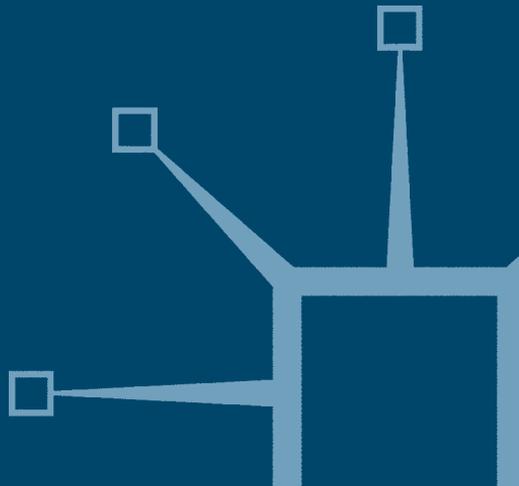


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Looking East

English Writing and the Ottoman Empire
before 1800

Gerald MacLean



Looking East

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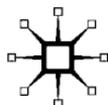
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Looking East

English Writing and the Ottoman Empire
before 1800

Gerald MacLean



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Preface

The chapters that make up this book are largely based on essays and talks written between 1993 and 2003, the years during which I was writing *The Rise of Oriental Travel* (2004). They reflect my thinking and archival adventures at a time when questions concerning literary, historical and cultural relations between early modern England and the Ottoman Empire – indeed the Muslim world at large – were starting to concern a small but increasing number of literary historians and cultural theorists. For my own part, I began with the general question of what an English reader of the late seventeenth century might have known, from published works, about the Ottomans. This was largely inspired by attempts to annotate poems on the Restoration that seemed to me to contain a number of very striking and even obscure allusions to matters Ottoman, and this suggested that knowledge about and attitudes towards the ‘Turks’ deserved further attention. Soon discovering the rather extensive archive of published works that was in print in English before 1660, I set out to read as much of this material as I could while wondering what to make of it. I was already familiar with Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, and was acutely aware that, on the one hand, much of the scholarship that it had inspired took no notice of the period before European expansion into the East, while, on the other, that the kinds of analysis Said prompted were only partly relevant for understanding the ideas and attitudes prevalent during the earlier period. Before very long, I also became curious to know what was going on inside the Ottoman world, and what attitudes there might have been among the subjects of the Sultan towards the English. Reading recent work in the area led me to discover that, when it comes to Ottoman historiography, there are still no straightforward answers, very few simple questions, and that my attempts to learn sufficient Turkish to read modern scholarship in that language would never prove adequate to the task.

Nevertheless, a number of scholars writing early Ottoman history in English have been making striking advances in the field, while the study of early modern relations between Europe and the Muslim world has become a distinctly exciting and important growth area of research and theory. By attending symposia on Ottoman history, I quickly discovered that specialists took many things for granted that were largely unknown beyond the field, while those same scholars were delighted to share

their ideas and insights with a historian of English literature. The English, notoriously late at taking on board the ideas and arts of the 'Renaissance,' were also behind the Italians and French and Spanish in discovering the importance of the Ottoman world. But in this latter engagement, at least, they were quick to catch up. While the influence of English trade and culture upon the Ottomans remained fairly insignificant, I find I am not alone in noticing how widespread the effects of encountering the Ottoman world, its people and culture proved to be on the development of the English nation during the early period.

The questions, methods of analysis and conclusions proposed in *Looking East* are in many ways products of their moment in the development of knowledge. Their focus throughout is upon the English and the impact of Ottoman culture and society, and the often mistaken and bizarre notions of that culture and society, upon the development of Englishness, largely as it was being constructed in the development of a national literature. This is not a comparative study, though I have attempted throughout to keep in play the dynamics of social and political life within the Ottoman domains as a check upon the more entrenched fantasies and illusions that, throughout the period, continued to surface in works by many of the writers who felt empowered to write about those they called 'Turks.' Even as I write, I am aware of Ottoman scholars who are delving into the vast archives in Arabic, Farsi and Ottoman Turkish where they are discovering materials that have already started to alter many, if not most, of the standard notions of how the Ottomans went about their lives and conducted their commercial, political, economic and imperial affairs. And there are scholars in Europe and the United States who are developing new theoretical paradigms for understanding Anglo-Ottoman – and more broadly 'East-West' – relations during the early modern period on the basis of mutuality, dialogue and reciprocity. And they are right to do so if we are to understand the past in ways that will liberate us from our current fixation upon conflict and incommensurability. In the pages that follow, I hope to have contributed to these efforts if only by way of addressing one side of the problem; how the early modern English came to think what they did about the Ottoman Empire at a time when they were developing ambitions for an empire of their own.

In revising the essays that make up this book, I have arranged them into a rough chronological sequence and reduced the repetition of key points whenever doing so does not compromise the argument at hand. The Introduction outlines the historical range of the field, and examines the place of seminal studies by Nabil Matar and some of the

challenges facing the study of early modern writing posed by Edward Said's *Orientalism*. I suggest that 'imperial envy' usefully describes the evolving dynamic of early modern English responses to encounters with the Ottoman Empire at a time when the English were seeking to find a place for themselves in the larger world beyond their insular realm. The first three chapters then consider how the English first became aware of the Ottomans from the arrival of imported goods, from direct encounters, and how the experiences of earliest visitors to that Empire began to challenge English conceptions of themselves. The next three chapters consider several different ways that the English regarded the Ottoman Empire and those who lived there, both human and otherwise, as part of a more general process of developing a new sense of their own place in the world. By the start of the eighteenth century, having achieved maritime supremacy and an incipient Eastern Empire of their own, the English had become the imperial British and began regarding themselves as equal, if not superior, to the Muslim Ottomans. The final three chapters investigate how a century of diplomatic, strategic and commercial alliances with the Ottomans contributed to the development of thought and writing in English, including the distinctive ways that the earliest post-colonial US writers represented themselves in relation to the Ottoman Mediterranean. I end with Byron's sardonic reflections on how the imperial British might appear in the view of a trans-national visitor from the Ottoman court.

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Time off from teaching would be useless without research facilities. My thanks to Dr Tony Greenwood for showing me the treasures of the library held by the American Research Institute in Turkey, Istanbul; Dr Muhammed Isa Waley for access to collections of the Oriental and India Office Collections at the British Library; and librarians and staff at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Boston Public Library, the British Museum, the Glasgow University Library, Exeter University Library and the Manuscripts Room of the British Library, Euston. I would especially like to thank Doris Nicholson of the Oriental Collection at the Bodleian for her generosity, wit and patience. For invitations and hospitality, I am also deeply indebted to Professor Abdeljelil Temimi of the Fondation Temimi, Tunisia; Professor Vassily Cristides, director of the Institute for Graeco-Oriental and Arabic Studies, Athens; Abdelkader Belhorma of the Bibliothèque Centrale, Université Abou Bakr Belkaid, Tlemcen, Algeria; Abdellah Abdi and Rafia Ghalmi of the Bibliothèque de l'Université d'Alger; Kim Duistermat, former director of Netherlands Institute for Arab Studies, Damascus. Special thanks are due to Professor Ali Tablit of l'Université d'Alger for hospitality, intellectual stimulation, and for drawing my attention to the early US writings on Algeria.

On various occasions, university audiences at Loughborough, Glasgow, Oxford, Cambridge, Columbia, Sussex, Reading, York and elsewhere have asked stimulating questions that have inspired and refined my thinking; thanks to all. I also learned a great deal from my students at Bosphorus University, Istanbul, during the summer seminar I conducted

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Without the support of numerous historians who have attempted to keep me straight, I would have given up long ago. Idris Bostan, Edmund Bosworth, Suraiya Faroqhi, Caroline Finkel, Dan Goffman, Colin Heywood, Robert Irwin, Geoffrey Lewis, Philip Mansel, Victor Ostapchuk, Salih Özbaran, Rhoads Murphey, Gabriel Piterberg and Michael Rogers have done their best but are not in any way responsible for errors or inaccuracies.

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Citations to previous publications are given in the notes to the individual chapters.

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Introduction: Islam, the Ottomans and Early Modern England

Constantinople [is] in the forme of a Triangle in circule 15 myles, seated upon seaven hills, and therefore some would have it the seate of the Anti-christe.

– ‘Mr. Stamp,’ 1609.¹

Hostility to Islam was widespread in early modern Christian Europe. Throughout Christendom, knowing that the lands where Christianity had been born were now subjected to Islamic control combined with memories of the crusades to feed deeply rooted and persistent antagonisms. After the loss of Byzantine Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman forces of Mehmed II, Muslims generally became known as ‘Turks’ regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, while fears that the invincible Ottoman armies threatened to overwhelm Europe spread like the plague. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Ottoman incursions into continental Europe, the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa, gave substance to such fears. For Christians living in nations adjacent to the expanding Ottoman domains, identifying Islam with the Ottomans seemed naturally compelling, based though it was on a misunderstanding of both Islam and of Ottoman statecraft. But fear breeds superstition, and even as far away as England, hardly menaced by Ottoman armies, sixteenth-century churchmen encouraged the conviction that the Christian faith was under attack and the ‘Turk’ became synonymous with Islam. In 1565, the Bishop of Salisbury instituted a prayer for Wednesday and Friday services that opens as follows:

O Almighty and everlasting God, our heavenly Father, we thy disobedient and rebellious children, now by thy just judgment sore afflicted, and in great danger to be oppressed, by thine and our sworn

and most deadly enemies the Turks, Infidels, and Miscreants, do make humble suit to the throne of thy grace, for thy mercy, and aid against the same our mortal enemies; for though we do profess the name of thy only Son Christ our Saviour, yet through our manifold sins and wickedness we have most justly deserved so much of thy wrath and indignation, that we can not but say, O Lord correct us in they mercy and not in thy fury. Better it is for us to fall into thy hands, than into the hands of men, and especially into the hands of Turks and Infidels thy professed enemies, who now invade thine inheritance . . . The Turk goeth about to set up, to extol and to magnify that wicked monster and damned soul Mahumet above thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, whom we in heart believe, and with mouth confess, to be our Saviour and Redeemer.²

By the middle of the sixteenth century, to be an English Christian no longer simply meant a daily life spent amongst family amidst a local community but had become profoundly a matter of being part of a greater world – one ruled over by an all-seeing and almighty judicial power who governed all things. One's very moral being, in this regime, would be subjected to judgements with direct and seemingly knowable repercussions on a global scale; the sins of the English became the very stuff of Ottoman military power. With such ideas on the liturgical agenda, it is hardly surprising that the English should have harboured strange and fearful fantasies about Muslims and Ottomans, including the superstitious notion that the triangular shape and seven hills of Constantinople were symbolic evidences for the diabolic nature of Ottoman rule.

Fear and fascination

During the course of the seventeenth century, while such hostile fears continued to be spread about, they became absorbed into and mitigated by a broader fascination with elements of Ottoman culture, and the English increasingly conceived of themselves and their own nation in terms that drew upon comparisons, contrasts and relationships with the great Muslim empire. Informed and accurate news about the Ottomans regularly entered public discourse. Everywhere seemed somehow to be connected with everywhere else, and no man, or island, could claim exception. Events at home became knowable only as parts of a larger scheme that involved, among other things, the dreaded spread of Islam. In the issue of his anti-government newsletter *The Man in the Moon* for

the last week of May 1649, John Crouch reported: 'There is a new Book imprinted by Authority of Parl. called the Turkish Alchoran worthy your most serious devotions.'³ Crouch's casual irony here – 'worthy your most serious devotions' – suggests how the licensing for publication of Islam's holy text in English might have been no considerable surprise coming as it did from a regime that had, only four months previously, executed king Charles I. Great changes were in the air, and localized national events were part of larger, global schemes.

For the English and Europeans more generally, links between these two events, the publication of 'the Turkish Alcoran' and the judicial execution of a Christian monarch, were no idle coincidence. Within a short time, the connection appeared in Royalist rhetoric at home and abroad to damn the new republic for being anti-Christian. On St Valentine's Day 1650, Thomas Calegreo, the Resident of the King of Great Britain at the Venetian Court, presented letters to the Doge from the dead king of England's son, expressing friendship while pleading for assistance against the regime in London that had recently beheaded his father. In his own voice, Calegreo offered a brief account of how recent events in England threatened 'all the Princes of Christendom.'

The danger to the Christian religion is shown by the sects which have sprung up in the new empire...and at the same time by the publication of the Alcoran, translated from the Turkish, so that the people may be imbued with Turkish manners, which have much in common with the actions of the rebels. The Church of St. Paul, comparable with St. Peters at Rome, remains desolate and is said to have been sold to the Jews as a synagogue.⁴

No matter that the English version of the Qur'ān had been translated from a well-known French version and not from 'Turkish'; for the purposes of pro-Stuart propaganda, the English Republic was a breeding ground for alien, anti-Christian elements that were currently running the government in league with anti-Christian foreigners, all of them busily spreading the seditious manners and beliefs of the 'Turks' and Jews.

Contemporary partisan accounts frequently accounted for the English Civil Wars in terms of 'Turks,' the Old Testament, millennial prophecies, Judaism, Islam, as well as that familiar archenemy, the Pope. In 1645, the parliamentary press reported how defeat of Charles' army at the battle of Naseby was a wondrous sign that the enemies of Protestant reform were everywhere in defeat. Reflecting on coincidental events in the Mediterranean, the writer of *The Scottish Dove* speculated: 'who

knowes, but that the *Turke* shall in these times be Gods instrument, to destroy the *Pope* and then God will trouble him and from heaven consume him by the fire of his indignation.⁵ Hopeful expectations that the 'Turk' and the Pope were about to defeat each other without English Protestant blood or money being spent were not uncommon among the writers of victorious parliamentary newsletters. For 12 August, *The True Informer* reports Ottoman landings on Crete with great excitement: 'We cannot but have great expectations, of these remarkable concussions and combustions in divers parts of this world, but in an especiall manner of those risen between the two great opposites of Jesus Christ the Turke and the Pope.'⁶ For Protestants in England and Scotland, the weeks following the king's defeat at Naseby were godly times indeed that attested to the impending overthrow of impious worldly tyrants in Rome and Istanbul. But for Royalist journalists like Crouch, the appearance of an English 'Alcoran' only weeks after the king's execution offered confirmatory evidence that all was no longer well in Britannia's bit of Christendom.

The turmoils of Civil War were by no means the first time that social, religious and political life in England and Scotland had been interpreted and described in terms of 'Turks,' Ottomans and Islam.⁷ Indeed, during the first half of the seventeenth century, English writers became increasingly preoccupied with the Ottomans and the 'Turkish religion' – the most common way of referring to Islam at the time. Why should this have been so?

Sponsored by Elizabeth, Anglo-Ottoman trade and diplomacy flourished during the final decades of the sixteenth century. Yet commerce alone could hardly account for the widespread development of interest in the culture, history and religion of the Ottoman Empire. Published first in 1603, the year James VI of Scotland acceded to the throne of England, Richard Knolles' monumental compilation from foreign sources, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, would remain in print throughout the century, providing statesmen and courtiers and anyone else who was interested with useful information. His efforts also provided dramatists and poets with exotic characters, remarkable scenes, and ingenious plots, but poor Knolles himself seems to have profited little from the influential work. In 1609, he wrote to Robert Cotton pathetically pleading for financial help that would enable him to pursue 'the furtherment of the continuation of the Turkish historie,' but he died in poverty the next year.⁸ Yet such was incipient curiosity in the lands ruled by the Ottomans that fame, if not fortune, awaited those prepared to undertake the arduous journey beyond the edge of Christian Europe simply in order to write about it. So successful were printed

travel accounts by Thomas Coryate (1611), William Lithgow (1614), and George Sandys (1615), that Fynes Moryson dusted off a Latin journal that he had kept during a journey made between 1595 and 1597, translated it into English, and published it in 1617.⁹ By 1636, Henry Blount observed: 'I was of opinion, that hee who would behold these times in their greatest glory, could not find a better *Scene* then *Turky* these considerations sent me thither.'¹⁰ Understanding what was going on in England, as in the world, meant knowing about the Ottoman Empire.

Misconceptions and continuing challenges

Islam and the Ottomans came to play no small part in the interests, imaginations and ambitions of the English throughout the early modern period. Yet, until very recently, only a few scholars of English history or literature have bothered very much about Islam or the Ottoman Empire, and very few historians have been interested in tracing, or admitting to the existence of, Eastern influences upon Renaissance Europe. With notable exceptions, scholars of the Renaissance have refused to recognize how Islamic ideas or cultural influences could have had any relevance to their great theme of European resurgence, and it has only been in very recent years that the study of Ottoman sources has begun to reveal how that sophisticated imperial state not only differed greatly from traditional accounts of military conquest followed by decline into luxurious indolence, but also how Ottoman cultural life was dynamically integrated with the European Renaissance right from the start.

In 1937, a Byron scholar named Samuel Chew published a very thorough survey of references to Islam in English writing of the Renaissance period. Few will need reminding how greatly the world has changed since Chew's study, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* first appeared, price \$5.00. Yet in terms of Anglophone scholarship on Chew's general topic, any impartial jury would surely conclude that a great deal of work is still waiting to be done. Following Chew's comprehensive survey of how English writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries represented the peoples and cultures of the Ottoman and Persian Empires, Clarence Dana Rouillard in 1940, Dorothy Vaughn in 1954 and Robert Schwoebel in 1969 produced general accounts of French, Italian and German writings about those they called 'Turks' that remain useful for their reach and coverage of the contemporary vernacular materials.¹¹ The limitation of this first wave of surveys, and it is one that continues to reappear in studies being produced in the field today, might be called the 'single-archive approach,' for none of these

scholars knew or cared very much about the peoples that their European sources purported to represent other than what they could deduce from those very sources.

In all fairness to Chew, Rouillard, Vaughn and Schwoebel, none of them ever claimed that they were doing more than investigate the ways that early European writers regarded those they called 'Turks' and the world of Islam they inhabited, but their indifference to whom and what they were representing marks a cautionary and stubborn absence. For the result of this single-archive analysis is that prejudiced misinformation all too often reappears as fact, past errors resurface as reliable judgments, and before very long fantasy returns as history. All four scholars, for instance, recycled the early modern European habit of using the term 'Turk' as though it were synonymous with both 'Muslim' and with 'Ottoman,' while to the Ottomans themselves, the word referred disparagingly to the Anatolian peasantry over whom they had come to rule. As L. Carl Brown observes, the matter is not a trivial one since it continues to perpetuate a number of very serious misconceptions about the nature and constitution of the Ottoman state. He writes:

The West for its part has stubbornly refused to call the Ottoman Empire by its name, instead labelling this multireligious, multilingual, multiethnic polity as 'Turkey' and its ruler 'Turks.' That those ruling from the banks of the Bosphorus themselves used the word 'Turk' to mean 'rustic' or 'bumpkin' just did not penetrate Western perceptions. Ironically, the West since time out of mind has insisted that the Ottomans were 'not like us' even while imposing, however unconsciously, a strictly Western ethnolinguistic rubric upon the Ottoman Empire, which was the very opposite of a nation-state.¹²

Further, as Metin Kunt explains: 'Though in Europe the [Ottoman] empire was often referred to as "Turkey," such a term itself – either as a political or a geographical entity – was totally unknown in the Ottoman Turkish language or in any of the many other languages spoken by its subjects within its borders.'¹³ There are many who continue in this habit of using misleading name-calling, and it is one that has been rendered even more confused and potentially perilous ever since 1923 when the Turkish Republic declared all inhabitants to be 'Turks' in order to erase Kurds, Armenians, Laz and other ethnicities from the national landscape.

There are also further and important terminological difficulties presented by the numerous different ways that early English writers

employed the term 'Turk.' Who, or perhaps more accurately, what, was meant by 'Turk'? As Matthew Dimmock has recently argued, 'Turke' occupied 'a whole range of associations that fundamentally question critical assumptions of a single defining notion of otherness,'¹⁴ and indeed ambiguity and inconstancy were central to many of the different ways the term was employed. The English version of Ortelius' map showing the Ottoman Empire appeared with the following gloss: 'The Turkes are of nature greate observatours of theyr false lawes, slaves unto theyr lorde, good souldieurs, boathe on foote and on horsebacke, patiente in labour, sparinge in theyre foode, and for the reste very inconstante.'¹⁵ Like women, 'Turks' were self-divided and ever changeable, managing to represent for European men everything they imagined themselves not to be. In *The English Parnassus* (1654), a rhyming dictionary for use in schools that came complete with lists of approved epithets, Joshua Poole assembled the following list of suitable synonyms and epithets for 'Turke' from a comprehensive survey of usages in 'the best authors':

Unbelieving, misbelieving, thrifty, abstemious, cruel, unpitying, mercilesse, unrelenting, inexorable, warlick, circumcized, superstitious, bloody, wine-forbearing, turban'd, avaritious, covetous, erring.¹⁶

What is most striking about Poole's list is that it omits any specific reference to Islam, even though the most commonly used term to describe Muslims was 'Turks,' regardless of national origin. The English translation of the Qur'ān, published in 1649, characteristically describes itself as 'newly Englished, for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the *Turkish* vanities.'¹⁷ Before the term 'Muhammetan' became general, Muslims were most often simply referred to as 'Turks' even when they were North Africans or European renegades. Thomas Dallam, returning from Istanbul in 1599, for example, introduces readers to 'our drugaman, or Intarpreater . . . an Inglishe man, borne in Chorlaye in Lancashier; his name Finche. He was also in religion a perfit Turke, but he was our trustie frende.'¹⁸ For Poole, however, with literary horizons before him, 'Turk' was to be used for describing certain characteristics that often had little to do with the lands commonly referred to as 'Turkey.'

Indeed, early modern English culture had for so long defined itself in opposition to Islam that the very words 'Turk' and 'Turkish' could even be applied to the English themselves if they behaved in ways

deemed inappropriate. Anyone who betrayed certain qualities, acting haughtily or proud, *alla Turchesca*, for instance, was liable to be called a 'Turk.' What gave formal unity to the most persistent of those qualities was a principle of inner-contradiction, of inconstancy. A great observer of false laws, unbelieving, misbelieving and erring all at once, 'and for the reste very inconstante,' to be a 'Turk' entailed a whole series of self-contradictions. To be any of these, in Poole's analysis of early seventeenth-century poetic usage, was to be a 'Turk.' Simply put, 'Turk' referred to any Muslim but, in more general usage, the word could also be pejoratively applied to anyone who portrayed contradictory or violent or tyrannically patriarchal characteristics: Shakespeare's use of the term in *Othello* offers illuminating examples.

It is hardly surprising that the multiple attitudes towards the Ottomans circulated by writers who never left the British Isles most commonly reiterated a long tradition of Islamophobic fears, rhetoric and imagery in which the cruel figure of the 'terrible Turk' lusted and savaged his way across a menacingly large empire. At the head of a hugely powerful and resplendent military machine, the figure of the Ottoman sultan haunted Europe, terrorizing captive peoples into slavery, while tyrannizing over his subjects by spectacular displays of sudden, summary justice. Such is what we find in King James' poem celebrating the defeat of the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. Scholars today clearly need to use the term with care and deliberation lest they simply reproduce the prejudiced fantasies of the past or the nationalist presumptions of the post-Kemalist present.

Yet a further complication arises if we take into account the fact that many of the figures – whether real historical people or literary characters – referred to as 'Turks' were not Turks in any sense, but rather Muslims, European converts, or characters from just about anywhere who behaved in certain ways. To avoid possible confusion, then, I shall refer to 'Ottomans' whenever subjects of that imperial state are at issue, and reserve 'Turk' for referring to those mutable figures haunting the early modern European imagination. Similarly, I have used 'English' throughout when referring generally to travellers, merchants, readers, writers and writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – except when doing so would demonstrably include those who were not English – since a key concern here is with the place of these writers and their works upon the development of a national literature that has most commonly been referred to as 'English literature,' and I have reserved 'British' for emphasizing the imperial project of the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Examining how and why Europeans represented the Ottoman Empire, and the Muslim world more generally, during our period is arguably the most exciting and important scholarly endeavour on the agenda of early modern cultural studies today. But understanding what those representations or ‘images’ meant in the past, and what they might continue to mean today, necessarily requires a certain degree of reasonably accurate knowledge of the peoples and cultures being described if we are to grasp how, and to what ends, these early misrepresentations distorted the populous and complex world which they claimed to be portraying; as well as being able to recognize when and why they were accurate. How did the Ottoman Empire record and represent itself? How have modern Ottoman historians changed the ways we might best understand what was going on back then?

The immediate challenge facing scholars who would avoid the single-archive method arises from two distinct directions. The first is the enormous difficulty of access to, and interpretation of, sources in languages such as Farsi, Ottoman Turkish and the various Arabic dialects; a difficulty greatly compounded by the unfamiliar nature of such archives as do exist and are available. In the case of Ottoman sources, the problem has been further exacerbated by two complicating factors: the Ottomans themselves were generally uninterested in writing history of the kind known to European historians since the Enlightenment, while the study of the Ottoman past was deliberately ignored following the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. It was not until the late 1940s that scholars such as Halil İnalcık set about recovering Ottoman history from archival sources in the modern style, and even today gaining access to primary sources continues to present obstacles to those capable of reading Ottoman Turkish.¹⁹ A further problem is that a majority of modern Ottoman historians are based in the United States and Western Europe, and have consequently focused on Ottoman influences in the Mediterranean region and relations with the French, Spanish, Italians, Dutch and English. Yet the Ottoman Empire was so vast that while important revisionary advances in Ottoman historiography are being produced – and this is especially true for specialist studies of relations with Poland, Hungary, the Black Sea region, even Iran and Syria – there are few who can keep up with developments in the field as a whole.

The other general challenge facing scholars today has been caused by Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978). Said’s own insistence that he was concerned in that study only with Western representations of the Orient and not with any actually existing or “‘real’ Orient’ has, all too often,

been taken to be a licence to follow suit and simply to ignore entirely what might otherwise be known about the peoples and cultures of the Muslim world.²⁰ Perhaps the most regrettable effect of Said's important study has been that many scholars coming of age in the long shadow of *Orientalism* have felt free to dismiss the important historical studies produced by skilled and knowledgeable Orientalists, many of whom do not reproduce the imperializing gestures discerned and described by Said, while even those who can be so accused often have a great deal to teach us today.²¹ For scholars without the languages and access to archival sources who nonetheless seek to work in the field, the best if not only solution to both these challenges is to look beyond the single-archive method by taking serious heed of works by those who, skilled in the necessary languages, are directly engaged in original, archival study.

Unfortunately, the dilemmas do not end there. During the late 1990s, a second wave of important studies of early modern East–West relations began appearing, partly in response to developments in colonial-discourse studies inspired by Said and others. Acknowledging that the winners write history and that the very instruments of knowledge production were complicit in structures of 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. After all, during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the great imperial powers were the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals, and not the Spanish, French, Dutch and English. Art historians such as Julian Raby and Deborah Howard seriously challenged the exclusively European bases of Renaissance art and architecture by disclosing the Eastern influences without which Dürer's genius might not have flourished and Venice might have remained a rather drab city built on a swamp.²² Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton broadened and extended this critique of the Eurocentrism underlying the very notion of the Renaissance by examining how the exchange of material goods, styles and ideas between East and West sufficiently enriched some ambitious European merchants to claim noble status for their families and to display their wealth by patronizing talented artists.²³ Then, in the late 1990s, Nabil Matar produced two groundbreaking books, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (1998), and *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (1999) which, combining intimate historical knowledge of the Muslim world with exhaustive coverage of Anglophone sources, effectively set the agenda for study of Anglo-Muslim relations in the sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries on a properly comparative basis that does not casually ignore the other sides.

The dilemmas that remain involve language, methodology and conceptualization: how are those relations, movements, exchanges, encounters and interactions between demonstrably different social, religious and political orders that constitute early modern culture as a whole to be analysed, contextualized and described? How useful and accurate are the very terms and chronological descriptors we are likely to employ? Not too long ago Malcolm Yapp pointed out that the geopolitical concept category of 'Europe' can raise more problems than it solves for describing the actual conditions obtaining four hundred years ago, a time when the very notion of 'Europe' was only starting to be deployed as a way of imagining a unified area that, before the Ottomans seized Constantinople and finally severed the Western from the Eastern Christian communities in 1453, could be considered part of 'Christendom.'²⁴ Without a great deal of reflection, it soon becomes clear that even words such as 'East' and 'West' can confuse and distort, predicating as they do an imaginary and ideological zero point of reference. Once we admit that 'the Renaissance' involved far more than a re-birthing of skills, knowledge and styles from Greek and Roman antiquity, and entailed importing a great deal of materials, skills and styles with Asiatic, African and indeed Islamic origins, periodization becomes blurry while notions of 'origin' and 'influence' dissolve into tendentious gestures. As for the Ottoman Empire, as Metin Kunt observes, 'the Ottoman term for it was *devlet-i âl-i Osman*, "the domains and rule of the House of Osman."²⁵ Simply by calling it an 'empire', we are liable to continue the mistaken enterprise of measuring and assessing its history as if the Ottoman achievement were comparable with the *imperium* of Rome, and then to find it following a comparable trajectory entailing a rise to greatness and a fall into decadence.²⁶ Dangerously mistaken too is the persistent and propagandistic notion that Ottoman incursions into Southeastern Europe were inspired by Islamic hostility towards Christianity rather than by expansionist ambitions to extend dynastic domain and rule for economic and political ends.

If, even to scholars, these historical and theoretical dilemmas seem like picayune hair-splitting, let me insist that they are of considerable importance at a time when there are many who, occupying positions of considerable power and authority, would insist, not only that Turkey is East and Euro-America is West, and that the only possible connection between them is inevitable and unceasing conflict. What we can

learn from the past, and must teach if there is to be a future in which scholarship and teaching have any place, is that Christianity, Islam and Judaism were not and are not incompatible, that none has ever held an inviolable monopoly over the truth, and that none rests upon a theology requiring the elimination of the others despite the doctrinal fantasies of some evangelical ministers, bellicose rabbis, deluded self-appointed imams and belligerent secular nationalists.

Nabil Matar's *Islam in Britain and Turks, Moors, and Englishmen*

Since the late 1990s, the serious study of early modern England and the Islamic world has been on the scholarly agenda and the field continues to grow, spawning innumerable international conferences and scholarly publications. In large part, this interest can be attributed to Nabil Matar's first two books which were conceived and written with a thoroughness and care born of many years devoted to tracking literary, historical and archival materials in Arabic as well as English sources to illustrate the topics involved. As suggested by the title, *Islam In Britain, 1558–1685* focused principally on religious issues: on the historical record and literary representation of the many Christians who converted to Islam, and of the few Muslims who converted to Christianity; on the place of Arabic scholarship in Renaissance and Reformation theology; and on the development of specifically racist attitudes towards Islamic peoples by the second half of the seventeenth century. *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* focused more closely on attitudes towards those Muslims who found themselves in Britain where, according to Matar, they were quickly deracinated from their own cultural and historical backgrounds in order to be rendered colonizable – no longer representatives of powerful and historically complex cultures but primitive savages to be conquered, dominated and enslaved. While the scope of these two studies differed, between them they effectively set the agenda for much of the work that has appeared since, including Matar's own subsequent translations of Arabic travel writings, *In the Lands of the Christians* (2003) and *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689* (2005).

The scholarly impact of Matar's first two books can hardly be overestimated. *Islam in Britain* challenged previous understanding of the non-European origins of early modern Anglo-British identities and imperial ambitions. It examined the nature and range of attitudes towards Islam and the Ottoman Empire to be found in accounts by travel writers, historians, theologians, playwrights and poets between the accession of

Elizabeth in 1558 and the death of Charles II in 1685. Literary evidence of English fascination with the Near East during this period was previously documented by Samuel Chew (1937), Hamit Dereli (1951), Orhan Burian (1952) and Brendon Beck (1987), but Matar's contribution moved beyond the mere cataloguing and summarizing of literary texts in order to offer a profoundly original argument concerning the emergence and development of anti-Islamic prejudice in Protestant Britain.²⁷ Matar began by pointing out that the English, Scots and Irish were far more likely to meet a Muslim than a native American or sub-Saharan African. Thousands of Britons – not only mariners but also women and children – were taken captive and sold in the slave markets of North Africa. Moreover, many converted to Islam, either from perceived necessity – having become slaves they thought it was in their best interests to do so in order to improve their conditions and escape captive servitude – or from a desire to improve their social status and material circumstances. Tales of renegades, Christians who had 'turned Turk' by converting to Islam, and had subsequently prospered, were numerous throughout the period; many were not fantasies, but accounts of actual events.

According to Matar, the allure of Islam was so great that considerable efforts had to be made to demonize Islam and those who converted to it. Surveying this process of demonization in seventeenth-century plays by Thomas Kyd, Thomas Heywood, Robert Daborne, John Mason, Philip Massinger and John Dryden before turning to sermons concerning historical British renegades who came home in hopes of re-converting to Christianity, Matar showed it to be largely a process of systematic mystification in which otherwise knowable facts were commonly ignored if they proved inconvenient. After all, eyewitness reports of renegades invariably indicated that they were successful in their new lives, not the miserable wretches commonly portrayed by preachers and playwrights. On the contrary, many renegades were respected and accepted by Christian travellers, traders and diplomats. At home, however, dramatists and churchmen cast the renegade in an entirely different light as 'a type of generic evil.'²⁸

In subsequent chapters of *Islam in Britain*, Matar reversed the direction of his enquiry by examining the ways that early modern Anglo-British culture and society attempted to incorporate elements of Islam – its wisdom, knowledge and people. Investigating the state of knowledge about Islam, Matar pointed out that while accurate information about Islam in medieval Britain had lagged behind that in the rest of Europe, for those living during the middle decades of the seventeenth century, Islam had become 'an intellectual and social matter at home,'²⁹

especially following the appearance of the English-language *Alcoran* in 1649. Knowledge of, and misinformation about, the history, society and religion of the Near East and North Africa provided material that was regularly used to describe, represent and even criticize what was going on at home. An increasing sense of Islamic culture began influencing the imagery and perceptions of poets as varied as John Milton, Andrew Marvell, Edmund Waller and Thomas Traherne. Scholarly debates at the time concerning the status of Arabic science and Islamic theology fed into and reinforced the political debates of mid-century, providing global contexts for local and national crises. During the English Civil Wars, the Ottoman Empire offered the model of a religious state that would have pre-empted the possibility of sectarian uprisings by its multicultural tolerance. Among the pious, Islam posed a problem since it encouraged far greater piety among its adherents than Christianity. For Protestant reformers, allusions to Islam were especially useful as anti-Catholic propaganda. Unlike Catholicism, Islam permitted liberty of conscience, and there were persistent hopes that the 'Turks' would eventually destroy the Pope.

One of Matar's major contentions throughout this study is that interest in Islam during the period was invariably opportunistic: either a means for sorting out domestic problems or a way for partisan writers to promote their own cause. He argued that, knowing they could not conquer the Ottoman Empire, 'English writers turned to the only option left for them in confronting Islam: to fantasize in drama and sermon about Christian victory and Muslim defeat.'³⁰ Yet as Matar himself had already argued, the situation was never quite as simple as preachers and playwrights would have had people believe. Many expatriates allied themselves to the winning side and gained the respect of Muslims. For many English writers, the victory and expansion of Islamic-Ottoman armies in the Mediterranean and Southeast Europe offered a chance to advocate capturing trade from Catholic Venice and Spain; for others, it offered evidence that divine providence was about to bring about the defeat of the Pope. Mutual hostility towards icon-worshipping Catholics, as Matar demonstrated, was a key in Elizabeth's early diplomatic attempts to capture from the Venetian, French and Spanish, the profitable Eastern trade out of Ottoman ports for English shipping.³¹ Fantasies of Islam in defeat were powerful, but only part of the story.

In his follow-up study, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery*, Matar turned westwards and posited a 'Renaissance triangle' in which Anglo-Protestant attitudes to Islam and the Muslims become confused with emergent attitudes towards Caribbeans and native-

Americans. Matar pointed out that Barbary pirates threatened British fishing fleets taking Newfoundland cod to market in Mediterranean ports; that several British merchants sought their fortunes in the trade of the Mediterranean as well as the West Atlantic. Meanwhile, religious polemicists in England and Scotland regularly vilified Muslims and 'Indians' in similarly grotesque terms for being exemplary of un-Christian vices and perversions. Matar instances Sir Thomas Smythe, who turned his winnings playing the Levant trade into another fortune in the colonial New World. In describing this 'Renaissance triangle,' Matar castigated Braudel and others for ignoring links between Britain, the Mediterranean and the New World, but held back from a more fully engaged dialogue with Robert Brenner's analysis in *Merchants and Revolution*, from which he acknowledged his information about Smythe.³²

Nevertheless, Matar's investigation of the roots of Orientalist attitudes represented truly groundbreaking work that has inspired numerous subsequent studies by literary and cultural historians of the period. And the ground being broken was, and still is, situated in a political and ideological minefield. In the closing chapters of *Islam in Britain*, Matar unearthed some compelling evidence that suggests ways that modern 'anti-Semitism' has important roots in late seventeenth-century Anglo-Protestantism, but in presenting it, he remarkably managed to avoid polemic. On the contrary, Matar quietly set about analysing, summarizing, and discussing his materials without even hinting at the acrimonious disputes that continue to divide the world today.

In his final chapter, Matar observed how millenarian theology in England and Scotland turned to the prophecies of Daniel and Revelations in order to explain the twin threats of Ottoman sea power and the Counter-Reformation, while at the same time accounting for the historical failure of the Christian crusaders to recapture the sacred lands of the Near East. Viewing both Catholic and Muslim nations as hostile, reforming Britons began reviling their enemies not only in dogmatic terms but also as racial others. Thus, according to Matar, arose the 'demonization of the Muslims – both the Turks and the Arab "Saracens" who had given rise to Islam.'³³ By distinguishing Muslim 'Turks' from Arab Saracens, seventeenth-century eschatologists separated the achievements of medieval Arab civilization from the militarized dissemination of Islam. Although scholarly Arabists such as William Bedwell knew it to be nonsense, this distinction was supported by various etymological and ethnographic myths of origin: the Saracens were variously held to be the sons of Sarah, or of Hagar, or simply a group of unpaid

soldiers whose leader, Muhammad, founded a new religion based on military aggression and expansionism.

Matar describes how several historical accounts of the 'Saracens' systematically de-historicize the knowable past by moving directly from Muhammad to the Ottomans, 'deleting thereby over 700 years' of Arab history.³⁴ Millenarian expositors of Daniel had little difficulty seeing the Saracens as the 'Kings of the South,' who began driving Christianity from the East – a process they believed was simply continued by the Ottomans.³⁵ Having thus reduced the history of Arabic civilization to militarized aggression, some Protestant writers claimed that Muhammad himself had prophesied that Islam would only last 1,000 years, a period that was about to end: 'Muslim eschatology secured the victory of Christ over Mohammad.'³⁶ Implicit in this historical scheme, according to Matar, is an emergent ideology of progress in which the story of the past merely confirms Anglo-Protestants in their own superiority over all other nations and races: pro-Israelite but anti-Jewish, pro-Arab but anti-Saracen, pro-Roman but anti-Catholic. Belief in the decay of other nations and races provided the emerging conditions for increasingly powerful fantasies of divinely ordained Anglo-Protestant superiority.

Yet, while uniformly condemning Saracens and 'Turks' 'to military destruction and spiritual damnation,' there were some Anglo-Protestant eschatologists who encouraged praying for the Jews since Paul (Rom. 11:24) had written of the Jewish conversion to Christianity. From here, according to Matar, arose the notion of the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine where they would dispel the Saracens and 'Turks,' convert to Christianity, and establish 'in Palestine the Protestant English Kingdom of Christ.' Although 'Restorationism' was condemned as heretical by most theologians, Matar describes works by several writers who were keen to promote it – including Joseph Mede, Thomas Goodwin, Henry Finch and Thomas Brightman. While some modern scholars describe this position as philo-Semitism, Matar argued that it is, rather, profoundly anti-Jewish. After all, he pointed out, the belief that the Jews would complete the crusades by driving the Saracens and Turks from the Holy Land as a prelude to their own inevitable conversion to Christianity held the further advantage – to Protestant Britons – of expelling the Jews from Britain once again. In this period, 'Restorationism was the hallmark of an anti-Jewish position; calling for the expulsion of the Jews (again) from England and for their conversion out of their religion to Christianity did not constitute philo-Semitic measures.'³⁷ Allowing that not all Protestant expressions of philo-Semitism were Restorationist, Matar observed that Restorationists had a hard time finding any evidence at

all that Jews wanted to fight Muslims or live in Palestine: 'not a single Renaissance Jewish writer in England expressed the desire to destroy the Muslims.' Moreover, travellers often reported how 'Jews who had been badly treated in Christendom were supporting their Muslim protectors against their former persecutors.' Nevertheless, the logics of popular millenarian Protestant eschatology apparently led many at the time to believe, despite evidence to the contrary, that 'the Jews were hostile to the Muslims.' 'Once the Muslims were destroyed by the Jews,' Matar explains, 'then the Jews would renounce their faith, occupy ("restore to") the land of Palestine, and hand the land and themselves over to England. Then the millennium would begin which Protestant Britons (and converted Jews) alone would live to celebrate.'³⁸

By adopting a balanced and scholarly approach, Matar was clearly hedging his bets – without doubt a wise strategy given the personal threats that were regularly directed at Edward Said during the 1990s. The implications of his study, however, direct themselves to one of the great unanswered problems of *Orientalism* without seeking to solve it: How did the discourse of Orientalism materialize into political agency and action? In addressing this question historically, Matar's study pointed to dangerous revisions of received historical wisdom. His examination of English thought about the East during the mercantile era – the period immediately before the post-Napoleonic shift at the core of Said's study – points directly to the Anglo-Protestant origins of a 'Restorationist' discourse within millenarian thought that would resurface after the First World War as British Zionism and take on new and alarming energy in the fanatical Christian Zionism of the present day.

In Matar's account, the desire of European Jews during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was not to militarize into an armed nation that would fight the Muslims out of Palestine, not to reclaim – in the name of a Christian millennial eschatology – the Biblical lands of Israel. Yet this is the very structure of desire, according to Matar's evidence, that some elements of the Anglo-Protestant imperial imaginary of the mercantile era constructed for them. In Matar's account, no European Jew wanted to live in Near Eastern deserts, to take up arms against one of the most efficient and bloody imperial armies the world had ever known. But apparently, this is what some Christians in Britain and the colonies of the New World were beginning to want to have happen. A crusade against the Ottoman Empire was as unaffordable and unthinkable in Elizabethan England as it was beside the point. Armed with the knowledge that wealth was the new form of power, mercantile agents of all sorts – speculators, tradesmen, merchant adventurers, stock-holders

in the trading companies and their overseas agents – understood only too well that English interests in the Levant had nothing to do with military conquest or the planting of colonialists abroad. On the contrary, those interests had everything to do with cheaper goods from further East – the Indian sub-continent, Southeast Asia and China – and bigger export markets for English goods. Therefore, a diplomatic approach to Anglo-Ottoman relations was called for.

Matar's argument may sound rather like the received historical wisdom once taught in English schools: Britain needed good relations with the Ottomans in order to have minimal interference from the Ottomans when reaching further into Asia to make certain of capturing the jewel in the crown of empire – the Indian subcontinent. Yet Matar's revisionary spin was to disclose how the early agents of what would eventually become British Zionism were already hovering in place during the mercantile era, imagining the British Empire into being. By amassing literary, historical and archival evidence concerning attitudes towards Islam and Muslims – both native-born and converts – during the early mercantile era, Matar exposed how the roots of Orientalism – the construction and domination of the East by the West – were entangled with those of 'Restorationist' ideology in the British imperial imaginary right from the start.

Before orientalism

Matar's work made clear how there are several ways in which the representation of the Ottoman Empire, religion, and peoples in early modern English writing will necessarily differ from some of the more general notions of Orientalism developed by Edward Said. Unlike 'the Orient,' the Ottoman Empire really existed. The Ottomans were well aware of the fact, and were quite capable of representing themselves. Said himself is perfectly clear that although 'there were – and are – cultures and nations whose location is in the East,' these are not to be confused with the ways they have been represented.³⁹ Orientalism describes the ways that 'Westerners' understood and eventually sought control over those cultures and nations by designating them the 'Orient.' When early European visitors set about understanding, misunderstanding, overlooking or ignoring the self-representations of the Ottomans, the reports they left behind may often owe rather more to their own imperial fantasies and personal ambitions than to really existing conditions.⁴⁰ But no one ever doubted that the Ottoman Empire existed. Said is also almost entirely concerned with the period following the defeat of Islamic

imperialism – the post-Napoleonic period of Enlightenment. For him, the previous era was dominated by ‘Christian supernaturalism,’⁴¹ but as we will see, this generalization proves only partly useful.

How else might these early modern English writings about the Ottomans fail to fit into Orientalist paradigms? Said defines Orientalism in three interconnected ways: it is at once an academic discipline, a dialectical ‘style of thought’ for distinguishing the East from the West, and the historical development of a ‘corporate institution for dealing with the Orient’⁴² that is at once grounded in that dialectic and authorized by the academic discipline. What is clearly of interest here – since the case of the Ottomans simply does not fit – is the moment at which European knowledge about the Orient is presumed to have become institutionalized power, when the West began acting in and upon those really existing places and peoples, forcing them into conformity with their own ideas. In Said’s account, and for many who have followed him, Orientalism is not of much interest or even fully in place in the third sense, as an achieved operation of power and knowledge, until after the French Enlightenment, when the great European nations were building Eastern empires.

Yet even in the face of such basic historical differences, early modern English accounts of the Ottomans developed certain representational themes that would feed directly into the Orientalist mind set: these include such notions as backwardness, licentious eroticism, ‘different sexualities,’ barbaric cruelty, despotic absolutism. And as Said insists, when reading such representations: ‘The things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation, nor its fidelity to some great original.’⁴³ And so it is when reading early English accounts of the Ottomans. More importantly, English writing about the Ottomans shared with Orientalism the habit of citationality, of moving ahead by the re-writing and sometimes correcting of what earlier writers had said. Like Orientalism, the early writing about the Ottomans was ‘after all a system for citing works and authors.’⁴⁴ In this, as in other crucial respects, English writing about the Ottomans resembles Orientalism because they are both discourses, and one of the things discourses do is constitute subjects. Moreover, since they are both imperial discourses, they seek to construct subjects in terms of national identities, legitimate authority and power over others.

For Said, Orientalism situates the generalized European subject ‘in a position of strength,’⁴⁵ while the English regarded the Ottomans from a position of relative weakness. Their view 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. During the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at least, English writers, and especially the visitors who wrote about their experiences in the lands ruled by the Ottomans, never forgot that they were dealing with an empire that controlled a great deal of Eastern Europe and a third of the known world, not a backward, vulnerable and somehow ‘orientalized’ space waiting to be conquered and controlled. Where imperial discourses might be expected to produce empowered imperial subjects constituting themselves at the expense of colonized subalterns, the situation proves to be more complex in the case of English views of the Ottomans. Instead of any simple desire for domination, we will find instead a restructuring of desire, knowledge and power: imperial envy.

Imperial envy

The essays that make up *Looking East* explore how the English came to know and think about the Ottomans during the early modern period, and seek to trace the influence of that knowledge and thought on the English themselves as they set about imagining and then establishing their own Eastern empire: a cultural process that Richmond Barbour recently termed England’s ‘Eastern initiative.’⁴⁶ I shall argue that the emerging national imagination was greatly stimulated and challenged by everything that was coming to be known about the Ottomans, their social and cultural life, their religion and manners. And I shall argue that early modern English writers framed an imaginary Anglo-Ottoman relation that complicates our understanding of both Orientalism and the emergent culture of British imperialism. Where Said was concerned with the period during which European powers could be said to be ‘in a position of strength,’ for the pre-colonial period English attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire can better be characterized by a dominant discursive formation that I call ‘imperial envy.’

By imperial envy, I intend something similar to an instance of what Raymond Williams called a ‘structure of feeling.’ It helps make sense of the often contradictory and sometimes difficult kinds of evidence that enable us to understand how the English thought and felt about the Ottomans during their earliest encounters with a great and powerful Muslim empire, and suggests how those thoughts and feelings may have helped to shape the English into imperial Britons. When Queen

Elizabeth ascended the throne, the English were a weak and relatively insignificant nation seeking to compete with the Spanish for the wealth of the New World. To the pious among the English, the Ottoman Empire was at once the great enemy and scourge of Christendom, yet to the commercially minded it was also the fabulously wealthy and magnificent court from which the sultan ruled over three continents with his great and powerful army. 'The Turkes,' wrote Henry Blount in 1636, 'are the only moderne people, great in action, and whose Empire hath so suddenly invaded the world.'⁴⁷ How could they not be objects of envy? Describing early modern English knowledge of and attitudes towards the Ottomans in terms of imperial envy provides a useful strategy for understanding the growth of imperial fantasies and ambitions that would help to energize and transform an insular people into an imperial nation. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, once mastery of the seas made ambitions for an empire of their own seem imminent, British attitudes began to shift and the dominance of imperial envy started to give way to an emergent imperiousness.

When early modern English writers represented Ottoman civilization, they did so in ways that complicate our understanding of both Orientalism and the cultural history of British imperialism. In this book, I have attempted to identify and describe some of the dominant tropes, structures and fantasies by means of which English writers and readers came to know the Ottoman Empire. Such knowledge and fantasies will be found to be both strategic and interested. The need to produce reliable information about the Ottomans at this time, like all systems of knowledge production, arose from both lack and desire, and in this sense tells us perhaps rather more about those desiring knowledge than about the objects of knowledge. European desire for the 'worldly goods' of Asia saturates Renaissance art, literature, political thought and commercial practice – as Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton have amply demonstrated. Most often, what represented, but also stood in the way of, that desire was the Islamic Ottoman Empire. From the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries, a period roughly corresponding to the Ottoman's greatest territorial reach into Europe, knowledge about the imperial dynasty and the vast maritime and territorial areas that they governed, proved essential to the English, not only for competing with other European nations equally keen to capture Eastern markets, but also for developing a new, and indeed international, sense of national self-importance.

The ideas, images and clichés produced by early English writers about 'the terrible Turks,' their religion, culture, society and empire, illustrate

the inseparability of commercial interests from cultural change. In the Renaissance and early modern periods, personal and national identities were busily re-making themselves in accordance with what was newly becoming known of the world through a wide variety of different kinds of exchange and encounter. For the insular English, personal and national desires and identities could no longer be simply constructed from the local, the familiar and the traditional, but increasingly became inseparably related to notions about the global, the strange and the alien. When, in *The Way of the World* (1700), William Congreve's Mirabel announces he will permit Millimant to serve only 'native' drinks once they are married, and then specifies 'tea, chocolate, and coffee,' the dramatist's irony exposes how something very strange has occurred in the concept of what could be considered native to England. In the same play, Sir Wilfull Witwoud's desires to become a traveller also suggest how, by the end of the seventeenth century, the attractions of overseas travel were no longer restricted to intelligencers, diplomats, merchants, antiquarians or would-be travel writers, but had become an activity that even a country-bred gentleman could imagine himself undertaking. A self-styled 'Christian,' however, Sir Wilfull liked to drink, and he knew from his 'Map' that it was better not to visit Muslim lands since 'your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape.'⁴⁸

Unlike accounts of how Western Europeans viewed Asian peoples and cultures in terms of radical 'otherness,' however useful they may be for thinking about later periods of Western imperialism, 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. While the English clearly envied the Spanish and their empire, and sought to compete directly with them for the wealth of the New World, their envy of the Ottomans was a different matter. While attacking Spanish shipping proved a profitable way of acquiring gold and silver, there was never any question of taking on the mighty Ottoman armies: it was sea power that provided the key to British imperial might. Further, commercial and strategic alliances with the Ottomans proved a sensible and effective way of undermining Spanish power. For the English, this admiration and envy of the Ottoman state lasted from the earliest mercantile and diplomatic encounters in the late sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century – by which time they began restyling themselves British while establishing the grounds for an Eastern empire of their own. Once we take the imaginative, literary and poetic writing about the Ottomans and put it alongside contemporary historical documents, it

becomes clear how fascination with Ottoman culture and society helped shape how the English thought about, and represented themselves, as a nation with increasing imperial ambitions of their own. With the realization of those ambitions during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, envy gives way to an amicable indifference born from a presumed superiority that had, perhaps, always been present.

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Part I

Beginnings

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1

The English Encounter the Ottoman World

During the second half of the sixteenth century, English ships began asserting their mercantile and military interests in the Mediterranean for the first time in history. The desire for commercial profits went hand in hand with efforts to compete with the Spanish Empire and to learn how the mighty Ottoman Empire held itself and its subject peoples together. By 1620, a mere four decades after beginning direct trade, the English had become Christian Europe's leading trading partner with the Ottoman Empire. Soon after the Restoration of 1660, they began establishing their own colonies in North Africa and the Asian subcontinent. During the eighteenth century, having colonized Ireland and united with Scotland, they restyled themselves 'British' and set about establishing their own Eastern empire.

Looking East examines how these events influenced, and were shaped by, English writing about the Ottoman Empire during this period.

This chapter opens by examining how Ottoman culture, especially distinctive objects and images representing the Ottoman Empire, first began to appear in England. Then, after describing the development of early commercial and diplomatic relations, it offers a brief survey of the many different kinds of writing that were involved in making the Ottoman world knowable to early modern English readers.

Visualizing the Ottoman world in early modern England

What available images enabled the English people of the early modern period to envisage the Ottoman Empire? How might they have imagined the Ottomans and Ottoman culture without travelling there? What did they suppose the Ottomans and their world looked like? What figures, images, objects, accoutrements, costumes,

accessories and styles of life dominated their imaginative vision of the Ottoman East?

Answers to all these questions, of course, greatly depended upon the education, wealth and social rank of those concerned, while the existing records supply us with a disproportionate body of evidence for assessing the attitudes of the aristocratic and propertied elites. Those living in, or with access to, the grand houses, for example, would have been familiar with paintings of Ottoman sultans. By the mid-sixteenth century, the European fashion for collecting portraits of eminent and illustrious figures from legend and history had infected the most prosperous sections of Tudor society. The habit of boosting prestige by displaying paintings or embroidered tapestries containing images of reigning monarchs, English and foreign, took firm hold among the Henrican aristocracy: By 1546, no fewer than twenty-eight portraits of 'divers noble persons' could be found in the collection of the Duke of Norfolk alone.¹ By the time Elizabeth ascended the throne, according to Susan Foister's study of sixteenth-century inventories, 'the tradition' of collecting and displaying portraits 'apparently already established among the nobility had spread to the middle classes.' Inventories of the estates of Sir Ralph Warren (1554), John West (1569) and Thomas Key (1572) all include pictures of the 'Great Turk.'² The total number of such portraits hanging in English houses, however, is likely to have been somewhat higher, given the numerous unspecified portraits listed in such inventories.

Pictorial images of Ottoman subjects and themes were not uncommon in sixteenth-century English collections, though the records can be tantalizingly vague and indicate potentially lost masterpieces. In 1590, an inventory of John, Lord Lumley's extensive art collections at Nonsuch Palace, his house on Tower Hill and at Lumley Castle listed a 'skreene' with 'Thirteene Emperors heades of mould worked garnishing the hall,' and a picture showing 'a bridge of Constantinople.'³ A sale of pictures from Sandbeck Park in Yorkshire held in 1807 included 'The Turk; a fine spirited head; Rembrandt.'⁴ Although this painting has since disappeared into a private collection, the attribution to Rembrandt, though possibly spurious, does suggest the work was probably of sixteenth-century origin. Of portraits representing Ottoman sultans held in English collections, that by Hans Eworth is the earliest known surviving work, and it illustrates many of the most common features of such portraits (Figure 1).

Signed and dated 1549, when Eworth was living in Southwark, this painting assembles many of the established conventions for depicting

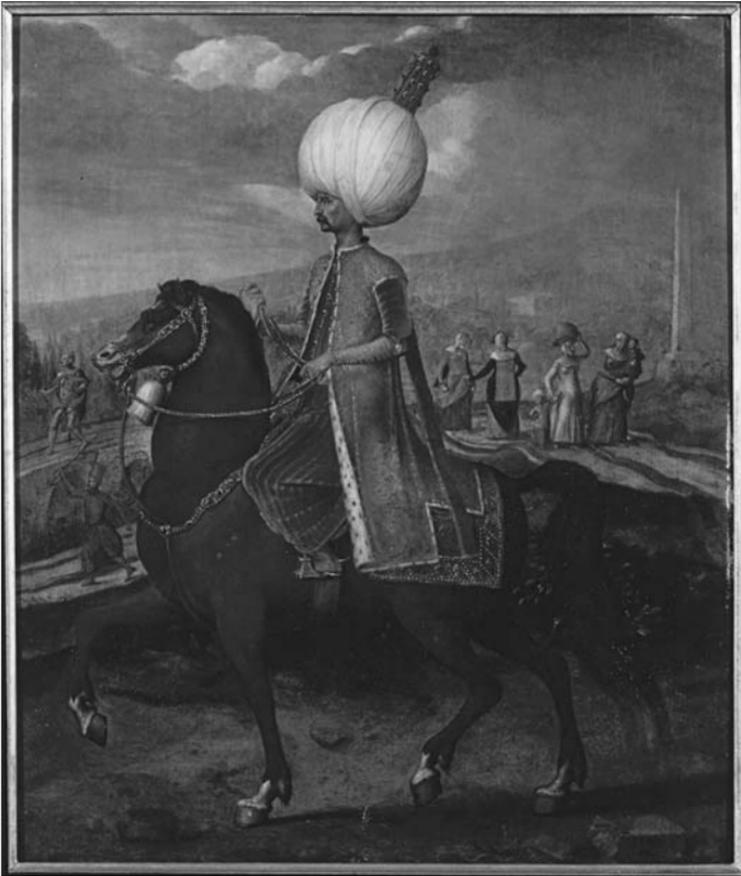


Figure 1 Hans Eworth, Portrait of a sultan, possibly Süleyman ‘the Magnificent.’ Reproduced with permission from a private collection

eminent Ottomans, and displays some standard features for representing the society over which he ruled. Eworth’s likely sources for the painting include sketches made by Pieter Coecke van Aelst on his visit to Istanbul in 1533, an engraving of Süleyman the Magnificent by Hieronymus Hopfer of Augsburg, and the equestrian portrait of Mehmed II on a medal designed by Costanzo di Moysis. Karen Hearne observes that Eworth ‘was following a tradition of portraying Turkish figures, especially rulers, on horseback’ and that, by ‘exaggerating the turban to immense proportions, he emphasises the exoticism and the rather menacing elegance of his subject.’⁵ The sense of exotic authority is further achieved by the figure’s apparently easy and effortless command over his energetic and powerful horse – almost certainly represented as an Ottoman ‘Turkish’

(Turcoman) or Arabian stallion, to judge by the heavy crest of the highly arched neck, the extraordinarily small head and the delicate limbs. The feathered fetlocks are not characteristic of Eastern blood horses, however, and perhaps owe something to the horses with which Eworth would have been familiar in his native Flanders. It is most unlikely that the painter would have seen such a good-sized yet elegant creature anywhere in England at the time. Near Eastern bloodstock had long been the envy of serious horsemen throughout Europe, but would not be seen treading on English soil in significant numbers for several decades. Indeed, at the very time of Eworth's painting, the English were in the midst of a crisis of confidence in their own native breeds, which had proved grossly inadequate in size and stamina for supporting Henry VIII's military adventures in Scotland and France. 'Royal interest in horsebreeding and the improvement of English breeds became public policy in the 1530s,' according to Joan Thirsk. 'The avowed object,' she notes, 'was to breed "good and strong horses" that would help the defence of the country – in other words, horses for war.' In 1547, two years before Eworth dated his painting, a new muster book was initiated that required all gentlemen 'to furnish a certain number of horses each' for the public service.⁶ Increasing the number, size and strength of the native stock was the prime concern of royal policy, and there can be little doubt that the bold and powerful stallion shown in Eworth's portrait would have been the envy of every loyal English horseman.

As in the Costanzo medal, Eworth's rider adopts the short-stirrugged seat favoured by Ottoman horsemen, while the loose reins confirm that he has achieved control through natural ability rather than coercion and brutality. The horse certainly appears both willing and at ease with its rider, who has no means or need of resorting to force to maintain command. It is in keeping with his status that Eworth's horseman carries no weapons and is costumed in sumptuous garments that indicate at once his status and Ottoman otherness. He wears a full-length sleeveless caftan of richly embroidered cloth of gold that falls open to reveal a fur lining of spotted sable. Underneath, he wears a red ankle-length shirt, or *gömlek*, studded to the throat with a sequence of jewelled buttons that match four rows of jewels decorating the tall headpiece – also dyed red – that surmounts his turban. If the painting is, in some respects, intended to represent the reigning emperor, Sultan Süleyman (r.1520–1566), it is notable that this style of tall and voluminous turban, known as a *mücevveze*, became fashionable during Süleyman's reign. Moreover, the facial features are curiously

in line with a description penned by Lokman, the official Ottoman biographer, who wrote that Süleyman 'was tall and majestic-looking with strong limbs and broad shoulders; he had an elegant and handsome face, aquiline nose, furrowed brows, and deep hazelcoloured eyes.'⁷ Eworth could not possibly have known Lokman's description, which was, after all, not written until thirty years after Eworth dated his painting. Hearne speculates that Eworth followed Hieronymus Hopfer's engraving which, in turn, 'is thought to share a common source, now lost, with Albrecht Dürer's drawing of Süleyman, dated 1526.'⁸ Be that as it may, it is clear that reasonably accurate details of Süleyman's appearance were available in Europe to those seeking to know. Although most portraits of Süleyman in Ottoman miniatures represent him with a full beard, and not simply, as here, a drooping moustache,⁹ later generations of English readers would become familiar with the engraved profile of Süleyman that illustrates Richard Knolles' *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), in which, perhaps following Eworth or his sources, he appears similarly beardless and wearing an oversized *mücevveze* (Figure 2).

