

“A Mirror to Turke”:
“Turks” and the Making of Early Modern England

By

Laura Perille

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A.M., Brown University, 2010

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by the Department of History as satisfying the
dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Date _____

Tim Harris, Advisor

Recommended to the Graduate Council

Date _____

Tara Nummedal, Reader

Date _____

Palmira Brummett, Reader

Approved by the Graduate Council

Date _____

Peter Weber, Dean of the Graduate School

VITA

Laura Perille was born in Denver, Colorado, on March 13, 1986. In 2008 she graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, with a double major in English and History, receiving Honors in the latter for her senior thesis, “Fashioning an Ideal: Constructions of Honor Leading Up to the English Civil Wars.” In May 2010 she received her A.M. from Brown University. During her graduate work at Brown, Laura has participated in scholarly programs through the Folger Shakespeare Library and the National Endowment for the Humanities. She received a grant from the Institute of Turkish Studies at Georgetown University to complete an immersion Turkish language program in Istanbul, Turkey, in the summer of 2011, and she completed an immersion language program in Persian at Georgetown the following summer. Brown’s Department of History selected her as a Peter Green Doctoral Scholar for the 2012-13 academic year. She is currently serving as a Brown-Wheaton Faculty Fellow, teaching an original seminar at Wheaton College on cross-cultural interactions in the early modern world.

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INTRODUCTION

It was a wonder of wonders, that a *Mayden Queene* should at one time be both a staffe to *Flanders*, and a stay to *France*, a terror to *Pope*, a mirror to *Turke*, feared abroad, loved at home, Mistresse of the Sea, wonder of the world.¹

We have some Reason to mistrust, that these Men are ready to *Exchange* (I will not say Christianity for Turcism, but) a Christian Monarch for an Infidel... they are willing to admit of a *Mahumetan* Habit rather than a *Christian* Ceremony... and a *True-Protestant Grand Seignior* rather than a *Christian* Prince.²

These two excerpts are taken from sermons delivered exactly 70 years apart, revealing shifts in how early modern Englishmen and women invoked the “Turk” not only to speak to political and religious anxieties but also to construct and reconstruct a national identity as they negotiated a period of great change. The first excerpt comes from a sermon that John Boys delivered at Paul’s Cross on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot in 1613. In the sermon, Boys nostalgically remembered Queen Elizabeth I (r. 1558-1603) as a mirror to the Turk, perpetuating Elizabeth’s careful self-presentation of herself as equal or superior to the Ottomans. Such self-presentation served as a means by which Elizabeth garnered legitimacy for her diplomatic policies on a European stage in the late 1580s and early 1590s. As Boys’s printed sermons were quite popular and enjoyed great sales, his ideas would have further solidified such an Elizabethan legacy for a wider audience.³

¹ John Boys, *An exposition of the last psalme delivered in a sermon preached at Pauls Crosse the fifth of November, 1613* (London: Imprinted by Felix Kyngston, for William Aspley, 1613), 17-18.

² Edward Pelling, *A sermon preached before the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at St. Mary le Bow, on Nov. 5, 1683 being the commemoration-day of our deliverance from a popish conspiracy* (London: Printed for Will. Abington next the Wonder Tavern in Ludgate-Street, 1683), 20-21.

³ “Boys, John (bap. 1571, d. 1625),” William Richardson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3144> (accessed January 28, 2015).

The second excerpt was part of a sermon that Edward Pelling, the chaplain to the Duke of Somerset, delivered in November 1683 before the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen at St. Mary le Bow. At a moment marked by political fragmentation into Tory and Whig parties, Pelling condemned the duplicity of Whigs and nonconformists and preached passive obedience. His statements reflect the arguments made by Tory party propagandists, who sought to hold up a mirror to the Whig party and underscore that the latter's sympathy for the Ottoman Turks was misplaced and made them supposedly just as delusional and hypocritical as the Turks themselves. Perceptions of Whig sympathy for the Turks arose from the fact that certain prominent Whigs had expressed support for the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance against the Austrian Habsburgs. In linking their political principles to this other imperial struggle, the Whigs appeared – to their enemies – on the verge of trading Christianity for “Turcism” and preferring the rule of a “True-Protestant Grand Seignior” rather than a Christian Prince. Tory propagandists suggested that the Whigs and nonconformists had in fact become “Turks” themselves. These excerpts thus speak to different conceptualizations of the “Turk” in relation to the domestic religio-political landscape. From the reign of Queen Elizabeth I to the Exclusion Crisis under King Charles II (r. 1660-1685), the “Turk” evolved not only from serving as a means of self-promotion and legitimization to a satirical weapon but also from being one whom contemporaries hoped to equal or rival to something that contemporaries could actually embody.

This present study explores relations with and discourses of the “Turks” within England from the formalization of Anglo-Ottoman trading rights in 1580 to the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683. As engagement with the Muslim “Turk” varied over time and

space, I consider particular moments at which this engagement assumed critical importance for public debates, examining both the mechanisms by which these debates were shaped as well as the interplay between discourse, policy, and public opinion. I argue that perceptions of the Muslim “Turk” helped to define an evolving Anglo-Protestant character through framing the contours of public debates about issues such as national responsibility, liberty, religious unity, and political governance. As visions of what constituted this character remained contested throughout this period, contemporaries deployed particular cultural assumptions of the “Turk” both to legitimize their own political and religious visions and deny their opponents’ claims to represent the interests of the nation and, even more broadly, Christendom.

Analyzing the “Turk” both as a complex actor as well as a multivalent concept in early modern England, I examine how and why contemporaries engaged with the “Turk” at particular moments to effect change or shape policy. The political, religious, or economic concerns of these moments determined the ideological terms of the engagement. Contemporaries often used “Turk” synonymously with “Muslim” and “Ottoman,” referring to Muslim subjects of the Ottoman Empire and thereby deploying “Turk” as a catch-all term to identify a heterogeneous group of people. Yet the term also reflected a conscious choice intended to achieve a certain effect or evoke an array of value-laden associations such as universal monarchy, liberty, popery, slavery, and even rationality. The “Turk” became embedded within a conceptual field shaped by legends, histories, reports, real interactions, and perceptions of “Mahometanism” and Ottoman military and political dominance. Through trade, war, and diplomacy, European states confronted a “bewildering geopolitical chessboard of Islamic polities” from North Africa

to Anatolia and then beyond to the edge of South East Asia.⁴ The Muslims with whom contemporaries interacted had “multifaceted identities” shaped by historical and national distinctions, ensuring that the figure of the “Turk” did not suggest only “one single defining notion of ‘otherness.’”⁵ For the Ottomans themselves “Turk” was a demeaning label that suggested boorishness, denoting an Anatolian nomad or a “rude peasant, not a cultivated member of society.”⁶ Thus, the “Turk” was a charged term, which contained its own internal power and dynamic.

My dissertation thus seeks to advance ongoing efforts to explore how and why Europeans represented the Muslim world. In line with recent scholarly work that has sought to undercut binaries between not only English Christian and Muslim “Turk” but also self and “other,” my study demonstrates that contemporaries consistently recognized the inherent instability of these divisions and indeed often negotiated or destabilized these categories in the interests of policy and propaganda. For instance, contemporaries dislodged stereotypes popularly associated with the “Turks” and deployed them to censure a perceived danger in their midst, proving the ease with which one could “out-Turk” the Turk.⁷ At other times the “Turk” became the means of rejuvenating contemporaries’ very Christian faith. I contextualize these discussions within domestic

⁴ Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 10-11.

⁵ Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 11. See also Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011), 5; Matthew Dimmock, “‘Captive to the Turke’: Responses to the 1580 Capitulation.” In *Cultural Encounters Between East and West, 1453-1699* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, GBR: Cambridge Scholars Press), 56.

⁶ Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories About the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 17; Tijana Krstic, *Contested Conversions to Islam: Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 5. Krstic also indicates that the official term of “Osmanlı” (Ottoman) poses challenges to historians because it is unclear whether the term extended beyond members of the ruling dynasty and the military-administrative elite.

⁷ See Jonathan Burton, “Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in Tamburlaine.” In *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Winter 2000).

and foreign developments as well as interactions with “Turkish” officials, pirates, captives, converts, and soldiers, uncovering the matrix of experience with and rhetoric of the “Turks.” These relationships served as the catalyst or testing ground for the issues that contemporaries wished to interrogate or espouse, affecting the way that they thought of themselves and their relationship to the wider world. Similar to David Armitage’s argument that “the various conceptions of the British Empire arose in the competitive context of political argument,” I seek to demonstrate that experiences and debates involving the “Turks” proved formative in charting the development of England.⁸

My dissertation’s title, “A Mirror to Turke,” reflects my methodological approach to tracing the evolutions of engagement with the “Turks” and the ways in which competing visions of English national identity interfaced with and evolved from such cultural understandings and experiences. In its early modern usage, a mirror might serve as an example or a warning – something to be imitated or a means by which one’s true character was revealed. Thus, a mirror was tied closely to the process of introspection and the desire to see one’s own essence reflected back: one constructed one’s own truth through relying on reflection.⁹ A mirror had the power to reveal versions of the truth. As Sabine Melchior-Bonnet has argued, “By consistently reengaging the subject in a dialectic of being and seeming, the mirror appeals to the imagination, introducing new perspectives and anticipating other truths.”¹⁰ An encounter with the mirror allowed an individual “to observe oneself, to measure oneself, to dream oneself and to transform

⁸ David Armitage, *Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4-5.

⁹ Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror: A History*. Trans. by Katharine H. Jewett (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), 184.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 157.

oneself.”¹¹ I seek to explore this very process of observation, interrogation, and transformation, employing the mirror as a framework for considering a process of dynamic, continual self-interrogation. Throughout the period under consideration, contemporaries evaluated their own practices and policies through recourse to a conceptual field involving the “Turks.”

From the mid-sixteenth century, “Turks” came to the fore of English consciousness due not only to the increasing frequency and density of Anglo-Ottoman interactions through travel, trade, diplomacy, and intellectual exchange but also to the Ottoman Empire’s dominance as a major actor in the world affairs in which England sought to participate.¹² A long history of European discourses about and contact with the “Turks” influenced Anglo understandings. Histories and legends about the “Turks” reached London from the Continent, creating an ideological and discursive matrix.¹³ By mid century, England gradually began to take part in this intellectual and commercial exchange and increasingly to generate its own literature on the Ottoman Turks. Following his remarkable journey to Jerusalem to see the holy sepulcher in the late 1530s, the physician-writer Andrew Boorde addressed “Turkish” customs and the law of

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² By the seventeenth century, the Ottomans controlled territory stretching from the Anatolian Peninsula to the border of Morocco to the east, to the Balkans and Hungary to the north, and to Mesopotamia to the southeast.

¹³ For instance, see Ogier Ghislein de Busbecq. *The four epistles of A. G. Busbequius concerning his embassy into Turkey being remarks upon the religion, customs, riches, strength and government of that people* (London: Printed for I. Taylor, 1694). Though Busbecq’s Epistles were not published until 1694, they had been in manuscript circulation in the original Latin since 1581. Also see Francis Billerbeg, *Most Rare and straunge Discourses, of Amurathe the Tukish Emperor that nowe is* (London, 1584/5).

Muhammad in his *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* of 1542.¹⁴ In 1553 the merchant-traveler Anthony Jenkinson became the first Englishman to receive a grant of privileges from the Ottoman Sultan to trade independently within the Empire.¹⁵ Then disorders in the Netherlands in the 1560s encouraged some English merchants to recognize the benefits to establishing their own trade to the Levant rather than continuing to rely upon the Antwerp market for shipments of currants, oils, and wines. Thomas Cordell, a member of the Mercers' Company like Jenkinson, spearheaded the drive to establish a Turkey trade.¹⁶ The timing of this burgeoning trade appeared no random circumstance: Queen Elizabeth's excommunication in 1570 not only encouraged England to seek new political alliances apart from Catholic Europe but also promoted a contraband trade in cloth and metal to Turkey, as the papal ban against supplying the Turks with munitions no longer seemed to apply and was thus ignored.¹⁷ Based upon increased English mercantile activity with the Ottomans, in November 1580 Sir Francis Walsingham wrote of the advantages to England should the Queen open a direct trade

¹⁴ Andrew Boorde's *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*. Quoted in *The Elizabethan World*, ed. by Susan Doran and Norman Jones (2011), 667. As *The Fryst Book* reads, "The Turkes hath a law called Mahomet's law. And the book that their law is written in is called the Alkaron. Mahomet a false fellow made it, he seduced the people under this manner, he did bring up a dove and would put 2 or 3 peasen [peas] in his eare, and she would every day come to his ear and eat the peasen, and then the people would think the holy ghost, or an Angel did come and teach him what the people should do" (Boorde, sig. NIV). The emphasis on the falsity of Muhammad echoed other printed material circulating in England. For instance, see *There begynneth a lytell treatyse of the turkes lawe called Alcaron. And also it speketh of Machamet the Nygromancer* (London: 1519?).

¹⁵ At the age of 23 as an apprentice of the Mercers' Company, Jenkinson received this grant of privileges from Sultan Süleyman. S. A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey: A documentary study of the first Anglo-Ottoman relations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 6-7; Margaret B. Graham Morton, *The Jenkinson Story* (Glasgow: William Maclellan, 1962), 27.

¹⁶ Credit for spearheading this trade is also given to rival merchants Edward Osborne and Richard Staper. See Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 11.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

with Turkey. Fifteen years later, the newly re-chartered Levant Company had 15 ships and 790 seamen engaged in its Mediterranean trade, adding 16 more ships by 1600.¹⁸

The seventeenth century brought Englishmen and women increasingly in contact with Muslim “Turks,” thereby generating a deeper, more sustained intellectual engagement. Though very few Muslim “Turks” made their way to England’s shores, those that did left a significant impression on English consciousness. From the latter half of King James I’s reign (r. 1603-1625), merchants and communities in the west of England mourned the depredations committed by “Turkish” pirates from Morocco and the Ottoman regencies of Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunisia – collectively known as the Barbary states. These pirates disrupted commercial activity, seizing hundreds of merchant vessels and taking British seamen, fishermen, and soldiers prisoner.¹⁹ The fear of these individuals “turning Turk” while in captivity was very real – an anxiety broadcast in contemporary plays and sermons. Besides experiences with Muslim “Turks” through piracy and trade, contemporaries also came into contact with the occasional Ottoman emissary who arrived in London. In the late 1650s, several Ottoman agents became the focus of considerable attention when they publically converted to Christianity under the patronage of various religio-political groups, who eagerly held up these conversions as an affirmation of divine favor. Rooted in a specific, local context, such experiences shaped the meaning and significance of the “Turk” for contemporaries.

Meanwhile, English travelers to Ottoman domains provided their compatriots back home with new insight – albeit often distorted – into “Turkish” government and

¹⁸ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 1:626.

¹⁹ As Linda Colley indicates, between 1600 and the early 1640s, North African corsairs seized over 800 English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish trading vessels in the Mediterranean and Atlantic. See Colley, *Captives* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2002), 43, 54.

society. Following in the footsteps of European travelers like Nicolas de Nicolay, Jean de Thévenot, Francis Billerbeg, and Ogier de Ghiselin Busbecq, whose writings on the Ottomans were widely circulated and often printed, George Sandys, Henry Blount, Robert Bargrave, Paul Rycaut, and Thomas Smith recorded their observations in the form of travel books, letters, and political and religious analyses.²⁰ Taking their place alongside other histories like Richard Knolles' authoritative *The General Historie of the Turkes* (1603), such works both reinforced and challenged the ideological values of their countrymen, and contemporaries drew upon such works when advancing timely political or religious arguments.

Englishmen and women also gained increased exposure to “Turkish” intellectual and religious traditions. In 1633 at the same time that the Lords of Admiralty demanded captains’ “diligence in scouring the seas and freeing them from Turks and pirates,” King Charles I and Archbishop Laud set about imposing a type of “knowledge tax” on ships arriving back from Ottoman domains in hopes of creating a repository of Near Eastern manuscripts, books, and other materials.²¹ In a letter to the Turkey Company, Charles wrote of the “great deale of Learning... very fit and necessary to be known, that is written in Arabicke.”²² Given the kingdom’s “great scarcity and want of Arabicke and Persian Bookes,” Charles instructed the Company to adhere to a new regulation: “Every Shippe of [theirs] at every Voyage... should bring home one Arab[ic] or Persian Booke.”²³ With access to these materials a new priority, the first chaired positions of Arabic were established at Cambridge and Oxford in 1632 and 1634, respectively.

²⁰ See also Daniel Goffman’s notes on northern Europeans who visited Ottoman domains. *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 224.

²¹ *CSPD 1633-34*, Vol. 244, 174.

²² TNA, PRO SP 16/260, f. 239, King to the Turkey Company, Feb. 1633-4.

²³ *Ibid.*

Published as *The Alcoran of Mahomet* and based upon the French translation by André du Ryer, the first English translation of the Qur'an appeared in 1649 and came up against immediate official hostility.²⁴ Yet while many authors continued to condemn "Mahometan" blasphemies and lies, others vindicated Muhammad and expressed respect for the honor and obedience with which "Turks" treated their religion. In his *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners* (1665) and *A defence of the doctrine of justification* (1673), John Bunyan suggested the potential validity of – or equal claim of Turks to – a strong scriptural tradition, writing, "How can you tell but that the Turk had as good Scriptures to prove their *Mahomet* the Saviour, as we have to prove our *Jesus* is."²⁵ In the 1670s, Henry Stubbe prepared a defense of Muhammad, intending to situate Islam in a historical context, refute Christian fables, and defend a "literate and cultured Prophet" from accusations of sensuality, imposture, and violence.²⁶ Such efforts further broadened and enriched the conceptual field of the "Turks" and "Mahomet," offering an array of representations from which contemporaries could draw. Indeed, this very array ensured that the "Turks" could accommodate a range of ideological agendas by the late seventeenth century.

Work on Anglo-Ottoman relations is heavily indebted to the pioneering work of Samuel Chew with *The Crescent and the Rose* (1937), Norman Daniel with *Islam and the West: the Making of an Image* (1960), and Susan Skilliter with *William Harborne and the*

²⁴ The translation was compiled anonymously, yet it is often attributed to Alexander Ross because a treatise by Ross was appended to the translation.

²⁵ John Bunyan, *Grace abounding to the chief of sinners* (London: Printed by George Larkin, 1666), 26. See Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad*, Ch. 4.

²⁶ See Nabil Matar, ed., *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 15, 28, 34.

Trade with Turkey (1977). These seminal works set the research agenda for not only considering Christian perceptions and representations of Muslims but also documenting transnational political and religious engagement in the medieval and early modern periods. For instance, Chew's work offered a vast array of allusions to Islam and the Turks in English literature, and in the process, identified central themes and tropes, including the perceived unity and strength of the Ottoman Turks that literary scholars would later explore in plays and captivity narratives.²⁷ Delving into cross-cultural relationships and perceptions at the level of language and text, Chew sought to highlight the ways in which the accounts of contemporary pilgrims, travelers, traders, controversialists, diplomats, and soldiers supplied a medley of facts and fancies which were superimposed on a heritage of medieval legend to produce the "most fantastic image" of the Islamic East. In *Islam and the West*, Daniel also explored this "deformed image of Islam" that was established in the European mind, considering what purposes and motives caused this image to be deformed and what led Europeans to prefer untrue versions of the history of Muhammad.²⁸ Daniel demonstrated that misrepresentations arose from Christian faith and morals, as Christian writers worked to serve the high purposes of the Church in attacking the Islamic claim to be the true revelation of God and depicting Muhammad's character as "wholly and unquestionably incompatible with religion."²⁹ The West thus developed a canon of beliefs that suited its needs, protecting Christian minds against apostasy and bolstering its own confidence when facing a

²⁷ Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 107-8.

²⁸ Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2009), 24.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 271.

civilization “in many ways superior.”³⁰ Moving away from Chew’s and Daniel’s focus on European representations, Skilliter in her monograph focused on William Harborne’s early diplomatic missions into Turkey and the nature of the exploratory correspondence between Ottoman and English actors, including Queen Elizabeth I. Through an array of diplomatic letters, Skilliter offered insight into the intricate negotiations and maneuverings on both sides, as England attempted to gain commercial privileges. In doing so, her work undercut the static image of English perceptions towards the “Turks” that Chew presented.

The publication of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* in 1978 generated a new historiographical moment in Anglo-Ottoman studies, as scholars began to interrogate whether the early modern context manifested the East-West binary and type of cultural hegemony that Said posited for the modern era. Through their attention to plays, chronicles, and travel and captivity narratives, literary critics and historians such as Nabil Matar, Daniel Vitkus, Gerald MacLean, Jonathan Burton, Linda McJannet, Ros Ballaster, and Kenneth Parker have highlighted the complexity of contemporary perceptions of the Ottomans and the rich, layered, and often conflicting discourses pertaining to the “Turks.”³¹ These scholars have analyzed shifts in representation over time and space as well as traced the ideological currents or motivations that gave rise to such variance. In

³⁰ Ibid., 301.

³¹ Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2005); Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005); Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theatre and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Kenneth Parker, *Early Modern Tales of the Orient* (Routledge, 1999).

doing so, they have refuted the West's positional superiority over the East and thereby demonstrated that the early modern context undercuts Said's claims, illustrating that the supposedly monolithic and diametrically opposed categories of East-West or Christian-Muslim were never as clear-cut as some would suppose.³² Contemporaries would not have understood these negotiations in terms of an East-West binary inscribed by domination and subjugation; indeed these interactions often proved a disorienting experience, as contemporaries wrestled with their own sense of marginality in the face of Ottoman power.³³ In tracing this experience, the work of Nabil Matar, Matthew Birchwood, and Matthew Dimmock has proved particularly influential for my present study. Matar's *Islam in Britain* (1998) examined how early modern Britain treated and absorbed Islam, demonstrating the different ways in which English dramatists, preachers, and theologians engaged with Islam and often confronted their religious or cultural anxieties in the process.³⁴ In the edited volume *Cultural Encounters Between East and West* (2005), Birchwood and Dimmock further highlighted the negotiation and uncertainty that not only characterized cross-cultural encounters but also permeated English literature and discourse.³⁵

Said's unilateral model has given way to an emphasis on models of exchange and an exploration of the variance, mobility, and interactivity that characterized representations of and experiences with the Ottoman Empire. The work of Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton has illuminated the dynamic exchange of material, goods, people and

³² See Goran Stanivukovic's edited volume *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

³³ Kenneth Parker, *Early Modern Tales of the Orient* (Routledge, 1999), 28-9.

³⁴ Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (1998).

³⁵ Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock, *Cultural Encounters Between East and West, 1453-1699* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, GBR: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005).

information with the East, tracing the formation of cultural identities from these encounters.³⁶ Also seeking to broaden our understanding of the differing forms of Anglo-Ottoman encounters, Daniel Goffman has highlighted the political and diplomatic interchange between Europe and the Ottoman Empire in *Britons in the Ottoman Empire* and *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*.³⁷ Trade and diplomatic concerns as well as first-hand interactions with the Ottoman Turks often created a reality separate from that propagated by anti-Turk literature and medieval myths.

Attention to transnational political and religious engagement has not only shifted scholarly attention to rethinking models of exchange but also provided a more nuanced, complicated view of the Ottomans and Mediterranean World. Scholars including Goffman, Virginia Aksan, Suraiya Faroqhi, and Palmira Brummett have alternatively exposed the limitations and strengths of European sources on the Ottomans, considered similarities and differences between the Ottomans and their European counterparts, and focused on the zone of cultural engagement.³⁸ For instance, through attention to iconography surrounding maps and rhetoric, Brummett has shed light on how Europeans imagined Ottoman space and power and thereby established markers of identity.³⁹ This consideration of the differing forms of encounters and the formation of identity and

³⁶ Lisa Jardine and Jerry Brotton, *Global Interests: Renaissance Art Between East and West* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000).

³⁷ Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998) and *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

³⁸ See Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman, eds., *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and in particular, Palmira Brummett's chapter "Imagining the early modern Ottoman space" and Gábor Ágoston's chapter "Information, ideology, and limits of imperial policy: Ottoman grand strategy in the context of Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry." Suraiya Faroqhi, *Approaching Ottoman History: An Introduction to the Sources* (Cambridge, 1999) and *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (I. B. Tauris, 2004). For reorientation of consideration of European writings on Ottomans and Mediterranean World, see Stanivukovic, ed., *Remapping the Mediterranean World*.

³⁹ Brummett, "Imagining the early modern Ottoman space." See also *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2009).

representations has increasingly stressed that “Muslims” were not a single, homogenous category and that understandings of the “Islamic world” varied according to time, space, objective, education, and occupation. In their recent monograph *Britain and the Islamic World*, MacLean and Matar documented the multiplicity and complexity of these cross-cultural encounters, examining not only diplomatic exchanges, captivity narratives, and material culture but also the changing form and tone of accounts written about the Islamic world in Britain.⁴⁰ Their main contribution was to complicate the label “Muslims” and demonstrate that contemporary Englishmen had different experiences with and developed particular conceptions of three distinct Islamic regions.

Recent work on the subject of English literature and exchange with the Ottomans has focused increasingly on contextualization and engaged with the political, religious, and social dynamics of the home society that gave rise to certain discourses and cultural representations. In *The Birth of the Despot* (1987) Lucette Valensi helped to establish these considerations as a fruitful line of inquiry by examining the changing concept and deployment of despotism in Venetian ambassadors’ *relazioni* about the Ottoman system.⁴¹ Considering the relationship between experience, cultural imperatives, rhetoric, and political thought, Valensi charted a process by which the Venetian ambassadors increasingly stressed the opposition between their republic and Turkish tyranny – a shift that unfolded after the Battle of Lepanto (1571). While *The Birth of the Despot* offered a compelling model for thinking about shifting representations based upon a changing sociopolitical landscape, the study failed to engage deeply with contextualization of

⁴⁰ Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁴¹ Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte*, trans. by Arthur Denner (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987).

sources, audience, and experience. Margaret Meserve has since pursued similar themes regarding the interplay between political imperatives and shifting representations and, in doing so, has provided a more compelling model for contextualization. Studying Renaissance humanists in *Empires of Islam* (2008), Meserve relates their histories of Islam not only to sociopolitical imperatives but also to personal ambition in the humanists' desire to advocate their relevance in formulating political thought and policy. She traces the humanists' intellectual and theoretical engagement with the Ottoman Turks and Islam, seeking to "identify just how humanists discovered, understood, and articulated those differences."⁴² Anders Ingram and Matthew Dimmock have built upon such contextualizations of literature and further emphasized the importance of examining writing for what it may reveal about projections and criticisms of English political and religious structures.⁴³ Meanwhile, exploring the discourse of Islamic republicanism as it shaped and threatened political ideologies, Humberto Garcia has presented a case for the rise of Islamic-inspired secularization in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁴

While these studies have importantly explored the shifting, amorphous nature of Anglo-Ottoman representations and interactions, there are critical gaps in our knowledge regarding the relationship between these negotiations and critical domestic and international developments over a century of great change. Understanding the form of representations and interactions is important, yet it is necessary to contextualize this

⁴² Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 11.

⁴³ See Anders Ingram, "English literature on the Ottoman Turks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" PhD dissertation (University of Durham 2009). Ingram explored the developing complex body of English literature on the Ottomans between the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, situating individual works within domestic and foreign developments. See also Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad*.

⁴⁴ Humberto Garcia, *Islam and the English Enlightenment: 1670-1840* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), and "A Hungarian Revolution in Restoration England: Henry Stubbe, Radical Islam, and the Rye House Plot." In *The Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 51, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 1-25.

engagement and interrogate its significance for the shaping of public opinion and the development of national policy. Through engaging with “Turks” both directly and discursively, contemporaries grappled with – and in turn shaped – their own policies and practices, charting a way forward for their nation at a time when it was only starting to emerge as a true player on an international stage – a stage on which the Ottoman Turks maintained a formidable presence. Thus, an analysis of contemporaries’ engagement with the “Turks” may tell us a great deal about how contemporaries were working through central religious and political anxieties while at the same time developing policies and envisioning their national destiny. Throughout these processes, the “Turks” often provided a critical means of political and cultural orientation.

Studies by scholars of early modern Britain on not only how fears of popery and Puritan dissent affected polemical debates of the period but also how Jewish themes served as a lens through which contemporaries evaluated their own history illuminate the importance of analyzing similar processes with the “Turks.” Peter Lake has demonstrated the “long-term coherence on political and religious history” to be derived from tracing the “trajectories and ideological contours” of anti-popery and anti-puritanism.⁴⁵ Different at any given point in time, both of these complex ideological entities encompassed “distinctive religio-political values and agendas,” gave contemporaries the means of confronting “areas of religious, political and cultural ambiguity, tension and conflict,” and “operat[ed] at a dizzying number of cultural levels, running through a range of

⁴⁵ See Peter Lake, “Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice.” In *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England*, ed. by Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2006), 97. Also see Peter Lake, “Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice.” In *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, ed. by R. Cust and A. Hughes (Routledge, 1989).

cultural forms and literary genres.”⁴⁶ Through deploying anti-popery or anti-puritanism at various moments with often completely different agendas, contemporaries defined and outlined the contours of the English Church and Protestant state. Achsah Guibbory has explored a similar form of national introspection through analyzing how English contemporaries made sense of Christian history and development through the lens of Jewish history and themes. As Guibbory argues, this lens involved an “unstable, shifting mix of identification and opposition, affinity and distance, attraction and repulsion.”⁴⁷ In deploying these cultural discourses, contemporaries subjected not only anti-popery, anti-puritanism, and Jewish history but also greater conceptions of the Anglo-Protestant nation to “incessant cultural, political and polemical construction and reconstruction.”⁴⁸

By studying such dynamic processes with regards to the “Turks,” we might lend additional coherence to the political and religious development of this period, understanding how and why contemporaries turned to visions of the “Turks” to forward particular agendas and define the values and policies of their nation. In invoking the “Turks” repeatedly in debates at moments of great crisis and change, contemporaries revealed the wide-ranging significance and relevance of this ideological entity, proving that we cannot dissociate the “Turks” from studies of early modern English religion and politics without losing a critical piece of the cultural puzzle. My dissertation seeks to account for this gap in our knowledge by delving into how the “Turk” became an integral part of English religio-political discourse from the Elizabethan era to the Exclusion Crisis and thereby shaped the contours of public opinion and policy. My dissertation will

⁴⁶ See Lake, “Anti-Puritanism,” 83, 97, 81.

⁴⁷ Achsah Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 25.

⁴⁸ Lake, “Anti-Puritanism,” 87.

address larger questions regarding how manipulating the concept of the “Turks” allowed contemporaries to navigate and resolve religio-political tensions and uncertainty, how certain individuals and groups were able to set the terms of pivotal debates through invoking the “Turks,” and how the Anglo-Protestant nation was constantly “constructed and reconstructed” – to borrow Lake’s phrasing – amidst this process. Ultimately, this is a narrative about power and how contemporaries justified their right to speak for the national interest or challenged others’ right to do the same through seizing control of ideological terrain and determining political, religious, or economic action. As Lake suggested for his studies of anti-popery and anti-puritanism, studying these processes becomes a matter of “who is doing what, with what discursive materials, using what means of communication and control, to whom, and why” as well as of the “struggle to seize control over the terms in and through which the contemporary socio-political scene could be turned into a narrative... and thus into a object of polemical and political action.”⁴⁹ Exploring how engagement with the “Turks” enabled contemporaries to set the terms of debates central to national identity and provoke certain actions, my work seeks to interrogate further the ways in which cross-cultural engagement – whether intellectual, religious, economic, or diplomatic – was crucial to defining the self.

This is a study about England and the cultural discourses and mechanisms that shaped debates and policy at particular moments of crisis. As Matar has observed, “attention to Islam was proportionate to the religious anxiety in society,” and moments of controversy certainly provoked deeper engagement not only with “Mahometanism” but

⁴⁹ Ibid., 88.

also with “Turks” more broadly.⁵⁰ I focus specifically on England due to my attention to localized dynamics within alternatively congregations, communities, or the city of London. A matrix of experience with and rhetoric of the “Turks” was only one means by which contemporaries negotiated and navigated these moments, yet it was a crucial one. During a period when England was finding its way through political, religious, and social upheaval, the “Turks” alternatively provided an example in the form of formidable Ottoman Turkish power and influence, a disruption in the form of the “Turkish” pirates, and a solution to political and religious insecurities in the form of converts who could re-inspire Protestant faith and unity. Employing the “Turks” as a lesson or means of comparison, Englishmen and women assessed their policies and practices on a spectrum of values that encompassed liberty, tyranny, and anarchy; barbarity and civility; deficiency and excess. Discourses of the “Turks” were made more potent by the interplay with other ideologies and charged concepts including popery, slavery, liberty, and religious unity. In *Britain and the Islamic World*, Matar and MacLean argued for the Islamic world’s significance in the making of Britain, yet their focus on larger interchanges rather than local contexts and dynamics prevented them from exposing the dynamics of that “making.” I am interested in exploring why the “Turk” came to the forefront of English political and religious debates at particular moments and, in turn, how such cultural engagement shaped the terms and progression of those debates. Thus, I engage with historiographical debates related to the intention and nature of Elizabethan foreign policy, Charles I’s relationship with public opinion, the development of the public

⁵⁰ Nabil Matar, “Islam in Interregnum and Restoration England.” In *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Spring 1991), 58.

sphere, the mid-seventeenth century pursuit of religious unity, and partisan politics surrounding the Exclusion Crisis.

Print and a growing body of knowledge about the Ottoman Turks and “Mahometanism” critically helped to facilitate the expression of increasingly diverse agendas, as contemporaries had access to a broader, more complex array of ideas and a universe of knowledge from which to formulate and advance their own opinions. During the seventeenth century, political and religious fragmentation drove contemporaries to deploy the “Turks” to support various ideological positions, revealing the capacity of the “Turks” as a conceptual field to accommodate a range of agendas and assumptions. In the late 1580s, Queen Elizabeth already confronted the challenges of setting the terms upon which a transnational ideological debate involving the Turks would be waged. A century later, such containment was no longer possible: the challenge thus became how to best massage and package discourses of the “Turk” to advance one’s political and religious advantage amidst a more transitory, shifting news media.

The conceptual framework of my study is indebted to recent models for exploring the contexts of change as well as the relationship between rhetoric and cultural values. In his recent article “Towards a Social and Cultural History,” Mark Knights proposed new directions of inquiry for cultural historians, asserting the importance of studying the social and literary contexts for political discourse. As an example of how to engage with the “language of politics” and trace how concepts were constituted and changed over time, Knights and his early modern research group investigated “commonwealth” as a

keyword in a conceptual field.⁵¹ They argued that “commonwealth” was not only a keyword endowed with a “certain rhetorical power” and contested over time but also a concept that was deployed to invoke various ideas and “associated and value-laden terms.”⁵² Situating “commonwealth” within a conceptual field, Knights and his group explored how that field both incorporated a set of social and cultural values as well as gave those values coherence.⁵³ This framework for analyzing a complex concept informs and provides a compelling model for my own study.

Over the century that I consider, the “Turk” constituted a rich conceptual field involving notions of liberty, tyranny, toleration, and superstition. Due to its various resonances, “Turk” demonstrated a remarkable capacity to serve a range of political and religious agendas. Throughout the period under consideration, various actors created, adapted, and negotiated the various meanings of “Turk” according to these agendas and their own real or imagined proximity to Muslim “Turks.” For Knights, the conversation around “commonwealth” often involved a debate about different constructions of authority – constructions that came to the fore and were re-oriented during moments of crisis in the state.⁵⁴ Similarly, engagement with the “Turk” surged at moments of cultural crisis in which contemporaries assessed the authority and legitimacy of those in positions of influence. As scholars of early modern Britain have shown, authority was seen as “something that has to be legitimized rather than nakedly exercised.”⁵⁵ In the following

⁵¹ Mark Knights, “Towards a Social and Cultural History of Keywords and Concepts by the Early Modern Research Group.” In *History of Political Thought*, Vol. XXXI, No. 3 (Autumn 2010), pp. 427-448.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 428, 446.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 429.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 431.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 430. See, for example, Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002) and Mike Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

study, I explore how engagement with the “Turk” became a means of shaping and articulating a value-system – a process that unfolded as an ongoing dialogue.

Contextualization is an integral part of my study. I argue that treating experiences and discourses broadly and divorcing them from their specific contexts not only distorts our understanding of the period but loses sight of the very “motors and wide contexts of change” that produced cultural shifts.⁵⁶ I am concerned with how and why contemporaries engaged with the “Turk” at particular moments and the significance of that engagement for the political, religious, and social landscape. As Meserve has indicated, European writers said “radically different things about the Islamic East” at different times and in different places and to ignore such complexity would be to construct a “monolithic Occident as undifferentiated and removed from reality as the Orient it is meant to have fashioned.”⁵⁷ Such contextualization work allows us to investigate the ways in which cultural engagement with the “Turk” served as the catalyst by which contemporaries interrogated, challenged, and altered their own value systems. These discourses interfaced with other debates and experiences, formatively shaping contemporaries’ relationships with not only ideologies but also each other.

My dissertation engages with different genres of cultural production, arguing for the importance of considering the multiple forms and spaces in which contemporaries digested, interpreted, and deployed discourses of the “Turks.” Scholars working on the figure of the “Turk” in England have tended to focus on particular literary genres, such as captivity narratives, plays, literature, and histories.⁵⁸ While such insight has proved crucial in undercutting misleading binaries by illustrating the ambivalence of

⁵⁶ Knights, “Towards a Social and Cultural History,” 429.

⁵⁷ Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 11.

⁵⁸ See, for example, work by Daniel Vitkus, Linda McJannet, and Matthew Birchwood.

representations and discourses of the “Turks,” it risks overlooking not only the ways in which various genres were related and played upon the knowledge and expectation of diverse audiences but also how different actors in different spaces framed the terms and nature of larger debates in which the “Turks” were invoked. The coffeehouse, Royal Exchange, church congregation, and theater all became forums and sites of this cultural production that my dissertation seeks to explore. By remaining attuned to the various publics of reading and listening communities involved in this production at distinct moments, we can better assess how and why particular inflections of discourses regarding the “Turks” arose.

Through consideration of ballads, libels, newsbooks, pamphlets, sermons, histories, and plays as well as of political, diplomatic, and mercantile tracts and correspondence, I explore the interplay between oral, material, and visual culture, tracing the circulation of discourses across space and class.⁵⁹ As forms of expression, each of these generic forms became a “principle vehicle for the representation of debate,” and the conscious choice of actors to utilize these mediums in debates involving the “Turks” reflected the particular fashioning of cultural discourses for various audiences.⁶⁰ My study thus investigates how the “Turks” were embedded within a “multi-layered, multi-level, multi-participant, and multi-form conversation” that articulated and negotiated England’s development and positioning on a larger European political and religious stage.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Recent work on sermons and the news press heightens our understanding of information production, dissemination, and reception. For English sermons see Ian Green, “Orality, script and print: the case of the English sermon c. 1530-1700.” In *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, Vol. I, ed. by Heinz Schilling and István György Tóth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For news press see Jayne E. E. Boys, *London’s News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011).

⁶⁰ Knights, “Towards a Social and Cultural History,” 439.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 445.

Print materials and the “precise, local, specific context that alone gave them meaning” serves as an underlying concern throughout my study.⁶² Contemporaries read such materials within particular socio-political contexts that colored both their interpretations and the ways in which they invoked and engaged with the “Turks.” As Roger Chartier and Natalie Zemon-Davis have argued, contemporaries did not consume texts passively but rather were “active users and interpreters of printed books they heard and read.”⁶³ This dynamic engagement ensured the circulation of ideas as well as a transformation in how individuals “interpreted the world and negotiated their place within it.”⁶⁴ As Bronwen Wilson has shown for Venice, print and printed visual imagery provided sixteenth-century individuals with the ideas and representations that “cemented and regulated identities” and “helped to secure ideological values that were central to Venetian cultural life.”⁶⁵ Similarly, in England different genres of printed material about the “Turks” gave contemporaries not only material with which to formulate and frame their ideological values but also the mode of packaging those values to a larger domestic and foreign audience and thereby outlining particular conceptions of English identity.

In considering these multiple forms of public expression, I seek to highlight the various “publics” which were informed and shaped by experience with and discourses of the “Turks.” My work is influenced by the frameworks provided by Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron in *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (2001) and

⁶² Roger Chartier has articulated the importance of reading printed materials within such specific contexts. See Roger Chartier, “General Introduction: Print Culture.” In *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Roger Chartier and trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 3.

⁶³ Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 225.

⁶⁴ Bronwen Wilson, *The World in Venice: Print, the City, and Early Modern Identity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 265.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin in *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe* (2010). In their edited volume, Dooley and Baron sought to trace the production and reception of information as it affected politics, social structures, and economies.⁶⁶ Wilson and Yachnin similarly analyzed the ways in which information exchange shaped early modern society. Yet they extended the purview to an exploration of how connections between people, things, and forms of knowledge created “publics,” which exhibited “jostling interactivity” and gave rise to “differing, competing forms of public expression and action.”⁶⁷ In doing so, they took a post-Habermasian approach, thinking in terms of a “plurality of publics” rather than the emergence of a bourgeois public sphere centered on rational communication.⁶⁸ Often a public was formed – and publics came to interact – through heated religious debate; yet because Habermas viewed religious debate as essentially irrational, he tended to dismiss it from his analysis of the public sphere. Jesse Lander has argued for the prominent place of polemic and print in generating debate and thereby facilitating the expansion, contraction, and interchange of particular publics.⁶⁹

The framework of alternatively overlapping and diverging publics driven by “intention, conviction, and argument” is thus useful for my study’s consideration of the different groups of people across time and space who constructed and deployed discourses of the Muslim “Turk.”⁷⁰ Real or imagined proximity to Muslims affected the tone and slant of these cultural discourses within each public. Though these publics

⁶⁶ Brendan Dooley and Sabrina A. Baron, eds., *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001).

⁶⁷ Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin, eds., *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 6.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 5, 7, 10. See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, English trans. (1989).

⁶⁹ See Jesse M. Lander, *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and Literary Culture in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Introduction, in particular 17-18.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* Lander emphasizes the three components of intention, conviction, and argument in tracing the relationship between polemic and print and the rise of certain publics.

shared language, the meanings that contemporaries attributed to that language often conflicted. Thus, emerging policies, institutions, and publics were shaped by the negotiation of the customary rhetorics and universe of knowledge upon which political and religious debates were subsequently staked. As Wilson and Yachnin have argued, the self-awareness of the “makers and partakers” regarding their participation in these exchanges became its own form of knowledge significant to public making.⁷¹ By engaging with “Turks,” contemporaries were aware of their participation in a larger discussion with political, religious, and ideological ramifications, using their own experience and interpretations to continue to define the contours of the discussion. Print greatly affected the nature of such processes in that it not only further enabled the generation and dissemination of information but also “destabilized shared meanings.”⁷²

Each of my chapters addresses a particular moment at which public discourses and policy were shaped by actions, ideologies, and rhetoric surrounding the “Turk.” Examining the historical moment of the late 1580s and early 1590s, the first chapter examines the attempts of Queen Elizabeth I both to forge a martial league with Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-1595) against Philip II of Spain (r. 1556-1598) as well as to justify that potential alliance to a larger domestic and European audience. I argue that Elizabeth’s justification for her Ottoman league invoked particular ideological notions of the “Turk” to offer an explanatory framework for her evolving foreign policy. Within this framework, she attempted to challenge Spanish influence and garner legitimacy on a European stage, constructing a vision of Anglo-Protestant responsibility that justified

⁷¹ Wilson and Yachnin, *Making Publics*, 2.

⁷² Knights, “Towards a Social and Cultural History,” 438.

intervention in European entanglements. This vision was made more critical by the fact that Catholic writers attacked and undermined her policies across Europe and that, in intervening in European contests, she wanted to avoid appearing guilty of the same universalist ambitions for which she denounced Philip. Considering Elizabeth's diplomatic relationship with the Ottoman ruling elite and her discursive engagement with the "Turk," this chapter seeks to make interventions in historiographies related to the politics of information and the development of the "public sphere," Elizabethan foreign policy, and the formation and deployment of cultural ideologies.

The second chapter focuses on the mid to late 1620s when "Turkish" pirate raids off the coasts of Cornwall and Devon ravaged communities and shipping. Examining both the experiences of these communities with "Turkish" pirates as well as the responses of local and national political actors, I trace the ways in which these attacks generated a sense of political and economic crisis in the crucial early years of Charles I's reign and eroded trust in the very system of governance. Order, dependent upon peace and commanding leadership, appeared to have collapsed. This chapter explores the interplay between experience, rhetoric, policy, and memory, as local experiences with pirates became politicized on a national stage and implicated in debates over corrupt and arbitrary government as well as the protection of liberties. The "Turk" thus represented not only an economic and – in the case of captivity – physical assault but also the breakdown of communication and the sacred relationship between ruler and ruled, provoking a reevaluation of that relationship.

The third and fourth chapters treat a moment following the English Civil Wars, the regicide of Charles I, and the establishment of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate when

contemporaries turned to the “Turk” to navigate political and religious fragmentation, hold a mirror up to their own failings, and chart a way forward for the nation. Disillusioned by the Protectorate’s perceived use of force and arbitrary powers, individuals from MPs and soldiers to political theorists invoked the “Turk” as a means of challenging the legitimacy of certain forms of government as well as forwarding different interpretations regarding what constituted the “direct road to liberty.” The third chapter thus argues that the “Turk” became both a warning and a lesson in the mid-1650s when contemporaries began to doubt the nation’s ability to fulfill the ideal of a uniquely Anglo-Protestant liberty. While other scholars have considered the ideological tensions surrounding the Cromwellian Protectorate, this chapter seeks to explore how those tensions were shaped, heightened, and expressed through recourse to shared cultural discourses of the “Turks.” Examining efforts to convert Muslims in London in the late 1650s, the fourth chapter argues that these conversions became a significant means by which Anglicans, Cromwellians, and even Quakers affirmed divine favor for their respective visions of godly rule and thereby outlined a particular national destiny. In supposedly emerging from the “blindness” of religious error, the Turkish convert came to serve as a metaphor for each side’s hopes regarding the nation’s potential to escape its own complacency and come into greater communion with God. Though these groups staked their claim to “Truth” in multiple ways, the conversions of “Turks” proved a particularly compelling channel, given not only a millenarian impulse but also perceptions of “Mahometanism,” the might of the Ottoman Turks, and a larger contest for godliness unfolding across Europe that incorporated – and in some cases centered on – the “Turk.”

The fifth and sixth chapters assess how discourses of the “Turk” contributed to political and religious polarization during the Exclusion Crisis and subsequent Tory reaction, providing not only the Whigs and their nonconformist allies but also Tories with a compelling framework in which to package their political ideologies for a larger audience. Both chapters showcase the propagandists who served as key actors against a backdrop of political debate and explore the ways in which these discourses spilled over from the official chambers to publishing houses to coffeehouses to the streets and were thereby circulated, digested, reinforced, and challenged in a dynamic process. As the fifth chapter argues, in aligning their cause with the Turks and championing the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance against the Habsburgs, Whig and nonconformist polemicists defined the issues around which the propaganda wars of the early 1680s would be waged. The sixth chapter then investigates how Tories recognized the ideological implications of their opponents’ sympathy towards the “Turk” and thereby deployed the “Turk” to turn the tables and mark out what was at stake due to their opponents’ supposed delusions. The Tories’ deployment of the “Turk” was made more compelling by the concurrent debunking of Titus Oates’s Popish Plot; Tories were able to situate Whigs’ efforts to fuel hysteria within antichristian deceptions and notions of Turkish imposture. In these propaganda wars, Tories emphasized the distinction between loyal, obedient subjects and dissenting political and religious “others” and argued that their opponents, in becoming “Turks” themselves, had abdicated any authority to speak for the national interest.

Each of these chapters underscores the ways in which contemporaries – from officials to ministers to the common sort – attempted to demarcate not only the nature of this national interest but also who had the right to represent it through deploying the

“Turk” in public debate. At moments of perceived crisis, the “Turk” became a type of mirror with the power to reflect either positively or negatively on one’s own policies and practices and thereby reveal one’s “truth.” Thus, in navigating through periods of political, religious, and economic turmoil, contemporaries turned to the “Turks” to reassess and chart a way forward for the nation.

CHAPTER ONE

“Calling Down the Turke”: Elizabeth I and the Ottoman Alliance Against Spain

Shortly after the Ottomans granted the English trading privileges in 1580, Queen Elizabeth I and her inner circle began considering a strategy to turn these economic relations into a military alliance. Increased tensions and later outright war with Spain encouraged Elizabeth to seek a powerful ally, particularly as the religious wars that embroiled France altered power dynamics in Western Europe. She hoped that Sultan Murad III (r. 1574-1595) might be convinced to turn his galleys against Spain in the Mediterranean and thereby distract King Philip II (r. 1556-1598) from war in the Low Countries and an invasion of England. These hopes rested on a burgeoning trade with the Ottoman Empire – an economic relationship forged in part due to religious polarization in Europe. After Pope Pius V issued a Bull of excommunication against Elizabeth in February 1570, English merchants took advantage of this national isolation to tap further into the Ottoman market. The Ottomans’ military engagements demanded that they import more tin for military arms and cloth for uniforms; the English supplied this need, carrying scrap-metal to the Ottoman ports.¹ By the early 1580s, a healthy Anglo-Ottoman trade flourished with English ships carrying tin, lead and kerseys into Constantinople, Alexandria, and Tripoli in exchange for drugs, spices, and other goods. According to Spanish Ambassador Bernardino de Mendoza, the Turk bought these English goods for their weight in gold, “the tin being vitally necessary for the casting of guns and the lead

¹ S.A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey: A documentary study of the first Anglo-Ottoman relations* (London: Oxford University Press, 1977), 23.

for purposes of war.”² He added that such trade was of “double importance to the Turk... in consequence of the excommunication pronounced *‘ipse facto’* by the Pope upon any person who provides or sells to infidels such materials as these.”³

Yet working to shift Anglo-Ottoman relations from simply an economic partnership towards a military league threatened to undermine Elizabeth’s image as self-proclaimed “defender of the faith.” Though the Elizabethan government and merchants had demonstrated the ability to suppress or overlook religious difference in their Turkey trade, such economic relations proved somewhat problematic to a larger public. Contemporary clergymen expressed misgivings that the desire for Eastern goods distracted contemporaries from their Christian mission. As Meredith Hanmer declared in his sermon *The Baptizing of a Turke*, rather than greedily seeking the “earthly commodities of *Affrike*, *Asia*, and the hid treasures of the far *Indies*,” Englishmen should seek to convert infidels to their God.⁴ A political alliance was even more suspect, as it also implied religious collusion in this era of Reformation politics. When it came to considerations of politically allying with the Ottomans, the Elizabethan government feared provoking the condemnation of the “Protestant Nation,” for whom the “infidel Turk” represented a dangerous tyrant in a popish mold.

Acutely aware that an alliance with the Turks might broadcast an unfavorable impression of her own ambitions, Elizabeth and her councilors both suppressed rumors of their overtures to the Ottomans and crafted a justification for the league if a public statement became necessary. Prepared in the fall of 1590, this justification – described as a “project for peace” – claimed to reflect a heightened sense of Christian responsibility

² *CSP Spain (Simancas) 1580-1586*, Vol. 3, 352-370, Bernardino De Mendoza to Philip II, 15 May 1582.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Meredith Hanmer, *The Baptizing of a Turke* (London, 1586), sig. A.4^r.

and depicted Elizabeth as holding a position of superiority in relation to the Turks when in fact the Queen could claim no such authority. Elizabeth could “call downe the Turke” into this conflict rather than asking for his protection, thereby setting the “limbs of the devil” against one another in order to protect Christendom.⁵ It was important to maintain the image of the Protestant Queen battling the two destructive forces of the idolaters – or papists – and the infidels on her own.

In this chapter I argue that Queen Elizabeth I and her councilors deployed particular conceptions of the “Turk” to legitimize her foreign policy and challenge Spanish influence. The fact that Catholic writers attacked and undermined her policy across Europe made her engagement with and deployment of those cultural perceptions so critical. In examining this process, this chapter attempts to make critical interventions in historiographies concerned with, first, the formation and deployment of cultural ideologies; second, the politics of information and the development of a “public sphere”; and, finally, Elizabethan foreign policy. At the historical moment under scrutiny, Elizabeth and her councilors drew upon long-standing discourses of the “Turk,” yet they attempted to dislodge stereotypes popularly associated with the “Turk” and instead deploy them to censure a perceived danger – in this case Philip II. In doing so, they enabled and validated their own political agenda. In his work on Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* plays (1587, 1590), Jonathan Burton has traced the plays’ alternating suppression or amplification of religious difference and the ways in which Marlowe undermined the “self-other” paradigm.⁶ By the second play, Burton argues, *Tamburlaine* and his sons appeared to “out-Turk” the Ottomans through exercising perceived Turkish

⁵ Bodl., Tanner MSS 78, f. 66, Walsingham’s letter to Harborne, dispatched on 8 Oct. 1585.

⁶ Jonathan Burton, “Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine*.” In *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30:1, Winter 2000.

cruelty. This chapter will examine the interplay of such themes across drama, diplomatic correspondence, and political and religious tracts, tracing the ideological circuit that informed and shaped popular understanding. At a time when political news greatly informed the works of Marlowe and Shakespeare, the Elizabethan government could also draw upon dramatic themes in framing its policies, deploying the idea that Philip II might “out-Turk the Turk” to justify an alliance with the Ottomans.

As Elizabeth intervened in European hostilities, she became more invested in a type of transnational politics-out-of-doors. The dissemination of rumors across Europe regarding her overtures to the “Turk” demanded that she engage with these communication networks. While the Habermasian public sphere based upon popular political involvement and free and open debate did not yet exist, the Elizabethan regime increasingly relied upon the inflation and deflation of a sphere of public discussion both to contradict its enemies and silence unwanted rumors and debate. Tracing the development of this new type of political practice, Peter Lake and Steve Pincus have examined the exchanges between the regime and its allies, clients and connections that drew upon the same polemical and communicative strategies.⁷ As they argue, the regime itself often made the first and most sophisticated attempts to appeal to and mobilize various publics, though such attempts represented emergency measures designed to control popular opinion.⁸ This chapter demonstrates that Elizabeth’s presentation of her relationship with the “Turk” utilized the same communication strategies that Lake and Pincus have considered for domestic propaganda. The Queen recognized the importance

⁷ Peter Lake and Steve Pincus, “Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England.” In *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (April 2006), 275. See also Peter Lake, *The Anti-Christ’s Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), esp. 261-2.

⁸ Lake and Pincus, “Rethinking the Public Sphere,” 274.

of legitimizing her foreign policy and – through that legitimation – charting future policies and carving out her place on the international stage.

A number of prominent scholars have argued that Elizabeth preferred a defensive strategy in her foreign policy, perpetuating the idea that Elizabeth had war thrust upon her and acted as a reluctant participant in international affairs.⁹ For instance, Conyers Read claimed that Elizabeth “always favoured a defensive rather than an aggressive course” while R. B. Wernham indicated that Elizabeth, having previously been able to rely on a “continental balance” involving France and Spain up until the mid-1580s, approached intervention in European conflicts only as a last resort.¹⁰ Wernham attributed this defensive strategy to England’s insularity and explained that a concern with continental ports was not enough to draw Elizabeth into offensive continental commitments.¹¹ Yet these arguments misrepresent and fail to account for the diplomatic maneuvers in which Elizabeth and her councilors engaged. While it is true that Elizabeth was reluctant to commit great resources to European conflicts, one might argue that any shrewd ruler would seek to accomplish diplomatic ends with as little cost and manpower necessary. As her negotiations with the Ottomans indicate, she was certainly not a passive participant in international affairs: she not only understood the long-standing rivalries involving the Austrian and Spanish Habsburgs, the French, and the Ottomans but also played up those rivalries in actively seeking Ottoman aid. She did not wait until her hand was forced to pursue strategic alliances with a more powerful state and begin

⁹ See, for instance, Conyers Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), 309; R. B. Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, 1558-1603* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Relations* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 2000).

¹⁰ Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*, 309; Wernham, *The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy*, 71.

¹¹ R. B. Wernham, *Before the Armada: The Emergence of the English Nation 1485-1588* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 372, 374.

planning offensive action against Philip. Expanding our view beyond France and Spain allows us to recognize exactly how far-reaching and encompassing Elizabeth's foreign policy became. Finally, in matters of public presentation, it worked to Elizabeth's advantage to project the image that her hand was forced by international developments. In her justification for the Ottoman league as well as other propaganda, Elizabeth claimed that she took an interventionist approach only as a last resort, indicating that – though she embraced peace – occasionally conflict was needed to protect that peace. Though Elizabeth had worked to establish a league with the Ottomans for years, the prepared justification for the league stressed that the initiative lay with the Ottomans. The denial that she took the initiative proved a strategic move designed to present her as the guardian of justice and peace and thereby separate herself from the charges of ambition for universal monarchy leveled at other rulers.

Examining both Elizabeth's negotiations with the Ottomans as well as her representation of such negotiations also has implications for debates regarding whether Elizabeth was guided by religion or national interest in her foreign policy. Scholars including Read, Wernham, and E. I. Kouri have argued that issues of national interest guided Elizabeth's policy rather than confessional considerations. Though Read indicated that Elizabeth recognized that Protestants at home and abroad were her only "certain allies," he argued that "the one thing which mattered to her was the peace and security of England, and she was far from identifying those objectives with the Protestant cause."¹² Similarly, Kouri claimed that even when Elizabeth's religious rhetoric appeared most

¹² Read, *Lord Burghley and Queen Elizabeth*, 309.

sincere, the “hard politics of national survival” served as the underlying imperative.¹³ Taking a position in the middle of the spectrum in this debate, Susan Doran argued that Elizabeth prioritized not only security and English trade but also the defense of English Protestantism.¹⁴ David Trim has stressed the latter point in arguing for the existence of a contemporary “Calvinist International” that made providing aid to fellow believers a critical imperative under Elizabeth.¹⁵ Yet I would argue that debating Elizabeth’s level of religious commitment as displayed through her foreign policy is less productive than considering the ways in which she framed her diplomatic negotiations, which may provide great insight into what Elizabeth perceived as the greatest domestic and foreign pressures and how she navigated those challenges given tightly woven information networks across Europe. Elizabeth’s presentation of her negotiations with the Ottomans indicates that she understood the necessity not only of maintaining the image that she acted in the best interest of the Protestant cause but also of painting another as the religious and political aggressor. This presentation was all the more critical due to the Elizabethan government’s anxiety over public opinion and increased involvement in European affairs. The Martin Marprelate controversy of 1588-89, in which an anonymous author espoused English presbyterianism and attacked episcopacy in a series of pamphlets, demonstrated exactly how easily authority could be undermined. The government thereby recognized the need to bolster that authority further. On an international front, Elizabeth needed to project her commitment to the Protestant cause,

¹³ E. I. Kouri, “For True Faith or National Interest? Queen Elizabeth I and the Protestant Powers.” In *Politics and Society in Reformation Europe*, ed. by E. I. Kouri and Tom Scott (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), 421.

¹⁴ Doran, *Elizabeth I and Foreign Relations*, 65-66.

¹⁵ David Trim, “Calvinist Internationalism and the English Officer Corps, 1562-1642.” In *History Compass* 4/6 (2006), 1024-1048.

particularly at a moment when the Lutheran princes in German and Scandinavia actually accused Elizabeth of advancing her own political aims abroad under the pretense of religious motivations.¹⁶ Intervention in European affairs necessitated engagement with the religious frameworks that characterized patterns of conflict and allegiance in this confessional era. The concept of the “Protestant cause” proved fluid enough to accommodate and reinforce the different dimensions to Elizabeth’s foreign policy. In her letters to the Ottomans, Elizabeth emphasized her worship of one, true God and title of “Defensatrix Fidei,” positioning herself in opposition to the idolaters and appealing to the religious tenets that she shared with her Muslim correspondents.¹⁷ Yet Elizabeth also positioned herself as defender of the Protestant cause when justifying a league with the “infidel” against Spain.

The concept of “sacred empire” that Frances Yates explores in *Astraea* offers a useful framework for considering Elizabeth’s presentation of her negotiations and potential league with the Ottomans. Yates discusses a well-known set of engravings that celebrated the victories of Charles V. The engraving that opens the series depicted Charles seated in triumph with his subordinates and enemies at his feet: not only Pope Clement VII and Francis I were depicted but also Sultan Süleyman.¹⁸ The implication was that his “sword of imperial justice” threatened both the Pope and the Turk and circumscribed the power of spiritual or national powers.¹⁹ As Yates has indicated, variations on that iconography appeared from time to time in representations of

¹⁶ Kouri, “For True Faith or National Interest?,” 423.

¹⁷ Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 74-75.

¹⁸ *Charles V and his Enemies*. Engraving by Martin van Heemskerck, from *Divi Caroli V Victoriae*, 1556. Printed in *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* by Frances A. Yates (London & Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), Appendices.

¹⁹ Yates, 57.

Elizabeth, imbuing her with a sacred imperial destiny and indicating that the pinnacle of justice and peace might be achieved under her reign.²⁰ Attuned to issues of public presentation and influenced by the iconography of such rulers, Elizabeth worked to project these same themes in her propaganda, indicating that she intervened in conflicts only to serve justice and reestablish peace. She was careful to present the image of both controlling and circumscribing the power of the Pope and Turk.

The first part of the chapter will trace the leagues between Europeans and the Ottomans while also offering a narrative of the Elizabethan government's negotiations with the Ottomans. In doing so, the chapter will establish a framework for understanding how Elizabeth navigated the tensions between ideology and practice. The second part of the chapter will delve into Elizabeth's justification for an Anglo-Ottoman league, exploring the interplay between ideology, policy, rhetoric, and public opinion. This discussion will examine the politics of information and the ways in which Elizabeth sought to deploy the same communicative strategies that her adversaries embraced to extend her influence and situate herself as a champion of the Protestant cause.

PRECEDENTS OF EUROPEAN-OTTOMAN LEAGUES

Ever since Sultan Mehmed II strengthened Ottoman naval forces in the late fifteenth century, this sea power increasingly factored into policy decisions by European states, becoming crucial to the larger reconfiguration of power.²¹ In the early sixteenth century, the Ottomans had replaced Venice as the premier naval power in the eastern Mediterranean and maintained their power through “carefully formulated alliances,

²⁰ Ibid., 58.

²¹ Palmira Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 4-5.

formidable firepower, and precisely applied naval action.”²² An Ottoman alliance proved strategically beneficial to European rulers hoping to curb the strength of their Christian rivals, such as the Austrian and Spanish Habsburgs, whom the Ottomans also confronted in Europe and the Mediterranean. Even after the great Ottoman defeat at the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, the Ottoman Empire retained its prestige in the eyes of European powers.²³ With the launch of his Persian campaigns in 1578, Sultan Murad III shifted to a more defensive strategy in the Mediterranean, though this shift did not alter European fears of Ottoman maritime aggression farther west.²⁴ The possibility of Ottoman naval action in the Mediterranean was very real to European rulers. Rather than being “acted upon” by European states, the Ottomans played a central role in European political and cultural dynamics.²⁵

In seeking Ottoman aid against another Christian power, Elizabeth followed the precedents set by French king Francis I, Naples, Venice, Milan, and even the pope earlier in the sixteenth century.²⁶ Fearing Charles V’s ambitions of universal sovereignty, Francis I had sought a military alliance in the 1520s and 1530s with Ottoman sultan Süleyman I (1520-66) in order to maintain preeminence in Europe.²⁷ Their combined naval expeditions battled Charles’s forces in the Mediterranean. Objecting to this Franco-Ottoman league, Charles V and his supporters strongly condemned any association with

²² Ibid., 8.

²³ The same year as that battle, the Ottomans took the Venetian stronghold of Cyprus with hundreds of warships. See Géza Dávid, “Ottoman armies and warfare, 1453-1603.” In *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 306.

²⁴ Kate Fleet, “Ottoman expansion in the Mediterranean.” In *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 170.

²⁵ See introduction to Daniel Goffman’s *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²⁶ Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 27-28.

²⁷ Ibid., 34-40.

the infidel and questioned the French king's devotion to Christianity. Put on the defensive, Francis launched his own propaganda campaign, citing Charles's aggression as the reason for the Franco-Ottoman league and declaring that his aim was merely to protect Christian interests in Jerusalem.²⁸ An Ottoman alliance gained legitimacy if the stated purpose involved preserving the faith. Though a religious "other," the Ottomans at times importantly helped to restore the balance of power within Europe.²⁹ The Ottomans benefitted from these alliances as well: for his own part, Süleyman had found divisions among the Christian powers strategically advantageous in pursuing what Gabor Agoston has termed an "Ottoman grand strategy" involving a universalist vision of empire.³⁰

As the sixteenth century progressed, the Ottomans' westward expansion brought them into conflict with the Habsburgs. This rivalry played out in both Europe and the Mediterranean, as the Habsburgs captured Tunis in 1535 while the Ottomans took Tripoli in 1551. European powers also opposed to the Habsburgs strove to use the Ottoman-Habsburg rivalry to their advantage in pursuing their own political ambitions. When preparing for a potential war with the Habsburgs in 1555, Pope Paul IV proposed an attack on the Habsburgs by a joint French-Ottoman force.³¹ While religious difference concerned Christian rulers, they did not allow it to isolate them in the face of practical

²⁸ Géraud Poumarède, "Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté." In *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (1997), 3:217-46; Isom-Verhaaren, 36.

²⁹ Francis Bacon spoke to the concept of the balance of power in his essay "Of Empire": "During that triumvirate of kings, King Henry the Eighth of England, Francis the First King of France, and Charles the Fifth Emperor, there was such a watch kept, that none of the three could win a palm of ground, but the other two would straightways balance it, either by confederation, or, if need were, by a war; and would not in any wise take up pace at interest." Quote in *Three Ways to Be Alien: Travails & Encounters in the Early Modern World* by Sanjay Subrahmanyam (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2011), 129.

