistolarum Turcicarum variorum et diversorum Authorum libri v (-xiv)* (1598-1600). ‘The Turkish Documents Relating to Edward Barton’s Embassy to the Porte (1588-1598)’, Ph.D. thesis (Manchester U, 1965), p. 6n.
[328] Knolles, p. 1007.

vigilant, and according to the conventions betwixt us, favourable unto our friends, and unto our enemies a foe'.[329]

English diplomats, especially before the Armada of 1588, were determined to secure the Sultan's military aid against Spain. Harborne did not let any chance go without attempting to persuade the Ottoman government to send a fleet against the Spanish King. In a memorandum addressed to Murad in 1587, Harborne pleads with the Sultan

> not [to] 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-worshipers, may not turn his utmost wrath against you if you disregard his command, which my mistress, only a weak woman, courageously struggles to fulfil. The whole world, with justice, will accuse you of the greatest ingratitude if you desert in her danger your most trusting confederate, who, in the confidence of the friendship and the promises of Your Highness, has placed her life and her kingdom in jeopardy that cannot be greater on this earth. For the Spaniard, since my mistress had declined [to grant] him peace, is determined to destroy her completely, relying on the maximum assistance of the pope and all idolatrous princes.[330]

The English diplomatic efforts to secure the Sultan's fleet for an attack on Spain continued after the completion of Harborne's ambassadorial mission in August 1588. Harborne's successor Edward Barton was determined to succeed where his predecessor had failed. On 30 November 1588, Barton addressed a note to Murad that combined flattery with impassioned solicitation. He entreated Murad not to miss this long desired and rare opportunity to send out no more than a hundred galleys to fight the Spanish. He lured the Sultan with a promise of unlimited loot and kingdoms to be gained from this expedition. Barton added,

---

[329] Ibid.

[330] Arthur L. Horniker, 'William Harborne and the Beginning of Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations', *The Journal of Modern History*, 14/3 (1942), 289-316, at pp. 309-10.

> May your clemency deign then to inform me your servant clearly what may be your intention that I also may be able to inform my Queen, on whose behalf I take upon me and promise most absolutely that if she has knowledge of even a small force in aid coming from your direction, on no pretence and on no conditions will she make terms with the Spaniard.[331]

Barton had worked for many years under Harborne's guidance, thus the similarity between their appeals in content and style is conspicuous. The ambassadors reiterate the same themes in their solicitations to Murad. They stress the status of the Queen as a defenceless female sovereign and a faithful ally to the Sultan. The religious accord between Islam and Protestantism is highlighted as well. It is noticeable that in their efforts to forge an affinity between the two religions, the ambassadors insist on labelling the Catholics, especially Spain, as idol-worshipers and idolatrous. In this diplomatic discourse the anti-idolatry doctrine is conjured up to establish a common ground with Islam and to alienate the Catholics. The Queen too appeals to this shared religious element: in her first letter to Murad she introduces herself as 'the most invincible and most mighty defender of the Christian faith against all kinde of idolatories, of all that live among the Christians, and falsly professe the Name of Christ'.[332] Consequently, England's Christian neighbours are represented as the religious Other and the Muslim Turks are reconfigured as religiously familiar. Here the discourse of Otherness does not seem to depend on religious difference but it is dictated by immediate pragmatic goals; indeed, in this diplomatic rhetoric religion itself is reinterpreted and manipulated to serve diplomatic and material advantages. English diplomats needed to depict Islam as familiar and Catholicism as alien to induce the Muslims to support England against its Catholic enemy. This rhetoric shows the multiplicity in the modes of parlance the English employed towards both their Christian neighbours and Muslims. By the same token, it demonstrates that the dualistic framework of Christianity versus Islam is inadequate to account for this complex network of affiliating and alienating attitudes during the early modern period.

---

[331] Edwin Pears, 'The Spanish Armada and the Ottoman Porte', *The English Historical Review*, 8/31 (1893), 439-66, at pp. 459-60.
[332] Hakluyt, p. 5: 175.

The Fugger newsletters reproduce a letter sent from Istanbul to Queen Elizabeth on 16 January 1591.[333] The letter is a haughty reply to Elizabeth's previous correspondence, exhibiting the customary pride the Sultan takes in his Porte, which is described as 'happy', 'brilliant', 'blessed', 'exalted' and 'mighty'. Murad expresses his knowledge of the current events which were mentioned in the petition of her ambassador. Barton had informed the Sultan about the trouble between Don Antonio, the pretender to the Portuguese throne, and the King of Fez, Ahmed al-Mansour (1549-1603).[334] The Queen's letter had asked the Sultan to intervene to free Don Antonio's son, who was being held hostage by al-Mansour. Barton had also informed the Sultan about the mistreatment the English merchants received at the hands of the King of Fez, who allegedly followed this course of action to please the Spanish ruler. Murad promises to send 'strongly worded dispatches' to the King of Fez to send Don Antonio's son to the Porte and to release the English merchants and allow them to pursue their business without disturbance. Murad insists on the Queen's keeping her friendship with the French monarch 'to encourage each other with firm and steadfast mind'.[335] He urges Elizabeth to prepare her army and ships to join him in the war against Spain and promises that 'by the aid of the Almighty and most Merciful Creator, we will send three hundred galleys and some galleons'.[336]

Murad's letter concluded, 'We wish you health and that in future you may be able to furnish Us with useful tidings'.[337] This request is not new as the Sultan had made the same demand in a letter sent ten years earlier. The repetition of the request implies that the Porte expected and continued to receive such a service from England. As the Venetian ambassador in Istanbul reported, 'the English ambassador who supplies all the news of Christendom [...] has announced the death of the Duke of Ferrara, the

---

[333] The Turkish original in P. R. O., SP 102/61, f.37, and its Latin translation in SP 102/61, f.41. The English version is translated from Latin by the newsletters' translator, L. S. R. Byrne.

[334] Don Antonio appealed to the King of Fez to help him to launch a war against Spain and to obtain the Portuguese throne. The King of Fez promised to support him on condition that Don Antonio would leave his son as a hostage in Fez; the latter agreed to the condition but the Moroccan King neither helped Don Antonio in his war nor released his son.

[335] *The Fugger News-Letters*, ed. Victor von Klarwill, trans. L. S. R. Byrne (London: John Lane, 1926), 2:217.

[336] Ibid., 2:216.

[337] Ibid., 2:217.

succession of Don Cesare, and the Papal claims'.[338] The casualness in the reference to Barton's role of relaying the latest news of European affairs indicates that his activity was common knowledge amongst the European ambassadorial community. A comment from a source closer to Barton, the Elizabethan traveller Fynes Moryson, who was Barton's lodger during his visit to Istanbul, confirms further Barton's intelligence activity. Moryson remarks that 'it may appeare that they did him [Barton] wrong, who did attribute his greatnes in the Turkish Court, to his betraying the Counsells of Popish Christian Princes'.[339]

In spite of English diplomatic efforts, the promised Ottoman aid failed to materialise. That the Ottoman government was unwilling and unready to embark upon war with Spain is understandable. The Ottoman Empire was still recovering from an exhausting twelve-year war with the Safavids in Persia. The Turks did not share borders with Spain and the Spanish King did not present a direct danger to Ottoman territories. Besides, the Spanish had signed an armistice with the Porte in 1578, which was renewed in 1581, 1584 and 1587.[340] Consequently, the Ottomans had no immediate advantage in attacking Spain. Furthermore, the Spanish offered bribes to the Ottoman officials to deflect any decision taken by the Ottoman court against the Spanish King, whose 'newly acquired American wealth could pay more to the ministers than other powers could or would'.[341] Nonetheless, a report from the Fugger agent sheds light on what could have been one of the chief obstacles preventing the desired Ottoman expedition:

> The Grand Vizier has, moreover, indicated to certain Turks of good position that this English envoy [Barton] is still a young man and is being treated as his youth deserves. Neither the envoy nor his Queen will ever see the Sultan granting the Queen of England a fleet at his

[338] *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy (1592-1603)*, ed. Horatio F. Brown, 38 vols. (London, 1897), 9:304.
[339] Fynes Moryson, *Shakespeare's Europe; Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, Being a Survey of the Condition of Europe at the End of the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Hughes (London: Longman 1903), p. 30.
[340] Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (London: Collins, 1972), 2:1165.
[341] Quoted in Pears, p. 444.

> own cost unless with all due formality she puts down cash for expenses beforehand and gives ample security for all loss. Then perhaps something might be done.[342]

The English Queen was clearly aware of the fact that she had to pay for the military expedition. In a dispatch sent to the Senate on 21 July 1590 the Venetian ambassador at the Porte relates that 'the Queen has hitherto always offered to pay the fleet, and the Pasha now replies that if she will lend the money she shall have the ships'.[343] Although neglected by most commentators on Anglo-Ottoman relations, the funding of the Turkish armada seems one of the main reasons that hindered the Ottoman military action against the Spanish King. The Ottomans would not pay for a fleet to fight another country's enemy and it was not likely that Elizabeth, who refused to increase her ambassador's salary,[344] would think of supporting the Sultan's navy financially to fight on her behalf. The above Fugger report provides another type of valuable information about how the Ottoman officials regarded the English envoy. The Grand Vizier's tone intimates his patronising attitude towards an immature diplomat who believed that the Ottomans could be tricked and led into unnecessary expensive adventures on behalf of the English Queen.

The Sultan wrote again to Elizabeth on 30 January 1592.[345] Murad acknowledged the arrival of Elizabeth's letter to his 'happy' and 'blessed' Porte. This document referred to the Queen's previous correspondence, in which she had alleged her continued war effort against Spain out of her affection and loyalty to the Sultan: the war that cost the lives of many of her subjects and depleted her own funds was 'solely' waged for the sake of the Ottoman Porte. Moreover, the Queen informed Murad that, with the help of Don Antonio, she subdued many Spanish lands. It is evident that the

---

[342] *The Fugger News-Letters*, 2:209.
[343] *CSPV*, 8:497.
[344] There were frequent complaints from the English ambassadors in Istanbul concerning their meagre salary. In his effort to induce the Queen to increase his income, Barton wrote to Burghley, the Lord Treasurer, that he was paid only 3000 ducats for the hard work he was doing, 'Whereas other Ambassadors here resident have most honourable allowances, viz. the French 8,000 or 10,000 crowns, and this particular Ambassador free grant of two per cent on all goods brought into the country for the betterance of his provision, the Baylo of Venice 8,000 ducats of gold.' *CSPV*, 9:xxxi-xxxii.
[345] Turkish original in P. R. O. SP 102/4, f.29; its Latin translation in P. R. O., SP 102/61, f. 45. English translation in *CSPV*, 9:8.

Queen and her ambassador were promoting the image of England's regional conflict with the Spanish King as a war on behalf of the Ottoman Empire. These desperate diplomatic tactics revealed how far the Queen and her advisors were prepared to go to convince Murad to use his fleet against Spain. Murad informed Elizabeth that he had written to the Moroccan ruler, asking him to send the Portuguese hostage to Istanbul and to set the English merchants free. He related that he launched a war against the Polish King because the latter violated the peace treaty with the Empire so 'His country was put to fire and sword, and ruined. He sent Ambassadors to sue for peace, which was refused'.[346] However, to fulfil the Queen's wish, Murad agreed to negotiate a peace treaty with Poland. The letter affirmed that, although the export of corn to non-Ottoman territories was forbidden, he agreed to English ships to export corn from North Africa to France. Consequently, he sent his imperial command to the rulers of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli to take the necessary steps.

On one level, the Queen's requests were granted for the sake of her friendship with the Sultan. However, this does not obscure the fact that such decisions were taken essentially to serve Ottoman interests rather than to satisfy the English Queen. The permission for the export of corn was deemed beneficial by the Ottoman government to support France against their mutual enemy Spain. Besides, the Sultan's acceptance of the English intervention for peace negotiation with the Polish King was due to the Sultan's unwillingness to be involved in another war immediately after the end of his war with Persia.[347] It seems that for the purposes of Ottoman diplomacy there was no reason not to exploit these Ottoman choices to make their friends conscious of the generous benefits they gained from their association with the Porte. At the same time such imperial favours were intended to consolidate the position of the Empire's friends and to give them a prestigious standing with respect to the Empire's foes. Indeed, the successful English mediation for a peace treaty between the Sultan and Poland was a diplomatic and political achievement that promoted Elizabeth's status as a Christian monarch who had an impact on the European political stage.

[346] *CSPV*, 9:8.
[347] In evaluating Barton's role in the peace-making, Skilliter concludes that 'there is no doubt that Barton acted as mediator in the crisis, nor that it was his suggestion which was accepted, but it seems equally true that the Turks did not wish to begin a new war so soon and that they would probably have adopted any reasonable solution suggested to them'. Skilliter, 'Turkish Documents', p. 27.

Murad's letter conveys that, as long as she observes the peace, the Queen will receive more proofs of his affection; it concludes with 'Inform us of all your designs, thoughts, desires; for your friends shall be treated by us as you may wish. Your ships and merchandise shall never be molested'.[348] Undoubtedly, such amicable language, which repetitively surfaces in the Sultan's letters, portrays the correspondence as an example of a friendly cross-cultural contact. Some Renaissance scholars interested in the East/West interaction have recently proposed an interactive multicultural framework to explain the encounters between early modern England and the Islamic East.[349] They highlight the extent of the communication between the people living in these two regions. However, a closer look at the material under discussion alerts us to be careful not to overstretch the notion of an extensive early modern cross-cultural interaction. The exchange of correspondence between the sultans and Elizabeth and the presence of the English embassy in Istanbul were examples of intercultural communication, but they were at the same time limited to diplomatic and trading circles and they did not extend to the English nation in general; therefore, it is an exaggeration to classify them as a substantial intercultural event. Indeed, because the interaction was exclusive it did not result in a real change in conventional English attitudes towards Turkish or Muslim people. This is supported by the fact that at the same time when the friendly dispatches from Istanbul were published in England, popular sermons and prayers in English churches demonised the Turks.

Moreover, even within the exclusive groups that mediated the exchange, there was a lack of genuine cultural understanding and tolerance. Behind the veneer of friendliness and cooperation there were still misconceptions and prejudice. A letter from Barton to Francis Walsingham, Elizabeth's secretary of state, will suffice as an example. In this London-bound dispatch Barton asked Walsingham to pardon his boldness and rudeness because he was 'never much acquainted with the inditinge of the former letters sent to your honnor butt onelie exercised in the brabling matters of this heathenishe barbarous courte'.[350] Barton could have played the role of a cultural

---

[348] *CSPV*, 9:8.
[349] See the Introduction, pp. 15-18.
[350] *Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth*, ed. Richard Bruce Wernham (London: HMSO, 1936), 22: 175.

mediator who understood and tolerated the cultural characteristics of his hosts, but neither his long cohabitation with the Turks nor his acquaintance with the positive aspects of Ottoman culture obliterated his deeply-rooted belief in Turkish immorality and barbarity.

In his letter of August 1592[351] Murad reiterates the Ottoman maxim that his Porte is 'the refuge and asylum of the great Sultans and the sanctuary and haven of the Khāqāns of the age'.[352] He acknowledges the manifold manifestations of affection, sincerity and devotion the Queen expressed in her previous letter. In her former correspondence, Elizabeth had ascribed the delay of the new English ambassador's arrival in Istanbul to Spanish hostile activity in intercepting and capturing English ships at Gibraltar, but she promised to send a capable and respected ambassador soon. She had also complained about the robbery that English traders in Aya Mavra[353] were subjected to. Murad states that 'whatever was written and expressed on those subjects has been presented and reported in full at the foot of our exalted throne, and has been understood and comprised by our noble, world-comprehending, imperial intelligence'.[354] In Ottoman epistolary rhetoric the position of other individuals, whether common people or royalty, is firmly at the bottom of the Sultan's throne. It seems no one is eligible to be positioned higher than the foot of his imperial seat. This hyperbolic rhetoric is deployed to widen the gap between the solitary Sultan on his high throne—in command of nothing less than the whole world—and the others who are supposed to be below his imperial presence.

The letter states that, in a response to her request, the Sultan has issued an imperial command to restore the goods pillaged at Aya Mavra to their rightful owners and promises that English traders and ships will be defended and protected. The Sultan expresses his favourable attitude towards the Queen when he discloses that 'our consideration and respect is very much greater towards you than towards the great rulers and illustrious princes who seek refuge at our exalted Court'.[355] He reminds her

[351] Turkish original in P. R. O. , SP 102/4, f.35 and its Latin translation in SP 102/61, 49. The letter is translated into English by Skilliter and included in 'The Turkish Documents', pp. 198-201.
[352] Skilliter, 'The Turkish Documents', p. 198.
[353] Aya Mavra is an island in the Ionian sea.
[354] Skilliter, 'The Turkish Documents', pp. 199-200.
[355] Ibid., p. 200.

of the abundant and unfailing favours bestowed on her and highlights her enviable position in comparison with other European monarchs: 'with your ships and merchants always coming to and fro to our well-protected provinces and trading, let there be no doubt about your being the envied of your peers!'[356] The exchange that takes place in this communication affirms the above argument regarding the Porte's policy of exchanging material benefits for friendship and cooperation. The Sultan reminds the Queen of his favours but he does not demand a material return; instead he asks for the continuation of the friendship and the appointment of a new ambassador.

The Ottomans were keen to have accredited European ambassadors residing in Istanbul. The Fugger agent reported in April 1587 that the Spanish diplomatic delegation, which was negotiating peace with the Sultan, was expelled from the Porte and told that 'if its master the King of Spain desired to seek and obtain the friendship of the Sultan, he should send, like other Christian sovereigns, a regular and respectable embassy to the Porte'.[357] Not just the mere presence of the envoy but also his social background assumed a considerable importance for the Porte. This explains why Murad was prejudiced against the Spanish envoy Ferrari, who had a common status; and he showed the same attitude towards Harborne when the latter first arrived at the Porte.[358] To a certain extent, the Ottomans even encouraged the ambassadors to reside in Istanbul by providing them with regular payments.[359] The allowances and privileges granted to the ambassadors reflect the standards used to assess the diplomatic value and the degree of friendship or 'collaboration' their countries enjoyed with the sultans. For example, the ambassadors of the Holy Roman Empire and France were allowed one thousand aspers per day while the Spanish agent had no allowance because he did not offer gifts to the sultan; additionally, he was not admitted to the presence of the Grand Signior.[360] Depriving foreign ambassadors, who had fewer credentials or lower status, from seeing the sultan seems to have been a deliberate insult aimed at the envoy

---

[356] Ibid., p. 201.
[357] *The Fugger News-Letters*, 2:131-32.
[358] Stanley Mayes, *An Organ for the Sultan* (London: Putnam, 1956), p. 51.
[359] See Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Routledge, 2011), p. 62.
[360] Hakluyt, 6:68-69.

and the state he represented. At the same time it implies that being allowed into the imperial presence was a special honour not to be enjoyed by just any foreign diplomat.

The interest in having European ambassadors in Istanbul fulfilled the Porte's need for the ceremonial manifestation of power: the ambassador's kissing of the sultans' hand and offering of gifts, with all the ceremonies that accompanied them, were rituals that exhibited the sultans' splendour and power. Having envoys from European states also confirmed the imperial motto that the Porte was the indispensable refuge of all nations. At the same time, the Ottoman Empire followed a policy of unilateral diplomacy that did not endorse having resident Turkish embassies in the European courts.[361] The sultans did not consider the European potentates as their equals; until the eighteenth century, they did not reciprocate the European diplomatic presence.[362] Hence, despite the fact that England had had an established ambassadorial delegation in Istanbul since 1582, the first resident Turkish ambassador to London, Yusuf Agah Efendi, was appointed only in 1793.[363]

As we have seen above, most of Murad's letters to Elizabeth were replies to the English Queen, who had previously asked for economic, political or military favours or assistance. The only letters Murad wrote to England containing requests are dated 4 March and 1 September 1580, and they were dispatched to recommend some of his subjects who were sent to England to make purchase for the Imperial household.[364] It is illuminating that the Porte approached Elizabeth on two occasions only and for a minor matter such as buying household items. The vast disparity between the English requests and the Ottoman demands is an index to the significant role the Ottomans played in the European political and economic affairs; at the same time it shows that England was of limited benefit to the Porte.

---

[361] Before the 1790s the Ottoman Empire had no resident ambassadors in the European courts. In a letter dated 8 August 1607, the merchants of the Levant Company asked Robert Cecil, principal secretary to James I, to offer a good reception for a visiting envoy from Istanbul because 'he is the first that ever came hither from the Grand Signor'. *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury...preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, ed. M. S. Giuseppi (London: HMSO, 1965), 19:210.

[362] A. Nuri Yurdusev, 'The Ottoman Attitude towards Diplomacy', in Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), p. 27.

[363] G. R. Berridge, *British Diplomacy in Turkey, 1583 to the Present: A Study in the Evolution of Resident Embassy* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 287.

[364] Skilliter, *William Harborne*, pp. 77, 123-26.

Elizabeth was also in contact with Safiye, Murad's favourite concubine and the mother of Mehmed III. The two women exchanged letters on two occasions. The Queen sent letters to ask Safiye to intervene with Sultans Murad and Mehmed on behalf of the interests of English subjects. It is regrettable that there are no extant copies of Elizabeth's letters as the availability of such documents would surely shed more light on the nature of the interaction and the Queen's exact pleas. However, the letters sent by the Sultana still survive. The first letter from Safiye was sent on 4 December 1593.[365] Its opening passage contains an assertive account of Islamic beliefs. A long introductory invocation of God emphasises the Muslim conception of God's singularity: God is 'the Unique One, the Worshiped without peer'; He has no equal and nothing is comparable to Him.[366] The elaborate invocative preamble is followed by a long passage devoted to the praise of the Prophet Mohammed that puts emphasis on his superiority over other prophets and human beings in general.

This religiously charged introduction gives way to a long glorifying description of her son, Prince Mehmed, and Sultan Murad. She introduces herself as the mother of Mehmed, who is the heir of the sultans and Caliphs and worthy of the imperial throne. Murad is styled as 'the monarch of the lands, the exalter of the empire, the Khān of the seven climes at this auspicious time and the fortunate lord of the four corners (of the earth)'.[367] This illustrative preface dedicated to the Sultan is accompanied, as the traditional imperial rhetoric dictates, by a list of the names of Murad's dominions.

This epistolary prose constitutes a subjective rhetoric that articulates the Sultana's personal and cultural perspectives. A significant body of literature was written in Europe about Islam during the Middle Ages and early modern times but this material conveyed a Christian understanding of the Islamic faith; in contrast, Safiye's account represents a rare example of a direct unmediated expression of the Muslim point of view. The text negotiates the Christian concept of God and offers an alternative form of monotheism. It also upholds the holy and prophetic qualities of Mohammed, who

[365] The Turkish original is preserved in B. L. Cotton MS. Nero B. VIII, ff. 61-62, and its Italian translation in P.R.O., SP 97/2, ff. 295-96. The English translation is Skilliter's, included in her article 'Three Letters from the Ottoman "Sultana" Sāfiye to Queen Elizabeth I', in S. M. Stern (ed.), *Documents from Islamic Chanceries* (Columbia, S.C.: U of South Carolina P, 1970), 119-157, at pp. 130-33.
[366] Skilliter, 'Three Letters', p. 130.
[367] Ibid., p. 131.

was perceived in Christian Europe as an imposter. Likewise, the letter provides a self-confident narrative of who the sender was. Safiye's social and political status as a mother to the future Sultan and a partner to the current Sultan infuses her writing with self-assurance and authority.

Safiye concludes with the acknowledgement of the arrival of Elizabeth's presents and promises to solicit the Sultan on behalf of Elizabeth's subjects. The Sultana wrote again to the Queen during the reign of her son Sultan Mehmed III (1595-1603). The letter[368] is undated but it was probably sent at the end of 1599 as a reply to Elizabeth's letter and gift, which had been received in September 1599. Elizabeth sent Safiye a coach as a present; in return, the Sultana offered diverse items including a robe, a girdle, a sleeve, two gold-embroidered handkerchiefs, three towels, and a crown studded with pearls and rubies.[369] The Sultana informs Elizabeth that she admonished her son because he did not abide by his treaty with the English and promises to intervene with him concerning the English capitulations. In her reading of the correspondence between the Queen and Safiye, Leslie Peirce comments that 'these queens appear conscious of—and perhaps deliberately cultivated their—special communication as women'.[370] Peirce tries to envisage a cordial feminine bond behind these epistolary exchanges but in fact the communication between the two women was not a candid personal correspondence. The contact was spurred by commercial and political interests: it was initiated because Elizabeth was in need of some services from the Sultana and the latter was encouraged by the gifts she received from England. Neither was it 'cultivated' nor continuous because—due to its materialist motivations—it was sporadic in nature, with a six-year interval between the two letters.

