People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Kasdi Merbah University- Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of the Degree of Doctorate

Major: English Language and Literature

Title

The Early Modern Theatre and Cultural Othering

The Turk the Moor the Renegade and the Cannibal

Submitted by

Imane **BENKHELIFA**

Supervised by

Professor Mohammed Seghir HALIMI

Jury

Halima BENZOUKH	MCA, University Kasdi Merbah Ouargla	President
Mohammed Seghir HALIMI	PROF, University Kasdi Merbah Ouargla	Supervisor
Mohammed KOUDAD	MCA, University Kasdi Merbah Ouargla	Examiner
Tahar ABBOU	MCA, University Ahmed Draia Adrar	Examiner
Nassima KAID	PROF, University Djillali Liabes Sidi Bel Abbés	Examiner
Slimane ABDELHAKEM	MCA, University Ghardaia	Examiner

Academic Year: 2020-2021

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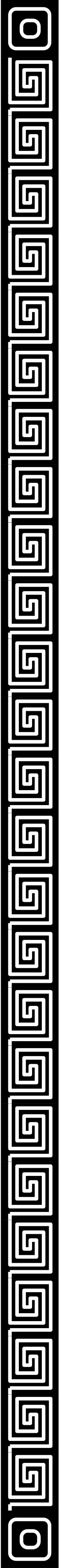

Dedication

Dedication

This research is dedicated to Mom and Dad

Mama, the love of literature that you instilled in me gave me perspective in life and ignited in me an endless spark.

Papa, my muse in artistry, you nurtured my passions for the love of aesthetic human expressions, of which you will always remain my most supreme artist.

To my Angel Mohammed

Your adorably cute presence in my life is all I ever needed to accomplish this research.

To my loving Sisters Karima and Ahlam

Having you by my side was the best therapy one could ever wish for.

To my Dear Husband Djalel

Thank you for the emotional sustenance that I have constantly received from you.

To my caring brothers Allal, Fathi, and Sofiane.

Thank you for believing in me.

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Professor Mohammed Seghir HALIMI. This research never would have come into being were it not for your incredible generosity and continuous support. Your guidance and help were essential to the development of my research.

Due thanks should go to the jury members: Dr. Halima BENZOUKH, Prof. Nassima KAID, Dr Mohammed KOUDAD, Dr Tahar ABBOU, and Dr Slimane ABDELHAKEM for their time, effort and valuable critiques and insights.

I would like to express special thanks to Professor Kim F.Hall who was unfailingly generous with her help and for inviting me to join the ongoing conference series and professional network community 'RaceB4Race', a true eye-opener to the centrality of race in premodern literature, history, and culture.

Among the many to whom I owe substantial debts of gratitude, let me mention my Professors at Beijing Foreign Studies University: Professor Zhang Zhong Zai, Professor Zhang Zai Xin, and Professor Jin Li.

I have been sustained by an incredible network of friends and colleagues who have helped along the way with stimulating suggestions: Boussafsaf Meriem, Benlemouez Hichem, Aggabou Houria, Tebdjoun Mounira, and Mebirouk Khadidja. I would also like to give special thanks to Mansoor Khan for his help with sources.

I acknowledge with gratitude the special help of my friend Harrat Sara for her valuable critiques, Guidoum Assia and Mouissa Fattoum for their support and encouragement.

Abstract

Abstract

This thesis analyses the workings of difference operative in the process of 'cultural othering' in a selection of early modern plays. Of particular interest, this research aims to study four marginalized and altered figures in the early modern stage: the Turk, the Moor, the Renegade, and the Cannibal. Associated with Islam, the Ottoman Empire, and the Barbary region of North Africa, these peripheral literary figures are approached against a revisionist historical background that acknowledges the centrality of Muslim presence in the disputes of the age and gauges the implications of England's geographical histories of contact as well as their entrance in the global world of trade. Nascent epistemological discourses of race are equally traced as fuelling 'cultural othering'. Although the four figures are all, to varying degrees, informed by the presence of Islam in the Ottoman Empire and the Barbary coast of Africa, they remain, nonetheless, highly ambivalent. It is this ambivalence that shall be tackled and considered as bespeaking the era's conflicting attitudes towards the Orient and Islam. The extent to which the selected plays are culturally informed and the way they fostered and remodelled an already entrenched discourse of differentiation and alterity shall equally be assessed. Scrutinizing the networks of meanings in which these playwrights were caught up is central to understanding the collective imperative of 'cultural othering'. The theatre, as a cultural institution, was the springboard onto which these mappings of difference were enacted and the English collective cultural identity can be glimpsed. This study contends that one cannot read early modern spectacles of alterity without contextualizing these texts in duly decentred counter-histories. Thus forging, the bridge between New History and literature from fresh angles is requisite to affirm the discriminating nature of othering. To this end, New Historicism is adopted in

approaching these plays that are deemed focal texts in Renaissance English culture. In their orientalizing proclivity, these texts are treated as belonging to Proto-Orientalism, and as such postcolonial theory will also be deployed in this study.

Keywords: Cultural othering, Alterity, collective cultural identity, New Historicism, Proto-Orientalism, counter-histories.

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General Introduction

Genaral Introduction

I want to convey the sense of a stockpile of representations, a set of images and image-making devices that are accumulated, 'banked,' as it were, in books, archives, collections, cultural storehouses, until such time as these representations are called upon to generate new representations Greenblatt *(Marvellous Possessions)*

The new is not found in what is said, but in the event of its return

Foucault *(What is an Author?)*

Cultural differentiation is not benign. The ways in which we imagine and construct differences today are derivative of past notions and imaginings that remain vehemently sediment in the structures of beliefs that inform our assumptions. The various figurations of differences carried towards ‘others’ during the Renaissance drew impetus from a protracted history of othering, tinged with condescension and mistrust and rife with contradictions. Nowadays, articulations of Western Christian selfhood, although constantly pushed to the edges of tolerance, carry within a clearly still-active tradition of antipathy vis-à-vis the threatening, the alien, and the unassimilable ‘other’. Formulating notions of selfhood and otherness involved a wide range of seemingly harmless comparisons and imaginings. Currently, those imaginings cannot simply be wished away or reversed, because they were stubbornly indoctrinated in different cultural discourses, amounting thus to a body of knowledge of the ‘other’, and of discursive practices upon the ‘other’ that are perniciously cumulative and which stiffened into discourses of race, islamophobia, misogyny, anti-semitism among many other forms of intolerance.

Early modern England was subject to heavy restructurings of beliefs and to substantial economic changes. As England sought a niche in the mercantile economy,

there ensued important geographical and cultural crossings. Although their incentive in world trade, as critics have adeptly shown, was belated, the English within just a few decades of their ventures in Ottoman and Moroccan domains, their primary partners of trade, leaped with their economy to unprecedented ease. These mercantile explorations, secured during Queen Elizabeth's reign began to expand England's tentative capitalist proddings into exotic and mysterious lands. Learning to mimic hegemonic models of successful economies, the English roamed the Mediterranean waters conducting successful and mutual trade, intermingling hence in large hybrid zones that acknowledged the one language of capital.

England's debutant ventures were not beyond the Atlantic, at least not initially, because the New World was the fighting terrain of hegemonic empires like Spain and Portugal. The Mediterranean was the microcosm of exploration for the English. The ambitious mercantile identity that the English articulated in this space altered the fabric of cultural and social life back in England. The role of traders and envoys was not simply to conduct diplomatic or mercantile exchanges, but were urged to amass knowledge about the peoples they met and about their lands. Back home, English cultural life was altered with the profusion of eastern commodities: exotic and highly in demand eastern spices, Opium, Amber, Turkish carpets, Algerian silk, Moroccan sugarcane, and saltpeter and Persian Safran among tons of valuable commodities. There were also chronicles, trade treatises, travel memoirs, histories or attempts at, and literary productions informing the English of what lays beyond their insular realm.

The accelerated pace of trade overwhelmed the English with information of 'others', which unregulated, circulated across various discursive formations informing pseudo-scientific theories and literary texts alike. The English theatre witnessed a boom

parallel to England's ambitious economic identity giving rise to a broad spectrum of theatrical productions. The Elizabethan and Jacobean theatres articulated ongoing cultural concerns over their place in a world defined by mixture and difference. The representation and categorization of perceived physical and religious differences were thus central to the public stage. I address what remains one of the most vexing lacunae in revisiting English literary history: the momentous years between 1570- 1630 when England's economical identity in the Mediterranean engendered a new kind of literary discourse and the early modern theatre was emerging as a site of profound, theatrical performances of alterity. Jews, Moors, Turks, Indians, renegades, pirates, Native Americans, Scythians, Moriscos, blacks, and Subsaharans are some of the liminal figures that frequently appeared in the stage of the age.

Formulating notions of 'self' and 'other' were appropriated into normative binaries that shaped social occasions as well as discursive practices. Perhaps, duly emphasizes Stephen Greenblatt, "most nations learn to define what they are by defining what they are not. This negative self-definition is, in any case, what Elizabethans seemed constantly to be doing, in travel books, sermons, political speeches, civic pageants, public exhibitions, and theatrical spectacles of otherness" (*The Norton Anthology* Introduction, 24). Through juxtapositions and contradistinctions, the English were valorizing, appropriating, and attributing traits that would define them as 'English', and pin down the 'others' as 'others'.

This literary epoch is characterized by hectic changes: social, economic, cultural, and religious, but while historians have stressed the importance of these factors in shaping the era and in engendering an overarching and dominant "spirit of the age" in which many playwrights found themselves caught into, the workings of race, colour and

religious discrimination have not been sufficiently stressed from revised angles. The obliteration of the centrality of religious and racial discrimination leads to the false assumption that the English Renaissance was colour-blind and religiously tolerant. This critical omission is partly due to the fact that literary metahistories, or “Les grands récits” of history, sought to provide a generalizable, comprehensive, and smooth, sense of history, a history that knows where it is headed and that epitomizes epochal truths. Fortunately, the neutrality of race in the age is being debunked as a clear fallacy as different realities are being divulged with revisionist histories. When reconsidered from the vantage point of “history from below”[1], this period attests to a kind of literary production that reveals just how much racializing ideologies were very much crucial to the way the English perceived ‘others’.

While many early modern historians and scholars are still reluctant to touch upon the issue of race during this period, on the grounds that studying it prior to the 18th is historically anachronistic, others are surveying the alternative racializing vocabularies and ideologies that were utilized by many writers across different discursive formations. Such reshuffling of old understandings is currently occupying a stronghold in English Renaissance scholarship and a considerable number of endeavouring scholars are participating to vivificate and broaden the field (See Appendix A). The early modern period, it is adeptly being revisited by a seam of Renaissance scholars, is far from being innocent of racializing bodies, and of culturally othering peoples of different origins. In

[1] Part of the counterhistorical spirit, this radical form of history was widespread among poststructuralists, who, following Nietzchean comtempt of history’s sweeping and generalized epistemological assumptions, sought to counter dominant narratives. Their efforts resulted in a varied range of revisionist histories: history from below, counterfactual history and alternate histories (Callgher and Greenblatt 53).

fact, when construed properly, most of the foundations for the later obstinate discourse of race are to be found germinating across an interdisciplinary array of discourses, of which literature is but one façade.

The structural model of binarism that is used to order, categorize, discern, and ultimately discriminate is the very basis on which people will be led to make seemingly harmless judgments of others. Kim F.Hall stresses that the "binary system of representation [that] constantly marks and attempts to fix and naturalize the difference between belongingness and otherness" is at the very root of racist discourses (12), and that language itself creates those differences under the guise of social organization. Hall stresses that “race was then (as it is now) a social construct that is fundamentally more about power and culture than about biological difference” (6). The binary structural oppositions are presumed to clear away the opacity of cultural signifiers through having those neatly ordered into decipherable divides. In the wake of poststructuralist thought, however, this model was utterly rejected and invalidated as it fell short to account for the complexity of reality let alone of discursive formations that purported to describe or represent reality, whose very medium was deemed volatile and inadequate. Furthermore, the paradigm of binarism rested on fixity and rigidity especially as this paradigm was espoused with postcolonial understandings of East/ West encounters.

In his epitome of *Orientalism,* Edward Said maintains that Orientalism is a corporate institution and “a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (3). In setting itself against the Orient, the Occident gained its identity, treating the former hence “as a sort of surrogate and even an underground self” (3). Both these two entities, the Orient and the Occident are constructs, and as he insists, the relationship between them is predicated on the Occident’s power, domination, and

complex hegemony. Culture, Said further argues, is a saturating hegemonic system whose constraints on writers and thinkers were "productive, not unilaterally inhibiting" (14). While Said's incentive of reading the Occident/Orient relationship was clearly delineated from the French, British and American experiences of the Orient, or departing from the imperial and colonial establishments, many scholars were eagerly seeking to apply the binarism, which rests on authority, to earlier periods in history. Such imposition will not simply result in anachronism but will run the risk of obscuring the nature of the real encounter between the English, in our case, and their Eastern counterparts.

England's status in the early modern age could hardly be described as hegemonic. Its precarious position in a world governed by super-powerful empires allowed her no room for competition, only hopes for inclusion. The model of East/West division in approaching England's relations in the early modern age has quite rightly been critiqued from several quarters. England's position, being what it was, there were still a number of thinkers and playwrights who engaged in imaginings of power and hegemony over the East, describing others and hierarchizing them as inferior to their own status. English discursive formations altering the others during this age were unmet with the material capacities and enforcements of an empire. The attempts of alterity are thus manacled within the discursive domain, especially towards such rivals as the Muslim potentates in the Ottoman domains and the region of Barbary.

The critical dismissal of England's weak position in the Afro-Eurasian sphere during this age jeopardizes a sound reading of the nature of the encounter. It was not an encounter of a powerful west face to a powerless east, but quite the reverse. The representations of power and authority remain, thus, quintessentially hopeful, wishful,

and ultimately impotent. Studying early modern representations and fashionings of 'others' need thus to acknowledge this basic corrective. Reading Renaissance art as dismantled from its just history will surely result in false conclusions of English superiority.

In this regard, Stephen Greenblatt argues that the art of the Renaissance could only be understood in the context of the society from which it sprang. The approach he initiated is interdisciplinary par excellence, drawing from history, anthropology, Marxist theory, and post-structuralism among as many disciplines as is necessary to enlarge the narrow and restricting boundaries of textuality. In this vein of thought, Jean E. Howard argues that "rather than erasing the problem of textuality, one must enlarge it to see that *both* social and literary texts are opaque, self-divided and porous that is open to mutual intertextual influences of one another" ("The New Historicism" 25). The symbiotic relationship amongst cultural texts became the core belief of New Historicists. This shift in interpretative practice, further stresses Howard, accords literature real power; "rather than passively reflecting an external reality, literature is an agent in constructing a culture's sense of reality" (Greenblatt, *The Greenblatt Reader* 25). The aesthetic, cogently asserts Greenblatt "is not an alternative realm but a way of intensifying the single realm we all inhabit" ("Towards a Poetics of Culture" 8). In this sense, literature is approached as an aspect of social, economic, political, and cultural history. This being said, New Historicism does not reduce the historical to the literary nor the literary to the historical, as often critiqued but, as a practice that is resistant to the hegemony of disciplinarily, it seeks to heighten the intersection of the historical and the literary by demonstrating their permeability, their circuitous energies and their symbiotic relationship. Consequently, artistic agency is not denied but shown as guided

by collective social constructions that "define the range of aesthetic possibilities within a given representational mode and link that mode to the complex network of institutions, practices, and beliefs that constitute the culture as a whole" (Greenblatt, *The Power of Forms* 5-6).

Alan Sinfield stresses that the goal of Cultural Materialism (New Historicism)[2] "is to restore literary writing to the immediate social and political engagement that has previously and elsewhere been taken for granted" (30), to stress the materialism of literary production as opposed to idealism and the transcendence of the conditions of creative activity, and to situate the writers of the Renaissance in "the conceptual matrix of history, ideology, and literature" (30). Partly drawing their conceptual framework from Clifford Geertz' anthropological understanding of culture in his Magnum Opus *The Interpretations of Cultures*, the New Historicists believe in his maxim that "there is no such thing as human nature independent of Culture" (3). Equally influenced by Clifford Geertz, Louis A. Montrose appropriates his ideas taking *"all* of culture as the domain of literary criticism", urging "a text to be perpetually interpreted, [as] an inexhaustible collection of stories from which curiosities may be culled and cleverly retold" (qtd.in Vaughan and Vaughan xviii). literary texts, thus, cease to function as

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[2] Gaining momentum in the 1970's and 1980's in Renaissance Studies, Cultural Poetics of New Historicism went by the appellation Cultural Materialism in Britain and New Historicism in America. Marking a return to history in literary criticism, this movement challenged the assumptions articulated by New Criticism which tended to regard literary texts as ahistorical, apolitical, and self-enclosed entities beyond the workings of the material conditions of production and consumption and disavowed their purely textual interpretations (Bressler 218-19). Its practitioners equally dismissed old Historicism's autonomous view of history as providing objective truths or as providing an essentially accurate picture of past events. History, they firmly maintain, is one of many discourses of seeing the world and the literary text needs to be tackled alongside not against it, and as having the potential to clarify cultural signifiers coded within which could be used to better understand history.

'cultural' only by virtue of *reference* to the culture in which one situates, but more importantly, literary texts are "cultural by virtue of the social values and contexts that they have themselves absorbed" (Greenblatt, *The Greenblatt Reader* 12), becoming focal vehicles of their cultural intricacies and anxieties as well as producers, in turn, of cultural meanings. Even past the collapse of the material conditions which gave the very 'raison d'être' for these literary texts, and which can only be recovered through perspectival historical interpretations, the texts will, by way of absorption of cultural concerns, contain enough traces to generate those histories. Greenblatt succinctly formulates it as such, "if an exploration of a particular culture will lead to a heightened understanding of a work of literature produced within that culture, so too a careful reading of a work of literature will lead to a heightened understanding of the culture within which it was produced" (13).

The commitment of Cultural Materialism and New Historicism, stresses Sinfield, is "to history as the place where culture is produced" (19). Even their understanding of history underwent serious revision in that they resist homogenous metanarratives as some sort of unified and autonomous whole to stabilize the volatility of the literary text. Their very conception of history is heterogeneous. A rejection of history as an overriding background of objective knowledge is thus essential in their conception. This being said, literature and history, they insist, are mutually constitutive of one other. Furthermore, "History, or rather histories are required for understanding the text" (19), affirms Sinfield; the text itself ushers towards resistant histories that await recovery. The reading mode necessary for such a recovery is to peruse the literary texts in search for "structural, social determinants, rather than

individual properties” (12), and to excavate resistant histories and hitherto marginalized voices. Dissident readings thus ensue, which do not really aim to discredit the manifest reading, but to question its absolutism and supplement it with new readings along new history, with special attention to the resistant histories that the text problematizes.

Steven Mullaney rightly maintains that culture is not to be seen as singular or static, but as “an ongoing production, negotiation, and determination of social meanings and social selves” (*The Place of the Stage* xi). The playwrights are caught up in this flux of culture more sensitively by virtue of their engagement in artistic production, and in the case of the stage, not any kind of artistic production for the Renaissance theatre, because its mode of expression is the most collective of all arts and the most culturally informed. Literary individualistic creativity is in this sense perceived as greatly submerged in the workings of culture. Greenblatt stresses in his book Renaissance *Self-Fashioning* that even the imagination of the writer “in its materials and resources and aspirations, is already a social construct” (vii). An understanding of literature as part of the semiotic system that constitutes a given culture is thus essential to the New Historicist project.

By acknowledging the interconnectedness of all cultural discourses, with history being one of many forms, literary texts will amount to a repository not simply of the aesthetic but withhold much history than previously recognized and are, in effect, when considered alongside social and political discourses, vehicles of power. In this sense, reading the literary text should be espoused with probing other cultural texts. Such a reading practice, stresses Bressler, aims to investigate the relationship of the text to its society, and when conducted properly, “an array of often conflicting social and literary patterns evolves that demonstrate how art affects society and how society affects art”

(216). The mimetic function of art is subverted in this sense and substituted by the imbrication of art with other discursive formations in society. Mimesis, Greenblatt insists, is itself a social relation of production; "any given representation is not only the reflection or product of social relations but that it is itself a social relation, linked to the group understandings, status hierarchies, resistances, and conflicts that exist in other spheres of the culture in which it circulates. This means that representations are not only products but producers, capable of decisively altering the very forces that brought them into being" (*Marvellous Possessions* 6).

Also central to this conception of the literary text as culture-in-action is a revision of the role of the author, a decentring of his role as a God-author of some clear teleological meaning in his text. In this respect, the New Historicists were influenced by such poststructural thinkers as Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes. In his lecture "what is an Author?" Foucault advances the idea that the author's function will enclose "other determining factors when analyzed in terms of larger entities-groups of works or entire disciplines" (136). This is precisely accurate for the case of the early modern theatre as the playwrights/participants in the entertainment enterprise and the cultural institution of the stage were driven by a conflicting amalgam of factors to generate their productions. The practices of New Historicism were fruitful in the Renaissance because this cultural period was rife with economic, religious, social, and ultimately cultural 'determinants'. The questions to ask of authors need to concern themselves less with the individualistic properties of the authors or of identity and authenticity than with the modes of existence of discourse, the governing forces, and the dissemination of literary and other discourses. Geertz argues that culture is "public because meaning is" and that systems of meaning are necessarily the collective property of a group (12-13). This

could not be more applicable than to the early modern public stage and as such, as icons of culture-in-action, the plays written for the stage were by their very nature not simply the creation of their playwrights' imaginative faculties but cultural products and producers of meanings.

The Renaissance playwrights were in this sense embedding in their artifacts cultural signifiers central to their culture. The surge of Turk plays, Moor plays, and the sub-genre of 'Turning Turk' plays were cultural phenomena and not simply autonomous literary pieces. As will be amply demonstrated in the pages that follow, each genre or sub-genre was deeply interrelated to historical events, social practices, and cultural anxieties. The encoded cultural signifiers equally drew of shared repertoires of convention that transcend the bounds of spatiality and temporality. There was also another role that the playwrights occupied which is that of reflecting upon the very codes they have implemented and adorned. Their agency is thus not completely devalued or muted but simply explored and exposed as culturally governed.

There are a number of scholars who, in their unwillingness to enroll themselves in studying non-canonical literature, foster the hold of Shakesperean exclusivity to this literary period. This is another concern that New Historicism sought to rectify. A narrow view of Renaissance literature will result in the effacement of crucial phases in the history of the stage. Shakespeare's reticence, to cite an example, in dealing with Ottoman material in his plays will engender, if literature classes valorize him by way of canonicity, a critical dismissal of the paramount role of this genre in the development of the stage, a development which, in its insistence and prevalence, has the potential of unclouding the very culture which made such productions imperative, of assessing the extent of imaginative captivation by Turks, and hence rethinking the notion of 'the spirit

of the age'. If the spirit of the age is measured by collective imperatives in the development of literature, then this genre of Turk plays legitimately assumes the status of one.

Fortunately, an attempt to treat the plays as products of particular moments and not just as transcendent universal texts is gradually replacing old conceptions in academia. In pedagogical practices, however, this turn to cultural analysis is not as vigorous as in academic research. Teachers of Renaissance literature still perpetuate the exclusivity of the canon to Shakespeare and maintain obsolete formalistic approaches to his plays. Countering this mainstream scholarship and practice, I undertake the study of four focal altered figures in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama and analyze them against two major counterhistories: a history of a prolonged religious polarity and a history of nascent pseudo-scientific, Proto-Darwinian, and scriptural race.

Challenging the anachronism of studying both religious differentiation and race prior to the 18th century, I align myself with scholars willing to explore and expose alternate vocabularies and conceptions of these two revisionist histories. I have termed the process by which these figures were othered 'cultural othering', in as much as it was carried out in a vast arsenal of cultural texts that influenced one other. The figures chosen contain an overlapping set of differentiating frameworks which shall be discerned. It is on the basis of such cultural readings that I hope to contribute to the understanding of what governs the dynamics of discursive formations and the poetics of cultural othering in literary productions and to construe the social and economic logic behind. As such, there remains much to be said, I maintain, regarding the revisiting of these texts from a reoriented perspective. This research, thus, provides a further contribution to the growing field of reassessing Elizabethan and early Jacobean

dramatic pieces that represented the four figures, with the Turk, the Moor, and the Renegade as related to Islam and the Moor, the Renegade and the Cannibal as defined by the role of the region of Barbary. In taking up this task, I mean to revisit and revise the past in ways to liberate us from fixation. As shall be argued, such readings of the past are motivated by contemporary and present concerns and involve taking a position within present critical debates of the need to revisit and rewrite the past.

This research advances the following questions. How does the English theatre under the uncertain and unnerving exuberance of exotic stimuli absorb differences and police its borders? To what extent is this cultural institution implicated in cultural and ideological workings? From what histories of contact did early modern English consciousness draw its understanding of Islam? What terminologies and dynamics of cultural othering were harnessed in inferiorizing Muslims and peoples of different ethnicities and colour and how were these infiltrating and shaping stage productions? How are the four figures conceptualized in mimetic plays of the age and what set of differentiating markers were they imbued with? In attending to these queries, I stress the role of the theatre in the mechanism of 'cultural othering', which is essentially a practice of self-definition, of a "negative self-definition".

This research is premised on the conviction that the Muslim-Ottoman presence, both geographically and politically, in the European map, triggered a set of conflicting responses to Islam. The extension of the empire has come to include the Barbary region in the North African coast, a region which has for long played an immense role in European colonial aspirations. That the region was Islamized and the threat of Turkishness has extended all along the North African Littoral exercised paramount pressure on European Nations and influenced their understandings of commercial and

political space. This hegemonic Ottomancentrism has been dimmed from common historiography of the early modern age. The repercussions of such effacement resulted in a twisted understanding of history, and hence in a unidimensional interpretation of the literary artifacts.

The liminal figures chosen in this research illustrate best the dynamics of cultural othering in this period. Since these inferiorized figures have lodged in a number of plays, I undertake the study of each liminal figure in a carefully chosen text and in relation to the two counter-histories provided in the first two chapters while hinting, whenever possible, to other literary works and other cultural documents. In a whirlwind of New Historicism, I attempt an interdisciplinary approach of discourses with the aim of decentering the primacy of the literary text and opening up a dialogic relation of discourses. Furthermore, in choosing different playwrights of the Elizabethan and early Stuart ages, I intend, in a typically New Historicist fashion, to decenter canonicity and to widen the scope of research in such a way so as to include more hitherto deemed less canonical writers, to show both the pervasiveness of the phenomenon of representing Muslims and the shaking grounds of the English canon. The Renaissance canon has for ages now posited Shakespeare as the spokesman of the age, with little to, in our case in Algeria, hardly any interest in other playwrights of the age. This prioritization results in an exclusive and parochial understanding of the age and works to foster Eurocentrism and to obscure the histories out of which such works emerged. By engaging in unveiling the larger picture, and through the inclusion of Islamic forces in the map and disputes of the age, the image of Muslims in the drama of the age starts to take new meanings and the interpretations fresh understandings.

The literary texts chosen for New Historicist scrutiny in this thesis will be analyzed following Clifford Geertz' technique of 'thick description' that the New Historicists adopted. Reading against the grain, thus, I peruse the plays in search for embrasures and faultlines from which I push the analysis extra-textually to the other cultural discourses. Furthermore, I will also be adopting Edward Said's strategy of 'contrapuntal analysis' which relies on interpreting different perspectives simultaneously with an "awareness both of the metropolitan history that is narrated and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts" (*Culture and Imperialism* 51).

Through the use of these two stratagems, it follows that the texts will be read dissidently against new histories undermining, hence, the primacy of metanarratives. This form of cultural analysis in which I aspire to engulf the texts has an aim to blur the boundaries between the aesthetic and the material. This being said, the artistic production is not completely downgraded nor is its value diminished. The autonomous centrality of the literary is simply questioned by having the plays interpreted in a centripetal fashion through grounds extrinsic to their textual borders.

It is believed that the boundaries of literariness should cease to enclose the texts safely within as if they emerged out of some transcendent creative genius which is ahistorical and non-implicated in the happenings of the age. The recurring and insistent concerns that these writers have registered in their works are what has facilitated the practice of rereading them. The prevalence, as well as the wide diffusion of the themes that they chose to tackle, provides the disruptive and perversive agents by which to review and revise the age and its supposedly 'Grand Truths' or 'Spirit(s)'. This disruptive power will lend support to the emergence of new histories that contradict

convened-upon metahistories and shared beliefs of what the Elizabethan literary renaissance was about. Thus, this reorientation of histories, and the reshuffling of truths about the age, will be established and the readings of the texts will be new and fresh. Literature in this sense, stresses Jean E.Howard helps to unveil the clashing histories untold and hence that we will be able to glimpse the full intertextual network in which a literary work exists and is part of, despite the declared intentions that the writers may hold and the critics likewise may deem absolute. The literary text, in this sense, will be emptied of most of its supposed rich signifying nature and will be used as a springboard to some extratextual reality.

One of the aims of this study is corrective, through demystifying artistic productions. The cultural criticism that is attempted in this research does not mean to demote the aesthetic of the text by immersing the writer in a much larger context, but more to reassess differentiational rhetorics of ontologizing others. As I reason in the following pages, the early modern period saw a paradigm shift in notions of place and space, and the English theatre, being an enclosed space of dramaturgy was obsessed with these changing paradigms. Through showing the pluralism or the collective nature of an insurgent imperative of 'cultural othering', and the multiple makers engaged in such imperative, I attempt to construe the prevalent and most pressing voices that they represented and to construe the logic behind such representations. As such, the present thesis will be divided into six chapters, disparate as they may seem in their focus; I will prove these liminal figures to be fully immersed in a sweeping logic of differentiation.

The first chapter tracks the changing precepts of Muslims and the role that they played in European and English consciousness. A revisionist history of England's engagement with the Muslim world is presented which will serve as the reoriented

terrain within which the texts are both situated as products and demonstrated as generaters of historical meanings. Additionally, England's economic and religious conflictual atmosphere will equally be highlighted as a decisive factor for artistic productions. It is strongly held that the English position amidst the conflictual atmosphere of the Renaissance and Jacobean Dramas cannot be understood in isolation. England's position in Europe and in the map of global trade is assential to the understanding of the ramified fashionings of identities against different others since most of the denigratory practices entrenched in these pieces are not simply the product of the moment. Bridging the link between economic activity, artistic production, and collective identity is equally essential for understanding the plays. English shifting religious and commercial identities are also surveyed, through which task I aim to eluciadate the background from a reoriented perspective.

The second chapter delineates the history of race before race and surveys the analogous mechanisms that were used to racialize bodies and discriminate subjectivities. These theories are divided into pseudo-scientific, secular theories of evolution, and non-scentific religious frameworks. A wide range of sources are thus highlighted in this section ranging from medical-anthropological texts to travelogues and scriptural texts and their interpretations. These texts contain a discriminatory framework of body politics and of understanding different peoples' sexualities and cultural habitus.

Chapter three revolves around the (mis)representation of the Turk, a figure which haunted the consciousness of English playwrights more than any other and helped to define many other figures in terms of religious alterity. To this end, Robert Greene's *Selimus* will be analyzed while stressing the perception of the Turks and their

denigration and mythologization which draws from a nine centuries-long tradition of regarding Muslims as implacable others. The play will be analyzed on the vestiges of its predecessor, namely Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine Plays*, because Greene capitalized on the success of the Tamburlaine Plays and engendered a complex tragical history that encapsulates the English' anxieties towards this figure.

Chapter four studies the image of the Moor in Shakespeare's *Othello* through linkage both to Islam and to the complex coding of skin colour. Reading against both histories, the image of Othello will be scrutinized to its fullest deciphering his racial question as well as his highly ambivalent religious question. This chapter demonstrates that the two questions, as opposed to many interpretations, are in fact inextricably bound and complementary.

Chapter five studies the figure of the renagade in Phillip Massinger's *The Renegado*. This chapter will analyze the anxieties that are espoused with the act of apostasy namely circumcision and the rite of passage. The conversion or 'turning Turk', as many chose to name it, is linked to the image of the Turk and many instances in the play will remind us of the expansionism of the Ottoman Empire and of their lure. The image of the convert however remains immovably stereotypical and highly charged with strident prejudice and misinformation. Not a single play about the renegades portrays this stage type in a morally heroic light. The renegade thus undergoes punishment and rejection even after he redeems.

Chapter six takes on the study of a seemingly remote and different stage type. Yet upon scrutiny, it becomes clear that the representation of the image of the cannibal is but the outcome of accretion and overlay of almost all previous differentiating mechanisms. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* will be analyzed in relation to the long and

protracted history of race. Less concerned with religion and more immersed in other forms of alterity, the play's central character Caliban shall be analyzed in relation to a number of scriptural and non-scriptural traditions of differentiation.

Chapter One- Cultural Othering and Christian Perceptions of Islam

Introduction

This existence of Islam was a problem at every level of experience from the early conquests during the middle ages up until it piqued with the conquest of Canstantinople in 1454. Islam gathered a momentum that seemed interminable and unstoppable. Its presence at the expense of Christian lands and its theological challenge to the Christian dogma was a far-reaching problem that demanded action. Theologically speaking, Islam urged a nuanced set of Christian responses in the aim of explaining its role in Christological providentialism. The development of the precepts of Muslims underwent a series of attacks and rationalizations that ranged from accusations of heresy to schism to providential probation to apocalyptical visions, but their religion was very rarely considered as a creed of beliefs that deserved to be treated on its own terms.

Adherents of a religion avowedly dependent on past authoritative texts for its rationalization framework, the Christians filtered Islam primarily through the scriptural text, which resulted in heavy recyclings of earlier tropes of differentiation that were yet to be accentuated under the moment's urgencies and exigencies. With the 15th century re-emergence of the Islamic threat under the Ottomans, and with their sensitive geopolitical positioning in Europe's cartography, there emerged new ideologies of contact with the 'Islamic bogey'. England's paradigms of interaction with Ottomans and the Muslims of the Barbary Coast were essential turns given its economic seclusion and religious identity as a protestant nation. This 'Turn to the Turks' altered the very fabric of the English economy, society, and culture. The theatre of the Renaissance and its burgeoning happened at the axis of mounting anxiety of what it means to be English amongst successful European nations gaining envious momentum in the new world, and in relation to Muslim potentates with whom only capitulations and trade were

conceivable, given the clear imbalance of power of the age. This chapter is purposefully elementary and introductory, designed to review the changing and conflictual precepts of Islam while situating England amidst, then gauging the implications of its alliance with 'the infidel' on English culture and the Renaissance theatre.

I. The Early Christian-Muslim Encounter (700–1100)

> *Be courteous when you argue with the People of the Book, except with those among them who do evil. Say: 'We believe in that which is revealed to us and which was revealed to you. Our God and your God is one. To Him we surrender ourselves. (The Qur'an 29:46)*
>
> *For also these Arabs to whom at this time God has given control over the world, as you know, they are [also here] with us. Not only are they no enemy to Christianity, but they are even praisers of our faith, honorers of our Lord's priests and holy ones, and supporters of churches and monasteries. (Isho'yahb Letter 14)*

The meteoric rise of Islam within only a century of its first appearance was followed by a swift and sweeping takeover of most of the eastern Roman and Persian empires. As Islam began to make religious truth claims over and against Christianity from the 7th-century Arab conquest of the Byzantine Empire onwards, radically changing the balance of powers, there was mounting tension in the Christian world to grapple with this steadily growing threat.

Islam emerged declaring that it is the last heavenly dispensation completing the cycle of the Abrahamic revelation. A strictly monotheistic religion, Islam challenged the main Christian dogma, rejecting sacramental rites and holy intercessors, which they viewed indeed as a dire error. The trinity and incarnation were utterly refuted by Muslims, as well as the worship of Jesus as if he were God, whom Muslims regarded as a holy prophet and maintain that he was not crucified. Moreover, the trinitarian creed associates with God's indivisible unity other unities, which the Muslims also rejected. Stripping the church from its authority could not be tolerated by Byzantine theologians. Islam came with a clear-cut message, to ask for submission to God's will and its core

belief, and the first of its five pillars is the proclamation of El Shahadda that "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his Messenger". Islam's position towards Jesus, which contradicts with orthodox and unorthodox Christian beliefs, was very clear,

> *The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, was no more than God's apostle and His Word which He conveyed to Mary: a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His apostles and do not say: "Three." Forbear and it shall be better for you. God is but one God. God forbid that He should have a son! His is all that the heavens and the earth contain. God is the all-sufficient Protector. The Messiah does not disdain to be a servant of God, nor do the angels who are nearest to him*. (The Qur'an 4:169–71)

Jesus was a prophet, but he was merely a man, not a God and thus that it was blasphemous to worship him, he who according to Islam never claimed to be God.

The Muslim Arab conquests under the Prophet's four rightly guided Caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali (632-661), advanced at direly steady ratios, reconfiguring paradigms, redefining the East and the West and signaling both alarm and fear among the Christians. Changing their capital from Medina to Damascus in 661 and later to Baghdad under the Abbasid Dynasty, the Islamic civilization flourished in the tradition of successful empires.

The Christians' self-assured sense of divine mission as well as their firm belief in the doctrine of triumphalism led them to seek venues to justify their losses to this newly surging religion as the Arabs invaded the wars-battered Byzantines in the Middles East and Africa and the Conflicts-riven Sassanids of Iraq and Iran. It must be stressed that although the early confrontations between Muslims and Christians happened mainly in

the Byzantine Empire and slightly later stretched to the Iberian Peninsula, knowledge of this blow soon found its way to the European consciousness.

Christian triumphalism held the belief that God is on the side of the government and that history is the divine plan that God ordained to extend his favour to his earthly empire. The Christians adopted a symbiotic relation of theology and history. The doctrine of triumphalism, in consequence, meant the granting of power because of divine favour to the faith and the unravelling of history to sustain the exceptionalism of the Christian faith. Since the church was the vehicle through which to channel religion and this, in turn, was a powerful tool that was used to obtain and maintain power, there emerged the concept of 'the religion of the state'. The church in this sense was considered as triumphant and its stronghold meant the consolidation of worldly powers and of imperial acknowledgement.

Furthermore, the church and the state were inextricably bound and the triumph of the former meant the success of the latter and vice versa; these two were united under the conduit of the emperor, who established God's rule, upheld God's law, and whose victories are justified both fold: militarily and religiously. In other words, the validity and truth of Christianity were therefore justified by the Empire's political and military triumphs. Consequently, defeat was only allowed, if ever, then simply as a mishap in a larger Christological scheme that still upheld Christian superiority to the other faiths.

There was another form of victory attached to this supremacy, which is the spiritual victory of the Christian faith over other faiths in claims of divine authority and eternal truth. As the Muslim Arab ever-expanding incursions of the sixth and seventh centuries proved the Church/State vulnerable to withstand the invasions, and within only years

the Muslim armies had vanquished both empires and expanded over vast territories, the demise of the Roman Imperial state and the waning of its supremacy challenged the church for explanations. God's providence and will upon the Christian church and the Empire's dominions was anything but certain.

There followed a line of stringed predicaments that befell the Christians, from 634 to 638, the Muslims captured Byzantines Syria, under the command of Khalid Ibn Al Walid after two decisive battles Al Anjadayn in 634 and Al Yarmuk in 636 during the rule of The Roman Emperor Heraclius[3], whose brother Theodore failed to resist the Arab conquests. Numerous Christian responses to this deadly blow would later summon Heraclius in various interpretations, holding him accountable for this loss because of his morally depraved rule and of antecedent Christian involvements.

Heraclius adhered to and supported the Byzantine Chalcedonian church, following the decision convened upon in the council of Chalcedon 451. This council was held after a heated Christological controversy struck the unity of Christians. This controversy was instigated two decades earlier by a bishop in Constantinople named Nestorius who declared that Christ's human nature and divine nature should be kept conceptually separate, and that Mary could not have given birth to Christ's divine nature, only to his human nature, and hence that Mary should not be called "bearer of God". All of this, Nestorius argued, is to avoid the blasphemy of saying that during the crucifixion, God himself had suffered and died.

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[3] Prior to his failure to maintain Jerusalem and Syria as Roman domains, Heraclius was celebrated by the Byzantines for defeating the Sassanian king and for recovering Jerusalem and the relic of Jesus's Cross from the Persians. This smashingly triumphant victory of Heraclius was duly labelled by many as being the first holy crusade.

Other bishops, however strongly disagreed with his belief and consequently in 431 the Council of Ephesus was held, during which Nestorius was outmanoeuvred by his opponents and it was decided that he and his followers were heretical. Despite the council's decision, however, Nestorius's belief in the two-nature separate Christology was adopted by and hence became central to many churches prime of which was the Church of the East, which was distanced and separated from the rest of Christianity.

This fragmentation in theological beliefs of the Christian church is of much relevance when we consider the strife and persecution outlived by certain ex-communicated Christian minorities under the Byzantine state and its adopted religious dogma. Many have come to argue that these minorities were actually welcoming Islam for its tolerance to the other faiths and that they were more in favour of Islam than of their opposing Christian rulers.

When the Nestorian followers grew, and more debates followed the nature of Christ, there ensued another council which supposedly sought to clear away the controversy and unify the Christians under one central dogma, and that is the Council of Chalcedon in 457. This council adopted a decree declaring that Christ was to be acknowledged in two natures, a decision consolidating anti-Nestorian beliefs. This decision became the official doctrine for all Christians.

In fact, the council's decision was anything but conclusive if not even more divisive, as there grew many non-chalcedonian opponents who refuted the decree. The predominant anti-chalcedonian church in the east, over which Heraclius reigned, was called the Syrian –Miaphisite church and its adherents called monophysites, or Jacobites, or even distantly, Nestorians. Heraclius, needless to say, had to profess and to

adhere to the state's decreed Chalcedonian dogma, all while ruling over a large anti-Chalcedonian Monophysite Christian community. Furthermore, these Syriac Monophysiste Christians were estranged through the linguistic divide as they spoke the Armaic dialect of Syriac instead of Greek. Their linguistic and religious estrangement segregated them from their co-religionists.

In his empathetic attempt to win these excommunicated Christians and to unite Christological beliefs across his domains, Heraclius tried to sidestep the argument by dictating Christ's nature as having a single will instead, otherwise named the doctrine of Monothelitism. His prevaricating intervention to engulf the controversy, however, worsened the situation as it was refuted by both parties, and gave rise to yet other theological divisions. Non-Chalcedonian and non-Monothelitic Christians underwent ceaseless persecutions under his rule.

Heraclius would be conjured up later in countless counter-arguments as an impious heretic, and Byzantium, thus, as suffering this infliction at the hands of Muslims due to his heresies and unjust treatment of the Monophysities. Christian history under the Byzantines was replete with divisions and with charges of heresy, as has been elucidated.

The threat which would split the Byzantine Empire asunder and weaken the hold of Christianity did not, however, come from within that internal strife, over which Heraclius ruled and sought to control, but from the Arab Muslims, who have by 630 been already settled in El Medina, subdued the Meccans, and took hold of El Kaaba. It is no wonder, then, that when the Arab Muslim conquest struck the allegedly united Christian empire, similar kinds of arguments were targeted at Muslims.

I have engaged quite at length in describing the situation of the Christians under Byzantine rule for solid reasons. Firstly, and since this research is premised on the conviction that monolithic history and its metanarratives are too simplistic to render sufficient accounts of the increasingly nuanced cultures and religions in flux, it was necessary to provide glimpses of 'counter histories', bifurcated and unsettling as they are.These nuanced counter accounts help in recovering hitherto marginalized accounts and other voices. While many still reproduce the early Christian-Muslim encounters to be highly antagonistic and military, accounts of the persecuted monophysites in Byzantium provides a varying corrective to the nature of the encounter. This is by no means an attempt to eclipse Syriac eastern Christian responses of Islam into a uniformly positive corpus[4], but to broaden the range of reception and Christian perceptions. The Islamic conquests, are described by Syriac Christians, declares Michael Penn, "as though there was nothing explicitly Islamic about them, and what [is seen] today as one of the world's most important interreligious encounters barely received mention from its contemporaries" (*When Christians First Met Muslims* 11).

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[4] Michael Phillip Penn in his two books: *When Christians First Met Muslims: A Sourcebook of the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam* and *Envisioning Islam Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World* provides the readers with diverse Syriac sources, that attest to the variety of responses as recorded by Eastern Christians living under Muslim rule, and of their perceptions of Muslims which ranged from the friendly and laudatory to the apologetic and polemic. Christians and Muslims' first interaction, based on these sources, remind readers that they were not solely moved by unmitigated conflict and hatred. The case might differ later in Latin and European Christian depictions from the crusades onward. Scholarship engaged in Western perceptions of Islam that relies solely on the Western European perspective ignores a great deal of early Christian interactions with Muslims and ends up, erroneously, fostering divides and perpetuating agendas and biases.

Other than the two decisive battles that the Muslims fought against Byzantium, it has been elucidated throughout many historical accounts, that the Muslims faced little resistance in the capture of the rest of Syria and Jerusalem and later Alexandria. In fact, most cities chose capitulations to Arab forces without prolonged siege. The Muslims were, in effect, called for and welcomed by the inhabitants of the area, the Monophysite Christian community, to liberate them from the Christian Chalcedonian Byzantine church. Muslims were initially perceived to be the liberators of the vast majority of the Christian population of Byzantium. One of the main reasons why their conquest was a success is thus due to the support and cooperation of the indigenous population.

Written less than two decades after the Islamic conquests, the epigraph taken from one of Isho'yahb Letters remains an essential reminder of how the first generation of Christians under Islamic rule was experiencing and interpreting its early days. Letter 14 contains passages that are particularly important, standing witness for some of the earliest interactions between Christians and Muslims and attesting to the Latter's general benevolence toward Christianity.

When the Arab Muslims captured Jerusalem in 634, under the leadership of Umar Ibn Al Khattab, there was a minor confrontation, and Sophronios, the patriarch of Jerusalem, surrendered the city after a long siege and unanswered help from his Emperor Heraclius. Choosing capitulation[5], Sophronius negotiated with the conquerors for the religious rights of Christians in exchange for a tribute.

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[5] People of the book living under Muslim rule (*Dar el Islam*) were not forcibly asked to convert to Islam. Islam's adoption of the *Dhimmi* creed was adopted by all later conquerors who expanded Muslim domains. In negotiation with Sophronius, Umar negotiated the rights of non-muslims as protected

In his sermon on Christmas day to his people, who were prevented by the siege to go to Bethlehem, the birthplace of Christ, for their customary mass, Sophronios lamented to them what he considered lies behind this bitter Christian defeat. Sophronios, through his sermon, would initiate the endless possibility of the discourse of "the Scourge of God" vis-à-vis the Muslims which would be duplicated, adapted, adjusted, and negotiated by a legion of Christian commentators on Islam after him.

He claimed their defeat to be God's punishing them for their sins, and for the corruption of the new heresy (Islam) that stained their pure orthodox faith; the "Saracens", he informs and implores the patriarch of Constantinople in his *Synodical Letter* for prayers, "[who] because of our sins, unexpectedly have revolted now against us, plundering everything with a crude and beastly disposition, irreverent and ungodly adventurers" (qtd.in Sahas 81). He was amongst the first to launch the false assumption that Islam was a heresy causing God's wrath. In his *Feat of Purification Oration*, he provided an image of the purity of his congregation contrasted against the heretic Muslims. In his *Christmas Oration*, he also called Arabs bloodthirsty Saracens (qtd.in Olster 107). Sophronios assigned to the "Saracens" or "the barbarians" as he referred to them, the ephemeral role in the divine history and had hoped that through chastisement, God will lead steadfast Christians once more to their guided paths. Similar views bemoaning the loss of Christian lands to the Muslim Arab conquerors shared the same kind of rhetoric.

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minorities who, upon paying a tax could still adhere to their faith. Actually the tax imposed upon them was less than that which they paid to the former Byzantine Empire (Qtd.in Vasiliev 62).

Writing shortly after the loss of Jerusalem from Alexandria, Maximus the confessor, expressed his poignant stance upon "the present evils now encompassing the civilized world" and laments how their civilization is degraded by "wild and untamed beasts who have merely the shape of a human form" (Lamoreaux 11). Numerous other commentators, writing from different orthodox and unorthodox positions, in the wake of the conquest, mainly eastern Christian voices, addressed the same concerns as Sophronios had done.

The Eastern Christian church of the 6th and 7th centuries defeat in face of the Arab Muslim conquerors had to be explained and reacting to this failure of the state to maintain its sovereignty, anti-Muslim Christian authors resorted to the books of authority for answers. As the setbacks of the Christian state followed and aggravated, proving to be not an accidental mishap but more of an insistent and pressing new reality that the Christians had to deal with and find new explanations to, the Church's rhetoric had to be significantly reconfigured and modulated.

Prior to this unsettling new reality, the church had used its military and hence territorial expansionism as well as its political successes to evidence the truth and supremacy of the Christian faith against other faiths. With the Muslim gradual conquests of the area, however, the aforementioned certainties in an invincible divine and imperial establishment were undergoing revision. The triumphalism that constituted the main rhetoric was giving way to disenchantment with the Roman Empire and its exceptionalism. This resulted in different sets of questions, which were unmet with satisfying answers, ending in a conspicuous emptiness and impotence in face of what was happening. Why should God allow Muslims to conquer and expand their domains? To this question are allied a number of others: Could it be possible that God is on their

side? Is God abandoning his Christian Empire? In light of such a turbulent and skeptical atmosphere that resulted from the bitter reality of defeat, new justifications had to be devised to make sense of the irreconcilable reality and the religious/state rhetoric.

At virtually no point has there been an attempt, at this early stage and even later, to understand Islam for what it is as a religion and on its own theological terms. Instead, the urge to juxtapose while still maintaining that the Christian religion was the starting and ultimate point of departure and truth has led to complex repertoires of incredulity, to misconceptions and misrepresentations. Christendom was set against Islamdom, never in the attempt of understanding the latter, but in finding in it supposedly sound justifications for the weakening of the former. There poured forth, as a result a number of discursive formations of all kinds: religious, literary, travel accounts, trade treatises, ballads, and songs that sought to denigrate the image of Muslims and Islam. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to indulge in meticulous outlines of these texts[6], but it is, I deem more fitting to introduce the tropes that emerged from the clusters of such discourses, and which were amplified and echoed across centuries up to the Renaissance and even beyond.

I.1. The Scriptural/Biblical Geneaology and the Mutating Etymology of Muslims

How the Muslim Arabs were identified and the names they were called across different epochs are matters worthy of scrutiny indeed. The etymology that they were

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[6] On medieval Christian polemical portrayls of Islam, Norman Daniel's *Islam and the West: The Making ofan Image* (1960) is an essential initiation; it was followed by Richard Southern's *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (1962).

assigned is specifically of interest insofar as a number of racial, ethnic, and religious markers are used as a designation and most often intermingle in a complex way. The term "Muslim" was actually used centuries after the appearance of Islam. As a matter of fact, the word ''Islam'' was first used in 1625 by Samuel Purchas (1577?–1626), an English cleric and travel writer, in his work *Pilgrimage or, Relations of the World and the Religions observed in all ages* (1613).

It would seem absurd if not anachronistic to use the word 'Muslim' to speak about the Muslims as perceived and represented by the Christians during the Middle Ages and early modern age when in those times other denominations were used. It is then deemed necessary for the sake of clarity and to cover another dimension that is believed to be integral in western cultural othering, to draw attention to these different appellations. Biblical genealogy was used, supposedly to discern races and posterities, but in the course of interpretation(s) carried heavy loads of racialization and imposed pejorative terminologies.

Reluctantly unwilling to accredit or authenticate Islam as a religion, "Christendom had been unwilling even to take cognizance of the fact that it was a religion" (Lewis 85). This denial manifests in discrediting religious etymologies, both by the Eastern Christian scholars and the European ones and instead resorting to ethnic markers: Saracens, Hagarians, Ishmaelites, Moors and Turks. The most prevalent name attributed to the early Arab conquerors was 'the Saracen'. The meaning of the word was widely contested in Christian-Islamic scholarship and is of particular importance due to the range of resonances and associations it referred to and acquired. In this respect, Berger states that, the name Saracene has been given different origins, ranging from the Arabic 'sharqiyin' ('Easterner') to the Greek 'skene' ('tent dweller') or the Greek 'sarakene',

meaning ‘empty Sarah’, referring to Abraham’s wife Sarah who gave birth to Isaac, the founding father of the Israelites, and who was therefore not related – ‘empty’ – to Ishmael, who was fathered by Abraham with his slave woman Hagar, and who is claimed by the Arabs as their founding father (20).

In the first three centuries AD, there were numerous references to the word Saracen, which derive, according to the Oxford Dictionary, from the Greek word “Sarakenoi”. The word was used to refer to an Arab tribe living in the Sinai Peninsula, which extended to cover all Arab tribes later. At the wake of Islamic expansions and the established Caliphates, the term was used by the Byzantines to refer to all Muslim subjects in the Caliph’s domains. During the crusades, the name was heavily grounded by Christian chroniclers and commentators and was nuanced with arrays of meanings. Such an account is of course more simplistic than it actually is.