³⁰ Employing its own envoys and agents in Europe, the Ottomans extensively gathered information about their neighbors and adversaries, allowing policy makers to develop strategy that would help to counter Habsburg aspirations. Gábor Ágoston, "Information, ideology, and limits of imperial power." In *The Early Modern Ottomans: Remapping the Empire*, ed. by Virginia H. Aksan and Daniel Goffman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 75-103.

³¹ Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel*, 43.

considerations regarding military strength and naval power. Despite the Ottomans' defeat to the Holy League in the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, European perceptions of Ottoman strength persisted. Indeed, Lepanto had no real strategic consequences for the Ottomans: a year after Lepanto, the Ottomans outfitted a new navy, eventually forcing the Venetians to cede Cyprus in 1573 after a two-part conquest and taking Tunis from the Spaniards in 1574.³² Though the Ottoman campaign launched against the Safavids in 1578 restricted the Ottoman ruling group's ability to commit forces elsewhere, European states continued to treat the Ottomans as a potential intercessor in their own conflicts.

Elizabeth's intentions to seek Ottoman aid against Philip II reflected her awareness of both the efficacy of prior European-Ottoman leagues as well as the willingness of Ottoman sultans to intervene in European affairs when threatened by the ambitions of the Habsburg and Spanish rulers. Indeed, the notion of enveloping Philip on both sides was something that Ottoman sultan Selim II (1566-74) had advocated in the mid- to late 1560s.³³ At that time Selim encouraged the Moriscos to rebel in Spain in order to aggravate Philip's problems caused by Protestant revolutionary activity in the Netherlands. By encouraging such coordination, Selim hoped internal divisions would distract and weaken Philip.³⁴ He had even sent a representative to the Netherlands to represent his interest in allying with the "Lutherans" for a general assault on the idolaters.³⁵ Elizabeth may have also factored into these plans: as early as 1565-66,

³² Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 55. See also Fleet, "Ottoman expansion in the Mediterranean," 168-9. Andrew Hess has also discussed Sultan Selim II's "sober resolve to continue in the face of adversity" and the speed with which the Ottoman accomplished a naval rebuilding program following Lepanto. See Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 90-2.

³³ See Andrew C. Hess, "The Moriscos: An Ottoman Fifth Column in Sixteenth-Century Spain." In *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (Oct., 1968).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

Selim's father, Sultan Süleyman, wrote to the Queen; an English translation of the letter recorded Selim's salutations to the "fountayne of noblnes and vertue whome all nations do seek unto and submit themselves."³⁶ Such rhetoric of affinity supported an Ottoman strategy of maintaining amicable relations with those who shared the same rivals. However, the Ottomans suspended plans for an assault against Philip II, instead turning their attention to Cyprus and Persia.

THE NEGOTIATIONS

Elizabeth's negotiations with Murad in the years surrounding the Spanish Armada of 1588 rested upon almost a decade of diplomatic and economic exchange. William Harborne had arrived in Ottoman Porte as the ambassador in the spring of 1583, though he had first come to Constantinople with English merchants in late 1578 to establish trade relations.³⁷ Disruptions to trade caused by the turmoil in the Netherlands had encouraged English merchants to seek a direct trade with Turkey rather than having to go through the middlemen of other European ports. English integration into these economic networks represented a threat to European nations who zealously guarded their trade. Thus, from the start, England's relationship with the Ottoman Empire involved diplomatic intrigue. Secretary Francis Walsingham's "A Consideration of the Trade into Turkey" written at some point between 1578 and 1580 considered the opposition that England would face from the Venetians, French, and Spanish in trading directly with Turkey. In some ways, Walsingham's discourse suggested a reorientation of political and commercial power

³⁶ BL, Sloane MS 2177, f. 15. See also BL, Add MS 27909 A-H, f. 18; BL, Cotton MS Nero B XI, f. 76. This letter appears to be the first communication of an Ottoman sultan with England. Skilliter dates the first communication to 1579, but this letter suggests that diplomatic communication preceded negotiations having to do with Anglo-Ottoman trade. See Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 50.

³⁷ Skilliter, 38.

once England claimed a piece of the Mediterranean trade for its own. As Walsingham mentioned, the Venetians and the French had been the principal traders into the Turk's dominions up into the late 1570s and benefitted from the monopoly. England's access to Turkish commodities would lead to the "great enriching of this realme," though Walsingham also noted that the "kinge of Spayne (who cane never be longe without warres with the Turke) will seeke also to impeach anie thinge that may be to his benefitte, being also not the best effected towards us."³⁸ The political and economic power struggles of European nations played out in their participation in the Mediterranean trade.

As tensions with Spain escalated in the early 1580s, Elizabeth began to contemplate seriously the strategic benefits of forging a martial alliance with the Ottomans. It appears that Walsingham helped to craft this strategy, given his desire to pursue aggressive measures against Spain. As early as January 1583, Ambassador Bernardino de Mendoza wrote to Philip II from London, warning him that Elizabeth was writing privately to the Turk. According to Mendoza, the Queen had indicated that the best way to prevent the northern Moroccan town Larache from falling into Philip's hands was for the Turk to send his fleets against Spain. Elizabeth had further indicated that she and the King of France would "endeavour to stand between him [the Turk] and the Persian" in order to "free" the Sultan to turn his attention to Spain; however, Elizabeth did not have the resources to support such rhetoric.³⁹ As France plunged deeper into its wars of religion, Elizabeth increasingly viewed England as a lone pillar against Spanish aggression.

³⁸ BL, Cotton MS Nero B XI, f. 280, "A Consideration of the Trade into Turkey" by Francis Walsingham.

³⁹ *CSP Spain (Simancas) 1580-1586*, Vol. 3, 432-443, Bernardino De Mendoza to Philip II, 6 Jan. 1583.

In the eyes of Elizabeth and her councilors, a subversive Spanish influence had penetrated not only England but also foreign states. Philip's territorial ambitions as well as domestic and foreign Catholic opposition threatened the Queen's person, realm, and reputation. After Walsingham uncovered Mendoza's secret communication with Mary, Queen of Scots, Elizabeth expelled Mendoza from England in January 1584 – an event that further aggravated tensions with Spain. From the Ottoman court, too, there was ominous news of Spanish machinations. William Harborne, Elizabeth's ambassador, reported that Spanish agents held sway at the Ottoman court through bribes and other underhand tactics. In the autumn of 1583, the Spanish agent had given the Ottoman vezir or statesman a “faire diamond esteemed worth six hundred pounds” – such presents “hathe betwene theas knit great freindshippe, and promise of league.”⁴⁰ Harborne feared that Spanish credit at the Ottoman court rose at the expense of English honor. He depicted Spanish influence as poisonous, indicating that it risked further unifying Spain and the Ottoman Empire and thereby allowing Philip to concentrate on his European wars. Beyond the political risks, Spanish influence in Constantinople inflamed fears that popery might further spread and infiltrate the Ottoman Empire. As it was, advertisements from abroad reported that Catholics were sending psalters and testaments into Turkey.⁴¹

Hoping to arrest Philip's ambitions without straining her coffers, Elizabeth appealed to the Ottomans to intervene and undercut the Catholic idolater. Sultan Murad found the notion strategically appealing enough to offer some assurance to Harborne at the beginning of the latter's residency in Constantinople, yet the Ottomans did not

⁴⁰ TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 33b, Harborne to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1583.

⁴¹ *CSPD 1581-1590*, Vol. 168, 161, February 1584.

dispatch a fleet, and it seems that they never intended to do so.⁴² By the fall of 1585, the desire for Ottoman aid became more urgent. Philip had seized English shipping in Spanish ports in May, posing a threat to English mercantile interests. In August Elizabeth signed the Treaty of Nonsuch in which she agreed to assist the Dutch with money and forces in their struggle for independence against Spain rule. With this direct assistance, Elizabeth became involved in European entanglements that she had previously tried to avoid.⁴³ The beginning of war with Spain and the desire to forestall greater involvement on the Continent would have made a potential Hispano-Ottoman clash in the Mediterranean appear strategically vital. Thus, in October Walsingham wrote to Harborne in Constantinople, advising him to urge the Sultan to convert some of his forces from fighting the Persians to combating Spain. Walsingham noted that if the King of Spain might be kept “thoroughly occupied, either by some incursion from the coast of Africa in itself or by the galleys of the Grand Seigneur in his dominions of Italy or otherwise,” Philip’s power “should be so weakened and divided but to all Christendom hereafter.”⁴⁴ Such a plan would play two potentially harmful powers against one another and thereby grant England needed reprieve. In order to persuade Murad that the Queen represented a formidable ally, Walsingham instructed Harborne to make it clear that, if the Sultan embraced the opportunity to assail the King of Spain on the one side, Elizabeth

⁴² In 1583, Harborne wrote to Walsingham that the Sultan had instructed his officials “especially to favour our proceedings,” though Harborne may have interpreted diplomatic rhetoric as promises for aid. TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 32, Harborne to Walsingham, 12 Aug. 1583. Later in a petition to the Sultan, Harborne expressed his hope that Murad would “accomplishe your foresaid promise of present aide.” TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 128, Harborne’s Petition to the Sultan, July 1588.

⁴³ McDermott, 157-8.

⁴⁴ Bodl., Tanner MSS 78, f. 66, Walsingham’s letter to Harborne, dispatched on 8 Oct. 1585.

would attack him on the other. With a united front, Elizabeth and Murad would bring Philip to “sink under the burden of so heavy a burden.”⁴⁵

Meanwhile, the machinations of Spanish agents at Constantinople continued to amplify Harborne’s unease. In 1587, after receiving word of the Spanish agent John Stephano’s efforts to establish a truce for Philip, Harborne had quickly prepared his own supplication to the Ottoman ruling group, “shewing it not to be for the Grand Signors honor and commoditie to yeld the King of Spaines request.”⁴⁶ Aware of different maneuvers that allowed diplomatic flexibility, Harborne entreated the Sultan to command his pashas not to favor the Spaniards by letter, word or deed. As it was, Ottoman officials had informed Harborne that Spanish agents would not be informed of any promises made to the English, deeming it politically advantageous to treat separately with the English and Spanish agents and thereby keeping both in suspense regarding how Ottoman influence would be used.⁴⁷ In his supplication Harborne proclaimed that Murad, through isolating the Spanish agents, would in his “greate wisdom... not onely like a very Lyon by might overthrowe these craftye pretences of this Foxe his Master” but also succeed in “manifesting to all men [his] invincible corege [*sic*].”⁴⁸ In advising Murad on a Machiavellian approach to statecraft, Harborne demonstrated his diplomatic audacity. He informed Murad that a decision to favor Elizabeth would enable the “enlarging of your empire as shee on that side so yow on this wolde make [Philip] feele your dreadfull

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ BL, Harley MS 295, f. 176.

⁴⁷ Ibid., f. 176-176b.

⁴⁸ TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 122b, Remonstrance to the Grand Signor.

forces” – a strategy that would alarm Philip, as it would be “impossible to resist the same united.”⁴⁹

Even the defeat of the Spanish Armada did not alter Elizabeth’s determination to obtain Ottoman naval assistance. Fears of Spanish aggression against England persisted, ensuring that Ottoman aid continued to factor into her wartime strategy into the 1590s. Assurances of the importance that the Ottoman ministers attached to a potential league with England masked their more ambivalent attitudes. While particular officials “poysoned with Spanishe pelfe” – as Harborne’s replacement Edward Barton put it – argued against Ottoman naval aid by citing not only Spanish power but also the troubles in Persia and later tumults in North Africa and Poland, others purportedly remained more open-minded to England’s cause.⁵⁰ Ottoman policy decisions were often reached only after struggles between different factions within the Ottoman elite, who supported either the war or peace party.⁵¹ The Ottoman elite closely followed the Anglo-Spanish conflict, monitoring the European balance of power with an eye to Ottoman strategic interests. When the Venetian Ambassadors had an audience with the Grand Vezir Sinan Pasha in June 1590, the latter inquired how matters were unfolding between England and Spain. The Vezir mentioned that the Queen had asked the Ottomans for two hundred galleys to join with her own fleet and that she volunteered to pay all of the expenses. As the Vezir

⁴⁹ Ibid. Fears of Philip’s impending armada induced a new forcefulness in Harborne’s negotiations. See TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 128, Petition to the Sultan, July 1588. Frustrated that he had received no advertisements of Elizabeth’s proceedings, Edward Barton, Harborne’s replacement, began considering several propositions to ensure the dispatch of the Ottoman fleet – one of which involved sending as bribes several rubies or diamonds worth three or four thousand pounds. See TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 132, Barton to Walsingham, 15 Aug. 1588.

⁵⁰ TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 140, Barton to Walsingham, 31 Aug. 1588. “Pelf” in contemporary usage implied money or riches that had a corrupting influence. See “pelf, n.”. OED Online. March 2015. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/139842?rskey=Hd9NqX&result=1> (accessed March 29, 2015).

⁵¹ Suraiya Faroqhi, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 5.

confided to the ambassadors, the Ottomans had “nothing in those parts,” and the Queen would be better served if she sent her fleet to join with theirs in the Mediterranean.⁵² Next the ambassadors paid a visit to Ferhad Pasha, who also asked for news about English and Spanish affairs. When Ferhad asked them whom the Republic would favor if compelled to take a side, Ambassador Lippomano declared that circumstances had not yet forced the Republic to make that decision.⁵³ For their own part, the Venetians hoped that the Persian Wars would continue to distract the Ottomans and ensure the latter’s decreased presence in the Mediterranean.

During this same summer, letters from Murad gave Elizabeth renewed confidence in the strength of their supposed league and validation of her self-proclaimed title “defender of the faith.” Tumults in Poland instigated this diplomatic development. Recognizing that the Ottomans’ involvement with the Persian Wars served as a distraction, Cossacks had risen up in Poland and conducted raids on Ottoman vassals. As Barton related the matter, the King of Poland assured Murad that he would take responsibility for punishing the offenders. However, Murad rejected the offer, intending “to subvert, and by the helpe of god almightie, to send a newe supplie [of forces] thether to the utter ruyne of the said Countrie.”⁵⁴ As stated in the English translation of the Sultan’s letter, supposedly only Barton convinced Murad otherwise by stating that Elizabeth desired peace on the King of Poland’s behalf – a reason being that Poland provided England with necessary tools of war like powder and masts.⁵⁵ Appreciating that Poland was England’s ally in the contest against Spain, Murad concluded in his letter to

⁵² *CSP Venice 1581-1591*, Vol. 8, 493, original dispatch of Venetian Ambassadors Giovanni Moro and Hieronimo Lippomano to the Doge and Senate, 26 June 1590.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ BL, Stowe MS, 161, f. 35, copy of letter sent from the “Great Turck to Queenes Maiestie,” 1590.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

the Queen that the peace left Ottoman affairs “somewhat quieted” and thereby would free his forces to aid her.⁵⁶

Emboldened by Murad’s support apparently demonstrated by his peace with Poland, Elizabeth did not hesitate either to threaten her enemies or coax her potential allies into giving aid through invoking the “Turk.” Appreciative of the assurances she gained from this rhetoric of diplomacy, Elizabeth wrote to Murad, interpreting his peace with Poland as evidence of his desire to increase her reputation with these kings and reaffirm their amity.⁵⁷ She praised the “goodnes of almightie god,” who “hath directed the mynde of your Majesty being in Relligion different from us, and one of the greatest Potentats in the whole worlde to beare us... as muche favour or rather more than to any other Christian prynce.”⁵⁸ Building upon this theme, Elizabeth asked Murad to extend his goodwill further by urging the King of Morocco Mulay al-Mansur to fulfill his promise to grant a subsidy to Don Antonio, the “Pretender” to the Portuguese throne. She hoped that al-Mansur and the Sultan would provide the funds to support the anti-Spanish claimant and thereby heighten Philip’s sense of insecurity. In the meantime, she attempted to frighten al-Manur into providing assistance by writing that she would inform the Great Turk of his prevarication.⁵⁹ Murad’s “assurances” gave Elizabeth just enough bravado to play her hand and elevated her confidence regarding her own diplomatic influence. From

⁵⁶ Ibid. The Ottoman government addressed Elizabeth as follows: “To the moste glorious and renowned virgin the moste happie of all wemen, Prince of the worthy Followers of Christ, most excellent Queene of the famous kingdome of England, Eliza: the most wise Gouvernour of all the affaires of the people and Family of the Nazarites, most sweete Fountaine of Honor, and glorie, a most comfortable clowde of raigne. Dere Ladye and Heire of everlastinge happines and glorie of the famous kindgome of England unto whome all Nations doe humbly resort, wee wishe the beginninge and endinge of all your highnes’ affaires and buisines, to be most happie and offer unto you our most lovinge and faithfull vowes, and everlastinge praise.”

⁵⁷ BL, Cotton MS Nero B VIII, f. 49b.

⁵⁸ BL, Cotton MS Nero B XI, f. 194, Queen’s letter to the Grand Seignior, Aug. 1590.

⁵⁹ Nabil Matar, “Elizabeth through Moroccan Eyes.” In *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 152.

Elizabeth's perspective, their negotiating power seemed a bit more matched in 1590 than a decade earlier when the Sultan had granted trading privileges and demanded that Elizabeth be "steadfast in submission and obedience."⁶⁰

Murad's peace with the Polish king served Ottoman strategy in preventing the overextension of their resources in troubled economic times. For Elizabeth, the peace protected England's access to military tools and gave her greater claim to the title "defender of Christendom."⁶¹ It marked the moment at which she saw herself transitioning from the role of subordinate to mediator – a shift Murad enabled by giving her reason to think the peace with Poland had come about through English intervention. In a letter to Barton, Elizabeth praised him for wisely using her credit to the point that her "honor thereby [was] largely advanced in the sight of the world & the King of Poland & that parte of Christendome singularly be hold[en] unto us."⁶² From Elizabeth's standpoint, any danger that Philip posed to England and France also affected the Ottoman Empire and thus demanded that they continue to collaborate in resisting this force.

THE JUSTIFICATION FOR A LEAGUE

In the autumn of 1590, Elizabeth's councilors outlined a "project for peace" between England and other parts of Christendom, evaluating the necessity of a league with Turkey against Spain. This "project," in the form of a manuscript tract, reveals how

⁶⁰ This language was standard rhetoric in Ottoman treaties. See document *Translation of the Registry copy of Murad III's letter to Elizabeth I, June 1580* and analysis in Skilliter, 115-117; Suraiya Faroqhi notes that the Ottomans mostly treated foreign rulers with whom they enjoyed good relations as obedient vassals. See her discussion in *The Ottoman Empire and the World Around It*, 6-8.

⁶¹ In a letter dated October 1, 1590, to Edward Barton, Elizabeth wrote that the peace was welcome news, for if wars between the Polish King and the Grand Turk proceeded, the English would lose needed military tools, "which if the warre [with Spain] should proceed we might not recover." BL, Cotton Nero B VIII, f. 50b.

⁶² BL, Cotton Nero MS B VIII, f. 50b.

Elizabeth and her councilors wrestled with the justification for an Ottoman league amidst salient ideological notions of the Turk as anathema to Christendom. Though the British Library manuscript catalogue dates the tract to 1588, the tract makes reference to Murad's letter to Queen Elizabeth regarding his peace with Poland, which came in the summer of 1590.⁶³ These "overtures" by Murad and proof of outright Spanish aggression offered Elizabeth and her council the perfect opportunity to build their case for a league. They could depict the impetus as coming from the Turk and thereby not only claim a position of superiority but also assert their commitment to justice and peace; circumstances had supposedly forced them to consider such a league. The tract thus prepared to defend a potential league that had already been years in the making. Though this tract was never published because the Ottomans chose not to dispatch a fleet against Spain, it provides crucial insight into the ways in which the Elizabethan government navigated religious and political pressures in framing foreign policy.

Prevailing cultural ideologies of the "Turk" shaped the way in which Elizabeth couched her justification for an Ottoman alliance. While the formalization of English trading rights into Turkey increased awareness of Ottoman culture, tropes of the political dangers and religious delusions associated with the Turks endured. Indeed, these themes proved mutually reinforcing: the Turk's tyranny could be seen as a result of his religious depravity and vice versa.⁶⁴ Anti-popery invigorated this ideology, as the ambitions of

⁶³ The manuscript tract makes reference to the peace between Murad and the King of Poland in the following excerpt: "There arrivd certayne lettres wrighten to her highnes by the Turke signifyinge to her how at her request delivered by her Ambasadour resident at Constantinople, he had bene contented the invasion Polland, and to yeild reasonable condicions of peace to the kinge and realme of Polland... and namly this that if shee would soe require, he would give her Ayde and supporte against the Kinge of Spaine." BL, Add MS 48063, f. 228.

⁶⁴ For discussion regarding development of European discourses of Turkish tyranny see Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte*, trans. by Arthur Denner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

Catholic powers seemed to mirror the construct of the Turkish tyrant. The excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570, the arrival of Catholic priests from Douai in the 1570s and the first Jesuits in the early 1580s, and the political and religious rivalry with Spain aggravated anti-popery, which both drew upon and reinforced anti-Turkism. The martyrologist John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, first published in 1563, offered a compelling religious context for later discourses about Turkish power and cruelty while also giving credence to these associations between Catholics and Turks. Devoting one entire chapter to the brutality of Turks, Foxe equated Catholics with Turkish barbarism. Proclaiming that the Turkish threat was sent to "scourge and devoure us" due to the pursuit of "miserable ambition and wretched warres among our selves," Foxe declared that, from the time of its birth, the Church of Christ had enjoyed no rest due to the triple assault from the "Heathen Emperours on the one side... the proude Pope on the other side, and on the third side... the barbarous Turke" – the "three principall & capital enemies of the Church of Christ."⁶⁵ Foxe's martyrology enjoyed wide popularity and continued to be printed throughout Elizabeth's reign. The construct of the "triple assault" from the Pope, the Turk, and the heathen Emperors prevailed along with it. In March 1580 the Spanish Ambassador reported that colored pictures entitled "The Three Tyrants of the World" with portraits of the Pope, Nero, and the Turk were being publicly sold in London.⁶⁶ The Turk and Pope appeared as parallel threats, undermining the strength and unity of Christendom. Writing in Scotland in 1588, James VI – later James I of England – also spoke to this prevalent sentiment. The hatred of the wicked against the faithful, he said, was manifested in "the agreance of Gog and Magog, the Turke the awowit enemie,

⁶⁵ John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1583 edition), 757.

⁶⁶ *CSP Spain (Simancas) 1580-1586*, Vol. 3, 16-23, March 1580.

and the Pape [*sic*] the covered enemie, to this persecutioun.”⁶⁷ For many contemporaries, these two forces – while opposed – shared a destructive hatred that threatened all “true Christians.”

Contemporary plays that featured Turkish characters also informed popular perceptions of the Turks, thereby shaping the ways in which Elizabeth’s inner circle framed their negotiations for a larger public. In 1587 Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* became the “first ‘blockbuster’ hit of the whole period,” drawing thousands to the Rose Theater to see the performance by the Lord Admiral’s Men.⁶⁸ The play’s success probably led the Admiral’s men to ask Marlowe for a sequel, and in 1590 the first edition of *Tamburlaine* containing both parts was published in black letter octavo.⁶⁹ Through the 1590s, the play’s two parts were frequently performed at the Rose. Part One focuses on the military exploits of the Tartar ruler Timur (1336-1405) – known in the West as Tamerlane or Tamburlaine – against the Turkish sultan Bayezid I in 1402. Part Two presents the futile attempts of Orcanes, the King of Natolia, and the Kings of Jerusalem, Soria, and Trebizon to undercut Tamburlaine’s power. Tracing the destruction caused by boundless ambition, both parts present Tamburlaine’s lust for power as overwhelming the superior Turkish forces and leading to the latter’s defeat. The Turkish sultan “Bajazeth” appears almost the tragic figure in Part One: after defeating Bajazeth in battle, Tamburlaine keeps the Sultan in a cage to serve as his “footstool.” Deprived of his power and mocked, Bajazeth mourns that his crown, honor, and name were “thrust under

⁶⁷ James VI, *Ane fruitfull meditatioun contening ane plane and facill expositioun of ye 7.8.9 and 10 versis of the 20 chap. of the Reuelatioun in forme of ane sermone* (Imprinted at Edinburgh by Henrie Charteris: 1588), 7.

⁶⁸ Anthony B. Dawson, ed., *Tamburlaine Parts One and Two* by Christopher Marlowe (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), vii, xxviii.

⁶⁹ Park Honan, *Christopher Marlowe: Poet & Spy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 177; Dawson, ed., *Tamburlaine Parts One and Two*, xliii.

yoke and thralldom of a thief.”⁷⁰ Many readings of the play emphasize the just punishment meted out to the Turkish tyrant, suggesting that Marlowe upheld popular stereotypes. Yet I would suggest that the focus of Part One is on Tamburlaine’s abuse of power – power that appears all the more reprehensible due to its illegitimacy and the fact that Tamburlaine would destroy nations simply to wear the title of king or emperor. As Jonathan Burton has argued, Marlowe played with the notion that one might “out-Turk” the Turk through cruelty, ambition, and lust and thereby take the Turk’s place as the “terror of the world.” In Part One, Marlowe not only explores the idea that somebody else could embody Turkish stereotypes but also interrogates what constituted a moral and legitimate use of power. He does so through transforming any initial satisfaction over the proud Turk’s defeat into discomfort at the extent of his fall, thereby underscoring the perversion of Tamburlaine’s newly consolidated power. What mattered was not only that Tamburlaine’s ambition and strength exceeded that of the Turk but also, importantly, that he represented an unlawful pretender – a “fiery thirster after sovereignty” – not worthy of the title of emperor.⁷¹ For all his boastful pride, Bajazeth appeared the more noble, lawful sovereign. In Part Two, Marlowe further builds upon these themes with the character of Orcanes, a “Turk,” who first makes a league with Sigismund of Hungary in order to send a greater united force against Tamburlaine. However, when Sigismund betrays Orcanes, the latter curses the “false Christians” as traitors and villains, wondering how the “fleshy heart of man” could exercise such deceit and treason.⁷² Orcanes thus appears more virtuous in comparison not only to the false Christians but also to Tamburlaine and his sons, allowing audiences to recognize that a Christian and a self-proclaimed enemy of the

⁷⁰ *Tamburlaine, Part One*, Act V, ii, 198. In *Tamburlaine Parts One and Two*, 79.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, *Part One*, Act II, vi, 31.

⁷² *Ibid.*, *Part Two*, Act II, ii, 29-32, 36-40.

Turks could commit the greatest treacheries. In its propaganda the Elizabethan government would link Philip II to this dual profile.

The cruelty and barbarity that Tamburlaine exercises throughout Marlowe's play provided a framework for considering how one might supersede the Turk as the "terror of the world." Indeed, Tamburlaine identifies himself as such, reveling in his power. When Tamburlaine stabs his son Calyphas as punishment for the latter's idleness, Orcanes condemns Tamburlaine's cruelty, proclaiming, "Thou showest the difference 'twixt ourselves and thee / In this thy barbarous damnèd tyranny."⁷³ Throughout the second part, the Turks appear horrified by the extent of Tamburlaine's and his sons' brutality. Both parts of Tamburlaine offer a nuanced depiction of the Turks, who become victims of not only Tamburlaine's but also Christians' duplicity and often appear the more legitimate, moral power. One might suspect that Marlowe's potentially greater knowledge of diplomatic proceedings affected this nuanced portrayal. When Cambridge University authorities appeared reluctant to award Marlowe his MA degree in 1587, the Privy Council sent a firm note that indicated that Marlowe "had been employed 'in matters touching the benefit of his Countrie' and hence 'deserved to be rewarded for his faithfull dealing.'"⁷⁴ Perhaps involved in activities to suppress the threat from Spain, Marlowe made Tamburlaine's lust for power a reflection of Philip II's perceived boundless ambitions. The circulation of these themes between the playhouse, the streets, and Parliament was made apparent in Sir Christopher Hatton's oration on the opening day of Parliament in early 1589. Hatton spoke to the King of Spain's treachery, denouncing him as an "ambitious tyrant" who sought England's "utter subdoing" – the

⁷³ Ibid., *Part Two*, Act IV, i, 137-8.

⁷⁴ Dawson, ed., *Tamburlaine Parts One and Two*, vii.

very language employed in Marlowe's plays to depict Tamburlaine's character and mission.⁷⁵

Robert Greene's *Selimus* followed on the heels of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, reinforcing popular perceptions of Turkish tyranny and suggesting further linkages to Philip II's ambitions. As Daniel Vitkus has indicated, Greene most likely composed *Selimus* in early 1588, hoping to deliver a success for the Queen's Men players equal to *Tamberlaine* for the Lord Admiral's Men.⁷⁶ The play traces the exploits of the Ottoman prince Selimus, who overthrows his father Bajezet and eliminates his brothers Acomat and Corcut in order to become the emperor. Though *Selimus* presents a caricature of Turkish tyranny and lacks the nuanced view of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, the play similarly exposes the destruction caused by boundless ambition, thereby offering another lens for interrogating Philip's designs. In Scene 2 Selimus counsels himself in a monologue: "Now Selimus, consider who thou art. / Long hast thou marched in disguised attire, / But now unmask thyself and play thy part / And manifest the heat of thy desire; / Nourish the coals of thine ambitious fire. / And think that then thy empire is most sure / When men for fear thy tyranny endure."⁷⁷ Later Selimus resolves "to clothe [his] complots in a fox's skin" where he could not further his designs with "lion's force."⁷⁸ Contemporaries most likely would have recognized the parallels between Selimus and Philip II in such allusions, as Philip's duplicity as a fox was a theme played out in contemporary materials and rehearsed in diplomatic tracts.⁷⁹ In playing with themes of

⁷⁵ Sir Christopher Hatton's speech on opening day of Parliament, 4 Feb. 1589. In *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments 1584-1601* by J. E. Neale (Oxford: At the Alden Press, 1957), 196.

⁷⁶ Daniel J. Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 18.

⁷⁷ *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks*, Scene 2, 1-7 (London: 1594). In Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays*, 68.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁷⁹ See, for instance, TNA, PRO SP 97/1, f. 122b, Remonstrance to the Grand Signor.

tyranny, ambition, and cruelty, both *Tamburlaine* and *Selimus* presented a compelling framework for condemning Philip II's designs. While the former offered insight into how one might become a far greater threat than the Turk in terms of bloodthirsty and unlawful ambition, the latter appeared to depict contemporary events in a Turkish setting, thereby equating Spanish perfidy with Turkish tyranny.

Elizabeth and her councilors employed both conceptual frameworks in preparing their "project for peace" or justification for the Ottoman league. The "project" concluded that Elizabeth might be forced to seek aid from Christendom's perceived enemy, the "Turk," in order to preserve God's kingdom from pernicious Spanish designs. In forwarding this argument, the "project" echoed the justification used by King Francis I in the late 1530s, indicating a certain continuity in propaganda across time and space. Like Francis before her, Elizabeth indicated that the purpose of an Ottoman league was twofold: to hold the infidel enemy close in order to protect Christendom and to use the power of this enemy to check that of an equally dangerous opponent. As copies of Francis's justification to Pope Paul III circulated in both Germany and England, it is safe to assume that Elizabeth grew up with some knowledge of these proceedings and later used them as a rhetorical framework.⁸⁰ She underscored that Philip intended to "scourge and devour" England – to use Foxe's comments about the Turkish threat and Tamburlaine's boasts about his own endeavors – in order to justify all means of opposing this immediate danger. In turning his forces against England, Philip appeared to pursue perverse or misguided ambitions. In his oration to Parliament in 1589, Hatton had stressed this interpretation, proclaiming that the state of international affairs was

⁸⁰ See discussion of François I's responses and dissemination of counter-propaganda in Poumarède, 224.

sufficient to show to all posterity the unchristian fury, both of the Pope (that wolfish bloodsucker) and of the Spaniard (that insatiable tyrant) in that they never bent themselves with such might and resolution against the very Turk or any other infidel, as they have done against a Virgin Queen, a famous lady, and a country which embraceth without corruption in doctrine the true and sincere religion of Christ.⁸¹

From Hatton's perspective, Philip had betrayed Christendom in pursuing his own ambitions and thereby proved himself to be the more dangerous threat or the greater "Turk."

Though Elizabeth had entreated the Sultan for aid, the justification depicted the Queen as holding a position of superiority in relation to the Turks. Appearing to mirror and even surpass Ottoman strength, Elizabeth might "call downe the Turke" into this conflict rather than asking for his protection.⁸² Here the initiative was made to appear from the Turk, who had written a letter of late to Queen Elizabeth "offering unto her in a sorte hys ayde against the kinge of Spaine."⁸³ As the justification stated, this letter had "given occasion to some to enter into consideration whether her highnes may with her honor (at least such honor as amongst Christian Princes ought to be acompted honor) imbrace the said offers of the Turke and encourage him to enter into action against the kinge of Spaine."⁸⁴ In 1535, Francis's supporters had also attributed the initiative to the Sultan, insisting repeatedly that the Turk had sent an envoy.⁸⁵ Francis and later Elizabeth sought to imbue their leagues with greater legitimacy and honor by denying the incentive lay with them. In doing so, Elizabeth could underscore that any decision to ally with the Turk was a difficult one. As the discourse acknowledges, it was very "disputable whether

⁸¹ Sir Christopher Hatton's speech on opening day of Parliament, 4 Feb. 1589. In *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, 197.

⁸² BL, Add MS 48063, f. 231.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, f. 227.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Poumarède, 228.

any necessitie may justly move a Christian prince to use the ayde of an Infidell against another Christian Prince.”⁸⁶ Only the existing divisions within Christendom could justify this potential alliance.

Central to the justification’s logic was the notion that only the Turk’s power might check that of the King of Spain. Elizabeth would be justified in pitting infidels against idolaters. The document underscored that that there was not “soe apparent soo readie nor soe equall to the king of Spaines greatnes as the force and power of the Turke who hath alsoe offered his assistance to her.”⁸⁷ The Turk appeared the only prince capable of inciting Philip’s fear. The tract thus outlined a proposal in which the Queen, acting upon these considerations and with the Turk’s letters in hand, would send a herald to Philip to alert him of the Turk’s offers and make him understand her determination to ensure the safety of her kingdom by any means she could procure. Meanwhile, she would notify other Christian princes that, if they failed to join together against the King of Spain, she would be forced “against her will” to call upon the Turk and “soe consequently to call one great and manifest danger to all Christendome and some of them in particuler whose houses are nearest the fier [*sic*].”⁸⁸ The failure of other Christian princes to act would constitute a disregard for Christendom’s welfare. As such, the Queen would then be “cleare before God and the world of all slander and blame & of danger whatsoever that may ensue unto the state of Christendome.”⁸⁹ In effect, the discourse provided rhetorical support for the league while also attempting to remove any culpability from Elizabeth in case either Philip’s fall contributed to the Ottomans’ rise or reports of

⁸⁶ BL, Add MS 48063, f. 227.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 231b.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 232.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

the league became public and thereby fuel for religious attacks. Francis had likewise blamed Charles V for creating the need for an Ottoman alliance through his aggression and quest for an “insidious and suspect grandeur.”⁹⁰

Such reasoning spoke to the prevalent notion that the Turks had – and would continue to – overrun Christendom if given the opportunity. The literary compiler Thomas Bentley (1543?-1585) invoked this idea in his massive devotional work *The Monument of Matrones*, which he published between 1582 and 1584 and dedicated to Elizabeth. The litany offered a prayer in case of invasion by the “Turke and Infidels, *that make warre in anie part of Christendome.*”⁹¹ As divine punishment for sins, an invasion by the Turks seemed a very real threat. Bentley allowed his readers to accept in this prayer that “barbarous nations, and cruell Turks, making invasion into Christendome, should spoile us of our goods, overthrowe Schooles, Churches, Common-weales; make pitifull havocke of the promiscuous, mixt, or confused multitude of sillie weake people, as they were sheepe prepared to the shambles.”⁹² Bentley labeled the Turks as the “mightie enimie of Christian Religion.”⁹³ As Bentley’s *Monument of Matrones* was a large publishing venture undertaken by a major publisher of such devotional works, we might assume that the printer anticipated a wide readership and strong sales.⁹⁴ Conscious that this construct of the Turk as the ambitious, godless enemy persisted outside the council chamber, Elizabeth’s council tailored their justification to such an understanding.

⁹⁰ Poumarède, 227.

⁹¹ Thomas Bentley, *The monument of matrones* (1582), 513.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 513

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 516.

⁹⁴ “Bentley, Thomas,” Colin B. Atkinson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, (Oxford: OUP, October 2005), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/61662> (accessed January 17, 2013).

For Elizabeth and her councilors, it was important to avoid comparison with what was perceived as Catholic laxity towards the Turks. A common explanation for the Turks' advance blamed Rome, and the notion that Catholic powers facilitated the Turks' conquests was reaffirmed in publications throughout the 1580s. In his *A Treatise Against Treasons, Rebellions, and Such Disloyalties* dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, the English clergyman Michael Renniger (1528/9-1609) relied upon the accounts of Bishop Otto von Friesing to condemn Pope Gregory III for weakening the "Empire of Constantinople" over disagreements with Byzantine Emperor Leo III and thereby making it prey to the Turks. As Renniger wrote, the "Bishop of Rome first pulled it [the Byzantine Empire] down on his knees, after came the Turks and overranne it."⁹⁵ In speaking to the dangers of the proposed marriage of Elizabeth to the French Duke of Anjou, even John Stubbes' political libel *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf* made reference to the "general rule" that a "straunger mighty king brought into a realme to ayde them as was the Turke and his sarasins, or upon any lighter occasion, will hardly be gotten out againe."⁹⁶ Aware of such perceptions, Elizabeth would have wanted to avoid any impressions that she, too, was preparing Christendom for Turkish conquest through calling upon the Ottoman Turks to engage the Spaniards. Thus, the "project for peace" underscored the "just necessitie" that compelled Elizabeth to turn to the Turks after she had sought to resolve the conflict by other peaceful means. The discourse proclaimed that Elizabeth could now "cleare herselfe before God and the worlde of all blame" and "doth cast from herselfe the burthen

⁹⁵ Michael Renniger, *A Treatise Conteyning Two Parts* (1587), 75.

⁹⁶ John Stubbes, *The Discoverie of a Gaping Gulf* (1579), sig. C.7^r. As punishment for the "slanders and approaches" in *The Discoverie*, Stubbes had his right hand chopped off. Stubbes' work appears to have "excited rather than stemmed the flow of libels" against the Elizabethan government. See Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 455.

and slander thereof upon the said kinge of Spaine as him that hath compelled her to use such extraordinary meanes to prevent daynger.”⁹⁷ Repeatedly emphasizing the Queen’s righteousness, the manuscript tract concluded that Elizabeth “shall be justified and excused in the eyes of all men livinge & of all posteritie to come if shee doe imbrace the offers of the Turke and drawe him into Armes against the kinge of Spaine.”⁹⁸

The justification for the Ottoman league built upon the themes and rhetorical tactics that Elizabeth had employed in earlier printed declarations, such as “A Declaration of the Causes Mooving the Queene of England to give aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the Lowe Countries” in 1585 and “A Declaration of the Causes, which Mooved the chiefe Commanders of the Navie in their voyage and expedition for Portingal” in 1589. As the Queen’s printer and a prominent member of the Stationers’ Company, Christopher Barker had printed defenses against the books and libels of the Jesuits in the early 1580s, and these public justifications of Elizabeth’s foreign policy passed through his hands as well. With these declarations, Elizabeth sought to mold the wider understanding of events taking place beyond England’s shores, providing an interpretative framework through which her subjects might understand her aims. The declaration regarding aid to the Low Countries laid the thematic groundwork for Elizabeth’s later justification for an Ottoman league. Serving as a formal defense of Elizabeth’s actions in concluding the Treaty of Nonsuch several months prior, the 1585 declaration proclaimed that the Queen was moved by divers reasons to publish her intentions for both her loving subjects and her confederate princes.⁹⁹ Indeed, the tract was

⁹⁷ BL, Add MS 48063, f. 230b.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 232b.

⁹⁹ “A Declaration of the Causes Moving the Queene of England to giue aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the Lowe Countries” (London: 1585), 1.

published simultaneously in England, France, Italy, and the rebel provinces of the Low Countries. The tract's reasoning revolved around the idea that, because Philip had so cruelly and evilly used his loving people, the Queen's actions were justified in the pursuit of peace and protection of these Christian subjects. Her decision to send aid to the rebels appeared a last resort after she had exhausted all peaceful options. As the tract explained, "And yet notwithstanding our saide often requests and advises given to the king of Spayne... wee found him by his counsell of *Spayne* so unwilling in any sort to encline to our friendly counsell."¹⁰⁰ Adept rhetorical maneuvers gave Elizabeth room to operate within this framework by legitimizing and strengthening her authority.¹⁰¹

COUNTERING CRITICISM OF A LEAGUE WITH THE "TURKS"

In the sixteenth century Ottoman as well as European powers utilized intricate networks of agents both to gather information and to disseminate their own reports and propaganda in the interests of policy, power, and diplomatic leverage. Gábor Ágoston has examined this process under the early modern Ottoman state, arguing that the intelligence that the Ottomans gathered about their neighbors and adversaries became integral to their "grand strategy."¹⁰² Aware that the European ambassadors in Istanbul were engaged in espionage, the Ottoman government sought to regulate the flow of information between Istanbul and European capitals while also extracting information from the ambassadors of competing European governments.¹⁰³ Philip II also recognized the intimate correlation

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰¹ See Kevin Sharpe's discussion of how Elizabeth constructed her image in *Selling the Tudor Monarch*, 317-473.

¹⁰² Ágoston, "Information, ideology, and limits of imperial power," 81, 92. Ágoston indicates that this communications network is "rightly regarded as one of the main instruments that held the Empire together."

¹⁰³ Ibid., 84.

between power and the control of information flow. As with the Ottoman government, Philip was driven by interests of political strategy to construct an intricate communications network composed of ambassadors and agents throughout Europe.¹⁰⁴ The rapid increase in private mail ensured that policy makers could more quickly and efficiently gather detailed information about their adversaries at the same time that these adversaries could disseminate rumors and reports that undermined their diplomacy. The communications network that Philip constructed enabled him to consolidate his authority and extend his influence across Spain's empire.¹⁰⁵ While Elizabeth's communication network was less sophisticated than Philip's, she recognized the centrality of managing the collection, manipulation, and dissemination of information to political influence. Her increased participation in European affairs necessitated that she not only remain aware of offensive rumors spread abroad but also carefully attend to issues of information control and public presentation.

Word of Elizabeth's communication with the Ottoman court seeped beyond her high political and diplomatic circle by the mid-1580s, yet the understanding of the nature of this relationship appeared limited. Indeed, some contemporary references to this communication assumed that the Queen's relationship with the Turk revolved around the latter's admiration for English Protestantism. Such admiration could be read as evidence that the infidels would convert to Protestantism if exposed to Christian teachings, doctrine, and good works. In his sermon *Baptizing of a Turke*, clergyman and historian Meredith Hanmer observed that the "secretary to the great Turke of Constantinople,"

¹⁰⁴ Cristina Borreguero Beltrán, "Philip of Spain: The Spider's Web of News and Information." In *The Dissemination of News and the Emergence of Contemporaneity*, ed. by Brendan Dooley (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 27.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.

Mustafa Beg, had written to Queen Elizabeth on March 15, 1579, and shown the “great affection his maister the Turke together with himselfe beareth to this lande and of our religion.”¹⁰⁶ As Matthew Dimmock has argued, the fact that Hanmer was somewhat aware of the Anglo-Ottoman correspondence significantly suggests again that at least an aspect of the association was known to the wider public by 1586 if not earlier. First published in 1589, the geographer Richard Hakluyt’s massive edited compilation *The Principall Navigations, Voiages, and Discoveries of the English Nation* helped to increase awareness of the Anglo-Ottoman diplomatic and mercantile relationship. Receiving his material from English merchants involved in the Turkey trade, Hakluyt presented diplomatic letters and descriptive extracts of the Ottoman court, yet he offered only a narrow window into Anglo-Ottoman relations. Hakluyt’s edits stripped the texts of references to Islam, replacing “Muslim” with “the holy religion” and thereby indicating a sensitivity to how prevailing cultural ideologies might color his readership’s attitudes towards these relations.¹⁰⁷

While the domestic public’s understanding of the association remained limited, the dissemination of reports from Constantinople by networks of foreign diplomats and merchants caused Elizabeth and her councilors great anxiety. The Spanish faction in Constantinople fueled such reports, hoping to draw criticism towards Elizabeth and to tarnish the reputation of the English at the Ottoman court. When rumors of the intended Anglo-Ottoman league began to spread across Europe in the mid- to late 1580s, Elizabeth’s response was a policy of containment and inversion. The dissemination of

¹⁰⁶ Hanmer, *Baptizing of a Turke*, sig.E.6^v. See the discussion of this letter in Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey*, 58-9.

¹⁰⁷ Matthew Dimmock, “‘Captive to the Turke’: Responses to the 1580 Capitulations.” In *Cultural Encounters Between East and West, 1453-1699*, ed. by Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), 45.

these reports and Elizabeth's attempts to contain them reflect a type of transnational politics-out-of-doors in which the Elizabethan government competed for the "same cultural and ideological terrain" as Philip II.¹⁰⁸ Employing the same strategies of printing pamphlets and spreading rumors, the regime attempted to invert the arguments of the Catholic opposition and thereby challenge their legitimacy. An early public sphere materialized through a series of exchanges between the regime and their connections involving similar polemical strategies.¹⁰⁹ Through engaging rumors and explaining certain policy decisions, the regime believed that the truth would overcome their opponents' lies. However, once employed, such methods established a framework for future communication, ensuring that this "mode of making political pitches, of maneuver and legitimation, came to play an unacknowledged but central role in the politics of the Elizabethan and early Stuart period."¹¹⁰ These political pitches also characterized the public presentation of Elizabeth's relations with the Ottoman sultan. Spanish rumors incriminating England offered a blueprint to the Elizabethan government from which to forward its own polemic. Though the Spanish argued that Elizabeth's negotiations were self-interested and thereby undermined Christendom's defenses, Elizabeth and her councilors seized the opportunity to proclaim that the Spanish idolaters paved the way for infidels.

In early 1588, reports spread across Europe of a potential league between the English and the Ottomans. Venice played host to many of these reports, which indicated

¹⁰⁸ Peter Lake, *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat*, 575. Lake discusses how the puritan preachers, pamphleteers, playwrights, and literary hacks competed for the same audiences and same "ideological terrain" in this "rudimentary public sphere."

¹⁰⁹ Lake and Pincus, "Rethinking the Public Sphere," 275. Lake and Pincus have traced the development of politics-out-of-doors in the English context, illustrating the Elizabethan regime's appeals to the people or Protestant Nation to respond to the Catholic threat.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 278.

that the English ambassador Harborne had petitioned the Sultan for naval assistance. Dispatched to Venice in March 1587, Sir Stephen Powle served as an agent to Walsingham, sending newsletters and any word of papal plots.¹¹¹ In February 1588 he wrote of a common report that the “Bailo” of England had spoken to the Sultan of established Anglo-Ottoman agreements and gained some assurance of the latter’s willingness to turn his arms against Philip. The report also described Harborne’s urgent pleas for the Sultan to send at least a hundred galleys into Spanish waters. According to Powle, those who spread this report did so for two purposes: first, to “lessen in the opinion of the world her Majesty’s forces, as unable to stand against Spain without diverting his power by the mean of the Turk; the other to make her Majesty odious to the world by bringing into Europe the arms of infidels to work a private revenge upon Spain.”¹¹² Powle’s letter not only discusses the very perceptions that Elizabeth’s later “project for peace” sought to erode but also speaks to the frustration of English subjects living abroad that their Queen’s reputation would be tarnished by such claims. The fact that individuals within the English diplomatic network were willing to believe that any distasteful report was the result of pernicious Spanish designs worked to Elizabeth’s advantage. Ignorance bred defiance in the face of foreign reports.

Also writing from Venice to Walsingham that spring, John Wrothe reported that the Spanish faction spread rumors that the Turkish galleys went to sea at Queen Elizabeth’s expense. The Spaniards purposely disseminated these reports so to leave “nothinge uninvented by the whiche thay thincke her Majesty may bee odious unto

¹¹¹ “Powle, Sir Stephen (c.1553–1630),” P. R. N. Carter in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/56051> (accessed January 19, 2013).

¹¹² *CSPF, Elizabeth, 1558-1589*, Vol. 21, 503, Stephen Powle to Walsingham, 3/13 Feb 1588.

Christiane princes.”¹¹³ According to the report, the Queen with the help of the Turks and the King of Fez meant to place Don António (1531-1595), the Prior of Crato and the claimant to the Portuguese crown, in power in Portugal. Overhearing some individuals discussing Queen Elizabeth’s designs, Wrothe addressed a gentleman who affirmed the validity of these rumors. Retorting that there was “litle probabilitie” that the Queen would pursue such a course of action, Wrote proclaimed that, if the Queen desired to buy allies, she would not turn to the Turk but rather “use the searvice of other whome as hir Majesty mighte better commande” so that she might “expecte a better successe in thaire attempts.”¹¹⁴ In Wrothe’s sardonic response, the Turk would prove a capricious ally; one could hardly believe that the Queen wanted such a partner in resolving the Anglo-Spanish hostilities.

Reports of an Anglo-Ottoman conspiracy also circulated beyond Venice. On March 25, 1588, Duke John Casimir of the Palatinate wrote to Elizabeth regarding a worrisome “common report” that she had “urgently requested” the Turk to dispatch his fleet and had promised him £300,000 in exchange.¹¹⁵ As the Duke wrote, “some people think it too hateful to be possible, or else that it has been invented and spread abroad in the hope that it will alienate from the Queen even those who are in the same boat with her and defend the same cause, on the ground that she has associated her impious arms with the enemy of Christendom.”¹¹⁶ The Calvinist military leader Casimir may have found such reports particularly troublesome, given that the Queen had previously negotiated loans to his mercenary army to fight for the “cause of the common faith” in the

¹¹³ BL, Harley MS 286, f. 134.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ TNA, PRO SP 81/5, f. 151, Duke John Casimir of the Palatinate to Queen Elizabeth, 25 Mar. 1588.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

Netherlands.¹¹⁷ From his perspective Elizabeth's turn towards the Ottomans would have not only signaled a diminishing value of her partnership with German Protestants but also called into the question the meaning that she attached to "cause of the common faith." It seemed that many contemporaries recognized the attractiveness of a league against Spain for the Turk, who needed "no such inducements," given that he had "sufficiently strong reasons for attempting to reduce to order the man who is going to do battle with him for the empire of the whole world—a man who rests his hope of universal empire and rule in open violence and arms and in nothing else."¹¹⁸ The Duke indicated that the Sultan had much to lose from a headstrong Philip ready to focus on contests farther east.

Catholic religious leaders did not hesitate to cite such a purported Anglo-Ottoman league in their polemic, hoping to magnify Elizabeth's crimes further. Pope Sixtus V exploited reports of the league when issuing a declaration in 1588 that reaffirmed Elizabeth's excommunication. He renounced her for "procuring for the oppression of Christendome and disturbance of comon peace, to bringe in our potent and cruell enemy *the Turke among other crimes.*"¹¹⁹ Catholic writers in Spain and other parts of Europe picked up on this theme. With the assistance of his priests, the ardent papalist Cardinal William Allen circulated his writings in England. In his *Admonition to the Nobility and People of England* written in preparation for the Armada, Allen urged English Catholics to overthrow Elizabeth. He justified such action through citing the Queen's "horrible crimes," one of which was "how she hath by messingers and letters, dealt with the cruel and dreadfull Tirante and enemie of our faithe

¹¹⁷ Kouri, "For True Faith or National Interest?," 422.

¹¹⁸ TNA, PRO SP 81/5, f. 151, Duke Casimir to Queen Elizabeth, 25 Mar. 1588.

¹¹⁹ Pope Sixtus V, *A declaration of the sentence and deposition of Elizabeth, the usurper and pretended quene of England* (1588).

the *Great Turke* himself... for the invasion of sum partes of Christendom” and the “disturbance of Christianity.”¹²⁰ Unsurprisingly, Allen enjoyed Philip II’s support and was even nominated by the Spanish King to the archbishopric of Malines in November 1589, though Allen was too impoverished to accept.¹²¹ Allen’s polemic against the Elizabethan government led government officials to denounce his treasonous activities. Sir Christopher Hatton condemned English priests, and in particular Allen, as those who “so delight[ed] in blood” as “villainous traitors.”¹²² Hatton exclaimed, “But that English subjects, being priests, should take upon them to be the workers of such an extremity, and that against their own country! before this devilish brood was hatched, I think it was never heard of amongst the very Scythians.”¹²³ Such accusations echoed those thrown at the Scythian shepherd Tamburlaine in Marlowe’s plays.

The publication of *A Declaration of the True Causes of the Great Troubles, Presupposed to be Intended against the realme of England* (1592) warranted further alarm on behalf of the Elizabethans. Though published anonymously, the *Declaration of the True Causes* has since been attributed to the writer Richard Verstegan (1548?-1640). Verstegan was forced to flee England at the end of 1581 after secretly printing an account of the Jesuit priest and martyr Edmund Campion.¹²⁴ Spending the next five years as a publicist in Paris, Rome, Rheims, and Antwerp, Verstegan in March 1587 settled in Antwerp, where he served as a publishing and intelligence agent for William Allen and

¹²⁰ William Allen, *An Admonition to the Nobility and People of England* (1588), 24.

¹²¹ “Allen, William (1532–1594),” Eamon Duffy in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/391> (accessed January 16, 2013).

¹²² Sir Christopher Hatton’s speech on opening day of Parliament, 4 Feb. 1589. In *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, 197.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ “Verstegan [Rowlands], Richard (1548x50–1640),” Paul Arblaster in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24217> (accessed March 20, 2014).

Robert Parsons, oversaw the publication of many English Catholic works, and arranged the smuggling and distribution of books.¹²⁵ Condemning the “tyrannies” of Elizabeth’s councilors including Cecil and Walsingham, the *Declaration of the True Causes* censured the Elizabethan government for seeking wars, making enemies of other Christian states, and persecuting Catholics. In particular, the *Declaration* focused on the Elizabethan government’s amity with the Turks, contrasting Philip II’s supposed efforts to counteract the Turk’s forces with the favor displayed towards Turkish designs by Elizabeth’s councilors. The *Declaration* proclaimed that, though Philip was “by nature disposed unto peace,” the Spanish king had “determined to employ such meanes as God had given him, to withstand the intention of this comon enemy [the Turk],” considering the “greatnesse of the Turk, and his incessant attemptes in the invading of Christendome.”¹²⁶ On the other hand, the text indicated that Cecil opposed such designs to suppress the Turkish threat and instead “sought to woork some speciall damage [*sic*] to the king of Spaine, then to have the potencie of the Turck diminished.”¹²⁷

In order to underscore England’s wickedness, the *Declaration* cited instances in which English writers and clerics had shown more sympathy to Turks or infidels than Spaniards. The text referred to a sermon delivered at Paul’s Cross in which the preacher supposedly declared that it was a “better acte to assist Turks, then Papistes.”¹²⁸ This sermon was most likely that delivered by Thomas White, the vicar of St. Gregory by Paul, on November, 17, 1589. Expressing gratefulness for God’s delivery of England from the clutches of Philip of Spain, White had declared that “the *Pope*” was “more

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ *A Declaration of the True Causes of the Great Troubles, Presupposed to be Intended against the realme of England* (1592), 19-20.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 20.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

odious unto us than *Turke*, or *Jew*.”¹²⁹ He commended Elizabeth for finally taking the “Sword in hande” in defense of the Gospel against such enemies. This notion of taking up the sword to fight for peace and justice was a theme that Elizabeth’s inner circle later incorporated into their justification for an Ottoman league. In addition to White’s sermon, the *Declaration* also objected to a comment made by the Bishop of Winchester Robert Horne, who had concluded in one of his works, “The Pope is a more perillous ennemie unto Christe, than the Turke: and Popery much more Idolatrous, then Turkery.”¹³⁰ However, the *Declaration* also twisted Horne’s words, interpreting his comment that a Christian prince could never bind his subjects by law to Popery or Turkey as an assertion that “it was better to sweare unto the Turk and Turkery, then unto the Pope and Popery.”¹³¹

In *Newes from Spayne and Holland* (1593), Robert Parsons sought to incriminate the Elizabethan government further by discussing its intimate ties to the Turks. He did so through promoting the recent publication of *Apologia pro Rege Catholico Philippo II* (Antwerp, 1592) by Thomas Stapleton, who used the pseudonym Didymus Verdicus Henfildanus. Stapleton had condemned England for “so open dealing with the Turke the publique enemye of al Christian profession” and “invitinge & styrring him to turne his forces upon Christendome therby to hurt the king of Spayne.”¹³² Parsons thus further publicized Stapleton’s claims that England and the Turk were knit together in close

¹²⁹ Thomas White, *A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the 17 of November An. 1589. In joyfull remembrance and thanksgiving unto God* (Printed by Robert Robinson and Thomas Newman, 1589), 60-61.

¹³⁰ Robert Horne, *An answeare made by Rob. Bishoppe of Wynchester, to a booke entituled, The declaration of such scruples, and states of conscience, touching the Othe of Supremacy, as M. John Fekenham, by wrytinge did deliver unto the L. Bishop of Winchester with his resolutions made thereunto* (London: 1566), 101.

¹³¹ *A Declaration of the True Causes of the Great Troubles*, 21.

¹³² Robert Parsons, *Newes from Spayne and Holland Conteyning An information of English affayres in Spayne with a conferrence made theruppon in Amsterdame of Holland* (Antwerp, 1593), 16.

amity, citing not only “the often embassages letters & presents sent unto this professed enemye of Christs name, from Inland thes later yeares” but also “a playne letter written by the Turk himself about three or fowers yeares agone, to the Queene about this matter soone after the defeat of the Spanish Armada.”¹³³ The letter referred to William Harborne’s supplication to the Grand Signior for the latter to send his navy against Philip. Parsons related that this letter had been intercepted in Germany and printed there both in Latin and German, suggesting the explosiveness of such diplomatic revelations.

THE BATTLE OVER OPINION

In the midst of the Elizabethan government’s negotiations with the Ottomans and ongoing fears of the Spanish threat, domestic pressures further underlined the need for careful public presentation of policy involving the “Turk.” The Parliament of 1589 witnessed a debate over maintenance of the Queen’s prerogative, as the Elizabethan government asked for two subsidies to address war expenditure.¹³⁴ Certain members of Parliament expressed misgivings to this weighty request. In response to these hesitations, Elizabeth had an interest in demonstrating that loyalty and trust in her person was well placed and proving the lawfulness and necessity of such demands. At a time when she encouraged scrutiny of Philip’s rule, she needed to defend her own rule and authority. Also from the autumn of 1588 through the summer of 1589, an anonymous author using the name “Martin Marprelate” printed a series of satirical tracts that attacked episcopacy and championed English presbyterianism. Printed in several print runs, each of around a thousand copies, the pamphlets were transported to London from secret presses and

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Neale, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, 203-15.

promptly distributed.¹³⁵ To the Elizabethan government, these tracts not only slandered religion and promoted schism but also suggested the “destabilizing potential” of such polemic for society.¹³⁶ In launching a counter propaganda campaign against the Martinist tracts, the government revealed its anxiety over the ease with which images of authority might be deflated.¹³⁷ The government took printed “slanders” seriously, as the combination of oral and print culture could prove dangerous in increasing the reach and intensity of gossip. Silencing detractors and molding public opinion proved critical at a time when inquiry regarding the latest news was – as one contemporary put it – always the “first question of an Englishmen.”¹³⁸

In seeking to undercut “loyal and due obedience” to Elizabeth, “slanders and libels” posed a real danger to the Elizabethan government.¹³⁹ Aware that “sundry lewd and seditious bruits” had been “lately spread and carried abroad in many shires of the realm by some unquiet and factious spirits,” Elizabeth issued proclamations in February 1587 and July 1588 that both condemned the spreading of seditious rumors, reports, and writings as well as ordered subjects to deliver such material immediately to the authorities.¹⁴⁰ In the proclamation of 1588, Elizabeth specifically cited Pope Sixtus V’s “most malicious and detestable bull” along with “other most false, slanderous, and

¹³⁵ Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 31.

¹³⁶ Sir Christopher Hatton’s speech on opening day of Parliament, 4 Feb. 1589. In *Elizabeth I and Her Parliaments*, 198. See Joseph Black, “The Rhetoric of Reaction: The Martin Marprelate Tracts (1588-89), Anti-Martinism, and the Uses of Print in Early Modern England.” In *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Autumn, 1997), 709. Also see Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering*, Ch. 2. See also Peter Lake, *The Anti-Christ’s Lewd Hat*, esp. 509-10.

¹³⁷ Black, “The Rhetoric of Reaction,” 712.

¹³⁸ John Florio, *Florios secund frutes* (London, 1591), sig. A2. Quoted in “Rumour, News and Popular Political Opinion in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England” by Adam Fox. In *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Sep, 1997), 601.

¹³⁹ *Tudor Royal Proclamations, Vol. II: The Later Stuarts (1553-1587)*, ed. by Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969). See No. 699: Ordering Martial Law against Possessors of Papal Bulls, Books, Pamphlets [Greenwich, 1 July 1588].

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* See also No. 688: Suppressing Seditious Rumors [Greenwich, 6 Feb. 1587].

traitorous libels, books and pamphlets” – in particular William Allen’s *Admonition to the Nobility and People of England and Ireland*.¹⁴¹ She recognized the power of print to stimulate further gossip and slander and thereby undermine the validity of her domestic and foreign policies.¹⁴² Asserting influence thus demanded not only careful public presentation but also the suppression of objectionable writings. As part of their duties, English ambassadors assisted the Elizabethan government in drawing attention to offensive books in circulation abroad. Sir Edward Stafford, the ambassador to France from 1583 to 1591, alerted Lord Burghley of the publication of Catholic works against the Elizabethan government as well as those that could be put to use as propaganda, reporting on the circulation of William Allen’s *True sincere and modest defence of English catholiques*.¹⁴³

Recognizing that the press could prove both a “threat to and an instrument of royal government,” the Elizabethan government carefully monitored the publication and dissemination of materials during the late 1580s and early 1590s.¹⁴⁴ Lisa Ferraro Parmelee has traced the interplay between the Elizabethan government, diplomats, printers, and readers around the publication in England of French pamphlets and books concerning the religious wars. The years 1589 and 1590 witnessed the peak of these publications – the same moment at which the Elizabethan government negotiated the presentation of an Ottoman league. The increased tempo of publications discussing international developments during these years suggests the demand for news as well as

¹⁴¹ See No. 699: Ordering Martial Law against Possessors of Papal Bulls, Books, Pamphlets [Greenwich, 1 July 1588]. In *Tudor Royal Proclamations, Vol. II* (1969).

¹⁴² See Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 455.

¹⁴³ See Lisa Ferraro Parmelee, “Printers, Patrons, Readers, and Spies: Importation of French Propaganda in Late Elizabethan England.” In *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (Winter, 1994), 863.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 853, 855. Such attention to print followed a 1586 decree of the Star Chamber that reaffirmed the licensing system and demanded that all printed books would have to be authorized by the archbishop of Canterbury or the bishop of London.

the need of the government to engage with such news by attempting to control its dissemination and reception. While Elizabeth's councilors prohibited the publication of French works that they found reprehensible, they strongly encouraged publications "laden with sentiments that were anti-League, anti-Guise, anti-Jesuit, antipapal, and anti-Spanish," understanding their value as "propaganda pieces."¹⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Elizabeth's councilor Lord Burghley also deployed the press in the interest of foreign policy, obtaining and translating Spanish works for dissemination as propaganda in England and overseas.¹⁴⁶ Print provided the Queen with the opportunity to disseminate her message and construct the image of her rule, though Elizabeth's enemies also utilized and understood the power of these same channels of communication.

With reports of her negotiations with the "Turk" disseminated across Europe in the late 1580s and early 1590s, Elizabeth and her advisors sought to suppress rumors and instead blame Spain for dividing Christendom. Elizabeth not only relied upon English agents abroad to perpetuate the notion that Spanish machinations bred these rumors but also directly intervened in information networks to alter foreign perceptions. In July 1588, Lord Burghley wrote to Walsingham worried that Dr. Allen "will say the Queen hath solicited the Turk."¹⁴⁷ Burghley's concern indicated the damage that such rumors could beget to Elizabeth's image at home and abroad. It was utterly important to maintain the image of the Protestant Queen battling the two destructive forces of the Spaniards and the Turks on her own. Thus, on December 19, 1588, John Wolley, who had assumed the responsibilities of Walsingham's office of secretary due to the latter's ill health, wrote to his superior with the news that Elizabeth desired her ambassador in France to "tell the

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 857-58.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 858-61.

¹⁴⁷ *CSPD 1581-1590*, Vol. 212, 503, 1-21 July 1588.