It is noticeable that on both occasions it was Elizabeth who initiated the communication by sending letters and presents, and in both dispatches it was the Queen who asked for favours from the Sultana. The appeal to Safiye reveals the extent

[368] There are two versions of this letter but the differences between them are not substantial. One of them is shorter and less ornate in style than the other. The longer version is the one covered in this discussion. It is in P. R. O., SP 102/4, ff. 19, and its Italian translation in P. R. O., SP 102/61, ff. 74-75. This letter was translated by Skilliter, 'Three Letters', pp. 139-40.
[369] Skilliter, 'Three Letters', p. 139.
[370] Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993), p. 228.

of the harem's power—a revelation that must have subverted the sixteenth-century European representations of the inhabitants of the place. In contemporary accounts touching the private life of the sultans, the harem was depicted as a place of sexual gratification for the sultans. The women living in such a quarter were kept there for sexual and procreating purposes until the age of twenty-five, when they were released from the harem and married off to members of the political or military elite.[371] The letters of the Sultana challenged the existing English (and European) narrative. The speaking voice in the letters is not that of a powerless sex slave but a woman with great authority. It would not be lost on English readers that the Queen bypassed the Sultan himself to negotiate with the Sultana, and the latter's promise to act speaks volumes about the degree of political power she enjoyed in that era.

Murad III died on 16 January 1595 but nearly a year elapsed before the Queen sent a letter to congratulate the new Sultan, Mehmed III, on his accession to the throne. Barton and the members of the Levant Company had petitioned the Queen and her ministers for about a year to send the congratulatory letter and the expected accession present. The reason for the delay was the Queen's refusal to pay for the gift. H. G. Rosedale explains that Barton, to justify the delay and to gain more time, recommended that the Queen should send a letter to the Porte to complain that she had not received the customary official notification of Murad's death and the accession of his son.[372] Barton's advice was followed and Sultan Mehmed sent a formal letter in January 1596[373], on the first anniversary of his accession to the throne, to inform Elizabeth formally of the death of Sultan Murad and the commencement of his own reign. He concludes with a request to send a worthy and accredited ambassador to renew the capitulations. Although the Queen was late in acknowledging the accession of the new Sultan with the conventional congratulatory letter and gift, the communication between London and the Porte went on and England kept its ambassador in Istanbul.

---

[371] See, for example, Antoine Geuffroy, *The Order of the Greate Turckes Courte* (London, 1542), *EEBO*, image, 24, and Hugh Goughe, *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno* (London, 1569), *EEBO*, images, 73-74.
[372] H. G. Rosedale, *Queen Elizabeth and the Levant Company* (London: Henry Frowde, 1904), p. 45.
[373] The Italian translation in P. R. O., SP. For., Turkey, vol. 3, f. 1. The letter is translated into English by H. G. Rosedale and included in his *Queen Elizabeth and the Levant Company*, pp. 60-61.

The delay caused by negotiation over the cost of the gift attracts attention not to its material value, which the Queen could afford but was unwilling to pay, but to its diplomatic and political significance. Ottoman diplomacy insisted on the receipt of gifts to seal any diplomatic deal with the Porte. The Ottomans, in fact, conceived the presents sent to the sultans as a form of tribute. A government document[374] entitled 'Matters to be considered for the honor of her Majestie and of the Realme' provides an illuminating glimpse of how the Queen's political advisors were aware of this fact. The text reads:

> Whether it be requisite to give any present to the Grand Signor in the name of her Majesty; sith he taketh all Presents of the Christian Princes to be as tributes: and for such are they registered in his Records: which being once begun, he looketh for the continuance thereof, as of duty; and the greater value that the Present is made, the greater duty and subjection he taketh of thereby.[375]

The Ottomans as well as the Europeans were therefore aware of the diplomatic and political significance of offering the gift as a tributary action. This explains why the Spanish refused to send presents to Istanbul, arguing that their agreements with the Porte were truces, not capitulations bestowed by the Grand Signior.[376] Hence, their policy was a tactical one, manipulated to avoid the embarrassing implications of the gift. The understanding of the gifts as a tributary duty towards the Porte can be further confirmed by the fact that there is no archival evidence showing that either Sultan Murad or Mehmed ever sent presents to Elizabeth. The Queen exchanged gifts with Safiye but she received nothing from the Sultans.

The second letter from Mehmed is included in Henry Ellis's antiquarian compilation *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History* (1846), in an English

---

[374] This paper, preserved among the Lansdowne Manuscripts, was written during Lord Burghley's administration. Reproduced in Henry Ellis, *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, the State Paper Office, and One or Two Other Collection, in Three Volumes* (London, 1824), 3: 83-84n.

[375] Ellis, 3: 83-84n.

[376] Fernand Braudel's coverage of the Turco-Spanish peace treaties documents how the Spanish insisted on not having ambassadors or sending gifts to the Porte. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2nd edn. (London: Collins, 1972), 2:1144-65.

version translated from an Italian copy.[377] Ellis does not elaborate on the history of the document's translation or its translator. Nevertheless, the accuracy in the rendition of the Quranic verses, which are usually difficult to translate faithfully, attests to the translator's competence. The dispatch was written on the last day of February 1596[378] to announce the success of Mehmed's military campaign in Hungary.[379] It was customary for the Ottoman sultans to send to local governors and foreign sovereigns *fethname* dispatches which served the purpose of announcing a military victory.

The Sultan deems it necessary that the Queen should be informed about his victory due to the 'great love and sincere friendship' she has for his blessed Porte.[380] In *fethname* texts, religious references are frequent, so in this letter there are numerous quotations from the Quran.[381] After salutations the Sultan starts with a Quranic verse that urges war for the sake of faith. As he explains, he has started this war because he desires to put this verse into action and fight for the sake of God. He cites a Quranic verse to describe the falling of Eger fortress: he heard an inner voice that recited a verse from the Quran—it said the way was open before him and God's favour was bestowed on him, and then the fortress fell by Divine grace. Another Quranic verse follows to describe the death of a massive number of people within a short time as the work of God.

The text states that the Muslim soldiers endured the difficulties and hardships of the war because of their belief that their efforts were considered meritorious and rewarded by God's mercy in the Hereafter. In this letter Mehmed's Christian foes are repeatedly called 'infidels'. It is with conceit and contentment that the Sultan relates the gruesome news of his taking of many forts and killing of thousands of 'infidels'. He disdainfully describes how six or seven eminent Christian monarchs, including the kings of Vienna

---

[377] The Turkish original in P. R. O., SP. 102/4, f.11. Italian version in B. L. Cotton. MS. Nero. B. xi. 225. English translation in Henry Ellis, *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, the State Paper Office, and One or Two Other Collections*, 3rd series (London, 1846), 4: 138-47.

[378] Mehmed's Hungarian campaign took place in the second half of 1596, hence the date given to the letter by Ellis is written in the Anno Domini old style; according to the new style this date is 1597.

[379] The Porte declared war against the Holy Roman Emperor because he refused to pay the tribute which his Empire had used to pay since the reign of Suleiman I. The Ottoman army was led by the Sultan himself. The expedition was concluded with an Ottoman victory in the battle of Mezokeresztes on 26 October 1596.

[380] Ellis, 4: 146.

[381] For the basic components of *fethname* see appendix IV.

and Spain, the Pope of Rome, Duke of Florence, and Duke of Transylvania, with an army of 300,000 soldiers and equipped with a hundred pieces of ordinance and basilisks (big cannons), failed in their attack on his imperial tent. The strong language is unsurprising because these stylistic choices are derived from the letter's subgenre. *Fethname* employs a holy war rhetoric in which the sultans and their soldiers are depicted as warriors for the sake of Allah. This type of letter was also used as a propagandistic tool to publicise the Empire's military prestige and invincibility[382]–this is why the Sultan flaunts his military might. In general, Mehmed's letter is couched in a most arrogant and bombastic tone that conveys the Sultan's sense of superiority over his European adversaries. It is worth mentioning that this sultanic rhetoric was articulated during a time that witnessed the installation and consolidation of European colonies in different parts of the world. The expansion of the colonies was accompanied by a growing European sense of the superiority and dominance of white European races. At this very time Mehmed inscribed a different narrative onto mainland Europe where Europeans were defeated and enslaved by this Sultan.

The letter represents a subjective account that projects the outlook of its sender. There were certainly several European accounts of this campaign where the events are narrated from a European angle, but Mehmed's version still survives as a self-representative narrative that offers a different perspective on the events. This epistolary text also negotiates and subverts the Christian point of view when the Sultan contests God and claims Him as his guide and helper against the Christians. At a time when Christian Europe designated the Quran as a heretical text, the Sultan considers the sacred book as God's word; for him the Quran is a source of divine assurance and guidance that explains events and gives good tidings.

It is a conventional element in the *fethname* to announce a victory and to call for celebration; hence, Mehmed mentions that he has ordered a public celebration in all parts of his realm and he asks Elizabeth to order the firing of guns in English fortresses and to celebrate the Ottoman victory. It seems distasteful and thoughtless to ask a Christian monarch to celebrate a Muslim victory over a Christian land. However,

[382] See Yurdusev, p. 14, and G. L. Lewis, 'The Utility of Ottoman Fatḥnāme', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 192-96, at p. 193.

situated in its historical and political context, such a request does not seem odd, especially if we take into consideration that the English ambassador had been present on the front line with the Sultan during the campaign. On that occasion, Barton had displayed openly the English royal arms on his tent; the French King 'expostulated with the Queene that her Armes should be borne in the Turkes Campe against christians'.[383] Furthermore, Barton was believed to be 'present at the fight, and was even reproached with having drawn his sword against Christians'.[384] The English government insisted that the ambassador had not been instructed by the Queen to go on this campaign.[385] On other occasions the English government tried to explain the ambassador's going to Hungary as an English diplomatic effort to try to hold peace negotiations between the combatants, but no such event took place. However, the Sultan handed over to Barton the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire, Friedrich von Kreckwitz, and his companions who had been imprisoned in Istanbul after the declaration of war.[386] Barton took the members of Kreckwitz's embassy with him and sent them to Buda before the start of the battle. This special gift to the English diplomat partially saved his face and excused his presence with the Turkish army. Whatever role Barton played, it was acknowledged by Mehmed in his letter as he expresses his satisfaction with the services rendered by the English ambassador during the campaign.

Conclusion

There is still a considerable lack of research about the letters of Ottoman sultans; the few studies that have engaged with these documents dealt with them mainly as

[383] Moryson, p. 29.
[384] *CSPV*, 9:xliii.
[385] In a letter of instructions from Elizabeth to her new ambassador in Russia, Richard Lee, she acknowledges how 'the proceedings of our agent at Istanbul hath been much spoken of'. *HMC Salisbury*, 10:170. When asked about Barton's joining the Sultan's army, Elizabeth ordered her ambassador to reply that Barton 'was forced by the Grand Signor's commandment; and it was merely without our knowledge and liking; and that as soon as we heard of it, we reproved him sharply for the same'. *HMC Salisbury*, 10:170. The above letter was sent on 1 June 1600, four years after Barton's notorious venture with the Sultan, but clearly European interest in this incident lingered on well into the turn of the century.
[386] Wenceslas Wratislaw, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz*, trans. A. H. Wratislaw (London, 1862), pp. 192-93.

historical material.[387] Consequently, this study is the first that pays attention to the literary characteristics of the letters and considers them as texts in their own right. Despite the fact that these texts are translations, they retain a distinctive style and tone that make them easily distinguishable from other contemporary English writings. The style of the letters is characterised by a grandiloquent rhetoric that elevates the status of the sultans; this style is manifest in the enumeration of the names of the Sultans' titles, ancestors and dominions, and in the placing of hyperbolic adjectives to describe the sultan, his throne, Porte or Empire. Furthermore, a religious tone frames and permeates the sultanic epistolary diction. Such a tone is created by the repetition of religious rhetorical formulas such as invocations of Allah and praise of Mohammed. Such regularly occurring stylistic features justify the texts' classification as a separate genre.

The epistolary texts under discussion constitute a highly subjective narrative that expresses the personal and religious perspectives of their senders. The sultans represent themselves as the greatest monarchs in the world: they use an authoritative voice to assert their superiority, flaunt their dominions and distribute their favours and commands. The letters are equally representative of their senders' religious point of view, conveyed through the repetitive utilisation of Islamic expressions and concepts. As a result, we have a subjective discourse that is different from and challenging to the Christian European frame of reference.

The letters have provided a contextual background that sheds light on how the diplomatic interaction between England and the Empire was initiated, accomplished and sustained. Based on the textual evidence in the letters themselves, and with the support of a wide range of archival sources, the analysis has offered a re-reading of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter. By focusing on texts produced in the sultans' court, the study highlights the Ottoman point of view and hence counterbalances a tendency in English secondary sources that usually foregrounds the English perspective at the expense of the Ottoman one.[388] The study, thus, presents illuminating insights into the

[387] See Skilliter and Wittek. Burton discusses Murad's letters briefly as examples of Anglo-Ottoman interaction, pp. 62-63.

[388] The English sources naturally give an English perception of their relation with the Porte. One example is the classic sources about the Levant Company: H. G. Rosedale's *Queen Elizabeth and the*

Ottoman imperial mentality and diplomatic policies: it clarifies the Porte's use of the capitulations and its conception of the symbolic and political significance of the gifts and ambassadors.

The Anglo-Ottoman contact was initiated by England and was welcomed and encouraged by the sultans: for Ottoman foreign policy, diplomatic relations with England and the presence of her ambassadors in Istanbul represented a symbolic, diplomatic and political success. The Anglo-Ottoman relationship was based on the sultans' offer of a unilateral trading license that served the commercial interests of the English nation. The reading of the letters shows that the English continued to benefit considerably from this exchange: the letters from Istanbul usually included promises, instructions or commands that served English economic and political interests. The relationship was thus basically founded on unequal terms, with the Ottomans being habitually the givers and the English the receivers, which explains why the sultans viewed the English Queen as an obedient ally: in return for their favours they expected her to offer intelligence service and tributary gifts.

The material under discussion challenges the theoretical premises of a recent critical trend that aims to promote the notion of a substantial contact between the Islamic East and England. The exchange between England and the Ottoman Empire during this period was exclusive and limited to diplomatic and trading circles; hence, it cannot be qualified as a significant intercultural phenomenon. Critics tend to depict the encounter as a smooth idealised communication between Muslim and English interactants, but this study highlights that even within the exclusive group that facilitated the interaction there were still intolerance and misconceptions.

Levant Company, Alfred C. Wood's *A History of the Levant Company*, and Mortimer Epstein's *The English Levant Company: Its Foundation and Its History to 1640*. These works focus on English archives and project an English view of this trading project but they pay limited attention to Ottoman diplomatic policies and their impact on the formation and growth of the Company.

Chapter IV
The Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Drama

This chapter presents a critical survey of all surviving Elizabethan plays that feature the figure of the Ottoman sultan.[389] Five of these are composed in English and two in Latin. The plays belong to different dramatic genres: four of them, the anonymous *Solymannidae*, Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great I*, Robert Greene's *The First Part of the Tragicall Raigne of Selimus* and George Salterne's *Tomumbeius* have been commonly labelled as historical dramas; Greene's *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* and the anonymous *John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon* have been classified as tragicomedy and Thomas Kyd's *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda* as tragedy. These dramatic works were produced in the period 1582-1594. The discussion proceeds chronologically in order to explore how the sultanic figure developed and which dramatic trends influenced its evolution.

Solymannidae

The first Elizabethan play to dramatise an Ottoman sultan is the Latin *Solymannidae*, [The Sons of Suleiman]. The play survives in a manuscript dated 5 March 1582.[390] The first and only English translation of the drama was produced in 2007 by Dana F. Sutton as an annotated hypertext edition. *Solymannidae* was a university play but it is not conclusive where it was performed.[391] It is shorter than the average Elizabethan play. The translator observes that there are mangled lines, especially at the beginning and end of the text; he explains that some lines fail to scan because the scribe conflates

---

[389] From the titles of some plays that have not survived, such as *The True History of George Scanderbeg* (1593) and *The Turkish Mahomet and Hiren the Fair Greek* (1594), it can be deduced that they included a sultanic figure. There are also other lost plays that might have featured the character of the sultan: *The Blacksmith's Daughter* (1579), *The History of the Soldan and the Duke of* ~ (1580), *Tamar Cham,* I and II (1588), *Frederick and Basilea* (1597), *Vayvode* (1598), *Mahomet* (1601) and *Zulziman* (1602).

[390] British Library, MS. Lansdowne, 723/2.

[391] Moore G. C. Smith asserts that it was acted at Cambridge. *College Plays Performed in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1923), p. 101.

two or more lines into one long line.[392] However, despite this obstacle of lost material and the effect of the translation process, the text manages a coherent dramatic plot. The scenes are carefully constructed to provide a smooth escalating action that leads to the tragic denouement, and the characterisation is contrived with enough clarity and detail to produce well-delineated dramatic figures.

The play dramatises a historical episode, the assassination of Prince Mustapha, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent's eldest son. *Solymannidae* was not the first dramatic work to deal with this incident. As far back as 1561 the French writer Gabriel Bounin composed a drama entitled *La Soltane* whose theme is the downfall of Mustapha. The fact that this event took place in 1553 and was, within less than a decade, performed on a Western stage indicates a European interest in the affairs of the Ottoman Court. This historical incident enjoyed a popularity that endured for three centuries. From the sixteenth to eighteenth century, the account of Mustapha's murder provided a sensational plot for English, French, Italian and German dramas. These include Georges Thilloys' *Solyman II* (1608), Fulke Greville's *The Tragedy of Mustapha* (1609), Prospero Bonarelli's *Il Solimano* (1620), Antonio Cospi's *Il Mustafa* (1636), Jean de Mairet's *Le Grand et Dernier Solyman ou la mort de Mustapha* (1635), Roger Boyle's *The Tragedy of Mustapha* (1668), François Belin's *Mustapha et Zéangir* (1705), David Mallet's *Mustapha* (1739), Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's fragmentary play *Giangir, oder der verschmähte Thron* (1748), Christian Weisse's *Mustapha und Zeangir* (1761), Nicolas-Sebastien Chamfort's *Mustapha et Zéangir* (1778), and Louis-Jean-Baptiste de Maisonneuve's *Roxelane et Mustapha* (1785).[393]

Samuel Chew suggests Hugh Goughe's translation of *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno* (1569) as *Solymannidae*'s main source,[394] while Sutton identifies the source as *Itinera Constantinopolitanum et Amasianum* (1581), an account written by

[392] *Solymannidae*, Commentary Notes.
[393] This list of plays after Galina I. Yermolenko, 'Roxolana in Europe', in Yermolenko (ed.), *Roxolana in European Literature*, *History and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 26-27.
[394] Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1937), p. 500.

Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, ambassador of the Holy Roman Emperor to Istanbul.[395] The following comparative analysis will reveal that Sutton's ascription of the source to Busbecq is inaccurate and Chew's proposal of Goughe's translation as the source is the correct attribution. A comparison between the three texts shows that many details in the play are mentioned in Goughe's but not in Busbecq's text. The character of Achmet pasha who advises Mustapha to mind his safety and to escape is not mentioned by Busbecq while Goughe refers to 'Acmat pascha' who 'secretly warned Mustapha by a messenger, that he shoulde have a more carefull regarde unto his lyfe and saftye'.[396] Sutton, convinced that Busbecq is the source, states in the introduction that Ganger, Mustapha's brother, is 'an invented character with no historical basis'. Ganger, or Giangir, was in fact a historical figure, the hunchback son of Suleiman and Roxolana, Suleiman's favourite concubine and later his wife. Busbecq refers to Giangir, not within his account of Mustapha's death but much earlier in his book, where he is said to have died from 'a grievous Passion' after having been informed of Mustapha's murder.[397] The writer of *Solymannidae* clearly did not use Busbecq as a source because he does not ascribe Ganger's death to a broken heart but followed Goughe's account, according to which he committed suicide after discovering the body of his brother: Giangir 'takyng in hande his dagger, wherwith hée was girded, he thruste it throughe his inwarde boweles, and so sodainlye gave up the ghouste'.[398] Following closely this version, the messenger who reports his suicide in the play relates that 'Soon he struck his own breast with a great sword, the savage steel raged within his inmost parts' (5).[399]

Another historical anecdote that shows what Goughe's translation and *Solymannidae* have in common is Mustapha's dream, which is not mentioned in Busbecq. According to Goughe, Mustapha 'semed to have seene Machomet appareled

---

[395] Sutton's attribution to Busbecq is supported by Linda McJannet in *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogues in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 152.

[396] Bartolomej Georgijevic, *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno*, trans. Hugh Goughe (London, 1569), 81. The book is not paginated and the figures in citation refer to the numbers allocated to the images of the pages on *EEBO*.

[397] Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The Four Epistles of A. G. Busbequius Concerning his Embassy into Turkey* (London, 1694), p. 121.

[398] Goughe, 87.

[399] The play has acts but no scene divisions. All subsequent citation numbers in parentheses refer to the acts of the play in the online edition.

with glisteringe robes, takyng him by the hande, to bringe him unto a certaine place moste delectable, garnished with exquisite and gorgiouse palaices, and environed with a most pleasant garden'.[400] This account is dramatically elaborated in the play when Mustapha relates to Achmet how Mohammed appears in his dream: 'his shoulders and body all clad in white linen. Flying wings covered his feet. In his hand he held an olive and a thin palm frond. He had a golden crown around his laurelled head, and the glory of his beard was like that of the star of the east when it ascends its oblique course'. In the dream the Prophet tells Mustapha that 'before the third day has passed for you, you will stand on happy feet with me in a better place'. Goughe recounts that Mustapha 'commaunded the Doctor to be sent for, & opened unto him the whole course of his dreame', and the doctor replied that the dream was ill-omened and foretold a danger coming to Mustapha.[401] In the play the doctor's role is taken by Achmet, who interprets the dream as 'Whoever dwells in Mohamed's blessed place is stone dead. No man alive can behold him or enjoy his bounties'.[402] It can be concluded that the absence of Achmet pasha, Giangir's suicide and the dream episode in Busbecq's text excludes it from being the source, while the inclusion of this information in Goughe's and the parallels between the play and Goughe's narrative in the details of the events and in the expressions used to describe them testify that Goughe's translation is the one the dramatist depended on.

Solymannidae dramatises the intrigue and treachery that lead to the execution of prince Mustapha. Sultan Suleiman has doubts about Mustapha's growing popularity and power, especially after the king of the Tartars proposes a marriage between his daughter and Mustapha. Suleiman's doubts are inflamed by his scheming wife Rhod and Roxanes, one of the pashas, who persuade the sultan that Mustapha is plotting against his life. Rhod aims to get rid of Mustapha and to secure the throne for her son Selim. One of the obstacles in Rhod's plan is Suleiman's advisor Hybrachimus, who supports Mustapha. Rhod and Roxanes conspire against Hybrachimus and convince Suleiman that he is a traitor. Rhod finally succeeds in her intrigue: Hybrachimus is assassinated and the play ends with Mustapha's execution.

---

[400] Goughe, 83-84.
[401] Ibid., 84.
[402] All quotations in this paragraph are from act 5.

The play starts with an astonished chorus who inquires ‘What’s this strange gaping hole in the ground? What’s this smoke? Has the earth burst open, and is the dark house of Dis releasing the Furies?’ The hole reveals an apparition with ‘lofty shoulders and blazing hair’ that turns out to be ‘the unhappy ghost of Selim’ (Sultan Selim I (1512-20), Suleiman’s father), who ‘in his armed might possessed boundless tracts of the sea and the earth’s globe’. Selim tells the chorus that ‘I have been sent from the hidden lake of the Styx, bearing sad misfortunes to my family’. He prophesises the crisis that will befall his house when ‘a savage stepmother will overthrow my princes, and, violent in her victory, will drag down the Emperor’s son, taking advantage of the gullible man’s silly fears’.[403] The use of a chorus in the play signifies a Senecan influence. In accordance with Senecan convention the chorus in *Solymannidae* concludes each act in a didactic—rather trite—style, commenting on the moral lessons of what has been acted and giving clear clues about the subsequent action. The other distinctive Senecan feature is the early appearance of the ghost. The play’s opening recalls the first scene in Seneca’s *Agamemnon*, where the ghost of Thyestes rises from the underworld to foretell the misfortune that will befall his family: ‘Leaving the murky regions of infernal Dis, I come, sent forth from Tartarus’ deep pit’; imagery comparable to the smoky gaping hole that brings forth the ghost of Selim. Like Selim, the Senecan ghost heralds violence and destruction to his family: ‘Now, now shall this house swim in blood other than mine; swords, axes, spears, a king’s head cleft with the axe’s heavy stroke, I see; now crimes are near, now treachery, slaughter, gore—feasts are being spread’.[404]

The ghost of Selim considers his family’s catastrophe as justice meted out by the gods, the ‘avengers of a father, [who] will not allow a crime to go long unpunished’ (1). The ghost moralises that ‘Blood atones for blood, unjust murder demands the crime be requited by fresh killing’ (1). Selim’s ghost portrays himself as Suleiman’s victim. Another reference in the play describes Suleiman as a parricide. In the third act Roxanes tells Suleiman that ‘Selim overcame Bayezid, then his son overcame him. Think of all the examples provided by your family [...] The father’s life is unsafe’ (3).

[403] All quotations in this paragraph are from act 1.

[404] Sutton has drawn attention to the Senecan influence on the play but does not go into detail. My close reading of the tragedies attributed to Seneca reveals a number of interesting parallels.