Of present importance, however, is that Eworth's painting, as substantially generic as it is, belongs to a well-established tradition of portraying Ottoman sultans and their world, and that such images were circulating throughout Europe, and into England, during the early part of the sixteenth century. In this context, the background details in Eworth's portrait are of comparable interest since they also signal features of the Ottoman world that were becoming commonplace themes in visual representations and written accounts. As Hearne points out, all of them – the obelisk, the group of women and children, the armed male figures to the right, the distant mountains – feature in the woodcut produced by Coecke van Aelst from his initial sketches, and from here many of them became visual and literary clichés.¹⁰ Published in 1585, the English translation of Nicolas de Nicolay's *Navigations, Peregrinations and Voyages, made into Turkie*, for example, includes engraved plates illustrating women going to the baths (plate 61), a 'Woman Turke leading her children' (plate 62), and various male figures from the sultan's court, including a running servant wearing a tall, plumed hat (plate 85) and a janissary bearing a staff of office (plate 77) – all of them very similar to those shown in Eworth's painting.¹¹ Figures of mounted sultans, running soldiers, standing guards, women on their way to the bathhouse with children and servants, also regularly appear in the costumes books of the time that were often brought back by travellers.¹²



Figure 2 Engraved portrait of Sultan Süleyman 'the Magnificent' (r.1520–1566), from Knolles, *General History of the Turkes* (1638 edition). Author collection

Of carpets and kings: Ottoman textiles at the Court of Henry VIII

Painted and engraved portraits of Ottomans were not the only, or indeed the earliest, sources to provide the English with visual analogues for the opulence and power of Ottoman culture. Before collecting portraits of



Figure 3 Engraved portrait of Sultan 'Genç' Osman II (r.1618–1622), from Knolles, *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1638 edition). Author collection

world leaders had become a fashionable form of signalling one's wealth and social status, the possession and display of costly silk clothing and 'Turkey' carpets enabled the nobility and upwardly mobile to declare their social superiority.¹³ Silken textiles first arrived in England with the Romans. Active importation of Chinese and Central Asian silk fabrics continued throughout the Roman occupation, fell into decline with their departure, only to be revived during the seventh century with the arrival of Christianity. Bede records Edwin, King of Northumbria (r.616–632) receiving a Byzantine robe from Pope Boniface V for adopting the Christian faith, and there is evidence that noble men and women were wearing tunics with silk-trimmed sleeves by the end of that century.¹⁴ Curiously enough, the earliest tapestries and oriental carpets to be seen in England arrived in 1255 from Spain with Eleanor of Castile who had come to London to marry the future Edward I. Included in her dowry 'were a number of tapestries and carpets with which she decorated the walls and floors of her lodgings in the Temple in Westminster,' much to the derision of the sober London citizens of the time.¹⁵ Well before the Tudor Reformation, the taste for sumptuous silken clothing among the rich and powerful had become fully secularized,¹⁶ and during Henry VIII's reign (r.1509–1547) the vogue for adopting features of Ottoman costume and collecting oriental carpets became a conspicuous feature of life at court. Certainly, Henry and the members of his court seem to have enjoyed dressing up in Ottoman clothing to impress foreign visitors. 'On Shrove Sunday the same yere [1533],' it is reported,

the kyng, prepared a goodly banket, in the Parliament Chambre at Westminster, for all the Ambassadors, whiche then wer here, out of diverse realmes and countreis . . . and shortly after, his grace with the Erle of Essex, came in appared after Turkey fasshion, in long robes of Bawkin, powdered with gold, hattes on their heddes of Crimosyn Velvet . . . girded with two swordes, called Cimiteries.¹⁷

Henry seems to have favoured Ottoman garb for his ceremonial costumes as well as for fancy dress parties. In examining how Ottoman clothing designs influenced sixteenth-century Western dress, Charlotte Jirousek observes how a drawing of Henry VIII made in 1542 shows that the English king had adopted the use of 'rows of horizontal bands' forming 'distinctive closures' on his coat. Such bands 'can be seen on kaftans from the late fifteenth century in the Topkapı collections,' and appear regularly in Ottoman miniature paintings of Sultan Süleyman. In a portrait of Queen Elizabeth from the mid 1570s, Jirousek points out,

the queen's 'bodice [is] closed with such bands of decorative braid.'¹⁸ We may never know, however, whether Elizabeth ever wore any of the items of Ottoman clothing – including robes, girdles, sleeves, and 'an under gowne' – that were regularly sent to her as personal gifts from the ladies of Mehmed III's court in Istanbul.¹⁹

Henry VIII's evident delight in dressing in Ottoman styles and accessories also extended to public displays of Ottoman textiles whenever he moved outside the inner circles of the court. When the king travelled, his baggage included no fewer than sixty-five carpets 'of Turkey making' – a phrase used in the royal inventories to designate knotted carpets made by Anatolian, Egyptian, Syrian or Persian weavers rather than the European-made carpets that imitated Eastern designs listed as 'Turkey work.'²⁰ If sixty-five valuable imported carpets seems excessive, inventories of Henry's possessions drawn up in 1539 indicate that, scattered over tables and floors throughout the various royal houses, he owned a grand total of eight hundred and one carpets, of which at least five hundred and fifty are listed as being 'of Turkey making.' Although many of these carpets had been in the royal collection since the previous century, Henry added many more: some were acquired from Cardinal Wolsey, while others were purchased from noblemen and dealers; thirty-two carpets 'of Turkey making' at Hampton Court came from Peter Vandewall, a Flemish merchant and carpet-dealer.²¹ It is perhaps not insignificant that Pieter Coecke van Aelst, whose sketches evidently inspired Eworth, originally travelled to Istanbul in 1533 with plans to establish himself in the carpet trade.²²

For his part, Henry VIII, not content with simply owning an enormous collection of carpets, started the trend for being portrayed standing on colourful rugs of Anatolian design. John Mills has catalogued a total of thirteen such portraits of Henry – most of them derived from a Whitehall palace fresco of 1537 painted by Hans Holbein the younger that was destroyed by fire in 1698 – and notes that 'certainly no other Monarch and probably no other artist's subject has been portrayed with so many different, interesting carpets.'²³ But Henry was by no means alone in his desire to collect 'Turkey' carpets and to be portrayed standing on them. An anonymous portrait of his son, Edward VI, shows the nine-year old succeeding to the throne in 1547, standing on a small-pattern Holbein carpet in a pose that directly imitates Holbein's much-copied image of his father.²⁴ Other notables from the mid-century to appear in portraits with carpets of Anatolian design under their feet include Lady Jane Grey (by 'Master John,' c.1545), Thomas Cranmer (by Gerlach Flicke, 1546), and Mary Queen of Scots (three times).²⁵

Anatolian rugs in Elizabethan and Jacobean portraiture

Although Queen Elizabeth (r.1558–1603) seems to have shared little of her father's interest in Eastern carpets, and there is only a single known portrait that shows her standing on one,²⁶ members of the Elizabethan nobility continued the tradition – notably Frances Sidney, Countess of Sussex (c.1565–1575), and Thomas, Lord Darcy of Chich (by Gerlach Flicke, 1551), while the young Princess Elizabeth, later Queen of Bohemia, and another young lady, perhaps Arabella Stuart, appear standing on carpets of Anatolian patterns in portraits by Robert Peake the Elder (both c.1600–1605).²⁷ It was, however, under King James I (r.1603–1625) that 'carpets became an indispensable adjunct of the standing portrait.'²⁸ Portraits of James himself regularly feature luxurious carpets, both Anatolian (geometric) and Persian (floral) in design, while Henry, Prince of Wales, appears at least six times standing on a variety of 'Turkey' rugs in full-length portraits by, or attributed to, Robert Peake that were painted between 1604 and 1610.²⁹ Peake may also be responsible for two similar portraits of the future Charles I, while he was still Duke of York (c.1610–1611). Princess Elizabeth, meanwhile, was again portrayed standing on a carpet of Anatolian design by Marcus Gheeraerts (c.1611). Following his older brother's untimely death in 1611, Charles appears as Prince of Wales sitting on a splendid gild throne set upon a pedestal covered by a voluminous Anatolian-style carpet in a portrait (c.1620) that was probably intended as a gift to King Christian IV of Denmark. In imitation of royal precedent, James, 7th Lord Hay, commissioned Peake to paint his ten-year-old son, John Hay, later 1st Earl of Tweeddale, standing on a 'Turkey' carpet (c.1605).³⁰

Portrait painters based in England at the time evidently did rather well for themselves from what had clearly become a craze among members of the Jacobean nobility to be painted standing on colourful rugs of Anatolian design. Robert Peake, John de Critz and Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger undertook numerous such portraits, including Thomas Howard, 1st Viscount Howard of Bindon (by Peake, 1606), Anne Vavasour (by de Critz, c.1605), Arabella Stuart (by de Critz, c.1605), Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth (by de Critz, c.1620), Frances Howard, Duchess of Richmond (by Gheeraerts, 1611), Frances Knyvell (by Gheeraerts, c.1615), and Gertrude Sadler, Lady Aston (by Gheeraerts, c.1620).³¹ Not to be outdone, Robert Sidney, 1st Earl of Leicester, appears surmounting spectacularly colourful pieces by both Peake (1605) and Gheeraerts (c.1615). Even more grandly, Thomas Howard, 14th Earl of Arundel, and his wife, Alatheia Talbot, are both shown sitting on embroidered chairs

set upon a carpet in the gallery of Arundel House (by Daniel Mytens, c.1618).³² Judging from their designs, the carpets appearing in several such portraits were clearly quite old at the moment of the painting. Full-lengths of Elizabeth Warwick, Countess of Banbury (c.1615–1620) and of Charles Howard, 1st Earl of Nottingham (c.1620) by Daniel Mytens show them both standing on a fine Kufic-bordered re-entrant rug – often known as ‘Bellini-type’ rugs – that would have dated from the mid-sixteenth century, after which such designs were no longer being produced.³³

But it was the English artist, William Larkin, who seems to have made his career from specializing in studio portraits of the Jacobean nobility that feature identical props, including silken hangings and sumptuous rugs of Anatolian designs. Between 1610 and 1620, Larkin painted – or has been attributed with painting – at least twenty such portraits, eight of them featuring what appears to be the same carpet, while the list of those who stood for him represents a veritable catalogue of the great families of the era: Catherine Howard, Lady Thynne (c.1610), Anne Clifford, Countess of Dorset (c.1610), Sir William Sidney (c.1611), Edward Sackville, 4th Earl of Dorset (c.1613), Richard Sackville, 3rd Earl of Dorset (twice, c.1613 and 1615), Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke (c.1615), Elizabeth Drury, Countess of Exeter (c.1615), Diana Cecil, Countess of Oxford (c.1615), Anne Cecil, Countess of Stamford (c.1615), Lucy Harington, Countess of Bedford (c.1615), Frances Prinne, Lady Seymour of Trowbridge (c.1615), Frances Howard, Duchess of Richmond (c.1615), Dorothy St John, Lady Cary (c.1615), Elizabeth Howard, Duchess of Newcastle (1615), Lady Isabelle Rich (c.1615), Catherine Knevet, Countess of Suffolk (c.1615), George Villiers, 1st Duke of Buckingham (c.1616), Susan Villiers, Countess of Denbigh (c.1616), and an unknown lady (c.1615–1620).³⁴

It seems most likely that Larkin himself provided the hangings and rugs that feature in so many of these portraits. But even if the subjects did not personally own such textiles, the vogue for being portrayed in association with them suggests something of the way the English nobility felt the need to display not simply their status and prestige, but also the global reach and associations of their good taste. One of the features that is most striking about nearly all of these portraits is the casual apathy of the standing – or sitting – subject to the enormously costly and beautiful rugs on which they are portrayed. Look at me, they demand, and see just how indifferent I can be to the beauty and wealth with which I am surrounded; and notice the ease with which I have appropriated this prize from the East in order to trample it, literally, under my feet.

Such, surely, is central to the desire being signalled in these portraits, the longing to disguise and appropriate what England lacks, to cover over the inadequacies of the native ground with a luxurious and exotic trophy from a far distant land that serves to distinguish and support a fantasy of personal involvement with an imminent, yet already established, global power.

Under James, peace was finally reached with Spain putting national prestige on the agenda. The statesmen who assembled at Somerset House in 1604 to discuss terms are famously shown sitting at a table covered by a magnificent small-pattern Holbein carpet that is five medallions wide and at least eight long – a truly outstanding example of its kind. By the start of the seventeenth century, curiously enough, small-pattern Holbeins such as this one had long been out of fashion and had not been produced for at least fifty years, suggesting at once that the choice of such a piece aimed at adding historical gravity to the occasion, and that it may well have come from Henry's collection.³⁵ The iconography of the painting certainly seeks to corroborate England's continuing international prestige and authority by evoking a splendid past. Cartouches on both the tapestries hanging either side of the window declare '1560,' while the painting behind the Spanish and Flemish delegates shows an armoured knight submitting to a venerable crowned figure: a turbaned groom, meanwhile, holds a magnificent stallion. Whether or not rumours of Elizabeth's strategic alliances with the Ottomans had actually assisted England's defeat of the Armada sixteen years previously, the meeting of English and Spanish ministers across a carpet of Ottoman origin must have been attended with keen and certain ironies: second from the window on the right sits Lord High Admiral Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, who had commanded the English fleet in 1588.³⁶

'Turkey' carpets in early modern England

Once established at the Tudor court, the taste for collecting expensive 'Turkey' carpets, displaying paintings of Ottoman potentates, commissioning portraits featuring Eastern furnishings and dressing in costly Eastern fabrics continued to inspire imitation among those eager to demonstrate their personal wealth, status and power. In 1583, an inventory taken at Kenilworth of goods belonging to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, listed no fewer than fifty-one 'Turkey Carpettes,' in addition to one 'Persian' carpet and one 'of Norwiche worke.'³⁷ Five years later, a probate inventory of Leicester's goods at Leicester House

and Exeter Inn added a further thirty-three 'turquoy carpetts' of various sizes and conditions, while a further inventory taken the same year of Leicester's belongings at Kenilworth simply noted 'Carpettes' worth one hundred and forty-eight pounds, two shillings and two pence ('148l.2.2d'), without specifying their kind or condition. Yet another inventory taken two years later at Leicester House added 'a turkie Carpet of six yardes longe' valued at five pounds, bringing Leicester's total collection of 'Turkey' carpets to at least eighty-five pieces.³⁸

Elsewhere, wealthy collectors decorated their houses with costly Eastern textiles of various kinds. An inventory of Lord Lumley's estates conducted in 1590 lists: fifty-seven 'Sutes of hangings of arras, sylke and tapestre,' eleven 'Turkey carpettes of sylke,' fifteen 'Carpettes of velvet for tables and wyndowes,' no fewer than ninety-five 'Other Turkey Carpettes,' together with forty 'Coveryinges and quiltes of sylke.'³⁹ In the years between 1597 and 1601, Bess of Hardwick collected no fewer than thirty-two 'Turkie carpetes,' including a magnificent star Ushak 'with an archaic geometricised leaf and stem meander and eight-lobed rosettes on the same red as the field' that is remarkably similar to that on the carpet shown in the 1567 portrait of Henry VIII, attributed to Hans Eworth, now on display in the Walker Gallery, Liverpool.⁴⁰ The textile collection at Hardwick Hall also includes an embroidered appliqué tapestry of 'The Virtues and their Opposites' from 1575 that portrays the Prophet Muhammad as the 'opposite' of 'Faith.' Less contentiously, embroideries of flowers feature the Anatolian tulip and hyacinth.⁴¹

However, the craze was such that demand exceeded supply, and it appears that some European imitations began to be produced. Based on a careful examination of four sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Anatolian-pattern rugs in the Buccleuch collection at Boughton House which, analysis shows, had been made in Europe, Ian Bennett and Michael Franses observe:

innumerable portraits of the royal family and aristocracy exist from this time with their subjects shown standing on carpets with well-known oriental designs and of almost certain oriental origin. But this is not always the case. There are many portraits from the early 17th century... which show carpets obviously based on oriental models but quite possibly not of oriental manufacture.⁴²

Bennett and Franses point out that 'the attribution to specific countries of the majority of 16th and 17th century carpets in the Eastern style, whether embroidered or piled, is problematic' since 'carpets in the

Anatolian style... were probably made in several European countries... But their exact place of origin remains tantalisingly impossible to determine.¹⁴³ Since few examples of early rugs have survived for analysis, determining provenance can be tricky and becomes further complicated when attempting to ascribe place of origin to a carpet that only appears in a painting. While carpets made by Mudejar weavers in Spain can easily be identified by their characteristic single-warp knotting style, and Polish carpets by their distinctive coarse wool, pieces made elsewhere in Europe can only be identified as such by the common use of hemp in the foundation or by chemical analysis of the materials used in the dyes.¹⁴⁴ For sixteenth- and seventeenth-century carpets, the use of traditional Anatolian designs, in other words, can be no certain guide to the place of manufacture. The four carpets in the Buccleuch collection examined by Bennett and Franses, for example, represent two of the major Anatolian design patterns: the star and the arabesque (often called 'Lotto'), both of which are 'associated with the Ushak district of west Anatolia.'¹⁴⁵ Once thought to have been imported from Anatolia, analysis shows that these four pieces are certainly European, less certainly English, since they all have hemp in their foundations and use colours different from those used at the time in genuine pieces believed to have been woven in or around the Ushak region. Consequently, assessing the possible origins of carpets in early modern paintings becomes exceptionally speculative. Bennett and Franses note that the portrait of Catherine Knevet, Countess of Suffolk attributed to Larkin, for example, shows her standing on a double octagon large-pattern Holbein that is strikingly similar to one of the European-made rugs at Boughton. Moreover, portraits attributed to Peake of Henry, Prince of Wales (c.1610) and of Robert Sidney, 1st Earl of Leicester (c.1605) display their subjects standing on an identical carpet, but since 'the artist has used some licence in the handling of both the field and border patterns,' Bennett and Franses suggest that it too 'might be a European copy.'¹⁴⁶ Nonetheless, Bennett and Franses concede that 'in the late 16th and early 17th centuries, the majority of oriental carpets reaching Europe were either from Turkey itself, or imports from other parts of the Ottoman Empire, notably Egypt and Syria, through Italian ports such as Venice and Genoa.'¹⁴⁷

How did large numbers of Ottoman carpets and textiles come to be in England? A few carpets using Anatolian designs were made in England at the time; the first known example – the so-called 'Venetian Floral Carpet' – dates from 1570,¹⁴⁸ but their number was very small and, since they were recognized as such in inventories, we can presume that they were not confused with the genuine thing. Since there

were no carpet dealers resident in England, collectors had to rely on foreign intermediaries such as Peter Vandewall of Antwerp mentioned earlier, make direct arrangements with merchants who were trading in Mediterranean ports, or be fortunate enough to receive them as gifts. Richard Hakluyt reports that English ships trading into the Levant as early as 1511 were importing 'commodities' that included 'Silks, Chamlets [skins], Rubarbe, Malmesies, Muskadels and other wines, sweete oyles, cotton wooll, Turkie carpets.'⁴⁹ Hakluyt himself understood that the growing demand for imported Eastern textiles could be reduced by domestic production. In 1579, acting on behalf of the London Dyers, he commissioned Morgan Hubblethorne to travel into Russia, Iran and Turkey in order to learn the tricks of the trade, adding: 'if before you returne you could procure a singular good workeman in the arte of Turkish carpet making, you should bring the arte into this Realme, and also thereby increase worke to your company.'⁵⁰ The success of Hubblethorne's expedition is not known. For the most part, the earliest knotted-carpets seen in England continued to be imported through Venetian and Flemish merchants trading via Marseilles and Antwerp. During the course of the sixteenth century, however, demand soon led to direct but informal importation on English ships from Mediterranean ports into Southampton, Sandwich and London.

By the mid-sixteenth century, 'the number of English ships involved in this trade was second only to the Italian,'⁵¹ yet until the end of 1582, importing carpets and other goods from Ottoman ports remained a tortuous and often random affair – a matter of merchants and ship's officers showing initiative and enjoying a certain amount of good luck evading Ottoman authorities. In September 1580, the *Bark Roe* left London for the Ottoman-controlled island of Chios, intending to trade English kerseys for carpets; at the time, the island's major export of mastic was restricted to Ottoman shipping but other commodities including textiles were deemed legitimate. In the event, the ship's crew under command of Peter Baker, decided to engage in a bit of piracy after leaving Chios and caused a major international furore; no carpets ever arrived back in England from that voyage.⁵² Even as the scandal of the *Bark Roe* continued to rumble on – Queen Elizabeth herself was obliged to write apologizing to Sultan Murad III (r.1574–1595) in June 1581 – the London merchants running what was then called the 'Turkey Company' were petitioning Elizabeth to appoint an official ambassador to Istanbul in order to expedite trade so that English 'Cloth and kersies of all sortes' could be profitably traded for 'Spices of all sortes Rawe silk Druggs ... Carpets quilts etc.'⁵³ Finally, in November 1582, nearly two

years after signing trading agreements with the Ottoman court, Elizabeth formally appointed William Harborne to be her 'true and undoubted Orator, Messenger, Deputie, and Agent' at the Ottoman court, and direct trade between England and Ottoman ports became formally licensed.⁵⁴

The textile trade takes off

The establishment of direct trade meant not only that more carpets were imported, but also that they began appearing in more modest households. Carpets and other luxury textiles had been among the essential items to inspire the trade in the first place. In 1579, the first consortium of merchants who petitioned Elizabeth for a loan of '10000 weight of silver ... for 6 years' offered to pay the debt back in spices and 'Turkey Carpets.' The merchants sought to make their case the more persuasive by listing the goods to be exported and those to be returned by the ships they had chartered at their own expense.

They shall also be able to shipp more store of broad cloathes, and Carseis over, and also shall bring more quantitie of commodities hither, whereby thinges shall be solde here at the more reasonable price, and thereby her Majesties customes both in and out shall be the more advanced.

The commodities they bringe from those partes are all sortes of Spices, Rawe Silke, Appoticarie drugs, India blewe, and Cotton Woll, as also yarme and cloaths made thereof, Galles, Currants, Sweete Oyle, Sope, Quiltes, Carpete and divers other commodities.⁵⁵

And such would prove to be the case, though in addition to 'Turkey carpets, quilts of silke, cotton woolls for the making of fustians,' the goods brought back from one expedition of 1598 also included 'dogg collars of leather.'⁵⁶

Once agents and factors of the Levant Company started taking up residence in Ottoman cities, they collected carpets and other Ottoman objects for their personal use, and regularly brought them back to England on return from service both for gifts and also for selling on. 'Considerable quantities' of carpets 'were exported from Izmir' as well as Istanbul by this means.⁵⁷ In 1599, John Sanderson, a Company accountant, recorded giving his sister Grace a gift of a carpet: 'At my last coming out of Turkie, since she was married, I gave hir a Turkie carpet, more wourth than 1.10.0' (one pound and ten shillings). Sanderson

also gave his brother, a minor clergyman, 'Six Turkie painted books' valued at three pounds, and 'Four Turkie carpets' worth five pounds and five shillings.⁵⁸ Those 'Turkie painted books' were, no doubt, illustrated albums of Ottoman costumes such as have already been mentioned. In 1604, having returned to work in the London offices of the Levant Company, Sanderson advised a junior colleague who had recently arrived in Istanbul to send back 'Turkie carpetts of the lesser sorte,' which 'yf they be well bought, ar heare good merchandice.'⁵⁹

The fact that Sanderson advised sending carpets 'of the lesser sorte' suggests how the taste for replacing rush matting with woven carpets 'of Turkey making' had already reached more modest householders than those wealthy enough to have been collecting for some time. By the second half of the seventeenth century, Ottoman carpets and other furnishings adorned houses of the prosperous middle classes. When Dyer Bate, a ship's captain, died at sea in 1687, an inventory of his household goods in Stepney included a dozen 'Turkey-work chairs in the dining room' as well as 'three sets of tapestries,' and six carpets. After serving in Izmir, Richard Uvedale, a young assistant in the Levant Company, furnished his London house with Ottoman carpets and tapestries; he had collected so many that some had to be stored in his garret. The demand was such that considerable profits could be made from bringing Ottoman carpets into England, inspiring entrepreneurial mariners to enter the business, both for profit and personal use. On his first voyage to Izmir in 1676, a young under-officer John Weekes had already sent home a carpet and two tablecloths before meeting a fatal accident. Captain John Hill operated a regular business trading in carpets, and reckoned he made a quick profit of 23% on two pieces bought in Izmir and sold in Alicante before reaching England, where they would have sold for more.⁶⁰

Finally, it is worth noting that direct trade in luxury textiles with the Ottoman Empire altered the cultural horizons not only of merchants, Levant Company factors and those able, ready and eager to buy goods imported from the East. In addition to carpets and other finished goods, the importation of 'all sortes Rawe silk' had a tremendous effect upon the lives of labouring-class women in London by providing a new and expanding source of employment. Writing in the 1630s, Thomas Munn observed 'a notable increase in our manufacture of winding and twisting only of forraign raw silk which within 35 years to my knowledge, did not employ more than 300 people in the city and suburbs of London, where at this present time it doth set on work above fourteen thousand souls.'⁶¹ One of the great Levant Company merchants, Munn, was

very much a booster for overseas trade and doubtless prone to exaggeration, but his claim is supported by the sheer and steady increase in the quantities of raw silk brought into England during the years in question. Contemporary records show that imports of raw silk rose from about 12,000 pounds in 1560 to about 120,000 pounds in 1621, and then to 172,000 pounds in 1630, 200,000 pounds in 1634, and to over 220,000 pounds in 1640.⁶² Much of the profit made from this vast importation of raw silk came from the resale of Iranian silk to Western and Central European countries with emerging silk industries of their own. Raw silk, moreover, is not strictly an Ottoman product, while the goods that were eventually produced from it in England for domestic consumption often had little or nothing to do with Ottoman or Eastern styles. Nevertheless, the impact upon the labour market, on fashion and on retailing, like the enormous demand for Zante currants, was very much part of the overall and pervasive entry of Ottoman culture into daily life in England at the time. As Matthew Dimmock points out, Shakespeare's 'casual domestic' references to 'Turkey cushions bossed with pearl,' and 'Turkish tapestry,' testify to 'the familiar nature of Ottoman material goods.'⁶³

What these various facts suggest is that for the English, starting in the mid-sixteenth century and continuing throughout the seventeenth, knowledge of Ottoman culture and society, and a consequent desire for Ottoman goods, spread from the royal court and nobility to the prosperous middle classes by the twin processes of emulation and entrepreneurial activity. To this we might add that, for those who never left England, reports by travellers into Ottoman lands would have amplified familiarity with the luxurious and enviable styles of life of the great Muslim empire that had already been widely absorbed into many facets of French, Spanish and Italian culture. By the eighteenth century, as Maxine Berg has shown, the British imagined that they had become the envy of all Europe for the wealth that trade had brought, and the oriental goods that it had bought them.⁶⁴

Oil portraits, magnificent and powerful horses, costly 'Turkey' carpets, embroidered silk tapestries and other household furnishings, not to mention sumptuous garments: for the early modern English, the Ottoman world was replete with desirable objects that made it a source of imperial envy.

Trade, religion and diplomacy

In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, thinking about the Ottomans involved more than thinking about religious differences, since

it also meant thinking about trade goods and empires in the East. The Ottomans ruled a great empire spanning three continents. It gave them control over the ancient routes across central Asia to India and China. By the early eighteenth century, the English had devoted a great deal of energy and resources to establishing their own empire, not only internally in Ireland and Scotland and in the New World, but eastwards too. These Eastern ambitions involved dealing not only with the Ottomans and their great territorial empire, but also with a previous history of writing in English about Muslims, 'Moors' and 'Turks.' Behind the ambiguous representation of the Ottoman Empire as both realm of tyrannous slavery and a space where adventurous English, Irish and Scotsmen might do rather well for themselves, hover those developments in trade, knowledge, skills and civilized arts called 'the Renaissance,' an era that may be said to begin with the Christian loss of Byzantine Constantinople to Islam in 1453.

If the capture of Constantinople by Fatih ('the Conqueror') Mehmed in part signalled the start of the European Renaissance, the consequences have yet to be fully explored and detailed.⁶⁵ To a divided Christian Europe, this moment of territorial loss created not simply an absence but a lack; and in consequence of that lack, a desire that, among the English at least, soon took shape as that structure of awe and desire I am calling 'imperial envy.' To European Protestants and Catholics alike, the loss of Constantinople to the Muslim Ottomans not only ended a historical era initiated by the capture of the sacred lands of the Bible by Islam; it also finally sundered Eastern and Western Christianities. Clearly, if we are to view the Renaissance as, in part, a systematic reconstruction of Graeco-Roman foundations that helped Europeans explain the increasing loss of territory within the expanding borders of the Ottoman Empire, we need also to notice how the great intellectual, artistic and cultural developments of the Renaissance involved enormous investments of material goods and energies in order to cross those borders commercially and culturally. For the English, the desire to trade is when the story of imperial envy fully begins, during the reign of Elizabeth, little more than a century after Fatih Mehmed seized Constantinople.

By the late sixteenth century, imagining some form of Anglo-Ottoman accord made obvious good economic sense to Elizabethan tradesmen, merchants and even statesmen such as Lord Burghley and Sir Francis Walsingham.⁶⁶ But any such alliance with Islam required justification. When Elizabeth came to the throne, trade with the East had been restricted on all sides by competing Catholic nations. As we have seen, Eastern goods arrived mostly via France and Antwerp in Venetian

galleons, while direct trade by means of English shipping was hampered not only by the hostile Spanish fleet, but also by an Ottoman–French treaty of 1536, by which all Christian nations doing business in Ottoman territories did so ‘only under the French flag and under the exclusive surveillance and protection of the French ambassador and consuls.’ Elizabeth herself vigorously pursued ambitions for an alliance with the Ottomans that would gain her the active support of the sultan against Spanish shipping, and at the same time allow English merchants to trade, free from French consular interference, and to exchange Eastern goods directly for English exports in Ottoman ports.⁶⁷

For Elizabeth, encouraging Ottoman aggression against Catholic Spain in the Mediterranean was an inexpensive way of trying to weaken her greatest enemy at sea while also providing an excuse for trading with the infidel. In her letter of October 1579 to Murad III, translated into English and printed in Richard Hakluyt’s *Principal Navigations* (1589), Elizabeth calls herself ‘the most invincible and most mighty defender of the Christian faith against all kinde of idolatries,’ clearly seeking ‘to depict the Protestants as a group akin to the followers of the prophet, who were not to be included in the Turkish mind among the Christian idol-worshippers.’⁶⁸

Queen Elizabeth’s rhetoric of an Anglo-Ottoman alliance against Catholic idol-worshippers may have helped persuade Murad to sign the initial trading agreement – *ahidname* or ‘capitulations’ – of June 1580 that would eventually grant English shipping direct access to Ottoman ports, without the indignity and costs of having to fly the French flag or pay for French consular services. This strategy of finding common enemy in Catholics who worship false idols, however, proved incapable of encouraging Murad to go one step further and take up arms against Spain and break the truce that followed the battle of Lepanto (1571): shrewd tacticians themselves, the Ottomans could prove impervious to European desire.

In 1587, with the threat of the Spanish fleet hanging most darkly over English commercial and political interests, Elizabeth’s resident ‘orator’ at Istanbul, William Harborne, eloquently pleaded in a memorandum to Murad. His rhetorical strategies here indicate clearly the relative subordination he knew that the Ottoman sultan held his country:

Do not let this moment pass unused, in order that God, who has created you a valiant man and the most powerful of all worldly princes for the destruction of idol-worshippers, may not turn his utmost wrath against you if you disregard his command, which my mistress, only a weak woman, courageously struggles to 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 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. And when, finally, there will not remain any other obstacle in Christendom, he will direct his invincible military forces toward your destruction and that of your empire and will become the sole ruler of the world.

A universal Catholic empire will prove inevitable unless, Harborne continues, Murad joins with Elizabeth to make 'war upon the sea' against the 'proud Spaniard' and 'mendacious Pope.'⁶⁹ Harborne's plea did not persuade Murad to do any such thing, and the English proved capable of surviving the Armada crisis without direct naval assistance from the Ottomans.

The argument that the Ottomans and English shared a divine duty to make war upon the idolatrous Catholics was only ever at best a diplomatic fiction invented to ease trade. Harborne's rhetorical postures – first cringe and grovel, then advise of danger, then advocate specific policies – invite us to glimpse something of the English diplomat imagining himself performing before the haughty and inscrutable sultan. Evidently a skilled diplomat who was by this time experienced at negotiating directly with the Ottomans, Harborne knew how obsequiousness might sometimes prove persuasive when dealing with the imperious 'Turks.' How did the Ottomans view the English at this time?

Mutual fear and fascination

While Elizabeth's loyal merchants and diplomats were first arriving in Istanbul and Izmir, the Ottoman image of European Christians often took the form of a threat to Islam. Early European travellers regularly report being taunted, attacked with stones, and even taken captive, simply because they were Christians who had dared enter into Dar-ul-Islam – the space of true belief and submission. That said, educated Muslims knew far more about Christianity than educated English people knew of Islam. Recognized by Islam as People of the Book, Christians and Jews were welcomed within the Ottoman state at a time when neither Jewish nor Muslim communities would have been tolerated in England.

But there were, right from the start, prejudices to overcome. For one thing, the English were generally regarded simply as *frangii* or Franks, European Christians largely indistinguishable from the French, Germans, Dutch, Spanish, or – worse of all – the Portuguese. Since 1498, when Vasco da Gama brought Portuguese ships into the Indian Ocean thereby threatening Ottoman control over trade in the region, hostility towards interloping Christians found a legitimate cause.⁷⁰ Following the defeat of the Safavids at the battle of Çaldıran (1514), Sultan Selim continued to expand the Ottoman borders into Muslim lands. Once Syria and Egypt had come under Ottoman control, Selim, and later his son Süleyman, realized that new tactics would be necessary for legitimating their authority over areas largely populated by Muslims. Members of the ousted regimes were appointed to local office and, under Süleyman's great vezir Ibrahim Pasha, administrative codes were developed for Baghdad, Aleppo and Cairo that took local customs and conditions into account. Moreover, as Caroline Finkel explains, Ottoman policy itself needed to shift 'eastwards culturally as well as geographically' as the 'sudden Muslim predominance within the empire sealed the Ottoman tendency towards fuller adoption of the traditional Islamic practices and mores of the Arab lands: as it has been recently put: "the question of who conquered whom is debatable."⁷¹ While the Sunni Islam of the Ottomans remained strategic and flexible, the law code developed for the province of Baghdad greatly 'resembled the Safavid code' since it was aimed at demonstrating 'that Ottoman justice was superior to that of the vanquished [Shia] Safavids.'⁷² In the Mediterranean, trade with Venetian, Genoese and Greek merchants continued; in 1569, Sultan Selim II (r.1566–1574) even went so far as to sign formal capitulations allowing French merchants to reside and deal directly with Ottoman ports. But in eastern parts of the Empire, however, attitudes towards European Christians remained less tolerant.

Although the English never established formal trading centres east of Aleppo, these regional differences are of present interest because it was in Baghdad during the 1560s that Hasan Pasha, son of Selim II's grand vezir, Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, established the first great Ottoman school of book production and illumination.⁷³ The school itself 'does not seem to have survived his death in 1602,' but under Hasan Pasha's patronage a number of the greatest examples of early Ottoman miniature art were created there.⁷⁴ Despite the putative ban on representation, these were largely pious works, and included the *Hadikat al-Suada*, 'The Garden of the Blessed,' a well-known history in Ottoman prose and verse celebrating the Islamic martyrs composed by the Baghdad poet

known as Mawlana Fuzuli who dedicated the poem to Mehmed Pasha. More than eighty copies were produced and distributed throughout the length and breadth of the Empire; seventy-seven are still known to exist in Turkey today.⁷⁵ In a copy now in the British Library, two of the miniatures illustrating Fuzuli's work, produced in Baghdad at about the same time that the English were establishing formal trading relations, we can glimpse something of the hostility projected towards Europeans within the Ottoman community.⁷⁶

In the first (Figure 4), the artist has imagined the scene just before the prophet Abraham is rescued from King Nimrud's evil plan to cast him into a fire. Three Europeans, indicated by their broad-brimmed black hats and baggy breeches, pull ropes attached to a catapult that will hurl Abraham from the wooden box into the flames. These hats, in the iconography of Ottoman art of the time, imitate the beaver headgear worn by the Portuguese colonists who had settled in the Indian Ocean. By the doorway of a building to the right, other figures – some in contemporary European costume, including broad-brimmed black hats – watch the scene. Indoors above, we see Iblis – the material manifestation of Satan – disguised as an old man, conferring with Nimrud and watching as the agents of his evil plan attempt to immolate the great prophet. In the second (Figure 5), Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, is to be imagined hiding in a tree that is being cut down while armed figures of various nations stand around; these include several Europeans wearing costumes specific to different times and places. Iblis, once again disguised as an old man in a black robe, seems to be instructing one of the contemporary Europeans to draw his sword against the moment when the tree will fall and Zacharias will tumble out. Some of the figures wear Roman helmets, while others are wearing Hungarian and Mongol armour. In addition to differences of costume and headgear, the artist has also used facial hair and shades of skin colour to distinguish a variety of national types, including one turbaned figure; all of them are clearly intended to represent enemies to Islam. In the Zacharias picture especially, figures suggestive of the Far East and Central Asia join Europeans in service to Iblis.

Clearly, these highly colourful and evocative images are overtly anachronistic and fanciful. Yet therein lies their charm and potential menace to Europeans, of any sort, since they displace the events they purport to describe, those legendary martyrdoms, from a historical past into a timeless world where the forces of evil commanded by Iblis are constantly working through distinctively foreign human agents.

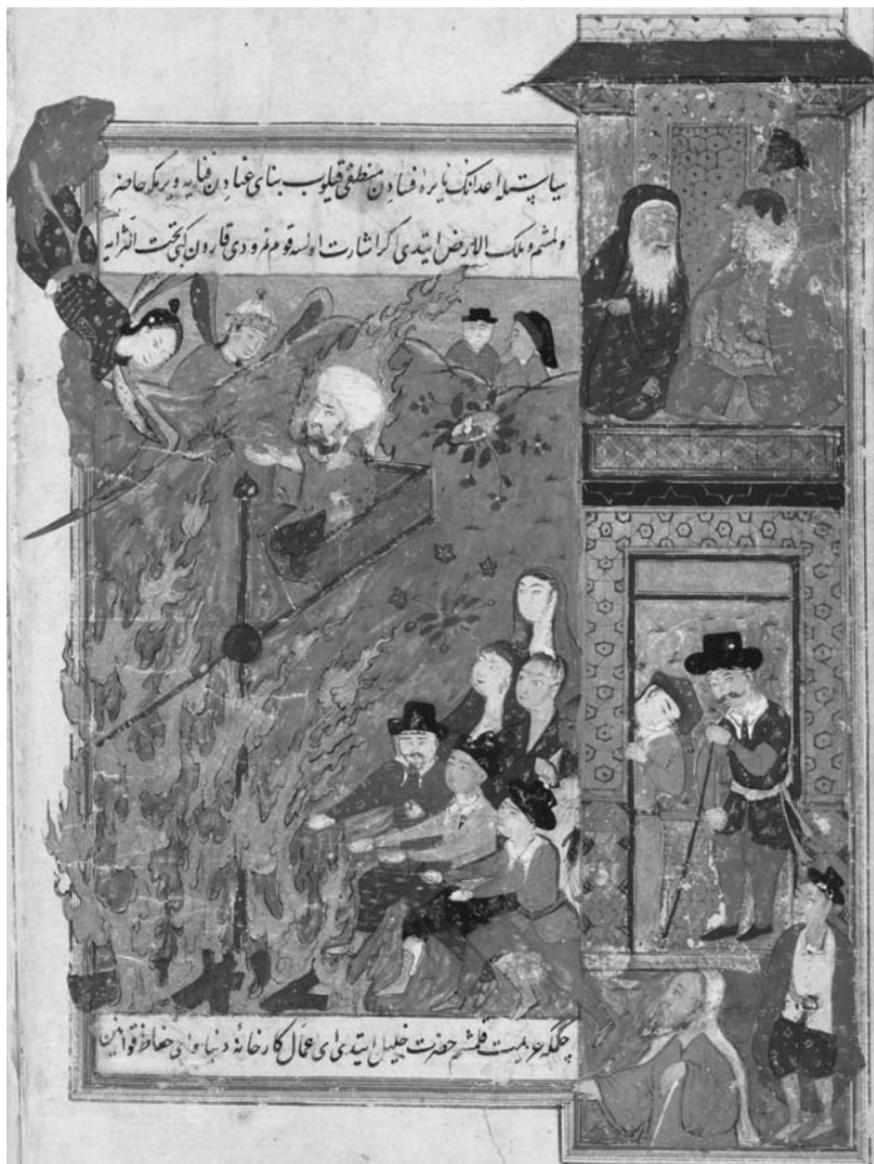


Figure 4 Abraham being cast into the flames from Fuzuli, *Hadikat al-Suada*. By permission of the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections; shelfmark Or 7301, f.15b. Copyright belongs to the British Library and further reproduction is prohibited

In the imaginative world being evoked here, to be a European interloper dwelling inside the realm of the faithful was, potentially, to be demonized as an enemy to Islam: such, at least, was the view from Baghdad, former centre of the caliphate.



Figure 5 Zacharias in the tree from Fuzuli, *Hadikat al-Su'ada* By permission of the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections; shelfmark Or 7301, f.40b. Copyright belongs to the British Library and further reproduction is prohibited

Other illustrated copies of Fuzuli's work from the late sixteenth century do not include images of Europeans among the enemies of Islam,⁷⁷ and indeed Ottoman artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries very seldom portrayed Europeans at all. When Europeans do

show up, they tend to be armoured soldiers under attack by superior Ottoman forces, diplomats grovelling before Ottoman sultans,⁷⁸ or costume portraits of men and women displaying the costumes of their native lands. Not until the early eighteenth century and the work of the Ottoman artist Abdulcelil Çelebi, known as Levni, does an Ottoman artist begin to represent Europeans without prejudice. In the 1720s, Levni created the earliest individualized portraits of European visitors to the Ottoman Empire to be shown wearing national costume and without demeaning or demonizing contexts. The jaunty-looking fellow in his splendid red coat carrying an embroidered portfolio (Figure 6) belongs to a series of costume portraits by Levni showing European men and women engaging in daily activities and forming, as Gül Irepoğlu puts it, 'part . . . of Istanbul life.'⁷⁹ This painting – together with a companion portrait in the British Library (Figure 7) – have been catalogued as 'European fops,' in order to capture, no doubt, their highly mannered poses and their mild, slightly effeminate expressions.⁸⁰ European men in their fine wigs going about their daily tasks in Istanbul may indeed have appeared effeminate or foppish to other citizens of that metropolis at the time, but of importance here is that these portraits – like those of European ambassadors that Levni included in his illustrations to Vehbi's *Surname* (1720) – are not of alien or alienated others, engaging in evil deeds or fearfully creeping about and drawing as little attention to themselves as they can, but rather images of jolly young expatriates displaying themselves in fine clothes.⁸¹ They certainly do not look fearful at all. Levni's paintings belong to a time when Istanbul was a fully cosmopolitan city with a flourishing international community. But if we recall the illustrations to Fuzuli, composed during the final decades of the sixteenth century when the English were first starting to arrive in significant numbers, shifts in the way Ottoman artists viewed Europeans suggest that earlier forms of stereotyping had proved permeable.

In the period with which this book is concerned, then, attitudes towards Europeans living inside Ottoman lands had clearly altered in some ways with familiarity. Developments in trade and foreign policy continued to provide good reasons why Euro-Christians and Ottoman Muslims could, and needed to, suspend differences of belief. As we have seen, Elizabeth and Murad III made common league against the Spanish and other Catholic nations for strategic and commercial reasons. In Elizabeth's correspondence with powerful women at Murad's court, the English queen was honoured with titles such as 'Queen of the Lutherans,' and 'Queen of Mary's way.' Such titles suggest how, even in the sixteenth century, the Ottoman court recognized, and respected,



Figure 6 Portrait of a European Man by the artist known as Levni, c.1720. By courtesy of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, © Copyright the Trustees of the British Museum; shelfmark BM 1960-11-12-01

distinctions between different forms of Christianity far better than most Europeans of the time understood Islam.

In the event, the earliest representatives of the Levant Company to serve at the court of Murad III – William Harborne and Edward Barton – proved enormously successful at establishing trade agreements



Figure 7 Portrait of a European Man by the artist known as Levni, c.1720. By courtesy of the Department of Oriental Antiquities, © Copyright the Trustees of the British Museum; shelfmark BM 1960-11-12-02

that favoured English merchants, and some members of the expatriate community quickly became important players in the political wrangling of the Ottoman state. In 1595–1596, Barton went so far as to agree to join Murad III on his military campaigns into Hungary in order to supervise the return of Christian prisoners, thereby gaining the respect of the Ottomans without compromising his reputation among his own countrymen.⁸² On Barton's death, the sultan ordered his body to be carried in full state pomp to be buried on Heybeli-ada, one of the

Princes' Islands in the Sea of Marmara. A decade after his death, William Biddulph proudly boasted how Barton 'hath left an immortal fame behind him in those Countries, to this present day, and lieth buried at an Iland of the Greeks, within twelve miles of *Constantinople* called *Bartons* Iland to this day.'⁸³ Such was the ceremonial lure of imperial power that even a pious Protestant chaplain like Biddulph could feel pleased and honoured when a fellow countryman earned the respect and public approval of a great Muslim sultan.

Cultural impacts

Despite mutual suspicions, fears and even occasional hostilities, English attitudes towards the Ottomans and Muslim culture had changed considerably by the early eighteenth century. Since the 1620s, the English had been Christian Europe's major trading partner with the Ottomans and had often been influential players in the Ottoman affairs of state. The story of the execution of Sultan Osman II in 1622 (Figure 3) greatly shocked English statesmen at the time and would later be recalled to parallel the execution of Charles I in 1649, used to exemplify advice to Charles II in 1660, and would still be on the mind of Samuel Richardson at the time when he was writing *Pamela*. The Ottomans were not simply foreign 'others' but models by which the English learned to frame their own self-representations while seeking and building an empire of their own. Spurred by imperial ambitions, English envy of the Ottomans produced not only political parallels but also some remarkable fantasies of Anglo-Ottoman filiation.

A telling instance appears in the ways that English and British identities were both constructed and distinguished by what we might see as a contest for cultural authority between the figures of St George of Cappadocia and the 'Wandering Prince of Troy' – not Aeneas, but Brute. Since the days of Edward III, the English had adopted St George to be their patron saint. While it was widely recognized that the historical George, who arrived already associated with ancient Turkic legends of dragon-slayers, was no native-born English son, subsequent representations re-imagine him as a crusading Englishman who kills the Turkish champion. The enigma of the claim, 'St George *for* England,' as Elizabethan and later ballad refrains regularly repeat, points to a symptomatic and imaginary fantasy that 'Turks' want to be English.⁸⁴ At the same time, tales of St George '*for* England' were competing for cultural space with a British foundation myth, first proposed by Geoffrey of Monmouth, that traced how the dynastic seed of Aeneas arrived with

Brute and promised a new empire about to flourish in Britain. What is remarkable is that both the historical George and the legendary Brute were native Anatolians – not strictly ‘Turks,’ and by no means Ottomans, but Asiatic others nevertheless. Such genealogical adoptions, I would suggest, are typical symptoms of imperial envy.

We can also, perhaps, account for such fantasies as a result of the rapid overload of information, and misinformation, being published about the Ottomans that both confirmed and displaced older habits of thought. As we will see, increasingly regular reports of commercial and diplomatic encounters with the Ottoman Empire soon entered into public knowledge, infiltrated the political languages of slavery and liberty, and provided a common currency of imagery and character types for poets, dramatists and writers of oriental romances to a degree that would have been unimaginable to the Elizabethans. Meanwhile, the flow into England of Ottoman goods continued apace. From the late sixteenth century onwards, an Anglo-Ottoman discourse was being produced not only by visitors who had been and seen for themselves, but also by those who wrote only from what they had read in other books. Who were the ‘Turks’ and the Ottomans? Where did they come from? What did they look like? How did they live? What clothing did they wear?

Among the books to which readers most often went in search of answers to such questions, Richard Knolles’ best-selling and much reprinted *Generall Historie of the Turkes*, first published in 1603, was the labour of twelve years’ research through chronicle histories. That Knolles undertook such a project and saw it through indicates how cultural interest in the Ottoman Empire was becoming firmly rooted in English soil by the 1590s, the same decade that Fynes Moryson set out to see for himself, and Marlowe’s *Tamberlaine* declared his imperial ambitions in high-astounding terms for the first time, before dragging the captive Ottoman emperor infamously about in a cage: the fact that no such humiliation took place would have mattered little to theatre audiences. The historian Kenneth R. Andrews concludes that ‘Elizabethan interest in the Levant was commercial,¹⁸⁵ but cultural and imaginative interests were also very much part of the picture well before the turn of the century. By the time the public theatres were closed in 1642, in plays such as Robert Daborne’s *Christian Turn’d Turke* (1612) and Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Turkish characters and scenes had delighted and admonished audiences, commonly warning of the dangers of falling into ‘Turkish’ captivity while admitting to the attractions of converting to Islam or ‘turning Turk.’ A large part of the English theatrical investment in the figure of the Turk is that it represented something anyone could choose

to become, in ways that Turks, Moors, Arabs or Jews could not chose to become English, Irish or Scottish.

Like Knolles, writers who never left the British Isles produced many influential works about the Ottomans in which they reiterated inherited facts and legends, thereby giving precise shape to traditional attitudes. The public theatre was itself only one of several sites where this kind of citational representation characterized the Anglo-Ottoman encounter. Scare stories involving the cruel figure of the turbaned Turk had long circulated not only in traditional entertainments such as Punch and Judy shows, but also in ballads, folk-plays and sermons. Despite diplomatic and commercial alliances, Protestant reformers kept up a call for an end to the ungodly Islamic empire throughout the seventeenth century – a call that could be traced back to the times of the Crusades. Sermons, chapbooks and ballads exhorted godly Christians to fear and despise ‘the terrible Turk.’ In churches, collections were taken up for the relief of sailors who had escaped from captivity, and for the widows of those still held captive, reminding folks at home that they had co-nationals abroad. News of what the Ottoman fleets were up to in the Mediterranean became a sensational staple of the popular London press; reports of raids on the Irish, Scottish and Cornish coasts by ‘Turkish’ and Barbary slavers made the threat to life in the British Isles appear rather greater than it was.

Yet finding occasions for developing new forms of anti-Ottoman and Islamophobic rhetoric was only part of the story. Alongside the growing Levant trade, English interests in the Ottomans expanded beyond the religious and mercantile into a variety of cultural registers: people wanted to know what the Ottomans were up to, and there was a regular supply of writing to serve that interest. By the middle of the seventeenth century, a highly educated clergyman and poet such as Bishop Henry King could claim to know a great deal about both the history and the present state of the Ottoman Empire, so considerable had become his interest in the available wealth of fairly reliable information.

For the London press, the outbreak of civil war in 1642 by no means put an end to English fascination with Ottoman culture, but rather re-tuned Ottoman themes to suit immediate political and social ends. Not surprisingly, travel writers were silent during the 1640s and 1650s, but the London press remained active in publishing newsletters from Istanbul. Meanwhile, the major political events of the period up to and including the Restoration were all recorded in contemporary publications that commonly addressed English political issues with parallels from contemporary Ottoman history. In 1642, for example, a letter from

Charles I 'to the Great Turk... Sultan Morat Han,' seeking to reaffirm diplomatic protocols between London and Constantinople, appeared in print. Since Murad IV ('Morat') had died two years before, it is difficult to know now whether the publication of this document was intended to revile Charles for having dealings with 'the Great Turk,' or to provide evidence of the royal prerogative in foreign affairs. In 1645, celebrations in the parliamentary press of the royalist defeat at Naseby linked the event with millenarian hopes that the Ottoman sultan and the Pope were even now defeating each other in the Mediterranean and bringing about the last days. During 1648, details concerning the disputed claims among the English diplomatic communities in Izmir and Pera were regularly published, bringing this formerly isolated community to the attention of the reading public.⁸⁶ In 1649, the year of the king's execution, the first English version of the Qur'ān appeared, 'for the satisfaction of all that desire to look into the *Turkish* vanities.'⁸⁷ That same year, a French verse satire appeared in Paris that transcribed an imaginary dialogue between the ghosts of Charles I and Sultan Ibrahim I (r.1640–1648), both monarchs who were executed at about the same time by their own people, while they stroll in the Champs Elysée.⁸⁸ Even in France, events in English politics were intimately linked to world politics. Francis Osborne's *Political Reflections Upon the Government of the Turks* appeared in 1656; in 1660, 'M. B.' advised members of the English army to *Learn of a Turke* and welcome a return to monarchy. Whatever else they might be, the Ottomans had firmly established themselves as a model against which the English state sought to measure itself.

By the Restoration, the reading of pamphlets and debating current political issues commonly took place in coffee houses. The story of how coffee and coffee houses arrived on the scene in London and Oxford during the 1650s has often, and recently, been told. Famously hailed by Jürgen Habermas as the birth of the modern public sphere, a place where incipient democratic institutions took shape, and where the people became a political force for change, Habermas regarded these institutions as an English innovation. In regard to coffeehouse culture, however, it would be more accurate to speak of the Ottoman origins of modernity than of the English ones. Like coffee itself, the English coffee house was an Ottoman import. Coffee came into the Ottoman Empire from Yemen in the Arabian peninsula, often via Egypt, and was a lucrative source of customs revenues. When two Syrians, one from Aleppo and one from Damascus, opened the first coffee house in Istanbul in 1554 near the Rustem Pasha mosque, coffee drinking in public places had already been a feature of Islamic life for several decades. There was a coffee house in

Mecca by 1511, and one in Cairo by 1532. From the time of Süleyman II (r.1687–1691), an additional tax was levied on its sale. Early seventeenth-century travellers to Istanbul, Izmir and Aleppo, like George Sandys, the Levant Company chaplain William Biddulph, the Scotsman William Lithgow, and the self-styled man of the new science Henry Blount, reported back in amazement at the avidity with which Muslims imbibed a dark and bitter brew called 'coffa' or 'cauphe' instead of wine or other alcoholic drinks. In 1657, five years after the first coffee house opened in London, Blount published a pamphlet recommending the health-giving medicinal properties of coffee and tobacco, which had arrived to fill English lungs from New World colonies.⁸⁹

Coffee houses became commonplace in English cities during the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. When Addison and Steele launched their periodicals, the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, during the first two decades of the eighteenth century, they expected them to be read aloud in coffee houses and to be debated publicly. The Ottoman origins of the coffee house did not disappear overnight. Many bore names like 'the Turk's Head.'⁹⁰ Sometimes proprietors dressed as Turks or Arabs; sometimes these proprietors were Levantines. It was not uncommon to see even English coffee house customers wearing turbans, and indeed, Ottoman headgear became a fashionable alternative to the ubiquitous wigs sported by post-Restoration men of fashion. The portraits of many writers and artists such as Samuel Pepys, Alexander Pope and William Hogarth show these men wearing turbans. When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu visited the *hamam*, the women's bathhouse, in Sofia in 1717, she was excited by the idea of a public space in which women could gather, as men did, to exchange 'all the news of the town.' 'Tis the Women's coffee house, where all the news of the Town is told', she enthused, and concluded that the women's baths, parallel in their gender segregation to so many male institutions, indicated that Ottoman women, far from being oppressed by Turkish tyranny, had much more liberty than English women. And she too had herself portrayed in her 'Turkish habit,' an elaborately brocaded silk gown that can still be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁹¹

By the Restoration of Charles II, Ottoman influences on English culture clearly took many different forms that helped to shape the national character and sense of England's – after the union with Scotland of 1707, Britain's – place in the world. Well into the eighteenth century, discussions of Ottoman affairs revisited the great themes of imperial desire and ambition from new political perspectives. In 1660, at issue were continuing disputes over the meanings of liberty and tyranny

in the new political settlement. To Royalists, the meritocratic, military and multi-ethnic structures of the ungodly Ottoman Empire closely resembled the recently defeated English Republic led by a tyrant called Cromwell whose army resembled the elite Ottoman janissary corps. Any freedoms the Republic seemed to offer, were little more than the false promises of a self-appointed tyranny, not the true liberty expected by free-born Englishmen under a godly king. According to Royalists, Charles restored monarchy to a nation that had for too long suffered under godless despots who too closely resembled those who ruled from Istanbul. In a poem praising the return of monarchy, Thomas Mayhew described why Charles would be welcomed:

If *Liberty* restor'd may welcome have
 From free-born men, enthral'd, and made a slave
 By their own Slaves, who must not onely pay
 The Lording *Janizary*, but obey;
 Not yield up their Revenues, but the Right
 Of their Inheritance to armed Might;
 Whose Laws and Charters, like the Gordian-knot,
 Are not disputed, but assunder cut.⁹²

In more popular idioms, polemicists vilified members of the Rump Parliament by associating them with a variety of 'Turkish' qualities: arbitrary authority, licentiousness, listening to false prophets. In numerous satires, the Rump of the parliamentary dragon recently slain by George Monk, the 'Cappadocian Knight,'⁹³ includes among its members figures such as Sir Henry Vane, 'that masked Turk,' 'Harry Nevil that looks like a *Mahomet's* pigeon,' and 'Janizary *Desbrow*.'⁹⁴

If the period's great contribution to knowledge of the Ottomans was Paul Rycaut's *Present State of the Ottoman Empire* of 1666, then the greatest literary expression of contempt for Islam at the time can be found in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. For Rycaut, who represented the Levant Company in Izmir between 1667 and 1678, the Ottoman state offered object lessons in imperialism: since it could only survive so long as it grew, the Ottoman Empire was surely about to collapse, its religion lacking in reason, and its insupportable army in Europe already exhausted. Nobody expected the English to colonize the Levant, but an Anglo-Ottoman accord remained essential to British imperial ambitions further east into the Indian Ocean and subcontinent, freshly on the agenda once Charles II acquired Bombay as a wedding present from Portugal in 1661. Rycaut's account of Ottoman social, religious and military organization helps

illuminate Milton's concerns with Eastern imperialism in *Paradise Lost*. Recent scholarship has focused on how colonization of the New World influenced Milton's imagination, yet Milton's epic displays more direct and constant engagement with the empires of the Muslim world. Satan is none other than the 'great sultan' from the East, fighting a losing war for control of heaven and the global future in terms that have a great deal to do with English republicanism.⁹⁵

In literary forms that developed in the decades following the Restoration, there was something of an over-signification of Ottoman and Islamic elements; it shows up throughout the heroic dramas of John Dryden and others whenever we find the imaginary spaces of desired empire being filled in with Muslim and Mughal emperors. In *Oroonoko*, Aphra Behn fantasizes that the life of a West African king resembles that of an Ottoman sultan, complete with court intrigues, harems and erotic dancing. At once a model of patriarchal despotism and tyranny, the empire of the Ottomans was also a site of liberties unimaginable in England. This is what Lady Mary Wortley Montagu described when, correcting 'the exemplary discretion or extreme Stupidity of all the writers that have given accounts of 'em,' she announced 'I look upon the Turkish Women as the only free people in the Empire.'⁹⁶

Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, then, whenever the English looked east to the Ottoman Empire, what they regularly saw was a strategic ally against the Spanish, a model of social and political governance that often put their own to shame, a grand and functioning empire that seemed effortlessly to control vast lands and seas, a model of culture and civilization, and a source of luxury goods that had increasingly become essential to everyday life. At the same time, of course, there were other views that continued to elevate religious differences into matters for contestation and hostility, that regarded the Ottomans as bestial and proud, as wasters of their own resources, and as diabolical agents seeking to overthrow the Christian religion. Such, indeed, is the contradictory structure characteristic of envy – that recognition of excellence in another that tends to breed malicious dislike.

2

The English Abroad: Travellers, Traders, Captives and Colonists in the Ottoman Mediterranean

Although notoriously unreliable, the writings of travellers often provide important insights concerning English trading interests and personal experiences in the Ottoman Mediterranean that the diplomatic and mercantile archives sometimes obscure or even ignore. Such accounts regularly contain otherwise unavailable information that contributes to our understanding of commercial negotiations, political interactions, social life and the formation of national identities in international settings where cultural differences were being mediated, in a very direct sense, by the logics and logistics of trade.

In this chapter, I focus on accounts concerning the earliest direct encounters between the English and the lands and peoples of the Ottoman Mediterranean, when possible noticing those moments when the traveller discovers fellow countrymen already living there. With this in mind, I wish to offer a variant on that 'paradigmatic' 'travel conjuncture' which James Clifford has termed the 'Squanto effect.' Squanto, Clifford recalls, was 'the Indian who greeted the pilgrims in 1620 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, who helped them through a hard winter and who spoke good English.' 'Think,' he continues, 'of coming into a new place like that and having the uncanny experience of running into a Patuxet just back from Europe.'¹ Or think, I would ask, of arriving on the coast of North Africa or any port in the eastern Mediterranean during the sixteenth century and being greeted by a turbaned 'Turk' born and raised in Devon, Cornwall or Essex.

A large number of these accounts describe experiences in the western Mediterranean ports of North Africa since these are the areas where the earliest Anglo-Ottoman encounters occurred. Indeed, from some records, it becomes clear that the English had been travelling to parts of Northern Africa before the Ottomans established their regencies there.

Travellers write history

Haunted by this figure of what Clifford terms the ‘hybrid “native”,’ the insider–outsider who is a good translator and explicator, the local informant who has ‘been around,’² I will suggest that while travel writers might not furnish us with accurate figures on values and volumes of trade, they nevertheless regularly provide important glimpses into the lives of expatriated fellow countrymen and women making a living where trade was happening and, in doing so, can shed light on how those engaged in shaping early Anglo-Ottoman relations refuse to conform to that ‘*positional superiority*’ of the West over the East that Edward Said attributes to subsequent generations of European Orientalists.³

Studies by Sonia Anderson and Daniel Goffman of Britons permanently resident amongst the trading communities of seventeenth-century Izmir, and recent studies of captivity narratives by Daniel Vitkus and Nabil Matar involving the movement of peoples between Britain and the Ottoman Mediterranean, provide ample evidence of the diversity, scale, and importance of the links between expatriation and trade in the more general formations of national and international identities at the time.⁴ But by trade, let me hasten to add, I have in mind not simply the business of making a profit from importing and exporting commodities – English tin, bell metal, rabbit-skins and woollen goods in exchange for Eastern silks, carpets, spices, Zante currants and silk, or African sugar, dates and almonds, for example – but also the exchange of cultural values, practices and attitudes, between one country, climate and social structure, and another. The desire to profit from the trade in goods, I am suggesting, was frequently accompanied by the desire to trade places. As Matar forcefully argues in *Islam in Britain*, the attractions of life within Morocco, the Ottoman Empire and its regencies across North Africa, were so compelling that ‘thousands of European Christians converted to Islam in the Renaissance and the seventeenth century, either because their poor social conditions forced them toward such a choice, or because they sought to identify with a powerful empire.’⁵ Hence it was that early travellers regularly found fellow countrymen already living in towns and ports from Algiers to Aleppo.

The version of the story I wish to tell here begins during the closing decades of the sixteenth century, a time when the English began travelling to the Ottoman Mediterranean in unprecedented numbers, initially for reasons of commercial profit and diplomacy. It closes with the end of the seventeenth century and the beginnings of what we might call

oriental tourism that coincided with the emergence of British imperial expansion eastwards. By this time the Ottoman threat to Europe had so far abated that many aspects of Ottoman culture appeared to have become westernized, while the itineraries of European travellers making the Grand Tour were regularly reaching beyond France, Spain, Italy and Greece to include Istanbul and other Anatolian, Levantine, and North African sites, such as the famed ruins of Troy, Ephesus, Alexandria, Cairo and the Nile valley. Unlike members of earlier generations who had travelled East on pilgrimage – intent on visiting the sacred sites of the Holy Land – or on crusade – intent on rescuing those sites from their Muslim captors – early-modern English travellers were typically motivated by personal ambition and the promise of material gain. Frequently, they found themselves both fascinated by and envious of the spectacular displays of staggering wealth and imperial power that the Ottomans had made their own.

During the course of the long seventeenth century, thousands of English, Irish and Scottish men and women, came to live in Mediterranean towns and ports, many of them attracted by the climate and opportunities for personal advancement that were simply unavailable in Britain at the time. Throughout the reach of its domains, the Ottoman Empire was resolutely multicultural and meritocratic. As 'R. D.', the author of *Historical and Political Observations Upon the Present State of Turkey*, noted in 1683: 'The Parity of Persons which is observed throughout All the *Turkish* Dominions, is also without question one of the main securities of the *Turkish* sway, for all are here equal and nothing but merit does advance People to the Ministry and places of State.'⁶ For many, the possibility of upward social mobility inside the Ottoman Empire provided incentives to leave their class-bound native lands. Drawn East by the desires for wealth, status and influence, or perhaps even simply by the desire to behold their own times in their greatest glory, to paraphrase Sir Henry Blount, adventurous individuals found themselves compelled by the dazzling allure and opportunities offered by the Mediterranean and Near East. Not all expatriated Britons living in the Mediterranean were necessarily there voluntarily, but even those taken captive and sold off in the great slave markets of the North African coast could sometimes do rather well for themselves – as I will suggest in the next chapter. Certainly by the early 1580s when the Levant and Barbary Companies formally opened up numerous entrepreneurial possibilities, religiously inspired pilgrims and crusaders started to be replaced by commercially minded pirates, merchants, entrepreneurs and

diplomats – all of them variously seeking to profit from the expansion of English trade and influence.

Early English encounters

Early English writing about piracy, captivity and diplomacy developed a variety of rhetorical and literary conventions to represent different forms of contact within the Mediterranean during the decades when the English were first sailing there in significant numbers. For the most part, these initial encounters occurred in the Maghrib, the North African coast stretching from Morocco to Libya, and it is with these that I am principally concerned here. One direction we might take in order to study the substantial archive of contemporaneous English writings that described and debated Mediterranean or ‘Barbary’ piracy might be the contextualized case study. For instance, the continuing appearance throughout the seventeenth and well into the eighteenth century of popular ballads and tracts celebrating John Ward’s exploits might lead us to conclude that this notorious Jacobean pirate had become a hero of the free-trade movement (see Chapter 4). Another direction, the one on which I want to venture here, is to turn to the accounts – literary, personal, commercial and diplomatic – of these earliest contacts as reported by writers in a variety of different literary kinds.

Before there was writing in English about adventures sailing into the Mediterranean, there was trade. With trade came cultural infusion and contestation as well as piracy or ‘free trade.’ In sixteenth-century England, a range of widely diverging attitudes regarding encounters with, and life among, the ‘Turks’ were all given voice. This diversity of attitudes helped shape the subsequent development of several literary forms: traveller’s reports, captivity narratives, news reports, religious polemics, picaresque romances, historical and geographical accounts, treatises on trade and commerce. During the late sixteenth century in England, the emergence of imperial ambitions under Queen Elizabeth was accompanied by the gradual emergence of ideas of ‘national literature’ based on a history of vernacular writing that would later be described by John Dryden and his contemporaries.⁷ The English had clearly been travelling to, and trading in, Mediterranean ports long before 1581 when official agreements – the so-called ‘capitulations’ or *ahidname* – were signed between Queen Elizabeth and the Ottoman Sultan Murad III. But English merchants had long been active in the Maghrib even before the Ottomans established their North African regencies, and a strong sense that England was entitled to enjoy a

special place in the area emerges from writings produced during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the various tracts and documents collected by Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas, most obviously, that emerging sense of entitlement was given substance by the very profusion of literary forms that recorded these earliest encounters. And it would directly feed the development of histories and stage plays, personal narratives and ethnographic treatises, political tracts and romances.

The earliest writings in English concerning the Ottoman Mediterranean suggest how contact through trade was intimately linked to a broader and more general interest in the land and its exotic flora and fabled fauna, to a fascination with its people, and to a curiosity about their cultures and languages. As early as 1547, for instance, the first book on surgery to be published in English, Andrew Boorde's *The Breviary of Healthe*, promised to provide 'the obscure terms of Greke, Araby, Latyn, and Barbary, in English.'⁸ Boorde clearly recognized that 'Barbary' constituted a language in its own right alongside Greek, Latin and Arabic, and that it contained valuable information that was worth knowing. This willingness to learn about and from Maghribian peoples, and to assimilate useful knowledges and skills, exceeds any simple desire for North African sugar and gold.

The first recorded trading contacts between English-speaking peoples and the Maghrib can be traced back to the early fifteenth century.⁹ Writing in 1764, the economic historian Adam Anderson noticed that 'the first Instance... of *Englishmen* trading to *Morocco*' took place in 1413. Citing the eighth volume of Thomas Rymer's *Foedera*, Anderson writes:

In this Year, [1413] it seems, a Company of *London* Merchants laded several Ships with much Wool and other Merchandize, to the Value of 24,000*l.* towards the western Parts of *Morocco*. The venture proved unsuccessful, however, because some *Genoese* Ships, emulous of this Commerce, made Prize of these *London* Ships outwards-bound, and carried them into *Genoa*. Whereupon King Henry IV. grants the Sufferers Reprisals on the Ships and Merchandize of the *Genoese* wherever they can find them.¹⁰

These early merchants also made their own alliances independently of the crown. Two years later, in 1415, according to Walsingham's *Latin Chronicle*, English merchants gave 'ayde and assistance... to King John the first of Portugall, for the winning of Ceuta in Barbarie.'¹¹ In his

commentary on international trade for the year 1492, when Muslim Granada fell to Isabella and Ferdinand, Anderson observes:

Upon this same Year, we may farther remark, from Mr. *Lewis Roberts* his well known *Map of Commerce*, That it was near about this Time when the *English Trade to Morocco* first commenced, (or rather was of any Consequence;) for we have seen that we did carry on some Trade thither so early as the Year 1413. And although by the Wars between *Morocco* and *Fez* that Trade was smothered, (as our Author phrases it) yet that out of this Trade to *Barbary*, sprung the *English Levant* or *Turkey Company*, tho' not till Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign.¹²

Such reports of how the Levant Company sprang from early fifteenth-century trade with Morocco have been ignored by later historians who have relied instead on Hakluyt's report of two subsequent trading ventures undertaken in 1551 and 1552 for evidence of the first encounters.¹³

However, these accounts of trade between England and Morocco reveal how three important themes that would characterize Anglo-Maghribian relations for the next three hundred years were already becoming evident from the early fifteenth century. First, rivalry among competing Christian nations would cause English merchants greater problems than negotiating with Muslims; secondly, the English crown was ready to support the merchants, but only when doing so – by licensing them to predate upon other ships in the area – would cost the royal exchequer nothing; and thirdly, strategic and often temporary alliances between crown and merchants, like those between otherwise-competing national interests, would set the terms for diplomacy in the area. As Rhoads Murphey astutely observed of conditions in the early seventeenth century, 'it is premature to expect the convergence of trade and politics' since trade was still most often a matter of particular merchants acting in *ad hoc* ways rather than hand-in-hand with state policy.¹⁴ In very much the same way, the writings that record the earliest English experiences in the Mediterranean lack any particular official form, and rather appear in a variety of *ad hoc* reports and accounts, such as the diversity of texts catalogued by Hakluyt and Purchas.