French King that the report of the Spanish Ambassador, that she had solicited the aid of the Turk and the King of Barbary against Spain, was untrue.”¹⁴⁸

In fighting accusations of a Turkish league abroad, Elizabeth and her supporters employed the same polemical strategies that marked what Lake and Pincus have described as an Elizabethan politics-out-of-doors. As the Queen’s enemies blamed her for allying with the Turk and weakening Christendom, Elizabeth and her proponents instead claimed that Philip was the one who had committed these crimes. Also precisely because many of those denouncing Elizabeth for allying with the Turk were Catholics, accusations of a Turkish league could be attributed to the work of a subversive popish force. Anglo-Protestant propaganda encouraged the impression that the Spaniards were the ones conspiring with and clearing the way for the Turks by widening divisions among Christians. In 1589 a writer by the pseudonym D. F. R. de M. penned *An Answer to the Untruthes, Published and Printed in Spaine*, condemning Spain’s “blind imagination” to envision itself as victor in this political-religious contest:

Thou persecutest English men, as thine enimies, to maintaine the opinion of men, & thou persecutest not the Turke, to maintaine and defend that of God. Thou persecutest Englishmen, poore in goods & rich in faith, & thou persecutest not the Turke rich in substance, and altogether without faith. Thou troublest the minds both of us and thy owne common weale, and thou causest tranquillitie amongst the Turks, enimies to us all.¹⁴⁹

Spain’s ambitions appeared perverse, keeping Christian powers embroiled in war and thereby giving the Turks an advantage. De M. declared that the Armada advanced the Turks’ ambitions by striking at England. Viewing the failure of the Armada as God’s

¹⁴⁸ *CSPD 1581-1590*, Vol. 219, 566, December 1588, 33. “Wolley, Sir John (*d.* 1596),” Glyn Parry in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29844> (accessed January 20, 2013).

¹⁴⁹ D. F. R. de M. *An ansyver to the vntruthes, published and printed in Spaine, in glorie of their supposed victorie atchieued against our English Navie* (1589), 39.

retribution, he scolded, “You see then heereby, that the desire which you had, to bereave Englishmen of their life, was to consent with that of the Turks. Against this thy wicked desire, did the mighty arme of God oppose it selfe.”¹⁵⁰ Those who showed laxity towards the Turks or personified stereotypes associated with them would suffer the consequences.

CONCLUSION

Elizabeth’s negotiations with Sultan Murad in the late 1580s and early 1590s marked a moment in which England became more firmly integrated into European power plays and patterns of allegiances. Initially hesitant to commit forces to the Netherlands and engage in open conflict with Spain, Elizabeth recognized that defeating Philip entailed courting a wider set of allies. Thus, she turned to the Ottomans, whose power continued to shape political dynamics not only in the eastern Mediterranean but also farther west. In many ways, their alliance seemed natural: isolated from Catholic Europe, Elizabeth could view herself as defender of the faith against idolaters, allied with the Ottomans in this struggle. European sovereigns like Francis I had set a precedent of seeking Ottoman aid against other Christian powers. However, alliance with the Ottomans also posed a type of public relations conundrum. Ideological notions of the “Turk” as the cruel, morally depraved enemy indicated that laxity towards the Turks and reliance upon their forces would lead to Christendom’s downfall. Acutely aware of how an alliance with the “infidel” would be perceived, Elizabeth continued to “feare least it sholde be blazed in Christendom that [she would] hyer the Grand Signior to the preiudice

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 40.

thereof.”¹⁵¹ Publicly allying with the Ottomans risked inciting attacks that she – like popes and heathen emperors previously – had opened the door to the infidels’ invasion. Thus, though Elizabeth encouraged the Ottomans to make policy beneficial to England’s interests, she attempted to keep knowledge of these affairs limited to an inner circle. In doing so, she took greater liberty in public presentation, projecting the image that she defended Christendom while also exposing the iniquitous designs of her opponents. Making their reasoning comprehensible within the ideological frameworks familiar to their audience, Elizabeth and her councilors manipulated the presentation of information according to the various “publics” with which they sought to engage. They also suppressed objectionable writings and inverted objectionable arguments regarding their religious and political integrity.

The image that Elizabeth’s inner circle attempted to broadcast across Europe was of a government committed to protecting the faith against idolaters and infidels. The appropriation of such themes by a wider English audience marked the degree to which they compellingly fitted within an Anglo-Protestant framework. In a ballad commemorating Sir Francis Walsingham’s life in 1590, Thomas Nelson wrote that Walsingham served as an exemplary councilor in his determination to protect England from not only the pope but also the Turk. England could only hope to have like-minded councilors take Walsingham’s place. Given that Walsingham was a strong advocate of Elizabeth’s alliance with Sultan Murad, Nelson’s assertions appear deeply ironic. The ballad concludes,

God grant her highnesse still may have such carefull members store,
That she may live and raigne in peace, in England evermore.

¹⁵¹ BL, Cotton MS Nero B XI, f. 128, abstract of letter from Edward Barton to Lord Treasurer, concerning state of Ottoman court, 2 Oct. 1592.

And graunt that his well governd life, a Loadstone still may be.
To such as shall from time to time serve in such high degree.
Graunt Lord that they may zealous be the Gospell to defend,
And shunne for to be covetous, even till their lives doo end.
Then shall her hignes live in joy, and England shall be free,
From Turke, from Pope, from sword, from fire, and force of enemie.¹⁵²

¹⁵² Thomas Nelson, "A memorable Epitaph, made vupon the lamentable complaint of the people of England for the death of the right honorable Sir Frauncis Walsingham Knight: principall Secretarie of Estate" (Printed for William Wright, 1590).

CHAPTER TWO

“Send us such commanders as in Elizabeth’s reign and then wee need not feare the Turke”:

Charles I, the Duke of Buckingham, and the “Turkish” Pirate Raids

When Charles I acceded to the throne in the spring of 1625 following the death of his father, King James I, the political, religious, and financial challenges that he confronted served as a trial by fire for the new king. Smarting from the failure of the Spanish Match – the proposed marriage between Charles and the Infanta of Spain – two years previously, he and the royal favorite, George Villiers (1592-1628), the Duke of Buckingham, had pushed James I to accept war with Spain. Charles’s marriage negotiations with the French followed, though many contemporaries did not see an improvement in the pivot from a Spanish Catholic to a French Catholic. That summer bubonic plague broke out in London, spreading quickly and leading to devastating death tolls. Between May and November 1625, 35,417 died of the plague in London; the spread of plague forced Charles to adjourn Parliament to Oxford at the end of July.¹ The sickness led to the closing of Stourbridge and Bartholomew fairs, and the Privy Council forbade London traders to sell their goods at Bristol Fair, thereby severely hurting the cloth trade.² As the textile industry was dependent upon London as the outlet for its overseas trade, the plague’s effects on the city proved disastrous.³ Thus, the outbreak aggravated pre-existing economic hardship due to a trade depression stretching back

¹ B. E. Supple, *Commercial Crisis and Change in England 1600-1642*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 99. See also Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985). Slack indicates that the plague coincided with the “precarious moment for the body politic” when a new ruler acceded to the throne. During epidemics, access to the Court and King was curtailed, leading to “sapped confidence,” Slack, 18-9.

² Supple, *Commercial Crisis*, 99.

³ *Ibid.*, 102.

several years. Military debacles also added to Charles's troubles. The day before Parliament opened on June 18, news arrived in London of the failure of Count Mansfeld's military expedition to the Palatinate, a region within the Holy Roman Empire; of the 12,000 soldiers that were dispatched, only 600 remained.⁴ Then there were the "Turkish" pirates.

As early as the turn of the seventeenth century, Englishmen and women worried about the threat from Turkish pirates sailing north towards England's shores. Reports of the losses suffered by merchants in Devon and Cornwall circulated by the beginning of James I's reign. At this time a Dartmouth merchant complained that the Turkish pirates had caused the "great impoverishment of that whole cuntry" by growing "so expert that they come out of the streats so fare as the Northern baye & take [merchants'] shipinge."⁵ Reopened markets in Spain and Netherlands as well as new industries, such as fishing in Newfoundland, created an expanding market, and corsairs preyed on ships involved in both the triangular trade with the fisheries of Newfoundland as well as the Turkey trade.⁶

This chapter represents a shift in geographical orientation to Devon and Cornwall, exploring how discourses of the "Turks" allowed locals to package their grievances within an ideological framework that they shared with their governors and that made a governmental response necessary to fulfilling its political, religious, and social obligations. In the first two years of Charles's reign, numerous reports reached the Privy

⁴ Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham* (London: Longman, 1981), 243.

⁵ BL, Harley MS 296, f. 196. This merchant delivered a list of merchants' grievances in Devon due to the spoils of the "Turks." He asserted that more than £54,000 had been lost between the towns of Exeter, Plymouth, and Dartmouth alone and that within eight years, Turkish pirates had taken from his Majesty's subjects in Cornwall and Devon above £100.

⁶ In the Turkey trade, English merchants yearly exported cloth, kersey, tin, lead, spices, dying wood, money, and other commodities to the Ottoman dominions while importing silk, mohairs, grogram, and other commodities. When markets in Spain and the Netherlands were closed to English merchants, they focused on nurturing these other trades.

Council of the destruction committed by “Turkish” pirates to West Country communities and shipping. While the Dunkirk privateers disrupted ports on the southeast coasts of England, Turkish pirates ravaged communities in the southwest. The Levant Company had to form a special convoy “in these times of hostility.”⁷ Numerous letters from West Country officials proclaimed that a failure to provide for coastal security would lead to the impoverishment of the entire realm, adding further strain to a government already concerned with plague, bad harvest, war with Spain, tensions over marriage negotiations with France, and the trading depression.

Scholars, namely Todd Gray and Nabil Matar, have turned their attention to the problems of piracy in the West Country and British captivity in North Africa. While Gray has outlined the nature of the problem in Devon and Cornwall, Matar has shed light on public disaffection with the failure of Charles’s government to redeem British captives in North Africa, arguing that this issue contributed to the build-up to the Civil War as a “willing Parliament” eventually took the initiative and addressed the issue as one of national responsibility.⁸ This chapter is in dialogue with Matar’s work, yet it attempts to delve deeper into the political and cultural dynamics of the mid-1620s and explore the mechanisms of the breakdown in communication and consensus. Tracing the interplay between public experience, rhetoric, memory, and governmental policy, I seek to explore the political and ideological differences that eroded subjects’ trust in the very system of governance and thereby analyze the ways in which order in the two senses of the term – peace and command – collapsed. We may situate debates over “Turkish” piracy within ongoing historiographical debates about propaganda and “popularity,” or public politics,

⁷ Supple, *Commercial Crisis*, 104.

⁸ Nabil Matar, “The Barbary Corsairs, King Charles I and the Civil War.” In *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 16, Issue 2 (Autumn 2001), 248-50.

as these debates became politicized and in turn not only made the government increasingly unwilling to explain itself but also encouraged communities to lose faith in what was perceived as a corrupt government.⁹

The first part of the chapter will explore the experiences of the West Country with Turkish pirates, tracing the evolution of the problem, contemporaries' understanding of the "Turks," and efforts by merchants, sailors, and local officials to seek protection from the King, Buckingham, and the Privy Council. The second part of the chapter will consider how "Turkish" piracy cast into stark relief for contemporaries the issue of private gain versus public good as well as the varying conceptions of order and disorder. For those most affected by the pirate attacks, these pirates reflected a political system in a state of disruption: not only had their governors failed to offer the necessary political and economic protection but also the concurrent plague, fears of invasion, and impressment and billeting of soldiers – its own type of "plague" for these coastal towns – aggravated social tensions.¹⁰ Indeed, the Turkish pirates appeared as one form of contagion that plagued already strained and anxious communities.¹¹ In a world in which disease was often seen as a consequence of moral and social disorder, the pirate raids could also be construed as symptomatic of greater societal ills.¹² As it was, political and religious treatises often attributed the "Turkish" advance to divisions within Christendom, and at

⁹ See Thomas Cogswell's work on the 1620s, in particular "The Politics of Propaganda: Charles I and the People in the 1620s." In *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (Jul. 1990), pp. 187-215;

""Published by Authority": Newsbooks and the Duke of Buckingham's Expedition to the Île de Ré." In *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (March 2001), pp. 1-25.

¹⁰ Walter Yonge of Colyton, Devon, noted in his diary that the gathering of soldiers at Plymouth in June 1625 was one of the greatest plagues of the country due to the violence and social strain that resulted. See *Diary of Walter Yonge, Esq., Justice of the Peace, and M.P. for Honiton, written at Colyton and Axminster, Co. Devon, from 1604 to 1628*, ed. by George Roberts (New York and London: AMS Press, 1848), 82.

¹¹ Later King Louis XIV would come to fear the exposure of his own captured French mariners and merchants to the "contagions" of North Africa, including not only plague but also sodomy and Islam. See Gillian Lee Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 2.

¹² Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England*, 304.

this socio-political moment, the “Turks” on England’s shores called attention to – and exacerbated – issues of political corruption and breakdown. I will analyze how these pirates’ attacks not only heightened the sense of insecurity that marked Charles’s accession to the throne but also further exposed the inefficiencies and corruption that tested the sinews of government and proved deeply destabilizing in the crucial early years of his reign.

At issue in responses to the “Turkish” pirates was the government’s preservation of the social order and the need to “overcome disruptive elements.”¹³ The cherished ideal of order necessitated that the government exercise “command and direction” as well as maintain “tidiness, peace and quiet”; a lack of order resulted when peace had been violated and policy failed to resolve the issue.¹⁴ As one scholar has noted, corruption and disorder were perceived as both spiritual and physical dangers, driving contemporaries to address those dangers by seeking out the root causes.¹⁵ Piracy became politicized in such a way, especially as the officials directly charged with reporting on Turkish pirates and dealing with those captured and imprisoned were key actors in Buckingham’s patronage network – a network that set up often bitter competition between its members as well as provoked hostility from the rival patronage network under William Herbert, the third earl of Pembroke. This hostility coupled with anxiety over the Turkish pirate raids translated into criticism of Charles’s closest adviser, Buckingham, in his position as Lord High Admiral. Rather than safeguarding the seas as the position demanded, Buckingham

¹³ Richard Cust traces the tension between disorder and order with regards to the circulation of political news, and this chapter traces the same tensions around perceptions of and responses to “Turkish” piracy. See Richard Cust, “News and Politics in Early Seventeenth-Century England.” In *Past & Present*, No. 112 (Aug. 1986), 79.

¹⁴ Slack, 303.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 49.

focused his attention elsewhere. When royal assistance proved slow in coming to the beleaguered West Country towns, nostalgic comparisons were made to Queen Elizabeth's reign when commanders defended the realm against the devil, the Spaniard, and the Turk. Public memory thus played a crucial role in underlining the regime's failures to safeguard its people's security and liberties in the face of foreign assaults. As merchants, mariners, local officials, and their MPs grew anxious over their economic and political security, they in turn questioned and challenged the legitimacy of those at the upper echelons of power.¹⁶

While a broad spectrum of opinion increasingly held the "court" responsible for political disruption, another body of opinion – shared most notably by Charles and Buckingham – recognized the seeds of disorder in popularity and defiance of authority.¹⁷ They viewed piracy as tied up with issue of supply, believing that weakened defenses and naval strength were directly correlated with the government's ability to fund its endeavors. These debates over supply only increased in intensity with Charles's implementation of the "Forced Loan" in 1626 – a tax levied without parliamentary consent that led contemporaries to scrutinize the use of royal prerogative and question whether their liberties were protected. Assessing the West Country's experience with – and the debates around – the "Turkish" pirates thus deepens our understanding of the political polarization in Charles I's early years as well as sheds light on the ways in which

¹⁶ Along these lines, it is telling that several plays in the mid-1620s centered on the theme of piracy, which strengthened connections between ongoing problems with piracy, Buckingham, and political corruption. Drama allowed contemporaries the opportunity to articulate and stress these anxieties and thereby make "foreign policy visible and understandable for those outside as well as within the 'political nation.'" Margot Heinemann, "Drama and Opinion in the 1620s: Middleton and Massinger." In *Theatre and Government Under the Early Stuarts*, ed. by J. R. Mulryne and Margaret Shewring. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 239.

¹⁷ See Cust, "News and Politics," 78.

ideological differences regarding order and the public good began to harden and encourage various groups' to position themselves as defender of the subject.

In considering England's experiences with so-called "Turkish" pirates, it is important to consider first the meaning of the labels "Turk" or "Turkish" in this context. At the time, "Turk" was a term rather loosely applied to identify not only Ottoman subjects within the Empire but also those from the Ottoman regencies of Tunis, Algiers, and Tripoli, the kingdom of Morocco, and even people who colluded with or demonstrated traits associated with "Turks" of the popular imagination. In his article "Reading 'Barbary,'" Ken Parker cautions against the "assumption that all so-called Barbary pirates were North African by origin and Muslim by religion."¹⁸ Similarly, I would question assumptions that all "Turkish" pirates were Muslim or even Ottoman subjects. These pirates were of many different ethno-communal identities. Indeed, North Africans were not the only ones to attack English shipping in the 1620s: Spanish and French privateers – most notably the "Dunkirkers," privateers operating from bases on the Flemish coast – were responsible for many of these attacks. What is important, though, is that West Countrymen and women often identified their attackers as "Turks" and fitted these pirates within their frame of reference. Hysteria amplified by political and economic uncertainty also fuelled rumors of attacks by "Turks" even when no such attacks occurred.¹⁹ Though discourses of the "Turks" were multilayered, the cultural dynamics of particular moments privileged certain understandings while muting others. In the 1620s, as news reached London of the turmoil within Turkey, "Turk" increasingly

¹⁸ Ken Parker, "Reading 'Barbary' in Early Modern England, 1550-1685." In *Cultural Encounters Between East and West* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), 83.

¹⁹ See Todd Gray, "Turks, Moors, and Cornish Fishermen; Piracy in the Early Seventeenth Century." In *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, No. 10 (1987-90), 467-8.

became synonymous with disorder – an association simply strengthened by the enduring fear that Christendom risked falling prey to *the* Antichrist or *an* antichrist in the form of the Pope or the Turk. The fact that the surge in pirate attacks coincided with the outbreak of war with Catholic Spain reinforced such an ideological notion: Spanish aggression and “Turkish” piracy could appear as a dual assault that compromised security. The question thus became how Charles, Buckingham, and the Privy Council could safeguard the nation as Queen Elizabeth had done.

PREVIOUS TROUBLES WITH PIRATES

While the intensity and severity of corsair attacks in the early years of Charles I’s reign appeared unprecedented, the problem of piracy was not new. Since the beginning of James I’s reign, so-called “Turkish” pirates had preyed on English shipping along with Dutch, Spanish, French, and English pirates and privateers. After James had made peace with Spain in 1604, English merchants once again began trading with markets in Spain and the Low Countries, building upon pre-existing lucrative trading channels and integrating new industries into these networks. Founded in 1610, the Newfoundland Company relied upon a triangular trade in which merchants exchanged fish from Newfoundland in France and Spain for valuable imports.²⁰ The Iberian Peninsula offered an expanding market for the fishing industry, becoming the chief outlet for English mariners engaged in the trade.²¹ The West Country towns in England facilitated and dominated the trade, serving not only as the home to many of these mariners but also as the ports for selling or re-exporting the goods. Plymouth became an important center for

²⁰ Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 110.

²¹ Gillian T. Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland 1577-1660* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 23.

the Newfoundland trade, and in 1603 it was said that the town's well-being was entirely dependent upon its fishermen.²² This triangular trade offered appealing targets to corsairs expanding their activities into the Atlantic.

Political conditions also set the stage for a surge of corsair activity in the early seventeenth century. An increasing power vacuum in the Ottoman regencies in North Africa as well as tensions between Spain and corsair communities established conditions conducive to the corsairs' operations. The truce between Spain and the Ottoman Empire in 1580 had allowed for an "era of corsair expansion, especially in Algiers."²³ In 1587 after the death of Uluç Ali, the last beylerbey who both commanded the Ottoman fleet and ruled Algiers, the Sultan established the North African provinces as three separate regencies, which were each governed by a pasha in three-year appointments. These officials did not enjoy as much authority as the beylerbeys – the Ottoman military commanders – and with the shift in the Ottoman court's focus away from the Mediterranean and North Africa in the late 1580s and 1590s, Ottoman control weakened in the region.²⁴ Though Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers nominally had Ottoman governors, the military comprised of the janissaries established their own authority by creating alliances with local Muslim elites.²⁵ This lack of central authority or direct Ottoman control gave

²² HMC, *Hatfield*, v, 387; xv, 151. Cited by Cell, 25.

²³ Ellen G. Friedman, *Spanish Captives in North Africa in the Early Modern Age* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), xxii.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 9. Andrew Hess has explored how the Ottomans made a strategic political calculation regarding which border demanded their greatest attention and allowed them best to exploit imperial arms without jeopardizing defenses. Believing that peace agreements assured the pacification of the western frontier after 1580, Ottomans turned their attention to the Safavids, whose realm was crippled by instability. See Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth-Century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1978), 99, 101-4; Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 56-8.

²⁵ Bruce Masters, "Semi-autonomous forces in the Arab provinces." In *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3, ed. by Suraiya N. Faroqi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 203.

corsairs greater freedom to operate, particularly in Algiers.²⁶ In addition, the expulsion of Moriscos from Spain in 1609 by King Philip III fueled corsair activity, as some of the exiles joined corsair communities and contributed their knowledge of Spanish coastal areas and ability to pass as Spaniards. Indeed, the peak period for corsair activity against Spain in the Atlantic – between 1610 and 1639 – followed expulsion of the Moriscos.²⁷

By the mid-1610s, Europeans felt acutely the damage wreaked by these corsairs. Sir Francis Cottington, the English ambassador in Madrid, reported in 1616 that the “strength and boldness of the Barbary pirates is now grown to that height” in both the Mediterranean and Atlantic as to create a sense of crisis at the Spanish court.²⁸ The Spanish court was not alone. In October 1616, a “Turkish” pirate vessel was captured in the Thames, and the ship *Mary Ann* of London was taken by Turkish pirates near Malaga.²⁹ English mariners and merchants engaged in the Levant and the Newfoundland triangular trades were captured by the hundreds in the later years of James I’s reign. The Master of the Ordinance, Lord Carew, noted in 1618 that Turkish pirates did great harm to English ships in the Mediterranean and that the Levant trade would end if the pirates were not destroyed.³⁰

Petitions from distraught individuals seeking ransom money for relatives in the hands of “Turks” led the Privy Council to raise a series of collections in the year 1619

²⁶ Friedman, *Spanish Captives*, 10.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13-25.

²⁸ Cited by Alan G. Jamieson, *Lords of the Sea* (London: Reaktion Books, 2012), 92.

²⁹ TNA, PRO SP 14/90, f. 35, Lord Carew to Sir Thomas Roe, Jan. 1617.

³⁰ *CSPD 1611-1618*, 514, Lord Carew to Sir Thomas Roe, Jan. 1618.

alone.³¹ A number of these collections were for mariners taken while carrying fish from Newfoundland to ports in Europe. For instance, in 1619 a charitable collection was raised for Francis Whitney to pay the ransom of £340 for her husband, Captain Thomas Whitney, who was surprised while conveying fish from Newfoundland to Legorne and taken to Algiers. Unable to raise the ransom money, his wife sought a collection for her “unhappy husband likely to perish under the wearisome yoake of the mercilesse Turke.”³² Letters of testimonial attested to the validity of the charitable collections for these individuals while official notices appealed to citizens’ feelings of Christian charity and indicated the counties in which collections were to be raised. These proclamations underscored the hope that all good Christians would be “ready & willing” to extend their liberal contributions.³³

The sheer damage done to English shipping by these “Turks” led James and his Council to enforce contributions by West Country towns for coastal security as well as offensive maneuvers against the pirates. In March 1617, the treasurer of the Virginia Company, Thomas Smythe, consulted the merchant companies about providing funds to

³¹ Beginning in the sixteenth century, English merchants residing in Cadiz served as middlemen in the process of redeeming captives out of North Africa. Through a network of partners and agents in London and Livorno, these merchants facilitated the transfer of money. See Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillaume Calafat, “The Economy of Ransoming in the Early Modern Mediterranean.” In *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000-1900*, ed. by Francesca Trivellato, Leor Halevi, and Cátia Antunes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 118-21.

³² LMA, P92/SAV/1911. See also LMA P92/SAV/1922, which describes how a Scottish ship, the Margaret, manned by mariners from Norfolk, England, was “unfortunately surprised and taken by a Turkish Pyrate” while carrying goods to Seville.

³³ LMA, P92/SAV/1919, P92/SAV/1926. For examples of petitions, see petition of Richard Doves of Dover on behalf of fourteen captives who had been taken from his ship sailing to Malaga by a Turkish man-of-war from Algiers, which was manned by 200 men, LMA, P92/SAV/1918. See also the petition of John Brigges of Ratcliffe in Middlesex on behalf of his brother and son, LMA, P92/SAV/1907. While the Council raised collections on behalf of English mariners, they also entreated citizens to extend charitable contributions to strangers, who had fallen victim to Turkish cruelty. The “poore distressed Grecian stranger,” Jeremy Lascarre, and the Grecian minister Nichofer Xenachio were among those for whom collections were raised to alleviate their miseries under Turkish bondage. See LMA, P92/SAV/1909 and LMA, P92/SAV/1926.

subsidize the costs of an expedition against “Turkish” pirates from Algiers and Tunis.³⁴ Tensions between London companies and West Country towns, including Bristol, Plymouth, Exeter, and Dartmouth, over proportional contributions stalled the plans. The Council continued to pressure these port towns to increase their contributions, believing that such requests were reasonable given that the trade and livelihood of the latter depended upon suppressing the “Turks.”³⁵ It was not until October 1620 that the English government dispatched a fleet led by Sir Robert Mansell against the corsairs.³⁶ In the end frustrated by unsuccessful negotiations, sickness, and limited supplies and reinforcements, his fleet returned to England without fully realizing their aims of putting an end to corsair raids. Thus, the Algiers expedition not only represented an embarrassment but also seemingly encouraged further pirate attacks. The royal commissioners appeared blameworthy, having abdicated their responsibility for collecting contributions, giving specific instructions, and providing the expedition with the resources it needed to succeed.³⁷ Several of these commissioners – most importantly the Duke of Buckingham – continued to serve on Charles I’s Privy Council. This continuity in leadership allowed some contemporaries to attribute England’s fall in grace

³⁴ *CSPD 1611-1618*, 444, Sir Thomas Smythe to the Council, 12 March 1617.

³⁵ Plymouth and Truro town mayors frequently referred to the pirates as “Turks.” For instance, see CRO, B/T 294/15, letter to the Mayor of Plymouth from Gregory Friggens, 1 March 1620; CRO, B/T 294/19, letter from Gregory Friggens to the Mayor of Plymouth, 27 March 1620. Though these West Country towns accepted the need for this expedition, some were unwilling to contribute, objecting to the way the tax was levied and the sums required of them in comparison to the London companies’ allotments. The West Country towns believed that the London merchants’ proportion of £40,000 was inadequate for the expedition given that they “engross[ed] the commerce of the world.” See *CSPD 1611-1618*, 476, letter of Sir Ferdinando Gorges to the Council, 16 July 1617; see also CRO B/T 294/27, letter from the Privy Council to the Mayor of Plymouth, 7 July 1620, which touched upon the unwillingness of some West Country towns to contribute. See David D. Hebb’s discussion of how this levy represented a “transitional stage” in naval finance and preceded the levy system employed with the Forced Loan and Ship Money, *Piracy and the English Government* (Hants, England: Scholar Press, 1994), 40.

³⁶ Jamieson, *Lords of the Sea*, 93. The fleet consisted of six royal warships and twelve armed merchantmen.

³⁷ Hebb, *Piracy and the English Government*, 39.

and the increasing devastation of Turkish pirates to the Duke's rise. A verse written years later had Buckingham speak the following lines:

On seas, from first to last they'le discant on
The honour in Argiers voyage wonne:
When as stout Mansfield, by my stronger hand
Was made retorne again into this land;
Which did more hurt unto the English nation
Then since the fabricke of the world's creation;
For then the Turks made havocke of our men
And shippes, and none would spare; which proved then
A disadvantage to our kingdom.³⁸

PERCEPTIONS OF "TURKS" AND TURKEY

A wider English audience gained insight into affairs in Turkey and exposure to "Turks" through newsbooks, sermons, and letters from relatives enslaved in North Africa. In 1622 a news syndicate of five publishers was established that regulated the production of the first newsbooks for popular audiences beyond the circles of the court and nobility.³⁹ A ban on domestic reporting imposed by the Star Chamber limited these newsbooks to printing only foreign news.⁴⁰ Though they often contained misleading reports due to the inclusion of rumors, these newsbooks provided English audiences with unprecedented information regarding developments across Europe and the Mediterranean, reporting on a wide range of events and setting the stage for rapid news distribution.⁴¹

³⁸ "A Dialogue Between the Duke & Dr. Lambe." In *Poems & Songs relating to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham* (London: Printed for the Percy Society, 1850), 60.

³⁹ Dagmar Freist, *Governed by Opinion* (London: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 1997), 8; Jayne E. E. Boys, *London's News Press and the Thirty Years War* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2011), 8.

⁴⁰ Freist, *Governed by Opinion*, 8.

⁴¹ Boys, *London's News Press*, 8.

In the early seventeenth century repeated wars and rebellions crippled the Ottoman Empire, leading to political, economic, and social upheaval. As it was, the same year that newsbooks began to reach English audiences, janissaries executed Sultan Osman II, giving rise to a long period of control by a coalition between janissaries and prominent palace circles led by Kösem Sultan of the harem.⁴² The deposed Sultan Mustafa I, uncle to Osman, returned to the throne only to be once again removed from power just over a year later. In England a relation of these coups was printed as *The Strangling and Death of the Great Turke and His Two Sonnes*, with a preface that explained that such violent acts proved God had “pulld short” the Turk.⁴³ Meanwhile a newsbook proclaimed that “Turkish hurly-burlies are said so farre to have encreased of late, that both the Letters of *Italy, Germany, Spaine, and the Low Countries*, this weeke received, doe all affirme, that they have there againe slaine their Emperour Mustapha, and set up their last murdered Emperour Osmans Brother, of foureteene yeares old upon the Mahometan Throne.”⁴⁴ While this report was not entirely accurate, as Mustafa had been deposed and not murdered, it underscored the disorder that became a theme in much of the reporting on events in Turkey. Rather than calming matters, the accession of Murad IV in 1623 only led to further political unrest, giving newsbooks much turmoil on which to report. As one news packet stated, even though the young Murad had replaced the more unstable Mustafa, “The Empire is not quieted, but rageth like a high sea after

⁴² Christoph K. Neumann, “Political and diplomatic developments.” In *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, Vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 48.

⁴³ *The Strangling and Death of the Great Turke, and His Two Sonnes* (London: 1622), A3.

⁴⁴ *Our Last Weekly Newes*, no. 44, 21 August 1623 (London: Printed for Nathaniel Butter and Nicholas Bourne), 6-7.

the winde.”⁴⁵ It appeared that mischief followed mischief as the janissaries, the “originals of these troubles,” continued in arms.⁴⁶

With domestic and foreign news circulating through newsletters, “separates,” correspondence, and gossip, even individuals in counties miles from London received reports that colored their understanding of unfolding local, national, and international events. Walter Yonge, a provincial gentleman who rarely traveled outside his village of Colyton, Devon, in the 1620s, recorded notable tidbits of news and gossip in his diary.⁴⁷ In July 1624 after reading Sir Edmund Prideaux’s circulated letter from London, Yonge noted, “There is great troubles in Turkey, and great divisions in that country.”⁴⁸ Richard Cust has indicated that a “news-diary” like Yonge’s may offer crucial insight into the news available to well-informed individuals outside of London.⁴⁹ As individuals in Devon and Cornwall confronted the devastations of piracy, foreign news arriving from London provided a frame of reference that could shape their perspective of such events. What is important is that in the years in which pirate attacks intensified and in the final years of James’s rule, news reports linked “Turks” to the disorder enveloping the heart of the Ottoman Empire. About the same time that the series of rapid turnovers in power began, West Countrymen and women confronted a surge of pirate attacks on their trade. It was not coincidental that the identifying label for these pirates came to be “Turk.”

Pageantry and performance also provided a conceptual framework in which those most affected by pirate attacks might understand and package their grievances. The fact

⁴⁵ *The Newes and Affaires of Europe*, no. 10, 15 Jan. 1624 (London, England; Printed for Edw. Allde for Nathaniel Butter and William Sheffard).

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁷ For a discussion regarding the circulation of news and how such news offered a critical perspective to contemporaries, see Cust, “News and Politics,” 71.

⁴⁸ *Diary of Walter Yonge*, 76.

⁴⁹ Cust, “News and Politics,” 65.

that the royals patronized and staged these dramas for a larger public created a shared experience and vocabulary from which merchants and local officials later drew when calling for greater governmental protection and aid. As David Bergeron has discussed, Elizabethan and early Stuart pageantry offered a means of safely confronting the Turk through staged sea battles and thereby controlling anxieties with the “assurance of victory.”⁵⁰ For the investiture of Prince Henry in 1610 and the wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Frederick, Elector Palatinate of Germany, in 1613, the Stuart royal family presided over festivities that included fictional battles between Christian ships and “Turkish” galleys on the Thames. In the latter production, 16 Christian ships met 16 Turkish gallies, who had as their base a “supposed Turkish or Barbarian Castle of *Tunis*, *Algeirs*, or some other Mahometan fortification” near Westminster.⁵¹ According to an observer, the “delightfull battaile,” which included the “dischardging [of] great shot in abundance” to the point where smoke filled the air, lasted three hours and led to the “great contentment of all the beholders.”⁵² Several months after this production, Queen Anne’s visit to Bristol prompted a similar sea battle, this time on the Severn River. In his account of the entertainment, Robert Naile wrote that the “water fight” between fictional Christian forces and Turks – whom he referred to as “cursed” and “worthy *Brutes*” – drew a thousand people.⁵³ The occasion gave Naile the opportunity to reflect not only on the Christian merchants who lost all of their goods and even their lives to Turkish pirates but also on the divisions within Christendom that allowed the Turks to gain such glory

⁵⁰ See David M. Bergeron, “‘Are we turned Turks?’: English Pageants and the Stuart Court.” In *Comparative Drama*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Fall 2010). pp. 255-75.

⁵¹ John Taylor, *Heavens blessing, and earths joy. Or a true relation, of the supposed sea-fights & fire-workes, as were accomplished, before the royall celebration, of the al-beloved mariage, of the two peerlesse paragons of Christendome, Fredericke & Elizabeth* (London: 1613), sig.A3^v.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Richard Naile, *A Relation of the Royall Magnificent, and Sumptuous Entertainment, given to the High, and Mighty Princesse, Queene Anne* (London, 1613), sig.C2^v, C3^f.

and spoil. By the end of the battle, the Christians had triumphed, taking Turkish captives whom they presented to the pleased Queen. Such performances, which pitted Christian and Turkish forces against one another, provided a compelling conceptual framework in which West Country towns could later interpret the pirate raids that strained their communities economically and socially. As it was, Bristol would later confront pirates on the very river on which they had staged the sea battle for Queen Anne; by identifying the pirates as “Turks,” merchants and local officials situated their grievances within a larger ideological contest that the Stuart royal family had itself staged and propagated.

As corsairs increasingly took English merchants and mariners prisoners and pirate raids on the southwest coast of England intensified in the mid-1620s, the beleaguered communities also drew upon a comprehensible ideological framework involving the Antichrist. On the readmission of a relapsed Christian into the church in Minehead, Somerset, the minister Henry Byam delivered a sermon in which he explicitly made that connection, arguing that if the Turk and Pope could not together comprise the Antichrist or both be the Antichrist, there could only be one other option: “*The Turke is he.*”⁵⁴ Calling the Turk the “very scourge and plague of Christendome, and Hammer of the world,” Byam declared that the Turk counted it “his greatest sport and recreation... to mangle, murder, wallow in the blood of Innocents.”⁵⁵ Byam’s sermon deployed anti-Turkism as a type of ideological source and explanatory power – a similar process to what Peter Lake has identified for anti-popery. Like polemicists who marshalled anti-

⁵⁴ Henry Byam, *A Returne from Argier: A sermon preached at Minhead in the County of Somerset the 16 of March, 1627* (London: Printed for I. P., 1628), 65. Interestingly, though Byam offered a dedication to William Laud, the latter – then bishop of Bath and Wells – refused to accept it; perhaps, as J. Sears McGee postulated, because of its treatment of “deep points.” See “Byam, Henry (1580–1669),” J. Sears McGee in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2011, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4250> (accessed May 16, 2013).

⁵⁵ Byam, *A Returne from Argier*, 65.

popery for their agendas, Byam employed anti-Turkism to “express, contain and, to an extent, control the anxieties and tensions at the very centre of the experience and outlook of English Protestants.”⁵⁶ Caring for a community devastated by pirate attacks, Byam attempted to help his parish work through such turmoil by situating it within an ideological framework of a larger struggle between Christ and Antichrist. The construction of such binaries not only reflected anxiety over the transformative experience captivity might have had on Englishmen enslaved under the “Turks” but also imposed order on an experience that made individuals and communities vulnerable and all too aware of the disorder in their midst.

THE “TURKISH” PIRATES THAT GREETED CHARLES’S REIGN

Immediately upon coming to the throne in 1625, Charles I confronted the problem of piracy. Two years previously, Sir Thomas Roe had facilitated a peace treaty between England and the delegations from Algiers and Tunis to curb corsair activity and free English captives in Algiers.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Algerines mostly ignored the treaty, ensuring that piracy against English ships as well as enslavement of English merchants and sailors continued. In 1625 pervasive, deep-seated anxieties regarding international affairs compounded the problem, as contemporaries most affected by piracy saw these attacks as portents of the economic and political disruptions to come. Tensions with Catholic powers – war with Spain as well as disputes over marriage negotiations – and increased skirmishes with Turkish ships in the Atlantic provoked suspicion of any foreign ship

⁵⁶ Peter Lake, “Anti-Popery: the Structure of a Prejudice.” In *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (Routledge, 1989), 80.

⁵⁷ See TNA, PRO SP 105/102, journal of Sir Thomas Roe, referring to treaty of April 1623 in Constantinople.

close to England's shores. In May 1625 the Venetian Ambassador Zuane Pesaro wrote to the Doge and Senate that reports were circulating of a large fleet of sixty ships in the strait between the Scilly Islands and Cornwall: "Some say they are Turks, pirates, or Spaniards, but others that they are French Huguenots expecting to find the Most Christian's fleet divided."⁵⁸ Charles had "sent to ascertain" the nature of the threat, as officials recognized that it could be a "false alarm," arising from the West Country's worst fears.⁵⁹ Hysteria alone was enough to disrupt the peace, as it inflamed feelings of economic and political uncertainty.

While Charles discovered the truth behind such rumors, his government proved incapable of actually confronting the depredations of Turkish pirates that threatened the "utter undoing of many" engaged in the Newfoundland and Virginia trades.⁶⁰ In the spring of 1625 numerous reports reached the Privy Council of ships lost to these pirates, who were sometimes joined by Dutch freebooters.⁶¹ The reports underscored the fears of West Country merchants and officials that such attacks were only the beginning of greater devastations. West Country townsmen expressed the desperate hope that their reports might encourage the King and Council to take some course against the "Turkish" pirates for the "suppressing of them, or at least the freeing of the coast of them."⁶² As one report to Secretary of State Edward Conway stated, the Turks upon the southwest coast had taken many ships and captured men only "to make slaves of them."⁶³ The writer complained, "Wee have ben affrighted by them, fearing their landing by night

⁵⁸ *CSP Venice 1625-1626*, Vol. 19, 86, Zuane Persaro to Doge and Senate, 30 May 1625.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 78, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to the Privy Council, 12 Aug. 1625.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² TNA, PRO SP 16/2, f. 78, John Trewinnard to Sec. Conway, 7 May 1625.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

among us,” and the fact that the King’s ships were “not upon the coast to scare them” had given the West Country towns “greater cause to feare.”⁶⁴ West Country mayors took it upon themselves to speak for their distressed countrymen, warning “how much hurt more they [the Turks and Moors of Salé] are like to doe if they be not in tyme prevented.”⁶⁵ The perception of royal indifference aggravated the anxieties of these local officials, who were held responsible to their distressed countrymen.

Criticism of Charles’s and the Privy Council’s handling of piracy appeared interlaced with such complaints, and local officials found themselves in the uncomfortable position of mediating between their distressed countrymen and the court or aristocratic patrons. According to certain letters from West Country officials, the peace with Algiers and Tunis had simply emboldened the pirates and led to the intensification of pirate attacks. These officials dated the proliferation of such attacks to Charles’s accession to the throne, suggesting a correlation between their troubles and royal policies. In August 1625, the Grand Jury of Devon petitioned Sir Richard Hutton, an assize judge on the Western and Midland circuits, entreating him to make the King and Council aware of the county’s distresses. As they declared, “There is nothing more available for the weale publick than free comerce and trade which of late hath bene much impeached and hindred by divers Turkish pyrats of Sallie in Barbery.”⁶⁶ Ever since last March these pirates had “frequented this westerne coast,” and “surprized sundrie shippes, barkes, and boats belonging to sevrall harbors within this County, besides divers others belonging unto other Counties whereby his Majesty loseth his customes and is deprived of many

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ TNA, PRO SP 16/2, f. 82, Mayor of Plymouth, Thomas Ceely, to the Privy Council, 7 May 1625. See also TNA, PRO SP 16/2, f. 150, Mayor and Bailiff of Weymouth to the Council, 19 May 1625.

⁶⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 38, Petition of the Grand Jury of Devon to Sir Richard Hutton, 6 Aug. 1625.

good and serviceable subjects.”⁶⁷ These men from Devon asked Hutton to alert Charles and his Council to “what great inconveniences have, and are like to befall this County and consequently the whole kingdom if speedy course be not taken to suppress those pyratycall infidels who doe infest theis partes.”⁶⁸ As a legal assistant to the House of Lords in the 1620s parliaments and later the presiding judge for the court of common pleas, Hutton appeared as a local official ideally placed to serve as a critical intercessor on the county’s behalf.⁶⁹ Such local officials, in turn, felt accountable for the welfare of their counties, though they often depended upon favor at court for their positions.⁷⁰

Though it is perhaps misrepresentative to speak of a “court-country divide,” as local officials were often implicated in court dynamics and patronage, the interest in defending country interests was quite acute for these officials.⁷¹ Again and again West Country officials entreated the Privy Council to attend to the critical matter of suppressing Turkish pirates, fearing for the “danger which the ships are nowe in that are coming from Newe-England and Newfoundland by reason of divers shippes of Sally which nowe lye here on our coasts.”⁷² The Mayor of Plymouth warned that if the entreaties of the West Country towns went unanswered and the Privy Council failed to address the problem, “the whole country will have just cause to rue it.”⁷³ Echoing these complaints, the Mayor of Poole proclaimed that unless the Lords turned their attention to

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ “Hutton, Sir Richard (*hap.* 1561, *d.* 1639),” Wilfrid Prest in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14311> (accessed June 19, 2014).

⁷⁰ Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics 1621-1629* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 6-8.

⁷¹ For debates over the “court-country divide,” see Perez Zagorin, *The Court and the Country* (New York: Atheneum: 1970); Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics*; Richard Cust, “Politics and the Electorate in the 1620s.” In *Conflict in Early Stuart England* (London and New York: Longman, 1989).

⁷² TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 12, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to Sec. Conway, 3 Aug. 1625.

⁷³ Ibid.

the Turkish pirates, the Newfoundland fleet, comprising over 250 ships and barques, would have “noe defence.”⁷⁴ In his grim assessment, the pirates would not leave Charles with any sailor to man his fleet.⁷⁵ In the meantime, Turkish pirates patrolling the southern coast had gained “easie entrance” to Milford Haven from where they could “doe much hurt uppon the coast of England & Ireland.”⁷⁶

Beyond the threat posed to commerce, Turkish pirate attacks threatened the social fabric of West Country communities, as hundreds of mariners and merchants involved in the triangular trade to the Newfoundland fisheries were taken to Barbary and enslaved. The cases of poor mariners enslaved by Turkish pirates during James’s reign only proliferated under Charles. In the spring of 1625, Turkish pirates surprised a Plymouth ship bound for Newfoundland, taking her master William Legg and 17 of her “choisest men, all which alsoe they chayned.”⁷⁷ Speaking for his distressed countrymen, Hutton wrote to Lord Keeper John Williams in August 1625 that both the “lamentable outcries” of the mariners’ wives as well as the “pittifull complayntes of others that have susteyned great losses even to the utter undoeing of divers of them” were enough to move any man.⁷⁸ Hutton added that Christian men held captive by the Turks ominously wrote that the “Turkes doe give out in speaches that they will bring as many English weomen [*sic*] thither as they haue brought men, the number of the men as it is reported is a thousand.”⁷⁹

⁷⁴ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 39, Mayor of Poole to the Council, 8 Aug. 1625.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 143, Examination of Nicholas Cullen, 25 Aug. 1625.

⁷⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/2, f. 83, Examination of William Court of Plymouth, 7 May 1625. The pirates left the 23-year-old sailor William Court as well as “six of her [the Plymouth ship’s] worst men” in the ship, which came into St. Ives five days later. For further examples see TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 12, letter from Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to Sec. Conway, 3 Aug. 1625. The Mayor reported to Secretary Conway that he had lately received “lamentable complaynts” from the “poore captives now in Sally under the barbarous cruelty of the Moores being to the number of 800 at the least.”

⁷⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 36, Sir Richard Hutton to Lord Keeper Williams, 6 Aug. 1625.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

In the beginning of August alone, the town of Looe lost 80 mariners and sailors who were bound on a fishing voyage to Turkish pirates.⁸⁰ The pirates had within the same amount of time taken at least 27 ships, which held around 200 men according to the Mayor of Plymouth's estimations.⁸¹ In a deposition given to Sir James Perrott that August, Nicholas Cullen, the master of the barque Michael of Wexford, testified that on a Sunday only a few weeks previously, the pirates had taken about 60 men, women, and children, out of a church in Mount's Bay and carried them away as captives before landing on the Island of Lundy where they "tooke awaie the people."⁸²

The fact that some of these reports proved ungrounded simply illustrates the extent of anxieties in the West Country – anxieties aggravated by seeming inaction. As Todd Gray has indicated, Cullen's report does not appear to be backed up by any records from Mevagissey or Marazion, which is in Mount's Bay.⁸³ Similarly, though the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol wrote to the Privy Council on August 18, 1625, that Turkish pirates had seized many inhabitants on Lundy Island, a report to Edward Nicholas, the Duke of Buckingham's admiralty secretary, a week later declared that the previous report was "most untrue": only one Flemish ship had appeared near the island, and it had committed no such atrocities.⁸⁴ Such reports illustrate not only the degree to which hysteria amplified West Countrymen's sense of vulnerability but also the ways in which the "Turk" offered a compelling framework in which to couch these anxieties and, perhaps even more importantly, seize the attention of local and royal officials.

⁸⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 78, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to the Privy Council, 12 Aug. 1625.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 143, Examination of Nicholas Cullen, 25 Aug. 1625.

⁸³ Gray, "Turks, Moors, and Cornish Fishermen," 468.

⁸⁴ For report, see TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 109, Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol to the Council, 18 Aug. 1625. For report proven false, see TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 139, Chas. Harris to Nicholas, 25 Aug. 1625.

Over the next year, the fear of Turkish pirates alone crippled West Country trade. The Mayor of Bristol expressed alarm that many of the town's ships engaged in the Newfoundland trade would "perish" due to the pirates and thereby lead to the "utter undoing of many merchants, owners & mariners."⁸⁵ Meanwhile, the Grand Jury of Devon complained to their assize judge that "the whole country is debarred from their trade and therebie utterly impoverished," concluding that "the kingdom is weakned."⁸⁶ It is likely that such complaints, circulating around the West Country, fed off one another and aggravated the sense of crisis. At the end of April 1626, the Mayor of Dartmouth asked the Privy Council to take such course "that the coast may be garded, and theis infesting enemies may be suppressed," as he and his countrymen "feared that wee shall suffer much bie those Barbarians who have within theis Twelve moneths last past bereaved his Majestie of many good and serviceable subiects, and have much impoverished this part of the kingedome."⁸⁷ Three months later, Captain James Duppa wrote to Secretary Nicholas regarding Falmouth, which was in dire need of governmental protection against the "Turks men of warre"; these pirates had been "dayly visiting their ports," making it so that "noe fishermen have gone forth."⁸⁸ As Duppa concluded, if such protection failed to materialize, "heer will be noe fishing, if noe fishing, then much misery & povertye in these west parts."⁸⁹ With reports of Turkish pirate ships sailing just off the coasts, merchants feared to set sail and risk their goods and persons: for instance, due to fears of Turkish pirates, Barnstaple merchants had delayed sailing for three weeks

⁸⁵ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 163, Mayor and Commonalty of Bristol to the Lord Admiral, 27 Aug. 1625.

⁸⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 38, Petition of the Grand Jury of Devon to Sir Richard Hutton, 6 Aug. 1625.

⁸⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/25, f. 105, Mayor of Dartmouth to the Council, 28 April 1626.

⁸⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/31, f. 52, Captain James Duppa to Nicholas, 8 July 1626.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

in the late summer of 1625.⁹⁰ While local officials may have dramatized the state of affairs in order to capture the Crown's attention, the fact that officials in different West Country towns each spoke to the grievous decay of their trade reflects a shared sense and discourse of crisis. Once one town's troubles with pirates was placed and understood within a larger picture of West Country economic woes, suddenly isolated fears coalesced and became amplified, creating the perception that "Turkish" pirates forebode not only the collapse of mercantile industries but also the nation's decline.

PIRACY BECOMES POLITICIZED

Beginning under James I, the Crown confronted its maritime troubles with projects designed to make profits. In an era which witnessed the rampant sale of offices, the position of Lord High Admiral, with its associated privileges, was highly desired. Seemingly finding the profits and power derived from this position irresistible, the Duke of Buckingham purchased the sole right to the office, becoming a chief beneficiary of the Crown's maritime projects.⁹¹ Yet such private gain did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. As pirate attacks intensified on the southwest coast of England, the affected communities began to question whether the public good was being compromised in the interest of private gain. Complaints that the coasts remained undefended from pirates cast Buckingham's ability to safeguard the seas into question.

As reports reached the Privy Council of the devastations committed by Turkish pirates, the need for some expedition to alleviate the West Country's woes and appease

⁹⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 143, Examination of Nicholas Cullen, 25 Aug. 1625.

⁹¹ David D. Hebb, "Profiting from misfortune: corruption and the Admiralty under the early Stuarts." In *Politics, Religion, and Popularity in Early Stuart Britain*, ed. by Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust, and Peter Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 107, 103

coastal communities was not lost on Buckingham. Those in Buckingham's patronage network also recognized the political value of some naval action for the Duke as well as for themselves due to their accountability to county interests. In a letter to Nicholas, James Bagg, the Vice Admiral for Cornwall, underscored how the Western parts "suffer[ed] by so farr an Enymie, as the Moores and Turkes of Salley" and indicated that Buckingham would not only serve his honor but also "satisfie the Countrie" in sending a defensive fleet.⁹² Bagg spoke for the interests of many who hoped that Buckingham would send his subordinate officers against the Turks.⁹³ At the end of June 1625, Buckingham somewhat fulfilled these expectations. He ordered Sir Francis Stewart to employ two warships and several Newcastle colliers to "clear the coast" of these Turkish pirates.⁹⁴ However, Sir Francis was not to follow the pirates so far as to miss the rendezvous with Buckingham's fleet at Plymouth. Buckingham's orders indicated that, while he wished to suppress these pirates, his priorities lay elsewhere, namely with the fleet that he was preparing for an expedition against Spain. Constrained by Buckingham's orders and inadequate in the face of the supposed much larger fleet of twenty pirate ships, Sir Francis's force of five ships failed to deal any real blow against the pirates.⁹⁵

By early August, reports circulated regarding the limited effectiveness of Sir Francis's expedition against the Turkish pirates, leading West Country officials to hope that Buckingham would take further action. Writing from Plymouth, Bagg encouragingly reported to his patron Buckingham that the latter's initial orders for the fleet to patrol the

⁹² TNA, PRO SP 16/4, f. 56, James Bagg to Nicholas, 10 July 1625.

⁹³ For instance, see TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 94, John Drake's letter to his cousin James Bagg, 16 Aug. 1625.

⁹⁴ *CSPD Mar. 1625-Dec. 1626*, Vol. 3, 49, Buckingham to Sir Francis Stewart, 27 June 1625.

⁹⁵ Shortly after Sir Francis Stewart returned from the expedition, James Bagg wrote to Buckingham that Turkish pirates were "nowe to the number of Twentye Sayle upon this coast." See TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 9, James Bagg to Buckingham, 2 Aug. 1625, Plymouth; TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 78, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to the Privy Council, 12 Aug. 1625.

coast had given West Country towns “great satisfaction.” However, since Sir Francis had returned from the coast, the Turks had gained the advantage, making the “Inhabitatione doubt when the fleet is gone, they shall have noe shippes to guard the Shoares.”⁹⁶ The Mayor of Plymouth voiced a similar concern to the Privy Council; yet according to the Mayor, as Sir Francis chased the pirates between Falmouth and Plymouth, he could not get near them due to their skill.⁹⁷ The Mayor noted that he received word that the English ships had retreated to Falmouth where they remained. Sir Francis’s ineffectiveness was further exposed when a large fleet of Turkish pirates attacked the southwest coast in late August 1625. As the Venetian Ambassador Zuane Pesaro reported, “In the parts towards Cornwall, in a district near the fleet, thirty Turkish pirate ships appeared, plundered the country, carried off a large number of slaves, did immeasurable damage and committed cruelties causing such terror that seven large districts have sent their outcry to the Court, an unheard of event.”⁹⁸

Aware of public criticism of his effectiveness and the need to make his voice heard, Sir Francis proved eager to seek out the Turkish pirates and bring them to justice, particularly because these pirates sought to disguise their identity as “Turks.” On August 16, 1625, Sir Francis wrote to Buckingham that he was “much greived that theis westerne gentlemen and merchants should informe your Grace that I have given them no helpe since my coming hither for securing theis coasts.”⁹⁹ He sardonically remarked that, in response to the complaints that the merchants and local officials presented to Parliament, he would have set forth a “humble petition” for an act that would provide “faire winds at

⁹⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 9, James Bagg to Buckingham, 2 Aug. 1625, Plymouth.

⁹⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 78, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to the Privy Council, 12 Aug. 1625.

⁹⁸ *CSP Venice 1625-1626*, Vol. 19, 218, Pesaro to Doge and Senate, 26 Aug. 1625.

⁹⁹ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 95, Sir Francis Stewart’s letter to Buckingham, 16 Aug. 1625.

pleasure” to chase and suppress the pirates. On board the *Lion* in early September, Sir Francis reported to Buckingham that he had met with two small ships whose crews referred to themselves as “Hollanders.”¹⁰⁰ However, Sir Francis did not doubt that they were Turks, as he “found on board them Englishe, Frenche, Danishe, Flemishe and bloodie Colors, and lardg redd vanes on some a halfe moone on some a starre, all hidden under their Bedds.”¹⁰¹ He further revealed that these crews alleged that the Duke of Savoy, Charles Emmanuel I (1562-1630), granted them a commission to “destroy Turkes and Infidells,” yet he had “found a letter in one of their shippes to the Admirall of Algiers, senior Mustaffa Rais and without question had found many others, both to Algiers and Sallye.”¹⁰² The dissembling of the pirates created all the more reason to fear this force.

As Parliament reconvened in Oxford in August 1625, concern arose regarding the state of naval affairs and the effectiveness of Buckingham’s command. At this time, the West Country towns wrote to their burgesses of the “daily oppression they are subiect by the Salley and Turkie pyratts.”¹⁰³ While Buckingham and the King received reports of these devastations – for instance, the Mayor of Plymouth’s letter was read to Charles at Oxford – West Country towns kept their MPs apprised of the latest grievances. Such awareness enabled MPs to scrutinize the royal use of subsidies when the coasts remained so poorly protected. Making political calculations, Bagg warned Buckingham that the West Country’s grievances would invite Parliament to negotiate the grant of Tonnage and Poundage which was meant for guarding the seas and intended shortly for renewal. In

¹⁰⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/6, f. 22, Sir Francis Stewart to Buckingham, 5 Sept. 1625.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 9, James Bagg to Buckingham, 2 Aug. 1625.

order to avoid further scrutiny, Bagg encouraged Buckingham to provide for West Country security with a greater presence on the seas, for “this feare of theirs being cleerd, will sweeten all proceedings and give them the better hope of the Virginia and Newfoundland Returnes, upon the safetie of which there wellfare, and wealth much depends.”¹⁰⁴ The corporation of Bristol already feared for their Newfoundland ships and wrote to Buckingham of the pressing need to protect the Severn River from Turkish pirates threatening their trade.¹⁰⁵ They entreated the Lord Admiral to grant them a commission to set forth ships to “scower & defend” the river and areas as far north as Davies Head and as far west as Waterford in Ireland in order to “make lawful prize of any pirate.”¹⁰⁶

The issue of “Turkish” piracy both played into and aggravated existing political tensions between patronage networks. While some local officials under Buckingham’s patronage reported directly to him, others sought the attention of the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall William Herbert, the third earl of Pembroke – Buckingham’s chief rival and the greatest aristocratic electoral patron.¹⁰⁷ On August 10, the Justices of Cornwall wrote to Pembroke, asking him to take some “speedye course” to free the coast of pirates and thereby ensure that not only the “poore Townes” in the West Country could continue their fishing trade but also the country would be “secure and free from daunger.”¹⁰⁸ As a great landowner in western England and southern and central Wales, Pembroke had a personal stake in securing the coast from pirates, yet he also would have had a political

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 163, The Mayor and Commonalty of Bristol to the Lord Admiral about freeing river of Severn from Turkish pirates, 27 Aug. 1625.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ See John K. Gruenfelder, *Influence in Early Stuart Elections 1604-1640* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1981), 123-4.

¹⁰⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 71, Justices of Cornwall to Earl of Pembroke, Lord Lieutenant, 10 Aug. 1625.

interest in calling into question Buckingham's authority and effectiveness as Lord Admiral and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.¹⁰⁹

On August 11, 1625, the House of Commons turned their attention to piracy. Sir Francis Nethersole wrote to Sir Dudley Carleton that, "after a long great complaine of many piracyes committed on the Westerne coastes by Turkes" in which MPs did not hesitate to place the blame on the Lord Admiral, the business was referred to a House committee."¹¹⁰ On that day various letters and petitions were presented from aggrieved subjects, who spoke of the many injuries done to them "upon the sea and sea coasts by the pyrats [the 'Turks'], Dunkerkers, Rochellers"; William Legg's letter from Salé of June 1625 was read, detailing how he and others had been sold at Salé and tormented and how "divers [were] forst to turne Turkes" due to their lost hope of redemption in captivity.¹¹¹ Another letter from John Barker reported "great spoyle" on the English coasts by these pirates.¹¹² The discussion quickly became politicized, as opponents of Buckingham with ties to areas most affected by "Turkish" pirate raids criticized the Admiralty's ineffectiveness and failure to suppress the pirates: Sir Robert Mansell and John Glanville, representing Glamorgan and Plymouth, respectively, argued that "the Kinge's shippes doe nothings, goeing up and downe feasting in every good porte" and that "directions were naught, and that all the dangers grewe by our ignorant courses."¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ See Gruenfelder, *Influence in Early Stuart Elections*, 123-4.

¹¹⁰ Sir Francis Nethersole to Sir Dudley Carleton, 11 Aug. 1625, Oxford. In *Debates in the House of Commons in 1625*, ed. by Samuel Rawson Gardiner (Printed for the Camden Society, 1873), Appendix, 161.

¹¹¹ Proceedings of 11 Aug. 1625 in House of Commons. In *Debates in the House of Commons in 1625*, 116-7.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 117.

At the time, Mansell appeared to be coming within Pembroke's orbit of influence, as the latter enlisted him in the "power struggle" against Buckingham by early 1626.¹¹⁴

Throughout the summer and autumn of 1625, Buckingham had devoted his attention to the Cadiz Expedition against Spain, which appeared designed to regain the honor and prestige that he and Charles had lost over the debacle of the Spanish marriage negotiations two years previously.¹¹⁵ However, with the dismal failure of this expedition and the calling of the 1626 Parliament, Buckingham once again drew criticism both for his failings as Lord Admiral and for the manner in which he accrued privileges and power. A satirical poem had the Duke of Buckingham state, "I from the pirats a third share receive; / Or that I correspond with forreyne states / (Whether the kings foes or confederates,) / To plott the ruine of the king and state."¹¹⁶ Buckingham's failure to safeguard the seas and his profit from and disbursement of confiscated pirate goods appeared suspicious. When the puritan minister Robert Bolton delivered a lecture at Kettering in 1626, his description and condemnation of those who "deale like a Turk" seemed to mirror the charges leveled at Buckingham. Using his lecture as a platform from which to denounce ignorance, profanity, and most importantly, those who exercised power wickedly, Bolton criticized men who "resolve[d] without remorse or shame, to defraud, dissemble, bribe, oppresse, put to Usury, serve the time" and who, for their

¹¹⁴ "Mansell, Sir Robert (1570/71–1652)," Andrew Thrush in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17992> (accessed June 18, 2014).

¹¹⁵ In the lead-up to the Cadiz Expedition, John Harrison, the agent in Morocco, attempted to raise an army of 10,000 anti-Spanish Moriscos in Morocco with the approval of the secretary of state, Sir Albertus Morton. See "Harrison, John (d. 1641x52)," Nabil Matar in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12435> (accessed March 6, 2013). Thus, while Moroccan pirates preyed upon English shipping, the English government sought the help of their countrymen against Spain.

¹¹⁶ "The Copie of His Grace's Most Excellent Rotomontados." From Sloane MS, No. 826. Presented in *Poems and Songs Relating to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham*. Ed. by Frederick W. Fairholt (London: Printed for the Percy Society, 1850).

“advantage and rising,” “cloake[d] crueltie with conscience” and in all purposes began “to deale like a Turke.”¹¹⁷

In the interests of deflecting criticism for an inability to guard the coasts and protect West Countrymen against the pirates, Buckingham laid the blame on the times and on the limited resources at his disposal. During the Lords’ debates in March 1626, Buckingham addressed the “cause that stirres theis Turkishe pyrats,” suggesting that the expedition against Algiers several years previously only “dyd incense them to come hether.”¹¹⁸ He added further that the mere £22,000 *per annum* appointed to defray the costs of coastal defense made it “ympossible to defende the coastes from theis Turkes, from the Spaniards, and Dunkerks.”¹¹⁹ In identifying the shortage of money as the reason for naval deficiencies, Buckingham deflected the blame from himself to Parliament’s hesitancy to grant subsidies – an issue that he and the King had pushed in the 1625 parliament.¹²⁰

When the Commons formally presented their charges against Buckingham in the spring of 1626, they accused him of purchasing the offices of Lord Admiral and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports as well as failing to provide for coastal defenses against pirates.¹²¹ In June Buckingham formally addressed the Commons, acknowledging the charges against him and the assumptions that his shortcomings had led to the “ignominious infesting of the Coasts with Pirats and Enemies,” “the endangering of the

¹¹⁷ Robert Bolton, *Some generall directions for a comfortable walking with God deliuered ina lecture at Kettering in Northhamptonshire*, 2nd ed., (London: 1626), 278-79. Bolton dedicated his lecture to Lord Edward Montagu of Boughton, a patron of godly ministers, who interestingly depended upon the backing of Buckingham in local quarrels.

¹¹⁸ *Notes of the Debates in the House of Lords: Officially taken by Henry Elsynge*, ed. from the original MS by Samuel Rawson Gardiner (Westminster: Printed for the Camden Society, 1879), 132.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ It was said that those who “usually stand stiffest for the country” expressed the greatest reservations in Parliament when supply was debated in August 1625. See Lockyer, *Buckingham*, 256.

¹²¹ See Lockyer, *Buckingham*, 321-7.

Dominion of these Seas, the extreme loss of the Merchants, and the decay of the Trade and Strength of the Kingdom.”¹²² He specifically addressed the “Pirates of *Sallie*” and the West Country’s grievances, stating that it had been “but very lately that they [the pirates] found the way unto our Coasts, where, by surprise, they might easily do hurt.”¹²³ He then assured the Commons that “there hath been that provision taken by his Majesty, not without the care of the Duke, both by force and treaty to repress them for the time to come, as will give good satisfaction.”¹²⁴

As the West Country sent numerous reports of devastations committed by Turkish pirates to Buckingham, he had his attention focused on Turkey, but for matters of private gain. Buckingham as well as other Privy Councilors entrusted Sir Thomas Roe, the English Ambassador in Constantinople, with acquiring ancient artifacts and precious stones in Turkey and sending them back to England for private collections. At the end of August 1625, Roe wrote apologetically to the Duke, admitting his failure to secure the jewel the “blacke goddesse from Alexandria” – “esteemed the jewell of all the stones in this part of the world” – for the latter.¹²⁵ Yet Roe professed, “I have not left any probable citty unsearcht into, and heare of divers peeces... Some I am absolutely promised, but nothing entire; halfe bodyes, heads and bustos. In Salonica a Jewe hath a whole marble, and ancient: I have procured letters to the metropolitan to buy it, if mony will prevaile. From Angora I am in hope, at least, of a faire lyon.”¹²⁶ Promising to send Buckingham all that he could procure, Roe asserted his eagerness to serve the Duke. Meanwhile, Thomas

¹²² John Rushworth, *Historical Collections of Private Passages of State*, Vol. I (London: Printed by Tho. Newcomb for George Thomason, 1721), 381.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 382.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ Sir Thomas Roe to the Duke of Buckingham, 26 Aug. 1625. In *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe in His Embassy to the Ottoman Porte* (1740), 433.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 434.