The dramatisation of Suleiman as a parricide is in disagreement with the historical accounts which unanimously attribute Sultan Selim's death to a fatal illness, but it seems that the dramatist is more interested in applying the Senecan dramatic model than in abiding by the historical records. In Senecan tragedies revenge plays a pivotal role in motivating and bringing about the catastrophe, and the re-emergence of Senecan ghosts is usually associated with foretelling or demanding revenge. Hence, regardless of the historical truth, Selim is depicted as a victim of his son so that his unavenged ghost can, in a Senecan manner, forecast the disaster for the Ottoman dynastic family as vengeance for his own murder. Fredson Bowers remarks that Senecan revenge is collective, 'in that it extends to all descendants of the injurer and to all his collateral kindred'.[405] Consequently, in a Senecan tragedy it is inflicted not only on the culprit but on the other members of his family as well to make the revenge more agonising for the living offender. This dramatic characteristic can be seen, for example, in *Hercules Furens* when the hero, in a fit of madness, kills his wife and children but stays alive himself. Likewise, in *Solymannidae* Suleiman's gullibility and suspicion lead to his assassination of one of his sons and the suicide of the other while the Sultan himself survives to lament his loss.

The dramatist's disregard for historical facts is also notable in his characterisation of Sultan Suleiman, whose dramatic image is at variance with the historical accounts about his person. Suleiman the Magnificent, who was known in histories as a formidable, resolute ruler[406], is here depicted as a weak-willed distrustful character. After meeting Sarpho, the Tartar emissary, to discuss the latter's proposal of a marriage between the daughter of the Tartar's king and Mustapha, Suleiman interrogates Alauna, Sarpho's companion, about the relation between the Tartar king and Mustapha. Suleiman's detailed inquiries intimate his suspicious, insecure nature. As he confides in his advisor Hybrachimus, 'I am ridden with anxiety for my empire. I am doubtful about my condition and about the loyalty of my nobles'. The Sultan is also represented as a gullible ruler who is susceptible to the influence of his inner

[405] Fredson Bowers, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1940), p. 44.
[406] For examples of sixteenth-century historical testimonies about Sultan Suleiman, see Peter Ashton, *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles* (London, 1546), [sig. cxv ^{v}]; Busbecq, p. 100; and Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603), p. 823.

circle. The third act demonstrates how the people around him can easily change his attitude towards Mustapha. The beginning of the act shows how Rhod and Roxanes influence the Sultan and instigate his hatred towards his son. Rhod accuses Mustapha of 'preparing schemes, planning his father's murder in his cruel mind, and seeking monstrous ways to gain the throne'. Their insinuations make Suleiman recall his advisor Hybrachimus, who convinces him that his son is innocent; so much so that Suleiman confesses that 'My hesitant mind sees evils. It is no pleasure to accuse my son's noble faith out of doubtful care'.[407]

The greatest influence on Suleiman is his scheming wife, who is bent on paving the way for her son Selim to the throne whatever the consequences: 'My mind is decided: I shall survive victorious, or pull down everything. I shall provoke wars, and Mustapha will perish in the struggle' (2). Mustapha, her enemy, is represented as the classical Herculean hero: 'He often gleams in his armor and whirls his sword, brandishes his spear, and powerfully controls his war-horse [...] this fierce lad is the only one who is wont to be caught up in every warlike pursuit' (1). As Roxanes describes him, 'that fierce, armed young bull of a man cannot be bested' (2). But Rhod, represented as the classic wicked stepmother, is ready to use assassination, poison and magic to get rid of her step-son. With her devious concepts of religion, morality and power, she seems resourceful and unstoppable. Regardless of the gender difference, Rhod's character has much in common with assertive male characters in other Turk plays of the period, such as Tamburlaine and Selimus. These over-ambitious figures advocate the same dubious moral principles to gain and retain power.

Her conversation with her son exemplifies how much the dramatist is indebted to Seneca, not just in the structure and themes of the play but also in the choice of dramatic speeches. In this dialogue Selim complains to his mother that he wishes to obtain the crown but Fate is against him; she answers:

> RHOD. Leave all the Fates' outcomes to me, for I see that they will be happy enough.
> SELIM. The gods govern future things.
> RHOD. But mortals govern present ones.

[407] All quotations in this paragraph are from act 3.

SELIM. Destiny, the mistress of things, brings everything to predetermined endings, and human reason is ignorant of their hidden paths.
RHOD. Yet it behooves those who undertake great enterprises to prevail. He who nurses dark fears, and makes his heavy heart quake with unwonted dread, is degenerate, unfit, gutless, and less than a man.
SELIM. By oppressing Father?
RHOD. One must gain power by doing right and wrong.
SELIM. The trustworthiness of an unjust ruler is held in suspicion.
RHOD. Nations adore whoever is lucky enough to acquire mighty wealth. Peoples fear him, and his honor erases his unpopularity, deserved or undeserved. (2)

This exchange is an unassuming attempt to imitate the epigrammatic dialogue which is a stylistic feature recurrent in Senecan tragedies; in *Octavia*, a play tentatively attributed to Seneca, an exemplary exchange takes place between Nero and Seneca:

SENECA. Fortune is fickle; never trust her favours.
NERO. A man's a fool who does not know his strength.
SENECA. Justice, not strength, is what a good man knows.
NERO. Men spurn humility.
SENECA. They stamp on tyrants.
NERO. Steel is the emperor's guard.
SENECA. Trust is a better.
NERO. A Caesar should be feared.
SENECA. Rather be loved.
NERO. Fear is a subject's duty.
SENECA. Duties irk.
NERO. We order, they obey.
SENECA. Then give just orders—
NERO. I shall decide.
SENECA. — approved by their consent.
NERO. The sword will win consent. (439-481)

Another dialogue between Jocasta and Eteocles in *Phoenissae* employs the same rhetorical formula and reiterates the similar theme of the contrast between a good king

and a tyrannical one (653-64). These dialogues take the shape of stichomythia. The use of this Senecan device indicates how much the playwright adheres to such dramatic conventions, so much so that he conjures up the character of prince Selim, who is superfluous in the plot, in this one-off appearance to manipulate him as the voice that argues for the ideal of a just ruler. The overall aim of this dialogue is to highlight the qualities of good kingship, important in the ethos of Senecan tragedy.

The influence of the Senecan model is not confined to these rhetorical borrowings. Indeed, the classical frame of reference permeates the whole dramatic text. The ancient place names are the dominant ones in the play. For example, Roxanes warns Rhod that Mustapha is supported by 'The soldiery of Pontic Thrace' (2), and she replies that she can use magic against her step-son with the help of 'a hag from Thessaly' (2). Sometimes ancient and contemporary references are used side by side. The extent of the confusion of names and periods of history reaches a bizarre, sometimes amusing, level: in conversation with Suleiman, Hybrachimus mentions the campaign by the Ottoman navy commander Barbarossa against the Phoenicians (4).

The pervasive classical mythological framework obscures and eclipses the Ottomans' cultural and religious characteristics. While some characters retain their Turkish names, the names of others, like Roxanes and Hybrachimus, are latinised, or entirely of classical origin, such as Ajax. The Turks are featured as worshippers of the pagan gods. For the wise advisor Hybrachimus, his duty to Suleiman 'is second only to that I have for the all-ruling gods of Olympus' (4). Roxanes warns that 'the gods of the Underworld grant nobody his baleful wish unless he first vows something to the pools of the Styx' (2). The Ottomans even appear as devoted and pious heathens, including the wicked Rhod, who believes that

> the gods of heaven let no crime to go unpunished. Whatever savage man plans a dire crime in his ungrateful mind, neither Mother Earth, nor Phoebus, shining with his golden light, nor deadly Jove, thundering with his wrath, nor even Phlegethon itself can suffer him to live in safety. (3)

On the other hand, there are few references to the Turks' Islamic identity. These references are related to the character of the Mufti, who is introduced as a venerable sage 'who presides over the rites of our bountiful Mohamed' and to whom 'sacred Mohamed's secrets are entrusted'; therefore, he is qualified to give an answer on the issue of breaking an oath. The Mufti's reply that 'whoever has given his word and taken an oath does violence to the gods if he breaks it', reveals that he is in fact 'entrusted' with the secrets of pagan gods rather than Mohammed's. Several of the Mufti's judgments are curious and confusing. When Suleiman, eager to get rid of Hybrachimus, tells the Mufti that he had sworn by the 'great gods' to preserve his advisor's safety and happiness, the Mufti initially refuses to accommodate Suleiman's change of mind: 'a ruler can sin against the sacred honor of his word less than can a slave';[408] later, however, he offers a peculiar, overly complex solution to how Suleiman might be absolved from his oath. Suleiman may

> kill Hybrachimus in the middle of the night, when Diana steers her wandering car and occupies the height of Olympus. When all things are still as they are overcome by sleep and slumber possess you as you lie abed, you may allow Hybrachimus to be dispatched to Orcus. But don't command this. Point out the steel with which you want his throat to be cut, and leave the rest to your trusty slaves. (4)

The Mufti reasons that sleep 'is a likeness of dull death [...] So while sleep overmasters your weary limbs, you can do that which you scarcely could when awake' (4). The Mufti utilises classical tropes and concepts that are alien to Islamic beliefs, but if we turn to the prophet character in Seneca's *The Trojan Women* we can fathom the archetype of the Mufti. In this tragedy the Greek host asks Calchas, the prophet, to guide them on their war campaign. Calchas decides that 'a young girl must be given / In sacrifice on the Thessalian's tomb', then 'One more victim / The Fates demand; and he must fall to death / From the top of Troy [...] Priam's grandson [...] Hector's son' (353-401). The similarity between the Mufti and Calchas is evident in the reverence

[408] All quotations in this paragraph are from act 4.

offered to them; their rulings have binding force and brook no contradiction. They are also alike in their whimsical verdicts that involve human fatality.

It should be noted that the dominance of classical frames of reference is not necessarily dictated by the lack of information about the Turks. Like most early modern accounts about the Ottomans, Goughe gives detailed information about the religious and cultural aspects of life in the Ottoman Empire which the dramatist could have utilised to create realistic Turkish figures. Nonetheless, the pervasive influence of the Senecan model on this early academic play was unavoidable; the dramatist and his audience were from a sophisticated and scholarly class who was instructed in the classics and who appreciated the faithful adherence to classical dramatic models in general and Seneca in particular. The above discussion has demonstrated how the dramatist was ready to manipulate his source and sacrifice historical accuracy for the sake of producing the Senecan effect. Another example that reveals the extent of the deviation from historical records is the insertion of the historical figure of Ibrahim Pasha (Hybrachimus), Suleiman's Grand Vizier who was murdered in 1536, within dramatised events that took place in 1553. In the introduction of the play, Sutton attributes this authorial disregard of historical truth to the dramatist's aim 'to produce one of those tales of court intrigue that appealed so greatly to Elizabethan tastes'. It can also be added that the inclusion of the account of Hybrachimus serves to illustrate a favourite Senecan theme, the instability of fortune and the fickleness of princes. As the messenger who reports Hybrachimus' death to Mustapha observes, 'the higher something lifts up its head, the quicker it falls as Fate rails against it. Once no man was more welcome or dearer to your father, but now he languishes as a tiny shade amidst the tiny shades, beholding Stygian Chaos' (5). The lesson illustrated by the downfall of Hybrachimus is that 'the prince's favor is seen to be fickle, his wrath to be headstrong, the twists of Fate to be various, the crime to be cruel, and furtive malice to be backbiting' (5).

The drama mentions some contemporary events such as Barbarossa's naval campaigns against the Mediterranean ports, Suleiman's war with Persia in 1548 and his unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1529 (4). However, these few reminders of sixteenth-century realities do not fully obliterate the classical mythological ambience

that pervades the drama and do not succeed in obscuring the fact that Suleiman and other Turkish characters are featured as typical Senecan characters, devoid of Turkish or Islamic colouring.

As this early play from the 1580s testifies, Elizabethan writers had quickly realised the potential of dramatising Ottoman history. *Solymannidae* demonstrates how the history of the Ottoman dynasty can naturally adapt to a classical tragic model centered around a noble house and provide a rich source to illustrate the favourite Senecan themes of change of fortune, revenge and tyranny. *Solymannidae* was the first English play to dramatise an Ottoman sultan, but the drama was confined to the university stage. The wider publicising of the sultanic figure through the Elizabethan commercial theatre in London was effectively accomplished by Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587-88).

Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great Part I*

This pioneering, exceptionally successful play dramatises the life of Timur, the Mongol conqueror (1336-1405). Marlowe chiefly depended on two sources: Pedro Mexia's *Sylva de Varia Lecion* (1542) and Petrus Perondinus' *Magni Tamerlanis Scytharum Imperatoris* (1553). Mexia's work was circulated in two English adaptations: Thomas Fortescue's *The Foreste or Collection of Histories* (1571) and George Whetstone's *The English Myrror* (1586).[409] William J. Brown adds John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* as another source for Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, especially for his characterisation of the Ottoman sultan.[410]

---

[409] For a discussion of Marlowe's use and 'misuse' of these sources see Roy W. Battenhouse, *Marlowe's Tamburlaine: A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy* (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1941), pp. 129-49; Leslie Spence, 'The Influence of Marlowe's Sources on *Tamburlaine I*', *Modern Philology*, 24 (1926), 181-99; Ethel Seaton, 'Fresh Sources for Marlowe', *The Review of English Studies*, 5/20 (1929), 385-401; Thomas C. Izard, 'The Principal Source for Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*', *Modern Language Notes*, 58/6 (1943), 411-17; and Hugh G. Dick, '*Tamburlaine* Sources Once More', *Studies in Philology*, 46 (1949), 154-66.

[410] Brown argues that Marlowe follows Fox's version that portrays Bajazeth as a tyrant, debases his valour, and does not show any sympathy towards his defeat and suffering. He also highlights Marlowe's use of the specific words 'footstool' and 'attire,' in reference to Tamburlaine's dressing in clothes of different colours during Damascus' siege, which are used by Fox but not other authors. 'Marlowe's Debasement of Bajazet: Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and *Tamburlaine*, Part I', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24/1 (1971), 38-48.

The play presents one of the memorable sultanic figures on the Elizabethan stage. The dramatic sultan who appears in the last three acts is modelled on the historical Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I (1389-1402), named Bajazeth in the play. The first appearance of the sultan gives the impression of a pompous, arrogant ruler. Bajazeth introduces himself as

> Dread Lord of *Affrike*, *Europe* and *Asia*,
> Great King and conquerour of *Grecia*,
> The Ocean, Terrene, and the cole-blacke sea,
> The high and highest Monarke of the world. (3.1.23-6)

This dramatic formula is commonly used by stage sultans; another two plays under discussion, *John of Bordeaux* and Greene's *Alphonsus*, include speeches similar to Bajazeth's self-introduction. In each the sultans boast their might and the extent of their empire. The recurrence of this type of speech can easily be identified as an archetypical sultanic rhetoric. The Ottoman Empire occupied a huge territory spanning three continents, and the sultans were disposed to flaunt their power and extent of their dominion, as their letters testify.[411] However, the existence of this written formula as a dramatic speech neither originated from, nor belonged exclusively to, Ottoman sovereigns. In fact, this rhetoric has deeper dramatical roots, the boastful language of the kings in the mystery cycles. In these cycles, tyrants, most notably Pharaoh, Herod and Caesar Augustus, start the plays by admonishing the audience and showing off their power and the enormity of their territorial possessions. In one of the Wakefield plays, *Herod the Great*, Herod is described as

> Chief lord of lordings. Chief leader of law,
> Knights waft on his wings to the heights they may soar,
> Great dukes he down flings, in his great awe,
> Makes humble.
> Tuscany and Turkey,
> All India and Italy,
> Syria and Sicily,

[411] See the discussion of the sultans' letters in the third chapter.

> All his feet tumble.
> From paradise to Padua to Mount Flascon;
> From Egypt to Mantua into Kemp Town;
> From Saraceny to Susa to Greece it may abound;
> Both Normandy and Norway bow to his crown. (37-49)

That the dramatist was inspired by Herod's speech is not surprising since the memory of this dramatic stock figure lingered long in the imagination of Elizabethan dramatists. His enduring fame can be established by the fact that he is mentioned eight times in Shakespeare's plays. One of these references takes place in the well-known advice Hamlet gives to the visiting actor when he urges the latter not to 'out-Herod Herod' (3.2.13). Hamlet's instruction shows how this theatrical figure was still remembered at the beginning of the seventeenth century[412] as the epitome of a ranting tyrant.

Bajazeth's portrait as a pompous, conceited Turk is confirmed by Tamburlaine's comment that 'Turkes are ful of brags' (3.3.3). Associated with his boastful nature is Bajazeth's love of flattery. The King of Argier tells Bajazeth, 'all flesh quakes at your magnificence' (3.1.48), and the sultan replies complacently, 'True (*Argier*) and tremble at my lookes' (3.1.49). When the King of Morocco praises him by saying

> The spring is hindred by your smothering host,
> For neither rain can fall upon the earth,
> Nor Sun reflexe his vertuous beames thereon,
> The ground is mantled with such multitudes. (3.1.50-53)

Bajazeth's rejoinder is 'All this is true as holy *Mahomet*, / And all the trees are blasted with our breathes' (1.1.54-55). Bajazeth's responses are exaggerated to convey the extent of his conceit and vanity. Nonetheless, Marlowe heightens the ludicrousness of the situation to the degree that the Sultan's illusion of his power over natural phenomena seems contrived and excessive.

---

[412] Ruth H. Blackburn states that a dozen of mystery cycles were still performed at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. *Biblical Drama Under the Tudors* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), p. 154.

There have been contentious opinions and diverse interpretations concerning Marlowe's sense of humour.[413] However, even those critics who have tried tenaciously to prove Marlowe's comic talent admit his deficiency in producing a light-hearted sense of humour. Paul H. Kocher, for example, remarks that Marlowe's 'humor is everywhere so hard in tone and so notably lacking in kindliness. What single character in all of the dramas is capable of really good-hearted laughter?'[414] Yet, much of the critical disagreement can be settled if a considerable section of Marlowe's 'hard-tone' humour—including Bajazeth's above replies—is considered as satire rather than comical, 'good-hearted' material. It is suggested here that Marlowe, as a satirist, consciously inserted such material not to excite amusement but rather to criticise and ridicule. This is why Bajazeth's self-congratulatory replies are ridiculous but do not constitute comic relief. The above scene is not the only instance when an aspect of Bajazeth's character is satirised; another episode exposes his cowardice, when the Sultan has lost his fight with Tamburlaine and is chased by his foe across the stage. The dramatist does not intend to induce the spectator or reader to smile or laugh at the Sultan's weakness but aims to convey his satirical stance towards the illusion of human greatness and heroism. The satire is brought to fruition when a paradox is formulated between Bajazeth's exaggerated conceit and pride and his later utter humiliation at the hand of his captor, and likewise between his boasting of his power and his smallness in defeat.

Another distinctive element in the portrayal of the Sultan is his military power. Bajazeth flaunts that his army 'lately made all *Europe* quake for feare' (3.3.135). He tells his tribute-bearing kings that

[413] For a discussion of the sense of humour (or the lack of it) in Marlowe's writings see Paul H. Kocher, *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1946), pp. 267-99; William Peery, 'Marlowe's Irreverent Humor—Some Open Questions', *Tulane Studies in English*, 6 (1956), 15-29; Russell A. Fraser, 'The Art of *Hero and Leander*', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 57/4 (1958), 743-54; Clifford Leech, 'Marlowe's Humor', in Richard Hosley (ed.), *Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama* (London: Routledge, 1963), 69-81; J. R. Mulryne and Stephen Fender, 'Marlowe and the Comic Distance', in Brian Morris (ed.), *Christopher Marlowe* (London: Benn, 1968), 49-64; and Battenhouse, pp. 217-25.
[414] Kocher, p. 298.

> You know our Armie is invincible:
> As many circumcised Turkes we have,
> And warlike bands of Christians renied,
> As hath the ocean or the Terrene sea
> Small drops of water, when the Moon begins
> To joine in one her semi-circled hornes. (3.1.7-12)

The imagery of the semi-circled moon is evocative of the Ottoman crescent. During the early modern period the gradual filling of the crescent became a trope that implied the Ottoman expansion which threatened to engulf Europe. This imagery was invoked by other Elizabeth writers. In *Astrophel and Stella*, Philip Sidney inquires 'Whether the Turkish new moone minded be, / To fill his hornes this yeare on Christian coast'.[415] Abraham Hartwell, in *The History of the Warres Betweene the Turkes and the Persians*, writes about the Turks' immense power and expresses his fear that

> the halfe Moone which now ruleth & raigneth almost over all the East, wil grow to the full, and breede such an Inundation as will utterly drowne al Christendome in the West. God for his mercies sake rebate her Hornes with the glorious shine of his brightest Sonne.[416]

The association between the crescent and the Turks is obvious, but the recurrence of the configuration of the Ottoman threat as an overflowing sea in both Hartwell's and Marlowe's texts is worthy of note. The flooding water captures the Ottoman expansion both in its magnitude and inexorability; the imagery is intended to alert the Christians to the danger of Ottoman expansion in Europe. The natural force of flooding water also has the connotations of chastisement and cleansing. This association has its roots in religious heritage that is formed out of Biblical stories such as Noah's Flood. The conception of the Ottoman aggression as a natural force might then betray an authorial view that such a force is an act of God to punish and cleanse Christendom from sins.

---

[415] Philip Sidney, *Sir P. S. His Astrophel and Stella* (London, 1591), p. 13.
[416] Abraham Hartwell, *The History of the Warres Betweene the Turkes and the Persians* (London, 1595), [sig. A4].

Bajazeth's military power is enacted in his siege of Constantinople. He declares that 'Yet would we not be brav'd with forrain power, / Nor raise our siege before the Gretians yeeld / Or breathles lie before the citie walles' (3.1.13-5). That 'forrain power' is Tamburlaine, who is introduced as a rescuer of Constantinople's Christian population from Bajazeth's vowed bloodshed. It is historically true that Timur's threat forced Sultan Bayezid I to lift his siege of Constantinople in 1402. This historical fact is taken up and developed by the dramatist to formulate a dramatic representation of Tamburlaine as pro-Christian. After saving the Christians in Constantinople, Tamburlaine reveals that the liberation of the Christian captives held by the Turks is one of his priorities. Declining the offer of a truce from Bajazeth, Tamburlaine informs his emissary that he

> Wil first subdue the Turke, and then inlarge
> Those Christian Captives, which you keep as slaves,
> Burdening their bodies with your heavie chaines,
> And feeding them with thin and slender fare,
> That naked rowe about the Terrene sea. (3.3.46-50)

Marlowe's depiction of Tamburlaine as a friend of the Christians has no parallel in the historical sources. This ahistorical portrayal of Tamburlaine would make it difficult for an English audience not to feel involved in the conflict and identify with Tamburlaine, who has the welfare of Christians at heart. At the same time, the emphasis on Tamburlaine's favourable attitude towards Christians highlights the image of the Sultan as a staunch enemy to Christianity.

After his victory over the Sultan, Tamburlaine holds Bajazeth captive in a cage; he uses him as a footstool to his throne and orders that he be 'in triumph drawne' (4.2.86) wherever Tamburlaine goes: his aim is that 'The ages that shall talk of *Tamburlain*, / Even from this day to *Platoes* wondrous yeare, / Shall talke how I have handled *Bajazeth*' (4.2.95-97). The humiliation of Bajazeth offers a dramatic spectacle but it is at variance with historical truth. The sources Marlowe depended on were historically inaccurate. The elaboration and exaggeration of the bad treatment Sultan Bayezid I

received and his suicide were in fact a European distortion.[417] The tendency in early modern European chronicles to revel in Bayezid's affliction and to amplify it is not surprising since this was the only historical episode that recorded the incarceration and humiliation of an Ottoman sultan. The Europeans found solace in the story of the defeat and ignominy of the Sultan who had secured many victories and conquests in south-east Europe. The dramatised Sultan anticipates this European reaction when he sorrowfully reflects that 'Now will the Christian miscreants be glad, / Ringing with joy their superstitious belles: / And making bonfires for my overthrow' (3.3.236-38). Indeed they were glad: their feeling was expressed by Peter Ashton who, in the epistle to his book *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles*, asked rhetorically 'Maye we not be glad to hear tel[?] that Taberlayn toke the great Turke Bajazet prisoner and al his lyfe after used hym like a vyle drudge?'[418]

At this stage in the play Bajazeth is represented as a broken, pitiable figure. His humiliation and suffering is demonstrated in the scene of the banquet when 'the Turke and his wife / make a goodly showe' (4.4.63-64). Bajazeth is treated as a jester; his curses and his refusal to eat become a source for entertainment and ridicule by Tamburlaine and his retinue. He and his wife are fed with the scraps from his captor's table; Tamburlaine orders that Bajazeth's 'wife shalt feed him with the scraps / My servitures shall bring thee from my boord' (4.2.87-88). As one critic has commented, 'it is hard to believe Marlowe's audience would have felt no compassion for the vanquished sultan'.[419] Although there is no means of knowing the audience's reactions, a compassionate response towards Bajazeth was at least clearly expressed by the contemporary dramatist Thomas Dekker. *The Pleasant Comedy of Old Fortunatus* (1600), expresses sadness for the plight of the Ottoman Sultan:

> Poore Bajazet old Turkish Emperour,
> And once the greatest monarch in the East;
> Fortune herself is said to view thy fall,

[417] For the origins and establishment of European myths of Sultan Bayezid I's cage, humiliation and suicide see Louis Wann, 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama', *Modern Philology*, 12/7 (1915), 423-47, at pp. 436-38, and Chew, p. 469n.
[418] Ashton. The epistle has neither page numbers nor signatures.
[419] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005), p. 78.