Religious differences between Christian and Muslim, meanwhile, seem very seldom to have been of great concern when there were profits to be made, and were regularly overshadowed by hostility towards the Church of Rome. For the puritan William Okeley, held captive in Algiers, the cruelty and covetousness of his Muslim masters, terrible as

they were, arose from the fact that they were followers of 'the *greatest Impostor* that ever seduced the Nations, but *One*.' That '*One*' who was an even greater '*Imposter*' than the Prophet Muhammad was, of course, the Pope, whose followers, having perverted the true Christian religion, deserved even greater contempt than adherents to 'the *Mahumedan unbelief*.'¹⁵ Indeed, such hostility between Christian nations, especially when compounded by commercial rivalry, regularly proved greater than animosity towards Muslims, and several writers insisted that '*Commerce and Trafficke*' served to ameliorate religious and cultural differences.¹⁶ Writing in 1637 to mark the visit of a Moroccan ambassador to London, an anonymous writer celebrated trade because 'it acquaints each nation with the Language, Manners, Behaviour, Customes, and carriage of one another; so that by these meanes men are made capable of understanding and knowledge; and therefore preferre knowledge before wealth and riches, for the one soone fadeth, the other abideth for ever.'¹⁷ These are very high ideals, perhaps, but such claims do at least suggest how English attitudes towards the peoples and cultures of Muslim North Africa during the early modern period were certainly more complicated, varied, and indeed more self-reflexive, than some twentieth-century historians would have us believe. Peter Earle, for example, begins his well-received study *Corsairs of Malta and Barbary* (1970) with a chapter entitled 'The Holy War in the Mediterranean' in which he writes: 'Unlike normal wars the war of the corsairs had neither beginning nor end. It was an eternal war.'¹⁸ Leaving aside the question of what he could possibly mean by the concept of 'normal wars,' Earle's emphatic claim is simply ignorant and dangerously inept history liable to perpetuate the errors of the past and to prolong needless conflict.

Seventeenth-century English merchants were eager to aggrandize their activities by associating themselves with royal authority and, in one case at least, with a radical Protestant commitment to the apocalyptic unfolding of divine providence. In 1613, one 'I. H.' edited and published *Late Newes out of Barbary. In A Letter written of late from a Merchant there to a Gentl. not long since employed into that country from his Majestie*. In the preface, I. H. promised that the news contained in this letter would be of great comfort to all true English Protestants because it confirmed that they really were living in sight of the second coming. Evidence found in news from abroad, as so often in the popular press of the time, provides the stuff of millenarian prophecy about imminent last days. The letter reports the recent appearance and growing power of a 'new Saintish King' in Morocco who claimed to be a divine messenger. So

sudden and furious had been the military successes of this new king, 'Mulley Om Hamet Abdela,' that the Catholic nations of Spain, Italy and France expected to be overrun by his forces at any time. The good news, according to I. H., is that Mulley Om Hamet ben Abdela has insisted on his friendship to the English and has promised to allow them continued free trade; but presumably only until time itself comes to an end.¹⁹ This frisson of excitement as the English take their rightly deserved position in the region also appeared in more mundane terms, requiring not so much an apocalyptic leap of faith as an active literary imagination. Reporting on his experiences as a member of Sir Robert Mansell's expedition against 'the Pirates of Algiers,' John Button addressed his readers directly:

...to make this Discourse the more pleasing to thee, such Spanish ships and gallyes, besides Turkish Pirates, as we encountred with at Sea, shall appeare sayling, in all their gallantry before thee. Imagine (as thou readest) that thou hearest the Canon playing, and Turkes by hundreds tumbling into the Seas, our owne stretching out hands to save a miserable number of poore Christians made slaves to the barbarous Turke & crafty Moore, but delivered from that servitude by us, God assisting our labours.²⁰

The Algiers expedition of 1620 would be the only military campaign undertaken by command of King James, and Mansell's fleet was the first English naval force to enter the Mediterranean since the Crusades.²¹ At the time, several well-informed commentators – including the Secretary of State Sir John Coke, as well as Sir John Chamberlain, Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Monson – considered the adventure to have been little more than an inglorious and expensive failure, while others – such as the dramatist Thomas Middleton – suspected it had been undertaken simply to appease the Spanish.²² For his part, Button remained generally non-committal on the success or failure of the campaign. Of more interest here is his explicit invitation to readers to see the sights and hear the sounds of armed conflict at sea, and to derive vicarious literary pleasure from imagining themselves part of this great and glorious action. Amidst the gallant spectacle and din of battle, what counts are not so much high affairs of state but rather those images of hundreds of 'Turkes... tumbling into the Seas' and the hands of those imagined English mariners reaching out 'to save a miserable number of poore Christians.' From the imaginary pleasures of such sights and sounds are national fantasies and even identities forged.

Some expatriate lives: Dragomen, consuls, converts and chaplains

However intimately related they might be, trade is one thing but long-term residence another. Probably, the earliest Englishmen to become expatriate guest workers in the eastern Mediterranean were the halberdiers regularly employed at the Byzantine court in Constantinople from the twelfth century onwards. Of these, Richard Hakluyt notes:

John the sonne of Alexius Comnenus...highly esteeming their fidelity, used them very nere about him, recommending them over to his sonne: so that long time afterwards the guard of those Emperours were English halberdiers, called by Nicetas Choniata, Inglini Bipenniferi, and by Curopolata, Barangi, which always accompanied the Emperour with their halberds on their shoulders, which they held up when the Emperour comming from his Oratorie shewed himselfe to the people; and clashing their halberds together to make a terrible sound, they in the English tongue wished unto him long life.²³

Four centuries later, in 1599, the organ-maker from Lancashire, Thomas Dallam, arrived in Istanbul where he encountered two English-born *dragomen* or interpreters: one, a 'trustie' fellow Lancastrian who regularly saves him from perils; the other, a duplicitous Cornishman who is rightly sacked from his position for dangerous incompetence.²⁴

Nearly a century later, Thomas Baker, consul in Tripoli from 1677 to 1685, also found it necessary to sack his English-born dragoman, making a sarcastic note in his journal for 13 May 1681: 'cashiered my conceited, foolish, impertinent false, Trayterous, base, Drunken Druggerman, who is called Hassan Agha; Who before his voluntary Turning Turk was named Edward Fountaine of a good Family in Norffolk as hee pretends; A hopefull Branch, and a great comfort to his Relations!'²⁵ Despite their linguistic abilities, the Englishmen who, for whatever reasons, had left native religion and homeland and become translators cannot be taken as reliable guides to expatriate life in general, but suggest a relatively high degree of moral corruption might be characteristic.

Indeed, for many of the young men sent into the Mediterranean on Levant Company business, the pleasures and opportunities for behaving in ways that would have proved unacceptable at home clearly proved so irresistibly attractive that Company officials quickly recognized the need to send out clergymen to regulate their behaviour. In the early 1600s, the chaplain William Biddulph could not wait to get home once he

had seen how expatriated Christian men organized their sexual liaisons with local women.²⁶ Later in the century, Sir John Finch wrote to Lord Conway that one

Great Principle that tends to Enlargement of Empire is the Liberty of Every mans having 4 wives; and as many concubines as he can maintain . . . Desire of Women being the most Prevelant because the most naturall & necessary Passion God has given Man; Tis very inviting to make that a reward of a Belief which Christians hold inconsistent with their belief. And upon this very Account most of the Renegados Turn Turks; especially Fryers & ecclesiasticall Persons.²⁷

Finch wrote this letter less than a year after arriving in Istanbul, so we can be fairly confident that he may have been repeating hearsay at second hand, or even a fantasy that he had taken along with him.²⁸ There is, so far as I know, no evidence that any European Christian – ecclesiastical or otherwise – ever converted to Islam simply in order to engage in polygamy and take on the burden of supporting more than one wife. After three and a half years residence as consul in Tripoli, Thomas Baker provided a more experienced and plausible view, that drunkenness, thoughtlessness and fear of punishment under Ottoman law were frequent causes of conversion, noting how two ‘London Mariners . . . about a yeare since in the Port of Alexandria voluntarily Turning Turks (which is noe uncommon accident to our drunken hard-headed sailors)’ now sought to repent and return to England.²⁹ Agreeing to convert in order to avoid punishment for public drunkenness was clearly a smart option for the less than pious.

Pressure to convert to Islam was by no means a policy of the Ottoman authorities and far less common than the sometimes lurid accounts of travellers would have their readers believe. It was also likely to have been most often strategic, a matter of form rather than belief. An interesting illustration of how a nativized informant served his new master is that of John Nelson, ‘a sonne of a yeoman of our Queenes guard,’ who had been ‘inforced to turne Turke’ by the son of the Dey of Tripoli. Writing of his captivity there in 1584, Thomas Sanders tells how the same ‘kings sonne . . . greatly fancied Richard Burges our Purser, and James Smith: they were both young men, therefore he was very desirous to have them turne Turkes, but they would not yeeld to his desire.’³⁰ In order to convince them to do so, John Nelson was employed to persuade them that the life of a convert would be to their advantage. In this mission, he apparently failed. Eventually, both Burges and Smith

were forcibly circumcised and dressed 'in the habite of a Turke,'³¹ but continued to insist that they were born Christian and would remain so. According to Sanders' account, it is just as well that they persisted in their protests, since some months later they were captured en route to Istanbul by the crew of a Venetian galley who 'would have killed the two Englishmen because they were circumcised, and become Turkes, had not the other Christian captives excused them, saying, that they were inforced to be Turkes, by the kings sonne.'³² Of the fate of John Nelson, however, Sanders makes no mention, though Nabil Matar, in his analysis of evidence concerning conversion to Islam, has identified him as the 'first English convert to Islam whose name survives in an English source.'³³

Despite possible pressures to relinquish one's native religion, life in the Ottoman Mediterranean appealed to many. Often pressed into service, sailors who transported merchants and their goods frequently found life in the Mediterranean far more appealing than the prospect of returning to long periods of unemployment back home. By the early seventeenth century, so many British mariners had stayed on in the Mediterranean to engage in piracy that the Earl of Northampton, writing in 1612, advised against sending an ambassador to Persia by sea 'so as to avoid sending him with English ships and sailors, who so often turn pirate in remote countries.'³⁴ That same year, the Venetian ambassador in London reported how English pirates controlling no fewer than thirty ships had defiantly 'refused to accept the pardon offered them by the King. They say that in the present state of peace they could not maintain themselves in England.'³⁵ Nine years later, Sir Henry Wotton, English ambassador in Venice, wrote that:

A cluster of pirates are said to have offered unto this State for protection, and some permanent seat, a million of ducats in pure donative, great sums at five per hundred, depositable in their exchequer, and moreover some thirty vessels, armed with three hundred pieces of artillery and able men, at the public service. At first the voice went that Samson (our *renegado*) was head of this offer. Then we fell to remember that the pirates at Tunis (which is his nest) are not masters of the money which they take, nor of the very vessels wherein they go, which are commonly overmanned by Turckes, so that now we know not where to fix this huge oblation.³⁶

So great was the desire of many expatriated English mariners to stay on in the Mediterranean that serving Catholic Venice could seem preferable

to life in Jacobean England. So much for national loyalty when it is challenged by the possibilities of personal wealth and free enterprise.

Not all were so easily persuaded, however. As the more piously nationalistic William Okeley put it in 1675, the temptation that must be resisted by the godly Protestant abroad is coming to believe that '*wherever we are well is our Country, and all the World is Home to him that thrives all over the World.*' For Okeley, however, 'one thought of *England*, and of its Liberty and Gospel *confuted a thousand such Objections.*'³⁷

English halberdiers working for Byzantine emperors, dragomen employed at the Ottoman court, and free-trading pirates operating from Maghribian ports clearly differ in kind from the many English merchants, sedentary factors, and consular officials who took up residence in Mediterranean ports during the sixteenth century; though not all of the earliest resident consuls were necessarily English or British. Certainly during the earliest periods of sea-born trade, whenever and wherever there were profits to be made, national identities and loyalties based on origin proved remarkably flexible. As soon as their ships reached the Liberian coast during the 1480s, the Portuguese granted a 'monopoly dealing in malagueta pepper across parts of Northern Europe to Duarte Brandao, alias Sir Edward Brampton, a Jewish businessman who served in the royal councils of both Portugal and England.'³⁸ In 1513, Henry VIII appointed an Italian, one Justiniano, to be his first consul to Chios. In 1520, he was succeeded by one 'Comio de Balthazari (a merchant of Lucca, residing in Crete)' who was given a patent to be 'for life, governor, master, protector or consul of the English nation there.'³⁹ Clearly, the business of appointing consuls was a pragmatic one of finding a competent person already familiar with the local scene, exchange rates and necessary languages. The earliest English-born appointee to consular office in the Mediterranean, a Londoner by name of Dionysius Harris, was named consul to Crete for life in 1530.⁴⁰ By 1599, when Dallam made his journey, English-born consular officers of the Levant Company had been appointed at various times to reside not only in Chios and Crete,⁴¹ but also in Leghorn,⁴² Patras,⁴³ Tripoli in Syria, and Aleppo.⁴⁴ Dallam visited the consul on Chios, but in or around 1611, that consulate was moved to Izmir and John Markham was appointed first consul there.⁴⁵ Some years earlier, in March 1597, Fynes Moryson reported that 'some English Merchants continually reside' on Zante,⁴⁶ but no consular representatives of the Levant Company were officially appointed there until 1616.⁴⁷

The appointment of British-born consuls and sedentary factors in Maghribian ports was similarly a strategic matter involving local

interests, languages and social arrangements. In January 1583, Hassan Basha, styling himself 'Viceroy and lieutenant, and capitaine of the jurisdiction of Algier' took it upon himself to grant the English merchant Thomas Shingleton a permit 'to trade & traffique freely in this city of Algier and other places of our jurisdiction.'⁴⁸ In April of the same year, William Harborne, Elizabeth's first representative at the Ottoman Porte, formally appointed Harvey Millers to be 'Consull for the English nation in Alexandria, Cairo, and other places of Egypt.'⁴⁹ In March 1585, Harborne appointed John Tipton to be resident 'Consul for the English in Algier, Tunis, & Tripolis of Barbarie.'⁵⁰ According to R. L. Playfair's justly celebrated *The Scourge of Christendom: Annals of British Relations with Algiers Prior to the French Conquest* (1884), however, Tipton had been living in Algiers and serving informally in that capacity since 1580.⁵¹ 'Unfortunately,' as Susan Skilliter pointed out, 'no reference is given for this information; also, the Turkey Company was not chartered until September 1581,'⁵² though as we have seen, Murad III did issue safe-conducts to individual merchants as early as 1580. Whenever it was that Tipton first arrived, he was certainly serving as resident 'Commisarie' on behalf of Edward Osborne, one of the founding officers of the Levant Company, by July 1584.⁵³

Such confusions among modern historians are, perhaps, inevitable given the fragile, fugitive and frequently inaccurate nature of the source materials. In his authoritative *History of the Levant Company* (1935), Alfred Wood observed that Tipton's appointment eventually proved unsuccessful because, 'a brief experience of intercourse with the three pirate states of Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis proved the impracticability of doing any stable business among a people who lived by plunder and rapine.'⁵⁴ Wood comments further that 'what happened to Tipton is not known,' but John Sanderson – who thought him 'a wicked athiesticall knave' – provides a graphic account of how Tipton moved to Istanbul in 1591 and was later murdered at sea in or around 1595 or 1596.⁵⁵

Although many English travellers at some point record their gratitude for hospitality, their reports of meetings with ambassadors, expatriated merchants, sedentary factors and consuls, vary considerably in interest, originality, reliability and significance. Travellers then, as now, often found themselves in need of help and regularly created inconveniences for officials of the Levant and Barbary Companies. Helping to rescue or ransom imprisoned travellers often seems to have been among the most common tasks of Company officers abroad. In April 1585, for instance, Thomas Sanders records his gratitude to Edward Barton, at this time a member of William Harborne's household in Istanbul,

for coming to rescue him and other Englishmen following two years captivity in Tripoli.⁵⁶ But travellers could easily make nuisances of themselves without falling into prison. When Dallam and three other passengers stopped on Chios to visit the consul there, such was the excitement stirred among the local children by the spectacle of foreign visitors that they broke down the walls outside the consul's house to get a better glimpse of these exotic creatures from overseas. Not surprisingly, this vandalism made the 'Consull verrie angrie.'⁵⁷

On the other hand, not all travellers caused trouble but enjoyed local hospitality and were keen to see the sights. While en route to Alexandria and Cairo in April 1586, the London merchant Laurence Aldersey stopped in Patras, 'and lay there with good entertainment at the English house, where was the Consull Master Grimes, Ralph Ashley, and John Doddington, who very kindly went with us, and shewed us the pleasures of the towne.' Aldersey continues:

They brought us to the house of the Cady, who was made then to understand of the 20 Turks that wee had aboard, which were to goe to Constantinople, being redeemed out of captivitie, by sir Francis Drake in the West Indies, and brought with him into England, and by order of the Queenes Majestie sent now into their Countrey.⁵⁸

The Ottoman Cadi, or judge, was greatly impressed that the English were restoring these 'Turks.' 'When he had talked with them,' Aldersey writes, 'and understood howe strangely they were delivered, hee marveiled much, and admired the Queenes majestie of England, who being but a woman, is notwithstanding of such power and renowne amongst all the princes of Christendome, with many other wordes of commending her Majestie.' By way of context, James Alday records how in 1551 'a tall ship called the Lion of London' conveyed 'two Moores, being noble men, whereof one was of the Kings blood... into their Countrey out of England,' without mentioning why they were in England in the first place.⁵⁹ Returning noble Moors is one thing, but repatriating Ottoman captives seized by the Spanish is surely another. Doubtless a strategy inspired by diplomatic imperatives, the incident also suggests how – officially at least – English attitudes towards the Ottomans at the time were not entirely hostile, cynical or driven by uniformly venal motives, though attitudes towards the Spanish were, of course, generally hostile. Redeeming a sizeable group of Ottoman captives, and then transporting them several thousand miles so they might be returned to their native land, can hardly be interpreted as the action of a people secure in

their superiority over the Ottomans; rather it suggests the policy of a suppliant, if not subordinate, nation seeking to ingratiate itself with an empire that, in Matar's phrase, constituted 'a higher civilization than Christendom.'⁶⁰

The merchant Aldersey evidently knew how to make himself a welcome guest in foreign parts and greatly enjoyed being taken to see historical monuments, credulously accepting whatever he was told. Before leaving Patras, he was taken by 'our foresaid countreyemen ... to the Chappel of S. Andrew where his tombe or sepulchre is, and the boord upon which he was beheaded, which boord is now so rotten, that if any man offer to cut it, it falleth to powder, yet I brought some of it away with me.'⁶¹ After spending May, June and the early weeks of July sailing southeast across the Mediterranean, Aldersey landed some miles east of Alexandria where he was 'well entertained of a Jewe' who 'provided mee a Camell for my carriage, and a Mule for mee to ride upon, and a Moore to runne by me to the City of Alexandria, who had charge to see mee safe in the English house.' Unfortunately when he arrived, he found the house bereft of Englishmen: 'whither I came, but found no Englishmen there.'⁶² As chance would have it, an English ship, the 'Tyger of London,' was moored nearby and the master, one Thomas Rickman, was able to open the English house and provide Aldersey with 'a faire chamber' as well as 'a man ... to provide me with all things that I needed.' Besides supplying food, this 'man' took Aldersey 'every day' into the city 'and showed me the monuments thereof' including 'Pompey his pillar, which is a mighty thing of gray marble ... in height by estimation above 52. yards.'⁶³ Made of pink granite, not grey marble, the pillar was not erected by Pompey but for Diocletian in 300 AD just before he began slaughtering all available Christians, and is certainly impressive at twenty-two metres, about half the height Aldersey estimated.⁶⁴ As for the stone on which Saint Mark was said to have been beheaded, and the bath of Saint Katherine, both of which Aldersey reports seeing, well, who can say what he was shown.

At least when he arrived in Cairo, the English house was not empty. Instead, Aldersey 'found M. William Alday, and William Caesar, who intertained me in very good sort ... M. Caesar brought mee to see the Pyramides which are three in number ... I also sawe the ruines of the Citie of Memphis hard by those Pyramids.' Only three pyramids? Credulous to the end, yet disarmingly ingenuous too, Aldersey informs us that 'the house of Joseph is yet standing in Cayro, which is a sumptuous thing, having a place to walke in of 56. mighty pillars, all gilt with gold,

but,' he hastens to add, 'I saw it not, being then lame.'⁶⁵ Again, we can only speculate what monument it was that Aldersey did not see.

By mid-August, presumably recovered from his lameness, Aldersey set off on his return journey, stopping in Algiers where he stayed with none other than 'M. Typton Consull of the English nation, who used me most kindly, and at his owne charge.' In company with Tipton, Aldersey visited the 'King' and marvelled at 'the manners of the Court,' observing 'the King doeth onely beare the name of a King, but the greatest government is in the hands of the souldiers.' While staying with Tipton, Aldersey also joined in the rescue of '13. Englishmen, which were by force of weather put into the bay of Tunis, where they were very ill used by the Moores,' and then sailed for home.⁶⁶

Although it is reasonable enough that early modern travellers should regularly misunderstand what they were witnessing and experiencing while in strange and foreign parts, no doubt assisted in such misconceptions by inaccurate local informants, encounters with expatriated merchants could reveal business transactions unlikely to show up in the diplomatic archives or the records of the Barbary and Levant Companies. Thomas Smith, sometime fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, and non-juring divine who was entirely hostile to all religious beliefs except his own, reports of his arrival on Gibraltar in 1678:

Here the Merchants told us, that it had not rained for seven Months together, except a day or two for an Hour: and that the *Algerines*, who were then breaking with us, had not been able to have set a Fleet to Sea about two years before, if they had not been furnished with Masts from *England*; and that they were now in Expectation of another Ship laden with the same, notwithstanding the Rupture, which was as good as began. I only make a Query, Whether *Jews* or *English Men* were the Freighters?⁶⁷

Speculation as to the national identities of the freighters reveals Smith's characteristic anti-semitism at work, but that is no reason to think that he invented or imagined that international dealers were supplying English spare parts for an Algerian fleet – one that might be used against English ships.

Travellers' encounters with expatriated co-nationals could also enable them to rectify common misconceptions and errors. From talking with English merchants living on Zante in 1597, for example, Fynes Moryson learned that 'the Haven being commodious, and most ships that trade in these Seas using to put into this Harbor, the goods that

are diversly transported thence, are vulgarly, but falsely, esteemed the native commodities of the Iland.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, Moryson does not specify exactly which commodities were wrongly thought to be native to the island. The historian of the English Levant Company, Alfred Wood, wrote in 1935 that 'the English merchants at Zante [bartered] for the currants, honey, wax, oil, and wine which the island produced,' but omits his sources.⁶⁹ I have been unable to find a single account by an early English travel writer who mentions the production or export of either honey or wax from Zante. In 1553, the traveller John Locke recorded seeing 'Orenges, Lemons, pomegranates, and divers other good fruites' growing in the gardens of a friary, but continued by observing that it was 'strange to mee how they should maintaine so many men on this Iland, for their best sustenance is wine, and the rest but miserable.'⁷⁰ While fruit-bearing orchards would provide conditions for the production of honey, Locke makes no mention at all of an export trade in this or any other local product.

The earliest mention of Zantean exports by an English traveller I have found appeared thirty-three years later when, on his 1586 voyage, Laurence Aldersey noted that the 'commodities of Zante are Currans and oyle,'⁷¹ an observation confirmed nearly a century later by Henry Teonge who, writing of Cephalonia and Zante, commented: 'These islands are very famous for currants, of which there is great plenty; as also of oil-olive, but especially at Zante, where their oil is kept in wells many fathoms in the rocks, and is in them candid as it will be here in a jar or bottle.'⁷² Certainly by 1675, when Teonge visited, the export of Zante currants to England had become widely 'famous' for a number of reasons. From 1580 onwards, the Venetians, who held the island on licence from the Ottomans, began 'steadily increasing the duties which had to be paid by foreign merchants at Zante,' leading the Doge and Senate to pass 'a law in 1602 compelling all currants to be sent to Venice and making the city the staple for all those which were shipped to the west.'⁷³ Evidently Venetian controls were a constant source of confusion and difficulty, even for the Venetians. In 1603, Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli, the Venetian Secretary in London, explained to the Doge:

In 1602 your Serenity issued an order that no foreigners might lade currants in Zante, but that they must come to Venice for them; and further that no foreign ship might lade currants in Venice unless it had brought two-thirds of it capacity laden with merchandize, and had discharged at least a part inside the Adriatic. Further you have forbidden any foreign ships to bring into Venice from Alexandria,

Cyprus, Syria, or any place in Turkey linen, cotton, wool, thread, under pain of confiscation. The object of these orders is to ruin English trade in the Levant, and to secure for Venetians the whole Levant trade with England.⁷⁴

One immediate result of this legislation was that 'the English went to settle in Ottoman Patras and increased their purchase of Morean currants,' a development that greatly 'alarmed Venice, because the English currant trade with Zante supplied an annual sum of 30–40,000 ducats to Venice; and now the English began to buy olive oil, which had previously come through Venice, directly from the Ottoman ports of Modon and Coron.'⁷⁵

Anglo-Venetian rivalry over the huge profits to be made from the trade in Zante currants would continue throughout the seventeenth century and beyond, gathering ideological, political and even moral significance along the way. After a visit to Zante in 1609, the Scots travel writer William Lithgow – who characteristically railed at anything he found not quite to his liking – observed:

It was credibly told me here by the better sort, that this little Ile maketh yearely (besides Oyle and Wine) onely of Currants 160000. Chickins, paying yearely over and above for custome 22000. Piasters, every Chicken of Gold being nine shillings English, and every Piaster being white money sixe shillings. A rent or summe of mony which these silly Ilanders could neve affoord, (they being not above 60. yeares agoe, but a base beggarly people, and an obscure place) if it were not here in England of late for some Liquorous lips, who forsooth can hardly digest Bread, Pasties, Broth...without these curraunts: And as these Rascall Greekes becomming proud of late with this levish expence, contemne justly this sensuall prodigality; I have heard them often demaund the English in a filthy derision, what they did with such Leprous stuffe, and if they carried them home to feed their Swine and Hogges withall: A question indeed worthy of such a female Traffike, the inference of which I suspende: There is no other Nation save this, thus addicted to that miserable Ile.⁷⁶

Lithgow was perhaps idiosyncratically acerbic in his use of moralizing terms to rail against this 'female Traffike' in a luxury item that was bringing his nation into disrepute among those he considered base and beggarly rascals, but he was by no means alone in condemning a business that was generating massive profits for Catholic Venice. Queen Elizabeth

herself may have disapproved of the trade. In August 1603, Scaramelli wrote to the Doge:

Beginning with the year 1580; they say that the Queen, being struck by the enormous quantity of currants and Cretan wine that was being brought into England, and holding that such abundance was superfluous, granted to Acerbo Velutelli, an Italian resident in London, a concession that no one except himself might import currants and Cretan wine. Her object was to moderate the influx.⁷⁷

Such was the tax imposed by the Venetians on English imports of Zante currants that, in March 1642, the House of Commons sought to prohibit their import by an Act of Parliament; but the ban was immediately vetoed by King Charles. This was among the last pieces of legislation to be disputed between Parliament and Crown before the outbreak of the English Civil War.⁷⁸ The commercial production of currants on Zante, however, seems to have continued: by 1754, according to Alexander Drummond, the annual harvest averaged 'four thousand tuns of currants.'⁷⁹

So, to return to Fynes Moryson's privileged information about those 'goods that are diversly transported' to Zante but 'are vulgarly, but falsely, esteemed the native commodities of the Iland;' what might they have been? By 1675, the great 'wells...many fathoms in the rocks' reported by Teonge might have been filled with olive oil brought from elsewhere. But it seems more likely that the lucrative trade in currants – 'the maine trade of this Societie' according to an entry in the Levant Company Minute book of 15 October 1617 – was at issue.⁸⁰ Alfred Wood, again vague in citing his sources, observes that by 1607 the English had 'not only developed a large contraband trade in the coveted berries, but...also transferred much of their business to Patras, the collecting station for the fruit of the Morea.'⁸¹ Presuming the historian can be trusted, it seems not at all unlikely that the traveller Moryson had discovered – but was too circumspect to specify – that even as early as 1597, English merchants were bringing currants from the Morea to Zante, and then shipping them to English ports to be sold at inflated prices as if they were 'Zante currants' in order to avoid paying exorbitant Venetian customs duties. If I am correct, this rather shady business practice of marketing currants (and perhaps other goods) from elsewhere as if they were the prestige variety grown on Zante would certainly be in keeping with modern business practices, involving highly taxed luxury goods. We might think of recent accusations that the Imperial

Tobacco Company of London has been manufacturing and exporting certain brands of cigarette to so-called 'third world countries,' where those brands have negligible sales, only to smuggle them back into Britain in order to sell them on without paying government taxes.⁸²

A less speculative misconception corrected by a travel writer concerns the fortunes of the notorious English pirate, John Ward. In 1614, the itinerant Scotsman William Lithgow stopped in Tunis where he visited

our English Captayne, generall Waird, once a great Pyrat, and Commaunder at Sea; who in despite of his denied acceptance in England, had turned Turke, and built there a faire Palace, beautified with rich Marble and Alabaster stones: With whom I found Domesticke, some fifteene circumcised English Runagates, whose lives and Countenances were both alike, even as desperate as disdainfull. Yet old Waird their maister was placable, and joyned me safely with a passing land conduct to Algieri; yea, and diverse times in my ten dayes staying there, I dynd and supped with him, but lay aboard in the French shippe.⁸³

So much for the blasphemous, evil-hearted and lecherous wife-killer, who reviles all things British, represented five years earlier in Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, a melodramatic play that ends with Ward's violent but premature death at the hands of the Ottoman authorities (see Chapter 4).

William Lithgow's writings also prove especially useful for tracking the existence of the numerous Englishmen and fellow Scotsmen who had traded their native shores for the sunnier climes of the Mediterranean. Like Dallam, Lithgow seems not to have been automatically hostile to renegades simply because they had abandoned their native Protestant religion. Although he was captured on suspicion of being a spy and tortured by the Inquisition in Malaga, Lithgow could be fair-minded, even in his treatment of Scottish Catholics. He reports staying three months in Padua to learn Italian from 'a Country Gentleman of mine, Doctor John Wedderburne...who taught me well in the language, and in all other respects exceeding friendly to me,' despite their religious differences.⁸⁴ Unlike Dallam, however, Lithgow evidently considered that sufficient revenge would be achieved by simply naming the 'Scottish Cowper, named Alexander Ley, borne in Dunbar, and there married' who was employed by the Inquisitors in Malaga to translate Lithgow's writings into Spanish in order to prove that he was 'an Arch-hereticke to the Pope and the Virgin Mary.' Besides the 'thirty

thousand Scots families' that he claimed were living 'incorporate in' the 'bowells' of Poland, Lithgow took evident pleasure in recording his meetings with fellow Scotsmen who were travelling or resident in the Mediterranean. These included two ships' captains – William Bailey, 'my cliddisdale Countrey man,' and John Allen 'borne in Glasgow' – as well as 'a countrey Gentlman of mine . . . named William Douglas' serving as a Knight of Malta, the 'young Scots Edenburgensen William Wylie . . . bound for Venice', 'my fellow Countrey man Mr. Wood . . . come from Malta', the galley-slave 'George Gib of Burrowtownenes', and the secretary to Sir Thomas Glover, King James' ambassador to the Ottoman Porte, 'my Countrey man, Maister James Rollocke . . . the last Scotsman I saw till my returne to Malta after my departure from Constantinople.'⁸⁵

In addition to indicating how the Scots were well represented among the earliest Britons to be found living in the Mediterranean, Lithgow provides evidence that representatives of the English crown exercised considerable direct authority within the Ottoman Empire. In addition to renegades such as Captain Ward, and forced converts such as Samson Rowlie who became Treasurer to the Beglerbeg of Algiers, the earliest ambassadors were able to assume powers that would have been unthinkable for representatives of foreign nations to assume in Britain. Like Thomas Dallam, but unlike the clergyman William Biddulph to whom I will turn in a moment, Lithgow greatly admired Sir Thomas Glover, who had been knighted and appointed ambassador by King James in 1606. Of Glover, Lithgow wrote: 'I never met with a more compleat Gentleman in all my travells; nor one in whom true worth did more illustrat virtue.' Lithgow may well be accused of partiality since Glover had been appointed by the Scottish-born king and 'most generously & courteously entertained me three moneths in his house.'⁸⁶

But Lithgow also provides the following account that illustrates the extraordinary power and influence that an ambassadorial representative of a Christian nation could exert within the Ottoman Mediterranean above and beyond the conditions set down by the trading capitulations. Commenting on Patras, which he calls 'Peterasso,' Lithgow reports:

Here I remember there was an English Factor lying, whom the Subbassa or Governour of the Towne a Turke, caused privately afterward upon malice to be poysoned, even when I was wintering at Constantinople, for whose death the worthy and generous Ambassador, Sir Thomas Glover my Patrone and Protector, was so highly incensed, that he went hither himself to Peterasso, with two

Jannizaries, and a warrant sent with him from the Emperour, who in the midst of the market-place of Peterasso, caused one of these two Janizaries, strike off the head from the shoulders of that Sanzak; and put to death divers others also that had beene accessory to the poysoning of the English Consul; and the Ambassador returning againe to Constantinople, was held in singular reputation even with the Turkes, for prosecuting so powerfully the course of Justice, and would not shrink for no respect, I being domestick with him the selfe same time.⁸⁷

Sometimes it took a representative of England, such as an ambassador like Glover, to execute the summary justice for which the Ottomans were renowned. Whether or not we today share Lithgow's enthusiasm, absolute and summary justice was a feature of Ottoman administration that was regularly reported on by travellers, and even greatly admired by some commentators at the time. Nonetheless, it is unimaginable that any Christian nation would have formally authorized any foreign representative, however eminent or personally popular with the head of state, to carry on in such a way.⁸⁸

Two intriguing incidents involving William Biddulph indicate something of the variety of occupations available to English men and women who settled in Ottoman lands. Biddulph, an Islamophobic chaplain to the Protestant community in Aleppo, reports how, on the night of 18 September 1603:

We had an Englishman, not long since, who sleeping on the *Tarras* (that is, on the top of the house) in the night, (as the custome of the contrie is in the heate of Sommer) who had his throat cut being asleepe in bed, by two or three wicked men, who came from the streete by a ladder to the top of the house; and after they had committed this murther, being discried by the barking of a dog, and seene also by the master of the house, through his chamber window where he slept, (but not plainely discerned being somewhat darke) they made haste downe againe, and were never knowen. But on the morrow after, the master of the house (an Englishman also) was in trouble himselfe, because he could not find out the murtherers, and it cost him an hundreth Dollers at the least before hee coulede bee freed, and the whole *Contrado* or Parish, was also fined.⁸⁹

A marginal gloss names the hapless victim as William Martin and the householder as one 'Jeames' Stapers – possibly a relation of Richard

Stapers, a founding member of the Levant Company – who had travelled into the Mediterranean with Henry Timberlake on board the *Trojan* early in 1601.⁹⁰ Of this incident I can find no other account, but in terms of Biddulph's prejudiced view of life among the Ottomans, it provided a graphically dire example of the dangers ever present to innocent Englishmen who had come to live among a covetous and treacherous people. Moreover, the incident also indicates that there were communities of expatriates in Aleppo at the time who were living outside the walls and jurisdiction of the Levant Company customs house, the Khan al-Gümruk. By the time of the murder in 1603, we may also reasonably conclude that there must have been more Britons resident in Aleppo than the fourteen merchants who had petitioned the Levant Company seven years earlier refusing to recognize the authority of the vice-consul, George Dorrington, because of his alleged incompetence.⁹¹ On the basis of the petition, Wood comments 'by 1596 the factory consisted of at least fourteen merchants.'⁹² The petition is signed by Ralph Fitch, Elizeus Sothern, John Munn, William Marshall, John Huntlie, John [Merro?], John Corrie, Laurence Bucklie, Philip Dawlish, William Clarke, Bartholomew Holland, William Lucas, Jason Rowles and Thomas Juett.⁹³ Additionally, we can add the names of several other Britons resident in Aleppo at the time from documents associated with the dispute over Dorrington's competency. A similar petition signed a week later includes the additional names of Simon Broadstreet, Thomas Burnaby and Edward Davis. The Aleppo community also included a self-appointed chaplain, 'Master May,' who seems to have taken Dorrington's side in the dispute.⁹⁴

The second incident concerns Biddulph rather more personally, and involves a rare moment of evidence concerning the activities of expatriate English women. On 6 May 1609, John Kitley wrote to John Sanderson about Biddulph's behaviour, taking particular delight in elaborating some excruciating puns and tortuous conceits out of the clergyman's name. Biddulph, he wrote:

ever hath shewed more beard then witt or religion in all his 10 years travils. Witnes his behaviour at Aleppo, here [i.e. Istanbul], and now lastly at Zante in the Lazarotto where he was found by the guardians in the very action rem in re, with that Inglishe strumpitt who I formerly described unto you. This Bed-woolfe or rather a woolfe in bed limed to a bitch, being so taken, fayned him selfe Lunitique, and being thus openly shamed became past all shame and was seene reeleing-drunke publiklie every day to the scandall of our religion

and shame of our whole nation to see the Greekes pointing at him saying ecco il vicario de l'inferno e imbrago. For my part I am of the Greekes opinion with this last imposition betimes that he may be well termed the vicar of hell.⁹⁵

So much for the pious and righteous self-image conveyed throughout Biddulph's *Travels*: 'rem in re' indeed. If Kitley's report of Biddulph's activities on Zante is at all reliable, it provides some evidence that not all the women running ale-houses and wine shops in ports regularly visited by European shipping were in any sense 'greeks,' the term by which all sexually available non-Muslim women were most commonly described in the English and French language sources: curiously, the Elizabethan slang term 'merry-greek' seems only ever to have been used to describe male figures with loose morals.⁹⁶

Some Maghribian residents

In contrast to residents of Ionian, Aegean and Levantine trading centres, the English men and women living in Maghribian ports who show up in the writings of travellers are most often immiserated captives, renegades or pirates. Exceptions there are, including the soldiers and colonists living in Tangier between 1661 and 1684 of whom more in a moment. But first, reports of hybridized natives discovered living in the Maghrib – many of them, like Dallam's treacherous Cornish dragoman, originally from the Westcountry – indicate that there were a variety of trades to be pursued there other than piracy. Thomas Pellow, a Cornishman from Penryn who was taken captive in 1715, reports meeting 'an *Exeter* Man, whose Sirname I have forgot... [who] often told me he was by Trade a Butcher,' but evidently found working as an executioner for the king of Morocco more to his liking than selling meat in a provincial Westcountry city.⁹⁷

It is hardly surprising to find that so many of the expatriated Englishmen residing in Maghribian ports had started life in Devon and Cornwall where many learned early the ways of ships and the sea. A manuscript dated 15 November 1604 cataloguing the names of 'pyratts and mourderers of the see' in service to Captain Ward shows that twenty out of thirty five were Devonian by origin, while five others came from Bristol or coastal towns in Dorset.⁹⁸ Samson Rowlie, the young man who became Treasurer to the Beglerbeg of Algiers in the 1580s, began life as the son of a Bristol merchant.⁹⁹ In his *Maritime History of Devon*, M. M. Oppenheim notes that many of the mariners aboard Barbary ships

were Westcountrymen who had converted to Islam. He mentions the instance of 'Thomas Norton of Dartmouth [who] turned Mohammedan at Salee, [and] now exceeds the Turk's cruelty to his own countrymen.' 'He was,' according to Oppenheim, 'audacious enough to return to Dartmouth, where he was seized; although tried and convicted he was reprieved.'¹⁰⁰ In June 1692, one 'Mr. Roberts' landed on Chios where the crew of a Corsair attempted to persuade him to join them: 'In the Evening came to me an *English Man*, who had sailed in her 8 years, his Name was *Dawes*, he was a native of *Saltash* in *Cornwall*, whom we had taken out of this Crusal, before our Ship was lost: But he, like a Dog returning to his Vomit, went on board again; where he yet remains, for ought I know.'¹⁰¹

Travellers regularly report how much more treacherous and unreliable converts could be than native peoples. On arrival in Algiers, Thomas Dallam reports on the danger from the 'greate number of Turks that be but Renied cristians of all nations' who 'proule about the costes of other contries, with all the skill and pollacie thei can, to betraye cristians, which they sell unto the Moors and other marchantes of Barbarie for slaves.'¹⁰² Since Dallam never claimed to meet such villains, we must presume that he was repeating hearsay picked up on board ship; the kind of scare-story likely to seem credible to an Englishman of the time who had been brought up to believe that the renegade was, as Matar puts it, 'a type representing the new villain in England's conflict with the anti-Christ'¹⁰³ – especially if he was originally from a Catholic country such as Spain or Italy.

Although Dallam encountered no such predatory renegades while in Algiers, others did. In the mid-seventeenth century, T. S. recounts how the ship on which he was travelling was captured by 'Turks' who 'treated us very generously, that we expected not from Enemies which we had angered.' After throwing overboard the bodies of the dead and dying 'to feed the Sharkes and other Ravenous Fishes of the Sea,' T. S. and the other unwounded Englishmen were moved to their captors' ship. 'During our stay a shipboard,' he recalls, 'we were as civilly treated as we could expect from *Turks*, and did feed as they did.' The danger, rather, came from 'some *English Renegadoes*' one of whom 'began to have some suspition' that T. S. was wealthier than he admitted, 'which made' the Turks 'put a higher Value upon me, and hope for a greater Ransom.'¹⁰⁴ By the time they arrived 'in the Bay of *Algiers*,' the new captives were clearly feeling anxious:

Some Officers of the Town came to take notice of our Number, and of the Prize that was taken; one was a *Cornish* man, that by his Apostasie had procured unto himself great Wealth among the *Turks*; he was a Trader in Slaves, and knew well how to make his advantage of his own Nation. He drew near us that were *English*, and enquired of us in what part of *England* we had been born; such Questions being unpleasing to us, I decried as he was our Countreyman, that he would shew us some Favour, and buy us for himself; we hoped to meet with a kinder treatment from one of the same Language and People.¹⁰⁵

But it did not take very long before T. S. and others began to realize that the *Cornish* slave-trader was calculating the ransom that could be expected from each of them. Having been tricked into declaring how much help they could expect from family and friends at home, 'We began to suspect him and be sorry for our credulity, when we perceived him in the company of the Owners of the Ship, offering for the most considerable of us large Sums of Money, leaving the rest to their ill fortune, without the least regard.'¹⁰⁶ Eventually, T. S. does rather well for himself, becoming chief advisor to the Ottoman commander in Tlemcen on the border between Algeria and Morocco, but not before considerable suffering, thanks to the machinations of that duplicitous *Cornishman*.

The adventures of Edward Webbe

Captivity narratives of the time further complicate our understanding of how the English experienced life in the region. One thing they indicate is that the enemy were never simply barbarous 'Turks,' renegades, or crafty Moors since the dangers to be faced when sailing into the Mediterranean most often came from natives of Southern European countries. From the mid-sixteenth century on, the threat of capture by Catholic Spain, or by corsairs operating from Corsica, Sicily and Genoa, was ever present and, for many English mariners, of greater concern than danger from the Ottoman regencies.

Published in 1590, Edward Webbe's account tells of a series of captivities, each one worse than the last. Having spent three years in Moscow with the English trading community there, he is taken captive at the sack of the city in 1571 and held prisoner of war for five years by the 'crymTartarians otherwise named the new Christians,' who set him 'to wipe the feete of the kinges horses . . . to fetch water, cleave wood, and to doe such other drudgerie.'¹⁰⁷ After being ransomed, he has the

misfortune to be captured en route to Alexandria and to spend the next five years suffering worse conditions chained to an oar in an Ottoman galley. Yet Webbe manages never to lose his rather laconic sense of humour. 'The foode which I and others did eat,' he observes, 'was verie black, far worse then Horse bread: and our drinke was stinking water, unlesse it be when wee came to the places where we tooke in fresh sweet water, at which time we supposed our diet to be verie daintie.'¹⁰⁸ Eventually, Webbe persuades his Muslim captors that he has valuable skills as a master-gunner, and in that capacity travels with the Ottoman army to Persia, Damascus, Cairo, Jerusalem, Goa, Ethiopia and along the Red Sea coast before being returned to Istanbul where, in 1582, he organized a fantastic fire-work display for the celebrations accompanying the circumcision of the future Sultan Mehmed III.¹⁰⁹ After a total of thirteen years in captive service to the Ottomans, Webbe gained his freedom thanks to the efforts of William Harborne, Elizabeth's first representative at the Ottoman Porte. While returning to England, he was briefly arrested on suspicion of heresy in Padua, held prisoner for nineteen days in Rome where he was interrogated and tortured by 'the English Cardinal Doctor Allen, a notable Arch papist,' only to be released and then re-arrested in Naples on suspicion of being a spy. Here, he reports being thrown into a dungeon and tortured in terms that are at once clinical and yet surprisingly free from resentment, self-pity or even anger:

Thrice had I the strappado, hoysted up backward with my handes bound behind me, which stroke all the jointes in my armes out of joint, where a Phisition was readie to set my armes in joynt againe presently. I was also constrained to drink salt water and quicklyme, and then a fine lawne or callico thrust down my throat and pluckt up againe, readie to pluck my hart out of my belly, all to make me to confesse that I was an English spye. After this there were foure harde horses prepared to quarter me, and I was still threatned to dye, except I would confesse some thing to my harme.

Thus seven monethes I endured in this misery.¹¹⁰

By grim contrast, his treatment at the hands of the Ottomans, who regularly beat him with 'an Oxe pissle,' might seem rather benign.

And Webbe was by no means alone in reporting how much worse he was treated while in captivity to Christians than when held by Muslims. The Flemish nobleman, Emanuel D'Aranda who was taken into captivity in Algiers nearly a century later, confirmed

Webbe's testimony. Reflecting on his experiences observing how Muslims and the Dutch treated English captives differently, D'Aranda commented:

abstracting from the Obligations of a *Christian* Perswasion on the one side, I weigh'd the actions of both, by the ballance of that Generosity, which may be expected from an enemy. The result was, an inclination to believe, that down-right *Mahumetisme* may rise up in judgement against the feign'd professions of *Christianity* in a *Low-Country* people, exemplary for their perfidiousness to their greatest *Benefactors* the English.¹¹¹

Writing in 1696, one Mr Roberts, after more than a year's captivity aboard corsair ships flying Livornese, Portuguese and Venetian colours, exclaims that he 'should prefer seven Years Slavery in *Algier*, as a far better Choise than to live 16 Months in a *Crusal*.'¹¹² Such moments of ironic black humour – surely few would choose either form of captivity – often accompany early English captivity narratives, serving both to modulate the tone of what might otherwise prove unremitting tales of suffering, and to distinguish English attitudes towards North African Muslims from their views on other Christian nations.

William Okeley and the English community in Algiers, 1639–1644

Although it would be another two centuries before Algiers would deserve the title of 'the Torquay of Africa,' as Osman Bencherif calls it,¹¹³ the pious William Okeley describes something like an expatriate community or subculture among the English living there during the period of his captivity between 1639 and 1644. When the man who buys him from the slave market – Okeley ironically calls him 'my Patron' – runs into financial difficulties, Okeley reports being commanded to 'allow him *two Dollars per moneth* and Live ashore where I would, and get it where I could.' Casting about and trusting to God, Okeley first comes upon 'an *English-man*, whose condition was that of a *Slave*, whose *Calling* was that of a *Taylor*' who 'counselled me to come and stay with him' and learn the trade.¹¹⁴ The next day, however, the tailor changes his mind and Okeley wanders forlornly until 'Providence Directed me to another *English-man*, who was sitting in a *little Shop*' and invites him to join the business. 'Seeing nothing but bare walls,' Okeley asks '*to what End? What Trade should we drive here?*' Recalling how the earliest trade between

England and Morocco was in munitions, we may not be surprised by the reply Okeley received:

Country-man (said he) I drive here an unknown Trade; here I sell Lead, Iron, Shot, Strong-waters, Tabacco, and many other things: This Motion was a great deal too good to be refused; and I think at that time no tolerable condition would have struck with me.¹¹⁵

For the next four years of their partnership, Okeley becomes a successful dealer in clandestine commodities, especially tobacco and wine that sell well among the local Algerians and resident renegades. Hiding his growing profits from both his partner (who becomes a lazy drunk) and from his Patron, Okeley soon takes on another partner, one John Randal, 'who, with his Wife and Child were taken in the same Ship with my self being put to the same shifts with my self, and, 'tis very common, having a Monethly Tax imposed upon him by his Patron.'¹¹⁶ As his hidden stash accumulates, so his desire for freedom grows and, in keeping with the providentialist nature of Okeley's narrative, deliverance arrives in the form of a newly arrived English captive, 'Mr. Devereux Sprat, a Minister of the Gospel.' 'It deserves our consideration,' Okeley continues.

and greatest Admiration, that the wise God should supply our Necessities at the cost and charges of others of his dear Servants; But thus Providence sent Joseph into Egypt, where he endured a thirteen Years Slavery, that he might preserve the Lives of his Fathers Family, within whose narrow walls the most Visible Church of God in those days was enclosed.¹¹⁷

Within a very short time, the cellar in which Okeley has been hiding his profits becomes a chapel where, three times a week, 'this Godly painful Servant of Jesus Christ prayed with us, and Preach'd to us the Word of God... To our Meetings resorted many, sometimes three or fourscore, and though we met *next the Street*, yet we never had the least disturbance from the *Turks*, or *Moors*.'¹¹⁸ Even amidst the relative lawlessness of the North African regencies, it would seem that Ottoman respect for alien religions held good.

Unfortunately, Okeley tells us nothing about who made up these large congregations, but perhaps they included 'Sampson Baker,' a surgeon who helps an unnamed English renegade who was severely beaten for public drunkenness.¹¹⁹ Perhaps, it was Okeley himself who supplied the means to get drunk in the first place. When Okeley eventually plans a

successful escape plan, he takes along a select group of six fellow countrymen, including two carpenters, a mariner, a bricklayer and two clothworkers; notably, no women or children were included in this escape. Okeley's text indicates that there was a substantial English community making a living and forming a subculture in Algiers at a time when England was engaged in its civil wars. While such an outpost is hardly evidence for early colonization, it does suggest that captivity was not restricted to backbreaking service aboard galleys and that the number of expatriated English men and women living in the Ottoman regencies is likely to be higher than we will ever know.

Pepys closes Tangier colony, 1684

Perhaps the most vivid record of how expatriated Britons conducted their social life in a Maghribian coastal town during the early years of the British Empire is supplied by Samuel Pepys in the journal and notes he kept while serving as agent for Lord Dartmouth's mission to close down the Tangier colony in 1684. Since John Wreglesworth has presented a splendid account of this 'obscure footnote in Britain's imperial history,'¹²⁰ I aim to add little more than a footnote to a footnote. Wreglesworth argues that Britain's Tangier colony 'fell' because of 'hostile politicians and economizing royal officials,' and that this once 'optimistic' attempt at establishing a military, naval and trading centre on the North African coast 'died from lack of interest.'¹²¹ A cursory reading of Pepys' so-called 'Tangier Papers' in their published form reveals further complicating ingredients. Unfortunately Edwin Chappell, who edited Pepys' shorthand manuscripts in the 1930s, considered there to be 'a certain amount of indelicate matter' that had 'to be omitted.'¹²² But even so, what Chappell did include provides sufficient reason for thinking that the fall, or death, of the colony might also have involved the gross incompetence, immorality and massive corruption affecting all members of the expatriate British community.

Immediately he arrived in September, Pepys noticed how 'mightily' English bodies were disfigured from life in the colony. On Friday the 14th, the day his ship arrived, Pepys recorded meeting his brother-in-law, Balthazar St Michel, who was 'mightily altered in his looks, with hard usage as he tells me.' Next Monday, the 17th, Pepys dined ashore and noted how Lady Mary Howard, whom he had known in London and now wife of the governor, Colonel Percy Kirke, was 'mightily changed;' and again on Sunday the 23rd, after attending church, he records: 'But above all that was remarkable here, I met the governor's lady in the

pew (a lady I have long admired for her beauty, but she is mightily altered. And,' he added, 'they do tell stories of her on her part, while her husband minds pleasure of the same kind on his').¹²³ More on Lady Mary and Colonel Kirke in a moment – for his own part, Pepys complained on the fourth morning after his arrival that he was 'mightily out of order with my being bit in my face' by bed-bugs.¹²⁴ Evidently, more than the local insect life was taking a mighty toll on the resident Britons.

Pepys was certainly no stranger to incompetence among ministers of state and admiralty officers, or to sexual corruption in high places. But what he found in Tangier offended and appalled even him: 'Everything runs so to corruption here,' he lamented, 'Nothing but vice in the whole place of all sorts for swearing, cursing, drinking and whoring.' Without comment he noted that the English physician, Dr Lawrence 'did get a black wench with child,' observing 'It is plain (from what I heard from the jade at the Bagno) that the women of the town are, generally speaking, whores... both mothers and daughters being so publicly to one another's knowledge.'¹²⁵ Beside the 'jade at the Bagno,' Pepys' local informants included one Captain John Giles, who had been in Tangier since 1671 and consequently served under each of the various governors. On the last day in September, Captain Giles told Pepys:

the whole unfortunate history of this town from the neglect and self-interestedness of the several governors, showing me what this place would without deceit have really been by this time for trade, if it had not been for their taking away its being a free port by their duties set on goods, so as the place is much worse than ever it was.¹²⁶

As Wreglesworth points out, the Tangier colony proved an enormous drain on the royal exchequer, and this was in part due to the corruption of the various governors as well as the ineffectiveness of royal control over their activities. Colonel Norwood, a former Lieutenant Governor, 'took the revenue of the hospital to his own use,' while, contrary to royal orders, Kirke peremptorily banished all the Jewish merchants since they would not collude in his corrupt business deals. The fact that Kirke was personally engaged in trade at all was also in contravention of his direct orders from King Charles. In addition to several instances of Kirke swindling merchants who would not agree to his terms, Pepys reports how he confiscated and 'staved in' an entire consignment of wine out of malice towards the dealer, who lost '500 dollars,' and 'all the good the Governor did in it, was to make all his soldiers that could come thither

drunk.¹²⁷ This is the same commander-in-chief who, as Wreglesworth points out, 'believed that brandy had killed more of the garrison than had the Moroccan tribesmen.'¹²⁸

According to a builder named Gibs, another of Pepys' informants, Colonel Kirke 'built a house for Mrs Collier,' one of his mistresses, using 'the King's stores and workmen, himself [i.e. Gibs] being employed in it, that was nine months in doing, that has cost the King £1,000 or £1,200, and she now lies in it. The like of the Bagno, built for the like use at the King's cost.' In this 'bagno,' according to a different, unnamed source, Kirke kept another mistress. 'The Governor,' Pepys notes,

is said to have got his wife's sister with child, and that she is now gone over to Spain to be brought to bed. And that while he is with his whores at his little bathing house which he has furnished with a jade a-purpose for that use there, his wife, whom he keeps in by awe, sends for her gallants and plays the jade by herself at home.

At least these buildings offered a certain amount of cover for Kirke's sexual indulgences, but Pepys also reports being informed 'of the most foul acts done by Kirke in public, lying with a woman in the market-place, and making another woman be taken from her husband out of her bed and . . . ,' but here Edwin Chappell's editorial pen omits fourteen words.¹²⁹

By no means all of Pepys' charges against Kirke are made at second hand from local informants, but Chappell's editing often requires that we would have to learn Pepys' short-hand and consult the manuscript in order to fill in the omissions that regularly appear in his reports of Kirke's own boastings. Two examples: 'The Governor,' Pepys writes, 'told us publicly at table of a foot jade, a bawd here in town (that is called [blank] formerly a servant of my lord's uncle Washington) that he went to, [16 words omitted] and the beastly discourse about it, between her and him.' And: 'Kirke himself told, himself, publicly at table how there was one wench, her name (as I remember) Joyce, that [10 words omitted] was banished the town for her lewdness, and all this by the time she was 16 years old, a mighty pretty creature; and of another wench called Dover [38 words omitted].'¹³⁰

Finally, two incidents that particularly roused Pepys' indignation also draw attention to elements of the colonial mentality that were largely ignored by Linda Colley in her much praised study *Captives*.¹³¹ One occurred shortly before his arrival concerning a certain John Mings who petitioned Lord Dartmouth complaining of ill treatment. Kirke, it would

appear, had a habit of arresting married men, 'the King's subjects,' and putting them in chains for no reason other than 'getting their daughters or wives to come to him to look after their husbands and fathers.' When Kirke 'found them pretty,' he used his position to 'debauch' them. In his petition, which Dartmouth asked Pepys to examine, John Mings described being a recent victim of this practice, claiming he was beaten and locked up in the guardhouse. When his wife came to see him, she was gang-raped by the guards 'then carried up to York Castle,' gang-raped again, 'and in the meantime their house robbed and goods carried away.' An enquiry was held but since Mings and his wife had already fled to Lisbon, there was no one to press their case; so Dartmouth resolved to avoid scandal by putting the petition aside. 'But though I believe,' Pepys commented, 'that the woman might be a light woman and her husband an idle fellow, yet there was too much confessed to show the bestiality of the place.'¹³²

We know from his earlier diaries that Pepys himself regularly accepted sexual favours from the wives of ambitious mariners in exchange for assisting their husbands' careers, so what roused his ire at the goings on in Tangier was the forced nature of such practices, which for him constituted an illegitimate use of power and authority for no end other than bestial pleasure. And throughout his own career, Pepys remained a fiercely proud and patriotic, if not pathetically loyal, servant of his employer, Charles II. The corrupt use of delegated authority invariably infuriated him even more than incompetence or negligence. 'Tangier,' he wrote, 'has plainly been a place to find only pretence for the employment of our ships upon their own business and the governors' ... to the debauching of all our commanders and others and particularly my Atkins.' Notice the personal identification with royal authority – 'our ships,' 'our commanders' – and the intimate sense of authority with regard to Samuel Atkins, Lord Dartmouth's secretary who was appointed Judge Advocate of the Fleet. Before Pepys arrived, it seems that Admiral Arthur Herbert ordered Atkins 'while he was drunk to be stripped stark naked and one of his legs tied up in his cabin by the toe, and brought in women to see him in that posture. But this,' Pepys comments, 'is but one instance of a whole life that they all spend here in roguery.'¹³³

For Pepys, it was not just the insects of North Africa, or the whorish women, or the corrupt and incompetent officers, or the lazy and drunken soldiery, or even the temptations of turning Turk, but a whole way of life in colonial Tangier that caused Britons abroad to be mightily altered.

Some conclusions

The distinctive perspectives of early accounts by travellers enable us to see just how rapidly very complex attitudes towards the Ottomans developed that were often quite distinct from the horror and loathing of crusading rhetoric – a rhetoric which nevertheless continued to reproduce stereotypes of ‘terrible Turks’ throughout the century and beyond. Fear never entirely disappears from these travellers’ accounts; it simply becomes part of the fascination.

From the earliest English and Scottish travellers and their reports of meetings with fellow countrymen living in Mediterranean and Maghribian ports, we learn a number of things that might otherwise escape notice were we to rely exclusively on the evidence to be found in the records of the Levant and Barbary Companies, the formal correspondence of merchants and diplomats, and the military and naval records. British-born soldiers of fortune and merchants were living and trading in the Mediterranean long before William Harborne and the Levant Company started regulating trade by formally appointing consular officials during the 1580s. And before the establishment of the Tangier colony, expatriated Britons living in Maghribian and Mediterranean ports, including captives, were engaged in numerous occupations – not simply as mariners and domestic servants, but also as slave dealers, executioners, surgeons, physicians, carpenters, builders, sail-makers, cloth workers, shopkeepers, ministers of religion and dealers in clandestine goods.

Since most narratives were composed with ulterior motives – the desire to exonerate returning converts and pirates or to proselytize on behalf of Christian piety – such works provide little reason to imagine that travellers were uniformly keen to hold on to their native religion, culture, or national affiliation when faced with the temptations of life in the sun. For every author of an autobiographical narrative of escape, return and repatriation, there were doubtless many more who stayed on willingly; and presumably even more who died in captivity or never had the opportunity to return.

Of the presence of British women living in the Ottoman Mediterranean, there can be little doubt. Unfortunately, the record remains tantalizingly vague. John Randal was, presumably, not the only captive in Algeria accompanied by a wife and child since Pepys records that there were over four hundred children born to Britons in Tangier at the time the colony there was abandoned. The ‘*Inglish*e strumpitt’ with whom William Biddulph became involved on Zante was, presumably,

not the only Englishwoman of that profession working in the region. Lists of captives indicate significant numbers of English women among those ransomed: Edmond Cason's *A Relation of the Whole Proceedings Concerning the Redemption of the Captives in Argier and Tunis* (1647) lists nineteen Irish, Scottish and English women among the two hundred and forty two persons redeemed.

As these few examples suggest, English representations of their earliest contacts with the Ottoman Mediterranean and its peoples were complicated and, in many respects, confused by the distinct and often conflicting agendas of those who wrote them. Richard Hakluyt provided his readers with innumerable instances of merchants and expatriated consular officials going about the nation's business in sometimes bizarre and perilous circumstances. Humanist scholars such as Andrew Boorde were interested in what could advantageously be learned from remote peoples; zealous puritans eagerly sought evidence from events in North Africa to support their apocalyptic visions; former captives claimed to prefer Muslim over Catholic masters; while advocates of trade could find themselves defending alliances that were often at odds with crown policy. Refracted through competition with other European nations, especially those loyal to the Roman Catholic religion, English attitudes towards and understanding of Islam and the Muslim nations of the Ottoman Mediterranean remained just as unstable and contradictory throughout the early modern period as was the sense of what it meant to be English to an Englishman or woman of the time.

In the words of W. Montgomery Watt, 'it is clear that the influence of Islam on Western Christianity is greater than is usually realized... it provoked Europe into forming a new image of itself.'¹³⁴ And so it was for many English writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seeking to forge a coherent sense of their own national identity from direct encounters with Muslim peoples and culture inside the Ottoman Mediterranean.

3

Performing East and Captive Agency

Performing East is about being English, but doing it somewhere else. Performing begins whenever the practices of acting, those forms of being other that are entailed in any performance, take over from simply being. The performances with which I am concerned in this chapter involve English visitors to Ottoman lands and may be said to have occurred in the 'East' since that is where they thought themselves to be at the time. Like Judith Butler in her treatment of gender, I shall treat nationality as a performance, an effect not a cause. National identity, like gender, may be considered a 'performative twist of language' in Butler's phrase – one that achieves the appearance of an identity, in this case a national one, when called on to do so. In other words, being male or female, English or Scottish, is a performative act in a particular language, the result of being in the world.

In the Introduction, I noted how the rhetoric of a speech delivered by William Harborne before Sultan Mehmed III contained a number of performative gestures, moments when the language itself suggestively indicated how Harborne might have physically gestured towards the sultan and his advisors while making his case for an alliance with the English. Of necessity, all ambassadorial speeches are performative just as, in clear and distinct ways, all ambassadors are actors – professionals whose job it is to act a part that has been prescribed, if not actually composed, for them by the monarch or government that they serve. Giving persuasive voice to another's words, performing the nation's official desire in order to negotiate with a potentially reluctant foreign authority, and doing so in a way that will preserve one's own and one's nation's dignity – these are the ordinary tasks of those officially appointed to represent their country abroad. The same was largely true of the chaplains sent out by the Levant Company to look after the

moral and spiritual welfare of the expatriate communities that were often composed of inexperienced young men liable to be susceptible to all manner of temptations.

What of those who were not of official status but, on the contrary, who found themselves held captive in lands governed by the Ottomans? We have seen how travellers into the Ottoman domains quickly discovered that their status as exotic foreigners could get them into immediate trouble, or even elevate their rank and importance. So much depended on how they presented themselves and how their hosts perceived them. Whoever they might have been at home, among the peoples of the Ottoman Empire, travellers regularly found themselves called upon to define themselves and to account for their nation, often by acting in ways unimaginable, unavailable and unnecessary at home. Even captivity narratives tell us that unfortunates who fell into the hands of Muslim patrons could find themselves performing as representatives of their nation, acting as agents of the land from which they had come.

A direct result of international trade and travel, 'performing East' is about forging a national identity, but doing it somewhere else.