Despite all these speculations to render a full account of the origin of the name, modern etymologists still debate its origins. Ekkehart Rotter in *Abendland und Sarazenen: Das okzidentale Araberbild und seine Entstehung im Fruhmittelalter* surveys early medievalists Latin uses of the term. Of particular merit, Irfan Shahid In “The Term *Saraceni* and the Image of the Arabs” traces the origins of the etymon. There were different gateways to the etymon Saracen, Irfan maintains, and various linguistic, ethnic, geographical and patristic understandings are mapped and at times overlap. Irfan Shahid refers to and builds upon previous attempts to pin down the meaning/and or the origin of the word and proposes numerous etymons that range from “*Sharqiyyin”* east designating thus a geographical scope, to “*Sariqin”* thief thieves marauders-plunderers, to *S'raq* (armaic) which means "emptiness" or "barrenness," and thus Saraceni are those "who live in barren land." . Probability though is inclined to an

Arabic derivation because the term *Saraceni* was likely used, Irfan argues, as a self-designation or as one assigned to them by another Arab group. In this context, etymologists are prone to hold that Saraceni is derivable from the name of an Arab tribe, the most prominent one in the 3rd century and whose name was later generalized, in Graeco-Roman usage, to designate a large portion of Arab inhabitants in North Arabia and Sinai. The fifth possibility for the term *Saraceni* is a place name such as Sarakene or Saraka (128-31). There is, in nearly all of these possibilities, a shift and tendency from the specific to the generic in the use of the term.

The popular use that the term *Saraceni* occupied, in a generic sense, referred to the Arab “Scenitae”, or tent dwellers of the tribes in the Arab region. This origin reflects both the Arabism and the nomadism of these Arab Scenitae tribes. The term must have been convenient enough for the Romans bordering their regions, denoting the Arabs inhabiting the Peninsular region, whose lifestyle, they could clearly discern was nomadic all while dwelling in tents. Prior to the Muslim Arab conquests The range of the meanings of the term “Saracen” linked to region, geography, lifestyle or origins as briefly surveyed, does not seem to carry much if any traces of nefarious alterity.

The semantic, historical, and later (ir)religious connotations ascribed to the term “Saracen”, it is believed, are of more relevance to the process of differentiation, especially when taken on by European Christian commentators in apologetics of their faith and polemics against Islam. It is then, that more authoritative scriptural rather than non-scriptural venues were adopted in expanding the etymon and filtering it through the looking glass of religion and differences in genealogies. Hierarchy of posterities and geographical delimiting were the result of this shift of interest. The same logic of

scriptural mappings of differences shall be tackled in the second chapter, as it relates to coloured Africans.

The Arabs were associated with the genealogy in Judaeo-Christian history. The Arabs were believed to be the offspring of Abraham through his wife Hagar from the book of Genesis in the Old Testament. It is said that they were called Saracens because Sarah sent Hagar away empty-handed, but this remains debatable still and there seems to be no agreement as to this interpretation of the term "Saracen". The origin of the name Saracen could either be misleadingly linked to Sarah, first wife of Abraham, as some were more prone to think that the Arabs falsely identify themselves as being Sarah's descendants, and not Hagar's, to assume a superior status to that of Sarah's offspring.

The appellative and denominative etymons "Ishmaelites" in so far as they descend from Ishmael, Hagar's son, and Hagarians, related to Hagar were derived from the story of Abraham and his posterity in the book of Genesis. According to Genesis, chapter 16, Sarai (later God asks Abraham to call her Sarah), had borne him no children. She asked Abraham, to take her Egyptian slave named Hagar as a wife so that she can build a family through her. Abraham agreed and Hagar became his wife. Hagar would conceive after and she began to despise her mistress, Sarai. The latter blamed Abraham for the wrong she is suffering, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the LORD judge between you and me". Abraham told her that her slave is in her hands and that she may do with her what she thinks best. Sarai from then on, mistreated Hagar to the point where Hagar fled from her to the desert. It is then, that the Angel of God

ordered Hagar to go back to her mistress and to be submissive to her, promising her that her descendants will be too numerous to count,

> 11The angel of the LORD also said to her: "You are now pregnant and you will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the LORD has heard of your misery. 12He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers. (*New International Version*, Gen16:11-12)

Hagar gave birth to a son, and Abram gave him the name of Ishmael which means "God has hearkened".

With the birth of Isaac from his wife Sarah, as God promised Abraham at the age of one hundred, Hagar and Ishmael's lives changed. When Isaac grew and was weaned, Abraham ordered a great feast to be held, during which Sarah saw Ishamel mocking his brother, and asked Abraham to get rid of both him and his mother "for that woman's son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac"(21.10). Abraham was distressed greatly because it concerned his son, but God ordered him to listen to Sarah because it is through Isaac that his offspring will be reckoned. The next morning Hagar and Ishmael were banished and she wandered in the Desert of Beersheba. Suffering from lack of food and water, Ishmael almost died there but was dramatically rescued by God. He went on to become the ancestor of the biblical Ishmaelites. God was with the boy as he grew up in the desert of Paran and became an archer.

Ishmael is regarded as the ancestor of Arabs, by both Jewish and Islamic traditions. The Christian, and also Jewish, view of the inferiority of the Arabs comes from their belief that it is not through Ishmael but through Isaac that God's covenant to Abraham

shall be extended, promising him blessings; "And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year" (*Genesis* 17:20-22). Ishmaelites or Hagarenes, according to later Christian commentators and authors, represented the less-favoured posterity of Abraham as they were begotten by the Egyptian slave Hagar. The origins of Arabs, it was quite established later, go back to Ishamel, Hagar's son, the wild man, as described in the book of Genesis, the "donkey of a man" whose hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him.

Later in the 15th century, with the ascendency of the Ottoman Empire in Constantinople, these appellations, the most prevalent of which is 'Saracen', were being replaced by the term "Turk" which carried the heavy load of associations ascribed to all previous etymons, and was further tinged with new pejorative meanings. Jonathan Burton persuasively asserts that as the place of the Turk in Europe was not exclusively understood in military and expansionist terms, and that trade relations were signaling a paradigm-shift of contact, the long-held image of the warlike 'Saracen' was attenuating and acquiring new associations; the Turk was conceived of as both a figure of war and commerce by the English, as well as other European nations (*Traffic and Turning* 34).

I.2. Islam as a Scourge of God and the Furnace of Trial

As the dissolution of Byzantium raged, there emerged a radical shift in the Church's philosophy of history and the venues to fathom the failures of the Christian Empire, of God's empire. Arguments centered on God's displeasure with the Byzantines resulted

in a new introspective rhetoric that would prevail in theological debates and sermons up to the 15th century.

A shift from the imperial religious type of rhetoric to an internal Christian one served to launch the false assumption that the defeat suffered by the Christians at the hands of the Muslims is but God's punishment for their internal sins. Such centrifugal kind of rhetoric not only served to justify God's wrath on the Christians by swallowing Islamic victory but rendered a rather milder justification to the Christians' powerlessness in face of its invasions, deeming this temporary fall from grace a test to their resilience and a punishment for their sins.

To many early Christian commentators in Byzantium, Islam was hardly ever conceived of as a religious menace, because the easily-fetched explanation was taken from sources with which common Christians were more or less familiar. The Bible is replete with instances of God's wrath and subsequent punishments of the Christians, which could only be reversed through cleansing and repentance. That many Christians believed would, in turn, mean the annihilation of the threat: in this case of the Saracens. In this sense, the role of the Arab Muslim invaders, according to a number of church leaders, was believed to be temporary and quite manacled within the Christian historical divine schema.

Perceiving Islam as God's Scourge is one of the most tenacious and stubborn associations to the Christians' weakening. It is important to note that the emergence of new tropes did not fully invalidate earlier ones, but that each trope was necessitated by new historical changes, becoming part of an archive, which would be summoned at later moments accordingly with appropriate contingencies. That while the introspective turn

has found more validity and prominence after the doctrine of triumphalism is by no means replacing the latter but merely displacing it as a yet-to-be resorted to explanation. Indeed, when the Muslims initially failed, to cite an example at invading Byzantine Constantinople, the trope of triumphalism would still be effectually summoned to heartily hail the setback of the Muslims. Even the explanation that Christian sin is to be held accountable for the failure was short-lived to give way to other historically contingent theological debates to the presence of Islam. It is then that the rhetoric changed to accusations of heresy.

To the majority of Christians during the 8th century, Islamic victories were self-referentially explained, implying that their successes are but a tribulation designed and indeed willed over God's faithful Christians. (Tolan, *Saracens* 41-42). In this light, the territorial and military defeats were not conceived of as state failures but were linked to the waning of Christian faith which was penalized by granting the Muslims the upper hand in their conquests.

This dependency in terms of explanation implies that they denied any Muslim victory for reasons non-related to *them*. Their victories were never interpreted as God's approval of Islam. Mauritz Berger expresses it best as he declares that "The Other was used not in its own right, but as a function in the existence and self-image of the European … [and that] Whatever reaction medieval European Christians had to Islam, they had no urge or curiosity whatsoever to understand this new religion" (65). Indeed, this kind of negligence would protract for centuries to come, and in each epoch would magnet-like attach stereotypes and misconceptions that remained, well predominantly, non-revised and non-corrected.

I.3. Islam as Heresy

When Islamic victories and more importantly their expansionism proved difficult to subvert, giving rise to an unmatched prosperous civilization that swept continents, there was once again a shift in terms of explanations by considering that Islam is a heresy and a corruption of orthodox Christianity. Perceiving Islam as a heresy[7], as a mere forged and falsified religion patched together from the debris of earlier Christian and Jewish elements in a heretic way, contributed to generating a corpus of theological explanations that were loaded with vilification and demonization of the new adversary. It is imperative to highlight that the polemists who took the cudgel against Islam did so, as sufficient scholarship in the field has shown already, by engaging in anything surrounding Islam except its theological dogma per se.

At earlier stages, the Arabs' threat was less perceived in religious terms than it was in military and expansionist terms. But when Islam's rise to prominence through conversion challenged the Christian church over claims of veracity by the 8th century, the Muslims were perceived rather differently as they assumed a competitive position to religious validity. When Muslim Arabs conquered Syria, Jerusalem, Egypt among many other lands, the Muslims, demographically speaking, constituted a minority to the inhabitants of the other different faiths. The new Muslim rulers adopted the law of *Dhimmi* towards inhabitants professing different faiths; they could choose to stick to

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[7] There exist a large number of Christian writers who associated Arabs with Christological heresies. Eusebius, in his *Historia ecclesiastica,* portrays Arabia as a hotbed of such heresies. John of Skythopolis, writing in theearly sixth century, says that Arabia contained many heretics; see John Lamoreaux, "Early Eastern Christian Responses to Islam," in John Tolan, ed., *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays* (New York: Garland, 1996), 3–31 (qtd.in Tolan, *Saracens* 287)

their faiths under Muslim rule in exchange for a poll tax or *Jizya,* a yearly taxation levied in the form of a financial charge. While there were many Christians who accepted their new roles and status in Muslim territories as *Dhimmis* or protected minorities, numbers of converts to the Muslim faith, however, grew steadily and alarmingly. It is during this time that the Christians were in need to marshal theological disputes and debates to debunk the falsity of this well-established religion and to discourage conversion or apostasy. Jerry Brotton comments that these writers sought to offer a persuasive account of the superiority and veracity of Christianity, resulting in a stream of apologetics that engaged in anything but Islam as an independent faith (*The Sultan and the Queen* 83). The result was an arsenal of caricatures and denigratory myths that laid the foundations for many of today's stereotypes.

Be it the judgment and will of God, or a penalty for the sins of the people, or God's wrath against his emperors, or that the schism was spurring from within the church and the chastisement is God's providence bestowed upon those he loves to discipline them, Islam's mutating (mis)understandings and precepts underwent a process of accretion, as each invalid trope prompted an impetus for an alternative, without completely disavowing the older. For the Christian commentators of the 8th century, Islam's rise to grandeur and their astounding victories had to be explained as playing a role in Christian history. The Muslim astonishing civilizations which took hold of the former Roman Christian Empire, stretching from Syria to Spain, dazzled many Christians who could not bring themselves to theologically satisfying interpretations. For many Christians indeed, the answers were to be found in authoritative books. The book of revelation spoke about the calamity that will befall Christians and the tribulation they

will suffer at the hands of infidels that many Christians reinterpreted in understanding Islam (Tolan, *Saracens* xv).

Again, from the 7th well up to the 16th century, Islam was discredited on its own terms and for its own religious decrees. In fact, as many historians convened upon, Islam and Muslims as words were not utilized until the 16th century, with very few exceptions. Instead, Christian apologists (defenders of Christianity) and polemicists (attackers Islam) used to refer to Muslims using ethnic categories such as Arabs, Turks, Saracens, and Moors, or biblical appellations such as Ishmaelites and Hagarenes.

Tolan persuasively argues that Christian Medieval perceptions of Islam grappled with this new faith in ways that were familiar to them in their already-forged vision of the world. As such, their approach to Islam had always been filtered through earlier understandings of religious others and that they never saw Islam for what it was and only rarely saw Muslims for who they were. Tolan calls this method an “intellectual filtering” to which almost all medieval authors writing about Islam adhered (4).

Arguing in a similar fashion, Frederick Quinn in The *Sum of All Heresies* maintains that, conceptually, the negative image of Islam dates way back in Europe’s history, even centuries prior to the birth of Prophet Muhammed. Tracing the historical roots to the European contradistinction against others, fearful and threatening strangers lodging European borders, Quinn maintains that the imagery of “the eastern enemy at the gates” was clearly existent in Greek and Roman times and was very much viable during the Middle Ages;

> The Greeks had created a self-image in relation to the Asian peoples on their frontiers, such as the invading Persians. It was a contrast between ‘‘civilized’’

> and ‘‘barbarian,’’ the liberty-loving Greeks confronting warlike Asian despots. Roman writers also assembled an arsenal of vividly negative images about ‘‘the robbers of Arabia’’ and ‘‘the wolves of Arabia’’ long before the Prophet’s birth. (25)

Whenever the Christians were confronted with dogmas, creeds, or practices that they rejected, they accommodated them by connecting them to earlier forms of discredited errors. The same kind of rationale was utilized when dealing with Islam. This explains the rehearsal of such charges as heresy and falsification, charges targeted earlier at pagans, Jews and infidels. Islam as a debauched heresy and a deviation of the true religion constitute two enduring and pernicious tropes which permeate into a large number of medieval writings about Islam.

In the intervening centuries from the 8th to the 11th, the belligerency adopted by Christians in approaching Muslims and their religion resulted in scant if none at all religious or intellectual interest (Berger 64). Most of the imagery generated during these times, maintains Daniel Norman in his book *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, is appalling and amounts to bellicose imagery: from “crude insults to the Prophet, gross caricatures of Muslim ritual, deliberate deformation of passages of The Qur'an, degrading portrayals of Muslims as libidinous, gluttonous, semihuman barbarians” (qtd.in Tolan XVI). The strong belief in a Christian history that was divine and clearly in favour of their faith has led them to fetch, in their authoritative books, for the role that they were supposed to entertain in the chain of history.

Since they clearly fall out of Christianity and are not identified with the Jews, then they could either be heretics or pagans, or the followers of the antichrist. They

entertained very scant knowledge indeed about the autonomy and possibility of the new faith, and were unwilling to negotiate boundaries. Their firm Christian view of history allowed already established roles for religious others, and they were not willing to abandon their grounding sense of Christian history.

By establishing this new religion as an error, any attempt of trying to understand it based on its authoritative book and decrees would be considered as a sin of being tempted to and seduced by this heresy. As such, refutation and denigration were the governing venues of reception, and ordering and categorizing would follow already set roles, inspired from antecedent books and writings. Christians, ascertains Tolan, harnessed the same reflex "to understand the world around them by delving into the works of respected *auctores:* a word that, tellingly, means both "authors" and "authorities" (19). Authoritative scriptures and revered writings accordingly constituted the surest refuge of Christian religious scholars.

It would indeed be erroneous to assert that all Christian parties shared the same kind of rhetoric and perceived the Muslims in a common pan-Christian manner. Tolan among other early medieval scholars draws attention to the disparities residing among scholars writing in the 7th and 8th centuries, and highlights differences among various Christian adherents, which ranged from orthodox ones safe within the walls of Constantinople, to scholars integrated in Muslim ex-Byzantium and assuming the status of a *Dhimmi,* to Monophysites who were freed from persecution of Byzantium (*Saracens* 46). These differences, however, do not change their initial almost unanimous perception of Islam as a scourge which they wished would go away. When the first encounter with Islam led to different realities, reactions and perceptions were perspectival.

As Islam was deep-rooted and no signs of its recession were imminent, but conversely that there were huge numbers of converts willing to join the new faith, Islam started to be gradually filtered through alarmingly religious terms and not only understood based on territorial conquests. This urged for new explanations to be created, or more accurately at such an advanced stage, for more arguments to prove this religion false and blasphemous and hence to protect the Christians from going astray of the true faith. Proving this religion as an error would be rooting it in the workings of Satan as opposed to those of God. In fact, the charge of heresy for Christians has a protracted history, and figures of precedent heretics were oftentimes summoned and likened to Islamic figures.

Maybe the most famous of these charges, and very likely the earliest apologetic responses to Islam, can be found in the works of John Damascene or John of Damascus (675 - c. 749). Like his father, he occupied a position in court during the Muslim Umayad Caliph. "The Heresy of the Ishmaelites" in his *The Fount of Knowledge* encapsulates a dire response to Muslims and their religion. Through it, Islam is challenged and some of its creeds are attacked. John's apologetic is actually very knowledgeable of Islam's enduring disputes with Christianity which is surely due to John's life and service in the Caliph's court of Damascus.

John's incredulity while arguing Islam and illustrating from a wide range of Islamic writings, the Quran prime of which, amounts to the first discussion of Islamic theology. It also demonstrates its author's acquaintance with the Quran as he questions many core beliefs of Islam. He condemns the prophet Muhammed for being a false prophet and conceives of his heresy as a result of collaborating with an Arian monk. Accordingly, he explicitly declares that Islam is a devised and not a revealed religion. Furthermore, he

fits the Ishmaelites in the role of precursors to the Antichrist, calling them this specific appellation instead of Muslims, to allude to their altered genealogy from the book of Genesis. He also calls them idolaters, who venerate the morning star and Aphrodite.

The monk Bahira, according to his account, instructed Muhammed of Christianity and helped him to forge the heresy of Islam out of the Old and the New Testaments. Of interest in John's narrative is the fact that he did not compartmentalize Islam as a religion on its own but instead thrust it in a long line of Christian heresies. His apologetic thus is that the Muslims misunderstood the Christian authoritarian scriptures and that they ended up adhering to a deviant form of Christianity. Many of John's arguments against Islam have been echoed later by apologists, especially his argument concerning the divine nature of Christ and the Kaaba, illustrated in the next two passages respectively,

> So, if we wrongly declare Christ to be the Son of God, it is they who taught this and handed it down to us…As long as you say that Christ is the Word of God and Spirit, why do you accuse us of being Hetaeriasts?...If, however, He is outside of God, then, according to you, God is without word and without spirit. (John 155)

His attack on Muslims related to El Kaaba accounts them responsible for idolatry, the Muslims who, according to him, were accusing the Christians for venerating the Cross,

> How is it that you rub yourselves against a stone in your Ka'ba and kiss and embrace it?"… yet you blame us for venerating the cross of Christ by which the power of the demons and the deceit of the Devil was destroyed…" This stone…is a head of that Aphrodite whom they used to worship and whom they called Khabar. (John 156-57)

Initiator of the apologetic genre against Islam, he was followed by a number of other apologetics who expanded arguments and created others. His views were the most influential on later writers like *Risalat al-Kindi,* Theophanes, or the *Historia de Mahometh pseudopropheta*.

I.4. Islam as the Antichrist and the Apocalyptic Trial

It is now fitting to introduce the reader to one of the most stubborn and enduring depictions of Islam and of its Prophet as the apocalyptic figure of the Antichrist. Another cohort of Christian writers sought to squeeze in the new threat of Islam in the futuristic Christian scheme of the apocalypse, or the end of times. When the incessant successes of Muslims and more importantly the tides of converts that joined the new faith seemed too pervasive and long-lasting to fit in any transient explanations in Christian historiography, many found in the grim visions of the apocalypse legitimate explanations to these events.

These Christian authors envisioned the specter of Islam as either precursor to or embodying the antichrist that was going to herald the last blow to Christendom as predicted by the Bible. The Muslim invaders were more than a temporary chastisement tool and not merely adherents to a heresy but were believed to be part of the last day's apocalyptic calamity that befalls mankind, adapting the hellish reality outlived by many to concepts in Christian theology.

To prevent the multitudes of Christian converts to Islam, the rhetoric had to be apologetic and polemist at the same time. Otherwise said, Christians needed to be reassured of the superiority of their faith to Islam, and to portray the latter as occupying yet another designed role in Christian theology, which is that of the Antichrist or of its

precursor. In fact, this motif was used as a defensive mechanism to the failures of Christianity to justify Muslim incursions first in Eastern Byzantium which recur in the following centuries with the Muslim conquests of the Iberian Peninsula of Spain, of Sicily, during the Crusades, and throughout the deadly conquest of Constantinople by the Seljuq Turks or the Ottomans.

According to the Christians, Tolan maintains, the term of the Antichrist could carry two meanings: the first is that it could actually refer to *the antichrist,* the apocalyptic heretic entity that would reveal itself at the end of times and tempt the steadfast Christians dragging them to fallibility and fall from grace. Such an entity, according to them, embodies both heretical and Jewish inclinations. Heretical inclinations, further explains Tolan, in that it claims to be the Christ and performs all sorts of miracles to err the Christians; Jewish characteristics in that the antichrist denies the Christian crux belief that the Christ is God through re-establishing Jewish practices and rebuilding the temple. Second, the antichrist could as well be applicable to all enemies of the Church, especially heretics (9). The Muslims, who refuted the trinity and acknowledged Jesus a human prophet created by the one and only God, would later perfectly fit this template of the heresy of the antichrist.

In fact, the prophet Muhammad was disparaged and denounced by many Christians as a false prophet and a heretic, and that the conquests that resulted from his forged religion were but calamities ushering the world's final days. Defamation of the prophet Muhammed had to be part of their rhetoric to fit him yet once more into an already entrenched archetype familiar to them in their Christian historiography. The framework of the apocalyptic expectations is probably the most recurrent and the most pervasive of

all. It defies any chronological ordering and at times converges and overlaps with other sets of responses.

The apocalypses that ushered to the end of time that the Book of Revelation pointed to were very graphic and rich with beasts and all sorts of fallen creatures that were all harnessed against Islam. The prophet Daniel had predicted such times and many apocalypses quoted passages of his revelation to unprecedented ratios. “The abomination that desolates” (9:27), the 9th 10th and 11th chapter of Daniel, were revived as bespeaking the changes that plagued Christian lands. The holy space will suffer profanity and the steadfast Christians will be killed by the sword, suffer or fall into captivity (11:33). Parrallels were easily drawn to the Muslim conquests and to their religion.

Matthew later expanded this hellish vision in the New Testament in chapter 24. The desolation according to Matthew will enter the holy place and there will follow great suffering. Further uncertainties will prevail because of the emergence of many false prophets and false Messiahs who would work magic and produce miracles to lure the faithful astray. In addition to false prophets, there shall later appear the Antichrist epitomizing all earlier heresies. It was held by many that Muhammad, the letters of whose name, by numerological analysis, added up to 666, the sign of the Antichrist, was targeted with that name (Quinn 26-7).

The genre of apocalyptic writings was utilized by many early Christians in the wake of the conquests. A harbinger of end times, these apocalypses made analogies between the status quo and details as tackled in the book of revelation and the period of conquests suffered by the Christians at the hands of Muslims. The immediate nature of

apocalyptic writings faded slightly from explanatory possibilities but never completely vanished. The earliest, most famous, and enduring of apocalypses is the anonymous the *Apocalypse of Pseudo- Methodius,* a document which epitomizes best the early attitudes of Syriac Christians face to the conquests.

This document represents an ardent attempt to grapple with the loss of Christian domains to the Arabs, and in its dialogic arguments, a number of negative depictions are used. The Apocalypse, like various Christian documents of the age, stresses the role of God in unleashing these conquests. However, the author ascertains that it is not because God prefers the Muslims that they are rewarded with successes, but instead that this alleged control is to blame for the Christians' depravity, debauchery, and corruption. Again, a self-centered and centrifugal sort of rhetoric is used to account for the other's grip of Christian lands. The author's tone however does not remain statically grim and denunciating, but smoothly switches to a stance of spiritual victory, by claiming that the Byzantine empire is invincible and predicting the imminent downfall of the "Sons of Ishmael", despite frank clues to the opposite. In procession with the chronology of the apocalypse, the author predicts that the evil of the "sons of Ishmael" would be annihilated by the later coming of Gog and Magog and other calamities. The following is one of the most quoted and echoed passages in *the Apocalypse,*

> For these barbarian tyrants are not men. Rather, they are Sons of Devastation set on devastation. They are annihilators and will be sent for annihilation. They are destruction and will come out for the destruction of everything. They are defiled and love defilement. And when they come out of the desert, they will split open pregnant women. They will snatch babies from their mothers' laps and dash them upon the rocks like defiled animals. . . . They are rebels, murderers, blood

shedders, and annihilators. They are a testing furnace for all Christians. (Qtd.in Tolan, *Saracens* 78)

Seen through the prism of apocalyptic visions, *Apocalypse of Pseudo- Methodius* is an attempt to render diabolic what was sacred to Muslims. After the consolidation of Islamic power during the Umayyad Caliphate, apocalyptic hopes were eclipsed and appeared only fleetingly till the crusades.

II. The Crusades and their Rhetoric (1100–1140)

By the end of the Eleventh century, approximately two-thirds of the ancient Christian world was occupied by Muslim armies: Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia, and Spain was invaded via the straits of Gibraltar by the 8th century, and by the 1400s, the Balkans and south-central Europe were subject to Muslim Invasions. The Eastern Byzantine empire continued to lose much of its territories to the Muslims until it was subdued completely by the 15th century with the conquest of the Ottomans.

Europe on the other hand experienced rather stable times as "the periods of terrifying and devastating raids by the Vikings in the west, Arabs in the south and Huns in the east were past; the Magyars who had ravaged the interior of Europe had settled in present-day Hungary and converted to Christianity" (Berger 69). The problems of internal strife subsided and a European sense of religiosity united Christian nations. Economically speaking, economic historians argue that Europe's experienced a trade revival due to Islamic expansions and the flourishing of Mediterranean trade. Europe expanded its exports to new markets and revenues were substantial enough to reverse the fortunes of a once belated Europe. This coincided as many argued with a rather waning and fragmentation of the Islamic empire, creating thus more opportunities for Europeans to

long-distance trade. This type of trade was slowly taken on by Italian merchants who dominated the Mediterranean. Furthermore, this gradual economic prosperity coincided with a feverish religious zeal that was, to a great extent, shared by many a European Christian nation.

The turn of the millennium was coupled with apocalyptic fears, and many predicted the end of times, but those were soon to vanish. Although many historians argued that the commercial stability along with religious zeal and the consolidation of papal authority in Europe triggered the first crusade, the true reasons behind these holy wars still remain debatable. Mauritz Berger shrewdly remarks that "The mere argument of recapturing the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem does not suffice to explain this sudden passion because these lands had already been under Islamic rule for over four centuries without any European clamour for reconquest" (73). Indeed, the Europeans' capacity for launching pan-Christian crusading campaigns lies much in other forms of change than in simply religious claims of holy lands' recovery. Berger further outlines three main instigating reasons: the Church wanted to fasten its grip of papal authority and power, calling knights as well as commoners for a sacred war; the second factor concerns the fear of one's soul and salvation, which had its roots in the pervasive spiritual consciousness; and the third to satisfy early medieval and violent martial energies that aspired to new challenges and were defined by "direction (East), purpose (holy war) and blessing (the promise of the absolution of all sins) (73).

A holy war consolidated and blessed by papal authority, and backed by commoners and kings alike who were eager to partake in its glories needed rhetoric of justification. What could justify a holy war against the infidels? There poured forth a wide range of chronicles that sought to imagine and portray the Muslims as idolaters, and whose

idolatry must be eradicated. Of course, by this time in the Eastern Byzantine Christian writings, other forms of polemics and apologetics were to the front. From extant Europe however, perceptions were different and grosser in degree and nature. Like their predecessors of the 7th and 8th centuries, the Christian chroniclers of the early crusades needed to shove the Muslims into the divine plan. Muslims had to be envisioned as pagans and idolaters and their religion as paganism, imagining them in the most vivid and horrific terms. Pope Innocent III identified Islam with the beast of the Apocalypse and hoped that new Crusades could bring about its demise.

The charge of idolatry played a major role especially in documents of the first crusade. Tolan asserts that "It is only in the twelfth century that various European authors provide the Saracens with a panoply of idols, in stone and precious metals, inhabited by demons who endow them with magical powers" (*Saracens*106). This makes perfect sense when considering that the church, supposedly pacifist in its religious teachings, had to adjust its understanding of war and violence. These were not, after all, sporadic unorganized raids, but a holy war launched on a large Western European scale. Rendering the Muslims pagans and idol worshipers were the most suitable venues to vindicate the violence that was to ensue.

It is during this time that the Muslims' appellation repertory was the largest; Muslims were called Ishamelites and Hgarenes, alluding to their inferior offspring and allegedly barbaric ways; they were equally referred to as "Mahummicolae", or "Mahometeans," meaning worshippers of Mohamed, deliberately fitting them in the role of paganism. Some Christian writers, following the steps of many before them in this fashion, needed to explain the crusades as playing a role in Christian history and eschatology and hailed these holy wars, arguing that they constitute the fight against

heathens and that the Bible promises the restoration of Christian victory over all other faiths. In terms of representing the Muslims, thus, it could be said that there was a shift of perception from those early eastern Christians, but the truth is, while viewed as such, we are speaking of a different lot of Christians, of Western Europeans who had little first-hand contact with real Muslims and no interest in their religion. It would, then be wiser to clarify that we are speaking of a different set of Christians whose motives behind viewing Islam as such are so unlike their predecessors', although as we will see, some earlier tropes are reiterated.

While the early eastern Christians found themselves helplessly thrust in the role of *Dhimmis* and whose images of Muslims to some extent fluctuated between dismissal and acceptance, the Western European Christians were driven by completely different motives. Some might argue that the crusades were meant to serve as counter-attacks to the Muslim conquests; the truth is that after more than four centuries of the initial conquests, this argument is barely credible. As a matter of fact, many agreed later that these wars were driven by utter ideological and political agendas.

Pope Urban II who called for the first crusade was faced with the truth that the Latin Roman church had its grip only over dispersed parts in Italy and that papal authorship fell short over other European churches. Answering a plea for help from the part of an Eastern Christian delegation, Urban II at the Council of Clermont, 1095 enjoined the first crusade arguing that the holy land had to be reclaimed from the infidels. With zealous eloquence, Urban II beseeched Christians to propagandize his call "to destroy that vile race" under Christ's command. He further asserts that "all who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am

invested" (Bongars 513-17). Stirring paramount incentive to uphold a series of holy wars against the Muslims, Urban II initiated the rhetoric of first indulgences, or the granting of "full remission of sins", as inducements to participation. Ironically, it is the abuse of this rhetoric of indulgences by popes during the 12th and 13th centuries that will culminate in corruption and strike Christendom from within by reformers. The next point will elaborate on the reverberations of this schism even further.

Frederick Quinn assiduously debunks the real ideological purposes of the crusades as he argues that,

> Behind the carefully crafted negative portrayals of Islam there was generally also a local leader's desire to maintain a unified political and/or religious front. Pope Urban II in 1095 launched the Crusades against Muslims, the infidel occupiers of the Holy Lands, but his unstated purpose was to consolidate political support for the papacy at a time of emergent European nationalism when various monarchs wanted to claim territory of their own free from papal interference. (23)

The crusades had the most potent effect on literature as well as on popular sentiment in general. It is obvious that they affected European ideas and ideals and also various European literatures much more deeply and lastingly. Quinn argues that the first wave of the Crusades was a fertile period in the fashioning of imagery in Europe, especially in France and Britain, where mythic stories and fanciful tales about chivalric pursuits against idolaters and Muslims were consumed. The vivid images and tales resultant of this period spanning roughly 1100-1140 would provide many later writers with rich material for their imageries (26).

The most famous of this kind of popular imagination found sufficient shape in the Middle High German epic poems, called the *Chansons de geste*. These epic kinds of poems were particularly famous in Middle High German literature as well as in French literature. Relating the events of violent crusades against the Muslims, this type utilized the Eastern world as a setting for chivalric romances and adventures, bringing into antagonism the Muslim-Christian encounter. Most of the crude and belligerent images of Muslims could be traced to this specific type, most famous of which are the Rolandslied (ca. 1170), which relates the events of the violent Christian crusade under Charlemagne against the Muslims of Spain, as well as the epic works Graf Rudolf (ca. 1185), König Rother (ca. 1160), and Herzog Ernst (ca. 1160).

III. The Ottoman Conquest of Constantinople and the Reformation in Europe

The Eastern Christian empire of Byzantium, or the remnants of which, after the Muslims decreased its territories from the middle east, finally came to its demise with the fall of Constantinople on May 29th, 1453 at the hands of Mehmed II. This decisive historical moment constitutes a watershed in the history of the early modern age. In fact, many historians argue that the Byzantine Empire from the eleventh till the fifteenth centuries was steadily declining, ending finally when the Muslim Seljuks tore its long-standing Armor apart. Constantinople that resisted repeated Muslim attacks was weakened by the Ottomans who had believed and prayed to have it delivered to Islam.

By the 14th century, the Ottoman tribes that had established themselves in the Balkans were united under their patriarch and progenitor Osman and seized inchmeal more territory penetrating deep into Europe, deeper than any previous Muslim ruler. The hope of a shrieking Muslim hold was constantly disappointed for western

Christians, what was gained in Spain after the Reconquista was soon lost to the Muslim Ottomans in Eastern Europe in an ebb and flow movement.

Yet again, Christians and Eastern Europe specifically would suffer at the hands of a barely predicted and underrated Muslim force. The Ottoman incursions took over most of the ex-Byzantine territory, and pushed westward to Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, and further to Vienna's borders. The Siege of Vienna 1529 marked the apogee of Ottoman incursions into central Europe, generating a widespread Ottoman unpopularity, and was it not finally repulsed, Europe would have been eclipsed under Muslim Ottoman powers. While undoubtedly, the Ottomans' military victories in Europe were territorially speaking immeasurable, Revisionist historians such as Palmira Brummet and Halil Inalick drew attention to the Ottomans' seizure and hegemony over the most important trade routes highlighting their deep-seated position in economical machinations. Thus, emphasizes Janothan Burton in *Traffic and Turning*, that alongside their appellation of 'the present terror of the world', the Turks were also seen as a respected and important trading power (37), in possession of the most strategic trade routes.

What characterized the 15th century in Europe was not simply that its map was redefined and its borders contested by external threats. A much more severe threat was emanating from within Christianity, a reformation unprecedented and unmatched and whose ramifications changed Christianity and Europe irretrievably. The first half of the sixteenth century was an age of instability both for Germany and for Europe.

Catholic Papal authority which has consolidated its grip from the crusades on wreaked havoc with its twisted means of gaining power and authority. The Catholic

Church of Rome had created a trade in salvation with the pope Julius II issuing indulgences or papal authorizations that granted its buyers atonement and remission of sins, for rebuilding the falling-apart Basilica of St Peters, consolidating thus papal authority. The task of restoring and renovating St Peters was so costly that indulgences were sold in hectic numbers. Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk and professor of theology was outraged by the Church's means, and whose protest culminated in his "95theses", an utter insurrection and rejection of all that the Catholic Church stood for. The domination of the Catholic Church and of Papacy was challenged, thus, by protestant Christians and later by powerful kings, the results of which created severe national and religious divisions. This event of the reformation was synchronized with Muslim geographical presence in Europe under Ottoman rule, a rule which has grown by the 15th century so threatening and so immense to fight back, and against whose, holy wars were simply unamenable.

The feverish Christian zeal that was prevalent during the 11th 12th and 13th centuries was giving way to more nation-centred religious fragments. Mauritz Berger asserts that "religion became 'nationalized' as shown in the maxim *cuius region eius religio* (to each region its own religion)" (109). This emergence of nationalism as opposed to the more feudal, fluid, and permeable boundaries of previous centuries along with the appearance of new protestant faiths8 ushered towards a new geo-political religious mapping of Europe. With individual nations and states, and the menace of the

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[8] There emerged during this time various nominations to protestant religions, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Hussite, and Presbyterian among others were professed by different European nations, sometimes even coexisting and/or colliding in one nation.

reformation threatening to fragment the Christian unity even further, the sort of political unity necessary for vast crusading campaigns was simply inconceivable. The crusades belonged to feudal Europe; the political unity needed to launch large expeditions to fight back the enemy of the Christian faith was not there, lost amongst divided nations and religions. It becomes difficult from this point on to truly speak of any unified pan-Christian unity. While, certainly, the popular consciousness which emerged out of the crusades was shared and accepted by many a European Christian nation, during the early modern age, however, this inherited shared consciousness is to permeate but alongside new national, religious, and economic realities.

When the threat of Islam resurfaced to Christendom this time under the "Grand Turk, The Horror of the World", it faced a bitterly divided and fractured Christianity, torn apart between facing the Christian internal heretics or, once more the external ones. Responses to this threat, argues Tolan, showed little innovation, and mainly rehearsed tropes and solutions offered by theologians, polemists, and apologetics of the previous centuries. Similar patterns were invoked, popes and religious propagandists urging rulers and princes to wage wars against the Turks, and polemicists compiling anti-Muslim arguments from their authoritative antecedents (xviii). Furthermore, with the printing press being firmly established in the Roman holy empire since 1440, the circulation of anti-Turkish discourses had never proved to be easier. In a somewhat lighter vein, Berger maintains that although the idea of a religious crusade was appealing, it was however outweighed by "petty and national concerns" (110) and that the Islamic-Christian conflict was mainly rendered imaginary.

The blow that the fall of Constantinople has caused Western Europe is not to be underrated. Despite inherently different theological and doctrinal tenets, the Latin

Catholics experienced a major calamity with the capture of Eastern Byzantium, and the threat of Islam now reincarnated in the form of the Turks was feared by princes and commoners alike. Reformers and Orthodox Christians utilized the notion of the Turk to attack each other. The Catholics and protestants rallied their attacks against each other, the former accusing the latter of dissent and heresy and the latter accusing the former of corruption and heresy as well.

The Turks' incursions deep into Europe were demanding an immediacy of response and fight that was simply not possible due to internal problems and to the failure, contrary to previous centuries, of any holy war materialization. The Ottomans' steady incursions in Europe with the annexation of Belgrade in 1521, and Rhodes in 1522 were to prove most alarming with the Siege of Vienna of 1529. The Ottomans from thence were deeply seated in the religious and political disputes of the age, and the metaphor of the Turk was inexorably connected with the reformation and counter-reformation in 16th century Europe.

The factions that characterize the early modern age on all levels could not have been better depicted as by the humanist thinker Erasmus who draws the most accurate image of the age, with all its chaos and "things falling apart" to summon Yeats, which I will quote at length to describe the prevailing atmosphere under the renewed Ottoman threat whilst linking it to Christian corruptness. No one could better describe the chaos than did Erasmus of Rotterdam as he wrote at the beginning of the year 1526:

> .... if he [God] were not God I don't think he could get through so much business. King Christian of Denmark, a devout partisan of the gospel, is in exile. Francis, King of France, is a "guest" of the Spaniards. What he thinks of this I don't know, but surely he's a man worthy of a better fate. Charles is preparing to

> extend the boundaries of his realm. Ferdinand has his hands full in Germany. Bankruptcy threatens every court. The peasants raise dangerous riots and are not swayed from their purpose, despite so many massacres. The commons are bent on anarchy; the Church is shaken to its very foundations by menacing factions; on every side the seamless coat of Jesus is torn to shreds. The vineyard of the Lord is now laid waste not by a single boar but at one and the same time the authority of priests (together with their tithes), the dignity of theologians, the splendor of monks is imperiled; confession totters; vows reel; pontifical ordinances crumble away; the Eucharist is called in question; Antichrist is awaited; the whole earth is pregnant with I know not what calamity. The Turks conquer and threaten all the while; there's nothing they won't ravage if their under- taking succeeds. (Qtd.in Bohnstedt 5)

The rhetoric Erasmus uses here is hardly novel. Binding external threats to internal weakness as seen earlier constitutes one of the most recurrent Christian defense mechanisms face to Islamic expansions. The formula of the Turk was thus mediated between reformers and counter-reformers and considered a scourge of God, or God sending the wicked to punish the wicked for their fallibility and sins. The Turk remains this static emblem of infidelity and aberrance from norms whereby to measure other aberrations.

III.1 The Reformation(s) in England and the Turks

It is held almost as a fact and taught like so in many curricula worldwide that the reformation in England is less rooted in a religious upheaval as much as it is in ideological and petty concerns. While, there certainly emerged religious speakers who took it upon them to either defend or denounce their nation's adoption of the Protestant

faith, when King Henry VIII broke ties with the Roman Catholic Church, his decision had much to do with pope Clemens VII's refusal to grant him a divorce and was hence more political. In 1533 Henry declared his separation from the Roman Catholic Church, established himself as the head of the Church of England, and freely pursued his matrimonial demands by divorcing Catherine of Aragon and marrying Anne Boleyn. He was consequently excommunicated by the Pope and England's religious identity would soon undergo a tornado of reformations changing the country's destiny irretrievably during Tudor times.

But there was more to Henry's initiative of Protestantism and overthrow of the papacy. Henry VIII had just years earlier earned himself the title of "the defender of the faith" in 1521, not for having fought against the infidels, but for having articulately discredited Martin Luther's attempts at reform. Henry was well aware of the obligations that this appellation and title entailed, that this papal endorsement demanded from him to act like a Christian king when the duty of fighting the archenemy the Turk calls. Henry's later dissent from Papal authority attenuated his participation in any such grand humanist obligation to Christendom against the Turkish threat. The Ottoman advances to the borders of Christendom were conjoined with the upheavals of reformation across Europe. Christian monarchs were expected to rise to the fore in face of the Ottomans, but such unity among European nations was waning day by day due to national and domestic concerns, the kind of which prompted King Henry VIII to withdraw from the Roman Catholic Church in pursuit of his "great matter".

The formula of the Turk was highly contested and used by theologians and politicians of opposing views to measure out which is the great evil in this calamity. The Christian religious polarizations were also at times coupled with instances of

mercantile compromise and necessity with the Ottomans, the thing which has distanced some European nations even further from any crusading campaign against the Turks. Of all Christian monarchs, it was the holy Roman Emperor Charles V whose marked attitude towards the Ottomans was strictly crusading. The Turk as a metaphor remains in all of this unknown per se, constantly invoked in the humanist rebukes and refutations of both Lutherans and orthodox Christians, just like the precedent formula of ‘the Saracen’.

In England alone, there was an extraordinary array of texts written in the vernacular from diametrically opposed parties concerning the issue of the reformation. The ardent William Tyndale, Simon Fish, and Thomas More among many others were active in these heated debates. The issue of a crusade was a pressing and contentious one especially as the Ottoman forces under Suleiman the Magnificent had taken on Hungary and were pressing against Vienna’s walls. Matthew Dimmock in *New Turkes* puts it best as he states that at the wake of Ottoman expansionism and in between these ardent oppositions within Christianity lies “the ‘turke’, consistently represented as false and used in this particular context to emphasize the way in which one or the other are considered deviant from central religious tenets. In this Christian humanist context, the figure of the ‘the turke’ remains fixed within what is essentially a dominant concept of otherness (35).

By remaining irrevocably divided over the legitimacy of each party’s dogma, Turkishness and the metaphor of the Turk were included in their arsenal of verbal arrows whilst attacking each other. The English theologians who engaged in such heated debates followed the steps of predecessors, in the same fashion in which Martin Luther fired his dismay at Pope and Turks jointly. The religious schisms that are yet to

trouble England with the next Tudor monarchs, all to varying degrees, invoked the formulation of the Turke in their discursive formations, a symbol emblematic of faithlessness and standing in adversity to Christian creeds.

The degrees through which the image of the Turk was rebuked also depended on other paradigms that were to emerge as the Ottomans seated themselves firmly within the European map and against whom not only war was thinkable, if ever, given the weakness of unity. There were, instead, other considerations of alliances and trade capitulations that were yet to ensue and probably culminate in their most complex and malleable form during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

III.2 Edward and Mary's Reigns and the Religious and Cultural Deprogramming

How the English conceptualized and perceived Islam is deeply rooted in the sharp break with earlier religious affiliations. The adoption of the Protestant faith had far-reaching consequences, economic, ideological, social, and cultural. Henry VIII's death was succeeded by the short reigns of Edward VI then Mary, two reigns, most historians agree that extremely oscillated religious affiliations so intensely that the reverberations on the English national consciousness were deeply felt on all levels. Although the break with the Roman Catholic Church was secured during Henry's reign, yet the measurements taken by the monarch were cautious and relative to the adoption of the new faith. It is not until the reign of the sickly and childless Edward VI that England underwent a sharp remodeling of the monarchy's religious affairs, denouncing the catholic doctrine and taking the church in a strictly protestant sense with all its epistemic break.

The Religious affiliations as experienced by the English who lived through more than one monarch's reign during Tudor times are anything but stable and decipherable. They were, in fact, configured and reconfigured at close ratios, and this resulted in a lasting sense of unsettlement. The ensuing incongruity of such religious resetting, stresses Steven Mullaney in his perceptive study *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* (2015) resulted in a collective cultural deprogramming, as peoples' affiliations were constantly contested, challenged, and produced. The radical kinds of reforms conducted during the reigns of Tudor Monarchs, and especially Mullaney stresses during the reign of Edward, had as a goal the creation of a "counter memory" in Michel Foucault's conception, of a new structure of historical consciousness that delegitimizes adherence or allegiance to an earlier collective memory (12).

England was witness to heavy restructurings of beliefs and values during the reformation that shook more than one generation. The Elizabethan age, rather stabilized as it was compared to the previous reigns, was still subject to the heavy aftershocks of the oscillation of faiths. The tensions confronting Elizabethan generations to Shakespeare and his contemporaries were even more challenging, as this generation, emphasizes Patrick Collinson, was not sure what to believe. They inherited and had to live with "a profoundly dissociated sense of [their] world" (Qtd.in Mullaney, *the Reformations of Emotions* 13). This ambivalence in religious belonging and the resultant spiritual alienation, I argue, that the Elizabethans must surely have felt, is going to be complicated further, as Queen Elizabeth sought to secure diplomatic, trade alliances with potentates of other faiths, with the Muslims.

While, just over fifty years ago, historians were quite confident in the completion of the English reformation by the second half of the Elizabethan epoch, many revisionist

historians are however questioning such closure and instead argue that reformations, using the indefinite plural, were still at work even beyond the 1590's (Mullaney, *The Reformation*). A refutation of metahistories and metanarratives[9], what constitutes an integral element of the New Historicist project, is shown in the way that recent historians are keener to fragment monolithic understandings of religion in the era, and their endeavour to bring forth effacements and erasures, which beforehand were obscured for the sake of homogeneity and intelligibility.

The profound fractures amongst the English were prompted by the multiple reformations that England underwent in such a short time span of 50 Years. Between 1400 and 1600, religious belief was an integral part of everyday life. It was also impossible to separate religion from the practice of political authority, the world of international finance, and the achievements of art and learning. The religious sectarianism that characterized England across the times of reformations resulted in severe attenuation of religious blonging, which will later prove most complex, as we endeavour to argue, along with England's involvement with Islam through trade.

Mary's reign was even more unsettling. Her clear Spanish and catholic affiliations, translated in her marriage of expediency to king Phillip of Spain would ensure once

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[9] During the 1940's, 50's and 60's, the workings of coherent and unified worldviews about historical epochs were often taken as stable and then would be traced in operation within literary texts or set texts against. This formalist literary analysis was dominant in literary classrooms entailing alongside its hermeneutic the conviction that history serves as a background against which the literary text is posited. Old historicism contends that historians conduct several and diverse methods of historical research to discover a consistent worldview of each literary epoch that they later engage to crystallize it in the most objective manner. The findings are then to offer perspective to the contextualized literary text, which is considered of primary importance as opposed to the secondary function of history.

more that England is to profess papal authority and jurisdiction. Queen Mary was a devout Catholic due to her upraising by Catherine of Aragon, whom Henry VIII nullified his marriage with, hence rendering Mary an illegitimate child and ruler. After Edward's death, however, who had kept her at bay, she snatched the throne and was crowned Queen. The country by her reign was deeply fissured, on the one hand, there stand the supporters of the reformation who were against a match with Catholic Spain, and on the other, the remaining Catholics devout to papal authority were hailing the new monarch after twenty years of percussion. During her short five years reign, Mary did restore Catholicism and proceeded with the persecution of a huge number of deemed protestant heretics in what became known as the 'Marian Persecutions', earning her the title of 'Bloody Mary'.

The reinstitution of the Catholic monarch Mary had other repercussions on the national scale. Her ardent catholic and Hapsburg affiliations also meant that she was devout to the Orthodox ideology of the crusades and of fighting and subduing the archenemy of Christendom: the Muslims. By the time of these renewed Habsburg feelings that circulated in England, it was made clear that any opposition to the Habsburgs or the papacy is likened to an alliance with the Ottomans since the latter had made itself an overt enemy to the Holy Emperor. Orthodox polemical discourse condemning Lutherans and Turks alike was given prominence again and subsequent prints of Orthodox humanist polemic were made available for the public. The Turk as a rhetorical device and a marker of falsehood thus was perpetually evoked in English discourse.

III.3 Elizabeth I and the Dawn of Eastern Trade

Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne in 1558 was immediately followed by the reestablishment of the protestant church of which she was supreme governor. The act of Supremacy was passed by the parliament in 1599 which re-ensured the separation of the English church from Catholicism. On the wider international scale, this meant that England was secluded from the rest of mainland Europe, and was even further distanced, economically speaking, after pope Pius V excommunicated Elizabeth and declared her illegitimate in 1570.

Protestant England under Elizabeth's reign secured relations with a number of Muslim potentates; an intrepid move which as many historians deem lies behind England's alleviation of its economic turmoil. Anglo-Islamic trade that was secured during the reign of Elizabeth I sprung mainly from a nation so conscious of its marginalized position in a European arena dominated by hegemonic empires. First there lies the most insistent and in proximity danger of Catholic Spain under the Hapsburg Empire, whose doctrinal dogma against the resurgent Protestant England was sufficient enough to put them in enmity. The mightiest empire in all of Europe, the domains of the Hapsburg Empire during the reign of King Phillip II, Mary's husband from 1554-1558, were the largest encompassing seventeen provinces of the Netherlands and countless settlements in the new world.

With mounting tensions between the nations, already instigated during the previous oscillating rules of the Tudors, especially between King Henry VIII and Charles V, the scenario of invading England, then under the reign of Protestant Elizabeth was very thinkable and expected, given the frictions among the two nations in the ardent aim of

overthrowing Protestant Elizabeth and reinstating Catholicism on English domains. The invasion that King Phillip II would set assail to England comprised his mighty fleet, the Spanish Armada, which, against all odds of power balance, dismally failed to fulfill its mission, a loss that had been widely interpreted in English and Spanish histories. Interpretations of providential intervention were always the strongest, and Elizabeth I rejoiced in the contention that God was in favor of her rule and on her side, despite wide continental and papal disapproval of her.

As a matter of fact, Elizabeth's firm realization of the impossibility of uplifting her country's economic potential through a pan-Christian European alliance was but confirmed and this led her to look east, to the Ottoman Empire with the aim of advancing trade and seeking fresh markets. in pursuit of An alliance with the infidel, or at least this is how the Catholic would view it like, England ventured in the footsteps of the French to demand capitulations for Trade on Ottoman domains, a decisive move in the future of England's mercantile ventures and initiation into the global scene of nascent capitalism.

It betrays historical veracity to deem antagonism and adversity the ruling paradigms by which all Christians faced the Muslims of the Levant. In fact, as far as England is concerned, such kind of heated hatred towards the Ottomans remained almost strictly restricted to theological debates at the wake of the reformation and was hardly ever materialized into any attempts or campaigns against them. England, as discussed above during the short and complex reigns of the Tudors was busy enough sorting out religious inclinations, oscillating between reformation and counter-reformation in costly and unsettling decisions. Furthermore, the insularly isolated and Protestant England was quite impoverished and lingered in belatedness to ever consider or entertain such grand

crusading ideas; this was as discussed earlier feasible and thinkable for the Habsburg Empire, but never for the English, it was neither a choice nor an obligation, it was simply out of the question. The national and petty concerns that Elizabeth had to face at the beginning of her reign led her to embrace a tolerant and very diplomatic stance towards peoples of the other faith.