And grieves to see thee glad to licke up crommes
At the proud feete of that great Scithian swaine,
Fortunes best minion, warlike Tamberlaine:
Yet must thou in a cage of iron be drawne
In triumph at his heeles, and there in griefe
Dash out thy braines. (sig. [B1^{v}])

Leslie Spence comments that cowardice, impotence, and love of flattery 'are not associated with the historical Bajazeth. Marlowe substituted them for the dignity and heroism Mexia credits Bajazeth with, that Tamburlaine might be saved the disgrace of treating with brutality a valiant but unfortunate adversary'.[420] Spence's observation is pertinent, but it overlooks the fact that even if the dramatist attaches negative characteristics to the Sultan, he at the same time endows him with some positive ones. Indeed, Bajazeth's character is not totally void of tender feelings, nobility, courage and fortitude. The Sultan is no longer the proud, powerful sovereign, but he is still the loving husband. In the last exchanges with his wife Zabina before his suicide, he asks her

O poore *Zabina*, O my Queen, my Queen,
Fetch me some water for my burning breast,
To coole and comfort me with longer date,
That, in the shortened sequel of my life,
I may poure foorth my soule into thine armes,
With words of love: whose moaning intercourse
Hath hetherto bin staid, with wrath and hate
Of our expreslesse band inflictions. (5.1.275-82)

Bajazeth's speech expresses a variety of emotions; it is an outburst of grief and despair but it is also an expression of noble love. His words depict the symptoms of physical and emotional thirst, the thirst for water and the thirst for a reunion with his beloved wife. Despite their humiliation and suffering Bajazeth and Zabina remain vocally defiant. They do not flinch from cursing or admonishing Tamburlaine:

[420] Leslie Spence, 'Tamburlaine and Marlowe', *PMLA*, 42/3 (1927), 604-22, at p. 614.

Bajazeth asserts to have ‘such a stomacke (cruel Tamburlane) as / I could willingly feed upon thy blood-raw hart’ (4.4.11-12). Bajazeth’s and Zabina’s outright challenge of Tamburlaine prompts Zenocrate to say ‘My Lord, how can you suffer these outragious curses by these slaves of yours?’ (4.4.26-27). In the face of his ordeal and helplessness, Bajazeth keeps his claim to dignity and superiority over his captor; he laments how his name and honour are ‘Thrust under yoke and thraldom of a thiefe’ (5.1.261). There is nobility and heroism in Bajazeth’s tragic end that he chooses for himself. His sense of dishonour is what prompts him to take his decision: ‘Now *Bajazeth*, abridge thy banefull daies, / And beat thy braines out of thy conquer’d head: / Since other meanes are all forbidden me’ (5.1.286-88).

This fluctuating characterisation of the Sultan in *Tamburlaine* is indicative of the ambivalence that is notable in Marlowe’s formulation of his characters. This authorial feature has attracted critical attention.[421] Commenting on Tamburlaine, Peter Berek remarks that ‘Marlowe was irretrievably ambivalent about his hero’s defiant self-creation: the play is flawed by its brilliant author’s own confusions’.[422] Indeed, this confusion can be recognised in Bajazeth’s character; Bajazeth starts out as a ridiculously pompous, conceited and cowardly figure and ends up as a character that does not lack a sense of nobility, dignity and courage. However, despite the inconsistency in the Sultan’s dramatic image, there is an unequivocal message that Bajazeth’s suffering and violent death are a deserved punishment for a tyrant. The naming of Tamburlaine as the scourge of God implies that Tamburlaine is God’s instrument to punish Bajazeth’s pride and aggression. As Roy W. Battenhouse remarks, Bajazeth’s ‘humiliation furnishes spectacular illustration of the instability of worldly Fortune’.[423] His death too illustrates the evanescence of earthly power. This notion is expressed clearly by Tamburlaine’s wife Zenocrate, who discovers the dead bodies of Bajazeth and his wife. She moralises ‘Those that are proud of fickle Empery,

---

[421] See Joyce Karpay, ‘A Study in Ambivalence: Mothers and Their Sons in Christopher Marlowe’, in Sara M. Deats and Robert A. Logan (eds.), *Placing the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*: *Fresh Cultural Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate. 2008), 75-92, and Peter Berek, ‘*Tamburlaine*’s Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation Before 1593’, *Renaissance Drama*, 13 (1982), 55-82.
[422] Berek, p. 65.
[423] Battenhouse, p. 248.

/ And place their chiefest good in earthly pompe: / Behold the Turke and his great Emperesse' (5.1.353-55).

The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon

The period after 1588 witnessed a vogue for historical drama with oriental themes. The exceptional success of *Tamburlaine* motivated Marlowe's fellow playwrights to compose drama that tried to surpass or at least duplicate his success. Greene's *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon*, printed in 1599, was one of those imitations. Its composition date ranges from 1587 to 1591.[424] The drama is inspired by the history of the real figure of Alphonso V (1385-1458), King of Aragon and Sicily. His conquest of Naples and his relations with the Turks are the only historical facts that are faintly reflected in Greene's drama while the remaining characters and details of plot are invented. Most likely Greene obtained the underlying idea for his plot from Bartolommeo Fazio's *De Rebus Gestis Ab Alphonso Primo, Neapolitanorum Rege, Commentariorum Libri Decem* and Vespasiano da Bisticci's *Vite di Uomini Illustri*.

The play is basically an uninspired imitation of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*.[425] The hero Alphonsus is crudely modelled on Tamburlaine in his ambition, self-confidence and unstoppable conquests. Like *Tamburlaine*, *Alphonsus* is heaving with bombastic speeches, ranting confrontations and battle scenes. These Marlovian effects are fused with romantic elements such as the first-sight love between Alphonsus and the sultan's daughter Iphigina that ends in a happy-ever-after royal wedding—which explains the play's classification as 'Comicall'. These features are mingled with the eerie presence of the figure of Mahomet that speaks through 'a brazen Head' and the magic of the sorceress Medea. This dramatic hotchpotch is chimerically enfolded in an overall classical framework where Venus offers comments and explanations at the opening and conclusion of each act and the nine Muses unveil and wrap up the play with a

---

[424] See Churton J. Collins (ed.), *The Plays & Poems of Robert Greene* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), 1:74; E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 3: 327; and Irving Ribner, 'Greene's Attack on Marlowe: Some Light on *Alphonsus* and *Selimus*', *Studies in Philology*, 52/2 (1955), 162-71, at p. 162.

[425] Collins, 1:72-73, and A. B. Grosart, *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene* (London, 1881-1886), 1:175-76, demonstrate with examples the parallels between the two plays.

masque. J. Churton Collins does not exaggerate when he describes the work as 'phantasmagorical medley'.[426]

The ahistorical sultan Amuracke appears in the last three acts. In a speech that is reminiscent of Bajazeth's first lines in *Tamburlaine*, the sultan alludes to the extent of his power and dominions when he orders one of his commanders to go

> To *Siria*, *Scythia* and *Albania*,
> To *Babylon*, with *Mesopotamia*,
> *Asia*, *Armenia*, and all other lands
> Which owe their homage to high *Amurack*. (836-39)

The aim is to rally forces to support Belinus, the king of Naples, to restore his kingdom that has been taken over by Alphonsus. At the beginning Amuracke seems a pious sultan who insists that he should secure Mahomet's approval to launch the war on Alphonsus because he would 'not set foote forth of this land, / If *Mahomet* our journey did withstand' (814-15). He ascribes his victories to Mahomet's guidance. However, after Mahomet wrongly foretells the victory of Belinus, Amuracke turns against him, calling him a 'cursed god' (1402). Moreover, he commands his men 'Mount on your Steeds, take Launces in your hands; / For *Amuracke* doth meane this very day / Proude *Mahomet* with weapons to assay' (1421-23). Regardless of these few distinctive features in his characterisation, such as his power and his link to the rather vague God Mahomet, the Sultan, like other characters in this play, remains sketchy.

It seems a futile task to try to read much into the character of the sultan in this play because the drama clearly fails to produce conceivable, coherent dramatic figures who have a claim to reality or history. A case in point is the connection between the Turkish Sultan and the King of Naples, who are introduced as 'cosens'(779)—which in early modern usage variously indicated family relationships, similar status, or a certain familiarity between the persons so characterised.[427] For this reason, the

---

[426] Collins, 1:73.
[427] During the early modern period the word cousin was also used to describe someone who had affinity to or friendship with another or used by a sovereign to address other sovereigns or noblemen in his realm. J. A. H. Murray, et al. (eds.), *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (Oxford:

insistence on reading the characters as representatives of Islam or Christianity, as some critics have already done, is a critical practice that can easily be invalidated by the confusion and inconsistencies in the play-text. Matthew Dimmock, for example, maintains that in this drama the difference 'between the conventional doctrine of the 'Christian' and this deeply alien set of Islamic beliefs is intentionally profound'.[428] If we searched the text for these two opposing religious identities, Muslim and Christian, we would not end up with any clear-cut result. The absence of any clear religious identity can be exemplified by the King of Naples' belief in Mahomet. Belinus requires Mahomet's approval of the coming war because he does not want Amuracke to 'displease the Gods' (817). He then visits Mahomet's temple to listen to his prophecy and declares, 'And since we have God *Mahound* on our side, / The victories must needs to us betide' (1229-30). For Dimmock, Mohammed is considered as a deity and idol because Alphonsus repeatedly calls Amuracke 'pagan'.[429] The accusations of paganism and blasphemy are exchangeable between the two main characters; however, they are not related to either an Islamic or Christian context but their point of reference is Olympus. Amuracke calls Alphonsus a 'blasphemous dog' because Alphonsus abuses Mars by claiming that the god of war

> [...] moping sits behind the kitchin doore,
> Prest at commaund of every Skullians mouth,
> Who dares not stir, nor once to move a whit,
> For feare *Alphonsus* then should stomack it. (1484-87)

Alphonsus uses the same terms for Amuracke because the sultan 'did brall and raile / Against God *Mars*' (1680-81). Alphonsus and Amuracke refer to Jove as their supreme god. Indeed, the belief system that remains stable and dominant in the text is a classical frame of reference with the constant allusions to, and invocation of, the gods of antiquity. Another critic describes the relationship between Iphigina and

---

Clarendon Press, 1888-1933), 2:1097. The term then indicates that Amuracke and Alphonsus share either cordial, familial or national lineage, which seems implausible.

[428] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 180-81.

[429] Ibid., p. 180.

Alphonsus as a love between Muslims and Christians.[430] It is doubtful whether Amuracke's daughter can be considered as a representative of Turkish Islamic culture since she and her mother are in fact Amazons. Fausta, Amuracke's wife, threatens to move her 'armie of *Amazones*' (948) against the sultan, who has banished her and her daughter, and her Amazonian daughter proves her martial nature in fighting with Alphonsus. The play can thus not simply be framed within a perspective juxtaposing Muslim and Christian beliefs and identities, as the above critics would have it.

The First Part of the Tragicall Raigne of Selimus

Greene did not give up his attempts to write a play that would outdo *Tamburlaine*. His subsequent try to rival Marlowe was (if Grosart's attribution is correct)[431] *The First Part of the Tragicall Raigne of Selimus*, which was issued in 1594. The main source of the play is Peter Ashton's *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles* (1546).[432]

Selimus is a drama of intrigue, betrayal and rivalry within the Ottoman royal family. The play dramatises how Selimus, the historical Sultan Selim I, manages to obtain the Ottoman throne by ruthlessly eliminating his family. After getting rid of his father by poison, he murders his brothers Acomat and Corcut, his nephews Amurath and Aladin, and his sister Solyma and her husband Mustaffa.

Some features in Selimus' characterisation are indebted to Senecan influence. His statement that he 'could be a devil to be a king' is an echo of the maxim of Senecan tyrants like, for example, Eteocles in *Phoenissae*, who thinks that 'Sovereignty is well bought at any price' (664). Like other Senecan tyrants, Selimus seeks absolute power. His aspiration is not confined to the throne as he dreams of expansion. He addresses himself 'Thou oughtst to set barrels of blood abroach / And seek with sword whole

---

[430] Burton, p. 33.

[431] Grosart was the first scholar to attribute the play to Greene, 1: lxxi-lxxvii. In support of Grosart see Chambers, 4:46; Chew, p. 491; and Tucker Brooke, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908), p. xix. Greene's authorship has also been disputed by Collins, 1: 61-66, and F. G. Hubbard, 'Repetition and Parallelism in the Earlier Elizabethan Drama', *PMLA*, 20/2 (1905), 360-79, at p. 372. All modern studies include the play in Greene's oeuvre.

[432] Daniel J. Vitkus gives Thomas Newton's *A Notable Historie of the Saracens* as another source. *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000), p. 18; Irving Ribner suggests that 'it is more likely that his [Greene's] immediate source was the fifty-ninth chapter of Pierre de La Primaudaye's *French Academy*'. 'Greene's Attack', p. 168. It is also likely that the dramatist made use of several available sources that reported the history of Sultan Selim I.

kingdoms to displace' (2.10-11). Selimus often communicates to his audience what he thinks and plans. He uses his asides and soliloquies as a channel of a private communication with his spectators. His self-revelatory speeches can be traced to the theatrical conduct of the Vice character in morality plays. In morality drama the Vice will typically utilise his debut to unfold his identity and mission. Selimus too uses his first lengthy monologue to introduce himself as 'The perfect picture of right tyranny' (2.53); he then unveils his aspirations towards the throne and his decision to murder his father; in this he reminds us of Titivillus in *Mankind* (525-540, 565-580, 589-606) or Belyal in *The Castle of Perseverance* (196-234), who expose to the audience their intention to lead Mankind astray and explain how they will achieve their plans.

In addition to the influence of Senecan and the morality tradition, Selimus' figure is equally shaped by the Machiavellian mode of characterisation. Machiavellianism is apparent in his dissimulation and duplicity. In one of his maxims Machiavelli theorises that 'those that have been best able to imitate the fox have succeeded best. But it is necessary to be able to disguise this character well, and to be a great feigner and dissembler'.[433] Selimus is the perfect epitome of a dissembling fox. At his father's funeral he confesses 'I'll mourn in show, though I rejoice indeed' (20.9). He informs the audience how he deceptively smiles to his father to make the latter think

> [...] Selim's thoughts are brought to such an ebb
> As he hath cast off all ambitious hope.
> But soon shall that opinion be removed;
> For if I once get 'mongst the janizars,
> Then on my head the golden crown shall sit. (17.43-47).

The dramatic trope of a deceptive smiling appearance is used by Richard III, too, who confides to the audience that 'I can smile, and murder whiles I smile' (*Henry VI (3)*. 3.2.182). Selimus takes the precedence for being one of the discernible early Machiavellian figures; for this reason he can be considered as an inspiring model for later Machiavellian heroes such as Richard. It is a fact that Selimus is heavily indebted to Tamburlaine but he is different from his archetype in showing unmistakably

[433] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Luigi Ricci (London: Humphrey Milford, 1903), p. 70.

Machiavellian traits which are not apparent in the Marlovian hero.[434] Selimus uses intrigue and dissimulation to gain political power; such Machiavellian policies are not used by Tamburlaine. Selimus is the unprincipled prince who relinquishes religion to achieve his ends while Tamburlaine, with his complex and dubious faith, believes in a rather vague divine presence which he variously addresses as Jove, God, Heaven or Mahomet. Indeed, the figure of Selimus takes the Elizabethan overreacher to a new level by exhibiting fashionable Machiavellian characteristics.

In Machiavellian philosophy fortune does not control our lives; humans can change their fate by using their own abilities and grasping the presented opportunities.[435] These concepts are conspicuous in Selimus' characterisation. He contemplates that his aged father has a short time to live but decides not to wait for his father's natural death because 'Wisdom commands to follow tide and wind, / And catch the front of swift Occasion / Before she be too quickly overgone' (2.40-42). His determination to take control of his own destiny is illustrated in his challenge to Fortune: 'I will advance my strong revenging hand, / And pluck thee from thy ever-turning wheel' (6.18-19).

Another distinctive Machiavellian trait in Selimus' character is his atheism. He abhors and rejects religious beliefs, which he considers as 'mere fictions' (2.102). When his adviser Sinam Bassa reminds him of 'a hell and a revenging God' (2.186), Selimus replies:

> Thinkst thou I care for apparitions
> Of Sisiphus and of his backward stone,
> And poor Ixion's lamentable moan?
> No, no! I think the cave of damnèd ghosts,
> Is but a tale to terrify young babes. (2.189-93)

---

[434] The influence of Machiavellian traits in Tamburlaine's characterisation is discussed by Battenhouse, pp. 206-16; but for a more convincing counterargument see Mario Praz, *The Flaming Heart: Essays on Crashaw, Machiavelli, and Other Studies in the Relations Between Italian and English Literature from Chaucer to T. S. Eliot* (Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1966), pp. 118-20.

[435] According to Machiavelli the princes who obtain sovereignty through their merits 'owed nothing to fortune but the opportunity which gave them matter to be shaped into the form that they thought fit; and without that opportunity their powers would have been wasted', p. 21.

The hell Selimus denigrates is the ancient Greek underworld. Selimus' use of a classical frame of reference shows again the influence of Seneca. The dramatist could have utilised the available accounts of Islamic hell and paradise to express Selimus' Islamic conception of hell but the influence of current dramatic traditions made the classical pagan underworld the preferred dramatic narrative. Significantly, Selimus scorns this, and not a Christian, universe. Classical concepts might have conveniently expressed such strong atheistic and blasphemous statements since censorship would not have applied to a non-Christian character who dismisses the classical notion of hell.

Selimus' denial of religion is motivated by his ambitious Machiavellian nature. He claims that 'nothing is more hurtful to a Prince / Than to be scrupulous and religious' (17.141-42). Atheism absolves Selimus from religious or moral restraints that would stop him from achieving his goals. He anticipates that 'schoolmen', religious scholars, might use their 'bookish ordinance' to oppose his plans, and thus, as a defense strategy, resolves 'To arm my heart with irreligion' (2.74). Although Selimus' rejection of religion is a pragmatic decision that achieves his immediate materialist purposes, it is at the same time based on deeper philosophical grounds. Selimus surprises us with a coherent piece of reasoning that is intended to prove that religion is a mere human invention. Selimus contends that when the earth was created 'Then everyone his life in peace did pass / War was not then, and riches were not known' (2.78-79). He goes on:

> But after Ninus, warlike Belus'son,
> The earth with unknown armor did worry;
> Then first the sacred name of king begun,
> And things that were as common as the day
> Did then to set possessors first obey.
> Then they established laws and holy rites
> To maintain peace and govern bloody fights.
> Then some sage man, above the vulgar wise,
> Knowing that laws could not in quiet dwell,
> Unless they were observed, did first devise
> The names of gods, religion heaven and hell [.] (2.88-98)

This stanza shows us a different aspect in Selimus' characterisation and adds depth to this crude dramatic figure. In this scene Selimus appears as a philosopher who is able to reason his case. He discards his usual uncompromising iniquitous habits and tries to use intellectual argument to prove his convictions, in a lucid register that differs from his usual bombastic rants. In these lines Selimus depends largely on classical sources to give an alternative account of human existence on earth.[436] Generally speaking, Selimus' speeches are packed with references to the ancient gods and underworld creatures. Selimus' ample use of classical allusions reminds us how little this character has to do with eastern Islamic culture.

Jean Jacquot comments that 'Selimus's speech sounds, as it should, like a diabolic distortion of theology and orthodox political theory'.[437] For the 'average' Elizabethan Selimus' atheistic debate would have sounded blasphemous. However, Selimus' statements have also been interpreted as a genuine inquiry into the truth of religion. Jonathan Dollimore argues that the play problematises religion and questions its veracity; he contends that 'nothing in the play effectively contradicts Selimus' argument that religion is a mystification of the social order, and 'mere fictions' cannot continue to work effectively in that respect when successfully exposed'.[438] Dollimore's verdict is a result of a partial reading that does not consider the overall message and aims of the drama.

To start with, the play does not present the atheist point of view as a valid 'exposure' of religion. The fact that it comes from a character like Selimus is the first indicator of its fallacy. Selimus is deliberately constructed as a vicious figure with whom no one should identify, nor does the dramatist invite the audience to accept Selimus' ideas: the hero's views come across as extreme, unorthodox and repulsive. Selimus, for example, theorises that father, mother and brother are 'foolish names'

[436] Jean Jacquot traces the roots of Selimus's ideas in this stanza to accounts of the origins of the world, and the Golden and Iron Ages, as mentioned in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a Greek poem written by Sextus Empiricus, and St Augustine's *The City of God*. 'Ralegh's "Hellish Verses" and the *Tragicall Raigne of Selimus*', *The Modern Language Review*, 48/1 (1953), 1-9, at p. 6. Vitkus adds Hesiod's *Works and Days* as a source for Selimus' account. *Three Turk Plays*, p. 145n.
[437] Jacquot, p. 7.
[438] Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1984), p. 86.

invented 'to strike / Into our minds a certain kind of love' and 'To keep the quiet of society' (2.112-15). His rejection of basic human feelings and bonds makes him appear as a monster, even in comparison with his Marlovian archetype. Notwithstanding his moral and religious failings, Tamburlaine is still represented as a human being. David M. Bevington remarks that the episodes in *Tamburlaine* 'reveal his [Tamburlaine's] capacity in love for generosity, loyalty, and a sense of justice'.[439] His human side is also manifest in his ability to have, and to express, a sublime kind of love towards Zenocrate. Except for his adoration of the crown, Selimus does not express any emotions about anyone or anything. His father, who knows him well, does not believe that he has married the daughter of the king of Tartary for love: as he exclaims, 'Selimus in love? / If he be, lording, 'tis not ladies' love / But love of rule and kingly sovereignty' (1.187-89).

The play has, in essence, an anti-atheist message. The drama equates the loss of religion with moral corruption. Selimus orders:

> Let Mahound's laws be locked up in their case,
> And meaner men and of a base spirit
> In virtuous actions seek for glorious merit.
> I count it sacrilege for to be holy
> Or reverence this threadbare name of 'good'.
> Leave to old men and babes that kind of folly;
> Count it of equal value with the mud:
> Make thou a passage for thy gushing flood
> By slaughter, treason, or what else thou can. (2.12-20)

Religion here is presented as the safeguard of morality since those, like Selimus, who relinquish religion give themselves a license to commit slaughter, treason or any other possible crime. Remarkably, what is rejected is not the Islamic faith per se, but the concept of religion in general because the rebuff of 'Mahound's law' amounts to the rejection of universal concepts of 'good' and 'virtuous actions'. Selimus goes on to

[439] David M. Bevington, *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1962), p. 208.

deny the judgment of the good and evil in the afterlife. According to Selimus, everyone would be treated equally in Death's kingdom where 'nothing doth the wicked man affright, / No more than him that dies in doing right' (2.133-34). The abolition of the concept of Judgment Day in Selimus' atheist perspective means that there is no point in doing good in human earthly existence. It can be concluded that the message of the play is to highlight the devastating effects of atheism and to present religion as an important factor that sustains moral values.

The anti-atheistic message can also be gleaned from the play's final judgment of its atheist hero. Selimus does not escape divine punishment. There is no evidence that a sequel of the play was ever written, but it would certainly have ended with Selimus' untimely and violent death in the same place where his father died. Such an end is already anticipated in the first part: Selimus' brother Corcut prophesies: 'Selim, in Chiurlu didst thou set upon / Our agèd father in his sudden flight; / In Chiurlu shalt thou die a grievous death' (22.74-76).

Importantly, in comparison with his forerunner Tamburlaine, Selimus' irreligious and immoral views are too radical and shocking. The excess in the characterisation of the play's main character was intended to outshine the Marlovian hero and ultimately to achieve profit. The Queen's Men added *Selimus* to their repertoire after the Admiral's Men had an unprecedented success with *Tamburlaine*. Mark Hutchings gives *Selimus* as 'an example of how the demands of the market could drive artistic production'.[440] To put it more precisely, the play is an example of how the market ruined an artistic production because, in an earnest attempt to achieve a commercial success, the dramatist went to the extreme and composed an over-extravagant imitation of *Tamburlaine*.

The dark side in the hero's characterisation should not obscure some of his commendable features. Selimus is known for his heroic qualities that win him the people's love. His father laments that

> Stern Selimus hath won my people's heart;

[440] Mark Hutchings, 'The "Turk Phenomenon" and the Repertory of the Late Elizabethan Playhouse', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 16 (2007), last accessed June 2012, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk>.