Performing East and national identity

Performing begins whenever the practices of *acting*, those forms of *being other* that are entailed in any performance, take over from simply being. By 'performing East,' then, I want to draw attention to certain ways that writing about being in the Ottoman domains entailed discovering that new forms of self-presentation were required by those who found themselves acting on what Edward Said called the 'theatrical stage affixed to Europe.'¹ For Said, the dramatic metaphor is central to the development of Orientalist discourse at a time when European imperialism was constituted by, as he put it,

a set of representative figures, or tropes. These figures are to the actual Orient – or Islam, which is my main concern here – as stylised costumes are to characters in a play... [Orientalist discourse] is not even trying to be accurate... it is trying... to characterize the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are *for* Europe, and only for Europe.²

The performances with which I am initially concerned here include representations by English and Scottish travellers to North Africa, hardly 'East,' but at the time, an area nominally governed by the Ottomans

and, like a great deal of the rest of the African continent, consequently liable to the 'orientalizing' tendencies of the European imagination. In using the term 'East' in the North African context, I am hoping to draw attention to, rather than reproduce, the imperializing gesture of the writers in question, who frequently identify with the imperial power of the Ottomans at the expense of the local populations, with whom, given the embryonic nature of British imperial designs, they have rather more in common in their subordination to the imperial authorities. In this sense, 'performing East' seeks to account for a rather more dynamic and mobile relationship than the one suggested by Said. Where Said's Orientalists create a collection of 'figures, or tropes' and set them to perform on 'a theatrical stage' for an entirely Eurocentric audience, the performance of travellers in Ottomans' lands entails becoming an actor on a stage that is by no means of their own making, and for an audience that is divided between those already living there and those who will subsequently be reading the account.

Following Judith Butler's discussion of how gender comes into being through performance, my aim is to treat national identity formation as a performative effect, and not a cause, of manners and behaviour. For Butler, and other post-structuralist analysts of subject construction, the point is to examine the commonsensical notion of the pre-discursive self, the sense of a self or 'identity' that seems to exist before language, but which only ever appears in language. In Butler's sense, describing identity as performative opens the way to a theory of subversion – a way of thinking about being legitimately different from social norms. In the case of performing East during the early modern period, however, performativity also serves to describe the constitution of a self under unfamiliar and unprecedented circumstances. 'The notion that sex,' Butler writes – and we might think of Englishness or any national identity – 'appears within hegemonic language as a *substance*, as, metaphysically speaking, a self-identical being,' is no more than an 'appearance... achieved through a performative twist of language and/or discourse that conceals the fact that "being" a sex or gender is fundamentally impossible.'³ Similarly, any identity based upon national origins of birth may be theorized as not so much a '*substance*' but more an effect of language. Like gender in Butler's view, national identity 'proves to be performative – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be.'⁴ In the case of diplomats, travellers and even captives who find themselves performing East, there is a double constraint, not only that of potentially inappropriate national origins, habits and manners, but also that of negotiating with the dominant culture within

which performing subjects find themselves. Simply imagining oneself to be English or Scottish or Irish is not the same as performing Englishness, Scottishness or Irishness in a space imagined to be the East, since the external circumstances and constraints often proved just as important as one's imagined sense of self.

In the same way that Butler argues it is impossible to 'be' a sex or gender, so I would further argue that it is the experience of discovering the impossibility of not-being English or Scottish that proves to be the prior condition and rationale for what I am calling 'performing East.' Only in the East do certain ways of performing a national self become not simply possible but also necessary. In lands controlled by the Ottomans, the English – for example – were constantly called upon to represent (and be represented), and to think about themselves (and be thought about) in newly available ways, as English. Being English in England was not the same as what we might call 'doing-being' English in the East. Certainly during the early modern period, being English in England would have entailed family, local and regional identifications that, I am suggesting, were largely displaced by travelling East and discovering the impossibility of not-being a national representative when entering the Ottoman Empire.

Although Butler is mostly concerned with performance as a site of resistance to heterosexual normativity, her further comments on identification as performance also prove useful for thinking about national-identity formation during the early modern period, particularly her emphasis on the body. If, Butler writes, we understand

identification as an enacted fantasy or incorporation . . . it is clear that coherence is desired, wished for, idealized, and that this idealization is an effect of a corporeal signification. In other words, acts, gestures, and desire produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body, through the play of signifying absences that suggest, but never reveal, the organizing principle of identity as a cause. Such acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are *performative* in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.⁵

To follow Butler's own emphases, it is on the surface of the body that performative fabrication takes place – a useful insight when considering the representation of British bodies performing East. It also marks a crucial move in her thinking from the earlier emphasis on performance

as a question of language to this new emphasis on agency. Once the body itself has been brought into consideration as an active agent, the question of performance becomes, as it were, a different matter and a matter of differences.

Doing-being English or Scottish, this performing East, was crucially a matter of having a certain kind of body. Scholars frequently think about the body of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu performing in the hamam and the harem, so it will not sound outlandish to suggest that for many travellers, *doing-being* English could sometimes best be performed cross-dressed or in Oriental drag. Where performance moves from language to bodily enactment and the question of agency, I recall the insistence of Raymond Williams throughout his many important studies of theatre, cinema and television, that the primary question of 'text and performance' concerns the ways that theatrical forms of acting move into and inhabit the world as scripted activity. For Williams, this move from text to performance always involves a sense of things happening, of actions taking place within the complex cultural mediations by which the dramatic conventions of stage and screen engage directly with the ideologies and practices of everyday life.⁶ In the formally non-dramatic contexts of early British travellers being represented and representing themselves in the East, I want to retain these important and linked senses of performing as *being other* and as *acting*, making something happen, in order to open up the question of pre-colonial agency as it appears in these sources concerning these cross cultural and trans-national encounters of the early modern period.

Performing captive agency

I want to begin by examining two examples involving English captives who, despite the obvious constraints of their situations, achieved considerable personal agency. I hope to demonstrate how different kinds of evidence concerning two Englishmen – Samson Rowlie and 'T. S.' – contribute to, by way of complicating, the development of the discourse of imperial envy, particularly in its performative aspects. They do so by representing these English captives as performing remarkable degrees of both personal and political agency, not only despite but also because of their captivity. Between the 1570s when Rowlie was captured and the 1670s when *The Adventures of T. S.* appeared in print, the captivity narrative had developed from reprintings of diplomatic correspondence into a multi-faceted genre in which questions of national identity were regularly cast in comparative terms and global contexts. Both of these

Englishmen, enslaved in Algeria, are represented as identifying with the Ottoman imperial administration rather than with any of the indigenous people. Despite their own status as captives, they are shown viewing themselves as comparable with the Ottomans rather than with the equally enslaved local population. Instead of finding common cause with others similarly struggling against Ottoman control, both Rowlie and T. S. entered the ranks of the Ottoman administrative elite where they enjoyed considerable political influence. It seems that to be English among the Ottomans was not only to be from somewhere else, but also to embark upon representing oneself, in historical actions and written accounts, as an imperial agent helping to run a global empire.

We know of Rowlie from a watercolour portrait made in about 1588 (Figure 8), and from the diplomatic letters published by Hakluyt in his *Navigations* concerning him. We know of T. S. from numerous moments of authorial self-representation that appear in an autobiographical captivity narrative, *The Adventures of (Mr. T. S.)* published posthumously in 1670. These representations of Rowlie and T. S. show how both Englishmen, despite captivity, rise to positions of power and influence among the Ottoman military-administrative elite.⁷ Examining these different English captives in terms of performativity helps us to approach the problem of both representation and agency in the pre-colonial moment of the Anglo-Ottoman encounter.

Scholars have often noticed how European travellers commonly report feeling 'dis-oriented' by their experience of arriving and living in the East.⁸ This experience of discovering oneself being called upon to be *other* also gets described as a moment of agency in unexpected and sometimes surprising ways. Contemporary readers of early modern captivity narratives were certainly being invited to imagine themselves members of a privileged nation, whose numbers included brave men capable of transforming captivity into direct personal agency. The evidence concerning Rowlie and T. S. exemplifies this nationalistic scenario, showing them turning slavery into personal power by becoming active and powerful agents of the Ottoman administration in Algeria. But the evidence also suggests possibilities more complicated than this.

A preoccupation with national identity often went along with a desire for, to use Said's terms, 'a different type of sexuality' to be found in the East⁹ – a desire that proves to be among the earliest and most persistent structural features of Orientalism. Exploring different forms of sexuality in the East – 'What are the Women like?' as Steve Clark ironically calls this *topos*¹⁰ – was as much on the agenda of early travellers as learning about the peculiarities of Ottoman culture and society was



Figure 8 Samson Rowlie, a.k.a. Assan Aga. From a German traveller's picture book, c.1588. By courtesy of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, shelf-mark Ms. Bodl. Or. 430, f.47

of compelling fascination to readers at home. Questions of male virility and the successful performance of English masculinity abroad also seem to have been of particular interest to travel writers and their readers.

Samson Rowlie

Appearing in a contemporary traveller's picture book of 1588, the portrait of Samson Rowlie shows him in full local costume and stance, an Englishman performing East. He is, we might say, *doing-being* Assan

Aga, engaging in a fully costumed theatrical performance in the role of Eunuch and Treasurer to Uluç Hassan, the Ottoman Beglerbeg of Algiers.¹¹ Judging from the opulence of his robes and the dignity and authority suggested by the gilt throne on which he relaxes, Rowlie has evidently done rather well for himself. His casual pose and joyful expression suggest a man who is happy and prosperous, at ease amidst the comforts and responsibilities of his position. Despite captivity and presumable castration, wearing the white turban of a convert to Islam has provided this merchant's son with status, political influence and access to wealth that he might never have enjoyed in his native land. Nabil Matar rightly insists that we remind ourselves constantly just how attractive life in Muslim nations was for many classes of Englishmen. For Rowlie, performing East, 'turning Turk,' assuming Muslim costume, and becoming a eunuch, were perhaps not choices, but transformations that brought him considerable wealth, status and influence. In moments of diplomatic negotiation, moreover, an English ambassador continued to regard him as still an Englishman who could be called upon to do his duty by his native land.

This is how readers of Hakluyt's *Navigations* met Rowlie, in this role of inadvertent diplomat, performing East perhaps less colourfully but in more detail than in the portrait. From Hakluyt, ever eager to promote the rise of English power abroad, readers could learn that Rowlie had become the most influential Englishman in the Ottoman regency of Algiers, having the direct ear of the 'king.' Back in 1577, Francis Rowlie, a merchant from Bristol, and his son, portentously christened Samson, had been aboard the *Swallow* when she was seized; her crew and passengers were all taken captive to Algiers.¹² Three years later, Mehmed III signed trading capitulations with the English and in 1582 William Harborne was formally appointed to represent Elizabeth and her loyal merchants in Istanbul. Among his duties was to intercede on behalf of English captives within the Ottoman sphere of influence. Hakluyt includes a letter from Harborne dated March 1585, eight years after the *Swallow* was taken, addressed to John Tipton, the recently appointed English consul in Algiers, instructing him to set about releasing the English prisoners being held there.¹³ These included three men who, like Rowlie, had been captured on the *Swallow*: 'Rich. Crawford, Anthony Elvers, Wil. Rainolds.' Hakluyt also published Harborne's subsequent letter written more than a year later – it is dated 28 June 1586 – seeking the release of yet another English prisoner, one William Hamore. This time, however, Harborne bypassed the consul Tipton – who seems to have been something of a scoundrel¹⁴ – and addressed himself directly

to one 'Assan Aga, Eunuch & Treasurer to Hassan Bassa king of Alger, which Assan Aga was the sonne of Fran. Rowlie of Bristow merchant, taken in the Swallow.' This, at least, is how Hakluyt's text describes him.¹⁵

We will probably never know how Samson Rowlie came to occupy 'an office of great trust and importance as the Beglerbeg of Algiers' Treasurer.¹⁶ For a provincial Ottoman governor to imitate the Ottoman *devşirme* by promoting a promising and intelligent captured English boy would not be unusual, particularly in Algeria at this time when, as Tal Shuval has argued, the Ottoman elite relied heavily on recruiting its members from outside the country.¹⁷ As for Rowlie's power, Harborne evidently thought Rowlie exercised sufficient influence to persuade his master to release an English prisoner. 'I am inforced by duetie to God & her majesty,' Harborne wrote to him, 'as also by the smal regard your master had of the Grand Signors former commandements, to complaine unto him.' Comparing him with the Ottoman sultan himself, Harborne further flatters Assan Aga with confidence in his influence, writing: 'by your means, he will not contrary this second commandment.'¹⁸

Both the portrait and Hakluyt's account insist that the price Rowlie had to pay for this position of presumptive wealth and power was his biological manhood. The portrait shows Rowlie emphatically feminized in attitude and expression, slouching in a way that is hardly virile and manly, while the flow of his skirts across leg and over groin invites the eye to notice possible absence. The facial features and sloping shoulders make no concessions to virility, though Rowlie's face is no less feminized than others by the artist of this collection. Being a eunuch, even in title, removes Rowlie from the settled certainties of heterosexuality and opens up speculative possibilities: to be a eunuch after all meant being allowed to do something that ordinary men were forbidden: he could enter the harem. What he could not do, presumably, was father children.

The adventures of T. S.

Keeping in mind this call upon the English reader to scrutinize the possible sexual behaviour of fellow countrymen in the East, let us turn ahead nearly a century to a text that purports to be the first-person account of T. S., which describes how native cunning combined with an attractive, virile body, enable him to transform captivity into a position of considerable influence among the Ottoman elite in Western Algeria. While T. S. makes himself indispensable to his master, the Ottoman governor of the important frontier city of Tlemcen, further forms of

captive agency are represented, most specially a detailed account of how the Ottomans sought to govern on the western edge of Algeria. Throughout, readers are invited to imagine the different heterosexual possibilities available to an English captive who endured slavery without converting to Islam or becoming a eunuch. Here, I will focus on these sexual opportunities.

The self-representations in T. S.'s *Adventures* engage questions of performance and agency somewhat differently from the evidence about Rowlie. This is, in part, a generic matter since travel writing and autobiography often stretch the bounds of belief as a matter of formal convention; certainly, the picaresque idioms and reports of miraculous events in the *Adventures* invite these forms of reading pleasure, and it is not at all clear that the *Adventures* has not been fabricated from a variety of different sources.

Published in 1670, apparently posthumously, the *Adventures* offers a chronological narrative in which four different kinds of materials are brought into focus at different times. First, we find an opening section in which T. S. provides a personal account of his early life and family ties, his reasons for travelling, how he was taken captive, and a summary of his first years of slavery in Algiers. Secondly, several subsequent sections report on the various sights and adventures he experienced while travelling, including descriptions of cities and people, flora and fauna, landscapes, productive capacities, markets, and military fortifications, both man-made and natural. Thirdly, a substantial section follows in which T. S. finds himself becoming an inadvertent diplomat and advisor to his Ottoman master, effectively entering the ranks of the Ottoman military-administrative elite governing the western city of Tlemcen (called 'Climsan'), taking a leading hand in organizing military encounters and diplomatic negotiations with Moorish and Arab leaders who are reluctant to accept Ottoman control. Fourthly, we might notice a number of picaresque episodes in which T. S. describes, or coyly hints at, his sexual adventures among the local women, including his claim to father a daughter with a wife of the Beglerbeg of Algiers. In *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, I discuss in some detail the way that T. S. combines these various elements in his narrative, and in doing so shifts his own authorial persona constantly. Here, I am concerned with the third and fourth groups of material in which he performs sexually and as an agent of the imperial Ottoman state.

In the opening pages, T. S. represents himself performing in a number of subordinate, passive and clearly effeminized roles, but from these he invariably emerges triumphant. He characterizes himself as a younger

son, passively constructed as one 'first designed for a scholar' until his rebellion against an imperious teacher enabled him to forsake study and become 'one whose Profession is to Trade.'¹⁹ Following this moment of self-assertion and muted Oedipal rebellion, T. S. begins to perform in a number of more active, dominant, heroic and emphatically manly roles. Setting out to trade in Izmir, he fights so bravely when his ship is set upon that his heroic reputation – one of only eighteen men to survive out of more than a hundred – increases his market value as a slave.

Perhaps most remarkably, for T. S., becoming a slave involves imagining himself as a horse, ever fearfully suspicious of men and their intentions, but also a fine performer. Associating the market in slaves with a horse market is a familiar trope in captivity narratives, but T. S. extends the metaphor with subtlety and nuance. On arriving captive in Algiers, he reports negotiations with a slave trader, a Cornishman born, who informed the captives 'that if we came on shore, we should be led to the Market, and there sold as Horses' unless they promised to pay him off. The narrative keeps readers as uncertain as he was at the time concerning the Cornishman's intentions and honesty, eventually calling him 'the deceitful Turk' once his malicious self-interest has become clear.²⁰ Narrative strategies are handled deftly throughout the *Adventures*, keeping readerly interest in what might happen next to the fore. Moments of sexual innuendo begin to appear early on and accumulate resonance. Once in Algiers, T. S. describes how being a slave is rather like being, not simply any horse in any market, but a prized and noble stallion among a harem of mares.

Wearing chains like a horse, T. S. finds himself being led through the streets and into the palace to be inspected by none other than 'the King of Argiers' himself.²¹ In a cool palace courtyard, the slaves are kept waiting, 'for being about Noon, he had been bathing himself, and afterwards taking another Recreation, which is usual at that time of day in the hot Climates.' Hot climates, noon, bath house, chained slaves lounging about in oriental palace: once ashore, alongside the ethnographic voice, we cannot help but notice how coy idioms and sexual innuendo increasingly colour the scene for us and recall the bawdy tastes of Restoration readers for whom the work was originally published. Most readers would surely have had little difficulty imagining what the king was up to while engaged in 'another Recreation' 'usual' 'in the hot Climates.' As if in confirmation of the Orientalist stereotype machine, we are soon told that 'the good old man was a greater Lover of his Pleasures [with boys] than of Money... a strange Fancy possesses

the minds of all the Southern People; they burn with an unnatural Fire, which consumed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*.²² Imagining himself to be, as we have seen, a fine stallion, T. S. is himself in little danger from the Beglerbeg's 'unnatural Fire.' While the sexual threat to T. S., as Joe Snader observes, will later come from heterosexual women, Algiers has been set up efficiently as a slave market where all manner of different sexual possibilities come to be exchanged.²³

Once the king emerges, T. S. finds himself being looked over for points of conformation as if he were a horse. He recuperates the moment by taking on, once again, the confident voice of an ethnographer capable of standing aside from the circumstances of the moment. These acts of becoming an expert in analysing the features that characterize the foreign culture in which he finds himself, these performative moments of putting the other under study, momentarily set the English slave free, enabling him to look directly back into the eye of the 'King of *Argiers*' and recognize an expert:

He look'd upon us with a stern Countenance, and took notice of our Features and Stature; for it seems the *Turks* are excellent in the Art of Physiognomy; they know a man and his Inclinations at the first view, as well as an expert Farrier can the good or ill Qualities of a Horse.²⁴

All 'Turks'? All the time? When he writes of being looked at in this way, T. S. wants us to see that, under the scrutiny of an expert, he really is a fine specimen. What would be the point of being assessed in this way if not by a judge with all the instinctive abilities of an expert farrier, one risking his back every time he takes up the foot of an unfamiliar and powerful animal? Now that he is up for sale, a slave without further options, T. S. needs to appear like a good performer, and he is immediately confirmed by the judgment passed. T. S. writes: 'He cast a Jest upon every one of us,' and of T. S. 'he said, That he advis'd him that should be my master, not to trust me too much with his Women.'²⁵ Unlike Samson Rowlie, what T. S. most definitely is not, is a boy with a boy's body. With this shrewd testimonial from an expert in the points and qualities of a man, our stallion finds himself being kept on by the king for his personal use. Describing the rest of his stay in Algiers, T. S. uses familiar conventions of comic romance to arrange a palimpsest of tropes from captivity narratives, but never once does he find himself called upon to perform as an object of homoerotic desire.

Sometimes imagining yourself a horse means that you get to perform like a stallion at stud among the Eastern mares. While a slave in Algiers, T. S. proves the Beglerbeg's judgment regarding him to be correct. Unable to escape or effect rescue, T. S. finds himself increasingly a victim of his desirable body. After establishing the comic mode with moments of merriment in the kitchens, where he served briefly as a cook, T. S. found himself 'by a wonderful change of Fortune' promoted 'Keeper of the Kings bath.' The change of fortune and accompanying change of scene bring the slave from the kitchens to the bathhouse and the stallion closer to the mares. 'It seems,' T. S. writes, 'some of his Women had seen me in the House, and interceded for me . . . I thought myself then a pretty Fellow, and not inferiour to my former Estate.' Immediately after these reflections on his good looks and good luck, he describes being seduced in the baths: 'One of the Kings Wives . . . sought a fit opportunity to discover her self to me, and make use of my Bath when the King was abroad.'²⁶ How surprising. A Spanish maid appeared on the scene to serve as go-between and we are left to guess the rest.

Almost at once, however, T. S. discovers that one problem with being a useful and valuable stallion is that you are likely to get sold on. Soon the king heard rumours 'which were sufficient to cause him to remove me from my pleasant Office, which', T. S. pauses to comment, 'angered me more than any thing that happened to me all the time of my Slavery,' a remarkable testimonial to the pleasures of the bath house. Finding himself on the way to market, T. S. resumes his equine identity long enough to describe himself performing in a moral tableau: 'When I saw my self with an ill favoured *Turk*, leading me by a Chain, as a Horse or a Bullock, thorough the streets, I then began to lament my hard fortune, and remember my former Estate; I knew not what Providence had prepared for me, nor what surly master I should meet with next.'²⁷ In the event, T. S. is surreptitiously bought by his former lover, the admiring wife of the king, who keeps him for the next two years for her own purposes. But in this expressive lament and moment of anxiety over the next 'surly master,' surely we hear a voice common in captivity narratives. Recalling their favourite books from childhood, some English readers may hear the voice of Black Beauty.

But in what other ways does this scene ask to be imagined? In the clanking of those chains can we not also hear some moment of high camp performance being acted out?

T. S. reports his delight at finding himself a sex slave: 'I thought my self happy to be a Slave to so excellent and kind a Lady: I never dreamt

of a Change whilst I belonged unto her: I had no reason; for nothing was wanting unto me useful to the Life of Man.' It is perhaps not so astonishing after all that his very next sentence qualifies this general assertion by indicating how the 'Man' in question must welcome a 'Life' involving a bit of bondage and discipline: 'I only wore a Chain out of Formality,' he coyly confesses, and 'I did also employ my self in slavish work, but not above measure.'²⁸ Limits in all things, it would seem; but we are not told what those acts are that he refuses to perform. Wearing his chains now only for formal, decorative purposes, T. S. hints at his sole daily task.

The Lady became very devout after my coming to that place; she seldom mis'd a day, but came in some Disguise to pay her Devotions at the Mosquette, from whence there was a passage to my Lodgings.

A good Protestant, his thoughts sometimes reverting to Providence, T. S. cannot resist hiding irregular sexual adventures behind the doors of a reviled religion: mosque or convent is all one. The joke, rather, turns on how the implicit sexual performance of the English slave becomes occasion for the superstitious to find, in his mistress' daily devotion, evidence of her saintliness:

By this frequent and constant Attendance at Publick Prayer, she purchas'd unto her self a very great esteem with the People, and a favour with her Husband; and ever after she was named a Saint. I continued her Slave about two years.²⁹

Happy times indeed! If only, T. S. recalls thinking, she would marry him! Instead she becomes sainted for her piety and dies six months after being 'brought to Bed of a pretty little Girl, somewhat whiter than ordinary; the old Fool thought himself to be the Father of it. I was once admitted to see it; but now my Mistress was dead, I was left to the Misfortunes and Miseries of a slavish life.'³⁰ 'It,' the unnamable thing left behind, simply disappears from the narrative. Whatever concerns his sexual desirability might have entailed, fatherhood was evidently not to be among them.

In broader terms of empire, armies and trade, the question of captive agency and of Englishmen performing East is perhaps most fully narrativized in T. S.'s account of his years in service as financial, military, diplomatic advisor and pander to Hally Hamez Reis, the Ottoman

governor of Tlemcen. In these later sections of his account, there is, as I have suggested in *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, a highly conventionalized account of how T. S. gave his master such successful advice on the battlefield against Arabs tribes resisting Ottoman taxation that the two of them became major agents of Ottoman imperialism on its western periphery; both grow rich and prosper from his master using his position in the historically important frontier city of Tlemcen to grow fantastically wealthy.³¹ Our English hero offers him sound diplomatic advice that furthers his career in the Ottoman administration; along the way T. S. also helps Hally Hamez gratify his sexual desires by arranging assignations with local women. After a successful three years, his master is promoted back to Algiers and T. S., as promised, given his freedom. Along the way, T. S. has provided a first-hand account of Ottoman imperial administration at work and of his various interventions within it: he writes as if providing the scoop on how the Ottoman taxation system really works, with reports on battling recalcitrant Arab armies and offers advice on winning negotiations with powerful Moorish kings.

An Englishman who seems to be doing no more than what comes naturally to him, T. S. resists and subverts and eroticizes the conditions of his captivity whenever possible. Performing East for T. S. was also about making things happen from behind the scenes – using his ‘Fidelity & Wit’ and his supposed talent for understanding local cultures sufficiently to be able to bring about his own best interests. His final achievement was to become the man beside, if not exactly behind, the master: ‘My Master had the honour of it, although it was effected by my Contrivance.’³² In this scenario, the captive becomes an agent who controls his master.

Performing for England: A note on Thomas Roe

Although we cannot be certain that *The Adventures* of T. S. accurately describe an Englishman’s experience of turning captivity to his own advantage, the publication of the work at a time when Charles II and his ministers were eagerly seeking to promote the English colonies in Tangier and the Indian Ocean indicates just how timely this ‘adventure’ may have seemed to many English readers. If a fairly ordinary younger son of the middling sort was able to achieve so much by reason of his native superiority, how much more was the nation bound to realize from international enterprises supported by the royal court? In tune with its times, T. S.’s account displaces imperial envy with a personal take over.

Promoting nationalist ambitions for great things in the larger world, of course, was one thing, especially if it came in the form of a tale of how a captive overcame adversity to show the Ottomans how best to run their empire. Achievement could be quite another thing, as the uneven record of diplomatic missions by English ambassadors to Eastern courts attests.

The earliest English ambassadors to reside in Istanbul were a fairly mixed bunch, yet it was in part because of the success of the first five – William Harborne (c.1578–1588), Edward Barton (1588–1597), Henry Lello (1598/9–1607), Thomas Glover (1607–1611) and Paul Pindar (1611–1619) – that, within four decades, the English had ousted the French and Venetians to become Christian Europe's major trading partners with the Ottoman Empire. 'Except for the disturbance of England's trade during the English Civil Wars, from which the Dutch drew some profit,' writes Bruce McGowan, 'the English were the undisputed leaders in the Levant trade between 1620 and 1683.'³³ Within a century, finished cotton cloth from English manufacturers 'ranked first among the European exporters of cotton cloth to the Levant.'³⁴ England's trading supremacy was obviously a complex and multifaceted achievement, but had the earliest ambassadors failed in their performances at the Ottoman court, it might not have come about.

Yet not all English ambassadors to the courts of Muslim emperors were so successful, and this may well have had something to do with the ways in which they performed East. The case of Sir Thomas Roe, ambassador to the Ottoman court between 1622 and 1628, is especially interesting since Roe had previously served as James' ambassador to the great Mughal emperor Jahangir, which means that he was already experienced at performing East. Richmond Barbour has recently described how Roe, 'the first fully credentialed ambassador from England to set foot in India,' suffered acute 'embarrassment' at finding that his claim to 'this name of an ambassadour' was greeted with laughter when his ship docked at Suwali in 1615.³⁵ Barbour rightly observes that Roe confronted specific difficulties because other merchants claiming to represent the English throne had already arrived before him, while the English nation were there perceived to be little more than latecomers with no more authority than their eagerness for commercial profits could provide. From his own account, Roe clearly understood this, just as he understood that the Portuguese, who had been in the region far longer than the English, were actively labouring 'a peace with the Mogull on condition to banish the English' and had gained many supporters, including the Governor of Surat, from whom Roe was expecting assistance on

his embassy to the court of Jahangir.³⁶ The challenge facing Roe and all English ambassadors in the East was, in Barbour's terms, 'theatrical as well as practical' and needed to be 'resolved theatrically: by public acts of regal self-presentation' that would be 'received as genuine and substantial by a sufficiency of relevant spectators.'³⁷ In other words, Roe needed to act in ways that would defuse a complex and potentially disastrous situation without compromising the dignity and authority of his appointment. Roe himself understood how everything depended upon those public acts of regal self-presentation, noting in his journal: 'and that therefore, if it seeme to any that shall heare of my first carriage that I was eyther too stiff, too punctuall, too high, or to prodigall, lett them consider I was to repayre a ruyned house and to make straight that which was crooked.'³⁸

In the event, Roe devoted the better part of six weeks to attempting to upstage the intransigent governor of Surat before he could begin his journey to the court of Jahangir on an embassy that Roe himself later considered a failure. Before leaving the ship that had brought him this far, Roe insisted on the privilege due to his position. Knowing that it was 'the custome of the Kings officers to search everie thing that came ashoare' in order to assess it for duty, he insisted on being exempted, 'being an ambassador from a mightie King... and for their priviledges, they were to be excercised on ordinary persons, and not upon my qualety.'³⁹ Three days later, having finally received some rather vague assurances on this point of protocol, Roe agreed to go ashore to meet a delegation from Surat:

At my landing, the cheefe officers of Suratt with about 30 companions wer sitting under an open tent upon good carpetts, in grave order. Coming almost to them and they not rising, I stayd and sent them woord I would not come farther if they satte still; whereupon they all rose, and I entered the tent and went straight up and tooke my place in the middest of them, turning my face toward the Generall and the English.⁴⁰

The detailed precision with which Roe reports this, and numerous other such incidents during his stay in India, shows that he fully understood how crucially important the theatrical elements of his public performances would be to his success. After barely a week in the country, Roe was already absolutely confident that he knew how to behave towards the local dignitaries, noting 'I best knew that see yt, these men triumphe over such as yeeld, and are humble enough when they are held up.'

After all, he later observes, 'we English knew what did appertayne to kings and princes.'⁴¹

Roe's *Journal* of his embassy to Jahangir is replete with similar accounts of meetings with local dignitaries and self-serving descriptions of his own imperiously formal behaviour, designed to brook no challenge to his unquestionable superiority as 'an ambassador sent by the King of England.'⁴² That the Mughal emperor ruled over an empire far greater in extent, wealth and number of peoples than anything James might have imagined for himself, never seems to have occurred to Roe's sense of his own importance, anymore than the Englishman could conceive of his own insignificance. After three years of negotiations, Roe left with no better understanding of how to conduct himself among the people with whom he had come to deal than the views with which he had arrived, famously declaring in a letter written to the East India Company in 1618 towards the end of his stay: 'Assure yow, I knowe these people are best treated with the sword in one hand and caducean [the wand of Hermes] in the other.'⁴³ Can Roe really have imagined that his appointment as England's ambassador gave him the status of a messenger of the gods, sent to instruct and punish? Embarrassed that he had proved able to extort little more than some vague and indefinite assurances from Jahangir, Roe claimed that because of 'the pride and falshood of these people, that attended only advantage and were governed by privat interest and appetite, I was forced to relinquish many poynts often insisted upon.'⁴⁴ Acutely aware as he was of the vital importance of his own public behaviour, Roe seems to have been simply incapable of considering how the imperious manner of his own performances, marked by a flagrantly belligerent attitude, might have had a great deal to do with his failure in the Mughal Empire. Richmond Barbour puts it succinctly: 'Roe was commissioned to establish a distinguished place for England in the Moghul theatre of state. He found himself a watcher at the margins, enticed and appalled, mordantly justifying his incapacities.'⁴⁵

In fairness to Roe, no one at the time in England seems to have thought Roe's embassy a failure, and certainly not the officers of the Levant Company who, in 1621, appointed him ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. Roe's descriptions of his self-confident and arrogant posturing evidently suited their idea of how Englishness should be represented at imperial Muslim courts. Indeed, the very length and regularity of his detailed reports back to the officers of the East India Company doubtless contributed mightily to his credibility as an honest and effective agent on behalf of his country's interests. His modern

biographer, Michael Strachan, certainly considered him an exemplary figure: 'Honest, patriotic, charitable and immensely courageous, he was the epitome of that ideal evolved by his native land as it grew to the height of its power – a Christian gentleman.'⁴⁶ Yet even Strachan felt forced to admit that Roe's entire diplomatic career was marked by a sense of failure, never reflecting that perhaps the performance of a 'Christian gentleman' among established and powerful Muslim empires required rather more finesse than a sword in one hand and a sense of divine calling in the other. Be that as it may, Roe's embassy to the Ottoman Empire proved to be, in certain respects, a repeat of his performance at the Mughal court; he did manage to sort out the affairs of the English merchants, which had fallen into disarray under his predecessor John Eyre, to arrange the release of numerous English captives, and to pillage a number of minor antiquities for the Duke of Buckingham's collection. But at the same time, he took great offence that he was not instantly received by Sultan Osman II (r.1618–1622), quarrelled incessantly with the French ambassador over whose name should appear first on the renewed capitulations, alienated the community of Jewish merchants who were essential players in the commercial life of the city, and ineffectually interfered in Ottoman affairs of state. Within weeks of arrival, Roe felt he had already seen enough to write home:

If I should speak of the situation of this place . . . there is nothing in the world of that magnificence and delight; but if we then consider the people that possess it, and the uncleanly order and government in it, it is a sink of men and sluttishness . . . This mighty empire hath passed the noon, and is declining apace, if not very near its dissolution.⁴⁷

This may be the earliest prediction of the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire by an English writer, and Roe may well have thought that events were about to prove him right. Having led an unsuccessful military campaign against Poland, Sultan Osman – according to Roe's account which is much in line with contemporary Ottoman reports – blamed the Janissaries and sought to replace them by raising a counter army in central Anatolia under guise of making the hajj to Mecca. The plan was soon discovered, causing the Janissaries to rebel, with the result that Osman and several of his key ministers were executed. Within fifteen months, as Roe tells it, 'there were three Emperors, seven great Visiers, two Captiane Bassaes, five Aga's of the Janisaries, three Treasurers, six Bassaes of Cairo, and in proportion as many changes of Governors in all the Provinces.'⁴⁸

The importance of the story of Osman's downfall (to which I will return in Chapter 7) is that Roe claims to have seen it coming, imagined that he was in a position to offer Osman advice that might have prevented it, and that he wrote about it. His version of the events, first reported in his despatch back to the court in London, also appeared in an anonymous pamphlet published in 1622 entitled *A True and Faithfull Relation, Presented to His Majestie and the Prince, of what hath Lately Happened in Constantinople, Concerning the Death of Sultan Osman, and the Setting Up of Mustafa his Uncle*; again in the continuation of Knolles' *Generall Historie* that appeared in 1638, largely based on Roe's dispatches; once more in another pamphlet, *Learne of a Turke*, published in 1660 on the eve of the Restoration; and yet again in 1740 in Samuel Richardsons' edition of *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in his Embassy to the Ottoman Porte from the Year 1621 to 1628 Inclusive*.

The publication of the *Negotiations* brings me to my final point, which is that for Roe, the act of writing was itself a form of performing East. Despite his seeming failures to achieve all he set out to on his actual embassies, it was the voluminous, incessant and meticulous documentation of his activities, experiences and observations that, for later English readers, constituted Roe's supreme performative achievement in establishing what it meant to be English on the stage of the great Muslim empires. His contributions to the continuations of Knolles, for instance, devote a disproportionate amount of space to recording his own activities and the affairs of the English, and in doing so he doubtless pleased many English readers eager to find their nation actively engaged in the shaping of Ottoman history. He certainly impressed Anthony Wood sufficiently for the Oxford antiquarian to write that Roe 'to his immortal reputation, recover'd the respect due to ambassadors, which had been utterly lost for several years before, by a succession of insolent viziers.'⁴⁹ With prospects of establishing an empire in India ever more imminent, subsequent generations of English readers returned to Roe's writings and found cause for national pride. Thomas Carte, a historian and founding member of the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, who assisted Richardson in the publication of the *Negotiations*, was credulously celebratory. 'I cannot sufficiently admire', Carte wrote, 'his rare abilities, judgement and integrity, his extraordinary sagacity in discovering the views and designs of those with whom he treated, and his admirable dexterity in guarding against their measures and bringing them over to his purpose.'⁵⁰ With only Roe's aggrandizing self-representations before him, Carte may be forgiven for having

imagined so; yet, as Jyotsna Singh has observed: 'Jehangir's memoirs reveal his indifference toward the English...in his mind, only the Persian and Ottoman monarchs were his worthy rivals.'⁵¹ However significant the Levant trade may have been in the commercial development of seventeenth-century England, it too was a minor matter in the economic history of the Ottoman Empire at the time: the modern scholars responsible for the definitive *Economic and Social History of the Ottoman Empire* manage never once to mention Roe.⁵² In short, Roe's reports of his ambassadorial performances in the East anticipated the high-handed manner and unshakeable arrogance towards the superior host nations that greatly appealed to later British ambitions for Eastern empire.

My purpose here is not to vilify Roe but to mark his place in the history of English writing about the Ottoman Empire, and Eastern empires more generally, and to suggest how the performativity that permeates his descriptions both resulted from and directly contributed to that structure of feeling I have called 'imperial envy.' For Roe, writing was itself a performance of how Englishness came into being through direct contact with Muslim empires greater than anything that the English of his era could reasonably hope to achieve. Yet, as Richmond Barbour puts it: 'Roe's writings enabled imperial readings... [they] projected a presumption of cognitive mastery over the "eastern theatre."⁵³

Some conclusions

I have suggested that performativity offers a way of grasping agency – both personal and political – in the contexts of tracing new ways of understanding Orientalist and imperial structures in the early modern period, in an attempt to understand, better than we do at present, how early cross-cultural encounters such as that between Britain and the Ottoman Empire necessarily complicate our understanding of national identity formation.

Ever mercantile in their Mediterranean interests, the English were little concerned with the peoples of the Maghrib. Apart from the telling exception of Tangiers under Charles II, neither crown nor merchant ever really wanted to colonize the Mediterranean – military expediency notwithstanding, as in the case of Gibraltar. As for the peoples of the Maghrib, British travellers demonstrated little curiosity and even captives identified with the dominant Ottoman elite rather than the local peoples. In 1615, the Scots traveller William Lithgow, journeying West along the coast from Tunis, admired the landscape for its beauty

and productivity, but could not resist noting that it was also 'so infinitely peopled, that it made me wish there had been none at all.'⁵⁴ Instead, travellers were more interested in the Ottomans, the imperial authorities with whom they imagined themselves to have more in common.

For the English, being in Muslim lands meant being called upon to explain one's presence and to perform one's national identity in unprecedented ways. Among potentially hostile others, the Ottoman authorities were the only audience that counted. Performing East was a matter of the body rather than the soul because it was the body that could not help but signify. Performing East, then, describes both a historical phenomenon, a semiotic exchange of sorts, but one that is also a material formation discernible from archival documents. In this sense, it can be recovered only as a literary effect, a figure of representation. In each case, early evidence registers envy of the Ottoman Empire in the form of a surreptitious takeover by visiting – even captive – Englishmen.

Attending to national identity formation as performative also helps highlight ways that the global stage increasingly helped shape aspects of Englishness unavailable within the insular setting. In order to retain, as it were, the appearance of an intact national identity while in a land of bath houses and harems, where certain things were expected to happen that could not happen at home, both Rowlie and T. S. were held accountable for their sexual bodies in contemporary representations. In this sense, the difference between being a eunuch and being a stallion signals the primacy of the body over the soul. It is the performance of these Englishmen's sexualized bodies that sets limits to the conditions of their agency within slavery. In reports of Rowlie, 'turning Turk' was more about being a eunuch than about being a turbaned Muslim: questions of religious difference are muted in the portrait and only implicit, at best, in Hakluyt. Although offering a sometimes piously Protestant narrative of the soul providentially overcoming adversity, T. S.'s *Adventures* focuses throughout on the sexual body in ways the genre does not normally allow. But T. S. somehow must fully report and describe his sexual performances since it was these that so often threatened his faith in the form of rich and lusty widows wanting to marry him if only he would convert to Islam. Religious difference for T. S. provides the substance for parody and ribald humour at the expense of Islam, women, and especially married Muslim women. He piously laments his bodily power to attract so many women: 'I was once so troubled with addresses, that

I wished my Face had been disfigured, my stature more contemptible, and that all the promising Characters of my person had never appeared in me.⁵⁵

For the early modern English travelling into the lands of the Ottoman Empire, performing East was most often a matter of the body rather than the soul. Moreover, while the stakes were clearly somewhat different for diplomats, performance was evidently the key to success or failure.

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Part II

Writing the Ottoman World

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4

On Turning Turk, or Trying to: Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*

This chapter continues to focus on national identity in its performative and contingent aspects by shifting attention to the London stage and examining how the dramatic artistry of Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke* (1612) imaginatively asserts an essentialized English identity by constructing a moral and nationalist frame that demonizes the desire to convert to Islam and suggests that it is impossible for a native-born Englishman to foreswear his national identity. In shifting from documentary representations of Englishmen in the East to an imaginative theatrical text, I hope to demonstrate the double action of imperial envy at work in these different representational forms. As I suggested in the previous chapter, while Samson Rowlie and T. S. became identified with the Ottoman elite and Thomas Roe wrestled with ceremonial protocols he refused to understand, all three testify to the wealth, power and prestige that constituted those aspects of imperial power most to be desired and envied. While neither Rowlie nor T. S. willingly elected to enter captivity, they nevertheless overcame adverse circumstances and exemplify how ingenuity and native abilities enabled them to achieve positions of considerable importance beyond anything they might have acquired in their native land. Despite adversity, these two Englishmen prove their mettle and illustrate the enviable attractions and benefits of life within the Ottoman Empire, which is shown to be both open and welcoming to men of talent. For his part, Roe relied upon a stubborn arrogance born of presumptive superiority that brought him to frustrated hostility. Put together, these three performances indicate how imperial envy involves not simply recognizing the other's excellence, but also entails feelings of malicious enmity towards that excellence.

In dramatizing events from the life of the notorious English pirate, 'Captain' John Ward, Daborne's play acknowledges many of the

attractive features of life among the Ottomans, but insists that audiences must recognize why they are to be despised. Daborne abandons knowable facts for convenient fictions in order to achieve a clear moral design that has very little to do with actual encounters between the English and the Ottomans and everything to do with emergent nationalism. Daborne reworks certain plot elements of *Othello* and exploits contemporary ambiguities over the concept of 'turning Turk' in order to demonstrate how being English is not a choice but an unquestionable fact that cannot be denied. In Daborne's moral-nationalist scheme, an Englishman born cannot not want to be English, and indeed cannot willingly stop being one whatever the attractions of doing so might be.

On turning Turk, or trying to

As we learn more about the Afro-Asiatic origins of the European Renaissance, studies of the theatrical representation of Arabs, Jews, Moors, Persians, Saracens and 'Turks' evidences the importance of the cultural representation of Eastern others for the re-birthing of European identities and civilization. Scholars of the London stage have revitalized interest in the great wealth of dramatic materials concerning the terrifying threat of 'the Great Turk' and the dangerous delights of Eastern promise.¹ Here, I wish to contribute to this re-birth of interest in early modern dramatic writing about the 'Turks' and the Ottoman Empire by examining Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke; or, The Tragickall Lives and Deaths of the two Famous Pyrates, Ward and Dansiker* which was published in 1612. Noticed by scholars on several occasions, the textual difficulties presented by the printed copy deterred full-scale studies until Daniel Vitkus' recent modernized edition in *Three Turk Plays* rescued this play from undue oblivion. In what follows, I examine aspects of the language and implicit staging in order to suggest ways in which attention to dramatic design can help with difficult moments in the text. I shall also provide a historicized introduction to 'the only play in English that addressed the complex and destabilizing theme of conversion to Islam.'²

Daborne's printed text is notoriously hard to follow: the list of characters does not correspond with the names of those who appear in the character calls; speeches are wrongly assigned; scene changes are sometimes indicated but stage directions are irregular. Reconstructing implicit stage business from the dialogue is complicated by innumerable asides and frequent compositor's errors.³ Chew commented, quite unfairly: 'Even when every allowance is made, it is a contemptible piece

of work, coarse and scabrous, bombastic and noisy, ill-constructed and confused in style, thought, and intention.⁴ Fortunately, in 'Preposterous Conversions,' Patricia Parker recently rescued Daborne's artistry by her ingenious demonstration of subtleties of language that were clearly illegible to Chew, while other critics have begun recognizing its important place with the group of 'Turk' plays that fascinated London audiences.⁵ Moreover, Daborne's dramatic designs are clear enough: he set out to impose an explicit moral order upon the story of a notorious English pirate in order to render the historical Ward's very success into a literary pattern of defeat and death – a pattern rendered inevitable by a logic that claims an Englishman cannot *not* be English, however hard he may try to 'turn Turk.' In Daborne's moral-nationalist scheme, Ward dies recognizing that, in death, he will be judged as a Protestant Englishman – the very national identity he has been attempting to disown.

An account of Daborne's dramatic artistry not only helps to fill a gap in the emerging scholarship of the non-European roots of the Renaissance, but also demonstrates how historical poetics and dramatic intertextuality work together in constructing notions of national identity. By historical poetics, I mean the ways that, loosely based on contemporary reports of 'Captain' John Ward, an Englishman who set himself up as a Barbary pirate and did rather well for himself, Daborne's play abandons known and knowable facts for convenient fictions in order to achieve a demonstrable moral design. By dramatic intertextuality, I mean the ways that Daborne was not alone in exploring the theatrical potential of characters who 'turn Turk' on the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. I find his play's highly moral nationalism peculiarly imaginative in using the stage to exploit the possibilities contained in contemporary anxieties and ambiguities over conversions to Islam in order to exemplify how being English is not a choice. In Daborne's moral-nationalist scheme, an Englishman cannot desire not to be English, and indeed cannot willingly stop being one.

The Turk within: *Othello*

In his comments on the play, Nabil Matar situates Daborne's tragic structures as intertextual transpositions of Marlovian paradigms from *Faustus*, thereby focusing attention on Daborne's representation of the perils of Islam.⁶ Here, I will thicken this description of Daborne's tragic intertexts by suggesting how this play also relies on and transforms structural, thematic and narrative devices from *Othello* in order to achieve its moral and nationalist goals.

Between the Elizabethan moment of Marlowe's *Tamberlaine* and the Jacobean moment of *Othello*, a cultural shift clearly occurred in the ways that the Ottoman Empire was being represented on the London stage. Marlowe sensationalized the Ottoman Empire in defeat at the very moment that Queen Elizabeth herself was supporting diplomatic and trade agreements with the Sublime Porte, while Shakespeare staged that empire so far in retreat that its members never show up. Although the scene and action of *Othello* take us perilously close to the margins of the Ottoman Empire, in Shakespeare's play the Ottoman other never takes direct form. The 'Turks' – at least the costumes that signified 'Turk' – never come out and face the audience; instead, they hang ominously back in some off-stage closet, a determining absent-presence, a force to be fearfully dealt with, though unseen. If it were not for the Venetians making war against the Ottomans, Othello might not have risen to be a general in the first place, and his wedding night would not have been interrupted by all that confusion of martial and patriarchal fury. If it were not for Venetian fear of the Ottomans, forces would not have been sent to Cyprus where, as the play shows us, the men behave in ways that soldiers waiting for battle often do in Shakespeare's plays, becoming hard-boiled and petty, competitive and easily indignant, hot and secretive, ready and waiting to kill and die. When the enemy forces fail to appear, frustrated Venetian virility, barracked away from home, festers into fantastic and deadly sexual jealousies. European fears and animosities towards the Ottomans provide the circumstances, but it is the absent 'Turks' themselves who, by proving inconstant and failing to appear, provide the site, stimulus, circumstances and occasion for Iago's scheming. Even though they never appear on stage, the Ottomans really do make all the differences in *Othello*: without them, the play could not exist.

Othello dramatizes how the European re-birthing of its own cultural identity involved the incorporation of the other's contradictions, not simply as a theme but also within the play's performance of tragic design. Indeed, as Matar, Lois Potter, Virginia Mason Vaughan and Daniel Vitkus have variously demonstrated in their indispensable contextual accounts of *Othello*, the keys to this play's performance of the grand problems of Renaissance tragedy – involving questions of racial origins, national allegiance, religious affiliation and male sexuality in times of war – are all symptomatically different forms of the contradictions contained within the notion of 'turning Turk' that disrupt a unified national identity. To 'turn Turk' was not simply to become a renegade by converting to Islam, but also to assert a dangerous degree

of individual agency in defiance of one's native country, family and religion. In *Othello*, as again in Daborne's play, it has a great deal more to do with *turning* than with either Islam or actual Turks.

Certainly by the time of Shakespeare's play, the very terms 'Turk' and 'Turkish' had come to refer to such a generalized range of qualities and meanings that they could be applied to people in general regardless of ethnicity, including the English themselves if they behaved in ways deemed inappropriate. As I have already indicated, anyone who behaved in certain ways or betrayed certain qualities such as acting haughtily or proud, for instance, was liable to be called a 'Turk.' What gave formal unity to the most persistent of those qualities was a principle of inner-contradiction, of inconstancy. Such descriptions of the contradictory 'nature' of the 'Turks' meant that the term 'Turk' could be anyone who portrayed such contradictory characteristics. In the same way that European identities often imagined themselves into being by constructing and incorporating an imagined 'Turkish' (or some other exotic) other, an other that is specially constituted by a series of contradictions, so the action of Shakespeare's play achieves tragic closure by following through how the very contradictions assigned to the other, once they have been incorporated, destroy the incorporating body. What destroys Othello is this 'Turk' within.

On stage, Othello performs a psychomachia of 'turning Turk.' The Moorish Venetian general represents, and is constituted by, racial contradiction, just like the 'Turk' whom he isn't. And, just like the 'Turk' whom he isn't, Othello also represents that great threat to European ideas of self-hood and nationhood, the danger of inconstancy, of internal contradiction, of disrupted identity. Othello was captured and converted, but details are left tantalizingly vague. Whatever he may be, he is no longer what he once was. Defined by racial otherness and religious conversion, Othello is constituted by this 'Turkish' inconstancy. Othello's celebrated final words declare how it is the very power of inconstancy, of reversibility and ambiguity, that necessitates and legitimates his most self-authorizing act, that of suicide. Othello asks that his epitaph should report:

that in Allepo once,
Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him thus.

(5.2.353–7)

On cue at 'thus' Othello stabs himself and dies. The stage action is clear, while the clarity of his final words depends entirely on their ambiguity; who is the 'Turk' being killed except the 'Turk' within, those very contradictions that constitute the incorporated other in this tragic moment of national identity construction-in-destruction?⁷

Set on the frontier between Christian Europe and the Ottoman Empire, *Othello* shows the threat of Ottoman imperial power failing to materialize as such, while exploring how the danger reappears in a different and even more threatening form, that of contamination. Not simply a military force out there, the 'Turkish' threat rematerializes inside the social body of the Venetian polity. A 'malignant' contagion that utterly lacks respect for any essential distinctions between those boundaries that make identities and nations possible, it enters and destroys Europeanized subjects. Alien but not strange, different but knowable, external but assimilable, the 'Turkish' peril is not simply unignorably out there, but has been incorporated to become both constitutive and destructive of European identity.

Captain Ward: English pirate

Robert Daborne's *Christian Turn'd Turke* (1612) restages within moral, providentialist and nationalist idioms the process of destructive incorporation involved in 'turning Turk' that Shakespeare dramatized in *Othello*. Instead of an imaginary Moor, Daborne puts a celebrated English pirate, Captain 'Jack' Ward, into the title role. Daborne's play also takes place on the frontiers between Christian Europe and the Islamic domain of the Ottoman sultan, but this time crosses over into the Ottoman spaces of North Africa. This encounter with the Ottoman other once again precipitates a tragic, or at least destructive, crisis of national and personal identity. But this time, London audiences were invited to watch not a Moorish Venetian being destroyed by the 'Turk' within, but a would-be convert to Islam being destroyed by the English identity he cannot renounce. Both Othello and Ward marry across racial borders, murder their wives, and fall because of the schemes of corrupt and insurgent subalterns, Iago and Gallup. Yet within the Christian moral order of Daborne's play, Ward is never really admirable, pitiable, or indeed tragic. He is simply doomed and deserving of contempt because of his impossible desire not to be an Englishman.

It is difficult to imagine that Daborne did not have *Othello* often in mind. While reconfiguring plot elements, themes and structures from *Othello*, Daborne based his play on printed reports of Captain Ward,

whose exploits in the Mediterranean during the first decade of James' reign continued to prompt nationalist pride in English control over the seas despite the moral contradictions involved in praising piracy, and despite the differences that a change in government entailed. 'In itself,' the Whig historian Samuel Gardiner observed a century ago, 'piracy was by no means regarded in England with the detestation which it merited' since to 'plunder Frenchmen and Venetians was a very venial offence,' while to 'plunder Spaniards was almost a heroic achievement.'⁸ Such certainly had been the attitude tacitly sanctioned by Elizabeth and her policies. But James sought peace with Catholic Spain, and found the predations of English pirates against Spanish shipping an embarrassment. He set out to condemn and to punish pirates instead.⁹ By 1608, Ward's well-known exploits had become such an acute diplomatic embarrassment that, by royal command, 'nineteen pirates were seen hanging in a row at Wapping, as a terror to all who might be disposed to follow their example.'¹⁰ Early in 1612, the year of Daborne's play, James had been persuaded to sign a general pardon for English pirates. The Venetian Ambassador, Antonio Foscarini, reported how James agreed to this pardon not only because it would add an estimated three thousand mariners back to the royal navy, but also in part because he had proved incapable of stopping them by force since the Grand Duke of Tuscany allowed them to operate from Livorno.¹¹ Foscarini later reported that the pirates, 'who at present with thirty ships are infesting the ocean sea-board of Spain and the Straits of Gibraltar, have refused to accept the pardon offered them by the King' because 'in the present state of peace they could not maintain themselves in England.'¹²

Elizabethan tolerance, if not encouragement, of English privateers for attacking Catholic shipping may officially have changed under the new king, but government policy by no means displaced English pride in English pirates. Ward had become a national celebrity whose name survived, long after his death, among advocates of free trade. One nineteenth-century commentator, Cornelius Payne, annotated his copy of Daborne's play in characteristic terms:

I have read that Ward was a Devonshire man, and was one of those that left England and indulged in Free Trade in consequence of the pusilanimous policy of Solomon (James I) . . . This is a very poor play quite unworthy of being devoted to the memory of one bearing the name of Ward.¹³

This heroizing Ward as a champion of free trade was not unusual since, judging from the ballads about him, Ward's name was very much a part of the popular history of the free-trade debates. Between 1655 and 1674, and again between 1780 and 1885, broadside ballads celebrating Ward, the entrepreneurial hero of old England, were in constant production. Nor was Ward's reputation limited to metropolitan London. Between 1840 and 1866, printers in the northern industrial cities of Preston and Manchester issued ballads of Ward, the English pirate.¹⁴

The whiggish attitude that kept Ward's name alive as an international champion of free trade was not simply the view of those looking back from an era when Britannia was imagined to rule the waves. In his own times, Ward was poetically remembered for his power at sea in a satire attributed to John Donne, in which a man of affairs asks 'Whether Ward / The traffic of the Midland seas had marred.'¹⁵ Famous or infamous, notorious or worthy, Ward's exploits were presumed to be sufficiently well known by 1626 for George Wither to satirize writers of ballads by comparing them with Ward:

Yet this (making Ballets) is nothing;
If they look for fame, And meane to have an everlasting name
Amongst the Vulgar: let them seeke for gaine,
With Ward the Pirat, on the boistrous maine.¹⁶

James Howell in his *Familiar Letters* (c.1650) recalled Ward with admiration for having directly helped establish Christian naval control over the Mediterranean. For that control, he writes:

... we may thank our countryman *Ward*, and *Danskey* the Butterbag *Hollander*, who may be said to have been two of the fatalest and most infamous men that ever Christendom bred.¹⁷

From the start, Ward's exploits were reported alongside those of a Flemish-born pirate, Simon Dansker, who was usually called a 'Dutchman.'¹⁸ Tales of alliances and disputes between Ward and Dansker allowed plenty of scope for exemplifying contemporary Anglo-Dutch rivalries. In 1683, Samuel Pepys proudly noted 'it was one Ward an Englishman that first brought in the use of the bowline at Algiers.'¹⁹ In an era when England was striving to establish maritime supremacy, the skills of native-born pirates remained proud testimony to the presumptive rights of Englishmen over the seas and those who sailed on them. During the seventeenth century, successful captains

among the Barbary pirates were reported to favour having an English pilot on board.²⁰

Despite its moral framing, Daborne's play participated in this myth-making in ways that Wither might have considered to be contributing to the self-glorifying vulgar tastes of Jacobean theatre audiences. Ward's story had become recently topical when Daborne was writing his play:²¹ his most obvious sources were published in 1609, the year after English pirates were to be seen hanging at Wapping.²²

Daborne's Ward: The exorbitant Turk

Not content with simply hoping that Ward would be punished, Daborne stages the pirate's death knowing how much Jacobean audiences enjoyed watching sex and misogynistic violence when packaged with suitably moral outcomes and English chauvinism. In distinction from his possible sources, Daborne claims in his 'Prologue' that he has set out to shift the already well-established view of Ward the pirate to a new focus on Ward the 'Turk':

What heretofore set others pennes aworke,
Was *Ward* turn'd Pyrate, ours is *Ward* turn'd Turke.

What this means, in effect, is that Daborne largely ignores historical accounts, such as that by Andrew Barker, and invents a plot that enables him to represent Ward's inevitable death in a morally uplifting, punitive climax following the pirate's marriage to, and attempted murder of, a fictitious Muslim beauty, Voada. By shifting focus from Ward the pirate to Ward the 'Turke,' Ward constructs a politically convenient moral design similar to the ballads' structure, one that invites audiences to imagine Ward already on the way to his tragic defeat from the very beginning of the play. This dramatic design efficiently forecloses any possibility of nationalist admiration for Ward's heroic exploits and achievements.

Daborne's play opens with the famous English pirate at the top of Fortune's wheel with nowhere to go but down; yet not all the characters on stage know who he is. Moments into the first scene, Gismund, one of Ward's piratical confederates, enlightens us all by describing Ward in mock Ottoman terms that suggest how Ward appears: arrogantly *alla Turchesca*. But Gismund's terms ironically end up pointing to those gallows at Wapping:

Do you know this honourable shape? Heroicke Captaine Ward, Lord
of the Ocean, terror of Kings, Landlord to Merchants, rewarder of

Man-hood, conqueror of the Western world, to whose followers the Lands and Seas pay tribute, and they to none, but once in their lives to the manor of *Wapping*, and then are free ever after. (lines 26–31)

In the moral-tragic scheme of things, Ward may not be destined to hang at Wapping himself, but Daborne will stage his death with the spectre of the gallows foregrounded in the minds of an audience familiar with scenes of punitive execution.

Like Shakespeare in *Othello*, Daborne explores the dramatic possibilities offered by the notion of ‘turning’; not the English fisherman turned pirate but the Christian who, in the end, finds that he cannot ‘turn Turk’ without destroying himself. In his version of the Ward story, the ‘Turkish’ danger is not its military threat, either directly staged or internally feared, but the treacherous duplicity of those seductive temptations that make pursuing Eastern promise a certain road to damnation. What destroys Daborne’s Ward is his desire to enjoy all the benefits that behaving like a ‘Turk’ entails, without becoming one by embracing Islam, since to do so would be to acknowledge a higher authority than himself, thereby admitting to the possibility of the rightful claims of his native land and king. Daborne’s Ward is no pious Christian holding out against the Islam, but a self-proclaimed atheist and would-be stateless person. Consequently, his paramour is no Desdemona but Voada, a rather old-fashioned type of the Muslim woman as ‘vulgar, libidinous, and too much to handle,’²³ who appears on stage in all her duplicitous, licentious, fickle, filthy-mouthed, scheming whorishness before Ward first sees her.²⁴ Unlike Dansker, the sensible Dutchman, who recognizes a whore when he sees one and quickly strikes a deal and agrees on terms with Voada, Ward speaks of falling in love with her; and it is within the moral-nationalist scheme of Daborne’s play that he should mean it. Immediately Ward falls ‘victim of a woman who has enchanted him,’ he really becomes a ‘wittol,’ a ‘duped husband,’ unlike the noble Moor Othello, who only imagines himself a dupe.²⁵ However unsuitable or even loathsome the object, love is an entirely unsuitable emotion for one seeking to prove himself to be the cruel and heartless ‘Turk’ that Daborne is anxious to show Ward imagining himself to be, but failing to become.

Ward may be hailed by a fellow pirate in the exaggerated terms befitting a proud and imperious Ottoman, but being a ‘Turk’ is, at best, an ambiguous identification. A study in duplicity, Daborne’s play is structured by a sometimes impacted series of peripeteia, often staged with scenes of doubled actions in which sets of characters conspire only to re-group and plot again. Female duplicity is crucial to Daborne’s design

and appears in double form: European female virtue in distress cross-dressed as a boy, and 'Turkish' female whorishness. The play opens, however, on a scene of duplicitous European men. Before bringing any female characters on stage, Daborne insists we see those feminized 'Turkish' principles of inner-contradiction, inconstancy and duplicity busily at work shaping Ward's character.

The play opens with an attack on piracy for producing slavery, the antithesis of the heroic liberty that defines European manhood, voiced by Ferdinand, a merchant whom Ward is trying to recruit:

Piracy, it's theft, most hatefull, swallowes up
The estates of Orphanes, Widowes, who borne free,
Are thus made slaves, inthral'd to misery
By those that should defend them, at the best.
You rob the venting Merchants, whose manly breast
Scorning base gaine at home, puts to the maine
With hazard of his life and state, from other lands
To enrich his owne, whilst with ungratefull sands
He thus is overwhelmed.

(lines 64–72)

Refusing Ward's offer of rewards if he will join the pirate crew, Ferdinand stands righteously on guard to protect women and fellow venture capitalists. Unlike heroic tradesmen and manly merchants, who materially benefit their native land, pirates are slavish. Only ignoble monsters would impoverish women and children by robbing fellow countrymen of the rewards of selfless mercantile adventuring. But this is just the kind of man Daborne shows Ward striving to be – this opposite of the heroic European gentleman.

If the sometimes obscure action of Daborne's play works in the ways I am suggesting it does – imposing a Christian moral order onto a formalized tragic action in tune with Jacobean theatrical tastes, an order that can be tracked in the sequencing of narrative episodes – then Daborne's first change of scene provides the appropriate thrill of erotic danger at the right moment to warn us how sexual desire, in all its duplicity, will be Ward's final undoing. The scene shifts to the French ship, where threatened female virtue interrupts previous talk among men about manhood, and provides opportunity for that ever popular comic-erotic scene of a boy actor playing a girl in the act of changing her clothes to dress up like a boy in order to disguise her sexuality. While 'putting on

the weed of a Sailers boy,' poor Alizia not only has impending pirates to worry about, but also a rather imperious fop of a brother, the garrulous Lemot, who interrupts her in order to tell her at great length to do the very thing that she is already doing: 'Deere sister hide/At least thy sex, though not thy sorrow' (lines 125–6). Lemot at least provides Alizia with plenty of time to fuss theatrically with her costume in one of those moments of cross-dressing so beloved of theatre audiences.²⁶ Ward and Gismund watch from 'above,' according to a stage direction (before line 144), while Alizia, Lemot and the French crew anticipate the pirates' attack. Although victorious, Ward appears 'with a slaine friend' in a state of grief. His first words – 'Recall thy spirit brave friend' (line 195) – begin a series of railings against heaven and fortune (lines 226–43), in which Ward furiously imagines avenging his dead friend by summarily executing all the French captives. The other pirates want them for ransom, of course. Gismund grumbles; he and Gallup, captain of the ship that seized the French prisoners, conspire behind Ward's back. For Ward, being a 'rewarder of man-hood' involves an irreducible element of loyalty that, in the play's sequencing of scenes and Daborne's moral order, shows Ward failing to be the cruel fatalist with 'no conscience, no religion' (line 264) he aspires to be.

In Daborne's moral scheme, Ward remains irreducibly English in several respects, despite his repeated efforts to forswear such an identity. The sequence of scenes tracks his tragic downfall through a variety of turns. His mariner's skills enable him to achieve all the powers of a 'Turkish' despot; but his loyalty to a dead friend causes him foolishly to lose authority and command over his mutinous crew. To a sentimental nationalist, this residual loyalty, despite the consequent loss of authority, might seem to signal the irreducible trace of the Englishness Ward cannot foreswear. At this point in his exegesis, Daborne changes scene and turns to Dansker, in order, I think, to offer an alternative form of European – indeed Protestant – national identity that suggests how what is about to happen to Ward might have unfolded differently. In fabricating his account of the relation between the two pirates, Daborne begins with them already separated, following a previous dispute. With Ward gulled of his booty and on the run back to safe harbour in Tunis, the scene discovers Dansker in the process of fulfilling his own national identity, seeking to gain eventual pardon by the very means (piracy) that have made him an outlaw.

Scene three is a scene that contrasts Dutch reform with Ward's resistance to his native Englishness. Dansker receives news that his pardon and right of return have been assured if he re-allies himself with Europe, abandons Barbary piracy and joins the French fleet. Daborne's Dansker

proves to be a moral-nationalist foil who emphasizes Ward's degeneracy since the Dutchman instructs his men that their purpose must be nothing less than 'to ruine all the Pyrats' (line 447) using their native talents to serve the interests of their native land, and 'with the same weapon . . . / Our country cure, with which we wounded her' (lines 444–6).