In the undeclared war with Spain after the defeat of the Armada, there followed a number of changes in Europe which escalated the tensions between the two nations and underprivileged England so critically. Economically speaking, Spain was gaining momentum on all spheres and was in hold of most inland and sea trading routes, and claimed an unprecedented hegemony which worsened England's seclusion and shrunk its markets considerably. Furthermore, England's trade in the Levant suffered past the Franco-Ottoman league, whereby the Sultan granted capitulations to his subjects in 1535, who mediated English Trade. The most decisive historical incident which urged England to reroute her interest to Muslim potentates, however, was the sack of Antwerp by Spanish forces, which was the cultural, economic, and financial center of the Netherlands and the major entrepot for English cloth exports. Antwerp trade had not recovered from what came to be known as the Spanish fury at Antwerp, not for a century or more ahead. The Antwerp cloth market was left in ruin, and English merchants were compelled to seek alternate markets to trade in.

Free from any obligations towards papal obedience after their Queen's excommunication, and running short of markets in continental Europe, the English merchants were targeting farther markets out of need and in defiance to Spain, whose enmity to the infidels or the Turks has not faltered. The combination of these factors prompted new ways of conceptualizing and of representing difference, especially in the

court and in court-sponsored trade assemblies. Negotiations with the Ottomans with the aim of advancing capitulations were an urgent necessity to which a number of court advisors and wealthy merchants contributed.

What is remarkable in the 1570s, however, is that the surging paradigms of viewing the Ottomans as potential allies were mainly occurring in certain sectors and did not totally replace or efface the long-standing divisive religious politics vis-a-vis the Turks that was circulating at considerable ratios in English publications. Indeed, other sectors in the English society maintained somewhat fervent rhetoric of otherness towards them, and hence perpetuating the metaphor of the Turk as a scourge of God which can only be pushed back through Christian unity. The fabric of English national and religious consciousness had gone through waves of shocks in the alternating reformations and counter-reformations in England that any talk of a unified religious identity, even during the somewhat cautious and tolerant reign of Elizabeth, is a pure fallacy.

The most important of all writers who set the tone for the English religious and national identity in the 1570s is undoubtedly John Foxe, who, took the cudgel against the Papists, whilst making sure to include the metaphor of the Turk and to weigh the damage of the former against the latter. Matthew Dimmock in *New Turkes* persuasively demonstrates how Foxe's sermons repeatedly grounded the notion of the Turke that would influence an entire culture including many writers and dramatists, and who "appears to have defined the sense of relativity in categories of difference that followed the ideological upheavals of the reformation" (81). Foxe potently declares that it is the mark of their times that "Turkes be not more enemyes to Christians than Papistes to Protestantes" (Qtd.in Dimmock 81).

The year 1571 marks another watershed historical moment in Christian-Ottoman relations, as a huge fleet of the holy league, under the command of Pius V, defeated the Ottoman fleet during the battle of Lepanto 1571. The league mainly consisted of the Spanish Empire and the Venetian Republic. News of this significant Christian victory, although there are a number of revisionist historians who argue that it is the holy league that suffered the consequences so grievously, was complex. It has been reported that news of this victory were a source of rejoicing across different European countries, orthodox, Lutherans and Protestants, and that England was no exception. Dimmock argues that while that might be true to a certain extent, the English court must have maintained a show of Christian unity, which by no means represented the reality of the situation (83).

The aftermath of the battle of Lepanto, argues the revisionist historian Halil Inalick was to define new political circumstances in Europe that would change the inclinations of many nations. The defeat of the Ottomans at the Battle of Lepanto was soon recovered and quickly succeeded by yet another grander reconstruction of the Turkish fleet, which coupled with their costly and demanding engagements with the Persians, created a huge need that their empire was short to supply them with. The English had come to fill in this need and that hastened the alliance with the Turks. The rapidly shifting circumstances of the late 1570s, thus, led Elizabeth to seek an association with this alluring partner in the midst of her nation's ruinous continental seclusion.

On another front, the Spanish conquest of Portugal, after the ill-fated crusade of the young King Sebastian against the moors in Barbary that ended up with the sack of his army at the battle of Al Kasr Al Kabir 1578 added turmoil to England as their only possible ally came in the grip of Spanish rule, the situation which precipitated further

the alliance with the Ottomans. The fact that the capitulations between the English and the Ottomans were established in the same year is no coincidence. England was driven in every way and destined to seek economic help away from Christian Europe.

After several petitions from tradesmen and merchants with the aim of advancing trade with the Ottomans, of importance is Elizabeth secretary Francis Walsingham's "A Consideration of the trade into Turkie" 1578?, Queen Elizabeth started exchanging letters with Sultan Murad[10] via her envoy William Harborne who left England in July 1578 to pursue commercial capitulations with the Turks which his nation was officially granted in May 1580. The offspring of these ventures was the establishment of the Turkey Company in September 1581[11], which would very soon be succeeded by a number of other chartered trade routes during Elizabeth's reign. The company proved to be a smashing success from its get-go.

England's isolation was finally clearing away to more promising maritime enterprises in the Mediterranean and Asia. Zealous for such an initiation into world trade, the English, mimicking powerful competitors, adopted a strategy, stipulates Daniel Vitkus, to develop a strong fleet of merchant-privateers and to harness their ships to their full potential. There was also another task equally important for these

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[10] Jerry Brotton in *the Sultan and the Queen* describes the correspondences between the two rulers and the way Elizabeth was eager to extend her apathy to Catholic "idolatry" and those Christians "falsely" professing Christ, a strategic technique she adopted in order to harness the similarities between Islam and Protestantism. Their correspondences extended over seventeen years exchanges, giving rise to one of history's most odd alliances.

[11] Under Elizabeth's Reign, four trading companies received her royal charter: the Turkey Company, 1581 renamed Levant Company, 1592; Barbary Company, 1585; East India Company, 1600), and the Guinea Company, 1588.

merchants, which was an intensive intelligence gathering to produce the body of knowledge that would serve the purpose of expanding profits (*Turning Turk* 21).

There was just within years of England's capitulations an unprecedented profusion of knowledge and data gathering concerning their new allies and wherever the mercantile enterprises took them. England was to experience a flood of Ottoman related material, which, given the accelerated pace of trade filtered through different forms of discourses not solely for commerce purposes, but given their nature, as will be discussed in the prime texts, were replete with descriptions of the exotic and spectacles of competing displays of power and wealth. It was to this kind of texts, persuasively argues Dimmock that the English would turn to at the wake of their entrance into the scene of global commerce, to spectacles of aggrandizement that attenuated the grip of polarized religious politics circulating in other reprints and translations, in the aim of defending their new liaisons with the Ottomans (*New Turkes* 67). The secular domain and the religious domain were quite separate when it came to dealings with the Ottomans, who were deemed sheer 'infidels' in Christian European consicousness. The grip of polarizations was still effectual in religious texts and coincided with surging different types of texts that strove to reveal the wealth and lure of these eastern potentates, and the lucrative revenues that were to result of an alliance with them.

Indeed, new cultural tropes in conceptualizing difference were emerging and complicating the notion of the Turk. The influx of information resultant of the lucrative commercial ventures was changing the English and how they viewed and constructed their identities against others. This is by no means an effort to situate representations of the Turks in one benevolent or malevolent way. As a matter of fact, the intermingling of different forms of texts taking virulent nationalist protestant positions towards the

papacy, Spain, and the Turks (in positive or pejorative terms) render any simplification parochial. There was no unified strategy of representing the Ottomans, be that in court or in theology or even in travel chronicles and merchant memoirs. It is precisely in the midst of this highly volatile and indeterminate set of responses that the Turk Plays would become the mania of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, staging spectacles of ambivalence and confusion, of demonization as well as of imperial envy. The culture which gave rise to the spectacles that altered the Turks should, thus, be perceived from current understandings of culture; it was not easily decipherable as often wrongly advanced in books and compilations that seek to present a comprehensive sense of both history and culture. Instead, Renaissance culture suffered from the confusing shock of new and unpolicied material about the world. It all happened so fast and across different discursive formations that negotiated and appropriated the meaning of Islam and Muslims at high rations. Any reductive view that seeks to eschew contradictions is, I deem, erroneous. Culture was then, as in now, constantly in flux, and the only constant thing about it is its changeable mechanisms. As far as others are concerned, cultural workings functioned like enzymes that sought to absorb and to change the nature of these foreign subjectivities so as to render them easily decipherable, assimilable, and harmless.

IV. Embyonic Capitalism, Cultural identity, and the Collective Theatre

No longer under the domination and mediation of Venetian and Spanish merchants[12] in trade with the East, the English were thanks to the efforts of their queen and the urge

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[12] Ottoman trade capitulations were extended way earlier to European nations, beginning with the Genoese in 1453, Venice in 1454 and France in 1535.

of shrewd merchants and envoys, finally having access to the East's most coveted spices, fabrics, and tons of other valuable commodities that came from Persia and East India via the Porte of the Ottomans. Legions of travelers and English tradesmen were conducting import-export trade in the Mediterranean's most luring centers and raising tremendous amounts of Capital. Mingling with traders from many nationalities in utterly hybrid spaces that acknowledge the language of Capital and shared interest, these merchants were flooding England with all sorts of commodities and knowledge about their travels and the exotic lands to which they ventured and exporting woven cloth, lead, tin among other highly demanded commodities in exchange for a wide variety of lucrative commodities.

The 1570s constitute a benchmark in the economic history of England. Thousands of English subjects were contributing to an unprecedented impetus for trade with hegemonic and outstanding world economies. Daniel Vitkus rightly states that over just three decades from the midpoint of the sixteenth century, the English merchants and mariners "began to assert themselves as players in the world of international commerce and cross-cultural exchange" (*Turning Turk* 25).

The economic period from 1570-1630 constitutes such a quantum leap and one of the most striking transformations indeed in the economic development of England. New conceptualizations of capital and investment emerged as well as new understandings of cross-cultural exchanges and new sources of capital, were all initiating England in what would irretrievably change its economy and subsequently its cultural life, its art, and its later imperial aspirations.

IV.1. Foreign Trade and Cross-Cultural Mixture

England, many early modern historians firmly agree would not have gone as far in its later imperial aspirations if it was not because of this Levantine debut in the world economy. The English during this time span was broiling under religious and economic strife, isolation, and western venues to imperialism were beyond their reach and so were the Christian ones, the majority of which were under Habsburg's grip. Furthermore, Ottoman naval powers in the Mediterranean basin weakened the hold of the Italians, the situation from which the English benefitted immensely.

The English Merchants' entrance into the extensive maritime enterprise in the Afro-Eurasian world initiated them in a foreign mode of trade that was developing an increasingly abstracted system of new forms of capital. Through mutual and profitable exchanges, there were a leading number of merchant venturers who knew that the future lies in investments with new forms of bills and debts, and started forming groups of investors in overseas trade with a considerable shared join-stock capital.

The join-stock companies they helped create uplifted the economy of England so conspicuously and headed the nation in an embryonic form of capitalism-mercantilism. The annual turnovers of the Levant Company were so lucrative to the merchants and to the crown that the latter continued its support for the successful charter and sponsored more charters of the like. Daniel Vitkus declares that economic facts and statistics are one way of assessing the success of England's ventures in global trade, that the outward economic expansion that the English economy experienced can equally be measured through its huge impact on the English culture. Concomitant to this burst in economic

activity, cross-cultural encounters and exchanges were corresponding ideological changes and infiltrating a vast array of cultural discourses.

With the Mediterranean as the primary site and locus of trade, English merchants roamed the waters engaging in peaceful trade in contact zones highly defined by acculturation and cross-cultural negotiations. The city of London and its port constituted a fresh locus for the profuse trade being carried out. The vibrant transcultural activity which characterized global trade urged the English merchants to adhere to a superfluid and malleable understanding of difference. The myriad transactions carried out between merchants and voyagers of different nationalities and faiths were defined essentially by profit and shared interests and not by religious, ethnic, or national differences.

The very nature of the capitalist marketplace is rooted in transcultural activity and mixture. Whatever religious affiliations those merchants professed, differences were silenced in favor of speaking the one language of capital. The English who were undertaking these voyages were undergoing a vertiginous experience of mingling with different others. Situating themselves in contradistinction to these others and understanding their new place and role in this fabulous system of world trade led to the production of a huge corpus of knowledge that was carried back home along with commodities: knowledge of exotic lands and peoples and faiths that sprung from first-hand contact and dealings and which was cemented in a variety of discursive formations, and later on taken by playwrights and disseminated with its unsettling force and magnitude. [13]

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[13] Gerald Maclean in *the Rise of Oriental Travel* demonstrates that ravel narratives about the Ottomans abounded; Thomas Coryate, William Lithgow, Fynes Moryson and SirGeorge Sandys all produced

The transcultural activity that for the first time in the history of English trade was non-Eurocentric but maritime and long-distance, with the initial trajectory of the Levant company sweeping a dazzling distance and crossing a number of port cities linking Asia to Europe, lies behind the English' cultural identity. The Meditteranean salient laid the foundation for cross-cultural encounters, through which the English will come to terms with their Englishness, as it contrasts and hybridizes with the various subjectivities they met.

IV.2. Alterity, the English Crisis of Subjectivity, and Cultural Identity

The English' new commercial identity forged in the Mediterranean is by no means simply an economic phenomenon whose returns alleviated England's economic seclusion solely. The new ambitious identity that the English were securing through their foreign trade bears considerable resonance to the ways in which not only those adventuring merchants but later all English people have come to situate themselves in a world, to which they now belonged, even if as simply minor players. With the striking malleability of global trade and of the Mediterranean, the English were experiencing the shock of the unfamiliar through their extensive non-Eurocentric engagements.

Although the English were never more than small contributors in the scene of global trade compared to their much stronger rivals, their inclusion with the potential and aim

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celebrated travels publications during the first decades of the new century, "an era that opened with the publication of several important English works on the Ottomans. In 1603 alone, there appeared Richard Knolles' great compilation *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, Alexander Hartwell's translation of Lazaro Soranzo's *Ottomano* and Henry Timberlake's *A True and Strange Discourse of the Travailes of two English Pilgrimes* (5).

of advancing wealth and ease led them to frictions with a number of emulative imperial models. Wishing to arise to the grandeur, their efforts at escalation while intermingling in hybrid spaces defined by mixture shaped the identity that England will materialize later in the 17th and 18th centuries. Articulating a will to power without the sufficient equipment to absolute power, the pragmatic merchants were very much aware of their deficiency in this hegemonic maritime economy dominated by far superseding empires. It is, however, in the midst of the multiplicity of cultural influences in the hybrid Mediterranean basin, that the English were going beyond the binary, reconstructing and reconfiguring their identity (Powells 1).

Many historians are prone to conceive of the early modern age in England as the early imperial and the early colonial. While workings of imperialism can surely be traced germinating during the 16th century, it would be however against historical evidence to validate any truth claims to imperialism or colonialism during an age in which England possessed not an inch of land out of its borders. The early modern period is the transitory period in which glimpses of an imperialist identity can be seen sprouting, but it still remains an age in which the English were working their way piecemeal in a globalized trade system through mutual trade and state-sanctioned privateering and not through imperial conquests.

In an effort to evaluate the conditions of England's nascent capitalism, Daniel Vitkus rightly stipulates that England was yet beginning to take on an ambitious identity to the rest of the world, "buoyed by its successful intervention in the Mediterranean seagoing economy, by newly developed superior technologies in shipbuilding and gunnery, by the culture of maritime aggression and plunder that grew out of competition and conflict with Spain (*Global Traffic* 21). Very conscious of their belatedness and yet aspiring to

make up for it, the anxious balancing of sameness and difference, of inclusion and marginality, would bring the English to a better understanding of their place in the Afro-Eurasian mercantile cosmopolitanism.

Enacting their subjectivity amongst other different subjectivities in the course of their economic leap, the English prime space of articulating themselves against different others did not happen across the Atlantic[14], but in the liminal Mediterranean and against the Muslims primarily. Islam in its many incarnations played the most important role in the English crisis of subjectivity by the end of the 16th century. Barbara Fuchs persuasively argues in *Mimesis and Empire* that the confrontation with Islam was crucial for Europe's self-image and construction as an empire (3) and the English stand as no exception in this formulation. Coming into extensive contact with culturally, religiously, somatically and nationally different subjectivities, the English were appropriating, negotiating, and ordering differences. In a similar vein Nabil Matar and Gerald MaClean argue that the Islamic world had a specific and important role in the making of Britain. in their perceptive study *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558–1713,* they assert that "religious and national identities, as much as cultural and domestic life in Britain, were being shaped by ideas, goods, styles, and techniques imported from

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[14] England during the second half of the 16th c was quite intimidated in colonial settlements compared to its much powerful European rivals, the Spanish being the most successful of which. While many interpretations of the English origins of imperialist aspirations are prone to link it to the 17th century plantations in the New World, it must be clearly noted that the English ambitious sense of empire was not in fact due to English transatlantic ventures, the majority of which were clear failures prior to the 1650's. The drive for imperial claims has sprung rather from England's eastern ventures in global commerce instead, from a position of weakness and not that of domination. Any claims to the contrary runs the risk of situating English initiatives in an indelible hegemonic history of conquest and settlement when in fact, it was not.

Islamic lands" (2) concomitantly with decisive changes occurring in the ways the English thought about themselves and the ways they acted in, and upon, the international scene.

Alterity, the anthropological and philosophical concept standing for otherness, is the mechanism that the English articulated. Mediterranean and Islamic alterity was defined by a wide range of identity markers, and manifested in the behavior of foreign peoples observed by the English who went to the Mediterranean to travel or plunder or trade (Vitkus, *Turning Turk* 8). The exchanges taken on by the English with different others were mutating the English identity to take on the mercantile capitalist form it did acquire and the highly ambitious imperialist aspirations for more.

The English identity was in constant flux and construction face to alien peoples during this time. It becomes then impossible to separate the cultural identity of the English from their nation's foreign relations and its economic incentives. The imitative drive that the English were to acquire was guaranteed in these hybrid loci. The encounters resultant of trade transactions and circumnavigations of the Mediterranean engendered a considerable corpus of knowledge about foreign and alien lands and peoples that circulated in England. The voyages and far-fetched commodities quickened the appetites of English subjects back home to know more about the world that lies beyond their waters.

By being constantly challenged for assertion, the English were practicing both mimesis and alterity in their exotic encounters. Their spatiality in an exciting maritime reality defined by pragmatism and profit endowed them with a different kind of purpose as they fantasized to emulate imperial models. The English have come to understand

themselves, stresses Vitkus, by comprehending their difference from others while later appropriating and mutating due to foreign practices (*Turning Turk* 27). It has been stressed earlier, that the Tudor age constitutes a surging period of nationalism as the English religious identity was mutating through the many reformations it had witnessed. The English national identity was just as equally given shape and purpose through the nation's new economic penchant. Any attempt to understanding the English identity formation must in this sense touch upon both dimensions.

Primordial and at the basis of most cultural analysis is the identification of binaries or dichotomies. Structuralist models of analysis, adopting clearly distinct binaries have routinely been used in cultural and literary studies. The structuralist binary modal of self versus other, so entrenched in discussions of identity formation, it is argued comes to an impasse in an early modern context. The new realities engendered by the multiculturalism of the early modern global scene not only prove to be challenging to any simplistic critical model of understanding identity; they ultimately are unsustainable in this context. Thus, any Endeavour to understand the workings of English collective identity will have to go "beyond the binary", to borrow Timothy Powells.

As a matter of fact, many early modern scholars have urged to adopt a more nuanced conception of identity and theoretical model in the period under study to fully engage in the complexities and anxieties of the English to construct that sense of distinctiveness. Furthermore, the polarized model which may in many instances be applicable to modern and post-modern realities has undergone serious revision by various critics and scholars seeking to reconfigure and present model(s) that are duly historicised and that acknowledge the nature and the fluidity of early modern multicultural contexts, to which England has immersed itself during Queen Elizabeth I's reign.

IV.3 The Theatre as a Collective Enterprise

London city was the locus in which commercial playhouses were abundant. A huge intake zone of exotic commodities and vibrant mixture, London of all English cities underwent firsthand and capacious waves of commercial activity and was thus the most influenced in terms of cultural changes. The maritime expansionary thrust that the English embarked on through trade was also changing the city of London with the emergence of more commercial playhouses whose aim was to raise profits through itinerant spectacles. Daniel Vitkus stresses the importance of London's cultural absorption due to its literary and theatrical culture that was sensitive to the load of change that London was receiving through its ports (*Trafic and Turning* 26). Charting a parallel course of change, London's public playhouses absorbed and disseminated analogous spatial voyages, by bringing home the strange and the exotic.

London was in a short span of time under destabilizing exotic influences that were urging new forms of art to appear. The playhouse, the most collective of all arts, the most social of all arts played a crucial role in filtering through these exotic influences and in staging spectacles of difference and novelty. The new notions of otherness that were thrust by cross-cultural encounters were equally being reflected and imagined within the security of the theatres' walls. The surge of artistic production and consumption, characteristic of the age, enjoins one to stress the institutionalization of the place of art through the medium of playhouses. In literary metahistories, the Renaissance is predominantly perceived of as the phase of boom in artistic production, with such great names as Shakespeare, Marlowe and Jonson who epitomized the spirit of exploration and harnessed their genius imaginative faculties to produce the most electric pieces of art. While such descriptions of the age are most certainly true, they

nonetheless attempt to discard the economic function of the loci in which these writers enacted their art. The material conditions of production and consumption will lend a different naturalized understanding of these writers and their works.

Accounts documenting the shock of attraction to the alien and the often unpoliced flood of (mis)information permeated into English culture. The embryonic capitalist structures that were operative in trade were also to touch upon a number of varying sectors, and to find full articulacy in many other industries. The commerciality imperative and a society of consumption were slowly emerging. The theatres of London were equally being influenced by England's economy. By their very nature collaborative, with a number of participants, the playwrights being only one faction of, the theatre companies that were successful then were highly caught up in the pragmatism of profit-making. In this respect, Stephen Greenblatt in his essay "The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England" emphasizes the localization of theatre and its subjection to rules of representation and intertwinement with Capitalism. He reveals the extent to which the Renaissance literary productions were designed in intimate and living relations to a surging commerce practice. A contingent practice, the theatre and its productions were governed by a set of rules which way transcend the mere playwrights' roles; the choices the playwrights made were not totally idiosyncratic.

A number of early modern scholars [15]have cogently drawn solid grounds for the joint-stock nature of theatre companies, very similar and sometimes even intersecting

[15] Douglas Bruster in *Drama and the Market in the Age of Shakespeare* provides a comprehensive account of the logic of market and its influence on Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

with other long-distance trading companies. Resting on the same logic, shareholders of these playing companies had to present forth commercial stage performances answerable to the demands of the audiences. The theatre itself asserts Vitkus, was an economic enterprise, and its positioning in the domestic marketplace was complacent with many forms of economic life.

It follows then that the spectacles enacted in playhouses were governed by a complex set of logic. The text alone is not enough in understanding the cultural transactions at hand. In his lecture "What is an Author?" Michel Foucault insisted upon the study of the mode of existence of discourses, and upon asking new questions concerning authors and artifacts. Contenting oneself with the expressive value and formal transformations of early modern drama posits the text as central and a stable locus of theatrical meaning, when in fact, the script was but one faction in a collective enterprise which contests the very confidence in the text, or the author alone.

Greenblatt insists that in order to understand, historically speaking, the spectacular achievements of focal early modern playwrights, one might look at "acquisitive energies of English merchants, entrepreneurs, and adventurers, promoters alike of trading companies and theatrical companies" (*The Renaissance Self Fashioning* 194). Along somewhat similar lines, Jean E. Howard shrewdly insisted upon the theater's role in ideological production stressing that "the early modern mode of theatrical production, as exemplified primarily in the large amphitheatres, involved material practices which themselves have ideological implications" (*the Stage and Social Struggle* 8).

Stephen Greenblatt, whose insights of New Historicism[16] are appropriated at length and in detail in this study, situates early modern drama of all literary productions the period in which credulity of the text needs to be brought to the fore. That the text needs to be constantly challenged by evading its borders into the mode of its own existence constitutes his major aim in what became known as 'Cultural Poetics', "to look less at the presumed center of the literary domain than at its borders, to try to track what can only be glimpsed, as it were, at the margins of the text" (Greenblatt, "the Circulation of Social Energies" in Lodge 497).

A presumably demarcated zone of cultural production and dissemination, the theatrical productions of this early modern stage need to be thought of less as autonomous transcendent artifacts, but more as material practices of ordering the knowledge of the alien into structured vehicles of cultural workings. This rerouting of interest (from the text to the mode that gave birth to the text) is indispensable in this study. As such, it is important first to chart The modes of existence of these theatrical productions (discourse of alterity); to link it to the modifications operative within the historical given culture; then there follows scrutinizing the modes of circulation of discourses and last but not least the mechanisms of valorisation, attribution and appropriation.

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16 Stephen Greenblatt stresses in his lecture "Towards a Poetics of Culture" that New Historicism is an interpretive practice rather than a doctrine. New historicists remain skeptical about formulating a systematized abstract body of theory to be applied on texts. As a matter of fact, their central aim in analysing literary texts was directed against New Criticism practices of interpretation (literary text as ahistorical, self-contained, self-referential object and the interpretation as essentially intrinsic) and as a result they ended up adopting "methodological eclecticism", privileging interdisciplinarity in their approach.

Asking how the collective imperative of the early modern theatre was shaped, circulated and condensed in a manageable aesthetic form and tossed to audience consumption is what, Greenblatt believes, scholarship of the early modern theatre of alterity needs to be engaged with (498). This is by no means an effort to diminish artistic value, but to insist, especially during this time frame, that the drama needs to be considered as a cultural practice along with other cultural practices. An inquiry of the coming to existence as well as the governing factors are at the crux of cultural poetics. Theatre historians have challenged the whole notion of the text as the central, stable locus of theatrical meaning and that the circumstances in which texts are embedded and the anxieties and concerns they voice defy the autonomy of the script. Catherine Callagher and Stephen Greenblatt pointedly stress that the New Historicist project "is not about 'demoting' art or discrediting aesthetic value; rather it is concerned with finding the creative power that shapes literary works outside the narrow boundaries in which it has hitherto been located, as well as within those boundaries" (*Practicing New Historicism* 12).

Greenblatt speaks of the potent social energies encoded within the theatrical works, past their evanescent stagings and which circulate through circuitous channels. Proposing a set of abjurations upon which the New Historicist project rests, Greenblatt insists first that genius alone is by no means the sole origin of great art. Second, that no creation is to be understood as motiveless and no artifact as autonomous, hence neither are the artists dematerialized from the collective exchanges to which they have contributed nor are their imaginings de-ideologized.

Greenblatt insists, "art does not simply exist in all cultures; it is made up along with other products, practices, discourses of a given culture… as a rule: [that] there is very

little invention in culture" ("The Circulation of Social Energies" 503). In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, such an understanding of artistic production is indispensable. This "lateralization and institutionalization" of artistic production and its mediation through the demarcated zones (playhouses) and subjection to capitalist transactions and a number of other considerations linked to the entertainment industry manacled artistic production and defined its content. While the theatre was, literally, a sphere of artistic production that is "marked off from the outside world and licenced to operate as a distinct domain…its boundaries are highly permeable" (507).

Determining what could be staged from what could not was a perquisite for artistic creation that was primarily designed for consumption in an emergent capitalist culture. Even Shakespeare, whose works are now said to transcend spatial and geographic boundaries, was a shareholder and wrote from the vantage point of a playwright/investor in the joint-stock theatre company of the Globe.

The stage, thus, answerable both to the royal censor and to the marketplace, poured forth spectacles that were commodified and that audiences paid for in order to get entertained. With the theatricality firmly institutionalized and commodified, the public, thus, exercised a considerable degree of control over what ought to be staged from not, just as the crown controlled what could be staged from what could be censored. Furthermore, the English Elizabethan, Jacobean and Caroline stages were crucial meeting points for diverse social groups, as argues Walter Cohen, enacting various discursive and performance traditions, both highbrow and lowbrow, to elite as well as to popular tastes (*Drama of a Nation* 19). Alvin B.Kernan in "Shakespeare's and Jonson's View of Public Theatre Audiences" likewise acknowledges the potential of the emergent theatrical audience for shaping theatrical experiences and dictating to the

playwrights themes and ways of writing. According to Kernan, stage mass audiences were large and different, forming a cross-section of the population representing all classes. He insists upon the ways whereby the popular audience encouraged the playwrights to write more and what material they were much drawn into (192-93). Indeed, as shall be demonstrated in the next chapter, the playwrights' competition while working for different playing companies led them to consider such paradigms as reception and influence prior to composition. Robert Greene, whose play *Selimus* is our choice of the image of the Turk, chose his material after the success of Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine Plays*, capitalizing on their success and hoping that by presenting audiences with what they were more penchant towards his play will be followed by a sequel.

The writers were trying to provide parallel accounts satisfying the ethnic curiosity of audiences by dramatizing the customs and reports of alien peoples. The early modern playgoers, argues David McInnis in *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England,* were voracious consumers of voyage drama. "Mind travelling" is the collaborative experience that the playgoers sought to appease in commercial playhouses, resulting in a stage-travel that sought to simulate true travel experiences (1-2). This urge for the distant and the imaginative was accentuated by the histories of contact that have come to shape the popular imagination of Europeans in general and the English through Levantine trade.

Conclusion

The evolution of the precepts of Islam from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance in European consciousness does not follow a clear progressive trajectory of acceptance, nor does it clearly adhere to a set pattern. While the early crusades have maintained clear theological divisions and adversarial binaries, which marked the Middle Ages, Medieval times, should not be perceived as the dark moment of ignorance in opposition to an enlightened Renaissance, as often wrongly claimed. Renaissance Precepts of Islam, while admittedly more malleable than in previous periods, do not really form an amicable or fully tolerant attitude towards Muslims. Most of the enduring misrepresentations typical of the middle Ages and of confrontational attitudes permeate well into and are reproduced in a huge number of Renaissance texts.

The challenge in situating early modern renaissance attitudes to Islam lies exactly in the transitory nature of this era sandwiched between two epochs, the middle ages, and 18th c Enlightenment respectively, that are defined by their sweeping oppositions to Islam, and whose attitude is antagonistic and divisive. This difficulty however clears away, as we consider the geopolitical presence and role that the Muslims played in each period and the extent to which the Muslims took part in the military engagements and political affairs of the age. In other words, the Renaissance art is loaded with plenty of biases and stereotypes towards Muslims, which are also to be perpetuated later, precisely because they were sufficiently voiced in the Renaissance discursive productions and reiterated just enough to find perpetuation beyond this transitory age. The Renaissance however equally witnessed other lenient forms of contact with Islamic potentates that urged new ideologies to form, not necessarily replacing older repertoires of difference, but coexisting with those in an ambivalent set of attitudes. The theatre

was caught in between these two extremist attitudes, and the writers engaged in theatrical production mediated this oscillating nature towards ‘others’.

Chapter Two- Cultural Othering and Race before Race

Introduction

This chapter introduces some of the most notable early modern productions that imagined sexualities, and politicized the construction of 'others' bodies. There was a spectrum, in effect a nuanced array, of cultural texts, some related to anthropology, others to medicine, some to climatic sciences, to religious sermons, others yet to travel accounts and even trade chronicles and memoirs, that were produced during the15 th, 16th and early 17th centuries and that are considered by New Historicists as cogent cultural vehicles of European beliefs towards alien peoples and of their attempts to fathom their difference. Ordered into scriptural and non-scriptural prodcutions, these theories are immersed in an epistemological racial discourse, laying the foundations for a later sheer discourse of race.

Taken together, these texts comprise shifting theories, sometimes attempts at theories, of racial difference and appropriations of human and physiological attributes by an ideological array of discourses. A less exhaustive outlining is carried out with the aim of showing the versatility and assessing the impact of these theories on perceptions of 'others'. Interestingly, and in perfect accord with what New Historicists believe, some of these texts were old forms of thought rehearsed and reiterated under contemporaneous cultural praxis, borrowing old tropes of difference and contradistinction and enlivening them once more to serve contingent ideologies. The iteration of old tropes of difference, charged with discriminatory views and stereotypes, bolsters the belief that many early modern scholars hold, that much of the attributes assigned to alien bodies are but the accretion of fears of old antagonists which are being reshuffled and displaced to new threatening subjectivities. Demarcations of 'selfhood' and 'otherness' involved a varied set of figurations of difference, of which body

politics, the policing of domestic sexualities against Others' sexualities and linguistic figurations are tackled in this chapter.

I. The Non-Scriptural Traditions of Accounting for Racial Difference

> *It seems that whatever we perceive is organized into patterns for which we, the perceivers, are largely responsible. Perceiving is not a matter of passively allowing an organ—say of sight or hearing—to receive a ready-made impression from without… As perceivers we select from all the stimuli falling on our senses only those which interest us, and our interests are governed by a pattern-making tendency, sometimes called a schema… By and large anything we take note of is preselected and organized in the very act of perceiving. We share with other animals a kind of filtering mechanism which at first only lets in sensations we know how to use (*Mary Douglas *Purity and Danger)*

Chartered below are some of the most governing venues of racial difference that found ample manifestation in early modern thought. As will be demonstrated, these explanatory gateways are heirs to a protracted philosophical tradition that dates back as early as Greek times. Notions of selfhood and alterity were taken on by thinkers since the dawn of ages, and different frameworks of grounding one's sense of selfhood were devised. While the earliest attempts can hardly be filtered through purely scientific or biological terms, they remain nonetheless beginnings and analogous ways to the more stiffened forms that developed in the 18th century and which still find sufficient reverberations even to our days.

The frameworks, it is argued firmly, that were during the modern age resorted to in the course of racializing 'others' drew from a long line of auctores, books of said authority by leading scholars and thinkers in the tradition. The discipline of ontology which concerns itself with the study and nature of being is a highly derivative field of study. No single framework or theory popped up in full genius and originality out of

nowhere. Instead and similar to our argument about perceptions of Muslims, there has always been and always will be a repertoire of already rehearsed figurations of approaching others, which draws its impetus from revered books of authority, be those scriptural or non-scriptural, which will serve as the backbone for later figurations.

Of interest is also the nature of interdisciplinarity in the formation of these theories. While for example the theory of geohumourism first sprung from purely medicinal urges, it crystalized later to offer understandings of various ethnicities and races. Indeed, no field of study could purport to itself an enclosed and self-sufficient autonomy. The same applies to the understandings of polygenesis, which runs the course of centuries, and was to a reserved degree harped upon with caution prior to the early modern age because of its audacious assumptions which contradict religious understandings. In the early modern age, and along the large scale of mixture and minglings, the waning of religiosity and the overwhelming powers of nascent capitalist societies, such secular patterns of thought found more articulacy with the contingencies of the age.

While the early uses of these theories were mainly targeted at policing subjectivities and sexualities within European domains, against other subjectivities, that were more or less familiar to the Europeans by way of proximity, the early modern age of exploration changed the picture. With the mania of far-fetched explorative campaigns which dominated the 15th and 16th centuries, and the contact histories with strikingly different others, those theories were harnessed under the new pressures, but with more sharpened attitudes of differentiation. The English, for example, have for ages been setting themselves against the Irish or the Scottish, entertaining thus, notions of differentiation and models which, many scholars argued, will later be reshuffled and rerouted to other

threatening “others”. The 15th and 16th centuries in Europe in general and England specifically underwent an ordeal of hectic changes, with new understandings of spatialities and new mappings of cartography upon the discovery and settlements in the new world(s) discovered in the Americas, and the old worlds contested upon for imperial claims.

I.1. The Scientific Regionally Inflected Humouralism

This understanding is an extension of a long tradition of classical, medieval, and early modern texts which drew on climatic explanations of colour and disposition, articulated coherently in what is labelled humouralism or the humoural theory. This pathological theory dates back to the classical Greek physician, Hippocrates (460 – c. 370 BC), dubbed the father of medicine, who is accredited for devising the theory of the four humours, and whose intellectual corpus proved to be a powerful force in the field of medicine. Later commentators of his thought, however, have stressed the pertinence of his works to ethnology and anthropology, in that they are as much concerned about the bodily composition and its balance as they are about dividing people into various groups. Obviously, and since this study seeks to outline the various forms of cultural othering(s), it is with the ethnological and anthropological dimensions of this theory that I will be concerned.

Premised on the idea that bodies are constituted of four substances or humors (blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile) and that particular climates and environments have particular effects on these humours, bodily differences and pathological anomalies were thus attributed to imbalances caused by climate, geographical location and diet. In other words, regional and hence climatic factors, hold the advocates of this theory, alter the

balance of the bodies of the inhabitants, leading thus to the creation of different types, some needless to say considered more temperate or balanced than others. Having thus established pseudo-medical, biological understandings of human bodies, pathologies, and of differences in accordance with geographical locations and climates, Hippocrates' principles were to infiltrate the works of many subsequent classical philosophers, physicians and scholars.

Our interest in humouralism lies not in its medical dimension as much as in engendering taxonomic, ethnological hierarchies that were synthesized and negotiated across centuries. [17] As Gail Kern Paster's stresses that humoural discourses are never "socially neutral, but deeply inflected with narratives of gender and class distinctions" (qtd.in Mary Floyd Wilson *Race and Ethnicity in Early Modern Drama* 12). It is thereby, in this same ideological model of understanding humoralism and differences that this work is structured. Indeed, early modern transmissions of Humoralist discourse accentuated the divides between peoples, creating stereotypes that still live with us today.

Wilson persuasively demonstrates how early modern versions of, what she prefers to call, "Geohomouralism", negotiated and mutated, were often charged with ideologically ethnical purposes (23). By deeming sexuality the ultimate marker of southern hot

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[17] Some notable names that enriched this tradition of humouralism include the 2nd century CE physician Galen of Pergamum who further synthesized the Hippocritic basic claim elaborating it in what was deemed as the basis of European medicine during the Renaissance; Aristotle. In the Muslim world names who adopted and systematized this theory include al-Rāzī (Rhazes) and Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) in the 7th and 8th centuries. Hunayn ibn Ishāq (Johannitius), al-Majūsī (Haly Abbas) and the Cordoban Ibn Rushd (Averroës) created the version of Galenic medicine that dominated medieval and early modern Europe (Rebecca Earle chapter –"Humoralism and the Colonial Body the body of the conquistador").

climates and its inhabitants, that is, in the intemperate sense, a stubborn association of heat to sexual excesses was emphasized and swept across many early modern homouralist texts. It is crucially important, for scholarship engaged in early modern ethnography and constructions of differences, argues Wilson, to recognize and acknowledge the tenacious imposed role of sexuality in early modern geohumouralism, then to unsettle this long-presumed unshakable link (23). Sexuality, she further maintains, was the product of the moment; it was “made essential to the racializing process” (24), and she cogently backs up her argument by declaring that the classical and early medieval texts of humouralism never posited sexuality as the norm whereby to assess geographical and hence ethnical differences of peoples, “courage or wit [she stresses] *not sexuality* tended to be the indices of peoples’ predominant temperaments” (24). Sexual geo-climatic stereotyping during the early modern era should thus be duly understood as an ideological impulse.

Humouralism resurfaced again during the early modern age and was an entrenching and prevailing mode of understanding ethnic, somatic, and behavioral differences. Furthermore, the knowledge and assumptions drawn from this theory governed the formation of regional identities and was the predominant schema of early modern ethnography. What is peculiar of this theory in early modern Europe is that it was gradually but surely being reshuffled under new pressures of trade, mixture, and explorations. The notion for example that the African heat burns and wastes humours making the body cool and dry, and that contrarily, the cold air of northern regions “breedeth humours of the bodye… [the] vapours and spirites be smitten inward, [and] makes hotter within…” as expressed here in the sixteenth century encyclopedia *Batman Uppon Bartholome,* has been maintained from Aristotle Galen, Vitruvius, Pliny to

Albertus Magnus to Jean Bodin (Wilson 2). The works of the latter were particularly influential for the English.

Jean Bodin (1530–96), a French jurist and political philosopher, produced in 1566 his volume *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History,* which is regarded as a pivotal early modern work that discerned foreign bodies. His *Method for the Easy Comprehension of History* (published in Latin) is regarded by some scholars to have encapsulated the first coherent articulation of modern categories of race, taking into account, as has been said, that he often drew on older thinkers, negotiating and perpetuating the legacy of humouralism. He offers a way of substantiating Aristotle's claim which he cites, that nature makes certain people slaves" (Burton and Loomba, *Race in Early Modern England* 94). Bodin employs in his history an antiquated logic in assigning differences amongst peoples, adopting the humoral theory and reassigning its uses. Visibly clear in his work, the most dominant trope in the construction of racial difference is attributed to degeneracy. Bodin used this theory to attribute varying dispositions to particular groups of people as he contends that "Southerners abound in black bile, which subsides like lees to the bottom when the humors have been drawn out by the heat of the sun and increases more and more through emotions, so that those who are mentally constituted in this manner are plainly implacable" (102). Accordingly, southerners are regarded to be more driven towards jealousy, sin, lust, and fornication than their northern counterparts purportedly as a consequence of climatic and environmental conditions.

Furthermore, Bodin, in the logic of classical humouralism, is also accredited for attributing to the Southerners inhabiting Africa devious sexual practices. He argues that due to their cool and dry disposition (dominated by black vile), they are seized by

frenzy and driven towards hideous sexual excesses that even amount to “promiscuous coition of men and animals, wherefore the regions of Africa produce for us so many monsters” (105). According to his climatic homouralism, the southerners’ skins are scorched dark and their sexual drives are indelibly uncontrollable and aberrant; that “they might sin more freely for the sake of pleasure, because self-control was difficult, particularly when plunging into lust, they gave themselves over to horrible excesses” (105).

Bodin’s approach in his *History* is avowedly derivative from a long and layered tradition of ontologizing human difference, and his work, widely influential and well received during his time, was yet to trigger subsequent studies in the said tradition. Mary Floyd Wilson stresses that early modern thinkers “negotiated and synthesized this revered and authoritative knowledge for their own ethnological purposes”, in tandem with explorations and slave trade (23).

I.2. The Secular Theory of Polygenesis

While Bodin’s understanding of racial differences rested mainly upon climatic and environmental influences and Humouralism, there (re)surfarced in the premodern era another epistemic framework which claimed to account for the bodily, sexual, and cultural differences of some alien subjectivities. The theory of polygenesis or polygenism as opposed to monogenesis, the belief that all mankind are derived from Adam, sustains the assumption that all men might not have descended from the same and one biblical patriarch, attributing thus separate origins to separate human groups. This theory had its first expression with the 16th-century Italian philosopher Lucilio Vanini (1558-1619), a radical freethinker and libertine, who maintains that “the Native

Americans had a separate and natural origin, that they were earth-born rather than divinely created, let alone descended from Adam" (Qtd.in Smith Justin.E 6).

These polygenist speculations were by no means peculiar to the early modern era; as such theological debates have existed for ages. Along with the ubiquitous campaigns of discovery and exploration, the newly discovered lands provided a strong incentive for the polygenetic corpus of knowledge to be conjured up once more (Smith 92). Challenging the biblical script, this proposed theory attempted to explain the different racial categories, by assigning to some, the Europeans, a human nature that is derivative of divine creation, and immersing the rest in natural laws, hence denying them any divinely human nature.

New world inhabitants and Africans were cataloged as less than humans, that is as primitive races that were pre-Adamite or post-Adamite, in either case, regarded as creatures engendered from earth or descended from apes or other beasts. The legacy of such theory was yet to undergo further revision and consolidation in the next two centuries and to be marshaled by apologetics of racial regimes in justifying conquests, mass killings, and subjugations of peoples around the globe, whose nature was argued to be animalistic, monstrous and degenerate. [18] to put it somewhat crudely, what the strata of premodern polygenetic accounts of racial difference were foregrounding was a

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[18]John Locke argues a century after Vanini that sub-Saharan Africans are the product of long, promiscuous hybridism with apes, he is revisiting a Vaninian theme, promoting the non-separateness of human beings from the rest of living nature (Justin E Smith). For more premodern supporters of the doctrine of polygenesis, see Paracelsus, Bruno, Whitaker, Boyle, and Hale in Jonathan Burton and Ania Loomba's co-authored *Race in early Modern England a Documentary Campanion.*

ferocious violation of deeply rooted beliefs that "all human beings are descended from Adam, and that the proper reading of scripture leaves no opening for any humanoid yet nonhuman first parents of different races" (Smith 95).

Another invaluable exponent of the theory of polygenism in the 16th century is the Italian astronomer and libertine philosopher Giordano Bruno (1548-1600), who is said to have visited England and published many books there. Bruno proclaims in the passage below that the diverse races that the Renaissance came into contact with, cannot possibly be the offspring of a single progenitor, as he clearly categorizes them according to a certain hierarchy, positing all that contrasts with the white European man, as degenerate and even monstrous. The following excerpt is taken from his work *De Immenso et Innumerabilibus*

For of many colours

Are the species of men, and the black race

Of the Ethiopians, and the yellow offspring of America,

And that which lies hidden in the caves of Neptune,

And the Pygmies always shut up in the hills,

Inhabitants of the veins of the earth, and custodians

Of the mines, and the ***gigantic monsters of the South*****,**

Cannot be traced to the same descent, nor are they sprung

From the generative force *of a single progenitor.*

Every island everywhere can give a beginning to things,

Although the same form is not preserved everywhere the same

For one species flourishes in one place, another in another. (Emphasis added)

(Qtd.in Burton and Loomba, *Race In Early Modern England* 129)

In this regard, Smith argues that the polygenetic dogma of accounting for racial differences initiated “a thoroughgoing naturalism about humanity’s origins and connection to the rest of the natural world” (6). Advocates of this theory were in fact creating taxonomic divides among creations, not only believing in multiple origins and that some humans could not possibly be the posterity of Adam and Eve, but more perniciously, holding that Barbarians (sub-Saharan Africans, Native Americans, and other peoples) are fortuitously generated from the earth, and hence that they fall below some creations (subhumans) that are engendered through sexual practices. The offspring of this nature-bound mode of creation, said to be responsible for engendering Barbarians, adheres hence, in their view, to no set species’ code of development, that these peoples just come into being perchance and imperfect (93).

These polygenetic accounts of humanity were thus nonchalantly ushering a naturalistic understanding of human diversity fostering beliefs, yet to crystalize, that Europeans and Africans are, borrowing Voltaire’s words “ entirely different races”, thus joining “the chorus of all the wishful thinkers with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo of the institution of slavery” (95). This yields a detriment account of human diversity whereby explanations of separate origins, and of their dispersion in far flung islands and lands, is reduced to a spontaneous, “autochthonous,” in smith’s words, mode of creation, that is to say, springing from the depths of the earth through some kind of mechanism similar to putrefaction.

Shakespeare's conceptualization and description of Caliban's difference, to state just an example, is closely attached to this naturalist model of reducing human beings to sub-humanity. Indeed, the next two centuries were yet to witness abominable reverberations to this said theory with such notable names as Voltaire, John Locke, Francis Bacon, and ultimately Charles Darwin.

II. Policing Sexualities and Cultural Stagnation

The early modern age was subject to heavy restructurings of beliefs and figurations of difference articulated in a wide range of discourses. The plethora of European discursive formations as well as practices during the early modern era, no matter what explanatory logic was adopted, tended to regard the foreign humans they encountered as rife with inequalities. This gave rise to an overload of texts that tried to account for the origins of non-Europeans, for their different human morphologies as well as for their sexual tendencies. Notwithstanding the dominant trope and the alleged appropriate explanatory gateway[19], taken collectively, expresses Jonathon Burton, these practices and discourses "reveal the torturous process through which religious and environmental mappings of difference were progressively edged out, identity 'implanted' in the body and intimate corporeal practices invested with special significance" (The *Routledge History of Sex and the Body* 7).

Pan-European discursive formations, aesthetic, and supposedly real mappings of difference reveal just the extent to which it would be completely faulty to draw

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[19] Physiognomic, morphological, natural manners, society mores, a survey of body parts, an account of climatic conditions among a number of other modes that were resorted to in fathoming ethnological and racial differences.

borderlines in terms of thinking and perceiving. Regardless of national differences, these texts share in common a certain way of viewing and of representing otherness, which is but the cumulative outcome of deeply-rooted western traditions, dating back to the Greco-Roman philosophies. Despite the linguistic and national diversities of these productions, and even of the nature of these texts, one is prompted to ask whether there exists a pattern, even if loose, through which, figurations of racial differences were conducted? This, in turn, prompts another question, what shared tropes and what stereotypes, were deemed more lucid and threatening than others?

II.1. Sexual Abberance and Racial Degeneracy

As this study is premised on the conviction that during this age, the aesthetic was so immersed in the real workings of culture, that ideological workings are hence indelible traces in all forms of discourse, it follows then that the aesthetic, stage, and dramaturgical in our case, is no less implicated in the manifest, overwhelming mode generated by the perception and conception of different subjectivities. To view those others, in overwhelmingly most reports, as devious from dictated norms and as thus inclined towards vices of both body and mind; that they are incarnations of inferiority and degeneracy needs to be further analyzed.

The reiterated motifs and the repetitions, it is claimed, reveal much about the beholder than they do about the represented. The cultural materialist Alan Sinfield pointedly asserts that "It is axiomatic in cultural materialism that the topics to which a culture obsessively returns…are those about which it is most uncertain and insecure" (*Shakespeare, Authority and Sexuality* 12). The patterns generated out of culsters of discursive formations are, in this sense, indices to the culture which brought them forth.

That there was a collective impetus from thinkers and writers of varying sectors in the early modern culture engaged in endeavors of differentiating others is symptomatic of the insecurity that the English were experiencing as a corollary to loads of scrambled data about other peoples.

Degeneracy constitutes a crucial element in racialized discourses that can be detected through the myriad texts of the age. As maritime exploration grew heavy and cross cultural encounters abounded, new paradigms of confrontation with others and of ordering the flood of information coming from these new worlds had to be devised. Degeneracy was one of the important markers attached to non-Westerners whereby western notions of civility and progress were established and differences rationalized.

Sexual degeneracy of the other races occupied a strong stance in most early modern discourses of difference and constitutes a dire marker of cultural stagnation. Most travel accounts of this period gave detailed accounts of the different sexual practices of the peoples they confronted, linking these practices to skin colour, to their different bodies, to inveterate religious prejudices. To cite one example of many, the Dutch trader and explorer Pieter de Marees' *A Description and Historicall Declaration of the Golden Kingdome of Guinea* (1604) attests to African men's 'great privy members, of their nakedness and connects those to lust and lack of civility respectively (qtd.in Burton and Loomba, *Race in Early Modern England* 211).

Such conceptualization of difference which holds that pleasure and sexuality were organized differently, is in fact but a corollary of previous taxonomies imposed on others; the categorization of alien peoples as subhuman and somatically inferior, or through their cultural mores also meant scrutinizing their bodily differences and harshly

judging their sexualities. Jonathan Burthon expresses this shrewdly as he remarks that "if sexual 'degeneracy' was a marker of cultural stagnation, it could also be used to assert the 'backwardness' of a race of people. And in turn, that backwardness could reciprocally suggest the 'degeneracy' of race (*the Routledge History of Sex and the Body* 502).

Understanding bodies in early modern times, namely humoral and climatic and later scriptural models, were believed to produce uncontrollable sexualities and to be the cause for abnormalities. Bodin's belief, to cite just one example in a full-fledged tradition of the like, that southerners are penchant towards vices of the body and the soul was an extension to a history of differentiation which regarded foreign people's differences as resulting from their fluctuating bodily compositions. Environmental theories had an equal share in discriminating others and in racializing bodies, judging non-western sexualities, and ultimately in policing western sexualities.

Non-western sexualities were thus understood in the light of contesting reasoning models, the most appropriate to this study have been chartered above. The stereotypes surrounding non- European bodies and sexualities are in fact an amalgam of various explanatory models, primitiveness, and apishness, for example, is an outcome of polygenetic understandings, while sexual excesses and aberrations are predominantly traced back to the later scriptural explanations of skin colour. At other times the same stereotype could be the outcome of more than a single mode of explanation, layered and stubborn, and the culmination of more than a discriminatory explanatory practice.

Scholarship engaged with early modern views of others that attempts to understand the stereotypes brought to bear upon them; it is thus held, needs to amount to a process

similar to that of a decoction so as to duly understand each stereotype. Lust, to take one example, is a trait commonly attributed to Turks, Africans, Indians, Amerindians; the derivative of such a stereotype differs in each figure, and in the one figure it can be the outcome of conflicting racialized ideologies. Thus Turkish lust is looked upon from a position of fear and anxiety, involving such paradigms as emulation and mimesis alongside disavowal; Sub-Saharan understanding of lust is rather linked through bodily differences, skin colour, and scriptural interpretations and so on. Each figure needs to be justly historicized, and each stereotype rightly understood. Sex and race are thus inextricably bound together, just as are Western sexualities and racist sexualities.