> The janissaries love him more then me
> And for his cause will suffer any smart.
> They see he is a friend to chivalry. (1.89-92)

Selimus is represented as a valiant warrior. After being defeated by Selimus Tonombey confesses that 'A matchless knight is warlike Selimus [...] Twice I encountered with him hand in hand, / And twice returnèd foilèd and ashamed' (28.32, 35-36). When compared with his two brothers, Selimus seems the most suitable candidate for inheriting the throne. The eldest brother Corcut, the philosopher, 'never saw his foeman's face' (9.90) while Acomat 'leads his life still in lascivious pomp' (9.87). Selimus' determination and ambition commands admiration. He daringly rants:

> Mars, or Minerva, Mahound, Termagant,
> Or whosoe'er you are that fight 'gainst me,
> Come and but show yourselves before my face,
> And I will rend you all like trembling reeds. (6.20-23)

In an act of defiance, he vows that 'In spite of heaven shall Selim wear the crown' (4.40). And he does wear the crown and compares the occasion to Hercules' apotheosis after accomplishing his twelve labours: 'as many labors Selimus hath had / And now at length attainèd to the crown./ This is my Hebe, and this is my heaven' (17.87-89). In his ambition and love of power Selimus is not unique as this type of ambitious villainous tyrant became popular on the Elizabethan stage. His euphoric meditations about the crown reminds us of Tamburlaine, who describes 'the sweet fruition of an earthly crowne' (2.7.29) as 'the perfect bliss and sole felicitie' (2.7.28). In a state of rapture the English usurper Richard III meditates about the crown as well: 'How sweet a thing it is to wear a crown' (*Henry VI (3)*. 1.2.33).

Another characteristic feature in Selimus is his individuality. He expresses views that assert his difference and convey his disdain for the conformist masses. He rationalises that 'The names of gods, religion, heaven and hell' (2.98) are not bad

> Because they keep the baser sort in fear;
> But we, whose mind in heavenly thoughts is clad,

> Whose body doth a glorious spirit bear
> That hath no bounds, but flieth every where;
> Why should we seek to make that soul a slave,
> To which dame Nature so large freedom gave?
> Amongst us men, there is some difference. (2.117-23)

Selimus does not establish his difference from and superiority to the 'baser sort' by way of his royal lineage. His creed of individualism depends on his belonging to those individuals who harbour 'heavenly thoughts' and 'glorious spirit'. Selimus' class is open for ambitious freethinkers regardless of their wealth or social background. This concept of individuality was certainly revolutionary in the hereditary society of sixteenth-century England that was based on privilege. On stage, however, the presence of such figures had gradually become more frequent. Tamburlaine is a clear example of a low-born man who achieves distinction by ruthlessly asserting his individuality. According to Stephen Greenblatt he fashions himself in a self-conscious opposition against hierarchy.[441] This feature is not confined to Tamburlaine but found in other contemporary overreachers, including, for example, Mordred in *The Misfortunes of Arhur* (1587), who expresses his free will to reject all forms of authority:

> I loath, I yrke, I doe detest a head.
> B'it Nature, be it Reason, be it Pride,
> I love to rule: my minde nor with, nor by,
> Nor after any claimes, but chiefe and first. (10)

Selimus, too, obviously a member of this dramatic pedigree, challenges and rejects whatever is considered of higher status, whether father, king or God. He convinces us of his individuality by distinguishing himself from those who accept the social and religious hierarchies; these he derogatorily labels as 'meaner men', 'the baser sort', 'old men' or 'babes'.

---

[441] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980), p. 203.

Vitkus comments that Selimus, with his insatiable lust for power, is a typical example of oriental despotism[442] but, as the above parallels to Richard III and Mordred demonstrate, Selimus is neither unique in his seeking of power nor is his desire limited to Oriental despots. Selimus is sourced from Turkish history but his theatrical representation is a familiar Elizabethan character that was in vogue during the late 1580s and 1590s: the aspiring, unprincipled, brutal, heroic, individualistic protagonist.

The other sultanic figure which demands critical attention is Selimus' father, Bajazet. This sultan represents the figure of an old, wise and weary ruler who starts the play by denouncing power: 'He knows not what it is to be king / That thinks a scepter is a pleasant thing' (1.30-31). Despite his extensive empire 'from the south pole unto the northern bears' (1.14), Bajazet complains that 'yet doubt and care are with us evermore' (1.15). These sultanic statements reiterate a favourite Senecan motif: the tragic exposition of the worries and dangers of kingship. In *Thyestes*, Tantalus urges his father to accept the offer of sharing the kingdom with his brother; Thyestes, however, refuses: 'While I stood / Among the great, I stood in daily terror; / The very sword I wore at my own side I feared' (425-67).

In most of his speeches Bajazet is given to lamentation over the gradual decline of his authority and the disobedience of his sons. Bajazet contemplates:

> Then do we fear, more than the child newborn,
> Our friends, our lords, our subjects, and our sons.
> Thus is our mind in sundry pieces torn
> By care, by fear, suspicion, and distrust,
> In wine, in meat we fear pernicious poison;
> At home, abroad, we fear seditious treason. (9.13-18)

Bajazet's worries have contemporaneous resonance for the Elizabethans; in fact, they do not appear at all as foreign to their concerns and experiences. These lines would not only have applied to the old sultan but also to the English Queen, whose reign witnessed many attempts to assassinate her, the latest carried out by Anthony Babington and others in 1586. It is worth noting that the main theme of the drama,

[442] Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*, p. 11.

which is the conflict over succession, was a common concern during Elizabeth's late reign. During the Tudor period in general 'the succession to the English crown was a principal focus of political instability and unease'.[443] Bajazet's indecisiveness in the matter of choosing his successor is the nucleus of the whole dramatic plot. The audience cannot miss the implication that Elizabeth's hesitation about naming an heir might lead to a civil war between rival claimants to the English throne.

Bajazet does not seem to be a typical oriental despot but a liberal ruler who believes that royal power is based upon and legitimated by popular support:

> First of all is our state still mutable
> And our continuance at the people's rate;
> So that it is a slender thread whereon
> Depends the honor of a prince's throne. (9.9-12)

The example of a wise, just and kind ruler like Bajazet functions to expose Selimus' model of politics as tyrannical, a theatrical aim recognised and appreciated by the Elizabethans. Philip Sidney remarks that tragedy 'openeth the greatest wounds, and showeth forth the Ulcers, that are covered with Tissue: that maketh Kinges feare to be Tyrants, and Tyrants manifest their tirannicall humors'.[444] While the play explores the nature and legitimacy of kingship, it nevertheless does not attempt to present a radical inquiry into the political status quo. When Hali, a courtier, asks 'Why should it be unlawful for the son / To levy arms 'gainst his injurious sire?' (9.54-55), the counsellor Mustaffa replies:

> You reason, Hali, like a sophister;
> As if 'twere lawful for a subject prince
> To rise in arms against his sovereign
> Because he will not let him have his will. (9.56-59)

---

[443] Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), p. ix.
[444] Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie* (London, 1595), sig. [F3^{v}], [F4].

The judgment on the illegality of opposing the sovereign has its weight because it comes from one of the sympathetic figures in the play, the wise advisor Mustaffa. It seems that although the play touches upon the political concerns of the day, it does not challenge the tenets of Tudor political orthodoxy. This reading supports Irving Ribner's conclusion that sixteenth-century history plays asserted the most common political doctrine 'of the absolute authority of the king, his responsibility to God alone for his deeds, and the sinfulness of any rebellion against him, no matter what the provocation'.[445]

The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda

During the same historical period *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda* (1592) appeared on the stage.[446] The play has been attributed to Thomas Kyd, especially in light of its resemblance to *The Spanish Tragedy*, where indeed the tale of Soliman and Perseda is included as a play-within-a-play.[447] The source of the play is one of the tales in Henry Wotton's *A Courtlie Controversie of Cupids Cautels* (1578). The story has no historical validity but the tale's Turkish sultan is modelled on Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and the plot is constructed around his conquest of the island of Rhodes, which took place in 1522. *Solyman and Perseda* is a tragedy of love, intrigue and revenge. The basic element in the plot is the romantic love between Erastus, the gallant knight, and Perseda, his beautiful chaste mistress.

Soliman's court is staged in the play as the refuge for Erastus, who has escaped from Rhodes to avoid a death sentence waiting for him at home for committing a murder. Erastus decides, 'To Turkie must I goe; the passage short, / The people warlike, and the king renownd / For all heroyicall and kingly vertues' (2.1.269-71). In

---

[445] Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957), p. 309.

[446] Three anonymous editions of the play were published during the sixteenth century, the first tentatively dated 1592, when the play was entered in the Stationers' Register, two further ones dated 1599.

[447] For detailed comparison between *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Solyman and Perseda* see Lukas Erne, *Beyond "The Spanish Tragedy": A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2001), p. 161; Arthur Freeman 'Shakespeare and *Solyman and Perseda*', *The Modern Language Review*, 58/4 (1963), 481-87; *Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 140-46; and John J. Murray, (ed.), *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda* (New York: Garland, 1991), pp. xxix, xxx.

Soliman's court, Brusor, Soliman's advisor, who has attended the celebration of the wedding of the Prince of Cyprus and the daughter of the Governor of Rhodes and who has also taken part in the tournament that Erastus has won, is describing to Soliman the heroism of that winner, when Erastus himself bursts into Soliman's presence. Soliman asks Erastus for the reason of coming to his court, and the knight replies:

> ERASTUS. Thy vertuous fame and mine owne miserie.
> SOLIMAN. What miserie? Speake; for though you
> Christians account our Turkish race but barbarous,
> Yet have we eares to heare a just complaint
> And justice to defend the innocent,
> And pitie to such as are in povertie,
> And liberall hands to such as merit bountie. (3.1.56-62)

The Sultan's words question the preconceived notions of the Turks as barbarous people who lack benevolence and justice. The Sultan proves—for a good part of the play at least—that these preconceptions are mistaken when he demonstrates that he is a compassionate, just and generous ruler. Having heard Erastus's story, Soliman considers him as his 'adopted friend' and grants him the freedom to live as a Christian (3.1.100). After testing Erastus's valour in a friendly contest, in which Erastus beats Soliman, the Sultan esteems Erastus for his martial skills and instantly appoints him as a commander of the Janissaries (3.1.98). The Sultan's generous actions make Erastus admit that 'I must confesse that *Solyman* is kinde, / Past all compare, and more then my desart' (4.1.8-9). When the decision of the invasion of Rhodes is taken, Soliman wishes Erastus to lead the attack, but when the latter asks Soliman not to force him to 'sheath my slaughtering blade / In the deare bowels of my countrimen' (3.1.124-25) the Sultan admires and respects his decision. Moreover, as a sign of affection and esteem towards Erastus, Soliman decides to spare the inhabitants of the island from pillage (4.1.55-56). The portrayal of Soliman's humanity and liberality is highlighted further after his meeting and falling in love with Perseda, who is brought to his court as a captive after the fall of Rhodes. Despite his great passion, the Sultan acts nobly and generously when he agrees to Perseda's request to live as a 'Christian Virgin'

(4.1.142). Furthermore, after the accidental reunion between the lovers in Soliman's court, the Sultan agrees to their marriage and appoints Erastus as a governor of Rhodes. This initial depiction of Soliman as a generous, magnanimous and majestic figure reflects the early modern complimentary attitude towards the historical Sultan Suleiman.[448]

This positive projection of Soliman is just one aspect of the Sultan's characterisation that contrasts with his other image as a lustful tyrant. When meeting Perseda for the first time the Sultan becomes instantly captivated by her beauty. In a lascivious manner, Soliman gives an erotic description of Perseda's body (4.1.77-88), declaring that 'Love never tainted *Soliman* till now' (4.1.89) and describing his love as a 'maladie' (4.1.148) and fire (4.1.189-91). The commonplace notions of love at first sight or love as an illness or fire were perpetuated in Petrarchan love poetry of the period as well as in romances and novella compilations such as the source of the play. Wotton's work depicts love as an irrational condition that consumes the lover's body and mind; thus, upon seeing Perseda, Soliman is, almost comically, 'presently frying in the flame of this celestiall lampe'.[449] The narrator develops the theme of love as thirst when he excuses Soliman's earnest attempt to secure Perseda's favour: 'there is none so constant, which can refraine to drinke, being broiled with thyrste, especially finding a fitte fountaine.'[450]

However, Wotton might not be the sole source for these common romantic motifs since they were also stock techniques on the Elizabethan stage. In *Cambyses King of Persia* (1584) we see a similar scene when the king meets an unnamed Lady for the first time:

> For Cupid he that eyelesse boy, my hart hath so enflamed:
> With beauty you me to content, the like cannot be named.
> For since I entred in this place, and on you fixt mine eyes:
> Most burning fits about my hart, in ample wise did rise.
> The heat of the such force doth yeeld my corps they scorch alas
> And burns the same with wasting heat, as Titan doth ẏ gras

[448] See footnote 406 above.
[449] Henry Wotton, *A Courtlie Controuersie of Cupids Cautels* (London, 1578), p. 55.
[450] Ibid., pp. 72-73.

> And sith this heat is kindled so, and fresh in hart of me:
> There is no way but of the same, the quencher you must be.
> ([sig. E3, E3^{v}])

This stanza from an early play indicates that Soliman's romantic lines are not exclusively sultanic rhetoric but a type of conventional speech in Elizabethan drama. It is worth noting that *Solyman and Perseda* is the only play that presents a sultan engaged in amorous sensual pursuits. In all the plays under discussion sensuality is never a characteristic of stage sultans. Soliman might be the first example of the 'lustful sultan', a stock libertine that was not yet in evidence in Elizabethan drama but emerged as the seventeenth century progressed, culminating in Mary Pix's notorious *Ibrahim, the Thirteenth Emperor of the Turks* (1696). For this reason, *Solyman and Perseda* might well be considered a landmark in English theatre history.

Another distinctive feature in the Sultan's character is his readiness to use force, often recklessly so, and his indifference to ties of family or friendship when doing so. Soliman is the character that commits most killing in the play, either by himself or through his orders. The first appearance of Soliman shows him with his two brothers, Amurath and Haleb. The brothers' argument over the invasion of Rhodes escalates to a fatal confrontation that leads to Amurath's killing of Haleb. This murder prompts Soliman to mete out justice by killing Amurath on the spot. This scene has been consistently criticised for its gratuitousness and insignificance in relation to the main plot. John J. Murray excuses the inclusion of this subplot by explaining that

> Kyd's general methods and the adhering to Elizabethan conventions are the chief reasons for the scene's use. Kyd wished to introduce Soliman very early in the drama because he is, after all, the principal antagonist, and the slaughtering of the two brothers would fit the requirement of what Professor Lucas used to call 'the great moment scene' in Elizabethan plays.[451]

To my knowledge, no critic has realized that the author might have deliberately inserted this scene to show how the loss of the brothers in a dispute over the invasion

[451] John J. Murray, pp. xxxv.

of Rhodes makes Soliman more determined to attack the island. Soliman announces that 'In controversie touching the Ile of Rhodes / My brothers dyde; on Rhodes ile be revengd' (3.1.7-8). The early introduction of the antagonist, as Murray suggests, might be one of the reasons behind the inclusion of this scene, but as the above quotation shows, the playwright was clearly interested in motivating every action. In this I agree with Lukas Erne who observes that Kyd is ' "the first English dramatist who writes dramatically" in the sense that he is the first who skilfully represents human causality on stage'.[452] A closer look at Kyd's changes in the process of transforming the tale into drama shows his skill in contriving a tightly constructed plot where each action is utilised to induce further developments in the storyline. Brusor, who is mentioned late in the novella, appears in the first act of the play, where his participation in the tourney serves to make him the means through which the news of Erastus's extraordinary feats reach Soliman. Perseda's undramatic death by bullets from a Turkish musket in the source is expanded into a tragic scene where the disguised Perseda is killed by the Sultan in person; to heighten the pathos of the scene, Soliman's death follows as a result of her poisoned lips.

Soliman goes on a murderous rampage: after Erastus's trial and execution (which the Sultan himself has engineered to possess Erastus's wife) Soliman kills the two Janissaries who have strangled Erastus; he orders the Marshal to throw the trial's two false witnesses from a tower; and finally he commands Brusor to stab the Marshal. This bloodshed is the consequence of Soliman's regret over Erastus's unfair execution; now he wreaks his vengeance on those who helped 'bereave *Erastus* life from him' (5.3.104). In the last scene the Sultan causes yet more carnage by killing Piston, Erastus's servant, and the braggart knight, Basilisco, for trying to kiss the dying Perseda; he also orders the beheading of Brusor.

Vitkus describes the scene of the massacre of Soliman's two brothers as 'a typical English representation of the Ottoman royal house as a dysfunctional family that is power hungry and unnaturally murderous'.[453] This may well be true; however, on the Elizabethan stage, excessive violence is not necessarily linked to Turkish characters. *A*

[452] Erne, p. 4.
[453] Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 121.

Warning for Fair Women, a 1599 anonymous play, starts with an argument between the three allegorical figures History, Tragedy and Comedy about their mastery over the stage. Comedy satirically sums up Tragedy's task as 'How some damnd tyrant, to obtaine a crowne, / Stabs, hangs, impoysons, smothers, cutteth throats'.[454] In Elizabethan tragedies and histories brutality is a conventional characteristic of the action rather than a specific national or racial categorisation. Hence, gory actions are committed by all tragic Elizabethan characters regardless of their religious or racial affiliation. During this period, dramatists selected historical episodes, either English or foreign, which abounded with conflict and violence. John Payne Collier is hardly a moral authority but he may have a point with regard to Kyd's dramatic choices: 'if in his plays he [Kyd] dealt largely in blood and death, he only partook of the habit of the time, in which good sense and discretion were often outraged for the purpose of gratifying the crowd'.[455] Indeed, Kyd added more violence to the plot by inserting the scene that shows the murder of Soliman's brothers, which was not mentioned in the original tale.

Soliman is a lustful violent tyrant who brings about the tragic end of innocent lovers but he is not represented as an absolute villain since he is eventually allowed an honourable majestic exit. Having rid himself of Erastus, Soliman invades Rhodes to claim Perseda and the island. Perseda, who swears that 'first *Perseda* shall with this hand die / Then yeeld to him, and live in infamie' (5.3.61-62), fortifies the island and leads the forces to fight the invaders. The mournful heroine, who is disguised as a male, fights Soliman and is killed by him. Recognizing the dying Perseda, Soliman kisses her, unaware that her lips '*were sawst with deadly poyson*' (5.4.118) which ends his life. The dying Sultan asks Erastus for forgiveness and orders the execution of Brusor, who had convinced him to dispatch Erastus. He commands his Janissaries to put his and Perseda's bodies in Erastus's tomb. In his last words he addresses his soldiers:

---

[454] *A Warning for Fair Women*, Old English Drama: Students' Facsimile Edition (Amersham: n. p., 1912), p. [A2^{v}].

[455] John Payne Collier, *The History of English Dramatic Poetry to the Time of Shakespeare and Annals of the Stage to the Restoration* (London, 1831), 3: 207.

> Ah, Janisaries, now dyes your Emperour,
> Before his age hath seene his mellowed yeares.
> And if you ever loved your Emperour,
> Affright me not with sorrowes and laments:
> And when my soule from body shall depart,
> Trouble me not, but let me passe in peace,
> And in your silence let your love be showne. (5.4.133-39).

The serene pathos of Soliman's last speech intimates that ultimately the Sultan is redeemed. The play shows us an inherently noble Sultan whose evil actions are due to wicked counsel and unbridled infatuation. As Arthur Freeman comments on Soliman's last speech, his 'demise is, of course, unchristian, but in its Stoicism there is implicit the admiration of the author and the age'.[456] The play's main source itself presents the Sultan in a favourable light. Indeed, the novella puts the blame on Perseda rather than Soliman. It seeks to show that all misfortunes in love are, intentionally or not, caused by women: in Perseda's case, 'the faulte of the too beautifull bride, who pleasing the King overmuche, approched the flame so neare the flaxe'.[457] The narrator defends Soliman: 'if any man wyll accuse *Soliman*, those whiche are lawfull Judges in the Courte of Love wil easely excuse him, when they remember how the force of Love constraineth us to doe things unpossible to nature and right'.[458] Kyd follows faithfully his source and the romanticised depiction of Soliman as a blameless, dignified ruler in the source contributes to the variation in the character of the Sultan, who appears as a changeable figure oscillating between nobility and depravity.

Dramatically speaking, Soliman is a highly developed rounded figure. The scene of the fake trial illustrates these aspects in his character. The central action on stage shows the trial that is overheard by the hidden Soliman, while Piston is secretly watching both the trial and Soliman. Erne credits this multi-layered scene with 'a sophistication that goes beyond Kyd's predecessors and is rare even in early Shakespeare'.[459] Erne focuses on the complication of the scene; I would like to show

[456] Freeman, *Thomas Kyd*, p. 162.
[457] Wotton, p. 72.
[458] Ibid., pp. 72-73.
[459] Erne, p. 179.

how the scene illuminates the depth and multiplicity in Soliman's characterisation through the exposition of the psychological changes he goes through. The Sultan watches the trial that he himself has orchestrated. When Erastus appears, the concealed Soliman says 'See where he comes, whome though I deerely love, / Yet must his bloud be spilt for my behoofe, / Such is the force of marrow burning love' (5.2.12-14). Erastus's proclamation of his true love and loyalty to Soliman and his innocence make the Sultan reply 'My selfe would be his witnesse if I durst, / But bright *Persedaes* beautie stops my tongue' (5.2.32-33). But when the two false witnesses deliver their perjured testimonies against Erastus the Sultan curses them: 'Mischiefe and death shall light upon you both' (5.2.75), and when the death sentence is announced Soliman berates himself 'O unjust *Soliman*, O wicked time, / Where filthie lust must murther honest love' (5.2.90-91). The complexity of the scene gives a chance to the audience to access Soliman's deep thoughts, which cannot otherwise be exposed. His asides reveal the psychological conflict within him and divulge a diverse range of emotions, from being ready to sacrifice Erastus to the feeling of anger, then regret, for Erastus's unfair death. In fact, in this play the Sultan is the only character whose feelings, thoughts and motives are laid bare. Soliman appears as a multi-dimensional figure, and while the two main characters, Erastus and Perseda, who, as young people maddly in love, are depicted as lacking maturity and depth, the Sultan turns out to be a comparatively reflective rounded figure. Soliman is distinguished for his ability to engage with highly moral and intellectual issues. He blames himself for killing his brother and questions the idea of justice that makes man a killer.

> If love of *Haleb* forst me on to wrath,
> Curst be that wrath that is the way to death.
> If justice forst me on, curst be that justice
> That makes the brother Butcher of his brother. (1.5.108-11)

In another questioning statement that exhibits the Sultan's reflective nature he inquires 'What should he do with crowne and Emperie, / That cannot governe private fond affections' (4.1.145-46). It is not usual in dramatic works of this period to present characters that expose their inner psychological reflections. This type of

characterisation evident to a greater extent in another Kydian figure, Hieronimo, found its ultimate shape in Shakespeare's Hamlet. Erne does not miss the mark when he argues that 'Soliman may seem like a second-rate artistic creation when contrasted with Lear or Othello, but compared with characters in contemporary and earlier plays he looks like a remarkable achievement'.[460]

It is worth noting that, although the plot of *Solyman and Perseda* is fictitious, it precariously claims an entitlement to historical truth. The references to historical figures such as Soliman, and real events and places, create the illusion that the drama is a real historical account. Early modern drama that is based loosely on actual historical events constructs its own version of truth. The extent of the influence of such *dramatic* truth is evident in how other plays adopted and recycled motifs from *Solyman and Perseda*. In Erne's view, *The Jew of Malta* sees, contrary to historical fact, Malta's entire town guards killed because Marlowe 'followed the recent *Soliman and Perseda*, which his audience would still have remembered, rather than any of the 'dozens' of historical accounts'.[461]

As we have seen, the Sultan is a complex, volatile figure that oscillates in his extreme passions and reactions. Soliman is capable of displaying a vast range of contradictory feelings: love, hatred, anger, generosity, magnanimity, viciousness and lust. His dramatic image is constructed out of two dominant ingredients: the current staple of stage tyrants such as brutality, capriciousness and lecherousness, and the romanticised source that portrays the sultan as a figure not totally deprived of heroism and nobility. These combined factors give us a stage sultan who does not lack complexity and inventiveness.

Tomumbeius

An Ottoman sultan appeared in a second Latin play entitled *Tomumbeius, Sive Sultanici in Aegypto Imperii Eversio*.[462] The play survives in a single manuscript; there is no evidence that it has ever been published. The English version discussed here is available online, translated by Christopher McKelvie and edited by Roberta Barker.

[460] Ibid., p. 181.
[461] Ibid, p. 159.
[462] Bodleian Library, MS. Bodl. Rawl. Poet. 75.

The title-page of the manuscript carries the author's name, George Salterne of Bristol. The dramatist might have used any of the known sources on the Ottoman invasion of Egypt, such as Peter Ashton's *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles* (1546), Thomas Newton's *A Notable Historie of the Saracens* (1575), and Philip Lonicer's *Chronicorum Turcicorum* (1578). The dates of the play's composition or performance are not known. It is definitely an Elizabethan production because the dramatist prefaced his play with a poem dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. Chew proposes that it could have been written as a sequel for *Selimus*, which means that it was written after 1594.[463] In the introduction of the play, the online editor surmises that *Tomumbeius* was written either in the period 1582-4, when Salterne was a student at Oxford, or in the period from late 1580s to early 1590s, during the dramatist's years in the Middle Temple.