In pointed contrast to the reforming Dutchman, the English pirate tries to act like a duplicitous 'Turk.' But in Daborne's tragic scheme, Ward destroys himself by struggling against an Englishness he cannot foreswear. Ward cannot be the man he wants to be, but causes tragic destruction in the attempt. This logic of failure becomes apparent when Ward cannot help feeling the loyalty for a dead friend that undermines his authority over his men, but it soon reappears in more vigorous form when falling in love loses him his life. With all Ward's previous confederates turning against him, Daborne's fourth scene brings on stage Voada and Agar – the 'Turkish' wife of Benwash, a rich Jewish merchant who has converted to Islam for business reasons – in conversation with Rabshake, Benwash's servant. Rabshake's job, we soon learn, is to stop Agar from making Benwash a cuckold. If this play were ever performed, this scene would surely have to be played for the kind of comic effects, low and misogynous as they are, that would intensify the ludicrous nature of Ward's sentiments for Voada. The racist and sexist stereotyping, however offensive it may seem to modern audiences, contributes to the play's moral design. In the sequenced staging of Ward's downfall, female sexuality has already interrupted piratical male business-as-usual in the figure of Alizia, European virtue in distress, the well-born virgin seized on her way to a prosperous marriage. Love, or at least the kind of heterosexual desire likely to disturb men living amongst pirate communities, interrupts once again when the two 'Turkish' women come on stage, teasing each other about their desires for European men, Dansker and Gallup.

Daborne characterizes 'Turkish' women as intemperate in their lusts, lewd of thought and speech, scheming and duplicitous. Agar may be married, but is no more reluctant to entertain the possibility of European lovers than Voada. Agar has already taken a strong fancy to Gallup:

Agar. Speake freely, what think you of the new-come Captaine, *Voada*?
Voada. Hee lookes as if his father and mother had got him in feare:

his eyes go like a Citie Catch-poles, severall wayes at once, ther's
no stuffe in him. Give me the Dutch Cavaliere *Dansiker*.

Agar. Out upon him puffe-paste, he was spoild in his infancy, ill-bred.

(lines 481–8)

Once Gallup arrives on stage, Agar almost swoons (lines 522–56), becoming so excited that she abandons any care for her husband's notice: 'He saw our eyes meet, no matter, may I coole my heate / Let the world burn. Thy counsell *Voada*' (lines 560–1). But *Voada* is too distracted to reply to this request. While Agar has been lusting after Gallup, *Voada* has evidently been taking a fancy to *Alizia*, now dressed as a boy and up for sale to Agar's husband. 'It is a lovely boy, rare featur'd, would he were mine,' she sighs, continuing:

I have not seene so much of beauty in a man . . .
I must enjoy his love, though quenching of my lust did burn
the world besides.

(lines 586, 588, 593–5)

Such intemperate desires and lusts of 'Turkish' women for European men and doubly cross-dressed boy-girls are crucial to Daborne's moral designs. Gallup is only interested in Agar for her money and engages with her in suitably filthy banter while *Voada* arranges terms with *Dansker*. Gallup gallantly leads off with a familiar pun on 'stand,' which is so immediately taken up and turned by Agar's sexual heat that he humbly backs off:

Gallup. All content both night and day stand to your desires.

Agar. Our desires equall your wishes sir.

Gallup. Your desires are above my performance then.

(lines 632–4)

Agar pleads with another European to 'intreate him stay his pace,' but is rebuffed with further filthy punning: 'And trot in your ring, Lady' (lines 638–9). Meanwhile, in a side action, *Dansker* has been making a deal with *Voada* from whom he parts, promising:

Next night, time of my project, if I prove not as hot a shot as came
in your quarters since the losse of your virginity, let me suffer the
paines of *S. Anthonies* purgatory.

(lines 645–7)

The Dutchman secretly plotting his rehabilitation recognizes *Voada* for what she is and deals with her appropriately.

It is within, and in contrast to, this context of intemperate female lusts for European flesh, this world of bargaining for sex, of scheming and double-dealing, that Ward makes his most serious mistake by falling in love with Voada. Unlike Dansker, who boasts, brags and bargains with Voada, and unlike Gallup who is repelled by the immodest fury of Agar's desires, Ward falls in love, blinded to Voada's mercenary and heartless scheming.

Within the play's moral-nationalist frame, the English pirate cannot recognize a courtesan when he sees one. Ward's ability to experience what he will call 'love' for Voada once again shows him capable of the kinds of higher feeling that he would most repudiate in himself. In love, Ward proves to be something of an innocent abroad, a sentimental English dupe susceptible to duplicitous Eastern beauty, and not the heartless 'Turk' he would prefer to be. When he first sees Voada, Ward has just sold off a captive Englishman and his two young sons into slavery. Again, the narrative turn is suggestive of Daborne's purpose: having renounced his national loyalties, Ward 'falls' in love. With pathetic futility, the second of the boys appeals to Ward, presuming the pirate must feel some loyalty to his native land:

The soyle that bred you sir doth not bring forth
Such hideous monsters, that we should imagine
You can be so far cruell to betray
So many innocent lives...

(lines 747–50)

Obdurate, Ward continues with the sale despite these taunts and rhetorical appeals to nationalist sensibility, that 'your owne fellowes, countrymen do they not stand / Condition'd as your selfe' (lines 806–7). The sale hardly concluded, his national loyalties renounced, Ward turns and sees Voada, falling so far into the folly of love as to mistake entirely who she is and what she represents: 'so true a faire / I nere beheld till now' (lines 863–4), he declares to an audience perfectly aware that one thing she most certainly is not is true.

Daborne interrupts the passage of Ward's love for Voada in order to establish and emphasize how the Englishness which Ward would deny nevertheless makes him an enormously valuable asset to the Governor of Tunis, himself a Christian renegade. Ward cannot not be perceived, valued and judged as an Englishman, however hard he tries. Within moments of falling in love with Voada, Ward is challenged by Dansker,

who insists on his prior claim to her in suitably vulgar terms: 'I'll have a finger in the platter with you, were you the great Turks selfe' (lines 893–4). Whatever prurient speculations we are invited to entertain about the sexual habits of pirates and the previous escapades of Ward and Dansker, an Englishman in love is not prepared to share and finds the suggestion dishonourable. The two Europeans fight until arrested by Tunisian guards. Ward soon reappears on stage, no longer in custody, but with the Governor of Tunis, Benwash and Voada's brother Crosman, who are flattering and inviting him to stay on in Tunis and join forces with them. 'You are the man we covet,' the Governor explains, since he knows that Ward is clearly marked by destiny, his kismet written in his brow:

I see there speakes a fortune in your brow
Will make us proud to have acknowledg'd you.

(lines 971, 985–6)

In a recapitulation of the opening scene, when Ward and Gallup failed to persuade the Frenchmen to turn pirate, the Governor, Benwash and Crosman try persuading Ward to turn 'Turk.' The Englishman is not taken in by Benwash's argument that if Islam were ungodly, God would have destroyed it (lines 1006–8), or by the Governor's promise of increased profits. 'To cut off your further argument,' Ward declares:

What's mine of prowess, or art, shall rest by you
To be dispos'd of: but to abjure
My name, and the beliefe my ancesters
Left to my being: I do not love so well
The earth that bore me, to lessen my contempt
And hatred to her, by so much advantage,
So oblique act as this should give to her.

(lines 1040–7)

The syntax is difficult, but Daborne's Ward is clearly a shrewd rhetorician and casuist. He refuses to foreswear his native land and ancestral religion, though hated, because doing so would be to acknowledge their authority over him. Hearing this, Crosman immediately summons Voada – 'Worke in my sister presently' – and explains:

T' must be a woman's act . . .
... What Divels dare not move
Men to accomplish, women worke them to.
And see, in happy time she's come, wee'l single them.

(lines 1054–7)

Thus singled, left alone with Voada, Ward immediately reneges on his resolution, as if to prove Crosman's scheme inevitable and himself a foolish sailor, who, despite his prowess in the piratical arts, knows nothing of the ways of the world.

Here comes an argument that would perswade
A God turne mortall; untill I saw her face,
I never knew what men terme beauty was:
Besides whose faire, she hath a minde so chaste
A man may sooner melt the Alpes then her.

(lines 1058–62)

Ward could not be more deceived than when imagining Voada's chastity. Voada's fires, of course, have been burning for Dansker, so Ward may not be entirely mistaken that she has been casting alpine looks his way. But Voada clearly knows the 'sport' (line 841) and rebuffs this early declaration, which moves Ward to reiterate it:

Un-gentle maid to triumph in my torment,
If ever breast did feele the power of love,
Or beauty made a conquest of poore man
I am thy captive, by heaven, by my religion.

(lines 1076–9)

Ward's ability to feel what he calls 'love' runs counter to his already professed contempt for 'heaven' or any 'religion.' Voada knows better than to listen to Ward's oaths, even when he swears his love 'by thy God, by the great Mahomet,' which she contemptuously dismisses out of hand for being 'To weake a bond to tye a Christian in' (lines 1081–2). She insists that if Ward loves her as she now claims to love him, he will turn 'Turk,' and then 'I am yours' (line 1095). Despite loving the woman who now appears to want him, Ward demurs only momentarily, since

to acknowledge any religion runs counter to what he calls his liberty: 'Should I for ever sell my liberty?' (line 1103). But almost immediately Ward is taken in by a rather old theatrical trick when Voada bursts into tears: 'They are witnesses she faines not' (line 1120), he fondly imagines, unlike Othello who thought he knew better. Convinced of her love for him, Ward gives in and calls for preparations to be made for his conversion into the 'Turk' who can enjoy the woman he loves: 'away, the flame doth burne / Which sets the world on fire, and makes me turne' (lines 1140–1). This is the cue for which Voada has been waiting: 'Thou art all harmony, best love I flye.' Yet even as she wings away, she cannot resist an ironic aside: 'I have my ends / How e're thou sinke, thy wealth shall beare me high' (lines 1142–4). Left alone, Ward delivers a soliloquy on love, freedom, slavery and the burden of having too much money (lines 1145–62). Bereft of any chance of returning home, and blinded by the sexual temptations that constitute the promise of Islam, Ward imagines that his excessive worldly wealth and ability to get more are proof that he can successfully deracinate himself into a kingless world.

The ceremony of Ward's conversion occurs in dumb show and is reported after the fact. Parker agrees with Vitkus that Ward 'went so far in his Islamic zeal as to be circumcised,' but it seems to me that Sares' report of the event uses 'Turke' as a verb synonymous with 'play'd the Jew' to indicate Ward's trickery in supplying a counterfeit that enables him to avoid circumcision:²⁷

I saw him Turke to the Circumcision.
Mary therein I heard he play'd the Jew with 'em,
Made 'em come to the cutting off an Apes taile.

(lines 1298–300)

To 'Turke' is surely to turn duplicitously. In any case, Ward's conversion to Islam has nothing to do with religious concerns and in this sense is clearly false. His death soon follows, once Ward has discovered Voada's duplicity, stabbed her, and been arrested for the attack.

According to the Scots traveller, William Lithgow, the English pirate Ward was not only alive and well, but also exceptionally wealthy three years after Daborne's play staging his death was published.²⁸ Ward's death scene in Daborne's play has nothing to do with the historical Captain Ward, and rather a lot to do with the way in which the spaces of the Ottoman Empire had come to signify in the idioms of Jacobean drama. Adapting elements of plot and tragic design from *Othello* in

order to construct a moral narrative out of published sources concerning Ward, Daborne fabricates a faithless and whorish 'Turkish' woman for Ward to love and murder. Once arrested, Ward taunts his Tunisian captors:

... you're slavs of *Mahomet*
 Ungratefull curs, that have repaid me thus
 For all the service that I have done for you,
 He that hath brought more treasure to your shore
 Then all *Arabia* yeelds, he that hath showne you
 The way to conquer *Europe*, did first impart,
 What your forefathers knew not, the seamans art;
 Which had they attein'd, this universe had bene
 One Monarchy.

(lines 2246–54)

Only in Ward's dying scene does Daborne allow a moment of nationalist pride in English seamanship to animate his account of Ward the pirate, a man of destiny despite low birth. Although he did not employ his native skills in 'the seamans art' on behalf of England, Ward nevertheless could not help but display those irrepressible talents of his nation. He claims to have taught these skills to 'ungratefull curs' who, fortunately for Europe, were too late in acquiring them to achieve the global empire that would inevitably have been within their grasp had they been reared to be better mariners in the first place. In this moral-nationalist scheme of things, Ward's Englishness is as irrepressible as England's control at sea is inevitable: at sea, it takes an Englishman to show the 'Turks' how to be themselves, but better.

Daborne's portrayal of Ward attempts to resolve the moral and political dilemmas of English piracy in the Jacobean moment by insisting on the irreducibility of Englishness even in the limit-case of a pirate. In death, Ward finds that he cannot not be an Englishman. Daborne's text is obscure regarding how Ward's death is to be staged. Three times Ward declares 'Ha':

Ha, ha, ha, I laugh at you.
 Here's a preservative gainst all your poysons
 True Balsamum for villany 'who will soare high
 First lesson that he learn's, must be to dye.'

(lines 2242–5)

He may not have dropped the knife with which he earlier stabbed Voada, and so perhaps is to be imagined stabbing himself. Yet his talk of poisons may suggest that he produces from his clothing and imbibes one of those deadly solutions so popular in Jacobean theatre. Either way, Ward clearly attempts to forestall execution at the hands of the 'Turks,' but like Othello, he expires into a moment of self-knowledge that takes form as the desire to punish and kill them. Since the Governor of Tunis orders his body to be torn apart and scattered over the city walls as soon as Ward stops speaking, it may even be that Ward is to be seen failing in this final bid, through pre-emptive suicide, for autonomous control over his life.

Unlike Othello, Ward does not find the 'Turk' an exorbitant element within himself that he feels he must destroy, but the utterly alien other that he only now realizes he must fail in becoming because he cannot not be an Englishman.²⁹ And it is as an Englishman that he must confront and be held accountable to a moral order that he cannot cast off. In his dying moments, Ward turns against those very 'Turks' who, he now realizes, have been tricking him all along in order to benefit from his English skills. His dying speech continues with a curse:

... may all your seed be damn'd
 The name of *Ottaman* be the onely scorne
 And by-word to all Nations; may his own slaves
 Teare out the bowels of the last remaines
 Unto his bloud-propt throne, may ye cut each others throats:
 Or may, oh may the force of Christendome
 Be reunited, and all at once require
 The lives of all that you have murdered,
 Beating a path out to *Jerusalem*,
 Over the bleeding breasts of you and yours.

(lines 2254–63)

This pious call for a united Christian front is entirely out of keeping with anything we have heard from Daborne's Ward so far. It is, however, entirely in tune with King James' policy of refusing the right of return to English pirates, and fulfils the didactic moral scheme of Daborne's play, which is to warn other Englishmen against the temptations of turning 'Turk' and ending up hanged at Wapping. In his dying words, Ward discovers himself still to be very much an Englishman:

Lastly, oh may I be the last of all my country
 That trust unto your tretcheries, seducing tretcheries,
 All you that live by theft and Piracies,
 That sell your lives and soules to purchase graves,
 That dye to hell, and live farre worse then slaves,
 Let dying *Ward* tell you that heaven is just,
 And that dispaire attends on bloud and lust.

(lines 2265–71)

Within Daborne's scheme, all Englishmen so seduced are damned, bound to 'dye to hell,' because abandoning and forswearing their birth-right does not so much free them from the moral order that gives national identity meaning, but rather condemns them to a hell that does not disappear simply because they deny its existence. An Englishman may imagine himself turning 'Turk,' but will still die subject to the Christian moral order into which he was born.

In its strategic distributions of different kinds of sources into an exemplary moral action, Daborne's *Christian Turn'd Turke* exemplifies a key feature of what we might call Ottoman citationality – the tendency to correct, revise and re-write the history of what life inside the Ottoman world meant.³⁰ In this sense, Daborne may be said to be using Shakespeare to correct the facts of Ward's career, borrowing devices from *Othello* to stage the death of a living Englishman, a dangerous example of falling for the temptations of the East. As Matar has argued, 'Daborne had to punish Ward even if the play blatantly defied truth,'³¹ and in adapting Shakespeare's plotting to do so, Daborne moved well beyond the optative endings of the 1609 sources that merely hoped Ward had been captured and executed. In his death, Daborne's Ward is as much an inverse of Othello as Voada is of Desdemona. Daborne's concern is to show that an Englishman can only destroy himself by any such ill-conceived attempt to turn 'Turk.' Ward can neither continue as a privateer – thus becoming part of the Ottoman 'nation' – nor convert to the 'nation' of Islam. However often he vacillates, however much he wants to enjoy the pleasures that conversion promises, however often he denies his native land and religion, Ward's death signals his inability to be other than what he is, an Englishman, who – in the moral logic of the play, at least – is therefore necessarily born subject to the moral codes he so eagerly tries to ignore and deny, but cannot disavow.

Before the curtain closes

A Christian Turn'd Turke, I have been arguing, is a play of competing national identities. It is a play about turning, about conversion and perversion, and about what these mean in terms of the construction of different and competing national identities – Europeans turn pirate and prey upon their fellow Christians; Dutch pirates turn anti-pirate; servants turn against their masters; a Jew converts to Islam. But despite his best efforts, the native Englishman finally fails to turn 'Turk' and dies judging himself, a warning to other Englishmen. Daborne's Ward is in many respects the exact inverse of Othello. For Ward, the irreducible element within that destroys him is his native Englishness – an identity that he claims to hold in such contempt that he will not actively disavow it because doing so would be unduly to privilege it. Amidst such ambiguity, Daborne insists on the irreducibility and undeniability of national being.

When representing Ottomans on the London stage, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Daborne and other dramatists drew together legends and available facts with less regard for historical accuracy than for allowing themselves plenty of scope for larger dramatic designs in which Muslim characters and Ottoman spaces helped them to represent English concerns. Nevertheless, these plays marked the emergence of specifically Ottoman elements within Orientalist structures. In each, the East represents a militarized, meritocratic space where the defining standards and normative values of Christendom are suspended, subverted and brought to crisis. Tamberlaine, a Tartar, Othello, a Moor, and Ward, an Englishman, improve their stations in life by means of their encounters with the Ottomans, fighting against or alongside them. And if, on stage at least, they all come to tragic ends rendered inevitable by that self-advancing relation, what's at issue in their death scenes is a peculiarly English form of personal and imperial desire taking shape by means of these imaginary relations with the Ottoman other.

5

The Sultan's Beasts: Encountering Ottoman Fauna

This chapter explores some early modern ideas of what is human and what is beastly, and to the sometimes leaky distinctions that were involved. Such concerns feature regularly in descriptions of those imaginative relations and direct encounters between the English and the Ottoman Empire that were, as I have suggested in previous chapters, helping to shape English imaginations and identities during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Majestic, powerful and exotic beasts such as camels, elephants, lions and giraffes served as familiar signs of imperial might and so were very much part of the magnificence and splendour that made the Ottoman world enviable. But at the same time, they suggested how that world, for all its grandeur and brute strength, belonged to an inferior natural order. Envy, after all, necessarily entails vilification of the admired, and what better way to demean the Ottomans than by associating them with beasts?

Recent research has effectively decentred the Renaissance from what has sometimes been taken to be its hermetically sealed Eurocentric origins, and along the way exposed some of the fault lines in the development of humanist thinking that placed human existence at the centre of the universe. The period 'before Orientalism' has increasingly come under scrutiny for evidence of cross-cultural hybridization.¹ In terms of national identity formation, Colin Kidd has observed that 'Britons did not view the East simply as a scene of otherness, but also manufactured it in the image of Christian Europe and its divisions.'² Like other European nations, the early modern English were beginning to imagine themselves into being as a distinct national entity by measuring themselves against other nations, including the Ottomans and other Asiatic, African and New World peoples. And they could do so because people were people, all descendants of those who survived with

Noah, whatever their evident cultural differences. Amidst an increasing interest in defining those differences as signs of specifically national characteristics, there were as yet no clear distinctions being made in 'racial' terms. 'The undoubted practice,' Kidd explains,

and justification – of imperialism, white colonialism, racial subordination, cultural extirpation and enslavement should not obscure the logic of ethnic theology. The orthodox scholarly elites of the early modern British world did not think in essentialist terms of innate ethnic *differences*, but historically in terms of processes of *differentiation* from a common stock. History explained – and diminished – such variations.³

In other words, the past told of how people in some parts of the world had developed more rapidly and fully than others. Emerging ideas about evolutionary change confidently described the developmental advances that enabled Europeans to distinguish themselves from the natural world of animals and plants, while the same logic assisted them in discerning fewer signs of such development when they looked East to the lands of the Ottomans and other Asiatic and African peoples.

Here, I wish to pursue this notion of differential development and to suggest that a pervasive, though often neglected, strategy which enabled this process of 'manufacturing' concepts about the 'East' was to shift, or blur, or generally rearrange the borders between nature and culture in order to discover, in the East, entirely new orders of different natures. This strategy came to naturalize, as it were, the presumptive superiority of Western values and attitudes by consigning those living in Ottoman and Islamic lands to backward, primitive and beastly levels of existence. For all the opulence of their court culture, people are regularly described as appearing to be little different from the strange and peculiarly dangerous animals and insect life of the regions in which they lived. Such beliefs may well have helped early travellers, who often only partly understood what they were seeing, to feel less threatened and humbled by their potentially subordinate position within Islam and the Ottoman imperium. At the same time, for English writers who never left the British Isles, tropes of beastliness and bestiality provided a biblically sanctioned rhetoric that might be used not only to generate fear, loathing, and contempt for Eastern and African peoples, but also to rail against moral degeneracy among the putatively more advanced Europeans.

Reports of encountering different kinds of beast, and witnessing strange alliances and curious relationships between people and animals,

feature so regularly in writings by early English travellers to Ottoman lands that a summary scheme might be in order. Travellers not only mentioned seeing familiar animals, such as donkeys, dogs, horses, sheep, cattle and varieties of game, but also reported sightings of varieties of animal life never before seen, such as the notable exotics for which the sultan's collection in Istanbul was famous – giraffes, crocodiles, elephants and other imported creatures. They also brought back tales involving legendary beasts such as the unicorn and Sphinx. As represented by early travel writers, Ottoman fauna may be divided into three general groups: The Dangerous, The Familiar and/or Useful, and The Exotic and/or Legendary. These general categories can be further subdivided as follows:

The Dangerous

1. the microscopic
2. insects and other small 'varmints'
3. reptiles, snakes and lizards

The Familiar and/or Useful

4. small furry creatures: cats and dogs, rodents
5. beasts of burden and livestock: donkeys, oxen, mules, horses and camels; cattle, sheep, goats and pigs
6. game birds and animals

The Exotic and/or Legendary

7. exotic creatures of sea and air
8. imported exotics: giraffes, crocodiles, lions and elephants
9. legendary and extinct: dragons, unicorns, Anatolian lions and the Sphinx.

As the imaginative possibilities of what was going on elsewhere in the world expanded, reports by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English travellers of encountering the natural world of the Ottoman Empire helped confirm and shape English attitudes about themselves. In a variety of sometimes contradictory ways, travellers constantly represented themselves interacting with invisible, insect and animal life while visiting the Ottoman Empire. What these representations and contradictions insist is this: if we wish to understand the English view of the Ottoman Empire, we must not lose sight of the historical fact that it was not a vacant space but a vast and various territory populated by

many different kinds of inhabitants, some of whom were strange and exotic, but not all of whom were always dangerous, hostile, threatening, or even human. The journey from England to Ottoman lands involved meetings with people wearing the clothes and speaking the languages of many different nations, but it also entailed meetings with bizarre and unusual animals, insects and reptiles too. Early descriptions of such remarkable meetings with exotic life forms established a clear discourse of what Donna Haraway has named 'significant otherness' in order to describe the complex exchanges always occurring across different orders and species, and the ideologies revealed by their uncovering.⁴

An exemplary fictional moment from the middle of the twentieth century neatly illustrates something of the persistence and durability characteristic of the peculiarly English attitudes that were developed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for representing beastly encounters in Ottoman lands.

James Bond goes to Istanbul

In August 1957, James Bond packed a copy of Eric Ambler's spy thriller *The Mask of Dimitrios* into his famous attaché case and flew to Istanbul for the first time in his career. During a stopover at Athens airport for refuelling, Bond ignored his book and drank two tumblers of ouzo instead. Feeling 'the drink light a quick, small fire down his throat and in his stomach,' Bond finds himself entering the East.

The air was soft with evening and the smell of flowers and there was the steady pulse-beat of the cicadas – zing-a-zing-a-zing – and the distant sound of a man singing. The voice was clear and sad and the song had a note of lament. Near the airport a dog barked excitedly at an unknown human smell. Bond suddenly realized that he had come into the East where the guard-dog howls all night. For some reason the realization sent a pang of pleasure and excitement into his heart.⁵

It is not just the ouzo that makes Bond's stopover in Athens such a thoroughly physical experience of being an English body outside England. It is also the exotic smells, and the distinctive blending of sounds issuing from insects, singer and dog that tell him 'he had come into the East.'

Istanbul only intensifies the English agent's first time in the East. Bond goes straight to the 'Kristal Palas' hotel, a thinly veiled allusion to the celebrated Pera Palas Hotel where, as Bond knew, spies from all

over Europe and Asia once met, but tourists now drink tea. On his first morning, he awakens to find himself thoroughly bitten by some long-term residents. But bed bugs are only the start of his encounters with Turkish vermin. After a day full of adventures, he returns to the hotel:

It was seven o'clock on the same evening and James Bond was back in his hotel. He had had a hot bath and a cold shower. He thought that he had at last scoured the zoo smell out of his skin.⁶

For most of that first day in Istanbul, Bond has been grovelling about in an ancient, disused drainage system below the old city described as being full of rats and bats. In Fleming's version of things, an underground sewerage system is imagined to run right underneath the Embassy of the USSR making it possible for ingenious British agents to install a periscope from a submarine and spy directly into the Soviet conference room. The ancient underground water systems of old Stamboul are real enough – the vast Yerebatan Saray, or Basilica Cistern, rebuilt under Justinian in 532 CE is featured in the film based on Fleming's novel and has been open to tourists for some time now – but no disused drain exists anywhere that could support populations of rats and bats both, and certainly not in the numbers imagined to have given Bond his 'zoo smell.' There are, moreover, no kinds of bat, not in Istanbul certainly (I have looked and asked), indeed not anywhere in Anatolia, who would choose to live in a wet and rat-populated drain. As for the Soviet Embassy, it has always been in Ankara, while the magnificent nineteenth-century Russian Embassy building designed by Guiseppe Fossati in Beyoğlu, also featured in the film, is on the wrong side of the Golden Horn to be anywhere near the ancient water systems.⁷

Fleming's aim, of course, is not to provide anything like an accurate field-guide to the subterranean ecosystems and life forms of Istanbul but to perpetuate a peculiarly English experience of being in the Orient. His aim is to illustrate how, within mere hours of arrival, his hero's earliest encounters with the East necessarily involve being molested by insects and being brought into direct physical contact with the verminous life forms surging below the cities' filthy streets. In Bond's experience, there is to be little difference between Eastern nature and Turkish culture; he is repulsed as much by the hotel concierge, who 'executed an oily bow, washing his hands' while conducting our hero to a better room, as he is by the zoo smell acquired from the sewers. For Bond, the exotic sounds of insect, dog and man that greeted and excited him in Athens have all

too quickly metamorphosed into the noxious smells, verminous activity and beastly behaviour that repulse him in Istanbul.

Meetings with remarkable beasts

The earliest English travellers regularly reported experiences strikingly similar to those Fleming imagined for his hero. Personal complaint never entirely disappeared, and it would not be until the late seventeenth century that systematic cataloguing and describing of local fauna would also become a habit among the English, one encouraged by the Royal Society, but already long evident in continental writers. In this, the English were behind the times once again. For the Flemish-born Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, being appointed by Emperor Ferdinand to represent the Holy Roman Empire at the court of Süleyman the Magnificent provided the chance of gathering a substantial menagerie of exotic animal companions and examining their behaviour. Busbecq took up residence in Istanbul in January 1555, decades before the English arrived, and before returning to Vienna in 1562 had entered into domestic relations with numerous species including:

monkeys, wolves, bears, stags, gazelles, lynxes, eagles, ducks, cranes, partridges, and jackdaws. He also kept thoroughbred horses and baggage camels, and collected starfishes, clusters of cuttle-fish eggs, enormous snails, and some yellow balls, like oranges.⁸

Bernerd C. Weber, whose list I have been quoting, mentions 'thoroughbred' horses, potentially a confusing term ever since the eighteenth-century invention of the 'English thoroughbred' from Eastern bloodstock.⁹ Eighteenth-century English writers employed 'thoroughbred' or 'through-bred' as a translation of the Arabic *kehailan*, meaning 'purebred all through.'¹⁰ Busbecq's first English translator, however, renders Busbecq's phrase 'Habeo complures generosos equos...' into 'a Breed of brave Horses; some from *Syria*, others from *Cilicia*, *Arabia*, *Cappadocia*,' drawing attention to the purebred nature of these horses by means of their character, as courageous in battle and service.¹¹ 'Brave' was how the Duke of Newcastle described Ottoman or 'Turkish' horses in 1667 having, no doubt, inspected some that had been sent as gifts to Charles II and were kept at Newmarket.¹²

Busbecq was no Donna Haraway, yet witnessing how intimate transactions between man and beast constantly intrigued him since they

confounded expectations and pointed to heights of extraordinary intelligence among the animals. He marvelled at a young elephant 'that could dance and play at Ball':

When this *Elephant* was bid to dance, he did so caper or quaver with his whole Body, and interchangeably move his Feet, that he seem'd to represent a kind of Jig; and as for playing at Ball, he very prettily took up the Ball in his Trunk, and sent it packing therewith, as we do with the Palm of the Hand: And if this be not to dance and play at Ball, I know not what is.¹³

What also fascinated Busbecq was observing the close relations between people and animals. On his journey to Istanbul, Busbecq spent the night in a caravansary in Niş and could not help noting how the 'Turks' kept no partitions between themselves and the camels and horses:

and thus, when their Masters are warming themselves at the Fire, or else are at Supper, they stand near them as Servants us'd to do; and sometimes they will take a Piece of Bread or Apple, or whatsoever else is offered them, out of their Masters Hand.¹⁴

As European visitors travelled East, they found animals began behaving like clever servants; thus do familiar borders prove newly leaky. Arriving in Istanbul, Busbecq was even more astonished to witness how 'several sorts of wild Beasts...were so gentle and tame, that I saw one of the Keepers pull a *Sheep* out of a *Lions* Mouth, so that he only moistned his Jaws with the Blood without devouring him.' An emblem of Ottoman authority and absolute sway over all subjects, perhaps, the obedient lion doubtless suffered from some as yet un-named eating disorder, but survived, unlike the giraffe whose bones Busbecq eagerly interred for examination.¹⁵

In contrast with Busbecq's scientific interests in all manner of Eastern animals and their relations with humans, the English were relatively slow to develop beyond initial astonishment or fear when encountering unfamiliar creatures. In his autobiography, even the phlegmatic Levant Company accountant John Sanderson felt impelled to begin his report of arriving in Istanbul in 1592 by describing some of the strange animals he saw there.

Upon Palme Sunday we arrived in Constantinople where then I remained six or seven years. In which time I had the view of many

animalls, as olifants, tame lions, tame spotted cattes as bigge as little masties, great and smaule deer, rowebucks tame (but thes are brought out of Egipt). The admirablest and fairest beast that ever I saw was a jarraff, as tame as a domestical deere and of a reddish deere colour, whitebreasted and clovenfooted. He was of a very great hieth; his forelegs longer then the hinder; a very longe necke; and headed like a cambel, except two stumps of horne one his head. This fairest anymale was sent out of Ethiopia to this Great Turks father for a present. To [*sic*] Turks the keeper of him would make him kneele, but not before any Christian for any mony.¹⁶

Where Busbecq observed new and exciting forms of interaction between humans and animals, Sanderson marks his entrance into Istanbul by conjuring a frozen spectacle of outlandish beasts with curious names and astonishing bodies, a tableau in which the 'Turk' and his giraffe refuse to perform for the newly arrived English visitor.

In fairness to Sanderson, when it came to a more familiar and useful animal – a horse – he found himself capable of forming an unusual attachment with one that he called 'a Babilonian,' presumably an Arabian, whose behaviour echoes Busbecq's observations about the tractable behaviour of Eastern horses. This particular horse was, Sanderson writes,

an excellent duple grai, very sadd [dark coloured], of a meane stature; rather too little for me, but the best, I am of opinion, that ever I shalbe master of. He would walke by me, licking my hand; stand still when I backed him; and kneele at my pleasure. I presented him to Ed. Abbott, who one him outranne the most famouse beast in Alepo, called Berthrams mare . . . He cost me in Stamble 24 ducats gould; his furniture as much more.¹⁷

Although no sentimentalist, Sanderson clearly recognized how Eastern horses behaved rather differently from those he knew back in England; and he seems to have been rather put out that Abbott, the merchant to whom he gave his 'Babilonian' later sold him for a small profit.

In describing the creatures kept by the sultan, Sanderson was but responding to one of the more immediately striking features of Ottoman imperial culture: the celebrated collection of a wide-ranging menagerie of animals collected from all parts of the Empire and beyond that demonstrated the sultan's glory and prestige. Sanderson later noted how, when Mehmed III set out for Hungary in 1595, his entourage involved a great assembly of men and beasts:

I remember a great number of dogs ledd after him, well manned and in thier best apparrell; his haukes by horsmen carried in gret number; tame lions and olifants, with other beasts of many sorts; but espetially the jarraff before spoken of, beinge prince of all the beasts, was ledd by three chaines of three sundry men stalking before him. For it is the custome that, the Great Turke in person goinge on warefare, most or all in generall the cheefe men and beasts attend him out of the citie.¹⁸

Maintaining such a vast array of striking and bizarre animals to impress his subjects, and terrify his enemies, made significant inroads on the imperial exchequer. Providing food and shelter for the enormous variety and number of often delicate and dangerous creatures formed a significant part of the court revenues, and employed specialists in all forms of animal husbandry. Within the Topkapı palace itself, extensive and elegant stable blocks were capable of housing as many as thirty of the sultan's prized horses, and there were also stables for the oxen used to transport wood to the palace kitchens.¹⁹ Thomas Gainsford, who joined the Istanbul embassy in 1607, described the palace and noted that:

Under the walls are stables for seahorses called *Hippopotami*, which is a monstrous beast taken in *Nilus*, Elephants, Tygres, and Dolphines: sometimes they have Crocadiles and Rhinoceros: within are Roe-buckes, white Partridges, and Turtles, the bird of *Arabia*, and many beasts and fowles of Affrica and India.²⁰

Outside the palace were additional stables for horses, as well as special facilities for the elephants, lions and other creatures in addition to their handlers. An edict issued in 1574 or 1575 during the reign of Murad III casts some light on the variety of exotic carnivores living inside one such facility, the *arslanhane*, or lion-house, and the expenses entailed in supplying enough sheep's heads to feed them. A total of ninety-three heads per day were being fed to an unknown number of lions, tigers, wolves and civet cats, in addition to two monkeys, two lynxes and a solitary sable. Apparently those responsible for feeding these creatures had been caught out for overcharging the treasury. The purpose of the edict was to point out that, at a cost of one *akçe* (a small silver coin) for four heads, the total costs were well below the forty-six and a half *akçe* per day being claimed by the keepers and to demand a refund of the difference.²¹ By way of comparison, the average daily earnings of a member of the Janissary corps rose from half an *akçe* in 1527 to a little over seven *akçe* in 1609, so if we assume a steady rise in salary rates, the

cost of feeding the animals in the *arslanhane* alone – and the treasury maintained plenty of herbivorous animals such as elephants, giraffes, camels, horses and oxen too – was roughly equivalent to the salaries of five or even six soldiers.²² Even without the corruption of their keepers, the sultan's beasts were by no means an inexpensive item on the palace budget, but they were clearly successful at achieving their purpose of impressing foreign visitors.

The unfamiliar quadrupeds attached to the court and army were not the only strange animals to strike the imaginations of English visitors and, presumably, those who read their accounts. Many are the reports of excitement at seeing and riding camels. William Davies was simply astonished by his first sight of them on Cyprus, while those who travelled into desert places continued to feel the need to offer detailed descriptions.²³ An anonymous English writer describing the pilgrimage to Mecca reports that forty thousand 'Mules, Camels, and Dromedaries' were needed for the great caravan, and describes how 'the greatest and fairest [camel] which may be found within the dominions of the Grand Signior... is decked with cloth of golde and silke, and carieth a little chest... made in likenesse of the arke of the olde Testament' for carrying a copy of the Qur'an.²⁴ William Lithgow felt impelled to provide an idiosyncratic account of the distinction between camels and dromedaries:

A Dromidore, and Camel differ much in quality, but not in quantity, being of one height, bredth, and length; save only their heads and feete, which are proportionated alike; and the difference is such, that the Dromidory hath a quicke and hard-reaching trot, and will ride above 80. miles in the day, if that his rider can indure the paine. But the Cammell is of a contrary disposition: For he hath a most slow and lazy pace, removing the one foote from the other, as though he were weighing his feete in a balance; neither can he go faster than he would.²⁵

More practically minded, the Habsburg envoy Busbecq collected six female camels, intending to take them back for his 'royal masters' in hopes of persuading them 'to breed this kind of animal.' Recognizing their usefulness on the unpaved and frequently remote roads traversing the Ottoman lands, he had come to believe that:

There are two things of which the *Turks* make Mighty Advantage of, which are *Rice* among the Fruits of the Earth, and *Camels* among the

Beasts of the Field, both of them very convenient in their several Kinds, for long Expeditions...And for *Camels*, they'l carry huge Burdens; they will endure Hunger and Thirst to admiration; and also they require little Attendance.²⁶

To an equestrian people like the English, fascination with camels, their peculiar habits, and just how uncomfortable they were to ride on, seems to have required endless reports. Even as late as 1789, Henry Abbott considered that readers of his published *Journal* would be interested by an illustrated account of an accident he sustained when the girths of the mahafee, the contrivance strapped to his camel's back, snapped.

...down we came, basket and all; the fall was very aukward, and though I got no hurt, and my companion only a slight bruise, we have to thank Providence for coming off with sound necks.

The Arabs attributed this accident to the box that is fastened at one end of each mahafee, for the convenience of an European to stretch his legs; these I really believe squeezed the camel's shoulders, the most susceptible part of that animal; besides, far from answering the purpose they are intended for, the sharp corners of the upper parts of the boxes used to cut our legs most unmercifully, at every step the camel took: independent of these inconveniences, that of being confined to one posture, (which in this kind of mahafee you must be) during a long day's march, is not a small one; we therefore exchanged them for those of our servants, without boxes, which we found far the easiest, and turned them to our own use during the rest of the journey. Thus equipped, we continued our course until half an hour after eleven that morning.²⁷

Perhaps some of the purpose and pleasure of this account was the heroic display of how the author overcame acute discomfort and subsequently proved that he knew better than the locals. Certain it is that Henry Abbott clearly liked to appear as intrepid as possible, later recording how he enjoyed a meal of roasted camel, 'which I found pretty tender, and not inferior to coarse beef.' 'But,' he continued, 'my companion, from his prejudice against the animal when alive, could not bear the thoughts of feasting on its flesh.'²⁸ Perhaps his companion was still smarting from their earlier tumble.

Although various kinds of encounter with camels preoccupied many travellers, amphibious quadrupeds also startled and excited the attention of English visitors, sometimes leading to what are obviously unreliable

reports. On a journey to Egypt, Sanderson was surprised one morning by a group of hippopotami that he attempted to describe by comparing them with animals that would have been familiar to readers in England, including the camel:

...comminge alonge by a little iland, we espied eight sea horsse, which weare in bignes like great swine, rather bigger, headed like a horsse, onelie thier ears round like a cambles. They arose one by one as we came neare them, and plunged into the water. A Spahie (which is a cavalier Turke) toke his bowe and shotte at them; did hitt one upon the head, and he snuffeled up out of the water, makinge a great noyes; *but we set eye no more upon them.*

It is conceivable that Sanderson did not know what he was looking at. He was evidently saddened by their departure, but whether because he found them simply wonderful to watch or because he imagined he might have been able to make some quick cash from them is unclear. Elsewhere he notes that his greatest profits while trading in Istanbul and Aleppo came from 'factorage profit of fishes teeth' noting that 'a parcel' of 'seahorses teeth was a very luckie marchandice' that realized 'above 2000 ducats Gould in Constantinople.' The 'teeth' he had imported from England that made him such 'a good and luckie increase' were, most likely, walrus tusks.²⁹

Surprisingly, Sanderson spotted no crocodiles during his journey along the Nile, but many other English visitors to the region did and their accounts not uncommonly begin to blend observation with various forms of local legend and superstitious belief. After all, as one commentator declared: '*Affrica* is that part of the *World* that doth produce most *Wonders, Monsters, strange Beasts, Fowles, and Serpents.*'³⁰ As if in conformation, one early traveller reported that in the Nile

are very many great Croccodiles from Cairo upward, but lower then Cairo passeth no such creature: and this, they say, is by reason of an inchantment made long since with hindereth their passage for coming any lower then Cairo. Moreover of these creatures there are sometimes found some of an incredible bignesse, that is to say, of fourtie foot about. The males have their members like to a man, and the females like to a woman.³¹

Much of this is clearly unreliable hearsay, though perfectly reliable as a report of common belief since the legend about 'an inchantment' that

kept crocodiles restricted in their movements would be repeated more than a century later by Ellis Veryard who informs us that

The Crocodil is an amphibious Creture, that lives on land as well as in the Water, and is seldom found below *Cairo*, which the *Egyptians* attribute to a *Talesman*, or constellated Figure, said to have been tied by the antient Magicians under the Pillar of *Mikias*, which repels or kills them when they approach: But because they are now and then found below *Cairo*, they say that this *Talesman* is (I know not by what accident) turn'd up-side-down, so that a Crocodil may pass, if he swim on his Back.³²

However, Nile crocodiles do not grow to forty feet in size – Veryard quite reasonably claimed to have seen one ‘about Sixteen feet in length’ and Lithgow reports on one ‘whose body was twenty two foot long’ – and do not display external genitalia. Yet the notion that these man-eating amphibians have ‘their members like to’ those of humans indicates how easily seemingly settled certainties, such as the difference between people and beasts, could all too easily come unstuck when coming across beasts in foreign parts. When describing the statue of the Sphinx – ‘a Woman’s Face, and the Body of a Beast’ – Veryard never suspects that any corresponding anomaly had ever existed, but crocodiles were clearly a different thing: actually existing creatures from far distant areas, especially dangerous ones of monstrous size that inhabit both land and water, might well have seemed to cross between human and animal orders.³³ Nor, perhaps, should it be surprising that sexual difference was a specific site of such contravention since it was fondly imagined that the lands ruled by the Ottomans were a place where all manner of bizarre and un-natural forms of sexuality could be found. And the ancient Egyptian fertility god Sobek was, after all, half man and half crocodile. A few sentences after noting how crocodiles have human-like genitals, the anonymous author further informs us: ‘This countrey is so fruitfull, that it causeth the women as also other creatures to bring foorth one, two, and oft-times three at a birth.’³⁴ People and beasts, it would seem, are here equally subject to a distinctive order of nature unlike that familiar to the folks back in England.

Further reported sightings of improbable beasts are not hard to find. While in captive service to the Ottoman army, Edward Webbe travelled extensively and wrote of seeing a ‘beast...called Arians, having foure heades, they are in shape like a wilde Cat, and are of the heighth of a

Mastie Curre.' He also claimed to have 'seen in a place like a park . . . three score and seventeene, Unicornes and Oliphants all alive at once time, and they were so tame that I have played with them as one would play with young Lambes.' Engraved images of a unicorn and an 'oliphant' adorn the description. Of more interest in terms of how meetings with remarkable beasts figured in the construction of differential human identities, Webbe also reported coming upon a river in which the fish were magically capable of distinguishing the religious identity of human predators. 'In the land of Siria,' he writes,

there is a River that no Jew can get or catch any fish in it at all, and yet in the same River there is great store of fish like unto Samon Troutes. But let a Christian or a Turke come thither and fish for them, & either of them shall catch them in great abundance, if they doe but put their hand into the water with a little bred, and an hundreth will be about his hand.³⁵

Webbe's human categories here are emphatically religious, yet such bizarre and fantastic claims about interactions between people and animals no doubt helped to contribute to the incipient process of defining and constructing national identities. More than a century after Webbe's *Travailes* appeared, with the so-called 'Enlightenment' breaking out over Europe, the distinction between religion and nation had come into play, yet remained tied to pre-emptive moral judgement. Ellis Veryard, writing at the end of the seventeenth century, typified the approach when he observed that not all 'Turks' were necessarily born Muslims or even, for that matter, 'true *Turks*':

I grant, the true *Turks* are naturally good and just in all their Actions; but these are the least part, the greater being *Renegats*, *Moors*, and *Arabs*, People of very corrupt Manners. The True *Turks* rarely or never fail of their word, and are apt to reproach the *Jews* and *Christians* with that Vice. They are likewise zealous in their way, charitable, temperate, and even superstitiously reserv'd.³⁶

A trained physician, Veryard was very much a man of the new scientific age, who travelled in pursuit of what he called '*good Education*,' confident 'that the Learning of the Antients is become almost (if not quite) useless,' and needed to be replaced by 'actually viewing and contemplating . . . things in the Original.'³⁷ And it was in that spirit of advancing knowledge through careful observation that his *Account of Divers Choice*

Remarks, as well Geographical, as Historical, Political, Mathematical, Physical, and Moral was published with numerous steel-engravings of animals and objects he examined on his travels. Among the illustrations he included an image of a creature that confounds any distinctions between humans, animals and creatures of the sea (Figure 9). 'As we pas'd along the coast of the *Red Sea*,' Veryard writes,

we saw divers *Mairmaids* ... if I may so call a certain Fish taken there-about, having a Head like a Monkey, a Neck, Breast, and Belly like a Woman, and the Tail of a Fish. It has likewise Arms with one Joynt only, and Hands, but the Fingers (tho' in Number and Articulations like ours) are joyn'd by a Membrane like the Feet of a Goose. Its Skin is thick and ruff, which the Country People use for Shoes.³⁸

Whatever the creature might have been, Veryard's language testifies to the imprecise development of the scientific gaze at the time, blending as it does clinical observations with comparisons that merge different natural orders. What might Jonathan Swift have made of this description and illustration?

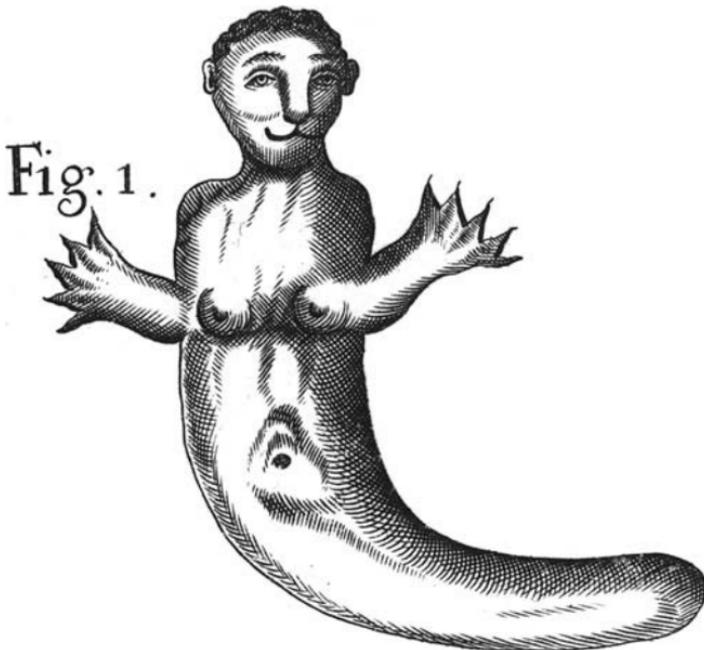


Figure 9 A 'Mairmaid' from Ellis Veryard's *An Account of Divers Choice Remarks, as well Geographical, as Historical, Political, Mathematical, Physical, and Moral* (1701), opposite p. 283. By permission of the British Library, shelfmark 215.e.14. Copyright belongs to the British Library and further reproduction is prohibited

Yet not all meetings with unlikely creatures were benign. In addition to the spectacular displays of the sultan's beasts on the streets of Istanbul and sightings of bizarre and unusual creatures, many English travellers tell of perilous and even life-threatening meetings with alien reptiles, rodents and insects of many kinds. In 1599, Thomas Dallam described being bitten by insects on his first night on Ottoman soil, and regularly recorded the insects, 'Aders, snakes, and sarpentes,' and other wild creatures that he seemed to run into whenever he stepped ashore.³⁹ Yet Dallam might have considered himself fortunate since John Covel, travelling to Istanbul in 1669 got no further than Malaga before running into 'little bugs, which left hard knobs and pimples wherever they seised.'⁴⁰ Irritating and dangerous encounters with nature in its foreign forms were very much part of reports by the earliest English eyewitnesses, and they doubtless contributed to traditional insularities and prejudices regarding abroad. Seventeenth-century travellers had no names for the microscopic viruses and bacterial forms of life that proved threatening to so many Englishmen and women who travelled into the Mediterranean and further east. Yet many reported the hazards of breathing the air in the harbour at Iskenderun and various phrases came into usage, such as 'yellow janders' and 'that rascally Scanderon disease.'⁴¹ English ships commonly moored at Iskenderun in order to attend to trading interests in Aleppo, the most important centre of the Eastern trade after Cairo. From Aleppo, John Verney wrote home to complain of being 'often troubled with little flies which sting our hands and faces.'⁴² Fynes Moryson writes at length of how both he and his brother were taken ill on the road from Aleppo to Iskenderun, and how his brother's subsequent death from what he calls the 'flux' – most probably dysentery – necessitated organizing a grave deep enough and with enough stones to prevent 'jackells' of the night who would otherwise dig up the corpse. Even in death, the Englishman's body was threatened by beastly predators. Dallam records several crew and passengers dying over a period of several weeks following their stay at Iskenderun, while pious travellers like William Biddulph regularly used metaphors of plague and contagion to characterize the dangers to godly Protestants of living too long among Muslims, Jews and Eastern Christians. At the other end of the Mediterranean, Samuel Pepys recorded being plagued by the insect life of Tangier in 1684. Although he wisely slept aboard the ship, by the third night the invasion had arrived: on the fourth morning after his arrival Pepys woke 'mightily out of order with my being bit in my face' by bed-bugs.⁴³

Of Turkish beasts and beastly Turks

From the East came forth not only many kinds of beasts, great and small, fabulous and familiar, but also – in the view of English visitors – many different forms of beastliness. After several years living in Istanbul, Paul Rycaut felt impelled to condemn the Ottomans for what he considered to be their unhealthy and perverse attitude towards dogs and camels. Scorning those who ‘hold it a merciful action to buy bread and feed the Dogs, of which there is a great number of diseased Curs in all streets appropriate to no Master,’ Rycaut indignantly complained that

this care of Dogs is accounted so charitable, that there are certain Laws made for the protection and maintenance of them: and it is a lighter offence to deny bread to a poor Christian who is famished in his chains, than to the Dogs of their street, which are fit for nothing but to breed Infections.

Offended that legislation insured dogs were treated with greater charity than people, Rycaut kept his greatest contempt for the great affection with which Ottomans treated camels, going so far as to hold them in ‘Religious reverence.’ ‘The Camel,’ he wrote,

is another sort of Beast to which the *Turks* bear not only a love, but a Religious reverence, accounting it a greater sin to over-burthen them with too much labour than the Horse, because it is the beast most common to the holy parts of *Arabia*, & carries the *Alchoran* in pilgrimage.

Worse still, in Rycaut’s view, was the particular intimacy that he claims to have witnessed taking place between camels and their handlers:

I have observed those who have the government of the *Camels*, when they have given water to them in a Bason, to take of the foam or froth that comes from the mouth of the Beast, and with that, as if it were some rare Balsome, with a singular devotion to anoint their Beards, & thereat with a Religious sigh groan out, *Hadgi Baba, Hadgi Baba*, which is as much as, Oh Father Pilgrim, Oh Father Pilgrim.⁴⁴

Evidently repelled by such antic gestures of seeming piety, Rycaut leaves it to his readers to judge whether the devoted reverence or the near mingling of bodily fluids is more offensive.

At other times, Rycaut was fond of demeaning Ottomans by describing them in animal terms. Ottoman troops, expert at digging mines under the walls of besieged fortresses, were 'like worms' who would later reappear 'heaving like Moles.' When Murad IV seemed to yield to the demands of his mutinous janissaries, 'it was only like a Ram who retires, that he may butt with the greater force.'⁴⁵ A native resemblance to wild and uncivilized beasts was among the charges regularly levelled against the Ottomans by early travellers. In the dedication to his *Travels*, Sir George Sandys called the Turks 'the wild beasts of mankind' claiming that they had broken in upon ancient civilizations 'and rooted out all civilitie.'⁴⁶ In a similar vein, Thomas Smith, after wandering about viewing Christian sites in Istanbul, casually observed: 'I was oftentimes perplext and in doubt, whether I was more to admire the piety and munificence of those, who raised such stately and glorious structures, or the brutishness and barbarousness of those, who pulled them down.'⁴⁷ Smith travelled to Istanbul in 1668 as chaplain to Daniel Harvey and stayed three years in Anatolia: his *Remarks* won him acclaim from the Royal Society. A churchman hostile to everything non-Christian he saw, Smith formally declared that 'The Turks are justly branded with the character of a Barbarous Nation,'⁴⁸ reminding us just how easily the terms – bestial, brutish, barbarous – slide into one another in the language of confident English observers.

Both Sandys and Smith probably held these views about the Ottomans before they left England. Such ideas had long been part of received wisdom regarding the Turks among literate Englishmen. Bestial forms of sexual conduct were also very much part of the picture. Here is John Speed, who never travelled, writing from documentary sources with all the certainty of an eyewitness specialist in terms that anticipate the racial ethnographers of much more modern times:

The multitude, I mean the born-*Turkes* favour still of their barbarous ancestors, and carry the markes in their foreheads, and limmes, of *Scythians* and *Tartars*. They are for the most part broad-faced, strong-boned, well proportioned, dull and heavie headed, of grosse understanding, idley disposed, and yet greedy of wealth, luxurious in their diet, and bestly in their lustfull actions, without distinction of kindred or sexe.⁴⁹

Accusations of bestiality opened vistas of indiscriminate profligacy, of lust unbounded by conventional English categories, of a dizzying multiplicity of wanton meanings, yet they invariably suggested how

any normative distinction between people and animals needed to be redrawn.

Here is an example of how crossing from Christendom into the Islamic Mediterranean could be a felt experience involving observable changes in the natural world. For Thomas Smith, travelling to Istanbul in 1668, the line separating Christian civility from Turkish beastliness was very much a geo-physical reality that could be read and understood from observation of the natural world, especially the behaviour of exotic creatures at sea. Smith records feelings of entering into a different order of nature once he approached the Mediterranean. Off Biscay he noted: 'We saw a Pilot-fish swim by the sides of the Ship and several Bonito's and Albicores playing, as it were with their Heads above water.' In the behaviour of birds at sea he marked how the natural world itself distinguished the borders of Christendom by marking the spaces of death which opened up beyond: 'At other times I have seen several Birds floating upon the Water, which being driven by some Tempest from the Coasts of *Spain* and *Portugal*, have been tired in their flight and so drowned. This happens . . . sometimes even in the Mediterranean, in the Mid-Seas between the *Christian* and *Barbary* Shores.'⁵⁰ Smith was by no means alone in reporting this sensation of entering a new world order of natural differences unlike those he knew at home. Like Bond, Smith knew he had entered the East because the animals told him so.

One of the most sensational reports of bestiality in Ottoman-controlled lands appeared from the London press in 1670. According to the *Adventures* of 'Mr. T. S.,' an English merchant held captive in Ottoman Algeria, divine fury once petrified a man caught in the very act with his favourite donkey. 'At some distance from *Tezrim*,' he writes:

in a little Meadow where excellent Grass grows, I saw the perfect Stature of a man Bugging his Ass: it was so lively that at a little distance I fancied they had been alive, but when I came nearer, I saw they were of a perfect Stone.⁵¹

Aware that Muslims 'naturally hate all sorts of Representations,' T. S. doubts that the statue can have been manmade. After a close inspection, he becomes convinced that only divine intervention could, 'in the very moment of the Beastly Act,' have so swiftly 'changed the fleshly Substances of the Man and of the Ass into a firm Stone, as an eternal reproach to Mankind.'⁵² Lest sceptical readers doubt his word, T. S. reassures us that other 'Merchants, and Traders' will confirm that similar stone

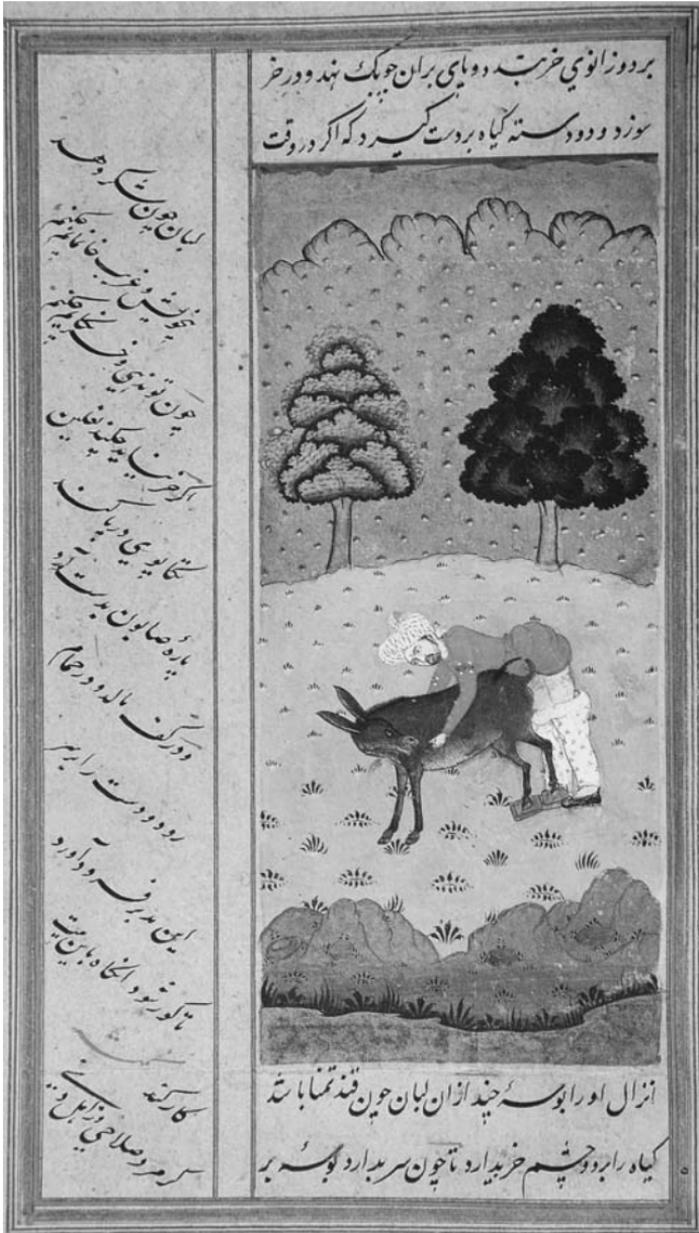


Figure 10 A man and his favourite donkey. Private collection, Istanbul

monuments are to be seen elsewhere in the Ottoman Maghrib, all of them testimonies to a just god. Such seems to have been the case. Published in 1657, Laurence Price's pamphlet *A Famous City Turned into Stone* tells of Angrogra, a town supposedly inland from Tripoli whose inhabitants

were reported to have been petrified even as they were 'merry making amongst their Friends and acquaintances: some were vaulting and dancing in dancing Schooles, some were acting their parts in the Play-houses, whilst others were drinking and swaggering in Ale-houses.'⁵³ This sounds rather more like London than anywhere in North Africa at the time.

Of the statue in Tezrim, T. S. assures us 'It is necessary that the *Moors* should have such signal Tokens of Gods Displeasure always before their eyes; for they are enraged to commit such filthy Actions more frequently than other Nations.'⁵⁴ Africa was renowned for being home to monsters and beasts unknown elsewhere, but from much further east comes the Persian poet's advice on how to tie the feet of the donkey down before attempting copulation, as comically imaged by an anonymous artist (Figure 10). Such scenes of beastliness and bestiality challenge the borders that define humanity, serving Christian claims that condemn Islamic Ottomans, Arabs and Moors to brutish underdevelopment and un-natural relations with animals. But not always.

Of beasts and blood lines

Such reports of beastly behaviour point directly to Orientalist othering and phobic hostilities; tales of beasts in the East, human and otherwise, could be summoned as evidence of the backwardness and often dangerous under-development to be found among the peoples and their institutions. Yet there are other sides to the picture too, instances in which disturbing, blurring and erasing lines between nature and culture in the East enabled forms of recognition and identification. Being English or British or both, took shape in terms of relations with Anatolian Turkey and its native inhabitants, human and animal, legendary and historical. In 1614, Tristram White described how St George figured the historical intimacy between Anatolia and England:

George not in *Europe*, nor in *England* borne,
Whom living though much noblenesse did adorne,
Yet was no Peere to meanest Potentates,
His fame transplanted to the Westerne States.⁵⁵

Similarly transplanted, Brutus, the legendary founder of Britain and grandson of Aeneas, was also Anatolian born. George and Brutus were neither Turks, Ottomans or Muslims, nor were they native to the nations they later came to patronize. Being English or British or both had a great deal to do with mythic ancestry, and fantasies of breeding in a bit of

hybrid vigour from the East was clearly a possible option once borders between fact and myth became blurred.

With St George in mind, it is worth noting how slaying oriental beasts was part of a general structure that defined English-ness from fanciful Anatolian origins. Whoever the historical George might have been, the Cappadocian hero assumed his dragon-slaying attributes from Manas, hero of the venerable and ancient Kirghiz epic.⁵⁶ According to the Soviet folklorist Samar Musayev, Manas himself represents both the dragon-slayer and the dragon who slays.⁵⁷ But for White, the 'ordinary' image of St George 'killing a Dragon, is but Symbollicall and figurative' of how England inherited the flag of true faith.⁵⁸ So, no doubt, it could come about in 1660 at the Restoration of monarchy to England, that the Devon-born General George Monk could be proclaimed a new St George, a re-born 'Turkish' slayer of dragons, in numerous ballads and fanciful biographies that appeared once he declared that he and his army were for the return of Charles Stuart.⁵⁹

In Restoration England, the idea of killing oriental beasts also revived memories of how Richard I became known as 'lion-hearted' while on crusade against Islam, a topos that lived on in the figure of a lion-killing English hero. A broadside ballad published during the 1660s imagines how an Elizabethan apprentice travelled to Turkey, killed the king's son, but escaped punishment. Indeed, as shown by the woodcut illustrating the broadside (Figure 11), our English hero reaches right into the mouths of two famished lions and tears their hearts out, declaring that he does so 'for lovely *Englands* sake, / And for my Country Maiden Queen.' Amazed at the death of his lions, the superstitious Turkish 'King' is quick to perceive supernatural forces at work:

So taking up this young man
 he pardon'd him his life,
 And gave his daughter to him
 to be his wedded wife,
 Where then they did remain
 and live in quiet peace,
 In spending forth their happy days
 in joy and loves increase.⁶⁰

I will discuss this ballad in further detail in the next chapter; for the moment, suffice it to observe that, if its claims were true, then by the 1660s when the broadside appeared, an Englishman had fathered two or three generations of Ottoman sultans.



Figure 11 Woodcut illustration to *The Honour of an Apprentice of London*, c.1658–1664. By courtesy of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, shelfmark Wood 401, pages 63/4

John Bulwer's *Anthropometamorphosis*

Writing in the mid-seventeenth century, the physician John Bulwer regularly contrasts the human form divine with the body made beastly when charting the ways cultural practices have inscribed national distinctions onto the human body itself. An early essay in ethno-anthropology, John Bulwer's *Anthropometamorphosis: Man Transform'd: Or, The Artificiall Changing Historically presented, In the mad and cruell Gallantry, foolish Bravey, ridiculous Beauty, filthy Finesse, and loathsome Loveliness of most Nations, fashioning and altering their Bodies from the mould intended by Nature; With Figures of those Transfigurations... With a Vindication of the Regular Beauty and Honesty of Nature*, of 1650, was sufficiently successful to be revised and reprinted three years later in a larger and more sumptuous format, with a finely engraved portrait of the author by William Faithorne, as well as numerous original woodcuts illustrating how people around the world marked and mutilated their bodies with signs of national belonging.⁶¹ Bulwer fiercely advocates a natural way of being human, a precept that he applied comprehensively to the different ways that people throughout the world not only dressed differently in accordance with national fashions, but more importantly

the various ways they marked their bodies to conform with culturally specific versions of beauty.