Howard, the Earl of Arundel and the other great aristocratic patron besides Buckingham and Pembroke, employed both Roe and another agent, Mr. Petty, to secure these same treasures. Tensions arose between Roe and Petty when the latter worked covertly to purchase treasures solely for Arundel. The collection of these objects from Turkey thus manifested the internal competition of the Privy Councilors – a competition stiffened by personal animosities. Knowing that Arundel was aware that Buckingham had given similar orders for the collection of treasures, Roe wrote to the Earl that Buckingham would not be pleased if Petty took all things before or from him.¹²⁷ While the Privy Councilors focused on accumulation of treasures for their own private gain, diplomatic and economic matters appeared relegated to secondary importance. In the very same letter to Buckingham concerning artifacts from Turkey, Roe complained of the few instructions that he received concerning his diplomatic responsibilities. As he stated, “I have walked herein in Egiptian darkness, without any answe, or other intimation of his majesties orders... I beseech your grace, affoord me the comfort and fauour of some directions.”¹²⁸

Perceptions of political corruption played into undercurrents of suspicion regarding whether the court tended to the “public good.” As Richard Cust has indicated, already in a 1624 election, the local politician John Poulett spread the rumor that his rival Sir Robert Phelips “had forsaken the country and was turned courtier” as a means of tarnishing Phelips’ reputation and making him lose the “good opinion of the country.”¹²⁹ In appearing to serve his own interests as Privy Councilor and failing to protect the West

¹²⁷ Sir Thomas Roe to the Earl of Arundel, 20/30 Oct. 1625. In *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe*, 444.

¹²⁸ Sir Thomas Roe to the Duke of Buckingham, 26 Aug. 1625. In *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe*, 434.

¹²⁹ Cust, “Politics and the Electorate in the 1620s,” 154.

Country from the “Turks” as Admiral, Buckingham appeared to preside over a political system in a state of disorder. Buckingham’s agents were not immune from similar suspicions of corruption. In December 1625 James Bagg, Buckingham’s chief western agent and the one who reported most frequently to Buckingham about the “Turkish” pirates, came under suspicion that he had poorly victualled the Cadiz fleet to “save charge,” for his “private gain,” or “out of evil affection”; Walter Yonge, a Justice of the Peace, wrote that regardless of the reason, Bagg was “unfit to be employed in the same again.”¹³⁰ These suspicions regarding corruption surrounding Buckingham and his network – suspicions only heightened by the degree to which West Countrymen’s anxious reports of “Turks” were met by inaction – had ramifications for shifting political dynamics in those affected counties. Indeed, royal inaction seemed to suggest not only corruption but also broken channels of communication. Cust and Gruenfelder have both noted the degree to which Buckingham’s patronage in Cornwall declined after 1625, attributing this change to Pembroke’s rising influence and eventual opposition to the Forced Loan of 1626.¹³¹ Yet I would also argue that experience with “Turkish” pirates, royal inaction, and perceived corruption surrounding Buckingham and his agents eroded the trust that the local communities had in Buckingham’s authority and created space for resistance to his influence.

THE DISINTEREST OF CHARLES I

While the Duke as Lord Admiral seemingly prioritized other issues over the safety of West Country towns and their trade, Charles I also appeared indifferent or

¹³⁰ *Diary of Walter Yonge*, 89.

¹³¹ Gruenfelder, *Influence in Early Stuart Elections*, 147-8; Cust, “Politics and the Electorate in the 1620s,” 156-9.

unwilling to engage with the larger problem of piracy and English captivity. The King's response to the arrival of an Ottoman emissary in 1625 illustrated his inattentiveness to matters of diplomatic and economic importance as well as the degree to which merchants began to doubt his concern for their interests. The emissary, or chiaus, came to confirm England's peace and establish an "everlasting truce" with the North African regencies.¹³² Coming from Constantinople by way of Algiers, the chiaus Jaafar Agha – or "Giaffer Aga" – had an audience with Charles in April in which he brought a present of Barbary horses, tigers, and lions as well as 50 captives.¹³³ In May 1625 a newsbook reported, "There is a Turkish Ambassadour arived in England, (as wee understand here) to present his Majestie of great Britaine with 150 Englishmen which have bin made slaues, and some Lyons, Leopards, and other beasts of Barbary, being charged to treat about the traffick."¹³⁴ Yet despite this gift and the fact that the chiaus "wold have taken upon him the state of an ambassador," he found himself "little welcome" and was "receved only as a messenger."¹³⁵

Over the next several months, the King's inattentiveness to the confirmation of the peace frustrated not only Jaafar but also his councilors and the Levant Company merchants, who feared that this slight would jeopardize an already tenuous peace and endanger English trade. Writing to Secretary Conway on August 8, Nicholas Leatt declared that the Turkish Ambassador would in no ways be satisfied unless he kissed the

¹³² TNA, PRO SP 16/521, f. 34, Egidio Ouwens to Marco and Michelle Moons in Venice, 29 April 1625.

¹³³ Ibid. See also TNA, PRO SP 16/1, f. 113, John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 23 April 1625.

¹³⁴ *The Continuation of Our Weekly Newes from the 12 of May to the 19 of the same*, no. 22, 19 May 1625 (London: Printed for Mercurivs Brittanicus), 11.

¹³⁵ TNA, PRO SP 16/521, f. 34, Egidio Ouwens to Marco and Michelle Moons in Venice, 29 April 1625; TNA, PRO SP 16/1, f. 113, John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, 23 April 1625.

King's hand and received confirmation of the peace from Charles's "owne mouth."¹³⁶ Leatt firmly reminded Conway that the Ambassador had made the voyage for the "love of our nation," stressing the importance of this mission not only for the Turkey Company but also for all of England.¹³⁷ Should this peace fall out, Leatt declared, they might expect all of the English captives enslaved in North Africa to remain in miserable bondage.¹³⁸ Leatt suggested that Charles give the chiaus a ring of one or two hundred pounds to content him and mentioned that the "turkey company will not be sparinge to gratifie him further."¹³⁹ Jaafar also took matters into his own hands, writing to Secretary Conway that he expected to meet with the councilor and treat upon the business entrusted to him by the Grand Signor and the divan of Algiers. Stating, "I see things do not goe according to the accord made att Constantinople," Jaafar warned of the "inconveniencies which may happen" should he go away without satisfaction.¹⁴⁰ However, Secretary Conway and Charles initially ignored these warnings regarding the ramifications for English trade and those captives held in North Africa.

It was not until the very end of August that Charles decided to acknowledge Jaafar, and this attention appeared only retroactive, precipitated by reports of the fair treatment given by Turks to important Englishmen returning from the Virginia colony. At the beginning of September, Secretary Conway wrote to the Governor of the Levant Company, Hugh Hammersley, that Charles had recently been informed that Sir Francis Wyatt or "some other principall person" returning from Virginia had "beene mett with or

¹³⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 62, Nicholas Leatt to Sec. Conway, 8 Aug. 1625. See also TNA, PRO SP 71/1, f. 63.

¹³⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 62. Buckingham similarly reported that the Ambassador had "ever favoured our Nation" and that the latter had negotiated the peace with Algiers to the best of his ability. See TNA, PRO SP 16/6, f. 230, Buckingham to the King, 30 Sept. 1625.

¹³⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 62, Nicholas Leatt to Sec. Conway.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ TNA, PRO SP 71/1, f. 62, Giaffer Aga to Conway, 10 Aug. 1625.

taken by the Turkes and used with so much equity and humanitie.”¹⁴¹ Thus, as Conway also wrote to the Turkey Company, “If the Turkey messenger be not gone, his Majesty will give him accesse, moved thereunto by the good usage which some Turkes had given to Sir Francis Wyatt.”¹⁴² While Conway identified Wyatt as the “principall person” taken by the Turks, it is more likely that this person was in fact George Sandys, treasurer for the Virginia colony, who had narrowly escaped Turkish pirates on his way back to England in 1625.¹⁴³ Appreciative of this civil treatment given to one of his own colonial officials, Charles expressed his desire to “hold the like faire proceeding with [Turks] upon all occasions” and “use him [the Ambassador] withall due respect and honor.”¹⁴⁴ Yet despite this abrupt turnaround in Charles’s attentions, delays continued.

When Charles and Buckingham finally gave Jaafar satisfaction, their negotiations appeared designed to improve the odds of Buckingham’s fleet against Spain rather than solidify any real diplomatic ties. The nature of these negotiations led some to believe that the Court would collude with pirates to implement its anti-Spanish designs. On September 30, 1625, Buckingham wrote to the King that the Turkish Ambassador sent from Algiers, who had already been moved to Dover and then to Plymouth, had expressed displeasure that his presents were not only unrewarded but also ascribed to the merchants.¹⁴⁵ Crucially, Buckingham stressed that the chiaus was willing to give assurance that Charles’s forces would have “readie assistance from Algiers, Tunis, & all those partes of Afrique both with men & shipps as occasion shall require & that they shall

¹⁴¹ TNA, PRO SP 105/109, f. 94, Lord Conway to the Governor of the Levant Company, 1 Sept. 1625.

¹⁴² TNA, PRO SP 14/214, f. 116, Secretary Conway to the Turkey Company, 1 Sept. 1625. See also TNA, PRO SP 16/521, f. 274. Charles had reappointed Wyatt as Royal Governor of Virginia in May 1625.

¹⁴³ “Sandys, George (1578–1644),” James Ellison in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24651> (accessed May 16, 2013).

¹⁴⁴ TNA, PRO SP 105/109, f. 94, Lord Conway to the Governor of the Levant Company, 1 Sept. 1625.

¹⁴⁵ TNA, PRO SP 16/6, f. 230, Buckingham to the King, 30 Sept. 1625.

have a safe retreat thither & accomodacon with all manner of victualls & necessarie what soever.”¹⁴⁶ Employing his influence when he realized the usefulness of resources from the Barbary states and the advantage of having safe harbors there for his expedition against Spain, Buckingham related that the Ambassador had encouraged Charles to write two letters, one to the pasha and another to the divan of Algiers, to require the assistance he thought fit. The chiaus declared his willingness to carry these letters to Algiers and return with satisfactory answers. It appears that Charles approved these plans, as late in the fall, Leatt ordered James Frizell, the English consul in Algiers, to present 1,075 eight-real coins – silver coins minted in the Spanish Empire – to Jaafar Aga and his followers.¹⁴⁷ Foreign emissaries reached their own conclusions regarding the significance and purpose of the gift. On November 3, 1625, the Venetian Ambassador Zuane Pesaro reported to the Doge and Senate that the Earl of Carlisle had told him in strictest confidence that the “king had decided to send 60,000 crowns to present to the Porte to frustrate the Spanish negotiations with the Turks. They had sent back a Chiaus richly rewarded.”¹⁴⁸ Yet Pesaro expressed his belief to the Doge and Senate that “they mean to move the pirates with the advantage of the fleet, rather than proceed to the Porte with such a rich present.”¹⁴⁹ Suspicions remained that the fruits of Jaafar’s diplomatic labors went to supporting designs against Spain rather than safeguarding trade.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ *CSPD 1625-1649*, Vol. 523, 118, breviat of letters from James Frizell, 18 Nov. 1625.

¹⁴⁸ *CSP Venice 1625-1626*, Vol. 19, 290, Pesaro to Doge and Senate, 3 Nov. 1625.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

“TURKS” ON ENGLISH SOIL

While corsairs captured and brought thousands of English sailors and merchants to Algiers and Tunis, English fleets similarly captured “Turkish” men-of-war, seizing not only goods but also the pirates who manned them. In the mid-1620s, reports reached London of dozens – even hundreds – of Turkish pirates brought into West Country ports and there held captive until further direction from the Privy Council. Yet these instructions proved infrequent and conflicting, reflecting an already strained government forced to confront multiple troubles including disease, financial difficulties, and military failures as well as divided by personal interests and factions. Though West Country officials repeatedly wrote to the Council for further directions, these men often found themselves compelled to use their own discretion in dealing with their Turkish prisoners. While some of these prisoners were immediately executed, others were held for periods of time in county gaols at the great expense of their gaolers. The absence of a lead from the center created opportunities for corruption and heightened the sense that the West Country was on its own in the struggle against piracy.

While the Privy Council originally instructed the West Country towns to deliver their Turkish prisoners to the Levant Company, such a transfer did not necessarily happen due to the very nature of ransoming. As Nabil Matar has illustrated, “rampant favoritism” surrounded the ransoming – or nonransoming – of captives: as the “receaver generall” of the contributions to redeem captives, the Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbot received collections from the various relatives and parishes of captives and then authorized payments to particular agents on advice from the Privy Council.¹⁵⁰ Thus, the Privy Council, the Archbishop, and the King wielded the authority to distribute ransom

¹⁵⁰ Matar, *Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2005), 50.

money, and such a distribution chain allowed intermediaries the opportunity to embezzle money or distribute the collections in a way most beneficial to themselves.¹⁵¹ When other matters distracted the King and Council, subordinates and members of Buckingham's patronage network could also interpret instructions according to their own interests. The Council often relied passively on the word of these subordinates – the exceptions being the Forced Loan and collection of ship money around which the military and financial crisis demanded further action and enforcement.¹⁵² As Sir John Coke, one of the king's two principal secretaries, complained, "I have written so manie particular and tedious letters to the Lord Admiral that I may feare hee never readeth them over, because in his returns I find no directions given to things of most importance."¹⁵³ Attention to any particular problem such as the maintenance of Turkish prisoners depended upon the concern of a councilor, which given the other business the Council oversaw, proved difficult.¹⁵⁴

By 1624 the capture and incarceration of Turkish pirates in the West Country was not an unusual occurrence. Writing to Buckingham in February 1625 from Exeter, Sir John Eliot reported on the fates of the Turks and renegades from Constantinople and Algiers that had come in at Plymouth in the previous year: the pirates along with some others who had "bene accidentlie in the Gaole, and upon former tryal neglected" – 23 in total – had been found guilty of all offences. Eliot reprieved five of the prisoners and sentenced the rest to execution. While some of pirates brought into West Country ports were sentenced to death, others were retained in public or private custody. In April 1625

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Derek Hirst, "The Privy Council and Problems of Enforcement in the 1620s." In *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Autumn, 1978), 52.

¹⁵³ Cited by Hirst, "The Privy Council and Problems of Enforcement," 55.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 58.

the Privy Council wrote to West Country towns regarding the “Turkes” and “Mores” in their custody, stating, “Wee doo hereby require and expresly charge you, to send them with all convenient speede to the Governor of the Turkey Companie or to such as hee shall thinke fit to appoint to the receiving of them, or els to give us an accompt what is become of them.”¹⁵⁵ While Bristol and Exeter were each listed as holding only three or four each, Plymouth held 30 Turks and Moors. Baronet Seymour was listed as holding 10.¹⁵⁶ Within the next year, however, the number of “Turks” taken prisoner soared with the constant pirate attacks off the southwestern coasts.

Complaints regarding the lack of instructions in managing these prisoners regularly reached Buckingham’s admiralty secretary, Edward Nicholas, who not only managed the suits of those hoping to gain entrance to the Duke’s patronage network but also dealt with the disbursements of seized pirate ships and goods. In early 1626, Captain John Mason, Commissary General for victualling the fleet and army, wrote to Nicholas again of a ship from Salé called the Good Fortune, which he had taken off the coast of Ireland and brought into St. Ives.¹⁵⁷ He had received no word from the Lord Admiral Buckingham touching its disposal. Similarly, Francis Bassett, the Vice-Admiral of North Cornwall, who played an important role in overseeing the handling of Turkish captives, complained to Nicholas of the lack of instructions. Writing to Nicholas on May 24, 1626, Bassett expressed frustration that he had not received any instructions regarding the handling of a Turkish man-of-war brought within his vice admiralty in the previous

¹⁵⁵ TNA, PRO PC 2/33, f. 23, Message regarding custody of Turks and Moors, 25 April 1625.

¹⁵⁶ “Baronet Seymour” most likely referred to Sir Edward Seymour, knight and third baronet (1610-88) of Berry Pomeroy, Devon. See mention in “Seymour, Sir Edward, fourth baronet (1633–1708),” D. W. Hayton in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25162> (accessed June 12, 2014). Also see mention in TNA, PRO SP 16/25, f. 16, Mayor of Dartmouth’s letter to the Council, 28 April 1626.

¹⁵⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/20, f. 81, Captain John Mason to Nicholas, 2 Feb. 1626.

month. Since that time, another small ship had been brought into St. Ives by merchants from Looe who were taken by this Turkish man-of-war at the end of April while on their way to Newfoundland for a fishing voyage. These merchants had managed to rebel, slay seven or eight pirates, and take command of 32 “Turks” who were under hatches. Bassett stressed that he was at great charge for the “watching of thos doggs” and desired “to bee freed of both as soone as possible may be.”¹⁵⁸ Such prisoners proved a great charge due to their diet and the guards needed to watch them “least they should doe mischieffe & escape.”¹⁵⁹ Bassett entreated Nicholas to instruct him in these matters and “how soever forth I ought to have in those occasions proceeded towards our greater Maister [Buckingham] by way of information” so that he would “not commit error.”¹⁶⁰ While waiting for instruction, Bassett often had to make do with the local resources that he had, paying a widow £3 13s in one instance to feed nine of the prisoners for six weeks and later employing her again for the same task.¹⁶¹ Even then such sustenance was rather limited: when Bassett was finally able to send the prisoners to a neighboring gaol, he had to hire a horse to carry one of the prisoners who was too ill to walk.¹⁶²

In addition to the great charge of keeping these prisoners, West Country officials feared that the pirates would escape and carry away ships as well as information that would further compromise coastal security. By June 1626 Nicholas recorded that St. Ives had received 41 “Turks” while Padstow had taken in 80.¹⁶³ Forced to care for their Turkish captives, Bassett and other inhabitants of St. Ives petitioned the Privy Council

¹⁵⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/27, f. 81, Francis Bassett to Nicholas, 24 May 1626.

¹⁵⁹ TNA, PRO SP 16/30, f. 37, Francis Bassett to Nicholas, 17 June 1626.

¹⁶⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/27, f. 81.

¹⁶¹ Royal Institution of Cornwall, Thurstann Peter transcripts. Cited by Todd Gray, “Turks, Moors, and Cornish Fishermen,” 465-66.

¹⁶² Gray, “Turks, Moors, and Cornish Fishermen,” 466.

¹⁶³ TNA, PRO SP 16/29, f. 14, Minute as to the 41 Turks brought into St. Ives, 2 June 1626.

that spring for the Turks to be transported elsewhere. According to Bassett, his fellow townsmen were “in much feare of them, lest being abroad, they might twoe much observe the coaste there and gett some boate or barque and escape, returne to their further annoyance.”¹⁶⁴ Bassett asked for approval to send the Turkish prisoners to Cornwall’s common gaol in Launceston, which was “farr remote from the coaste” and would thereby allow the prisoner to be “more safely kept and not be able by observation of the coaste to doe harme thereafter.”¹⁶⁵ Receiving these reports, Nicholas recorded a motion to be made at the Privy Council in June, indicating that “to kepe them [the Turks] long & to permitt them to goe abroad to worke would make them too well acquainted with the country” and that these Turks “might take an opportunity to steale some barque & escape.”¹⁶⁶ Yet the Council once again was slow to send instructions, and aggravating the problem was the fact that Bassett received separate instructions from other parties, including the Commissioners of the Navy who had ordered him to put the Turks to death.¹⁶⁷ Meanwhile, others from London had told him to dispose of them with his friends, but as he wrote, he could not “finde any man so madd as to meddle with them besydes some of them are so old, as they are unfitt for any service.”¹⁶⁸

Conflicting instructions sent by a divided Privy Council compounded the problems caused by delays. On June 27, 1626, the Privy Council met at Whitehall and discussed the matter of Turkish prisoners. The Lords decided that these prisoners should be delivered to the Levant Company or the King’s agent in Morocco, John Harrison, “to

¹⁶⁴ TNA, PRO SP 16/524, f. 28, Petition of Francis Bassett, May 1626.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ TNA, PRO SP 16/29, f. 14.

¹⁶⁷ TNA, PRO SP 16/30, f. 37, Francis Bassett to Nicholas, 17 June 1626.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

be disposed of by him” or exchanged for English subjects held captive in Barbary.¹⁶⁹ The Council shared Bassett’s concern that the captives would endanger the West Country if they were given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the coast. Yet other minutes of the Council included one motion by Buckingham that the “41 Turkes now at St Ives may be brought to Launceston prison, where they may be safer kept, & cannot informe themselves soe well of the Coast, as they may doe att St Ives.”¹⁷⁰ Thus, while some instructions directed West Country officials to deliver the Turkish prisoners to John Harrison or the Levant Company, others commanded the Turks to be moved inland to the Launceston gaol.

In theory the Turks taken captive were to be exchanged for the English captives in North Africa, yet the logistics of managing this exchange and the danger involved often served as a deterrent.¹⁷¹ Interests of the public good thus gave way in the face of administrative inaction and political and military difficulties. Just as seized pirates’ goods offered a ready source of wealth to those in positions of power, certain individuals profited from the Council’s indecisiveness and preoccupation with other matters by selling the Turkish prisoners into slavery in the Mediterranean. Such individuals justified taking possession of the prisoners by indicating that the costs of maintaining these Turks in England were unsustainable. Claiming to speak for many Cornwall inhabitants, a man by the name of Charles Barrett petitioned both the Privy Council and Buckingham regarding how the West Country towns had “byn a long tyme & are still grevously

¹⁶⁹ TNA, PRO PC 2/33, f. 362, Meeting at Whitehall, 27 June 1626.

¹⁷⁰ TNA, PRO SP 16/34, f. 186, Nicholas’s minutes of motion to be made at the Council, Aug.? 1626.

¹⁷¹ At this time ransoming exchanges between Europe and North Africa involved a number of figures and organizations – merchants, diplomats, religious orders, charity organizations, and royal or municipal institutions – as well as a number of related costs, which included taxes, customs, transit fees, middlemen commissions, and various financial services. See Kaiser and Calafat, “The Economy of Ransoming,” 115-6.

burdened & much oppressed with an unnecessary charge” of “retayneing and releeving many Turks brought as prisoners into this his Majesty’s kingdome.”¹⁷² Sending these prisoners inland merely augmented the charges. Barrett derided the policy of exchanging prisoners because the Turks “will not release one English captive for 10 of theis Turkish prisoners.”¹⁷³ He thus requested that the Council free the petitioners from this “unnecessary charge” and order that “all the sayd Turkish prisoners now in Cornewall may be forthwith delivered by order from your honors unto your petitioner Charles Barrett.”¹⁷⁴ As further encouragement, Barrett assured the Council that he or those whom he appointed would “transport them [the Turkish prisoners] beyond the seas at their owne charge and imploy them for the redemption of many of his Majesties subiects now in cruell captivitie in Barbary.”¹⁷⁵ Convinced by Barrett’s arguments of a prisoner exchange, the Privy Council issued a new set of instructions approving Barrett’s plan, exposing its inefficiencies by contradicting earlier orders to deliver the prisoners to Harrison or transport them to Launceston.¹⁷⁶ Only a few months later the Council issued yet another warrant, clarifying that though Barrett was entitled to all of those Turks and Moors present in Launceston or “in any other place of the said Countye” before September 29, all of the Moors taken since September 29 were to be delivered to Harrison.¹⁷⁷

Fueling internal competition between its members, patronage networks gave rise to jealousies as individuals attempted to win favor and further their own advancement.

¹⁷² TNA, PRO SP 16/36, f. 118, Petition of Charles Barrett to the Privy Council, 28 Sept. 1626. Also see similar petition to Buckingham, TNA, PRO SP 16/36, f. 119.

¹⁷³ TNA, PRO SP 16/36, f. 118.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.* Also see similar petition to Buckingham, TNA, PRO SP 16/36, f. 119.

¹⁷⁶ TNA, PRO PC 2/34, f. 119. Meeting at Whitehall, 29 Sept. 1626.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, f. 192b, A warrant for the delivery of Moores and Turkes to Charles Barrett, 12 Dec. 1626.

The clash between Bassett and Barrett over the handling of Turkish prisoners reflected this internal competition. In late November 1626, John Sorrell, the keeper of the Launceston gaol, reported to Barrett that Bassett had sent him about 50 Turkish prisoners but “did not send with them, nor ever since they came to prison anie allowance for their maintenance.”¹⁷⁸ In order to cover the great charge of maintaining them, Sorrell “suffred them to begge by the way of releife” and had since then maintained them at his own and the county’s expense.¹⁷⁹ He added that as a further affront, Bassett had taken their ship and goods “worth about five hundred poundes” and that when the Turks arrived at the prison, they had “neither money nor clothes to cover their nakednes.”¹⁸⁰ In his position as Lord High Admiral, Buckingham oversaw the disbursement of confiscated pirate goods, and members of his patronage network gained access to these prizes as well. The subsequent channeling of goods risked generating resentment, especially in communities already economically and socially strained.

While Cornwall officials voiced their complaints against Bassett, Barrett did not remain immune from criticism either, implicating the inefficiency and corruption of the entire system. Writing to the King, Harrison declared,

There is one Mr Barrett whoe hath gone about upon some misinformations given to the Lords to transporte some Turks and Mores from hence, pretendinge to carry them for Barbery to redeeme captives (as he saith which I have left unredeemed which is none at all for I cleared all at Salley) but indeede (as twice hath bin discovered) to carry them unto Ligornoe in Italy their to be sould for slaves.¹⁸¹

Harrison not only wanted to clear his own name but also expose the perfidious covert operations of another. The agent added that while he was negotiating a treaty at Salé, a

¹⁷⁸ TNA, PRO SP 16/40, f. 85, John Sorrell to Charles Barrett, 30 Nov. 1626.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ TNA, PRO SP 16/44, f. 166, John Harrison to the King, Undated 1626.

certain “Captain Quayle” had captured and then thrown overboard “a number of the Mores and Moriscoes” – an event which had almost “overthrowne all the whole businesse and indangered all our lyves.”¹⁸² Harrison’s letter speaks to the confusion of the entire system of handling prisoners, which allowed individuals to pursue private gain due to a distracted and divided Council.

Not until the spring and summer of 1627 did Charles and his Council turn their attention to “Turks” who had been captured and imprisoned in the realm, yet once again Charles’s attention to the matter appeared retroactive as a response to outside pressures. The desire to negate charges of English piracy against Ottoman shipping and lessen strains on already exhausted funds catalyzed this shift. In early 1627, Sultan Murad IV informed Charles that he had sent imperial instructions to the Tunisian and Algerian viceroys to take heed “not to doe any wrong or violence to any of the [English] merchants.”¹⁸³ Seemingly attempting to shake the otherwise royal indifference, Sir Thomas Roe wrote to Charles to emphasize the importance of answering the Sultan with “good words for good words.” Roe indicated that the Sultan and his ministers had “vehement complaynt” against English privateers who preyed upon Ottoman shipping and that controversy “proceedeth of feare what may be done in those seas, to the great hinderance of the Grand Signor’s reueneu.”¹⁸⁴ Suggesting the need for diplomatic reciprocation, Roe’s letters spoke to the dangers of allowing such complaints to go

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ TNA, PRO SP 97/13, f. 20b-21, Sultan to Charles I, 20 Jan. 1627. Hearing of the Algerian viceroy’s arbitrary imprisonment of the English consult and merchants, Murad also declared that he had sought to bring the perpetrators to justice.

¹⁸⁴ TNA, PRO SP 97/13, f. 29, Sir Thomas Roe to Charles I, 17/27 Feb. 1627.

unaddressed. As Roe later confided in Lord Conway, “The Grand Signor will not leave the spoyle of his subjects in those parts, nor the enterrupting of his Trades.”¹⁸⁵

As was the case with Charles’s treatment of the emissary Jaafar, only reports of the goodwill and justice employed by the Ottomans or “Turks” drove the King to act and prove his integrity as well. Several months after receiving the Sultan’s letter, Charles responded by expressing his gratitude for the Sultan’s fair treatment, addressing the charges of English piracy, and finally attending to the matter of Turkish prisoners in England. Deflecting criticism regarding English injustices committed, the King wrote, “Wee are informed that some others, not being of our Merchants or subjects, but the subjects of other Princes or States, have committed some outrages and offences in those parts, and it is very probable that to disguise their own faults and to call aspersion and blame upon our People, they may have deceitfully and injuriously carried the flagg or Colors of England.”¹⁸⁶ Charles hoped to exonerate English subjects from the very charges of piracy that they leveled against the “Turks.” Meanwhile, in order to demonstrate their own integrity, Charles and his Council directed inquiries to be made into “Turks” who remained in London after being released from captivity. Identifying these “Turks” would allow them to be sent home and thereby serve as proof of English benevolence and leverage in diplomatic negotiations.¹⁸⁷ On June 21, 1627, according to the Privy Council’s direction, Nicholas Leatt conducted an inquiry into the Turks and Moors from Algiers “of present wandring and begging about the city of London.”¹⁸⁸ Fifteen men were

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., f. 194, Sir Thomas Roe to Conway, 8/18 Sept. 1627.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., f. 143, Charles I to the Sultan, 1 July 1627.

¹⁸⁷ As Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillame Calafat have discussed, adherence to – and respect for – procedures of ransoming not only ensured successful negotiations but also critically helped to maintain good trading relations between European nations and North Africa. See Kaiser and Calafat, “The Economy of Ransoming,” 128.

¹⁸⁸ TNA, PRO SP 71/1, f. 81, 21 June 1627.

listed in total. These men had been chased ashore by Captain Hart of Dartmouth, imprisoned, and stripped of their ships and goods. Before leaving for Salé, John Harrison had them released from prison. At the time of the inquiry, these men had been in England for eleven months. Another inquiry of the same date into the Turks and Moors belonging to Tetuan and Salé resulted in a list of eighteen men who had been in London for six months.¹⁸⁹ Seventeen had been taken after the Christian captives in their ship had surprised them and brought the ship into Cornwall, where they were promptly imprisoned. Of these “Turks and Moors,” Leatt offered to transport seven or eight to their homes in Tetuan and Salé. The Council resolved to send the rest away to Turkey in Levant Company ships, which were to be ready around October 10, 1627.¹⁹⁰

COMPARISONS TO ELIZABETH’S REIGN

The hesitancy and inconsistency with which Charles I, Buckingham, and the Privy Council approached the problem of Turkish piracy encouraged harmful comparisons to Queen Elizabeth’s reign. Years after Elizabeth’s death, public affection for the former Queen made her into an almost “sacred” figure.¹⁹¹ In a sermon delivered at Paul’s Cross on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot in 1613, John Boys – made the dean of Canterbury in 1619 – declared, “It was a wonder of wonders that a *Mayden Queene* should at one time be both a staffe to *Flanders*, and a stay to *France*, a terror to *Pope*, a mirror to *Turke*, feared abroad, loved at home, Mistresse of the Sea, wonder of

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., f. 81b.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., f. 82.

¹⁹¹ Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 464.

the world.”¹⁹² Boys published this sermon as part of a collection between 1609 and 1617 that sold extremely well and both reflected and molded admiration for Elizabeth.¹⁹³ Commemoration of the Queen pitted her memory against what were seen as the deficiencies of her successors. Radical critics of Stuart foreign policy such as Thomas Scott and John Reynolds painted Elizabeth as the champion of the Protestant Cause, remembering her as the “scourge of popery.”¹⁹⁴ Yet contemporaries celebrated Elizabeth for not only protecting England from the Spaniard but also standing up to the Turk. Through comparing Queen Elizabeth’s and her advisers’ ability to achieve defensive victories and supposedly guard the nation against both Spanish and Turkish threats, contemporaries underscored the failure of the Stuart regime to safeguard its people. As one ballad declared, “Send us such commaunders / As in Elizas reigne / And then wee need not feare the Turke / The Devill or pride of spaine.”¹⁹⁵

Such nostalgia depended upon remembering Anglo-Ottoman relations under Elizabeth in a certain light, erasing any sense of amity between Elizabeth and the Turk and instead emphasizing their relationship as one based solely on trade. Originally written to counteract Jesuit Robert Parsons’ *The Warn-Word* at the turn of the century, Matthew Sutcliffe’s *The Blessings on Mount Gerizzim* was published again in 1625 in lieu of the failure of the Spanish Match and the beginning of war with Spain. Fervently anti-Catholic, Sutcliffe sought to undercut Parsons’ charges against Queen Elizabeth and

¹⁹² John Boys, *An exposition of the last psalme delivered in a sermon preached at Pauls Crosse the fifth of November*, (London:1613), 17-18.

¹⁹³ “Boys, John (bap. 1571, d. 1625),” William Richardson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3144> (accessed May 23, 2013).

¹⁹⁴ Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy*, 468.

¹⁹⁵ BL, Sloane MS 1792, fols. 74v-75v. *Early Stuart Libels Database*.

defend her legacy. He addressed Parsons' accusation that Elizabeth enjoyed familiarity with the Turk:

As for that contract which her Majestie had with the Turke, it was onely for trade of merchandise, as the articles will shew; and not for amitie. And yet if by this means she had any credit with the *Turke*, she used it to the good of Christians, as the *Polonians* and *Transilvanians* can testifie. But king *Philip* ended his warres with the *Turke* to fight against *Christians*.¹⁹⁶

Sutcliffe had served as the provost of the failed King's College, Chelsea, at which Boys had been appointed one of the founding fellows in 1610. In their work the fellows strove to refute controversial Catholic literature, and these counterclaims involved not only exposing Catholic hubris and profanity but also demonstrating a historical opposition to Turks and maintaining that Elizabeth – unlike Charles – held her own in matters of foreign policy and domestic security.¹⁹⁷

Under Elizabeth, redeemed captives published narratives that honored the Queen in demonstrating how she had provided for her subjects and rewarded them with service. While the numbers of British captives in North Africa reached unprecedented levels between 1625 and 1640, this period saw the publication of only one captivity account, which slandered Catholics rather than Muslims.¹⁹⁸ Already confronting public criticism of his financial and military debacles, Charles could not afford to allow published captivity narratives to expose further his administration's inability to address the grievous problem of piracy. Such narratives would simply remind a wider audience that English merchants, mariners, and captives were left to fend for themselves, thereby inviting

¹⁹⁶ Matthew Sutcliffe, *The blessings of Mount Gerizzim* (London: 1625), 87.

¹⁹⁷ "Boys, John (bap. 1571, d. 1625)," William Richardson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3144> (accessed May 23, 2013).

¹⁹⁸ Nabil Matar, "English Accounts of Captivity in North Africa and the Middle East: 1577-1625." In *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 2 (Summer 2001), 569.

public comment and debate.¹⁹⁹ To many contemporaries, it seemed that Charles's government had misemployed the money raised through various levies – funds which were the most needed to defend the seas. For instance, John Delbridge expressed the hope that since the West Country towns “doe paye his Majesty the custome of Tonage and poundage and imposicons, that his Majesty would be pleased to suppress these our enemyes the Turks”; if the King failed to do so, the merchants and mariners would be “driven to give over Adventuring the Seas.”²⁰⁰

Anxiety over the decay of English sea power coursed through such complaints, manifesting nostalgia for the naval successes of the past. As Claire Jowitt has demonstrated, the war with Spain at the beginning of Charles's reign led to a “revival of nationalist sentiment based on martial ideology,” driving a renewed interest in Elizabethan explorers and naval commanders.²⁰¹ The failure of the Cadiz expedition in 1625 and the expedition to relieve Huguenots at the Isle of Ré in 1627 exacerbated the unease created by foreign pirate attacks. There was a sense that England had lost its military prowess. In *The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake* (1628), Sir Francis Drake the Younger nostalgically presented an account of his uncle's circumnavigation and piracy that acted both as “an indictment of contemporary martial failure” and as a call to “future acts of derring-do.”²⁰² Such martial failure was made all the more apparent by the supposed inability of English sailors to match the strength and skill of the “Turkish” pirates. As it was, the Mayor of Plymouth observed that pirates outsailed

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ PWDRO, 1/360/31, John Delbridge, London, to the Maior of Barnestaple, Feb. 1632.

²⁰¹ Claire Jowitt, *Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630: English Literature and Seaborne Crime* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 68. Jowitt points to several texts, including John Webster's Lord Mayor's Show *Monuments of Honour* (1624) and the anonymous play *Dick of Devonshire* (1625) all referred admiringly and nostalgically to Drake's naval successes. Interestingly, rather than speaking to Drake's piracy against Spain, Drake was remembered as an aristocratic and chivalric hero.

²⁰² Ibid., 78.

English sailors and thus made it extremely difficult to confront the problem: an expedition to confront the pirates could not get near them, with the “sayd Pyrates being farre better saylers then our English shippes.”²⁰³ English ships were poorly provisioned and equipped, and mutinies were common due to lack of pay.²⁰⁴

In 1634 the mariner Nathaniel Knott wrote a tract, “An Advise of a Sea-Man,” in which he suggested ways to improve the navy’s efficiency in expeditions against Turkish pirates. While deploying religious polemic and speaking of a larger holy war against the “infidels,” Knott manifested the ability to overcome those cultural divides – at least temporarily – in order to learn important military and naval lessons and thereby improve England’s position at sea. Dedicating the tract to Archbishop Laud, Knott implied that the failure to confront the problem of Turkish piracy had jeopardized the public good of England and contributed to its weakness. He expressed his hope that his advice would “bee offensive to no man, not prejudiciall to me, the rather for that it concernes the publike good of this our Mother England, whom to leave to the mercy of inhumane Infidells, were in it selfe inhumane, and barbarous.”²⁰⁵ The English fleet appeared susceptible to the attacks of these “infidels” because the ships could not compete with the latter’s sea might. As Knott wrote, “Our English built are indeed strong, and well enough contriv’d for fight, but soe bound with Timbers, that they are but indifferent saylors the best of them. If the worse bee chosen, as soone may you catch a Hare with a Taber (as the vulgar Adage is) as surprize a Turke.”²⁰⁶ The Turks’ sea power as well as their hardened,

²⁰³ TNA, PRO SP 16/5, f. 78, Mayor of Plymouth and his brethren to the Privy Council, 12 Aug. 1625.

²⁰⁴ See, for instance, TNA, PRO SP 16/22, f. 151, John Clifton to Nicholas, 15 March 1626; TNA, PRO PC 2/35, f. 242, Act of the Privy Council, 28 Jan. 1627. See also David Loades, *England’s Maritime Empire: Seapower, Commerce and Policy, 1490-1690* (Harlow, U.K.: Longman, 2000), 155.

²⁰⁵ BL, Lansdowne 213, 1-2, Nathaniell Knott, “An Advise of a Sea-Man,” 1634. See also TNA, PRO SP 16/279, f. 196.

²⁰⁶ BL, Lansdowne 213, 10.

disciplined condition allowed them to defeat the inadequate English forces. Knott concluded with the recognition that the current gap in power, resources, and mentality between Englishmen and Turks necessitated that the former learn from the latter: “If our seamen will not learne of Christians, learne then of the Turkes.”²⁰⁷ While Knott’s treatise and the Mayor of Plymouth’s comments surely contrasted English and Turkish sea power as a form of rhetoric to elicit governmental attention and assistance, the very repetition of such arguments across genres indicates the extent to which naval insecurity served as a pressure point.

CONCLUSION

Considering the effects of and dialogue surrounding “Turkish” piracy in the West Country sheds light on the tensions that would not only create irreparable divisions between Charles, Buckingham, and Parliament but also generate suspicions of the corruption undermining the political system. Attacks on English shipping and the failure of the regime to guard against these assaults and redeem English captives proved to have grave ramifications as criticism of Buckingham intensified. Complaints about the regime’s – most notably Buckingham’s – handling of piracy and the disruptions to trade and coastal communities were to factor into Parliamentary debates in 1626 and 1628. Presenting Parliament’s grievances to the King after the Petition of Right in 1628, Sir John Eliot included “Turks” in a list of the embarrassments that had weakened the kingdom:

Witness that Journey to Algiers – witness that with Mansfield – witness that to Cadiz – witness the next – witness that to Rhee – witness the last. (I pray God we may never have more such witnesses.) Witness likewise the Palatinate – witness

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 31-32.

Denmark – witness the Turks – witness the Dunkirkers – witness all. What losses we have sustained, how we are impaired in munition, in ships, in men! It is beyond contradiction, that we were never so much weakened, nor ever had less hope how to be restored.²⁰⁸

Eliot's critique revolved around the idea that the kingdom's weakness was the result of its own disorders – arising from religious contests and the misuse of resources as well as from corruption, financial strain, and the inability of the Council to provide for the nation.²⁰⁹ Becoming an important political actor in these parliamentary debates, Eliot drew upon formative experiences in the West Country, where he had served as the Vice Admiral of Devon.²¹⁰ Eliot's new patron Pembroke, one of Buckingham's chief rivals, had extensive personal and political ties to Cornwall and thus could tap into these anxieties over coastal security and "Turkish" pirates to erode the influence of the Duke. Such power struggles played out in parliamentary debates.

When approaching these early years of Charles's reign, it is thus appropriate to think about escalating frustrations with royal policy, aggravated by not only disease, financial difficulties, war, and religious strife, but also "Turkish" piracy. This piracy exposed and widened social divides and focused attention on the very governors entrusted with ensuring the realm's safety. In such a tense environment, Buckingham's position as Lord Admiral began to appear farcical; responsible for protecting the seas, Buckingham directed few resources to suppressing the Turkish pirates, and those

²⁰⁸ Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, 2:384. Also cited by Matar, *Britain and Barbary*, 53.

²⁰⁹ See Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, 2:380.

²¹⁰ Interestingly, collusion with an English pirate John Nutt had earned Eliot a spell in prison, during which time James Bagg, the Vice Admiral of Cornwall, had taken over Eliot's responsibilities. An intense rivalry developed between Eliot and Bagg, both initially beneficiaries of Buckingham's patronage. While serving as one of the main informants on Turkish piracy, Bagg besmirched his rival Eliot in letters to Buckingham. As Eliot's faith in Buckingham began to wear thin, it was thus logical for him to set himself apart from the regime's failings by invoking Turkish piracy as a grievous embarrassment. See "Eliot, Sir John (1592–1632)," Conrad Russell in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8630> (accessed April 3, 2013).

resources appeared sorely inadequate. Expeditions against Spain consumed his attention, and Buckingham and Charles often considered Turkish piracy only retroactively – when it seemed to affect or overlap with other privileged matters. The process of guarding the coasts, handling Turkish prisoners, redeeming captives, and managing diplomacy with the Ottomans appeared very much haphazard.

Though such troubles were not new to Charles's reign, the consequences had grown much more serious due to the intersection of other domestic and foreign policy concerns. The poorly executed Algiers expedition of 1620 reflected an "abdication of responsibility" by James I's Council that carried over into Charles's reign due to the continuity in leadership, a disorganized administrative system, and financial strains. Under Charles the lack of consideration given to Turkish piracy and English trade encouraged contemporaries to scrutinize the ways in which private gain and bad counsel jeopardized the public good as well as thrust the political system into a state of disorder. The government's failure to provide both for West Country communities as well as for its merchants and mariners enslaved by the thousands in North Africa played into arguments that Buckingham had plunged the nation into disgrace. These concerns intersected with anxieties regarding Charles's use of royal prerogative with the Forced Loan of 1626. In the face of opposition to the tax, Roger Maynwaring delivered a sermon before the King at Alderton in July 1627, declaring that the respect that Charles asked of his subjects were courtesies that even a Turk would give to a Christian.²¹¹ While Charles demanded that his subjects conform to "Turkish" civility and obedience, his subjects in the West Country

²¹¹ Roger Maynwaring, *Religion and Allegiance: The Second Sermon: Preached before the Kings Majesty at Alderton on the 29 of July, 1627* (London, Printed by I. H. for Richard Badger, 1627), 47-8. As Thomas Cogswell indicates, England's pulpits represented a "formidable platform for disseminating the royal line. See Cogswell, "The Politics of Propaganda," 196.

lamented that disorders brought on by the “Turks” had eroded their trade and livelihood. Such differences in perspective simply manifested the divide between King and subjects.

The West Country towns still mourned their losses by Turkish pirates into the 1630s, speaking to the serious grievances that remained unaddressed by Charles and his Council and revealing the perceived broken communication channels between the Court and the West Country towns. In 1632 Richard Ferris, the Mayor of Barnstaple, wrote to the Mayor of Exeter that “unlesse a speedie course bee taken for the suppressinge of them, which must bee done in an hostile manner, it will bee too late over a while to attempt it.”²¹² Having “begunne to feare much what will become of this the Turkish great power” along with his peers and constituents, Ferris sought to join with the leaders of neighboring towns to petition the King and Council over their grievances.²¹³ He underscored the fact that the Turks “want not power to bringe to passe their cruell designes beinge able to sett foorth 100 sayle of shippes well manned & guided” in a “great fleete.”²¹⁴ The attacks of these “Turks” on the “best shippinge” of the English had led to the “undoeinge of manye persons of good abilitie, and the distruccon of manie god marriners”; thus, within Barnstaple it was “much feared” that the “Turks” would “not bee afraid to roave abroade into all parts and come even home to our doores.”²¹⁵ The fears of attacks at sea had given way to deep-seated anxieties about domestic security. When such fears interfaced with others regarding the infiltration of popery, contemporaries came to view as endangered not only the church and state but also their lives and liberties.

²¹² PWDRO, 1/360/32, Richard Ferris (Mayor), William Palmer, Richard Beadle to the Mayor of Exeter, 13 Feb. 1632, Barnestaple.

²¹³ PWDRO, 1/360/31, John Delbridge, London, to the Mayor of Barnestaple, Feb. 1632,

²¹⁴ PWDRO, 1/360/32.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

The problem of captivity only aggravated the sense that the nation could not help its own. While Charles's subordinates oversaw the collection of money for ransoming, these collections did not appear to alleviate the problem. During the early years of Charles's reign, James Frizell, the Consul at Algiers, reported a want of means for redeeming English captives as the collection money had not been paid.²¹⁶ Thousands of captives languished in North Africa while their relatives continued to petition the King and Council for the redress of their loved ones. In 1626 almost 2,000 "distressed wives" petitioned Buckingham, speaking to the miseries that their husbands endured in captivity. However, Charles remained hesitant to direct any funds towards this matter: at the end of September 1626, the Council granted that John Harrison might buy an old ship to ship the captives for England under the condition that this would not be chargeable to the King.²¹⁷ As British captives languished in North Africa and towns in the West Country complained bitterly of the devastations committed by Turkish pirates, Charles and Buckingham remained focused on other matters, failing to recognize initially that such matters widened social, economic, and political divisions and exposed to contemporaries just what was at stake.

²¹⁶ *CSPD 1625-1649*, Vol. 523, 118, Breviat of Letters from James Frizell, 22 Apr. 1626.

²¹⁷ TNA, PRO PC 2/34, f. 121, Privy Council Motion, 30 Sept. 1626.

CHAPTER THREE

The “Turk” and the Direct Road to Liberty

From its very founding in late 1653, the Cromwellian Protectorate generated unease across the political spectrum.¹ Such unease lay in the Protectorate’s controversial origins: in December Oliver Cromwell and army leaders forcibly dissolved the sitting Nominated Assembly due to concerns that its zealous enactment of a series of political and religious reforms posed a threat not only to liberty of conscience but also to the army’s status. They proceeded to adopt the Instrument of Government, a codified constitution that established the Protectorate, and in doing so brought an end to the period of republican rule that the execution of Charles I had inaugurated in 1649. Government propaganda portrayed the Protectorate as the nation’s escape from anarchy, heralding the new political arrangement by which legislative authority resided with both the protector and Parliament.² Yet as Blair Worden has observed, the fact remained that the Protectorate “replaced parliamentary rule by a military usurpation” and thereby in some ways represented a “profound alteration of the revolution’s course” and a “fundamental aberration from Roundhead ideals in the 1650s.”³ Though Cromwell hoped that the first protectorate parliament, which met in September 1654, would ratify the Instrument and sanction the Protectorate, the MPs first wanted assurances that the authority of the constitution and the protector derived from parliament rather than soldiers. The question

¹ John Morrill discusses the criticism from both conservative and republican sources regarding the Instrument of Government, the codified constitution of the Protectorate. John Morrill, “Cromwell and his contemporaries.” In *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution* (London and New York: Longman, 1990), 270. The Instrument of Government was drafted by army officer John Lambert.

² Blair Worden, *God’s Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 234.

³ *Ibid.*, 242.

of whether the risk of arbitrary government was greater under a single ruler or continual parliaments emerged as a central issue in negotiations throughout the autumn and early winter. Fearing that parliament threatened his vision of godly rule, Cromwell dissolved the parliament on January 22, 1655, ensuring continued military authority and aggravating the sense of crisis over the constitutional framework and the uses and abuses of power.⁴

In navigating the ramifications of a government that increasingly relied on force, contemporaries turned their attention to the Ottoman Empire, whose recent political disorders presented a cautionary example of a government weakened by violence and absolute power. In the fall of 1648 janissary commanders instigated the execution of first the grand vizier and then Sultan Ibrahim in Turkey. Sultan Mehmed IV, a minor at the time, succeeded Ibrahim. After the murder of Kösem Sultan, Mehmed's grandmother and the most influential governmental figure, in 1651, Mehmed's mother, Turhan, assumed control.⁵ Several years of political instability ensued, leading to the period between May 1655 and October 1656 when Ibrahim appointed and then removed seven grand viziers,

⁴ From Cromwell's perspective, parliaments that sat continually would be able to exercise "an absolute power without any control" and thereby rule tyrannically. As he saw it, if parliament gained control over the army, it would establish itself in perpetuity and institute "whatever religion and form of government it chose." Cromwell believed that he had himself wielded arbitrary power after the dissolution of the Nominated Assembly – nicknamed the Barebone's Parliament – and thus welcomed the Instrument as a means of limiting his power. While Cromwell needed a parliamentary settlement, he wanted the settlement to accord with his vision of godly reform. As Patrick Little and David Smith have argued, "The crux of the problem was that he wanted a Parliament but it had to be a Parliament *on God's terms*." Frustrated by the opposition of leading Presbyterians and former hardline members of the Rump Parliament (1648-1653), Cromwell purged the Commons only nine days after the session began, allowing only those who accepted the constitutional framework of the Protectorate to remain. Yet he continued to find parliament's work threatening to his vision. He thus acted at the "earliest constitutional opportunity" of five lunar months rather than the intended five calendar months, dissolving the first protectorate parliament in January 1655. See Patrick Little and David L. Smith, *Parliaments and Politics During the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 84, 132-4; Worden, *God's Instruments*, 246-7; Johann Sommerville, "Oliver Cromwell and English political thought." In *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, ed. by John Morrill (London and New York: Longman, 1990), 255; Derek Hirst, *Authority and Conflict: England, 1603-1658* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 332.

⁵ Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire 1300-1650*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 73.

six şeyhülislams, and five grand admirals.⁶ Only with the appointment of Köprülü Mehmed Pasha as grand vizier in 1656 did the Empire slowly regain political stability. As Englishmen and women interpreted these developments, they favored depictions of the Ottoman Turkish government as a “monarchy by arms” characterized both by the absolute rule of the sultan – “so absolute” as to be arbitrary and tyrannical – and by martial force as represented by the janissaries. These conceptions deeply influenced the ways in which they addressed the perceived turn towards arbitrary rule and force in their own government.

This chapter illustrates how contemporaries deployed the “Turks” in the mid-1650s not only to articulate concern with the direction that the commonwealth had taken under the Protectorate but also to hold a mirror up to their own institutions and practices and thereby provoke further political and religious reform. In doing so, individuals from MPs and soldiers to political theorists shaped the contours of debates regarding the nation’s development; they forwarded different interpretations of what constituted the “direct road to liberty” as well as what authority should exercise sovereignty or have the final say when it came to the system of laws.⁷ In these years the problem of how to sustain liberty while achieving political stability – a problem that had long served as a “defining concern of British imperial ideology” in the context of achieving empire – became a lightning rod.⁸ Amidst grave political uncertainty, contemporaries became uncomfortably aware of the ease with which a state might succumb to anarchy or tyranny

⁶ Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 217.

⁷ For contemporary use of phrase, see John Milton, *The Second Defence of The English People Against the Base Anonymous Libel, Entitled, The Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Parricides*. In *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. IV 1650-1655, Part I, ed. by Don M. Wolfe (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), 552.

⁸ David Armitage, *Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 125.

and subsequently endanger hard-won liberties. Many feared that Cromwell sought to establish an absolute monarchy by arms in the Turkish mold. Addressing such anxieties, political writers, most notably James Harrington, invoked the Turkish system to cast into stark relief the paths that lay open to authorities. Meanwhile, other writers such as Francis Osborne deployed the Turks as a barometer of Christian – and specifically English – failings, reflecting anxieties that the nation was increasingly led astray by selfish ambition, cruelty, and corruption. This chapter will argue that the “Turk” became at once a warning and a lesson in the mid-1650s when doubt regarding the nation’s loyalty to – and ability to fulfill – promises of liberty increasingly came into question. Often the contemporaries who deeply engaged with the Turks in their writings were those most committed to the Commonwealth project and thereby invested in preserving its integrity through invoking the Turks as a moral or political lesson. The next chapter will consider how the “Turk” came to serve as a “godly instrument” in catalyzing further reformation and thereby serving as a metaphor for the nation’s potential to escape its self-imposed blindness.

While scholars have considered the ideological tensions surrounding the Cromwellian Protectorate, this chapter explores how those tensions were shaped, heightened, and expressed through recourse to shared cultural discourses of the “Turks” – discourses that informed not only popular tracts and pamphlets but also political treatises. This chapter will also build upon scholarly work that has assessed how European humanists, diplomats, and governmental officials approached and invoked Ottoman history and culture according to their changing imperatives. In *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*, Margaret Meserve examines how Renaissance

humanists not only used their histories of the Ottomans to assert their “own relevance as participants in the conduct of modern politics” but also offered political, moral, and theological interpretations of Ottoman experience that suggested the work of larger providence.⁹ In this chapter, I will argue that English writers under the Protectorate similarly interpreted the experience of Ottoman Turks according to their own political assumptions regarding how to achieve and sustain liberty as well as further godly reform. These writers invoked the Turks to draw compelling parallels to their own experience, extract pointed lessons, and encourage greater scrutiny of contemporary institutions and practices, thereby reinvigorating the debate about liberty and asserting their importance in the discussions about the nation’s future.

THE MOST FEARFUL TYRANNY & THE PERVERSION OF LIBERTY

Embracing the notion that the civil wars had been fought for civil and religious liberties, Cromwell and his officials fused rhetoric regarding the purpose of government with the language of liberty.¹⁰ They purported to forge a path that would safeguard and strengthen liberties and thereby throw off the shackles of rule by unlawful or arbitrary powers. Yet a central paradox in Cromwell’s thinking remained that though he hoped to “sheathe the sword” and avoid relying on naked force in politics, the army appeared the only means of protecting Cromwell’s vision of godly rule and securing these liberties.¹¹ The Protectorate’s military foundation tainted it with an air of illegitimacy, giving former

⁹ Margaret Meserve, *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 3-5.

¹⁰ Cited by Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 338-339.

¹¹ Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 317, 333.

supporters of Cromwell pause and reason to question whether those liberties were protected.

Wary of what the Protectorate meant for the Commonwealth, writers turned to the Turkish example to underscore the critical political choices ahead for the nation, exploring the contrasts between tyranny, anarchy, and desired liberty. John Milton initially believed in and commended the Protectorate's promises to safeguard freedoms, heralding the nation's escape from tyranny and barbarity and its subsequent protection of liberty. Following the execution of Charles I, Milton had entered the service of the new republic, becoming of service in translating international correspondence into Latin as well as countering the attacks of the republic's detractors. One such attack came in the form of the anonymous libel *The Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Parricides*, which was published in The Hague in 1652. The libel condemned the regicide as a monstrosity and proclaimed that the "minds of nations of Europe were aroused to inquire into the depths of this affair."¹² Seeing his mission to vindicate English actions and enlighten the educated both at home and abroad, Milton responded to the libel's accusations with a firm belief that, in doing so, he bore the arms of liberty to an audience that extended across Europe and Asia.¹³ He explained that English actions restored both civil and religious liberties and thereby promoted a "renewed cultivation of freedom."¹⁴ In Milton's view, those who failed to recognize such achievements simply reflected the degenerate nature of the times – times in which tyranny had become a "sacred institution"

¹² "Epistle to the Reader" of *The Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven*. Appendix D in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. IV 1650-1655, Part II, 1046.

¹³ John Milton, *The Second Defence of The English People Against the Base Anonymous Libel, Entitled, The Cry of the Royal Blood to Heaven against the English Parricides*. In *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. IV, Part I, 555.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 556.

and tyrants “sheltered themselves behind the blind superstition of the mob” while the common people, “maddened by priestly machinations, sunk to a barbarism fouler than that which stains the Indians” and thereby found themselves enslaved.¹⁵

Yet for all its glorification of England’s regained freedom, Milton’s *Second Defence* also contained a warning – a warning regarding the ease with which one might slip back into slavery. Addressing Cromwell in his tract, Milton asked the Protector not to violate or allow others to violate their hard-won liberty. As Milton wrote, “He who attacks the liberty of others is himself the first of all to lose his own liberty and learns that he is the first of all to become a slave.”¹⁶ Cromwell’s elevation to position of Lord Protector in December 1653 most likely served as the source of Milton’s unease regarding the vulnerability of newly attained liberties. Milton’s tract also included a similar warning for his countrymen, indicating that one’s own character was a “mighty factor in the acquisition or retention of liberty.”¹⁷ Milton mentioned that if his countryman began to imitate the royalists whom they drove out by seeking the same goals, they had become royalists themselves and thereby allowed themselves to be subdued.¹⁸

In articulating the corrosive effects of tyranny and servility within a state, writers like Milton drew upon discourses of the “Turkish” tyranny, popularized by the historian and translator Richard Knolles in his *The General Historie of the Turkes* (1603), which was a compilation of histories, chronicles, and travelers’ reports. Subsequent editions appeared in 1610, 1621, 1631, and 1638, and Knolles’ *Historie* enjoyed great popularity,

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 550.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 673.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 680.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 681.

serving as an authoritative history on the Ottoman Empire through the seventeenth century. For Knolles, the Turkish rulers were so absolute as to wield power arbitrarily.¹⁹ Knolles compared the Ottoman government to the “government of the master over his slave, and indeed mere tyrannical.”²⁰ As he explained, “The great Sultan is so absolute a lord of all things within the compasse of his empire, that all his subjects and people, be they never so great, do call themselves his slaves, and not his subjects.”²¹ As Asli Çırakman has indicated, Knolles borrowed his definition of tyranny from the French political philosopher Jean Bodin (1530-1596), arguing that Turkish tyranny depended on disarming common subjects and making the *devşirme*, or the abducted children of Christian subjects, into pillars of the military and civil service.²² The Turkish government could thus appear dependent on slavery; within England contemporaries drew upon such conceptions in discourses of “Turkish slaves.”²³ In his history of London, the political writer and historian James Howell (1594?-1666) compared Constantinople and London, writing, “*Constantinople* may be called but a nest, or banner of *slaves*; and herein... *London* hath the start of Her.”²⁴ Conceptions of Turkish tyranny also revolved around observations that the Ottomans depended upon “strangers” to preserve their power. While such observations were not uncontested in contemporary accounts, the notion that

¹⁹ In the seventeenth century absolute and arbitrary government were not necessarily regarded as synonymous. Absolute rulers were supposed to rule according to law, and they only degenerated into tyrants if they did not – i.e. if they ruled arbitrarily. See the discussion in Tim Harris, *Rebellion: Britain's First Stuart Kings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), Ch. 1 and *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 57-8.

²⁰ Richard Knolles, “A briefe discourse of the greatnesse of the Turkish Empire.” Appended to *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 2nd ed. (London, 1610), Aiv.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Asli Çırakman, “From Tyranny to Despotism: The Enlightenment’s Unenlightened Image of the Turks.” In *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Feb., 2001), 54.

²³ Tyranny could entail not only absolute but also unlawful or arbitrary rule, and indeed such ambiguity in the concept led to conflicting interpretations of the nature of Turkish government. See Çırakman, “From Tyranny to Despotism,” 55.

²⁴ James Howell, *Londinopolis; An Historicall Discourse or Perlustration of the City of London* (London: Printed by I. Streater, 1657), 386.

tyranny rested upon illegitimate and alien sources of influence played into critiques of how Cromwell abused power.²⁵

Disgruntled MPs, soldiers, sectaries, and even disillusioned Independents picked up on Knolles's conception of tyranny when criticizing Cromwell, arguing that the Protector's reliance on force and pursuit of absolute power paralleled that of the Ottoman Turkish government. Immediately following the parliamentary dissolution of January 22, 1655, one group of MPs published *A Declaration* in which they complained that they had been "turned out of doors, and threatned for endeavouring to put some limitations upon the power of our mighty Conqueror, Oliver Cromwell."²⁶ The MPs justified *A Declaration* as a necessary response to "the Usurpation, Oppression, Cruelty and Falshood of the Tyrant."²⁷ Indicating that Cromwell had not found MPs as "servile as he could wish them," the MPs declared that

he forced them out of the Parliament-House by his Souldiers, with many insolent reproaches, as men not worthy to be his slaves any longer, and so sell the last remainders of our well built Government, Laws, and Liberties, into the hands of our Infydell Grand Seignior and his Ianizaries, after all his hypocriticall vows and protestations to live and dye a faithful Servant of the Parliaments.²⁸

The MPs concluded that Cromwell represented the "unjustest Usurper, and the greatest Murtherer and Robber, that ever England had."²⁹

²⁵ In his acclaimed travel account *Voyage into the Levant*, which underwent four editions between 1636 and 1650, Henry Blount argued contrary to the notion that the Ottomans achieved a tyranny through securing the aid of strangers. Blount remarked, "The Gran Signior hath not the inconvenience of Tyrants, which is to secure themselves against their people by strangers, who are chargeable, & perfidious; for he without charge, is held up by Plantations of his owne People, who in descent, and interesse are linkt with him." In *A Voyage into the Levant: A brief Relation of a Journey lately performed by Mr. Henry Blunt Gentleman* (London: Printed by R. C. for Andrew Crooke, 1650), 225-226.

²⁶ *A Declaration of the Members of Parliament Lately Dissolved by Oliver Cromwell* (Jan. 1655).

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

Similarly, *A Copy of a Letter from an Officer of the Army in Ireland, to his Highness the Lord Protector*, protested against the drift of the government towards a military monarchy under Cromwell, couching such arguments within the compelling framework of Turkish violence and arbitrary government. The author, probably the former army preacher Richard Goodgroom, voiced horror at the thought that soldiers would have torn down a “Legall Monarchy” only “to set up, and introduce without form of law, justice, or consent... an arbitrary boundlesse power solely subservant to the exorbitant wil and unsupportable ambition of one single person.”³⁰ As Goodgroom argued, Cromwell intended to establish a permanent force of thirty thousand men who would in effect “be his *Janizaries*” and work “to inslave the people in these nations, to the lusts of their grand *Senior*.”³¹ This force would not depend upon Parliament for funds and thereby would be accountable only to Cromwell. History showed that such a standing army was a shaky foundation for any government: Goodgroom cited the “Turkish & Russian Armies” who “proved more fatal and tyrannical to their own princes, then to their poor oppressed vassals.”³² The author denounced the excesses and violence exercised by Cromwell in maintaining his “arbitrary Sovereignty” and making the army complicit in his designs as his “*Janizaries*.”³³

Attempting to inflame and capitalize on this domestic dissent, Sir Edward Hyde, who was on the Continent in service of the exiled Charles II, publicized a report that condemned Cromwell for conspiring to bring over Swiss mercenaries to consolidate his

³⁰ R. G., *A Copy of a Letter from an Officer of the Army in Ireland, to his Highness the Lord Protector, concerning his changing of the Government* (June 1656), 3. For notes on Goodgroom, see *The Political Works of James Harrington, Part One*, ed. by J. G. A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 10-12.

³¹ R. G., *A Copy of a Letter*, 3.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 11, 19.

control over the government. In 1655 intelligence sent to Charles II indicated that Cromwell had already spent three months negotiating with the Swiss “to raise him a body guard of 3,000 because he cannot trust his own army, as they are generally averse to what he desires, and he would depend upon these as the Turk upon his janizaries.”³⁴ In order to disguise this end, this report asserted that Cromwell was using the money collected for the relief of Protestants in Savoy to pay these mercenaries and thereby “order the City of London as he pleases, and not fear his army.”³⁵ Apparently, Charles II informed Hyde of his desire to have the report distributed to their network of correspondents across Europe via the royalist army officer Sir Marmaduke Langdale. Hyde later repeated the claims of this report in his *A letter from a true and lawful member of Parliament* (1656), which responded to the government’s defense of its proceedings since the attempted royalist insurrection Penruddock’s Rising of March 1655.³⁶ Addressing the Protector in the letter, Hyde wrote, “In distrust of the whole English Nation, you are treating to bring over a Body of Swisse to serve you, as the Janizaries do the Turk, and in order to control your own Army, as well as to reduce the People to an implicit obedience to your Government.”³⁷ Such accusations attempted to undermine Cromwell at home and abroad.

As it was, foreign diplomats and agents picked up on the theme of Cromwell’s force and cruelty, indicating the compelling nature and the fluid circulation of such discourses across Europe. The Venetian Resident in England, Giovanni Sagredo,

³⁴ TNA, PRO SP 18/100, f. 210, Intelligence sent to Charles II, Sept. 4/14 1655.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ See *A Declaration of his Highness by the Advice of his Council, Shewing the Reasons of their Proceedings for Securing the Peace of the Commonwealth, Upon the occasion of the late insurrection and rebellion, Wednesday, October 31, 1655* (London: 1655).

³⁷ Earl of Clarendon, Edward Hyde. *A letter from a true and lawful member of Parliament, and one faithfully engaged with it, from the beginning of the war to the end. To one of the lords of his highness councell, upon occasion of the last declaration, shewing the reasons of their proceedings for securing the peace of the Commonwealth, published on the 31th of October 1655* (1656), 65-66.

discussed Cromwell in terms that applied to the Grand Turk, tapping into a popular discourse and depicting him as one who seized power forcibly and then held his people in servitude.³⁸ In a letter to the Doge and Senate, the Venetian Resident wrote, “Cromwell thinks nothing of these scruples [of conscience] and laughs at them, for as he wields force enough to keep the people in hand he means to do as he wishes. Accordingly he will nominate others, who being of a more cruel and barbarous disposition... will do as he desires without the slightest remorse.”³⁹ One week later, the Venetian Resident added his opinion that Cromwell induced his people “to obey him blindly” and discussed the Protector’s unlawful treatment of supposed conspirators – treatment that appeared “more worthy of barbarians than Christians.”⁴⁰ Exposed to such sentiments in England, the Venetian Resident propagated these reports abroad according to his own political objectives, thereby further solidifying conceptions of Cromwell’s brand of “Turkish” tyranny.