Degeneracy, hence: physical, sexual, and moral was directly read through the physical attributes and differences of ‘others’. An entrenched trope in the representation of ‘others’, it also served as a medium of establishing western civility and progress. The physical attributes of Africans, namely their phenotypically visible skin colour, were believed in many cases to be either due to humoral imbalances, in others to some religious curse, in either case at the origin for their so-called (im)morality, which leads them to degenerate sexually and to become prone to non-conforming sexual practices.

Attributes such as immoral, fornicate, lascivious, bestial, and primitive, and reduced to creatures were at the core of the conceptualization of the African subject as animalistic. Sexual degeneracy, stresses Jonathan Burton, was considered a clear marker of cultural stagnation, which in turn justifies the backwardness of a given race. Subjectification and later governance seemed a natural outcome of this differentiating and sexualizing/racializing proceeding. Burton states that “once the stagnation of culture was established it was logical to cite the practices and mores of that place as expressions of degeneracy. From there could proceed a cycle of mutual recursion where

sexual practices might attest to racial degeneracy, which in turn would verify sexual aberrance, which then further substantiated racial degeneracy, and so on" (503).

II.2. Others' Sexualities, Western Sexualities, and Body Politics

Such construction of the other's body and sexuality was always bound to a construction of the Western European man. Carmen Nocentelli avers that "the intensified scrutiny brought to bear on the private parts and private lives of non-European peoples coincided with a reorganization of erotic life within Europe itself" (7). That is to say, that there was a dynamic of contradistinction aimed at regulating sexuality in Europe through juxtaposition to the others' sexualities. Ann Laura Stoler, Anne McClintock, and Philip Howell to name just a few have persuasively argued that the development of sexual discourses within Europe cannot be properly charted without reference to the racialized contexts created by overseas expansion.

With the flux of European cross-cultural encounters to the flunks of the unknown world, and to sub-Saharan Africa specifically, there emerged new paradigms, needless to say, of interaction and ultimately of perception and representation. Various forms of discourse: sermons, travelogues, literary texts, and historical chronicles engendered a nexus of sexuality and body politics in the aim of construing, discerning and ultimately discriminating the genealogy of foreign bodies. What is detected in most of these discursive formations is a conspicuous penchant towards polarization and the creations of various divides that informed European understanding. A plethora of ideologies that attempted to conceptualize difference were at work, some linked to religion and skin colour as has been discussed earlier, or to location, gender, rank, and culture and ultimately all encapsulated in the stubborn notion of race.

Non-Europeans were imagined to possess non-normative traits and non-conforming sexualities. Many devious practices were described and condemned in travel accounts, memoirs and sermons, and through which several dichotomies were created. Within these descriptions is concentrated the perception of these new alien lands and their peoples as primitive, savage, deviant, and degenerate. "The strangeness of foreign lands and people was expressed in terms of departure from normative gender roles and sexual behaviour", maintains Loomba (Shakespeare *Race and Colonialism* 31).

Burton holds that there existed a complex matrix of discerning foreign bodies, previously used against different sexualities in Europe but later rerouted to Non-Europeans. Such transferral of traits was gradually settling Europeans as normative and systematically discerning non-European bodies and sexualities as intemperate and aberrant (501). Formations of these early modern notions of sexual difference served the later racial regimes that justified the ensuing military conquests. By constructing foreign bodies as alarmingly different and by imagining their sexualities as laden with excesses and as lacking moderation and restraint, these perceptions were actually engendering a crude binaristic system that posits the European as bodily and hence culturally more superior and their African counterparts as bodily and culturally degenerate. So what forms of sexual aberrations were Africans and Non-Europeans in general believed to possess?

In her Landmark study *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity*, Carmen Nocentelli cogently probes early modern views and the ways through which perceptions of sexual propriety entailed attributions of racial difference, which in turn were to affect the boundaries of normative sexuality. Aligning herself with the wave of scholars and new historicists who resisted the propensity to regard

sexual ideologies as if they emerged “fully formed, from within Europe alone”, she rather contends that European encounters at the wake of the expansionist era “deeply inflected the ways in which the West came to define what was acceptable in matters of eros.” (5). She joins the endeavour chartered by the postcolonial historian Dipesh Chakrabarty in his work *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought* to decenter or to provincialize Europe, and to disengage with European Western-made-universal and indispensable intellectual tradition, be that in the figure of the human or that of reason or of political modernity, that were forged in 18th c Europe and that profuse into the human sciences (6). [20]

This emphasis on reading race and sexuality together, as imbricated and as mutually transformative and constitutive rather than as autonomous or analogous analytic domains reoriented the understanding of the era and of racial and sexual ideologies. In a similar manner to Dipesh, the gender theorist Judith Butler, in the 1990s urged scholars engaged in studying race, sexuality and sexual difference to move away from the paradigms of juxtaposing them, and to seek instead to probe their relation to one

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[20] Dipesh expresses that an entity called the “European intellectual tradition” which stretches back to the ancient Greeks is in effect but “a fabrication of relatively recent European history” (8), which aims to make the tradition seem unbroken. He further explains that almost all social sciences are immersed in the said tradition. He argues that the statement “first in the West, and then elsewhere”, or originating in one place (Europe) and then spreading outside, posited the West as the centre and the rest as the delayed periphery which later legitimated the idea of civilization; “Europe was described as the site of the first occurrence of capitalism, modernity, or Enlightenment” (8). The rest of the world (India and Africa mainly) had yet to spend some historical time of development and civilization (ie colonial rule) to be ready for such tasks as self-government, appropriating them hence in what Dipesh calls “the imaginary waiting room of history”; that these colonized nations must learn the art of waiting, which he argues is the realization of the “not yet” of historicism. That some people were hence, according to this deeply rooted tradition, less modern (not yet) than others and hence that they are in need of a period of preparation and waiting before they could be fully recognized as politically modern enough for self- government.

another, a considerable body of scholarship was charted after her endeavour (Qtd.in Nocentelli 5).

Race during this era was less a crystallized notion built upon clear biological differences like during the 19th c, but more of a locus of cultural practices that are contingent on the historical moment and context conditioned, but that still derives from a long tradition of differentiation. These cultural practices were embodied in various discursive formations ranging from "religious affiliations, cultural habitus, geographical origin, and humoral composition" (Nocentelli 6). Similar to a large and still growing number of revisionist scholars, Nocentelli emphatically argues that race, as an identitarian category, was not simply concomitant to the imperialist regimes of the 18th and 19th centuries, that it did not pop up suddenly; instead modern racial discourses are the result of accretion of conceptual repertoires, vocabularies, and imaginings from previous centuries.

The same kind of historical accretion and overlay mechanism applies to the construction of modern sexuality. Indeed, many scholars are drawing attention to the recyclings and re-ascriptions of earlier tropes and conceptions of difference that are so laden with stereotypes and rehearsed once more to the historical status quo. The early modern era then attests to a crucial period in which much of the epistemological and vocabulary repertoires of difference: sexual, bodily religious, and ultimately racial, were developed and heightened conterminously with the large and unprecedented scale of exploration and territorial expansions.

Ever since Michel Foucault published his seminal work *History of Sexuality* (1976), confining the development of sexuality mainly to Europe and saying very little indeed

about sexual practices outside of it, many scholars deemed his study reductionist in that it seeks to construe European sexual discourses, and hence formation, exactly during the time span of expansionism. Eurocentric in its nature, and by implication negligent to the immense role that the rest of the colonized world was to play in engendering Europeans sexualities, Foucault's "tunnel vision" is deemed anachronistic and limited and hence falls short to account for the coarticulation of both the west and the non-west in foregrounding the former's and imagining the latter's sexualities.

Several authors thus have called into question Foucault's paradigm finding it implausible and historically unfeasible. "One of the most provocative aspects of recent scholarship on the sexual politics of empire has been to connect peripheries and metropoles together, thus challenging the Eurocentric purview of Foucault" (8) shrewdly remarks Nocentelli. She then embarks to explain that "the development of sexual discourses within Europe cannot be properly charted without reference to the racialized contexts created by overseas expansion" (9). Many scholars have debated Foucault's paradigm of reading European sexualities. Ann Laura Stoler in her book *Race and the Education of Desire* inquires as to why is the colonial context inexistent in Foucault's *History of Sexuality* and she challenges his tunnel vision and reinstates, based on a thorough historical and analytical analysis, the due importance played by the rest of the world in fashioning Western sexualities. She argues that Foucault's perspective elided a field of knowledge "that provided the contrast for what a healthy, vigorous, bourgeois body was all about" (7); that affirmations of this same bourgeois Self could not be achieved nor disentangled from the racialized contexts in which it was secured.

Schemata of race and sexuality are symbiotically tied together, just as are western sexualities and non-western sexualities. The coarticulation existent amongst these concepts cannot be dismissed and scholarship interested in the study of cultural othering needs to approach westerners' identity formations as imbricated in forms of differentiating and racialized discourses. The west did not normalize standards and norms in seclusion, their processes intersected with their imaginings of other peoples, and the verdicts of their lives, habitus, bodies, and sexualities as non-normative.

II.3 Linguistic Divides: Writing/Language and the Encounter with the Other

European early modern encounters with others and their conception of them equally involved figurations of linguistic differences. Many scholars have stressed the importance of language in the ontologization of race. The discourse of travel, which is deemed an essential medium and vehicle of Europeans' first contacts with peoples of the newly discovered lands, is rife with descriptions of the languages and oral traditions of alien peoples. More importantly, the strength of this form of discourse, declares Stephen Greenblatt "lies in the shock of the unfamiliar, the provocation of an intense curiosity, the local excitement of discontinuous wonders" (*Marvellous Possessions* 2).

Most chroniclers of these voyages states Greenblatt adopted the technique of the anecdote, which, in deploying they immersed in lies; "Few of them *steady* liars, as it were, like Mandeville, but frequent and cunning liars nonetheless, whose position virtually required the strategic manipulation and distortion and outright suppression of the truth" (7). The observations of travelogues were far from being detached assessments of difference, in a truthful scientific manner, but were instead relational,

local and historically contingent, whose manifest interest was not knowledge of the other but practice upon him, generated not through rationalizing but imagining and figurations (12-13).

The chroniclers in the new world, very few of them historiographers, engaged in rationalization with linguistic differences as they sought to write themselves as contentious imperial subjects. Conceptualizing linguistic differences is part of the discriminatory practices as integral as configurations of bodily and corporeal differences. The conquistadors' agency in scripting down their observations in the new world was considered as a dire marker of superiority. The indigenous people's bemusement of the written letters and their inability to conceive of the written language as a means of communication led the settlers to manipulate the natives into believing that they were enlightened civilizers. The role of language in conquests, of the written word, in communication and documentation resulted in engaged representations and unscientific assessments of the other. The interest of these representations was not an attempt to know, understand and communicate with the other, but to practice power upon him, as stresses Greenblatt in Marvellous Possessions and "the principal faculty involved in generating these representations is not reason but imagination" (12-13).

Those representational practices were in short ideologically charged. In "a lettered empire", Barbara Fuchs touches upon the role of language in the Conquista and cites an example of distortion that I find will illustrate best my point. In conversing with the natives during the conquest of Peru, the Spanish inquired form the natives of their land's name. The answer of the indigenous, misunderstood and ignored, led them to distortingly name it Peru. The Spanish ignorance in context did not inhibit them from assigning the territory a wrong appellation whose very strength, as stresses Fuchs, is

that "the incorrect name sticks" (79). The Christians, stresses Fuchs, "understood what they wanted to understand, supposing the Indian had understood them and had replied …as if they had been conversing in Spanish" (79). If this instance, of which there were many indeed, highlights the role of communication, or the lack and distortion thereof, in practicing power over the other's very being and land, then how can one ever suppose that European representations tell us something about the peoples purportedly sought to be represented. Indeed, Stephen Greenblatt puts it best as he emphasizes that "we can be certain only that European representations of the New World tell us something about the European practice of representation" (*Marvellous Possessions* 7), a practice so ideologically manacled, and not in any instance about the represented. The representations thus amount to interpretive and imaginative accounts that exert a power of perspective.

The efficacy of writing in the conquest is no less important than communicative language. The natives' confusion in conceptualizing and in understanding the 'written word' had led many of them to assume that the letters had certain magic of telling. Unable to understand how the letter functioned, the natives thought that these letters were like spies that report the facts. The letter's efficacy as a long-distance instrument of control was thus exercised upon the natives' ignorance. The linguistic superiority served as a weapon for the settlers in controlling their subordinates.

Samuel Purchas' description of what characterized the European white man over his other counterpart was taken by many writers of the age as a maxim and that the advantage of writing of White Europeans allowed them credence and agency in the worlds they subjugated later. This amazing advantage of perpetuation and of knowledge and reproduction, especially as espoused with the invention of the printed word, which

by the high time of English explorations was very diffuse in many European countries, served as the most effective weapon that Westerners relied upon and used to represent themselves and to undertake the task on behalf of others. In this vein Samuel Purchas states that “God hath added herein a further grace, that as Men by the former exceed Beasts, so hereby one man may excel another; and amongst Men, some are accounted Civill, and more both Sociable and Religious, by the Use of letters and Writing, which others wanting are esteemed Brutish, Savage, Barbarous.' (Qtd.in Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions* 10).

III.The Scriptural Non-Scientific Tradition of Accounting for Racial Difference

When European travellers encountered the peculiar phenotypical blackness of west Africans at the wake of explorations, they were puzzled and found their striking skin colour difficult to fathom in their prevailing physiological theories; that there also existed peoples in other regions and in parallel latitudes, but whose skins were nonetheless way lighter (the Indians) cast strong doubts on the most convened upon models of climatic and geographical explanations of skin colour. This resultant scepticism, stresses Mary Floyd Wilson, was intensified with the rise of other path-breaking scientific methods mostly the inductive empiricism of Francis Bacon.

The intrinsic, indelible peculiarity of black skin then proved to be challenging to accommodate following classical natural philosophy which regards the body in constant flux. This subsequently led many writers to regard it as a mysterious phenomenon, beyond scientific explanatory modes, “There is no question that black skin becomes a scientific problem during this period, and once conceived as a mystery, it is the

fundamentally *non-scientific* "Curse of Ham" which then emerges as an explanation of its origins and significance" (Wilson 5).

The visible inadequacy of humourism, as scientific discourse, to account for blackness and the fixation of the African body, caused a conceptual shift, a recourse to the scriptural text for possible answers. The suggestion that the African black skin was a bodily affliction due to some biblical curse upon an entire race, marking them hence as fundamentally different and inferior to the Europeans, seemed more plausible, stresses Rebecca Earle, than explanations linked to the long-held workings of humourism; "a number of scholars have therefore pointed to this association as an important step in the racialisation of the African body" (192).

Rebeca Earle further clarifies that the defining trait of humoral discourses in regarding bodies was that they are flexible and prone to change under certain conditions. She highlights that the belief that the African body was less mutable, whether expressed through the idea that the African complexion was particularly robust or through the notion that dark skin reflected a divine curse, meshed well with the roles which most Africans were expected to perform in colonial society (199). This highly racialized association of blackness and a said curse, explores the historian Benjamin Braude, was invented in this early modern era.

The historian Benjamin Braude has shown that the association between a distinctive African body and the curse of Ham developed in the early modern era. The Bible itself makes no connection between Noah's curse and dark skin neither does it designate clear-cut inhabited spaces for different progenies, nor did Europeans prior to about 1400 posit any consistent link between the curse of Ham, dark skin and Africa, which was, in

any case, a poorly conceptualised location. The discursive formations that ensued during the 15th and 16th centuries were slowly and perniciously altering understandings of differencs based on manipulated interpretations of the religious script.

III.1 The Naochic Dogma

The following excerpt taken from the book of Genesis contains Noah and Ham's story which, as will be explained further, proved to be very contesting,

20 Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded[a] to plant a vineyard. **21** When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and lay uncovered inside his tent. **22** Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father naked and told his two brothers outside. **23** But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it across their shoulders; then they walked in backward and covered their father's naked body. Their faces were turned the other way so that they would not see their father naked.

24 When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him, **25** he said,

"Cursed be Canaan!
The lowest of slaves
will he be to his brothers."

26 He also said,

"Praise be to the LORD, the God of Shem!
May Canaan be the slave of Shem.
27 May God extend Japheth's[b] territory;
may Japheth live in the tents of Shem,
and may Canaan be the slave of Japheth.

Genesis 9:20-27 New International Version (NIV)

The tale of Noah’s curse upon the lineage of his son Ham is widely debated in exegesis, history and literary criticism for the resonance it bears to the construction of the ideologies of race. The way this tale from Genesis 9:20-27 has come to be interpreted in western cultures and how it has been implemented in depictions of otherness and difference is a key element to understanding the West’s identity politics and their perception of the other. This is not to assume of course that all western discourse adheres to its norm, but to demonstrate that the remnants of this tale and its most manifest interpretation are strongly present in the history of racial attitudes that marks renaissance art.

A multitude of revisionist scholars and historians have construed Noah’s tale and its interpretation, deeming it central to western views of otherness and to the long history of servitude as inextricably linked to blackness and inferiority. Felicia R. Lee in *From Noah's Curse to Slavery's Rationale* shrewdly demonstrates the role of this enigmatic tale in fostering stubborn and complex origins to the concept of race. What has led people to view themselves as racially segmented? The biblical account was not described in sheer racial or somatic terms as can clearly be seen in the extract from the book of Genesis.

Across centuries, however, different interpretations attributed to the story racist views mainly perceiving Ham as black. This division alongside the corporal reality of Ham has come to constitute a traveling trope in literature and is at the origin of the construction of the idea of race and of its attached issue of servitude. It has been of paramount importance to historians probing the implications of race and slavery, especially in regards to the long and notorious American slave trade.

Noah's curse upon the offspring of Ham: Canaan was manipulated to justify the later servitude of certain peoples, who were said to be the rightful lineage of Ham and his son. Bewildering and long debated in this tale is the fact that the curse was exacted upon Canaan and not Ham who was said to have committed the transgression of beholding his father naked. Even more unsettling is the later association of Ham with blackness, the issue that has evoked the intrigue and questioning of many scholars. In this vein, the historian David M. Goldenberg in his ground-breaking book *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity and Islam* contends that the association of the word Ham with "darkness, black and heat" was a result of a misreading of Hebrew and other Semitic languages.

Myriad speculations concerning the nature of Ham's sin arose. Many speculate that the sexual transgression that Ham committed was more grievous than just contemplating his father's naked body, for the penalty was a serious double curse targeted to the Canaanites who had to be subjugated to servitude. Many scholars have debated Ham's act to his Father Noah in the tent. Some have suggested the possibility of rape. Benjamin Braude in *Ham and Noah: Sexuality Servitudinism and Ethnicity* enlists various possibilities to the episode of Noah and Ham in the tent. Basing his arguments on a range of sources: Mesopotamian tablets, intra-biblical exegesis, obliquely the earliest expansions of a biblical story, as well as rabbinic and patristic comments, Braude maintains that what was done to Noah was some kind of sexual violence ranging from anal intercourse to rape to castration to incest. Other critics have

argued that "Seeing One's parent's nudity" in Genesis has been mentioned in a couple of instances, connoting to sexual intimacy and at times even to incest or rape[21].

Familial public nudity was viewed as a sexual license that is emblematic of shame and disgrace and that undermines dignity and honour. Ham's act, debatable and ambiguous as it proved to be interpreted, became "the foundation myth for collective degradation, conventionally trotted out as God's reason for condemning generations of dark-skinned peoples from Africa to slavery," says Braude for the Yale conference (qtd.in Felicia R Lee)

The resultant overwhelming connotations to skin colour, to the blackness of Ham and Canaan, as a sign of their corrupt inner nature is deeply insinuated in western discourse. The racial ideologies that developed later and that were cemented in literary texts are valuable indices because, as Ania Loomba states; literary texts "do not only reflect and shape their immediate present but also encode ideas from the past and visualize the future. Through them, one can grasp the dynamism and flow of particular ideas and see how they are both transmitted and challenged*" (Shakespeare, Race and Colonialism* 4). Loomba further maintains that the urge to accentuate differences of language, skin color, and religions, that contradistinction against 'others' was central to the early modern age because of the intense cross-cultural contacts of exploration and trade.

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[21] *Noah Ham and the Curse of Canaan: Who did what to whom in the Tent? A New Solution to why Canaan (not Ham) was cursed*. Dr Rabbi David Frankel in his article discusses the Euphemism of Seeing Nakedness and its implications. Dr Rabbi construes the incongruities in the tale, and aligning with what the Rabbis anticipated and modern scholars implied, assumes that Ham's crime was more serious and disgraceful to have been ensued with Noah's severe reaction.

Such dynamism of difference towards others recharged and rearticulated old tropes from the moment of the crusades. Jonathan Burthon declares that "As European encounters with the non-European world widened, older tropes about particular places were reiterated and recirculated, to new and diverse effects" (*the Routledge History of Sex and the Body* 504) .An anxiety to generate identities was intense as European encounters with different non-Europeans grew heavy during the age of exploration, older tropes of difference were invoked and rehearsed. The tale of Noah's curse with its subsequent race division, enacting the enslavement of Canaanites and bestowing blessings upon Shem and Japheth, formed a stubborn hierarchy whose implications reverberated for centuries. As shall be argued in this thesis, Shakespeare and his contemporaries' culture draws upon this division of lineage and descent.

III.2. Noah's Posterity and Spatiality

The tripartite division of the world attributed to Noah's posterity has been widely contested and debated in exegesis across centuries. Different commentators across time have come to provide varying constructions of space and geography. Some approaches to geographical designations were dominant more than others. It would not only be faulty to imagine these spatial divisions in the modern sense of geography but even anachronistic to attempt a designation of space from an angle of modern cartography. In this context, Braude maintains that "Neat and clear-cut continental divisions among the three sons are not only completely alien to the biblical text, they are also incomprehensible to the ancient and medieval mind" (Braude, *The Sons of Noah* 109). Indeed, the spatiality of demarcation and by implication of differentiation of the naochic posterity is an outcome of mythmaking and ideological workings as shall be reviewed briefly. The thinkers who took it upon them to modulate, negotiate and interpret the

biblical section of Noah and Ham's story enagaged in more than simple exegetical hermeneutic commentaries but instead were ushering irreversible racializing histories.

The first-century Jewish Roman historian Flavius Josephus (37?-100) is accredited for having formulated the linkage of space to Noah's offspring in Genesis 10, which became the basis for later authors and scholars; that "Japhet was Eurasian, Ham Afrasian, and Shem Asian. The more learned and precise Christian commentators followed his lead" (Braude, *the Sons of Noah* 109). The flood of contesting interpretations following Falvius's geographical designation of Noah's posterity, controversial and ramified in its methods of analysis as well as in its subsequent conclusions, attests to the extent of the mystification of the Naochic Myth. [22]

Medieval views have proved to be so complex that it would be unsound that the previously mentioned offspring-geography linkage should be compact and neat. It is clear, further argues Braude, that the medieval understandings did not simply and consistently allot Africa to Ham, Asia to Shem, and Europe to Japhet, but that this formula has forever been subject to revisions. Braude's densely annotated article testifies to the range of versions and editions that contributed to the changing of the Hamitic Myth. As this research attempts to construe the early modern English consciousness of difference, which as has been argued earlier is deeply entrenched in European consciousness, the periods prior to this epoch are sketchily reviewed and are thus allotted cursory attention.

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[22] The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods Author(s): Benjamin Braude provides a lengthy and thorough analysis of over a millennium of perspectives to the Naochic paradigm which accounts for the slow development of a once malleable notion to the modern stiffened and racialized one.

In a continuum to the evolution of the Noachic Legend, Braude among many other scholars enunciates that the late medieval and early modern ages in Europe heavily relied on the immensely popular work *the Travels of Sir John Mandeville.* Actually, many critics and historians deem it arguably the most invaluable single volume for the study of the European conception of the 'other' in the era. Fatly saturated with exotic tales and descriptions of radically different others, Mandeville's *Travels* depicted savage and animal-like creatures, pervert same-sex and incestuous practices, devious coupling with animals, and even stories of women copulating with fiends procreating monsters.

The age of European explorations to the rest of the unknown world deeply altered the meaning of the Noachic paradigm. What has been a rather malleable and elastic identity in classical and medieval times was slowly transforming and acquiring a different shape concomitant to the spirit of exploration, expansion, and the ensuing long and bitter history of the slave trade. The contingent reality of exploration and the discovery of black sub-Saharan Africa led the Europeans once more to resort to the legend of Noah's curse, and to reinterpret it and reconstruct it this time based on skin colour and a due geographical delineation, as a means of vindicating slave trade. That Ham was the progenitor of Africa and the Africans were doomed eternally to servitude and enslavement was irredeemably percolating the European mind-set and hence tinting several forms of discourse.

The fifteenth century (1415-1460) witnessed a set of expeditions led by explorers and adventurers whose campaigns were often sponsored by royal patronage to seek alternative trade routes. The early modern age as has been stressed earlier was an age of seaborne trade and maritime hegemony, the locus of which used to be the

Mediterranean basin, but that was soon to change for a number of pioneering nations, and a new age was ushered with the discoveries of the Iberian explorers.

Mandeville's travelogue (1356), later deemed by the 18th century so detached from historical veracity and accuracy and more fictional than ever, was nevertheless regarded during late medieval and early modern times as an account of paramount authority and reliability, informing the views of explorers and shaping the worlds they sought to discover. Very few medieval books have been reissued for so long as to make it to the 17th century. Moreover, the book encapsulates a stance of clear misrepresentation and prejudice to the rest of the world which is needed in understanding European views and the construction of otherness. In this regard, Ania Loomba stresses that books like Mandeville's and Pliny the Elder's were redeployed to sexualize the bodies of the peoples that were colonized or yet about to be, rendering them savage and bereft of civilization (*Shakespeare Race and Colonialism* 43).

Mandeville's travel memoir enjoyed an unparalleled influence for more than two centuries after its appearance in 1356. To this point, Charles Moseley asserts in his article *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville and the 'Moral Geography' of the Medieval World* that the book was the most widely disseminated account of the Orient in the later Middle Ages and the early modern period, and was frequently adapted for various uses. It was one of the first secular books to be printed. Printing records during those times attested to the appeal of the material and Mandeville's "Travels" were voraciously in demand.

Moseley further contends that the book's huge appeal and perpetuate effect was because the book offered things that readers were looking for. The book's usage of the pilgrimage pattern and description of certain holy settings testifies to the attitude of the

author and his audience alike, in that they were hugely marked and fixated by "past crusades but also by current ones in Africa, Spain, the Eastern and Asia Minor. Their mental maps are not spatial….but narrative, mnemonic and ideological" (44). How the book was unquestionably received then, with readers seldom critiquing Mandeville's incentive or his accounts also tells a lot about its impact on European consciousness; "what people believed of the books is an important fact about it" shrewdly remarks Moseley.

Another aspect worthy of scrutiny in Mandeville's travels is his insistence on the fact that "the globe is habitable everywhere, that it is everywhere traversable". Such emphasis on the boundless territory crossing explorer fuelled a strong desire for mobility and discovery. It encouraged many people to secure the means and to set off to far reaching exotic lands. Indeed, this book shaped the world that Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Dom Enrique and Martin Frobisher set off in voyages to discover. Not only did *the Travels* trigger and heighten an urge to circumnavigate the globe, with its nowadays dismissed-as-fiction tales of Sciapods, Amazonians and Astomi among many other grotesque creatures, it enfolds medieval European prejudice of whom they were yet to encounter. European encounters with and their attempt of understanding the other was conditioned on (mis)information, the like of which is to be found par excellence in books such as *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, which was deeply disseminated in the European mindset.

As the fifteenth century Iberian Campaigns of exploration set off to the flanks of sub-Saharan Africa, pioneered by the Portuguese Henry the Navigator, they encountered radically somatic different people. This European new contact with West Africa, not the

already familiar east African subject, engendered a new and different image of the Black African, whose physical description was sharply set against the European's.

The Naochic Myth and the deliberate Africanization of Ham were then solidly replacing any vague or fluid interpretation of Noah's posterity. The European geographical designation of Africa to Ham was then taking strong hold. Braude maintains that "By the nineteenth century, the connection of Ham with Africa had been so deeply embedded in European consciousness that it was seen as the correct reading even when it was clearly a later addition that made no sense" (118). Ham as the progenitor of dark races who reside in Sub-Saharan Africa was being established as a consistent fact. From thence emerged a long and abominous racializing depiction and perception of Africans which was purely biased and ideological as the subsequent slave trade stands testimony to. Braude declares that "between I589 and 1625, a change took place in English attitudes toward the Curse of Ham. Slavery had started to make it credible (138). The spatial linkage of Africa to Ham was constructed responding to contingent needs of explorers seeking wealth and booty, and whose imagination was already saturated with prejudice and misinformation about others.

Not a trace of this linkage exists in the ambiguous and indeterminate Genesis 10, nor has there ever been a clear-cut and lucid attribution of geographical space to the three sons of Noah and their posterities, who instead of each inhabiting a continent of his own, many scholars contend, were more thought to have inhabited overlapping territories. This prompts a question: if this is how space has come to be envisaged in relation to Genesis 10 during the age of exploration, so clearly manipulated and biased, with the actual encounter of the other, how did Europeans view themselves in

opposition to them? To this may be added a supplementary question, how were the stereotypes of servitude, debasement, and sexual desire justified?

III.3 Blackness, Servitude, and Sexual Desire

When the geospatial designation of Africa to the Hamites and Canaanites had well been established in European consciousness, there emerged a long process of further othering the Africans by ascribing to them various stereotypes, then justified religiously and ethnologically but later becoming an entrenched part of the western discourse that hardened into axiomatic racialized beliefs. A stubborn somatic determinism has evolved, the remnants of which are inexorably haunting the image of the African well into the twenty-first century. As this study is structured after the insights of Cultural Materialism, the discursive formations, literature to stand as just an example, of the early modern age, constitute valuable storehouses of ideological workings. Literary writings of the age, it is strongly held, are deeply interwoven in the conceptual matrix of history and ideology. This must therefore involve a discussion of the political implications of the literary text in social contexts. Alan Sinfield maintains that the commitment of cultural materialists is to history as the place where culture is produced.

With the africanization of Ham and his lineage, with this spatial and regional delimiting, there coexisted, emerged, sometimes resurfaced, a number of theories attempting explanations of racial difference. There are many scholars who believe that racial history was tangential to advances in biology and anthropology, overlooking by that any attempt of tracing back racial history prior to the scientific empiricism of the 18th century. They further argue that it is anachronistic to talk about race during a time when the word usage was not linked to blackness nor to the pejorative connotations it

has come to assume across time. While indeed during the early modern age, the word was used in the sense of lineage, family, class, bloodline, and heredity. Counteracting this stream of thought, Ania Loomba stresses that "early modern ideas about racial difference that feed into the modern idea of race cannot be inferred only from the particular words" (*Shakespeare Race and Colonialism* 22); that it is crucial to map the concept of racial difference that existed in those times and to infer its alternate vocabularies that so mark European attitudes to non-Europeans in general, and Africans specifically. Loomba further emphasizes that "gender and sexuality provided a language for expressing and developing ideas about religious, geographic and *ultimately* racial difference" (31).

That the word "race" was not deployed in its modern usage does not annihilate nor does it disavow the existence of a pernicious archive of early practices and terminologies of race. Furthermore, If such racial vocabularies stresses Jonathan Burton "seem less biological than post-enlightenment ones, it is partly because a full-fledged discourse of biology or genetic transmission had not [yet] developed in the earlier period, and not because 'cultural difference' is a necessarily benign idea (*Western Encounters with Sex and Bodies* 501).

Along similar lines, Kim F.Hall argues against contemporary dismissal of the existence of race, as understood and associated with modern scientific terms, during the early modern period, and holds onto the idea of a language of race that worked to create differences and ushered forth racial beliefs (6). [23]Indeed, as this study attempts to prove,

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[23] For more about a reorientation in the history of race, and its articulation in the sixteenth century See Jordan Winthrop landmark study *White over Black American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812;* See

discursive formulations of race strongly undergird structures of power and are very well enmeshed in the ideological construction of identities, both European, English in our case and of the different others.

In point of fact, the porousness of different forms of cultural othering(s) and their intersectionality with the economical, religious, social, and ideological workings, as shall be amplified in this study, do but attest to the urgent need to reorient our understanding of race during the early modern age and to acknowledge its myriad manifestations. The dynamic of race and racializing was well existent, even when the word "race" usage, in the modern discriminatory sense, was not.

Early modern forms of cultural difference, or as included in the title of this thesis the process of "*cultural Othering*", are no less racializing than the later forms coterminous with colonial experiences. The perception of others and the conception of difference in this age, shaped by the histories of cross-cultural encounters, involved complex Imaginings of non-European bodies, sexualities, and cultures. Burton stresses that in the process of these imaginings which culminated in a wide range of writings, and at the basis of European perceptions of others, lies an undeniable "pattern of external condemnation and internal disavowal" (500). This pattern of contradistinction is at the basis of identity formation of the westerners, of the assumption of the European's superiority as set against the alleged inferiority of the Non-Europeans they later subjugated.

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also Rebecca Earle, " the Cradle of Race?" *The Body of the Conquistador: Food, Race and the Colonial Experience in Spanish America, 1492-170;* Margaret R. Greer et al *Rereading the Black Legend: The Discourse of Religious and Racial Difference in the Renaissance Empires.*

Such engagement, arguably, entailed a complex dynamic in which the imposition of binary divides was crucial. Moreover, European perceptions of other cultures shaped their understanding of bodies and sex, and an understanding of sexuality was important to the policing of race. Burton emphatically stresses that "the history of sexuality is as indissoluble from the history of race as histories of early modern Europe are undetachable from world history" (495).

It becomes necessary then, for scholarship interested in the intersection of racial history and sexual history, to chart the logic through which notions of differences were fathomed, ordered, discerned, and normalized, in an era prior to the scientific empiricism and the biological determinism that germinated in the 17th century and prevailed during the 18th. If biology and science had not yet thrived to propose supposedly sound grounds for racial and bodily differences, then what modes of discourse, one must ask, what analogous mechanisms were utilized, devised at times, or recycled and reiterated at others, during the early modern age and through which differences were discerned and polarizations accentuated.

Similar to the claim raised in this study, that during the time span delineated for studying the English stage, which as has been contended, is immersed in a proto-orientalist discourse, so did the different cultural discourses used in this era that attempted to make sense of differences equally contribute in engendering quasi-biological notions that paved the way for what was to come later. The Religious text prime of all discourses, occupied an unambiguous and influential role in mediating the understanding of differences in skin colour and in ushering a robust proto-biological discourse. In other words, what one can glimpse in the fabric of European beliefs of and attitudes towards African and American *Terra Incognita* is but a proleptic beginning of

a diachronic process of sexual, physiological racial and cultural othering, within which, a wide selection of discourses: religious, cultural, economic, geographical, and aesthetic were invoked.

Conclusion

The imaginings of difference that early modern quasi-scientific discourses articulated did not simply discern but discriminated the subjectivities they purportedly studied. Geohumourism and Polygenesis attempted to provide stigmatizing, demarcational groupings of humans, and although most of these theories went out of vogue in the ensuing centuries, the harm was already done through taxonomizing subjectivities in stubborn hierarchies and engendering long-lasting binary divides. Difference signaled alarm and was deemed as a dire marker of stagnation, both moral and cultural. These theories were being revived under the exigencies of travel and exploration and constituted, in effect, a concerted ideology that served the colonial and imperial regimes. Although England was no empire during early modern times, these discourses circulated nonetheless in English culture and informed the beliefs of the English towards 'others'.

The scriptural text, especially the book of Genesis, was equally summoned alongside the said biological theories in order to grapple with the differences of darker-skinned subjectivities. Manipulated in such an ideological way to delineate certain peoples spatially and to discriminate them physically as the offspring of a damned Hamite posterity, interpretations of the genealogy of the Bible were just as taxonomizing as anthropological and pseudo-biological discourses, perhaps even more. For while the scientific theories waned as they got replaced by other innovative theories, the scriptural text has that in it that supposedly renders its authority unquestionable, which, coupled with the ever-changing interpretations, leads to conditioned and contingent statements. The explorations of the West-African coast and the New World led to the revival of the

Book of Genesis not only in search of etymological appellations and origins but to impose roles in the ever-growing imperial establishments of the age.

Chapter Three- Altering the Turk in Robert Greene's *Selimus* and the Marlovian Archetype

Introduction

This chapter undertakes the study of one of the most vexing figures that inexorably haunted the imagination of the English in the time span of 1570-1630 which is the figure of the Turk. A surge of Turk plays defined the Spirit of public playhouses of England. This phenomenon of Turk productions is not given ample treatment in anthologies and book guides of British literature because of the prevalence of Shakespeare studies in representing the Renaissance. Shakespeare was the exception and the multitudes of playwrights who engaged with Turkish material were the rule, and a revision of what texts represent this time span the most is overdue and timely. It is believed that following the bounds of canonicity mutes an essential stage in the Renaissance theatre and our choice of writer and production seeks to correct that. As such, Robert Greene's *Selimus* is chosen for a cultural study, with the aim of demonstrating the extent to which the play was defined by the machinations of the very culture which made it possible.

Since studying Turkish plays necessarily involves touching upon issues of religion, most of the findings of the first chapter concerning altering the Muslims will be traced in *Selimus*. This chapter equally assesses the importance of influence and reception in molding the play's content, as well as the mode of accretion, capitalizing upon earlier successes, in defining struggle, hero, and themes. The play will thus be studied as capitalizing on Marlowe's successful Tamburlaine Plays, and analogies, as well as differences, will be highlighted. This method has an aim to study the play amidst its culture and in relation to the genre that it is part of. Following the method of thick description, focal passages in the play will be enlargened in an analysis that acknowledges the immersion of the writer in the machinations of othering the Turks.

The Anxiety of approaching the Turks, while simultaneously envying their spectacular ascent to the grandeur and vilifying them religiously will also be highlighted. The depictions of the Turks that Robert Greene implemented in his play will be assessed against the most prevailing understanding of the Turks in the Renaissance. Robert Greene colluded in a theatrical imperative that enabled him to make certain statements and not others about the Turks and to problematize certain geopolitical concerns over others, even at the expense of his play's historical genre.

I.The Turk Genre

From 1579 till 1624, the date of the closing of theatres, Islamic Levantine matter has been an essential part of a huge number of plays, dramatizing Oriental personaes and/or drawing from oriental settings and (faux) histories. In this time span, forty-seven plays about the Orient appeared in England, thirty one of which directly mentioned Turkish sultans and other Turkish characters (Wann 439).

Beginning with the rise to eminence from Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd to the masterful dramas of William Shakespeare, interest in Muslims and the Orient does not only mark the period mentioned above but is actually the driving thrust of Elizabethan Drama as a whole, or what is usually referred to as the golden age of English drama. with the considerable bulk of plays dealing with Oriental matter, the assertion that the prevalence of plays dealing with oriental topics is insistent and not arbitrary is quite justifiable, given the fact that the major playwrights of the Elizabethan Era used Oriental matter in at least one of their dramatic productions, with some indulging in its use to appear almost regularly in their theatrical corpus (427).

Some critics have claimed that the English knew Muslims as imaginary and literary constructs only and that these Muslims inhabited distant and extant non-Christian domains and with whom the English had little affairs with. Suppressing or eroding actual Muslim presence in and interaction with the English in England runs the risk of approaching Islamic representations as mere products of fancy. Nabil Matar in *Turks and Moors* sought to rectify these assertions by demonstrating that there was a considerable and extensive bilateral interaction among the English and the Turks and moors (7). As such, the theatrical constructions will be read against the vestiges of real and actual encounters. Daniel Vitkus in *Three Turk Pays* likewise maintains that the

marked dramaturgical interest in the Turks and of Levantine Islamic power took the stage at a time when Turkish presence in Europe was more conspicuous and its expansionism at its zenith, and pausing a sustained threat to the alleged European Christian unity. For the theatergoers, then declares Vitkus, the Turk "was not an imaginary bogey and the Turk plays …are not simply fantasies about fictional demons lurking at the edges of the civilized world" (3).

Elizabethan England as demonstrated earlier held extensive exchanges with Muslim potentates as part of its foreign policy. The mercantile exchanges irrevocably changed the texture of English cultural life and affected deeply the way that Elizabethans perceived themselves alongside different others. Burton cautions against considering the amicable relations during Elizabeth's reign as natural tolerant amity and instead argues that these imperatives were rather driven by 'expediency and realpolitik' (*This Orient Isle* 21). Effectively, the newly formed liaisons between England and the Muslim potentates in the Ottoman Empire and Morroco were not in Burton's words "made of stone and threatened by canons, but made instead of words and threatened by commerce diplomacy and travel (*Traffic and Turning* 17).

The Turkish Genre of plays which was immensely popular from 1579 to 1624 does not necessarily invoke Turkish material per se, but since in early modern usage, Islam was synonymous to Turk, the catchall term used to designate all 'Mahometans' as Turks and the Qur'an as the "Turkish policy", all associations to Turks and Turkishness were linked to Islam (Burton, *Traffic and Turning* 13). Moreover, these plays' representation of Islam was mediated by the perceptions of Muslims resultant of England's commerce and foreign policy with the Ottomans, with the year 1579 as the decisive date when the Sultan granted Elizabeth I official trade capitulations (13).

Indeed, if the study of Islamic material in early modern Elizabethan and Jacobean drama is limited by the word usage Islam per se, one would end up with very little indeed. Acknowledging however the illicit connotations and alter usages of Islamic-related material would totally expand the archive of early modern artistic captivation by the East, the Muslim and the Orient whom the English primordially identified with as their economical and political ally: the Ottomans.

The plays that constitute the Turkish genre drew heavily from the texts that circulated about the Ottomans during sixteenth-century Europe. These texts appropriated earlier inventories about Muslims which date back to the 7th century and were supplemented by new precepts and yoked together. The trauma of recent events in Europe caused by the Ottomans' territorial advancements resulted in no less than three thousand works about the Ottomans in the 16th century alone (Burton 22) which circulated heavily through translations. The superimposition of earlier understandings with the new ones was projected forth on the Ottomans and produced them as antagonistically as they were perceived and represented: treacherous, barbarian, military, lascivious, lecherous, despots, amoral, and scourge.

I.1The Tamburlaine Plays and the Burkean Spectacle of the Sublime

Christopher Marlowe's two Tamburlaine Plays set the tone for what would become one of the playhouse's most enduring genres, the Turkish Genre. Conquering plays staging the spectacular ascent of a venturing and plundering hero, *Tamburlaine the Great* and its sequel drew on conventions already established among the English during those times. Marlowe's keen eye and his genius in playwriting ensured him a long-lasting reputation and canonicity in Renaissance Drama. Bombastic with its language,

and in its careful choice of struggle and hero, these two plays fostered a new play aesthetic of which countless playwrights followed the steps. In a manner similar to Foucault's initiators of discursive formations, Marlowe fits perfectly this category as he is accredited for putting forth and staging with unprecedented success what would sweep London playhouses. A drama of fear and of fascination, encapsulating the age's most anxious and promising concerns, the Tamburlaine plays in accordance with the changes in English cultural and social life provided the theatergoers with matching spectacles to their new reconfigured identities at the wake of global trade.

An explanation of the rise to splendor and the insistent demand of the Turk plays needs to take into account the materiality of the business of playmaking and the immersion and collusion of writers to this collective enterprise. Mark Hutchings draws attention to the importance of acknowledging the emergence of a "play market", similar in its close ties to profit to any other economic enterprise or venture undertaken during this time by merchants. The spectacular emergence of public playhouses in London and their synchronization with the other sectors of economy and trade do but attest to the impossibility of dematerializing the theatrical productions from the overall new reality in which the English were thrust into. An accelerated sense of profit making and capital investment was equally to touch upon the play market, prompting the emergence of plays that would match the aspirations of spectators whose lives were redefined by the new economic reality.

The radical shift in foreign policy thus was visible enough not only in the forms of goods and commodities available in England but also in the inclinations of the entertainment industry of the stage. Productions like those of the Tamburlaine Plays whose aim was primarily to make saleable commodities were consumed at huge ratios

by spectators and the rivalry between playing companies, as argues Mark Hutchings, ensured the longevity and popularity of this Genre.

The destination towards which Elizabeth's foreign policy ushered its nation rendered even more complex the representation of others. Otherwise said, while the amicable beneficial capitulations were transforming the very nature and identity of what it means to be English in a world dominated by the accelerated pace of international trade, this positive spin towards the Muslim other was coterminous and synchronized with yet strongly felt anti-Turkish sentiments. It is the existence of these two opposing attitudes in terms of differentiation that assured the coming to life of spectacles that play on the strings of demonization and temptation for wealth and empirical aspirations at the same time.

The Tamburlaine plays' popularity as will be argued stems primarily from this balancing of revulsion and attraction that can be felt all throughout. While they do certainly utilize earlier tropes of differentiation and demonization, in their very Mediterranean nature and geopolitical concerns, they reflect albeit if distantly current situations. This allows for a more nuanced and ramified set of interpretations both in favour and in disfavour of the Ottomans. It is this multiplicity of interpretations, argues Hutchings, that allows for a more complex understanding of Turkish material and figures in the plays and that defies any sense of simplification and stereotyping.

I propose another appellation for the phenomenon that the Tamburlaine Plays caused in England. Edmund Burke is famous for introducing his philosophy of the sublime, which many have deemed an essential element in Romantic and gothic literature of the 18th century. The dominant aesthetic invoked throughout these plays befits the notion of

the sublime. In his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* is a 1757 Burke carries a systematic analysis of what constitutes a state of the sublime, and of its adjacent feeling of astonishment. To Burke, the effect of the sublime is different from the effect of the beautiful, in that the latter tends to relax the beholder, while the former, by constantly challenging the beholder into the terrible, tenses the nerves through its oscillation of the spectacular, which could at any moment turn alarming and threatening. "Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling" (Burke). The beholder is thus suspended in a state of astonishment, the emotional power which results from the balancing of the agreeable with the dangerous.

The Tamburlaine Plays' effect that it must surely have engendered and which is believed to be at the core of its enigmatic success, lies, I believe in its introduction of a content which leaves the spectator in a terrible uncertainty at the thing described. Tamburlaine is both the scourge of the Turkish threat, but at the same time, his will to absolute power might at any moment be threatening even to the Christians. His mutating religious affiliations are another instance; he takes on a plethora of religious identities and yet ultimately adheres to none. He is a Muslim who takes the crown of another Muslim, who then turns atheist and declares war on all the Gods, his blasphemous character goes by unpunished and his tragedy is almost stubborn until the end.

I.2 the Mania of Turk Plays As *A* Spirit of the Age

Anthoglogies and study books of the renaissance literature are assembled based on certain criteria of canonicity. While, certainly, the archives of literary works are constantly being challenged and new recovered voices implemented, especially with the emergence of politicaly-driven literary theories, major areas are still insistently demanding attention. Feminist activists, for example, have expanded the archive of silenced women voices and are even proposing revisions of hitherto-deemed fixed literary periodizations. This revisionist leap also touched upon studies of race in early modern England whereby scholars are redefining understandings of race and gender and extending the lines to earlier periods. Approaching renainssance literature based on canonicity erodes crucial developments in the English theatre of early modern England.

The cosmopolitanism of Shakespeare in Renaissance studies and the exclusive adoption of his plays, as bespeaking the spirit of his age, come at expensive stakes. The costly risk is in a reductionist vision of the amply versatile and volatile nature of the early modern theatre. While other playwrights might not have stood the test of time in the way Shakespeare did, their efforts, however, especially if taken collectively, yield a change of perspective and urge new spirit(s) of the age, instead of one sweeping and fixed spirit.

What I am proposing here is an ovedue consideration, a timely one actually, of the the Turkish plays genre as the spirit of the early modern stage at least in the span of time from 1579 to 1624. The theatre was predominantly and visibly engaged in this genre of plays like it has never been before. Approaching the theatre solely through

Shakespearean lens will eclipse this defining period in the stage history. Shakespeare chose not to deal with explicit Turkish material. While, there are hints in a number of his plays to concerns resultant of contemporary engagements with the Turks, he somehow escaped dramatizing a full play to this genre, which is a decision difficult to understand. Notwithstanding his inclination, renaissance literary courses and anthologies should not, I believe, dim concerns of Turkish material and Islam from understandings of the era. While there are countless numbers of books and articles raising such concerns, they remain initiatives that might escape the attention of student or the debutant researcher. If, however, this parochial vision is invalidated through course materials, curriculums and syllabi, the result will be very different and the scope considerably enlargened.

The selection, thus of the literary works most representative of the early modern theatre, needs to undergo revision in such a counter-way so that the literary periodization and the designation of the spirit of the age do not follow the fashion of metanarratives and metahistories that aspire to glisten and smooth contradictions and heterogeneity. Shakespeare or Marlowe are not respresentatives of the Elizabethan stage, no single voice should purport to represent an age or even a fraction of an age, at the expense of other voices and the tendency of selection by way of canonization needs to be reconsidered.

II.Robert Greene's Selimus and the Marlovian Archetype

Driven by rivalry amongst playing companies and by a commitment to a tradition that the commercial playhouse set as lucrative, Robert Greene composed his tragic chronicle play *The First Part of the Tragical Reign of Selimus, Sometime Emperor of*

the Turks, and grandfather to him that now reigneth following the spectacular success of what most critics deem its predecessor: Malowe's *Tamburlaine Plays*. The very essence of autonomy in terms of production and of pure artistic genius is contested in the Renaissance theatre and in the genre of Turkish plays specifically. Early modern playwrights as is quite known in drama construct their pieces based on a list of sources and influences, that most of the time they are in no position to discredit. Greene for example borrowed from Turkish annals or their British redactions while composing his play (Burton, T*raffic and Turning* 33). Mediating between a varied number of discursive formations or texts, the playwright assembles his piece also in accordance with the demand of the theatre. The popular culture of their times dictated which type of characters and dramas were more prone to be gainful for the enterprise of the theatre.

Selimus's raison d'etre cannot be understood in isolation, as a literary phenomenon fully flung from within a literary genius in his secluded chamber. The collaborative nature of the institution of theatre as well as the rivalry which grew intense amongst playing companies were the two major forces validating such emergence and ensuring their appeal. The late 16th century playmaking tradition had already established a certain aesthetic of serious plays, and the writers who were influenced and eager to perpetuate the tropes and archetypes introduced, were in fact questioning very little but instead colluding in a profitable mania, at the core of which, for Greene, lies a marlovian character and his enactment of absolute power.

This calls for new approaches to be adopted while surveying plays of the late 16th century. An approach less author-centered and more acknowledging of the derivative, collective, and collaborative nature of theatricality needs to be adopted with texts of this kind. The implication of the stage in the material conditions of playing companies and

the role that the authors purport to as contributors in a collective enterprise with entertainment aims urge, in fact, necessitate new ways of dealing with these dramatic pieces. If discarded, one would end up asserting anachronistic and implausible interpretations to these texts as if they were fully transcendent of the material circumstances, when they were instead submerged in those. Mark Hutchings consolidates this need as he asserts that analyzing "Turk Plays" needs to consider the material conditions of playmaking as well as the complex intertextual relations between playing companies (2). I want to be clear about references to individual authors in this study, as it is strongly held that whatever beliefs these writers hold of Islam and Oriental matter are less an articulation of their own feelings concerning the religion of Islam than a 'perspective', emanating from early modern English culture.

Initially written to be followed by a sequel, as voiced in its prologue, *the Tragedy of Selimus, Emperor of the Turks*, first printed in 1594, dramatizes the life of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I or Selim the Inexorable. Loosely related to his true life, and needless to say, hardly composed in a historical sense of accuracy and veracity, Greene's tragedy sought to bring a central Turkish Sultan to prominence and the play follows his enacted deeds that amount to the atrocious and the barbaric. The prologue promises the audiences the most genuine tragedy, not forged nor feigned and a lamentable chronicling of the will to power and liberation through the transgression of the anti-hero Selimus, whose story "this last age acknowledges for true" (Prologue). In fits of remorseless fury, Selimus right from the prologue is presented as an implacable prince whose Machiavellian ways lead him to poison his own father and to murder his brothers and nephews in pursuit of absolute authority.

Issues of authorship of the play were debatable, and not until late in the 19th century did Alexander Grossart, upon perusal of extensive stylistic features as well as parallels and comparisons to other works by Greene, establish the play's authorship to Greene. A later inclusion of the play in his *Three Turk Plays*, Daniel Vitkus attributes authorship to Greene and estimates that it was written sometime around 1590, based on staging records (16-18). Very few commentators questioned Grossart's study, although some were inclined to think that the play was co-authored with another playwright, given the incongruous verse in certain parts of the play, which they believed belonged to another author.