Compiled from the work of a wide variety of Muslim, Greek and Christian writers and travellers from Aristotle to Leo Africanus, from Averroes to William Lithgow, Bulwer's book argued for a godly and therefore natural order of human behaviour. Though global, it is resolutely ahistorical and concerned with reforming the extravagant English fashions of his own godly times. It examines how 'the mad and cruell Gallantry, foolish Fineness, and loathsome Loveliness of most Nations' led to a 'fashioning and altering their Bodies from the mould intended by Nature.'⁶² Terming such deformities 'Apish,' Bulwer wanted his readers to understand that there was a proper, divinely ordained original and hence entirely natural way of being human in a human body that had been disrupted by satanic inspiration and cultural influence. 'I doubt not,' Bulwer writes in the prefatory epistle,

but you will soon discern the propense malice of Satan . . . tempting mankind to a corporall Apostasy from himself: as if in an Apish despight of the glory of man's Creation, that divine consultation, *Faciamus hominem*, Let us make man according to our Image; He would have his *Defaciamus hominem*, Let us deface man according to our likenesse.⁶³

Despite such occasional asides at supernatural influences, however, Bulwer usually pursued more secular explanations, such as the possibility that mankind had evolved from the beasts. 'From the mouth of a Philosopher' he reports hearing the argument that 'man was a meer Artificiall creature, and was at first but a kind of Ape or Baboon, who through his industry (by degrees) in time had improved his figure & his Reason up to the perfection of man.'⁶⁴ In Colin Kidd's distinction, this is differential development but no essential difference in kind.⁶⁵ Bulwer, finding this anonymous philosopher's position 'too sceptical,' nevertheless persuaded at least one friendly reader to conclude that there was a reverse evolution at work throughout the entire world that had rendered humankind into 'the now little better then the perfecter sort of Ape called *Man*.'⁶⁶ Bulwer terms this perverted and backwards evolution a 'new History of abused Nature' and contends that it has, 'in many parts of the world,' shown mankind to have 'practically degenerated into the similitude of a Beast,' while some men never learned to stand upright but continue 'on all foure, like foure-footed Beasts.'⁶⁷

Bulwer's method in advancing his 'Corporall Philosophy' was to encourage readers to reflect upon the strange habits and practices of other nations and then to engage in self reflection, 'that men descending into themselves, may know themselves to be men and not beasts.'⁶⁸ Artificial behaviour could be approved in certain circumstances. When describing how men and women in different parts of the world marked their bodies with signs of national belonging, Bulwer approved of practices that aimed to rectify defects or enhance what nature initially intended, and often showed himself to be remarkably even-handed in judging other nations and cultures. On occasion he goes so far as to concede that even the habits of the 'Turks' can be approved when they clearly arise from natural conditions. 'All endeavour of Art pretending to advance the Eye above its natural beauty,' he writes,

is vain and impious, as much derogating from the wisdome of Nature. Art indeed, where Nature sometimes failes, and proves defective, may helpe to further her perfection: but where shee appeares absolute, there to add or detract is instead of mending to marr all. Yet perchance the *Turks*, in painting the hair of their eye-lids, might be excused, if they did it to a Natural end, (which I doubt they doe not, but in a Phantasticall bravery) for some think that the hair of the Eye-lids doe cast a shadow upon the eye, helping thereby the blacknesse of the thin membrane.⁶⁹

Such functionalist arguments are common to Bulwer's scheme of what is natural and serve to illustrate his contention that whatever enhances nature is beautiful. Accordingly, he approves of the Ottoman fashion for using 'a black powder made of a Mineral called *Alchole*' for drawing their eyebrows 'into embowed arches' by arguing that:

To draw them into embowed Arches, is but an imitation of Nature: but to make them meet, is more then shee ever intended; but (as the *Arabians* doe) to paint them in a Triangular forme, is a piece of Geometry, which we cannot allow to be exercised in the Eye-brows.⁷⁰

By the same argument he disapproves of several practices found among the Ottomans, particularly those that have led the English into bad habits. 'The Turkes,' he observes, 'paint their long nailes red, and our Merchants that live there conform unto that custome,'⁷¹ but continues: 'These Nations who thus paint their Nails, offend against the vertue of

ornamentall Decorum, Decency, or reverence, in this unnatural excesse of care, being not contented with the naturall beauty of the naile.⁷²

Clearly, Bulwer was by no means uniformly hostile to those he called 'Turks,' and even adopts the 'Turkish' point of view in order to condemn fashionable Englishmen and women for their beastly sartorial habits. In keeping with the reforming English spirit of his times, Bulwer pilloried excessive, costly, flamboyant and foppish costume for being gross, costly, vain and immodest. 'What would Turkes say,' Bulwer asks, 'to an English man thus strictly cloathed, who detest our little and streight breeches as dishonest, because they too much expresse our shamefull parts.'⁷³ Before worrying what the 'Turks' might think, Bulwer had been fulminating against elaborate styles of male codpieces that were still to be seen in revolutionary England. Of such immodest and beastly, if not piscine, fashions, he writes at length:

Those filthy and Apish Breeches, that so openly shew'd our secret parts, with the vaine and unprofitable modell of a member, which we may not so much as name with modesty, whereof notwithstanding we made publike shew and open demonstration, was the shadowed imitation of the reall bulke of the great Privy Membred *Guineans*. Or else this fashion seemes to have been derived from the *Indians* of the Island *La Trinidad*, who beare their members in a Gourd or Reed, as it were in a sheath, letting their stones hang out; before the Spaniards came into the Country they wore such kind of Codpieces bordered with Gold and Pearle, which Custome the Spaniard made them to leave. And these Ribband-bushes that our moderne Gallants hang at their Cod-piece, want nothing but Bells instead of Tags, to be allied in their Phansie to the yard-balls of those of *Aga*, *Pegu*, *Siam*, and the *Bramas*, who delight in such gay baubles and Codpiece musique.⁷⁴

Bulwer no doubt saw and even heard ornamental codpieces exhibited on the streets of London, but it is unlikely he ever saw any of the exotic people he describes. The illustrated edition, however, provided a woodcut of a smiling male figure – complete with bow and quiver of arrows and naked but for an ornamental codpiece – in case the imaginations of English readers needed prompting.

Since Bulwer was writing entirely from written sources, there is nothing casual about his own method and language, and it is entirely symptomatic that he should term 'apish' the fashion for men to ornament and display their genitalia. Base imitation crosses the border into naked brute beastliness, but the state of play only becomes

visible in these ways once the comparativist concern for the whole world was put on the agenda. In many respects, Bulwer's concerns and method seem strikingly globalizing since he seeks to unfold the layers of acculturation that have transformed the human body from its 'natural' – which for Bulwer means prelapsarian – state into the multiple variants and internationalized differences of the 1650s. He understood that to achieve a worldly perspective on the human form involved a complex negotiation of certain physical distinctions between men and women, humankind and animals, as well as the cultural, historical and geographical factors that always complicate general theories.

Put another way, I am suggesting that already by the 1650s, in assembling a contemporary and global history of human bodies based on ancient sources and travellers' accounts, Bulwer anticipated many concerns among feminist and postcolonial theorists of identity formation, not only regarding the complex and international interactions between sex, gender and race, but also those between people and animals.⁷⁵ We are unlikely to approve many of Bulwer's views, but his study shows he recognized how knowledge of the world brought familiar and local normativities to crisis.

Bulwer evidently understood what some today would call gender construction and performativity, and that these categories were both circumstantial and increasingly defined in comparative and global registers. Bulwer insists that women are little different from, and sometimes worse than, animals. When condemning artificial hair colouring, Bulwer writes condescendingly and without gallantry: 'Tincture of Haire is most shamefull and detestable in Men; so in that impotent creature, and untamed Animal, Woman (to the more honourable sort of whom Ornamental dresses of Haire are permitted) the indulgency is to be moderated.'⁷⁶ Bulwer was by no means alone in this view of women. Here is the French traveller Jean de Thevenot: 'The Turks do not believe that Women go to Heaven, and hardly account them Rational Creatures; the truth is, they take them only for their service as they would a Horse.'⁷⁷ Strategically, at least, Bulwer made use of the 'Turkish' point of view to condemn beastly English habits. He condescends to women, just as he will enforce the crude judgements of his age about primitive peoples being more like animals than civilized nations. But Bulwer was also starting to think through how the complex interconnections between sex, gender, race and nation were inseparable from understanding animals and the beastly within human culture.

Some conclusions: Englishness, borders, beasts

Where imperial envy took negative form, admiration gave way malice. Ian Fleming's Turcophobia echoes an established Orientalist strategy for redefining the borders between nature and culture in the East and thereby bringing Eastern peoples and animals into a mutual register below the superior human level which the English imagined for themselves and their own cultural values. Early reports of infestation by invisible perils, alien insects and other vermin not before seen by Englishmen contributed to previously existing structures of anti-Islamic prejudice. Even reports of sightings of exotica, such as crocodiles, giraffes and elephants in the Topkapı palace, could contribute to the sense that Ottoman lands were un-natural, a perversion of the proper order of things; or even that these places belonged to a different order of nature entirely, one in which the people differed little from beasts for all their attempts at culture.

Fleming's typically English and Orientalist prejudices and tropes recall not only moments when bestialization of Ottoman fauna, including humans, occurred, but also those moments when early modern sources offer alternatives to prejudice and revulsion. For early English visitors experiencing the natural world in the East, questions of Eastern difference were never simply prejudicial or inevitably hostile. Oriental difference was seldom no more than otherness to be avoided or washed off in a hot bath, and it sometimes even offered new and empowering ways of being. As for Bond travelling from Athens to Istanbul, the experience of entering into the East was first and foremost a bodily experience. But facts of experience, such as seeing or smelling something one has never seen or smelt before, are hardly facts until they are given meaning. When describing the physical effects of encountering a different microbiology and fauna, early travellers who wrote about the experience were necessarily engaged in a discourse about how the body itself exceeded the expectations of a national experience of identity. Once national borders were crossed, all manner of changes could occur that also involved crossing or displacing other kinds of border.

This tampering with the borders between human and animal, between nature and culture has gone largely un-examined in discussions of Orientalist strategies, though it clearly contributes to the 'backwardness' Edward Said observed to be central to the Orientalist construction of the Orient.⁷⁸ Shifting the line between culture and nature could render the Ottomans into beasts little different from the insects and animals inhabiting the land they lived in and ruled over. Such strategies could

be shown to have been a powerful way of imagining and representing how the 'Terrible Turk' 'declined' into the 'Sick Man of Europe' during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁷⁹

Inherited from crusading rhetoric, fantasies that beasts needing to be killed by Christian heroes inhabited the East have persisted well beyond the mercantile era and into our own times. Blurring the borders between the human and animal inhabitants, and dealing with Islamic power by killing dragons and dehumanizing the peoples of the Ottoman Empire are, of course, only elements of a more complex set of Western representations and self-serving identifications inspired by humanist thought.

6

The Making of the British Imperial Subject

Before Lady Mary

When Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writes home from Ottoman lands in the second decade of the eighteenth century, a distinctive form of neo-colonial occupation becomes evident: the one being practised whenever visitors cannot help but imagine themselves agents while in the Ottoman Empire, eager to find parts to play in the great game of European diplomacy. Having ‘past a Journey that has not been undertaken by any Christian since the Time of the Greek Emperours,’ as she informed the Princess of Wales, how could Lady Mary not feel that simply being here and now in Adrianople was to be an agent, part of history in the making?¹ Lady Mary knew very well that others had travelled into Ottoman territory before, often going out of her way to name and to correct the accounts of Aaron Hill and Paul Rycaut. Yet she insists that her readers notice how she is also an original, not simply a woman subverting gender norms by travelling,² but something rather more than this – an informed adventurer going somewhere for the first time and with a mission; seeing inside the *haremlük* and bringing back a secret from the East – inoculation against smallpox. It may be that the Oriental stereotype can only be fully achieved by a cross-dressed European – preferably a woman. Anxious to claim that she was a first, Lady Mary nevertheless knew that others had preceded her; most of them men. By their own reports, as we have seen, the earliest English visitors to the Ottoman Empire were often called upon to perform as if they were national agents, but few displayed the fully developed sense of casual empowerment that can be mapped in Lady Mary’s epistles. How might the existence of earlier writers have encouraged Lady Mary’s assumption of personal entitlement and agency? Who were

these spectres of Lady Mary, the English visitors who had gone before, especially those whom she appears to ignore?

In this chapter, I turn first to Henry Blount's *A Voyage to the Levant*, a work that was published in 1636, over fifty years before Lady Mary was born. A full account of Blount and his *Voyage* appears in *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, but here I wish to emphasize how, in its own day, Blount's text was celebrated for achieving a generic break-through in travel writing, and suggest that this can be explained by how English and British national identities were coming into focus at the time in terms of global imaginaries; most specifically a discourse about the Islamic Ottoman Empire that was quite explicitly linked to emergent imperial ambitions. In other words, Blount might be said to have been among the first to establish public terms in which it would be possible to begin imagining a British Empire into being; and he did so by setting out to learn from the 'Turks.' In this he differed significantly not only from Thomas Roe, who sought to impose his own conditions at all times, and who wrote for the officers of trade and state, but also from other widely published travellers such as Thomas Coryate and William Lithgow who wrote for personal advancement, or George Sandys and other early antiquarians who were primarily interested in exploring what might remain of antiquity. For Blount, travel into the Ottoman Empire and writing about it were aimed at exposing incrustated prejudices and directed at future possibilities. In these ambitions, he would soon be followed by other writers, such as Henry Marsh and Paul Rycaut who, though neither of them was especially friendly towards the Ottomans, nonetheless understood that the great achievements of Ottoman imperial civilization could not be explained away by traditional prejudice or religious arguments.

Henry Blount's *Voyage*

In the opening pages of *A Voyage*, Blount sets out in detail his rationale and methods for preparing himself before starting on his journey from Christian Europe into the Ottoman Empire. A precocious learner, much celebrated for his wit while at Oxford, and trained in law, Blount presents himself to his readers as, in many ways, he no doubt was – a well-educated man of his times, a well-informed and yet sceptical observer who is seeking to contribute to knowledge currently unavailable from previous accounts. Casting himself right from the start as a man of the new sciences, Blount proposes a comparative

and rationalist enquiry into the Islamic world, thereby indicating how Christian supernaturalism may not have dominated discourse about the East until the European Enlightenment. Blount claims, at least, that his desires to travel to Ottoman lands were both sceptical and rational; he wanted to test tradition and authority, to find out if the ‘*Turkish way*’ was indeed the way it had been represented, or whether it was perhaps ‘rather another kind of civility, different from ours, but no lesse pretending.’³ For Blount, civilizations and cultures were evidently distinct but relative, to be valued in their own terms and not those of an opposing perspective. Could it be that the ‘Turks’ were not so terrible as they had often been made out to be?

Blount rather portentously explains how preparing to travel to Ottoman lands requires an extended process of unlearning that turns into nothing less than a ‘putting off the old man,’ if one is to test received wisdom free ‘from all former habit of opinion.’⁴ Yet this remarkable moment of spiritual rebirth in Blount describes something quite unlike the ‘innocence’ of vision that Mary Louise Pratt discovers in the figure she calls the ‘seeing-man,’ the European male traveller who imagines his own ‘innocence in the same moment’ that he asserts ‘European hegemony ... he whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess.’ Pratt has in mind here the activities of those she calls the ‘bourgeois’ naturalists of the late eighteenth century whose belief in scientific classification served to ‘naturalize’ their own ‘global presence and authority.’⁵ But there is nothing possessive about Blount’s gaze. Pratt’s ‘seeing man’ hardly describes the situation of an apparently independent member of the landed squirearchy travelling into the Ottoman Empire with – so he declares – a carefully prepared programme of sceptical enquiry and analysis necessitating a complete personal, intellectual, cultural and spiritual makeover on the part of the enquiring visitor. As we will see, Blount calls this figure a ‘passenger.’⁶

In its own day, Blount’s *Voyage* was praised by a learned bishop for transforming travel writing by refiguring the agency of the English visitor to Ottoman lands. In panegyric verses ‘To my Noble and Judicious Friend Sir Henry Blount upon his Voyage,’ Bishop Henry King explains how Blount’s example teaches others how best to manage their business in Ottoman lands.⁷ Apparently, reading Blount’s *Voyage* did not so much add to King’s previous knowledge of Ottoman imperial history as alter his attitude towards that knowledge by informing him of useful things that English travellers to the East clearly needed to know. According to King, Blount’s various reports of encountering and contending with cultural differences transformed the familiar registers of

both travel writing and the knowledge they offered about the Ottomans into a new form of practical knowledge, a guide to the kinds of agency available to future English travellers to Ottoman lands.

The first half of King's verses summarizes what he claims to have known and thought about the Ottomans before reading Blount. The Anglican prelate admits that 'those two baits of profit and delight' (line 4) had often tempted him, while reading about the origins of the Ottoman Empire and looking over the maps of Ortelius and Mercator, to feel 'strong and oft desires to tread / Some of those voyages which I have read' (lines 7–8). He describes an imaginary journey north through Africa, pauses in Cairo, then sets off to Istanbul: 'Once the world's Lord, now the beslaved Greek, / Made by a Turkish yoke and fortune's hate / In language as in mind degenerate' (lines 38–40). King offers the standard Renaissance view of how the expansion of the ungodly Ottomans brought slavery and degeneration to the once glorious Greeks. Here too, in this imaginary moment of gazing on a map of Istanbul, King finds himself gripped by what he calls pity and amazement, an ambivalent attitude that I would call imperial envy:

And here, all wrapp'd in pity and amaze
I stand, whilst I upon the Sultan gaze;
To think how he with pride and rapine fir'd
So vast a territory hath acquir'd;
And by what daring steps he did become
The Asian fear, and scourge of Christendome:
How he achiev'd, and kept, and by what arts
He did concentre those divided parts;
And how he holds that monstrous bulk in awe,
By settled rules of tyranny, not Law.

(lines 41–50)

To the Anglican divine, the Ottoman Empire presents a moral and a theological problem: how can God allow pride, rapine and tyranny, the sultan's base motives and base means, to continue enabling him to hold such a monstrous bulk of an empire together? The answer, of course, was implicit in the terms of the question: the Ottoman Empire is the 'scourge of Christendome' and is all part of a higher plan.

Sure, who e'er shall the just extraction bring
Of this gigantic power from the spring;

Must there confess a Higher Ordinance
 Did it for terror to the earth advance.

(lines 53–6)

Reassured that nothing happens but according to divine providence, King has little trouble expressing his personal excitement and awe as he contemplates the rapid spread of the Ottoman Empire until the moment when Mehmed

Made Constantine's his own Imperial seat;
 After that he in one victorious bond
 Two Empires grasp'd, that of Greece and Trebizond.
 This, and much more than this, I gladly read,
 Where my relators it had storied;
 Besides that peoples manners and their rites,
 Their warlike discipline and order'd fights.

(lines 73–81)

Remarkably missing from King's brief summary is any sense of contempt for the victorious Ottomans or horror at their achievements. Rather, King admits that he found himself fascinated and excited by heroic stories of Ottoman imperial conquests until, that is, he came to read Blount's account:

Though I confess, like stomachs fed with news,
 I took them in for wonder, not for use,
 Till your experience'd and authentic pen
 Taught me to know the places and the men;
 And made all those suspected truths become
 Undoubted now, and clear as axiom.

(lines 92–6)

The immediate effect of reading Blount's *Voyage* is that the Bishop now feels himself 'cured' of his previous desire and now will have no reasons ever to travel:

Sir, for this work more than my thanks is due;
 I am at once inform'd and cur'd by you
 ... By your eyes.

I here have made my full discoveries;
And all your countries so exactly seen,
As in the voyage I had sharer been.

(lines 97–8, 105–8)

But King expands this personal obligation to Blount into a national debt since Blount has transformed travel writing from the collecting of interesting anecdotes about other cultures into a systematic programme of knowledge that will directly serve English commercial interests in the East. Instead of idle chatter, Blount has returned with clear understanding of those countries through which he has travelled, and his insights will benefit future travellers.

By this you make me so; and the whole land
Your debtor: which can only understand
How much she owes you, when her sons shall try
The solid depths of your rare history,
Which looks above our gadder's reach,
The commonplace of travellers, who teach
But table talk; and seldomly aspire
Beyond the country's diet or attire:
Whereas your piercing judgement does relate
The policy and manage of each State.

(lines 109–18)

No longer excited by stories of Ottoman military conquest, King finds himself inspired by the prospects of a future in which the English will participate in profitable commerce with the great empire in the East. He insists that England owes Blount something for providing future 'sons' with necessary knowledge for them to travel and deal successfully in Ottoman lands. The nation should, he writes,

...canonize your book
A rule to all her travellers, and you
The brave example; from whose equal view
Each knowing reader may himself direct,
How he may go abroad with some effect,
And not for form: what distance and what trust
In those remoter parts observe he must:
How he with jealous people may converse,

Yet take no hurt himself by that commerce.
 So when he shall embark'd in dangers be,
 Which wit and wary caution not foresee;
 If he partake your valour and your brain,
 He may perhaps come safely off again,
 As you have done; thought not so richly fraught
 As this return hath to our staple brought.

(lines 124–38)

King's mercantile metaphors here are surely most apt. In a sense, Blount's book is itself the rich freight, the 'return' to the nation's 'staple,' the knowledge of how to travel and 'come safely off.' Dismissive of those who travel 'for form' not 'effect,' King praises Blount's 'example' by which future 'sons' will learn how they might most profitably pursue their nation's commercial enterprise, going abroad 'to some effect.' Blount, the exemplary guide to 'dangers... / Which wit and wary caution [may] not foresee,' exemplifies strategies needed by travellers encountering the dangers and diplomacies of everyday life inside a supremely powerful but nervous empire potentially hostile to Christians (lines 133–4). According to King, Blount deserves national recognition and reward for extending the scope of England's future agency within Ottoman territories by providing such a detailed account of how merchants might visit, avoid dangers and deal profitably.

Blount gets ready

How well does Blount's *Voyage* live up to the learned bishop's praise? From the start, Blount's account is couched in secular logic that owes rather more to neo-Platonism, to the Florentine humanists, to Jean Bodin and to Francis Bacon, than it does to Christian supernaturalism. He does not defend travelling on religious grounds, but in order to advance knowledge by means of rational enquiry. 'Intellectuall Complexions,' he starts out, desire '*knowledge*,' especially 'of humane affaires.' Proposing that '*experience* advances' knowledge of human institutions 'best,' Blount argues that knowledge will increase proportionally with the degree of novelty and difference experienced. 'So my former time spent in viewing *Italy*, *France*, and some little of *Spain*,' he concludes, 'being countries of Christian institution, did but represent in a severall dresse, the effect of what I knew before.'⁸ Cultural

difference is crucial to knowledge, and will best advance free from religious concerns.

Intellect desires knowledge; experience of difference increases knowledge as difference increases; therefore, intellect desires experience of radical difference. Within this logic, Blount's designation of 'Christian' countries is clearly a cultural and political category that suspends those religious differences between Protestants and Catholics that were currently devastating Europe in a terrible war that would last for thirty years. Nowhere in Blount's *Voyage* do we find even a trace of the Christian providentialism so evident in King's poem. For Blount, national institutions are the historical result of geography, nature and climate. Neither a product of, nor evidence for a theogenetic or providential design, national and cultural differences appear to knowledge as matters of space. Since no culture could appear more different to an enquiring observer from the 'Climate' of the 'North-west parts of the World' than that practised by 'those of the South-East,' Blount proposes that knowledge of the geographical space over which Islam currently rules will necessarily prove specially productive of new knowledge. Here 'the Turkes' have established an empire 'and fixt it selfe such firme foundations as no other ever did; I was of opinion, that hee who would behold these times in their greatest glory, could not find a better *scene* then *Turky*: these considerations sent me thither.' In 1634, when Blount set out, the lands northwest of the Danube were continuing to be destroyed by rival Christian armies in a devastating war that, begun in 1618, had reached its peak of intensity with the intervention of Gustavus Adolphus four years earlier. Southeast of Vienna, on the other hand, the Ottomans – 'the only moderne people, great in action' – were successfully ruling an actually existing empire that, while Blount was there, constituted the most extensive and most firmly established empire in that region for some time. How could anyone of an intellectual complexion not want 'to behold these times in their greatest glory'⁹ by going to see for themselves just what was going on inside the Ottoman Empire?

Even as he appears to conclude when writing 'these considerations sent me thither,' Blount evidently felt the need to explain further his purposes and preparations before setting out, describing four 'particular cares': observing religion, viewing the various 'sects,' examining the army and visiting Cairo. Expecting to find 'another kind of civility, different from ours, but no lesse pretending,' Blount distinguishes himself from expatriate 'inhabitants,' and modestly assumes for himself the guise of what he terms a 'passenger;' someone with an 'unpartial' mind, a comparative project, and a healthy disrespect for the common

prejudices of Christians about the Muslim Ottomans. Passengers might never achieve the perfect knowledge available to ‘inhabitants,’ but neither do they simply pass by without seeing what is about them. Blount, the exemplary passenger, sets forth with an agenda that requires stopping long enough to test received opinion by means of experience. Intellectual passengers travel to seek critical distance from their own cultural specificity, already expecting to find that things may not be the way they are commonly said to be. And to do this, Blount points out, passengers need to be capable of imagining and being receptive to the possibility that other cultures might be ‘different from ours, but no lesse pretending.’ Litotes – the rhetorical figure of negative understatement being used here – is never, of course, a trope of equality but one of relative negation; ‘no lesse pretending’ points to the absent foundations of European normativity.¹⁰

Each of Blount’s stated reasons for travelling to the Levant exemplifies a compelling interest in comparative imperial identities, an interest characteristic of imperial envy. His second declared aim – to investigate the seemingly peaceful co-existence of distinct religious, racial and cultural communities within *millets* – is to investigate an aspect of Ottoman society that proved constantly fascinating to English visitors and readers. Blount provocatively calls these groups ‘sects’ – a term he will use throughout the *Voyage* in order to distance himself from any religious persuasion, Christian or otherwise. Blount writes that he wanted to ‘acquaint my selfe with those other sects which live under the *Turkes*, as *Greekes*, *Armenians*, *Freinks*, and *Zinganaes*, but especially the *Jewes*.’ His third professed reason for travelling is ‘to see the *Turkish Army*, then going against *Poland*,’ since doing so will enable him to compare Ottoman and Christian military discipline. Blount states that his fourth reason for travelling was a personal desire to visit Cairo, ‘and that for two causes’: the first of which continues his agenda of sceptically interrogating received Christian opinion about Ottoman administration; the second, ‘because *Egypt* is held to have been the fountaine of all *Science*, and *Arts civill*, therefore I did hope to find some spark of those cinders not yet put out.’¹¹ Blount’s suspicion that Christian images of Ottoman ‘sottish sensuality’ might greatly misrepresent actually existing conditions is indeed ‘shrewd,’ as Samuel Chew once remarked.¹² But it also draws attention to how Blount’s interests are nonetheless persistently imperial, arising from the desire to assess the nature, range and authority of Ottoman power on the one hand, while seeing if there is anything left of the great African imperial civilization on the other.

In describing his own interests in the workings of Ottoman imperialism, Blount notably does not impose the kind of Christian moral-providential frame we noticed in King's poem, where the ungodly empire of the Ottomans was a contributing cause of Greek degeneracy. Although Blount presumes that the vast multitudes living in Cairo are 'deeply malicious,' he does not hold the Ottomans responsible for current conditions in the 'greatest concourse of Mankind in these times'; rather he wonders at their ability to rule over so many diverse populations. Whatever may have been the cause, our Oxford rhetorician and wit boldly mixes metaphors when acknowledging Egypt to have been the 'fountaine of all *Science*, and *Arts civill*,' and expressing his hope to find 'some spark of those cinders not yet put out.'¹³ By the 1630s, evidently, the European Renaissance had not entirely erased knowledge of the African roots of civility, a matter regarding which Blount is strangely lacking in his usual scepticism.

Blount puts off the old man

Throughout his opening pages, Blount distinguishes himself from writers on the Ottoman Empire who never went there, for whom 'Turk' was synonymous with Muslim and therefore principally a religious antagonist to be feared and righteously destroyed. But he also, as we have seen, considers himself a 'passenger' in distinction from inhabitants, insisting nevertheless that the experience of the passenger allows knowledge of a sort unavailable from reading the frequently false reports of others. Having found himself 'desiring somewhat to informe my selfe of the *Turkish Nation*, [he] would not sit down with a booke knowledge therof,' but had to go and see for himself in order to avoid any 'affection, prejudicacy, or mist of education,' all of which 'delude' the mind with 'partial *ideas*.'¹⁴ Passengers may know less than inhabitants, who can provide visitors with reliable, local information – such as the 'Family' who had been resident in Cairo for twenty-five years who 'informed me of many things, with much certaintie.' But passengers know more than those who stay at home and read books full of their author's prejudices and opinions. It was in this self-styled role of passenger that Blount performed most of his travelling from the moment he left Venice on 7 May 1634, a passenger on a Venetian galley amidst 'a *Caravan of Turkes*, and *Jewes*,' since it is their trading interests that determine the route and schedule he finds himself following.¹⁵ Passengers may have to rely upon others, going where and when they are ready, but the well-prepared

passenger is not simply passive and dependent but flexible and eager to adapt to circumstances.

Blount reserves one of his more startling revelations of what being a passenger can mean for the moment just before his journey actually begins. About to set forth, Blount retrospectively assures us that his 'preparation' served him well, bringing about nothing less than a form of personal re-construction that would seem to be essential for all who would travel to foreign nations:

hee who passes through the severall educations of men, must not try them by his owne, but weaning his mind from all former habit of opinion, should as it were putting off the old man come fresh and sincere to consider them: This preparation was the cause, why the superstition, policy, entertainments, diet, lodging, and other manners of the *Turkes*, never provoked me so far, as usually they doe those who catechise the world by their owne home.¹⁶

To become a passenger is to be reborn. Passengers, it would seem, are those who have put aside their domestic pieties and provincial pre-judgements and become capable of withstanding the change of culture, diet and lodging. Evoking the Pauline injunction to the Ephesians to put aside the 'old man,' Blount secularizes the trope: not so much a figure of spiritual rebirth, more a proposal to unlearn received prejudice. Passengers of an intellectual complexion need to cast aside their ingrained domestic pieties and provincial pre-judgements, since only by doing so will they prepare themselves – in mind and body – for the change of diet and lodging.

Only thus prepared can Blount allow his travels to begin. But his narrative has barely begun carrying him forth on his journey before circumstances once again demand that he engages in yet another remarkable moment of self-reconstruction by stepping outside the burden of Christianity. Delighted to find himself sailing among 'Turks' and Jews, 'not having any Christian with them besides my selfe,' Blount explains that travelling without other Christians offered two advantages: he would not get into trouble because of association with the views of other Christians, and secondly: 'I had a freedome of complying upon occasion of questions by them made; whereby I became all things to all men, which let me into the breasts of many.'¹⁷

Once he starts leaving Europe, Blount does not simply imagine himself prepared and ready to step outside his own culture; he joyfully shakes it off and declares himself better able to perform without it. He certainly

finds any association with Christianity burdensome, later describing himself not 'loving company of *Christians in Turky*,' and avoids them whenever possible. Later, he will note that the Tartars are especially keen on seizing known Christians and selling them into slavery.¹⁸ Consequently, acting free from any customary cultural identification as a Christian, Blount can become compliant, 'all things to all men,' the prototypical agent who, keeping himself unobtrusive and secretive, finds a way into 'the breasts of many.' Blount's 'passenger' may, after all, be none other than the ideal foreign agent, one capable of dealing with local contingencies in ways unimaginable to those, like Thomas Roe, who imagined they represented a superior form of culture.

Blount boldly goes

The opening pages of Blount's *Voyage* offer a detailed account of his reasons for travelling, but by the time one has finished reading his report of the journey, it is hard not to suspect that he has been rather cagey from the start; certainly with respect to his material means, but perhaps even about his motives for adventuring into Ottoman lands. One cannot resist speculating, looking for indications and hints in his elaborately stated intentions and elsewhere, that crucial aspects of his 'purpose' would have been too obvious to contemporary readers to need mentioning. Although he provides constant circumstantial reminders and asides about travelling conditions, not once does Blount feel any need to tell us directly how it was that he undertook this journey in the first place. Who paid? After offering his detailed rationale, Blount simply and suddenly projects himself to Venice, where he finds himself employing a Janissary to serve as travel agent to organize his trip as far as Istanbul.

Here, the terms of King's verses help us to grasp the contemporary sense in which it may have been the very act of writing the *Voyage*, of publishing the book, of describing in detail and illustrating with exemplary episodes how to be a passenger, that constituted both Blount's most obvious and therefore unspoken goal and, according to King, his great achievement. By writing to instruct future sons of empire how they might most profitably travel among and, more importantly, deal with the peoples of the Ottoman world, Blount perhaps fulfilled a mission that did not need explaining at the time. As Sir Thomas Palmer had observed in 1606, since Princes no longer travelled abroad themselves, they needed others to do it for them.¹⁹ In this sense, Bishop King's verses urge to be read as a professional letter of reference, a commendation for

the knighthood that Blount received from Charles I in March 1640, four years after initial publication of *A Voyage*.

Changing tides

With imperial horizons before us, Blount's book helps to complicate and historicize Said's account of how the Christian West approached and perceived the Islamic Orient during the pre-colonial period. Bishop King does, it is true, offer the mysteries of divine providence – Said's 'Christian supernaturalism' – to explain the rise and success of the Ottoman Empire. But there is nothing supernatural about his evident fascination with the imperial power of the Sultan or, for that matter, the commercial metaphors that he uses to praise Blount for advancing the kinds of knowledge that will promote the nation's trading interests in the East. King was doubtless correct in drawing attention to the usefulness of Blount's information for encouraging future trade. Yet in the face of traditional hostility and religious prejudice towards the 'Turks,' it was also Blount's avowed purpose to promote a comparative approach to acquiring knowledge about the nature of this great and actually existing empire. By shifting understanding of the Ottoman Empire from a religious to an empirical frame of reference, Blount's work helped demystify the ingrained certainties of national identity while also offering strategic observations on the operations of imperial control. To do so was not only to acknowledge common ground between the contemporary Ottoman and English states, but also to recognize how the English could learn a great deal from the Ottomans about the running of their own country as well as dealing with foreign nations. There were, he never doubted, innumerable differences between the two societies, but while certain features of the Ottoman polity were clearly to be avoided, some were worthy of emulation, while others served as object lessons in political statecraft.

When *A Voyage* appeared in 1636, trade with the Levant was flourishing, but the costs of maintaining a fleet capable of protecting England's maritime investments had become the topic of a heated constitutional debate that would directly contribute to the outbreak of civil war. Without consulting Parliament, Charles I had declared that 'we, and our progenitors, Kings of England, have been always heretofore masters of the aforesaid sea,' but at the same time he also declared that it was up to 'the Mayor, commonalty, and citizens of our city of London' to pay for the building, manning and equipping of a new fleet.²⁰ With mounting political unrest aimed at Charles' increasingly autocratic policies, it may

not have been entirely by chance that Blount concludes his *Voyage* by recalling the Janissary uprisings of 1621 against the authoritarian regime of Osman II, an uprising that would lead to the young sultan, his grand vezir and chief black eunuch all being publicly executed.

The afterlife of Blount's book, moreover, suggests how its political insights were more than simply occasional, and that its empirical method helped contribute to a major sea change taking place in English attitudes towards the Ottomans during the course of the second half of the seventeenth century that would continue through the eighteenth century and beyond. Although Lady Mary seems to have ignored it, *A Voyage* was widely read and, perhaps thanks in part to Bishop King's praise of it, became something of a best seller, being reprinted seven times before 1671. Such was the book's renown that it was also translated and appeared in a German edition of 1687, and twice appeared in illustrated Dutch editions of 1707 and 1737. 'This book,' wrote an eighteenth-century biographer, 'made him known to the world, and much taken notice of,'²¹ and it was reprinted as late as 1808, in John Pinkerton's seventeen-volume *General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages*.²² In addition to gaining Blount an enduring reputation, his book was quickly recognized to be an exemplary guide to Eastern travel by writers in addition to Bishop King. In 1650, James Howell borrowed extensively from Blount's *Voyage* when he added 'a new Appendix for Travelling into Turkey and the Levant' to the second edition of his *Instructions and Directions for Forren Travell*.²³ The traveller Peter Mundy transcribed and annotated large sections of Blount's book into the pages of the extensive manuscript describing his own journeys throughout Europe and Asia undertaken between 1608 and 1656. Mundy's aim was to confirm details from his own notebooks, and to commend the accuracy of Blount's observations.²⁴ Nearly a century later, the antiquarian and bibliophile Robert Harley, the Earl of Oxford, included 'the much esteemed voyage of Mr *Henry Blount*,' in the first volume of his *A Collection of Voyages and Travels* (1745) and reported having examined a French translation, though this latter claim seems unreliable. Nevertheless, Harley's estimation of *Voyage*, written a century after its publication, voiced what had become received opinion: 'the prudent methods he took to obtain the truest and most useful part of knowledge in those parts, for the good of his country, and the impartiality with which he delivers each particular, must deserve the greatest commendations, and render it most agreeable to the reader.'²⁵

In emphasizing how Blount's 'prudent methods' and 'impartiality' at gaining and conveying 'useful...knowledge' served 'the good of his country,' Harley echoes Bishop King's earlier praise, but he does so from a position of considerable historical hindsight regarding the relative power and influence of the Ottoman and British nations. By the mid-eighteenth century, British imperial confidence was firmly established, while belief in the imminent collapse of the Ottoman Empire was widely encouraged. Blount may have been one of the first Englishmen to recognize the importance of regarding the Ottoman imperial achievement in its own terms, free from religious dogma and ignorant prejudice, but he was by no means the only writer to have made the case for a comparative assessment by the time of Harley's comments. Finding advice from precedents in Ottoman history had become something of a habit among political and historical commentators writing on the current scene in seventeenth-century England. An interesting example from the 1650s is Francis Osborne's *Political Reflections Upon the Government of the Turks*, which typifies the practice of selectively reporting on exemplary anecdotes concerning the Ottomans in order to offer oblique comment on sensitive and controversial topics at home. Osborne ironically argues, for instance, that the English were foolish for refusing to pay tithes to maintain the clergy since, were they to do so, they could then reasonably expect to exert some control over clerical abuses. 'Were they wise enough,' he argues,

to weigh the great advantage they have through the *Churches* dependence on their welfare, which would be quite lost, did their *maintenance* drop out of the immediate hand of the *Prince*, as it doth among the *Turks*; who are too well read in Policy, to break or dismember so usefull an Engine, because it may or might, for want of Circumspection, have bruised the fingers of those it ought to preserve.²⁶

Osborne's target proves to be the unlicensed clergymen whose rabble-rousing activities he blames for what he considers to be the social and political chaos of the times. Published anonymously, the title page claims that this work appeared from a London printer in 1656, though there is reason to believe it was actually published in Oxford in 1658, the year of Cromwell's death: either way Osborne's text offers covert reflections on the immediate dangers facing the English Republic at a moment when church and state were in crisis.²⁷

The rise of imperial ambitions

By the second half of the seventeenth century, English writers continued to express contempt for those they called ‘Turks,’ but they also tended to characterize them less as distant and barbaric partners in trade and increasingly as potential allies in the great game of international intrigue and empire building. Following the Restoration of monarchy in 1660, numerous writers sought to boost national pride by imaginatively projecting Charles II as the head of a kingdom that was destined to establish a global empire rivalling the past glories of Rome. John Dryden famously forecast how the ‘Happy Age’ of Charles’ reign marked a new era of British imperial power:

Oh Happy Age! Oh times like these alone
By Fate reserv’d for Great *Augustus* throne!
When the joint growth of Armes and Arts foreshew
The World a Monarch, and that Monarch *You*.²⁸

Fanciful as such notions might have seemed, they were nevertheless pervasive and influential ingredients in the development of national ambitions at the time. Royalist apologists widely declared that Charles’ nine years of exile among foreign courts had provided the new king with an ideal education in international statecraft that promised he would lead his kingdom to new heights of global power and influence, and the new king rose to the challenge by immediately chartering the Royal African Company to challenge Dutch shipping in West Africa, the Caribbean and East Indies. Further, by seeking an alliance with Portugal, Charles not only snubbed the Spanish who had sought his assistance to reconquer Portugal and Brazil, but also acquired Tangier and Bombay. These were, as one historian recently put it, ‘sensational events [that] confirmed England’s new status as a leading power in all continents and as would-be mistress of the seas.’²⁹ As imperial ambitions in the East seemed ever more attainable, and any threat that the Ottomans might pose became ever less urgent, envy faded and a newly confident sense of parity took hold.

Among those who declared the need for a reassessment of popular notions concerning the Ottomans was the London bookseller Henry Marsh. Claiming to have once served in the sultan’s army in some unspecified capacity, Marsh set out to disabuse any who might think that the Ottoman Empire under Mehmed IV was in any sense in decline,

and to comment on the capture of the Habsburg fortress at Newhausel (Uyvar) in Slovakia by Ottoman forces commanded by Grand Vezir Köprülü-zade Fazil Ahmed Pasha in late September 1663.³⁰ In dedicating his *New Survey of the Turkish Empire and Government* of 1663 to Sir Andrew Riccard, the current governor of the Levant Company, Marsh sought to flatter both his patron and his nation with the suggestion that, since they engaged in direct trade with the English, the Ottomans were not to be despised. Marsh explains how choosing Riccard for his dedicatee

was partly designed to *compose* and *civilize* those *horrid* and *dire conceptions* we have of those Barbarous [Ottoman] Arms; by letting the World see, that persons of the greatest Humanity have and do maintain a constant and amicable Correspondence with them; partly to let their present *Dread* and *Puissance* do service to those *fair* and *obliging attractions* for which your *Name* is no less Famous, and partly to *vindicate* the *Truth* of the *Discourse* ensuing, when we offer it at so *known* an *Altar*, and to so *competent* a *Judge* and *Patron*.

After some more fulsome praise of his patron and claims for the veracity of his own report, Marsh continues by arguing that however degenerate the Ottomans might once have been, discipline and sobriety provide the keys to understanding the power of the contemporary Ottoman state. The logic of Marsh's encomium stops just short of suggesting that it was because of their 'amicable Correspondence' with the English that 'this *Asian People*' have triumphantly emerged from their former barbarism:

...let the World also be taught, the great and admirable effects of *Sobriety* and *Abstinence*, and the mischiefs of *Ryot* and *Excess*; For this *Asian People*, once the nauseated and basest dregs of the World, odious for their *Luxury*, and *Infamous* for their *Slavery* (the necessary consequence thereof) are now by their temperance and abstemiousness, (the injunction and *Discipline* of an absurd Religion) become the *Mightiest Nation*, and greatest Lord of the Universe: and by irresistible and over bearing approaches, have given the Empire of *Germany* (the *reeling*, *staggering* Remnant of the Fourth Monarchy) a *Cup of Trembling*.³¹

Marsh's clear dislike of the Habsburgs, and his evident delight at their defeat, by no means made him a promoter of the Ottomans, but he certainly considered it best to recognize how and why it was in the

interest of the English to continue maintaining good terms with the 'Mightiest Nation.'

Marsh's account of Fazil Ahmed Pasha's siege of Newhausel need not detain us beyond noting that, by the mid-seventeenth century, reporting on recent events taking place within the Ottoman Empire and along its borders had become a standard feature of the popular press: indeed, a reprint edition of Marsh's *New Survey of the Turkish Empire* was published by a rival bookseller in 1664. In that year, Marsh also published a comprehensive history of Hungary, Janos Nadanyi's *Florus Hungaricus*.³² But it was Paul Rycaut's *Present State of the Ottoman Empire* of 1666/7 that holds place as the most important advance in English writing on the Ottomans since Richard Knolles' *Generall Historie of the Turkes*. Although Knolles' monumental history had been regularly updated since its first appearance in 1603, the various continuations had followed Knolles' original scheme of recording selected events according to the reigns of sultans. Rycaut's achievement was to replace the diachronic narrative model with an analytical and synchronic approach that described actually existing conditions arranged thematically into three books: the first reports on the constitutional and social structures of the imperial state; the second examines religion; the third details and assesses military organization. For Rycaut, secretary and later consular official for the Levant Company in Istanbul and Izmir between 1661 and 1678, the Ottoman state offered object lessons in imperial administration, while his prognosis of imminent decline was perhaps rather more self-serving than entirely accurate. Since it could only survive so long as it grew, he suggested, the Ottoman Empire was surely about to collapse, its religion lacking in reason and its military forces in Europe already showing signs of exhaustion.

Rycaut set sail for Istanbul in the year of the Restoration with Charles II's new ambassador, Heneage Finch, third Earl of Winchelsea and, from the start, was acutely aware of the need for gathering accurate and up to date information about the great empire into which he was traveling. 'I resolved from my first entrance into those Countries,' he later reported, 'to note down in a blank Book what occurred in that Empire, either as to civil or military affairs; with what Casualties and Changes befell our Trade, that so both one and the other might serve for Examples and Precedents to future Ages.'³³ In other words, Rycaut's plan was to keep his eye on all aspects of how the Ottomans ran their empire in order to figure out how it operated, and to write down everything he learned. If, as I earlier suggested, writing about life inside the Ottoman Empire can itself be seen as a form of performing East, Rycaut's assiduous note-taking

and voluminous published output may stand as certain evidence of his performativity as an envious Englishman. In her carefully detailed study of Rycaut's career, Sonia Anderson lists the titles of no fewer than fourteen published works, a number that, if we include reprints, reissues and translations, swells to eighty-three publications that appeared during his lifetime, in addition to numerous posthumous reprintings.³⁴ Among Rycaut's first tasks after arrival in Istanbul was to prepare copies of the renewed trading capitulations negotiated by ambassador Finch. Finding himself 'inundated with requests for copies,' Rycaut decided to have them printed. 'I apprehended, that printing some coppies thereof, would save mee from a greater paines, then transcribing so many would bee,' and so he set about commissioning 'the first work to be printed in English' in the Ottoman Empire.³⁵ The experience evidently did little to impress Rycaut with the state of learning among the Ottomans since he found that the only printing presses were owned and operated under special license by a Jewish monopoly; the proscription on printing Ottoman and Arabic texts was designed to preserve the venerated art of calligraphy. Rycaut also cynically adduced a political strategy behind the ban:

The Art of Printing (a matter disputable, whether it hath brought more of benefit or mischief to the world) is absolutely prohibited amongst them, because it may give a beginning to that subtlety of Learning which is inconsistent with, as well as dangerous to the grossness of their Government, and a means to deprive many of their livelihood, who gain their bread only by their Pen, and occasion the loss of that singular Art of fair Writing, wherein they excel or equal most Nations.³⁶

To Rycaut's way of thinking, nearly every aspect of life within Ottoman society tended towards the imperial project, so the ban on printing was obviously designed to restrict learning to an administrative elite while keeping the sultan's subjects in relative ignorance. He did, however, recognize there was a very efficient bureaucracy designed to maintain imperial control, admitting that 'as to the successes and progress of Affairs in their own dominions, they keep most strict Registers and Records' which provide the state with 'so much knowledge as neither to be over-reached in their Treaties with the wits of the World, nor for want of Good Conduct of Affairs lose one inch of their Empire.'³⁷

Rycaut's preoccupation with evaluating how well the Ottoman Empire was holding together under Sultan Mehmed IV (r.1648–1687),

and what the implications might be for English interests in the region, pervade his work. When Rycaut's *Present State* appeared in 1667 – an earlier edition was destroyed the previous year in the Great Fire of London – he prefaced it with a dedication to Charles II's secretary of state, Henry Bennet, the Earl of Arlington, that announced the originality of his study while boosting the importance of the English presence there. Like Bishop King praising Blount, he claimed his book achieved something more important than works by travel writers. 'I may,' he declared, 'confidently draw a rude Scheme before your Lordship, of the Turkish Government, Polices, and Customs; a Subject which Travelers have rather represented to their Countrymen, to supply them with discourse and admiration, than as a matter worthy the consideration, or concernment of our Kings or our Governours.'³⁸ And like Blount and Marsh before him, Rycaut insisted that it would be a grave and ignorant error to continue in the traditional view of the Ottomans as simply rude and barbaric warriors. He was certain that a powerful statesman such as Arlington would agree 'that a People, as the Turks are, men of the same composition with us, cannot be so savage and rude as they are generally described.'³⁹ Nevertheless, Rycaut was by no means overly impressed with what his five years' experience had shown him. 'I must confess,' he notes, 'I cannot applaud the generality of this people with so high encomiums, as I have read in the Books of some ingenious travellers, and do believe without partiality that they come short of the good nature & vertues are to be found in most parts of Christendom.'⁴⁰ Convinced that the character of a people determined the conditions under which they live and are governed, he reframed a familiar argument that the power and extent of the Ottoman Empire owed more to the errors and weaknesses of European nations than to anything directly arising from its own energy and dynamism:

It hath been the happy fortune of the Turk to be accounted barbarous and ignorant; for upon this perswasion Christian Princes have laid themselves open and unguarded to their greatest danger; contending together for one Palm of land, whilst this puissant Enemy hath made himself master of whole Provinces, and largely shared in the rich and pleasant possessions of *Europe*.⁴¹

Strikingly absent from Rycaut's version of this argument is any reference to a divine plan; 'the happy fortune of the Turk' was not the result of a providential deity seeking to punish the sins of 'Christian Princes,' but more simply the result of divisive in-fighting among contending

European nations. Although not the earliest commentator to abandon providential explanations, Rycaut's elaboration of this secular argument throughout *The Present State* would, arguably, prove to be one of the most influential.

Rycaut also advanced the complementary, and by no means original, argument that the success and very existence of the Ottoman Empire were the result of continuous expansion by means of a well-organized army. He begins the third book of *The Present State* with the observation that 'the main sinews of the Ottoman Empire consists in the force of the *Spahees, Janizaries*, and the other Auxiliaries,' while the government itself is 'wholly founded upon Martial Discipline.'⁴² But a few pages later will conclude 'how far the nature of the Turks is degenerated from the ancient warlike disposition of the Saracens.' Rycaut's evidence for this last claim was both direct and personal since he had accompanied the returning Ottoman forces after their defeat by the Habsburg armies in August 1664 at the battle of St Gotthard. 'We marched back with the Army,' he writes, 'to whom nothing could come more joyful than their return home, and the conclusion of the War; by which may be observed in some manner, how far the nature of the Turks is degenerated.'⁴³ Generalizations such as this, based on single episodes are, of course, dangerously made, though it is worth noting that the Ottoman defeat at St Gotthard ended a campaign that had begun less than a year previously with the great victory at Newhausel recorded by Henry Marsh. Moreover, between 1672 and 1678, Mehmed IV's armies would launch a number of successful offensives into Poland and the Ukraine before their signal failure to capture Vienna in 1683 inspired a coalition among European nations that would eventually force the Ottomans to withdraw from north of the Danube and accept the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, the year before Rycaut died.

Having lived just long enough to see Ottoman expansion into Europe halted and reversed, Rycaut may well have gone to his grave feeling vindicated in his belief that the sinews of the Ottoman Empire were its armies and that, with their retreat, the empire itself was in certain decline. Certainly, this general interpretation proved enormously popular among historians for another three hundred years and continues to persist today despite increasing evidence to the contrary.⁴⁴ Be that as it may, my concern here is with Rycaut's *Present State* and how his own national interests helped to shape the way he conceived of the Ottoman Empire in his day. It was within this interpretive frame – of a degenerate people and the diminishing military power of the Ottoman state leading to an inevitable decline within the empire

itself – that Rycaut sought to impress upon his readers the crucially important implications for his fellow countrymen. In his preface to Arlington, Rycaut endeavours to impress upon his patron and other readers just how important and well-respected the ‘British nation’ has become at the Ottoman court. His example, curiously, involves the highly successful performance not of the English ambassador, Heneage Finch, but of a Scottish mercenary, Count Walter Leslie, who had arrived as a representative of the Habsburgs to sign the peace agreement following the Ottoman defeat at St Gotthard. The passage is worth quoting at some length since it indicates how clearly Rycaut understood and emphasizes the importance of personal performativity when negotiating with the Ottoman court.

And hereupon Earl *Leisle* being dispatched for Extraordinary Embassadour from his Imperial Majesty, to the Grand Signior; though the Turk was elevated with the thoughts of the necessity the Christians had of a Peace, yet did so happily manage his Charge and Employment, as created in the Turks an extraordinary reverence towards his Person, and obtained such Honours and Treatments from them as the Turkish Court never bestowed before on the Emperours, or any other Christian Embassadour; extorting this Complement from the great Vizier, That he was more satisfied the Emperour had sent so brave and illustrious a person, than if he had sought to reconcile his Affections with a hundred thousand Dollars more of Present. And to do justice to this worthy Person, he hath brought a reputation to the British Nation, above any in our age, whose virtues and industry have acquired the highest Trusts and Preferments in Forreign Parts; and done the same honour to his King, under whom he was born a Subject, as to the present Emperour and his Ancestors, under whom he is, and hath always been a faithful Minister.⁴⁵

Leslie may have been acting on behalf of the Habsburgs, but Rycaut is keen that his readers should be left in no doubt that his grand success reflected directly upon the reputation of ‘the British Nation.’ Such was the evident importance of personal performance and of the Anglo-Ottoman relation.

Rycaut concludes *The Present State* by reflecting on the privileged place that the British enjoy in their relations with the Ottomans. ‘We ought to consider it a blessing,’ he writes, ‘that we have never felt any smart of the rod of this great oppressor of Christianity; and yet have tasted of the good and benefit which hath proceeded from a

free and open Trade, and an amicable Correspondence and Friendship with this People [which] hath brought a most considerable benefit to this Kingdom, and gives employment and livelyhood to many thousands of people in England.⁴⁶ Although his seventeen years' living inside the Ottoman domains never caused Rycout to become especially fond of the people or their institutions, he nevertheless understood and advocated the need for continuing that 'amicable Correspondence and Friendship' with the Ottomans if England was to achieve the greatness in the world that he and others of his times so eagerly desired.

Some conclusions

For Henry Blount, writing in the 1630s, travelling to the Ottoman Empire proved to be in part an exercise in personal self-reconstruction that began with a suspension of normative domestic perceptions and attitudes, a stepping outside native religion and national identity. Far from perceiving the Ottoman Empire to be an orientalised space awaiting Western penetration and dominance, Blount emphasized how understanding the Ottoman world would require European visitors to put aside received opinions and cultural expectations before going to see for themselves. For Francis Osborne, Henry Marsh and Paul Rycout, writing in the 1650s and 1660s, a growing sense of Britain's destiny to play an important role on the stage of European and international commercial and political affairs, together with a clear sense of the evident wealth that was being generated by trade with the Ottomans, combined to urge a re-evaluation of who and what the Ottomans represented and whether or not they posed any form of threat to England's aspirations. With increasing imperial expectations before them, they too understood how the English could not assume major roles in world affairs as long as they remained burdened with traditional prejudices towards and inaccurate information about the nature, range and condition of the actually existing Ottoman state. Before there was any question of British ships setting out to control the East, it was necessary that those in command should become capable of recognizing and understanding what was already there, firmly in place, rather than simply denouncing the Ottomans for being tyrannical and barbarous, however admirable their empire might otherwise be.

During the early decades of the eighteenth century, the 'Happy Age' foretold by Dryden back in 1660 seemed finally to have arrived and

imperial envy gave way to British imperial might. While the Levant trade continued to swell the national coffers, events in Europe and the Americas helped to encourage imperial dreams. Following the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707, the English officially became Britons and with this expanded sense of national identity managed to bring off 'one of the most sensational coups in the history of the British Empire' in 1713. By the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht signed that year, Britain acquired extensive territories in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Acadia from the French, and from the Spanish, took over the slave trade into Spanish America together with Gibraltar and Minorca. With command over these two western ports, the British Navy now had effective control over the commerce of the Mediterranean. 'Britain was now unquestionably Europe's dominant maritime and colonial power.'⁴⁷ The imperial age of the 'Free-born Briton' had finally arrived,⁴⁸ and the Ottomans, who had never really been a threat but a useful ally, increasingly became a subordinate partner.

And so it should be little surprise that when Lady Mary wrote home from the Ottoman Empire in 1717, she did so with all the self-confident assumptions of her privileged class and nation, eagerly seeking to set the records straight on what was and was not the case with regard to that other great empire adjacent to Europe. That said, Lady Mary did not take it upon herself to correct the Ottomans so much as the extravagant notions about them that continued to circulate in her native land. There would, however, be others happy enough to take on themselves the task of teaching the Ottomans how things should be done, who would also write letters home to advertise their achievements.

In 1754, Alexander Drummond published his *Travels Through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece, and Several parts of Asia, as far as the Banks of the Euphrates: in a Series of Letters*, which describe various observations in a precise and witty style. A Scottish Freemason, Drummond was also an artist and his book comes complete with numerous illustrations of exotic landscapes and ancient ruins based on his field sketches; several of these include portraits of the artist at work. But Drummond's vainest moment of self-representation inspired him to abandon his usual prose for verse. While visiting Izmir, he claims to have 'formed a lodge of free masons in the place... the only lodge that is in the Levant,' proudly announcing: 'the lodge of Drummond Kilwining, from Greenock, has reason to be proud of this her first daughter; and, I assure you, I am not a little vain of being the father of such a flock,' and then offered the following:

For ages past, a savage race
 O'erspread these Asian plains,
 All nature wore a gloomy face,
 And pensive mov'd the swains.

But now Britannia's gen'rous sons
 A glorious lodge have rais'd,
 Near the fam'd banks where Meles runs,
 And Homer's cattle graz'd;
 The bri'ry wilds to groves are chang'd,
 With orange trees around,
 And fragrant lemons fairly rang'd,
 O'erspread the blissful ground.

Approving Phoebus shines more bright,
 The flow'rs appear more gay,
 New objects rise to please the sight
 With each revolving day.

While safe within the sacred walls,
 Where heav'nly friendship reigns,
 The jovial masons hear the calls
 Of all the needy swains.
 Their gen'rous aid, with chearful soul,
 They grant to those who sue;
 And while the sparkling glasses roll,
 Their smiling joys renew.⁴⁹

Once the English had looked upon the Ottoman Empire with imperial envy, but by mid-eighteenth century 'Britania's gen'rous sons' began arriving with benevolent schemes of neo-colonial occupation in the service of promoting commerce.

Part III

Some Literary Impacts

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7

Learn of a Turk: Restoration Culture and the Ottoman Empire

Learn of a Turk

In 1615, William Bedwell was surely confident that his readers would assent when he asked: 'May not Christians be ashamed to be taught of a Turke?'¹ Bedwell was England's first great scholar of Arabic and the first great English Orientalist to dedicate his life to the study of a language that he much admired but which belonged to a religion he despised.² Certainly, the assumption behind his rhetorical question would have echoed the feelings of most of his Protestant compatriots at the time. Yet by the Restoration of 1660, English culture had become so thoroughly saturated with Ottoman, Persian and Muslim influences that the new government was quite earnestly encouraged to 'Learne of a Turk.'

This chapter traces the demise of that sense of shame during the course of the seventeenth century and explores some of the ways that fascination with and increasing knowledge of Ottoman culture influenced different kinds of writing in English. I discuss changing and contradictory attitudes towards the Ottomans and argue that, from 1660 most evidently, national and imperial self-representations were thoroughly informed and shaped in several registers – political analogy, racial fantasy, imperial destiny – by familiar, though often confused, assumptions about those the English called 'Turks.' Alongside the politically and religiously orthodox view that the Protestant British had nothing to learn from the Muslim Ottomans, as Bedwell once believed, envy of the magnificent imperial civilization ruled by the Ottomans so greatly animated and structured English thoughts and feelings about themselves and their place in the world that it features in many kinds of writing.

While few would become as openly sympathetic towards Islam as Henry Stubbes, whose manuscript *Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism with the Life of Mahomet and a Vindication of him and his Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians*, probably composed during the 1670s, marks an extreme position in pro-Muslim thought at the time, Stubbes' account nevertheless suggests how mindless fear and hostility had, in philosophical writing, somewhat abated by the end of the seventeenth century.³ 'Turks' were still often called 'terrible,' but attitudes were no longer quite that simple, nor had they been for some time. Throughout the course of the seventeenth century, the term 'Turk' continued to be regularly used for referring to all Muslims regardless of ethnic or national origin, yet readers did not have to go very far to find traveller's reports mixing admiration with awe. Regular news reports from Istanbul, accounts of contemporary events in Algiers and Aleppo, as well as increasingly accurate histories of the Ottoman Empire provided fascinating reading and offered compelling political parallels with events at home. Thanks to the efforts of Sir Thomas Roe, the execution of Sultan 'Genç' Osman II (r.1618–1622) (see Figure 3) in 1622 was widely reported in England at the time, and would be regularly recalled throughout the 1640s and 1650s by writers seeking to find historical parallels for the regicide of Charles I, its causes and consequences. Although the Republican government had closed the public theatres, in 1656 William Davenant managed to produce an opera, *The Siege of Rhodes*, which dazzled audiences with displays of exotic Ottomans in full regalia. At the same time, more popular forms of writing, such as the broadside ballad, suggest how English interest in tales about the Ottomans was no longer confined to learned historians and politicians alone, but also gripped the national imagination in sometimes startling ways. Most likely published shortly after the Restoration and reprinted many times thereafter, *The Honour of an Apprentice of London* shows how the imperial envy characteristic of English attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire had taken a new turn, imagining not only that the Ottomans wished they were English, but that they had been fathered by an Englishman since the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

The *Haile-i Osmaniye*, or the tragedy of Osman II

On 23 February 1660, some weeks before Charles returned to claim his throne, the stationer George Thomason added yet one more pamphlet to the vast collection of printed works he had started on the eve of the Civil Wars. Titled *Learne of a Turk, Instructions and Advise sent from the*

Turkish Army at Constantinople, to the English Army at London, it carried the quizzical yet portentous colophon 'Printed in the first moneth of the great Platonick year, Called anciently by some in English, As you were.'⁴ Purporting to be a letter from an expatriated Englishman living in Istanbul, *Learn of a Turk* offers an exemplary warning to the people of England even as they were on the brink of once more transforming their government, this time back to monarchy. The author, who enigmatically signed as 'M. B.', directly addresses several pressing political problems, including that of what to do with all the men currently under arms, by offering a salutary version of the story of the fall of the Ottoman Sultan, Genç Osman II, back in May 1622. During that month, the young Osman was deposed and publicly strangled alongside his grand vezir and chief black eunuch. Mustafa I, Osman's mad uncle who had been deposed four years earlier, was reinstated, only once again to be forced to abdicate after a mere four months of undeniable incompetence. Thus began the nine-year minority of the underage Sultan Murad IV (r.1623–1640) and the effective rule of his mother, the Valide Sultan Kösem.⁵

Why did M. B. imagine that the English in 1660, who themselves had recently lived through Europe's first Republic and seen it crumble back into the political mess from which monarchy seemed the best solution, would be susceptible to the suggestion that they could, and indeed should, 'learne of a Turk'? What could the English learn from the ungodly Ottomans in this the 'great Platonick year'? Clearly, M. B. thought it was reasonable to assume that readers of political tracts would understand only too well how history taught a comparative method: could it be that past events from Ottoman history might prove just as important for understanding the nature of domestic politics as were events in France or Spain, the United Provinces or Italy? Perhaps the Islamic world was not fundamentally different from Christendom after all. While Charles II was preparing to take up his throne, the 'Turks' were still popularly considered to be entirely unlike the English, yet perhaps the outrageous suggestion of M. B.'s title emphatically signals how the serious political stakes at issue in this tract dissolved apparent differences. 'Reader,' it begins,

Although thou hast not much skill in forreign *Names*, yet if thou hast any little skill in *Domestick affairs*, thou mayest out of this discourse pick some knowledge of our *Miseries* past: of our *Miseries* present, with the *root* and *spring* of them, and of the most probable *means* of redeeming them for the future.⁶

Might it be that even the Ottoman past offered crucial lessons in statecraft and imperial management for those concerned with the future of English interests?

To learned readers, at least, M. B.'s topic would have been a familiar one. Stories about the great 'Ottoman tragedy' of Osman – to borrow Gabriel Piterberg's translation of the Ottoman historian Katip Çelebi's formula, the *Haile-i Osmaniye* – resounded throughout the English seventeenth century well into the Restoration period and beyond.⁷ Within a few months of Osman's death, no fewer than three printed tracts had appeared in London describing his death by strangling.⁸ Nor should this particular interest in Osman's fate be so surprising since, among Jacobean statesmen, Genç Osman held a special place. Unlike Elizabeth, who had been keenly interested in making personal contact with Ottoman sultans, their mothers, wives and grand vezirs, James adopted a rather more impersonal and highly mediated policy of leaving relations with Muslim nations to merchants and diplomats.⁹ In Thomas Glover and Paul Pindar, James would be fortunate to have ambassadors with extensive experience and understanding of Ottoman cultural and political life and, as we have seen, it was during his reign that trade with the Ottomans surpassed that of any other Christian nation. The high regard in which the Ottomans held James was signalled when Genç Osman, immediately upon his accession in 1618, personally directed a special envoy, one 'Uri or Husseine Chiaus,' to confirm the articles of peace. Osman's envoy Uri 'had audience from his Majesty at White Hall, Sir *Thomas Glover* being Interpreter.'¹⁰ Even as the Christian armies in Europe were preparing to destroy each other in a war that would last for the next thirty years, Osman wrote seeking a special relationship with James by flattering him most fulsomely as a king of peace:

The most invincible, most mighty, and most happy Sultan *Osman Chan*, of the *Othoman* Empire Monarch, sendeth unto your excellent Majesty a hundred thousand salutations and greetings, evermore praying the most high God for your Majesties happinesse, sendeth unto your Highnesse with all possible honour and renowne, this his Imperiall and most noble Letter; and withall hopeth, that the sacred bond of peace, which hath beene hitherto inviolably on your Majesties parts kept and observed; your Majesty will be well pleased still on your part, with dayly encrease more and more of friendship, earnestly to continue therein. And his Imperiall Majesty on his behalfe is also resolved in the like manner evermore punctually to keepe and observe the same.¹¹

Neither the diplomatic elegance of the address nor the formulaic insistence that, like James, Osman sought peace with distant allies at a time of impending war should distract us from recognizing how James and his ministers maintained very strong and close ties with the Ottoman court. While it had been Elizabeth who had initiated that rapprochement in hopes of establishing an Anglo-Ottoman alliance aimed at thwarting the Spanish, James' pro-Spanish position did not mean that the king of England and Scotland was no longer considered a significant player in Ottoman affairs. The ambassador Henry Lello recorded that Ahmet I's grand vezir, Dervish Pasha, sought James' assistance in concluding a peace with the Holy Roman Emperor, confident that 'yf my King would be a mediator in it' a peace 'might be effected.'¹² In the event, James proved reluctant to intervene personally, and Lello was singularly ineffectual. In 1606, James knighted and appointed Thomas Glover as ambassador to replace Lello. Over the next few years, Glover quickly consolidated Ottoman trade with England while also vigorously intriguing on James' behalf at the Ottoman court, housing the Moldavian pretender, Stephan Bogdan, in the English house at Pera at the king's request. When Bogdan's claim was rejected, James was forced to recall Glover in 1611 amidst international scandal.¹³

But knowledge of and interest in matters Ottoman were by no means reserved for those involved in high and sometimes secretive matters of state; as Daniel Goffman has amply illustrated, the activities of English merchants and diplomats in the Ottoman Empire were the subject of considerable public interest throughout mid-century.¹⁴

Restoration culture and the Ottoman 'Turks'

Certainly by 1660, many aspects of English culture had become thoroughly permeated with Ottoman, Persian and even Mughal influences; though sometimes the differences between 'Turks,' 'Persians,' and 'Indians' became elided. Massive numbers of publications about the 'Turks' had been appearing from the English press for more than a century. In London and Oxford, coffee houses had become familiar and culturally important landmarks.¹⁵ As we saw earlier, imported 'Turkey' carpets and costumes made of Eastern fabrics could be found decorating increasing numbers of properties and persons throughout the land. Eastern horses of a quality hardly ever before glimpsed in England had long been highly desirable and were being shipped from Ottoman ports in significant numbers. James I, Oliver Cromwell, Charles II, James II, William III, Queen Anne and the three Georges all had imported

Arabians, Turks and Barbs in their studs. As Donna Landry has pointed out, the importing of oriental horses changed forever the way the English thought about and treated their principal mode of transport. 'The English thoroughbred horse,' she writes, 'an eighteenth-century invention, and a cultural icon of British Imperial superiority, in fact has an Asian, primarily Ottoman origin.'¹⁶ The new Oriental horses both demanded to be treated differently from other horses and inspired new forms of horse-keeping philosophy, new riding styles that allowed horses more freedom of movement, and a new form of painting, the horse portrait. There had been horse portraits in Ottoman, Persian and Mughal art but never before had horses been regarded as artistic subjects in their own right by English artists. Now, in paintings by John Wootton, James Seymour, Sawrey Gilpin, and, most famously, George Stubbs, horses were portrayed as intelligent beings as well as athletic racing machines, and as beautiful creatures as well as useful ones. No wonder that in 1726, Jonathan Swift created the Houyhnhnms, a species of totally rational equines. New forms of equestrian management and riding, new forms of painting and new ways of thinking about human–animal relations – it would be hard to overestimate the effect that Eastern horses had on English and British self-conceptions.