Tomumbeius dramatises the defeat, arrest and execution of Tumanbay, the last Mamluk ruler in Egypt, at the hand of the Ottoman Sultan Selim. The sultan is the present/ absent figure in this play. Selimus appears only as an apparition in a vision that the Caliph, a priest and counsellor of Tomumbeius, conjures up at the command of his master. Tomumbeius tells the Caliph about

> a dream that descended upon my eyes as soon as I slept. Oh, the monstrous things it made known to me! Mud, marsh, water, blood, gallows: now I seem to flee alone, follow Selimus; now I hide myself in a marsh, and then I am pulled out of the mud. I would gladly consult the holy oracles, to see if what is to come may be discerned so that I might know what Selimus now thinks and does. (4.1)

None of the sources that the dramatist might have depended on mention Tomumbeius' dream. However, an Arabic source narrates that when Tomumbeius entered the valley where he was arrested, he told his companions about a dream he had two nights before. In the dream he saw himself in the same valley, with five black dogs attacking him. He tried to defend himself by his sword but the sword flew from

[463] Chew, p. 494.

his hand and the dogs started to devour him.[464] Ibn Zunbul (?-1574) was a witness of the Ottoman invasion of Egypt and is one of the major authorities on this historical event. There is no evidence that European historians knew his chronicle because his account was translated into Ottoman Turkish only after the sixteenth century.

Although he has a brief ethereal appearance, Selimus' ubiquitous presence is felt throughout because as a representative of the coming danger he is constantly the topic of other characters' speeches. Selimus is introduced as 'a harsh, savage, impious Turk' who comes from 'the wicked blood of Ottoman' (1.2). He is described by the Caliph as 'an inhuman monster, no piety moves him' (3.2), in a reference to Selim's killing of the members of his family to obtain the throne. He is the greedy, brutal, barbarian tyrant but also a victorious brave fighter (3.1). His heroism is described in the messenger's account of the last battle between him and Tomumbeius: when the Turks started to lose ground and to flee, 'suddenly Selimus [burst forth], thundering havoc as he flew into battle like a thunderbolt, with the power of a storm coming forth from the flashing of south or a winter gale roiling vast oceans' (5.1).

However, when Selimus appears in the vision, his image as a fierce, cruel man becomes highly destabilised. The vision shows Selim addressing the goddess of war:

> Turn back, go far away, fierce goddess of war! Will we never enjoy security and peace? Shall I never again sheath the sword which once I drew? Even now I wish for an end to the war with Tomumbeius in honest peace, but I do not wish for it to end in false faith. Give us peace! (4.2).

The vision then shows a messenger informing Selim that his peace emissaries have been killed by Tomumbeius' men. Selim is inflamed by the bad news: 'Can there be such injustice? Such great wickedness? Has it not been enough to wage war, that false men should assail my person with treachery? Beaten, put to flight, scarcely still holding a corner of their kingdom, the enemy would murder a messenger of peace?' (4.3). Selim adds wrathfully 'It is sin even to ignore a messenger, and he killed one! It

---

[464] Ahmad Ibn Ali Ibn Zunbul, *Akhirat al-Mamalik* [The End of the Mamluks], ed. Abd al-Munaim 'Amar, 2nd edn. (Cairo: The Egyptian General Corporation of Books, 1998), p. 226.

is a sin to do violence to a messenger, and he criminally betrayed one!' (4.3). The appearance of the Sultan in a vision rather than in a normal scene is more effective in the exposition of his character. His projected portrayal through the vision has a sense of immediacy and credibility. Dramaturgically, the Sultan is visible to the staged characters and to the audience but he is unconscious of his visibility. This unconsciousness endows his short appearance with spontaneity and ingenuousness. In his direct revelation to the audience he shows himself as a magnanimous sovereign who hates war and is disposed towards peace. Indeed, the scene shows a Sultan who does not look for needless violence but is prepared to do battle when required for sound political reasons. This contrasts him starkly with Tomumbeius, whose first acts are critically reflected by his treatment of Selimus's messenger.

Selimus' wish for peace and his wrath for killing of his messengers have their historical roots but they are exaggerated in the play to highlight the horrible wrongdoing committed by the Mamluks. The message is that the Egyptians are sinful and deserve punishment. The divine retribution and the dire consequences of committing evil is the underling recurring theme of this drama. The play opens and concludes with Astraea, who contemplates and moralises about divine justice. Throughout the play the Mamluks are represented as a sinful race who are justly punished by the Turks. The destruction of Egypt is seen by the moralising chorus as 'Uprooting utterly the thornbush of sin' (5.1). The Caliph tells Tomumbeius that God is not malicious in his chastisement of people but

> our crimes lie ever heavy upon us. Our impotent pride, our overwhelming indulgence, our insatiable thirst for gold, lust for evil and jealousy, the unjust companion of great virtue [...] every day create harsher punishments for the Nile. Drive sin away from your kingdom, please the gods! Please the gods, and you keep your kingdom inoffensively. (1.2)

The play offers the second representation of the historical Sultan Selim on the Elizabethan stage, but it is apparent that Selimus in *Tomumbeius* has little to share with Greene's Selimus. Under the influence of the Marlovian heroic model Greene

mustered the available dramatic tools from Senecan and Machiavellian conventions to the Vice in order to formulate an extremely ambitious, brutal and cynical figure that can be a successful contender to Tamburlaine. Salterne, who depends predominantly on the Senecan tradition, is not interested in constructing the Sultan as an overreacher but to forge a figure characterised by his love of peace to foreground the unfair treatment he received from his enemies. The figure of the Sultan has to be adjusted to contribute in highlighting the ultimate message of *Tomumbeius* which is the justifiability of divine retribution. Although the two plays dramatise the same historical figure, what decides the final shape of the character are dramatic imperatives dictated by the dramatic models the playwrights adopted and the ultimate message and purpose of the work.

John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon

The last Elizabethan play to dramatise an Ottoman sultan is *John of Bordeaux or The Second Part of Friar Bacon*, an anonymous play that survives in a fragmented manuscript attributed to the period 1590-94.[465] The manuscript was edited and printed by the Malone Society in 1936. The editor designates it as a sequel to Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* and gave it the above title. *John of Bordeaux* is a shortened version of the original text.[466] It has many defects but overall the text is comprehensible. The dramatist apparently borrowed some of his characters from Thomas Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590). Dimmock also suggests Sir John Bourchier's *The Boke of Duke Huon of Burdeux* (1534?) as a possible source for the drama.[467]

The central theme of the play is the story of John of Bordeaux, the commander of the army of Frederick, Emperor of Germany. The Emperor's son, Ferdinand, plots against Bordeaux because he wants to seduce the latter's wife Rossalin; eventually he succeeds in convincing the Emperor to banish Bordeaux. Another central figure, the English necromancer Bacon, manages to expose Ferdinand's conspiracy; with his

[465] The Duke of Northumberland's Library at Alnwick Castle, MS 507.
[466] With 1720 lines the play is shorter than other plays produced during the same time. The play's editor conjectures that the fragmentary manuscript might be a shortened version of the lost original play that was prepared for a touring cast, p xiii.
[467] Dimmock, p. 183.

magical skills, he reconciles Ferdinand with his father, Bordeaux and Rossalin, and the play ends on a happy note. The Turks appear in the play as representative of the outside danger to Christendom that takes shape in the Ottoman siege of the Italian city of Ravenna. Bordeaux's valour saves the city for a while but after his banishment it becomes defenseless and falls to Amurath.

The sultan is not a central figure in the drama. He appears briefly at the beginning of the play in a scene with Friar Bacon: Bacon is arrested and brought to the Turkish camp, where he flaunts his extraordinary skills in front of the sultan and demands boldly that Amurath give him his crown, robe and scimitar—'yeld them me with out delaye, / for Inglish Bacon will not hav a naye' (174-75). Amurath replies:

> Blasphemus Cristian what my royall croune framd at
> the cost of worlicke ottaman that fyrst was supreme
> of the mightie Turke my curious robe and my semeter
> my I exchaung them for the western world and have the
> land that Limite from the allps unto the farthest
> setting of the son I would not leve my robe nor yet
> my croune, my semeter se Cristian how it shines. (176-82)

Amurath asks for his sword to cut off Bacon's head but the latter casts a paralyzing spell on the sultan. Bacon deceives Amurath by showing him the apparition of his son Selimus; the English magician pretends he is going to kill Selimus, which forces the Sultan to sacrifice his regal paraphernalia to ransom his son.

The references to the Sultan's turban and garments indicate that the sultanic figure in this play is dressed in special costume. Other Elizabethan plays show that, in addition to the costume, other accessories represented the sultans visually onstage. In *The Spanish Tragedie*, Hieronimo plans his revenge through the enactment of a playlet that has the same plot as *Solyman and Perseda*. Hieronimo orders one of his cast 'You must provide a turkish cappe, / A black mustacio, and a Fauchion' (4.1.144-45). From these two plays it follows that a Turkish sultan was distinguished on the stage by his turban, robe, facial hair and a sword. The turban in particular is a conspicuous mark of Turkishness and used as an emblem of Islam. In *Solyman and Perseda* the turban is

utilised as the sign of conversion. When the braggart knight Basilisco converts to Islam, Perseda's friend, Lucina, asks him 'how chance, / Your turkish bonet is not on your head?' (5.3.13-14), he replies that 'Because I now am Christian againe' (5.3.15).

The theatres were not unique in acquiring or showing Turkish costume. Ottoman attire in England can be traced to the late medieval period and the early Renaissance. The Turkish fashion was distinctly present in Tudor England. In a banquet, Henry VIII 'with the Erle of Essex, came in appareled after Turkey fashiō, in long robes of Bawdkin, powdered with gold, hattes on their heddes of Crimosyn Velvet, with greate rolles of Gold, girded with two swordes, called Cimiteries hangyng by greate bawderikes of gold'.[468] The interest in wearing Turkish clothes survived during Elizabeth's reign. Safiye Sultan, Sultan Murad III's favourite concubine, sent a royal outfit as a gift to Queen Elizabeth. The gift was chosen according to the advice of the English ambassador Edward Barton.[469] Barton's suggestion of Turkish garb indicates its popularity at that time. Undoubtedly, the contact with the Ottomans made their costume familiar and accessible in England. In *Queen Elizabeth's Wordrobe Unlock'd*, Janet Arnold states that fashions at the court were 'partly adapted from styles described by travellers returning home from abroad or brought to the country by foreign visitors'.[470] For the royal and upper class who searched for a new and striking appearance, Turkish costume represented exoticism, luxury and power. However, the Turkish fashion was not exclusive to the better classes but soon became a popular trend. Commenting on the fashion in his own day, the Elizabethan author William Harrison wrote that dress changed rapidly from Spanish to French and German, then 'by and by the Turkish manner is generally best liked of'.[471] The Turkish influence was not confined to clothes but extended to hair styles as 'some are shaven from the chin like those of Turks'.[472]

---

[468] Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (London, 1809), p. 513.
[469] Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1903), 6:102.
[470] Janet Arnold (ed.), *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (Leeds: Maney, 1988), p. 112.
[471] William Harrison, *The Description of England: The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*, ed. Georges Edelen (New York: Dover, 1994), p. 146.
[472] Ibid.

What is noticeable about the sultan in *John of Bordeaux* is that he features in a comical scene. Most of the comical effect is produced by Bacon's assistant Perce. Commenting sarcastically on the sultan's turban, Perce says that 'I am hartelie sorrie for him' (141) because 'he semes to be trobled with the headake a has / such a vengable manie of cloute a bought the pat on him' (142-43). Bacon orders the sultan to hand over his crown, robe and scimitar to Perce, who quips, 'shall I gev him my cape my goune and my sword and then a can not / say that we ar behoulding to him for exchaung is no roberie' (212-13). A joke on Ottoman garments as markers of tragedy follows, when Perce plays with the audience's expectations: 'this is Like to prove a tragedie I but on / the Turke robes and make an extent in his beest appariell' (216-17). Using the Sultan as a butt of mockery is determined by the tragicomical nature of the play. The episode provides comic relief for the main tragic incidents happening in Frederick's court. At the same time, the scene is intended to demonstrate the talent of the English magician, who is capable of obtaining the regal symbols from a great sovereign. Obviously, the choice of the Ottoman Sultan increases the effectiveness and comicality of the scene as he represents a powerful ruler 'whos worth hath won the world' (112). Ravenna is later reported to have fallen to Amurath but the success of Bacon and his servant in making the Sultan a subject of their mockery constitutes at least a symbolic victory over the Great Turk.

Conclusion

The foregoing critical survey shows that the Ottoman sultan was a familiar figure on the Elizabethan stage. His familiarity stems firstly from his royal status since the lives of people of great rank were the usual subject of Elizabethan historical and tragical drama. The playwrights were interested in dramatising the sultans because their fictional and historical tales illustrated themes such as the struggle for power, ambition, revenge, vanity of worldly pursuits and divine punishment, which were popular on the stage. We may conclude that dramatists were not interested in the figure

of the sultan per se but in his potential to feature the familiar themes of Elizabethan drama.

The dramas under discussion present diverse multifaceted sultanic characters. These stage sultans are by no means modelled on a static pattern. Much critical literature has proposed the existence of a stock stage sultan.[473] This critical view that can be traced to older studies, such as Chew's significant volume *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937), gathers momentum thereafter, and especially the last three decades have given it a systematic ideological shape in the wake of postcolonial criticism. The diverse characters discussed above prove that it is difficult to detect a stage sultan that fits the mold of what Vitkus calls 'archetypal sultan': the despotic, lustful, cruel, fickle, whimsical, irrationally angry sultan.[474] In all the plays produced during Elizabeth's reign there is only one stage sultan, Soliman in *Solyman and Perseda*, who exhibits sexual passion. The heterogeneity of the stage sultans is clearly demonstrated in *Selimus*, which shows two contradictory sultanic figures: Selimus, the brutal, parricidal, fratricidal tyrannical son, and Bajazet, the gentle, judicious old sultan. Furthermore, the multiplicity in the representations of the sultans is evident in how the same Selimus is represented in a quite different light in another Elizabethan play. In *Tomumbeius*, Selimus' vicious side is downgraded; instead his ahistorical portrayal emphasises a peace-loving ruler who is the victim of the Egyptians' aggression. The discussion illustrates that the stage sultans occasionally share characteristics typical of royal characters on the Elizabethan stage and thus do not strictly conform to a Turkish stereotype. Indeed, these figures do not constitute a separate dramatic 'species', because in their ambition, heroism, bombast and brutality they are not different from their predecessors or contemporaries like Herod, Tamburlaine and Richard III.

The study demonstrates that the conventions of Elizabethan drama were not adapted to form a distinctive image of Ottoman sultans; rather, the sultans were adapted to conform to current dramatic traditions. Dramatic models of royalty had already been shaped and developed by influences from the native mystery and morality plays, as well as Senecan and Machiavellian conventions; the sultan adapted to such models. In

[473] See Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, p. 115; Dimmock, p. 196; and Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), pp. 12-14.
[474] Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, p. 115.

the above discussion we have seen many examples of this process of adaptation. For example, Soliman' murder of his father raised the opportunity of showing the latter as a vengeful Senecan ghost. Selimus in *Selimus* had to discard his faith and act as a staunch atheist to conform to the Machiavellian character in vogue.

The study also shows that other factors such as the source material, theatrical competition and commercial profit influenced the characterisation of the stage sultan. The sultanic figure is equally indebted to the dramatists' choices, aims and individual writing habits; for example, Marlowe's ambivalence in creating his characters and his tendency towards satire have a bearing on Bajazeth's character. With all these influences at work it is understandable that we have seen multifaceted inconsistent theatrical representations of the Ottoman sultans.

Conclusion

The thesis has examined a selection of sixteenth-century sources from England and the Ottoman territories which contained textual, and sometimes visual, representations of Ottoman sultans. The study has covered genres such as travel writing, historiography, diplomatic correspondence and drama. The material has been examined by using an interdisciplinary approach that draws on critical tools from literary theory, cultural studies, historiographical debates and art history. The study does not adopt a particular theoretical framework to read the primary texts; instead, the discussions in every chapter have engaged with critical concepts such as representation, subjectivity, identity, nationalism, alterity and cross-cultural encounter, that are spontaneously suggested by the content of the discussed material.

The thesis has focused on texts which have been neglected in current scholarship: these include letters exchanged between the Sublime Porte and Queen Elizabeth I, two Latin plays, *Solymannidae* and *Tomumbeius* (here examined for the first time), and accounts of Sultan Selim I's conquest of Egypt as told by Richard Knolles and the Mamluk historian Shihab al-Din Ibn Iyas (here subjected, for the first time, to detailed comparative analysis).

The study reveals the variety and heterogeneity in the way the sultan was perceived and represented. Travellers saw and reported different aspects of the sultans' personalities and behaviour. For example, in Fynes Moryson's travelogue, Sultan Mehmed III was a brave warrior who stood his ground when his men had fled the battlefield, but John Sanderson recounted how the Sultan helplessly watched from the seraglio's window as his soldiers murdered his mother's favourite servant. This is the same Mehmed who sat by the organ maker Thomas Dallam, listening to his musical performance and rewarding him from his own pocket. He is also the Sultan who reportedly ordered the execution of nineteen of his brothers. Likewise, travellers presented different accounts of the sultans' environment, in particular, the harem.

Dallam, an eye-witness, depicted its inhabitants as richly clothed, beautiful, carefree girls who were playing with a ball. Moryson's second-hand fantasy report recycled the conventional tropes about the harem and portrayed the women living there as mere sex slaves.

Travel writing is, albeit fictionalised in part, based on factual material obtained from real encounters with the Ottoman world. English travellers to Istanbul faced a new alien terrain and their experiences confirmed, adjusted or subverted any preconceptions of the sultans they might have had. While an Elizabethan dramatist, for example, might have had more freedom to create a fictional sultan, a travel narrator was, for all his subjective impressions, to a greater extent influenced by the realities in Istanbul. A pertinent example is the conversation Dallam had with the English ambassador Henry Lello, who had warned him about Mehmed III's arrogance and cruelty. Yet eventually Dallam met the Sultan, sitting so close to him that he touched Mehmed's knee, and received gold from the Sultan's hand. Such real and unpredictable experiences created highly diverse and even contradictory representations of the sultans.

The depiction of Sultan Selim I in Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* depended on historiographical practices of the period as well his Continental European sources. During the early modern period historians became more interested in verifying their material and producing reliable information. As a consequence, Knolles's image of Selim eschewed conventional prejudice. Knolles may have employed crusader rhetoric in the dedication and introduction of the *Historie* for tactical reasons—perhaps in order to appeal to a broader readership or a dedicatee; yet, in his account of Selim's personality and actions, Knolles achieved his stated goal of a fairly reliable historical standard. He gives us a realistic, well-rounded historical figure, especially when compared to Ibn Iyas's highly subjective view of Egypt's conqueror.

The comparison of an Arabic chronicle with Knolles's *Historie* reveals a good deal of affinity: Knolles and Ibn Iyas adopted a similar conception of the roles of God and Fortune in historical processes, and ascribed to Fortune horrific actions and events that would have been difficult to reconcile with a just and merciful God. Both regarded the

Ottoman expansion as divine punishment. Thus, the study shows that there was an intellectual space during the sixteenth century when the perspective of a Christian Elizabethan historian would have been understood and shared by a Muslim historian from the East. The analysis demonstrates that comparative Anglo-Arabic analysis can be a productive field of inquiry that provides a broader picture of early modern historical events.

Importantly, anti-Ottoman rhetoric was not exclusive to Western writers as the Arabic text shared with many early modern Europeans their antagonistic and alienating sentiments towards the Turks. My findings challenge studies that insist on a specifically Western anti-Ottoman 'othering' discourse. Intriguingly, the Mamluk historian, who shared his religion and culture with the Turks, configured them as the Other: as he saw it, their religious and cultural practices, as well as their political and military system were alien and objectionable. We can find some parallels between Ibn Iyas's attitude and English alienating discourse towards Spain, as evident in the petitions of the English ambassadors to Sultan Murad. The religious heritage shared between England and Spain did not prevent the English from considering their Christian neighbours as the religious Other. In the same way as Ibn Iyas highlighted the Turks' supposed religious deviance, many English Protestants too considered Spanish Catholicism as a departure from the true Christian faith. Remarkably, English diplomatic rhetoric fashioned a religious affinity with Islam which was grounded upon the Islamic and Protestant opposition to religious icons and idolatry. Such a complex network of affiliations and alienations destabilises any conceptualisation of East and West as religiously unified, uniform entities in opposition to each other. The above examples have shown that the discourse of alterity does not depend on religious difference but on historical contexts and circumstances.

With regard to Elizabethan drama, the sultan became a likely choice for tragical and historical repertoire that featured the lives of eminent personages, and playwrights found in the history of the Ottoman dynasty a rich mine for tragedies that centred around the popular themes of ambition, revenge, power struggles and court intrigues. The analysis has brought to light a group of richly varied sultanic characters that appeared on the stage during the last two decades of the sixteenth century. The

portrayal of sultans on the Elizabethan stage was formulated and regulated by certain imperatives and traditions. Dramatic conventions were partly inherited from mystery and morality cycles; partly they derived from neo-Senecan and Machiavellian modes of characterisation. Similarly, other factors such as source material, theatrical competition and commercial profit had an impact on the characterisation of the stage sultan. Finally, a sultan's character was indebted to a dramatist's creative choices and individual writing habits.

While giving due attention to theoretical backgrounds and close readings of plays, my thesis has, above all, analysed representations of stage sultans with close attention to their dramatic contexts. Studies interested in the representations of Muslims in early modern English drama have insisted on reading the stage sultan as a separate dramatic 'species'.[475] The limitation of this practice lies in its dealing with the sultan as an autonomous character that is isolated from his dramatic roots and context. This approach needs urgent revision. An interpretation of the character of Selimus in Greene's eponymous play as a mere stereotypical example of an Oriental tyrant does not explain why he should be depicted as an atheist. We need to look further and consider the influence of Machiavelli on the Elizabethan stage during this period and investigate issues related to theatrical competition and commercial consideration—the investigation of these factors would clarify the dramatist's intention to forge a radical hero who could contend with Marlowe's Tamburlaine. It is only then when we discover that the significant factors that shaped the character of the sultan had little to do with Turkish or Islamic culture.

The thesis has traced the development of the sultanic figure, from a crude neo-Senecan character in *Solymannidae* to a more sophisticated one in *Selimus* and *Solyman and Perseda*. As the figure evolved, it contributed to the rich roster of characters on the early modern English stage. Selimus represents one of the earliest Machiavellian overreachers and, in this quality, certainly influenced later villains in the genre. Likewise, Soliman's rounded character in *Solyman and Perseda* marked a

---

[475] See for example, Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); and Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999).

significant phase in the evolution of multi-dimensional characters in English drama. Over the next two centuries the sultan remained a familiar figure on the English stage. It would be a rewarding topic for future research to examine his continued theatrical history.

While three chapters have considered how travellers, dramatists and historians represented the sultans, one chapter has inverted the point of view, by illustrating how the sultans envisaged and represented themselves in letters. The epistolary texts introduced a subjective narrative that expressed their senders' personal and cultural perspective. Despite the side effects of translation the letters retained their distinctive Eastern style and conveyed a set of beliefs and values that were different from and challenging to the Christian European point of view.

Another observation about the material under discussion is the tendency in each genre to circulate types of information about the sultans that were not often reflected in or shared by the other genres—despite the fact that the texts were produced during the same historical period. For example, in the sultans' letters and Elizabethan travelogues the sultans are represented as the Queen's diplomatic and commercial partners. In Knolles's *Historie*, which was published twenty-four years after the establishment of Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic and commercial relations, there is no inkling that England had diplomatic or trading agreements with the Turks. Knolles's volume was intended as a comprehensive publication that recorded all material about the history of the Ottoman Empire, yet the author was silent about a chapter in Turkish history that was related to his own country.[476]

The same applies to drama—for example, despite the existence of numerous accounts of the harem, monogamous sultans kept strutting the stage; in fact, there is hardly any reference to the harem and Bajazeth's promise to make Tamburlaine 'a chaste and lustlesse Eunuke, / And in my Sarell tend my Concubines' (3.3.77-78) remains an exception. Although many plays of the period were based on historical accounts, Elizabethan drama appears to have gone a different way with regard to sultans. Surprisingly, playwrights did not draw much upon facts conveyed in letters,

[476] Knolles includes one letter from Murad to the Queen mentioning briefly the Queen's request to help Don Antonio and commenting on Murad's unwillingness to invade Spain. *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603), p. 1007; strangely enough he does not give the letter's historical context.

travelogues or histories even if these might have contributed to a more vivid and spectacular stage sultan. Obviously, what was performed on the stage was more often than not decided by dramatic choices rather than outside influences.