Selimus is presented as a Militant man who follows war with dismal strife, and who indulges in acts of extreme violence, barbarity, and cruelty as grossly enacted in the play. Driven by an insatiable lust for power, Selimus kills his brothers Acomat and Corkut and later dethrones and poisons his father Bajazet in order to get hold of the sole reign and sultanship of the empire. There is a striking incompatibility between the historical events as chronicled in history books and those dramatized in the play. To cite just an example there is no historical evidence that Selimus either killed his father or that he poisoned him. However, since the Turks were stereotypically regarded as barbarous and greedy, who could go to any extent for the gratification of their material lust, Greene deploys the same kind of stereotypes notwithstanding their historical falsity.

A tragedy of Parricide and of sheer and hectic filial betrayal, the play is a total sum of demonizing fantasies involving poignant anti-Islamic polemic. Similar to the sermons and polemical theological attacks that circulated during the early modern era, the play

consolidates the same kind of rhetoric and promises the audience exactly the type of demonization to which they have become by the 16th century so much accustomed.

Staging the mighty Turk as the ultimate enemy of Christendom, this play, similar to Tamburlaine, strives to distort the figure of the Turk by attempting to weaken its internal solidity, through schisms in the family of the Sultan. While Othello and Tamburaline lead an army against this enemy and both help to displace its threat in both plays, an incident to which audiences must have rejoiced, in Selimus, the schism comes from within, as Selimus leads an attack and plans to overthrow his own father's rule. Weakness of the Turk is wished for and its suppression is prayed for. The militarism of Selimus as presented and stressed upon in this play, his characterization as a Machiavellian boundless anti-hero whose aspirations are unstoppable serves well to justify his later enactment of cruelty and his defiance even to his own religion and his own God, an aspect which is also similar to the character of Tamburlaine, whose shifting religious identity in the play indicates his loyalty to authority and hegemonic rule only.

Not in an attempt to diminish authorship, but it is believed throughout this study that it is more important to chart the emergence of literary types and archetypes as they respond to much larger social, political, and economic practices, and as such that *Selimus I* is to be approached as belonging to a substantial archive of altering Turks and Muslims and not as a self-enclosed ahistorical artistic production. The probable time of production, which according to Greene's remarks in the preface to *Perimedes the Blacksmith*, must have been during the winter of 1587-88, calls into scrutiny the calculated attempt that Greene had in mind while competing to produce and imitate Christopher Marlowe's phenomenal and widely popular *Tamburlaine the Great*.

Selimus was written for the Queen's Men, which were in mounting competition with Phillip Henslowe's company the Lord Admiral's Men (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays* 18). Greene, thus, eager to rival or supersede crafted *Selimus* on the vestiges of *Tamburlaine the Great*, seeking to emulate not only the character and aesthetic but more importantly the material success for the company he worked for. Furthermore, the drive to expand the companies' archive with similar archetypes, attests to the extent to which playgoers marveled at spectacles of power indulgence, tyranny, and the recourse to the polarized medieval type of religious struggles. Taken together, the Marlovian aesthetic, to which *Selimus* is without a shade of doubt committed, becomes a gateway to the much larger cultural concerns that captivated the imaginations of the English then.

The collaborative nature of playing companies and the rising rivalry between them dictated upon the writers not only the genre of the plays but even the type of character, the sort of struggle, and the geopolitical concerns that these plays dramatized and cemented in the popular English consciousness. The Marlovian model that the Tamburlaine Plays brought to the fore and which promulgated an endless fascination and initiated the possibility of discourse, must be understood in tandem with a protracted history of religious difference. A recourse to the trope of the scourge of God, discussed in the first part of this thesis, constitutes one of the influential markers for the success of the play. Marlowe's central character is the reincarnation of the scourge of God against the Muslim Turks, who emerges in the play as a chastisement tool to Turkish atrocities as epitomized in Bayezit. The Scythian Tamburlaine who vows to scourge kingdoms with his conquering sword is represented as a boundary-crossing anti-hero thief, who through barbarous arms and guided by prophecies aspires to make

himself monarch of the East. Selimus in Greene's play clearly adheres to the Marlovian archetype, not only in terms of characterization but also in terms of language.

In a spectacular ascent and mobility that characterize his rise to emperorship from a meager status of a shepherd, Tamburlaine declares that he means to be a terror to the world. This very formulation was deeply cemented in the English popular consciousness as they had lived through times in which the Turkish threat was nearly engulfing Christian lands. Richard Knolles calls the Turks "the present terror of the world", and Tamburlaine under the conduct of tartars aspires to be immortalized through the annihilation of the present terror of the world, and to become the scourge to punish the scourge, a saga of confrontation playing on European fears and anxieties as the Turks were pressing onto Christian borders so alarmingly.

Establishing the mode for tyrant plays that dramatize issues of providential intervention with contemporaneous concerns, the Marlovian template created in Tamburlaine grounded the choice of Afro-Eurasian conflicts and grand (anti)heroes that Greene's *Selimus* would follow the lead of. Ostensibly centered upon early modern historical circumstances and figures, both the Tamburlaine Plays and Selimus, draw impetus of the religious issues, however, from earlier notions of religious polarization. Through reshuffling tropes of the scourge of God and the notion of providential intervention, both plays thus take their type of struggle from a long lineage of Christian-Muslim confrontational history, and which by the early modern age was as discussed earlier well entrenched in the English collective memory.

The avid interest with the east, which generated the economic interest of the playhouse with eastern settings and characters, was fused with long-held histories of

clash and contact with the Muslim other. The legacy of 1453 which posited the Ottoman existence as a threat, real or imaginary, was not erased by the newly established Anglo-Ottoman foreign policy. The cultural memory, that is to say, was still very much influenced by histories of confrontation and alarm. It is this precise eastern interest while still maintaining part of what defines the West's relationship to the East, in religious terms, that is very well balanced both in the *Tamburlaine Plays* and *Selimus.*

The actual instances of ideological compromise which sprung from England's eastern imitative are thus measured not by the emergence of a fully tolerant discourse of the other, but instead by this drive towards the exotic and the eastern, by the appeal of Turkish material to playwrights and audiences. "The late Elizabethan playhouse drew on a conventional narrative of fear that was also, as is now widely recognized, one of fascination" (Hutchings par.1). The content material which treads in an ebb and flow fashion on ascillations of fear and of opportunity proved to be most explorable for playwrights. Stages plays, which by essence, harness the potential of delaying resolution, of augmenting audiences' attachment, and of creating alter-worlds almost as threatening as the outlived ones could not have found a better material to capture audiences than the Turkish material.

In an effort of emulation, thus, and an eager endeavour at equaling or superseding success, Robert Greene composed a tragedy, whose central character may at first glimpse seem very different from Tamburlaine, but upon scrutiny, it becomes clear that he was characterized in a similar moral fashion so that he exceeds the deeds and transgressions committed by Tamburlaine. A tyranny play, *Selimus*, thus, in its serious nature, central anti-hero and geopolitical mappings draws many parallels to Marlowe's

Tamburlaine plays in a tradition, that was deemed later a phenomenon in the history of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage.

II.1Selimus and Acomat's Insatiable Lust for Power and Debasement of Bajazet

The utter embodiment of the Turkish villain, Selimus' status has been debased to that of a barbarous in terms of differentiation and did not simply rest on religious denigration. As Emily C. Bartels in her essay "The Double Vision of the East: Imperialist Self-Construction in Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Part One" points out that "The Turks, in contrast, were categorically demonized as barbaric infidels, whether despotic conquerors or demonic slaves" (4). The first scene of the play opens with Bajazet lamenting his late situation concerning the greed of Selimus and the future of the Ottoman Empire. Selimus is described as the youngest prince who is beloved by his people and as having the janissaries, the Ottoman Empire's military backbone, ready to suffer for his sake even if at the expense of their rightful Sultan and ruler. Bajazet then grimly predicts insurrection not only from his own army, but more importantly from his own bloodline, portraying his own sons, as a "headstrong brood" that will ruin their father's estate like vipers eat up the belly that nourished them. Stereotyped as such, Selimus' filial betrayal and later coup are naturalized, and his later deeds are described as common sense amongst Turkish Sultanship and royalty.

Selim's enactment of his insatiable greed and lust for power starts to untangle as he undertakes his first act of betrayal by allying himself with the King of Tartary through marrying his daughter, the news of which confirm Bajazet's suspicions about his sons' intention to overthrow him, and especially Selimus whose "hands [does] itch to have the

crown" (177), describing him not as a mere prince, but as " a sea, into which run nought but ambitious reaches/ seditious complots, murther, fraud and hate" (180-81). This boundless nature that Bajazet describes Selimus to possess is very reminiscent of the way Tamburlaine was described as bloody, insatiate and barbarous in his means to wear himself down and never rests until he reaches the fruit of all, "the sweet fruition of an earthly crown" (I.2.6.69).

It is very clear that Selimus was molded after Tamburlaine, and this consolidation of the boundless hero could stand as a testimony of what audiences loved about the play. They loved in Tamburlaine "the shepherd who means to be a terror to the world" whose fiery looks do menace heaven and dare the gods, the anti-hero, who despite his twisted mischievous means becomes immortal like the gods. Selimus, in a similar bombastic manner, will prove as daring and as blasphemous as the archetype after which he was so craftily molded.

Taking his treason through the alliance with the tartars to be but a prologue to his cruelty in want and love of rule and kingly sovereignty, the play establishes the first element of the Tyrant Play. More typical features of this genre are to ensue. Selimus is presented in scene two as he declares bare his long disguised intent of "manifesting the heat of [his] desire/ and nourishing the coals of [his] ambitious fire" (2.4-5) and intending to rule tyrannically. The tyrannical rule that he aspires to achieve at the expense of his father's is consolidated by the unanimous love and support of the janissaries, a defining prerequisite that the council of Bassas later acknowledges decisive in favour of Selimus.

In a parallel also similar to Tamburlaine, Selimus scorns religion as too manacling and virtuous deeds as sacrilege, vowing to "make [himself] a passage for [his gushing flood/ by slaughter, treason or what else he can" (2-19-20). This state of tyranny demands a stripping of not only civility and morality but more tellingly of religion as well. Bereft of other markers, this leaves only the ethnic marker by which to call the subject, no longer representative of a prince, not an adherent to any set religion or creed of morality, Selimus is bare to his presumptuous barbaric Seljuk origins. It is from this instance that the true nature of altering Turkish Selimus begins. Governed by an insatiable lust for power, Selimus deliberately dehumanizes his soul and acts with matching horrors the role of the barbaric Turk whose own defiances might as well extinguish the very existence of his empire.

Selimus plans to kill his eldest brother Acomat and resolves to take Bajazet's crown in his stead, and if the latter frowns or resists then murder is the answer. "Let them view in me the perfect picture of right tyranny" Selimus asserts as he "arms [his heart] with irreligion, articulating a total effacement and disregard to religions which he firmly believes are mere fictions and fables. His debasement is further extended to his views of the institution of family whom he ultimately deems as a policy that, similar to religion, aims "to keep the quiet of society". Selimus' insistence upon unbounding the soul and transgressing real and imaginary obstacles in his quest for absolute power keeps aggravating as he descends with his deeds to the abominous. He further frees himself from the burden of an afterlife and adopts a nihilistic vision of void and darkness boasting his blasphemous resolution "that since in death nothing shall to us fall/ here while I live, I'll have a snatch at all" (2.135-36). An empire, he tells Sinam, is a sweet thing, as he could be a devil to be a king. (2.203-4).

In fact, these characteristics, attributed to Selimus here, were part of the dominant religious and political discourse in which the stereotypical features of the Turks were represented in early modern England. for the English people in the early modern period, stereotypical features of the Turks included "aggression, lust, suspicion, murderous conspiracy, sudden cruelty masquerading as justice, merciless violence rather than 'Christian charity,' wrathful vengeance instead of turning the other cheek" (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays* 2), all of which Selimus in this play embodied.

The second of Bajazet's sons and the least likely to be fit for reign, Acomat is described as a prince who leads his life in lascivious pomp and delights in foolish love. Upon hearing of Selimus' rebellion against his father, he determines himself to rise from his slumber and to take advantage of Selimus' failed attempt by winning his father's mind. Wishing Bajazet to yield him the Turkish empery, Acomat's hopes were soon dashed and he, in turn, rages against his father. Condemning his father for belittling him and deeming him unworthy of the Turkish crown, he vows to cause him trebled distress than Selimus had done and to indulge in massacres even more horrible, the beginning of which is to sacrifice his nephew Mahomet, son of the deceased eldest Alamshae and chief commander of Natolia, the rightful heir to the crown. Acomat besieges Iconium, the town in which his nephew resides, and demands that they yield to his power or else that they shall suffer the most monstrous deaths he can devise. Despite the fact that Mahomet expresses his possible readiness to resign his right for rule to Acomat, the latter still declares against odds his will to seal the resignation with Mahomet's blood, and that tyrant-like he will not stop until all hindrances are cleared from his path. Acomat then kills Mahomet so monstrously throwing him on top of a grove of steelhead spears.

What is really noteworthy in Acomat's rise to tyranny is that he was the least expected candidate for such atrocious acts. Having been raised spoiled and a prince "soft-hearted, mild and gentle as a lamb" (12.72) who, unlike Selimus, was distracted by courtly luxury and effeminacy, Greene seems to be grounding the stereotype of lust for power amongst all Turkish princes despite their inclinations. This generic thrust in terms of stereotyping Turkish Sultans is very telling of the rooted beliefs of many early modern English of the Turks.

Unable to fathom her uncle's sheer tyranny, Zonara daughter of Alamshae and sister to Mahomet, who upon having her implorations to spare her life unheard, expresses her despair in the following way

> Thou are not, false groom, son to Bajazet!
>
> He would relent to hear a woman weep;
>
> But thou wast born in desert Caucasus,
>
> And the Hyrcanian tigers gave thee suck,
>
> Knowing thou wert a monster like themselves.

Alluding to his birth in the wild inhabitable mountain range in Caucasia, and to his upbringing, Zonara, equates Acomat's nature with the monstrous, and harps on the strings of ethnicity and outlandish origins. Zonara's verdict is actually emblematic of the way Christian Europeans have regarded the ascent to power of the Turks, whose capture of Constantinople was unexpected and their powers underrated.

Acomat further takes on the Tyrant role by having Zonara strangled, and all of Natolia sacked, the news of which he designed would reach Bajazet in their most dismal picture. The descent to barbarity is very well crafted in the character of Acomat in a pageant of crimes, even more grievous than Selimus's descent. Acomat whom Bajazet describes as "ten times more unnatural" staged the most dismal spectacle of death in Natolia slaying six thousand citizens and hence proving to be the most rebellious enemy for his father. Yet despite all his cruelties, Bajazet had hopes that Acomat would be brought to filial obedience through counsel and sends Aga to render him lenient. Unfettered by the counsil of Aga and still more determined to outmanoeuver Selimus in his ways, Acomat menaces to burn up fields and overthrow whole towns and with sword and blood to subdue all who stands in his way, and to tear Bajazet piecemeal with his own teeth averring Aga that "the surest grounds for kings to build upon/is to be feared and cursed of everyone" (14.50-51).

In an act of cannibalism and utter barbarity, Acomat plucks Aga's eyes "more blood[ily] than the anthropophagi that fill their hungry stomachs with man's flesh!" (14.77-78), dismembers his arms, and sends him off to Bajazet a tortured emblem of the fate that he menaces will equally befall his own father lest he interferes with his plans. Cataloguing graphic disfigurations that he intends to perform on his own father, Acomat's barbarous and insatiable nature comes to its apogee in the play.

The debasement and maltreatment of Bajazet which are clearly willed in this play call into question the appeal of such spectacles in the late Elizabethan playhouse. Robert Greene is clearly in his play reproducing an aesthetic which, gross as it may look to contemporary readers, was conversely received heartily by audiences. Although Greene's Bajazet is not the same ruler as Tamburlaine's Bajazet I, for the latter is a

forefather to the former, yet he subjects him to analogous and similar maltreatment. Tamburlaine's treatment of Bajazet I in the *Tamburlaine Plays* initiated the aesthetic in a saga of confrontation and humiliation. Bajazeth in the Tamburlaine plays sets himself in direct enmity and adversity to the Christians, the Scourge of Europe, and Tamburlaine emerges as their saviour and as himself in turn occupying the Christological role of the Scourge of the Scourge. Tamburlaine devalues Bajazet by using him as a footstool to rise to his royal throne and keeping him in a cage. The treatment of Bajazeth by Marlowe must have stirred enough response that Greene sought to reproduce the same kind of debasement only this time, it is not enacted by a Scythian thief (Tamburlaine) but by his own lawful sons.

Upon receiving his loyal counsellor Aga mutilated and tortured, Bajazet listens to Mustapha, the imperial councilor and son-in-law of Bajazet, who instigates him to chastise the rebellious Acomat through Selimus. This call complicates matters even worse, as the recently deposed Selimus is the most militant and hence fit to lead the janissaries against his brother Acomat. Bajazet agrees to Mustapha's plan and sends Selimus reconciling lines exempting all his earlier transgressions, provided that he stops Acomat's cruelties.

Ostensibly repentant, young Selimus remerges in scene seventeen in a fake reformed attire, and takes on the role assigned to him as chief general of the janissaries to lead the war against his brother Acomat. His mischievous and treacherous nature, however, is indelible. Despite having been granted re-inclusion and total power and command, Selimus' nature, Greene seems to stress, remains static and stubborn to change. His lust for power and rule is but given a lawful guise this time. He then makes the resolve to

keep up with his plans despite the fact that Bajazet willfully resigned the crown to him and made him lawful and rightful emperor of the Turks.

With the crown in his head, and his ambition of empery appeased, he thus proceeds to erase every possible mishap to his seat. First, he gives orders to Bajazet's physician, Abraham the Jew, to prepare his own father the strongest poison he can devise. Bajazet gulps the potion and dies cursing his "disobedient sons, unnatural sons, unworthy of that name" (18.117-18). Selimus mourns his father in a show without the smallest dram of grief. Later, he gives orders to strangle his eldest brother Corcut, Soldan of Magnesia in an equally coldhearted manner.

Selimus' bassas later manage to unearth Corcut from his disguise in Smyrna coast as a shepherd and bring him to Selimus. Corcut, who confesses his conversion to Christianity and lectures Selim on the need of repentance of his vile deeds, meets his death as Cali Bassa and Hali Bassa strangle him. His next move is directed towards his son Acomat. Selimus orders a siege on Amasia where Acomat's wife and two sons Amurath and Aladin reside, working his revenge upon Acomat, who fled from Macedonia to ask the aid of his chief foes the Persian Ismael and the Egyptian Soldan.

Sorrowful at Selim's determination to eradicate the entirety of the Bajazet's race, Mustapha sends word warning the princes Aladin and Amurath of their uncle's unmerciful plot, and they both flee one to Egypt and the other to Persia. Upon hearing of this, Mustapha follows next in the line of killings for charges of treason and so does his wife Solyma get strangled all while cursing Selimus as a cruel tiger and as no man.

Acomat prepares with the aid of Tonombey in Egypt to marsh to Amasia to help his besieged citizens and to wage war against Selimus. In Amasia, the queen Acomat's wife

curses Selim as a bloodthirsty parricide who lusts for more massacres, and as she refuses to yield to him he soon captures the city and takes her life away. Preparing to meet his last threat, Acomat and his ally the Egyptian Soldan finally meet in a field of battle near Amasia. Conquered at his sword, Selimus proceeds to kill his last remaining trouble, Acomat and "clean consumed all the family of noble Ottoman/ except himself" (29.65-66). His future expansionist plans Selimus declares will be targeted at Egypt and Persia.

The play opens up with Bajazet's soliloquy, in which, subject unto fears as any emperor of great rule, he starts describing the domains he possesses in the following way:

> Aye, though on all the world we make extent
>
> From the South Pole unto the Northern bears
>
> And stretch our reign from East to Western shore,
>
> Yet doubt and care are with us evermore. (1.13-16)

This passage denotes a motif that is reiterated in most early modern Turk plays: that of sweeping geography and mapping of the regions unto which the Turks ventured and seized, indicating their glory in expansionist terms, and the anxiety that such annexations caused the Christians to feel; a constant reminder of the ever-present and still quite insistent threat of the Turks. What is noteworthy, however, in this soliloquy of Bajazet, is that he confesses his doubt and care, despite his unmatched glory, and foreshadows his imminent demise. A fearful king's lamentation of what hidden mischiefs might be lurking in the dark, so tormented and distressed by his loss of the

Levant as it was taken clean from him by the Persian Sophy Mighty Ismael and as he suffered the loss of his son Almashe, his chief bless and the comfort of his days as he calls him, to the Tartarian emperor, Ramirchan.

Acknowledging the relative weakness of his armies, previously undefeated during his father's valiance, Bajazeth admits his sad mischance of having his army cracked in two and overwhelmed by the Christian armies. His decrease in power signalling their increase, he was forced to call a truce, or a friendly peace. His distress however and restless spirit does not merely amount from "foreign damages" but also, from "internal home-born outrages", namely of his three sons, his eldest Corcut, the philosopher, who leads his life in Magnesia learning liberal arts and the Religious Laws of Islam; Acomat, the pompous son who lives lavishly courting with his own wife and indulges in quite pleasant joys, and Selim whom he calls the prince who " follows wars in dismal strife" (1-1.84) and who snatches at his father's crown with greedy claws, a crown that he intends to reserve for Acomat.

Stern Selimus has not only won his people's heart, but more importantly is valued and loved by the Janissaries, who are ready to suffer any loss to support him, even more than his own father, and who would even be willing to overthrow him from his crown for the sake of Selimus. The utter embodiment of stereotypes of jealousy and attachment to power, Bajazet anticipates his overrule by the janissaries, whom he declares nothing can be done without their will, alluding to the fact that his state is mainly led and run by its janissaries. Describing his own sons thrilling with ambitions to rule and Selimus's aspiring thoughts of taking the crown are backed up by the bassas who would, Bajazet knows well, work on his demise to restore the empire to Selimus, whom they believe is most apt for the position.

Selimus is characterized as a prince of forward hope, whose very name frightens the enemies of the Turks, and whose boundless ambitious, nature, like that of Marlowe's Tamburlaine, is insatiable; "for Selimus hands do itch to have the crown, / and he will have it-or else pull me down" (1.177-178). He is no ordinary prince, Bajazet states, "Ah no he is a sea/ into which run nought but ambitious reaches, /Seditious complots, murder, fraud and hate." (1.179-181). A warrior who is not capable of any sort of love except "love of rule and kingly sovereignty" (1-1 189), Selimus' voracious plans are but the prologue to yet-to-enfold endless deeds of cruelty, which are to bring about a tragedy.

Ochialli tells Bajazeth that Selimus craves another seigniory nearer to his father and to the Christians, a geographical location that is very sensitive, and that he means to be a scourge to them all (3.31-34) and boastingly promises to take control of the whole Christian coast. The imminent danger which would emanate if Bajazet granted Selimus such a status is immeasurable. Having been already introduced to Selimus's merciless intentions and the stakes he vows he would take in pursuit of worldly powers, a favourable answer to his request would have taken the play to a direct clash with Christians, and Selimus would indeed prove to be the ultimate Scourge of the Christians, which is not what Robert Greene intended in his play, and thus this aspiration had to be aborted for the sake of having him act, instead, as the scourge to the Turks.

Bajezet replies that Selimus means to be scourge to none other than his own father and that it is his father's estate that he intends to undermine, reversing thus the role of the scourge. Seeking to appease him and to get rid of him, he then promises him Samandria, bordering on Belgrade of Hungary, a region so dangerous and difficult to

subdue, and from which the previous emperor Mahomet was fought back and driven away with shame. Bajazet believed that in sending him away, Selimus' threat will be displaced and his fury enacted against the Christians instead. Samandria is the fortress capital of Serbia, which is located on the Danube near Belgrade, in an area which was subject to continuous clashes between the Turks and the Christians. Selimus, however, senses his father's design of assigning him a region full of strife and in which the Christians are said to have fought valiantly in honour of their cross, in a mini crusade in Hungary, and determines even sterner than before to refuse the crumbs and to demand the loaf, and swears in spite of heaven that he shall wear the crown.

It is the displacement of the threat which is of import in Bajazet's proposal and Selimus's refusal. If Selimus indeed willed to act as the scourge of God to the Christians, then Samandria of all regions was the perfect pick, because it represents a challenge which his grandfather Mehmet II or the conqueror was unable to defy as he got defeated and the siege he forced on Belgrade in July 1456 abandoned. The glory of taking on where his grandfather had left would have proved unmatched, but Selimus was not designed to scourge the Christians.

His soul thus wallowing in ambitious fire, Selimus stands against his father in the field of battle near Chiurli, sixty miles west of Istanbul. Bajazet laments the cruelty of the very son whom he had hoped in vain would have turned a comfort to his old age. Bajazet's lamentation tells something very important about English perceptions of Turkish Sultans' filial expectations, how they wished them to rule and what kind of conflicts they would assign priority. Bajazet wished to see Selimus act as "a scourge and terror to [his] enemies" (5.11), and that any Turkish army hosting must always be targeted primarily against the "base Christians" in the aim of chastising them, or in a

second position against the Persians. The geopolitical concerns of conflict outlined in scene five indicate that writers and audiences alike were very in tune with Turkish military campaigns, and that the rise of insurrection from within the Turkish sultanate, similar in various ways to the reformation in Europe, was viewed as the providential chastisement of the Turkish threat to the Christians.

Selimus' reply to his father's fatherly lamentation and disenchantment with his offspring is very interesting indeed. despite all feverish desire of the crown, he tells his father that he did not take arms neither against him per se, whom he thinks age and meagre health will have him soon, nor against his brothers primarily, the lives of whom he only spares during their father's life, but more importantly in order to "win again the fame that [bajazet] had lost" (5.49). the relief that the Turkish threat will be displaced and weakened by an internal schism soon gives alarm to the terrifying possibility of having Selimus, the most militant and the most fearless of all Bajazet's sons rule in full personification the role of the scourge of God, that he means to reinstate older glories. In a frenzied fit of inferiority complex, Selimus reminds his father of his unjust and maltreatment compared to his siblings and openly declares himself his foe. It was settled then, that Selimus will only prove to be scourge to his own Ottoman race.

Selimus' firm pledge to undermine his father's rule and to reinstate Turkish glory invokes a mixed set of feelings. On the one hand, his overthrow of Bajazet and massacre of his brothers would weaken the empire's foreign campaigns of expansion, but on the other, if Selimus succeeds in his plans, then what would become of Christian domains once a ruthless, fearless, religionless sultan who vows to reign better than all his forefathers takes control. It is this possibility of a momentary relief espoused with the potential for greater danger that Robert Greene was keen at developing in his play.

The markers that were introduced and through which Selimus was othered and altered follow a degrading logic up until he assumes the position of "the unnatural son" (6.78). Worthy of scrutiny is Selmus's logic, as he condemns his father of being "unnatural" and thus that the violations of family codes were initiated by his own father first, and that he finds it only plausible to follow in the same fashion "Since he is so unnatural to me,/ I will prove as unnatural as he. (4.22-25). By advancing the charge that behaving in an "unnatural" way, violating thus humanistic ideals, Selimus is generalizing this trait to encompass the "Turk race" and as such what seems specific becomes a generic trait.

While confronting each other in the battlefield near Chiurlu, Bajazet shames Selimus, whose martial sword his father instructs him, should have been targeted at the Christians or Persians, but who instead like a crafty cuttlefish turned his hungry jaws upon himself, "for what am I, Selimus, but thyself? (5.21) Bajazeth laments. Selimus, in response, reminds his father that he, of all his brothers, is entitled to the empery because of his martial merits against the Christians and the Egyptians, citing the mythical Christian king Prester John who was believed to rule a kingdom in Ethiopia or China, which stand as material emblems of his title as Scourge. He thus, bitter for not having been granted succession to the title of emperor, which he would use to further consolidate his role as the scourge of others, decides to become foe and scourge to his own "unnatural" father who failed, as opposed to the janissaries, to see him as the only due and fit for the ordained role that Ottoman Sultans are supposed to fulfil. Hopes of Turkish doom were very popular in early modern times and Turkish defeat offered audiences a delightful spectacle of Turkish humiliation

II.2 Selimus' Religious Afiiliations

The process of othering Selimus did not simply rest on the divides of civility/barbarity and justice/tyranny. While the play clearly fits the genre of the Tyranny play, staging at its very heart, not only one tyrannical ruler but two: Selim and Acomat, religion plays a decisive role in the uncontrolled and wild enactments of Selimus' imperious despotism. In the early modern popular fiction, it was stereotypical that the Turks are represented as tyrannical rulers who have an insatiable lust for expansionism through the sword, a long-held accompanying assumption of Muslim expansionism in general. Daniel Vitkus stresses that "in scriptures of the stage and in other accounts, the facts about Islamic or Ottoman culture and its power are often imbedded within or distorted by demonizing fantasies (*Three Turk Plays* 6). The demonization of the Ottoman threat was thus rarely depicted without the harnessing of anti-Islamic polemic.

The English resorted to imaginary resolutions face to the anxieties engendered by the deep-seated Ottomans' presence in Europe. The issue that the Turks had the potential to subdue more European nations and to convert their populations to their religion was indeed very pressing, and not a single Turk play escapes harping upon the prospect of conversion to Islam, coerced or willful in pursuance of wealth and ease. This inspired as Daniel Vitkus argued in *Turning Turk* "an anxious fascination" with the Great Turk. Such fascination delved into the religious practices of the Turks with the aim of demonization, and a conspicuous recourse to earlier misconceptions of Islam was summoned from protracted archives. Islamic theology and practices, inevitably, were described erroneously, bearing little if any resemblance to the true faith. This distortion comes as no surprise, as it has been elucidated at length in the first chapter, that Islam

was hardly received with the aim of understanding it. This refutation of Islam as a religion is amply manifested throughout Greene's *Selimus.*

The choice of dramatizing the rise to the absolute power of Selimus of all Turkish Sultans is very well measured by Greene. Selim I or the Grim, was the most controversial figure in Ottoman history, who in an unprecedented rebellion against his father Bayezid II, is said to have taken the throne by force, and eliminated all possible heirs and or claimants to the throne except for his handpicked son Suleiman. It was not however accepted as a fact that he poisoned his father nor that he renounced his religion and turned Atheist. Selimus in Greene's dramatization is a clear villain "a monster and a caricature, a prodigy of egotism without compassion" (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays* 19).

Robert Greene heightened the most controversial acts in his reign, by engaging fully in his patricide and filicide and by representing him as a self-declared atheist, and a blasphemous character with a mutating religious identity, just like Tamburlaine in Marlowe's plays. The demonization of Selimus could not have reached its apogee without declaring his total refusal of religion and denial of his faith, and of any faith. As a matter of fact, Selimus's religious affiliations were laid clear at the very beginning of the play, advancing thus the statement that his tyranny was inextricably bound to his atheism.

Selimus was able to conceive of filicide and patricide in cold-hearted terms because his understanding of family relations was rendered animalistic by his total effacement and sacrilege of religion. At the heart of his greed for power then, lie his blasphemous religious conceptions. A corollary outcome to Selimus' declared atheism is an underrating and a questioning of the Islamic religion. By positing in a lead role a Sultan

who rules over vast Islamic territories and whose religion is willingly renounced, Greene is targeting the very solidity of Islamic-run Sultanates and the wished-for waning of Islam as the conduit in the state. This will to belittle the hold of Islam is only accentuated later as we consider the other characters in the play. In true historical accounts, Selim was, despite the horrors he committed which no creed tolerates, professing Sunni Islam as his main religion. The ellision of his religious affiliation in Greene's dramaturgical piece, thus, serves to question and shake the grounds of Islam, albeit if in an imaginary and fantasizing way.

Corcut, who is presented to us as the least concerned about state affairs and the scholar who engaged in all sorts of knowledge pursuits, a philosopher and a sage, leads his life "learning arts and Mahound's dreaded laws" (1-81). Mahound was used in English to refer to Prophet Mohammed, and Corcut is described as fully immersing his intellect in the study of liberal arts and of the religious laws of Islam. Corcut's intellectual inclinations as the eldest prince and the primary claimant of the throne becomes more resonant later in the play as he declares his apostasy from Islam and adoption of the Christian faith, and even urges his brother Selim to do the same. This act of apostasy which came from a scholar in Islamic religion does much to strike the validity of Islam and of its claims to truth.

While the youngest prince Selim was resolved on arming his heart with irreligion, Corcut studied it throuroughly and yet chose to convert. This irrelevant conversion of Corcut encapsulates a long-held anxiety between Islam and Christianity, an anxiety in which converts stood as emblems of the triumphant faith. Christianity, in this sense, is deemed triumphant to Islam through the conversion of Corcut, who only plays a minor role indeed in the development of the main struggle. He is described by Cali Bassa as

unfit for rule, given to peace, wise and a prince who never handled more than his pen. Whilst Selimus' atheism was necessary for his tyranny and despotism, Corcut's conversion is of little consequence to action in the play. It mainly serves to delegitimize Islam as a superior faith, and to predict in an apocalyptic way its imminent demise through the prince's distance from and refutation of his Islamic faith. A redeemed Christian man, Corcut was demanding a parley, before his execution; and his dying words act as a cautionary tale to the English. The play was after all staged for English audiences whose religion was protestant. By showing Muslims abandoning their faiths, one to clear-cut atheism, and the other finding solace and true guidance in Christianity, Greene's attitude to and wishful thinking in the waning and extinction of Islam is unquestionable. Corcut addresses Selimus, whom he clearly knows is beyond repentance, in the following way,

> Since my vain flight from fair Magnesia,
>
> Selim, I have conversed with Christians
>
> and Learned of them the way to save my soul
>
> and 'pease the anger of the higher God. (22-50-52)

This recalls to mind the same kind of rhetoric that the apologetic and polemic writers marshalled in their pieces to prove Islam a heresy and a falsified faith, the aim of which was to prevent the conversion of steadfast Christians to the wrong religion ie Islam. Corcut validates through his apostasy from Islam and conversion to the Christian faith that the latter is the only way to save one's soul and that he deems Islam, upon extensive studies, a less true if not a wrong faith altogether.

In the introduction to her book *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England,* Jean E. Howard succinctly stated that her intent in rereading focal early modern scripts was to supplement moral questions of "how does a text morally code, and render ethical judgment upon, particular instances of theatrical practice? (8). this kind of didactic closures and the inculcation of the moralizing statements and moral virtue that they carry provide an answer as to how Greene's *Selimus* was morally coded. In this respect, Selimus is deeply rooted in the conventions of homiletic drama; popular in many Elizabethan plays (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays* 19), a drama whose aim is primarily to preach, in a fashion similar to sermons, didactic and moral issues.

Jonathan Dollimore in *Radical Tragedy* maintains that Greene's *Selimus* "contains a fascinating discourse on atheism and one which takes up the debate on the ideological dimension of religion" (58). Indeed, when Selimus declares his atheism, he advances the idea that the world once enjoyed peace, that there were no wars, and that equality was established. Consequently, Selimus holds, there was no judge and no law "nor any king of whom to stand in awe" (2.87). Possession and ownership disturbed this order, and "laws and holy rites/ to maintain peace and govern bloody fights" (2.93-4) were established. Some sage man then, knowing that laws could not operate in quiet, and that they need to be observed "devise[d] the names of gods, religion, heaven and hell / and 'gain of pains and feigned rewards to tell" (2.98-99). Religious observations, he further maintains, are "only bugbears to keep the world in fear" (2.105) and hence that religion, itself a fable, he asserts, was only founded to make men peaceable. Selmius' understanding of religion is purely ideological, advancing as Dollimore asserts "a parodic inversion of the dominant order" (59).

Filicide obedience, Selimus further synthesizes is also derivative of the same ideological manoeuvering, and is also but "a policy to keep the quiet of society" (2.114.115). The differences in actions be those ill or good, thus, do not have afterlife corrosive effects, for he believes that "in death's void kingdom reigns eternal Night" (2.131). Then, according to him, since death is the end, after which there is no other form of life, Selimus resolves to free his soul from its bondage, since nature gave it so large a freedom to be contained by any human fabrication. This problematizing of the understanding of religion and probing its status as ideology, I maintain, serves to cast serious doubts to the veracity of Islam as a religion and not to any religion for that matter. Selimus' ideological arguments concerning religion, although they seem targeted at all religions, must have been received by the English audience as a refutation of Islam primarily, since it is the religion that he is supposed to adhere to. This was not a stance of insurrection or subversion of the state's religion but one which is clearly articulated in reference to Islam, and thus that the ideological arguments were targeted at Islam as a religion. Furthermore, the subversive atheistic context that the play presents forth under Selimus is not targeted at Christianity, for the play does foster the validity of the Christian faith through Corcut's conversion, and thus Christianity is spared any atheistic subversive contradictions. In a nutshell, Selimus's indelible atheism remains relational to Islam.

In the fashion of portraying Islam as a heresy, the play entertains a considerable share of misconceptions of Islamic practices that are associated with paganism and Satanism. As discussed in the first chapter, Prophet Mohammed's image in western Christian conceptions of Islam was a product of vilification, caricature, and misinformation. The Western traditional misrepresentation, especially during the

crusades, maintained that Islam deified Mohammed as Mahound, who is said to be the idol of the Saracens. Such misunderstanding of Islam and the reluctant effort to apprehension, coupled with a fuzzy confusion of the different eastern ethnicities had led to the emergence of a number of erroneous indicators of both ethnicity and Islam. Understanding of the prophet Mohamed is but one instance of such confusion. The appellation of Muslims as Mahometans, which was quite abundant in the polemic and the literature of the time, is one illustration of such a deliberate refusal to acknowledge the religion and the distortion of Mohamed as a prophet through deeming him an idol, which his followers worship. The image of Turks and of Turkish practice adhere to a type of understanding Muslims that bears no traces to the religion of Islam, Muslims were described as Mahometans, Turks, falsely described as pagans who made an idol of their prophet.

After Murdering his father, and Selimus feigning mourning at his funeral, the audience is asked to imagine "the temple of Mahomet". In early modern consciousness, most Christians believed that Muslims hold within their mosques a collection of deities and that the mosque was a form of "a temple [or a] shrine dedicated to the worship of the idol, Mahomet" (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*146). In this sense, Mahomet was shown as a deity who was "often made part of a heathen pantheon that also includes Apollin, Termagant, and other devilish idols" (9).

II.3 Selmilus' Enactment of Cruelty and Anti-Providentialism

Robert Greene's *Selimus* has been categorized as a conquering play, given the nature of its major character, as a tragedy due to the number of deaths enacted on stage, and as a history play because it drew its central character and plot, even if loosely, from

parallel historical accounts. Selimus keeps on gaining imperial momentum, massacring all possible subverters to his scheme and asserting his own indomitable will in the place of God's. His blasphemous atheism and his overweening will and pride go by unpunished in the course of the play either due to the fact that the play was after all loosely constructed upon the history of Selim I, or because Selimus' character encapsulates a fantasy of imperial ambition and is molded after the unbound tyrant, who, like Marlowe's Tamburlaine, is not content until he achieves all and appeases his limitless hunger.

There are a couple of explanations which can be advanced for this absence of divine intervention. The play's clear violation of generic expectations of Tyrant plays needs to be understood in relation to the play's anti-Turkish or anti-Islamic sentiments. Selimus' tyranny is in the play mainly enacted against his own Ottoman race, and despite taking glory in previous confrontations against Christians and wishing to prove scourge to the Christians once an emperor, the play does not materialize any Christian losses at the hands of Selimus. It would thus be reductive to characterize Selimus as simply a tyrant, or as simply a scourge of God or even as simply an atheist.

His tyranny must be understood in conjunction with Islam, as a Turkish tyrant who chose to focus his will to power not at the expense of Christians but against his own father. His aspirations of becoming the scourge of God and to revive the Ottomans' glory that his father had lost remain unfulfilled and his role as a scourge is to scourge himself instead, to become his own enemy, like a " a crafty polypus" or a cuttlefish "turn[s] [his] hungry jaws upon [himself]" (5.20). "for what am I Selimus, but thyself" (5.21) his father Bajazet, tells him, as he confronts him with a large army, an army which Bajazet had hoped would be "a scourge and terror to [his] enemies" (5. 11), and

marshaled "for no other purpose and intent/ than for to chastise those base Christians/ which spoil [his] subjects' wealth with fire and sword" (5.13-15). It can be deduced, that it is Bajazet who embodies the true role of the scourge of God against Christians, despite his failure to do so. Selimus only means to be an internal schism, the long-wished-for scourge of the scourge (Bajazet).

Another possible explanation is, from a comparative vantage point, linked to the concept of influence.[24] The play was following the Marlovian model as discussed earlier; hence influence dictates that it needs to capitalize on the huge popularity and success of Marlowe. Marlowe's Tamburlaine does die but in the sequel and he does not die because of any providential chastisement and his tragedy has been described by many as constantly teasing the reader's expectations, a "stubborn tragedy" Greenblatt says of it. In an effort to emulate Marlowe, and the play has a great share of allusions to Tamburlaine, Selimus is constructed with the hope of having the play succeeded by a sequel. Greene did imply by the end of the play that it was to be completed "next shall you see him with triumphant sword / dividing kingdoms into equal shares / and give them to his warrior followers / if this part, gentles, do like you well / the second part shall greater murthers tell". The play was not followed by a sequel, but what is interesting is Selimus' last soliloquy in the play, after he "clean consumed all the family

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[24] The concept of influence constitutes the standard concept of the French School of comparative literature, and it was advocated by many practitioners of this school and utilized by them in their comparative practices to such great ratios that the school was dubbed the School of Influence studies. Broadly defined, influence means the movement and transferral of an image, an archetype, a motif, an idea or even a tone from one literary work to another. The concept was studied alongside other mechanisms such as borrowing, imitation, direct and indirect influence, literary and non-literary influence.

of noble Ottoman" (29.65-66) annihilating the Islamic threat, he intends to turn to his "neighbour emperors", to Egypt and Persia which he means to quell. His future geopolitical conquests are not targeted westward, not against the Christians but instead eastward and hence displacing any potential threat against Christian Europe.

Second, because dramatic narrative feeds on conflict and the postponement of the resolution, Selimus thus had to remain victorious till he last murders his brother Acomat. Had any punishment befallen him earlier would have interfered with the basic historical bulk of the life Selim I. while the play did manipulate for the sake of theatricality many historical events in the life of Selim I, it did however maintain the Sultan's rise to power intact.

Third, since clearly in this play, Selimus is considered as the scourge of the Turks, his task was yet to be followed by other conquests, the wishful extinction of Ottoman rule. The impotent divine retribution face to Selimus' horrible ascendency casts doubts on the validity of the religion he is supposed to adhere to and which he dared with his atheism. It is thus, the absence of Islamic divine judgment that the play seems to be disseminating to audiences, since Selimus's tyranny was not, not in a single instance in the play, targeted against Christians.

Conclusion

Robert Greene's choice to focus on the self-destructive history of Selim I and not on other campaigns that materialized during his reign demonstrates the appeal of the exoticly shocking in his history, especially as it colluded with the corroboration of anti-Turkish sentiments. Greene's Turks have been inscribed the stereotypes prevalent in the popular consciousness of early modern England. By Making Selimus' opposition quintessentially against his father and having Selim's history specifically tailored and trimmed to be summed up in his opposition to his father, Greene was enclosing in his play a hopeful stance for the annihilation of the Ottomans' threat and a desire for the recession of Ottomans from Europe. Furthermore, through the amplification of Selim's anachronistic atheism coupled with the amplification of Corcut's enlightened Christianity, Greene registers the anxiety of the suspension of Selimus' Islamic religious identity, the implementation of his atheism that is relational to his earlier affiliations, and the the consolidation of his role as scourge are perfectly balanced in the play.

Robert Greene's play could thus be said to respond in perfect accord to its age's deepest anxieties concerning the Turks and their threat. Drawing from a protracted history of othering the Muslims, the play deploys ages-long charges against Muslims and their religion. As an anti-Islamic piece of drama, it fulfilled its main tasks and did little to question the stereotypes endemic to a long tradition of othering Islam: the demonization of the Turk is achieved; depiction of Islam as heresy is fulfilled, the wishful thinking of having Islam scourged and self-suppressed from within is secured.

Chapter Four- Othering the Moor and the Question of Race in *Othello*

Introduction

England's engagement with the Northern coast of Barbary was equally part of England's foreign affairs. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, England established solid mercantile and diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Morocco and traded with the regencies of Algeria, Tunisia, and Lybia, then under Ottoman rule. The contacts with this region which is predominantly defined by its Islamic religion put the English in contact with the Moors. This identitarian figure of the Moor captivated the playwrights' attention not simply for its Islam, but for its skin color. The attributes ascribed to the Moors on the Elizabethan theatre were both derivative to the actual contacts with them and to other anxieties linked to body politics and differentiation. Religious markers were thus intermingled with epistemologically racial markers and giving rise to complex stagings of the figure of the Moor. Shakespeare's *Othello*, like no other Elizabethan play, encapsulates the intricacies of this figure.

Othello was thrust in a cosmopolitan, supposeldly colour blind Venetian setting, which at first welcomes him as a general leading his armies against their arch enemy the Turk. As he attempts miscegenation, his status and the extent of his inclusion are questioned as a patently racist discourse untangles. He gradually falls victim to his racial origins and conduct. This chapter highlights Othello's geohumourism in the play and demonstrates the extent to which the play harped upon issues of race. While many found the religious question of Othello a mystery in the play, reading against the grain will prove that religious issues were just as part of Othello'd othering process as his race. Shakespeare's dramatic text constructs Othello as an enigmatic figure, whose physique is not compatible with his origins and whose religion is anything but

conclusive. A consideration of this ambivalence as part of the mechanism of Othering will thus be highlighted.

I.Elizabeth's Engagement with the Moors of Barbary and the Surge of Moors Plays

The figure of the Moor in the early modern stage was not a fictitious entity floating above the anxieties and concerns of its age. Plays staging Moorish characters were particularly abundant during the second half of the Elizabethan age. This surge in theatrical production was coterminous with the intensive trade with the region of Barbary, and of the particular interest with Morocco. This nation, which is part of the region of Barbary, yet different in its independent rule, Muslim but with sentiments sharply anti-Ottoman and anti- Spanish played a tremendous trade role and informed English attitudes and perceptions of the Moors.

The heightened fascination towards the moors was conspicuous specifically after England received a Moroccan delegation during Elizabeth I's reign, with the ambassador Abd al-Wahid bin Masoud bin Muhammed Al Alnnuri sent from the part of the Moroccan Sultan Mulay el Mansur in what was ostensibly a delegation negotiating trade. Al Alnurri was however sent to negotiate the possibility of a diplomatic and military alliance against Spain: their common enemy, but his sultan's proposal was prevaricated and demurred. Part of the transaction which Al Mansur advanced with his ambassador also included the formation of a coordinated league to attack Ottoman-held Algiers, Morroco's nemesis even before Al Mansur's accession (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 26). Queen Elizabeth's refusal to Al Mansur's scheme is probably due to this part of the agreement, for fear of the disruption of her trade with the Ottomans, among other concerns. She had plans of her own, and attempted to convince Al Annuri whom her advisors discerned was a Morisco, to fight for her against the Spanish. The Moriscos were the Sultan's elite troupes and famed for their hatred of the Spanish as well. Al

Annuri proved loyal to his ruler and recounted to him in detail the Queen's intentions, which upset Al Mansur. Prior to the revisionist history of the early modern age, advocated by scholars who endeavoured to correct Islam's contribution to England, accounts of the Tudor ages critically effaced the role that Muslims contributed with their diplomatic and mercantile presence in English domains.

Elizabeth was particularly cautious against any military alliance lest it would disrupt her relations with the Ottomans, whom she equally needed. The Anglo-Moroccan alliance was particularly different because of the porous presences of envoys and ambassadors who visited England and were seen publically parading London streets with their peculiar Moorish attire and complex set of beliefs: anti-Turkish, anti-Spanish and especially wealthy Muslims. Moorish presence in England was thus decisive in influencing public attitudes and the writers' penchant to and curiosity of their culture.

England and Morocco's attitudes towards Spain had common grounds: the former defined by its anti-Catholic sentiments which had proved poignant past the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and the latter due to the expulsion of the Moors from Southern Europe, and the hopes of Al Mansur to regain the lands and conquer Al Andalus. Furthermore, Morocco's relationship with its neighbouring Ottoman regencies of the Barbary region was equally fraught with tensions. The Ottomans were seeking hegemony over the North African coast, which the Moroccans resisted vehemently. The dangers of a political and military alliance with Morocco against the Spanish were too alarming for England to pursue and Queen Elizabeth sealed the negotiations with turning down the league.

The entanglement with the Moors was thus balanced cautiously and rerouted to the much safer venues of trade with occasional support in campaigns but not a strict

military alliance. Al Mansur in return refrained from extending help to the English in buttressing Dom Antonio's claim to the Portuguese throne against Philip II of Spain, which resulted in a dismal failure with heavy losses for the English. Al Mansur was instead pursuing another option with Philip II of Spain by exchanging his non-cooperation in the Anglo-Portuguese alliance with the city of Asila in northern Morocco, the offer which Philip granted on the 13th September 1589 (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 19). Despite the uncertainties and tensions between the two monarchs, realpolitik and cooperation continued nonetheless. The relationship between the Morocco and England, stresses Jerry Brotton, must not be equated with amity whereby differences are eschewed and the two happily coexisted in an atmosphere of tolerance. Their relationship was instead "based on mutual suspicion, misunderstanding and ambivalence. Its consequences were various and sometimes contradictory" (49).

England's setback with the Moroccan Sultan was not a state secretive matter, the news of which circulated in the streets of London and were adapted by playwrights in the theatre, dramatizing the duplicity and hazards of engaging with the Moors. Again I would argue the same kind of discrepancy with the Turks exists with the Moors, the state seeking alliances and the theatre's treading on the topics of either is governed by non-stately tropes, tropes that are deeply entrenched in the process of cultural othering and coded by such markers as religion and skin colour.

Nabil Matar assiduously maintains that to English playwrights whose country had not a single piece of land out of their insular realm in Africa, the Moroccans "were not defeated subalterns and kidnapped savages—as other non-Europeans and non-Christians were. That is why playwrights blackened them into sons of the cursed Ham with thick lips and rolling eyes, fearful "to look on" (*Othello*, 1.3.98), even as a

Christian, the Moor was "problematic, unsettling and dangerous" (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 33). As Elizabeth was pursuing diplomatic and political relations with the Moroccans, the playwrights were captivated by the race of the Moors. Unlike the Turks who were filtered mainly through religious terms, the Moors' religion posited little threat to England or to Europe for that matter for its non-expansionist schemes in Europe. The Moors were mainly colour and race coded and their religion was oftentimes conflated. This is not however an attempt to completely mute religious coding in approaching Moors, but to assign more priority to one marker over another, the marker which was harnessed more in the English theatres, namely that of blackness.

Echoes to the religion of the Moor are still invoked at times as will be demonstrated later in the discussion of Othello's character. Although in the early modern period, the word Moor became attached to issues of blackness, earlier when the first Berber Moors of the North African region migrated to the Iberian Peninsula after the conquest, they were designated by the Spanish as half Arab half Berber peoples who professed the religion of 'Mahomet'. In the 16th c however, way after those moors were expulsed and their religious threat receded, and especially for the English with whom engagements were more diplomatic and mercantile, these moors as aliens were perceived as threatening because of their complexion tone, because of their strikingly alarming visibility.

The Moroccan moors were somatically different, tawny or dark in skin and both visibly attractive if delegates and ambassadorial envoys, or conversely threatening if common moors.[25] While envoys and ambassadors were invited and encouraged on

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[25] When in the Anglo-spanish war, the English attempted the capture of th Spanish city of Cadiz in 1596 along with the help of the Dutch, the Moroccan Sultan Al Mansur aided Queen Elizabeth in the course, a

English domains, the other commoners were shunned out, as Matar elucidates, the reason why "the only way to overcome them was by sending them away, not converted or culturally defeated; simply sent back to the regions beyond the Mediterranean frontier, to a life of sterility and loneliness" (24). During Renaissance England, Loomba argues that nationalist affiliations were sharpening simultaneously with feelings of hostility to outsiders and that England witnessed waves of hostile riots towards the presence of foreigners in their domains. This was the outcome of mounting anxieties of being engulfed by outsiders, and Loomba recalls that this was the atmosphere in which England conducted its extensive maritime and mercantile explorations and the writers imagined these alternate worlds and their outsiders in the theatre *(Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* 16). This adopted attitude saw parallels in theatrical productions of the age. Predominantly, the Moors' somatic differences were invested in characterization and description and were believed to pierce through the flesh to their conduct and behaviour. Condemned for a number of vices that were equally targeted at other non-Europeans, the moors of the stage were rendered fearful and barbarian both in features and in behaviour.

Although a number of scholars have distinguished between different kinds of Moors in the North African region, that there were white, tawny and dark skinned Moors[26],

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favour, which after the sack of the city, England reciprocated by rescuing Moorish galley slaves in Spanish ships and bringing them to England. This move however caused a dismaying reaction from Londoners at the sight of so many vagabond moors perusing the streets, which led Queen Elizabeth later to issue a proclamation to their expulsion.