Away from the country houses and stable yards, the impact of the East also permeated urban entertainment and fashionable styles of clothing. Once the theatres reopened, they staged both new and old plays set amidst the imperial splendours of exotic Muslim courts and paraded gorgeous Eastern costumes that both influenced and reflected the newly glamorous fashions of the royal court. As early as 1656, Thomas Betterton had performed in William Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes* wearing a turban and 'Turkish vest,' a knee-length coat of fancy brocade, a style that would become popular following the Restoration.¹⁷ Fashionable young men especially craved the real thing. In 1663, Edmund Verney wrote to his brother John, who was serving his apprenticeship as a merchant in Aleppo, requesting 'some silke waskots & shirts of the sort of linen made where you are.' And he also ordered 'a Turkish habit from head to foot, but not of cloth, because that's too common here.'¹⁸ Indeed, so common had flamboyant and oriental male costumes become by 1666 that some claimed the Great Fire of London had been provoked by the licentious clothes worn by courtiers. In response to such suggestions, King Charles declared that he would adopt a more sober style of dress that would encourage thrift. The costume turned out to be a full-length sleeved coat of plain silk closed with centre-front buttons that covered the shirt – considered an immodest undergarment – and was

aimed to replace the traditional doublet while covering over the area formerly inhabited by the offensive cod-piece. On 15 October, Samuel Pepys noted 'the King begins to put on his Vest . . . being a long Cassocke close to the body, of black cloth and pinked with white silk under it, and a coat over it, and the legs rufled with black riband . . . a very fine and handsome garment.'¹⁹ Three days later, John Evelyn reported making the journey 'to Court, it being the first time of his Majesties putting himselfe solemnly into the *Eastern fashion* of Vest, changing doublet, stiff Collar, bands and Cloake &c: into a comely Vest, after the *Persian* mode with girdle or shash.'²⁰ Charlotte Jirousek suggests that Charles' 'vest' owed rather more to the uniform of the Ottoman janissaries than to Persian coats of the period, which 'typically had a diagonally cut neck-line that closed at the side seam.'²¹ Either way, the king's new 'Eastern fashion' introduced all the elements that would eventually evolve into the men's suit, but by no means ended the fashion for more exotic male costumes based on oriental styles which continued unabated: in 1666, Pepys reports paying a visit on Sir Philip Howard and finding him dressed 'in his night-gown and Turban like a Turk; but one of the finest persons that ever I saw in my life.'²²

Restoration readers and the Ottoman 'Turks'

The Restoration also heralded a new age of English writing in the sense that the written word had become recognized to be a truly dominant agent of social and cultural change. In this respect, the Declaration of Breda of April 1660, which established the terms by which Charles would regain his father's throne, might be taken as symbolic of a shift towards a formal and written constitutionalization of state power. Reading, writing and the theatrical performance of language on public stages had become crucial to the way the English-speaking and reading peoples of Great Britain took to refashioning themselves in the decades following the Stuart Restoration.²³ From 1660 at least, there developed not only an undeniable presence of writing about Eastern empires and cultures in general, but also, as with men's fashions, some degree of confusion between what properly belonged to the Mughals, Safavids or Ottomans. A proliferation of imaginative and often casually confused references to 'Indian,' 'Persian' and 'Turkish' customs, habits and objects strongly suggests that writers felt free to take it for granted that a great deal was widely known, but that precision was not very important: such casual indifference marks an important symptom of cultural saturation. This casual attitude appears, for example, when in *Oroonoko* Aphra

Behn imaginatively describes a West African royal court in terms that are clearly derived from accounts of the seraglio in Istanbul. For our purposes here, it matters less what Behn's sources might have been than that she clearly considered it mattered little if she mixed the cultures. Similarly, when in *The Way of the World* Congreve's Millimant speaks of 'tea, chocolate, and coffee' as 'native' drinks we can surely hear how Englishness itself has become transformed by international contact and exotic appropriation.

Despite such possible confusions, however, certain aspects of the Ottoman state were evidently well known: the dynastic order of sultanic succession, the lack of a hereditary nobility, and the meritocratic social system largely based on the *devşirme* or child-levy, which enabled those born to Christian parents to rise to positions of high office. By the 1660s, even balladeers, writing for a popular range of readers and listeners, assumed their audiences shared a reasonably well-informed understanding of such features of Ottoman social and political life.

For many Restoration readers, the Ottoman 'Turk' remained a rather distant but an increasingly familiar figure, most often a non-Christian enemy, but seldom simply that. After briefly considering the question of English Restoration readership a little further, I will turn to a broadside ballad that raises interesting questions of just how much a balladeer might expect readers to know of Ottoman society and, in doing so, illustrate a particularly telling instance of how imperial envy continued to characterize English attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire. As we have seen, by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, imperial ambitions and achievements were more and more on the agenda of English writers who were boldly and ambitiously framing a new and sovereign national identity. Imperial envy of the Ottomans continued to shape key aspects of that agenda.

Envy – that ambivalent and complex structure of feeling that blends malicious hatred with admiration of another's excellence – in this imperial form had inherited a traditional enemy in the Ottoman Empire: the 'present terrour of the world' as Richard Knolles and others once thought. Yet the picture had become more complicated than that since envy also entails desire and attraction and there was a great deal that the English found both desirable and attractive in what they knew of the great empire of the Ottomans. During the course of the seventeenth century, the imperial turn often displaced malice into strange fantasies of Anglo-Ottoman filiation. Since those afflicted by envy feel that those they envy should also envy them back, imperial envy sometimes took

highly imaginative forms; including the fantasy that the Ottomans wished they were English.

In 1663, Henry Marsh reported how the events of Charles II's return had been received at the court of Sultan Mehmed IV (r.1648–1687) in Istanbul. 'I may not omit,' Marsh writes:

that it is certainly reported, the Grand Signior, being highly affected with his Majesties Restitution, should say, *That if he were to chuse his God, or his Religion, he would chuse the King of England.*²⁴

Whether reliable or not, this is a remarkable piece of evidence. The nature of the Ottoman historical archive is such that it provides very little direct documentation about Ottoman views of Europeans at this time. Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, of course, but since we are only beginning to understand just how wrong Bernard Lewis was to argue that the Ottomans, and Muslims more generally, were simply uninterested in Europe, the point is worth raising.²⁵ As a witness to events in Istanbul, Marsh is as reliable as any, having claimed that he once served in the Ottoman army.²⁶ Moreover, there is every reason to think that Mehmed – surely one of the most powerful dynastic rulers of the time and all too aware of how fragile dynastic right can prove – would have been both intrigued and indeed 'affected' by stories of Charles II's return. If Mehmed ever made such an admission as Marsh claims, it may well have circulated widely for someone like Marsh to learn of it, and would further testify to just how successful the Stuart propaganda machine had been at presenting the new king Charles II to a global audience. Whatever the case may be, Marsh's claim was just the sort of notion that would have appealed to English readers at the time.

Fantasy filiations

So even if Marsh's report really is no more than a fantasy generated by propaganda about the return of Charles II, it still points to an important feature of how loyalty to Charles was being generated in global, indeed, Ottoman terms. Suggesting that the Ottoman sultan envied the king of England was a truly remarkable assertion about England's place in the world. Moreover, a closely related belief – that Englishmen not only should be, but actually were, running the Ottoman Empire because the Ottomans were indolent, lascivious, prone to luxury and incompetence – was firmly in place by the Restoration. An exceptionally

resonant example that illustrates this turn on the structure of imperial envy involves a broadside ballad that offers the remarkable fantasy that the Ottoman dynasty itself had been fathered by an Englishman ever since the days of Elizabeth. Most readers of the Restoration period probably knew that this was improbable, but ballads and their readers have seldom been interested in historical accuracy of the documentary sort. First entered into the Stationers' Register on 13 March 1656,²⁷ *The Honour of an Apprentice of London* offers a powerful fantasy of upward mobility, of making good by going abroad: the East, it would seem, was already a career. This ballad not only depends upon an illuminating range of received notions about how the Ottoman Empire was run, but also imagines that empire to be, despite its military greatness, penetrable by the greater fortitude and godliness of an Elizabethan Englishman.

The ballad tells how its eponymous hero, a Cheshire lad, is sent to 'Turkey' by his master, a London merchant. Once there, the English apprentice cannot hide his superior native abilities and vigorous nationalism, and quickly turns into an Elizabethan knight-errant who sets about teaching the 'Turks' the error of their ways.

Our hero's adventures begin shortly after arriving in foreign lands and deserve attention. He first destroys the honour of the Ottoman army by single-handedly dismounting twenty 'Turkish' knights who were rash enough to challenge the name of Queen Elizabeth. If his military prowess were not sufficient evidence of our stout-hearted apprentice's honourable devotion to the best of queens, he goes on to terminate the paternal line of the Ottoman dynasty by killing 'the Prince of *Turks*' with 'a box upon the ear' (see Figure 11):

And there with all he gave him
 a Box upon the ear,
 Which broke his neck asunder,
 as plainly doth appear,
 Now know proud *Turke* quoth he
 I am no *English* boy,
 That can with one small box o'th ear,
 the Prince of *Turks* destroy.

When as the King perceived
 his Son so strangely slain,
 His soul was sore afflicted
 with more than mortal pain.

And in revenge thereof
 he swore that he should dye
 The cruelst death that ever man
 beheld with mortal eye.²⁸

But the sultan's cruel plans, to have our hero punished by being torn apart by starving lions, immediately go awry since the vengeful 'King' has foolishly forgotten that Englishmen become lion-hearted once they arrive in the East, and have god on their side (lines 81–96). Indeed, as shown by the woodcut illustrating the broadside, the English hero reaches right into the mouths of the two famished lions and tears their hearts out, declaring that he does so 'for lovely *Englands* sake, / And for my Country Maiden Queen.' (see Figure 10). Amazed at the death of his lions, the superstitious Ottoman 'King' quickly recognizes that supernatural forces must be at work:

But when the King perceived
 his wrathful Lyons hearts,
 Afflicted with great terror
 his rigor soon reverts
 And turned all his hate,
 into remorse and love,
 And said it was some Angel sure
 sent down from God above.

(lines 113–20)

Convinced by what he has seen of the apprentice's divinely assisted heroism, the sultan is suddenly overcome by repentance and envious admiration for all things English.

The King in heart amazed,
 lift up his hands to heaven,
 And for his foul offences
 did crave to be forgiven,
 Believing that no Land
 like *England* might be seen,
 Nor people better governed
 by vertue of a Queen.
 So taking up this young man
 he pardon'd him his life,

And gave his daughter to him
 to be his wedded wife,
 Where then they did remain
 and live in quiet peace,
 In spending forth their happy days
 in joy and loves increase.

(lines 129–44)

Well, if that were true, then for two or three generations by the late 1660s, an Englishman had fathered the dynastic line of Ottoman sultans. Here, imperial envy produces an imaginary Anglo-Ottoman relation, one that takes shape as the fantasy that the Ottoman Empire has, in dynastic terms, been ruled by the English.

This fantasy is especially interesting, in part because of what it takes for granted about English knowledge of Ottoman social structures. The sultan is familiarly called a 'King' and imagined to have a royal family and court just like Britain's with 'Noble Ladies' and 'Barons.' Yet at the same time he is characteristically represented as being prone to cruelty and superstitious excess in line with traditional ideas about his tyrannical power and ungodly religion. The upwardly mobile apprentice achieves great things within the Ottoman Empire without embracing Islam or undergoing circumcision, but simply by being a worthy Englishman. What further marks this fantasy as part of a systematic citational discourse in Michel Foucault's sense, rather than simply an isolated fantasy set within some magical distant land, is the clear recognition that the Ottoman Empire was at once multi-ethnic and meritocratic: access to wealth, social status and political influence did indeed depend entirely on the absolute will and dynastic line of the sultan in just the ways imagined here.²⁹ In this respect, at least, the fantasy is not entirely groundless. In 1656, the year this ballad was registered with the Stationers' Company, Francis Osborne observed:

The Subjects in *Turkey* have nothing *hereditary*: all *Honours*, and *places of profit*, being peculiar to *Desert*, and determine with *Life*, without the lest partiality shewed to greatness of Birth . . . this hangs no lesse weight of *Restraint* on the *Ambition* of all in actual Administration of publick Affaires, than it adds *Industry* to such as have not yet attained to that height. By which a foule error in *Europe* is obviated, where men ascend to the highest places by the mediation of *Friends* and *Money*, rather than any advantage their *worth* brings to the

Commonwealth: It being most ordinary for Fools to be admitted into the *Temples of Honour and Riches*, whilst the choicest endowments of Art and Nature are suffered to pray, if not beg, without.³⁰

In respect of the possibility of meritocratic advancement, at least, the fantasy of an English apprentice fathering the Ottoman dynasty also points to the possibility that the English state had something that it might well learn from Ottoman statecraft.

Power at the Ottoman court was known to be available to foreigners. Early travellers to North Africa and the Levant had long reported being amazed by the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual mix of peoples living under Ottoman rule. They were fascinated by how the social, legal and political system was so entirely without respect for blood-lines or hereditary privilege – except in the case of the ruling Osmanlı dynasty and descendants of the Prophet – that they regularly observed how even personal property reverted to the state.³¹ The multi-ethnic composition of Ottoman society had itself attracted English visitors. In 1634, Henry Blount had travelled ‘to acquaint my selfe with those other sects which live under the *Turkes*, as *Greeks*, *Armenians*, *Freinks*, and *Zinganaes*, but especially the *Iewes*’³² in order to find out how the Ottoman system was able to control their coexistence. Paul Rycaut’s *Present State of the Ottoman Empire* of 1667 observed that among the greatest weaknesses of the Ottoman state was the lack of hereditary nobility, and a political system that made promotion to positions of power available to anyone, at the ‘sole favour of the Prince, without any title of noble blood.’³³ Perhaps the fantasy that an Englishman fathered Ottoman sultans might once not have seemed so entirely implausible as it must now sound.

By the 1660s, writers had frequently described how the Ottoman court in Istanbul reproduced itself by the child-levy or *devşirme*, which converted and educated a periodic intake of boys from Christian families under Ottoman rule into court schools. Here they were educated and, based on personal aptitudes, became janissaries, courtiers, royal servants, even ruling ministers of state. Beyond the *devşirme*, the Ottoman elite and administrative classes also admitted and promoted Christians who had embraced Islam. Court interpreters or ‘dragomen’ were frequently renegades. Since the late sixteenth century, British readers of Hakluyt’s *Navigations* would have known the story of Samson Rowlie, who, during the era evoked by the ballad, became Assan Aga, the most important Englishman in Algiers.³⁴ Englishmen who became powerful Turks were liable to be demonized: contemporary reports inevitably dwell on the

fact that Rowlie was a eunuch.³⁵ Yet such was clearly not the case of the valiant apprentice.

The heroic and virile boasting of the ballad are as typically imperialistic as the barely submerged structure of male Orientalist fantasy that makes Turkish women, pre-eminently Ottoman princesses, especially desirable and desiring. What is most fascinating, however, is the ballad's shrewd perception that Ottoman despotism, the tyranny of the absolutist sultan, makes itself vulnerable to English penetration in just this way. The Ottomans might well become British subjects in so far as the absolute authority of the sultan could, in theory at least, appoint an Englishman to be his heir. In this ballad's fantastic colonization of the Ottoman dynasty, we can see a well-developed instance of imperial envy, imagining a take-over of the great Ottoman dynasty and empire with all the erotic charge that accompanies sexual adventuring.

However whimsical the story might seem, the legend of the London apprentice continued to prove remarkably popular in England and Scotland for more than a century after it first appeared. In various forms, it was reprinted more than twenty times, not only in London (fifteen times) but also in Newcastle and Sheffield, in Tewkesbury for sale in Gloucester and Cheltenham, in Manchester (twice), in Coventry, and in London for sale in Glasgow.³⁶ The latest copies that I have found were printed in the early nineteenth century. As we might expect, the original story was revised and elaborated along the way. First printed in about 1775, an adaptation entitled *The Famous History of the Valiant London Prentice* shifted from verse into prose, gave the hero the unlikely name of Aurelius and assigned him several further adventures before he set out for Istanbul; this version was reprinted in about 1810.³⁷ Meanwhile, in 1805, an even longer prose version had appeared entitled *The London Apprentice: Or, Singular Adventures of Henry and Zelima. An Historical Tale*. In addition to renaming the hero more suitably and giving his exotic bride a name, this version casts him as Elizabeth's ambassador and tells how the happy couple return to England and raise a happy family of several children. Henry's original master is reported to have been an eminent London goldsmith. Even more striking is that this version claims to have inspired a theatrical spectacle, noting on the title page: 'On this interesting Narrative is founded the popular Spectacle, performed, with great Applause, at Astley's Amphitheatre, called, The London Apprentice; or, The Seven Towers of Constantinople.'³⁸ Even while this theatrical extravaganza was 'Performing with Unbounded Applause,' the musical score of the 'Much Admired Overture' by one J. Sanderson was printed having been specially 'Arranged for the Piano

Forte' so that audiences might recapture some of the excitement once they had returned home.³⁹ If indeed Mr Astley constructed staging to resemble 'The Seven Towers of Constantinople' in his amphitheatre, London audiences might well have felt inspired to think of how the greatness of their own empire was supplanting the former grandeur of the Ottomans: 1805, after all, was the year that the Royal Navy under Admiral Nelson defeated the French at Trafalgar. In 1820, yet a further adaptation of the story appeared. *London's Glory; Or, The History of the Valiant and Renowned Henry Cornfield, a Native of Cheshire; Recorded in History as the Famous London Apprentice, Whose Wonderful and Singular Adventures and Heroism Astonished Europe* was clearly aimed at inspiring national pride. Advertised to be sold by Lumsden and Sons of Glasgow, this prose version gives Henry a family name and county of birth, and tells readers that the London goldsmith to whom he was apprenticed was one Robert Freeman of London Bridge. We also learn that his bride, Zelima, was really a Persian princess who had been captured by Algerian corsairs en route to Istanbul where she was sent to marry Abdallah, the eldest son of the sultan, here imaginatively called 'Soliman.' As chance would have it, young Henry bravely captures the Algerian pirate ship, rescues the princess and promptly takes her to Istanbul. In true *Arabian Nights* mode, the princess and English hero have, of course, fallen in love by the time they arrive. When Henry is caught climbing into Zelima's rooms, the sultan proposes to punish the Englishman: 'it was decreed that Henry should be exposed to combat, unarmed, with two lions, and that Zelima should be forced to witness the catastrophe of her lover!' Henry duly tears the hearts out of the lions, marries Zelima, receives word that Queen Elizabeth has appointed him her new ambassador, makes a substantial fortune and eventually retires to England with his wife and 'numerous offspring.'⁴⁰

It would seem that, even as the British Empire grew and that of the Ottomans appeared to fall into decline, the tale of an upwardly mobile Elizabethan apprentice doing rather well for himself at the Ottoman court continued to fire the national imagination. Imperial envy was turning into imperial pride.

Some conclusions

In the years immediately following 1660 and the king's return, the political importance of the Ottoman Empire for British mercantile interests and foreign policy became increasingly acute as commercial investments being made among 'Turkey' merchants increasingly targeted the

Indian subcontinent. Imperial ambitions were becoming realized with increased trade with Eastern empires and the English, ably aided by the Scots and Irish, were increasingly refashioning their national identity as British in keeping with this sense of imperial status before them. What Rudyard Kipling famously called 'the Great Game' – the nineteenth-century struggle between the great European powers over control of trading routes in the East – was well underway by the start of the eighteenth century and would certainly have been apparent to readers of periodical publications as well as to many at court.

Strategically, alliances with the Ottomans who governed such vast territories served British trading and imperial interests. Writing in 1737, the geographer John Green summarized what had long been apparent: Ottoman control over the Anatolian landmass, the Levant, Barbary coast, and most importantly, perhaps, their land-holdings in South-east Europe, was crucial to British trade with India. Green warned how that trade had recently been threatened by 'the League formed by the *Germans* and *Russians* to drive the *Soltan* out of Europe,' and continued:

It is therefore the Interest of *Great Britain* to frustrate the intended League; to which, indeed, she is incited by other powerful Reasons: because, should *Turky* in *Europe* fall a Conquest to these Crowns, what would become of the ballance of power, and even of the Protestant Religion itself? Would not the Popish Princes, when strengthened by such large Acquisitions, turn their Arms against the *Heretics*, as they call us, whom they hate even more than *Infidels*, and have always been attempting to destroy?

I make no Difficulty to affirm, that Christianity would suffer more by the Expulsion of the *Turks*, than if Popery was driven out instead of Mohammedism: For whereas the latter allows free Toleration to all Religions, while the former denies it to any; Christianity may subsist, at least, under the one, but must be extirpated under the other.⁴¹

By the 1730s, the Anglo-Ottoman alliance stretching back to the 1580s still held strong for good reasons. What Green calls the 'ballance of power' had shifted considerably by the Restoration, but the Ottoman Empire, especially the parts that would come to be known as 'Turkey in Europe,' remained a very good thing for British commercial and imperial ambitions further east. And those powerful overseas interests and ambitions had cultural repercussions during the years when the English were

re-defining themselves as British and setting about consolidating their own empire in the East.

Judging from the broad nature and range of printed works about the Ottomans published in seventeenth-century England, even while the English were becoming the imperial British, they were regularly thinking about the Ottoman Empire. Had it not been for the execution of Charles I in 1649, there would have been no need for a Restoration in 1660, and there were those at the time who regularly recalled the *Haile-i Osmaniye*. But the period from Osman II's execution in 1622 until the accession of Mehmed IV in 1648 equally fascinated English readers because it also heralded the so-called 'reign of the women' under the Valide Kösem. The great Ottoman tragedy would be memorialized once again in 1740 by none other than Samuel Richardson who, at the very time he was writing *Pamela*, was busily editing the vast collection of papers that Sir Thomas Roe had compiled during his embassy to Istanbul. Richardson paraphrases Roe's account of his Ottoman sojourn for being

so fruitful of great events, that in the first fifteen months of it only, Sir Thomas [Roe] observes that he had seen there three emperors of the Turks, seven prime visiers, two captain bassa's, five aga's of the Janissaries, three great-treasurers, six bassa's of Cairo, and other changes in proportion: and which at the same time that it shews the distresses of the Turkish empire, then struggling, as it were, to preserve itself from dissolution, lays open the genius and policies of the Turks, as well in regard to their own government, as to their conduct with their neighbours.⁴²

The same catalogue of volatile Ottoman appointments had appeared, almost word for word, in *Learn of a Turk*,⁴³ suggesting just how resonant these great events in Ottoman history continued to prove for literate English readers more than a century after they had taken place.

In 1660, M. B. was being far from idiosyncratic when he refuted the learned William Bedwell's earlier claim that Christians would be ashamed to learn from the 'Turks.' Rather, he was on to something important: that the genius and policies of the English, and their struggles to preserve themselves from dissolution in 1660, with regard to their own government as much as their conduct with foreign nations, however distant, could be characterized by a willingness to learn of a 'Turk.'

8

A View from the West: Young American Writing about the Maghrib

What happened following the Treaty of Paris of 1783 when the first writers from the newly established United States looked East?

Empire and apocalypse

We might begin with the words of George Bush regarding Islam, the Islamic World, and how to read the prophecy of Daniel as the key to a correct Christian interpretation of Revelations, chapter nine, verse one: 'And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth.' Of this verse, Bush writes:

Commentators at the present day are almost universally agreed in regarding the fifth trumpet as symbolizing and predicting the appearance of the Arabian impostor, his spurious religion, and his Saracen followers.

Bush ends his lengthy disquisition on verse one by observing:

As a striking coincidence with the signs here predicted, it is worthy of note, that a remarkable comet immediately preceded the birth of Mohammed; and that an eclipse of the sun, of extraordinary degree and duration, attended the first announcement of his pretended mission.¹

Few there are, I am sure, who imagine that a twenty-first century president of the United States could believe such superstitious nonsense or hold such racist views; but it does seem that during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there were many residents of what I shall

call 'Young America' – that nation of migrants, settlers and colonialists who had recently fought against and declared independence from Great Britain – who did so believe. Among them was George Bush, not the Texan who oversaw the invasion of Iraq, but a possible ancestor of his, the early nineteenth-century Presbyterian minister and Orientalist of considerable standing who taught Oriental languages at New York University, denied the resurrection of the body, supervised the American Bible Society's version of the King James Bible, converted to Swedenborgianism, and was the first American to write a substantial life of Muhammad in American English. George Bush's *The Life of Mohammed*, from which I have been quoting, first appeared in 1830 and was reprinted in 1844 and again in 2002.

To early modern scholars of comparative religions, Bush's reading of Daniel and Revelations will be a familiar one. It places the rise of Islam within a providentialist and millenarian theory of history that belongs firmly within a populist Protestant tradition of anti-Islamic propaganda initiated at the time of Martin Luther and Englished by George Foxe. For many extreme Protestants, Daniel's prophecy helped explain the emergence of Islam as part of a divinely ordained apocalyptic scheme that justified contempt for Muslims. In describing this tradition, Nabil Matar has shown how Reformation theologians in England and Scotland used Daniel and Revelations to cope with the twin threats of Ottoman sea power and the Counter-Reformation while, at the same time, explaining the failure of the Christian crusaders to recapture the sacred lands of the Near East.² Implicit in this scheme are emergent ideologies of progress and of national exceptionalism by which the story of the past merely confirmed Anglo-Protestant Young Americans in the sense of their own godly superiority: pro-Israelite but profoundly anti-Jewish, pro-Arab but anti-Saracen (for today read: pro-Saudi but anti-militant Islam), pro-Roman (and Republican) but stoutly anti-Catholic and hostile to papal supremacy.

In an attempt to address, if not redress, this kind of self-serving vilification of Islam and Muslims, I propose to explore some of the literary forms and tropes which circulated these ideas, and to recall their roots in early English writing about the Ottoman world and the writing of the national script – by which I mean the various processes by which language becomes literature, something that happened to English during the long seventeenth century. I have suggested elsewhere that this scripting of the nation was fully and inextricably underway in England by the time of the Stuart Restoration, an event that in many ways signalled the arrival of what we continue to recognize as 'English

literature' – the national literature first formally defined by Dryden and his contemporaries. I have also argued that oriental travel writing very quickly assumed a very important place in this scripting and reveals crucial ways that, from the late sixteenth century on, English readers were invited to think of themselves in relation to the many places in the world to which their fellow countrymen were travelling and the cultures they were directly encountering, often for the first time.³ For the early modern English, the rise of oriental travel was, in crucial ways, about the place of writing and literary culture within the formations of the national script.

For Young American writers, the imperative for their new nation to have a foundational myth and national literature became urgent as soon as the United States of America came into being and Young American merchants started to send ships into the Mediterranean. Writers such as Colonel David Humphreys of Connecticut and Royall Tyler of Boston were innovators and Young American literary firsts. Humphreys (1753–1818), a Yale 'wit' who served with George Washington during the Wars of Independence, wrote the first sonnets and epic verse. Tyler (1757–1826) wrote some of the earliest plays and prose fiction. Both writers responded in 'new US literary forms' to the discovery that the US flag would be subject to new obligations in the Islamic Mediterranean. In characteristic rhetoric, Humphreys' epic *Poem on the Happiness of America* (c.1786) develops accounts of Young America first entering into the internecine negotiations that attempted to distinguish pirate from corsair, and did so with a view to establishing the legitimacy of a unilateral invasion of Algeria by US military forces that would utterly destroy Muslim North Africa in the name of a millenarian eschatology that has continued to characterize US foreign policy ever since. Dedicated to Humphreys, Tyler's satirical novel *The Algerine Captive; Or, The Life and Adventures of Doctor Updike Underhill: Six Years a Prisoner among the Algerines* (1797) exposed the hollow pretensions of the New England grandees, poked fun at the reading habits of the new nation, and established the captivity narrative as a formative Young American genre.⁴ Where the earliest English accounts of Mediterranean piracy develop from residual humanistic attempts to understand the nature and range of Ottoman imperialism spurred by imperial envy, the earliest efforts of the first US commentators aimed to forge a language and literature of national identity based on – in the words of Colonel Humphreys – 'the illustrious task of rearing an empire.' What we now call 'gun-boat diplomacy' has, it would seem, a long and distinguished place in US foreign policy.

'The illustrious task of rearing an empire'

In Chapter 2, I indicated the diversity of responses recorded by early English writers on first encountering the Muslim Mediterranean. For the earliest US authors writing about the Maghrib, however, such complexities and conflicting agendas often had little or no bearing amidst the nationalistic euphoria that accompanied independence from Great Britain. Having victoriously thrown off rule by a distant parliament and absentee-king, post-independence writers – such as the soldier-poet Colonel David Humphreys, the Boston-born lawyer and wit Royall Tyler, and the captives John Foss and James Riley – all regarded the task of forging a 'new image' of their nation to be largely a straightforward matter of asserting the divinely ordained exceptionality of the United States from every and any nation that had ever gone before in a distinct literary language and its suitable forms.

Here is an extract from the Preface to Humphreys' lengthy verse 'Address to the Armies of the United States of America' (1784):

To inspire our countrymen now in arms, or who may, hereafter, be called into the field, with perseverance and fortitude, through every species of difficulty and danger, to continue their exertions for the defence of their country, and the preservation of its liberties, is the object of this address... For where is the man to be found, who, after all that has been done and suffered – after such a profusion of blood and treasure has been expended – and such important advantages have been obtained – would basely relinquish and leave unfinished the illustrious task of rearing an empire, which, from its situation and circumstances, must surpass all that have ever existed, in magnitude, felicity, and duration?⁵

Throughout his poetic efforts, Humphreys regularly adopts a similarly sententious style in order to inspire patriotic fervour: evoking strong feeling proves as crucial to his vision of poetry as it was to his oratorical presumptions.

In a later work, his lengthy *Poem on the Happiness of America* (c.1786), Humphreys asserts what would later be known as the manifest destiny of the United States and he does so by means of a rhetoric of self-righteous indignation that expresses visceral contempt and utter disdain for every other nation that has ever been. Following several hundred lines detailing the glorious victory of the colonial army over the British, and foretelling the even greater glories to be achieved in the future, the progress of the American dream – figured at this point in the poem as

the growth of US overseas trade – is suddenly interrupted by the Algerian corsairs. In ‘The Argument’ prefixed to the poem, Humphreys summarizes his historical topics from this point in his story and adopts an abbreviated, fragmentary style that will usefully convey more than a little of his purpose and perspective while summarizing his subsequent verses:

America called upon to employ her sons, on discoveries, in the carrying trade, fishing and whaling – commerce – interrupted by the Algerines – sensation produced by it on the Americans – invocation for powers of expression to excite them to revenge – a view of the miseries of the prisoners – which terminates in an anathem on the perpetrators of such cruelties – friends of the captives and ruined merchants how affected – exhortation to arms unless an equitable peace can be obtained – apostrophe to the tributary powers – resolution to be taken by us – our resources hinted from a glance at the late war – Great Britain and Algiers contrasted – prayer to the Supreme Being – an army raised – preparations for war – a navy formed – naval combat with the corsairs – their defeat – their woe – the utter destruction of their country – return and rejoicings of the victors – a prospect.⁶

Their defeat. Their woe. The utter destruction of their country. The rejoicings of the victors. Passionate intensity clearly counted for a great deal to Humphreys. By recalling and evoking the ‘sensation produced’ by news that ‘Algerines’ had prevented Americans from pursuing ‘discoveries’ and ‘commerce,’ Humphreys craves ‘powers of expression’ that will ‘excite’ Young America’s sons to seek ‘revenge.’ Since US forces had so recently defeated those of Great Britain, it follows that they will have little difficulty vanquishing the Algerian corsairs, bringing them ‘woe,’ and achieving the ‘utter destruction of their country.’

As this extract from Humphreys’ summary suggests, the narrative logic of his poem relies heavily on rhetorical assertion and is rather light on historical understanding, rational analysis or logical argument, and it depends on an unquestioning belief in revealed religion: strong and violent feelings are proof that god is working directly through and within his chosen people. In the poem, Humphreys explains how the inevitable and just progress of American commerce has been stalled not so much because the Algerians were powerful, but rather more because European nations have been despicably weak. Racially contemptuous of the Algerians, Humphreys wilfully ignores the existence of their recognized and sovereign government. His absolute assurance that he and his new nation represent the latest word in Enlightenment thought

also enables him to express derision at European nations that agree to pay these 'savage tribes' for their ships to enter and trade in the Mediterranean:

O ye great pow'rs, who passports basely crave,
From Afric's lords, to sail the midland wave –
Great fallen pow'rs, whose gems and golden bribes
Buy paltry passports from these savage tribes –

...

And shall the weak remains of barb'rous rage,
Insulting, triumph o'er th'enlighten'd age?

Indignantly incapable of understanding how such conditions might have come about, Humphreys exhorts his fellow countrymen to further the divine plan and set the world to rights by forcefully insisting on the right of US shipping to trade freely wherever it goes:

Then, O my friends, by heav'n ordain'd to free,
From tyrant rage, the long-infested sea –
Then let us firm though solitary, stand,
The sword, and olive-branch in either hand:
An equal peace propose with reason's voice,
Or rush to arms, if arms should be their choice.

(p. 44)

Sword or olive branch: this sounds rather more like an ultimatum than a framework for a negotiated settlement, but to the self-righteous such distinctions have no meaning. Any 'equal peace' could only be one that is favourable to those setting the terms and defining free trade according to their own divinely sanctioned self-interests. Humphreys evidently imagined that US trade into the Mediterranean should carry on without paying regard to local customs and duties. And in the very next line of his poem – 'Stung by their crimes, can aught your vengeance stay?' – Humphreys makes it clear that, to his 'friends' who were 'by heav'n ordain'd to free' the Mediterranean to US shipping, there could be no question of negotiation: do as we say, or die.

For Humphreys, 'th'enlighten'd age' on behalf of which he claims to speak, has very little to do with 'reason's voice,' and rather more to do with visceral appeals to the inner light of the Young American patriot whose very intensity of feeling provides proof of divinely ordained

righteousness and the godliness of the mission. This version of the Enlightenment is one that abandons reason in favour of primitive fury:

But first with me, Americans! prepare
 To view th'abode of horror, pain, despair –
 Prepare to feel your blood with fury boil,
 Your bosoms palpitate, your steps recoil,
 In ev'ry pulse resentment beating high,
 While the red lightning flashes from your eye.

(p. 37)

With all the force of a motivational huckster selling some quack remedy, Humphreys instructs and inspires his readers how to feel and see. Inspirational rhetoric capable of arousing strong sensations and powerful sentiments 'prepares' readers 'to feel' and displaces logic, objective analysis or even historical accuracy. Humphreys' summons to his fellow Young Americans recall their victory over Britain – 'the first of Nations, as the queen of isles – / Britain, whose fleets, that rul'd the briny surge, / Made navies tremble to its very verge' – and suggests that their defeat of such forces as these assures them of an easy victory in Algeria:

But what are these whose threatnings round you burst?
 Of men the dregs, the feeblest, vilest, worst;
 These are the pirates from the Barb'ry strand,
 Audacious miscreants, fierce, yet feeble band!
 Who, impious, dare (no provocation giv'n)
 Insult the rights of man – the laws of heav'n!

(p. 45)

One might have hoped that Humphreys – who shortly after publishing these lines would be appointed US minister to Lisbon in charge of negotiating with Algiers for the return of American captives – would have had at least some understanding of the laws of the sea, but he seems only interested in arousing martial fury in the breasts of his patriotic readers.

But hark! the trumps, as if by whirlwinds blown,
 Sound from cold Lawrence to the burning zone!
 Thy cause, humanity, that swells their breath,
 Wakes in each bosom cool contempt of death.

So there is no doubt that in this Young American writer's view, dying in a righteous cause was not simply a virtue but a founding sentiment of national identity. At this moment of contempt for death, Humphreys' poetic vision silently shifts narrative register, and he describes the rousing of a US army and its mission against Algeria as if these were events that had already taken place:

By rumbling drums, from distant regions call'd,
Men, scorning pirate rage start unappall'd;
With eye-balls flaming, cheeks of crimson flush,
From rice-green fields, and fir-clad mountains, rush
High-mettled youth – unused to sights of slain,
Of hostile navies, or the stormy main –
Enrag'd, they leave unfinish'd furrows far,
To dare the deep, and toil in fields of war.

(pp. 45–6)

Untried in battle, the nation's youth are soon joined by 'stern-visag'd veterans' with their 'rattling arms,' and they in turn are joined by long-haired but patriotic sharp-shooting hunters from the backwoods:

From Erie's inland vales, unnam'd in song,
In native fierceness pour the hunter throng;
Beneath their rapid march realms roll behind;
Their uncomb'd locks loose floating on the wind:
Coarse their worn garbs – they place their only pride
In the dread rifle, oft in battle tried.
With aim unbalk'd, whose leaden vengeance sings,
Sure as the dart the king of terror brings:
So erst, brave Morgan, thy bold hunters sped–
Such light-arm'd youths the gallant Fayette led,
Ere Steuben brought the Prussian lore from far,
Or Knox created all the stores of war.

(p. 46)

Evidently the fascination among American men with guns and fire-arms has a long and distinguished heritage. Describing swords and canons being cast in a foundry, Humphreys indulges in some evocative periphrasis: 'Now preparation forms the gleaming blade: / In moulds capacious pond'rous deaths are made.' With the possibility of those

ponderous deaths before him, he never really believed in the olive branch or the need to negotiate.

Preparations over, the next hundred lines of the poem describe an entirely fictitious battle at sea in which US forces utterly destroy the Algerian fleet while US marines raze the city and lay waste all the surrounding countryside. Humphreys wants readers to share his carnal and sadistic delight at visualizing the total destruction of Algerian lives and civilization that follows the arrival of those vengefully enraged US forces:

Woe to proud Algiers; to your princes woe!
 Your pride is falling with your youths laid low –
 Woe to ye people, woe, distress, and fears!
 Your hour is come to drink the cup of tears:
 A ghastly paleness gathers on your cheeks,
 While mem'ry haunts your ears with captive shrieks;
 Then stifled conscience wak'ning dares to cry
 'Think on your crimson crimes, despair, and die.' –
 Then ruin comes, with fire, and sword, and blood,
 And men shall ask, where once your cities stood?

With a blithe delight in carnage and destruction that would thrill Milton's Satan, Humphreys relishes the ruination that will follow the arrival of Young Americans on North African soil. With genocidal glee and apocalyptic pleasure he imagines a great cloud of black smoke hanging over Algiers harbour:

'Tis done! Behold th'uncheery prospects rise;
 Unwonted glooms the silent coasts surprise:
 The heav'ns with sable clouds are overcast,
 And death-like sounds ride on the hollow blast –
 The rank grass rustling to the passing gale:
 Ev'n now of men the chearful voices fail –
 No busy marts appear, no crouded ports,
 No rural dances, and no splendid courts;
 In halls, so late with feasts, with music crown'd,
 No revels sport, nor mirthful cymbals sound
 Fastidious pomp! how are thy pageants fled!
 How sleep the fallen in their lowly bed!
 Their cultur'd fields to desolation turn'd,
 The buildings levell'd, and th'enclosures burn'd.

Lest any might question the righteous legitimacy of rejoicing at such waste and devastation, Humphreys immediately reassures readers that everything he says conforms to divine plan, for these scenes of destruction are 'The direful signs, which mark the day of doom' when

The stars shall fall, the sun be turn'd to blood,
The globe itself dissolve in fluid fire,
Time be no more, and man's whole race expire.

(p. 50)

By way of conclusion

If US history of the twenty-first century already makes such triumphalist fantasies peculiarly alarming, it might be worth recalling their debt to those earlier English writers who evoked millenarian prophecy to explain the worldly success of Muslim nations. Within the world of Anglo-Protestant millenarian thinking, all that is historical or factual melts into air and then goes up in smoke. Inherited from the English, the providentialist and millenarian language of first encounter, which gives this fantasy its bearings, put US commercial and military ambitions in the Mediterranean firmly onto the agenda of the new nation.

It is by no means beside the point to observe that nothing like the events described by Humphreys ever took place. Humphreys himself knew only too well that no US forces ever demolished the Algerian fleet, annihilated the Algerian people or brought desolation to their land. Also to the point, there is little reason to suppose that Humphreys' views on US–Maghribian relations had very much immediate effect upon government policy. Perhaps the point is that factual arguments have seldom mattered either in diplomacy or in the poetic contribution to nation building.

Between 1784 and 1786, when his epic poem was probably first published,⁷ Humphreys had himself served in Europe as secretary of a committee to negotiate commercial treaties, working in Paris alongside Thomas Jefferson who was locked in a dispute with John Adams. At the time, Jefferson wanted to equip a navy and seize the American captives held in Algiers by force, while Adams considered that paying would be cheaper and simpler. Adams' view prevailed, though problems arranging the funds and negotiating the terms persisted for several years allowing the debate to continue.⁸ However, when Humphreys' verses 'On the Happiness of America' appeared, the US government

was itself pursuing the very same policy of those 'great fallen pow'rs' and was indeed 'basely' craving immunity by the payment of 'golden bribes' to the Algerian Deys. In 1790, when he was appointed US minister to Portugal with a commission to negotiate for the release of the American captives in Algiers, Humphreys' views must have been well known. By November 1793, having failed to agree on terms with the Algerians, Humphreys wrote to Jefferson 'that no choice is left for the United States but to prepare a naval force, with all possible expedition, for the protection of their trade.'⁹ It was despite Humphreys' well-known position on the matter that, in July 1794, the Secretary of State Edmund Randolph authorized Humphreys to raise the grand sum of 800,000 dollars from loans in France on order to pay for the release of the American captives. For reasons that remain unclear, Humphreys had, without orders to do so, decided to leave Lisbon for the United States before receiving this commission.¹⁰ Far from being reprimanded for causing needless delay, within a year Humphreys was on his way back to France to raise the funds, accompanied by Joseph Donaldson, newly commissioned consul to Tunis and Tripoli. While Humphreys – whom Joel Barlow, an American resident in France, observed 'seems to have too much beef in his head to be a good manager of such affairs' – was in Paris, Donaldson proceeded to Algiers and negotiated the very treaty that Humphreys had spent years failing to achieve.¹¹

Reporting to the President in 1797, a decade after Humphreys' poetic diatribe against the 'great fall'n powers' who 'basely' purchased 'paltry passports' first appeared, the new Secretary of State, Timothy Pickering, more soberly wrote of 'a sum of money necessary to purchase the usual peace presents.'¹² For the time being, at least, Humphreys' furious indignation gave way before business as usual, though Jefferson's view – 'we prefer war in all cases to tribute under any form and to any people whatsoever' – continues to inspire many in the United States.¹³

In concluding his epic on the 'happiness' of America, with a motivational call to battle against 'proud Algiers,' and to imagine Young America's sons leaving their fields to manufacture arms and build ships in which they could set out to seek revenge, and then describing an imaginary battle after which American forces devastate the North African coast, Colonel David Humphreys can certainly claim to have been the very first and last – indeed only – representative of a US government ever to have used the imaginative

licence of heroic poetry to circulate disinformation as if it were historical fact. Yet, given his evident desire to arouse his fellow countrymen in pursuit of a unilateral military agenda that was both racist and genocidal, he was by no means the last among representatives to be sent on diplomatic mission for which they were clearly unsuited.

9

A View from the East: Don Juan in England

But every fool describes in these bright days
His wondrous journey to some foreign court
And spawns his quarto and demands his praise.

Byron, *Don Juan* (5: 51)

During the course of the eighteenth century, matters and manners Ottoman and more generally Oriental became standard topics and themes in all kinds of English writing, while new genres arose that drew their inspiration from the East. From the seductive Ottoman costume of Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724) to 'the two *Turkish* tobacco pipes' featured in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760–1776), formerly exotic objects had become familiar and even domesticated literary tropes; the Shandy family fortune, of course, came from the 'Turkey' trade. Henry Fielding's Parson Adams in *Joseph Andrews* (1742) knew and advocated the Qur'ān. Further, from Samuel Johnson's Abyssinian 'happy valley' in *Rasselas* (1759) to Alexander Pope's 'Eastern priests' running 'in giddy circles...to imitate the sun' of *The Essay on Man* (1732–1734), the Orient provided a distant but increasingly familiar repository of values, ideas and practices against which British pride and progress might be measured.¹ Jonathan Swift's Houyhnhnms owe their conception to the importation of Eastern bloodstock without which there would have been no 'English' thoroughbred.² As for content, so for form: even the emergence of the eighteenth-century novel owes rather more to Eastern influences than earlier generations of critics were willing to recognize. As Ros Ballaster has recently established, once translated into English from Antoine Galland's *Mille et une Nuits* (1704–1717), the *Arabian Night's Entertainments* promptly gave birth to numerous imitations in various sub-genres. The framed sequence of

oriental tales, according to Ballaster, gave voice to a whole host of concerns – social, sexual and political – that were central to the development of eighteenth-century English prose fiction and literary culture more generally. ‘The realist occidental novel,’ Ballaster amply demonstrates, ‘like the western Enlightenment of which it was a part, was always already “oriental.”’³ In short, the history of eighteenth-century English literature awaits revision in terms of its Ottoman and Oriental elements, analogues and formal influences. In the early years of the nineteenth century, Lord Byron looked back in comic and satiric amusement and mocked the ways that nationalist pride disguised a whole series of importations and hybridizations.

This chapter returns to certain concerns that Donna Landry, Joseph Ward and I addressed in our introduction to *The Country and the City Revisited* (1999). Following Raymond Williams’ argument that understanding the development of English literature in terms of the country and the city required a long historical view that disturbed conventional periodization, we suggested that understanding the development of Englishness as a pattern of national identities would require a similarly long view. It would also require a comparative, international frame, given the massive global movement during this period of people and ideas. We termed the period from roughly 1550 to 1850, between Elizabeth and Victoria, ‘the mercantilist moment,’ and argued that the characteristic celebration of ‘imperial expansion and English greatness at home’ which had, in Blackstone’s phrase, given shape to ‘a polite and commercial people,’ receded before ‘a new rhetoric of defensiveness or bellicose bombast’ by the middle of the nineteenth century. We wrote: ‘if there had ever been such a thing as mercantilist innocence, it did not survive the era of Romanticism and the coming of the railway.’⁴

From among the many questions we were unable to develop in that work, I would like to pursue here the links between travel, landscape and national identity by investigating how Englishness and the English countryside appeared when viewed, as it were, from abroad in the final cantos of Byron’s *Don Juan*.⁵ In doing so I hope to show how, at least for Byron, Englishness had come to have very little to do with the English countryside, but rather more to do with bringing home the wealth of foreign nations. The green and pleasant land, in his view, had become a repository where the riches of trade and plunder of empire could be accumulated, and then invested in or displaced onto the body of Englishwomen.⁶

My argument has two elements. First, throughout the mercantilist period, the English who travelled overseas in large numbers experienced their national identity in ways that were unavailable in their native

land and in so doing transformed what it meant to be English. As a result, their accounts provide an extensive record of how comparative global perspectives were part of the process of national identity formation from at least the mid-sixteenth century. By the nineteenth century, travel narratives had established familiar patterns in which the English land itself figured as a starting point; being English or British increasingly meant coming from a place rather than simply living there.⁷ In this respect, the expatriated persona Byron's projects of himself in *Don Juan* might be said to typify and fulfil a necessary trajectory; the only true patriot is an expatriate. As Jerome McGann noted in *The Romantic Ideology*: 'It is no mere coincidence that Byron, Shelley, and Keats all die out of England, or that Byron's and Shelley's poetry ultimately rests on an expatriate stance.'⁸

The second element of my argument is that, in the closing cantos of *Don Juan*, Byron provides an especially interesting instance of how Englishness most reveals itself when viewed from somewhere else. Remaining at ease in the Mediterranean, the expatriated poet maintains contact with England by sending his hero on a diplomatic mission to 'that spot of earth, / Which holds what might have been the noblest nation' (10: 66). What I find most striking about Byron's treatment of that 'spot of earth' is just how negligible it proves to be in the subsequent account of Juan's travels in England's green and pleasant land. Indeed, to the senses in which we familiarly speak of the disappearance of the countryside in terms of the agricultural revolution(s), might be added the sense in which the countryside – both as productive land and aesthetic object – almost entirely disappears from the globalized views of the poet and his characters, only to reappear in Juan's attraction to the productive 'soil' of English female bodies.

The disappearance of the English countryside: Once again

At the start of the mercantilist period, it seems often to have been the case that, when English travellers saw foreign and exotic lands for the first time, they could not avoid thinking about England. In 1599, Thomas Dallam stepped ashore in Algiers and recorded:

This dai being the Laste Day of Marche, it was a wonder to us to se how forward the springe was: trees and hedgis wear full blowne, corne, wheate, and barly shott, yong oringis and apples upon the trees.⁹

The description of the exotic and foreign landscape in terms of seasonal dislocation by reference to an implicit English standard was already a trope familiar in traveller's reports by the end of the sixteenth century. For Dallam, the foreign countryside also had powerful aesthetic qualities, provoking not simply the desire to look, but that more English of desires, wanting to go for a walk. Anchored for days before Zante harbour, Dallam's eye for the possibility of a prospect view surely bespeaks his childhood spent walking in the Lancashire dales:

Whyleste we lay thus for sixe dayes upon the seae before the towne, I touke greate notis of a little mountayne, the which, as I thought, did ly close to the seae, and semed to be a verrie pleasante place to take a vew of the whole iland and the seae before it. It showed to be verrie greene and playen ground on the tope of it, and a whyte thinge lyke a rocke in the mydle tharof. I touke suche pleasour in behouldinge this hill that I made a kinde of vow or promise to my selfe that assowne as I sett foute on shore I would nether eate nor Drinke untill I had bene on the tope tharof; and in the meane time did labur with tow of my companyons, and perswaded them to beare me company.¹⁰

Not simply spectating but doing something: this desire to command the new landscape from a high place, to behold a prospect view, combines with a desire to gain proximity to the green plain he can glimpse on the mountain top; a green plain – a champion landscape with verdure reminiscent of England, perhaps. Dallam wants to tackle and achieve that green, the high open plain or down so conducive to recreation, as Celia Fiennes observed in 1689 of the Wiltshire Downs, 'a fine champion Country pleasant for all sports.'¹¹ And he wants to discover what landmark or monument marks the spot, that 'whyte thinge lyke a rock.'

I wish also to mark the crucial Englishness of how Dallam's aesthetic reading of the countryside involves the presumptive right to go wherever he wants. Dallam was a special case, perhaps, but there was nothing very predatory about his interest in foreign places and peoples, and he was not long in the Ottoman Mediterranean before he learned about not going everywhere he wanted to. This inherited national sense of a right to roam nevertheless exemplifies what we called the 'innocence' that might once have been possible in the early decades of the mercantilist moment. This is the innocence that, we wrote, 'did not survive Romanticism' and the railway.

How differently do things look to Byron?

Don Juan in England

In the autobiographical passages of *Don Juan*, Byron the poet himself never returns to England but, in the final cantos, sends his hero instead to 'that spot of earth, / Which holds what might have been the noblest nation' (10: 46). Byron draws our attention to the importance of Juan's visit to England by announcing, in canto twelve, that only once Juan landed in England and entered metropolitan London society can the poem finally and formally begin. The design of these cantos invites readers to imagine arriving in England for the first time from the point of view of a foreigner – in this case a well-travelled and wealthy Mediterranean diplomat travelling with his adopted daughter, 'the little Turk' who 'refused to be converted (10: 55). Juan is hardly an innocent abroad, but his first impressions of England and the English provide the knowing expatriated poet with plenty of opportunities for correcting his idealistic misapprehensions and thereby revealing aspects of the nation unavailable to the foreign traveller.

In Byron's account of Juan and Leila in England, the rural countryside, as such, rarely appears. Consider, for instance, the account of Juan's experiences on the hunting field, surely a moment when some description of the English countryside would be in order? But, instead, all Byron provides is a summary and dismissive list – 'hills, dales, bushes, / And what not' – of features over which Juan heroically rides at such speed that he notices nothing while gaining himself a reputation as a sporting man. In *Don Juan*, even the hunting field is no more than a politicized arena where personal reputations are lost and won, and national identities are performed:

A fox-hunt to a foreigner is strange;
 'Tis also subject to the double danger
 Of tumbling first, and having in exchange
 Some pleasant jesting at the awkward stranger
 But Juan had been early taught to range
 The wilds, as doth an Arab turn'd avenger,
 So that his horse, or charger, hunter, hack,
 Knew that he had a rider on his back.

(14: 32)

An experienced and intrepid horseman, Juan may have been able to impress his native mount with his equestrian skills, yet the very bravery

with which he overcomes the unfamiliar rules regulating the 'strange' activity in which he is engaged serves only to set him up as the conspicuously foreign outsider that he cannot avoid being:

And now in this new field, with some applause,
He clear'd the hedge, ditch, and double post, and rail,
And never *craned*, and made but few '*faux pas*,'
And only fretted when the scent 'gan fail.
He broke, 'tis true, some statutes of the laws
Of hunting – for the sagest youth is frail;
Rode o'er the hounds, it may be, now and then,
And once o'er several country gentlemen.
But on the whole, to general admiration
He acquitted both himself and horse: the squires
Marvell'd at merit of another nation;
The boors cried 'Dang it! who'd have thought it?' – Sires,
The Nestors of the sporting generation,
Swore praises, and recall'd their former fires;
The huntsman's self relented to a grin,
And rated him almost a whipper-in.

(14: 33–4)

Foxhunting folk traditionally regard themselves and their sport as, if not exactly democratic, then at least open and welcoming to anyone with sufficient skill and courage to keep up with the field. But not all so welcomed are necessarily keen to belong:

Such were his trophies – not of spear and shield,
But leaps, and bursts, and sometimes foxes' brushes;
Yet I must own, – although in this I yield
To patriot sympathy a Briton's blushes, –
He thought at heart like courtly Chesterfield,
Who, after a long chase o'er hills, dales, bushes,
And what not, though he rode beyond all price
Ask'd next day, 'If men ever hunted twice?'

(14: 35)

'...hills, dales, bushes, / And what not' just about sums up Byron's interest in fox hunting and the rural English countryside.

Byron's satiric stance in the name of a higher and nobler sense of what the English 'might have been' shows him relying on tricks of the travel writer that can be traced back to the time of Dallam and others. Several times Byron draws attention to how England appears to an eye that has seen Athens and Constantinople. Juan and Leila's arrival in England echoes generations of accounts by Englishmen arriving in the East, noticing the strange customs and national monuments. In keeping with the globalized perspective of the expatriated English bard controlling the text, however, the polite and commercial people who welcome Juan have degenerated into a race of deplorable money-grubbing imperialistic hypocrites and murderous bullies who have transformed the countryside into a series of metaphors for their own greed. Juan is taken in. He imagines himself travelling to 'the island of the free' (10: 64), and seems not to notice the high prices. His first sight of Dover's cliffs provokes in him 'a kind of pride that he should be among / Those haughty shopkeepers, who sternly dealt, / Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole / And made the very billows pay them toll' (10: 65). The very land first appears to him in the form of an instrument of national desire, a means of bringing in money. Byron insists we hear the cash change hands in the turn on 'dear' even as 'Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties, / They cliffs, *dear* Dover!' (10: 69). It is the cliffs themselves that halt arriving travellers and demand the toll, while Dover pockets the cash.

Juan's earliest sights of England provide further occasions for Byron to rail against the exorbitant taxes, tolls and costs in England, as well as the greed of those who live there and profit from high prices. With an eye trained by Catholicism and foreign travel, Juan felt 'of course' the sublimity of Canterbury Cathedral, but he is not alone in seeing it for the first time. Here, and elsewhere, Byron imagines how England appears to the resolutely Muslim Leila.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime:

He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he saw
That casque, which never stoop'd except to Time.
Even the bold Churchman's tomb excited awe
Who died in the then great attempt to climb
O'er kings, who *now* at least *must talk* of law
Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
And ask'd why such a structure had been raised;
And being told it was 'God's house,' she said
He was well lodged, but only wonder'd how

He suffer'd Infidels in his homestead,
The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low
His holy temples in the lands which bred
The True Believers; – and her infant brow
Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.

(10: 74–5)

Leaving the pre-mercantile sublime of Canterbury Cathedral to the swinish greed of those infidels now inhabiting it, Byron offers a glimpse of the Kentish countryside that can temporarily evoke images of green fields in the expatriated memory:

On! on! through meadows, managed like a garden,
A paradise of hops and high production;
For, after years of travel by a bard in
Countries of greater heat, but lesser suction,
A green field is a sight which makes him pardon
The absense of that more sublime construction
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

(10: 76)

This is not what Juan sees but what Byron imagines: are we not being invited to believe those 'green fields' now exist only in the poet's memory, no longer there in Kent, having been replaced by those managed gardens productive of hops? In any event, between Dover and London Juan admires not the countryside but the fast roads, musing on the 'highways of free millions; / A country in all senses the most dear / To foreigner or native' (10: 77), and providing the poet occasion to interrupt and meditate on the pains of paying the exorbitant turnpike tolls (10: 78–9).

Byron describes Juan's feelings and reactions on his approach to and first sight of London, informing readers where the idealizing eye of the foreign traveller can sometimes miss the point. As the sun goes down, Juan seeks out, but never actually finds, a prospect view; instead, he is attacked by robbers in his first encounter with the natives. Since his arrival, Juan has been deceived into imagining he understands what he sees because of a sense of false familiarity with and attraction to the English 'soil,' a sense that anticipates Byron's subsequent account of his hero's attraction to English women:

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from
 A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space
 Which well beseem'd the 'Devil's drawing room,'
 As some have qualified that wondrous place:
 But Juan felt, though not approaching home
 As one who, though he were not of the race,
 Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,
 Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t'other.

(10: 81)

Whatever Juan might think he is seeing when he looks at the countryside, Byron refuses to allow his readers to be deceived. The price to be paid for all that butchery and bullying in the cause of imperial expansion and wealth production is the devastation of the national landscape:

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
 Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
 Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
 On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;
 A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
 On a fool's head – and there is London Town.

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke
 Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
 Of some alchymic furnace, from which broke
 The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper):
 The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
 Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,
 Were nothing but the natural atmosphere,
 Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

(10: 82–3)

'But Juan saw not this.' Juan's affinity for the maternal English 'soil' that has bred generations of imperial sons distorts his sense of what lays before him as he looks out over London – not a smoke-polluted city, but a magical alembic producing wealth.

Between cantos ten and eleven, the coach taking Juan to London pauses on Shooters Hill, providing opportunity for further reflection on

the prospect view of London, this time explicitly from the perspective of the expatriated bard correcting the false impressions of the idealistic foreigner who saw not what is there but what he expected to find:

To our theme. – The man who has stood on the Acropolis
And look'd down over Attica; or he
Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is,
Or seen Timbuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
May not think much of London's first appearance –
But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence?

Don Juan got out on Shooter's Hill;
Sunset the time, the place the same declivity
Which looks along that vale of good and ill
Where London streets ferment in full activity;
While everything around was calm and still,
Except the creak of wheels, which on their pivot he
Heard, – and that bee-like, bubbling, busy hum,
Of cities, that boils over with their scum.

(11: 7–8)

Certainly, by contrast with the grandeur and exotic beauty of the great imperial cities of Africa and the East, London makes a rather poor showing. But Byron's point is that it really matters not at all what is there to be seen by the human eye since it is the idea of what London represents that counts. And the idea overwhelming Juan's visual experience proves to be none other than that most hackneyed of all the idealisms used to serve the turn of greedy capitalists and imperialists, the 'freedom' to become vulgarly wealthy by exploiting the land and those living there. With comic brutality, Byron interrupts Juan's illusory belief that he is gazing upon a land of freedom:

I say Don Juan, wrapt in contemplation,
Walk'd on behind his carriage, o'er the summit,
And lost in wonder of so great a nation,
Gave way to't, since he could not overcome it
'And here,' he cried, 'is Freedom's chosen station;
Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it

Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection
Awaits it, each new meeting or election.'

'Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here people pay
But what they please; and if that things be dear,
'Tis only that they love to throw away
Their cash, to show how much they have a year.
Here laws are all inviolate; every highway's clear;
Here' – he was interrupted by a knife,
With – 'Damn your eyes! your money or your life!'

(11: 9–10)

Juan understands immediately that England is an expensive country, but from Byron's satiric point of view, at least, gets the rest of it wrong.¹²

Throughout Juan's stay, Byron fits him firmly into the seasonal rounds of metropolitan London society as the only English people who really count move between city and county in pursuit of wealth and power according to the round of parliamentary sessions (13: 42–9). From this metropolitan perspective, the entire land has become a capitalized venture controlled by those ruling the government: 'Cash rules the grove, and fells it too beside' (12: 14). After bringing Juan and Leila into London society, canto eleven ends with a promise that 'What Juan saw and underwent shall be / My topic' (11: 88). Set up with the wealth and prestige of being Catherine of Russia's special envoy in the 'great game' of European diplomacy (10: 45–6), the well-travelled Spaniard and his adorable ward are rapidly taken up into the very best and noblest circles of power and money. Canto twelve opens with lively attacks on both middle age and the miserly capitalists who control the profits of global trade, before returning, as promised, to describe Juan and Leila in London:

And now to business. – O my gentle Juan!
Thou art in London – in that pleasant place,
Where every kind of mischief's daily brewing,
Which can await warm youth in its wild race.
'Tis true, that thy career is not a new one;
Thou art no novice in the headlong chase
Of early life; but this is a new land
Which foreigners can never understand.

(12: 23)

Despite everything he has learned during his travels, Juan has innocent moments. He continues to trust his mistaken understanding of what he sees going on around him in the 'new land' of imperial England. As for Leila, she becomes the mystery she was destined to become all along because, unlike her guardian, she can see right through everything:

The little Leila, with her Orient eyes,
And taciturn Asiatic disposition,
(Which saw all Westen things with small surprise,
To the surprise of people of condition,
Who think that novelties are butterflies
To be pursued as food for inanition,)
Her charming figure and romantic history
Became a kind of fashionable mystery.

(12: 27)

It is only once Juan has 'disposed' of 'the little orphan of the East' to Lady Pinchbeck (12: 41–8), that Byron can announce his poem is about to begin:

But now I will begin my poem. 'Tis
Perhaps a little strange, if not quite new
That from the first of Cantos up to this
I've not begun what we have to go through.
These first twelve books are merely flourishes,
Preludios, trying just a string or two,
Upon my lyre, or making the pegs sure,
And when som, you shall have the overture.

(12: 54)

Everything we have read so far, it now seems, has been geared to introduce Byron's hero, and then bring him to England and put him among the Englishwomen.¹³

After twelve introductory cantos, the poem finally starts with Juan entering metropolitan English society where (and there are no surprises here) Byron is immediately concerned with setting up Juan's amorous adventures. 'Coming young from lands and scenes romantic,' to 'a country' that 'seem'd to him half commercial, half pedantic,' Juan 'at first did not think the women pretty' (12: 68).

I say at *first* – for he found out at *last*,
 But by degrees, that they were fairer far
 Than the more glowing dames whose lot is cast
 Beneath the influence of the eastern star.
 A further proof we should not judge in haste.

(12: 69)

What Juan, we are promised, will learn is that the value of an Englishwoman greatly outweighs what she might seem to lack to a roving male eye experienced in measuring the female beauties of Mediterranean lands:

She cannot step as does an Arab barb,
 Or Andalusian girl from mass returning,
 Nor wear as gracefully as Gauls her garb,
 Nor in her eye Ausonia's glance is burning;
 Her voice, though sweet, is not so fit to warb –
 le those bravuras (which I still am learning
 To like, though I have been seven years in Italy,
 And have, or had, an ear that served me prettily); –

She cannot do these things, nor one or two
 Others, in that off-hand and dashing style
 Which takes so much – to give the devil his due;
 Nor is she quite so ready with her smile,
 Nor settles all things in one interview
 (A thing approved as saving time and toil); –
 But though the soil may give you time and trouble,
 Well cultivated, it will render double.

(12: 75–6)

Only the Englishman who has travelled the Mediterranean can accurately assess the true value of an Englishwoman.