Overall, my analysis of the material under discussion has demonstrated just how diverse and inconsistent the image of the sultan was. Critical attempts at nuanced portrayals of Muslims in early modern English texts need to go significantly further than many current generalised views.[477] Nor is it possible to operate with simplistic notions of Orientalism. Significant factors other than Turkish culture, Islam or the East came into play. As I have shown, the textual characteristics of each genre and authorial intentions were important, as were performance contexts and the placement of particular statements. As much has become evident from my analysis of specific authorial statements which address their recipients directly, such as in Knolles's *Historie* and in travelogues. Seeking personal direct contact with readers or audiences involves a degree of identification and compliance with their supposed expectations and beliefs. We need to ask whether Knolles, in speaking to his readers, really believed the Turks to be barbarous and tyrannical, or whether he rehearsed commonplaces in order to please, given that the main body of his volume often takes a more balanced stance. Likewise, when travelogues voiced conventional negative opinions, their authors might have felt the need to express their subjective, heartfelt feelings; but we should also consider that they might have sought confirmation of their culture's basic views of Turks as cruel infidels. By the same token, Richard Wrag extolled the reign of Queen Elizabeth as peaceful and prosperous by opportunistically highlighting Murad's rule as chaotic and irreligious.

My study has shown that currently fashionable ideas about multicultural interaction cannot adequately address an early modern context. Recent studies[478] that have examined the contact between England and the Islamic world during the early modern period tend to depict the contact as an extensive intercultural exchange. The discussion

---

[477] For example, while Nabil Matar's books have made a huge contribution to widening the subject, there are grounds to revise his view that 'in literature and theology, and thus in the emergent ideology of early modern Britain, the Muslim was depicted as occupying a place beneath the civilized European/ Christian'. *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999), p. 14.

[478] See the Introduction, pp. 15-18.

of Elizabethan travelogues and sultan's letters illustrates that this notion of far-reaching interaction is exaggerated. The Englishmen who headed to the Ottoman capital were usually connected with the English diplomatic delegation or trading companies in Istanbul. As the contact in this period was limited to diplomatic and trading circles, it is an exaggeration to qualify it as an intercultural phenomenon—indeed, the exchange of letters or commodities between a limited group of individuals does not constitute a significant cultural exchange.

Homi Bhabha and Timothy Powell[479] may fruitfully discuss mixed societies in the Americas, Australia and South Africa in terms of post-colonialism, globalisation and cross-cultural interaction; yet applied to sixteenth-century Anglo-Ottoman relations, such an approach would exaggerate the depth of understanding between England and the Islamic world. Representatives on both sides aimed at material benefits rather than any intercultural communication in the modern sense, where the participants engage in a dialogue that leads to mutual understanding and respect. In the early modern period, participants on both sides were capable of holding fast to their prejudices: the kind and generous treatment Dallam received in the Sultan's palace failed to change his mind about the supposed barbarity of his hosts, and likewise, 'dog' remained a favourite Ottoman invective against Christian residents in Istanbul.[480] Indeed, on occasion, encounters did not facilitate any intercultural dialogue but intensified religious and nationalist sentiments: far from understanding or tolerating the Turkish culture, English travellers asserted proudly their Englishness and Protestantism. This observation may equally explain the lack of authorial subjectivity in Elizabethan travelogues. It has been argued that authorial self-representation in these texts is eclipsed by the travellers' religious and nationalist sense of belonging: the occasional individualistic statements voiced by travellers were expressive of their Protestant English identity rather than of their own subjective views.

---

[479] See the Introduction, pp. 15-17.

[480] According to Fynes Moryson, the Turks called all Christians dogs; thus, when he was watching the Sultan's parade, a guard tried to push him back, and when 'a Janizary that our Ambassador had sent to conduct me, putt him back, […] he would not admitt his excuse for me, but said it might not be indured that a Christian dogg should come so neare to the Emperor'. *Shakespeare's Europe: Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, Being a Survey of the Condition of Europe at the End of the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Hughes (London: Longman, Sherratt & Hughes, 1903), p. 54.

Advocates of an intercultural approach have perpetuated the myth of a smooth interaction between supposedly equal nations, thereby neglecting imbalances in power relations.[481] The interaction between the Ottoman Empire and Elizabethan England was one between a world power and a small kingdom that led, at that point, a peripheral existence on the world map. From the analysis of the sultans' letters, Queen Elizabeth emerges as a petitioner, depending on the goodwill of the Ottoman court, with the sultans or Sultana Safiye graciously granting favours. The fact that the relation was basically founded on unequal terms explains why the sultans viewed the English Queen as inferior ally and expected from her obedience and collaboration.

During the Elizabethan period, the figure of the sultan became at once more commonly known and more complex. The sultan ceased to be a distant, vague idea: he became a correspondent with the English monarch, and Englishmen were able for the first time to 'see' him face-to-face in actual meetings, in portraits and on stage, and to read first-hand accounts of his person and life. Whether or not the availability of more information led to greater mutual understanding or to a hardening of conventional prejudiced views, it nevertheless contributed to adding sophistication in representations of the East and in broadening Elizabethan horizons.

[481] Peter Burke draws attention to this aspect of intercultural communication when he calls on scholars to distinguish between encounters of equals and unequals. *Cultural Hybridity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), p. 67.

Appendix I: Engraving of Sultan Selim I in *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*

SELYMVS.

Phil. Lonicer. Turc.Hist.lib.1.

En Selymus, ſcelere ante alios immanior omnes:
In patris, & fratrum, dirigit arma necem.
In Perſas mouet inde ferox: Memphitica regna
Deſtruit: & Syros Æthiopaſq; domat.
Hinc in Chriſticolas irarum effundere fluctus,
Ipſorumq; imo vertere regna parat.
Cùm diro victus proſternitur vlcere: Chriſtus
Scilicet eſt populi portus & aura ſui.

Lo *Selymus*, in crueltie exceeding others farre,
His father, and his brethren both, deſtroies with mortall warre.
The Perſian fiercely he aſſailes: and conquers Ægypts land:
The Sirian, and the Moore likewiſe, he tam'd with mightie hand.
But purpoſing in his mad mood, the Chriſtians to confound,
And the memoriall of their name to roote from off the ground;
A loathſome Canker eat him vp, and brought him to his end:
Chriſt is to his the ſafeſt port, when he will them defend.

Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603), p. 498.

Appendix II: The Structure and Components of Ottoman Formal Letters.

The internal parts in the letters may vary depending on their subject, purpose and recipient, but in general they consist of some or most of the following components:

I-Introductory Protocol

1- Invocation of God
2- Tughra (imperial cipher).
3- Intitulation (name and rank of the sender)
4- Inscription (name and titles of addressee)
5- Salutation

II-Body or context of document

1-Narration and disposition (declares the reason of issuing the letter)
2-Sanction and corroboration (threat of punishment for disobedience)

III-Final protocol

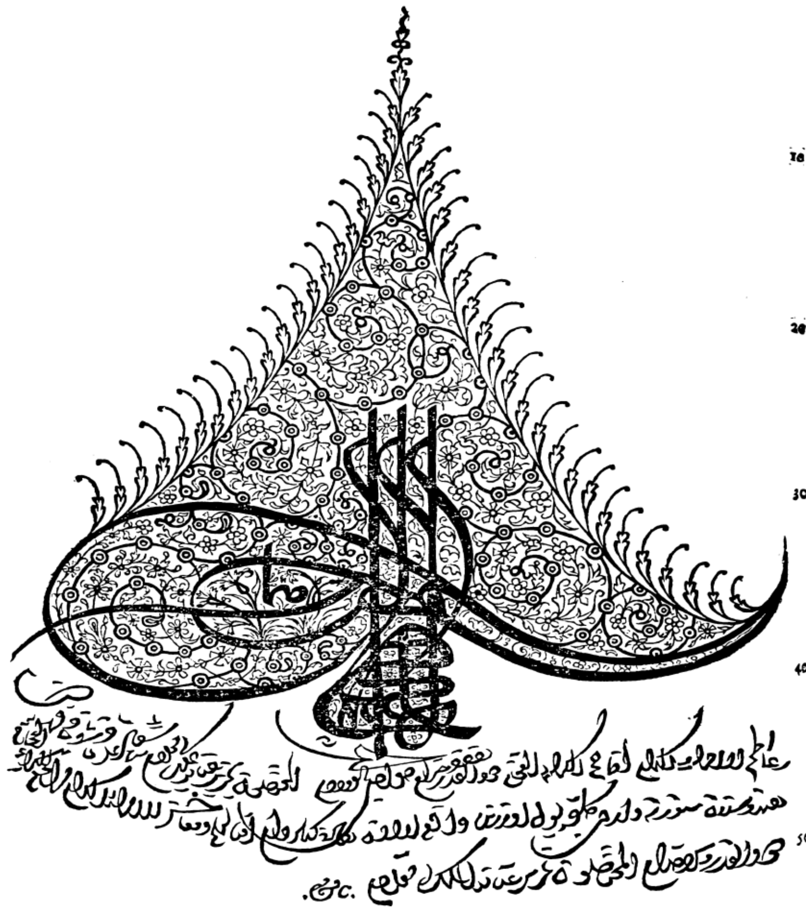
1-Date
2-Place of Writing
3- Seal [482]

---

[482] After Jan Reychman and Ananiasz Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomatics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968), p. 140.

Appendix III: The Reproduction of the Sultan's Signature in *Purchas His Pilgrimes in Five Bookes*.

344 *The forme of the* Grand Signiors *Seale, with part of his Passe.* LIB. IIII.



The Great Turkes *Letters Patents Englished.*

YOU *that are My most* Laudable, *Fortunate, Wealthie, and great* Vice-reys *and* Beglerbeys, *that are on the way from My most Happy and Imperiall Throne (both by Sea and Land) vnto the Confines and Bounds of the* East-Indies : *Owners of some part of Dignitie, and those vnto whom belongeth to giue aide, helpe, and succour in* GODS *cause, and* Mussulmanicall *Religion, vpon thier Emperours becke, The Wealth and Greatnesse of whom let it continue for euer. Likewise vn-to*

Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes in Five Bookes* (London, 1625), 4: 344.

Appendix IV: The Component of *Fethname* Letters

Fethname usually consists of these elements:

1. Praise to God.
2. Blessings upon the Prophet.
3. The ruler's duty to relieve oppression.
4. The reasons for ending the wrong-doing of the tyrant in question.
5. The sultan's resolve.
6. The multitude of his troops.
7. The strength of the enemy.
8. The boldness of the enemy.
9. Description of the battle.
10. The sultan's victory.
11. Thanks to God.
12. Occupation of the enemy's territory.
13. The victory to be proclaimed by land and sea (only in *fethname* addressed to the sultan's own dominions).
14. The name of the place to which the *fethname* is sent and of the bearer.
15. The sultan's joy at the victory, his communication of the good tidings to the recipient and his request for prayers.[483]

[483] Cf. Christine Woodhead, 'Fatḥnāme', *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd edn. (forthcoming).

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Al-Bakri, Mohammed Ibn Abi al-Surur, *al-Minah al-Rahmaniyya fi al-Dawlah al-'Ūthmaniyah*, ed. Laila al-Sabbagh (Damascus: Dar al-Bashaier, 1995).

A Proud and Blasphemous Cahllenge: *Given out in Denuntiation of Warre, by Amurath the Great Turk, against all Christendome Coming with an Army of 1600000 men* (London, 1643), *EEBO*, last accessed 28 Jan. 2010, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

Ashton, Peter, *A Shorte Treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles* (London, 1546).

A Warning for Fair Women, Old English Drama: Students' Facsimile Edition (Amersham: n. p., 1912).

Busbecq, Ogier Ghiselin de, *The Four Epistles of A. G. Busbequius Concerning his Embassy into Turkey* (London, 1694).

Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, ed. Richard Bruce Wernham, vol. 22 (London: HMSO, 1936).

Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts, Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy (1592-1603), ed. Horatio F. Brown, vol. 9 (London, 1897).

Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury ... preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, vol. 9 (London: HMSO, 1904).

Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury ... preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire, ed. M.S. Giuseppi, vol. 19 (London: HMSO, 1965).

Clere-Ville, Bartholomé de, *The Copye of the Letter Folowynge whiche Specifyeth of ye Greatest and Mervelous Visyoned Batayle that ever was Sene or Herde of and also of the Letter yt was Sent frome the Great Turke unto our Holy Fad[er] ye Pope of Rome* (London, 1518), *EEBO*, last accessed 17 Dec. 2010, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

Dallam, Thomas, 'Master Thomas Dallam's Diary', in Theodore Bent (ed.), *Early Voyages and Travel in the Levant* (London, 1893), 1-98.

Dekker, Thomas, *The Pleasant Comedie of Old Fortunatus* (London: 1600).

Ellis, Henry Sir, *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, and One or Two Other Collections*, *in Three Volumes*, vol. 3 (London, 1824).

- - - . *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters: From Autographs in the British Museum, the State Paper Office, and One or Two Other Collections*, 3rd series, vol. 4 (London, 1846).

Ernest, Hans (ed.), *al-Dur al-Musan fi Syrat al-Mudhfar Selīm Khan* (Cairo: The House of the Restoration of Arabic Books, 1962).

Georgijevic, Bartolomej, *The Ofspring of the House of Ottomanno*, trans. Hugh Goughe (London, 1569).

Geuffroy, Antoine, *The Order of the Greate Turckes Courte* (London, 1542), *EEBO*, last accessed 21 Jan. 2010, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

[Greene, Robert], *The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, King of Aragon* in J. Churton Collins (ed.), *The Plays & Poems of Robert Greene*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905).

- - - . *The First Part of the Tragicall Raigne of Selimus*, in Daniel J. Vitkus (ed.), *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000).

Hakluyt, Richard, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, vols. 5 and 6 (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1903).

Hall, Edward, *Hall's Chronicle: Containing the History of England During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth* (London, 1809).

Harrison, William, *The Description of England: The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*, ed. Georges Edelen (New York: Dover, 1994).

Hartwell, Abraham, *The History of the Warres Betweene the Turkes and the Persians* (London, 1595).

Herod the Great, in Martial Rose (ed.), *The Wakefield Mystery Plays* (London: Evans Brothers, 1961).

Hughes, Thomas, et. al., *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (London, 1587).

Ibn Iyas, Shihab al-Din Mohammed Ibn Ahmed, *Bada'i' al-Zuhūr fi Waqa'' al-Duhūr*

(Cairo: People's Printers, 1960).

Ibn Tulun, Shams al-Din, *Mufakahet al-Khlan fi Hawadeth al-Zaman*, *Alwaraq Website*, last accessed 12 Dec. 2011, <http://www. alwaraq.net>.

Ibn Zunbul, Ahmad Ibn Ali. *Akhirat al-Mamalik*, ed. Abd al-Munaim 'Amar, 2nd edn. (Cairo: Egyptian General Corporation of Books, 1998).

John of Bordeaux, or The Second Part of Friar Bacon, ed. William. L. Renwick (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1936).

Knolles, Richard, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603).

[Kyd, Thomas], *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda*, in Frederick S. Boas (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Kyd* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901).

- - - . *The Spanish Tragedy*, ed. T. W. Ross (Berkeley: U of California P, 1968).

Mankind, in *Everyman and Mankind*, ed. Douglas Bruster and Eric Rasmussen (London: Arden, 2009).

Marlowe, Christopher, *Tamburlaine the Great*, in *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. David Fuller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

- - - . *The Jew of Malta*, ed. T. W. Craik (London: Benn, 1966).

Montagu, Mary Wortley, *Letters of the Right Honourable Lady My W---y M----e*, vol. 2 (London, 1763).

Moryson, Fynes, *An Itinerary Written by Fynes Moryson Gent. First in the Latine Tongue, and then Translated by him into English: Containing his Ten Yeeres Travell through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turky, France, England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1617).

- - - . *Shakespeare's Europe: Unpublished Chapters of Fynes Moryson's Itinerary, Being a Survey of the Condition of Europe at the End of the 16th Century*, ed. Charles Hughes (London: Longman, Sherratt & Hughes, 1903).

Newton, Thomas, *A Notable Historie of the Saracens* (London, 1575).

Preston, Thomas, *Cambyses King of Persia* (London, 1584).

Procter, Thomas, *Of the Knowledge and Conducte of Warres, Two Bookes Latelye Wrytten and Sett Foorth, Profitable for suche as Delight in Hystoryes, or Martyall Affayres, and Necessarye for this Present Tyme* (London: 1578).

Purchas, Samuel, *Purchas His Pilgrimes in Five Bookes* (London, 1625).

Rycaut, Paul, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1668).

Salterne, George, *Tomumbeius*, trans. Christopher McKelvie, ed. Roberta Barker, *The Philological Museum*, June 30, 2011, The Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham, last accessed May 2012, <www.philological.bham.ac.uk>.

Sanderson, John, *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584-1602*, ed. William Foster (London: U of Cambridge P. 1931).

Sandys, George, *Sandys Travailes* (London, 1652).

Shakespeare, William, *Hamlet*, ed. G. R. Hibbard (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

- - - . *Henry IV Part 2*, ed. A. R. Humphreys (London: The Arden, 2007).

- - - . *King Henry VI, Part 3*, ed. John. D. Cox and Eric Rasmussen (London: Thomson, 2001).

Sidney, Philip, *The Defence of Poesie* (London, 1595).

- - - . *Sir P. S. His Astrophel and Stella* (London, 1591).

Solymannidae, trans. and ed. Dana F. Sutton, *The Philological Museum*, 7 Aug. 2007, revised April 28, 2011, The Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham, last accessed June 2012, <www.philological.bham.ac.uk/soly/>.

The Castle of Perseverance, in Peter Happé (ed.), *Four Morality Plays* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979).

The Fugger News-Letters, trans. L. S. R. Byrne, ed. Victor von Klarwill, 2nd Series (London: John Lane, 1926).

White, Thomas, *A Sermon Preached at Paules Crosse the 17. of November An. 1589* (London, 1589), *EEBO*, last accessed 12 Sept. 2011, <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>.

Withers, Robert, 'The Grand Signiors Serraglio', in Samuel Purchas (ed.), *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, vol. 9 (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1905-07), 322-406.

Wotton, Henry, *A Courtlie Controuersie of Cupids Cautels* (London, 1578).

Secondary Sources

Ács, Pál, 'Tarjumans Mahmud and Murad: Austrian and Hungarian Renegades as Sultan's Interpreters', in Bodo Guthmüller and Wilhelm Kühlmann (eds.), *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance* (*Tübingen*: Niemeyer, 2000), 307-16.

Ágoston, Gábor and Bruce Masters (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Facts on File, 2009).

- - - . *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005).

Akgündüz, Ahmed and Said Öztürk, *Ottoman History: Misperceptions and Truths*, trans. Ismail Ercan (Istanbul: IUR Press, 2011).

Alderson, A. D., *The Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956).

Allen, Roger and D. S. Richards, *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006).

Alloula, Malek, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986).

Anglo, Sydney, *Machiavelli: A Dissection* (London: Paladin, 1969).

- - - . 'The Reception of Machiavelli in Tudor England: A Re-Assessment', *Il Politico*, 31 (1966), pp. 127–38.

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

Andrea, Bernadette, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007).

Appleby, Joyce, Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: Norton, 1995).

Ari, Bülent, 'Early Ottoman Diplomacy: Ad Hoc Period', in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.) *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 36-65.

Armstrong, W. A., 'The Elizabethan Conception of the Tyrant', *The Review of English Studies*, 22/87 (1946), 161-81.

Arnold, Janet (ed.), *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (Leeds: Maney, 1988).

Ayalon, David, *Gunpowder and Firearms in the Mamluk Kingdom: A Challenge to a Mediaeval Society* (London: Valentine, Mitchell, 1956).

Axton, Marie, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).

Ballaster, Ros, *Fabulous Orients: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005).

Barber, C. L., *Creating Elizabethan Tragedy: The Theater of Marlowe and Kyd*, ed. Richard P. Wheeler (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988).

Barbour, Richmond, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

- - - . 'Power and Distant Display: Early English "Ambassadors" in Moghul India', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 61/3,4 (1998), 343-68.

Bartels, Emily, *Speaking of the Moor: From Alcazar to Othello* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P , 2008).

- - - . *Spectacles of Strangeness: Imperialism, Alienation, and Marlowe* (Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1993).

Battenhouse, Roy W., *Marlowe's Tamburlaine: A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy* (Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 1941).

Behrens-Abouseif, Doris, *Egypt's Adjustment to Ottoman Rule: Institutions, Waqf and Architecture in Cairo (16th and 17th Centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

Belsey, Catherine, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London: Routledge, 1991).

Bentley, M. (ed.), *Companion to Historiography* (London: Routledge, 1997).

Berek Peter, '*Tamburlaine*'s Weak Sons: Imitation as Interpretation Before 1593', *Renaissance Drama*, 13 (1982), 55-82.

Berridge G. R., *British Diplomacy in Turkey, 1583 to the Present: A Study in the Evolution of Resident Embassy* (Leiden, Brill: 2009).

- - - . 'Diplomatic Integration with Europe before Selim III', in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 114-30.

- - - . 'Dragomans and Oriental Secretaries in the British Embassy in Istanbul', in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.), *Ottoman Diplomacy: Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 151-66.

Bevington, David M., *From Mankind to Marlowe: Growth of Structure in the Popular Drama of Tudor England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1962).

- - - . *Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, Mass : Harvard UP, 1968).

Bhabha, Homi, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Birchwood, Matthew and Matthew Dimmock (eds.), *Cultural Encounters Between East and West, 1453-1699* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2005).

Blackburn, Ruth, H., *Biblical Drama Under the Tudors* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971).

Blanks, D. and M. Frassetto (eds), *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Perception of Other* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

Blanton, Casey, *Travel Writing: The Self and the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

Boas, Frederick S., *An Introduction to Tudor Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933).

- - - . *Christopher Marlowe: A Biographical and Critical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940).

- - - . *University Drama in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914).

Borm, Jan, 'Defining Travel: On the Travel Book, Travel Writing and Terminology', in Glenn Hooper and Tim Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writings* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 13-26.

Bowers, Fredson, *Elizabethan Revenge Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1940).

Bradbrook, M. C., *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980).

Braden, Gordon, *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985).

Braudel, Fernand, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, 2nd edn., vols. 1 and 2 (London: Collins, 1972).

Bray, Julia, (ed.), *Writing and Representation in Medieval Islam: Muslim Horizons* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Brodwin, Leonora Leet, *Elizabethan Love Tragedy*, *1587-1625* (London: U of London P, 1972).

Brooke, Tucker, *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908).

- - - . *The Tudor Drama: A History of English National Drama to the Retirement of Shakespeare* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911).

Brown, William J., 'Marlowe's Debasement of Bajazet: Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and *Tamburlaine*, Part I', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24/1 (1971), 38-48.

Brummett, Palmira, 'A Kiss is Just a Kiss: Rituals of Submission Along the East-West Divide', in Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock (eds.), *Cultural Encounters Between East and West, 1453-1699* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2005), 107-31.

- - - . *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, NY: State University of New York P, 1994).

Burckhardt, Jacob, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. S. G. C. Middlemore (London: George G. Harrap, 1929).

Burke, John, *A Genealogical and Heraldic Dictionary of the Landed Gentry of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1863).

Burke, Peter, *Cultural Hybridity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009).

- - - . 'Cultures of Translation in Early Modern Europe', in Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (eds.), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 7-38.

- - - . *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1992).

- - - . 'Representations of the Self from Petrarch to Descartes', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1997), 17-28.

- - - . *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (London: Arnold, 1969).

- - - . 'The Renaissance Translator as Go-Between', in Andreas Höfele and Werner von Koppenfels (eds.), *Renaissance Go-Betweens: Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 17-31.

Burton, Jonathan, 'Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in

Tamburlaine', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 30/1 (2000), 125-56.

- - - . *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: U of Delaware P, 2005).

Bushnell, Rebecca. W., *Tragedies of Tyrants: Political Thought and Theater in the English Renaissance* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990).

Campbell, James, 'The United Kingdom of England: The Anglo-Saxon Achievement' in Alexander Grant and Keith J. Stringer (eds.), *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Campbell, Mary B., *The Witness and the Other World*: *Exotic European Travel Writing, 400-1600* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991).

Carey, Daniel, 'Questioning Incommensurability in Early Modern Cultural Exchange', *Common Knowledge*, 6/2 (1997), 32-50.

Chambers, E. K., *The Elizabethan Stage*, vols. 3 and 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923).

Chew, Samuel C., *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England During the Renaissance* (New York: Octagon Books, 1965).

Childs, Peter and Patrick Williams, *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory* (London: Prentice Hall, 1997).

Çırakman, Aslı, *From the "Terror of the World" to the "Sick Man of Europe": European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth* (New York: Peter Lang, 2002).

Clemen, Wolfgang, *English Tragedy Before Shakespeare: The Development of Dramatic Speech*, trans. T. S. Dorsch (London: Methuen, 1980).

Clifford, James, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1988).

Cole, Douglas, *Christopher Marlowe and the Renaissance of Tragedy* (Westport: Greenwood, 1995).

- - - . *Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1962).

Collier, John Payne, *The History of English Dramatic Poetry to the Time of Shakespeare and Annals of the Stage to the Restoration* (London, 1831).

Collingwood, R. G., *The Idea of History*, ed. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946).

Collins, J. Churton (ed.), *The Plays & Poems of Robert Greene*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905).

Cook, Michael Allan, *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East: From the Rise of Islam to the Present Day* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1970).