Exploring the parallels between Cromwell’s practices and Turkish tyranny served as a form of “unveiling” within a larger Protestant tradition of “unmasking” the deceits and superstitions of Turks and papists.⁴¹ Such conceptions of imposture played into polemical literature of the late 1640s and 1650s, as royalist propaganda such as *The Alcaron of Mahomet* (1649) conflated Cromwell with Muhammad.⁴² Yet with the establishment of the Protectorate, not only conservative but also republican sources

³⁸ See Lucette Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot: Venice and the Sublime Porte*, trans. by Arthur Denner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 90.

³⁹ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 172, Francesco Giavarina, Venetian Resident in England, to the Doge and Senate, 17 May 1658.

⁴⁰ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 176, Francesco Giavarina to the Doge and Senate, 24 May 1658.

⁴¹ Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 173. As Dimmock indicates, this tradition had emerged by the 1620s.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 174.

sought to “unveil” the ways in which the Protector and his Instrument of Government had deviated from godly principles. In the dialogue *The picture of a new courtier drawn in conference between Mr. Timeserver, and Mr. Plainheart*, the Protector was “in part unveiled” in order to “see himself discovered.”⁴³ The author, a self-declared “lover of Englands dear brought freedoms,” cited examples of Cromwell’s “tyranny,” writing, “You may see now the poore people of *England* are fairely delivered from being subject to a Parliament of their own chusing, to be slaves to *Cromwell* and his creatures, which God nor man did never set over this Nation.”⁴⁴ These intertwined themes of hypocrisy and tyranny proved particularly prevalent in popular materials following Cromwell’s forceful dissolution of the first protectorate parliament. In the broadsheet *A Declaration of the Free-born people of England, now in Arms against the Tyrannie and Oppression of Oliver Cromwell* of March 1655, the writers declared that Cromwell had “aspire[d] to make himselfe an absolute Lord and *Tyrant* over three potent Nations” while promising the “Liberty of Gods people, and the administration of Impartiall justice.”⁴⁵ The broadsheet underscored the hollowness of those promises, proclaiming, “He that seemed so zealous for Liberty, now dares owne every private English Man his Vassall, and their Parliaments his Slaves... Now what *Patroon* in *Algier*, ever claimed more Mastery over his Slaves bought in the Market, then this claime of *Cromwells* extends unto over Us.”⁴⁶ Subjects appeared no better than Turkish slaves, subjugated to the arbitrary will of their

⁴³ I. S., *The picture of a new courtier drawn in conference, between Mr. Timeserver, and Mr. Plainheart. In which is discovered the abhominable practises and horrid hypocrisies of the Usurper, and his time-serving parasites. In which a Protector having been in part unveiled, may see himself discovered* (1656).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁴⁵ *A Declaration of the Free-born people of England, now in Arms against the Tyrannie and Oppression of Oliver Cromwell* (March 1655). John Morrill also discusses the ways in which Cromwell’s political deviousness and brutality were emphasized in contemporary pamphlets and broadsheets. See Morrill, “Cromwell and his contemporaries,” 268-70.

⁴⁶ *A Declaration of the Free-born people.*

new master. Such polemical literature thus deployed the very rhetoric of liberty that Cromwell had embraced to expose him as a dangerous hypocrite.

NAVIGATING THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

By the mid-1650s, the Cromwellian Protectorate had shaken the confidence of the republic's early years, increasingly appearing to justify Milton's unease over the security of liberties and the permanence of the republican legacy. The failure of the Western Design – a military expedition against Spanish colonies in the Caribbean (1654-55) – created doubts regarding Britain's potential to achieve imperial grandeur while Cromwell's dissolution of the first protectorate parliament in January 1655 engendered a crisis in government.⁴⁷ There was a pervasive sense that England had lost sight of its godly mission and ability to safeguard liberty. In the midst of this anxiety over the nation's failings, contemporaries turned to the Turks.

In 1656 as the second protectorate parliament met, writers such as Milton and James Harrington invoked the "Turks" to comment upon the state of contemporary political institutions, illuminate the meaning of English liberty, and speak to the critical political choices that lay ahead for Britain. These writers were driven to reaffirm the political values upon which the Commonwealth was based, outlining a path that would diverge from reliance on force and thereby nurture liberty rather than plunge the nation into a state of servility. In *The Birth of the Despot*, Lucette Valensi charted a similar process within the Venetian Republic by examining the *relazioni* of the Venetian ambassadors over the sixteenth and into the seventeenth centuries. As Valensi indicates, in the changed political climate after the Battle of Lepanto (1571), the Venetian

⁴⁷ Armitage, *Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, 134-6; Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 333.

ambassadors increasingly emphasized the Ottoman Empire's "fundamental incompatibility with the Venetian system," alighting upon the concept of despotism to signify that the Turkish system represented a degeneration from a legitimate form of government.⁴⁸ While Valensi struggles to explain fully the reasons for the Venetian ambassadors' discursive shift and explore the interests embedded within her sources, her examination offers useful parallels to the English context of the mid- to late 1650s when republican writers increasingly portrayed the Ottoman Turkish government as a flawed system – a portrayal with significant ideological ramifications. These English writers warned that their government's inclination back towards monarchical forms combined with an increasing reliance on force threatened to lead the nation back into slavery. In constructing the opposition between the republican and Turkish systems, the Venetian ambassadors emphasized that the latter employed force to take and maintain power; English writers similarly embraced these distinctions at a moment of political strain to chart a path towards a legitimate, structured government.⁴⁹

Preoccupied with the question of how to build a "pacified polity" amidst a drift towards military authority, the political writer James Harrington invoked the Ottoman Turks as a critical component of his theory regarding the best means of achieving a stable political system.⁵⁰ In his *The Commonwealth of Oceana* published in 1656, Harrington charted the means by which his contemporaries might create a balanced and orderly state, and in doing so, lead England away from flawed political systems in which naked force and selfish interest played a large part. Exploring the difference between English and

⁴⁸ Valensi, *The Birth of the Despot*, 71, 85.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵⁰ Glenn Burgess, "Repacifying the polity: the responses of Hobbes and Harrington to the 'crisis of the common law.'" In *Soldiers, writers and statesmen of the English Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 203.

Turkish governmental structures, Harrington argued that the Turks represented a perfect example of a “monarchy by arms.” As Harrington wrote, this absolute monarchy was “no perfect Government,” as it manifested a “dangerous flaw” in creating space for violence: the “Janizaries have frequent interest and perpetual power to raise sedition, and to tear the Magistrate, even the Prince himself, in pieces.”⁵¹ In the Turkish government, the Grand Signior also “overbalance[d] the people,” serving as “sole Landlord of a Territory.”⁵² Meanwhile, Oceana – a thinly veiled reference to England – had previously maintained the other type of monarchy, which was a monarchy by nobility. Such a government had also proved unsustainable and imperfect, as the nobility exercised “perpetuall power” and often had “frequent interest” in raising sedition.⁵³ Indeed, the regicide and the Civil Wars were evidence – and the result – of such imperfections.

In contrast to both the flawed Turkish and former English governments, Harrington forwarded a model for the commonwealth of Oceana that would achieve political balance through separating its executive and legislative powers among the Magistracy, the Senate, and the People.⁵⁴ In a sense these were unequal, hierarchical groups that maintained internal stability by each fulfilling their own roles and promoting reason, or rational choice, in rejection of the passions and individual interest. Such a government achieved liberty through privileging law and common interest as well as preventing against the severe disruptions that the Turkish “monarchy by arms” and the former English “monarchy by a nobility” enabled. The choice to adhere to these principles lay open to contemporaries and represented a unique moment in which they

⁵¹ James Harrington, *The Common-Wealth of Oceana* (London: Printed by J. Streater, 1656), 21.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

might cast away the chains of anarchy and tyranny. As J. G. A. Pocock indicates, Harrington's work emphasized a path in which "humans can apply their intelligence in determining what they shall be, and are to that extent godlike."⁵⁵ Pursuit of that path would serve as evidence of the society's civility. Just as reason and passion competed for the soul of a man, virtue and law competed against vice and disorder for the soul of a nation; the nation that chose government based on the former ensured the liberty of every man and escaped the shortcomings of the Turkish system.⁵⁶

Harrington's and Milton's republicanism appeared a response to the political disruptions of the 1640s as well as the trends of the early to mid-1650s, offering a model that departed from the perceived absolute monarchy not only of the Turks and the English Stuart kings but also – as many feared – of Cromwell. Harrington criticized the Protectorate's failure to protect subjects' liberties as it pursued *imperium* and thereby proposed measures that would allow for a commonwealth to expand while also safeguarding freedoms.⁵⁷ Pursuing these measures first came down to the decision to refuse monarchy and to embrace the republicanism of Oceana. By making this choice, the English would prove themselves the chosen people of Israel and differentiate themselves from tyrannical Eastern empires.⁵⁸ Seventeenth-century sermons, printed materials, and public displays frequently drew analogies between biblical Israel and contemporary England, promoting the understanding that England was "repeating the history of biblical

⁵⁵ J. G. A. Pocock, ed., *The Commonwealth of Oceana* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), xvi.

⁵⁶ Harrington, *The Common-Wealth of Oceana*, 11.

⁵⁷ For a greater exploration of these themes, see David Armitage, *Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, Ch. 5 "Liberty and Empire."

⁵⁸ Benedict S. Robinson, "Returning to Egypt: 'The Jew,' 'the Turk,' and the English Republic." In *Milton and the Jews*, ed. by Douglas A. Brooks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 194.

Israel, but with the possibility of getting it ‘right’ through godly reform.⁵⁹ Harrington’s *Oceana* is reflective of the particular socio-political moment, representing as Pocock has put it, an “*occasione*, a moment of revolutionary opportunity at which old historical forms have destroyed themselves and there is a chance to construct new forms immune from the contingencies of history.”⁶⁰ Milton, too, believed in the “potential for liberty to foster greatness” and drew upon the writings of Sallust, the popular classical historian who argued that a republic’s greatness derived from its liberty.⁶¹ Thus, Milton increasingly expressed unease with indications that Cromwell desired to uphold monarchical forms – which in Sallust’s opinion led to tyranny – by assuming the role of military dictator.⁶²

In noting this direction, Harrington and Milton contrasted the freedoms nurtured by a republic with what they saw as the coercion and instability that existed under the “absolute monarchy” of the Turks. They indicated that the pursuit of a particular political system was a conscious choice and thereby reflective of a national character. Given the high stakes, Harrington remained aghast at the “exquisite politicians” who, when presented with the choice, might propose “nothing but slavery, beggary and Turcisme.”⁶³ Such arguments gained greater force as the Cromwellian regime went in an increasingly conservative direction. In February 1657, parliament created a new constitution – the

⁵⁹ The sense was that England was in the position of biblical Israel in suffering for her sins but also looking forward to the promise of redemption by God. As Achsah Guibbory has illustrated, contemporary Englishmen and women recognized their “opportunity to be, more fully than other Protestant countries, the ‘true Israel’” as they eradicated corruption and idolatry. Human choice and action thus played an important role in this drama. See Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 31-33, 89-120.

⁶⁰ Pocock, ed., *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, xvii.

⁶¹ Armitage, *Ideological Origins*, 134, 126-7.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 136, 134.

⁶³ James Harrington, *The Prerogative of Popular Government. A Political Discourse in two Books* (London: Printed for Tho. Brewster at the three Bibles at the West end of Pauls Church-yard), Book 1, Ch. 1, 6.

Humble Petition and Advice – which offered Cromwell the Crown and was “designed to civilianize his rule and begin the restoration of the ancient constitution.”⁶⁴ This constitution, which replaced the Instrument of Government, went into effect in May 1657 and gave Cromwell the right to name his successor and declare war and peace. Though Cromwell refused the Crown, the Humble Petition further underlined what was at stake and aroused concerns regarding the protection of liberty – often seen as freedom from arbitrary and tyrannical rule.

HOLDING A MIRROR TO CHRISTIAN FAILINGS

Under the Cromwellian Protectorate, contemporaries turned to the “Turks” as a means of holding a mirror up not only to their nation’s political trajectory but also to its moral and cultural failings. As with the writings of the political theorists, this social commentary projected an uneasy sense that England and, more broadly, Christendom had lost their way and deviated from fundamental political and religious values. In this type of national self-reflection, England might not just appear to embody elements of the Turkish system – as it seemingly neared a “monarchy by arms” as discussed above – but rather emerge as the more corrupted of the two. In setting up such contrasts, these writers attempted to demonstrate just how much Christendom had sacrificed in deviating from those values, as the Turks came to exhibit more virtue and order and thereby gained the upper hand militarily, politically, and – to a certain extent – culturally. Earlier European writers had provided a framework for critiquing Christian governments and societies through turning to the Turkish example. For instance, the Flemish writer and diplomat Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, who served as the Habsburg ambassador to the Ottoman

⁶⁴ Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 141.

Empire in 1554-56, used his memoir the *Turkish Letters* to critique the Habsburg court. Though the *Letters* were not translated into English until 1694, they had been available in the original Latin since 1581.⁶⁵ English writers and editors, including Samuel Purchas, Richard Knolles, Robert Burton, and Alexander Ross, quoted his epistles. Discovering that certain elements of the Turkish system put Christian governments to shame, Busbecq reserved his greatest scorn for disorder in Christian ranks and perverted Christian values that prized trappings of nobility above virtue. As he wrote,

When I compare the Difference between *their* Soldiers and *ours*, I stand amazed to think What will be the Event, for certainly *their* Soldiers must needs conquer, and *ours* must needs be vanquished, Both cannot stand prosperously together: For on *their* side there is a mighty, strong and wealthy Empire, great Armies, experience in War, a veterane Soldiery, a long series of victories, Patience in Toil, Concord, Order, Discipline, Frugality and Vigilance. On *our* side, there is public Want, private Luxury, Strength weakned, Minds discouraged, an unaccustomedness to Labour or Arms, Soldiers refractory, Commanders covetous, a Contempt of Discipline, Licentiousness, Rashness, Drunkenness, Gluttony, and that which is worst of all, *they* use to conquer, *we* to be conquered.⁶⁶

English writers would later appropriate these themes to comment upon moral and political degeneracy in their Christian state as well as illuminate the ease with which Christians betrayed their principles. Anxiety regarding rancor within Christian ranks served as a common thread in these various works. Given worsening religious fragmentation, the desire for unity became a driving force in politics in the mid-1650s. Cromwell aspired towards liberty of conscience and unity, believing that unity – not toleration – was God’s will and the substance of faith.⁶⁷ As Ottoman imperial

⁶⁵ Gerald Maclean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 227.

⁶⁶ Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, *The four epistles of A. G. Busbequius concerning his embassay into Turkey* (London: 1694), 171.

⁶⁷ J. C. Davis, “Cromwell’s religion.” In *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, ed. by John Morrill (London and New York: Longman, 1990), 204.

organization and unity had long drawn the admiration of European travelers and observers, English writers drew upon such examples when attempting to underscore the disorganization and fragmentation of their own state. Identification of the Ottomans as an ideological and religious enemy did not preclude the possibility of a more secular analysis; indeed, European commentators might refer to the Ottoman Turks as infidels and barbarians in the same text that they spoke highly of the order and dignity of the Ottoman state.⁶⁸

In his *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks* of 1656, the parliamentary sympathizer Francis Osborne (1593-1659) discussed Turkish customs in order to provide a marker for evaluating the integrity of contemporary English practices. Though Osborne may have traveled abroad in his earlier years, by 1650 he had settled in Oxford where his brother-in-law William Draper, a colonel in the parliamentary army, had him appointed as one of seven judges responsible for all the prisons and people committed to them.⁶⁹ Osborne's *Political Reflections* was part of a series of historical, political, and moral works that he published in these later years, and it reflected the same worldliness that had made popular his earlier work *Advice to a Son* (1655) and earned him a reputation for atheism.⁷⁰ In many ways *Political Reflections* appeared a product of the political climate: as with contemporary political writers, Osborne engaged with

⁶⁸ For instance, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq as well as the English author Francis Osborne both navigated these seeming tensions, speaking to religious and ideological difference while also praising certain facets of Ottoman government and society. See Busbecq, *The four epistles*, and Francis Osborne, *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks* (London: Printed by J. G. for Thomas Robinson, 1656). Margaret Meserve also discusses the ways in which Western observers during the Renaissance recognized impressive qualities in the Turks such as military skill, strategic cunning, and brilliant leadership while also voicing strong concern over the Turks' "inborn ferocity" which led them to "acts of barbarous cruelty and violence." See Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 65.

⁶⁹ "Osborne, Francis (1593–1659)," Marie C. Henson in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20875> (accessed July 12, 2013).

⁷⁰ Ibid.

particular aspects of Turkish culture as a means of addressing English anxieties and delivering pointed social commentary. As Osborne explained in his preface to the reader, the opposition of his critics could not discourage him from “prosecuting what Conscience informes [him] may advance Settlement,” as he had “long been taught, that the way lies to the Paradise of Peace, through the Purgatory of Censure.”⁷¹ He thought it necessary to make some “choice observations” on the Turkish system, underscoring the ways in which this system manifested greater unity than his own Christian nation that had made unity its objective. In offering these observations, *Political Reflections* manifested ambivalence towards the Turks, suspending judgment until Turkish weaknesses were weighed against Christian ones in order to determine which most crippled the state and reflected social and moral decay. Cases where Turkish practices appeared blameworthy seemed less so when juxtaposed with Christian behaviors – a juxtaposition meant to provoke national self-reflection and inspire a return to a godlier path.

In writing *Political Reflections*, it is likely that Osborne was influenced by Henry Blount’s popular account *A Voyage into the Levant* (1636), which detailed Blount’s eleven-month journey through the Ottoman Empire and was on its fourth edition by 1650. Admiring the Turkes as the “only modern people, great in action” with an Empire that had “so suddenly invaded the world, and fixt it selfe such firm foundations as no other ever did,” Blount had sought to “behold these times in their greatest glory” and see for himself the state of Turkish institutions, policy, and customs.⁷² Though Blount had been a gentleman pensioner to King Charles I, he accommodated himself to the new regime

⁷¹ Osborne, *Political Reflections upon the Government of the Turks*, “Preface to the Reader,” A4.

⁷² Henry Blount, *A Voyage into the Levant: A brief Relation of a Journey lately performed by Mr. Henry Blunt Gentleman* (London: Printed by R. C. for Andrew Crooke, 1650), 4.

under Cromwell and gained various government appointments.⁷³ Osborne's discussion of Turkish religion and policies seems to draw on and interpret some of the themes that Blount had earlier explored, thereby fitting another's observations into incisive political and moral commentary.

In his work Osborne crucially eschewed the notion of ingrained racial features and practices, arguing that the temptations of power and selfish ambition affected Christians just as much as Turks. This argument had important ramifications for political theory, as it implied that tyranny was not simply "Turkish" but rather a consequence of political choices. For instance, addressing the stereotype of the cruel Turk, Osborne wrote, "The inclination to Oppression; Covetousnesse, and Cruelty, is no more a stranger to their natures, then ours; which proves Sin an effect of Law and constraint, rather then of Liberty, or Nature."⁷⁴ Osborne thus held governors to a higher standard of leadership, indicating that integrity and stability of political and religious institutions was their responsibility. Given the ongoing debates about the uses and abuses of power, Osborne's arguments attempted to highlight the degree to which unjust or oppressive policies could corrupt not only governors but also the societies that they purported to protect.

Treating questions of authority and liberty, *Political Reflections* explored Turkish customs in order to force contemporaries not only to hold a mirror up to their own practices but also to pursue a more righteous path. Osborne's vision of a godly nation appeared rooted in the liberty of the subject, though this liberty was tempered and strengthened by obedience to civil and religious leaders, reverence for God, and a life

⁷³ For a greater discussion of Blount's narrative and background, see Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580-1720* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 117-176.

⁷⁴ Osborne, *Political Reflections*, 23.

characterized by honor and fortitude. In this model, while subjects had a great responsibility to obey and honor their governors, those governors in turn needed to set a godly example and not succumb to selfish interest that distracted and weakened them. While Christians' selfish interests bred internal divisions, the Turks – in Osborne's analysis – seemed to channel selfish interests to their advantage in making personal ambition and appetite the stimulus for the enlargement of their empire.⁷⁵ Osborne promoted a vision in which both ruler and ruled found their liberation in submission to God, contrasting the Turks' reverence for God with Christian hypocrisy and ungodliness. As Osborne indicated, "The awefulnesse the Turkes beare to the Name of God is so great" that they were "possibly not so likely as Christians (who observe no such decency) to call it to the witness of an untruth."⁷⁶ Osborne noted that in Christendom abuse of God's name was "so often and grossly practiced, as it is apparent to the multitude, who are apter to follow the Example of their Kings, then the Doctrine of their Teachers."⁷⁷ Osborne admired the obedience that the Turkish doctrine inspired, commenting favorably upon the Turks' "Honour of God, Obedience to their Prince, Mutuall Love, [and] Resolution in Warre."⁷⁸ In Osborne's work, the Turk set an example of appropriate submission to a providential – rather than an individual – will.

Though Osborne repeatedly spoke to the superstition of the Turkish religion and referred to Muhammad as a "supreame Jugler," he admired Turkish prudence in religion and conflict in comparison to Christian ignorance and recklessness. Osborne stressed that

⁷⁵ Osborne indicated that, though the Turks also sought advancement and glory, those ambitions were both directed towards enlarging the empire as well as kept in check by a system of meritocracy and the sultan's absolute power.

⁷⁶ Osborne, *Political Reflections*, 18.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

the Turks rightly identified those of a different faith as their true enemies while Christians wrongly turned on each other and thereby served as the means of their own destruction.⁷⁹ “Exceeding the prudence, if not the piety of Christians,” the Turks – according to Osborne – remained more committed to their expeditions against Christians than those against the Persians, who shared their Muslim faith. In contrast, Osborne wrote that the Christians “make the sword an Umpire in the smallest differences of Opinion” in following Princes and other powerful men who employed “wicked Engines” to “keep Victory fastened to their Tentdoors.”⁸⁰ These powerful men deluded their subjects into settling their personal disputes and pursuing selfish interests rather than fighting for the larger cause of Christendom. With such observations, Osborne echoed Busbecq’s earlier castigation of the rancor within Christian ranks. Busbecq had observed the Turks’ hatred of duels and their unwillingness to turn their swords against their own countrymen, remarking, “’Tis quite otherwise with us Christians; ours do many Times draw their Swords against one another, before ever they come in sight of a publick Enemy... and count it (forsooth) a brave and honourable Thing.”⁸¹ Concurring with Busbecq, Osborne indicated that gain among Christians had become a greater priority than religion and salvation. In succumbing to internal divisions and deploying religion to further personal rather than national or imperial interests, Christians often appeared the more degenerate society.

⁷⁹ The assertion that Christian sin was responsible for European Christendom’s decline was an old argument used by the Renaissance humanists. For instance, the fourteenth-century Florentine humanist Coluccio Salutati wrote of Turkish virtues as a means of contrasting – and exposing – Christian schism and moral degeneracy. See Meserve, *Empires of Islam*, 74.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

⁸¹ Busbecq, *The four epistles*, 198.

In *Political Reflections*, Osborne repeatedly stressed the importance of moderation, truth, and obedience to the health of political and religious institutions – qualities that the Turks exhibited. As Osborne commented, unlike the Christians who “cast many doubts” and plagued their consciences with “useless terrours,” “Mahumet and his successors, the better to gain the love of the people to Religion, tempered it with so much moderation, as it rather enclines to Hope than Feare; wisely foreseeing, that nothing makes Subjects recoile more from their Obedience, than when they are loaded with a conceit that their Governours lead them in the way to Hell.”⁸² Indeed, the tendency of Christian leaders to do the latter led Turks to view them with a “high disdain.”⁸³ Osborne’s discussion of the hope inspired by Muhammad echoed the observations made by Blount regarding how the Turks gained “good courage” and thereby stronger military purpose from their religion.⁸⁴ Such motivations made the Turks often seem free of confusion and disunity.⁸⁵ In his work Osborne like Harrington and Milton demonstrated expectation of a larger moment of national reckoning: a moment at which leaders like Cromwell were reminded of their obligation to escape worldly temptations and lead their nation down a godly path while subjects were encouraged to lay aside their differences in the interest of unity and stability.

Such messages deployed the Turks to shame subjects into not merely holding their governors to a higher standard but also themselves foregoing self-interest and petty differences, thereby playing into Cromwell’s desired program of godly reform and Christian unity. In a sermon delivered on March 31, 1657 to the Lord Mayor and

⁸² Osborne, *Political Reflections*, 71-73.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁸⁴ Blount, *A Voyage into the Levant*, 142.

⁸⁵ Though this discussion focused on the idea of Turkish unity, at other times European Christians did acknowledge Sunni/Shiite divisions when it suited their political or rhetorical purposes.

aldermen of London, clergyman Thomas Jacombe chastised self-interested Christian governors, invoking a Turkish example of compassion to shame and provoke change within their society. Prominent among London ministers, Jacombe enjoyed connections to the Protectorate and appeared at the forefront of Cromwellian religious policy. He served as one of the Cromwellian “ejectors” to assist London commissioners in ejecting scandalous ministers and later in November 1654 helped to draw up a statement of religious fundamentals, which the parliamentary subcommittee on religion then forwarded as the “definition of tolerable religious orthodoxy” under the constitution the Instrument of Government.⁸⁶ After addressing the City’s magistrates in his sermon, Jacombe offered some “short rules” to the governors and trustees of several hospitals in their performance of mercy, advising them to “give that to the poor, which is honestly gotten.”⁸⁷ To reinforce his point, Jacombe quoted a purported “noble speech” of Sultan Selim II to a pasha, who had suggested that the sultan erect hospitals out of estates wrongfully taken from Persian merchants. Selim responded that he would never allow goods that were wrongfully taken to be used for works of charity and devotion, instead indicating his desire for the goods to be restored to their rightful owners. As Jacombe concluded for his congregation, “This *Turk* is a shame to many Christians,” as the latter would get estates however they could and then “quiet their consciences” by setting up “some Monument of their charity, out of their unjust and oppressive gaines.”⁸⁸ Jacombe’s sermon reflected frustrations – shared by many of his contemporaries – regarding the

⁸⁶ “Jacombe, Thomas (1623/4–1687),” N. H. Keeble in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/14580> (accessed February 14, 2014).

⁸⁷ Thomas Jacombe, *Oi ellemonez eleethesuntai, or Gods mercy for mans mercy* (London: Printed for Philemon Stephens, 1657), 33.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

ways in which self-interest perverted Christian charity and unity. The Turkish example served to cast into stark relief Christian hypocrisy and underscore Jacombe's point that a gift to God should not be "laid in thy brothers tears." While the Turks might appear as the barbarous nation that threatened Christendom's territorial and cultural boundaries on a larger plane, individual Turks might manifest orderly and refined behavior, thereby allowing the discourses of Turkish barbarity and civility to coexist.⁸⁹

Employing Turkish civility as a foil to Christian failings also factored into contemporary drama, particularly in William Davenant's operatic play *The Siege of Rhodes*. Davenant had become a "valued member" of Queen Henrietta Maria's circle by the late 1630s and created several masques for the king and queen.⁹⁰ During the civil war years, Davenant helped the royal couple remain in communication, even joining the exiled royal court near Paris. In May 1650, he was intercepted by a parliamentary frigate on his way to take up an appointment in the colonies and was imprisoned as "an active enemy of the commonwealth."⁹¹ However, no real action was taken against the poet, and he was released on bail in October 1652, enabling him to begin work on an operatic drama. Depicting Sultan Süleyman's siege and capture of Rhodes in 1522, the first part of *The Siege of Rhodes* was entered on the Stationer's Register in August 1656 and thereby appeared concurrently with Osborne's *Political Reflections*. Davenant also composed a second part, which appeared in May 1659.

⁸⁹ Henry Blount remarked that the "strange thing" that he found during his time with Turkish mariners was their "incredibly civility," which was displayed "not only in ordinary civilitie, but with so ready service, such a patience, so sweet, and gentle a way." In his writing, the seeming ferocity and tyranny of the government did not affect the people's civility in manner. See Blount, *A Voyage into the Levant*, 136-7.

⁹⁰ "Davenant, Sir William (1606–1668)," Mary Edmond in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7197> (accessed February 10, 2014).

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

Playing upon inversions of supposedly ingrained religio-political identities, Davenant depicted the character Sultan Solyman as the embodiment of Christian civility while the Christian soldier Alphonso appeared as a slave to the passions. In the play when the Ottomans capture Alphonso's lover, the Christian princess Ianthe, Solyman grants Ianthe safe passage to Rhodes because he is impressed with her beauty and virtue. Suspicious of Solyman's intentions, Alphonso declares, "This Christian Turk amazes me," and tells Ianthe, "Your vertue will not be deny'd: / It could even Solyman himself withstand; To whom it did so beauteous show / It seem'd to civilize a barb'rous Foe."⁹² The second part of the play similarly opens with Alphonso contemplating Solyman's mercy; as he admits, "It rudeness were in me, not to confess / That Solyman has civil been, / And did much Christian honour winn / when he Ianthe recus'd from distress."⁹³ While the civility of his opponent disquiets Alphonso, Solyman grows distressed over the bloodlust of his own Turkish soldiers. The Sultan confides in the pasha Mustafa, "We want the half of what we think we have; / For we enjoy the Beast-like pow'r to kill, / But not the God-like pow'r to save. / Who laughs at Death, laughs at our highest Pow'r; / The valiant man is his own Emperour."⁹⁴ Inspired by Ianthe and wearied by his experience in war, it is Solyman who recognizes the baseness of human nature and looks to attain a higher standard of morality and government. He later declares, "Tis fatal (Rhodes) to thee, / And troublesome to me / That I was born to govern swarms / Of Vassals boldly bred to arms."⁹⁵ With Solyman appearing to represent a Christian ideal, Davenant encouraged his audience to revisit their own ideological perceptions and contemplate

⁹² William Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, First Part (1656), 19, 20.

⁹³ Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, Second Part (1663), 7.

⁹⁴ Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, First Part (1656), 23.

⁹⁵ Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, Second Part (1663), 20.

both the readiness of the Turk to embrace and embody Christian values as well as the ease with which the Christian - the soldier Alphonso - might succumb to “Turkish” passions. As literary scholar Matthew Birchwood has argued, Davenant’s play performs an “extraordinary refraction of identity upon the already complex and fragmented figure of the Muslim.”⁹⁶ In many ways, Solyman’s display of civility in the play dramatically represented the choice that Harrington had discussed in *Oceana* and Osborne in *Political Reflections*: the decision to escape the limitations of human nature and worldly temptations was a conscious choice that either led a nation into disorder engendered by selfish ambition and the quest for power or into stability arising from political balance and protection of liberties. As we shall see in the next chapter, in the several years following the presentation of Davenant’s play in London, three Muslim converts to Christianity would serve as a standard by which to judge Christians – and specifically the English nation – on their receptiveness or willingness to pursue this path. Presented as leaving worldly pleasures behind and embracing “Christian” virtues, these converts would demonstrate that civility was measured in the supposedly conscious choice to conform to a higher standard in religion and government.

CONCLUSION: MOMENT OF TRANSITION

With the death of Oliver Cromwell in September 1658, the reins of government passed to his son Richard, yet a power struggle between different groups for control of Richard’s council led to months of political turmoil. Meeting from January to April 1659,

⁹⁶ Matthew Birchwood, *Staging Islam in England Drama and Culture, 1640-1685* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), 128. Also see Birchwood’s discussion of the play in the chapter “Turning to the Turk: Collaboration and Conversion in William Davenant’s *The Siege of Rhodes*.” In *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, ed. by Goran V. Stanivukovic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

Richard's protectorate parliament suffered from a growing division between a conservative majority and the army. Threatened by increasing parliamentary control, the army pressured Richard into dissolving parliament in April, though one month later the officers reassembled the Long Parliament, which came to be satirized as the "Rump" in a "rhetorical coup" initiated by the Royalists.⁹⁷ Forced to accept the new regime, Richard resigned as protector on May 25, 1659. Over the next year as the army jostled with the restored Rump for power, contemporaries articulated their concerns over the resultant political instability and over the threat to liberty posed by both. In satire as well as serious political commentary, contemporaries once again invoked the "Turks" both to underscore that England's path appeared increasingly directed towards Turkish tyranny as well as to hold a mirror to the failings of the Christian government. In the tense political climate, the deployment of the "Turk" as both a warning and lesson once again increased in significance and intensity.

Both the army and the Rump came under popular censure, as contemporaries recognized that both groups failed to uphold – or rather endangered – political and religious institutional stability. A ballad "The Re-Resurrection of the Rump" satirized parliament by comparing it to the supposed moral degradation and godlessness of the "Turk":

And whilst within the Walls they Lurk,
To satisfy us, will be a good work;
Who hath most Religion, the Rump, or the Turk,
Which no body can deny...⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Ruth E. Mayers, *1659: The Crisis of the Commonwealth* (The Royal Historical Society, 2004), 3.

⁹⁸ "THE RE-RESURRECTION OF THE RUMP: Or, Rebellion and Tyranny revived." The third Edition. To the Tune of the Blacksmith (1659).

In such popular materials, the “Turk” served as more than a rhetorical device to criticize the Rump for being godless. Contemporaries also invoked the Turk as a lesson regarding the dangers of martial authority. Written by the anonymous “M. B.,” supposedly an English agent in Turkey, the tract *Learne of a Turke* retold of tumults in the Ottoman Empire in the late 1610s and early 1620s, drawing comparisons to the contemporary political climate. Depicting the assassination of Sultan Osman II and the havoc wreaked by the janissaries, the author concluded by imparting several “moral observations”:

First, how dangerous a thing it is for any supream power to stand in need of a constant standing Army; they do but bestride an unruly Camel, which they cannot manage, as this unfortunate Osman dreamt, before his death.

Secondly, what a dangerous thing it is for a Civil Power, to permit the souldiers and Officers of the Army to hold their Counsels and Conventicles. These were the root of all these troubles in the Turkish Empire.

Thirdly, how much better it is to be under the worst of Monarchies, then at the courtesie of a mutinied Army, appears by this story.⁹⁹

As the tract indicated, once authority and power passed over to the army, the army could undermine all political authority as an “unruly Camel.” The careful balance in governance thus tipped in favor of the soldiers and officers, upsetting attempts to safeguard civil and religious liberties. Such a state appeared both to succumb to the tyranny of the many as well as to represent the “monarchy by arms” that Harrington cautioned against and many had suspected under Cromwell. Seeing a reflection of the tumults that rocked the Ottoman Empire in their own political struggles, contemporaries feared that the opportunity to choose a form of government that would balance different interests, emphasize law, and protect liberties was slipping away. The year 1659 strengthened perceptions that England was edging closer to the perceived Turkish model.

⁹⁹ M. B., *Learne of a Turke* (London, 1660), 22.

New institutional authority was needed to erode the political blindness and eschew a reliance on force that seemed to defeat reason.

CHAPTER FOUR
Instruments of Providence:
“Turkish” Converts and the Contest of Godliness

As contemporaries negotiated the political and religious uncertainty of the mid- to late 1650s under the Cromwellian Protectorate, they looked to the guiding hand of providence for instruction. Belief in divine providence permeated English culture, imposing a larger order and meaning upon potential chaos. Indeed, Cromwell’s trust in God’s providence was his “sure refuge” and “rock” that offered spiritual strength.¹ Yet with trust in providence came the understanding that God would send His people both “mercies” and punishments when provoked. Each judgment appeared its own form of grace, meant to offer divine instruction. The Old Testament provided guidance in making sense of this divine instruction. Engaging with the Book of Joshua in particular, Cromwellians and Anglicans each made their own uses of the story of the sin of Achan, for whose wickedness all of Israel was punished, when interpreting the text and drawing literal and figurative parallels to their own experience.² They located Achan’s sin in both general sins and particular people and events, such as the regicide. Such differences imbued debates about the nation’s development with religious significance, encouraging contemporaries both to navigate the dangers of Achan’s sin as well as to place their trust in instruments of providence that would help the nation regain political stability.

This chapter will consider how contemporaries held up the “Turk” as a godly instrument when forwarding their visions of religious unity during the late Protectorate.

¹ Blair Worden, *God’s Instruments: Political Conduct in the England of Oliver Cromwell* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 15.

² *Ibid.*, 23-29.

In the late 1650s various groups, including Anglicans, Cromwellians, and Quakers, sought the conversions of Muslim “Turks” in London and abroad as a means of affirming divine favor for their respective visions of godly rule and thereby defining the outlines of a particular national destiny. Though these groups staked their claim to “Truth” in multiple ways, the conversions of the “Turks” proved a particularly compelling channel, given the millenarian impulse and the role of the “Turk” in political theory as discussed in the previous chapter.³ For each of these groups, the Turkish convert – in emerging from the “blindness” of religious error – offered a providential sign that the nation might escape its own complacency and come into greater communion with God through embracing their religio-political model.

In facilitating the conversions and drawing the “Turks” into the Anglo-Protestant fold, these groups pointed to the guiding hand of providence and saw themselves as actors in a significant providential experience with the Turk as an instrument of divine will. Ian Green has demonstrated that amidst the sectarian challenge in the 1640s and 1650s, preaching became a “dynamic instrument of criticism and change” for the Presbyterians and moderate Independents, or Congregationalists.⁴ This chapter will argue that the conversions of the Turks and the sermons delivered on the day of their baptisms became this type of dynamic instrument of change, allowing the convert’s sponsors to act upon an evangelistic impulse that allowed the elevation of their religio-political model, denigration of alternatives, and presentation of a blueprint that suggested the way to the

³ The millenarian impulse constituted a belief in the Second Coming of Christ and the transformation of society. Playing into this apocalyptic tradition was the idea that England might further God’s reformation by drawing religious “others” – Jews and Turks – into the Anglo-Protestant fold. The approach of what was thought to be a climactic year – 1656 – invigorated “prophetic zeal.” See Derek Hirst, *Authority and Conflict: England, 1603-1658* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 337.

⁴ Ian Green, “Orality, script and print: the case of the English sermon c. 1530-1700.” In *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, Vol. I, ed. by Heinz Schilling and István György Tóth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 247.

nation's redemption. These conversions were only one of the ways in which political and religious leaders struggled to mold the nation's destiny, but they were an important one. As Achsah Guibbory has indicated in *Christian Identity*, Puritans and Royalists during this period both invoked analogies from the Hebrew Bible, yet "beneath the common discourse lay a struggle for the identity of the nation, and over who or what was the 'true' Christian Israel."⁵ I would suggest similar impulses were at work in the conversions of the "Turks" in London.

In deploying conversions of Muslims as ammunition in religio-political rivalries, various groups in England displayed an eagerness to participate in a larger contest of godliness unfolding across Europe, indicating the significance of these conversions for not only a domestic but also a foreign audience. In France Protestant-Catholic rivalries played out through the conversions of Muslims, as in 1655 Huguenots sponsored the conversion of a Muslim from Algiers named Mustapha, who "swore 'to live and die professing the truth in our churches'."⁶ The following year the Order of the Capuchins baptized two Muslims at the cathedral in Rennes while two other Muslims – an "African Turk" and a Tunisian – were baptized at Saint-Nicholas-du-Chardonnet and the Saint-Jacques hospital in Paris.⁷ The latter two baptisms were publicized in the *Gazette de France* (1656), a weekly magazine, and the news most likely reached London shortly thereafter. Various groups in England would thus have had an incentive not only to forward their vision amidst domestic religious and political fragmentation but also to demonstrate the greater appeal of Anglo-Protestantism over Catholicism to Muslims.

⁵ Achsah Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 122.

⁶ Gillian Lee Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 49.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 260 [note 119].

Such a preference would both indicate God's favor and prove that Protestantism was a religion that appealed to reason rather than fear or superstition.

Scholars, most notably Nabil Matar, have noted the zeal displayed by particular religious and political interests in converting Muslims during the Interregnum in England, indicating that these conversions represented an affirmation of the status quo and situating these conversions within an eschatological context.⁸ Yet this chapter seeks to delve deeper into the cultural dynamics of this moment, arguing that these conversions were about not only fulfilling a millennial destiny but also owning the Turks' conversions as a providential sign; these conversions offered hope of the nation's potential to escape from the shackles of tyranny, blindness, or enthusiasm and orient itself along a preconceived "Truth." Amidst religious fragmentation and competing visions of truth, the conversions offered a means of confronting religious error and reclaiming a national destiny by rallying contemporaries around this success. I provide a close reading of conversion texts, examining the Anglican cleric Thomas Warmstry's text in particular, in order to delve deeper into the tensions between enthusiasm and truth as well as tyranny and liberty that characterized these conversions and in many ways made them so significant. This chapter remains attuned to the interplay between policy, propaganda, and public opinion, underscoring the opportunities and dangers that these conversions alternatively offered and posed to various groups. In tracing these dynamics, I am concerned with the "public" represented by a congregation and networks created by ministers, merchants, or diplomats. Each of these publics interfaced with the others and thereby put emphasis on public presentation and increased the pressure to identify a

⁸ See Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), Ch. 4, especially 143-151; also Matar, "The Comenian Legacy in England." In *The Seventeenth Century*, Vol VI, No. 1 (Spring 1991), 207-211.

providential sign that was genuine and stable in a world seemingly characterized by false inspiration and instability. The performance of – as well as texts surrounding – the individual conversions reflect the intense care with which patrons sought to bolster their cause and provide evidence of divine influence and favor. At the same time that Englishmen were “trying to domesticate their fear of the Turks” with the introduction of the “Turk’s Head” on coffeehouse signs, the “Turk” came to serve as a figurehead for conflicting visions of godly rule.⁹

In tracing the role of the “Turks” in Interregnum politics and debates, this chapter engages with themes explored in the historiography of Anglo-Irish relations. Discursive engagement with both the Irish and the Turks manifests anxieties regarding not only the degree to which the nation had lost its way but also an awareness regarding how the “other” might be absorbed into the body politic and thus serve as a means of rejuvenating the center. Scholars have demonstrated the ways in which England’s relationship with the Irish affected the construction of the former’s own self-definition with regards to concepts of civility and barbarity.¹⁰ English writers, such as Barnaby Riche (1542-1617), looked forward to a world in which English Protestantism “colonized all forms of cultural difference” and converted that difference to a “singular king, law, and religion” based upon perceived Anglo-Protestant virtues and opposed to the “unruly traits” represented

⁹ Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 116.

¹⁰ See Kathleen M. Noonan, “‘The Cruell Pressure of an Enraged, Barbarous People’: Irish and English Identity in Seventeenth-Century Policy and Propaganda.” In *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Mar., 1998), 152. See also Anna Suranyi, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008).

by Irish culture.¹¹ Yet in the civil war years and through the Interregnum, when the English looked forward to God's plan for the New Jerusalem or Zion, there was an uneasy awareness – apparent in political writings – that England was never far from descending into barbarity or tyranny itself. Recognition of English policy failures also shifted the blame to the center. As Andrew Hadfield has demonstrated, some authors blamed failures to establish Anglo-Protestant institutions in Ireland on misguided or flawed English policies. In *A Discovery of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued* (1612), Sir John Davies had indicated that the “discovery” was that the Irish were not given a vested interest in serving the state because English law was never properly introduced.¹² Davies suggested that the formation of loyal subjects was the means by which the English might avoid a policy of subjection and instead embrace subjectification.¹³

The conversion of the Turks in London in the late 1650s manifested this same type of impulse to draw the “other” from a culture popularly associated with tyranny into an Anglo-Protestant fold. Exposure to English law and “pure” Christianity served as the means by which the converts’ sponsors hoped to achieve this subjectification. In separating the “Turk” from his former blindness and transforming him into an English subject and representative of their side’s salvation, these sponsors demonstrated their intention for the convert to lead a complacent England back towards the New Jerusalem. In the religious rebirth of the “other” – previously tied to a supposedly tyrannous,

¹¹ Constance C. Relihan, “Barnaby Riche’s Appropriation of Ireland and the Mediterranean World, or How Irish is ‘The Turk’?” In *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, ed. by Goran V. Stanivukovic (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 179-189. In treating these “unruly traits,” contemporary authors disagreed regarding whether the Irish were victims of their ancient heritage or simply had engrained characteristics.

¹² Andrew Hadfield, “Crossing the Border: Ireland and the Irish Between England and America.” In *The Journal of Early Modern History* 3 (1999), 147

¹³ *Ibid.*, 148.

hypocritical, and superstitious culture – Englishmen might take comfort in shedding their own tendencies towards this same tyranny and hypocrisy.

I would like to make one note about my usage of terms in this chapter. Though scholars debate the appropriateness of the term “Anglican” for the interregnum due to the fact that the Church of England had been disestablished in the 1640s, I follow Achsah Guibbory in using “Anglican” to “signify the self-conscious identity of people during the 1640s and 1650s loyal to both monarchy and an English Church that was no longer the official ‘national’ Church of England.”¹⁴ While the Church did not officially exist, the Church remained a very real religious body and community to those loyal to it, as demonstrated below. The conversion of the Muslim “Turk” Rigepe Dandulo gave his Anglican patrons the opportunity to demonstrate the certainty and legitimacy of their religious body.

MILLENARIANISM, JEWS, & TURKS

In the seventeenth century, Jews and Turks occupied a central place in political and religious thought in large part due to millenarian expectation. Millenarianism constituted the belief in the approaching millennium or earthly paradise following the Second Coming of Christ. Rooted in Scriptural prophecies and the Book of Revelation, millenarian thinking took the form of “specific expectation” in the unfolding of a “particular configuration of literal political transformations of the earth.”¹⁵ Protestants across all denominations frequently engaged in eschatological speculations, though not

¹⁴ Guibbory, *Christian Identity*, 121.

¹⁵ Malcom Oster, “Millenarianism and the new science: the case of Robert Boyle.” In *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, ed. by Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie, and Timothy Raylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 139.

all subscribed to precise millennial calculations.¹⁶ Establishing an intimate relationship between history and prophecy, Protestant historiography was based upon an historical interpretation of prophecies or a representation of history as the “proper domain of the ‘theatre of God’s judgement,’” employing the Apocalypse as the “guide to history.”¹⁷ As in other Protestant countries, in England contemporary historiographical works sought to demonstrate the significance of the nation in providential history.¹⁸ The Presbyterian controversialist Thomas Brightman (1562-1607) was the first English writer in the Protestant apocalyptic tradition to offer an historical interpretation in which England – the “elect nation” – served as the setting for the final providential event foretold in Revelation.¹⁹ He believed that such providential events and the dawning of the New Jerusalem would be realized within the near future. The need for England to escape its complacency and recognize its place in this cosmic drama thus appeared urgent. Associating the corrupted church of Laodicea with England, Brightman forwarded an interpretation of the Apocalypse that called upon England to realize the full reformation that was its destiny.²⁰ As Paul Christianson has argued, even reformers who did not subscribe to the concept of a national church still found compelling the belief that God

¹⁶ Mark Greengrass, Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor, “Introduction.” In *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, 12.

¹⁷ Avihu Zakai, “Reformation, History, and Eschatology in English Protestantism.” In *History and Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Oct. 1987), 300, 302. Zakai also quotes from A. G. Dickens, *The German Reformation and Martin Luther* (London, 1974), 205.

¹⁸ Zakai, “Reformation, History, and Eschatology,” 306.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 312.

²⁰ Katharine R. Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 166-167. See also Zakai, 316-317. Revelation foretold the fate of seven churches. The sixth church, Philadelphia, appeared as the new apostolic Church or the only church that would be saved the final judgment, and Brightman correlated it with the Genevan churches. Laodicea was the sinful church as portrayed in Revelation that rejected God’s word and thereby was to receive a special punishment.

would first reveal his reformation to Englishmen and allow them to lead others.²¹ Milton himself believed in this “patriotic millenarianism.”²² As the fall of Rome, the conversion of the Jews, and the decay of the Turkish empire appeared integral to the apostolic recovery, English reformers began to explore different means by which their nation might facilitate these events and thereby prepare for the millennium.

Revolving around the concept of universal reformation, the millenarian thinking of Moravian writer Jan Amos Comenius proved particularly influential in England from the early 1640s. Comenius, whose English disciples included the famous editor and publisher Samuel Hartlib (c. 1600-1662) and ecumenist John Dury (1596-1680), believed that the “Universal Reformation” was “not a mere shadow, but a reality whereby we may truly escape from Babylon, and truly release ourselves from the labyrinths, and be truly restored to God and attached to freedom.”²³ As Nabil Matar has noted, Comenius’s priority was on converting rather than destroying Muslims, and Comenius sought to appeal to shared reason and thereby promote conversion through intellectual engagement rather than military conflict.²⁴ For Hartlib and Dury, education appeared as the means by which both the conversion of Jews and Muslims as well as their reunion with Christians might be achieved. Such union would pave the way for universal reformation as well as serve to fulfill England’s divine mission. In the 1640s, these men pursued a project involving the creation of a college of Jewish studies – a project that would not only provide Christians with valuable insight into Jewish beliefs and practices but also make

²¹ Paul Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon: English apocalyptic visions from the reformation to the eve of the civil war* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1978), 246.

²² However, Milton seems to have become increasingly disillusioned with the concept of English history as the history of election after the late 1650s. See Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition*, 235-6.

²³ Jan Amos Comenius, *Panorthosia or universal reform*. Quoted in *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, 13.

²⁴ Matar, “The Comenian Legacy in England,” 205-206.

Christianity “less offensive” to the Jews by translating central Christian texts into Hebrew.²⁵ The project of evangelization by way of education extended to Muslims as well. Hartlib, Dury, Henry Oldenburg, and Robert Boyle nurtured this project, turning to the orientalist William Seaman to translate the Bible into Turkish.²⁶ Seaman appeared a logical choice for the commission, having served the English ambassador Sir Peter Wyche in Constantinople from 1628 to 1639 and translated the index of a codex on Islam as well as part of the historical work Sadettin Hoca’s Tac-üt-tevarih as *The Reign of Sultan Orchan, Second King of the Turks* (1652).²⁷ Seaman translated into Turkish the Johannine epistles by 1659, John Ball’s *Short Catechisme* by 1660, and by the mid 1660s, the entire New Testament at Boyle’s expense.²⁸ The translation of Christian texts into Hebrew and Turkish represented efforts to win souls by appealing to reason rather than replicating the forced conversion policy that had backfired in Spain and Portugal.²⁹ The thinking was that if Jews and Turks were exposed to true Anglo-Protestantism, they would recognize the appeal of reason and “truth” and thereby willingly abjure their supposed former blindness.

²⁵ Richard H. Popkin, “Hartlib, Dury, and the Jews.” In *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, 119-120.

²⁶ “Seaman, William (1606/7–1680),” Alastair Hamilton in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24986> (accessed January 9, 2014).

²⁷ Ibid. See also Linda McJannet’s discussion of William Seaman and his work in *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories About the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 167-79.

²⁸ ODNB, “William Seaman.” In the 1660s Boyle maintained an interest in composing a universal catechism that would be translated into other languages, including Turkish. Writing to Boyle in September 1667, Benjamin Denham referred to his agreement with the oriental scholar Edward Pococke that if such a catechism “were made in Italian, Latin, vulgar grammatical Greek and Turkish, it would at least confirm the poor Greeks in Christianity, if not convert the Turks and barbarous.” Benjamin Denham to Boyle, September, 1667. *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle. Electronic Edition*, Vol. 3. Correspondence: 1666-7, 343.

²⁹ Popkin, “Hartlib, Dury, and the Jews,” 126.

While Hartlib and his circle of contacts pursued the translation of Christian texts to win converts and achieve universal reformation, contemporaries also debated the readmission of the Jews to England, considering such a policy as a means by which the English nation might serve as the gateway to millennial fulfillment in addition to satisfying economic considerations.³⁰ As the millenarian academic Thomas Brightman believed, the conversion of the Jews would also help to defeat the Turks and thereby accomplish the events revealed in Scripture.³¹ By 1650, a growing body of opinion maintained the importance of the Jews to this unfolding cosmic drama.³² In the fall of 1655, the rabbi Menasseh ben Israel reached London on a mission to encourage Cromwell to offer Jews refuge in England. Cromwell took a personal interest in the matter, meeting with Menasseh and accepting his petition. In order to consider fully the readmission of the Jews to England, the Council of State appointed delegates to the Whitehall Conference, which convened in December 1655. The question of readmission divided English clergymen at the Whitehall Conference. Baptist minister Henry Jessey attended the conference and published an account, *A Narrative of the late Proceeds at White-Hall concerning the Jews*. This text presented the economic, political, and religious arguments for readmitting the Jews, indicating that England would claim spiritual and temporal riches for the gentiles in drawing Jews into the Anglo-Protestant fold. Writing, “The Lord hath exalted England in spiritual, and in temporal mercies and deliverances, as much as, (or *more then*) any other Nation under Heaven,” Jessey

³⁰ Not everyone condoned or was even willing to consider proposals put forward in favor of the Jews. Many Royalists were appalled by proposals to readmit the Jews, fearing that such toleration opened the hell gates to religious pluralism and subsequently confusion and anarchy. See David S. Katz’s discussion regarding Royalist attitudes and responses to proposals put forward in favor of the Jews. In *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England 1603-1655* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 191, 199.

³¹ Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 91.

³² *Ibid.*, 103.

suggested that “none are more likely to convince [Jews] by scripture, and by holy life, then many in *England*.”³³ As he declared, “happy is *England*, if it be instrumental in so blessed a work,” strengthening the belief in England’s unique role in a larger providential drama.³⁴

One of the more persuasive arguments for readmitting the Jews not only drew upon England’s claims to cherish morality and liberty over the infidels, heathens, and papists but also called the nation to seize this opportunity to convert the Jews. At the end of his account, Jessey cited a letter supposedly written in Leghorn in 1652 and sent by the preacher in the Phoenix frigate to a friend in London. The letter spoke to the state of the “poor blinde Jews,” stating,

They long to hear that England would tolerate them; surely the promises of Jehovah will be performed, and he wil give them favour in all Nations. O that ENGLAND may not be slack herein. Shall they be Tolerated by the POPE, and by the Duke of FLORENCE; by the TURKS, and by the BARBARIANS, and others; and shal *England* stil have laws in force against them? when shal they be recalled?³⁵

Citing the toleration given to the Jews by the Turks, the letter appeared written to arouse shame and a new resolve on behalf of the reader, calling the reader to act according to the very principles that England claimed to protect. Also by extending this toleration, England would be well-suited to evangelize and draw Jews into Christianity, thereby setting a precedent for converting others including Muslims. Putting forth their position “most vociferously,” the philo-Semites “agreed that once the Jews were readmitted to England, the way would be clear for them to convert to Christianity.”³⁶ Cromwell, who

³³ Henry Jessey, *A Narrative of the late Proceeds at White-Hall concerning the Jews* (London: 1656), 6, 4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

³⁶ David S. Katz, *The Jews in the History of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 127; Katz, *Philo-Semitism*, 215.

professed his interest in Jewish readmission only as it appeared related to Scripture, reminded the delegates in the session of December 18 that the “Jews would one day be called into the Church, and pointed out that it was the duty of all good Christians to work towards that end. Furthermore, given the exalted and purified state of religion in England, it would be particularly desirable to readmit the Jews so as to prevent them from falling into the hands of the idolaters on the Continent.”³⁷

The issues that the Whitehall Conference delegates raised shed light on how contemporaries thought about England’s role in evangelization and its call to draw the Jews from spiritual blindness and the clutches of idolaters into a certain Anglo-Protestant truth. Such thinking also had ramifications for how contemporaries perceived Turks, and indeed discourses surrounding Turks and Jews often proved mutually reinforcing at this time. The religious imperatives of not only preventing the “idolaters” from claiming more souls but also heralding the appeal of Anglo-Protestantism to religious “others” extended to both groups. Though many contemporaries underscored the economic and religious dangers in readmitting the Jews, others believed England would fulfill its ordained role in drawing the religious other into its Anglo-Protestant fold. While the Whitehall Conference did not reach a consensus due to the conflicting interests of clergymen, merchants, and officials, the following years saw the increased recognition and tolerance of Jews within England. After a legal dispute in March 1656 forced a leading member of the previously secret Jewish community to reveal himself, his fellow Jews found themselves compelled to disclose their own religious identity more formally to the English government and public.³⁸ Yet this more open Anglo-Jewish community did not

³⁷ Katz, *The Jews in the History of England*, 130-1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

serve as the catalyst for Jewish conversion, and by the late 1650s, those who had most vociferously pushed for the conversion of the Jews grew increasingly disillusioned.³⁹ Attempts to achieve religious unity and further reformation instead found greater success with three Muslim “Turks.”

CONVERTING THE “TURK”: THE CASE OF DANDULO

Though the passage of the Humble Petition and Advice in May 1657 and Cromwell’s reinstatement as Protector in June 1657 seemed to ensure constitutional stability for the regime, a sense of malaise marked the Cromwellian camp. Constitutional disagreements fractured the unity of the Cromwellian inner circle, and Cromwell’s refusal of the crown led many MPs to withdraw from Parliament in disgust.⁴⁰ Additionally, in March 1657 Cromwell had committed troops to a French alliance against Spain in Flanders, yet his council was not prepared to handle the financial burden.⁴¹ An air of uncertainty regarding God’s designs settled upon London, and many contemporaries shared the fear that the activities of the radical Protestant sects threatened further religious and social disorder. Under Cromwell, the Church structure proved “wholly non-didactic and non-directive,” and the sects stepped into this vacuum.⁴² In October 1656 the Quaker James Nayler had provocatively ridden into Bristol in a reenactment of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Though Nayler underwent trial and punishment that winter, the event was both a reminder of the perceived heresy

³⁹ See Popkin, “Hartlib, Dury, and the Jews,” 132.

⁴⁰ See Barry Coward, *The Cromwellian Protectorate* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 85-89. See also Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 348.

⁴¹ Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 350-351.

⁴² Anthony Fletcher, “Oliver Cromwell and the godly nation.” In *Oliver Cromwell and the English Revolution*, 231.

and religious fragmentation within the state as well as an indicator of the regime's vulnerability when it came to constitutional struggles regarding the authority to try individuals. Amidst such religious turmoil, Anglicans viewed the Church as besieged.⁴³ The arrival of a Muslim from the Eastern Mediterranean offered Anglicans the opportunity to promote – and garner acceptance for – their alternative model of institutional authority and thereby indicate that the guiding hand of providence favored their side to lead the nation from its present darkness.

In 1658 the cleric Thomas Warmstry published his account *The Baptized Turk*, a narrative of the conversion of Rigepe Dandulo to Christianity. The account described Dandulo's baptism by the royalist cleric Peter Gunning, whose ministry was so popular that his congregation – along with that of Jeremy Taylor – gained the nickname the Grand Assembly.⁴⁴ Gunning began to officiate at the Exeter House Chapel in the Strand following the death of his patron, the royalist conspirator Sir Robert Shirley, in 1656. It was here, in the Exeter House Chapel, where Dandulo received his baptism before a “full and cheerful Congregation” on November 8, 1657, and was given the Christian name Philip.⁴⁵ His conversion offered the London episcopalian fraternity crucial evidence of

⁴³ As Kenneth Fincham and Stephen Taylor have observed, the link between episcopalianism and royalism was complex and less close than is often assumed. Most episcopalians accommodated themselves to the new order with some participating fully in religious life while others were disaffected conformists. In these years, as Fincham and Taylor indicate, there was often a “fine line that many of [the episcopalians] trod between conformity and nonconformity.” The bishops that conformed “represented no single strand of churchmanship.” See Fincham and Taylor, “Episcopalian conformity and nonconformity 1646-60.” In *Royalists and royalism*, ed. by Jason McElligott and David L. Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 18-43. The above points are worth mentioning because this spectrum of individuals who fell within Anglican or episcopalian belief represented different interests, yet they came together in the interest of seeing through the providential event of a Muslim's conversion – a providential event that betokened hope for a besieged church.

⁴⁴ “Gunning, Peter (1614–1684),” Kenneth W. Stevenson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11748> (accessed November 15, 2012).

⁴⁵ Thomas Warmstry, *The Baptized Turk, or a Narrative of the happy Conversion of Signior Rigepe Dandulo* (London: Printed for J. Williams and T. Garthwait, 1658), 139.

the truth and resilience of their cause and thereby presented a challenge to sects who would forward erroneous beliefs as well as to the Cromwellians whom Anglicans saw as eroding religion, order, and justice. As Warmstry wrote in the epistle dedicatory, in facilitating Dandulo's baptism, the Countess of Dorset, Lord Gorge, and Philip Warwick had "provided not onely for him but for the honour of the Christian, yea of the poor English Church, and for the encouragement of others to come in to the embracement of Gods Truth."⁴⁶ In such endeavors, these noble patrons would "help to undeceive the besotted World, that looks upon Offices of Religion as if they were a business fit onely for those that are of a low condition."⁴⁷

Rigep – anglicized to Joseph – Dandulo had arrived in England as part of a diplomatic mission from Algiers only five months before his conversion. In May 1657 the Venetian Resident in England, Francesco Giavarina, reported to the Doge and Senate that a Turk had come from Algiers on mercantile business and to confirm the good relations and trade between England and that city.⁴⁸ Carefully monitoring the proceedings, Giavarina shared additional insight three weeks later, stating that the Divan of Algiers had sent the agent to make a complaint regarding suspicions that the English consul Robert Browne had hidden some English slaves who had escaped from there.⁴⁹ For his part, Giavarina hoped that the tensions would escalate, thereby distracting the Turks from their ongoing war with the Venetians, who increasingly saw themselves as defending the cause of Christendom alone. As Giavarina wrote,

Here they propose to send back the Aga [agent from Algiers] in a few days and I am assured that they will give him a stiff answer, meeting their complaints with

⁴⁶ Ibid., epistle dedicatory.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 44, Francesco Giavarina to Doge and Senate, 18 May 1657.

⁴⁹ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 53, Francesco Giavarina to Doge and Senate, 8 June 1657.

threats that if the Turks do anything to the English consul, war ships of this nation will pay a call at their port. God grant that this may produce some advantage for the state's forces. If those barbarians have imprisoned the consul as they intended, or if, dissatisfied with the answer, they decide to pursue their revenge, no doubt steps will be taken here against the Turks. A squadron of their ships sent to those waters would notably assist the public cause as it would create a considerable diversion which would greatly serve the cause of Christendom defended so vigorously by the most serene republic alone.⁵⁰

At the time Giavarina also reported that the Aga's present of animals to the Protector had recently arrived in the charge of a Turk of lower rank. This "Turk," whom Giavarina identified as a "renegade Greek," was Rigep Dandulo. In his narrative, Warmstry noted that Dandulo had been appointed to accompany the agent from Algiers on the mission to England.⁵¹ Dandulo fell ill shortly after his arrival in England, most likely afflicted with the same serious illness that had confined the Turkish Aga to his bed in the first few weeks of his diplomatic mission.⁵² For when the Aga returned to Algiers in early July, Dandulo was not well enough to go with him. The mission had proved successful, though, as the Aga left with a satisfactory reply after suspicions against the consul were assuaged. In actuality an English merchant had taken a Spanish slave at Algiers and carried him to Leghorn, where the merchant allowed the Spaniard to escape. After encountering pressure from the Protectorate, which did "not wish to give the Turks the slightest cause of offence because of the interests of trade and commerce," the merchant had promised to make restitution by either recovering the slave or offering money.⁵³ Cromwell and English merchants also took steps to smooth over tensions: the Aga

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Warmstry, 18.

⁵² On June 1, 1657, Giavarina reported, "The Turkish Aga still keeps his bed, being seriously ill. He makes no attempt at negotiation." *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 49, Francesco Giavarina to Doge and Senate, 1 June 1657.

⁵³ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 59, Francesco Giavarina to Doge and Senate, 6 July 1657.

received a present of 200 pieces of eight and a piece of Scarlet while the Turkey Company “entertained and feasted him splendidly.”⁵⁴

In late summer after returning to health, Dandulo petitioned Cromwell in order to return home.⁵⁵ On October 13, 1657, Cromwell issued a passport for “Joseph Dandeloe a Turke,” who was “about to transport himselfe to his owne Countrey” after “being left behind [by the Algiers delegation] by reason of sicknesse.”⁵⁶ Cromwell commanded civil and military officers to permit him to travel in any English ship to Algiers without any hindrance or molestation.⁵⁷ Given that Cromwell had recently written to the Grand Signor and expressed his desire for amity and unmolested trade, he would have had no desire to impede Dandulo’s wishes and thereby hazard his own negotiations.⁵⁸ However, Dandulo never returned. In *The Baptized Turk*, Warmstry provided some details of what transpired in the interim between Dandulo’s petition to Cromwell and his conversion.

After Dandulo’s arrival in England, the merchant Henry Lawrence, the son of the Lady Lawrence of Chelsea in Middlesex, greeted Dandulo and brought him to his mother’s home. Henry Lawrence and Dandulo had met when they were both in Smyrna not long before, so it is likely that Dandulo sought to reconnect with his former acquaintance.⁵⁹ While in Lady Lawrence’s house, Dandulo “entered into some familiarity” with Mr. Isaac Lawrence, another Turkey merchant who had married Lady Lawrence’s daughter.⁶⁰ As Warmstry relates, Isaac convinced Dandulo to remain a little

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Warmstry refers to Dandulo’s attempt of petitioning the Protector for the purpose of returning home. In *The Baptized Turk*, 93.

⁵⁶ BL, RP 290/2, passport, signed by Oliver Cromwell, 1657.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ See TNA, PRO SP 105/109, f. 203, Oliver Cromwell’s letter to Mehmet IV, 11 Aug. 1657.

⁵⁹ Warmstry, 16-18.