In what remains of the unfinished poem, Byron's focus on Englishwomen as the national 'soil' seems to me to be of more importance than his casual glances at the land itself. Canto thirteen continues the point when introducing the English-born heroine, Lady Adeline – 'the goodliest soil of body and of mind' (13: 2) – who, we are assured, proves to be 'the fair most fatal Juan ever met' once 'Destiny and Passion spread the net' (13: 12). Juan's talk of 'Madrid, / Constantinople, and such distant

places' quickly endears him to Lord Henry, Adeline's husband, and they bond further over their mutual love of horses:

Of coursers also spake they: Henry rid
Well, like most Englishmen, and loved the races;
And Juan, like a true-born Andalusian,
Could back a horse, as despots ride a Russian.

(13: 23)

The stage is thus set for Juan's invitation to stay with Lord Henry and Lady Adeline in their country house for the hunting season. Juan accepts, goes hunting, sees a ghost and the poem breaks off.

Some conclusions

Byron's contribution to the history of country house writing in these closing cantos is neither surprising nor great, offering some elegant variants on comic situations and characters typical of romances set in luxurious rural settings. In contrast to Ben Jonson's 'Penshurst,' Lord Henry's place in the country is simply a house where he keeps unspeakable amounts of 'furniture and plate' (13: 74), and where he entertains his friends from a decent cellar of imported wines (13: 75). This is not a productive estate but a centre of consumption dependant upon foreign income and trade. Lord Henry has some woods that provide partridge and pheasant, but his is not a site of local production and hospitality: Lord Henry upholds the game laws. For Byron, as for other writers, the country house is a literary device for bringing a group of different characters together in the 'new land' of imperial England. In all this, as in the final cantos generally, the green and pleasant countryside hardly figures at all.

In his own commentary superseding that of his foreign hero, Byron's double view of England achieves a globalized perspective in which the mobile capitalist classes who constitute the metropolitan London 'society' into which Juan gets absorbed seem to be the only people living in England: certainly, this mixture of old bloodlines and new money is the only class that matters. But apart from the footpads, no other sorts of inhabitant seem to exist. In terms of production, Byron is keen, we notice, on how the bodies of Englishwomen from those classes have displaced the countryside as the site of production and investment of *interest* – 'well cultivated, it will render double.' At the centre of a global

empire, the English nation reproduces itself by and in the bodies of its propertied women. From this Byronic point of view, the disappearance of the countryside is not just a matter of enclosures and suburbanization. It also points to a constitutive shift in the history of English national identity formation, one we would today describe as globalization but which for Byron was the horror of a land and once noble race both destroyed by imperial greed.

Epilogue: By Way of Conclusion

In this book, I have proposed that English – and latterly British – attitudes towards the Ottomans and the Ottoman Empire from the mid-sixteenth through the eighteenth century were initially and substantively characterized by imperial envy, a structure of feeling that combined admiration with contempt, fear with fascination, desire with revulsion. Many Saidian and post-colonial critical models, as others before me have noticed, do not greatly help us understand relations, real or imaginary, between the English and the Ottomans in the period before European nations became imperial predators upon the lands to their east. Consequently, I have suggested that imperial envy most usefully describes the ambivalent structure of admiration and hostility towards the Ottomans that distinguishes a great deal of writing of the time. In envying the Ottomans their empire, moreover, the English came to refashion themselves as British once they set out in pursuit of an empire of their own. Imperial envy also helped give shape to the nature and character of their imperial ambitions and achievements.

It was because of commercial and diplomatic alliances with the Ottoman court that the English were first able to become an important presence in the Mediterranean and directly enter the Eastern trade through factories in Izmir, Aleppo and other Ottoman entrepôts. Had it not been for strategic alliances with the Ottomans, the English would have had a much more difficult time competing with the Spanish for colonies in the New World and with the Dutch for trade eastwards. Without commercial and maritime supremacy, there would have been no British Empire.

From their earliest contacts with the magnificence of Ottoman imperial culture, the English learned that empires work best when military power is directed at expanding and preserving trade rather than

enforcing religious belief for its own sake. It was commercial not religious zeal that inspired their global pursuits, just as it was secular and commercial goals that distinguished their colonial and imperial policies from those of the Spanish. As I argued in Chapters 6 and 7, by the time of the Restoration, imperial envy had started to give way before a more confident sense that Britain's stature in global diplomacy and trade was not merely high, but on a par with the great Ottoman Empire. The retreat of Mehmed IV's armies from Vienna in 1683, and the Treaty of Karlowitz of 1699, which established the final borders of the Ottoman presence in Europe, were widely seen as signs of a long-anticipated decline in Ottoman power. Although modern historians are seriously challenging notions of Ottoman decline, nevertheless seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britons, buoyed by their own growing status as players on the world stage, increasingly viewed themselves as equal, and often superior, to the Ottomans. Once imperial pride began to replace imperial envy, a process that continued throughout the eighteenth century, new forms of familiarity and even condescension towards the Ottomans began appearing in works by Paul Rycaut, Aaron Hill (1709) and the new generation of travel writers such as Alexander Drummond (1754) and Elizabeth Lady Craven (1789).¹ In Chapter 8, I showed how the earliest US writers, having defeated the British, began with a sense of their own invincible superiority over all other nations, and a divinely ordained mission to enforce their own version of free trade wherever they chose. To ideologues like David Humphreys, commercial success was nothing less than proof of godliness and was to be pursued with vigour and at all costs. If the new republic aspired to outdo the empire from which it had so recently broken free, Britain continued to swagger on the world stage and accumulate wealth from other far-flung colonies. Byron, as we saw in Chapter 9, had little difficulty satirizing the vulgarity and pretensions of the new imperial Britain by looking at it from the perspective of a Mediterranean persona.

But the story of imperial envy did not entirely end with the advent of the British Empire. As Donna Landry has argued in *His Lordship's Arabian, or Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture*, the story of that enduring icon of English-ness – the thoroughbred horse – is a tale of how imperial envy continues to run through the world of equestrian culture and sporting art well into the eighteenth century and beyond.

Notes

Introduction: Islam, the Ottomans and Early Modern England

Versions of some paragraphs of the Introduction formerly appeared as sections in review essays: "Before Orientalism? Islam, Ottomans, and Moors in the English Renaissance," in *Review* 22 (2000): 229–47, and "When West Looks East: Some Recent Studies in Early-Modern Muslim Cultures," in *The Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7:1 (Spring, 2007, in press). My thanks to the editors for permission to reprint.

1. 'Mr Stamp's Observations in his Voyage to Constantinople,' British Library Stowe MS 180 ff. 27–32; the passage cited, f. 28r.
2. 'A Form to be used in common prayer every Wednesday and Friday, within the city and Diocese of Sarum: to excite all godly people to pray unto God for the delivery of those Christians that are now invaded by the Turk' (1565), in Clay, ed., *Liturgies*, pp. 519–20.
3. *Man in the Moon*, p. 66.
4. *CSPV, 1647–1652*, p. 138.
5. *Scotish Dove*, p. 751.
6. *True Informer*, p. 132.
7. On English newsletters and their interest in the Ottoman Empire, see my 'Re-siting,' in Gilroy and Verhoeven, eds, *Epistolary Histories*, pp. 176–97.
8. Reprints of Knolles' *Generall Historie*, with continuations, appeared in 1610, 1621, 1631, 1638, 1687 and 1700; an abridgement was published in 1701. See Woodhead, "'Present Terrour,'" for a comparison of Knolles' account with that of Taliki-zade, a contemporary Ottoman historian. For a thorough examination of the reprint history of Knolles, see Parry, *Richard Knolles*. Knolles' letter to Cotton is quoted from BL MS Cotton Julius C.III.e, f.225.
9. For Coryate, Lithgow and Sandys, see Chew, *Crescent*; Strachan, *Coryate*; Bosworth, *Intrepid Scot*; Davis, *Sandys*; Haynes, *Humanist as Traveller*; and Ellison, *Sandys*. These were all travel writers in the sense that they traveled explicitly in order to write about their travels. Accordingly, their works need to be distinguished from, for instance, Biddulph's *Travels* (1609), or escape-from-captivity tales such as Davies, *True Relation* (1614).
10. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 4.
11. Rouillard, *Turk*; Schwoebel, *Shadow*; Vaughn, *Europe*.
12. Brown, 'Introduction,' in Brown, ed., *Imperial Legacy*, p. 5.
13. Kunt, 'State and Sultan,' in Kunt and Woodhead, eds, *Süleyman*, p. 4.
14. Dimmock, *New Turkes*, p. 207.
15. Cited by Vitkus, 'Turning Turk,' p. 148.
16. Poole, *English Parnassus*, p. 213.

17. *Alcoran*, title page.
18. Dallam, 'Diary,' p. 84
19. See Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History*.
20. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 5.
21. See Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing*.
22. See Raby, *Venice*; Howard, *Sansovino*, and *Venice and the East*.
23. See Jardine, *Worldly Goods*; and Jardine and Brotton, *Global Interests*.
24. Yapp, 'Europe in the Turkish Mirror.'
25. Kunt, 'State and Sultan,' p. 4.
26. See Finkel, ' "Treacherous Cleverness." '
27. Dereli, *Kiralıçe*; Burian, 'Interest'; and Beck, *From the Rising*. Kamil Aydin's *Images of Turkey* is mostly concerned with twentieth-century writings, but casts some light on writings from the early modern period.
28. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 51.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
31. The classic works on this topic, Horniker's 'William Harborne' and 'Anglo-French Rivalry,' remain useful but need supplementing with specialized studies such as those cited throughout Inalcık with Quataert, eds, *Economic and Social History*.
32. See Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, esp. pp. 161–7 for detailed analysis of trading triangles that would strengthen Matar's case.
33. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, pp. 154–5.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 157–8.
35. Such beliefs survived well into the nineteenth century at least; see, for example, Bush, *Life* (1830), in which Muhammad fulfils the prophecy of Daniel 7: 8–26, while illustrating and confirming Revelations 9: 1–9, as discussed in Chapter 8. Other nineteenth-century accounts that follow the tradition include Gilman, *Saracens* (1895), p. 455; and Forster, *Mahometanism* (1829).
36. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 161.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–71. Compare Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, the classic study of English attitudes towards Jewish people in the mid-seventeenth century.
38. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, pp. 174–5, 183. See also Matar's important essay, 'Protestantism, Palestine, and Partisan Scholarship' which examines contemporary rebuttals of Restorationism and notes how these were seldom philo-semitic.
39. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 2.
40. On the problems created by linguistic interference, see Shaw, 'Double Veil'; and see Grosrichard, *Sultan's Court*, for a fascinating Lacanian account of the fantasmatic elements that structure European fears of 'despotism.'
41. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 122.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 3.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
46. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 1.
47. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 2.
48. Congreve, *Way of the World*, Act 4, lines 240–1, 393–5.

1 The English encounter the Ottoman world

1. Hearne, *Dynasties*, p. 64.
2. Foister, 'Paintings,' p. 278.
3. Cust, ed., 'Lumley,' pp. 16, 26.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
5. Hearne, *Dynasties*, p. 64. On Costanzo di Moysis, see Chong, 'Artist,' pp. 126–7.
6. Thirsk, *Horses*, pp. 12, 15.
7. Lokman's *Kıyafetü'l-insaniyye fi şemali'l-'Osmaniyye*, a biographical dictionary of Ottoman sultans, was composed in 1579 after Süleyman's death and clearly presents an official view; cited here from Atıl, 'Image of Süleyman,' p. 366.
8. Hearne, *Dynasties*, p. 64.
9. See examples reproduced in Atıl, 'Image of Süleyman.'
10. Hearne points out that Eworth must have been familiar with van Aelst's original sketches in Antwerp since the full-scale woodcut made from them, *Les Moeurs st fachons de faire de Turcs avecq'les Regions y appartenantes ont este au vif conrefaictes par Pierre Coeck d'Alost, luy estant en Turquie, l'An de Jesuchrist M.D. 33*, was 'not issued by Coecke's widow until 1553, four years after the date of Eworth's painting,' *Dynasties*, p. 64. A reproduction of van Aelst's plates can be found in Maxwell, *Turks in MDXXXIII*; the British Library copy is at shelfmark 1780.b.11.
11. de Nicolay, *Navigations*.
12. See, for examples in England, the coloured illustrations in the German traveller's book of 1588 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (MS. Bodl. Or. 430); the *Dilsuzname* (c.1590) in the library of All Souls College, Oxford (Coll. MS. 314); an album, c.1600 in the British Library (Or. 2079); and an album in the British Museum, c.1620 (1928-3-23-046).
13. See Wooley, 'Medieval Treasury,' pp. 20–7.
14. See Crowfoot, Pritchard and Staniland, *Textiles*, p. 82.
15. Mills, 'Coming,' p. 11.
16. See Crowfoot, Pritchard and Staniland, *Textiles*, p. 100.
17. Halle, *Hall's Chronicle*, p. 513. See also Hayward, 'Symbols,' pp. 1–11.
18. Jirousek, 'Ottoman Influences,' p. 240; the drawing of Henry VIII appears on p. 289.
19. See Skilliter, 'Three Letters,' p. 139; and my Introduction to MacLean, ed., *Re-Orienting*, pp. 1–28; esp. p. 16.
20. Examples of Elizabethan, and later, English made pile-carpets are discussed and illustrated in Kendrick and Tattersall, *Hand-Woven Carpets*, pp. 78–83.
21. See King, 'Inventories,' pp. 293–302. The story of Wolsey's involvement importing Turkey carpets is well known; see Mills, 'Coming,' p. 18; and Kendrick and Tattersall, *Hand-Woven Carpets*, pp. 76–7.
22. Maxwell, *Turks in MDXXXIII*, p. 2.
23. Mills, 'Portraits,' p. 176.
24. Now in the National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG 511; see Mills, 'Father's Footsteps,' pp. 10–11.

25. For details of these portraits, see Mills, ' "Small Pattern Holbein," ' pp. 26–34. The portrait of Lady Jane Grey by 'Master John' is reproduced in King, 'Inventories,' p. 298; NPG 4451.
26. The only known portrait of Elizabeth standing on a carpet, by Marcus Gheeraerts c.1580s, is in a private collection in the United Kingdom; it has been discussed and reproduced in Mills, 'Eastern Mediterranean,' p. 54, plate C2, and in Hearne, *Dynasties*, plate 41, pp. 86–7.
27. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 17, 89, 214, 215; pp. 80, 133, 242. Strong's attribution to Steven van der Meulen of the portrait of Frances Sidney has been contested; see Hearne, *Dynasties*, where it is reproduced and discussed, plate 48, pp. 95–6.
28. Mills, 'Coming,' p. 19.
29. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 202, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229; pp. 235, 248–50. The carpet in the portrait of King James attributed to John de Critz the Elder (c.1606) reproduced in Hearne, *Dynasties*, plate 125, is clearly Anatolian, p. 184.
30. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 230, 231, 216; pp. 250–1, 243. See Hearne, *Dynasties*, plates 52, 142 for the portraits of Elizabeth and Prince Charles, pp. 188, 213.
31. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 203, 250, 252, 254, 292, 310, 312; pp. 236, 265, 266, 267, 293, 302, 303.
32. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 221, 308; pp. 245, 301. The portrait of Thomas Howard and Alatheia Talbot is reproduced in Hearne, *Dynasties*, plates 140, 141; pp. 209, 211.
33. See Mills, 'Carpets,' pp. 100–1.
34. Reproduced in Strong, *English Icon*, plates 337, 338, 339, 342, 341, 336, 327, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 354, 355, 356, 357, 328, 329, 362; pp. 321, 322, 324, 323, 321, 316, 318, 319, 320, 330, 331, 317, 334. On the portrait of Lady Cary, see Mills, 'Early Animal,' p. 237.
35. See Mills, 'Coming,' p. 19.
36. On Elizabeth's propaganda campaign, information network and alliances with the Ottomans at the time of Philip's plans for the invasion of England, see Parker, *Grand Strategy*, pp. 71, 192. See also Pears, 'Spanish Armada.'
37. Owen, ed., *Report*, p. 307.
38. Kingsford, 'Essex House,' pp. 30–41, 47, 50.
39. Cust, ed., 'Lumley,' p. 28.
40. McDowell, 'Bess,' p. 39.
41. McDowell, 'Elizabethan Embroidery,' pp. 16–25.
42. Bennett and Franses, 'Buccleuch,' p. 107.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 104, 100, 105.
44. On Spanish carpets and their characteristic knots, see Erdmann, *Oriental Carpets*, pp. 57–8.
45. Bennet and Franses, 'Buccleuch,' p. 96.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 103.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 98–9.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 101; and see Beattie, 'Britain.'
49. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 2–3.
50. *Ibid.*, 2: 201–3; this passage 203.
51. Franses and Pinner, ' "Classical" Carpet,' p. 358.

52. Skilliter, *Harborne*, pp. 151–70.
53. Cited in *ibid.*, pp. 188–9.
54. Harborne's commission is here cited from Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 200; it also appears in Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 85–7, together with Elizabeth's letter 'to the great Turke' notifying him of Harborne's appointment, 3: 87–8. On the delay between the *ahidname* of 1580 and Harborne's formal letters of appointment, see Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 38 and *passim*; Ménage, 'English Capitulation,' pp. 373–83; and Kütükoğlu, *Osmanlı-İngiliz*. My thanks to Suraiya Faroqhi for this last reference.
55. BL MS Cotton Nero B viii, ff.53r–v.
56. BL MS Lansdowne 86/82.
57. Anderson, *English Consul*, p. 168.
58. Sanderson, *Travels*, pp. 32, 33.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
60. Anderson, *English Consul*, pp. 146, 168, 150.
61. Cited in Wood, *History*, p. 76.
62. Brenner, *Merchants*, p. 25, citing figures compiled by A. M. Willard, 'The Import Trade of London, 1600–1640' (University of London, PhD dissertation, 1956), appendix 2.
63. Dimmock, *New Turkes*, p. 202, citing *The Taming of the Shrew* (2.1.345), and *The Comedy of Errors* (4.1.104).
64. Berg, *Luxury*.
65. See the essays in MacLean, ed., *Re-Orienting*.
66. See Skilliter, *Harborne*, pp. 177–9, 27–32, and BL MS Lansdowne 112.
67. Horniker, 'Harborne,' pp. 293–4, 290. Though of concern to the English at the time, the Franco-Ottoman treaty of 1536 'was drafted but never ratified by the sultan,' and it was not until after the formal capitulations of 1569 that 'French commerce in the Levant fully developed' enabling France to replace 'Venice in the dominant trading position in the Levant'; Inalcık, *Economic and Social History*, 1: 194. The status of the French *ahidname* of 1536 has been a topic of considerable controversy; see Zeller, 'Une légende,' and Olnon, 'Classifying *Avianas*,' pp. 160–1.
68. Horniker, 'Harborne,' p. 396. Elizabeth's letter of 25 October 1579 is here cited from Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 69; see also her letter to Mustafa Beg of the same date in Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 73.
69. Harborne's speech to Mehmed III, translated in Horniker, 'Harborne,' pp. 309–10.
70. See Özbaran, *Ottoman Response*; Stripling's *Ottoman Turks* also remains useful.
71. Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, p. 110.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
73. On the Baghdad school, see Çağman and Tanindi, *Islamic Miniature Painting*, p. 70.
74. Rogers, *Topkapı Sarayı Museum*, p. 240.
75. Demeril, *Poet Fuzuli*, pp. 114, 115.
76. Fuzuli, *Hadikat al-Su'ada*, Oriental and India Office Collections, British Library, shelfmark Or. 7301, f.15v and f.40v; see Titley, *Miniatures*, # 25, p. 44.
77. See, for example, miniature representations of Abraham in copies of the *Hadikat al-Su'ada* found at British Library, Oriental and India Office

- Collections, shelfmark Or. 12009, f.15v; and the Edward Binney 3rd Collection, reproduced in Binney, 3rd, *Turkish Miniature Paintings*, p. 62.
78. See, for example, illustrations of Europeans in Arifi, *Süleymanname* (c.1558), Topkapı Palace Library, shelfmark TSK H.1517; and Lokman, *Hünername*, 2 vols (c.1584–5, 1587–8), 2 vols, Topkapı Palace Library, shelfmark TSK H.1523–1524.
 79. Irepoğlu, *Levni*, p. 168.
 80. So Titley, *Miniatures*, ##68, 69, p. 73. Michael Rogers writes that ‘the caption was mine, for an exhibition at the British Museum in 1979 (no catalogue). I actually called it “a French fop,” which Norah Titley, doubtless wisely, decided was a provocation’ (personal letter, 10 November 2000).
 81. See Atıl, *Levni*, a full-colour reproduction of Levni’s illustrations to the *Surname i-Vehbi* in the Topkapı Palace Library, shelfmark TSK A 3593.
 82. See Thomas Glover, ‘The Journey of Edward Barton Esquire, her Majesties Ambassador with the Grand Signior, otherwise called the Great Turke, in Constantinople, Sultan Mahumet Chan,’ in Purchas, ed., *Hakluytus Posthumus*, 8: 304–20.
 83. Biddulph, *Travels*, p. 40.
 84. George of Cappadocia was, at least, a Christian. When Calvin proposed that he be decanonized, English writers quickly defended the historical George. Printed descriptions and defences of the Order of the Garter are specially interesting in and after 1660, with the revival of the Order itself, and the persistent claim that General George Monk, who brought Charles II back to England, was really a second St George: fantasy genealogies of this Devonian squire showing his ancestral links to Edward III, who first instituted the Order, were promptly produced. See Heylyn, *History*.
 85. Andrews, *Trade*, p. 91.
 86. See Goffman, *Britons*.
 87. *Alcoran*, title page.
 88. *L’Entrevue*; a copy can be found in the British Library, shelfmark 11474.c.37.
 89. As Fernand Braudel long ago pointed out, ‘the abundance of literature on coffee defies description,’ *Mediterranean*, 1: 762n35. But nevertheless see Chaudhuri, *Asia*, and on the arrival of coffee drinking to early modern Britain, see Matar, *Islam in Britain*, pp. 110–17; Hattox, *Coffee*; Ellis, *Coffee-House*; and Cowan, *Social Life*. For Blount on coffee, see MacLean, *Rise*, pp. 118, 120, 151–2, 162, 168, 172; for Lithgow and coffee, see Bosworth, *Intrepid Scot*, pp. 58–9. For Habermas’ celebrated study of the coffeehouse, see *Public Transformation*.
 90. One estimate suggests that ‘from the middle of the seventeenth century onwards there existed some fifty establishments under the sign of *The Turk’s Head* in London alone,’ Schiffer, *Oriental Panorama*, p. 283, citing Koppelkamm, *Imaginäre Orient*, p. 80.
 91. Montagu, *Letters*, 1: 314, 326. For other remarks in this paragraph, see Hattox, *Coffee*; Ellis, *Coffee-House*; and Cowan, *Social Life*.
 92. Mayhew, *Joyfull and Welcome Return*, lines 55–62.
 93. Higgons, *Panegyrick*, line 37.
 94. *Rump*, 2: 100; 2: 50; 1: 370.

95. See my 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans,' in Achinstein and Sauer, eds, *Milton and Toleration*, and 'Milton Among the Muslims,' in Hadfield and Dimmock, eds, *Religions of the Book*.
96. Montagu, *Letters*, 1: 328, 329.

2 The English abroad: Travellers, traders, captives and colonists in the Ottoman Mediterranean

Earlier versions of parts of this chapter first appeared in 'Britons Abroad: Travellers and Traders in Maghrebian Ports, 1580–1720,' in Abdeljelil Temimi and Mohamed-Salah Omri, eds, *The Movement of People and Ideas between Britain and the Maghreb* (Tunis: Fondation Temimi, 2003): 117–24.

1. Clifford, 'Traveling Cultures,' in *Routes*, pp. 18–19.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
3. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 7.
4. See Anderson, *English Consul*; Goffman, *Izmir*, and *Britons*; and Vitkus, ed., *Piracy*.
5. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 15.
6. R. D., *Historical*, p. 5.
7. See MacLean, *Time's Witness*, chapter two, 'English Poetry and the Struggle for a National History.'
8. Boorde, *Breviary of Health* (1547); reprinted in 1548, 1552, 1556, 1557, 1575, 1587 and 1598.
9. Citing Polidore Virgil and Froissart, Playfair dates the earliest Anglo-Maghribian encounter to 1390, when a combined force of English and French soldiers set out to assist the Genoese against attacks from 'Barbary corsairs,' *Scourge*, p. 1.
10. Anderson, *Historical*, 1: 239.
11. Cited in Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 4: 21.
12. Anderson, *Historical*, 1: 312. For Roberts' observations on the origins of the Levant Company in the Barbary trade, see Roberts, *Merchants Map*, pp. 269–70.
13. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 4: 32–3, 33–5. Following T. S. Willan, Susan Skilliter, for example, notes that 'English merchants had been engaged in an unregulated traffic in munitions with Morocco since 1551,' and reprints two safe-conducts signed by Murad III in 1550 allowing English merchants to trade in Algiers: see Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 23, citing Willan, *Studies*, pp. 98, 118–20, 168–71; and see Skilliter, pp. 107–8, for translations of the safe-conducts. More recently, Hair and Law, in their authoritative survey 'The English in West Africa,' though concerned primarily with the 'Guinea' trade, note: 'The earliest reference in print was Richard Hakluyt,' though also observing that there were 'occasional contacts with Morocco, the earliest in the 1470s'; in Canny, ed., *Origins of Empire*, pp. 243 n4, 244.
14. Murphey, 'Merchants,' p. 30.
15. Okeley, *Eben-Ezer*, Preface, sig. A8.

16. *Arrivall and Intertainements*, p. 1. Another seventeenth-century captive assailed the Dutch: 'abstracting from the Obligations of a Christian Perswasion on the one side, I weigh'd the actions of both, by the ballance of that Generosity, which may be expected from an enemy. The result was, an inclination to believe, that down-right Mahumetisme may rise up in judgement against the feign'd professions of Christianity in a Low-Country people, exemplary for their perfidiousness to their greatest Benefactors the English,' D'Aranda, *History of Algiers*, sig. A2v.
17. *Arrivall and Intertainements*, p. 3.
18. Earle, *Corsairs*, p. 1.
19. I. H., *Late Newes*, preface.
20. Button, *Algiers Voyage*, sig. A3v.
21. Playfair, *Scourge*, p. 38.
22. See Hebb, *Piracy*, pp. 105–7, 79.
23. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 2: 419.
24. See Dallam, 'Diary,' pp. 79, 84, 89.
25. Pennell, ed., *Piracy*, p. 129.
26. For Biddulph's concerns over arrangements between 'Christian' merchants and local women in Istanbul and Aleppo, see *Travels*, p. 81, and MacLean, *Rise*, pp. 63–5.
27. Finch to Conway, 4/14 February 1675, BL Add MSS 23,215, f. 79v.
28. Finch did not arrive until 'about Mar. 18 1674,' according to Wood, *History*, p. 251, which fits with the observation of Giacomo Quirini, the Venetian bailo, who notes on 17 April 1674: 'By reason of the capricious circumstances the ambassaddor of England entered Constantinople privately,' *CSPV 1673–5: #323: Giacomo Quirini to Doge, 17 April 1674*, p. 247.
29. Pennell, ed., *Piracy*, p. 133.
30. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 150, 149.
31. *Ibid.*, 3: 150.
32. *Ibid.*, 3: 154.
33. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 34.
34. Earl of Northampton to Rochester, September[?] 1612, *CSPD, 1611–18*, p. 149.
35. Antonio Foscarini to the Doge, 19 April 1612, *CSPV, 1610–13*, p. 335.
36. Smith, ed., *Wotton*, 2: 215.
37. Okeley, *Eben-ezer*, p. 46.
38. Hair and Law, 'English in Western Africa,' p. 244 citing Roth, 'Brampton.'
39. Wood, *History*, p. 2, citing Thomas Rymer, *Foedera*, 13: 353.
40. Wood, *History*, p. 2, citing Rymer, 14: 389.
41. Wood, *History*, pp. 72–3.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 64–5.
43. Wood reports that Harborne appointed consuls to both Chios and Patras 'but the dates of their foundations have not survived,' *History*, p. 15; see also p. 70. However, a consul was evidently in residence in Patras by 1585; see Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 133.
44. 'In June 1583, Harborne, as ambassador in Constantinople, fulfilling the terms of the privileges, appointed Richard Forster as English consul for Aleppo and Tripoli,' Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 179. See also Wood, *History*, pp. 75–7.

45. See Wood, *History*, pp. 72–3.
46. Moryson, *Itinerary*, 2: 107.
47. Wood, *History*, pp. 66–7; Wood also notes that there were English merchants resident on Zante as early as 1586, p. 15.
48. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 120.
49. *Ibid.*, 3: 114.
50. *Ibid.*, 3: 126–9.
51. Playfair, *Scourge*, p. 26.
52. Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 107.
53. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 120.
54. Wood, *History*, p. 59; for more on the Maghribian consulates, see pp. 61–4.
55. Wood, *History*, p. 61; Sanderson, *Travels*, p. 12; and see my notes on Tipton quoted in Tablit, ‘Algerian-British Relations,’ pp. 197–9.
56. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 151–2.
57. Dallam, ‘Diary,’ p. 45.
58. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 354.
59. *Ibid.*, 4: 32–3. Willan suggests that ‘the two noble Moors seem to have been emissaries from the King of Velez who was seeking support from Charles V against the King of Morocco,’ and argues that it ‘seems unlikely, therefore, that they were a means of introduction to Muley Muhammed’ for the purpose of initiating Anglo-Moroccan trade agreements; see *Studies*, p. 97.
60. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 15.
61. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 354.
62. *Ibid.*, 3: 356.
63. *Ibid.*, 3: 357.
64. Seton-Williams and Stocks, *Blue Guide*, p. 674.
65. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 358.
66. *Ibid.*, 3: 358.
67. Thomas Smith’s journal of his 1678 voyage to Istanbul in *Miscellanea Curiosa*, p. 14.
68. Moryson, *Itinerary*, 2: 107–8.
69. Wood, *History*, p. 67.
70. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 17, 18.
71. *Ibid.*, 3: 354.
72. Teonge, *Diary*, p. 75. ‘Candid’ here presumably means ‘clear’ or perhaps ‘white’ from the Latin, *candidus*.
73. Wood, *History*, p. 67.
74. Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, 13 August 1603, CSPV, 1603–1607, #109, p. 80. Confusion among the Venetians themselves over exactly how and when such regulations were to be enforced continued throughout the century.
75. Inalcık, *Economic and Social History*, 1: 377.
76. Lithgow, *Discourse*, pp. 58–9.
77. Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli to the Doge and Senate, CSPV, 1603–1607, #109, p. 79.
78. See Wood, *History*, pp. 69–70.
79. Drummond, *Travels*, p. 100.
80. Cited by Epstein, *Early History*, p. 109 n1.
81. Wood, *History*, p. 68.

82. See Bowers, 'Imperial's bid,' and 'Imperial's chief.'
83. Lithgow, *Discourse*, p. 315.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 407, 368, 369, 83, 291, 337, 311, 347, 353, 125.
86. *Ibid.*, pp. 117, 116.
87. *Ibid.*, pp. 60–1.
88. Dallam casually mentions a similar incident when, arriving in Lepanto on his return journey, he found the English consul Jonas Aldridge 'was gone 40 myles from home to hange a Jew,' 'Diary,' p. 86.
89. Biddulph, *Travels*, p. 59.
90. See John Sanderson's letter to Jeffrey Kerby, 22 January 1601: 'A ship cauled the Trogian, for accompt of Master Stapers and his sons, gone for Argier and so for Alexandria,' in Sanderson, *Travels*, p. 214. Among Staper's other sons, Thomas, Rowland and Richard (junior) all died overseas, while Hewet arrived back in April 1607; Sanderson, pp. 18n, 236. According to Sanderson, the *Trojan* 'broke upon Tripoli Rocks' on her return journey in 1602, pp. 19, 128.
91. A copy of the petition dated 'Aleppo the 4th of August 1596' appears in Sanderson's papers, *Travels*, pp. 151–2.
92. Wood, *History*, p. 75.
93. BL Lansdowne MS 241, ff. 394v–395.
94. *Ibid.*, ff. 395v, 397.
95. Kitley to Sanderson, 6 May 1609; BL MS Lansdowne 241, f. 409v. In editing Sanderson's papers, Foster omitted the passage after the word 'Zante,' commenting only 'The writer goes on to accuse Biddulph of gross immorality and drunkenness,' p. 264.
96. See OED 'Greek' sb 5.
97. Pellow, *History*, p. 102; mentioned by Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 39.
98. BL MS Lansdowne 142 f.263 (new style f.253).
99. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 131.
100. Oppenheim, *Maritime History*, p. 55 n1.
101. 'Mr. Robert's his Voyage to the Levant, with an Account of his sufferings amongst the Corsairs, their Villanous way of Living, and his Description of the Archipelago islands. Together with his Relation of Taking, and Retaking of Scio, in the year 1696,' in Hacke, *Collection*, p. 2.
102. Dallam, 'Diary,' pp. 14–15.
103. Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 51.
104. T. S., *Adventures*, pp. 12, 14–16.
105. *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.
106. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
107. Webbe, *Rare and most wonderful things*, sig. A4v. For contemporary English reports of the sack of Moscow by the Crimean Tartars, see Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 2: 135–6, 315.
108. Webbe, *Rare and most wonderful things*, sig. Bv.
109. *Ibid.*, sigs B5–C3v.
110. *Ibid.*, sig. D.
111. D'Aranda, *History*, sig. A2v.
112. 'Mr. Robert's,' in Hacke, ed., *Collection*, p. 13.
113. Bencherif, *Image of Algeria*, p. 121.

114. Okeley, *Eben-Ezer*, pp. 16, 17.
115. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
116. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
117. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
119. *Ibid.*, pp. 32–3.
120. Wreglesworth, 'Tangier,' pp. 223–31.
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 223, 230.
122. Pepys, *Tangier*, 'Preface,' p. lx.
123. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 17, 22.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
125. *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 89, 90.
126. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
127. *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 97, 102, 99.
128. Wreglesworth, 'Tangier,' p. 229.
129. Pepys, *Tangier*, pp. 92, 90, 103.
130. *Ibid.*, pp. 90, 89.
131. See Colley, *Captives*, pp. 23–41.
132. Pepys, *Tangier*, pp. 92, 97, 98.
133. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
134. Watt, *Influence of Islam*, p. 84.

3 Performing East and captive agency

Parts of this chapter appeared in an earlier version, 'Performing East: English Captives in the Ottoman Maghreb,' in *Actes du Ier Congrès International sur: Le Grande Bretagne et le Maghreb: Etat de Recherche et contacts culturels* (Zaghouane, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi, 2001), pp. 123–39.

1. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 63.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 71–2.
3. Butler, *Gender*, pp. 18–19.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
6. For these remarks, see Williams, *Drama in Performance, Modern Tragedy, Drama from Ibsen to Brecht and Television*.
7. I borrow this term from Tal Shuval, who uses it to translate *ocak*: see 'Ottoman Algerian Elite.'
8. See, for example, Duncan, 'Dis-Orientalism,' and Parker, 'Introduction,' *Early Modern Tales*.
9. Said, *Orientalism*, p. 190.
10. Clark, 'Introduction,' *Travel Writing*, p. 19.
11. The legend that accompanies the portrait reads: 'Huius Eunuchi Fidei omnia Sacreta ASSAM WASCH: & gaza & mulieres prestantes Comissa Hic in Anglia natura in Civitate IARmouth quem Vocarunt turcae ASSAN AGA, in Anglia Samson Rowlii.' MS. Bodley Or. 430, f.47.

12. See Skilliter, *Harborne*, pp. 19–22 for discussion of a document concerning the voyage, probably in the hand of John Hawkins, at National Archives, SP 12/114, ff. 84–5.
13. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 130.
14. On Tipton, see Chapter 2, note 55.
15. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 131. In October 1587, the Fugger correspondent in Istanbul wrote that Hassan Basha ‘is the greatest corsair of them all now, and is to be entrusted with the control of all Barbary,’ *Fugger Newsletters*, p. 144.
16. Skilliter, *Harborne*, p. 22.
17. See Shuval, ‘Ottoman Algerian Elite.’
18. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 131.
19. T. S., *Adventures*, pp. 4, 3.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 20.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–4.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 24, 28.
23. Snader, *Caught Between Worlds*, pp. 102–3 on the sexual ‘threat’ to T. S. from women.
24. T. S., *Adventures*, p. 27.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 37.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 40–1.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 56, 57–8.
31. For Tlemcen, see Lawless and Blake, *Tlemcen*; I owe this reference to Professor Derek Hopwood. For the rest of T. S.’s account, see chapter four of MacLean, *Rise*.
32. T. S., *Adventures*, pp. 170, 180.
33. McGowan, *Economic Life*, p. 21.
34. Inalcık, ‘When and how,’ p. 375.
35. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 1.
36. Roe, *Embassy*, pp. 29, 30.
37. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 1.
38. Roe, *Embassy*, p. 30.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 40.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 44.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 457.
44. *Ibid.*, p. 477.
45. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 181.
46. Strachan, *Roe*, p. 283.
47. Cited Strachan, *Roe*, p. 145.
48. Knolles, *Generall Historie*, p. 1427.
49. Cited in Roe, *Negotiations*, p. viii.
50. Cited ODNB, from British Library Add MS 6,190, f.34.
51. Singh, *Colonial Narratives*, p. 30.
52. Inalcık and Quataert, eds., *Economic and Social History*.

53. Barbour, *Before Orientalism*, p. 195.
54. Lithgow, *Discourse*, p. 316.
55. T. S., *Adventures*, p. 223.

4 On turning Turk, or trying to: Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*

A version of this chapter first appeared as 'On Turning Turk, or Trying to: National Identity in Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turke*,' in *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 29:2 (Winter 2003): 225–52, and is reprinted with permission (copyright 2003 South-Central Renaissance Conference). My thanks to the South-Central Renaissance Conference for honouring it with the Albert W. Fields Award for the best article in Renaissance studies published in 2003.

1. The general survey in Chew, *Crescent*, pp. 469–540 still provides a useful introduction. More recent studies include: D'Amico, *Moor*; Bartels, *Spectacles*; Vaughan, *Othello*; Potter, 'Pirates'; Shapiro, *Shakespeare*; Burton, *Traffic*; 'English Anxiety'; Dimmock, *New Turkes*; Vitkus, 'Turning Turk'; *Turning Turk*; and the recent studies cited by Vitkus in his *Three Turk Plays*.
2. My thanks to Nabil Matar for this formula.
3. For these reasons, I have quoted, and supplied line numbers parenthetically, from the scholarly transcription by Swaen, in 'Robert Daborne's Plays,' pp. 53–256, which is based on the copy in The Hague, in preference to the modernized and 'restored' text edited by Vitkus in *Three Turk Plays*. Vitkus' introduction provides useful biographical information about Daborne as well as invaluable historical details concerning the pirate Ward; see pp. 23–39.
4. Chew, *Crescent*, p. 532.
5. Parker, 'Preposterous'; see also Jowitt, *Voyage Drama*; and Hutchings, 'Acting Pirates.' Hutchings observes that of six hundred surviving plays that were written between 1567 and 1642, 'more than one third refer to Turks or matters Ottoman,' p. 205 n8.
6. Matar, *Islam*, pp. 54–61.
7. Compare Vitkus: 'Othello enacts his own punishment and damns himself by killing the Turk he has become,' 'Turning Turk,' p. 176. As Jennie Evenson has observed, there must also in some sense be a Venetian within, as Othello becomes the punished and the punisher (personal conversation, 2003).
8. Gardiner, *History*, 3: 67.
9. See *ibid.*, and Horniker, 'Anglo-French Rivalry.' Vitkus provides a modernized version of James' 1609 proclamation against piracy in *Turk Plays*, pp. 353–6.
10. See the exchange of letters between James' secretary of state, the Earl of Salisbury, and England's ambassador to Venice, Sir Henry Wotton, in Smith, ed., *Wotton*, 1: 413–16. On the hangings at Wapping, see Gardiner, *History*, 3: 67. Both Chew, *Crescent*, p. 360, and Vitkus, *Turk Plays*, p. 4, report that twelve pirates were later hanged at Wapping in 1612; but I have been unable to confirm this claim.
11. Foscarini to the Doge and Senate, *CSPV, 1610–13*, item 283, dated 4 February.
12. *Ibid.*, item 335, dated 19 April.

13. Annotations to the copy in the Royal Library at The Hague, cited by Swaen, p. 176. Swaen dates these annotations after 1843 because they also refer to works published that year. Ward was not a Devonian but from Faversham in Kent (*ODNB*); however, he began his career in Plymouth and, according to a manuscript listing 'the names of pirates' in Ward's crew dated 15 November 1604, twenty of thirty-five were Devonians (British Library MS Lansdowne 142 f. 263 [refoliated 253]).
14. Details here are based on a preliminary examination of the 'allegro Catalogue of Ballads' in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, shelfmarks: Wood 401(79) dated 1658–64; Wood 402(39) dated 1655–58; Douce 2(199a) dated 1663–74; Douce 1(80b) dated 1711–1732; Harding B4(107) dated 1780–1812; Harding B4(108) and Johnson 820 dated 1802–1819; Firth c12(7) dated 1840–1866 printed in Preston, Lancashire; 2806 c16(334); and Harding B11(4035) dated 1855–1858 printed in Manchester; Harding B11(4034) dated 1863–1885. Unfortunately this is not the place to pursue fully the fascinating history of how Ward's fame as a champion of the free-trade movement was kept alive for three centuries, which would require considerable archival research. The Bodleian ballads alone – and there are likely to be many more broadsides and references to Ward – are highly suggestive and deserve much fuller investigation, especially the links with the Lancashire cotton industry in mid-nineteenth century.
15. Donne, 'Elegy 14: "A Tale of a Citizen and His Wife,"' in Donne, *Poems*.
16. Wither, 'Satyr on Inconstancie,' cited in Swaen, p. 176.
17. Howell, cited in Swaen, p. 185.
18. On Dansker, see Hebb, *Piracy*.
19. Pepys, *Tangier*, p. 116.
20. So Andrew Barker in 1609: 'the *Turkes*, whose governours, I meane *Masters & Pilates*, are all Englishmen ... whose successe at Seas is so great, that it is most lamentable to report, how many Ships of *London*, and other parts of England have beene taken and made prey unto them: without the help of which English, the *Turks* by no means could have governed and conducted them through their unskilfulnes and insufficiencie in the art of *Navigation*,' Barker, *True and Certaine Report*, sig. A2.
21. On topical allusion in the play, see Maxwell, 'Notes.'
22. Several pamphlets and ballads describing Ward's adventures appeared that summer that may have provided Daborne with material for his play. So close in time to the Wapping executions, reports of Ward's exploits were evidently controversial and subject to censorship. In early June, a 'booke' called *News from the Sea* was registered with the Stationers' Company, but the printer forbidden to print it: see Arber, ed., *Transcript*, 3: 411. Eventually printed by Nathaniel Butter, extant copies invariably have the date trimmed from the colophon. One copy, with the revised title *Ward and Danseker*, and also printed for Nathaniel Butter, still bears a date of 1609 (Bodleian copy shelfmark Wood 371[10]), and is discussed by Chew, *Crescent*, p. 357, and by Vitkus, *Turk Plays*, pp. 24–7. The moral danger of taking pride in Ward's activities, however, did not prevent the licensing and, presumably, the printing a month later of two ballads, 'the one called *the seamens songe of Captayne WARDE, the famous Pirate of the world an Englishman*, the other, *the seamens songe of DANSEKER the Dutchman his robberyes and fightes at sea*,' Arber, *Tran-*

script, 3: 414. Both Swaen, pp. 179–85 and Vitkus, *Turk Plays*, pp. 345–51, who provide transcripts of these latter two ballads, presume that Daborne knew them. Although licensed in time for Daborne to have known them, the only existing copies, however, could not have been printed until much later in the century, between 1655 and 1674, given their printers: see Glasgow University Library, shelfmark Euing #327; and Bodleian Library, shelfmarks Wood 401(79), Wood 402(39/40), Douce 2(199a). Despite proudly broadcasting the global fame of the English pirate, both ballads impose tight moral frames that show how Ward, like all pirates, is doomed to certain punishment. These broadsides prove closer in design and moral purpose to Daborne's play than Barker's *True and Certain Report*, a more detailed prose account, which, licensed and printed in October 1609, he might very well have read; see Arber, *Transcript*, 3: 422.

23. Kahf, *Western Representations*, p. 90.
24. Arguing that Muslim women were 'between myths' in terms of how they were represented in Renaissance literature, Mohja Kahf convincingly demonstrates how 'the "bad" Muslim woman is on her way out of the gallery' of types by the early seventeenth century, *Western Representations*, pp. 5, 90. Daborne's representation of 'Turkish' and 'Jewish' female figures deserves fuller examination in the light of Kahf's research, especially the contrast between Voada and Desdemona, than I can offer here.
25. Parker, 'Preposterous,' p. 14; Vitkus, *Turk Plays*, p. 159.
26. I have in mind such instances as the Lord's pleasure in the induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, and of Jessica's escape in *The Merchant of Venice*.
27. Parker, 'Preposterous,' pp. 18–19; Vitkus, *Turk Plays*, p. 237.
28. Lithgow, *Discourse*, p. 358.
29. On the figure of the exorbitant, see Spivak, 'Three Women's Texts.'
30. On citationality, see Said, *Orientalism*, and Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*, pp. 70–92.
31. Matar, 'Renegade,' p. 495.

5 The sultan's beasts: Encountering Ottoman fauna

An earlier version of parts of this chapter first appeared as 'The Sultan's Beasts: Early English Encounters with the Fauna of the Ottoman Empire,' in Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock, eds, *Cultural Encounters between East and West, 1453 to 1699* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), pp. 195–215.

1. See especially: Brotton, *Trading Territories*; Jardine, *Worldly Goods*; Jardine and Brotton, *Global Interests*; Howard, *Venice*; Matar, *Islam in Britain and Turks, Moors, and Englishmen*; Raby, *Venice, Dürer*; Parker, ed., *Early Modern Tales*; and Vitkus, *Turning Turk*.
2. Kidd, *British Identities*, p. 289.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 290.
4. See Haraway, *Companion Species*.
5. Fleming, *From Russia*, pp. 89–90.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
7. See Çelik, *Remaking of Istanbul*, pp. 132–3.

8. Weber, 'Diplomat,' pp. 95–6.
9. Weber may have been following the translations of Forster and Daniell, *Life and Letters*, 1: 214, or Forster, trans., *Turkish Letters*, p. 105.
10. Edwards, ed., *Encyclopaedia*, p. 41, citing Lady Wentworth, and Prior, *Early Records*, p. 15.
11. Busbecq, *Omnia Quae Extant*, p. 166; translation, *The Four Epistles*, p. 163. The 1744 translation also reads 'a breed of brave Horses,' *Travels into Turkey*, p. 131.
12. Cavendish, *New Method*, p. 71.
13. Busbecq, *Four Epistles*, p. 63.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 63–4.
16. Sanderson, *Travels*, p. 57.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60.
19. See Neçipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, pp. 47, 72–3.
20. Gainsford, *Glory of England*, p. 254.
21. Sultanic edict, of 982 AH/1574–75 CE (probably September), Mühimme Defteri 25 doct. no.2480, p. 268; Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi, Istanbul. My thanks to Caroline Finkel for transcribing and translating this document.
22. Salary figures have been calculated from the tables provided by Murphey in *Ottoman Warfare*, pp. 16–17.
23. Davies, *True Relation*, sig. D4v.
24. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 177, 181.
25. Lithgow, *Discourse*, p. 263.
26. Busbecq, *Four Epistles*, p. 167.
27. Abbott, *Journal*, pp. 36–7; and see 'Saddle Time,' Donna Landry's account of the trope of discomfort in eastern travel writing.
28. Abbott, *Journal*, p. 52.
29. Sanderson, *Travels*, pp. 7–8, 17 and 17 n1.
30. *Arrivall and Intertainments*, p. 45.
31. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 173–4.
32. Veryard, *Account*, p. 285, sig. Dddd2. Since this work is often mispaginated, I have given both page and signature references where needed to avoid confusion.
33. Veryard, *Account*, p. 298; Lithgow, *Discourse*, p. 277.
34. Hakluyt, *Navigations*, 3: 174.
35. Webbe, *Rare and most wonderfull things*, sigs B4v–C, Cv, B3.
36. Veryard, *Account*, p. 312; sig. liii2v.
37. *Ibid.*, sigs b–bv.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 305.
39. See Dallam, 'Diary,' pp. 54, 55.
40. Covel, 'Covel's Diary,' p. 115.
41. Sanderson, *Travels*, p. 5; Verney and Verney, eds, *Memoirs*, 2: 268.
42. Verney and Verney, eds, *Memoirs*, 2: 262.
43. Pepys, *Tangier*, p. 17.
44. Rycaut, *Present State*, pp. 166–7.

45. These examples from Rycout's *History of the Turkish Empire* (1680) are cited here from Sonia Anderson's *English Consul*, p. 241.
46. Sandys, *Relation*, dedication.
47. Smith, *Remarks*, preface, sig. A7v.
48. *Ibid.*, sig. B.
49. Speed, 'A Description of the Turkish Empire,' in his *Theatre*, p. 35.
50. Smith, *Remarks*, pp. 4, 5
51. T. S., *Adventures*, p. 238.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 239.
53. Price, *A Famous City*, pp. 7–8.
54. T. S., *Adventures*, pp. 242, 240. The same account of these providential statues reappears, word for word, in R. D., *True Relation*, p. 6. My thanks to Nabil Matar for drawing my attention to this work.
55. White, *Martyrdome*, sig. D.
56. See Hatto, ed., *Manas*, and the studies in Gürsöy-Naskali, ed., *Bozkirdan*.
57. Musayev, *Epos Manas*, p. 151.
58. White, *Martyrdome*, sig. A2v.
59. For the many instances of works published early in that year, see 'Hoping for the King, December 1659–April 1660', Part III of my online anthology *The Return of the King*, which includes a detailed bibliography of published works on Monk as St George.
60. *Honour of an Apprentice*, Bodleian Library shelfmark Wood 401(63/64), lines 129–44.
61. The illustrated second edition of 1653 was reissued the following year with a more user-friendly title – *A View of the People of the Whole World*. Except when otherwise noted, I have quoted from the 1653 edition.
62. Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis*, 1653 title page.
63. *Ibid.*, sig. *2v.
64. *Ibid.*, sig. B3.
65. Kidd, *British Identities*, p. 290.
66. R. Mason, 'Letter directed to the Author,' in Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis*, sig. xx.
67. Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis*, p. 450.
68. *Ibid.*, sig. ***4v.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 99–100.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 92.
71. *Ibid.*, 1650 edition, p. 166; the aside concerning 'our Merchants' was cut from the 1653 edition, p. 288.
72. *Ibid.*, 1653 edition, p. 290.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 540.
74. *Ibid.*, pp. 539–40.
75. The *locus classicus* for such an investigation remains Haraway, *Primate Visions*, see especially pp. 26–58, and see also her more recent, *Companion Species*.
76. Bulwer, *Anthropometamorphosis*, p. 68.
77. de Thevenot, *Travels*, 1: 56.
78. See Said, *Orientalism*, p. 7.
79. See Çirakman, *From the 'Terror.'*

6 The making of the British imperial subject

An earlier version of parts of this chapter appeared as 'Ottomanism Before Orientalism: Bishop Henry King Praises Henry Blount, Passenger in the Levant,' in Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna Singh, eds, *Travel Knowledge: European Discoveries in the Early Modern Period* (London and New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 75–96.

1. Montagu, *Letters*, 1: 310. Among the many important studies of Lady Mary, her life and letters, I have found the following most useful: Aravamudan, 'Lady Mary'; Grundy, *Lady Mary*; Halsband, *Life*; and Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones*.
2. Anna Secor usefully distinguishes Lady Mary's gendered perceptions from her persistent class biases; see 'Orientalism.'
3. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 2.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
5. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, pp. 7, 28.
6. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 2.
7. An undated manuscript copy of King's poem 'To my Noble and Judicious Friend Mr. Henry Blount upon his Voyage' is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford at shelfmark: MS. *Eng.poet.e.30, f.71. The poem, first published in King's *Poems* (1657), is quoted here from Saintsbury, ed., *Minor Poets*, 3: 223–6; line references are given parenthetically.
8. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 1.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 2. Blount's discussion here is worth considering in terms of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notions of 'worlding' and 'the ethical embrace;' see 'Echo,' in Landry and MacLean, eds, *Spivak Reader*, pp. 175–202, and the editorial Introduction, pp. 5–6.
11. Blount, *Voyage*, pp. 2–3.
12. Chew, *Crescent*, p. 43.
13. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 3.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 5.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 69.
19. Palmer, *Essay of Meanes*, sigs A2–A2v.
20. 'Specimen of the First Writ of Ship-Money,' in Gardiner, ed., *Constitutional Documents*, pp. 37–8.
21. Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, 2: 376–7.
22. Pinkerton, ed., *General Collection*; Blount's *Voyage* appeared in volume 10.
23. Howell, *Instructions* (1642; second edition, London: Humphrey Moseley, 1650).
24. See Munday, *Travels*, esp. 1: lvi, and Appendix A, pp. 146–57.
25. Blount's *Voyage* appears as item IX in the first volume of Harley, *Collection*, passage cited 1: 3. Harley's claim to have seen a French translation appears at 1: 512 but refers to 'a book entitled, *Voyage de Levant*. Par. 1632, written by D.C.,' and so cannot have been by Blount.
26. Osborne, *Political Reflections*, sig. A3v.

27. So the British Library Catalogue: 'Probably a counterfeit printed in Oxford in 1658.'
28. Dryden, *Astraea Redux*, lines 320–4.
29. Israel, 'Emerging Empire,' p. 429.
30. On the campaign of 1663–1664, see Murphey, *Ottoman Warfare*, pp. 122–9.
31. Marsh, *New Survey*, sigs A2v–A3v.
32. Nadanyi, *Florus Hungaricus*.
33. Rycaut, *History of the Turkish Empire*, cited in Anderson, *English Consul*, p. 26.
34. See Anderson, *English Consul*, Appendix I, 'Rycaut's Works,' pp. 294–7.
35. Anderson, *English Consul*, p. 30.
36. Rycaut, *Present State*, p. 32.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 33–4.
38. *Ibid.*, sig. A2.
39. *Ibid.*, sig. A3.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
41. *Ibid.*, sig. A2v.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 169.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 212.
44. Recent studies that dispute the notion of Ottoman 'decline' include: Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*; and '“Treacherous Cleverness”'; and see also Fleischer, *Bureaucrat*.
45. Rycaut, *Present State*, sigs A2v–A3.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
47. Israel, 'Emerging Empire,' pp. 443, 444.
48. See Greene, 'Empire and Identity.'
49. Drummond, *Travels*, pp. 120, 121.

7 Learn of a Turk: Restoration culture and the Ottoman Empire

An earlier version of this chapter first appeared as 'Learn of a Turk,' in *Prose Studies* 29: 1 (April 2007) and can be found by consulting the Journal's website: <http://www.tandf.co.uk>.

1. Bedwell, *Mohammedis Imposturae*, sig. G2.
2. As Alastair Hamilton writes of Bedwell's *Mohammedis Imposturae*: 'The mere title of Bedwell's translation, let alone his preface and the text itself, are clearly anti-Islamic. His object is not to understand Islam, but to attack it and expose it to ridicule,' *William Bedwell*, pp. 68–9.
3. See Bosworth, 'Prophet Vindicated.' Stubbes' manuscript was edited by Hafiz Hahmud Khan Shairani, *An Account of the Rise & Progress of Mahometanism*.
4. M. B., *Learne of a Turk, Instructions and Advise Sent from the Turkish Army at Constantinople, to the English Army at London* (London: 'Printed in the first moneth of the great Platonick year, Called anciently by some in English, As you were,' 1660). George Thomason's dated copy is at British Library shelfmark LT. E.1016(6).
5. See Peirce, *Imperial Harem*.

6. M. B., *Learne*, sig. A2.
7. Piterberg, *Ottoman Tragedy*, and 'How the Ottomans Wrote Their Own History.'
8. See *Strangling and Death; True Relation of the Murther*; and Thomas Roe's account, published anonymously as *True and Faithfull Relation*.
9. On James' antipathy to the Ottomans, see Dimmock, *New Turkes*, pp. 199–201.
10. Thomas Glover's translation of Osman's letter is transcribed in Edward Grimestone's additions to the 'fift' edition of Knolles, *Generall Historie*, p. 1379.
11. Knolles, *Generall Historie*, p. 1379; reversed italics.
12. British Library MS Cotton Nero B.xi, f.165v. Lello's report, and Dervish Pasha's letter to King James, is transcribed in Burian, ed., *Report of Lello*, p. 25.
13. For a contemporary account of the affair by Glover's secretary, who considered it an example of Ottoman treachery, see Gainsford, *Glory of England*, pp. 192–3. Why James supported Bogdan remains unclear, though he claimed to be married to the Lady Arabella Stuart; see Wotton's letter to the Earl of Salisbury in Smith, ed., *Life and Letters*, 1: 414. Ben Jonson refers to Bogdan's visit to England in *Epicoene: The Silent Woman* (1609), Act 5 scene 1.
14. Goffman, *Britons*.
15. See Chapter 1, note 89.
16. See Landry, 'Steal of a Turk,' and *His Lordship's Arabian*, forthcoming, studies to which these comments are greatly indebted.
17. Jirousek, 'Ottoman Influences,' p. 242.
18. Verney and Verney, eds, *Memoirs*, 2: 263.
19. Pepys, *Diary*, 7: 324.
20. Evelyn, *Diary*, 3: 464–5.
21. Jirousek, 'Ottoman Influences,' p. 242.
22. Pepys, *Diary*, 7: 378.
23. For more on this topic, see my Introduction to, and the essays in, *Culture and Society*.
24. Marsh, *New Survey*, p. 45.
25. For Bernard Lewis' position that Muslims were not interested in Europe, see *Muslim Discovery, Islam and the West*, and the essay collection *From Babel to Dragomans*. William Dalrymple lists a number of 'notable examples' of Lewis' position from these works in 'Porous Frontiers,' note 18, pp. xxi–xxii. And see also Finkel, "'The Treacherous Cleverness.'"
26. Marsh writes: 'I was present in the Turkish Army in an Expedition against the Persian,' *New Survey*, p. 35.
27. Eyre, ed., *Transcript*, 2: 37.
28. *The Honour of an Apprentice of London. Wherein is Declared his Matchless Manhood, and Brave Adventures Done by him in Turkey, and by What Means he Married the Kings Daughter of that Same Country* (London: for F. Coles, T. Vere, and W. Gilbertson [c.1658–1664]), Bodleian Library shelfmark Wood 401(63/64); lines 49–64. Subsequent references to line numbers are given parenthetically to this copy.
29. See Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*.
30. Osborne, *Political Reflections*, p. 46.

31. On the reversion of property to the sultan following the death of the owner, Fynes Moryson reports how, on the death of his brother en route between Aleppo and Iskenderun the 'Turkes presently snatched all things that were his, as belonging to the Great Turke,' and even 'seazed upon all the goods' of an English merchant 'as if they had belonged to my brother,' *Itinerary*, 2: 67.
32. Blount, *Voyage*, p. 5.
33. Rycaut, *Present State*, p. 2.
34. For a fascinating study of how the Ottoman Algerian elite during this period aimed to preserve their own 'Turkishness' by imitating the Ottoman court, by both restricting marriage to local women and recruiting 'volunteers from non-Arab regions of the empire,' see Shuval, 'Ottoman Algerian Elite,' passage quoted, p. 328.
35. See MS Bodl. Or. 430, fol. 47v for the description of Rowlie as a 'eunuch': 'Huius Eunuchi Fidei omnia Sacreta ASSAM WASCH: & gaza & mulieres prestantes Comissa Hic in Anglia natura in Civitate IARMOUTH quem Vocarunt turcae ASSAN AGA, in Anglia Samson Rowlii.'
36. A checklist of the reprinted titles referred to here can be found in my 'Learn of a Turk.'
37. *The Famous History of the Valiant London Prentice* (London: 'Printed and Sold in Bow Church Yard,' [c.1775]), BL shelfmark 1076.1.4(6); reprinted (London: 'Printed by J. Evans and Co, No. 42, Long-Lane, West Smithfield,' [c.1810]), BL shelfmark 1076.1.4(7).
38. *The London Apprentice; Or, Singular Adventures of Henry and Zelima. An Historical Tale. By the Author of 'Douglas Castle'* (London: A. Neil, 1805), BL shelfmark 1487.e.20.
39. *The Much Admired Overture, to the New Grand Spectacle (Written by Mr. Astley Junr.) call'd The London Apprentice, of the Seven Towers of Constantinople, now Performing with Unbounded Applause at Astley's Royal Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge; Composed & Arranged for the Piano Forte, by J. Sanderson* (London: Hodsoll [nd]), BL shelfmark H.123(3).
40. *London's Glory; Or, The History of the Valiant and Renowned Henry Cornfield, a Native of Cheshire; Recorded in History as the Famous London Apprentice, Whose Wonderful and Singular Adventures and Heroism Astonished Europe* (London: 'Printed and sold by J. Bailey, Chancery Lane; sold also by Champante and Whitrow, Aldgate; Willmott and Hill, Borough; Lumsden and Sons, Glasgow, [1820?]', BL shelfmark 12450.bb.17; passages quoted, pp. 26, 28.
41. Green, *Journey*, sigs A2v–A3.
42. Richardson, Preface to Roe, *Negotiations*, p. v.
43. M. B., *Learne*, p. 12.

8 A view from the West: Young American writing about the Maghrib

An earlier version of this chapter appeared as 'Of Pirates, Slaves and Diplomats: Anglo-American Writing about the Maghrib in the Age of Empire,' in Claire Jowitt, ed., *Pirates? The Politics of Plunder 1550–1650* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 169–86.

1. Bush, *Life of Mohammed*, pp. 196, 197.
2. See Matar, *Islam in Britain*, chapter five, 'Eschatology and the Saracens,' and, for the use of prophecy in pre-Reformation anti-Islamic propaganda, see Setton, *Western Hostility*.
3. See MacLean, Introduction to *Culture and Society*, pp. 3–27, and *Rise of Oriental Travel*.
4. Although a fiction, Royall Tyler's *The Algerine Captive* predated authentic accounts by US captives such as John Foss, *A Journal of the Captivity and Sufferings of John Foss*. James Riley's *Loss of the American brig Commerce* (1817) was reprinted twenty-two times, making it one of Young America's best-sellers. Such was the demand for such works that four spurious captivity narratives purporting to be by European women were published in the United States between 1804 and 1830, between them running to over thirty reprinted editions during those years; see Bekkaoui, *Elizabeth Marsh*, p. 30. See also Baepler's useful, but editorially unsound, anthology *White Slaves*. For historical background, see Barnby, *Prisoners of Algiers*; Bencherif, *Image of Algeria*; and Parker, *Uncle Sam*.
5. Quoted from Humphreys, *Poems by Col. David Humphreys*, p. iii.
6. Humphreys, *Poem on the Happiness of America*, pp. 2–4. Subsequent page references to this work are given parenthetically.
7. The undated first edition of Humphreys' *Poem on the Happiness of America* is assigned to 1786 in the British Library Catalogue.
8. Parker, *Uncle Sam*, p. 40. It was during these years that Humphreys' *Poem to the Armies of the United States of America* was published in New Haven (1784) and reprinted in London and Paris (1785).
9. Cited by Parker, *Uncle Sam*, p. 85.
10. Parker, *Uncle Sam*, pp. 92–3.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–102; passage quoted p. 95. A detailed chronological account, including costs, of Humphreys' mission between March 1795 and July 1796, appears in *Reports of the Secretary of State*; my thanks to the Boston University Library for supplying a copy.
12. *Reports of the Secretary of State*, p. 3.
13. Cited by Parker, *Uncle Sam*, p. 159; see also p. 260 n1.

9 A view from the East: Don Juan in England

An earlier version of this chapter appeared as 'Don Juan in England, or, The Disappearance of the Countryside,' in Amanda Gilroy, ed., *Green and Pleasant Land: English Culture and the Romantic Countryside*, Groningen Studies in Cultural Change 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 173–84; permission to reprint applied for.

1. See Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*, p. 81; Defoe, *Fortunate Mistress* (1724); Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* (1760–1776), for Corporal Trim's 'Turkish tobacco pipes,' see 6.24.102; Johnson, *Prince of Abissinia* (1759); Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man* (1732–1734), 2: 27–8. For the best introduction to the eastern influences on eighteenth-century English literature, see Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*.
2. See Landry, 'Bloody Shouldered Arabian.'
3. Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient*, p. 58; and see also Ballaster, ed., *Fables of the East*.

4. MacLean, Landry and Ward, *Country and City*, p. 8.
5. Quotations throughout are from Byron, *Poetical Works*; references are given to canto and lines.
6. For the position of women at the centre of British imperial imagination, consumption and legitimation, see Brown, *Ends of Empire*.
7. See 'Colonizing the Colonizer,' Ivo Kamps' excellent discussion of how multiple national possibilities come into play in these early mercantile encounters from the Dutch material.
8. McGann, *Romantic Ideology*, p. 110.
9. Dallam, 'Diary,' pp. 13–14.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 19–20.
11. Morris, *Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, p. 36.
12. Clearly I am here de-historicizing the politics of the poem and ignoring crucial aspects of Byron's language in order to focus on other satiric elements. For a more sophisticated analysis of the literary use of the Spanish view of England, see Moskal, 'To Speak in Sanchean Phrase.'
13. Clearly, I am overlooking yet another important satiric aspect of Byron's poem, its critical engagements with Wordsworth.

Epilogue: By way of conclusion

1. See Hill, *Full and Just Account*; Drummond, *Travels*; and Craven, *Journey*; and see also Turner, 'From Classical to Imperial.'

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Add MS 23,215
Cotton Julius C.III.e.
Cotton Nero B.viii
Cotton Nero B.xi
Lansdowne MS 86/92
Lansdowne MS 112
Lansdowne MS 142
Lansdowne MS 241
Stowe MS 180
Or. MS 12009
Or. MS 2079
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