[26] Eldred Jones in *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama* (1965); Jack D'Amico in *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (1991); Kim F.Hall in *Things of darkness Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (1995), and Anthony Gerard Barthelemy in

most of the playwrights of the age focused their attention on the most visible phenotypic trait of skin complexion. England's engagement with the region of Barbary was coterminous to other English Engagements, of particular focus in this chapter, are the ventures carried out in the western coast of Africa and the ensuing slave trade that proliferated. Travel and mercantile narratives followed and I will argue, in the same fashion that Nabil Matar has done in his book *Turks, Moors and Englishmen*, that discourses were superimposed in fashioning others. In the case of Moors, a critical confusion was at work by assigning to the Moors the predominant somatic features that were remarked amongst the Western Africans who were enslaved. The result was ambivalent characters whose origins are eclectic and whose discerning demands a global sweep at various differentiating paradigms at the same time. The narratives and chronicles that transported the news of far-fetched regions back home were by nature intermingling fact and legend, observation and interpretation, and the result were far from being objective recorded accounts. Ethnic and racial differences were heightened and perceived self-referentially in order to stabilize their threatening potential. The playwrights took off from such sources and went further with their imaginative faculties dramatizing these liminal figures and othering them using a varied set of religious, ethnic, racial, and cultural markers.

By blackening their characters/actors, these playwrights delved into racializing issues, it is argued, which were invoked in travel narratives and have relied on a number of differentiating theories, the like of which have been outlined in the second chapter. This dramaturgical selection if not effacement of diversity could be traced to a number

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Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne (1999).

of reasons: theatre commodification reasons, ethnic curiosity reasons, and reasons linked to cultural identity and contradistinction. To this last point, Ania Loomba argues that debates about religious, cultural and bodily differences during the renaissance were profound and the question of difference central to the literature of the age. This interest culminated in the creation of ideologies of difference that harnessed alternate vocabularies of race (*Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* 4-7). Indeed, in the case of moors, this racializing attitude was secured through rendering the moors Negroid. This proclivity led to the application of attributes that were designated to 'black' Africans on the Moors.

II.Othello's Race and Ethnic Curiosity

Othello's is clearly described in the play as a Moor, this multivalent term, which is torn between ethnicity and race. The ramifications of the epithet Moor in early modern England could sweep a range of tone complexions, as Eldred Jones demonstrates in *Othello's Countrymen*. Michael Neil likewise maps the range of associations that this designation could refer to, which varies from the Berber-Arab people of the North African coast of Morocco Mauritania or Barbary, as it could be used to include the inhabitants of the entirety of the North African Littoral. The Term was also colour-coded covering such tones as white, tawny, or black, sometimes might even be applied to Indian or any darker-skinned people. The Moor was also used at times to indicate religion usually Islam which went by the appellation of Mohammedanism just as it could merge both ethnic and religious markers. This designation, argues Gerald Barthelemy, very often stood alternatively for many of these categories, especially as it became a general term for the ethnically, culturally, and religiously "strange" (17).

Despite the indeterminacy of the term, the multifaceted Moor was invested in the early modern stage and was circumscribed as 'other'.

English merchants and voyagers were quite alert not only to the different skin pigmentations of Africans, but to their political and economic import. While the western coast signaled subjugated sub-saharens invested in the slave trade, the northern coast of Africa carried different vibes of cooperation and need. How much Shakespeare knew of these varieties cannot be totally recovered but can be assessed from the sources he adopted in the composition of his play. This study, however, is not a dramatic sources study, as I endeavour to read against the grain along with the new historical findings. As such, Othello's race and ethnicity will be contested from within the text to engulf the very culture that gave rise to such perceptions.

Unsettling in the description of Othello the Moor are his features. Even if one accepts that Shakespeare chose a moor whose skin tone is darker, in the manner of selection, Othello's features do not really conform much with those usually attributed to the Moors. He is described by Roderigo at the onset of the play as a "thick lips" moor (1.1.66) whose Barbary features are berated. "Thick lips" was a characteristic almost unanimously ascribed to the "Negroes" of sub-Saharan Africa and not to the Moors of the North African region. Reading against the grain, thus, I maintain that Othello was blackened not out of benevolent selection, but in order to negroid him and invest those features that call upon such colour, race, damnation, and degeneracy concerns.

To begin with, the issue of damnation which bears resonance to the scriptural tradition of rationalizing racial difference elaborated in the second chapter is to be found at work in Othello. Once Othello's colour was determined as scorched black, there

follows a number of explanations and outcomes of this blackness. Desdemona alludes to the blazing sun and heat in the region in which he was born. This explanation of latitude and regional geohumourism alludes both to his skin complexion as well as to his behaviour as will be explained a bit later. Othello's blackness that the play insistently points to is linked to his damned status as an African whose race is by religious Christian norms bound to damnation. The Naochic dogma of accounting for racial difference is very applicable here. It is suggested that Othello is beyond redemption and salvation because he belongs to the damned progeny of Ham and Canaan. When in nightly watch, drunken Cassio converses with Iago in an instance on God's schemes of salvation, stating that there are souls which must be saved and others which must not be saved. He later naturally excludes Othello from Christian salvation as he declares "no offence to the general, nor any / man of quality-I hope to be saved" (2.3.93-94). Despite the fact that Othello is clearly described as a baptized moor, a Christian moor, Cassio, still maintains that his religion might only have served his worldly inclusion among fellow Christians, in Venice. Eternally, however, Cassio does not see a place for Othello despite his good and clearly valiant nature.

When Branbantio cries to Othello "damned as thou art" (1.2. 63), he is alluding to his physique, his blackness and features as a manifestation of a curse and a damnation. "Such a thing as [him]-to fear, not to delight" (1.2.71), Brabantio exclaims at the sight of Othello, despite his highly esteemed position as a general in Venetian forces. His phenotypical features, thus, are perceived as extending to an essentialist much deeper nature in his own race. Brabantio's verdict on Othello sentences him right to prison, where he believes people of his race ought to go for attempting theft of Venetian whiteness ideals. Although he himself a senator who is knowledgeable enough of state

affairs, to Brabantio, Othello's case cannot be classified as anything but a robbery "for if such actions may have passage free", denounces Brabantio, "*Bond-slaves* and pagans shall our statesmen be" (1.2. 100-01 emphasis added). Although it might seem fleetingly mentioned, Brabantio's remark on slavery here, I deem it, very resonant with the other implications concerning his race. Read through the lens of the Naochic myth again, Africans were by the sixteenth century delineated geographically and physically as the races of Noah's curse, who were subjugated to servitude.

Othello does serve the state as a military leader, his position however and despite its esteemed rank, does not in Brabantio's eyes take Othello away from the category of a "bond-slave". His servitude, he is asserting, is indelible and irreversible, just as is his blackness and subsequent damnation in the afterlife. After Desmona's murder, Lodovico exclaims how could a noble creature such as Othello who was "once so good. / Fall'n in the practice of a damned slave," (5.2.290-91), enlivening the issue of slavery which Othello, by foul deeds, had fallen into. It was a nature endemic to his race and origin which his presumed cultivation and inclusion in the Venetian society only seemed to camouflage. When Iago ignited within him what, according to his humourism, he was most predisposed to act like; his "monstrous" nature was highlighted. Even Othello himself, upon realizing his grave and murderous deed, curses himself as a slave "O cursed, cursed slave! Whip me, ye devils, / from the possession of this heavenly sight!" (5.2.177-78). Slavery and debasement inexorably haunt his race and he is made to fall back to it most tragically.

Another aspect of the origins of Othello concerns his noble lineage. Othello declares to Iago right after Brabantio learns of Desdemona's elopement with the moor that, boasting being unlike his nature, he actually is descendent of a very noble and highly

esteemed blood, “I fetch my life and being / From men of royal siege, and my demerits May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune / As this that I have reached” (1.2.21-24). His noble nature is echoed by many characters in the play, but is no fortress to his later degeneracy, to what Branatio and Iago believe him to be, a monstrous fearful moor both in looks as well as in actions. In fact, his short-lived nobility as I perceive it was simply meant to be harnessed to highlight his immense fall from grace, to ridicule the fallacy of his inclusion through exclusion.

Othello’s racializing process equally scratches issues of sexuality and their norms. The play opens up with Iago’s plan to deliver the news of theft to Branatio. The image which Iago employed in producing the most grotesque union concerns coition of animals, metaphoric as it may be for Desmdemona, yet I believe was meant to be literal for Othello. Their match deemed unusual, “unnatural”, and unthinkable in Venetian ideals, the tragedy will later untangle from the folds of this fragile, prone-to-subvert relationship. Divides of race, culture, age, and mannerisms were conspicuously shed light upon. The tragedy’s bitter denouement is achievable only when Othello, who once perceived his position in the Venetian system unshakable, indoctrinates these differences and acts upon them.

Othello’s propensity for hyper-sexuality is harped upon many times in the play by different characters. The “Lascivious moor” (1.1.125) as Roderigo calls him is a stereotype very well entrenched in discourses of the time. Believed to be of a nature given to excesses and aberrance, Othello’s body was scrutinized by the characters that drew on a number of differentiating theories of the age with the aim of discriminating him. When attempting to soothe and reassure Roderigo, Iago tells him that Desdemona’s love is merely “lust of the blood” and that she should not continue long

loving the moor and that “when she is / sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: / she must have change, she must” (1.3.347-49).

Referring to sexuality, Iago entertains the deep-seated (mis)belief that blacks are sexually hyperactive and that Desdemona’s relationship with him cannot trespass the threshold of sexual appetites. Iago affirms to Roderigo that “her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she / have to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull / with the act of sport, there should be-again to inflame / it and to give satiety a fresh appetite-loveliness in / favour, sympathy in years, manners and beauties: all / which the moor is defective in (2.1.220-25). Iago’s statement again foregrounds the bond between Desdemona and Othello as a fleeting lust, which as soon as appeased will give way to a demystified and bleak relationship with no other common grounds, not culture, nor beauty nor mannerism nor class. The only merits, Iago believes Othello is entitled to, are natural sexual ones, invoking a long-held misconception which early modern Europeans held of Africans and sub-Saharans concerning the anatomy and genealogy of their bodies, and scrutiny of their privy members and sexual durance during intercourse.

Since Othello is invariably characterized as black, notwithstanding his Moorish origins, through his blackness he was fastened in a long tradition that relates it to lechery and fornication. Othello’s sexuality is charged as bestial and as intense in degree, an accusation which during early modern times was targeted at Ham’s posterity whom it was believed got punished with such large penises (Bulwer qtn.in Loomba *Shakespeare Race and Colonialism* 51). Sexual excesses and aberrations are predominantly traced back to two explanatory modes both related to blackness: humourism and the interpretation of the scriptural Naochic dogma. Both these modes intertwine sex and race.

According to the Naochic dogma, Africa was linked to Ham's posterity to the curse to the issue of servitude, from which burst the endless stereotypes linked to body and sexuality. Othello is described both as an African, black who was admitted with incredulity into a Christian community but whose fall from grace, in the manner of his progenitor, classifies him alongside "bond-slaves", the natural position which he ought, according to Brabantio, to occupy. Shakespeare was heir to a tradition, classical, philosophical and scientific, albeit if never acknowledged or voiced, that enabled him to say some things and not others regarding human nature and human difference, to advance and foreground certain conceptions and not to contest them. Read against the model of the Naochic dogma, Othello is doomed to fallibility and prone to it precisely because of his predisposition which Iago does nothing but "bring this monstrous birth to the world's light" (1.1.399). His love to Desedemona is perceived as an unforgivable transgression with consequences that are unbearable, similar in many ways to how westerners interpreted Ham's transgression upon his father Noah. Read through the scriptural lens thus, the race and sexuality of Othello are imbricated and mutually constitutive of one another.

The play lends another reading related to geohumourism, the body of theory elaborated in the second chapter. This reading also hinges upon issues of race and sexuality. That Othello is a black moor is evident in the play; there are further descriptions of Othello's dispositions and temperament which link him yet once more to geography and body politics that are not manacled in religious terms, but more in pseudo-scientific terms. The early modern age as dealt with earlier witnessed the emergence of a number of theories that paved the way for the 18th-century nefarious biological essentialism of races.

In terms of region, Othello is designated as a southerner because of being a Moor. When asked by Emilia whether he was prone to jealousy, Desdemona speculates that "the sun where he was born / drew all such humours from him" (3.4.27-8). Desdemona is implying that the region where Othello was brought up was a hot region that affected his humourism in such a way leaving him incapable of jealousy. Her understanding of geohumourism is actually erroneous because it is precisely the southerners who, according to this paradigm, are penchant towards vices of the temperament such as jealousy. Furthermore, it was believed that southerners are inclined towards vices of the body and soul due to their specific composition of the four humours. Othello's cultural and moral degeneracy could thus be due to his humour which derives from his region. Furthermore, the southerners were also believed to indulge in lechery, and hence the issue of sexual degeneracy is also at play.

Othello's sexuality was given ample emphasis in the play, with various characters rationalizing his relationship to Desdemona solely through lechery. When Othello was justifying to the Duke his match with Desdemona, even he begins first by "confess[ing] the vices of [his] blood" (1.3.23); vices which are rooted in his sexual advance and excesses in loving Desdemona and then proceeds with his story of wooing her with his voyaging accounts. In an ideological impulse, Othello is thus subject to a sexual geo-climatic stereotyping and shoved into the taxonomy of southerners whose sexualities were deemed degenerate. Southerners were regarded to be more driven towards jealousy, sin, lust, and fornication than their northern counterparts purportedly as a consequence of climatic and environmental conditions. As elucidated in the second chapter, sexuality was not at all a marker in early humoral texts, but was ideologically made essential later on, and deemed the ultimate marker of Southern and hot climates

and of their inhabitants. The sexuality of the southerners was considered their most defining trait, in the intemperate sense, which resulted in a stiff and robust association of heat to sexual excesses as harnessed across many early modern homouralist texts. Othello is victim to this tradition of understanding Southerners as sexually and bodily degenerate and ultimately as culturally unassimilable.

When Desdemona was brought in to negate the charge of magic that Brabantio condemns Othello of, she declares her wilful love to him in such a way that robs her infatuation of any physical attraction, “I saw Othello’s visage in his mind” (1.3.252) Desdemona tells the audience, and therefore corroborating the standard beauty ideals of fairness and ugliness. While there are some who argued otherwise, reading into Desdemona’s statement an intrepid move towards colour blindness, yet it is maintained that her reply was meant to rebut what her co-religionists and Venetians were most prone to disqualify in their match, that it was unthinkable for a fair lady to fall in love for whom “she fears to look on” as her father shrieks. Moreover, when Othello demands that Desdemona be sent with him to Cyprus, he then apologetically justifies his demand as not “to please the palate of [his] appetites” (1.3.261-62), harping upon what he thought the others might read in this quest.

When Iago works on his devilish plan to trick Othello into jealousy, he does so with the racial conviction that Othello is given to such proclivity, that he is predisposed to these vices. In many instances in the play, characters harp upon the humourism of Othello. Othello’s downfall could not have been possible without manipulating him racially to misogyny and jealousy. By condemning him as an “Erring Barbarian” (1.3.353), Iago proceeds further with his villainy by working the faculties which he believes Othello is most deficient in. Iago stresses that “Our bodies are our gardens, to

the which our wills are gardeners" (1.3.320), and that the harvest depends on what one plants and "the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills" (1.3.325). He then proceeds to state that "If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, *the blood and baseness of our natures* would conduct us to most prepost'rous conclusions" (1.3.226-29 Italics mine). Although in this statement he was explaining to Roderigo his follies in love, yet this is precisely what Iago undertakes in his mission to metamorphose Othello, to let his bodily urges, which are deemed sharp, erratic and uncontrollable in his southern race, submerge his reasoning faculties and take over, leading to disastrous ends. When he affirms that "we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts" (1.3.329-30), Othello is by implication excluded from Iago's "we". Othello will be led to this 'baseness' of thought, which is both uncontrollable and irreversible. Othello's humour is then deemed less temperate and balanced than the other characters'.

Iago reassures Roderigo that it cannot be that Desdemona should continue to love the Moor for long, as he asserts that "These Moors are changeable in their wills" (1.3.344). He then condemns him both of an erring nature susceptible for fallibility, and of a moodiness which he deems is intrinsic to the Moor's temperament. Iago thus, plans to abuse Othello's naïve nature and to manipulate him to the deadly vice of jealousy.

After he was wrought to utter "unbookish jealousy", Othello's tide of change begins. Iago meant to lead Othello back to his origins, to what he is most prone to feel so uncontrollably so that he acts upon his suspicions. When "in humour altered" (3.4.123), he degenerates and starts acting so strangely that when he strikes Desdemona in front of Lodovico, the latter exclaims if this is "the noble Moor whom our full senate / call all-in-all sufficient?" (4.1.259-60), and wonders if his wits are safe and he is not light of

brains. He is much changed, Iago confirms to Lodovico. Othello's jealousy was possible according to Iago because he is fashioned in such a way to be easily "led by th'nose as asses are" (1.3.396-97) to this specific vice, which characterizes his race, and he is blinded by his jealousy because he is made to question his racial inferiority and to compare himself with other fellow Venetians, "haply, for I am black, / and have not those soft parts of conversation / that clamberers have…" (3.3.66-67) he tells Iago in utmost suspicion of Desdemona's treason. Othello's drive towards jealousy is thus made endemic to his race.

The vice of jealousy, thus, which has been given ample scrutiny in the criticism of the play, it is argued, should not be regarded as a mere vice which any character is susceptible to, but as an ethnic marker of Othello the Moor, the Southerner, who could not escape this essentialism in a tradition which has for ages posited him hieararchily below others, sexually, morally and culturally. Othello's jealousy is rooted in the Pseudo-medical, biological understanding of human bodies, pathologies, and of differences in accordance with geographical locations and climates. Through first blackening Othello, then thrusting him in a whirlwind of racial differentiation and of sexual and moral degeneracy, Shakespeare primarily invested in the moor his racial and ethnic features in accordance with his age's most dominant classical theories of regarding and discriminating others. Other markers in further differentiating Othello come in a second position but are essential to the overall portfolio of Othello in the play. While many are prone to think that Shakespeare did not explore in Othello his Islam, or his religion per se, I will argue that Othello's religion, or the fuzzy affiliation to any, is equally necessary for his tragedy, despite paucious textual, dramatic references.

III.Othello's Ambivalent Religious Identity

Othello's ambivalent and hybrid identity touches upon issues of the religion of the Moors just as equally as it does issues of race. In fact, one of the most tantalizing questions about Shakespeare's Othello concerns his religious affiliations. The ambivalence arises when one considers his origins, geographically and ethnically speaking. The play affords glimpses of the Moor's past which instead of concluding anything or stabilizing his religion conversely complicate it further. From the onset of the play, we are introduced to Othello as a noble Moor who was baptized Christian, according to Iago's confirmation, and is thus rendered religiously non-dangerous as he serves in a Christian army against their arch enemy the Turks in the Cyprus wars.

As Othello's religious past is left unclear, Othello is described as "An extravagant and wheeling stranger of here and everywhere" (1.1.135-36), whose religious belonging prior to his conversion to Christianity is left ambiguous. This ambivalence in his former religious belonging, however, clears simultaneously with his gradual fall from Christianity. As Iago determines to un-baptize Othello, he intends to reverse him back to whatever religion he belonged to prior to Christianity. In fact, Othello's ethnicity was almost unanimously regarded as professing the religion of Islam. While the term moor as highlighted by many early modern scholars could carry a wide range of associations, some of which discredit the exclusivity of Islam as a religion, Shakespeare made sure while keeping Othello's religion vague to hint to his North African origins and to his skin complexion. When he asked Desdemona to show him the handkerchief he offered her, he did recount a story of his mother with an oracle from Egypt who gave her the magical item. Whether the story is true or not, Othello's previous ventures, from his birth to his later captivity by "the insolent foe" to his ransom all suggest that he is more

a Moor of the region of Barbary than any other ethnicity. Furthermore, the Moors of the region of Morocco as elaborated in the first subheading, although sharing the same religion and language with the other moors of the region of Barbary, articulated an animosity towards the Ottoman Muslims. It could as well be that the construction of Othello's character drew from such understandings, as he is clearly in the play shown to stand in opposition to the Turks.

When in Cyprus, and Iago instigates the quarrel that will dispatch Cassio from the services of his general, Othello's rage about the provoked mutiny is expressed in the following way, "Are we turned Turks? And to ourselves do that / Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites? (2.3.157-58). He is referring to the alleged violence of the Turks in treating others, an experience which he was subjugated to during his captivity by them, which seemingly distances him from their conduct that he clearly condemns as barbarous and savage. Ironically, however, his descent from his alleged civilized nature will lead him to act precisely in the fashion of the Turks whom he condemned earlier. His Christianity is put to the test, now that he is in lands nearer to the Turks, and in which he might be driven to act as they would. As Iago determines to unbaptize him, to reveal his essential nature, he proceeds to poison his ears with jealousy and leads him to commit the most horrible un-Christian deeds. The association of Othello with the notion of "the Turk" untangles as his Christianity is revealed fragile.

Again, issues of race, ethnicity, and religion are rendered most complex and imbricated to ever attempt a discussion of one of those without bordering on the other. Othello's fall from grace and his renunciation of Christianity was only the outcome of Iago's cunning manipulation of the humours of Othello. By positing that men of his "race" and "ethnicity" are penchant towards such vices that even Christianity cannot

wash clean, that they lurk endemic to his very character and are only in disguise, waiting to be ignited, Iago's mission of unbaptizing Othello is premised on this essentialism about his origins and his temperament. Although never clearly stated by any of the characters, the association of Othello with the Turks is striking enough to escape the attention of an attentive reader. The opposition to the Turks that Othello keeps insisting upon, thus, only serves to heighten his later association with them, in an ironic fashion. Iago seems to be passing the message that not only is Othello reinstated to his ethnicity which is governed by his erratic humours, but he is equally reinstated to the Turk religion which was formerly described as savage and barbarous. Othello's horrific deed of murdering Desdemona is thus filtered both through ethnic, racial, and religious lenses.

On another front, the Turkish threat constitutes, at least partly in the first two acts of the play, the driving force behind the events. The Turks are defined thus as the arch-enemy of the Venetians who were rallying forces to combat them. Although no real confrontation takes place between the two, the way the play has dramatized the victory of the Venetians is worthy of some scrutiny. Othello announces to his fellow Venetians in Cyprus that the fleet was annihilated by some tempest and was thus drowned without further friction. The providential intervention had the upper hand in this magnanimous struggle and the alarm was completely suppressed from the picture. Satirically though, there still remains a Turk among the Christians, whose threat is only covered by a seeming and fleeting cultured and civilized nature.

Brabantio, who felt as betrayed as a father ever could at the news of his daughter's elopement with the Moor conjures up a comparison that deals with the potential of Turkish threat. After Desdemona confesses in front of her father her willful choice and

love of Othello, the duke tries to reason with Brabantio to accept and bless their marriage by stating that "The robbed that smiles steals something from the thief; / he robs himself that spends a bootless grief" (1.3.208-09) and Brabantio responds "So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile, / We lose it not, so long as we can smile" (1.3.210-11), mockingly telling him that if Cyprus is lost from us at the Turk's might, is the news of such loss not going to prove as bad when we smile, equating the theft of Cyprus with the theft of Christian virtue by Othello whom Barabantio equally considers as a Turk. While Cyprus was kept safe from Turkish might, Desdemona was not from the "Turkish" thief Othello. The Turkish threat is thus simply suppressed from one front but left roaming freely with Venetian consent on another, threatening Christian ideals of whiteness and virtue.

The metamorphosis of Othello to become the Turkish threat that he spent his whole lifetime battling against and muting becomes strikingly relevant after he murders Desdemona. When he takes on his barbarous, cruel, and erring nature which various characters early in the play secretly held about him, and finally commits the act of murder, Othello appeases his vengeance and is proven false by Emilia who shows him his follies with proof. Having realized his grave and cruel deed, Othello asks Lodovico to speak of him "as [he is]: nothing extenuate," (5.2.341), and then he recounts how once in Aleppo, when "a malignant and turbaned Turk / beat a Venetian and traduced the state, / [he] took by th'throat the circumcised dog" (5.2.352-54) and then proceeds to smote himself in the same manner he smote the Turk. In Othello's suicide speech, the personification of Othello becomes full. Othello realizes that he needs to murder the Turk within him. Othello's Christianity which was questionable is finally renounced.

The doubtfulness of his acceptance in Christian Venice is sustained until the end. His Christianity, or the lack thereof, becomes completely substituted by “Turkishness” and his reversion is fulfilled as his baptism is undone. Othello’s seeming inclusion soon proved to be a mere mirage, and his status as a respected and valiant general serving Venetian forces and aspiring to be assimilated through his marriage with fair Desdemona is reversed to an utter exclusion as he gets disqualified. He is not simply expulsed out of religion but out of humanity and civility as he resumes his place as a barbaric Moor who does not differ, in fact, is associated with the Turkish enemy that his transient host community was battling against.

IV. Interracial Marriage and Fears of Miscegenation

> *Prospero [aside] Fair encounter*
>
> *Of two most rare affections! Heavens rain grace*
>
> *On that which breeds between’ em*
>
> *(*Shakespeare *The Tempest)*

Since Othello has been described many times as physically falling of the taxonomy of human beings, a “barbary horse”, whose nature is more animalistic than human, the hellish coition between him and Desdemona that Iago plays the strings of had as an aim to draw a picture not simply of an indescribable, inconceivable interracial marriage, but of a coition which violates the laws of nature, and not merely of Western Venetian ideals. Othello’s status as a general serving Venice never proved so subversive, not until he takes a step further through considering miscegenation. His services are valued and revered in fighting back the Turkish theft of Cyprus, but once, as stated above, the act of

"robbery" touches upon a Venetian lady, then as declared Brabantio he cannot simply smile back.

When Iago and Roderigo approach Brabantio with the former being instructed to "rouse" the fears of Brabantio into insecurity, that "though he in a fertile climate dwell, / plague him with flies;" (1.1.37) so that the inclusion of the Moor in Venice will assume its true colours of danger and alarm. Brabantio initially discredits Roderigo's hurls by shouting "this is Venice: / My house is not a grange" (1.1.104-05), stressing the security which characterizes Venice and which stands inviolable. The theft, however, as Brabantio learned of came from an underrated thief, whom he thought his place in Venice is well manacled within a specific sector. After confirming that his daughter did in fact elope "to the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor" (1.1.125), Branbantio who had rejected Roderigo's suits to Desdemona now wishes if he had married her instead. Being the daughter of the senator, a fair Venetian lady of high acclaim and birth, Brabantio would have settled for a marriage incompatible in terms of class, but not in terms or race and colour. The social hierarchy fostered in the play unequivocally demands the supremacy of the white European man. The Moor is lovely to be around and to entertain with his far-reaching exotic voyages and adventures and to be admitted to the house *as a stranger*, but never to be accepted as a possible son-in-law.

Brabantio demands an urgent hearing for his daughter's case which, according to him, is no less serious than state matters. When she confesses her love to the Moor in front of the hearing audience, and Brabantio is advised to reason with his daughter's interracial marriage, he exclaims in a state of deception that "if such actions may have passage free, / Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statement be" (1.2.100-01). Venice, which Brabantio earlier characterizes as "secure" is no longer so as the "extravagant and

wheeling stranger / of here and everywhere" (1.1.135-36) disrupts its order not simply by being *in* Venice but by proclaiming through his mixed marriage to cement his place and to become the Moor *of* Venice. It is this substantial shift that Brabantio thought was against the law of Venetian ideals and which demands serious treatment.

From another perspective, the idea of Desdemona's marriage to the Moor was described as inconceivable and as disruptive because of degeneracy fears, the idea that the pure bloodline of Desdemona and Brabantio will be profaned and the ensuing posterity will end up being physically and morally degenerate; "You'll have your / daughter covered with a Barbary horse; you'll have / your nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins / and jennets for germans" (1.1.110-13), cries Iago to Brabantio while informing him of his daughter's "foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural" in seeking such a monstrous match at the preference of so many matches "of her own clime, complexion, and degree," (3.3.233). The outcome of such miscegenation as depicts Iago will result in an indelible empowerment of blackness over whiteness, of barbarity over civilization, of otherness over Englishness, and as such by staging these cultural anxieties, audiences were urged to re-evaluate their place in an age defined by intrusions and mixture. The succession of a hybrid posterity which could result of interracial marriages will lead to the chaos that Brabantio expressed, by having roles disrupted and new generations claiming the status of a Venetian by the law of such leniency and by toleration of such transgressions.

A match of any sort, let alone marriage, with the Moor is either explained as the work of witchcraft or as a debased instinctual, and lecherous relationship. Brabantio could not grapple with his daughter's elopement only through some compelling and supernatural force. It is important to highlight that Brabantio directly resorted to

accusations of black magic, and "foul charms" and that he did not conceive of his daughter's wilful agency in such a relationship. A theft which is resultant of foul practices that were naturalized about Othello and his origins lent itself as the easy-fetched sound explanation. When Desdemona later rebutted any charges transcending her will, she was deemed unnatural in her sexual propensities making "a gross revolt, / tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes / in an extravagant and wheeling stranger, / of here and everywhere" (1.1.133-36), and as driven mainly by lustful desires to the Moor who, in turn, desires her instinctually and sensually. Desdemona's tragedy thus begun the moment she renounced Christian and whiteness ideals through elopement, and her murder comes as a chastisement for her conversion. She was culturally dislocated with her act of betrayal and her erring soul had to suffer accusations of whoredom and later murder.

The act of miscegenation, of the incongruent and incompatible match is precisely what Iago harps upon in order to advance his attack against the Moor. When the marriage was seemingly accepted, Iago finds yet another loophole with the nature of this match to lead Othello to jealousy by convincing him that Desdemona proved unfaithful because of her whiteness, class and culture ideals. In this manner, the racial and cultural incompatibilities are harnessed to the fullest to lead Othello to indoctrinate his inferiority to Desdemona and to validate his suspicions of unfaithfulness.

V. Degeneracy to Barbarity and Monstrosity

The anxiety of miscegenation that Shakespeare's play dramatized is particularly potent as one realizes European and English prejudice against other subjectivities of colour. Othello's conversion of his Christian status and his descent to the pitfall of his alleged racial conduct are, as highlighted earlier, deeply rooted in configurations of the

difference of Moors. Furthermore, the accentuation of Othello's black colour and the dimming of his religious affiliations all serve the taxonomy which he supposedly occupies. Clearly falling out of Venetian societal hierarchy, Othello's odd marriage to Desdemona and the ensuing tragedy prove the fallacy of his inclusion in a society which only grants him martial power against the foe, and fleetingly promises tolerance only to prove it a grave mistake.

When Iago was describing his temperance of emotions through the faculty of reasoning as opposed to the Moors' "changeability of will" and punctuating the dichotomy between "an erring barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian" (1.3.353), he was actually drawing a demarcation line between human and sub-human. The ability to control the passions through both conscience and reason is not an option in the Moors' behavioural archive. He is driven towards those vices of the soul and body that 'Southerners' were believed in early modern times to articulate. The charge of sexual degeneracy that Othello is believed to inherently possess will lend to yet other forms of degeneracy, moral, spiritual, and ultimately to cultural stagnation.

Othello's sexuality as elaborated earlier is read both through the scriptural tradition of the Naochic dogma and through such theories as geohumourism. Both frameworks are applicable given the sufficient clues in the play. If we further consider the anxiety generated of miscegenation, it becomes clear that the play, through Iago, imagines a grim posterity that is both damned religiously and thus beyond the threshold of redemption, and deemed monstrous and physically deformed, be that in terms of colour, looks or even behaviour and morality. Metaphors and epithets of animalism are abundant in the play describing Othello, and it becomes clear upon consideration of his fallibility to the vice of jealousy that such descriptions were meant literally. The outcry

of Iago that "Your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs" (1.1.115-16) becomes very resonant, bespeaking early modern fears of miscegenation and of its degeneracy both in societal and physical terms. Figurations of different subjectivities in terms of the deformed and the monstrous were highly influential in early modern thought, creating grotesque imaginings of Others' bodies and sexualities.

Othello's fair mind and his control decline the more he is led towards misogyny up until his metamorphosis is described both in physiognomic as well as in mental terms. His jealousy becomes intolerable, his eyes roll, he is robbed of his poised and ennobled nature and he ends up falling into fits of epilepsy. His pathological state must have its full course, Iago tells Cassio, who asks him to alleviate him by rubbing his temples, lest he "breaks out to savage madness" (4.1.56). Iago then asks Othello to bear the bad news of unfaithfulness like a man, and the latter replies that "A hornèd man's a monster and a beast" (4.1.62). Desdemona's alleged treason, Othello implies, had robbed him of his manhood; he becomes thus degraded to a subhuman, to a monster and a beast. It is this transformation that enables him to commit the act of murder so mercilessly, despite the fact that he justifies his killing for honour. Although he is a general whose hands are rough worn with wars, he could not end the life of his wife without completely losing his sanity, or is it after he regains his racial and ethnic insanity?

Conclusion

Shakespeare's ennobling of a blackmoor and the cultural resistance to normalizing his vision are intricately woven in *Othello*. Shakespeare fashioned his Moor from the materials of his culture while remaining an heir to a classical tradition of perceiving others. Othello's initial appearance is thus framed by and within a social world distinguished by its nasty penchant for prejudice. Through coding Othello as unmistakably black, the play creates a colour anxiety as blackness perforates the edges of morality and conduct. The staples of racism are reiterated through Iago, who repeatedly reconfigures the meaning of race in the play. As Iago determines to undo Othello's baptism, he harnesses his intellect in igniting within Othello his vicious southern humour, which in early modern times is considered as barbarously debased and as debauched.

Iago's schemes prove successful as he renders the once-ennobled Moor an utter disfranchised "stranger" and alienates him from Western Christian ideals. The tolerance of Venetians towards "the wheeling stranger of here and everywhere" reaches its limits, as he concludes his erratic and hectic temperament with the murder of his wife Desdemona. Othello's jealousy is thus proven to be no ordinary vice, but a vice towards which men of his race and colour are more susceptible to fall and to fall irredeemably. The looming possibility of the inclusion of the moor is thus proven just a transient mirage. The divides separating civility and barbarity, whiteness and blackness, good and evil are problematized in this play incriminating, thus, the transparency of blackness which the play begins with into a more stubborn discourse of race.

Chapter Five- ‘Turning Turk’, the Renegade, and the Reversion of Islamic Triumphalism

Introduction

Corollary to England's engagement with the Barbary Coast are issues of hybridism and conversion. The expediency of contact, with which Elizabeth I acted in the foreign sphere, brought her nation not simply with lucrative revenues but likewise with perilous encounters as her subjects roamed a Meditteranean basin defined by trade and piracy alike. The trajectory from privateer to pirate to renegade was problematized as amounting to an act of betrayal. Many Englishmen sought this path as they reasoned to better their social status and chose to migrate, to 'Turn Turk', and to settle in Muslim domains. Although the facticity of conversion rates remains opaque, the anxiety that this phenomenon caused the English can be felt in the plethora of plays dramatizing the issue of conversion. As a counter-mechanism to the wilful conversion of many English subjects, propagandist campaigns were launched on a large scale to denigrate and vilify the image of the renegade and to aggrandize the horrors of captivity when renouncing the Christian faith in a concerted ideological move. A corpus of stereotypes about the Muslims was thus summoned from the large archive of altering Muslims as dealt with in the first chapter, which along with new perceptions of the hybrid renegade brought this stage type to its most complex profile.

Phillip Massinger's *The Renegado* encapsulates this complex stance, breaking generic expectations, and challenging simplistic understandings. In an intricate technique of juxtaposing characters, Massinger thematizes captivity, conversion, reversion, and the theatrics of conversion rituals in a Tunisian Meditteranean setting defined by mixture and trade. Along the contrasts he outlines, one can clearly sense his orientalizing proclivity of regarding Muslim women and men as well as his mythmaking attitude of regarding Christians as steadfast and immune to Muslim

enticements. As is customary for this Turkish subgenre plays, *The Renegado* maintains the attitude disseminated in the English popular consciousness regarding the issue of conversion, and the convert is subjected to punishment and is, in an anxious stance, shown as reversing back to his faith a repentant Christian. The peculiarity of this play is that it also dramatizes the apostasy of Muslims in a wishful triumphalist attitude reminiscient of early Christian convictions about their claims to religious truths.

I.England's Perilous/Luring Engagement with the Barbary Region

England's Mediterranean Salient is by no means exclusive to state-chartered international trade with Ottomans. While Elizabeth's foreign policy eagerly sought and indeed succeeded to establish beneficial trade with 'the infidel', the outcome of which defined England's commercial and national identity, Elizabeth tacitly encouraged other less formal engagement in the Mediterranean basin: state-authorized privateering.

England's engagement with the Barbary region is no less defining than its eastern engagement with the 'Mighty Turks'[27]. This region which stretches from Libya to Morocco with Tunisia, and Algeria in between, and was under Ottoman nominal rule except for Morocco, played an immense role in England's proto-imperialist and proto-colonial history. While the Ottoman regencies of Libya, Tunisia and Algeria were geopolitically different from the kingdom of Morocco, all were similar in their jurisprudential traditions as well as in their regional identity (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 3). "It would be fallacious", stresses Matar, "to separate the early modern history and literature of Britain from the collusions and captivities, trade and piracy, alliance and military confrontation with the Barbary States" (11).

The cooperative nature between England and Morocco, as dealt with in the previous chapter engendered a corpus of knowledge about Moors primarily. But in this chapter, it

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[27] Nabil Matar in *Britain and Barbary 1589–1689* (2005) was pioneering in countering the view that Britain's imperial identity was due to Protestantism and colonialism, and shrewdly argues for the immense role of England's trade, diplomacy and treatises with the Barbary region. England's overseas focus, Matar maintains, was first directed to where its economic future was going to lie, and that is the Barbary region.

is the other facet of the coin that we hope to shed light on, of English volatile and oftentimes perilous encounters with the Barbary corsairs of Algiers and Libya, which is the encounter after which the conversion plays subgenre was imaginatively molded.

Along with mutually profitable trade carried out in the Ottoman regencies of the Barbary Coast, there also was the conflictual issue of piracy, pillaging and plunder. The English' attitudes towards this region were ambivalent indeed, insofar as it was both threatening and luring to engage in any sort of activity with these domains, be those commercial or piratical. Notwithstanding, there were thousands of English travelers and traders who ventured to the Barbary region, which was monolithically Muslim and defined by a striking ethnolinguistic variety, with Turks, Moors, Arabs, Moriscos, Jews, Armenians, and European Renegades, speaking a varied array of Arabic, Turkish, the Lingua Franca and Spanish (Matar 3). Estimates of English Renegades and captives vary so much that any claims to veracity would be fraught with incredulity. They were, nonetheless, substantial enough to have percolated in a large number of texts: captivity narratives, travel memoirs, trade memoranda, pamphlets and theatrical productions.

The lure of the wealthy and religiously tolerant North African culture was underrated in most modern historical accounts; that many English deliberately sought refuge through migration and conversion to Islam was by no means accepted even in a Protestant nation, which presumably advanced amicable relations with Muslim nations. The Outcome of commercial realities with the east was testimony to the immense wealth and ease of the domains of these eastern potentates.

Given the lack, if not almost absence of historical veracity concerning real English converts, it is thus argued that the accounts of renegades undergoing coercible

conversion to the other faith was more a matter of contingent fabrication. Supported by very little evidence, the forced renegade was thus an invention on stage that sprung out of the anxieties of a nation inflicted with all sorts of threats to the unity of its religion and of social struggles[28]. The notion of the renegade was yet to foster the idea of the internal threat to one's religion.

Nabil Matar posits the view that the uniqueness of the English experience with Islamic Barbary lies in " the dangerous encounter with the religious Other—the Muslim, who threatened Christian belief by enticing hundreds of men and women to Islam and making them renounce their allegiance to God and monarch"[29] (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 5). The true danger thus lied not in the fabricated ensuing coercion of the Christian English and his captivity as much as it in his temptation and wilful renunciation. Correspondingly, the converts to Islam, pejoratively given the nomenclature 'renegades', were testimony to the Barbary coasts' appeal. The Barbary region with the consolidation of Ottoman rule and the Moroccan kingdom, which stood against invasions as the failed attempt of the ill-fated king Sebastian of Portugal at the battle of El Kasr El Kebir standing as a bitter reminder, meant that it was to be reckoned

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[28] The socio economic reality of England during the Renaissance was severely riven with problems. In fact, many historians discern a number of social ills that characterized this period, and contributed much in fashioning a conflicted panorama of life. The world of Shakespeare and his contemporaries was fractured. Many social tensions were in reality the outcome of economic fluctuations. Food supply was predominantly precarious due to bad harvest and weather conditions. Such social and economic tensions as Poverty, unemployment, violence, robbery and food shortages, along with epidemics such as the Bubonic plague, were all ushering to riots from angry people ripe for revolution and this meant a higher potential for political tensions and a civil war.

[29] Matar mentions one example of an extremely successful English Renegade, Hassan Aga, with whom William Harborne, the queen's delegate, had to plead with in the ransoming of English captives.

as a powerful force and its allure was very evident. The Englishmen's attraction to the Muslim worlds had sufficient grounds for justification. The economic motives for conversion encouraged many to seek alternate social lives, even if in distant lands. If we take into account the economic, social and even religious circumstances under which lived many English subjects and contrast them to an English "Turk" living under the sovereignty of Ottoman rule either in Istanbul or in North Africa, one would find enough legitimacy for the appeal of Islam as an alternate reality for many, even if the conversion was more of a social alleviation phenomenon. The Muslim multi-ethnic and religiously-tolerant communities under Ottoman rule proved tempting to many Englishmen and Europeans indeed. England was fraught with difficulties for labourers and seamen. After King James I's accession and his peaceful foreign policy with Spain many soldiers and seamen ended up facing the sceptre of unemployment (Vitkus, *Turning Turk* 110).

Even religiously speaking, England's reformations never really concluded, as argues persuasively Steven Mullaney in *The Reformation of Emotions in the Age of Shakespeare* (2015), resulting in a fragmented religious identity. Similarly, in accounting for the religious climate of England during the renaissance, Daniel Vitkus describes Post-reformation England as "marked by intrusion, surveillance and controversy. Constantly bombarded with references to sin and damnation, and caught between various religious factions who competed for followers" (*Turning Turk* 110). Englishmen living under the reigns of Elizabeth, James I and Charles I lived in ages of "ideological discomfort" (10). All of this stood sharply in contrast to the simplicity, tolerance and ease that characterized Muslim communities. Vitkus further states that Islam must have appealed to many English who sought social mobility through simple

rites of conversion.[30] Coerced conversion was rare as opposed to the Christian propagandist captivity narratives, pamphlets and sermons.

Piracy and pillaging were equally part of the overall picture. Countless numbers of captives fell at the hands of the Barbary corsairs and found themselves sold in slave markets in the region. There emerged during the reigns of James I and his son Charles I mounting public anxiety about the region of Barbary as the crisis of Barbary corsairs' caption of English and Scottish vessels attained its apogee. Inflicting maritime and hence trade instability, the Barbary corsairs' incursions in the Mediterranean caused the English monarchs distress especially as countless captives in North African shores were left unransomed. Even when ransomed, the reverberations were far-reaching, as preachers highlighted the dangers of conversion or of "Turning Turk" of the returned captives.

Alarming numbers of captives were reported, and from 1580 to 1620, captivity narratives were printed at unprecedented ratios in London, accentuating awareness of the dangers and malaise in Mediterranean waters. Nevertheless, Nabil Matar Assiduously contends that the circulation of this type of discourses was manipulated and that "there was a concerted policy in England to advertise the horrors of Barbary captivity to the English reading public—and ignore or suppress those of North America" (49), the main reason behind is that migration to the new world was favoured. European governments encouraged the publication of captivity narratives among Moors

[30] The basic rites of conversion to Islam were ideologically distorted in early modern England and Europe at large. The Christians mainly centred upon inordinate physical changes, namely the rite of circumcision, making it an integral part of conversion to Islam, when in fact it was not.

and the Turks with an accentuation of the brutality and horror among the Muslim corsairs; accounts that wanted to eclipse conversion to Islam and to render it a quintessentially coercive practice upon the European.

English perception of the region of Barbary was in effect achieved from the vantage point of over-powerlessness. This was not, emphasizes Matar, Sub-Saharan Africa or the Caribbean nor New England in which the English could duly exercise their sense of superiority, but a region in which paradigms of interaction were defined by the small roles the English have come to play there. In the North African hetero-ethnic and religious Muslim communities, many unemployed Englishmen found opportunity and immigration advanced at considerable ratios. The later representation that followed in artistic productions, notably in Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramas, complicated the actual encounters further and for purposes of the commerciality of theatricality, centered mainly upon the threatening, unassimilable Other and the indelibility of the vice of the renegade. Nothing was reported of the voluntary conversion of hundreds but reports mainly centred upon captivity, coerced conversion, feigned conversion and the religious reverberations of both from a Christian perspective. The result was a drama of psychological intensity about Barbary, its assimilative potential of the English and the denigration of apostates and Turks involving a complex set of stereotypes and ultimately condemning their religion, culture, society, history, and civilization.

I. 'Turning Turk' and Renegades

The idiom "Turn Turk" appeared in the English vernacular in the early sixteenth century concomitantly with the migration of Englishmen to Eastern domains and their conversion to Islam in pursuit of fortunes, wealth, and leverage. "Those who converted

to Islam were derisively described as 'turning Turk' and as 'renegades' with the term Turk representing any Muslim not just a subject of the Ottoman sultan" (Burton 15). Denoting the act of renouncing the Christian faith and accepting Islam was not the sole meaning for the idiom. Since conversion to Islam amounted to an act of faithlessness and betrayal, the term was also used to hint to any form of duplicity, hypocrisy or infidelity. Because the Turks, in European thought in general were associated with an array of vices and flaws, beforehand targeted at Arabs and adherent to Islam, "to Turn Turk" thus, signified, like earlier understanding of apostasy, turning from Christian virtue (Burton 16).

Conversion and apostasy were on no account new phenomena; renouncing Christian virtue had always been concurrent with Muslim conquests and installments, and indeed many eastern Christians in the 7th and 8th centuries, who lived under Muslim rule as *Dhimmis* had chosen conversion. The issue, however, was not tangible enough in an English context, not until the sixteenth century when the English encounters with Muslims grew heavy due to trade. The Islamic worlds in Ottoman domains or in North Africa, rendered alluringly accessible to merchants and venturers, offered the English new economic outlets, and new wealth opportunities, be those in the form of regulated economical exchanges or piratical privateering adventures. "Turning Turk" thus was concurrent with Islamic proximity to the English through trade transactions, and the idiom acquired ever since a nuanced clashing set of meanings, intermingling treachery with a lure for ease, and renouncing Christian virtue in exchange for worldly profits, and for sincere converts, afterlife rewards.

To destitute England, then, Turning to the Turk was insistent and a matter of necessity indeed. It was the quandary of inhibiting English Christians from "turning

Turk" while they engaged with the Turks that was unsettling. While relations were established and thousands of Englishmen voyaged to Ottoman domains in Constantinople and in North African ports, and found themselves enticed by the wealth, lure and religious tolerance, there poured forth a body of knowledge of the Turks that Burton characterizes as being "rhetorically divided", demonstrating the complexity of the response, which ranged from demonization to temptation and possible embracement of the faith. Taking cognizance of the nuanced attitudes towards the Turks and those who turned Turk will lend provocative readings of the subgenre of "Conversion plays".

III.Conversion Plays as a Subgenre

The Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Caroline periods saw the emergence of Turkish plays which dramatizes scenes of conversion, the dangers of captivity, and the moral attenuation of Christians on Muslim lands. The conversion plays' treatment of the issue of conversion is worth some contemplation. While there were numerous stories circulating in early modern England of renegades and numbers were indeed escalating[31] as extensive commercial relations grew, the theatrical archive of all of these three literary periods does not stage a single instance of successful conversion to Islam. Not once in these plays assert Nabil Matar and Jonathan Burton is a convert spared humiliation or chastisement, and most stagings of conversion draw incredible attention to the "fact of staging" the conversion. The theatre, stresses Burton, "was one of the many sites in which early modern English culture both turned *to* the Turks and strenuously asserted it had not *turn'd Turk*" (Burton 32). This suspension of a reality

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[31] Daniel Vitkus observes that it was very common for English Christians to turn Turk. Nabil Matar contends that there were thousands of European Christians who converted to Islam in the Renaissance and the seventeenth century (*Islam and Britain* 15).

outlived by many successful English converts was achieved, further elaborates Burton, through calling attention to "the artificiality of transformation in repeated scenes of false conversion" (30). When Robert Daborne wrote a play about the notorious Tunisian pirate John Ward in 1611, *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, he still dealt with Ward as if he were an Englishman. It was wishful thinking for many that the renegade, especially he who led a successful lucrative lifestyle in the country of the infidel, still held an allegiance, albeit if small, to his homeland; the mercenary Thomas Stukeley, the Barbary corsair John Ward stand as exemples of successful converts. Ward, for instance, was expected to serve his country in times of distress and envoys sought his mediation with the Barbary kings.

This deliberate and cautious distortion of the reality of English converts to Islam supports the view that the theatre's ideological role was quite alert of subversive themes. Staging a happy renegade would have proved subversive for the state. This led to the emergence of the renegade as the new villain in the drama of the age, a hybrid figure who renounced Christian redemption and who must as such be subject to severe punishment. Seeking to deconsecrate acts of conversion, these plays employed a set of tropes to condemn the Turks and those who turned Turk. "Turning" as a trope, observes Vitkus, refers thus to various transformations, including the shifting of religious, political, sexual and moral identities (*Turning Turk* 107). By stressing the moral degeneracy of renegades and situating them as infidels, this subgenre formed a coherent body in renaissance drama, with a set of stylistic conventions and theatrics as well and in which themes are also recurrent.

By stressing the graphic corporeal transformation of converts to Islam, the plays staged acts of circumcision and were described in crude terms of bodily violence. The

theatrics of conversion rituals are often exaggerated to produce the anxiety of change brought by the conversion rite of passage. This has led to an accentuation of acts of genitals mutilation and of stage types that are usually associated with physical violence, namely the eunuchs. Circumcision is however oftentimes mistaken for castration. Playing upon the strings of masculinity, or the lack thereof, while renouncing Christianity, the playwrights of this genre made a huge effort to portray English masculinity as jeopardized by an ensuing effeminacy past circumcision.

The theatre's ideological role is most intelligible in staging conversion plays. Matar in *Islam and Britain* emphatically stresses that not a single play ends happily, and not one convert was left unpunished. At the same time that playwrights in London were staging redeemed conversions, sermons were being preached among masses cautioning Englishmen of the eternal damnation of 'turning turk'[32] and even the coerced renegades who were ransomed and went back home had to undergo a ritual penance to be readmitted into their parishes. In 1635, Bishop Hall and Archbishop Laud promulgated a "Form of Penance and Reconciliation of a Renegado" targeted to the returnee renegades with the aim of chastising them through confession and ultimate reinstatement in the Church of England (Vitkus, *Turning Turk* 83).

Alongside the physical changes, conversion plays condemned the converts of looseness and of their temptation to sensual and sexual excesses, which they believed Islam accorded. The erotic licenses that they believed Islam granted were given enough

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[32] Edward Kellett's "A Returne from Argier", a sermon preached at Min[e]head in the Country of Somerset the 16 of March 1627, at the admission of a re-admission of a relapsed Christian into our church (as cited in Vitkus, *Three Turk* 46)

play in conversion plays, which, while they are clearly condemned in the life of the convert, encapsulate a stance of the enticement of conversion and of its lucrative revenues. The sensual lure, in this sense is dramatized as the driving force, along with the quest for wealth and booty, of renegade pirates who played the role of the boundless venturing hero.

Scenes of seraglios, Harem, concubines, and all sorts of sexual licences are staged with anxiety. Daniel Vitkus stresses that the complex religious and political transgressions resultant of the pirates' conversion to Islam were "both denounced as an irrational and unnatural crime but… also romanticized as a spectacular form of deviance from social and religious norms" (*Three Turk Plays* 5). The exploits of the convert pirates who joined the privateering fleets in the coast of Barbary were described in meticulous envy, and the renegades as having succumbed to worldly temptations.

The potential subversion of the renegade lies in his internal schism, in his dissent from orthodox Christian dogma, in the exercise of his free will, regardless of consequences. The figure of the renegade caused an anxiety precisely because he is an ambivalent hybrid subject, who makeshifts his religious alliances and affiliations deliberately and whose apostasy is both disruptive of and subversive to the veracity of Christianity.

IV.*The Renagado*

The earliest records of Phillip Massinger as a playwright date to 1613, when, along with two other playwrights, he petitioned the playhouse owner Phillip Henslowe for a loan. Massinger's early career was impoverished and precarious. He made his way up painstakingly and later becoming one of the most important Jacobean and Caroline

writers of the stage, matching brilliant predecessors in the tradition. He worked for the King's Men as their major playwright from 1625 until 1640. Phillip Massinger belongs to the second generation of renaissance playwrights that is to say after Shakespeare and his contemporaries, writing from the vantage point of a dramatist who had witnessed an archive of predecessors.