⁶⁰ Warmstry identifies this man as simply “Mr. Lawrence,” yet Randall Davies reveals this merchant was Isaac Lawrence. See Randall Davies, *Chelsea Old Church* (London: Duckworth & Co., 1904), 169.

longer in England than he intended. The involvement of the Lawrence family merchants in Dandulo's case reflects the convergence of certain royalist and mercantile interests by 1657, as Cromwell's war against the United Provinces of the Netherlands (1652-54) – followed by the war against Spain launched in 1654 – had eroded the patience, resources, and loyalty of the nation's merchants. The Council of State's failure to protect the Levant merchants and trade during wartime had placed the Company's assets in the Mediterranean in "extreme danger."⁶¹ The Spanish merchant Mr. Bunkley had declared that there was not one in a hundred of the Spain and Turkey merchants who did not stand "well affected" to the royalist cause, though this statement was undoubtedly an exaggeration.⁶²

Warmstry met Dandulo during the latter's stay at Lady Lawrence's home, where plans to encourage Dandulo's conversion developed. In the late 1650s, Warmstry acted as confessor to ex-royalists in London, and it was likely in this capacity that he served Lady Lawrence.⁶³ Arriving one evening to do "observances" for Lady Lawrence, Warmstry met Dandulo, encountering the agent in his "Turkish habit." Driven by "exciting inward inclinations" of converting Dandulo, Warmstry found support in Lady Lawrence herself, who contributed her "encouragement and compliant desires" to the furtherance of this undertaking.⁶⁴ Converting the Turk and heathen was something that had long been on Warmstry's mind, though in the context of how best to purify the Anglo-Protestant church. A moderate Anglican, Warmstry had criticized the Laudian ceremonialism of

⁶¹ Steven Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650-1668* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 98, 173.

⁶² Quoted in David Underdown, *Royalist Conspiracy in England 1649-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 213.

⁶³ "Warmestry, Thomas (1609/10–1665)," C. D. Gilbert in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28749> (accessed July 9, 2013).

⁶⁴ Warmstry, 19-20.

“Images, Altars, Crosses, the new Canons, and the Oath” at the second convocation of the clergy in the Worcester diocese in 1641. Such policies, he argued, were “scandalous to the Turk, and to the Heathen also,” for they “may be a meanes... to confirme and promote the Turk in his abhorring of the profession of Christianity.”⁶⁵ He concluded, “Many Moors, Turks, and Indians might be converted to Christianity, were it not for the scandal of Imagery.”⁶⁶ Dandulo’s conversion represented an opportunity for Warmstry to demonstrate that the true light of Christianity still shone forth amidst what he viewed as tumultuous times for the Church of England. As Warmstry indicated, God’s providential will was manifested in the “happy success, which is a good interpreter of Gods intendments... to convey [Dandulo] into the bosom of the true and orthodox Christian Church.”⁶⁷

As Warmstry began his work of persuasion, the merchant Isaac Lawrence volunteered his services as an interpreter between the minister and Dandulo. According to Warmstry’s account, at first Dandulo appeared “very averse [to efforts to convert him], and even strongly and desperately resolved to venture himself upon that Religion [Islam] which his Father had entertained.”⁶⁸ Yet after discussion at length, Dandulo “seemed to tend towards a kind of indifferency” or at least Warmstry, eager to plant the seeds of Christianity, chose to interpret Dandulo’s sentiments as increasingly receptive to

⁶⁵ BL, Burney Collection of Newsbooks, *Convocation Speech by Mr. Thomas Warmistry, one of the Clerks for the Diocesse of Worcester against Images, Altars, Crosses, the new Canons, and the Oath, &c.* (London, 1641).

⁶⁶ Ibid. During the Crusades, writers in Latin Christendom had denounced Muslim abuse of holy images in their propaganda, sensitive to this perceived contempt, and the recognition that pious Muslims took offence to imagery continued to inform religious texts and polemic through the early modern period. See Norman Daniels, *Islam and the West*, 134, 229-30. By Warmstry’s time, this recognition played into and reinforced anti-Catholic sentiments; in his *Convocation Speech*, Warmstry used Muslims’ distaste for imagery to criticize the reforms introduced by Archbishop Laud in the 1630s.

⁶⁷ Warmstry, 18.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 20.

Christian teachings. Encouraged by this initial exchange, Warmstry called upon the help of sequestered ministers Timothy Thurscross and Peter Gunning who both served as “luminaries of episcopalian resistance.”⁶⁹ In moving forward with Warmstry’s evangelization project, Thurscross also recommended an interpreter named Mr. Samois, “who had been a Traveller in the Turkish parts.”⁷⁰ As Warmstry related, Samois had turned “from the errors and Superstitions of Popery to the true Christian Catholick, Apostolick Religion, professed by the Church of *England*” and lately come to serve as the chaplain to Robert Bruce, the second earl of Elgin, who was an active royalist conspirator by the late 1650s.⁷¹ For Warmstry, the fact that Samois had “now very lately converted from his own Errors and Superstitions to the embracement of the Truth” and could serve as a “very great and active instrument of the conversion of another” appeared of crucial importance. Not only were Warmstry and his fellow divines drawing a “Turk” to Christian truth but they were also employing others who previously had appeared blinded to achieve that end.

Warmstry’s discussion of Dandulo’s lineage underscored an attempt to frame this conversion within a larger religio-political context. Though the Venetian ambassador had identified Dandulo as a “Turk of lower rank” when the latter arrived in England, Dandulo gained an impeccable pedigree from his sponsors. Suggesting that Dandulo descended from the very Christian and noble Venetian line of Dandolo family doges, Warmstry

⁶⁹ Included in this group were Henry Hammond, Herbert Thorndike, and George Wilde. See “Sancroft, William (1617–1693),” R. A. P. J. Beddard in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24610> (accessed January 24, 2014).

⁷⁰ Warmstry, 22.

⁷¹ Warmstry, 22. See also T. F. Henderson, “Bruce, Robert, second earl of Elgin and first earl of Ailesbury (*bap.* 1626, *d.* 1685),” rev. Victor Stater, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3757> (accessed January 16, 2014).

implied that he and his fellow ministers were reclaiming and preserving that Christian legacy – a legacy that had been lost by the Venetians and tainted by the Turks.⁷² Warmstry listed members of the Dandolo ancestral family, referring to the Doge Enrico Dandolo who led Venice to conquer Constantinople in 1204 as part of the Fourth Crusade and Andrea Dandolo, perhaps the most famous Doge of Venice. The construction of such a lineage gave Warmstry the opportunity to emphasize the multiple levels of “saving” which unfolded through Dandolo’s conversion. “From this noble Stock of the Venetian Commonwealth,” he wrote, “was this our Convert... sprung; so that he is derived as we see from Christian Ancestors, The corruptions of whose blood have now... been restored and purified in him by the water of holy Baptism.”⁷³ In order to explain Dandolo’s connection to the noble Dandolo family, Warmstry indicated that some branches of the family had been transplanted during the Ottoman-Venetian wars to the Greek island of Tzia in the Aegean Sea, where Dandolo’s parents still resided.⁷⁴ Perhaps of further note, the anglicized name given to Dandolo before his conversion was Joseph, a name that held particular importance for the Venetians.⁷⁵ By embedding Dandolo within the noble Venetian family’s legacy, Warmstry gave this particular conversion great symbolic significance.

Endowing Dandolo with such a noble ancestry also served to legitimize the conversion itself, as conceptions of honor, virtue, and credibility remained wedded to

⁷² Though England had ignored Venice’s pleas for help against the Ottomans in the mid-1650s, Warmstry’s account implied that winning the soul of a Turk was just as important – if not more so – to the Christian cause. A spiritual victory might represent England’s contribution to Christendom – the underlying idea being that where other nations had lost their way, England might serve as the guide.

⁷³ Warmstry, 4.

⁷⁴ In antiquity, this island was known as Keos.

⁷⁵ As apparent in the dome mosaics dedicated to Joseph in San Marco, Venice. Joseph was prominent in Egypt, the origin place of Saint Mark. I am grateful to Hilary Haakenson for drawing my attention to these points.

blood and lineage. As Steven Shapin argues, contemporaries often assessed reliability according to theories regarding the natures and dispositions of types of people, preserving the “equation between gentility and truth-telling.”⁷⁶ Lacking the knowledge to inform their sense, common people appeared more susceptible to errors of reason – an observation touching upon the “erroneous disposition of the people” that the physician Sir Thomas Brown made in his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* of 1646.⁷⁷ In the case of Dandulo, his patrons grounded their claims regarding the conversion’s authenticity on an impressive lineage. The conversion appeared a rational choice because the constructed bloodline imbued him with – or gave him the disposition to accept – that rationality. Such a background better prepared him to receive religious instruction and accept the supposed “flawless rationality” of Christianity based upon “deliberation and choice.”⁷⁸ As Warmstry insisted, only after extended discussion and recognizing the “light of nature and right reason” did Dandulo commit to a Christian baptism.⁷⁹ Rationality served as the means by which one arrived at truth and knowledge of providential will. Thus, in constructing Dandulo’s lineage, his patrons demonstrated not only that he had been given the disposition to recognize the proper interpretation of “truth” but also that they had the right to define and implement policies according to that validated truth. Underlying such a narrative was the hope that dissenters, nonconformists, and other “bold hypocrites” might also give up their pretensions of having tender consciences and embrace the truth

⁷⁶ Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 73. See especially Ch. 3, “A Social History of Truth-Telling.”

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁷⁸ Matar has considered how instruction of the convert was important to presenting the conversion as a “fully intellectual act,” yet I would also stress the importance that Dandulo’s patrons placed on his status. Dandulo’s background created the foundation from which he could proceed with this intellectual act. See Matar, “The Comenian Legacy in England,” 210.

⁷⁹ Warmstry, postscript.

that Warmstry and his fellow Anglican royalist divines preached. Indeed, less than a month after Gunning baptized Dandulo in the public ceremony, Gunning preached against the Anabaptists on December 3, 1657.⁸⁰

Much of Warmstry's account served as an exposition on how to discern pure truth as well as to suppress and acknowledge the dangers of "enthusiasm," as represented by various sects including the Quakers. In many ways, the account reflected the influence of a culture of "facts," in which evidence needed to be examined and substantiated in order to arrive at any "truth"; in this examination, only the recognition of providence and – for the Anglicans – authority could serve as the basis of its interpretation. In his *Philosophical Essay* of 1654, the committed Anglican Seth Ward and future Bishop of Exeter and Salisbury had forwarded a "rational defense of Scripture against radical claims of personal revelation," focusing on the nature of the evidence.⁸¹ Warmstry employed a similar method in offering a rational argument for why the legitimacy of Dandulo's conversion and his arrival at the proper "truth" were to be believed. As Warmstry related, Dandulo's decision to be baptized into the Christian faith followed his experience of a dream. In the dream, Dandulo came across "filthy stinking puddle water" and was troubled that he could not use it to wash himself. Suddenly, a "very fair full and clear chrystal stream" broke forth and washed the dirty water away, allowing Dandulo to cleanse himself in pure water. Next growing thirsty, Dandulo made his way to a poor house where he knocked at the door and was greeted by a woman who presented him

⁸⁰ "Gunning, Peter (1614–1684)," Kenneth W. Stevenson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11748> (accessed November 15, 2012).

⁸¹ Barbara J. Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 169-170.

with a dish to collect a heavenly shower and thereby quench his thirst.⁸² Recognizing that dreams either proceeded from the “singular providence of God” or from evil spirits, Warmstry devoted a good part of his account to proving that Dandulo’s dream belonged to the former in that it tended towards godly obedience and holiness.⁸³ As Stuart Clark has indicated, most individuals – if they placed any weight upon dreams – viewed them as a kind of prophecy.⁸⁴

The truth of the dream and the assurance of whether it proceeded from “right principle” were manifested through its internal morality and outcome. While dreams that operated according to godly obedience portended only good, the dreams of the “*Enthusiasts*” or “sleeping Wakers” threatened to overturn order, religion, and liberty, as their “pretended *Enthusiasms*” were “but waking dreams, the mad and wilde fancies of souls” in the “dead sleep and slumber of sin.”⁸⁵ In Warmstry’s view, these Enthusiasts, who “vented their own Dreams and Fancies instead of Gods Truth,” included the likes of Anabaptists and Quakers: Anabaptists “excused their Seditions and absurd opinions and practices by *Visions* and *Dreams*” while the Quakers and others were “carried away into strange Fancies.”⁸⁶ Thomas Hobbes, a Royalist with more absolutist beliefs, had himself decried the private judgments of the radical Protestant sects as a source of “improper knowledge,” arguing that individuals’ claims to decide religious truths led to the “ultimate fragmentation of knowledge.”⁸⁷ Messages from the divine did not encourage

⁸² Warmstry, 24-25

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 41, 89.

⁸⁴ Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 306.

⁸⁵ Warmstry, 38. Warmstry cited *A treatise concerning enthusiasm* by the scholar and divine Meric Casaubon, who had been deprived of his ministry during the civil war years due to accusations of ecclesiological innovation and popery.

⁸⁶ Warmstry, 38, 50.

⁸⁷ Steven Shapin, and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 103.

rebellion and disorder as these radical sects seemed to presage but rather upheld social order and achieved godly ends. Warmstry argued that Dandulo's dream worked towards the latter – in contrast to the “wilde fancies” of the sectaries – and thus proved a means by which God was “pleased to impart himself either *immediately*, or by the *ministration* of his *Angels* unto his people, either to discover some secret or future things unto them, or to encourage or give approbation unto some good things which they have in hand or design.”⁸⁸

The care with which Warmstry distinguished between the visions of the “enthusiasts” and Dandulo's dream reflected a larger anxiety over false conversions. Sectarians who claimed godly inspiration were often regarded as charlatans who pursued such beliefs for personal or political gain; as such, they appeared as false converts whose enthusiasm was “rendered as inauthentic, insincere, and unreal.”⁸⁹ Due to man's susceptibility to error, Henry More in his *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus* (1656) stressed the importance of distinguishing between false inspiration and divine influence.⁹⁰ Thus, in order to attest to the sincerity and authenticity of Dandulo's conversion, Warmstry stressed that Dandulo was not encouraged in his conversion by false impressions but rather was motivated by – and the instrument of – godly designs. In Warmstry's view, God had put Dandulo's dream “unto the Chariot of [their] motions and endeavors” and as such, needed to be “exceedingly regarded, as coming to [them] by Gods special, and sometimes extraordinary *work of Providence*.”⁹¹

⁸⁸ Warmstry, 42.

⁸⁹ Jeffrey S. Shoulson, *Fictions of Conversion: Jews, Christians, and Cultures of Change in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 155.

⁹⁰ Henry More, *Enthusiasmus Triumphatus, or a Discourse of the Nature, Causes, Kinds, and Cure of Enthusiasme* (1656). Quoted in Shoulson, 157.

⁹¹ Warmstry, 56.

Gaining a new level of intensity in the period between 1620 and 1660, such providential language coursed through Protestant discourse and thought, which emphasized providence as the exercise of God's power.⁹² For Protestants, providence imposed a certain order and meaning on life and formed a pattern for the true believer to see and understand divine purpose.⁹³ Faced with defeat on the battlefield during the Civil Wars, royalists often asserted that God supported their side though He had temporarily afflicted them.⁹⁴ Those of all political persuasions were able to take comfort in such a theoretical framework and anticipate future providential experiences. The thinking was that God would show mercy and raise His people from their lowly state. In framing Dandulo's dream and conversion within a providential framework, Warmstry not only appropriated the providentialist language that the Cromwellians embraced but also sought to prove that the conversion as well as the restitution of the Church of England reflected divine will. Warmstry's interpretation of Dandulo's dream further illustrated the message that the Church was to be God's chosen instrument in achieving His designs. In deconstructing the dream for his readers, Warmstry made the following interpretative conclusions: "*The poor house that he knockt at*, The habitation of the Church now in a poor afflicted condition, destitute of earthly magnificence and glory. *The woman that came forth*, That afflicted Church. *The dish she gave him*, The Ordinances and means of grace."⁹⁵ The "afflicted Church" appeared as the sole body through which God's will was realized and the godly deed of conversion accomplished. Warmstry indicated that the Cromwellian leadership, in further weakening religious institutions, eroded and acted

⁹² Blair Worden, "Providence and Politics in Cromwellian England." In *Past and Present*, No. 109 (1985), 58-59.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 63.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁹⁵ Warmstry, 70.

contrary to divine authority. Embracing the rhetoric of exile and captivity, Anglicans came to view themselves as prisoners in their own country – a country that had become its own Babylon from which Anglicans hoped for deliverance.⁹⁶

Infused with symbolic meaning, the notion of escaping from blindness not only described Dandulo's conversion from Islam to Christianity but also paralleled a greater hope that providence would further lead Englishmen and women into the light of God's truth. Such notions were commonly held across the religious and political spectrum. Cromwell's chaplain John Owen viewed providence as "a straight line" that "runs through all the darkness, confusion, and disorder of the world."⁹⁷ Englishmen and women would be led from their willful errors and self-interest and enter once again into the "light" as envisioned by the liberty to obey and serve God as an instrument of divine will. For Anglicans, this "light" also represented a reorienting of the nation back towards upholding their vision of the true Church and order.

Perhaps in an allusion to the ongoing research conducted at Oxford by a group of natural philosophers that included Robert Boyle (1627-1691), Warmstry suggested that contemporaries might better come into the light of truth by placing trust in the ultimate chemist, God, and His chosen instruments. The notable processes were not those that could be performed or reproduced in a laboratory but rather those created and initiated by God, the "divine Artificer at work in the great shop or laboratory of the world" in which he made use of his "several Agents and Instruments... and of all the creatures in the variety of their motions and effects to those various and wonderful purposes and products

⁹⁶ Guibbory, *Christian Identity, Jews, and Israel*, 135-6. Guibbory discusses how the biblical analogy appeared frequently in Royalist texts and sermons, as it spoke to their state of exile.

⁹⁷ Worden, "Providence and Politics," 63.

whereunto they are employed by the divine wisdom.”⁹⁸ In this laboratory of the world, Warmstry wrote, society might observe God “exercising a strange and wonderful Chymistry... making extracts of good out of every evill, light out of darkness, holiness out of sin, and the greatest good out of the greatest evill.”⁹⁹ The implication was that God had chosen Dandulo as an instrument in furthering this “wonderful Chymistry” and bringing a troubled nation from the darkness into the light.

The symbolic value of Dandulo’s conversion in suggesting greater providential designs was further enhanced by his name. The contemporary rumor that the famous Doge of Venice Enrico Dandolo was blind proved compelling enough for John Milton to employ it as evidence in his own writings.¹⁰⁰ In his *Second Defence*, Milton cited Dandolo as one of the “wise men of the most distant past” who endured blindness only to demonstrate his strength and be better prepared to open his heart to the divine.¹⁰¹ Blindness and suffering made one even more receptive to – and capable of serving as the vessel of – the light of truth. Indicating that the smallest occurrences could offer promises of redemption and salvation, Warmstry invited his readers to recognize Dandulo’s conversion – a seemingly “small” matter – as a “providential occurrence” in its achievement of godly designs.¹⁰² Quoting various passages of Scripture, Warmstry argued that “The Providence of God is very wonderful in turning the *greatest scales* with the *smallest grains*; in making so small, so inconsiderable a matter as the turning of a *leaf in a Book* at such a time to be the means to prevent the *ruine of a Nation*.”¹⁰³ Warmstry

⁹⁸ Warmstry, 92.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 92-3.

¹⁰⁰ *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. IV, 586.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 590.

¹⁰² Warmstry, 76.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 81.

thereby couched the conversion account in such a way as to stake an Anglican claim to truth and legitimacy within the larger contest of godliness happening within England.

For Warmstry, Dandulo was “his own Parable as it were,” appearing as the prodigal son who not only returned to his parents’ Greek home after being taken captive by a Moor and brought to Egypt at a young age but also found true salvation under the Holy Father in embracing Christianity.¹⁰⁴ In the eyes of his patrons, he was also a timely parable for the nation’s return to godliness from its present darkness. Thus, a political commentary appeared interwoven throughout the pages of Warmstry’s account. Warmstry referred to the story of Origen, who living in a time of temptation and persecution, desired to draw people from their idolatry. Stirred up with zeal, Origen made haste to the place where idolatry was to be committed only to neglect his own devotions and succumb to idolatry himself rather than diverting others from sin as intended. Warmstry cited the forty-ninth Psalm in which God reprimanded the wicked for taking his Covenant in their mouths only to cast his holy words away.¹⁰⁵ Warmstry made the connection to Cromwellian England – a time of “great *trial and catastrophe* in this Nation, when the *readings of the day did very aptly answer the sad condition of a great person in this Realm*” – an allusion that would not have been lost on his readers. Even Warmstry recognized that such a comment “would more provoke than edifie.”¹⁰⁶ For Warmstry, Dandulo’s conversion appeared situated to help the Church regain her way, which had been lost to “warlike Christians.” Warmstry expressed hope that “*Christians would lay down their swords and spears and return to their prayers and tears*” and that the justice of God would fetch “them up again out of their darkest Corners,” “meting unto

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 87-88.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 88.

wickedness in its own very measure... and causing evill and destruction like a well-nosed Blood-hound, to hunt the violent man to overthrow him.”¹⁰⁷

Dandulo’s baptism appeared particularly subversive and provocative to the Cromwellians because his sponsors depicted him as one of the “instruments which God is pleased to use and own” in forwarding a providential will.¹⁰⁸ In the months following Dandulo’s public baptism, Cromwellian officials made attempts to discredit the conversion and undermine the London Anglican community. What mattered was the Cromwellian perception that Dandulo’s baptism was part and parcel of what David Underdown has termed a “complex web of conspiracy” in London during these years.¹⁰⁹ Despite no outwardly apparent connection between the baptism and royalist conspiracies, fears of rumored attacks would have primed the government to see any event that promoted Anglican or royalist interests as dangerous. Already reports of an intended Spanish expedition against England led Cromwell to warn authorities in Bristol and Gloucester of imminent danger at the beginning of December, and the Council of State ordered extra guards for London amidst mounting tension.¹¹⁰ Knowing that Anglicans planned to gather for Christmas, Cromwell and his Council seized the opportunity to issue an ordinance in mid-December that forbade the celebration of “Holydaies,” including Christmas, Easter, and other feasts.¹¹¹ Thus, under the guise of eliminating superstition and popish festivals, officials launched a political attack against the very community of individuals who presided over Dandulo’s baptism. Reverend Peter

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 95.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 93.

¹⁰⁹ David Underdown, *Royalist Conspiracy in England 1649-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), 211.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 215.

¹¹¹ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 295 (17-24 Dec. 1657), 191-2.

Gunning and Dandulo's female sponsors, the Countess of Dorset and Lady Hatton, were among those targeted in the same chapel where Dandulo had been baptized only a month before. Having gone with his wife to celebrate Christmas in Gunning's congregation, the devout episcopalian and Royalist John Evelyn recorded in his diary that the chapel was surrounded with soldiers as the sermon ended. As he wrote, "All the Communicants and Assembly [were] surpriz'd and kept Prisoners by them [the soldiers], some in the house, some carried away."¹¹² In the afternoon Major-generals Edward Whalley and William Goffe as well as other Whitehall officials had examined the congregants "one by one," committing some to prison. Referring to Whalley and Goffe as "wretched miscreants" of "high flight, and above Ordinances," Evelyn wrote that they had asked him "frivolous & insnaring questions, with much threatning" before they finally released him.¹¹³ A contemporary report in the newsbook *Mercurius Politicus* also related the events of the political raid conducted by the soldiers, indicating that soldiers had apprehended the congregations of sequestered ministers Timothy Thurscross in Westminster, George Wilde in Fleet Street, and Gunning in the Strand. The report referred to Gunning's congregation as the "grand Assembly," which some "for the magnitude of it... have been pleased to term the Church of England; it being (as they say) to be found no where else in so great and so compact a Body."¹¹⁴ The timing of the raids suggested that the seemingly related threats of royalist plots and rising Anglican influence – as manifested through the achievement of Dandulo's conversion – inflamed Cromwellian fears.

The Anglican community also confronted rumors spread by their religious opponents that called into question the authenticity of Dandulo's conversion. In his

¹¹² *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E. S. de Beer, Vol. III (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1955), 203-4.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 204.

¹¹⁴ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 396 (24-31 Dec. 1657), 199-200.

account, Warmstry addressed these rumors directly, writing, “There have been various endeavors both to corrupt and to blast the credit of the Work that hath been by Gods mercy wrought upon this our Convert.”¹¹⁵ One rumor – which Warmstry attributed to an opposing minister – indicated that Dandulo was hired to become a Christian while another proclaimed that Dandulo became a Christian because he feared to return home after “violating the Laws of Mahomet in drinking wine before his conversion.”¹¹⁶ Warmstry refuted the latter rumor by indicating that Dandulo had applied for a passport to return home and was thus not driven by the fear of a homecoming.

Confirmation of providence’s role in an event rested upon the godliness of the outcome, ensuring that the political stakes surrounding the success of the conversion remained high. The Restoration perhaps fulfilled hopes energized by the auspicious sign of Dandulo’s conversion, enabling the continued popularity of Warmstry’s account.¹¹⁷ Yet in order for Dandulo’s conversion to remain as both an important sign in a larger providential chain of events and proof of divine favor for the Anglican royalist cause, he needed to live an honest Christian life. At the end of 1661, rumors circulated within London that Dandulo had been executed for some crime, provoking the newsbooks *Mercurius Publicus* and *The Kingdome’s Intelligencer* – both approved by the Restoration government – to publish the following advertisement:

Whereas *Philip Dandulo* a Turke borne, by profession a Mahumetan who was converted to the true Christian faith by Dr. *Wilde*, Dr. *Gunning*, Dr. *Warmstry*, Dr. *Thurstcross*, and baptized therein having his *Majestie’s* Letters, Patents, for Collections to be made in *London*, *Westminster*, and other Counties, in *England*

¹¹⁵ Warmstry, 92.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 92-3.

¹¹⁷ *The Baptized Turk* continued to be printed and sold over the next several years by T. Garthwait in St. Paul’s Church-yard and H. Marsh at the Princes Arms in Chancery Lane, near Fleetstreet. For example, see advertisement in *Don Juan Lamberto* by the royalist Thomas Flatman (1661). Marsh continued to sell *The Baptized Turk* in small octavo.

for his Subsistance and releife, was falsely reported to have been executed for some notorious crime... These are to certifie that the said *Philip Dandulo* is now living with his wife and family at the 3 Crownes in *Westminster*, and it was a Moor that was executed. On which the said report was falsely grounded, desiring all persons to be so charitable as to take notice of the same that he may not suffer thereby to his utter undoing.¹¹⁸

For the involved parties, their credibility hinged upon both proving that the report of the Turk's wrongdoing was "falsely grounded" and continuing to support one who had served as a godly instrument. The "potentially destabilizing question of authenticity" often marked discourses of conversion in this period, as contemporaries questioned whether a transformation was truly complete and stable.¹¹⁹ Dandulo's conversion was no different. Confronting negative rumors about the authenticity of Dandulo's conversion, his sponsors thus attempted to guard his legacy as one of the God's providential instruments, suppressing doubts regarding the degree to which Dandulo's conversion was truly a lasting victory.

VYING TO CONVERT THE "TURK"

Anglican royalists were not the only ones to stake their claims to legitimacy on the conversion of a "Turk." The contested visions of England's national development played out in the conversion of not only Dandulo but also two other Muslims. On May 2, 1658, the French Calvinist minister John Despagne – who maintained favor with the Protectorate even while the make-up of his congregation suggested a conservative political outlook – baptized a "Turk" into the Reformed faith at the French church at

¹¹⁸ *Mercurius Publicus Comprising the Sum of Forraign Intelligence*, no. 53 (26 Dec. 1661 – 2 Jan. 1662), Advertisement. See also *The Kingdom's Intelligencer* (23-30 Dec. 1661), Advertisement. Both newsbooks were published by Henry Muddiman and Giles Dury.

¹¹⁹ Shoulson, *Fictions of Conversion*, 152.

Somerset House and gave him the name “Arman Adrian” after his sponsors.¹²⁰ This “Turk” was actually from the “west of Africa.”¹²¹ In his sermon preached at the baptism, Despagne indicated that, though converts to Christianity were few in number, the glory of such a conversion reflected God’s grace and proved a step towards the day when cruel Babylon would “see her own Children dashed against the stones.”¹²² Echoing an argument made by Warmstry, Despagne proclaimed, “The smallnesse of the number of those who are converted, doth not hinder the Angels in Heaven from rejoicing. If God should at this present create a new star, but one star only, would it not ravish us all with admiration?”¹²³ Following the sermon, Despagne questioned the Turk on articles of the Christian faith, illuminating the perceived errors of Islam and hoping to underscore “truths” that would “open the eyes of those who have been seduced by Mahomet.”¹²⁴ As was the case with Dandulo, evangelization allowed Adrian to recognize his supposed former errors of reason under Islam and embrace a Protestant persuasion. In doing so, the convert not only validated his sponsors’ brand of faith but also rejected Catholicism. Stressing that their convert found Catholicism objectionable, Adrian’s sponsors indicated that he did not address himself to the Roman Church “by reason of the Images to which they kneel.”¹²⁵

¹²⁰ “Despagne, Jean (1591–1659),” Vivienne Larminie in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7547> (accessed July 11, 2013). The convert was baptized by Monsieur Armand of Caumont, Marquis of Montpouillan, and the Lady Adrian de Mayern whose names became his own.

¹²¹ John Despagne, *The Joyfull Convert Represented in a Short, but Elegant Sermon Preached at the baptizing of a Turke* (London: Printed by I. Leach, 1658), 5.

¹²² Despagne, *Joyfull Convert*, 9.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

Similar to those who facilitated Dandulo's conversion, Adrian's sponsors found renewed hope for their particular religious model in the convert's deliverance. Following Adrian's examination, Despaigne led the congregation in a prayer that spoke to greater hopes for the salvation of the Reformed church as well as for the convert. Despaigne asked God to pardon the Turk's faults, to cause "the Scales to fall from his eyes" and to "create in him a new heart, that being a new Creature he may walk in righteousness and holiness."¹²⁶ Once again, the convert would escape his blindness and enter into a holy communion with his Protestant sponsors. The reporting of the event by the official government newsbook *Mercurius Politicus*, supervised by Cromwell's Secretary of State and head of intelligence John Thurloe, indicated that the Protectorate condoned the proceedings and the victory for the Reformed religion that the conversion entailed. As the newsbook reported of the event, after Despaigne concluded the sermon, chairs were placed against the pulpit in order "to keep off the press of people."¹²⁷ Despaigne descended from the pulpit and sat with Adrian at his right hand, proceeding to interrogate Adrian over matters of faith and the reasons why he had decided to convert and chosen the Reformed faith rather than Catholicism. The newsbook indicated that Adrian "made his satisfactory, though not ample replication by reason of his unskillfulness in the French tongue."¹²⁸ It appeared a blessed providence that God had led the "Turk" to convert to the Reformed religion and thereby escape the errors of not only Islam but also Roman Catholicism.

Given the fact that others were fulfilling important elements of Comenius' millenarian vision outside of their immediate influence, it is not surprising that the

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹²⁷ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 415 (6-13 May 1658), 524-5.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

Cromwellians sought to validate their religio-political establishment with an evangelization success of their own. On January 30, 1659, the Cromwellians achieved that success with the conversion of Isuf, an Ottoman chiaus. As Matar argues, this conversion was to be a “confirmation of the status quo” and to take attention away from the Anglican triumph of Dandulo’s conversion.¹²⁹ Yet the significance of this conversion was greater than even Matar recognizes: on September 3, 1658, Oliver Cromwell passed away and with his death, the protectorate lost the one person who could preserve any political stability by managing competing interests, most importantly the army. His son, Richard Cromwell, succeeded him, yet Richard did not have the experience and clout that enabled his father to retain power. Deeply aware that the protectorate remained on shaky ground, Thurloe would have been eager to forward signs that would attest to the validity of Richard’s rule. As it was, in mid-October 1658, Thurloe may have helped Richard prepare his speech to the army officers in which he defended his godliness and commitment to the pursuit of liberty.¹³⁰

In March 1658 Isuf had come into England and was “received with much kindness” by Cromwell, given a pension, and put in the care of the ecumenist John Dury by John Thurloe.¹³¹ Isuf may have arrived as an Ottoman agent to confirm the articles of peace concluded a few weeks earlier between John Stoakes, the commander of the English fleet in the Mediterranean, and the governors of Tunis.¹³² This treaty sought to establish free trade and commerce and prevent the molestation of English vessels by

¹²⁹ Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 146.

¹³⁰ “Cromwell, Richard (1626–1712),” Peter Gaunt in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6768> (accessed August 21, 2013).

¹³¹ Thomas White, *A True Relation of the Conversion and Baptism of Isuf the Turkish Chaous, Named Richard Christophilus* (London, 1658), 8.

¹³² TNA, PRO SP 18/179, f. 141, Articles of Peace concluded by John Stoakes, 27 Feb. 1658.

Barbary pirates that had ravaged shipping. At the time of Isuf's arrival, only four months had passed since Dandulo's public baptism, and Warmstry's account of the event likely had recently been published. With this added publicity given to Dandulo's conversion, one might assume that the Cromwellians looked forward to their own potential conversion success. As one needed to surrender to divine purpose rather than conform providence to one's individual will, patience and vigilance were required in anticipating God's designs. On May 12, 1658, the Council ordered the Treasury Commissioners to pay £2 to Isuf, the Turkish Chaius, weekly until further order, indicating the further integration of Isuf into the Cromwellian network as well as the hopes for a sustained relationship.¹³³ Through the fall of 1659, Isuf continued to receive a weekly pension of 40 shillings on top of arrears.¹³⁴

Thurloe's support for and eagerness to secure Isuf's baptism was in line with his previous efforts to inspire confidence in the Cromwellian regime. As Patrick Little demonstrated in his analysis of the Sindercombe Plot – a failed attempt on Oliver Cromwell's life – and fears of foreign invasion in February 1657, Thurloe had adeptly mobilized domestic newsbooks and foreign intelligence to create a climate of unrest and thereby ensure the passage of the new constitution in early 1657. Such efforts appeared an “elaborate confidence trick, with the army as the main target” – a trick designed to achieve the civilian settlement, the Humble Petition and Advice, in which Cromwell would be accepted as monarch and the succession secured.¹³⁵ The conversion of Isuf similarly gave Thurloe the opportunity to win confidence for the Cromwellian

¹³³ TNA, PRO SP 25/78, f. 615, Council of State, Day's Proceedings, 12 May 1658.

¹³⁴ TNA, PRO SP 25/79, f. 236, Council of State, Day's Proceedings, 5 Oct. 1659. See also TNA, PRO SP 25/91, f. 91, Orders of Parliament, 8 Oct. 1659.

¹³⁵ Patrick Little, “John Thurloe and the Offer of the Crown to Cromwell.” In *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 231.

Protectorate at a critical moment. It is telling that John Dury wrote to Thurloe that “the providence of God hath directed him [Isuf] to be owned as a Christian by us.”¹³⁶ The Cromwellians could “own” the victory. Though the French minister Despagne retained favor under the Protectorate, the Cromwellians could not fully claim Arman Adrian – the Turk whom Despagne baptized – as their own, and indeed, Oliver’s death demanded that the Cromwellians find a providential sign that they could firmly link to Richard. However, Thomas White did call upon Despagne and the Dutch Minister Mr. Calandrine to join him in conversing with Isuf until they were convinced of his readiness to be baptized.¹³⁷ White likely found Despagne’s language fluency as well as his prior success converting a “Turk” valuable.

Both Thurloe and Dury understood the political and religious benefits of collaborating to facilitate Isuf’s baptism. Dury offered a compelling irenicist vision in which Thurloe could not only package and legitimize Richard Cromwell’s government but also frame Isuf’s conversion in a larger providential framework. Meanwhile, Thurloe’s sponsorship gave Dury the political authority and resources to further his project of Protestant unity. Since the 1630s, Dury had worked to forward his ecumenical schemes, navigating the different terms upon which the religious groupings of puritans, moderate Calvinist Episcopalians, and Laudians wanted religious unity compatible with their version of doctrinal orthodoxy.¹³⁸ As Anthony Milton has argued, by the early 1640s, Dury found himself increasingly forced to commit to a political side and thereby began “constantly reconstructing himself to suit the changing irenical possibilities...

¹³⁶ John Dury to John Thurloe, 16 Dec. 1658. In *A Collection of State Papers of John Thurloe*, 7 vols. (1742), ed. by Thomas Birch. Vol. 62, p. 620.

¹³⁷ White, *A True Relation*, 15.

¹³⁸ Anthony Milton, “‘The Unchanged Peacemaker’? John Dury and the politics of irenicism in England, 1628-1643.” In *Samuel Hartlib and Universal Reformation*, 96, 98.

according to whichever side's version of Protestant unity he was choosing to adopt."¹³⁹ He eventually aligned himself with the "polarized, apocalyptic rhetoric of Covenanters," and puritan divines provided him with a base of support as he pursued his reunion projects in the 1650s.¹⁴⁰ After Dury spent several years abroad in Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands working towards the cause of Protestant unity with Cromwell's support, he returned to England in February 1657. Though he had an audience with Cromwell several days after his arrival, it was not until June that Parliament appointed a committee of five, which included Thurloe and army generals Charles Fleetwood and John Desborough, to encourage further Christian endeavors for uniting the Protestant Churches abroad.¹⁴¹ However, nothing came of this aim, leaving Dury to attempt to win the support of the English universities for his work through 1658.¹⁴²

Though Dury's biographers have indicated that foreign wars, domestic confusion, and Cromwell's death frustrated Dury's larger project for international Protestant unity, it seems that involvement in Isuf's baptism gave Dury the opportunity to fulfill an aspect of his Comenian mission. Isuf's conversion appeared an important step towards achieving that unity and the full millenarian reformation involving not only the fall of Rome but also the conversion of Jews and Turks. As tensions between the Cromwellian inner circle, Parliament, and the army generals grew in the winter of 1658-59, Thurloe – on his part – may have recognized the opportunity to rally the disparate political elements around the figure of a converted "Turk" and subsequently a central component of Comenius' and Dury's vision for Protestant unity. As it was, the very individuals who presented a

¹³⁹ Ibid., 110.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 113, 99. As Milton indicates, this constituency supported a confessional foreign policy revolving around an alliance with the west European communities to combat popery and restore the Palatinate.

¹⁴¹ G. H. Turnbull, *Hartlib, Dury and Comenius* (London: University Press of Liverpool, 1947), 285.

¹⁴² Ibid.

potential challenge to the regime – including Fleetwood and Desborough – had served on the committee assigned to pursue endeavors tending towards Protestant unity with Thurloe one year earlier. Dury’s involvement and counsel regarding Isuf would have offered Thurloe the opportunity to recommit the Cromwellian government to a larger struggle for Protestant unity and make that unity the rallying cry and inspiration for Richard’s new policies. Indeed, the conversion appeared as part of a carefully staged series of events designed to confirm England’s providential role and cater to international opinion. Only a few days before Isuf’s public baptism, Richard Cromwell made a speech to Parliament, attended by his privy council and other high officers, in which he devoted a good part of the address to the state of the Protestant cause at home and abroad as well as to the “reviving power and designs of the King of Spain, the Roman Emperor, and other their Confederates to oppressing Reformed Professors.”¹⁴³ The following day, the House resolved to set aside the next Friday for a “day of Humiliation in Prayer and Preaching” for “seeking God for his special assistance and blessing,” selecting several ministers, including Thomas Manton to assist with prayer and preaching.¹⁴⁴ These events, along with Isuf’s baptism, which was also presided over by Manton, represented attempts to bring together the “heterogeneous mixture” of groups “differing in their beliefs and religion” with which Richard Cromwell had to contend.¹⁴⁵ Unity at home would serve as the basis for achieving Protestant unity abroad. Years earlier Manton had himself signed a letter recommending Dury in his mission to forge Protestant unity across Europe.¹⁴⁶ In

¹⁴³ *Mercurius Politicus*, no. 552 (27 Jan. – 3 Feb. 1659), 199.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 197.

¹⁴⁵ *CSP Venice 1657-1659*, Vol. 31, 287-294, Francesco Giavarina, Venetian Resident in England, to the Doge and Venetian Senate, London, 7 Feb. 1659.

¹⁴⁶ “Manton, Thomas,” E. C. Vernon in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18009> (accessed August 16, 2013).

bringing together these actors who had supported and worked towards the aim of Protestant unity, Isuf's baptism demonstrated the regime's renewed commitment to its aims and attempts not only to elevate its vision above others but also to forge internal consensus.

In the months leading up to Isuf's baptism, the communication between Thurloe and Dury suggested both their awareness of how such a providential event would bolster the Cromwellian regime as well as the perceived urgency in bringing about this "providence." Thurloe remained attentive to the proceedings regarding Isuf and consulted Dury on the best means of performing the baptism. On December 16, 1658, Dury advised the Secretary, "It will be very suitable unto his highness eminent piety and Christian charity, and a thing very commendable amongst all, that shall heare of it, if his highness would be pleased to countenance and owne him [Isuf], in the act of his reception into the visible societie of Christians."¹⁴⁷ Dury added further that Isuf should be given the name Richard and then admitted into Cromwell's presence in order "to expresse his thankfulnes unto his highness for the favour received, not only in the confirmation of his pension, which he got from his late highness of blessed memorie, but in the countenancing at his baptisme."¹⁴⁸

The fact that the name "Richard" was to be conferred upon Isuf at baptism further cemented the link between this sign of God's favor and the Cromwellian cause. Isuf's public baptism attained a level of urgency not only due to the power struggles happening within – and the army's seething discontent outside – the council chamber but also Isuf's

¹⁴⁷ *A Collection of State Papers of John Thurloe*, 620. John Durie to John Thurloe, 16 Dec. 1658.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

own seeming hesitations. In his letter to Thurloe, Dury advised that the baptism “bee done with all convenient speed,”

Because Satan is very busie to divert him from seeking to bee baptized (whom, neverthelesse, he doth resist very stoutly) partly by terrours and threatenings, partly by persuasions and promises; appearing very oft in the visible shape of a man to him, sometimes in the habit of a Jesuit, sometimes in other appearances of persons, with whom he is acquainted.¹⁴⁹

It is likely that Isuf knew of Adrian and Dandulo and, as such, was aware of previous attempts to win converts by other religio-political interests – an awareness that might further explain his doubts. As it was, Isuf told Thomas White that he “went abroad from morning till evening, and that his acquaintance was with some Turkish Merchants, and with some French Men, and with Mr. Powel, who liveth near the Temple.”¹⁵⁰ While these merchants may not have been the same ones who cared for Dandulo, they may have been less sympathetic to the Cromwellian efforts to convert Isuf. Already the Dutch and Spanish wars of the 1650s had weakened the English Levant Company financially and made it increasingly difficult for the Company to manage its affairs across the Mediterranean. In 1651 the Company’s attempts to recall the residing ambassador in Istanbul, Thomas Bendish, and replace him with a more loyal agent failed and further aggravated tensions, as Bendish began communicating directly with Cromwell and Thurloe rather than going through the English Levant Company and its directors.¹⁵¹ In doing so, Bendish, Cromwell, and Thurloe ensured more direct state control over the Company’s affairs, circumventing the Company and its merchants.¹⁵² Such developments

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ White, *A True Relation*, 13-14.

¹⁵¹ Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire 1642-1660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 184-5, 194.

¹⁵² Ibid., 194.

likely made the merchants wary of state efforts to garner legitimacy through co-opting the conversion of an Ottoman administrator.

Though Isuf did not descend from noble Christian blood – as Anglicans claimed for Dandulo – he could boast of a distinguished upbringing. As mentioned, presenting a Turkish convert of nobility either through blood or status enhanced the importance of the conversion. Yet this assertion of nobility also allowed the convert’s sponsors not only to underscore the sacrifices that the “Turk” made in accepting Christianity but also to prove that the conversion was a rational choice made by an individual with a presumed naturally high intellect. As Thomas White, the lecturer at St. Andrews, Holborn, related in his *A True Relation* of Isuf’s conversion, Isuf was born at Constantinople, the son of the Governor of the Archipelago. His father commanded 33 gallies and had served the Venetian, Muscovite, and German embassies. Isuf’s nobility in many ways thus seemed more concrete than Dandulo’s dubious noble ancestry, and the Cromwellians played up their convert’s “superior importance” by pointing to validations of Isuf’s character and status by European nobility.¹⁵³ His status made him an ideal convert and perhaps helps explain why the Cromwellians had previously taken a particular interest in him over another Turk, such as Mustapha Dargier, who had been enslaved by the Spaniards yet escaped, arriving in England via France.¹⁵⁴ Dargier received his pass to return to his native country on August 19, 1658 at Hampton Court.

Though designed to elevate Isuf’s conversion as a Cromwellian victory, *A True Relation* shared similar themes with the conversion accounts of Adrian and Dandulo.

¹⁵³ See also Matar’s discussion, *Islam in Britain*, 147. The Swedish dignitary Benedictus Skytte signed a certificate testifying that the said Isuf was the son of “one of the chiefe Grandees of the Empire, who was named Murath Captain, Generall of the Euxine sea,” with whom Skytte had resided for six months.

¹⁵⁴ TNA, PRO SP 25/114, f. 137, Pass for Mustapha Dargeir, a Turk, 19 Aug. 1658.

These accounts were not about reinforcing anti-Turkism but about marshaling the Turk's voice to criticize Catholicism and sectarianism, articulate Anglo-Protestant values, and catalyze further reformation through exposure of the nation's moral failings. Like Adrian and Dandulo, Isuf was not a passive convert but rather actively sought truth and knowledge as well as questioned immorality among Christians, holding them to a higher standard. In the vein of Busbecq's *Turkish Letters*, William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes*, and Francis Osborne's *Political Reflections*, these conversion accounts employed the Turk to hold a mirror to Christians' own failings and thereby shame and reenergize the faithful. Charges of hypocrisy popularly leveled against the Turks were here inverted and instead deployed against Christians within England. In Turkey European diplomats and travelers had often reflected on the "contradiction perceived between private religiosity and visible expressions of piety," indicating that Turks engaged in practices forbidden by Islamic law such as drinking wine and gaming.¹⁵⁵ In his preface to the reader, John Dury remarked that Isuf had opened his eyes to the "very few who are sincere in their walking answerable to the Rule" and the many wicked individuals who abandoned the Law of God.¹⁵⁶ White expanded upon Dury's observations in his own preface, writing that Isuf "was much offended at the wicked lives of Christians" and that such disgust at Christian hypocrisy nearly jeopardized the evangelization project.¹⁵⁷ White "did much endeavour to antidote him against that poyson, telling him that the small number of true Christians was so far from giving just cause of offence, that it did establish the truth of the Gospel, since Christ plainly tells us, that there are few that shall

¹⁵⁵ Bronwen Wilson, *The World in Venice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 143. Francis Osborne had commented on such hypocrisy as well.

¹⁵⁶ John Dury's preface to the reader. In White, *A True Relation*.

¹⁵⁷ White, *A True Relation*, A7.

be saved.”¹⁵⁸ White remarked, though, that readers should take note of Isuf’s godliness and reevaluate their own piety. When relating stories that Isuf had told him regarding the justice and compassion of Turks, White provocatively declared, “If these stories be true, as I judge them to be, have we not all much reason to wish that most of us might be converted to be Turks, as to our conversation, that we might be better Christians?”¹⁵⁹ He condemned the “heresies” and divisions within England by writing that his fellow countrymen “despise and destroy” the Gospel at home rather than exercising “great care and wisdom” in spreading the Gospel.¹⁶⁰ Such arguments suggested the continued sway of apocalyptic ideas regarding England’s need to shed its complacency in order to serve as the setting for the dawning of the New Jerusalem. Since the early 1640s, Dury along with Comenius and Hartlib had developed strategies for achieving this New Jerusalem in England and pursued endeavors that would facilitate this end.¹⁶¹

At a moment when not only the Anglican royalists but also Cromwellians deemed it important to suppress popish and sectarian heresies, these conversion accounts also proved a useful counterpoint to Catholic and Quaker evangelization efforts. White retold one of Isuf’s stories of certain Quakers, “who came to him with their hands in their pockets” and used “those rude carriages which they are known to use to all.”¹⁶² Isuf was apparently “much offended at their demeanour, and said unto them, that for his part he thought that Worship was due to God, and Courtesie to man.”¹⁶³ Isuf’s criticism justified continued vilification of the Quakers and underscored that the light of reason or truth did

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., A6.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., A3^v.

¹⁶¹ See “Durie, John (1596-1680),” John T. Young in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8323> (accessed August 16, 2013).

¹⁶² White, *A True Relation*, A2^v.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

not emanate from such sects. In the conversion account, Isuf's rejection of Catholicism achieved the same purpose. Travelling from Constantinople to Smyrna to Leghorn to Marseilles and then to Paris, Isuf had met with priests who were appointed to instruct and baptize him. However, not agreeing with key tenets of Catholicism such as transubstantiation nor with the use of images, Isuf "did so argue with them, that they found no way to convince him, but were forced to let him alone: And he was much troubled to find himself yoked with men of such a belief." As White related, Isuf was so disillusioned with Catholicism that he would have returned to Constantinople had the way not opened for him to meet two fellow Muslims who had converted to Protestantism.¹⁶⁴ The two converts introduced Isuf to the "Truth, which he heartily did imbrace."¹⁶⁵ Thus, as was the case with the translator Mr. Samois and Dandulo, other new converts helped propel the "Turk" away from Catholicism and towards an acceptance of Anglo-Protestantism. Adrian had also cited the same reasons for not addressing himself to the Church of Rome: "the Images to which they kneel, and because they do adore a piece of bread, saying that it is God himself."¹⁶⁶ While Anglican royalists and Cromwellians maintained different religio-political visions, they shared similar anxieties regarding the sects and Roman Catholicism and thereby emphasized that their Turkish converts found both loathsome.

In order to validate the particular religio-political vision represented by the evangelizing party, the convert needed to exercise reason and appear to discern the natural "Truth." The converts appeared to "speak for themselves" in these accounts, and

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 5-6.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 7.

¹⁶⁶ Despaigne, *The Joyfull Convert*, 17.

in so doing, offered the divine instruction provided by a providential instrument.¹⁶⁷ White declared,

Me thinks such a Convert, one that is a prudent, and by his conversion made a pious man, and never heard any thing of the Gospel before, is like Adam when he was created and brought into Paradise, he being of such wonderful acuteness of sense and understanding, seeing the glorious Sun... and being able to discern the wisdom of God.¹⁶⁸

Painting Isuf as Adam before the Fall, White infused the account with millenarian significance, indicating that this Turk's conversion presaged the conversion of the Jews and the redemption of Gentiles.¹⁶⁹ Also in presenting a question-and-answer format, White's account sought to pave the way for future evangelization efforts by giving readers both some knowledge – though flawed and fragmentary – of Islamic beliefs and thereby better preparing them to refute the errors of those whom they might come across.¹⁷⁰ Thus, such conversion accounts served an educational purpose under the assumption that offering insight into the Islamic religious tradition would help contemporaries to better refute and win over Muslims to Anglo-Protestantism.¹⁷¹ It was important that Isuf and the converts who preceded him were baptized only after demonstrating their understanding of Christian tenets; they consciously decided to accept Christianity after study and reasoned discussion.

Although the conversions were meant to evince divine favor for different models of belief and practice, the activities of the ministers who helped to facilitate the conversions speaks to a more nuanced picture in which religious aims alternately aligned

¹⁶⁷ See McJannet's *The Sultan Speaks* for discussion regarding how Western writers entered into dialogue with Ottomans and thereby not only constructed more complicated images of East but also allowed Ottomans to challenge conventions through their speech.

¹⁶⁸ White, *A True Relation*, A6^v.

¹⁶⁹ See Matar, *Islam in Britain*, 148; Matar, "The Comenian Legacy in England," 208.

¹⁷⁰ See Matar's discussion regarding how such an emphasis on rationality clouded Christians' understanding of Islam in *Islam in Britain*, 151.

¹⁷¹ Such education on the other's religious traditions had precursors in Catholic evangelization efforts.

with and transcended political objectives. The ecumenist John Dury navigated the political landscape in order to find support for – and the best means of achieving – his projects. A number of the participating ministers similarly demonstrated the capacity to rise above political divisions for the sake of not only Protestant unity in the face of growing sectarian or popish influences but also God’s larger providential plan for the nation. On the day in which Peter Gunning and Mr. Samois were to meet with Dandulo for the first time, Warmstry also prevailed upon Dr. John Gauden and Dr. Nicholas Bernard to attend the meeting, and both men “willingly complied.”¹⁷² Though a committed Royalist, Gauden had strong Puritan and Parliamentary connections, having served as the domestic chaplain to Robert Rich, the second earl of Warwick and the chief patron of the godly clergy opposed to Charles I.¹⁷³ Like Dury, Gauden was a firm proponent of Protestant unity, and in 1656 he had consulted with Presbyterians, Independents, and Episcopalians in London in hopes of achieving this unity.¹⁷⁴ Gauden had his conclusions delivered to John Thurloe – and most likely Cromwell in turn – via Nicholas Bernard, one of Cromwell’s chaplains.¹⁷⁵ Bernard himself had provided the “English habit” which Dandulo donned after his baptism.¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile, John Despagne, who baptized Adrian, retained favor under the Protectorate and received an augmentation of his salary from the Council of State in April 1657, yet he also ministered to a congregation comprised of individuals who were more politically conservative; the

¹⁷² Warmstry, 95.

¹⁷³ Fincham and Taylor, “Episcopalian conformity and nonconformity 1646-60,” 24.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ Warmstry, 140.

royalist John Evelyn even worshipped at Despaigne's Somerset House.¹⁷⁷ The presbyterian minister Thomas Manton similarly appeared to value unity over political allegiances. Showing charity to clergymen of other persuasions, Manton had organized a collection for Anglican clergy who had been sequestered during the civil war.¹⁷⁸ The Royalist John Evelyn had even attended the sermons of the "famous Presbyterian" in order to avoid being suspected as Roman Catholic.¹⁷⁹ The activities of these ministers indicated that interests of unity, order, and a godlier nation allowed them to collaborate and pursue endeavors that would help the nation repair crippling divisions. The conversions of the three "Turks" allowed such interests to converge with various political agendas. While the convert's sponsors viewed these conversions as divine approbation for a certain "Truth" and political and social order, other participants may have simply seen the opportunity to forward greater religious principles through their involvement.

THE QUAKERS' EFFORTS TO CONVERT THE "TURK"

While Anglican Royalists and Cromwellians attempted to validate their religious-political visions and forward a providential framework free of popery and sectarianism through winning Turkish converts, the Quakers launched their own claim to religious truth. With its focus on the primacy of the Spirit and universal redemption through inner light, their movement provoked contempt from – and posed a real challenge to –

¹⁷⁷ "Despaigne, Jean (1591–1659)," Vivienne Larminie in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2009, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7547> (accessed July 11, 2013).

¹⁷⁸ "Manton, Thomas," E. C. Vernon in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18009> (accessed August 16, 2013).

¹⁷⁹ Fincham and Taylor, "Episcopalian conformity and nonconformity 1646-60," 26.

mainstream puritans.¹⁸⁰ Many contemporaries came to view Quakers with great wariness, seeing the latter's untraditional practices as heretical and the precursor to further social and religious turmoil. In his commonplace book dating from early 1656, John Gibson recorded the verse, "The Anotamie [*sic*] of a Quaker as differentiated from Brownists, Papists, etc.," noting that the Quaker's "greatest care is, to condemne all obedience, his least care to serve God handsomely and cleanly."¹⁸¹ The verse continued with a list of the Quaker's characteristics: the Quaker "is of the Mahumetans sect, which hath dispised all religious arts and sciences except the confusion of them all; he abhores degrees and universities as Reliques of superstition. He is an obstinate heretick."¹⁸² In a word, the Quaker was "a hodgepodge of all."¹⁸³ In this view the same blindness that seemed to characterize Muslims also appeared to drive the Quakers. In his account of Dandulo's conversion, Warmstry had taken great pains to deny the legitimacy of Quakers' and Anabaptists' claims to religious inspiration in order to uphold the "Truth" of Anglican belief and practice. A fear of "enthusiasm" pervaded popular culture. Indeed, the perceived menace of the Quakers was so real to Cromwellian authorities that in 1657 the latter passed a statute that made attendance at some religious worship on Sundays compulsory.¹⁸⁴

Though many in positions of authority despised Quakers, they could not afford to ignore their evangelization efforts. The conversions of Dandulo, Adrian, and Isuf closely followed Quaker efforts to evangelize and convert Turks, and it is likely that an eagerness to snatch Turks from the "firebrand" of idolatry, profanity, and sectarianism infused

¹⁸⁰ Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 344.

¹⁸¹ BL, Add MS 37719, f. 200, John Gibson's commonplace book.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Hirst, *Authority and Conflict*, 348.

Anglican and Independent ministers with an even greater sense of millenarian urgency. By 1657, the Quakers had begun investing more resources in missionary activities, sending missions to other nations to spread their message. One of their first missions was to Turkey – a mission for which the Quakers set aside just over £177 – and comprised John Perrot, John Luffe, John Buckley, Mary Fisher, Mary Prince, and Beatrice Beckly. After arriving in Leghorn on July 29, 1657, and preaching to Jews, Roman Catholics, and English residents, the group sailed for Jerusalem before a storm forced them to make port at Zante Island.¹⁸⁵ There they split into smaller groups and set their sights on Adrianople, where – as reports had confirmed – the Ottoman sultan and his army were encamped.¹⁸⁶ While Perrot and Buckley went across Morea, the rest made their way to Smyrna by way of Candia; Mary Fisher and the others reached Smyrna on November 18, 1657.

Early in the next year, Fisher – a woman of around 35 – made it to the Ottoman camp at Adrianople. After she revealed that she had a message from the “great God” to the Sultan Mehmed IV, the latter received her with state ceremony.¹⁸⁷ Speaking through an interpreter, Fisher relayed her message while the Sultan listened with attention. Supposedly, after she had finished speaking, the Sultan and his ministers invited her to stay in the country and, when they could not prevail in this matter, they offered her a man and a horse for her journey – an offer that she declined.¹⁸⁸ Fisher later wrote to three friends that she had born her testimony before the “King” unto whom she was sent and

¹⁸⁵ Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 169.

¹⁸⁶ Library of the Society of Friends [London], William Caton Manuscripts, Vol. 320, f. 161, an epistle from John Parrot to Edward Burrow.

¹⁸⁷ William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. revised by Henry J. Cadbury (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 423. See also Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 53-61.

¹⁸⁸ Library of the Society of Friends [London], William Caton Manuscripts, Vol. 320, 164, Mary Fisher’s letter to Tho. Killam, Tho. Aldam & John Killam and their wives (London, 1658).

that “he was very noble unto me, & so were all that were about him received the words of truth without contradiction,” as “they do dread the name of God many of them.” She further confessed, “There is a love begot in me towards them which is endless... though they be called Turkes the seed in them is near unto God & their kindnesse hath in some measure been shewne towards his servants.”¹⁸⁹ Fisher believed that God would in time raise the Turks “more near truth then many nations.”¹⁹⁰

The tale of Fisher’s meeting with the Sultan would later be passed down among generations, eventually eulogized in a nineteenth-century epic poem that presented a romanticized view rather than an accurate account of Fisher’s experience. Reflecting the importance of this meeting for Quaker history, the poem written in iambic verse tells of “How the noble Turk received her / And her message from the Lord.”¹⁹¹ In the poem, though the chief ministers indicated their desire to refuse the Quaker audience and treat her harshly, the Sultan declared that Fisher should have an audience, supposedly impressed that she had risked “danger, toil, and death” to deliver the Lord’s message. As the Sultan purportedly told Fisher, “Speak freely, we have hearts to feel / And ears prepared to hear, / And be thy message good or ill, / Speak thou hast none to fear.”¹⁹² Emboldened by the Sultan’s encouragement and the weight of her message, Fisher declared, “God bids thee great & mighty King / Thy wars & fightings cease, / And thy victorious armies bring / To the pursuits of peace.”¹⁹³ Indicating that Islam would not achieve glory through the sword, Fisher proclaimed, “Then your crescent light go down /

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Library of the Society of Friends [London], Port.30.31, 3, Visit of Mary Fisher to the Sultan at Adrianople 1658.

¹⁹² Ibid., 13.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 16.

In darkness & in blood.”¹⁹⁴ Impressed that an “infidel” could be “so filled with power without [God’s] holy law,” the Sultan exclaimed, “Christian... we see / The Great God gives thee words / Dwell in our land, we welcome thee, / Thy message is the Lord’s!”¹⁹⁵ Commemorating this encounter, the poem concluded with the statement that “a whole kindred people keeps [Fisher’s] memory pure & brave” and that further tumults in the Ottoman Empire “Repeat in Islams startled ear / ‘That message was the Lord’s!’”¹⁹⁶

In the late 1650s and early 1660s, the persistence and high claims of the Quakers made the English consuls and merchants view them as “fatuous and futile visionaries to be headed back at every opportunity.”¹⁹⁷ On July 28, 1658, the English Ambassador Thomas Bendish wrote in frustration, “When, at length, becoming scandalous to our nation and religion (which upon this occasion was censured and scoffed at by Papist, Jews, and others of a strange faith) and insufferable also by reason of their disturbances of our Divine exercises and several notorious contempts of me and my authority, I friendly warned them to return.”¹⁹⁸ As Bendish communicated directly with Cromwell and Thurloe, it is likely that the latter not only acutely recognized the need to curb the Quakers’ activities at home and abroad but also perceived the religious and political significance of converting a “Turk” in England and thereby denying the Quakers any evangelization triumph. Mary Fisher spoke to the tensions between her expedition and English agents in Italy and Turkey when she commented in a letter that – in comparison

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 19.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 21-22.

¹⁹⁷ Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 420.

¹⁹⁸ Cited by Braithwaite, 423.

to the Turks – “The English are more bad most of them, yet there hath a good word gone thorow them, & some have received it but they are few.”¹⁹⁹

In addition to sending their missions to the Ottoman Empire, the Quakers also published letters to the “Great Turk” to call him to the “inward guide” of Christ. John Perrot’s *A Visitation of Love and Gentle Greeting of the Turk*, published in 1658, exhorted the Great Turk to turn to the light with which God had enlightened all people. Addressing the Turk, Perrot exclaimed,

And with this voice do I cry unto thee O TURK, who are set over many Regions, that over many more thou mayest reign, until all the earth be subdued for thee, for evermore to stand under thy Authority, the Dominion of the Seed to be over the whole Earth; being sent of the Almighty God unto thee, and unto thy whole Nation, with the message of everlasting Peace in my mouth, which if ye receive, the Lord my God will be your rewarder in righteousness.²⁰⁰

Perrot warned that the Turk’s strength and power was “subject to wither” if he did not recognize the “light of the world” which “draweth nigh your gates, and knocketh at the door of your hearts.”²⁰¹ Perrot’s second address to Muslims came in an address to the “Heads, Rulers, Ancients, and Elders” of the Turks in 1661 – a moment, post-Restoration, at which Quakers faced greater persecution.²⁰² Unlike other Christian addresses to the “Turks,” this tract, *Blessed Openings of a Day of good Things to the Turks*, avoided any reference to Islam or attacks on any particular religious tenets. Once again Perrot simply called the Turks to recognize the “*light of God* which shineth in every mans Conscience” and thereby succumb to that fountain, “which sheweth the

¹⁹⁹ Library of the Society of Friends [London], William Caton Manuscripts, Vol. 320, 164, Mary Fisher’s letter to Tho. Killam, Tho. Aldam & John Killam and their wives (London, 1658).

²⁰⁰ John Perrot, *A Visitation of Love and Gentle Greeting of the Turk* (London: 1658), 3-4.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁰² The Quaker Act of 1662 imposed penalties upon those who refused to take an oath of allegiance and banned larger Quaker religious gatherings.

filthiness of all other waters *in you*.²⁰³ Interestingly, Perrot spoke to the stereotype of the cruel Turk, when drawing a distinction between those allied with Satan and those who served God and received his love and mercy:

so that whosoever yoketh Kings, Rulers, Elders or people unto cruelty, enmity or killing of men for their conscience sakes, he is the absolute minister of Satan, because all enmity, envy, cruelty and bloodshed, killing and massacring is of the Devil, and not of God, whose life and nature is eternal love, pity and mercy.²⁰⁴

In such general language regarding cruelty versus mercy, Perrot attempted to make his message more compelling and draw the “Great Turk” into his religious fold. Though the Quakers fell outside of the mainstream’s conception of who comprised the godly community and thereby exercised “right reason,” they shared their counterparts’ belief that Turks had the potential to embrace the “light of nature” or “right reason.”²⁰⁵ For the Quakers, the ability to come into the light of God transcended former national or religious lines.

CONCLUSION

While historiography on the interregnum has explored how Oliver Cromwell and his soldiers viewed themselves as “instruments of providence,” this chapter has illustrated that contemporaries also turned to the “Turk” to fill this role when political and religious uncertainty created the urgent need for another providential instrument. Vying to advance their respective religio-political models, Anglicans, Cromwellians, and Quakers each sought to affirm their vision of godly rule through the conversion of Muslim “Turks.” The performative, public nature of these conversions became crucially important: the

²⁰³ John Perrot, *Blessed Openings of a Day of good Things to the Turks* (London: 1661), 4, 7.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

²⁰⁵ Peter Gunning had spoken to the “*Light of Nature* and *Right Reason* common to us both.” In Warmstry, *A Postscript*.

baptisms of Dandulo, Adrian, and Isuf allowed their patrons to stage, metaphorically, the nation's embrace of a certain saving "Truth" for their congregations and later for a much large audience through their conversion accounts. In London, both the Anglican community's anxiousness to defend publicly Dandulo's conversion from accusations that it was incomplete or unauthentic as well as the speed with which the Cromwellians attempted to suppress this community after the conversion suggests a shared recognition of the power of one "Turk" to inspire or serve as a harbinger of reformation. As both Warmstry and Despagne argued, God turned the "*greatest scales with the smallest grains*"; the fact that Thurloe timed Isuf's baptism to validate and win confidence for Richard's government at a moment of political insecurity further indicates the perceived significance of the "Turk" as a godly instrument. What was important was not only that Dandulo, Adrian, and Isuf demonstrated rational choice in deliberating and then choosing respective religio-political models but also that, in doing so, they emerged from the blindness of "Turkish" belief and practice. These conversions thus demonstrated multiple levels of "saving," as the "Turk" accepted Christian baptism, his patrons embraced this event as leading England safely towards their vision of godly rule, and the nation preserved and furthered the cause of Christendom that others, most notably the Venetians in their wars with the Ottomans, struggled to uphold.