Cox, Edward Godfrey, *A Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel: Including Voyages, Geographical Descriptions, Adventures, Shipwrecks and Expeditions* (New York: Greenwood Press 1969).

Cunliffe, John William, *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1965).

Daniel, Norman, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1960).

Dick, Hugh G., '*Tamburlaine* Sources Once More', *Studies in Philology*, 46 (1949), 154-66.

Dimmock, Matthew, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Dollimore, Jonathan, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (Brighton: Harvester, 1984).

Drees, Clayton J. (ed.), *The Late Medieval Age of Crisis and Renewal 1300-1500* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2001).

Draper, John W., 'Shakespeare and the Turk', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 55/4 (1956), 523-32.

Duri, Abd al-Aziz, *Bahth fi Nash'at 'lm al-Tarikh 'nda al-Arab* [Research in the Origin of Historical Scholarship in Arabic] (Beirut: Catholic Printer, 1960).

Edwards, Philip, *Thomas Kyd and Early Elizabethan Tragedy* (London: Longmans and Green 1966).

Epstein, Mortimer, *The English Levant Company: Its Foundation and its History to 1640* (New York: Franklin, 1968).

Erne, Lukas, *Beyond "The Spanish Tragedy": A Study of the Works of Thomas Kyd* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2001).

Faruqi, Nisar A., *Early Muslim Historiography: A Study of Early Transmitters of Arab History from the Rise of Islam up to the End of the Umayyad Period, 612-750* (Delhi: Idarah-I Adabiyat-I Delli, 1979).

Faroqhi, Suraiya, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

Fedden, Henry Romilly, *English Travellers in the Near East* (London: Longmans, 1958)

Finegan, Edward, 'Subjectivity and Subjectivisation in Language: An Introduction', in Dieter Stein and Susan Wright (eds.), *Subjectivity and Subjectivisation: Linguistic Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), 1-15.

Finkel, Caroline, *Osman's Dream: The Story of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1923* (London: John Murray, 2005).

Foister, Susan, 'Paintings and Other Works of Art in Sixteenth-Century English Inventories', *The Burlington Magazine*, 123/938 (1981), 273-82.

Foucault, Michel, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1972).

Fox, Levi (ed.), *English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London: Oxford UP, 1956).

Fraser, Russell A., 'The Art of *Hero and Leander*', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 57/4 (1958), 743-54.

Freeman, Arthur, 'Inaccuracy and Castigation: The Lessons of Errors', in Anne Lancashire (ed.), *Editing Renaissance Dramatic Texts: English, Italian, and Spanish* (New York: Garland, 1976), 97-120.

- - - . 'Shakespeare and *Solyman and Perseda*', *The Modern Language Review*, 58/4 (1963), 481-87.

- - - . *Thomas Kyd: Facts and Problems* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1967).

Fuchs, Barbara, 'No Field Is an Island: Postcolonial and Transnational Approaches to Early Modern Drama', *Renaissance Drama*, 40 (2012), 125-33.

Fuller, Mary, *Voyages in Print: English Travel to America, 1576-1624* (Cambridge UP, 1995).

Fussner, F. Smith, *The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought, 1580-1640* (London: Routledge, 1962).

- - - . *Tudor History and the Historians* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

Genette, Gérard, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

Goffman, Daniel, 'Negotiating with the Renaissance State: The Ottoman Empire and the New Diplomacy', in Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (eds.), *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 61-74.

- - - . *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).

Göllner, Carl von, *Turcica: Die europäischen Türkendrucke des XVI. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Bucuresti: Editura Academiei, 1961-1968).

Goodwin, Godfrey, *The Janissaries* (London: Saqi Books, 1997).

Grafton, Anthony, *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007).

Graham-Brown, Sarah, *Images of Women: The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East, 1860-1950* (New York: Columbia UP, 1988).

Gransden, Antonia, *Historical Writing in England* (London: Routledge, 1974-1982).

Greenblatt, Stephen, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1980).

Greenfield, Liah, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Harvard UP, 1993).

Greg, W. W., 'The Works of Thomas Kyd by Frederick S. Boas', *The Modern Language Quarterly*, 4/3 (1901), 185-90.

Griffin, Benjamin, *Playing the Past: Approaches to English Historical Drama 1385-1600* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2001).

Grosart A. B. (ed.), *The Life and Complete Works in Prose and Verse of Robert Greene*, vol. 1 (London, 1881-1886).

Grosrichard, Alain, *The Sultan's Court: European Fantasies of the East* (London: Verso, 1998).

Hadfield, Andrew, *Literature, Travel, and Colonial Writing in the English Renaissance*, *1545-1625* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1998).

Haldane, Duncan, *Mamluk Painting* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1978).

Hall, Donald E., *Subjectivity* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Hamilton, Keith and Richard Langhorne, *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Routledge, 2011).

Harper, James G. (ed.), *The Turks and Islam in the Western Eyes, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

Haskell, Thomas L., *Objectivity is not Neutrality: Explanatory Schemes in History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998).

Hasting, Adrian, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

Hathaway, Jane, 'Mamluk "Revival" and Mamluk Nostalgia in Ottoman Egypt', in Michael Winter and Amalia Levanoni (eds.), *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 387-406.

Hauser, Arnold, *The Social History of Art: Renaissance, Mannerism, Baroque*, 3rd edn. (London: Routledge, 1999).

Helgerson, Richard, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1992).

Heywood, Colin, *Writing Ottoman History: Documents and Interpretations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

Hicks, Philip, *Neoclassical History and English Culture: From Clarendon to Hume* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).

Hodnett, Edward, *Five Centuries of English Book Illustration* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1988).

Holt, P. M., *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, 1516-1922: A Political History* (London: Longmans, 1966).

- - - . (ed.), *Political and Social Change in Modern Egypt: Historical Studies from the Ottoman Conquest to the United Arab Republic* (London: Oxford UP, 1968).

- - - . *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London: Cass, 1973).

Hoppe, Harry R., '*John of Bordeaux*: A Bad Quarto that Never Reached Print', in Charles T. Prouty (ed.), *Studies in Honor of A. H. R. Fairchild* (Colombia:

University of Missouri, 1946), 121-32.

Horniker, Arthur L., 'William Harborne and the Beginning of Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations', *The Journal of Modern History*, 14/3 (1942), 289-316.

Hubbard, F. G., 'Repetition and Parallelism in the Earlier Elizabethan Drama', *PMLA*, 20/2 (1905), 360-79.

Hunter, G. K., 'Truth and Art in History Plays', *Shakespeare Survey*, 42 (1989), 15-24.

Hutchings, Mark., 'The "Turk Phenomenon" and the Repertory of the Late Elizabethan Playhouse', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 16 (2007), last accessed June 2012, <http://extra.shu.ac.uk>.

Inalcik, Halil, and Donald Quataert (eds.), *An Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire, Volume One, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997).

- - - . 'Imtiyāzāt' in B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 3:1179-89

- - - . *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age, 1300-1600*, trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973).

- - - . 'The Turkish Impact on the Development of Modern Europe', in Kemal H. Karpat (ed.), *The Ottoman State and Its Place in World History* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 51-60.

Ingram, Anders, 'English Literature on the Ottoman Turks in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', Ph. D. thesis (Durham U, 2009).

Irwin, Robert, 'The Political Thinking of the "Virtuous Ruler," Qānsūh al-Ghawrī', *Mamlūk Studies Review*, 12/1 (2008), 37-50.

Izard, Thomas C., 'The Principal Source for Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*', *Modern Language Notes*, 58/6 (1943), 411-17.

Jacquot, Jean, 'Ralegh's "Hellish Verses" and *The Tragicall Raigne of Selimus*', *The Modern Language Review*, 48/1 (1953), 1-9.

Jardine, Lisa and Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests*: *Renaissance Art Between East and West* (London: Reaktion, 2000).

Kabbani, Rana, *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient* (London: Pandora, 1994).

Kafadar, Cemal, ‘Janissaries and Other Riffraff of Ottoman İstanbul: Rebels without a Cause’, in Baki Tezcan and Karl K. Barbir (eds.), *Identity and Identity Formation in the Ottoman World: A Volume of Essays in Honor of Norman Itzkowitz* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2007), 113-34.

Kafescioğlu, Çiğdem, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital* (University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State UP, 2009).

Kamps, Ivo, *Historiography and Ideology in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996).

Kangal, Selmin (ed.), *Sultan's Portrait: Picturing the House of Osman*, trans. Priscilla Mary (İstanbul: İşbank, 2000).

Karpay, Joyce, ‘A Study in Ambivalence: Mothers and their Sons in Christopher Marlowe’ in Sara M. Deats and Robert A. Logan (eds.), *Placing the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*: *Fresh Cultural Contexts* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 75-92.

Kedourie, Elie, *Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

Kennedy, Hugh (ed.), *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c.950-1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001).

Khalidi, Tarif, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994).

Kia, Mehrdad, *Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2011).

Knapp, James A., *Illustrating the Past in Early Modern England: The Representation of History in Printed Books* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003).

Kocher, Paul H., *Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1946).

Korte, Barbara, *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations*, trans. Catherine Matthias (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

Krstić, Tijana, ‘Of Translation and Empire: Sixteenth-century Ottoman Imperial Interpreters as Renaissance Go-betweens’, in Christine Woodhead (ed.), *The Ottoman World* (London: Routledge, 2012), 130-42.

Kugler, Emily, *Sway of the Ottoman Empire on English Identity in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

Lawrence, W., 'Soliman and Perseda', *The Modern Language Review*, 9/4 (1914), 523-25.

Lefevere, Andre, *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (London: Routledge, 1992).

Leech, Clifford, 'Marlowe's Humor', in Richard Hosley (ed.), *Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama* (London: Routledge, 1963), 69-81.

Levine, Joseph M., *Humanism and History*: *Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1987).

Levin, Harry, *The Overreacher*: *A Study of Christopher Marlowe* (London: Faber & Faber, 1954).

Levy, Fred J., *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1967).

Levy, Fritz, 'The Elizabethan Historiographical Revolution', *History*, 4 (1961), 25-52.

Lewis, Bernard and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962).

Lewis, G. L., 'Fatḫnāme' in B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1963), 2: 839-40.

- - - . 'The Utility of Ottoman Fatḫnāme', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 192-96.

Lewis, Reina, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (London: Tauris, 2004).

Little, Donald P., *An Introduction to Mamlūk Historiography: An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of Al-Malik An-Nāsir Mohammed Ibn Qalā'ūn* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1970).

Logan, Terence P. and Denzell S. Smith, *The Predecessors of Shakespeare* (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1973).

Lowe, Lisa, *Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991).

Luborsky, Ruth, 'Connections and Disconnections between Images and Texts: The Case of Secular Tudor Book Illustration', *Word & Image*, 3/1 (1987), 74-85.

Lucas, F. L., *Seneca and Elizabethan Tragedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1922).

Mabro, Judy, *Veiled Half-Truths: Western Travellers' Perceptions of Middle Eastern Women* (London: Tauris, 1991).

Machiavelli, Niccolo, *The Prince*, trans. Luigi Ricci (London: Humphrey Milford, 1903).

MacLean, Gerald, *Looking East*: *English Writing and the Ottoman Empire Before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

- - - . *Re-Orienting the Renaissance*: *Cultural Exchanges with the East* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

- - - . *The Rise of Oriental Travel*: *English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

MacLean, Gerald and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011).

Maguire, Laurie E., '(Mis)diagnosing Memorial Reconstruction in John of Bordeaux', in John Pitcher (ed.), *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, vol. 2 (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1999), 114-28.

Mandelbaum, Maurice, *The Anatomy of Historical Knowledge* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1977).

Martels, Zweder von, 'The Eye and the Eye's Mind', in Zweder von Martels (ed.), *Travel Fact and Travel Fiction: Studies in Fiction, Literary Tradition, Scholarly Discovery and Observation in Travel Writing* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), xi-xviii.

Martin, John Jeffries, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Massoud, Sami G., *The Chronicles and Annalistic Sources of the Early Mamluk Circassian Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

Matar, Nabil, *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2005).

- - - . *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998).

.- - - . *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999).

Mayes, Stanley, *An Organ for the Sultan* (London: Putnam, 1956).

McJannet, Linda, *The Sultan Speaks*: *Dialogues in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Meijer, Fik, *Emperors Don't Die in Bed*, trans. S. J. Leinbach (London: Routledge, 2004).

Menage, V. L., 'The English Capitulation of 1580: A Review', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 12/3 (1980), 373-83.

Meserve, Margaret, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2008).

Meyer, Edward, *Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama* (Weimar, 1897).

Muir, Kenneth, *The Singularity of Shakespeare, and Other Essays* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1977).

Müller, Sabine Lucia, 'Striking the Right Note: Thomas Dallam′s Negotiation of Alterity in Istanbul (1599)', *Paragrana*, 19/2 (2010), 77-89.

Mulryne, J. R. and Stephen Fender, 'Marlowe and the Comic Distance', in Brian Morris (ed.), *Christopher Marlowe* (London: Benn, 1968), 49-64.

Murphey, Rhoads, *Exploring Ottoman Sovereignty*: *Tradition, Image and Practice in the Ottoman Imperial Household, 1400-1800* (London: Continuum, 2008).

Murray, J. A. H. et al. (eds.), *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, vols. 2 and 10 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888-1933).

Murray, John J. (ed.), *The Tragedye of Solyman and Perseda* (New York: Garland, 1991).

Myers, Robin and Michael Harris (eds.), *Journeys Through the Market*: *Travel, Travellers and the Book Trade* (Folkestone: Oak Knoll Press, 1999).

Noth, Albrecht, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton, N. J.: Darwin P, 1994).

Parker, John, *Books to Build an Empire: A Bibliographical History of English Overseas Interests to 1620* (Amsterdam: Israel, 1965).

Parry, V. J., 'Renaissance Historical Literature in Relation to the Near and Middle East (with Special Reference to Paolo Giovio)', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 277-89.

- - - . *Richard Knolles*' *History of the Turks*, ed. Salih Özbaran (Istanbul: Economic

and Social History Foundation of Turkey, 2003).

Pears, Edwin, 'The Spanish Armada and the Ottoman Porte', *The English Historical Review*, 8/31 (1893), 439-66.

Pedani-Fabris, Maria Pia, 'Ottoman Fetihnames: The Imperial Letters Announcing a Victory', *Tarih incelemeleri dergisi*, 13 (1998), 181-92.

Peery, William, 'Marlowe's Irreverent Humor—Some Open Questions', *Tulane Studies in English*, 6 (1956), 15-29.

Peirce, Leslie P., *The Imperial Harem*: *Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993).

Penzer, N. M.., *The Harem*: *An Account of the Institution as It Existed in the Palace of the Turkish Sultans, with a History of the Grand Seraglio from Its Foundation to the Present Time* (London: Harrap, 1936).

Peters, Rudolph, *Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law: Theory and Practice from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005).

Petry, Carl F. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998).

Philipp, Thomas and Ulrich Haarmaan, *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998).

Pollard, Alfred W (ed.), *English Miracle Plays, Moralities and Interludes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914).

Porter, Roy, 'Introduction', in *Rewriting the Self*: *Histories from the Renaissance to the Present*, ed. Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1997), 1-14.

Potter, David S., *The Roman Empire at Bay, AD 180-395* (London: Routledge, 2004).

Powell, Timothy, ed., *Beyond the Binary*: *Reconstructing Cultural Identity in a Multicultural Context* (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1999).

Pratt, Mary Louise, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 2008).

Praz, Mario, *The Flaming Heart: Essays on Crashaw, Machiavelli, and Other Studies in the Relations Between Italian and English Literature from Chaucer to T. S. Eliot* (Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1966).

Quadflieg, Helga, 'As Mannerly and Civil as Any of Europe', in Glenn Hooper and

Tim Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 27-40.

Rabbat, Nasser, 'Representing the Mamluks in Mamluk Historical Writing', in Hugh Kennedy (ed.), *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c.950-1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 59-75.

Raby, Julian, 'From Europe to Istanbul', trans. Priscilla Mary, in Selmin Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*: *Picturing the House of Osman* (İstanbul: İşbank, 2000), 136-63.

- - - . 'Opening Gambits', trans. Priscilla Mary, in Selmin Kangal (ed.), *The Sultan's Portrait*: *Picturing the House of Osman* (İstanbul: İşbank, 2000), 64-95.

Rawlinson, H. G., 'The Embassy of William Harborne to Constantinople, 1583-8', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (1922), 1-27.

Reiss, Timothy J., 'Revising Descartes: On Subject and Community', in Patrick Coleman, Jayne Lewis and Jill Kowalik (eds.), *Representations of the Self from the Renaissance to Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000), 16-38.

Renda, Gunsel, 'The Ottoman Empire and Europe: Cultural Encounters', Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilisation, Dec. 2006, last accessed 21 Jan. 2012, <www.belgeler.com>.

Reychman, Jan and Ananiasz Zajączkowski, *Handbook of Ottoman-Turkish Diplomatics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968).

Ribner, Irving,'Greene's Attack on Marlowe: Some Light on *Alphonsus* and *Selimus*', *Studies in Philology*, 52/2 (1955), 162-71.

- - - . *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957).

Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith, *A Glance Beyond Doubt: Narration, Representation, Subjectivity* (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1996).

Robinson, Benedict, *Islam and Early Modern English Literature*: *The Politics of Romance from Spenser to Milton* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

Robinson, C. F., *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

Rodini, Elizabeth, 'The Sultan's True Face? Gentile Bellini, Mehmet II, and the Values of Verisimilitude', in James G. Harper (ed.), *The Turks and Islam in the Western Eyes, 1450-1750*: *Visual Imagery before Orientalism* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 21-40.

Rosedale, H. G., *Queen Elizabeth and the Levant Company: A Diplomatic and Literary Episode of the Establishment of Our Trade with Turkey* (London: Henry Frowde, 1904).

Rosenthal, Franz, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1968).

Rowland, Albert Lindsay, 'England and Turkey: The Rise of Diplomatic and Commercial Relations', in *Studies in English Commerce and Exploration in the Reign of Elizabeth* (New York: Burt Franklin 1968).

Rubiés, Joan-Pau, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe', *Journeys*, 1/1 (2000), 5–35.

- - - . *Travellers and Cosmographers: Studies in the History of Early Modern Travel and Ethnology* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

Runciman, Steven, 'Byzantine Historians and the Ottoman Turks', in Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.), *Historians of the Middle East* (London: Oxford UP, 1962), 271-76.

Said, Edward, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003).

- - -. *Reflections on Exile and Other Literary and Cultural Essays* (London: Granta, 2001).

- - - . *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1983).

Saintsbury, George, *A History of Elizabethan Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1920).

Salmon, W. H., *An Account of the Ottoman Conquest of Egypt*: *Translated from the Third Volume of the Arabic Chronicle of Muhammed Ibn Ahmed Ibn Iyās, an Eye-witness of the Scenes He Describes* (Westport, Connecticut: Hyperion Press, 1921).

Schelling, Felix Emmanuel, *Elizabethan Drama, 1558-1642* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1908).

Schwoebel, Robert, *The Shadow of the Crescent*: *The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1967).

Seaton, Ethel, 'Fresh Sources for Marlowe', *The Review of English Studies*, 5/20 (1929), 385-401.

Sell, Jonathan P. A., *Rhetoric and Wonder in English Travel Writing, 1560-1613* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

Seneca, *Agamemnon*, trans. F. J. Miller, *Theoi E-Texts Library*. 2000-2011, last accessed June 2012, <http://www.theoi.com>.

- - - . *Phoenissae*, trans. F. J. Miller, *Theoi E-Texts Library*. 2000-2011, last accessed May 2012, <http://www.theoi.com/Text/SenecaPhoenissae.html>.

- - - . *Thyestes; Phaedra; The Trojan Women; Oedipus; with, Octavia*, trans. E. F. Watling (London: Penguin Books, 1966).

Skilliter, S. A., *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578-1582*: *A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1977).

- - - . 'The Turkish Documents Relating to Edward Barton's Embassy to the Porte (1588-1598)', unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Manchester U, 1965).

- - - . 'Three Letters from the Ottoman "Sultana" Sāfiye to Queen Elizabeth I', in S. M. Stern (ed.), *Documents from Islamic Chanceries* (Columbia, S.C.: U of South Carolina P, 1970), 119-157.

Smith, Anthony D., 'National Identity: Modern and Medieval?', in Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murray (eds.), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1995), 21-46.

Smith, G. C. Moore, *College Plays Performed in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1923).

Smith, Hallett, *Elizabethan Poetry*: *A Study in Conventions, Meaning and Expression* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1952).

Spence, Leslie, 'Tamburlaine and Marlowe', *PMLA*, 42/3 (1927), 604-22.

- - - . 'The Influence of Marlowe's Sources on *Tamburlaine I*', *Modern Philology*, 24 (1926), 181-99.

Spivack, Bernard, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*: *The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains* (New York: Columbia UP, 1958).

Spivak, Gayatri, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 271–313.

Stagl, Justin, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel, 1550-1800* (Chur, Switzerland: Harwood, 1995).

Steele, Meili, *Theorizing Textual Subjects*: *Agency and Oppression* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Sterling, Eric, *The Movement Towards Subversion*: *The English History Play from Skelton to Shakespeare* (Lanham, Md.: UP of America, 1996).

Southern, R. W., *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1978).

Thompson, James W., *A History of Historical Writing*: *From the Earliest Times to the End of the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 1 (New York: Macmillan, 1942).

Tribout, Bruno and Ruth Whelan (eds.), *Narrating the Self in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

Tucker, Aviezer (ed.), *A Companion to the Philosophy of History and Historiography* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

Vaughan, Dorothy M., *Europe and the Turk*: *A Pattern of Alliances 1350-1700* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 1997).

Venuti, Lawrence, *The Translator's Invisibility* (London: Routledge, 1995).

Vitkus, Daniel J., 'Early Modern Orientalism: Representations of Islam in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Europe', in D. Blanks and M. Frassetto (eds.), *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*: *Perception of Other* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999) 207-30.

- - - (ed.). *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000).

- - - . *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

Waith, Eugene M., *Ideas of Greatness*: *Heroic Drama in England* (London: Routledge, 1971).

Wann, Louis, 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama', *Modern Philology*, 12/7 (1915), 423-47.

Warneke, Sara, *Images of the Educational Traveller in Early Modern England* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

Wheale, Nigel, *Writing and Society*: *Literacy, Print, and Politics in Britain, 1590-1660* (London: Routledge, 1999).

Werbner, Pnina, ‘Introduction’, in Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood (eds.), *Debating Cultural Hybridity*: *Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism* (London: Zed Books, 1997), 1-29.

White, Hayden V., *The Content of the Form*: *Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1987).

Winter, Irene J., ‘What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 153/3 (2009), 254-70.

Winter, Michael, ‘Attitudes Towards the Ottomans in Egyptian Historiography during Ottoman Rule’, in Hugh Kennedy (ed.), *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c.950-1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 195-220.

- - - . ‘Historiography in Arabic during the Ottoman Period’, in Roger Allen and D. S. Richards (eds.), *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), 171-88.

- - - . and Amalia Levanoni, *The Mamluks in Egyptian and Syrian Politics and Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

Wilson, William Rae, *Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land* (London, 1823).

Wittek, Paul, ‘The Turkish Documents in Hakluyt’s *Voyages*’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 19 (1944), 121–139.

Wood, Alfred C., *A History of the Levant Company* (London: Cass, 1964).

Woodhead, Christine, ‘Fatḥnāme’, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 3rd edn. (forthcoming).

- - - . *Knolles, Richard*. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, last accessed 18 Oct. 2011 <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

- - - . ‘Ottoman Historiography on the Hungarian Campaigns: 1596, the Eger fethnamesi’ in *VII. CIÉPO Sempozyumu* [Proceedings of the VII Conference of the Comité des Études Ottomanes et Pré-Ottomanes (CIÉPO), at Pécs, Hungary, 1986] (Ankara, 1994), 469-77.

- - - . ‘The present terrour of the world’? Contemporary Views of the Ottoman Empire c1600’, *History*, 72 (1987), 20-37.

Woolf, D. R., *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England*: *Erudition, Ideology, and ‘The Light of Truth’ from the Accession of James I to the Civil War* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1990).

World Bulletin, 27 July 2010, last accessed 15 Dec. 2012,

<http://www.worldbulletin.net>.

Wratislaw, Wenceslas, *Adventures of Baron Wenceslas Wratislaw of Mitrowitz*, trans. A. H. Wratislaw (London, 1862).

Yeazell, Ruth Bernard, *Harems of the Mind*: *Passages of Western Art and Literature* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2000).

Yermolenko, Galina, I., 'Roxolana in Europe', in Galina Yermolenko (ed.), *Roxolana in European Literature*, *History and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010).

Young, Robert, *Colonial Desire*: *Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995).

- - - . *White Mythologies*: *Writing History and the West* (London: Routledge, 2004).

Youngs, Tim, *Travellers in Africa*: *British Travelogues, 1850-1900* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1994).

Yurdusev, A. Nuri, 'The Ottoman Attitude Towards Diplomacy', in A. Nuri Yurdusev (ed.) *Ottoman Diplomacy*: *Conventional or Unconventional* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 5-35.

Zilfi, Madeline C. (ed), *Women in the Ottoman Empire*: *Middle Eastern Women in the Early Modern Era* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).