It is important to stress here the extent to which Massinger was affected by such leading predecessors as Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Fletcher, Beaumont and Middleton, he did however depart from their dramatic agenda and conventions. Massinger's plays were so caught up in the manacles of the London Mercantilist world. He communicated an avid interest in economic exchanges and the Market Language. His plays capture the economical and expansionist mood which England was open to, due to her engagements in Islamic trade. The play which is the subject of scrutiny in this chapter *The Renegado* was licensed for the stage in 1624 and which contains an intricate outlook of Massinger on cross-cultural encounters with Muslims and their hazards and temptations and a negotiation of the boundaries separating different religious subjectivities as well as their permeability.

IV.1 The Theatrics of Conversion Rituals

The Renegado contains a nuanced array of conversions, reconversions, and hints to the corollary changes adjacent to the ritual of conversion. In fact, Massinger complicated the act of "turning Turk" by allowing different characters to hover near the change, or the fallacy thereof. The play is titled after the infamous pirate Antonio Grimaldi, whose characterization as we will see amounts to anything but that of a true convert. The title of the play itself or the problematic of which will be discussed later.

Antonio Grimaldi represents the trajectory that many aspiring European seamen pursued in the Mediterranean, namely that of privateering and piracy. The thorny issue which caused the English considerable distress by the late 16th century well up to the first half of the 17th is depicted in this play through the piratical ventures that Grimaldi is undertaking in Tunis and for the Tunisian viceroy. By the time Massinger produced his play and it was licensed for stage, the English popular theatre saw a number of plays thematizing the controversial issue of piracy. It could be said then that Massinger's piece is more of a revisionist and mature outcome of theatrical rehearsals in this subgenre. Prior to him, and of particular interest, I will give hint to Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turned Turk* whose play features the admirable villain Ward, a pirate who regrets his apostasy and turns against his master.

Clearly didactic in function, Ward received the due providential punishment and like Othello, ends up killing the woman who lured him to the other faith then himself. Massinger's play bears considerable parallels to Daborne's play. The echoes amongst early modern plays are hardly a novel phenomenon, as by nature of rivalry and assessment of previous pieces, the playwrights construct their plays in such a way so as to please an audience and hence end up capitalizing on earlier productions. Early productions thus function as barometers of feedback for new ones.

Religious conversion in *The Renegado* happens to a number of characters and for varying reasons. The earliest renegade Grimaldi's conversion is in this play linked less to the erotic element as much as to the energies of piracy and the pursuit of wealth and booty. Before he features in the play, we learn about Grimaldi from other characters who report his engagement in pillaging and enslavement of Europeans for the sake of the viceroy of Tunis. It is through the Jesuit mentor, Francisco, who is aiding Vitelli in

recuperating his sister Paulina from bondage, that we first hear of Antonio Grimaldi, " the shame of Venice and the scorn of all good men, the Perjured renegade" (1.1.105-6). We are told that Grimaldi serves under the command of the Viceroy, Asambeg, and that he along with other pirates lead prosperous lives not simply due to wealth but to power and authority as well.

This understanding of pirates' conducted lives was a contentious one. While many condemned their wrongdoings and apostasy; many others found it very enticing to read about upstarts, who from rags to riches have changed their fortunes. Thus while clearly in conversion plays, the convert does not escape punishment, the liberties and the privileges he enjoyed as a convert pirate are always amplified, encapsulating a clear stance of anxious envy. Mirroring violent cross-cultural encounters in the Mediterranean, piracy is often linked to the instability of religious affiliation which caused the English a tremendous anxiety (Vitkus, *Turning Turk* 107).

Grimaldi's inclusion and assimilation in Tunis is inextricably bound to his prestigious position in the viceroy's court, being one of his most favoured pirates. The engagements between Asambeg and Grimaldi are predicated on profit and mutual exchanges, which the moment they were disturbed he was subject to a very harsh Turkish verdict, stripping him off of all his gains and riches in dealings with the viceroy. Grimaldi's conversion to Islam was a prerequisite for him to enjoy sufficient influence in the court. His conversion however, the audiences and readers must surely sense, is anything but sincere, given his nature of debauched villainy and impiety even before turning to the Turk or turning Turk. We learn from Francisco, the Jesuit mentor, early in the play that Grimaldi's reputation is infamous due to a transgression he once committed in

St.Marks' cathedral in Venice. It is When Grimaldi was predisposed to damnation and despair by the end of the play that we learn of his most vile deeds.

In a conversation between Boastwain and Master we learn that before turning pirate, Grimaldi in one solemn day in the Cathedral and while the holy man was performing the high mass holding the bread and wine of communion, in a fit of "irreligious madness" (4.1.29) snatched "the sanctified means" from the hands of the holy man and dashed them upon the pavement, then escaped. With his sinful deed being charged with death and torture, Grimaldi left Venice in pursuit for an even more vile deed, that of piracy, and then even more grievously he sealed his debauched conduct by turning Turk. Grimaldi's transformation conjoins one to analyze it further; first, the claim is being made that Grimaldi's (and pirates in general) turn to piracy is in itself a sin especially that it is associated in his case with his declared atheism as he "glorified to profess himself an atheist" after his St. Marks deed.

His turn to piracy then demands from us to read it against foul deeds, piracy especially when sponsored by the Turks *is* his most grave sin; the writer seems to be advancing the claim that Grimaldi could not have proved the notorious pirate who *turned Turk* against his faith if he was not already predisposed to it. He is constructed to be a fit material to conversion, an exception among the rule, a morally corrupt person whose conversion, thus, comes as no surprise. His history of vices, in this sense, serves to diminish the validity and veracity of his conversion, if there truly has been any. *The Renegado* thus, whom the play in entitled after, is nothing of a sincere convert, his conversion is the mere outcome of his devious and mischievous nature.

Grimaldi's presence in Tunis and his belonging to the faith of the Turks will be reversed in the play as he proves ripe for redemption and Francisco takes advantage of his despair and plans an escape plot all while absolving him of his sins. His readmission to the Christian faith proves to be victorious and triumphalist in Francisco's eyes.

'Turning Turk' is also problematized in a number of other characters in the play. While Paulina was under no obligation from her captor Asambeg to turn to his faith, the latter being adamantly desiring her, she does however, by the end of the play promise her master to turn Turk, her true intention being to delay her brother's sentence to death. Paulina's pretence to convert to Islam could also mean that she is willing to betray her sexual code of chastity, "to turn a whore" as Gazet's aside reveals (Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays* 344). Paulina reasons to Asambeg that she has "hitherto …barred herself from pleasure, / to live in all delight" And that she will "fiercely run to his arms/ as ever longing woman did, borne high/ on the swift wings of appetite" (5.3.147-149) and he, rejoicing at finally winning his Christian captive, promises that "her will shall be a law" (5.3.176). Asambeg's joy at her proposition renders him a caricature of foolishness and as entirely driven by his lust "too violent/ in [his] desires" (5.5.10-11), as Mustapha tells him. Paulina of course betrayed him and did not entertain the slightest intention neither in reciprocating his love nor in converting leaving him the "dull, heavy fool, / worthy of all the tortures that the frown/ of [his] incenced master (the Ottoman Sultan) can throw on [him]" (5.8.33-35).

Vitelli's servant Gazet's phallocentric obsession with Turning Turk and circumcision is equally worth some attention in the play. Among all characters, it is Gazet who nearly undergoes castration to become a eunuch. When asked by his master Vitelli about his

religion, he provides the most economically-malleable answer, declaring that he refuses to confine himself in a single belief and instead shapeshifts his religious affiliations " live [he] in England, Spain, France, Rome, Geneva: / [he's] of that country's faith" (1.1.36-37). When Vitelli asks him "and what in Tunis? / Will [he] turn Turk here?" (1.1.38-39), Gazet's 'No' directly implies circumcision in Islam, misunderstanding it, as was customary for many during the age, for castration. Ironically enough, greedy as he is to change his fortunes, and amazed later at the Viceroy's palace, being sent as a messenger, he dumbly demands of Carazie, the eunuch, if there are any lucrative positions at court that does not demand wit or honesty. Carazie proposes he becomes a eunuch and Gazet, failing to understand the implications of such a position, foolishly hurls "I am made! An eunuch" (3.3.57). Gazet never undergoes the process of castration and he manages to escape. His role in the play as a fool who is obsessed with the theatrics of circumcision encapsulates an attitude which was held by many indeed during early modern times concerning Islamic conversion.

Vitelli by the end of the play also finds himself pleaded for conversion to Islam in order to save himself and Donusa from the penalty of death. 'Enlightened' as he was at the hands of the Jesuit Francisco, he stands as a test of fortitude to Paulina's pleas and it is he who ends up converting her to Christianity. Right from the onset, Vitelli undergoes tides of changes, from an uncontrollably angry and revengeful fellow to an emblem of Christian virtue and fortitude in his cause. He does however later prove fallible face to Donusa's charms and shares her bed, the sin which his mentor Francisco cautioned him of, affirming that "Turkish dames / (like English Mastiffs that increase their fierceness / by being chained up), from the restraint of freedom, / if lust once fire their blood from a fair object, will run a course the fiends themselves would shake at / to enjoy their

wanton ends" (1.3.8-13). His vulnerability, however, proves only feasible in terms of lust but not of conversion.

It is Vitelli who by means of "sacred and religious zeal" won the heart of Donusa to his faith while he remained obstinate to her eloquence and rhetoric till the end. " 'Tis not in man / to change or alter me" (4.3.53) he reassures Francisco moments before Donusa comes with vain hopes of converting him which he rejects "look[ing] down upon / All engines tyranny can advance to batter / [his] constant resolution" (4.3.143-45). Vitelli's 'brave courage' and unshakable fortitude is meant to encapsulate the triumphalism of Christianity face to Islam.

When Donusa argues with the notion of triumphalism asking Vitelli to weigh down which empire is mightier and more prosperous, he sidesteps the argument of triumphalism (and whose side is God on?) ,and engages in a polemical instead of an apologetic kind of rhetoric denigrating Islam, Prophet Mohammed and the holy book Qur'an in abominable terms. The dialogue between the two will later be quoted at length in the section of religious matter revisited because the arguments used by both bear resonance to early modern European and English precepts of Islam as they were handed down almost intact from medieval times.

Among all characters, though they all verge but never sincerely consume conversion, it is Donusa's reversion from Islam which is most striking in the play. At the crux of her apostasy lies a fair contribution of gender roles. In fact, the *Renagado* has been given fair criticism for dramatizing gender roles, patriarchy, and effeminacy among other issues. They are relevant to our analysis in as far as they are relatable to religious

Othering. Donusa's apostasy from Islam emanates, the play seems to insist upon, from her gender's frailty, her ethnic origins, and her religious affiliation.

At the beginning of the play, she is presented to the audience/reader as autonomous enough, as the emperor's niece, to accept and dismiss whomever she wants from her suitors. We first learn that Mustapha, the Basha of Aleppo is received in Tunis by Asambeg in due pomp for his mission to win her affections. At first, it seems that Donusa's authority over men might be related to her religion which is known to accord women the choice and final say about their suitors. It turns out later that this was not the case; her presumed authority serves mainly to heighten her fallibility and fragile nature in front of *Western men* as well as her lustful nature as a Turkish Muslim woman given to sensual and sexual excesses, a stereotype widely pervasive in early modern consciousness and which Donusa embodies perfectly. It becomes even truer when we consider how Massinger insistently contrasted female Christian 'virtuousness' with Turkish Muslim 'lasciviousness'. Indeed, the play juxtaposes a number of characters into dichotomies and while Paulina and Donusa for example share feminist ideals of their gender, they are still, religiously speaking, posited at diametrically opposed ideals of virtuousness. An apprehension of Donusa's lechery and lust is thus weighed down against Paulina's chaste Christian nature.

When at the beginning of the play, Donusa asks Carazie, the English eunuch, to tell her about women in his country, he enlists the endless libertine activities that English women enjoy stressing in his account the sexual liberties. English women, according to Carazie, know no such a thing as an "Italian girdle" i.e a chastity belt, and that they are at total liberty in transvestism, "wearing breeches" and commanding their husbands so efficiently as to render them cuckolds. English Women in Carazie's account defy

patriarchal rules and exercise unprecedented power; a record which is as phantasmal as the Sultan's Sereglio. Though her religion allows all pleasure, Donusa replies, "[Turkish women] enjoy no more / than that of the Ottoman race" (1.2.49-50).

There exists in the play a deliberate manipulation of the tradition of veiled women and sexual repression. Represented as restrained form freedom, like English mastiffs whose fierceness only increases as they are chained up, Francisco holds, Turkish Muslim women are by practices of constraints inclined to lustful looseness and are hence willing to pursue whatever means to achieve their "wanton ends". In this sense, gender, ethnic, and religious markers of coding the difference of Donusa are all employed collaboratively to foreshadow her apostasy. Vitelli manages to convince Donusa of the weakness of the faith she professes, and she, in a gender fragile manner, succumbs to his persuasive skills and ends up being baptized by him as she awaits her death. Strategically enough, the only successful conversion that is achieved in the play is that of Donusa who, instead of inviting her beloved Vitelli to his faith finds her herself, through her sardonic rebelliousness against her religion, invited in his and the play concludes with the triumphant superiority of the Christians: steadfast ones (Paulina and Vitelli), reconverts (Grimaldi), and reverts (Donusa).

IV.2 "Alter Sexes": The Anxiety of Effeminacy and its Displacement

The process of othering is only achieved by means of contradistinction, that is to say, juxtaposing counterparts in the aim of discerning them into divides, dichotomies or binaries. Implicated in this process are paradigms of assigning traits and features to each divide which contrasts with the other divide. As far as identity is concerned, this formalist equation of contradistinction has been contentiously negotiated, especially in

an early modern context which constitutes the most malleable and fluid period in the formation of national identities. Massinger resorts in othering the Muslims in his play to a set of divides, some ethnicity coded, others religion coded and also to gender divides. What is interesting in the use of gender divides in *the Renagado* is that they serve mainly to heighten religious divides as will be shown in the pages that follow.

From the onset of the play, we learn that there are Christian ideals as they contrast and contradict with "Turkish" Muslim ideals. In one such anecdote, Gazet was recounting to his master Vitelli how the Turks in Tunis venerate the colour green and that no non-Muslim is supposed to wear it, like one Mufti saw a Christian captive wearing a green apron tore it down in a fit of rage leaving her naked. The play's discerning of differences was gradual like in Gazet's anecdote, but then will touch upon the central characters in the story: Vitelli and his sister Paulina, Asambeg and Donusa. Central in gender discerning in a cross- cultural context are the standards that each culture sets for each counterpart to adhere to.

Because the presence of Christians, males or females, in Turkish lands is problematized as an experience fraught with dangers of changing one's faith or Turning Turk, coercible or willingly, there emerged changes in what it means to become a male Muslim and a female Muslim. Changing religious affiliations to Islam was understood by Christians as a passage rite strongly defined by the corporeal changes of circumcision. Circumcision has been strenuously intimidated in early modern captivity accounts and Turk plays, mediating thus the conversion rite mainly through fearful and exaggerated descriptions of castration. In fact, certain accounts conflated circumcision with the castration or mutilation. As to the Christian female, the conversion was

dramatized as a renouncement of Christian virtue and fairness, along with the inevitbility of damnation.

In *the Renagado*, gender and religion are yoked together in a symbiotic fashion. This results in such understanding as Christian male masculinity and its counterpart Turkish male masculinity, as well as Christian female virtuousness as compared to Turkish female lasciviousness. Vitelli derives the impetus for his manhood from his religion, as he is made to point out to in the play. His Christian masculinity is put to the test face to the moral-religious salient of a Muslim woman: Donusa. Vitelli does err but is soon made to regret his sin as he confesses to his Jesuit mentor Francisco. The adultery he commits with Donusa is purely lust-driven, which he later charges Donusa as having had more agency in materializing; "the sating of her lust" and "unchaste desires" were to blame for his fallibility. Now that Vitelli's religious resolution for not succumbing again is well grounded, it is his masculinity which will suffer the test of torture and death. His bravery and manhood are characterized as rocked by his religion while Donusa "basely descend[s] to fill a Christian's arms (3.4.73).

Christian manhood is in this sense rendered unalterable and inviolable, even as it is tested by the strongest enticements which is too absurd a fantasy to be ever true for all. He abstinently refuses to fall in the role of the victim, and when Donusa approaches him with pleas for conversion, he mocks her fear of death, of which he presumably has none, as being the sole reason for her conversion strategy. Acting the role of the brave Christian who valiantly accepts his faith, Vitelli tells Donusa that her intent to win him sprung from her fear to die, and as such attacks her religion as a weak religion that suffers its adherents to tremble at death. Through convincing Donusa to die in his faith

and turn apostate, Vitelli assumes the supreme role of the religious rescuer that is besides his rescue mission of his sister.

Donusa's gender role in the play is ramified enough to demand scrutiny. As a Turkish subject, professing Islam and abiding by its laws and decrees, Donusa conducts a life of luxury fit for her high birth as the Sultan's niece. She is however, as will be illustrated, cast in the role of the enslaved subject whose liberties are limited. It is precisely Donusa's cognizance of her religion's unfair treatment to her gender which facilitates Vielli's mission of converting her. This ripe conditioning was built piecemeal from the onset of the play. When in a conversation between her and her Slave Eunuch Carazie concerning the liberties that English women enjoy, she begins to lament her parochial field of agency as a woman. Envious of other women's liberties, she later unleashes her desires in a rebellious manner. Donusa's unchaste desires are complex precisely because they could either be read in terms of liberation from subservience as they could be read in terms of Turkish religious stereotypes, or, in our case as both.

Donusa's metamorphosis in the play is inextricably linked to her enlightened and rebellious female voice, which is clearly manipulated to serve her reversion from Islam. If scrutinized closely, one would assess that Donusa is libertine enough, and possesses a fair share of freedom for a woman who turned several eastern suitors down and has men at her command, who ventures to the marketplace to shop and to command Agas. Donusa's egalitarian demands are meant thus to backlash her own religion as a heresy and her male co-religionists as libidinous and oppressive. When denied her pleas to spare her life, Donusa attacks the partiality of her religion to the males who "to tame their lusts / there's no religious bit" (4.2.133-34). She then not simply curses the other gender's privileges in view of Islam, but is made to criticize the laws of "indulgent

Mahomet" cursing "Unkind nature, / to make weak women servants, proud men masters!" (4.2.126-27). her blasphemous conversion at the hands of Vitelli comes as no surprise. Vitelli faces little resistance indeed from a woman who had come to hate her religion's treatment of the female gender. Massinger would not have Donusa become an apostate simply because she falls in love for Vitelli, but only after she attacks her own religion as unfair, and thus validates the truth in a varied creed of beliefs. Her attack to Islam was achieved through the gateway of her male coreligionists and the privileges they achieved in a religion which is manacling to women and unfair to them.

Moreover, when Donusa accepts Vitelli's invitation to her faith, she does so without being reassured and with the possibility of her very imminent death. Her apostasy near her death is hard to believe really and calls attention to Vitelli's earlier pride of martyrdom, a high status that steadfast Christians can aspire to face in calamities, and which she would have joined him if had they been finally sentenced to death. The conversion of Donusa to Christianity and the reversion of Grimaldi's are two dire stances of an anxious fantasy that the English wished but very rarely achieved indeed.

Asambeg in *the Renegado* is by all means, the most contentious character in terms of gender expectations and masculinity. Just like Vitelli, Asambeg's masculinity is clearly dictated by his religion. All the typical stereotypes of the Turk are to be found in the character of Asambeg: libidinous, jealous, barbarian, wrathful, insatiable, and rough. Asambeg's infatuation with Paulina is responsible for the instability of his manhood and masculinity. Although by the end of the play, we do learn that Asambeg, just like Mustapha, attempted his chance as a suitor to Donusa and was met with rejection, Asambeg does not suffer much from her decision although she is more powerful, beautiful and attractive as much as he does at the hands of the Christian Paulina. This

inclination of desires towards Christian women was widely believed in the early modern age to be a defining trait of Turkish rulers, that they desired variety and novelty in their Harems.

Asambeg's weakness towards Paulina and his jealousy lead him to incarcerate her in a cell lest others would view her charms. Waiting for her to wilfully accept him and become his companion, Asambeg does not attempt violence and the play does not stage the horrors of coercible conversion nor of maltreatment. A corollary outcome of this is that Asambeg is bereft of his role as the oriental despot and all-powerful ruler who can have anything at his command and instead thrust in the role of the enamoured, enfeebled and emasculated ruler. It is he who is instead imprisoned by the love of Paulina, while she is portrayed as triumphant in preserving her chastity and in remaining true to her religion. Again, in Asambeg we see a displacement of the anxiety which occupied Western Christians the most namely that of circumcision and emasculation. By having all Christian males escape the issue of conversion and circumcision, the play reroutes the ensuing threat of emasculation and the lack of masculinity to their arch-enemy the Turkish Sultan.

Asambeg's stern character undergoes a transformation at the presence of Paulina, he whom "stout men quake at [his] frowns, and in return / [he] tremble[s] at her softness" (2.5.108-9). It is his captive that commands him, her keeper, and "robs [him] of the fierceness [he] was born with…" (2.5.107), and although he is constantly met with rejection and insults cannot but attach his faintest hopes in a tide of change. When Paulina complained about his base usage of her as an object of desire, secluded from outer society, Asambeg explains that his jealousy would not permit a soul to look at her whom he wants to win her love that he does not even entrust a servant or a eunuch to be

near her. Asambeg expresses his subservience and servitude to Paulina in the following way:

> ...there is something in you
>
> That can work miracles, or I am cozened,
>
> Dispose and alter sexes. To my wrong,
>
> In spite of nature, I will be your nurse,
>
> Your woman, your physician, and your fool. (2.5.149-53)

Not only does Paulina rob him of his essential fierceness that he was born with, he becomes so lenient as to "alter sexes", to become her woman and jeopardize his masculinity. The effeminacy that Asambeg experiences with Paulina contrasts strikingly against the unshakeable Christian masculinity of Vitelli. This anxiety of effeminacy is constantly invoked in the play by the foil character Gazet, who, linking it to circumcision keeps arousing the audience's attention to the issue, albeit in a pun-constructed hilarious manner. Otherwise said, the fears that the English and Christians at large perceived of their encounter with the Turks in the Barbary region are filtered through the intimidating anxiety of circumcision and emasculation. These fears are in *the Renagado* successfully dispelled, but more importantly strategically displaced so as to fall on their foe.

The only true conversion in terms of masculinity impotence is outlived by none than Asambeg. He, the representative of the Ottoman race and patriarch undergoes the most blatant tide of change. His weakness under Christian forces could thus, I propose, be read allegorically, encapsulating the wishful hopes of generations of Christians who

were subject to Ottoman threats. Paulina thus engulfs his potential fierceness and danger and renders him inert, passive, meek, and emasculate. Her shunning of Asambeg is a validation of Christian masculinity and an undermining of the Muslim Turks'. By keeping her body intact of the Turks violation and contamination, Paulina is preserving her chastity for her coreligionist male subject, all while annihilating and disparaging her Turk suitor's. At stake are always religions affirmations, negotiations and appropriation while assigning supremacy: Vitelli as the superiorly valid Christian male vs Asambeg as the emasculated, effeminate Muslim male.

This displaced anxiety is one of many in early modern literature in which the English try to control the others discursively, and as such engage in complex restructurings of power, desire and masculinity in a mythmaking manner. The restructuring of Asambeg's masculinity bespeaks a much larger anxiety towards the power the Turks exercised upon the Christians. The Turkish subject will then be fashioned as the opposite embodiment of what the western Christian purportedly stands for, or wishfully hopes to be. Since Vitelli's Christian masculinity is invalidated and credited in the play, Asambeg then must suffer at the hands of his Christian captive and whose masculinity and fierceness are obliterated, leaving by the end of the play a joke to his misplaced affections.

IV.3 The Eroticized Captivity Narrative

Daniel Vitkus maintains that early modern writings about any Turkish court are the same, be that under the rule of the Sultan, various Bashas, viceroys, kings or princes as they all serve as simulacra moulded after the Grand Seigneur: "each Turkish court is ruled by a powerful Muslim ruler who insatiably gathers and hoards women, wealth and

warriors" (Vitkus, *Turning Turk* 114). The ruler, according to this archetypal formation is a despot and tyrannical figure given to excesses of the will to power. His insatiable nature leads him towards annexation of territories through expansionism and sheer militarism. The expansion will thus mean the blurring of all differences, absorbing them under the Islamic banner of an all-devouring empire. In European accounts of the seraglio, Vitkus observes that "the libidinal regime at the center of Ottoman power is imagined as the secret core from which the merciless, masculine aggression of Turkish military power emanates" (*Turning Turk* 117).

Led by a robust and vigorous masculinity, the Sultan's court contains an institution that given too much attention to in Orientalist western representations: that of the Seraglio or Harem. This institution is domineered by a patriarchal oppressive and over-powering ruler. The Seraglio subjugates women enslaved from as many ethnicities and religious backgrounds whose sole aim is to please their insatiable lustful master. The image of the Harem attracted the attention of countless orientalist writings and paintings, featuring sensuous concubines around spas and bagnios, adorned with Turkish far-fetched luxuries and rendered passive objects in a catalogue for sexual satisfaction. "some private room the sunbeams never enter, / provoking dishes passing by to heighten / Declined appetite, active music ushering / your fainting steps, the waiters too, as born dumb, / not daring to look on you" (2.5.130-134), this exemplary description by Donusa, of her imperial private chambers, as she invites Vitelli to court her, abridges Orientalist views of the Seraglio. "is not this Tempe? Or the blessed shades / where innocent spirits rside? Or do I dream, / and this is a heavenly vision? (2.4.5-7) Vitelli stands amazed at the phantasmal scenery standing before him, he who is a Venetian Gentleman of high birth had never crossed a matching eroticized

orientalised setting. The seraglio of which Paulina is part is perceived of, however, not solely in terms of Eros but also as an enslavement institution which is exotic in its variety and whose sole aim is to subjugate, control, and oppress the women therein.

The pirate Grimaldi provides the first statement of the viceroy's seraglio. Having played an immense role "for the fatting of his seraglio" (2.5.16), Grimaldi demonstrates that most of his pillaging had as an aim to increase the riches and to abduct as many fair European ladies to the viceroy's court as possible. He thus invokes one of the axiomatic stereotypes whereby Turkish rulers were characterized and he even advances a more serious charge of sodomy as he mentions "his whores and catamites" (2.5.11-12). Drawing a picture of the Seraglio as a site of indulgence in all sorts of sexual licences, even pervert ones, Grimaldi, who himself is given to excesses as shown from his intemperate lascivious nature, foregrounds the charge on Asambeg.

In the *Renegado*, a mini version of the Sultan's famous Seraglio or Harem exits within the court walls of Asambeg, Viceroy of Tunis. Although in the play we do understand that the pirates' primary role is to enrich the ruler and enlarge his Seraglio, the play's exclusivity to one Christian captive does not at invalidate the presence of many other concubines. Paulina is the Christian captive snatched by the pirate Grimaldi in one of his sponsored piratical pillaging in the Mediterranean. A fair Venetian lady of high birth, who appeared the day of her introduction to the viceroy Asambeg like "the mistress of all rare perfections" (1.2.7-8), Paulina embodies one of the Harem of a despotic and lustful tyrant.

Her captivity in the grip of the archetypal Asambeg is highly eroticized, as the latter "dotes her extremely" and she becomes his one and only desire. Stressed in Paulina's

captivity is the element of enslavement and the barbarian jealousy enacted by her captor. Asambeg kept Paulina in an enclosed chamber that only he has access to. Ironically enough, it is Asambeg who is described as imprisoned by his extreme and uncontrollable lust towards her. The motif of imprisonment thus is literal for Paulina and metaphorical for Asambeg. She despises his affections and calls his love to her "the worthy parent of [his] jealousy" (2.5.129), which is, Paulina tells him, manifest in the way he treats her. Paulina is described in this sense as an enactment terrain to Asambeg's jealousy and "barbarous cruelty" (2.5.128).

By excluding her from human society and locking her up in a fastened chamber, Asambeg's treatment amounts to that of the jealous barbarian patriarch who oppresses and commodifies the other sex. "This base usage" of total seclusion that Asambeg provides Paulina was held to be very characteristic of Turkish rulers in writings and literatures of the age. Othello in Shakespeare's play was given to a similar kind of unrestrained jealousy towards Desdemona. Veiling Paulina out of others' sights is another facet to the accusation targeted at Turks and Muslims, namely that of restricting a woman's libertinism and manacling her agency solely to the service of the patriarch who owns her. Like many stage Muslims of the period, Asambeg's attraction to Paulina as a Christian object of desire augments and maximize with the rejection she offers.

Paulina's threat emanates almost exclusively from Asambeg's desire to own her body. Asambeg's captivity has one sole aim which is to invite her affections. Shielding her even from having servants, his love language is constructed precisely upon misunderstandings and stereotypes of the lustful, voluptuous Turkish ruler. He shows no interest of converting her, it is he who runs the hazard of emasculation and effeminacy in her presence and who must remind himself whenever he exists her chamber/cell to

"take [his own] rough shape again" (2.4.165), to resume "his fierce and cruel nature" (1.1.116).

When Vitelli, Paulina's brother, first unburdens his agony and discloses his reason for coming to Tunis, he invokes a centuries old tradition of depicting Muslims and especially rulers as essentially driven by their monstrous insatiable desires to Christian women in particular. Vitelli Imagines his sister "mewed up in his seraglio and in danger/not alone to lose her honor, but her soul" (1.2 129-130), and the viceroy compelling her either through force or flattery "to yield her fair name up to his foul lust, / and after, turn apostata to the faith/ that she was bred in" (1.2.137-139). The most severe verdict upon the Sultan comes from the mouth of his own niece Donusa, who was sentenced to death for courting a Christian, describing him as "a tyrant/ a most voluptuous and insatiable epicure/ in his own pleasures; which he hugs so dearly, / as proper and peculiar to himself, / that he denies a moderate lawful use/ of all delight to others" (4.2.118-122). Despising the patriarchal and unjust edict of Asambeg, Donusa charges Turks of the sexual excesses in which they indulge; "to tame their lusts/ there's no religious bit: let her be fair/ and pleasing to the eye, though Persian, Moor/ Idolatress, Turk, or Christian, you are privileged/ and freely may enjoy her" (4.2.134-137); speaking loud the misconceptions virtually held by multitudes of Christians about the Turks.

The eroticization of the Seraglio in English accounts, historical or literary in our case, it is argued does not have as an aim solely to depict a phantasmal, exotic, sensual and intriguing site in Turkish courts, but works more to create a site in which religious, ethnic, and gender controversies are underscored. Religiously speaking, the Seraglio of the Turkish ruler, in its variety of concubines serves as an emblem to the military

expansionism of the empire, an expansionism which westerners described in the most barbarous and inhumane way, from when Mehmed II first conquered Constantinople till its zenith under Suleiman the Magnificent and even beyond. Stories of the maltreatment of Christian women at the hands of the Turks were much fictionalized in western accounts of Turkish conquests. It is alleged that Turkish ways were those of rapine and rape, of lust and debauchery.

The varied ethnicities in the Seraglio is purported to heighten the belief in the insatiable nature of the Turk, in wanting to create a vast and assorted catalogue for his sexual satisfaction. The ethnic variety was also emblematic of the vastness of Ottoman domains. Moreover, this site was believed to be ruled by an all-powering patriarch, under whose authority all the concubines are subservient and compliant.

While this research necessarily focuses on and centralizes English literature, it becomes primordial that we tackle English representations of the Muslim Other. We can only be certain, notwithstanding, that English representations tell us something about English perceptions and that very few true facts can truly be inferred from their ideologically, religiously, and culturally informed theatrical productions in our case. I find it necessary however, in the context of English and by large European perceptions of the institution of the Harem, to stress that in reality, the Seraglio did not feature as often wrongly held, submissive, powerless foreign or Turkish women, who are passive to exert no form of power and authority. Contrarily, Ottoman historiographical accounts reveal the agency of powerful women in the Seraglio of the Turkish Sultan, most famous of whom are Hürrem Sultan, the wife of Süleyman The Magnificent, and mother of Selim II, and Kösem Sultan, mother of Murad IV. This corrective incentive is gradually gaining importance with the burgeoning of scholars who are replacing

Eurocentrism with Ottomancentrism and verifying a host of misconceptions and deliberate erasures from the history of the Ottomans.

IV.4 Religious Matter Revisited

As is customary for all plays in the subgenre of conversion, heated religious issues are at the crux of characterization and themes. Such plays and *the Renegado* is no exception, substantially juxtapose and discern religions. Turkish religious matter is abundant in Massinger's play and in every single instance is misunderstood and misrepresented, at times overtly exaggerated. For the sake of compactness, misrepresentations of Islam which have hitherto been explained in relation to other headings will only be given cursory mention.

The misconception of the Seraglio has been elaborated already. The West's representations of the Seraglio and Harem were dominated by a male voyeuristic and phallocentric tradition, which sought to imagine what lays within the walls of the Sultan's Harem, all while giving justification to Turkish patriarchal standards as they intersect with a religion which they presumed subjugates concubines and oppresses women. Discussions of the Sultan's Harem were contentious indeed, even by some Eastern scholars, and certain practices of even the Turkish sultans cannot be taken for representing Islamic practices, as indeed there were some transgressions. Nevertheless, western perceptions fed upon the threatening and the sensually forbidden in their chronicles of Harem. The microcosm of the Grand Seigneur's Harem which is reproduced in the play in Tunis is endowed with parallel features and tropes: Masculine tyranny, feminine subjugation and ownership, an eroticized setting, ethnic and religious variety, and excesses in sensual and sexual lures.

Another aspect of religious dealings in the play is found in the ardent efforts to denigrate and discredit Islam not only as triumphant but even as a valid religion. Almost all the old-age charges elaborated in the first chapter concerning Christian precepts of Islam are agitated in this play. The setting of the play is testimony to the magnanimity and expansionism of the Ottoman Empire, including the ports of the region of Barbary, Tunis being one major cross-cultural trade locus and the setting for events. The play despite the success of the Ottomans still maintains a divisive vision of the two religions. Just as no true converts to Islam are present in the play; all references to this religion are misunderstood, misperceived, misrepresented or utterly distorted and demonized.

The very first instance of misconception, and it is recurrent in many early modern plays, happens in the first scene when Mustapha, upon first introducing himself to Donusa, venerates her place as sacred and that he should enter it as pilgrims do "at Mecca when they visit / the tomb of [their] great prophet" (1.2.61-62). Many Christians believed that Prophet Mohammed was buried in a tomb in Mecca when he was in fact buried in Medina. Most Christian commentators, as lengthily dealt with in the first chapter, had little interest in Islam and in its prophet and therefore such fallacy never benefited from a corrective. As insignificant as this error may seem, it actually demonstrates the preservation of such misconceptions for more than ten centuries. Along slightly different lines, it was common in English texts describing Islamic culture to represent mosques as pagan temples, in which lodge the idol or deity of Mahomet or Mahound, that Muslims were believed to worship, which is evidently erroneous.

In act two scene five, Grimaldi rebels against Asambeg for more privileges but finds him infuriated over a deadly Maltese attack on his armies. The setback that the Turks suffer is taken by angry Grimaldi as proof of the Turks' enfeeblement which he bluntly

faces him with. Grimaldi states: "think not, therefore, sir, / that you alone are giants, and such pigmies / you war upon" (2.5.75-77), and he gets severely punished by Asambeg, confiscating all his possessions. Grimaldi's interjection is one of many anxious passages wishing the demise of the Ottoman Empire, and seeking to belittle and disparage Ottoman strength. Although even in the play, it is clear to whom the balance of power leans; all Christian characters maintain an anachronistic attitude towards Christianity, which bespeaks an inferiority complex in attitudes to Turks. Grimaldi does acknowledge that the Turks *are* giants, and his migration to Tunis was not a matter of choice, but of religious intolerance and economic need. Grimaldi's position as a renegade pirate, despite all pompous bravado to the contrary, is an outlandish and unstable one. Furthermore, the pride that Grimaldi takes in an obsolete pan-Christian unity by aligning himself with the Maltese is hardly plausible if not slightly absurd. The play is set during a time in which Christianity was fractioned and national and petty concerns never proved more divisive. When Donusa was trying to persuade Vitelli convert to Islam, she plays on the argument of triumphalism and God's favours to the valid faith, in a passage, which is worth quoting at length,

> Be wise and weigh
>
> The Prosperous success of things. If blessings
>
> Are donatives from heaven (which, you must grant,
>
> Were blasphemy to question) and that
>
> They are called down and poured on such as are
>
> Most gracious with the great disposer of 'em,
>
> *Look on our flourishing empire (if the splendour,*

The majesty and glory of it dim not

Your feeble sight) and then turn back and see

The narrow bounds of yours, yet that poor remnant

Rent in as many factions and opinions

As you have Petty Kingdoms. And then, if

You are not obstinate against truth and reason,

You must confess the deity you worship

wants care or power to help you. (4.4.89-103 Italics Mine)

Donusa's statement in terms of acknowledging the true geopolitical mappings of power is the truth which most westerners abstinently struggled to grapple with. She is raising the question which Christians have asked centuries ago and were yet asking during this age, whose side is God on? The triumphalism which clearly graced the Ottomans at their zenith was coterminous with a pitiable Christian entity riven and waned by "as many factions and opinions as [the Christians] have petty kingdoms". "Truth and reason" privilege the Ottoman Empire to any Christian kingdom, but Vitelli was not convinced, preferring to stick to his faith and even to attempt a counter-attack on Donusa's charge on his "deity" i.e Jesus Christ.

The reversion of Grimaldi to Christianity and his service to the one Christian cause led by Francisco could be traced to a real attitude in western policies towards influential renegades. Despite the fact that these outcasts were despised for renouncing the Christian faith, in moments of international crisis, Christian rulers had in a number of occasions resorted to the help of authoritative renegades to mediate between them and

Ottoman rulers[33]. Francisco's greatest religiously undertaken endeavours lie thus in finding in the blasphemous Turk Grimaldi, a Christian soul which could benefit from his services of regaining it through redemption.

Massinger must surely have had the intention of putting into clash the two civilizations and religions, as the play clearly demonstrates. The Janissaries, the famous backbone of the Turkish army, are also the object of contempt for Grimaldi who describes them as "ravished from other nations" (2.5.73). The Janissaries, the Turkish elite troops were famed for being captured or bought from other Christian domains then trained as Muslim warriors. This charge of dispersion and amalgamation had as an aim to question the unity of the Ottoman race. It was even extended, in various accounts, to the imperial family itself, whereby commentators believed that the imperial progeny, being the result of interracial and inter-ethnic marriages with concubines of the Harem, was adulterated and impure. Two of the most envious institutions receive similar treatment of profanity in western and English perceptions.

The accusation of Islam as a heresy and a false faith finds full articulation and embodiment in *the Renegado.* The play visibly establishes Islam as a religion of error and as such refutation and denigration are employed in describing the Turks, their

[33] Hassan Aga, the treasurer to the Pasha in Algiers was an English subject, Samson Rowlie, who was captured then willingly turned Turk, got castrated and conducted a luxurious life of power and authority, becoming so famous as to be invoked in various English chronicles and accounts. Hassan Aga was resorted to by William Harborne, an English factor in ransoming English captives and corresponded with him in a surviving 1584 letter, published later in Richard Haklyut's volume. The letter is testimony to the rapprochement strategy adopted by Harborne, despite Assan's assertion of the desertion of his faith and Englishness, to invoke within Assan that sense of Christian Englishness which he believed was indelible; "Harborne could not cope with this new Mediterranean reality and insisted on seeing the Englishman under the turban, and the Christian in the eunuch" (Matar, *Britain and Barbary* 6).

religion, prophet and holy book. It is precisely through maintaining that Islam is a heresy that the possibility of conversion to Islam is obliterated. When Paulina protested against Asambeg's incarceration, she calls him a false person, aberrant in communicating love and in wanting to win it. She further accuses him of being "falser than [his] religion" (2.5.136), against which she stood the test of fortitude through "love of piety and constant goodness" (4.2.25) and preserved her chastity which is "built upon the rock of [her] religion" (4.2.29). When Vitelli is caught with Donusa in flagrante delicto, he describes this treason as customary of "a Turkish faith" (3.5.86), by which he signifies duplicity, double dealings and hypocrisy, all attributes inextricably linked to the Turks and their faith in early modern understandings.

The instance in the play that bespeaks the writer-in-culture's attitudes towards Turks and Islam is deliberately postponed for reasons of resolution, and could duly be described as the culmination of all previous denunciations. It happens when Vitelli, in response to Donusa's supplication to join her faith, deems her deeply submerged in the workings of Satan, and metaphorically describes her as possessed by the Devil himself and he as having no will to exorcize her. He then proceeds in chastising her for blaspheming "that great omnipotency at whose nod / the fabric of the world shakes" (4.3.113-14), referring to Jesus Christ. The latter is then juxtaposed to Prophet Mohammed in a comparison which invokes centuries-old misperceptions of Islam and its messenger. Describing Prophet Mohammed as a "juggling prophet", that is to say deceiving by pretence of occult or magical powers, constitutes one of the earliest and most stubborn tropes in othering Islam. He, in turn, engages in an evangelizing discourse using theological strategies which Christian theologians have used for ages.

In fact, Vitelli was subject to Francisco's self-fashioning and religious counsel from the onset of the play, building him up "with the hands of virtuous and religious precepts" (4.3.12). It culminates later in the metamorphosis of Vitelli into the bravest Christian whose anger shows virtuously and whose fortitude is unshaken. Enlightened as he becomes with a deep Christian faith, Vitelli even takes on the role of the Christian martyr, to which he was "a choice invited guest" (4.3.35) fearless of "the grim looks of death". in her article on catholic martyrdom, Jane Hwang Degenhardt argues that the appeal of Catholic martyrdom and its emphasis upon physical inviolability can be better appreciated in light of England's increased commercial engagement with the Ottoman empire during the early seventeenth century and the particular anxieties that the English stage began to attach to the threat of Islamic conversion (84).

Vitelli's complex and carefully nuanced exchange with Donusa draws the audience/reader into a careful and difficult consideration not simply of his presumed evangelical role, but also of the misconceptions of Muslims that were tossed to and accepted by audiences during those days. The fabrication and denigration of the Turks is magnified because Massinger set it against flawless Christian male and female subjectivities (Vitelli and Donusa), and reparable reaccepted Christian subjectivities (Grimaldi, Carazie, and Gazet).

Vitelli proceeds in a calculated apologetic-polemical strategy, to attack Islam and defend his religion in the following manner:

> dare you bring / your juggling prophet in comparison with
>
> that most inscrutable and infinite essence
>
> that made this all and comprehends his work? (4.3.114-17)

I will not foul my mouth to speak the sorceries

Of your seducer, his base birth, his whoredoms,

His strange impostures; nor deliver how

He taught a pigeon to feed in his ear,

Then made his credulous followers believe

It was an angel that instructed him

In the framing of his Alcoran… (4.3. 125-31)

Vitelli is conjuring an anti-Islamic tradition which dates back to the medieval times. All such accusations were standardized about Muslims whereby their religion is not taken for an autonomous theological corpus but instead perceived as a religion of error, a heresy whose prophet, a trickster and a heresiarch, blasphemed his revelation and created his book. Tolan argues that the hostile and contentious perception of Prophet Mohammed as an impostor was forged in the middle ages and proved to be tenacious providing the dominant European discourse on the prophet through to the seventeenth century (*Faces of Muhammed* 2). Scant truth if any can truly be inferred from early modern representations of Mohammed or, rather said, "Mahomet", the fictitious entity devised by the west's imagination.

IV.5The Renagdo, or the Fallacy of, what's with the Title?

Massinger's play, written and performed rather late in the history of the English Turkish stage could be described as encapsulating a nuanced array of themes and tropes hitherto used by other playwrights. By taking on the central issue of conversion, the play, as has been discussed above, does not stage a single instance of "turning Turk". With the exception of Carazie, who had been made a eunuch way before, no other

Christian character undergoes conversion to Islam. In fact, even Carazie is not described in the play, not in a single passage as having converted to Islam or as having clear religious affiliations. Grimaldi only feigns his conversion while Vitelli was ready to die a martyr in Christianity than attempt to spare his life in a religion that he clearly holds much contempt for.

The problematic with the title arises as we consider that it is named *the Renagado* after Grimaldi. Grimaldi, however, plays a tangential role to that of Vitelli of Paulina or even Donusa. He is of interest in the play because of his infamous character and profession as a pirate. Even from the beginning, one can sense that his Machiavellian ways stand in face of any religious affiliations, he who has, for no apparent reasons, profanes his own religion then flew away. Fating himself with a kind of self-exile in Tunis, he indulged in the revenues that his pillaging brought, and only seems to seek more material gains and sexual licentiousness. Even his conversion, the counterfeited one, is hardly believable from a character whose contempt to bounds is apparent.

Grimaldi is not described in the course of degeneration in an Islamic world, which is the most recurrent trope about renegades, but he instead simply amplifies his villainous nature through transgression of boundaries. His conversion, thus, needs to be understood in relation to his new economic opportunity in Tunis as a pirate, a position which cannot be achieved unless he professes the faith of the Turks. Tangential and shallow by definition, Grimaldi's "turning Turk" is far from being the crux of the play, nor is his title of the Renagado suitable to its ends.

With the play clearly staging and thematizing much larger concerns of the corss-cultural encounter with the Turk in Barbary, and the Christian characters all immune

and steadfast in their beliefs to the end, the play provokes its readers/audiences beyond Grimaldi the Renegado and into the larger religious/gender issues at work. Since Massinger's play adamantly resists "turning Turk", the pivot on which the story really revolves, and no Christian is seen willfully and sincerely turn Turk, the play's central concerns are thus not simply with the enticements of religion but how those intersect and set standards of masculinity, both Christian and Turkish. It bears recalling here that the only successful apostasy staged was that of Donusa who venerates her conversion that "freed [her] from the cruelest of prisons, blind ignorance and misbelief" (5.3.131-32), bringing a closure with a triumphant note, a Christian triumphant note. Vitelli's Christian masculine success overcame and subdued both Turkish femininity and masculinity. His successful role as the religious mentor was adorned with Donusa's acceptance of Christianity even near death. In this sense, the play's title I maintain needed to touch about the issue of "a Turk turned Christian" and not "a Christian turned Turk".

Conclusion

Massinger's *the Renegado* is shown as deeply imbricated in the cultural anxieties of its era. The sceptre of Islamic threat was still clearly active even as England sought amicable relations with the Muslims. This play could not but collude with the most manifest understanding of the dangers of cross-cultural encounters. Staging the happy conversion of Grimaldi would have proven too subversive an act to be displayed to multitudes in a public stage which disseminates ideas. The cultural constraints upon the playwrights who took it upon them to dramatize renegades are crystal clear: the renegade needs to be humiliated and brought back to the service of the Christian faith. But alongside this axiomatic topic, that no playwright challenged, issues eros were equally policied.

The Renegado contains a number of interesting gender contradistinctions whereby Massinger was able to delve into what constitutes Christian masculinity while altering Muslim masculinity and the same is applicable to Christian and Muslim Femininity. Equally important are concerns of emasculation and effeminacy that are linked to the act of circumcision and castration, the latter being embodied in the English eunuch Carazie. Castration, however, as demonstrates Massinger could also be metaphorical as in the case of the Muslim ruler Mustapha, whose masculinity was effeminized through his love for Paulina. Although being endowed with all the attributes usually attached to the Turks, Mustapha is robbed of his fierceness by Christian feminine ideals, while Vitelli remains immune to Muslim enticements as embodied in Donusa. Equally important is the role that the Jesuit mentor Francisco plays in mediating religious fortitude to all the Christian characters and his tacit ways of winning back the once-damned convert pirate Grimaldi to Christian service.

Chapter Six-*The Tempest* and its Caliban

Introduction

In this chapter, the workings of cultural othering will be traced in a play that still up to this day flares up controversy concerning the racial issues it represents. Of particular importance are two characters in the play: Caliban and his mother Sycorax. Sycorax is underrepresented in the play and we only hear of her through Prospero, Ariel, and Caliban. The latter is of particular importance to have a better glimpse of clashing differentiating theories. Caliban's ambivalence triggered forth a plethora of interpretations especially in the wake of postcolonial studies. In this chapter, I mean to scrutinize the textual descriptions and epithets of Caliban in accordance with the dominant racializing theories outlined in the second chapter. Caliban's belated and nearly obstinate nature to change as well as his deformity characterize him clearly as an object of wonder, a freakish semi-human semi-devil whose categorization to human norms is slippery and playful.

In attempting to discern his origins, geneology, and role in the play, reading against the grain was predominantly applied to expose the manacling tradition that Shakespeare could not but collude to. From the paucity of textual traces in the play, I will conduct a geohumoural, polygenetic reading touching upon such issues as Caliban's monstrosity, his role of servitude in the play, his humoural conduct, and his status as an exotic islander. Caliban's linguistic abilities and his privilege of cursing as contrasted against Prospero's 'literal advantage' are equally discussed as an aspect of racializing others.

I. Caliban and the Cannibal

Shakespeare's *the Tempest* is considered by many Shakespearean scholars and critics as the most original of his plays. While certainly, echoes of inspirations still find their way in certain choices in the play and Shakespeare drew on a number of interesting sources[34] to compose his piece, his agency in terms of development of the plot, is the culmination of earlier attempts at originality. Written for the King's Men and enjoying a royal stage history, the Tempest was Shakespeare's last play before his retirement to Stratford. The play's criticism is one of the most enduring thanks to the plethora of unique characters in the play, who benefited from interesting perspectival approaches from different literary theories. Most notably, the play was appropriated by postcolonial critics who have seen in the characters of Caliban, Ariel, and Sycorax interesting emblems for a range of African and New World subjectivities. Out analysis will centre mainly on the character of Caliban and his cultural history, as well as his lineage and the undecidability in his characterization which wrenched open a number of speculations, enlivening thus his criticism beyond measure.

What did Shakespeare fashion his character Caliban over? Was he modelled after the American Indian or the African subject, did he conform to Montaigne's noble savages or their striking opposite or was it a blend of both. Or is Caliban simply unrelated to any existing figures. Such questions contend Alden T.Vaughan and Virgignia Mason Vaughan are not buttressed by authorial or autobiographical insights; speculations and

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[34] Peter Martyr d'Anghiera, an Italian historian who composed an accounts of the early voyages and chronicles to the New World, his compilation was translated into English by Richard Eden in 1555 with the title *Decades of the New World*. William Strachey's account of the Sea Venture Shipwreck, "A True Repertory of the Wreck and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Knight,"

evidencing must thus spring from within the text (Preface xx). Never had a character proven so unsettling as has Caliban. The aporia concerning his character drew from his striking difference to the other characters, both physically, morally and culturally. To begin with, the name that Shakespeare chose for his half-human half-monster creature is striking enough and so unusual that a number of explanations sprung forth in an attempt to decipher what the implications of such name could be. Evidently, Shakespeare could not have chosen such an intricate and resonant name without influences.

The etymology being thus so crucial to stabilizing the meaning and identity of Caliban, a seam of early modern scholars endeavoured to untangle the contexts against which the play was written, for it was believed that Shakespeare's the Tempest was composed after a number of cultural trends and influences. The intrigue of Caliban as a character begins with his name and extends to every aspect about him, his lineage, his skin colour, its complexion, his looks, the deformity which he was endowed, his language, and his morality. The fluctuations in the interpretation of each of these are to be held responsible for the perpetuation of Caliban's enigmatic position in Shakespeare's criticism.

There have been a number of possible interpretations for the choice of the name Caliban, which were compacted comprehensively in the cultural history of Alden Vaghan and Virgina Vaughan in their essential Caliban book *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History,* which was supplemented by further studies but not really superseded. It remains essential in any study of Caliban's character and the following interpretations are mainly adapted from this book unless states otherwise.

The widely accepted interpretation of the etymology Caliban, and the most convincing indeed, was that Caliban stands as an anagram for the Spanish spelling of the word Canibal. In the unwritten Caribbean Indian languages, states Vaughan and Vaughan, the consonants ***l***, ***n***, and ***r*** are virtually interchangeable. In this sense, Calib becomes the equivalent of Carib or Canib. The latter is often acknowledged as the source of the epithet cannibal. With a very slight rearrangement of the letters the result is thus the name of Caliban (26). This etymological speculation carries along an interesting range of sources that indicate the association to the Cannibals. Linked to the American origins signifying either "Carib" or "cannibal" or perhaps both, the name of Caliban was torn between these two edges (Vaughan and Vaughan 28).