Struggles to defend and advance respective religio-political visions did not end with the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660. While the restoration set the stage for a return to the Anglican royalist vision of government in Church and state, it was not immediately apparent that republican principles would be defeated. The Restoration reflected not only the weariness of contemporaries but also the degree to which the

Anglican model to safeguard liberty proved compelling after such political turmoil. As Blair Worden has indicated, the Restoration in 1660 appeared to many contemporaries as a movement designed to end military and sectarian tyranny and reinstate liberty.²⁰⁶ That is not to say that ideological divisions ceased to exist. The sectarian challenge remained very real, and divisions between Anglicans, Presbyterians, and separatists were to leave lasting tensions.²⁰⁷ However, the popularity of the Restoration provided the monarchy with an initial confidence that entailed both continuing to work around the discourses of liberty, reason, and truth that had marked the previous decade while also attempting to “put the clock back.”²⁰⁸ With such renewed confidence came the pursuit of new opportunities to fulfill imperial ambitions, such as the acquisition of Tangier.²⁰⁹ In this thinking, the English appeared ideally suited to plant the seeds of civility and liberty and thereby draw converts away from the blindness and superstition of other peoples and nations. This language of imperial legitimacy appeared rooted in the supposed opposition between the corruption and blindness of Catholics, infidels or “Turks” and heathens on one side and the legality and integrity of the English state and church on the other. As Eliga Gould has argued, “The history of Britain’s expansion remained intertwined with its Spanish antithesis, as Britons adopted a language of imperial legitimacy diametrically and self-consciously opposed to the Spanish model of donation and conquest.”²¹⁰ Individuals, societies, and then whole nations might be led to embrace the English

²⁰⁶ Worden, *God’s Instruments*, 345

²⁰⁷ Tim Harris, *London Crowds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 37. Tensions were not confined to London, as the respective settlements worked out in England, Scotland, and Ireland left many feeling betrayed. See Tim Harris, “The Restoration in Britain and Ireland.” In *The Oxford Handbook of the English Revolution*, ed by. Michael J. Braddick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

²⁰⁸ See Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms* (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 46-47.

²⁰⁹ See Tristan Stein, “Tangier in the Restoration Empire.” In *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 54, Issue 4 (Dec. 2011).

²¹⁰ Eliga H. Gould, “Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery.” In *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 3 (June 2007), 771.

version of “truth” over the corruption and godlessness emanating from other national models. The successes of the Muslims’ conversions in the late 1650s in many ways set a compelling precedent for such a process. The fact that the conversion accounts continued to be sold through the early 1660s suggests the continued significance of those conversions for imperial ambitions and the perceptions that these conversions were providential events in a larger chain of “providences.”

The acquisition of Tangier through the marriage negotiations between Charles II and Catherine of Braganza of Portugal in 1661 allowed the restored monarchy to employ this language of liberty in the context of colonization. Charles II envisioned Tangier as a strategic colony that would not only amplify England’s power in the Mediterranean and make France, Italy, and Turkey “tremble” but also validate a certain Anglo-Protestant vision centering around liberty and free trade.²¹¹ With Tangier, the precedent of converting “Turks” to Christianity and thereby propagating Anglo-Protestant liberties could be enacted on a much larger scale. Appearing shortly after skirmishes in the garrison at Tangier, the treatise *A Description of Tangier* sought to assuage concerns about the venture by arguing that the British were acting according to “divinely molded colonization and expansion” and “fulfilling messianic goals.”²¹²

Through the late 1650s and into the early 1660s, the figure of the Turk appeared intimately bound up with trust in the guiding hand of providence and conceptions of liberty, reason, and truth. As discussed in the previous chapter, writers invoked the “Turk” in the mid- to late 1650s to hold a mirror to Christian failings and indicate where

²¹¹ Nabil Matar, *Britain and Barbary* (University Press of Florida, 2005), 135. See Matar’s discussion of how Charles II saw Tangier as serving British interests against the military designs of Moors as well as the commercial maneuverings of the French and Dutch, 139. See also Stein, “Tangier in the Restoration Empire,” 985-1011.

²¹² See Matar, *Britain and Barbary*, 137-138.

Christians both deviated from these standards of reason and endangered the very liberties that they claimed to protect. The conversions of Muslim “Turks” also gave their patrons the opportunity to catalyze a cultural reorientation towards – and evince divine favor for – their godly vision, providing them with the means of forwarding their vision of unity amidst political and religious fragmentation. These conversions each became a metaphor for the nation’s potential to shed its complacency or blindness and come into greater communion with God as envisioned by the various groups. The engagement with real and imagined “Turks” was made all the more compelling by the fact that the English political and religious climate never seemed that removed from the Turkish model. Contemporaries remained acutely aware of the political choices that lay open to them: the ease with which they might descend into the tyranny of anarchy or absolute power became increasingly apparent with Cromwell’s growing power, the influence of the army, and the sectarian challenge. For those who welcomed the Restoration, the new order appeared both as a reorientation from this dangerous path and as another providential event that led the nation closer to the protection and promotion of Anglo-Protestant liberties. The acquisition of Tangier allowed Charles II’s regime to enact the metaphor of the liberation from blindness on a much larger scale. Charles II saw himself as extending Anglo-Protestant liberties – revolving around free trade – to the colony. In many ways, the “Turk” enabled contemporaries to chart a national path forward from the political and religious turmoil of the civil wars and Interregnum.

CHAPTER FIVE
Anti-Court Coalitions, “Turks,” and the Molding of Public Opinion

By the mid-1670s in England, political and religious polarization threatened to destabilize Charles II’s Restoration government. Already a “country” opposition had begun to emerge around fears that the government was soft on popery and inclined towards arbitrary government. Such fears were inflamed by the government’s association with French king Louis XIV, attempts to build up a standing army, and efforts to control parliament.¹ The court’s moral degeneracy also sparked debates about the nation’s ills.² In seemingly placing his power at the whims of a diverse group that included Louis XIV, the Duke of York, royal advisers, and mistresses, Charles II not only appeared a slave to his own pleasure but also seemingly abandoned Anglo-Protestant principles.

Political tensions only intensified in the fall of 1678 following Titus Oates’s revelations of a supposed “Popish Plot” to assassinate Charles II. Claiming that a conclave of Jesuits in London had hatched the plan, Oates convinced first the Privy Council and then the House of Commons. His revelations fuelled anti-popish fervor and drew increased attention to the issue of the succession. Between Oates’s revelations in 1678 and the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament in 1681, plot paranoia and successive attempts by Parliament to exclude Charles’ Catholic brother, James, the Duke of York, from the throne generated the “Exclusion Crisis,” which led to the emergence of the

¹ Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms 1660-1685* (New York: Penguin Books), 2005.

² Potentially tyrannical, arbitrary government implied misgovernment or power wielded according to pleasure and not regulated by law.

“Whig” and the “Tory” parties.³ Championing the cause of exclusion, those who came to be known as the Whigs proclaimed the need for an alternative heir. Whigs encompassed different factions, including both conservatives who valued a strong – but importantly Protestant – monarchy as well as those who were constitutional reformists who promoted popular sovereignty through Parliament.⁴ Though these different factions disagreed on the best means of protecting the nation from the evils of popery and arbitrary government, their organization posed a real challenge to Charles II and his court.

In exploring oppositions between dissent and the established church, Tim Harris, Mark Goldie, and Mark Knights have demonstrated the importance of religious tensions in both aggravating and shaping political divisions leading up to the Exclusion Crisis. Yet there is a gap in our knowledge regarding how constitutional debates were framed and made more potent by recourse to cultural ideologies involving religious and ethnic difference. This chapter addresses that gap, tracing a process from the oppositional court culture in the 1670s to the Exclusion Crisis by which those who bemoaned the state of political and religious affairs couched their concerns in discourses of the “Turks” and thereby cast into stark relief the accelerating atrophy of their nation’s moral and political integrity. In the 1670s, anti-court circles had deployed the “Turk” to speak to the courtly corruption, sexual excess, and absolute power of Charles II’s regime. From the

³ In May 1679, the Commons introduced a bill to exclude James, the Duke of York, from the throne. Charles prorogued and then dissolved parliament. The next Parliament did not meet until October 1680, at which point the House of Lords defeated another Exclusion Bill introduced by the Commons made up of a Whig majority. Charles dissolved this Exclusion Parliament before summoning another, which he dissolved in January 1681. The last Parliament, which met in Oxford in March 1681, lasted only one week. “Whig” and “Tory” came into use as terms of abuse in 1681 when, in his issue of the *Observer* of July 2, 1681, L’Estrange introduced the interlocutors as Whig and Tory, which became “natural complements” to each other and “agents, as well as symptoms, of division.” See Robert Willman, “The Origins of ‘Whig’ and ‘Tory’ in English Political Language.” In *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (Jun., 1974), 262. While “Whig” was originally a name for Scottish rebels who continued in arms, the term “Tory” initially designated an Irish plotter. B. Behrens, “The Whig Theory of the Constitution.” In *Cambridge Historical Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1941), 253, 259.

⁴ See Harris, *Restoration*, 140.

perspective of the “country” coalition, Charles’s government appeared to follow the Ottoman Turkish state in succumbing to these errors and thereby enslaving the nation to the ambitions or pleasures of a few.

Yet a crucial shift occurred in 1681, when events unfolding far beyond England’s shores shaped how contemporaries not only understood and deployed the “Turk” but also made the “Turk” central to the packaging of their political ideology. That year in a struggle for national autonomy, the Hungarian Protestants under Count Imre Thököly – anglicized to Teckley – allied with the Ottomans against the Catholic Austrian Habsburgs, citing the insolent, absolute, and unlawful rule of the Habsburgs as justification for their decision to both rebel and seek “Turkish” aid. The Hungarian-Ottoman alliance gave Whigs and nonconformists a new discursive framework with which to stage their opposition to the potential succession of James, the Duke of York. As debates over the exclusion of James intensified, the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance offered a compelling example of a contest between popish tyranny and religious and political liberty. In response to international developments and in the interest of their constitutional agenda, political malcontents went from associating the “Turk” with absolute power and sexual excess to speaking of the “Turk” as a check on such power and as an ally in the struggle for liberty.⁵ Thus, they implicated the “Turk” in a larger ideological platform regarding the legitimacy of resistance when liberty and law were under threat. In this chapter I argue that in aligning their cause with the “Turks” and depicting events in Hungary as illustrative of their political ideology, certain prominent

⁵ Proving that the “Turks” might serve as an acceptable ally in the struggle for liberty involved disentangling Muslim “Turks” from Catholics in the public’s ideological mental map. Without this separation, those who sympathized with the Hungarians would undermine the very essence of their platform: they could not claim to oppose popery if they condoned the assistance of another popish figurehead.

Whig and nonconformist publishers and writers including Henry Care (1646/7-1688) and Francis “Elephant” Smith (d. 1691) played a critical role in determining the issues around which the propaganda wars and constitutional debates of the early 1680s would be waged.

This chapter will contribute to discussions regarding how different forms of media became “part of the fabric of political discourse” and created a dynamic interplay between oral, written, and visual culture.⁶ In order to mold public opinion, Whigs turned to a wide array of communication strategies, including newsbooks broadsides, pamphlets, ballads, rumors, sermons, and pope-burning processions.⁷ Whigs not only flooded the market with political commentary in the form of print and manuscript materials but also developed a “sophisticated distribution network” that extended beyond London.⁸ This distribution network implicated and invested a wider audience in the City’s political debates and thereby ensured that such discussions transcended class and space. The Whigs’ efforts were rewarded as public opinion seemed strongly to favor their side in debates over exclusion.

As we will see in the next chapter, Tory propagandists recognized the significance and ideological implications of Whig support for the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance, eagerly twisting such sympathy to suggest toleration or even support for Turkish belief and practices. In their attempts to win back public opinion from the Whigs, Tory

⁶ See Joad Raymond, “Introduction: networks, communication, practice.” *In News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 10. Raymond discusses the different rhetorical forms and literary devices of printed news media that worked both to influence and to inform their readers.

⁷ See Tim Harris, “Whig mass propaganda during the exclusion crisis.” *In London Crowds in the Reign of Charles II: Propaganda and Politics from the Restoration Until the Exclusion Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 98.

⁸ Tim Harris, “‘Venerating the Honesty of a Tinker’: The King’s Friends and the Battle for the Allegiance of the Common People in Restoration England.” *In The Politics of the Excluded, c. 1500-1850* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 205.

propagandists – most notably former government licenser of the press Roger L’Estrange – emphasized that their opponents were blind to important religious and ethnic categories and thereby deluded and unable to represent the national interest. The arguments that Whig propagandists explored in their newsbooks and ballads provided Tory propagandists with a basis from which to interpret and satirize the central tenets of the Whig position. Tories were helped in their counterpropaganda campaign by the fact that not all Whigs were comfortable with the political implications of their affiliates’ arguments regarding the legitimacy of resistance. Thus, while also drawing upon discourses of the “Turks,” Tory propagandists were able to offer a compelling and – most importantly – coherent picture of Whig and nonconformist deviance. In Tory propaganda, the Whigs became “True Protestant Turks” who exposed their hypocrisy as they sought to usher in a political and religious topsy-turvy world.

RYCAUT & *THE PRESENT STATE*

The histories written and edited by Paul Rycaut, the British consul in Smyrna from 1667 to 1678, offered contemporaries compelling examples of how servility and submission to an arbitrary will created the conditions for perpetual tyrannical rule. In 1666 Rycaut published his “authoritative” treatise *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, which offered in-depth insight – of a limited sort – into Ottoman Turkish politics and culture. Well-received and widely translated, Rycaut’s history was republished in

subsequent editions in 1668, 1670, 1675, 1681, and 1682.⁹ John Finch, who served as English ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in Constantinople from 1672 to 1681, thought Rycaut's observations of Turkey to be "the most exact the world has hitherto seen."¹⁰ In addition, Rycaut revised and enlarged Richard Knolles' early seventeenth-century work *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* as *The history of the Turkish empire from the year 1623 to the year 1677*, which the republican bookseller John Starkey published in November 1679.¹¹ Starkey's shop on Fleet Street was one important hub of a large news network that not only interlinked communities around London but also extended across the Kingdom.¹² A strong opposition to Turkish slavery was a theme that coursed through many of the works with which Starkey was concerned, likely due to the parallels that the bookseller drew to the Restoration government. Rycaut's *The Present State* reinforced this theme of the dangers of tyranny and corresponding servility, giving Starkey the means not only to champion further the importance of freedom within a state but also to support his work as an "ideological broker" of republican values.¹³ As Rycaut wrote in the opening to *The Present State*, "If a man considers the contexture of the whole *Turkish* Government, he will find it such a Fabrick of slavery, that it is a wonder if

⁹ The title-page of the first edition has the date as 1667, yet it was published in 1666. See "Rycaut, Sir Paul (1629–1700)," Sonia P. Anderson in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24392> (accessed November 3, 2014). Also see Anderson's discussion in *An English Consul in Turkey* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

¹⁰ BL, Add MS 23215, John Finch to Lord Conway, Constantinople, 16/26 March 1678.

¹¹ The title page was postdated 1680.

¹² Starkey's shop was one meeting point for members of the Green Ribbon Club, which was comprised of first country and then Whig politicians. In addition the Earl of Danby recognized that newsletters from Starkey's shop were sent across the kingdom. See Mark Knights, "John Starkey and Ideological Networks in Late Seventeenth-Century England." In *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe*, ed. by Joad Raymond, 125.

¹³ Knights, "John Starkey and Ideological Networks," 127-8, 137.

any amongst them should be born of a free ingenuous spirit.”¹⁴ From his perspective, it was the Ottomans’ reliance on and breeding with slaves that perpetuated a condition of servitude and made tyranny appear natural.¹⁵

Within the particular socio-political context in which he first published, Rycaut intended *The Present State* to inspire loyalty to and gratitude for the Restoration government. In his epistle to the reader, Rycaut encouraged his reader to

thank God that thou wert born a Christian, and within the Pale of an Holy and an Orthodox Church. If the Tyranny, Oppression, and Cruelty of that State, wherein Reason stands in no competition with the pride and lust of an unreasonable Minister, seem strange to thy Liberty and Happiness, thank God that thou art born in a Country the most free and just in all the World... And thus learn to know and prize thy own Freedom, by comparison with Forreign Servitude, that thou mayst ever bless God and thy King, and make thy Happiness breed thy Content, without degenerating into wantonness, or desire of revolution.¹⁶

Rycaut pitted Turkish slavery against English freedom, suggesting that the Restoration was brought about by the natural use of reason and a drive toward liberty. Yet as the 1670s progressed and the nation’s political and religious climate became increasingly polarized, oppositional court writers found in Rycaut’s *Present State* ready parallels to their own experience under the perceived arbitrary government of Charles’s court. In *Present State*, tyranny in and of itself does appear as an abhorrent practice: Rycaut indicated not only that tyranny was “requisite for this [the Ottoman] People, and a stiff rein to curb them, lest by an unknown liberty they grow mutinous and unruly,” but also that the absolute rule of the prince “principally supported [the Turks] in their

¹⁴ Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Printed for John Starkey and Henry Brome, 1668), 9.

¹⁵ Anders Ingram, “English literature on the Ottoman Turks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries” (PhD diss., Durham University, 2009), 331-2.

¹⁶ Rycaut, *The Present State*, “The Epistle to the Reader.”

greatness.”¹⁷ Yet it was cruelty, oppression, and lust that weakened the state’s very integrity, and it was the way in which that absolute rule had been directed and manipulated by corrupt and prideful ministers that presaged destruction.

Rycaut’s commentary on the malign courtly influences and ambitions that crippled Ottoman government provided contemporaries with a framework in which they could interpret and make connections to their own experience. From Rycaut’s perspective, the flattery extended to the prince by those in the seraglio was “proportionable to this condition of slavery they profess[ed]” and underscored the degree of “condescension abroad to all the lusts and evil inclinations of their Master.”¹⁸ Such perverted obedience – expressed through flattery and “immoderate subjection” to the sultan’s whims – eroded Turkish discipline and power under both Sultan Ibrahim and Sultan Mahomet, whose counsels were “given chiefly by his Mother, *Negroes*, Eunuchs, and some handsome young Mosayp or Favourite.”¹⁹ Thus, as Rycaut concluded,

this obedience which brave and wise Emperours have made use of in the advancement of noble exploits, and enlargement of their Empire, is with effeminate Princes (delighted with flattery) the snare of their own greatness, and occasion of weak counsels and means in the management of great designs. If a man seriously consider the whole composition of the *Turkish* Court, he will find it to be a Prison and Banniard of Slaves, differing from that where the Galley-slaves are immured, only by the ornaments and glittering outside and appearances: here their chains are made of Iron, and there of gold, and the difference is only in a painted shining servitude, from that which is a squalid, sordid, and a noisome slavery.²⁰

In obeying an arbitrary will, the court and inner circle not only enslaved themselves but also made the sultan a slave to his own pleasure. Such themes resonated with

¹⁷ Rycaut, *The Present State*, 3. See Aslı Çırakman, “From Tyranny to Despotism: The Enlightenment’s Unenlightened Image of the Turks.” In *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Feb., 2001). 50-51. Çırakman discusses the different resonances of “tyranny” when used by European writers to depict the Ottomans.

¹⁸ Rycaut, *The Present State*, 9.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

oppositional court culture and later Whig propaganda, offering a framework for interpreting Charles's seeming reliance on French and popish influence.

The topical nature of Rycaut's commentary within the English context was heightened by ominous developments in the Ottoman Empire, namely the increased influence of seemingly corrupt ministers. In his works, Rycaut often approvingly commented on Ottoman Turkish practices and identified the "corrupting influence of the Ottoman constitution and of Islam" as the source of the Turks' faults rather than innate characteristics.²¹ As Rycaut noted in his epistle to the reader for his *History of the Turks*, he and his fellow English factors "esteemed it [their] duty, to speak best of that Government under which [their] Trade thrived most."²² Yet the comfortable state of affairs that English factors and ambassadors had enjoyed under the Ottomans appeared to be deteriorating by the late 1670s due to what Rycaut viewed as malign courtly influences. The death of Grand Vizier Fazıl Ahmed Pasha of the Köprülü family led to his replacement by the former "Chimacham" Kara Mustafa in 1676. According to Rycaut, by 1678 and 1679, the scene in the Empire appeared greatly altered with not only merchants but also ambassadors under "sad discouragements."²³ As he observed, "on a sudden the face of the whole Court was changed, every Officer thereof putting on a Countenance of fierceness, pride, and arrogance, beyond the manner and custom lately practised."²⁴ The Turkish state thus appeared subject to the pleasure of a corrupt minister – or at least one hostile to English interests – and thereby reflected tyrannical rule in

²¹ Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey*, 243. See also Ingram, "English literature on the Ottoman Turks," 326-328, 330.

²² Paul Rycaut, "Epistle to the Reader." In *The Memoirs of Paul Rycaut, Esq., Containing the History of the Turks* (London: Printed for John Starkey at the Mitre near Temple-Bar, 1679).

²³ Rycaut, *History of the Turks*, 318.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 334.

which power was wielded according to the caprices of ministers and women. Such observations supported the theme that the growth of “Turkish tyranny” threatened Christian individuals, government, and trade – a theme that the “country” opposition and later Whig propagandists deployed in their arguments regarding the dangers of courtly corruption and absolute power.

COURT OPPOSITION OF THE 1670s

Described by one scholar as “kaleidoscopic,” English politics of the mid-1670s were alternatively shaped by dynamics and policies involving the Church of England, the “aged and corrupt Parliament,” and the “commercial and military might of France.”²⁵ A “broad country coalition” emerged in response to the government’s suppression of dissent, pro-French foreign policy, and efforts to manage parliament.²⁶ Some members of this coalition came from a younger generation of politicians who opposed the polarizing work of Thomas Osborne, the Earl of Danby and Lord Treasurer, to “settle the church and state” by clamping down on “schismatics,” papists, “commonswealthmen,” and rebels.²⁷ Danby had attempted to relieve the king of his dependence on parliament by both reforming the crown finances and employing court placemen in parliament.²⁸ These younger politicians were joined in opposition by Presbyterian politicians and estranged

²⁵ John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: “This Masquerading Age,” A History of Early Modern England* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 82.

²⁶ Harris, *Restoration*, 81.

²⁷ “Osborne, Thomas, first duke of Leeds (1632–1712),” Mark Knights in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20884> (accessed September 14, 2013).

²⁸ Matthew Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II, 1660-1685* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 2010), 150.

former courtiers, and they sought to coordinate tactics in order to provoke a change in royal policy.²⁹

In the mid-1670s, a growing body of opinion held that tyranny, popery and moral degeneracy had overtaken Charles II's court and thereby led to the decay of patriarchal authority.³⁰ Circulated in the coffeehouses shortly after the prorogation of Parliament in November 1675, the Earl of Shaftesbury's pamphlet *A Letter from a Person of Quality to His Friend in the Country* (1675) criticized Charles's court for succumbing to the malign influence of a cabal of high churchmen and cavaliers who intended to institute popery and absolutism.³¹ The poet and politician Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) reiterated such accusations in *An account of the growth of popery and arbitrary government* (1677), claiming, "There has now for diverse Years, a design been carried on, to change the Lawfull Government of *England* into an Absolute Tyranny, and to convert the established Protestant Religion into down-right Popery: than both which, nothing can be more destructive or contrary to the Interest and Happinesse, to the Constitution and Being of the King and Kingdom."³²

The influence of Catholic France on Charles's court and policies simply aggravated concerns regarding the growth of popery within the English state. Revelations that Charles had secretly accepted subsidies from the French king Louis XIV not only explained why Charles had been able to prorogue Parliament for so long but also served as an ominous example of how public presentation might mask religiously suspect

²⁹ Harris, *Restoration*, 81.

³⁰ Spurr, *England in the 1670s*, 180.

³¹ Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 196. The royal ban on coffeehouses followed shortly after in 1676, further suggesting the perceived association between coffeehouses and subversive discourse from the perspective of the Charles II and his circle.

³² Andrew Marvell, *An account of the growth of popery and arbitrary government in England* (Amsterdam, 1677), 3, 5. Interestingly, in Marvell's view, popery was an "extract of whatsoever is most ridiculous and impious in them, incorporated with more peculiar absurdities of its own, in which those were deficient."

designs. Once introduced into a state, popery threatened to make subjects slaves to the arbitrary will of the ruler. As Marvell warned, “There are those men among us, who have undertaken, and do make it their businesse, under so Legal and perfect a Government, to introduce a *French* slavery, and instead of so pure a Religion, to establish the *Roman* Idolatry.”³³ Referring to the logic that deemed it treason to introduce innovations tending towards a commonwealth in the state, Marvell concluded that it would be no less a crime to make the monarchy absolute.³⁴

For the radical playwright Elkanah Settle, the Ottoman court provided the perfect context not only to reflect upon the ways in which Charles’s court deviated from a particular vision of kingship but also to contribute to a larger political and social commentary driven by “profound insecurities” over the nature of love, reason, and authority.³⁵ His play *Ibrahim the Illustrious Bassa*, which was produced in March 1676 for the Duke’s Company and licensed in May by Roger L’Estrange, echoed the concerns expressed by court preachers, who addressed the court’s “moral stagnation” and heralded the virtues of moderation and chastity.³⁶ For instance, in a sermon given before the King and court in 1675, Edward Stillingfleet had given a long lecture on sexual laxity.³⁷ In weaving implicit criticisms of Charles’s court throughout *Ibrahim*, Settle worked within a

³³ Ibid., 14.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Jenkinson, *Culture and Politics at the Court of Charles II, 1660-1685*, 236.

³⁶ Ibid., 89. As William Bulman has argued, we should not approach Restoration drama in terms of a dichotomy between “government” and “opposition,” as a play could accommodate multiple “political” agendas and manifest what Bulman has described as an “intentional form of ambiguity.” Thus, for L’Estrange licensing the play would not have seemed problematic. Also playwrights could ensure the licensing of their plays as long as they “partly shrouded the topical and ideological relevance of their productions.” See Bulman, “Publicity and Popery on the Restoration Stage: Elkanah Settle’s *The Empress of Morocco* in Context.” In *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 51, Issue 2 (Apr. 2012), pp. 308-39, particularly 315-6.

³⁷ See John Spurr, *England in the 1670s: ‘This Masquerading Age’* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 201. Edward Stillingfleet, *A Sermon Preach’d before the King, Feb. 24 1674/5* (London: Printed by Rob White, 1675).

larger tradition of playwrights who embedded their criticism within a play at a moment when outright censure would be politically dangerous. Under King Charles I (r. 1625-49), Sir William Davenant, Thomas Carew, and Aurelian Townshend had integrated criticism as well as praise into their drama and poetry, castigating the court for its dissimulation, intrigue, ambition, ridiculous fashion, and promotion of faction and corruption.³⁸ In a world in which theater and politics were closely intertwined, the playwrights “skillfully manipulated” the ambiguities between reality and fiction and the universal and the particular inherent in the play itself in order to present their political commentary.³⁹ In *Ibrahim*, Settle presented a drama featuring the Ottoman Sultan Süleyman or “Solyman” to explore the ramifications of political and religious apostasy and the tensions between a double self, given assumptions regarding the divide between the Christian and the religious other. The construction of historical parallels allowed Settle to imbue his play with multiple “topical readings” and thereby safely insert it into public politics – a strategy that he had similarly employed in his widely popular tragicomedy *The Empress of Morocco* (1673).⁴⁰

Ibrahim reflected not only a larger awareness of unstable political and religious categories but also the dangers of arbitrary government and the rule of the passions. This susceptibility to the passions appeared religiously inscribed, as contemporaries often valued rationality and loyalty as “Christian” attributes. While Tory propagandists would later employ these themes to expose the supposed delusions and “antichristian” intents of their Whig and nonconformist adversaries, Settle examined them in *Ibrahim* in the

³⁸ Kevin Sharpe, *Criticism and Compliment: The Politics of Literature in the England of Charles I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 290.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 296.

⁴⁰ Bulman, “Publicity and Popery on the Restoration Stage,” 316.

context of how a ruler might deviate from his obligations and principles and thereby prove his own apostasy. He further treated topical issues such as the arbitrary manipulation of the law by authorities, the neglect of the public good, and the ease with which a court might collapse under corruption. The play opens with the Ottomans' triumphant return from war against Persia and Solyman's bestowal of honors upon his Pasha Ibrahim.⁴¹ Recognizing that his predecessors had fallen after their rise to glory, Ibrahim expresses fear that he would meet a similar fate after the Sultan grew jealous of the very honors that he had granted. In order to reassure his trusted pasha, Solyman promises that Ibrahim would not be killed as long as he, the sultan, lived. Those around Solyman extol his virtue in subduing his supposed "Turkish" inclinations, particularly when the Sultan grants Ibrahim the love of the redeemed Christian Isabel. Surprised to find "such vertue out of Christendom," Isabel commends the sultan, proclaiming, "Those numerous Trophies you've in Battle wone, / Gain you less Fame than this one act has done. / Your Valour there but Nations overthrew; / Here *Solyman* does *Solyman*

⁴¹ In 1523, Sultan Süleyman elevated his longtime companion and confidant, İbrahim Ağa, to the grand vizierate, the highest office in the Ottoman Empire. Süleyman's decision to appoint someone so young and inexperienced – who had not served in any prior military or administrative office – bred resentment and tensions among the ruling elite, who valued a social order based on merit and hierarchy. Süleyman's decision thus appeared as the assertion of his will over the established order as well as the exercise of a new absolute power. İbrahim held the position of grand vizier for 13 years before the Sultan suddenly and unexpectedly ordered him to be strangled. Explaining the suddenness of İbrahim's fall – which paralleled the swiftness of his rise – posed dilemmas for contemporary historians, as the event could be explained as either a result of the Paşa's changed behavior or as evidence of sultanic arbitrary will and personal failings. The historian Celalzade Mustafa (c. 1490-1567) tried to explain and legitimize İbrahim's fall by embracing the former explanation, though Venetian sources and later Ottoman ones shed light on anxieties over and possible distrust of sultanic authority. See Ebru Turan, "Voices of Opposition in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman: The Case of İbrahim Paşa (1523-36)." In *Studies on Istanbul and Beyond*, Vol. 1, ed. by Robert G. Ousterhout (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2007), 23-35; Kaya Şahin, *Empire and Power in the Reign of Suleyman: Narrating the Sixteenth-Century Ottoman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 45-46, 101-2; Metin Kunt and Christine Woodhead, eds., *Süleyman the Magnificent and His Age: The Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern World* (New York: Longman, 1995), 176-7.

subdue.”⁴² Given that Ibrahim had previously rejected the Sultan’s daughter, Asteria, in favor of his beloved Isabel, Solyman’s blessing for the union between Ibrahim and Isabel appeared exceptionally notable.

Though Solyman at first exhibits a “Christian” face, the ease with which he succumbs to the blindness of passions and violates the rule of law in pursuit of pleasure indicates his underlying “Turkishness.” After constructing a virtuous image of the sultan, Settle devotes the remainder of the play to demonstrating the ways in which jealousy and corruption may tear virtue asunder. As Solyman develops an all-consuming obsession with Isabel and neglects the glory of his office, the intimate bonds that he formerly shared with his wife, his daughter, and Ibrahim collapse. Though Solyman initially personified “Christian” virtue, by the end of play he reveals his true “Turkish” character by committing “barbarous wrongs” against reason, love, and loyalty.⁴³ Near the play’s conclusion, the scorned Roxolana, Solyman’s consort, delivers the most damning lines: “No, Sultan, speak like what you are, and call / Your self a Tyrant, Monster, Savage, all / The blackest names from injur’d Tongues can fall.”⁴⁴ As Matthew Birchwood has illustrated, the play traces the sultan’s degeneration into the “familiar figure of the criminal tyrant who seeks to subordinate monarchical obligations to an arbitrary will” and thus wastes his kingdom.⁴⁵ Surrendering to the caprices of an arbitrary will, the sultan in the play appears blinded by his single desire. He acts on his advisor Morat’s counsel even while recognizing its absurdity, stating, “Though all that you have said in my defence, / Are Reasons as remov’d from Truth and Sence, / As I’m from Peace: Yet such my

⁴² Elkhanah Settle, *Ibrahim the Illustrious Bassa. A Tragedy* (London: Printed for T. M. for W. Cademan, at the Popes-Head in the Lower Walk of the New Exchange in the Strand, 1677), Act II, 17.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Act III, 39.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Act IV, 54.

⁴⁵ Birchwood, *Staging Islam*, 171, 173.

passion is; / I'm charm'd ev'n with imaginary bliss."⁴⁶ Only through violence - Roxolana drinking poison, Asteria's death, and the destruction of his kingdom - is Solyman's sense seemingly restored, yet by that time it is too late. Settle's play thus indicates the transformative nature of passions and the utmost dangers associated with the willful abandonment of law and reason. The sultan's infidelity appears as not only a moral concern but also an issue of political and religious apostasy.⁴⁷ Solyman would forfeit his crown for the Christian Isabel, reneging on his principles and demonstrating the shallowness of his commitments. Settle's play thus provided his audience with an interpretative framework - rooted in a shared conceptual map of Turkish passion and arbitrary power - in which to judge the misgovernment of the Stuart court. Increased knowledge of Charles II's secret negotiations with France made many contemporaries fear a growing popish influence and a turn to arbitrary government at court.⁴⁸

The picture that Settle presented was one that the Whigs would later seize upon to censure a court tending to the pursuit of selfish interests rather than the public good, an arbitrary government in which laws may be bent to commit crimes, and an atmosphere in which war creates a distraction from fissures within the nation. In the play, the Pasha Morat encourages the sultan to pursue his irreligious and illegitimate lust, stating, "What need of Cheats? Is there a happiness / That the Worlds Lord should wish, and not possess? / You wrong your self, and our great Prophet too, / To yield to grief, and not your joys pursue."⁴⁹ Arguing that fulfillment of pleasure was legitimate justification for

⁴⁶ Settle, *Ibrahim*, Act II, 20.

⁴⁷ Birchwood, *Staging Islam*, 171.

⁴⁸ There was a tradition in Protestant polemic of associating popery with sexual license. Where Protestantism was spiritual, Catholicism appeared carnal, with popery supposedly appealing to the "lower, carnal and corrupt side of human nature." See Peter Lake, "Anti-popery: the Structure of a Prejudice." In *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, ed. by Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (1989), 75-6.

⁴⁹ Settle, *Ibrahim*, Act II, 19.

the sultan's actions, Solyman's counselors carve out a space in which he may fulfill his desires.⁵⁰ The mufti similarly enables Solyman's desires by identifying a loophole in the oath that Solyman made to Ibrahim – that the latter would not die while the sultan lived. Indicating that the soul lies useless during sleep, the mufti argues that Solyman might have Ibrahim killed while he sleeps. The “Turkish” laws are those that may be bent to commit such crimes. Indeed, Solyman proclaims that Ibrahim's head is “forfeit by Turkish Laws” when the very integrity of those laws appears in question.⁵¹ Contemporary Venetian accounts of the execution of the actual Ibrahim in 1536 spoke to the political controversy that the event triggered; the controversy concerned sultanic authority and seeming exercise of arbitrary will, which Settle incorporated as central themes into his own play.⁵² Reflecting larger disillusionment with Charles's policies, Settle's play engages with questions of betrayal, duplicity, and personification of racialized qualities that would come to mark not only Whigs' critiques of the Court but also Tories' attacks on the shifting allegiances of Whigs and nonconformists.

Tyranny implied the arbitrariness of power, or power as driven by – and chained to – ambition and pleasure. Sexual excess became its own form of tyranny.⁵³ As Spurr has indicated, tyranny was often framed in terms of lust: the notorious tyrants of history exhibited unrestrained lust – they “knew no restraint, no limits but their own appetites,” and their lust could lead them towards self-destruction.⁵⁴ The sexual libertinism of Charles's court thus had implications for contemporaries' perceptions of tyrannical rule

⁵⁰ Birchwood, *Staging Islam*, 172. Birchwood suggests the Mufti was perhaps a direct representation of the Earl of Danby, whose repressive Anglicanism proved unpopular.

⁵¹ Settle, *Ibrahim*, Act IV, 43.

⁵² Turan, “Voices of Opposition in the Reign of Sultan Süleyman,” 31-2.

⁵³ Rachel Weil, “Sometimes a Scepter is only a Scepter: Pornography and Politics in Restoration England.” In *The Invention of Pornography*, ed. by Lynn Hunt (New York, 1993), 142.

⁵⁴ Spurr, *England in the 1670s*, 207.

and recourse to discourses involving the “Turk.” Different types of written and oral media offered spaces to explore connections between tyranny, lust, and oriental themes, becoming overlapping genres that reinforced and popularized such discourses.

As a long line of royal mistresses made their way into the King’s affections and before the public eye, Charles’s sexual exploits were criticized and descanted upon at large. A reflection of this eroticized court, the trope of the “lustful Turk” coursed through satire and other popular materials.⁵⁵ Contemporary debates about the introduction and popularization of coffee in London drew upon this trope. Certain broadsides attacked the harmful effects of coffee with sexually explicit language and themes, depicting coffee as a morally corrupting force. “A Broad-side against Coffee; Or, the Marriage of the Turk” played with the idea of a match between Turkish coffee and Christian water:

COFFEE, a kind of *Turkish Renegade*,
Has late a match with *Christian water* made;
At first between them happen’d a Demur,
Yet joyn’d they were, but not without great stir;
For both so cold were, and so faintly met,
The *Turkish Hymen* in his *Turbant* sweet...
Bold Asian Brat! with speech our confines flee;
Water, though common, is too good for thee.
Sure *Coffee’s* vext he has the breeches lost,
For she’s above, and he lies undermost;
What shall I add but this? (and sure ’tis right)
The Groom is *heavy*, ’cause the Bride is *light*.⁵⁶

The notion of an illicit liaison between coffee and water simply played into larger discourses regarding the dangers of sexual libertinism and royal sexuality – discourses for which the “Turk” appeared well suited, given perceptions of the seraglio and the power that its members held over the sultan. The satirical *Women’s petition against coffee* of

⁵⁵ See, for instance, the ballad “The saint turn’d sinner; or, The dissenting parson’s text under the Quaker’s petticoats. Tune of a Soldier and a saylor” (1670).

⁵⁶ “A Broad-side against Coffee; Or, the Marriage of the Turk” (London: Printed for J. L., 1672).

1674 denounced coffee in similar terms, depicting it as an “ugly *Turkish* Enchantress” that led their newly effeminate husbands to abandon ale-drinking and “run a *Whoreing* after such variety of destructive *Forraign* Liquors.”⁵⁷ Written by a “well-willer” who purported to speak for these English women’s complaints, the petition argued social crisis had arisen due to the “Excessive use of that Newfangled, Abominable, Heathenish Liquor called *COFFEE*, which Ruffling Nature of her Choicest *Treasures*, and *Drying* up the *Radical Moisture*, has so *Eunuched* our Husbands, and *Crippled* our more kind *Gallants*, that they are become as *Impotent*, as *Age*.”⁵⁸ The petition satirically commented that – in the coffeehouses – men engaged in “hot Contests about most Important Subjects,” such as “what colour the Red Sea is of” and “whether the Great Turk be a Lutheran or a Calvinist.”⁵⁹ The petition thus underscored not only the silliness of such places and the discussions to which they gave rise but also the unreason bred in these pursuits and thus their perceived threat.

The compelling association of sexuality and the Turk was reinforced not only through ballads but also pamphlets and newsletters. In his first weekly newsletter *Poor Robins Intelligence* launched at the end of March 1676, Henry Care reported foreign and domestic news in the form of bawdy or silly stories.⁶⁰ The issue of May 29 to June 5, 1677, told the lewd story of a gentlewoman, who, in the absence of her husband, invited a gentleman into her home. This gentleman presented her with a tankard as a gift and, among other rarities,

⁵⁷ *The women’s petition against coffee representing to the publick consideration the grand inconveniences accruing to their sex from the excessive use of that drying, enfeebling liquor* (London: 1674), 4. For brief discussion of this and other satirical pamphlets, see Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee*, 42.

⁵⁸ *The women’s petition against coffee*, 2.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁰ Lois G. Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care, Restoration Publicist* (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 40.

shewed her a curious Natural statue, and she inquiring how he cal'd it, told her it was the great Turke: whereupon she told him that she had a private Cabbinet which at that time she thought fit to name Constantinople, with which he was so taken as to enquire if the Great Turke might now be admitted; and finding the Substance complying, they both went up stairs for faciiliateing that important affair.⁶¹

While the two were preoccupied with this deed, a thief stole the tankard and went to pawn it at the goldsmith's shop. When the goldsmith sent for the gentlewoman and she came to the shop, she asserted that the tankard was hers. Yet the thief claimed that it was his. When asked how long he had possessed the tankard, the thief responded that nobody could deny his ownership, proclaiming, "I had it ever since the Great Turk entred Constantinople." At this sexually suggestive and incriminating statement, the gentlewoman ceded all claim to the tankard.⁶²

One strand of discourse about the "Turks" fixated on the space of the seraglio and stressed the lasciviousness of Ottoman Turkish power, underscoring the ways in which the sultan's power was held captive to women and favorites. When satirizing Charles's sexual promiscuity and luxurious display, contemporaries drew parallels to Turkish sultans, casting Charles in oriental settings.⁶³ The novel *Hattige: or the Amours of the King of Tamaran* presented Charles's affair with Barbara Palmer, the Countess of Castlemaine, as the Turkish King of Tamaran's obsession with his mistress Hattige, the daughter of a janissary.⁶⁴ In the kingdom of Tamaran, love "ruled absolute" with Hattige holding the government of the kingdom "in a manner in her hands."⁶⁵ Absolute power could thus entail weakness – the submission to unreason and the passions. In 1681 one

⁶¹ *Poor Robins Intelligence*, 29 May – 5 June 1677.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ See Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Weil, "Sometimes a Scepter," 142.

⁶⁴ Gabriel de Brémond, *Hattige: or the Amours of the King of Amaran. A Novel* (Amsterdam: Printed for Simon the African, 1683). For later example see *The Amours of the Sultana of Barbary* (1689).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 18, 21.

election pamphlet heralded the importance of Parliament, a critical “conjunction of King and People,” as the institution that

hinders the Subject from being given up as a Prey, not only to the will of the Prince, but (which is ten times worse) to the unreasonable passions and lusts of Favourites, chief Ministers and Women, when Instead of a Monarch, (who Governs but in Name, as it often happens) be ruled like the ancient *French*, by an insolent *Major* of the *Palace*, who will be sure to mind the private interest of himself and family, ten times more than that of the Prince, or the publick Good; or like the *Turkish Empire*, under a weak *Grand-Seigneur*, by the prevailing Concubine of the *Seraglio*, who is perhaps her self manag'd by no higher dictates than that of her *chief Eunuch*, or *she-Slave*.⁶⁶

The pamphlet forwarded the view that the Ottoman Empire was structurally weak despite its political and military dominance because the sultan made his power subject to the pleasure of his advisors and women. In drawing upon such an example, the Whigs sought to shape their countrymen’s understanding of the constitutional issues at stake. Only popular sovereignty could provide safeguards against arbitrary or tyrannical government.

THE EXCLUSION CRISIS, POPERY, & TURKISH SLAVERY

In the paranoia surrounding the popish plot and the Exclusion Crisis, Whigs invoked the “Turks” to articulate their concerns regarding the intolerance of the high Anglican establishment and the misuse of political powers by Charles II and his court. The concepts of Turkish tyranny and slavery offered a compelling framework for evaluating the supposed erosion of liberties under the government. Whigs “slanted” their propaganda towards dissenters, fearing that episcopal and court policies allowed popery to infiltrate the realm through opening the door to foreign influence and enabling the

⁶⁶ C. B., *An address to the honourable city of London, and all other cities, shires and corporations, concerning their choice of a new Parliament together with a true character of popery and arbitrary government* (London: Printed by Allen Banks, 1681), 5. Weir mentions this pamphlet as well in “Sometimes a Scepter,” 149.

sovereign to exercise arbitrary will.⁶⁷ Regardless of the means by which popery enveloped the realm, slavery appeared destined to follow; indeed in much contemporary literature, popery and slavery were interwoven. The relationship between the two also took on a British dimension. In a speech in the House of Lords in March 1679, the Earl of Shaftesbury argued that the state of Scotland and Ireland was crucial to England's defense, as they served as "two Doors that let in, either good or mischief upon us."⁶⁸ Cautioning that Scotland and Ireland were weakened by cunning French artifices, Shaftesbury declared, "Popery and Slavery, like two Sisters, go hand in hand, and sometimes one goes first, and sometimes the other in a Door; but the other is always following close at hand. In *England* Popery was to have brought in Slavery; in *Scotland* Slavery went before, and Popery was to follow."⁶⁹

Drawing upon the language of popish and Turkish slavery, Whig propaganda stressed that subjects risked becoming vassals to an increasingly arbitrary and absolute government committed to a popish successor and influenced by France. During the Exclusion Parliaments, Whig party propagandists began printing the debates and circulating "black lists of 'papists in masquerade'" in order to subject these supposed papists to "public execration."⁷⁰ Written in the fall of 1679, the "Advice to a Courteous Reader" was one such source – one of the "methods of intimidation and propaganda which the Whigs used for the purpose of browbeating Tories in the House."⁷¹ As the "Advice" read, the Lords and Lord Bishops had given the King an "absolute power" and

⁶⁷ Harris, *London Crowds*, 119.

⁶⁸ "A Speech made in the House of Peers, by the E--- of S--- November 1678 upon consideration of the state and condition of England, Scotland and Ireland." Printed in *Two speeches made in the House of Peers by a Protestant peer of the realm of England* (Hague: 1680), 12. Also in *Parl. Hist.* IV, 116.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁰ Behrens, "The Whig Theory of the Constitution," 58, 42n.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

“dared in the face of their country and the whole Christian world to deny us a succession of Protestant princes and tie our allegiance to perpetual vassalage under Popish furies.”⁷² Included in the manuscript was a blacklist of over one hundred names – a list designed to manifest the perfidy of those MPs, who were “for the most part that seed by which the degenerate and now tottering ministers of Rome and France hope to propagate by money and gifts a fresh execrable generation of Roman and French ministers and pensioners.”⁷³ According to the “Advice,” the nation’s religion, laws, and liberties were under threat due to a growing French influence at the English Court. Also the French King’s opposition to the Habsburgs appeared to encourage the Ottomans on the Eastern front, allowing both powers to expand as they conquered Christian territories. The “Advice” thus issued a warning about Cavalier-Anglican leaders who would sell the nation into slavery under the Pope and the Turk by supporting French ambitions:

Deceive not yourselves they that goe about to circumvent you by treats, expect to be treated by others, they that buy your votes in the Country will sell their own votes in Parliament and you & all that is yours to their best advantage... Scorne yee therefore as much to be bought as to be sold for slaves and serve as vassalls or stepping stones to mount the French Ambition to an Universall Monarchy and all Europe with your posterity to an Universall slavery, first to the Pope & shortly after to the Turk.⁷⁴

On October 29, 1679, in the midst of the “unquietness” generated by the popish plot and Charles’s proroguing of Parliament until late January 1680, Henry Coventry wrote to Ambassador Finch in Turkey that “as Christendom... may be afraid of your Grand Seignior, so Turky may be of our most Xtian Grand Seignior [i.e. Louis XIV], who hath conquered within a very few years more than yours hath done in a Century” by “having

⁷² TNA, PRO SP 29/417, f.491, “Advice to a Courteous Reader.”

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

rendred the most of Europe obedient if not tributary.”⁷⁵ Coventry added that if Louis XIV continued to pursue his ambitions, the Grand Signior would follow, and together they would destroy the Habsburg Emperor and then “decide whose the world shall be.”⁷⁶

Whigs drew upon the discourse of “Turkish slavery” when underscoring that popish tyranny eroded subjects’ liberties and made them no better than slaves. In the Whig satire *Popish Politics Unmasked* of 1680, the Duke of York and the Whig leader the Earl of Shaftesbury – representing opposite political poles – counsel Charles, who remains noncommittal while they champion arbitrary government and the cause of the people, respectively. Declaring that “laws are nothing else but ties and bands / On purpose made to shackle subjects’ hands,” York proudly informs his brother:

I villains of intrinsic value have,
And more obedient than a Turkish slave:
If you but bid them thrust their bloody knives
Into their fathers’ throats, their childrens’, wives’,
Or any but their own, they’ll freely do’t,
And lay them sprawling at your sacred foot.⁷⁷

York forwards a vision tending towards – and seemingly inspired by – the construct of a despotical Turkish sovereignty founded on cruelty and absolute obedience. As York concludes, “Whate’er you’d have, whate’er your wishes craves, / Nod, and ’tis done by my obedient slaves. / They know no scruple, no command dispute, / But do’t as readily as

⁷⁵ BL, Add MS 25121, f. 89, Henry Coventry to Ambassador Finch, 20 Oct. 1679, Whitehall.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ *Popish Politics Unmasked* (1680). In *Poems on Affairs of State, Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, Vol. 2, ed. by Elias F. Mengel, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 383.

Turkish mute.”⁷⁸ Calling to mind the ideologies of political governance as reflected in the writings of Harrington and Milton, such a satire depicted this path – one which resembled that of a tyrannical Eastern empire and forced subjects to surrender their liberties – as a direct contrast to one in which subjects fulfilled their predilection for republican freedom.

From late October 1681, the recourse to the “Turk” as a rhetorical weapon in partisan propaganda not only increased in tempo but also underwent an important ideological shift. While Whigs continued to invoke “Turkish” slavery and tyranny, the formation of the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance generated a new discourse of the Turks rooted in real events with implications for constitutional debates regarding the legitimacy of resistance. The catalyst for the discursive shift was the decision of Henry Care to devote three back-to-back issues of his successful weekly half-sheet periodical *Weekly Pacquet, Or Advice from Rome* to an account of Muhammad and his doctrine as well as an elucidation of why Catholics far exceeded Turks in absurd religious practice and faith.⁷⁹ Given that Care had simply rehearsed the tropes of Turkish sensuality in his earlier publication *Poor Robins Intelligence*, his new attention to these matters of faith appeared all the more notable. Like most of the Whig newspaper publishers, Care was a

⁷⁸ *Popish Politics Unmasked*, lines 101-104. In texts such as this one and Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, the “Turkish mute” was made to represent frailty and a complete loss of agency. Yet deaf people, or “mutes,” were actually among the few members of the Ottoman imperial household who were legally free. See Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire, 1300-1650*, Second Edition (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 135. For a detailed discussion of the mutes’ activities and signing system, see Michael Miles, “Signing in the Seraglio: Mutes, Dwarfs, and Gestures at the Ottoman Court 1500-1700.” In *Disability & Society*, 15 (2000), 115-134.

⁷⁹ Care began to publish *The Weekly Pacquet* on 3 Dec. 1678. Peter Hinds indicates that it was unarguably the main form of popular education and satire regarding Catholicism. See Peter Hinds, ‘*The Horrid Popish Plot*’, 153. Care became a target of the attacks from not only Tory propagandists but also state and church officials. By the fall of 1683, he was forced to plea-bargain with the court, and he later began a court propagandist under James II, driven perhaps by fear and hope of promoting religious liberty and toleration. See “Care, Henry (1646/7–1688),” Lois G. Schworer in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4621> (accessed September 20, 2013).

nonconformist.⁸⁰ Lois Schwoerer has dated Care's move into anti-court circles from the early summer of 1679 when Care not only publicly expressed disgust that any sympathy could be shown towards executed Catholics but also helped to write popular narratives of the Popish Plot, including *A Narrative and Impartial Discovery of the Horrid Popish Plot*.⁸¹ *A Narrative* implicated Charles and his advisors in the London Fire and thereby represented the first time that Care directly attacked Charles's court and the first time that Care was pitted against Roger L'Estrange, who responded with his own narrative of the plot in 1680. When Care was in trouble with the law in 1679 and 1680, he gained support from the Green Ribbon Club, a club that met on Chancery Lane and championed Whig principles.⁸² It appears that Care had first gained this base of support from his work with *Poor Robins Intelligence*: Edward Rawlins, one of the government's propagandists and author of *Heraclitus Ridens*, commented that Care was "made one of the Secretaries of the Prince of Whigland" based upon his "success in those performances" of writing the newsletter.⁸³ Care's political views may also have been influenced by his proximity to dissenters: he lived in the parish of St. Sepulchre's, which was heavily populated by dissenters, and thereby may have come into contact with anti-court circles.⁸⁴

In preparing his account of Muhammad, it is possible that Care was influenced by the writings of physician Henry Stubbe (1632-76), who had prepared a defense of Muhammad in the years before his untimely death in 1676 and was linked to the Earl of

⁸⁰ Harris, *London Crowds*, 120.

⁸¹ Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care*, 77

⁸² *Ibid.*, 22. See Knights discussion of the Green Ribbon Club in *Politics and Opinion*, 129. As Knights notes, at least 37 MPs were members, and the Club proved very effective in organizing propaganda and petitioning as well as in spreading news quickly.

⁸³ Schwoerer, *The Ingenious Mr. Henry Care*, 41.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

Shaftesbury, a leader of the “country” opposition and the later Whigs.⁸⁵ With the intention of situating Islam in a historical context and relying upon the writings of “Arabick Christians” rather than “European Christians,” Stubbe in his *The Rise and Progress of Mahometanism* refuted Christian fables about Muhammad and defended Muhammad from accusations of sensuality, imposture, and violence.⁸⁶ For instance, Stubbe indicated that it was a “vulgar opinion that Mahomet did propagate his doctrine by the sword” and argued that Muhammad surpassed his contemporaries “not only in sublimity of thoughts, quaintness of speech, wittiness of his parables or apologies, but in choice of words and phrases.”⁸⁷ As James Jacob has indicated, Charles Blount – a member of the Green Ribbon Club – had read and copied portions of Stubbe’s manuscript by 1678, as he included extracts in letters to Thomas Hobbes and the Earl of Rochester.⁸⁸ Yet while Stubbe’s ideas circulated among Whig leaders in manuscript form, it was through Care’s popular newsbook that the “Turks” and Muhammad became associated with Whig political and religious imperatives for a broader audience and set the stage for the slant of the propaganda wars that followed.⁸⁹

As Care explained in his *Weekly Pacquet* of October 21, 1681, “Having said so much... of the *Pope*,” he thought it might “not be altogether unacceptable to some

⁸⁵ For a discussion of the links between Stubbe and Shaftesbury, see James R. Jacob, *Henry Stubbe, radical Protestantism and the early Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 116-118.

⁸⁶ Nabil Matar, ed., *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 15, 28.

⁸⁷ Henry Stubbe, *The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism*. In Matar, ed., *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam*, 177, 125.

⁸⁸ Jacob, *Henry Stubbe*, 140-1.

⁸⁹ Stubbe’s *The Rise and Progress* was not printed in its entirety until 1911. Humberto Garcia has asserted that Stubbe’s work not only emblemized a “vibrant radical Protestant tradition” but also served as the basis for the later satires of the English reformers of Teckelite infidels. Yet while Stubbe’s work certainly represented such “radical” strains, we must be cautious when making assumptions about the significance of its role in supporting and characterizing the larger Whig and nonconformist position. See Humberto Garcia, “A Hungarian Revolution in Restoration England: Henry Stubbe, Radical Islam, and the Rye House Plot.” In *The Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 51, No. ½ (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 1-25.

Readers to give a brief Account too of the *Turks*,” adding that “the same” was not “altogether *Forreign* to our subject, for the Ambition and ill practises of the *Popes* was the principal Cause of the decay of the Christian Empire, and a main occasion of the *Turks* success.”⁹⁰ Care proceeded to reiterate the long-standing conceit that Catholic ambition had enabled the Turks’ rise, indicating that the Popes of Rome “have added Success to the Turks lewd Cause” by their perjuries and idolatries.⁹¹

Such arguments would have been familiar to Care’s readers, as Whig propaganda often drew upon the tradition of conflating Catholics and Turks in order to underscore the extent of the pope’s antichristian methods. For instance, contemporaries often embedded the Pope and Turk within a shared tradition of violence and perfidy. In his work, the anti-Catholic clergyman Israel Tonge explored the topic of Mahometan and Jesuit Assassins, which was illustrative of such themes. Published in 1680 to underscore the cruelties of the Jesuits and inflame fears related to the popish plots, Tonge’s *Jesuits Assassins* offered a history of “*Mahometan Assassins*” and their “Parallel with the *Papal*.”⁹² As the printer John Darby wrote in the preface, “The *Mahometan* cannot be denied the honour of the first-born of the Devil, the Murderer from the beginning in this Tribe of Regicides,” though Darby indicated that his younger popish brethren had out-gone him in “principles and practices.”⁹³ In *Jesuits Assassins*, Tonge discussed a history “from good Authority”

⁹⁰ *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome: or, The History of Popery*, Vol. 3, no. 72 (21 Oct. 1681), 571.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 573.

⁹² Israel Tonge, *Jesuits Assassins: Or the Popish Plot Further Declared, And demonstrated in their Murderous Practices & Principles* (London: Printed by J. Darby, to be sold by the Book-sellers, 1680), 2.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

regarding the Assasini, spuriously presenting them as a sect among the Turks.⁹⁴ Their governor was “honoured and worshipped as Vicar of Mahomet” and “joined unto him a number of Cut-throats” who demonstrated “untameable boldness.”⁹⁵ Practicing imposture, this governor supposedly instructed his followers in the “wicked Law of Mahomet” and led his followers through “blind Obedience” in committing “innumerable Murders”; together, they made “such havock and destruction all about in that Country” that “no Man durst resist their madness.”⁹⁶ Exposing the cruelty supposedly exercised by Mahometan and Jesuit assassins, Tonge’s tract was designed to impugn both further through association. Denouncing the pope and his creation of a state “wholly composed of superstition and wit,” the anonymous *Cabal of Romish ghosts and mortals* of 1680 also reinforced the long-standing popular association of the Pope and Turk.⁹⁷ The tract concluded with a satirical “Pope’s Last Will and Testament,” which spoke to the amity between the idolater and the infidel:

To my very cordial Friend, the *Great Turk*, all the domineering Power, Religious Tyranny, and exquisite Cruelty, that shall remain among the Clergy at my decease. *Item*, I give all the Nuns within my Reach and Power, to be sent to the *Seraglio* at *Constantinople*, and their Chastity therein to be preserved by the *Great Turk*, with the same Discretion it was in the Nunneries. *Item*, All the Priests and Friars I can grasp, I likewise give and bequeath to my trusty Friend the *Grand Seignior*, to be castrated and created Eunuchs, to be sent to the *Seraglio*, to give their Attendance on the aforesaid Nuns.”⁹⁸

⁹⁴ The “assassins” were a sect of the Nizārī Ismā‘īli who arose in the 11th century and extended their activities through Iran and Syria. Crusaders heard and misinterpreted stories about the Nizārīs and spread these legends when they returned home, providing evidence of Islamic violence. *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*, s. v. “Nizārī Ismā‘īliyyah,” accessed Feb. 9, 2015, <http://academic.eb.com/EBchecked/topic/416579/Nizari-Ismailiyyah>. See also Farhad Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma‘ilis* (London: Tauris, 1994).

⁹⁵ Tonge, *Jesuits Assassins*, 4.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁹⁷ *The Cabal of Romish ghosts and mortals, or, The devil deceiv’d and the sick pope* (London: Printed for Norman Nelson, at Grays-Inn-Gate in Holborn, 1680), 2.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

In his discussion, Care recognized such discourses regarding the mutual benefit that the Pope and Turk accrued through their association, yet he modified the relationship to strengthen the anti-Catholic thrust of his arguments.

After establishing his reasons for treating the Turks in his issue of October 21, Care turned his attention to Muhammad, depicting him as a “Politick Fellow” who sought to “contrive the Platform of a mighty Empire.”⁹⁹ According to Care, the “Foundation of [Muhammad’s] Project was to possess his people with a strong conceit” that “the Empire of the World was promised to them, and therefore they must by Arms take possession, and force all Nations either to obey the Laws of this Alchoran, or else to live in servitude to them.”¹⁰⁰ After reinforcing such traditional Christian commentary regarding Turkish ambition and delusion, Care in his next two issues began a relativistic progression towards the idea that Turks displayed more “Christian civility” than papists and gave Christians within their dominions greater liberties than those living under papal authority.

Having discussed the origins of Muhammad and delusions of his Turkish followers, Care used the next week’s issue to argue that the Turks were “not guilty of such absurd and wicked Tenets as the Papists.”¹⁰¹ Care’s argument rested on two assertions: that the papists held “several Opinions more unreasonable for their Absurdity, or more detestable for their Impiety, than the very Turks themselves” and that Christians might and did “live with less oppression under the *Turks*, than in places where *Popery* [bore] sway.”¹⁰² According to Care, unlike the papists who supposedly would have their traditions received with as much reverence as the Holy Scriptures, “The Doctors of the

⁹⁹ *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*, Vol. 3, no. 72 (21 Oct. 1681), 573.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 574.

¹⁰¹ *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*, Vol. 3, no. 73 (28 Oct. 1681), 577.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

Turkish Religion were never so absurd as to think the vain *Traditions* of their People to be of as good Authority, and no less to be believed than the *Alchoran* of their *Mahomet*.”¹⁰³ While Care attributed the Turks’ ignorance and servility to the “tyrannous constitution of their government,” he acknowledged that the Turks spoke “honourably of the Law and the Prophets,” appeared scandalized by the doctrine of transubstantiation, were “strict and regular *Fasters*,” did not allow their religious leaders to beg, and did not bend religious precepts to satisfy selfish interests.¹⁰⁴ All of these observations served as a counterpoint to what Care despised about popish practices. Care concluded this issue with the declaration that “Papists do out-vye the *Turks* themselves in *Disloyalty*, and *Barbarous* and *Perfidious Cruelty*.”¹⁰⁵

Care furthermore departed from an accepted strand of argument regarding supposed Muslim idolatry.¹⁰⁶ In a study *Of idolatry* published in 1678, the latitudinarian divine Thomas Tenison had devoted one entire chapter to the idolatry of the “Mahometans.” He opened the discussion by mentioning that Muhammad, growing weary of others’ false worship, “invented a new one of his own, which hath grown exceeding rankly since the first planting of it, as is the manner of many deadly and poysonous weeds.”¹⁰⁷ Having touched upon what he viewed as Muhammad’s hypocrisy and heresy, Tenison went on to explain that Muhammad’s disciples were accused of a double idolatry: “*First*, They are accused as worshippers of their Prophet in the quality of

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 578

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 578-581.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 582.

¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, this contemporary strand of argument differed from earlier works that asserted that the Muslim “Turks” despised idolatry and thereby found Roman Catholicism offensive; such an assertion reflected an awareness or acknowledgment of the tradition of sect discontent over the issue of aniconism. Sermons celebrating the conversion of three Muslims in London in the late 1650s also spoke to this notion that Catholic idolatry was one of the central reasons that these converts rejected Catholicism and embraced Protestantism.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas Tenison, *Of idolatry a discourse* (London: Printed for Francis Tyton, 1678), 144.

the highest Lieutenant of God. And *Mahomet* himself gave the occasion of this worship, by teaching them this Creed, *That there is one God, and Mahomet his Prophet...* *Secondly*, They are accused as worshippers of the Tomb of their Prophet.”¹⁰⁸ In the anti-popish fervor of the late 1670s, writers often compared popish and Mahometan idolatry in order to underscore the depravity of both. For example, *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* of 1679, which was based on Martin Luther’s epistles and Erasmus Alber’s *The alcaron of the barefote friars*, cited Turkish practices to illustrate the depths of the Franciscans’ superstition, absurdity, and idolatry. In the forward, the editor indicated that the Franciscans placed St. Francis “far above” Christ and thereby believed that “Christ is nothing more but the figure of S. *Francis* (as the Turks hold in respect to *Mahomet*) but the typified or antitype is all in all.”¹⁰⁹ The clergyman and informer Israel Tonge also compared the idolatry of papists and “Mahometans,” writing that “the Court of Rome, and their Disciples, do too Diabolically, in too many things, imitate this *Mahometan* Tyrant in Matters of Idolatry.”¹¹⁰

While other nonconformists and Whigs had adhered to the notion of papists’ and Muslims’ shared idolatry, Care in *The Weekly Pacquet* separated Turks from any such perceptions of popish idolatries. In doing so, he may have been inspired by Stubbe’s manuscript defense of Muhammad. Offering a corrective to the writings of many Christian theologians, Stubbe had emphasized that Muhammad “taught his followers to abolish idolatry everywhere” and that the “Mahometans” were just as “severe enemies...

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 146. Such notions of Mahometan idolatry stretched back in English writings to the sixteenth century. For instance, Richard Harvey in his *A theologicall discourse of the Lamb of God* (1590) stated that “Mahomet is made a greater and a mightier prophet than Christ,” asserting the Turks’ worship of Muhammad, p. 83. As Matthew Dimmock notes in *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad*, contemporary narratives of Mahometan idolatry were not uncommon, and idolatry often factored into the Christian demonization of Muhammad, 33, 78.