In 1610, Silvester Jourdain, a sailor survivor aboard a rescue-built ship, published his account titled *Discovery of the Barmudas*, which derives from an anonymous Virginia company pamphlet. The account describes the place as an enchanted region called the Isle of the devils from whence a crew who were shipwrecked off their course there and who had suffered its strange stormy weather made their way later to the colony of Virginia after a stay of over nine months. They miraculously managed to build two ships on board which they made their way to the colony of Virginia in a voyage and a strange experience that were meticulously described by one of the sailors Jourdain. News of this strange land and of its mystical happenings was soon to be diffused and percolated in other forms of discourse.

Accounts of exotic voyages constituted major materials for playwrights of the age. Just as such accounts were voraciously read by Englishmen and Europeans in general, as translations facilitated the circulation of discourses beyond boundaries of language and nation, it is believed that Shakespeare, being an investor himself in the Virginia

Company, could not have escaped exposure to such a text, especially as parallels are really obvious in the Tempest with the choice of setting and the enigmatic events and characters. The qualities of Caliban's isle, with its wondrous effects and bounteous fauna and flora abundance, renders an association of the places very plausible. Despite the valid claims of influence, to render Caliban's Isle a tantamount of Jourdain's Bermuda Isle would be diminishing to the literariness of the texts. While certainly the text was acknowledged from the 18th century on as a clear source for Shakespeare, there were a number of other possible sources proposed by scholars in regard to *the Tempest.*

The etymology source of the word to 'Carib' was cemented in Spanish accounts of the new world as early as Christopher Columbus's first voyage and journals. After having set firm foot in the New World and the Spanish leagued with the Taino tribes, who proved more cooperative than other natives, there begun to circulate accounts of hostile and less-lenient peoples to Spanish colonization, namely of the Caribs. Charges of cannibalism and human-flesh eaters were mainly advanced by Taino subjects to their Spanish masters. While the evidence remains sceptical concerning the savage practice of cannibalism, the rumours that circulated among the Spanish of newly discovered Carib natives condemned of such barbarous acts was stubborn to discredit. The nowadays almost unanimous association of human eaters with cannibals was not so clearly demarcated in early modern times.

The Caribs were peoples geographically delineated in South America, and the charge of Cannibalism as stresses Phillip Boucher was part of an anti-Carrib propaganda which had its roots in long-standing strife between the tribes of Taino and Caribs, mainly over land possession. The grotesque stories of cannibalism in the modern sense of man-eating as sweepingly applicable to all Caribs were ideologically concerted, in such a

way so as to justify the later deportation and depopulation of Carib peoples and subsequently of their enslavement. The origin of cannibalism as endemic to the Caribs was thus a fabrication, and the object of mythmaking about those peoples (Bouchard 7). As I will attempt to bridge later, the name of Caliban if taken as an anagram to cannibal might cause confusion, since Shakespeare's character, despite being assigned a number of debasing epithets and savage descriptions, is not at any place in the play associated with cannibalism in the sense of man-eating. The attributes which were thus stuck on him were more linked to the primitivism and his savage nature than to a specific practice of anthropophagi. Similar to the Caribs, he also stands for the exploited native, who is subjugated to practices of colonialism and who is deemed below the hierarchy of the while European man.

Another equally important source which is believed to stand as an influence on *the Tempest* is the essay *On Cannibals* by Montaigne. In his essay, Montaigne bridges a link between nature and goodness. Viewed from the prism of benevolence, On Cannibals, contrary to early accounts of native peoples entertains a humanist ideal. Montaigne viewed the Cannibals and their bond to nature, in what could be characterized as a transcendental model. By conducting simple lives uncontaminated by modern civilization, the Cannibals thus are emblematic of the noble savages. Montaigne further contends that he finds in the Cannibals the archetype of the Utopian "golden age" imaginatively idealized by poets and idealists (O'Toole par.1). Montaigne's flawless figuration of the native Cannibals, however, stands diametrically opposed to Shakespeare's stark abjection of the brutish Caliban. He proposes an opposing grim conception of human nature and the potential of its uprootedness by civilization.

Ovid's Metamorphoses is also considered one such clear influence on Shakespeare's *the Tempest* (Vaughan and Vaughan 24). *Metamorphoses* consists of a number of tales deeply rooted in Greek and Roman mythology entertaining such recurrent themes as transformation and the tide of change, both being clearly echoed in Shakespeare's the *Tempest*[35]. The list of echoes verbal and implied and of possible influences on artistic production foster again our conviction in the impossibility to consider the texts in isolation, and to acknowledge the extent of intertextuality and of influences not simply by other playwrights, but by a varied array of cultural discourses.

The thrust of *the Tempest* scholarship was mainly driven by the enigmatic status of Caliban more than any other character. Many have come to consider him the second important character after Prospero. While Prospero's origins and history are ravelable in the course of the play, Caliban leaves the readers with a number of unanswered questions and it is precisely this ambivalence about his character which opened room for varied speculative and interpretive claims. His name alone as briefly attempted to decipher its etymological origins posited such challenging interpretations, ranging from documents of the New world, to even possible foreign linguistic sources.

In the 19th century, some have come to propose the possibility that Shakespeare could have borrowed the name of Caliban from the Arabic insult يا كلب [*ya kalib*], meaning "you dog" (Vaughan and Vaughan 33). This theory was advanced along with considerations of the play's setting: the Island, which as eager as scholars wanted to

[35] The most direct verbal echo of Ovid in *the Tempest* is unanimously agreed by many scholars and critics, is Prospero's famous speech of renouncing his magic (5.1.50) by the end of the play which strikingly reworks a segment in Ovid's book 7 of metamorphoses as uttered by Medea.

situate it in Atlantic Carib/new world geography, was clearly based on hints from the play situated instead in an old world/Mediterranean setting instead. How much Arabic did Shakespeare know cannot be excavated as the writer left scant biographical notes against which such claims can be assessed. The interpretative process thus remains plural and speculative.

At the wake and burgeoning of postcolonial studies, Caliban was gradually being filtered through the lens of colonization and the exploitation of the natives. Standing as a symbol of the subjugated native by powerful Prospero(s), he manages eventually to gain back the land which belonged to him by right of his mother Sycorax. The interpretations linking Caliban to new world settlements were reductive, nonetheless in their geography. No such delineation to a specific geographical location over another is going to be attempted in our analysis of the play. The play, it is held, was produced during a time in which England was still very much hooked with the old world of the Mediterranean, and debutant in negotiations over settlements in the new. In this unsettling regard vis-à-vis the setting of the play, Brinda Charry succinctly declares that "Caliban is a 'compromise formation' constituted by and trapped between old and new world discourses" (71). Indeed, following hints in the play might mislead the reader into such locations as the Atlantic especially as Prospero's slave Ariel happens to mention the Bermudas, but Ariel does not say that the Isle is to found near this famous region but simply declares that one of his services for his master once took him there, being characterized as a airy spirit whose spatial crossing capacities are described as limitless.

The play's settings has been deemed by many scholars and critics of the play as situated in the Meditteranean basin given the fact the the trip was conducted between

Naples and Tunis. Caliban's geneology also corroborates this reading, as he is described as coming from an Algerian descent through his mother Sycorax, a witch we are told whose unspoken magic deeds led her to transgress forbidden boundaries and who was thus exiled in this Island when pregnant with her son Caliban. All of these details lead us to collude with a reading which principally acknowledges the Meditteranean as a setting, but I remain malleable as to the way Caliban was characterized. While certainly his origins are clear in the play, North African origins whose resonance by this chapter have very well been outlined, Caliban's resistance to an easy categorization opens room for a number of dissident reading to coexist with this manifest reading, viewing him as an emblem of the native American or by manner of symbolism as an emblem of the exploited and the colonized subject despite a clear geographical location.

In a Nutshell, Caliban anagram to Cannibal, and which was deemed almost unanimous by many scholars wrenches open the possibilities of discourses that converged in the composition of the play, and attests to the impossibility of separating the domains of the aesthetic and the real. Shakespeare's sources, thus, broaden the interpretations of both Caliban and his Isle and it is this aspect about the play, namely in its undecidability and ambivalence which keeps urging new interpretaive possibilities to emerge.

II. Language Divides, Prospero's 'Literal Advantage', and Race

The Tempest articulates an intricate linguistic-racial discourse. As elaborated in the second chapter, figurations of linguistic differences were crucial to racializing regimes and agendas just as were other figurations of body politics for instance. How the colonizer has come to rationalize the first encounter with the natives and to find means

of communication are essential gateways in fathoming the relationship of colonizer/native. The European settler in the flanks of the new world was very aware of his linguistic superiority, which, buttressed by a sophisticated written medium and the invention of the print word led him to fully assume the role of the representor, the speaker on behalf of those peoples whose languages were deemed just as barbaric and primitive as their looks and mores. *The Tempest* problematizes this encounter as represented by Prospero and Caliban.

The unlettered people of the New World were deemed conceptually impaired as they failed, as opposed to their European counterparts, to conceptualize the world around them. With no possession of a sophisticated semiotic system and hence of an undeveloped semantic system, the natives stumbled in their dealings with the newcomers and were hence considered exploitative precisely because of their linguistic inferiority, because they could easily be manipulated. Stephen Greenblatt asserts that the unlettered peoples of the new world had failed to "bring the strangers into focus [and that] conceptual inadequacy severely impeded, indeed virtually precluded, an accurate perception of the other" (*Marvellous Possessions* 11). Similarly in the tempest, Caliban initially failed to conceptualize both Prospero and later Trinculo and Stephano. The literal disadvantage of Caliban led him to undergo several sessions of tutoring by both Prospero and Miranda, so that he learns to name the things around him and to understand the import of his own meaning, which Prospero cries out, he did not know prior to his arrival to the Island.

Greenblatt's essay 'Learning to Curse" which tackles the linguistic capacity of Caliban as portrayed in the tempest, demonstrates the aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century. Ever since his essay, a legion of subsequent studies that focus

on language in *The Tempest* and its relation power emerged. Language functions to solidify relations between the colonizer and the colonized. Language, says Greenblatt, has been perceived as the perfect instrument and partner of empire. He studies Spanish and English documents on the New World and concludes that the settlers had two attitudes toward native language: either the natives had no language but, like Caliban, gabbled 'like / A thing most brutish' (1.2.357–8), or there were no linguistic barriers between conquerors and natives, and the natives were forced to adopt the conquerors' language. Both attitudes, writes Greenblatt, reveal the conquerors' inability to 'sustain the simultaneous perception of likeness and difference'. Prospero refuses to recognize Caliban's language as legitimate and hence denies his humanity, but Prospero also feels the need to teach Caliban his language and refashion him. It is this 'startling encounter between a lettered and unlettered culture' that the play illustrates in its conflict between the erudite magician and the 'barbarian' who wishes to 'Burn but his books' (3.2.95).

Caliban might have lost his native language, but he has a moment of victory when he learns how to curse, albeit in his master's language (Charry 69). The effacement of the linguistic capacities endowed to him by his mother sycorax has been substituted by the tutouring of Miranda, and Caliban speaks their language, but not in his own barbaric ways. The acquisition of the language of his colonizer Prospero, did not, the play indicates strongly, transform him into a better human being. As a matter of fact, Caliban does not seem in the play at all to be influenced by the sea of change, which the play thematizes, while all the other characters, despite their villainous intentions receive.

Greenblatt in *Marvelous Possessions* states that in the encounter of the Europeans with the Native Americans "the lack of writing determined the predominance of ritual over improvisation and cyclical time over linear time" (25).. When Propspero first came

to the island he was described as a literate man who knew how to write and read and who had in his possession several books of magic.The culture without writing represented by Caliban could easily be subjugated and manipulated. Prospero later civilized Caliban endowing him with linguistic abilities.

Although deposed from power and exiled out of Milan, Prospero enjoys an intrinsic form of power which is inviolable: namely that of the "literal advantage" as a conquistador, and not simply through his sophisticated language system and his ability to apprehend the world around, but through reading "the volumes that / [he] prize[s] above [his] kingdom" (1.2.168-69). He owned prior to his exile a large library in which he was "rapt in secret studies" (1.2.77), and "all dedicated / to closeness and the bettering of [his] mind" (1.2.89-90). His advantage is thus considerable enough for him not simply to exercise his superiority as a colonizer but to practice magic in its most dazzling and superb form. Prospero's first mission whom he takes so solemnly upon decking on the Island is to schoolmaster his daughter; Miranda we are told was tutored better than any other princess back in Milan and thus was passed down the necessary equipment of language. She, in no measure of time, will equally acquire from her father the "literal advantage" and will be civilized enough to take the mission, in turn, upon their slave Caliban as she gives him language lessons.

Caliban's relationship to language acquisition and cognitive skills differs tremendously from Miranda's. His learning trajectory is shallow as he stresses that his sole victory in learning his master's language is that now he can curse Prospero and his treatment not in a most brutish gabbling but in his own language. He was equally able to communicate later with Stephano and Trinculo as he instructs them about his master and he instigates the subplot of usurpation. Prospero also conjured another deficiency in

Caliban's language acquisition capacities which is as important as his ability to curse, namely Caliban's cultural stagnation and its indelibility despite being taught the language of his conqueror. This was expressed through the fostering of the divide of nature/ nurture which both Prospero and Miranda harp on in the play.

By stressing that the language lessons that they offered him did not stick or seem to alter his being, they are in fact taxonomizing Caliban as incapable of nurture or growing up, an "abhorred slave, / which any print of goodness wilt not take, being capable of all ill!" (1.2. 354-355) Miranda shouts at him, despite the many efforts that were harnessed to civilize him. He thus remains, in their eyes, stubbornly barbaric and 'savage' who did not know his own meaning. His "vile race" further stresses Miranda alluding not to race in the modern sense, but to his hereditary nature, "though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures / could not abide to be with" (1.2. 361-62). He had waited until Prospero came to teach him how to name the objects of creation; he must be taught and is not autonomous enough to learn by himself. Prior to Prospero's arrival, cyclical time and ritual used to govern his ways of being, and he declares that he communicated with his mother through some ritualistic and supernatural sort of telepathy as Sycorax puts images in his head.

Caliban's deformed shape is understood as penetrating to his very cognitive faculties, as he becomes inadequate and resistant to learning, a defect of some pseudo-medical sort, which seems to inflict him hereditarily and which is hence irreversible. It is worth mentioning that although, upon arrival to the Island, both Caliban and Ariel become subjects to Prospero. The juxtaposition of these two helps much in understanding Caliban's characterization and conduct and ultimately his discriminatory categorization. For while Ariel is described as a lofty creature who is leniently servile to

his master's tasks and has it in him to obey, Caliban is described as a rebellious slave who refuses and shrieks at his master's commands. Furthermore, Ariel is promised freedom by Prospero provided that he runs a few more errands, but Caliban is not; his anger and resentment serve to justify his enslavement even further.

III. Caliban's Ambivalence: Monstrosity and Deformity

The Tempest's elemental earthbound "monster" Caliban is the utter embodiment of the darkly alien figure who is perceived as the monstrous by the Europeans who come to inhabit the island. Caliban's mother is said to be from argier in North Africa and he is thus referred to as being, only if partially, half Moorish. The uncivilized, ugly, monstrous, lustful, violent Caliban is represented as a creature incapable of assimilation and as a creature that is worthy of a spectacle for its sheer bodily difference. Caliban's form is a contentious terrain of study indeed. Criticism of the play underwent drastic interpretative shifts. As to Caliban's physical features, and his humanity, or the lack thereof underwent various negotiations and appropriations. Clues in the play harbour suspicion to his humanity as he is constantly naturalized. However, that Shakespeare willed him to be, again even if just partially, human is buttressed by sufficient clues in the play.

The Folio does assert that Caliban has a human form, albeit if deformed. His human form, and not necessarily nature, is clearly validated in the play. It is precisely this human form, however, that complicates a simple understanding of his being. Not only is he introduced, to do justice to Prospero's description, as half-human, as we will see later, his ambivalence arises from his incompleteness in any decent. He is half-beast, half-monster, half-human, and half-devil. Fragmented and torn apart as he is described,

the views of those around him all corroborate his aberrance from their norms, from human norms, and it is this deviance that renders him the object of wonder. Before Caliban appears on stage, Prospero tells Ariel that when Caliban's mother Sycorax confined Ariel in a cloven pine**, "**Then was this Island / (Saue for the Son that [s]he did littour heere, A frekelld whelpe, hag-borne) not honour'd with A humane shape (1.2.281-84).

This early description of Caliban problematizes his categorization, bringing into question the very norms that Prospero and his audience, conceive of as norms for humanity. Sycorax, we are told was a witch, human enough in her appearance since no indications to any deformity of strangeness are reported concerning her shape. Caliban, by extension is human in as far as another human gave birth to him, but this is all. Nothing save this small detail keeps him shielded from attacks against what 'human' is supposed to stand for. The assertion of his humanity is thus by way of heredity, by having at least one parent, as we are told, who was human enough to fit the norm. Caliban's uncertainty about his his humanity is nevertheless corroborated by not being honoured with a human shape. Human shape, thus was the first marker that Prospero takes as prerequisite for humanity. Having been denied that through bodily deformity, the reader will be left in quest of what Prospero and his audience must have posited as other markers of humanity.

Upon first seeing Ferdinand, Miranda expresses her sense of wonder at such a lovely creature, stating that "This / Is the third man that e'er I saw, the first / That e'er I sigh'd for" (1.2.445-7). Her father, in attempting to abate her wonder at Ferdinand tells her that she thinks that there are no better shapes than this man, because she has only seen him and Caliban and that to most men out there is the world, this Ferdinand whom she

admired at first glance, is but a Caliban. Once more, Caliban's humanity is both foregrounded and questioned, this time by being taken as a barometer against which to measure 'human shape'.

Caliban could have been outrightly reduced to the beastly, one is enjoined to think. Why endow him with half humanity only to have it questioned over and over again by the people around him. This becomes clear later as we consider other functions that Caliban was destined for. By way of his appearance, and without further effort, he embodies the perfect spectacle of strangeness, described by Trinculo as a "Strange fish! Were I in England now, as once I was, and / Had but this strange fish painted, not a holiday fool there but / Would give a piece of silver. There would this monster / Make a man … his deformity is, Stephano and Trinculo stress, worthy enough for exhibition, in the same manner that "men of Ind" and other bodies were objects of bodily difference. Caliban's human attribute, albeit if clouded under layers of deformity, is essential for Prospero to subjugate him. He is thus rendered partly human, essentially for the colonial project that Prospero epitomizes. His Linguistic abilities of acquiring the conquistadore's language as well as his rough human nature render him the perfect match for the exploitable subject. Confined to a rock and constantly being fired orders to run arduous tasks, Caliban needed to be human to fulfill this role. He was in this sense allotted only sufficient enough humanity, if that be understood in shape or in cognitive capacities, whereby he can resume a static position in a stubborn hieararchy.

Caliban's archive of epithets and appelations is varied. He was called savage, which in Shakespeare's day meant wild, barbarous, and uneducated. The antithesis to European norms of the civilized, Caliban's savagery unfolds gradually in the play. His inability to acquire morality and ethics along with the language he was taught is one

aspect of his undomesticated nature. Despite having had the ability to speak and talk, being endowed with the essentials to name the things around him in his Island and to know his "own meaning", Caliban's nature, Prospero stresses, could not be nurtured. As such, his description as savage extends all the way through all while being demonstrated in his actions.

Caliban was equally assigned an interesting ensemble of imagery, and imagery that many scholars have come to describe as aquatic. Upon first sighting him partly covered under his gabardine, Trinculo exclaims at what lies in fromt of him by calling him a fish. Upon exposure, he was called half a fish half a monster. When he talked and behaved in his reckless manner, mistaking him and Stephano for spirits sent by Prospero to torment him, he is called an idiot monster or a Moon-calf monster.

In act3 scene2, Caliban is being referred to as "servant monster", a label which he seems to enjoy while being happy to obey. In this scene however Shakespeare gives Caliban a voice which does little other than evoke some sympathy for him. Prospero provides in act4 scene1 a strong image of Caliban after he recalls he is plotting to murder him. The external threat of his beast disrupts not only the artistic masque but also Prospero's inner tranquility. He calls him

> A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
>
> Nurture can never stick: on whom my pains,
>
> Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost!
>
> And as with age his body uglier grows,
>
> So his mind cankers. I will plague them all (4.1.189-93)

Prospero determines Caliban's nature as sterile and presents his mind as cankering and as festering. Caliban seems in many instances in the play to fear Prospero's punishment which kind of rationalize him. Prospero could then be said to confront the monstrous and Caliban to him is inherently a monster. Having once taken profit from him, he no longer considers taking much pain in understanding him but merely subjugates his body to cramps and fills his bones with aches that makes his roaring frightening even for beasts to hear. Shakespeare's treatment of Caliban forms part of a wider exploration of what it means to be human.

One might be tempted to raise the question that if to be human indicates a deviation from the norms, is Prospero, the practitioner of so called white magic which definitely carries a considerable potential for harm: reducing minds to distraction and pinching bodies with cramps, more distant from the norms than any Caliban? Shakespeare, like many of his contemporaries, knew just well how an exotic type could succeed on the island stage of the globe. Almost of the playwrights of the era have used the exotic other, depriving him of life and stereotyping him and hence reduced to a mere theatrical property placed on the stage.

IV. Caliban's Slavery and Servitude: an Imbricated Geohumoural, Polygenetic, and Naochic Reading

Caliban is blatantly called and described in the play as a slave who was subjugated to the services of Prospero after being taught by him. Teaching him his language was primordial for a full exploitation. We learn in the play that he is the only native in this island who "once was [his] own king" and then with Prospero and Miranda decking ashore his edenic isle, he was mentored by Prospero until he attempted rape of his

daughter, after which he was expulsed, confined in a rock, subjected to sheer servitude and physically punished and tortured when showing signs of reluctance or disobedience. His development in the play from a native to a project of civilization to a subject fit solely for servitude is crucial for colonial interpretations.

It is only after Prospero and Miranda declare him sterile ans stubborn to civilization, a creature that, despite their efforts to civilize him stubbornly refuses escalation, that he is deemed fit only for what people of his genealogy are fit for. This issue of servitude then is made central in the play. One would duly assume that Prospero whose charms can quell lands and rage tempests and inflict invisible pains on Caliban, is in no need of a servant, his magic can do the job for him. Besides, Ariel's presence in the play could have compensated for the services of the slave whose sole purpose behind learning his conquistadore's language is that he can curse and be understood. Caliban's role in the play is thus predestined, and he is rendered deformed in shape and in conduct to justify the harsh treatment he suffers at the hands of his master.

The type of labour, that he is bound to, is physically arduous and we are reminded many times in the play of his earth-bound nature in that he is confined to running such errands as digging chestnuts with his nails and fetching piles of logs and serving in offices that profit Prospero. Accordingly with his monstrous nature, which the play makes amply manifest, he is punished, as opposed to Ariel's delay of freedom punishment, physically. Beast-like, Caliban "whom stripes may move, not kindness" (1.2.349) as Prospero affirms is subjected to "old cramps, / [that] fill [his] bones with aches, make [him] roar, / that beasts shall tremble at [his] din" (1.2.372-74). His suffering at the hands of his master bears considerable allusions to the horrors that the African Americans endured in slavery especially as he mentions wiping and stripes.

Prior to the arrival of the survivors of Prospero's tempest, Caliban bears up with his suffering with bitter resentment. Upon knowing Trinculo and Stephano, his rebellious nature, which hitherto was only articulated in cursing, takes another dimension as he plans to overthrow and kill Prospero. Interestingly enough, Caliban declares his allegiance to his new masters, mistaking Stephano for a "brave god" and kneels to him, in a conceptual inadequacy reminiscient of the anecdotes of first encounters of Europeans with Native Americans. Indeed, his parochial vision led him to misperceive Trinculo and Stephano and to miscalculate the effects of his rebellious act. Although he, unlike the image of the Native American face to his conquistador, is endowed with the language of the other, his capacities remain nonetheless limited.

His ignorance and conceptual impairment are instantly unveiled as he asks them whether they have dropped from heaven, and Stephano mockingly tells him that they have, indeed, dropped out of the moon. Their wonder at his physical monstrosity soon fades as they realize that he is a "mooncalf", a naïve and foolish monster, "a very shallow monster… a very weak monster…a most poor and credulous monster!" (2.2.136-38). The giddy amazement that they might have briefly experienced upon first sighting him is soon transferred to Caliban instead. Caliban then proceeds, in a manner similar to his relationship with Prospero, to offer his favours, in an utterly meak and servile fashion; "I'll show thee every fertile inch o'th' island, / and I will kiss thy foot. I prithee, be my god … I'll show thee the best springs; Ill pluch thee berries; / I'll fish for thee, and get thee wood enough" (2.2.140-41 152-53) Caliban tells Stephano and Trinculo. Not only does he fail to filter through the nature of these new comers, in that they do not differ physically from Prospero and Miranda, but he further enacts what has become an indoctrinated necessity for being governed. By asking him to be his god,

Caliban unquestionably swears himself his subject. Now a counter-claim could always be advanced, arguing that while he did so he was under the effect of the liquor that Stephano gave him and thus drunken-like expressed his thoughts, which could be correct and sound if he changed his position upon sobriety, which he definitely did not. He thus remained “the most ridiculous monster to make a / wonder of a poor drunkard!” (2.2 157-58) way longer than normally should any normal human.

His revenge upon Prospero is that he now is allegiant to another sovereignty. One is always tempted to wonder what would happen if Caliban had exerted power, which he clearly owns a fair stance of, being a native of the region and the only one who is entitled truly to know its hills and meadows; the story would have gone a different course indeed. But this is how Shakespeare wanted his Caliban, an abjected, foolish, dependent and servile monster. The slavery-function is thus paramount to his portfolio as a character in the play; he must be led even as he attempts to usurp his usurper. His linguistic (in)capacities extend hence to his cognitive and conceptual skills defecting the very way his gazes upon others, unable to conceive of them as exploiters just like his previous master.

His deformity plays an equally important role in his servile nature and his subjugation. Again I am always tempted to imagine alternate ways in the course of the play to better decipher the actual ways. What if Caliban had met another Neapolitan who was physically inflicted, would he have asked him to be his God as he has Stephano. I believe that the nature of the encounter would differ tremendously. This being said, his deformity is thus not willed in the play as a benign marker of physical difference, but instead as a marker of his inferiority in a hierarchy which posits the European as superior: physically, mentally, linguistically, conceptually, and cognitively.

Caliban's servitude is gradually being implemented in the play so as to become intrinsic to his nature. One would assume that his rebellious character and resentment of his master Prospero will lead him to purchase his freedom at any cost. He does after all claim the Island to him by virtue of his mother Sycorax, and demands his Isle back all while cursing his subjected status. when he meets Trinculo and Stephano, however, he is portrayed as hailing his freedom not for having potential accomplices who might help and get a share of his edenic island, but drunkenly sings his joy at having "a new master" (2.2.176). He does not seem to realize the power in his hands both for speaking their language and for knowing the island better than them. Instead, he is described as a typical slave not only to Prospero but to his humours as well.

Taking into account geo-humoural understandings of the body and mind, Caliban's bizarre conduct towards servitude will be better unclouded. My reading of Caliban will situate him, just like Othello in a tradition which regards him as a Southerner, in humoural accounts of the era. First of all, his genealogy as descending from Sycorax who is clearly in the play linked to Algeria, as a geographical location, categorizes him as a descendent of North African origins. This region in European understanding was delineated as southern. All that lies beyond the Mediterranean basin could well be perceived as a southerner. Notwithstanding his current location in the Island, which as I have explained earlier is much bound to the Mediterranean than to the Atlantic, Caliban, by codes of geohumoural theory, could rightfully be discerned as southerner. The play does equally advance the other faction to his genealogy, which is believed to be supernatural. Both Prospero and Ariel do attest to the fact that Sycorax was banned from "Argier" for committing an abominable act, violating the laws of nature. Prospero affirms by the end of the play his account of Caliban's origins, which he must have

exclusively received from Ariel. "This misshapen knave", he tells all his guests in the Island upon debunking their plotting, is the son of a very strong witch, that he is a "semi-devil, / For he's a bastard one", alluding as he did earlier in the play to his mother's illegitimate and transgressive coition with the devil. Such kind of imagining alien peoples' deviant practices was hardly novel in the early modern age as demonstrated in Polygenetic accounts. Caliban's offspring thus lends two intermingling readings: geohumoural reading as a southerner by descent from Sycorax and a polygenetic reading by virtue of his father-devil entity. Each of these two theories endow him with certain traits, I believe, which are contradictorily coexistent in his nature.

First of all, Southerners were discerned from their northern counterparts as dominated by black vile, which leads them to be consumed by such debased vices as lust, debauchery, jealousy and revenge. Caliban, we are told early in the play by Prospero, attempted to rape Miranda. This attempt of violation, we are told was not done at the beginning of their encounter, but after Prospero assumed "the white man's burden" upon himself and attempted to civilize Caliban through giving him language lessons. Despite Prospero's "humanely taken pains", we are told, Caliban's stubborn nature to change is epitomized in the attempt of rape. At this early stage of their relationship, Caliban does admit that Prospero treated him with due empathy and care;

> When thou cam'st first,
> Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me
> Water with berries in't, and teach me how
> To name the bigger light, and how the less,
> That burn by day and night; and then I loved thee,

And showed thee all the qualities o'th' isle (1.2 336-340)

In this sense, Caliban's attempt at rape is depicted as driven by an indelible vice within him, which neither goodness nor care was capable of washing white. This glimpse at his early harmonious relationship with Prospero serves both to justify his enslavement as is also indicative of an ingrained trait in his humour. Furthermore, his failed attempt of rape is to be understood solely as instinctual, driven by the abundance of a certain humour which leads Caliban towards treacherous and lecherous deeds. Although he declares that he had grown to love Prospero for how he initially treated him, he does not, not even once in the play, describe his relationship to Miranda as affectionate or loving, despite admiring her. His rape attempt could thus be understood as a violation for the sake of the violation, and without further thinking of the consequences, which is again testimony to both his moral inadequacy as well as his instinct-driven nature. In short, that he is a mentally short-sighted, foolish, lecherous, and immoral semi-human who is solely capable of degeneracy. Towards the other gender hence, Caliban is shown to be driven by lust, and the only thing keeping him from doing it again is that he is compelled by Prospero's inhibiting powers, and was subsequently confined in a rock and assigned arduous toil.

When he later meets Stephano, and mooncalf-like mistakes him for a god, he presents his suit of usurpation with stressing the enticing reward of Miranda, the most fair and bountiful creature he ever saw. He is basically driven by revenge, a base vice which was equally attributed to the Southerners in geohumoural understandings. His consumption by revenge from Prospero allows no room in his mind for other much more promising possibilities of using the two Neapolitans to his own services. He was after all called a monster and and thought to be frightening, but that did not last long.

The best he could do was to promise Stephano the island, in a myopic fashion, provided that he rids him of Prospero, and he debasingly kneels to Stephano while he shares his plan. He tells Stephano that he is brave enough to attempt revenge, but that he, Caliban, dares not. His cowardice along with his parochial conceptualization of Stephano are analogous of the Southerners' conduct, which he seems to embody perfectly. "Do that good mischief which may make this island / Thine own for ever, and I, thy Caliban, For aye thy foot-licker (4.1 216-18).

Considering the other half of his lineage, Caliban's knavery and his debauched nature towards vile deeds, we are told by Prospero, must surely spring from his descent from the devil. At first, it seems that this epithet is more metaphorical alluding to his transgressions and unassimilable nature. Later, however, we are told the account of the underrepresented witch Sycroax, whom Prospero condemns of practicing black magic so strong that she controls the moon. Sycorax had once in the past broken the law by commiting an unforgiveable deed, and upon discovery of her foul deed, could not be killed because she was pregnant with a child and was thus exiled in this island.

Accounts of witches and supernatural transgressions were widely appealing during the early modern age and Sycorax we are told, gave birth to a child who was, both physically and mentally, tinged with her shame and was hence punished with his deformed shape. Polgenetically speaking, Caliban cannot be classified on equal footing with the other humans because of his hybrid and grotesque nature being semi-human only in that he roughly resembles humans and seems to have the ability of aquisition. However, even this ability is put into question later as Prospero declares that on his nature, nurture cannot stick.

A split-character, Caliban's human capacities do not extend to his conduct, perhaps because he is only partially human, and his phenotypical difference has led him to take on the role of the debauched even further. His deformity serves to foreground his imcomplete genetic makeup as well as a state of damnation. Being called a devil was for him, hence, both an allusion to his lineage as well as his behaviour. In fact, the ambivalence in his character, which keeps triggering forth interpretations, is the result of Shakespeare's clever way of presenting a trans-human creature. It was widely disseminated during late medieval and early modern times that regions such as Africa and the newly discovered islands gave birth to such horrific and hybrid monsters due to deviant sexual practices of copulating with animals. Giordano Bruno's account in his *De Immenso et Innumerabilibus* tells of "the gigantic monsters of the Sounth" who cannot be traced to the same descent, nor are they sprung from the generative force of a single progenitor" (Qtd.in Burton and Loomba, *Race In Early Modern England* 129). Caliban's deviance from human norms, thus, securel positions him as a "beast" or a "monster" whose body and mind only get uglier with age and who is incapable of escalating the evolutionary ladder. Prospero expresses it bluntly as he states that he is:

> A devil, a born devil on whose nature
>
> Nurture can never stick, on whom my pains,
>
> Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost.
>
> And as with age his body uglier grows,
>
> So his mind cankers…(4.1 188-92)

This clear implication to the element of degeneracy inhibits Caliban of change. His body, we are told grows uglier just as his mind festers with foul thinking. Prospero is alluding to an element that was paramount in polygenetic accounts of different

subjectivities, which is that of degeneracy. For a play which dramatized the sea of change, in which we see even the most vile of humans, under Prospero's charms, undergoing change for the better, Caliban is the only character who is only slightly touched by this theme. Upon recongnizing his grave deed of rebellion and his foolish belief in Stephano and Trinculo, he does vow by the end of the play to act wiser thereafter and to seek for grace, but is instantly shunned away as an emblem yet once more of Prospero's advantage of whatever he chooses to describe him with. The audience in this take Prospero's presentation of Caliban as "this thing of darkness" for what it literally means. He becomes, in the eyes of Alonso by the very end an object of amazement solely because of his different physical appearance; "this is a strange thing as e'er I / looked on" (5.1 293-93). His essence has been accounted for by Prospero, and even Caliban could not but accept his master's verdict. He thus remains slave to his appearance, a spectacle of freakishness and strangeness.

Geohumoural accounts of Southerners, and despite the crude discriminating descriptions, and the polygenetic framework, despite their hierarchizing nature, both seem to stress enough the behaviour and conduct of others, yet, do not seem to establish a clear link between the appearances of different subjectivities and enslavement, because the former theory as I have explained earlier sprung from medical grounds and attained anthropological dimensions later and the later was more of a pseudo-evolutionary theory. The issue of servitude in Caliban's nature, which as I have demonstrated became so much indoctrinated in his nature that he takes on the role unquestionably, is linked to another frame of differentiation, namely to the Naochic division.

Although clues to Caliban's skin colour remain extratextual, with the characters commenting more on his misshapen nature and freakish physique than on his skin pigmentation, Caliban's North African origins as well as his salient southern humourism lend a very sound interpretation of his dark skin shade. He is described by Prospero over and over again as a devil "this thing of darkness", he tells Antonio, I acknowledge mine" (5.1 278-79). The darkness he means is certainly a moral one but once we consider the issue of servitude which is inextricably linked to his very being, one is surely driven towards a reading of darker skin pigmentation.

As elaborated in the second chapter, the issue of skin colour, which was determinedly attached to the posterity of Ham, was a later adition which inexorably haunted the image of the African. All the other traits of Caliban seem to push the interpretation of his skin colour as black. In the movie adaptation "The Tempest" (2010), the role of Caliban is acted by the Beninese-American actor and model Djimon Hounsou who is dark skinned. Caliban's blackness was thus taken almost for granted especially in view of the other issue of bondage.

From the nineteenth century onward, Caliban was blackened in adaptations of popular culture and cinema. His skin pigmentation could thus be described as adding very little to his demonized and altered nature. The theme of damnation haunts him after all, from beginning to end due to his evil and supernatural genesis. Taken together with the issue of bondage which he embodies to the fullest, Caliban's place in the play cannot possibly be colour-blind. In her article "Shakespeare and Race: a Personal Story", Ania Loomba provides an invaluable insight on the question of race in a number of Shakespeare's characters, and concludes, regarding Caliban, that although textually speaking, we are left with this loophole of guessing the intentions of Shakespeare,

intentions that are way dead to be recovered, “whether or not [Caliban] was literally dark-skinned” maintains Loomba, “Caliban’s ‘political colour’ was black”.

Conclusion

Throughout the play, Caliban is subject to whatever the other characters in the play are disposed to see him. Some consider him a fish others like prospero a devil, in either case as anything other than one of their kind. In fact, Caliban is just as easily identified with an Indian or an islander or with a devil or a monster. The 'other's difference is something established by tradition and the alien as a sign of spatial distance, a creature from a distant place. In many ways similar to a travel to a foreign place, the experience of the theatre could sharpen and confuse prejudices, confirm or challenge the assumed identity of nature and custom but in most cases it does confirm more than challenge the deeply-rooted Western ideals. The dark alien could be counted on to arouse wonder among London's theatre goers. But such wonder is often accompanied by a sense of superiority. Spectators could satisfy their imagination in other races and cultures while being assured that all that is civilized and beautiful is securely fixed within the circle of their own values.

Shakespeare, more than any other dramatist of the English Renaissance, used theatre to create an important political perspective that framed the encounter between different cultures. By staging at the center and in an unprecedented manner a language-less savage who is described as Barbaric, cruel, immoral, sexually promiscuous, deviant, lazy and, emotionally uncontrollable, Shakespeare crafted Caliban as a deformed servant Moor of illegitimate birth. A missing link in Darwinian understanding, part beast part human, Caliban encapsulates his age's continuing concern with the order of things and with the acceptable boundaries of what constitutes a white European civilized subject as opposed to a an altered islander subject whose differences defy the norms of all that the European stands for. Caliban's ambivalence thrust him continually

in half descriptions and half epithets and render uncertain not simply his belonging to humanity, but to any stabilized origins.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Popular early modern English drama was profuse with staging different liminal figures, from different cultural and racial origins.The way the English have come to terms with the expediency of contact with physically and culturally different others, was to suffuse the huge bulk of literary Renaissance representations. Such insistent preoccupation with positioning others in drama, and yet marginalizing them through vilification and misrepresentation so as to assume the status of the objectified, inferior counterpart, is part of England's proto-orientalist discourses of 'others'.

Issues of otherness and difference are then central to the literature of the Renaissance. As far as drama is concerned, the English stage was frequently visited by blacks, tawnies, Jews, Moors, Turks, Indians, and all sorts of aliens of distant shores. Western humanism is fraught with denigration of different others. Hostility against the others has for ages been consolidated by religious and theological writings. Notions of difference that were engendered by theological discourse were further solidified by fantasized texts about encountering essentially different others.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, England and Spain were busy expanding into new world empires against a background of incessant continental struggle against the long perceived enemy Islam incarnated at the time in the mighty Ottoman Empire. Despite unreconciling doctrinal differences, England and Spain held an immovable attitude of hostility towards Islam. However, the way such attitude was manifested towards the Ottomans was crucially different. While the Spanish were more zealous in the cause of fighting the infidel, England's attitude was far more complex and tantalizing.

Accounting partly for such a response is England's intersecting trade concerns with the Ottomans.

The transatlantic and Mediterranean experiences led to several intercultural exchanges that ultimately engendered a highly complex stance towards difference. Such a clash of encounters helped many travelers and merchants to mingles with others and reify discourse-perpetuated notions of difference and help in metamorphosing those into new ones. The outcome of these encounters was transferred to native soils in the form of travel narratives, letters, memoirs and journals.

These types of texts helped most of the time to satisfy a certain hunger for exotic and remote new cultures. Most early modern historians nowadays agree that although the type of such texts was of a serious tone, they were not written in a scientific spirit nor did they contain much historical accuracy. Such type of discourse was fraught with inherited tropes of difference along with newly created biased observations. The circulation of texts is important when speaking about the early modern literature and drama specifically. In playwriting, most writers heavily relied on a wide range of continental sources in constructing their pieces. The outcome to such a process leaves scholars of early modern drama in a confusing situation as the stereotypes about others present in these texts might in fact not merely date back to different eras but also comply with different interests. Elizabethans rapaciously read accounts of the exploerers' far reaching voyages.

Travel narratives and chronicles transported the news back home in the form of fact mingled with fantasy narratives. Back home many writers were themselves engaged in producing literary artifacts that were eminently informed by the overload of knowledge

about others. The resultant discourse was to great deal imbued with notions of otherness and difference. Overseas expansion thus did not merely serve the state interests of trade, infusing the English market with new exotic exported products, but more importantly helped to fuel a whole new kind of discourse of difference that centuries later was crystallized into a discourse of race.

Very few scholars have seen it fit to develop an apt foothold as to the origins of religious and racializing ideologies of the English as they were busy articulating their sense of self, and to touch upon many liminal figures in one single work. This work attempts precisely this intrepid move by conjoining the four liminal figures that captivated the English playwrights the most and assigning to their prevalence and development an apt hermeneutic. The rationale which was discerned behind the representation of these four marginalized figures is a developmental one. The English popular imagination in the wake of European explorations to the new world was dispersed among old and new worlds. The imminent threat the Ottomans in Europe, although primarily targeted against such foes as the Hapsburgs formed kind of pan-christian polemic against this religious 'other'. Despite the fact that England's dealings with this religious other were defined by diplomacy and real politics, the hovering popular consciousness fed on a shared European tradition of fear and hatred.

The theatre made the best of these sentiments in engendering dramas of intense complexity problematizing such issues as religious polarization and perpetuating ages-long stereotypes and caricatures regarding Muslims. The gradual regression of the Turkish threat was paralleled by an attenuation of its presence in the public stage as it was gradually replaced by such figures in which not simply workings of religious difference are operative, but surgent racializing mechanisms are utilized, drawing

likewise, from a vast archive of understanding physical differences which could be traced to Greek times.

With the accession of King James I and the crisis of the Barbary Corsairs, the stage was yet again in tune with the news coming from England's engagements in Mediterranean trade and piracy. This encounter was different in that it was defined by profit and danger at oscillating ratios. The migration of Europeans and English subjects to Muslim domains and their renunciation of Christianity were so alarming that it had to be counteracted by propagandist campaigns daunting the dangers of intimidating piracy. Captivity narratives were very effectual in achieving the desired effect of denigration, from which a corpus of horrors in the Muslim domains infiltrated literary productions. With such a subversive issue as conversion, the theatre's role was very calculated indeed, and although the enticements of the Muslims worlds in Istanbul and the Barbary Coast were aggrandized, any attitude of temptation was heavily critiqued and punished on stage. Spectacles of happy renegades would corroborate such notions as Islamic triumphalism which European Christians, and the English were no exception, adamantly resisted, albeit if at the expense of real happenings.

The liminal figure taken up for study in the last chapter constitutes a literary phenomenon on its own. Shakespeare's highly ambivalent figure of Caliban, which is formulated as an anagram to cannibal, complicates any ready-given explanation of racializing ideologies in the age. His physical appearance as a deformed monstrous and freakish creature brings to question his human norm. His encounter with Prospero and his trajectory of learning the ocnquistadore's language demonstrate indelible vices within his nature, which could not be ameliorated despite education. Caliban's power lies in his knowledge of the isle, and he does have a fair share of, remained inadequately

harnessed. His mental and conceptual deficiencies are described as irreversible and as degenerative, two defining traits of racial histories of different peoples. Caliban's character is very difficult to decipher due to his genealogical makeup. Slow to take on the meanings and import of happenings around him, he is safely hieararchized as creaturely.

The study of early modern cultural othering conducted through this research I believe, foregrounds the immense role of New Historicism as a theoretical foothold in grasping the true nature of differentiating others against overriding new histories. The findings of this mechanism of cultural othering are part of the epistemological orientalism preceding orientalism and the epistemological race preceding race. By proving the implication of this era in the workings of both, this study is thus by nature proto-orientalist, in that the divides between self/other that were entrenched in the literary pieces were binaristic and hierarchizing. They differ from the divides of orientalism in intensity and in being coupled with real material superiority. A healthy marriage of the two theoretical frameworks: New Historicism and Poscolonialism prove essential to understanding the varied mappings of difference as enacted in the public stage.

Teaching Renaissance drama in Algeria suffers from all the inadequacies that this research hopefully sought to correct. Not only is it not taught sufficiently, but Shakespeare unanimously takes the center of Renaissance drama. This and along Formalistic approaches of theme and tone tend to quiet the student. A cultural form of analysis, I believe, that wrenches open such heated issues as religious differentiation and racializing attitudes will lead to much fruitful literary discussions, and even contributions. This need to historicize and to contextualize needs to extend to classes of

Renaissance drama, even if we stubbornly choose to teach by the canon, Shakespeare's *Othello* or *the Tempest* are rife with such ramifications that are capable of envigorating literature classes.

What is being suggested, thus, is that Renaissance drama ought to be handed down with students along with the apt theoretical framework that acknowledges the indeterminacies of the age, its contradictions and the ideological workings that touch upon such a cultural institution as the theatre. The theatre was the major cultural conduit through which the English began to articulate and formulate notions of alterity, of self and other as it played a crucial pedagogical role of informing the people with the necessary knowledge about their new trading partners and the different subjectivities that lie beyond their borders. Within the closed walls of this entertainment sphere, the strategy of attacking a distant enemy, spatially and temporally, was harnessed to stabilize differences domestically. By portraying the different liminal figures as threatening, the English were in fact normalizing resistant domestic threats and appropriating traits in such a way so as to pin down the other, discursively, to render his figure inert, fathomable, and harmless to their own agendas.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Abundant scholarship is being produced on the ontology of race and cultural othering in the early modern period. notable achievements in the field of premodern critical race studies include the organization called "Race Before Race" hosted by the Arizona State University Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and in partnership with The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Division of Humanities and the Hitz Foundation which presents an ongoing conference series and professional network community and seeks to push the fields in new archival, theoretical, methodological, pedagogical, and practical directions. The organization hosts a biannual symposium on different topics and promotes the study of race and social difference in medieval and early modern literature and culture and advocates for more inclusion of scholars outside of the traditional mode in everything from graduate school admissions to scholarly publications.

Appendix B: New Historicists disrupt history and question the unidimensional big stories, through the use of heterogeneous anecdotes, (*Isho'yahb Letter* 14 in our case) causing moments of pause. "The desired anecdotes would not as in the old historicism epitomize truth, but would instead undermine them" (51). As far as literature is concerned, the anecdote would leave behind faultlines in history for literary texts to fill in and to issue a voice. History would then be approached as contingent on the materiality of the literary text. The eccentric outlandish anecdote offers perspective to history, a fresh one, through which literary texts cease to be stabilized by history, breaking up the simplistic relationship of text and context. Instead, history will be viewed as part of the material-bound eventuality of the literary text. New Historicists overthrow the hermeneutic (practice) through which the literary text is secured within an established and totalizing historical account. To compensate for that, the anecdote serves to reveal the cracks in a once-perceived image of continuous history. The anecdote will then serve to divulge in the literary texts traces of "the accidental, the suppressed, defeated, uncanny, abjected or exotic, in short the non-surviving" (Howard, *The New Historicism* 52). In this manner, not only are anecdotes potential carriers of subversion, nor merely are they potent to urge new readings, but they promise new explanations. The newly envisioned histories that the anecdotes incite are duly dubbed by many cultural materialists and new historicists "counterhistories", resistant and once overlooked and silenced, will reemerge to contest dominant narratives and prevailing unequivocal historical practices.

Résumé

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Cette thèse analyse le fonctionnement de la différence opérant dans le processus d'altérité culturelle dans une sélection de pièces de théâtre prémodernes. D'un intérêt particulier, cette recherche vise à étudier quatre figures marginales et altérées au début de l'époque moderne : le Turc, le Maure, le Renégat et le Cannibale. Associés à l'Islam, à l'Empire ottoman et aux régions barbaresques d'Afrique du Nord, ces figures littéraires périphériques sont abordées dans un contexte historique révisionniste qui reconnaît la centralité de la présence musulmane dans les conflits de l'époque et évalue les implications des histoires géographiques de contact de l'Angleterre ainsi que leur entrée dans le monde global du commerce. Les discours épistémologiques naissants de la race sont également tracés comme alimentant « l'altérité culturelle ». Bien que les quatre figures soient tous, à des degrés divers, influencés par la présence de l'islam dans l'Empire Ottoman et la côte barbaresque d'Afrique, ils restent néanmoins très ambivalents. C'est cette ambivalence qu'il faudra aborder et considérer comme témoignant des attitudes conflictuelles de l'époque vis-à-vis l'Orient et de l'Islam. La mesure dans laquelle les œuvres dramatiques sélectionnées sont culturellement informées et la manière dont elles favorisent et remodèlent un discours ancré de différenciation et d'altérité seront également évaluées. Scruter les réseaux de significations dans lesquels ces dramaturges ont été impliqués est essentiel pour comprendre l'impératif collectif de « l'altérité culturelle ».Le théâtre, en tant qu'institution culturelle, a été le tremplin sur lequel ces cartographies de la différence ont été édictées et l'identité culturelle collective anglaise peut être entrevue. Cette étude soutient qu'on ne peut pas approcher les spectacles prémodernes de l'altérité sans contextualiser ces textes dans des contre-histoires dûment décentrées. Ainsi, forger le

pont entre la néo-histoire et la littérature sous des angles nouveaux est inestimable pour affirmer la nature discriminante de l'Latérisation. À cette fin, le Néo-Historicisme est adopté en approchant ces œuvres dramatiques qui sont considérées comme des textes centraux dans la culture anglaise de la Renaissance. Dans leur tendance orientalisante, ces textes sont traités comme appartenant au proto-orientalisme, et à ce titre la théorie postcoloniale sera également déployée dans cette étude.

Mots-clés : Altérité culturelle, Altérité, identité culturelle collective, Néo-Historicisme Proto-Orientalisme,contre-histoires.

الملخص

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تحلل هذه الأطروحة طرق عمل الاختلاف الفعالة في عملية التمييز الثقافي في الدراما الحديثة المبكرة. يهدف هذا البحث بصفة خاصة إلى دراسة أربع شخصيات مهمشة و مشوبة في المسرح الحديث المبكر و التي تتمثل في شخصية التركي, المغاربي البربري, المرتد و القنبلي و التي لها صلة وطيدة بالإسلام والشرق ، الإمبراطورية العثمانية والساحل البربري في شمال إفريقيا . يتم التعامل مع هذه الشخصيات الأدبية المهمشة ضد خلفية تاريخية معدلة تقر بمركزية العالم الإسلامي في نزاعات العصر ، وتقيس الآثار المترتبة على تواريخ الاتصال الجغرافي لانجلترا ودخولها في عالم التجارة العالمي.سيتم كذلك تتبع الخطابات المعرفية الناشئة للعرق على انها تغذي بدورها التمييز الثقافي. على الرغم من أن الشخصيات الأربعة مرتبطة بدرجات متفاوتة بالإسلام والشرق ، إلا أنها تظل متناقضة للغاية. هذا التناقض في المواقف هو الذي يجب معالجته واعتباره انعكاسًا لمواقف العصر المتضاربة تجاه الشرق والإسلام ، ومدى تاثر المسرحيات المختارة ثقافيًا والطريقة التي عززت بها وأعادت صياغة خطاب راسخ بالفعل عن التمايز والتباين يجب أن يتم تقييمها بالتساوي. إن التمحيص في شبكات المعاني التي وقع فيها هؤلاء الكتاب المسرحيون هو أمر أساسي لفهم الضرورة الجماعية للتمييز الثقافي. المسرح كمؤسسة ثقافية هو نقطة الانطلاق التي تم تأمين تعيينات الاختلاف عليها ويمكننا من خلالها رؤية الهوية الثقافية الجماعية الإنجليزية. تؤكد هذه الدراسة أنه لا يمكن للمرء قراءة هته النصوص المسرحية الحديثة المبكرة و التي تتطرق لمفهوم الغيرية دون وضع سياق لهذه النصوص في المكائد التاريخية اللازمة. وبالتالي ، فإنربط الجسر بين التاريخ والأدب من زوايا جديدة أمر مطلوب لتاكيد الطبيعة العنصرية للتمييز. ولهذه الغاية تم تبني نظرية "التاريخية الجديدة"لتحليل هذه المسرحيات و التي تعتبر نصوصًا محورية في الثقافة الإنجليزية في القرن السادس عشر. في نزعتها الاستشراقية ، يتم التعامل مع هذه النصوص على أنها تنتمي إلى ما قبل الاستشراق ، وعلى هذا النحو سيتم الاشارة في هذه الدراسة الى نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار أيضًا

الكلمات المفتاحية: الغيرية ، ما قبل الاستشراق ، الهوية الثقافية الجماعية، التاريخ الجديد ، التمييز الثقافي التاريخ المعاكس