¹⁰⁹ “The Collector to the Christian Reader.” In *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* (1679).

¹¹⁰ Tonge, *Jesuits Assassins*, 6.

against all images and pictures” as the Christians.¹¹¹ In a similar vein, Care declared that the Turks branded those who worshiped images as idolaters while the papists did “yet most absurdly make divers Corporeal Images of God.”¹¹² Care also forwarded an interpretation of Muhammad’s role that diverged from Tenison’s: as Care wrote, “*Mahomet*, wicked as he was, never had the presumption to call himself God, but the *Prophet of God* only, neither did his deluded Followers ever give him the Title or Honour of God.”¹¹³ In making such a distinction, Care laid the framework to judge and censure papist idolatry and pretensions in supposedly styling the Pope as God.

Having expounded upon the ways in which papists out-“Turked” the Turks, Care devoted the third and final issue in this series to further distinguishing the Turks from the papists. He opened the exposition with the declaration that Christians were less oppressed under the Turks than places where popery bore sway. As with the previous issue, Care structured the discussion in the form of oppositions between Turkish and popish practices, yet now his tone conveyed slightly more respect for the Turks to underscore popish depravity more fully. Characteristics associated with religious affiliations appeared inverted: while the papists could out-“Turk” the Turks, the Turks could appear better to embody “Christian” values of mercy and righteousness. Christopher Marlowe had toyed with these themes almost a century earlier in his *Tamburlaine* plays,

¹¹¹ Stubbe, *The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism*, 177, 186. There were contradictory opinions regarding whether Muhammad led his followers away from idolatry or retained idolatry. As Norman Daniel has indicated, the notion that Muslims were idolaters who worshipped Muhammad was often a polemical literary convention, yet those who devoted serious attention to the matter recognized Islam as an Abrahamic religion and acknowledged that Muhammad did not accept idolatry. See Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1960), Appendix A: “The imputation of idolatry to Islam,” pp. 338-43. The stock polemical biography of Muhammad by twelfth- and thirteenth-century European historians depicted Muhammad as a poor orphan, who with false miracles and tricks, styled himself as a prophet and copied aspects of Christian and Jewish theology while corrupting those elements in the process. See Meserve’s discussion of Renaissance humanists’ portrayals in *Empires of Islam*, particularly 158, 173, 193.

¹¹² *The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome*, Vol. 3, no. 73 (28 Oct. 1681), 579.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 580.

destabilizing the “self-other” paradigm.¹¹⁴ Care now deployed these themes to construct an ideological framework in which religious difference proved no obstruction to achieving peace and liberty within a principality. Rather, it was popery that destroyed the seeds of that peace. Thus, Care indicated that whereas Muhammad taught the Turks that every man should be saved by his own religion, the Pope and his allies forced all into their communion and “*Baptize[d]* whole Nations in their Blood.”¹¹⁵ Also whereas Muhammad ordered his disciples “to be at Amity with Christians if they desired it,” the papists denied Christians this amity and rather remained “implacable in their Malice against them.”¹¹⁶ Unlike the papists, Care asserted, the Turks did not poison men with treachery or break solemn oaths even when such oaths were made to those of a different belief. The Turks did not employ inquisitors to hunt out and torment Christians but rather “suffer[ed] them quietly to enjoy their own apprehensions in Religion.”¹¹⁷ These contrasts allowed Care to conclude with a validation of the Hungarians’ decision to seek Ottoman aid against the Habsburgs. He challenged those who still doubted whether the Turks were a more civil power to assess the case of the “poor *Hungarians*,” who through a “long and sad Experience” had discovered the aforementioned differences between the papists and the Turks and, “being persecuted to death for their Religion by the *Romanists*, [were] glad to take shelter under the Arms of the *Ottoman*.”¹¹⁸ In effect, Care had deployed the long-established rhetorical tactic of allowing the Turks to serve as a marker

¹¹⁴ See Jonathan Burton, “Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in Tamburlaine.” In *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30:1 (Winter 2000), 125-156.

¹¹⁵ *The Weekly Pacquet or Advice from Rome*, Vol. 3, no. 74 (4 Nov. 1681), 586.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 586.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 587.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 589.

of popish absurdity and depravity. Yet he attempted to widen the differential and, in doing so, made the Turks appear the more civil – even more “Christian” – power.

Care’s issues on the “Turk” in the *Weekly Pacquet* laid the groundwork for Whig support of the Hungarians’ cause. In the fall of 1682 Francis Smith, a Baptist, published a translated version of *The Declaration of the Hungarian War*, written by a Hungarian prince of Transylvania, Michael Apafi, and addressed “to all Kings, Princes, and Common-wealths, of the Christian World.”¹¹⁹ Smith published the English translation alongside the original Latin in which form the *Declaration* had been disseminated across Europe to “all Kings, Princes, and Common-wealth, of the Christian World.”¹²⁰ In publishing the *Declaration*, Smith sought not only to involve his countrymen in a matter implicating all of Europe but also to link England’s political developments to wider political contests. This *Declaration* sought to justify the decision of the Hungarian Protestants not only to take up arms against their Austrian Habsburg overlords but also to ally with the Ottomans. Word of the text’s impending publication had generated interest, and Tory propagandist Roger L’Estrange preemptively attempted to undermine its importance and gravity in his *Observer*, presenting an imagined dialogue between the characters of the Whig and the *Observer*. In the issue of October 23, 1682, the Whig comments that the Whig newspaper *The Loyal London Mercury: Or, The Moderate Intelligencer* would soon publish a vindication for the Hungarian Protestants taking up

¹¹⁹ Mihály Apafi, Anglicized to Michael Apafi, came to power in 1662 in Transylvania, a principality of Hungary and tributary state of the Ottoman Empire. Transylvania enjoyed internal autonomy under the Ottomans, and the Hungarian ruling class hoped to extend this model to all of Hungary, preferring Turkish influence to what was seen as the Habsburg’s absolute dominium. See László Benczédi, “Hungarian National Consciousness as Reflected in the Anti-Habsburg and Anti-Ottoman Struggles of the Late Seventeenth Century.” In *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 10, No. ¾ (December 1986), 426-7.

¹²⁰ *The Declaration of the Hungarian War, Lately set out by the most Illustrious Michael Apafi, Prince of Transylvania, Against the Emperour’s Majesty* (London: Printed for Francis Smith, 1682), title page.

arms with the Turks against the Emperor.¹²¹ The *Observer* wryly remarks in response, “It must needs be a Great *Satisfaction...* for *Protestant Princes* to know how the Turk came to *Over-run Christendom*; and an Honour to the *Profession* of those People that were the *Cause* on’t.”¹²² Though the periodical *The Moderate Intelligencer* stopped its short-lived four-month print run that day, Francis Smith brought the *Declaration* to print.

In the *Declaration*, Apafi traced the attempts of the Austrian Habsburgs under Emperor Leopold I to establish “an absolute and hereditary Domination in Hungary” through “smooth and cunning Arts” or, if those methods failed, by open force.¹²³ Since the 1650s, the Habsburgs had increasingly taken power from the Hungarian estates, sending more German soldiers into Hungary and setting up a state apparatus that reduced the parallel Hungarian institutions to “sham organizations.”¹²⁴ Apafi condemned these Habsburg overlords for treading upon Hungarian liberties, overthrowing the safeguards of law and privilege, and subjecting Hungarians to the “command and insolent domination of foreigners.”¹²⁵ Discovering that petitions and lamentations were useless against Habsburg oppression, the Hungarians found themselves left with no alternative but to take up “just and necessary arms” in order to ensure the “restoration of their buried Liberty.”¹²⁶ Yet shortly after the Hungarians had overthrown the Emperor’s army and confirmed a treaty that limited and bounded Habsburg power, their leader Stephen

¹²¹ *The Loyal London Mercury: Or, The Moderate Intelligencer* was published twice a week from June 14 to Oct. 23, 1682. From Aug. 23, it was simply published as *The Moderate Intelligencer*. It was one of the shorter-lived Whig newspapers that started up in 1682. See James Sutherland, *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 17.

¹²² *The Observer*, no. 228 (23 Oct. 1682).

¹²³ *The Declaration of the Hungarian War*, 1-2.

¹²⁴ Benczédi, “Hungarian National Consciousness,” 427.

¹²⁵ *The Declaration of the Hungarian War*, 1-2.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

Botskai passed away and with him their hopes for maintaining the treaty's articles.¹²⁷ Placing the Hungarian and Transylvanian move to “restrain an insolent and extravagant Domination within legal Bounds and Priviledges” in an ancestral tradition of resisting oppressors, Apafi argued that this struggle was meant to prevent the kingdom's “final destruction of Religion and Liberty” – destruction that in turn would serve to the “damage and prejudice of whole Christianity.”¹²⁸ The whole thrust of Apafi's argument rested on the ability of oppressed subjects to take up lawful and just arms; the threshold was crossed when a ruler went from the “lawful way of Governing, to the grievous and absolute form of Domineering.”¹²⁹

Apafi's *Declaration* reflected an awareness of the scrutiny to which the Hungarian decision to ally with the Turks would be subjected. As he commented, “I know there are many that put an ill construction upon this act of extreme necessity, and preposterously reproach the *Hungarian* Nation, and blame them as degenerate from the Christian Name”; however, he reversed the blame, accusing those critics of being “either ignorant of the fundamental Liberties of *Hungary*, or too favourable to the *Austrian* Party.”¹³⁰ Thus, Apafi went to great lengths to explain the league, arguing that “extreme Violence to the utmost loss of Life, Liberty and Fortunes” and the indifference of other Christian powers forced the Hungarians to turn to the Ottomans for aid.¹³¹ Thereby criticizing the indifference of other Christian nations, Apafi expressed gratitude to Ottoman favor, for the Port had “graciously granted refuge, security and means to sustain

¹²⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 5.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 11.

¹³¹ Ibid., 11.

the support Life.”¹³² Apafi further protested, “It seemed more advisable to fly to the Protection of a most Potent Prince, and to use his help in a Cause of the highest and inevitable Necessity, in respect to the common good, than either to grow old in mournful Banishment, or to precipitate that small part of the Kingdom yet remaining into manifest peril.”¹³³ He also pointed to the long tradition of European powers seeking Ottoman aid, reminding his readers that the Hungarians were not the first to implore the Ottoman protection in their own defense: King Francis I of France, Apafi commented, “made no scruple to call in help from the *Turks*” against Charles V. By way of conclusion, Apafi challenged his readers to “judge [whether] they have done perversly, in submitting themselves to the Protection of the fulgent Port, that promises upon the Faith of an Emperour, the restitution of Liberties, and security of Religion, Life and Honour, with the maintenance of all Rights.”¹³⁴ Within London, Apafi’s *Declaration* sparked heated discussion and debate upon its publication: L’Estrange, for example, remarked in his *Observer* on the degree to which the Hungarian Declaration was “*Read, and Descanted upon.*”¹³⁵ L’Estrange himself repeatedly went into print to undermine the validity of this Hungarian-Ottoman league. He asserted that the Hungarian Declaration was simply the vehicle by which Whigs and nonconformists transported the “Hungarian Rebellion” into England and thereby found validation for their own political disobedience.¹³⁶

While Whigs like Henry Care underscored Anglo-Protestant religious affinities with the Turks to depict popery as the singular evil, other Whigs continued to recognize greater differences. The case of the Hungarian Protestants exposed these underlying

¹³² *Ibid.*, 11.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹³⁵ *The Observer*, no. 399 (6 Sept. 1683).

¹³⁶ See, for instance, *The Observer*, no. 407 (20 Sept. 1683).

tensions within the Whig party for it cut to the core issue of obedience and the legitimacy of resistance. In condoning recourse to unchristian forces against Christian sovereigns, the dissenters appeared to eschew the duty of subjects to obey their sovereigns and thereby violate the sacred relationship between ruler and ruled. The idea that subjects could topple not only the political order but also the ruler himself through appeals to conscience had significant political ramifications and gave some Whigs reason to pause. Though the clerical Whigs in Anglican orders indicated that resistance might be legitimate if taken against those who acted illegally in the King's name, they sought to uphold the sacred position of the king.¹³⁷ In seemingly violating these tenets, the Hungarian Protestants' alliance with the Ottomans divided the Whigs.

Clerical Whigs appeared to express the most misgivings about outwardly approving the use of antichristian forces to oppose a ruler. Edmund Hickerlingill, who distanced himself from hardline dissenters, did not seem to blame the Hungarian Protestants as much as the circumstances that forced them to turn to the Turks for aid. In his *The Test or Tryal of the Goodness & Value of Spiritual-Courts*, Hickerlingill mentioned that he could not discover "any good luck that attended any that Persecuted men for Conscience-sake, though an *erroneous* Conscience."¹³⁸ As evidence, he cited the Habsburg Emperor's treatment of the Hungarian Protestants, stating that the latter for shelter "fled to the (*more merciful*) Turk, a Piece of Jesuitisme as *unpolitick* as *Impious*, whoever lives to see the upshot."¹³⁹ In Hickerlingill's view, such a policy smacked of popery in that it offered a short-term solution at the expense of political and religious

¹³⁷ Harris, *Restoration*, 158.

¹³⁸ Edmund Hickerlingill, *The Test or Tryal of the Goodness & Value of Spiritual-Courts, in Two Queries* (London: Printed by George Larkin, for the Assigns of the Author, 1683), 17.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

destabilization. He censured not only the ruler who would persecute subjects over their conscience but also those who would follow an “erroneous conscience” and betray their very principles. His words reflect the wariness with which clerical Whigs viewed their fellows’ championing of the Hungarian Protestant cause.

Yet even nonconformist printers and booksellers did not view the Turks uniformly, and in a number of instances, such differences emerged over attitudes towards France. While Francis Smith printed Apafi’s *Hungarian Declaration*, which justified an alliance with the Turks, Langley Curtis printed William Petty’s *The politician discovered* which criticized France for making leagues with the Turks. Originally involved in the Cromwellian regime, Petty served as a founding member of Royal Society and later received an appointment as a judge and registrar in the admiralty court in Dublin in 1676 under the Duke of York’s authority.¹⁴⁰ As evidence of France’s “chief Artifices for dividing and undermining their Friends,” Petty cited France’s “entertaining of a secret League with the Turk.”¹⁴¹ As Petty declared,

She usually calls in the Turk upon the back of ’em [her neighbors]; and this *most Christian King* will not stick to enter into secret Covenants with that Antichristian Tyrant against the rest of Christendom. I need not mount up so high as *Francis the I, Henry the II*, and other their Successors, who openly brought in the Turk against *Charles the V*, and other Emperors; publick Histories can bear me Witness in it... when any of Francis his Neighbours would upbraid him with such Antichristian Treacheries, he could put it off but with a Drollery: *What*, says he, *May not I, when beset with Wolves, call in for Dogs to help me.*¹⁴²

Petty further exposed French “antichristian treacheries” by arguing that the French were the reason for the loss of the city of Candia and thereby the Ottoman conquest of Crete.

¹⁴⁰ “Petty, Sir William (1623–1687),” Toby Barnard in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, September 2013, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/22069> (accessed November 5, 2013).

¹⁴¹ William Petty, *The politician discovered* (1681), “The First Discourse,” 18.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 19.

As he stated, “The Divisions, Counter-seasons, and wilful Misunderstandings of the French with their Allies, in that occasion, did more to the loss of the City, than the Batteries of the Turk, who had spent some score years in vain toward the conquest of that place”; the Turks “could never get it out of the *Venetians hands*, till these double-dealing French Friends came into help more toward the losing of it than the maintaining it.”¹⁴³ According to Petty, such amity between the French and the Turks allowed Louis XIV to look upon the “Mahumetans” as “one of the chief Supporters of his Crown and State.”¹⁴⁴ As he concluded, “And as the French will be Friends with the Turks to use ‘em against their Enemies, so with those they pretend openly to help, as their Friends, they deal as with Turks in effect, by underhand Conspiracies.”¹⁴⁵ For evidence, Petty referred to the French King’s designs concerning England and Holland in which he “ingaged the Frog and silly Mouse to a Fight, to weaken the one the other” so that “he, the French Kite might more easily snatch ‘em both away in his greedy Talons.”¹⁴⁶ As Petty stated, Louis had sent his fleet to assist the English against Holland, “with secret Orders to *d’Estree*, to leave the English and Hollander to destroy each other.”¹⁴⁷ Disagreements over which Catholic ruler posed the greatest threat – Leopold I or Louis XIV – influenced how Whigs viewed the Turks. For those who championed the Hungarian Protestant cause, the Ottomans represented an important ally in the struggle to safeguard the nation’s law and liberty. The ends justified the means. Yet for those who suspiciously regarded Louis XIV’s expansionist intentions, his amity with the Ottoman Turks served as proof of his betrayal of Christendom. Tory propagandists obscured these differences in order to focus

¹⁴³ Ibid., 20.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 21.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

on Whig sympathy for the Hungarians, making this sympathy the basis for construction of a compelling ideological framework regarding the Whigs' apostasy.

DUDLEY NORTH & THE SHRIEVAL ELECTION OF 1682

As the next chapter will discuss, Tory propagandists seized the opportunity to exploit the ideological implications of Whig sympathy for the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance, arguing that their opponents were politically and religiously suspect. Yet even as public opinion began to swing towards the Tories, the Whigs attempted to reclaim the "Turk" for their own propaganda purposes in order to undermine the Tories' gains. The best example of such efforts came in the bitter contest for control of the London shrievalty waged between June and September 1682. For Tories winning control of the shrievalty appeared central to consolidating their victory. Even though the Lord Mayor had the right to nominate one of the two London sheriffs, the common hall – the City's freeman electorate – had selected both sheriffs in recent elections.¹⁴⁸ Thus, Whig leaders controlled the electoral process and in turn the City's judicial system: as the two sheriffs were responsible for impanelling juries in London and Middlesex, they were able to provide protection to Whig political dissidents through the frequent return of ignoramus juries. Yet in the summer of 1682, the Court sought to pressure the Lord Mayor to nominate its favored candidates in the liverymen meetings and nullify the first election poll, thereby circumventing the Whigs' choice of candidates. Facing intense Whig opposition even though he was not a partisan Tory, Dudley North was elected sheriff as

¹⁴⁸ Harris, *Restoration*, 295.

one of the Court's preferred candidates.¹⁴⁹ According to his brother's memoirs, Whig agents "all over England" proclaimed that North and his Tory backers "should certainly be hanged for their audacity in this proceeding."¹⁵⁰ A former Turkey merchant with almost twenty years experience in the Levant, North had the means to pay for the privilege of the office. Interestingly, he was also fluent in Turkish, having taken pride in his ability to negotiate with Ottoman officials without recourse to a dragoman.¹⁵¹ While Richard Grassby argues that North's experience under a corrupt Ottoman administration gave him "both a hatred of arbitrary tyranny and a deep respect for the rule of law," North also admired certain virtues of the Ottoman law and recognized that bribery and corruption were not singular to Turkey.¹⁵² His intimate knowledge of the Turkey trade and experience in foreign parts thus made him an interesting choice for sheriff, though his brothers Roger and Francis campaigned on his behalf.¹⁵³

Opponents of Dudley North's candidacy targeted his experience with the Turkey trade in their attacks, drawing upon the themes of corruption and religious apostasy that had marked earlier "country" and then Whig discourses of the Turks. Appearing in quarto in the summer of 1682, Thomas Thompson's poem, *Midsummer Moon or the Liveryman's Complaint* spoke from the perspective of a liveryman or guild member of the common hall angered by the Court's campaign to circumvent the system and elect its

¹⁴⁹ "North, Sir Dudley (1641–1691)," Richard Grassby in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20297> (accessed September 17, 2013). See also BL, Add MS 32512, f. 82-85b.

¹⁵⁰ BL, Add MS 32512, f. 85.

¹⁵¹ According to his brother Roger North, if Dudley was angry at any time in England, "his tongue habitually went into Turkish." BL, Add MS 32512, f. 34.

¹⁵² Richard Grassby, *The English Gentleman in Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 125.

¹⁵³ At the time, Sir Francis North was Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and he became Lord Chancellor in December 1682.

own candidates.¹⁵⁴ Though Thompson's position was more anti-York than pro-Whig, his poem spoke for the Whigs' anger and sense of betrayal by the Lord Mayor.¹⁵⁵ Criticizing Tories for engaging in a new traffic of "Turkish officers," the poem commented on the Court's corruption as manifested through this shrieval election. Thompson asked, "Which stock'd seraglios and rich grand viziers, / Th' industrious Tory truck for officers? / In sober sadness, sirs, how goes the price? / Are sheriffs lately grown good merchandise? / Sure, brethren, we may fear the cause is low / When you for cordials unto Turkey go."¹⁵⁶ Thompson sardonically commented that the Court would "choose the city circumcised shrieves," thereby drawing suspicion to the potentially transformative nature of North's many years in Turkey.¹⁵⁷ However, North did not appear as the only instrument of the Court with "Turkish" loyalties. Thompson further added that the Tories might have considered calling muftis to their side as well had it not been for the fact that they were already well "stock'd" with bishops "who have their seraglios too" and "if their piety were open set, [were] verier Turks than Bishop Mahomet."¹⁵⁸ Religious institutions appeared a guise for deeper corruption, impiety, and sexual license. Invoking stereotypes of Turkish cruelty and further seeking to expose high Anglican intolerance, Thompson wrote that these bishops were "arm'd with sword for pen and mail for gown" and "with cogent blows knock reeling Error down."¹⁵⁹ In conclusion, Thompson mourned a "degenerate London" that had become a "slave to mighty pelf" and "stranger" to itself in not only paralleling Turkish structures but also embracing "Turkish" officers. Though

¹⁵⁴ *Poems on Affairs of State, Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*, Vol. 3, 1682-1685, ed. by Howard H. Schless (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 237.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹⁵⁶ Thomas Thompson, *Midsummer Moon or the Liveryman's Complaint*, 1682, lines 37-42, p. 241. In *Poems on Affairs of State, Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714*.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, line 44.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, lines 47-50.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, lines 56-57.

such propaganda reinforced compelling discourses of courtly corruption and intolerance as tending towards “Turkish” slavery and tyranny, the Tories’ campaign to silence all opposition and increasing control of the press ensured that their conceptual framework involving the “Turk” gained greater traction.

CONCLUSION

Leading up to and during the Exclusion Crisis, anti-court writers couched their arguments regarding the dangers of popery and tyranny in part in discourses of the “Turk,” drawing upon examples from histories and travel literature that spoke to the corrosive effects of arbitrary power in the Ottoman Turkish context. In the Ottoman experience these commentators found a reflection of the sexual excesses and corruption of Charles II’s government as well as the intolerance of the high Anglican establishment. Yet with the formation of the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance in 1681, Whig engagement with the “Turk” underwent a shift from these discourses regarding sexuality, power, and corruption towards a debate regarding the legitimacy of resistance for the sake of law and liberty. In the Hungarian Protestants’ struggle for independence from the Catholic Habsburgs, radical Whigs recognized their own attempts to confront the supposed popish influence within their state as represented by James, the Duke of York, and Louis XIV. Developments in Hungary provided these Whigs with a framework for exploring the radical political and religious implications of their constitutional perspective – a perspective that placed the king beneath the law and endowed the people with the right to safeguard their freedom in the case of unlawful rule. For these Whigs, the ends more than justified the means – the means being recourse to the military and political support of the

Muslim Turks. Yet as the Whigs comprised a heterogeneous mix of interests, the political implications of this discourse in some ways undermined Whig cohesion. Not all Whigs were willing to embrace such radical arguments and deny the sacredness of the king's position. By rooting constitutional debates about the lawfulness of resistance in real events, those who supported the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance took a more radical position than other Whigs – notably the clerical Whigs – were willing to condone. Such differences fractured the cohesiveness of Whig ideology and made the Tories' campaign to erode the Whigs' base of support all the more compelling.

CHAPTER SIX
**Exposing “The Greatest Imposter”:
The Tory Reaction and the Fight Against the True Protestant “Turks”**

In March 1681 Charles II dissolved the Oxford Parliament and began a period of personal rule, thwarting the parliamentary movement to exclude his brother James, the Duke of York, from the throne.¹ Yet in order to counteract the Whig appeal effectively, the government and its Tory allies – in what would later come to be known as the “Tory Reaction” – launched a drive to suppress political and religious dissent. As part of this movement, Roger L’Estrange and Nathaniel Thompson led a counter-propaganda campaign in order “to undeceive the people” – who had been “charmed” by nonconformist writers such as Henry Care and Francis Smith – and “reduce the deluded Multitude to their Just Allegiance.”² Positioning themselves as the “true defenders of English liberties and the Protestant religion,” Tories emphasized that the threat to church and state came not from a popish successor but from radical dissent and an arbitrary and unruly Parliament. The Tories identified Whigs as nonconformist subversives who strove to introduce a tyranny of popular government.³

In the early 1680s, Tories viewed dissent as politically destabilizing – a threat to the constitution. While scholarly work has examined the ways in which the King, Court,

¹ *His Majesties Declaration To all His Loving Subjects, Touching the Causes & Reasons That moved Him to Dissolve The Two last Parliaments. Published by His Majesties Command* (London: Printed by the Assigns of John Bill, Thomas Newcomb, and Henry Hills, 1681). Issuing this declaration on April 8, Charles II explained his reasons for dissolving Parliament, citing Parliament’s failure to protect the security and liberty of his subjects. The declaration was an attempt to win over moderates.

² Nathaniel Thompson, *A choice collection of 120 loyal songs* (London: Printed by N. T., 1684).

³ See Tim Harris, *London Crowds in the reign of Charles II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 131, 134, 136, and *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660-1715* (London: Longman, 1993), 108-9; Tim Harris, “Tories and the Rule of Law in the Reign of Charles II.” In *The Seventeenth Century Journal* (Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 1993), 18; Mark Knights, *Politics and Opinion in Crisis, 1678-81* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 316-25, 345-47.

and Tory party deliberately turned Whig arguments regarding popery and arbitrary government back on themselves, there has been little attention given to how these arguments were couched within particular cultural discourses and how the Tories achieved a great deal of success through appropriating these discourses and inverting them to undermine the Whig position. Thus, in examining the Tory propaganda campaign, I argue in this chapter that Tories sought to identify the dangers of their Whig and nonconformist counterparts by fixing their principles, actions, and characteristics within a religious and racialized framework involving the “Turks.” At a time when “debates over personal, denominational, and national religious identity ran fiercely and continuously,” the deployment of “Turks” in the different genres of popular pamphlets, newsbooks and periodicals, ballads, and sermons served to cast into relief the opposition between loyal, obedient subjects and dissenting political and religious “others.”⁴

This chapter will focus on the two contemporary developments that made the Tories’ rhetorical turn to the “Turks” particularly compelling and pertinent. The debunking of Titus Oates’s Popish Plot allowed Tories to cast light upon the destructive nature of paranoia as well as argue that Whigs’ efforts to fuel this hysteria served as evidence of their antichristian deceptions. In an era when anxieties regarding deception and uncertain truth shaped religious, political, and scientific debates, Tories made a critical analogy between dissent and antichristian – particularly popish and Turkish – imposture. Scholars such as Mark Knights have explored how political propagandists associated religious heterodoxy or unbelief with a set of vices like pride and discord to demonize that ideology, yet this chapter stresses the importance of recognizing the extent

⁴ Peter Hinds, *The Horrid Popish Plot’: Roger L’Estrange and the Circulation of Political Discourse in Late Seventeenth-Century London* (New York: Published for The British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2010), 188.

to which these vices were often racially or religiously inscribed.⁵ Integrating historiographies of religion, science, popular politics, and propaganda, this chapter seeks to demonstrate that the vices with which Tory propagandists identified the Whigs were rooted in conceptions of antichristian deception and the blindness that it created. Tories claimed their right to detect such deception, arguing that their opponents practiced deceptions in line with the Pope and the “impostor-prophet” Muhammad as well as succumbed to the passion and unreason that supposedly characterized those religions. The proliferation of English printed works on Islam in the mid- to late seventeenth-century gave contemporaries a greater foundation from which to understand “antichristian” deceptions and judge those who seemed to practice such deceptions in their midst.⁶ As Barbara Shapiro has argued, by the 1670s religious arguments had to appear rational and not driven by superstition or divine inspiration; this development reflected an emerging “culture of fact” that derided passion as irrational and antichristian.⁷

The second development fuelling Tory engagement with the “Turks” was the known Whig sympathy for the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance, which gave Tory propagandists further evidence of their opponents’ “Turkish” delusions and efforts to undermine Christian institutions. After enabling the Hungarian leader Count Imre Thököly to form a separate principality in Upper Hungary in 1682, the Ottomans

⁵ Mark Knights, *The Devil in Disguise: Deception, Delusion, and Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 56. As it was, pride and arrogance were some of the most common charges raised by Europeans against the Ottoman Turks.

⁶ One of the most notable examples of increased awareness regarding Islam came in May 1649 when Alexander Ross translated the complete text of the Qu’ran into English.

⁷ Barbara Shapiro, *A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), Ch. 7, “Facts of Religion.”

prepared for a larger attack on Vienna, the Habsburg capital.⁸ From the Tory perspective, the Ottoman Turks' advance appeared to mirror the concurrent assault on the English church and state by Whigs and nonconformists. In London the publication of the "Hungarian Declaration" by nonconformist publishers simply appeared to strengthen that connection. The leading Tory propagandist Roger L'Estrange, who had served as the government licenser of the press until the Licensing Act expired in May 1679, seized the opportunity to condemn the perverted values and misplaced allegiances of his Whig and nonconformist opponents. In his dialogue paper *The Observer*, L'Estrange compared the dissenters to Teckelites, or "an Anti-Christian Sort of Skittish Pretended Protestants, that run over to the Interest of the Turk for fear of Tyranny, and Popery, and Appeal to the Mercies of Mahomet from the Persecuting Spirit of the Gospel."⁹ These dissenters thus appeared guilty of the greatest political and religious apostasy, betraying Christendom and their nation in the name of liberty.

By underscoring the affinity of the Whigs and nonconformists with the Hungarians under Count Imre Thököly and their allies the Turks, Tories sought to demonstrate the incompatibility of their opponents' political and religious beliefs with a stable, peaceful, and Christian government. Tory propaganda emphasized that their opponents had embraced perverted beliefs and become a stranger to themselves and – more importantly – Christendom. Such arguments were rooted in issues of not only political and religious loyalty and obedience but also adherence to – and demonstration of – an English character. In tracing this process, I offer a corrective to Humberto Garcia's

⁸ László Benczédi, "Hungarian National Consciousness as Reflected in the Anti-Habsburg and Anti-Ottoman Struggles of the Late Seventeenth Century." In *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3/4, Concepts of Nationhood in Early Modern Eastern Europe (Dec. 1986), 429-30.

⁹ *The Observer*, no. 407 (20 Sept. 1683).

conclusions that Tory satires chose to remain secretive about the “internal enemy,” or the English radical Protestants who identified with Hungarian Protestant and Ottoman Turkish interests.¹⁰ The leading Tory propagandists offered such a forceful counterattack to Whig propaganda precisely because they drew such explicit connections between the activities of the English dissenters and the Hungarian-Ottoman struggle against the Habsburgs. This chapter is also in dialogue with Anders Ingram’s recent work on English ballads related to the Ottoman siege of Vienna, similarly considering the ways in which foreign events provided English writers with material to deploy in topical political polemic.¹¹ Yet this chapter seeks to consider not only the connection between foreign and domestic events but also the dynamic interplay between cultural discourses, propaganda, and public opinion. I seek to highlight the ways in which Tories, in seizing control of the “Turk” as a conceptual field, were responding to and in dialogue with Whig and nonconformist writers.¹² Drawing upon the different genres of ballads, libels, newsbooks, pamphlets, and sermons, I will highlight the various forums and materials through which the Tories staged their ideological attack on Whig principles and practices. From the Tory perspective, the Whigs had essentially ceded any authority to represent or speak for the interests of the Anglo-Protestant order, having become “Turks” themselves.

¹⁰ See Humberto Garcia, “A Hungarian Revolution in Restoration England: Henry Stubbe, Radical Islam, and the Rye House Plot.” In *The Eighteenth Century*, Vol. 51, No. 1/2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 1-25. He implies that this secrecy was necessary due to the sensitive and troubling thought that the radical English dissenters derived their inspiration from “Hungary’s Islamic revolution,” 11.

¹¹ See Anders Ingram, “The Ottoman Siege of Vienna, English Ballads, and the Exclusion Crisis.” In *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 57, Issue 1 (March 2014), pp. 53-80.

¹² In his article, Ingram focuses on the “synchronicity of the events surrounding the siege of Vienna and the concurrent English political context,” and as this chapter will discuss, the Hungarian-Ottoman alliance and the siege of Vienna made the Tories’ recourse to the “Turks” particularly compelling. Yet it is important to note how these associations were part of a larger dialogue and competition over the very conceptual field of the “Turk.” The party that effectively seized control of this terrain was able to shape the contours of unfolding constitutional and religious debates.

THE INFLUENCE OF HISTORIES AND POLITICAL TRACTS

Printed histories of the Turks provided a framework from which L'Estrange and other propagandists could draw to strengthen their ideological points. Reprints of Rycaut's *Present State of the Ottoman Empire* and *History of the Turks* offered a wealth of information about Ottoman politics, society, and trade. Yet it was the cultural observations made by Thomas Smith in *Remarks Upon the Manners, Religion and Government of the Turks* of 1678 that offered the type of stereotypes regarding Turkish barbarity, religious and political dissimulation, and tendency towards extremes that came to underlie Tory propaganda against the Whigs and nonconformists. Having served as the chaplain to the English Ambassador, Sir Daniel Harvey, in Constantinople from 1668 to 1671, Smith like Rycaut based his authority on his experience in the Ottoman Empire. In his preface to the reader, Smith declared his purpose in writing: "being more and more convinced by such kind of relations, of the brutish ignorance and horrid barbarousness of the Turks, of the dotages and follies of their worship," he sought to allow the reader to "more thankfully and seriously reflect upon that most blessed and merciful providence, which has cast your lot in Christendom, and in a Countrey especially, where the Christian Doctrine is profest in its primitive purity and integrity, and where civility and learning, and all ingenuous Arts flourish."¹³ Smith's treatise in many ways provided a conceptual framework for Tory propagandists to argue the extent to which Whigs and their nonconformist allies followed a dangerous Turkish example. As Smith concluded in his preface, "A reflexion upon which sad times should make us detest those seditious and fanatical principles, which if they should once prevail, and be received as good Christian

¹³ Thomas Smith, *Remarks Upon the Manners, Religion and Government of the Turks* (London: Printed for Moses Pitt, at the Angel in St. Pauls Church-yard, 1678), A6.

Doctrine, as they were most unhappily not many years since, we have just reason to fear they would bring as great desolations along with them as any that are now in Turkey.” Such observations allowed Tory propagandists not only to play upon fears that the nonconformists would lead the nation back down the path of 1641 but also to emphasize that the political and social turmoil that had destabilized the Ottoman Empire due to supposed Turkish hubris would also envelop England under like-minded dissenters. Smith drew parallels between Turkish “brutishness” and “barbarousness,” which had led to the destruction of magnificent ancient ruins, and the “mad and impious zeal of some of the prevailing faction [in England] in the late times of usurpation,” which “had done the like to several goodly houses of Religion and Learning in Christendom.”¹⁴

The picture that Smith presented to his readers offered evidence of the desolation that ensued when passions and radical principles were allowed to hold sway. Smith depicted the Turks as embracing “brutish licentiousness and sensuality,” suggesting that Turkish power derived from Scymitars while Turkish civility depended on bribery.¹⁵ In his view, superstition and hypocrisy characterized Turks’ behavior while avarice drove them.¹⁶ As opposed to “Christian” moderation, the Turks were “always guilty of Extreams”:

When once they have determined upon a thing, though never so rashly and without the due examination of circumstances, or the mischiefs that may follow, they presently proceed to execution. Whatsoever they do, they do it with so much impetuosity and fury, that equity and clemency and civility are wholly laid aside.¹⁷

¹⁴ Ibid., A8.

¹⁵ Ibid., 29, 30, 35.

¹⁶ Ibid., 49, 60, 88.

¹⁷ Ibid., 174.

Driven by passions and exercising “no moderation and command over themselves or appetite,” the Turks were never sated unless “cloyed with excess.”¹⁸ Regarding the Turks’ religion, Smith echoed other polemic Christian commentary and condemned what he observed as based upon “folly and imposture and gross absurdities, which abstracting from the common and fundamental principles and notices of Natural Religion, has nothing in it to recommend it self to the choice and acceptance of any sober and wise man.”¹⁹ The Turks’ religion merely sanctioned “gratifying the corrupt inclinations of nature,” aiming only for an empty “great semblance of devotion.”²⁰ Such observations reflected and played into the aforementioned deep contemporary anxieties regarding uncertain truth and imposture. While Smith acknowledged the uprightness of certain Turks, these admissions simply allowed him to establish his authorship as trustworthy, reflecting his supposedly critical and fair appraisal of Turkish society and culture. In effect then, these “exceptions” made Smith’s assertions of general Turkish barbarity and hypocrisy more believable and such barbarity that much more reprehensible. As Smith stated, while religious devotion certainly flowed from a “principle of conscience and is very hearty and sincere” in some Turks, it would be “great folly and weakness not to censure others of gross and ridiculous folly and dissimulation” for “this is no very rare or unusual thing among them.”²¹ These discourses of passion and dissimulation surrounding the Turks gave L’Estrange a framework from which to construct his attacks.

¹⁸ Ibid., 179.

¹⁹ Ibid., 27. One established strand of Christian commentary focused on Turkish folly and hypocrisy in religion; for instance, both George Sandys and Fynes Moryson spoke to the folly inherent in Turkish religious devotion.

²⁰ Ibid., 28, 54.

²¹ Ibid., 60-61.

The same year that Smith's *Remarks* appeared, Lancelot Addison published his *The First State of Mahumedism*, which was republished the next year as *The Life and Death of Mahumed*. A "custodian of Anglican orthodoxy," Addison had spent seven years serving as a chaplain to the English garrison in Tangier before returning to England in 1670, receiving his Doctor of Divinity at Oxford in 1675, and becoming a prebendary of Salisbury in 1678.²² While purporting to present a more objective account by drawing upon Arab writers, Addison reinforced the stereotypes of Turkish dissimulation by focusing on Muhammad – in his text "Mahumed" – whom he described as a "*Great Politique*" who employed various artifices to build his "Infant Empire."²³ His intention in writing, Addison declared, was to "justly awaken all Christian Magistrates into a timely suppression of *False Teachers*" by presenting a "short and plain *Account* of the onely great Impostor, that ever continued so long prosperous in the *World*."²⁴ Addison left his reader with the impression that Muhammad propagated his religious principles for personal gain and arose "from so contemptible a beginning, to grow up to be a scourge and disturber of the *whole world*" and a "monstrous Impostor."²⁵ In Addison's view, Muhammad "second[ed] *Heresie* with *Force*" and "propagate[d] *Enthusiasm* with *Conquest*."²⁶ Tory propaganda drew on these themes of imposture and violence, claiming to unmask the real intentions of Whigs and nonconformists.

²² "Addison, Lancelot (1632–1703)," Alastair Hamilton in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/157> (accessed May 14, 2014).

²³ Lancelot Addison, *The First State of Mahumedism: Or, An Account of the Author and Doctrines of That Imposture*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed by J. C. for W. Crooke, at the Green Dragon without Temple-Bar, 1679), 115.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, A₂.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 132.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, A₃.

THE TORY RESPONSE

In 1681 when Henry Care portrayed Muslim Turks as a more civil power than Catholics in an attempt to justify the Hungarian Protestants' alliance with the Ottomans, the discursive shift in the *Weekly Pacquet* did not go unnoticed by Roger L'Estrange, who quickly recognized the significance and potential ideological implications of Care's arguments. Considering Care one of his chief adversaries, L'Estrange had the *Weekly Pacquet* immediately delivered to him on Friday mornings in order to prepare his response.²⁷ He understood the necessity of confuting an adversary who sought to rally the opinion of "all true English Protestants" in London and Westminster to his side, particularly when control of the City proved critical to maintaining political influence. Both Care's *Weekly Pacquet* and the satirical *Courant* enjoyed popularity, and in December 1681 even Care boasted of the "many thousand hands" who had read his histories.²⁸ Thus, when Care published his three-issue comparison of Turkish civility to popish barbarity, L'Estrange promptly engaged with this particular strand of argument in his *Observer*, exaggerating the distinction that Care and his Whig allies had made between the Pope and the Turk and purposefully interpreting the Whig position as condoning "Turkish" belief and practice through disentangling the Turks and papists. L'Estrange viewed this position as turning a blind eye to important religious and ethnic categories. In his mind, such blindness appeared evidence of the Whigs' delusion.

Care's engagement with Islam seemingly served as the catalyst by which L'Estrange could focus his critiques on the shifting religious identities of his nonconformist adversaries. As Peter Hinds has noted, L'Estrange opened his very first

²⁷ Hinds, *The Horrid Popish Plot*, 59, 155. As Hinds notes, L'Estrange attacked Care as a "monkey," "dog," and "drunkard" in his writings.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 155.

edition of the *Observer* in April 1681 with the issue of religious identity. L'Estrange wrote that it was impossible "to say either what a Dissenter *IS*, or what he is *NOT*. For he's a *NOTHING*" and added further that "A *DISSENTER*, is one that thinks *OTHERWISE*" or "One that *Protests AGAINST*, but not *FOR* anything."²⁹ Thereby "stripping Dissenters of any positive identity," L'Estrange depicted them as an immoral force.³⁰ L'Estrange's depiction of the dissenters as devoid of real principles both reflected and drew upon a growing awareness of the emptiness of the very word "Protestant" – a word that seemingly could mask a range of agendas. Yet L'Estrange's reflection on the "nothingness" of dissenters also implied charges of atheism.

These themes regarding the emptiness of nonconformists' belief and the increasing hollowness of the word "Protestant" played out in the satirical *Dialogue Between the Pope and a Phanatick Concerning Affairs in England*, also published in 1681. In the satire, the Phanatick informs the Pope that one of the dissenters' artifices "consists in that *Hogan Mogan* word of Protestant Religion, a name which the People esteem more Sacred than that which the Disciples assumed at *Antioch*."³¹ When the Pope inquires how far the Phanatick would extend the title of the Protestant religion, the Phanatick responds that the word is "so comprehensive, that it may take in almost all the World except the Pope and the Devil."³² Pushing the Phanatick further, the Pope asks, "And will you make the Grand *Turk* to be a Protestant?"³³ The Phanatick's response is revealing, as it represents the Tory view that the nonconformists championed the cause of

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 183-4.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

³¹ *A Dialogue Between the Pope and a Phanatick Concerning Affairs in England* (London: Printed for H. Jones, 1681), 10.

³² *Ibid.*, 11.

³³ *Ibid.*

political disobedience and thereby shared similar values to the Turks. As the Phanatick states regarding the Turks' religious leaders,

The *Mufti* is of the same mind with our Presbytery concerning Princes, 'That whatsoever Prince obey not the Law of God, he is no true *Muscelman* or Believer, and being become by his filthy Actions an Infidel, he is *ipso facto* fallen from his Throne, and no farther Capable of Authority and Government,' and with this Divinity our *Turkish* Brethren strangled Sultan *Ibrahim*, in the same year *Forty Eight*, when we by the same Maxim cut off *Charles* the First.³⁴

The satire thereby sought to underscore the absurdity of the thinking – supposedly shared by the dissenters and Turks – that rebellion and potentially even regicide were justified if the ruler acted contrary to the law in certain circumstances.³⁵

Such political principles appeared the precursor to the destruction of church and state. *A Dialogue* further underscored the danger of the nonconformists' innovations in religion by having the Phanatick and Pope agree that the Turks, rather than praying five times a day and thereby preserving the "awful notion of a Deity and Sovereignty," should appoint lectures and thereby "distract and amuse [themselves] with Varieties and Novelties."³⁶ The comment referred to Puritan and nonconformist lectureships that were not officially sanctioned by authorities. Suggesting that dissenters led even the Turk in eroding the sanctity of religion through their innovations, the satire indicated that such innovations did more to harm a state than war or open rebellion. As the Pope commented, "A Society of Lecturers would sooner destroy the *Turkish* Empire, than all the Arms of *Persia* and *Christendom*, or the Mutinies of the Janizaries."³⁷ Care's issues of the *Weekly Pacquet* devoted to a discourse about Muhammad and Turkish civility gave L'Estrange the opening to articulate more fully the themes regarding how the nonconformists would

³⁴ Ibid. The text cited Paul Rycout's *Turkish History* in making these claims.

³⁵ Such depictions were similar to arguments that compared nonconformists with the Jesuits.

³⁶ *A Dialogue Between the Pope and a Phanatick*, 12.

³⁷ Ibid.

draw the Turks into their communion as well as surpass the Turks as an uncivil and immoral force.

Thus, shortly after Care's *Weekly Pacquet* issues on Turkish practice and belief appeared, L'Estrange opened an issue of the *Observer* with the Tory inviting the Whig to make the third man to two other "Fair Gamesters" – the Turk and the Pope. When the Whig asked what the Tory had in his hand, the Tory proclaimed, "Why here's one of *Robert Wisdomes Madrigals (From Turk and Pope, &c.)* turn'd into *Prose*, and *Mahomet* prov'd to be the better Christian of the two. It is in short the *Pacqueteers Apology for Turcism*, and wants only a *Whig* to make up the *History of the Three Grand Imposters*."³⁸ The Tory's response reflects not only the materiality of these exchanges – he held the incriminating issues of the *Weekly Pacquet* to prepare a direct response – but also L'Estrange's recognition that the Whigs' destabilizing of religious and ethnic categories could become the proof of their delusion or guilt. L'Estrange's persuasive genius rested in amplifying the totality of this delusion and underscoring the dangers that such delusion presented. His deployment of the "impostor" concept appeared doubly potent: imposture was long associated with Muhammad due to what was interpreted as his religious deceptions, yet the impostor was also one who evaded established categorizations and crossed boundaries to dangerous and unsettling effect. L'Estrange sought to prove that the Whigs had made Muhammad "Christian" and thereby become deluded about the godliness of their own practices, underscoring the political and social turmoil that came

³⁸ *The Observer in Dialogue*, no. 71 (16 Nov. 1681). Robert Wisdom was a Church of England clergyman and poet who died in 1568. His poems attracted ridicule from seventeenth-century authors – one of whom said that Puritans had rather listen to one of his psalms than the best hymn a cherubin could sing. See "Wisdom, Robert (d. 1568)," Alec Ryrie in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29785> (accessed October 18, 2013).

with such inversions. As the Tory remarks in this issue, “There is a certain kind of a *Fly-blown Christian* that *calls* it self a *Protestant* and is *none*, which I do take to be the greatest Impostor of the Three.”³⁹ In censuring the Whigs’ supposed duplicity, L’Estrange engaged with the theme of the “pious impostor” that had marked earlier satires of the Whigs.

In its early modern usage, the impostor was considered synonymous with a cheat, deceiver, or charlatan or defined as one who imposed on others. By the seventeenth century, the concept of dissimulation had evolved from the meaning of “hiding to protect an inner vulnerability” to implying “deliberate trickery, with intent to harm.”⁴⁰ Muhammad became increasingly associated with imposture after the 1610s when English writers began to publish material on the Qur’an.⁴¹ The Arabist William Bedwell, who produced the first work about the Qur’an in English, published *Mohammedis imposturae: that is, A discovery of the manifold forgeries, falshoods, and horrible impieties of the blasphemous seducer Mohammed* in 1615. A second edition appeared in 1624 as *Muhammad unmasked*. Such insight - though often distorted through an ideological prism - gave contemporaries a basis from which to judge Islam, giving rise to the directed critiques of Muhammad’s supposed deceptions and thereby popularizing titles of “great

³⁹ *The Observer*, no. 71 (16 Nov. 1681).

⁴⁰ Silvia Berti, “Unmasking the Truth: The Theme of Imposture in Early Modern European Culture, 1660-1730.” In *Everything Connects: In Conference with Richard H. Popkin*, ed. by James E. Force and David S. Katz (Boston: Brill, 1999), 25.

⁴¹ Although polemical ends did motivate translations of the Qur’ān in Latin Christendom, European translators and commentators were also capable of engaging with – or trying to understand – the Arabic language as well as details of Islamic belief, thereby reflecting a “complexity of attitudes towards the Qur’ān and of ways of experiencing it as a text and object.” See Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur’ān in Latin Christendom, 1140-1560* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

impostor” or the “Impostor-Prophet.”⁴² As touched upon in chapter three, by the 1640s and 1650s, the trend was well established in English writing of undermining Muhammad’s divinity by focusing on his supposed deceptions – deceptions thought to spawn violence and civil unrest.⁴³ In essence, contemporaries read the burgeoning knowledge of Islam within an anti-Catholic framework rooted in conceptions of antichristian deceptions and the blindness that those deceptions created. Debates regarding false miracles fitted within a longer tradition harking back to Reformation politics: Protestant reformers deemed such miracles “antichristian,” seeing Catholic traditions as characterized by both idolatry and superstition. Drawing upon New Testament scripture that described “‘lying’ signs and wonders designed to seduce even committed Christians,” Protestant texts indicated that “reformed eyes were needed to detect the implausibility of Catholic miracles in the first place” and thereby privileged a type of “religious seeing” that was non-sacramental and a “more removed and dispassionate act.”⁴⁴ As Stuart Clark has argued, control of the senses importantly defined Protestant social and intellectual discipline and imbued debates about reality and delusion with “enormous moral consequences in the fields of religion and politics.”⁴⁵ This religious framework set up a contrast between the irrationality of the passions and the rationality of self-control, keen observation, and informed judgment. Exercising this

⁴² For earlier associations of Muhammad with imposture, see John Cotta, *The triall of witch-craft shewing the true and right methode of the discouery* (London: 1616). Cotta discussed the “impious and infamous Impostures of Mahomet” as an example of imposture, thereby ensuring “that the odiousnesse of this foule sinne may appeare more foule, and the ugly face thereof may be more fully discovered,” p. 62. See also Thomas Herbert, *A relation of some yeares trauaile, begunne anno 1626 into Afrique and the greater Asia* (London: 1634).

⁴³ Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 172.

⁴⁴ Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 179, 183.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 183, 238.

observation thus allowed one to identify imposture or “unmask” the false practitioner.⁴⁶ The idea of false appearances was intimately bound to conceptions of the Antichrist, as contemporaries widely believed that the Antichrist’s power was not only derived from tyranny and cruelty but also enabled by false appearances.⁴⁷ In essence, the Antichrist was the “symbol of absolute opposition combined with exact imitation.”⁴⁸

Yet L’Estrange’s engagement with the concept of the “impostor” also invoked the fabled *Treatise of the Three Impostors*, or *De tribus impostoribus*, which denied Judaism, Christianity, and Islam by depicting Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad as the impostors. Rumors of the treatise’s existence and its attack on revealed religion surfaced throughout the Medieval and early modern periods.⁴⁹ By the latter half of the seventeenth century, political and religious fragmentation contributed to growing concerns regarding the spread of false religion or even atheism, and contemporaries could regard sectarians and dissenters as embracing and forwarding the book’s central tenets. In his *Religio Medici* of 1642 which was republished in its eighth edition in 1682, Thomas Browne mentioned the “miscreant piece of the three Impostors,” which he called the “Rhetorick of Satan.”⁵⁰ Interest in the book of the three impostors appeared reignited in the mid-1650s, as publications by Hugo Grotius, Richard Whitlock, and Alexander Ross each made reference to the book. Ross depicted the sectarian Ranters as people who would offensively identify holy religious figures as impostors. John Evelyn also alluded to the

⁴⁶ Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad*, 173-4.

⁴⁷ Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, 179.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 179.

⁴⁹ The first known printed version was published in 1719 and became an important text of the early Enlightenment. For an English translation of the 1777 edition, see Abraham Anderson, *The Treatise of the Tree Impostors and the Problem of Enlightenment* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1997). See also Berti, “Unmasking the Truth,” 30-31.

⁵⁰ Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* (London: 1642), 38. Browne determined that the villainous person who composed the work was “neither Jew, Turke, nor Christian, was not a positive Atheist.” Yet the work had associations with atheism.

legendary treatise in his edited *History of the Three Late Famous Impostors*, published in 1669.⁵¹ By indicating that Care's discussion in the *Weekly Pacquet* only needed a Whig to make up the "History of the Three Grand Impostors," L'Estrange seemed to suggest that the Whig was not only an impostor himself but also guilty of subscribing to the very impious and abhorrent ideas that the book represented. As his satire suggests, the Whig manifested antichristian qualities that marked him as an impostor in the popish and Turkish mold and, potentially, as an atheist, who was assumed to be "exceeding disingenuous in his principles, and objections" and "monstrously unreasonable."⁵² Those who did not adhere to the proper Christian "truth" appeared misled or driven by this unreason.

The themes of falsity, passion, and unreason that L'Estrange would draw upon in his satire thus appeared integral to contemporary religious discourses. Contemporaneous satires emphasized that the nonconformist simply pretended to religious belief. The satirical *Presbytery Truly Displayed* attacked the Presbyterian in such terms, observing that "for Dissimulation, Hypocrisie, and Lying, *Belzebub* is not able to out-do him."⁵³ Building upon classic anti-Puritan rhetoric that depicted the Puritan as deeply subversive and socially disruptive, the satire added further: "He's one that pretends to Religion, but abhors all Decency and Order."⁵⁴ Proclaiming that the Presbyter's religion "is but a meer Puppet-show, for he delights only in Formality... His True Zeal he pretends to (if any) is

⁵¹ Paul Rycout wrote the narrative on the third imposture of Sabbatai Zevi. See Sonia Anderson's *An English Consul in Turkey*, Ch. 7.

⁵² Sir Charles Wolseley, *The Unreasonableness of Atheism made manifest* (1669), 178.

⁵³ *Presbytery Truly Displayed: Or an Impartial Character of the Presbyterian* (London: Printed for the Author, and sold by W. L. at the Crown in Cornhill, 1681), 2.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 2-3. For discussion of moral panics and anti-puritan "media" campaigns, see Tim Harris, "'A saint in shewe, a Devill in deede': Moral Panics and Anti-Puritanism in Seventeenth-Century England." In *Moral Panics, the Media and the Law in Early Modern England*, ed. by David Lemmings and Claire Walker (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 97-116.

too Hot, and his false Religion (as we justly term it) is too Cold,” the satire concluded, “He’s a Church Incendiary, a Pulpit Boutefeu, an Ecclesiastic Buffoon, a Preacher of Seditious, a Fomenter of Rebellion, a pretended Friend both to King and Countrey; but in truth the sole Enemy of both.”⁵⁵ L’Estrange built upon these attacks by fitting them within an antichristian framework that encompassed not only Puritans and Catholics but also Muslims. Such a rhetorical strategy was made more compelling by the fact that the increasing tempo of trade and cross-cultural interactions enabled contemporaries to see in the Ottoman Empire the reflection of their own tumults and in Islam the reflection or representation of Catholic deceptions and absurdities.

Nonconformists appeared to extend their influence through works of seduction, misleading the nation through pinpointing one danger in order to introduce a far greater one. Thus, in order to stress that nonconformists actually sought to subvert the government and true Protestant religion, their opponents deployed the concept of the “cloak” – an allusion to the cloaks that Presbyterian clerics wore and a pun with resonances of concealment. *The Cloak in its Colours; Or the Presbyterian Unmasked* (1679) warned of “treacherous” and “blood-thirsty Presbyterians,” who appeared as wolves dressed in sheep’s clothing.⁵⁶ Appearing in 1680 and later annexed to *Presbytery Truly Displayed*, “The Ballad of the Cloak” picked up on similar themes, commenting upon the damage wreaked by a particular cloak – representing the Whigs and their allies – “that cramp’t all the Kingdom, and crippl’d the Crown” by “blind[ing] peoples eyes.”⁵⁷ This cloak, ran the ballad, not only “set publick Faith up, and pull’d down the Creed” but

⁵⁵ *Presbytery Truly Displayed*, 4-5.

⁵⁶ *The Cloak in its Colours; Or the Presbyterian Unmasked* (London: 1679), 11-12.

⁵⁷ “The Ballad of the Cloak: Or, the Cloaks Knavery. To the Tune of, From Hunger and Cold: Or, Packington’s Pound” (Printed for P. Brooksby, near the Hospital-Gate, in West-smithfield, 1680).

also “let all the Seas in the Citty to work, / And rather then fail, ’twould have brought in the Turk.”⁵⁸ Under the pretense of securing people’s lives and liberties, this cloak committed terrible crimes and “did joyn with the Devil to pull down the Pope.” Though this “cloak” did not bloody his hands with such damnable deeds, “He set it on foot, / By hallying and calling his Journey-men to it” and thereby created a “Bloody Disaster.” L’Estrange similarly embraced this construct of the Whigs’ imposture and the idea that their trumpeting of liberty of conscience simply masked destructive methods and principles.

In the main body of his issue of November 16, 1681, L’Estrange further cemented the notion that, while the Whigs sought to “Christianize” the Turks, they now vied with the papists to out-“Turk” the Turks. The Whig creates the opening for this discussion by mentioning that the “Weekly Pacquetteer” had recently given seven instances of cruelty and oppression in which the papists “out-do the very *Turks themselves*.” Yet the Tory inverts such claims, arguing that the Whigs and their nonconformist allies match the papists in their perfidy, cruelty, and hypocrisy and thereby also manifest “Turkish” qualities. The Tory cries, “And what difference now betwixt the Rigour of the Whigs, and the Papists? Have they not still carried Bloud and Desolation along with e’m [*sic*], wherever they have got footing?”⁵⁹ L’Estrange argued that the Whigs’ duplicity was best understood by the crimes that their predecessors – as well as their Scottish Presbyterian counterparts – had committed:

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ *The Observator in Dialogue*, no. 71 (16 Nov. 1681).

the Bloud of *Two Archbishops, Thousands of Loyal Protestants*, and the most *Execrable Regicide* that ever was Committed in the face of the Sun, and under the Pretext of *Conscience and Justice*.⁶⁰

In short, the Whigs' practices appeared to presage the same destruction of political and religious institutions that brought the nation to its knees during the Civil Wars and were a "most desperate provocation toward the Embroiling and Tumultuating of the Kingdom."⁶¹ In a later issue of the *Observer*, L'Estrange made explicit such connections between commonwealth government, tyranny, and political confusion: "Had not Our *Sultan Oliver* his *Janizaries*, as well as *Solyman the Magnificent*?" his *Observer* proclaims. "What did his *Major-Generalls* fall short of so many *Bashaws*? And were not our *Lords and Commons* in *One and Forty*, as *Lawless* as the most *Absolute Tyrants* that Ever liv'd upon the Face of the Earth?"⁶²

Representing a "hybrid form of printed and oral propaganda," ballads encouraged the oral transmission of such themes regarding the Whigs' hypocrisy and delusion.⁶³ A contemporaneous ballad "The Car-Man's Poem: Or, Advice to a Nest of Scriblers" played with the idea that the Whigs had mis-identified the real threat to the nation: rather than recognizing that they were the real offenders, these Whigs directed their venom against the King and his supporters and treated the latter as if they were "Turks." Criticizing Whig party propagandists and their nonconformist allies "turned poets," who

⁶⁰ Ibid. In referring to the two archbishops, L'Estrange was most likely speaking of William Laud and James Sharp. As the Archbishop of St. Andrews, Sharp had furthered the cause of Scottish episcopacy, allying himself with the government and pursuing a campaign against nonconformity. He was murdered in May 1679 by a band of Scottish covenanters. *The Cloak in its Colours; Or, The Presbyterians Unmask'd* (1679) had underscored that the "Presbyterians of *Scotland*" were "undeniably criminal" when it came to "the Bishop of *St. Andrew's* bloody Tragedy." For Sharp's biography, see "Sharp, James (1618–1679)," David George Mullan in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25211> (accessed April 6, 2015).

⁶¹ *The Observer*, no. 71 (16 Nov. 1681).

⁶² *The Observer*, no. 399 (6 Sept. 1683).

⁶³ See Harris, *London Crowds*, 102.

boldly lashed the nation's kings with their "dirty, frothy, hair-braind Pen," the ballad indicated that these poets appeared the real enemy to political and religious institutions. Revealing that these "car-men" ran to Whig bookseller and propagandist Francis Smith, who printed and protected their works, the ballad proclaimed, "Hang Sence, thats out of fashion so is Reason; / Come let us see you write Sediton, Treason, / Move for a Commonwealth, cry down the King, / Another Royal Head to th[sic] Block lets bring."⁶⁴ The ballad sarcastically concluded with an address to these car-men: "Come, drive on, Car-man, set thy brains to work, / And write as if it were against the Turk."⁶⁵ The car-men appeared to have abandoned all sense or reason, proving their blindness and drawing others into their delusion.

DEBUNKING THE POPISH PLOT

The themes of imposture and deception proved particularly compelling given the debunking of Titus Oates's Popish Plot. Although plot paranoia had surged with the depositions of Oates and his cronies in the fall of 1678 and subsequent executions of supposed conspirators, by 1681 belief in this plot had begun to ebb as Oates lost several cases of libel against those who attacked him.⁶⁶ As contemporaries began to doubt the veracity of Oates's testimony, he was increasingly reviled as an "impostor." In underscoring the blindness of the Whigs and the nonconformists and thereby their abandonment of sense and reason, Tory propagandists worked within an ideological

⁶⁴ UC Santa Barbara English Broadside Ballad Archive, "The Car-Man's Poem: Or, Advice to a Nest of Scriblers" (1680?).

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ "Oates, Titus (1649–1705)," Alan Marshall in Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20437> (accessed September 14, 2013).

framework that their opponents themselves had used to expose popish perfidy. In his *Jesuits Assassins*, Israel Tonge had extolled his – and like-minded individuals’ – ability to discern the deceptions of Rome. Referring to the Pope as a “*Chimera*,” Tonge smugly declared, “The *Roman* Wolf, for all his Sheeps Cloathing, is easily discerned by us, by his devouring Teeth, and bloody Chaps, from a Shepherd.”⁶⁷ Those susceptible to Roman deceptions included men and women “who had first given up their Faith to lying Legends; Reason, to his seducing Orators; and Sense, to his jugling Impostors.” The epistle dedicatory to *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* similarly stated that a man “must abdicate both his reason, and all his senses, to qualifie himself for [the papists’] opinion.”⁶⁸ As Tory polemicists sought to depict the Whigs as the real champions of arbitrary government and popery, they claimed that the Whigs had fallen prey to the very “lying legends,” seductions, and “jugling Imposters,” that they had condemned. Their trust in an “impostor” like Titus Oates and sympathy for the Hungarian Protestants and their Ottoman allies served as evidence of their vassalage to popish and antichristian principles.

Attributing these antichristian deceptions to Oates, satirical pamphlets and ballads throughout the early 1680s implied that the “Salamanca Doctor” had “turned Turk,” thereby further underscoring that those who believed in and defended Oates’s lies were confused regarding their true religious and political allegiance. Oates was often depicted as becoming a mufti, or Islamic scholar, reinforcing the notion that Oates embraced and forwarded antichristian doctrine. The ballad “Dr. Oats last Farewell to England” opened with the declaration that Dr. Oates had recently departed for “*Stom-Bola*,” where he was

⁶⁷ Tonge, *Jesuits Assassins*, 6-7.

⁶⁸ D. S., *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* (1679), A3^v.

“going to be a *Mufti* to the Grand *Turk*.”⁶⁹ Linking Oates to perceived popish and Turkish idolatry, the ballad had Oates refer to Muhammad as “my God” – a statement that reflected popular perceptions that Muhammad’s disciples worshipped him as God’s lieutenant.⁷⁰ In the ballad, Oates mourns, “Was ever poor Imposter, / Expos’d to more Disaster.”⁷¹

Printed in 1683 the pamphlet *Dr. Oats’s last Legacy’s and his Farewel Sermon* also depicted Oates as being “sent for to be high Priest to the Grand Turk” and satirized Oates’s delusional claims.⁷² His worldview seemed to pass for irreligion, as Oates in his short lecture upon his departure for Turkey states, “I’ll be short with you for thy Text, *I* will not look for it, for I am almost as great a stranger to the *Alcoran*, as yet, as to the Bible, *I* preach all by Inspiration. Oh! Popery, Popery’s coming in upon you, have a care *I* say, of *Anti-Christ*, and Popery, Remember my words when *I* am gone.”⁷³ As a means for subjects to stand up for their liberties, properties, and the “good old Cause,” Oates suggested, “Bind your Nobles in Fetters, and your Princes in Chains... for the Liturgie of the English Church is nothing but Superstition and Popery; the Bishops are all Popes, and the Clergemen are all Jesuits.”⁷⁴ In this pamphlet, Oates concludes his speech with a benediction, leaving his listeners to the protection of Muhammad and the Devil. Another satirical pamphlet of the same year *Dr. Oats’s Answer to Count Teckley’s Letter* had Oates respond to fake propositions made to him by the Grand Signor, Count Teckley, and

⁶⁹ “Dr. Oats last Farewell to England” (London: Printed for J. Dean, Bookseller in Cranburn-street, in Leicester-Fields, near Newport-House, 1680?).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Dr. Oats’s last Legacy’s and his Farewel Sermon* (London, Printed for J. Dean, 1683).

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

other nobles.⁷⁵ In the pamphlet, Oates informs Teckley that he would have accepted the propositions sooner had it not been for the “English *Turks*” who had as many great misfortunes as the Vizier before Vienna.⁷⁶ Thus, Oates was made to appear the leader – the false prophet – of nonconformists who supposedly worked to undermine the Christian establishment. Together, they appeared as the “English *Turks*.”

In *Dr. Oats's Answer*, Oates further explains how the kingdom had given birth to various popish plots over the last decade, describing each as monstrous babes or bastards. He indicates that the latest plot – a “great Monster” – whom he had helped to deliver was no delicate babe but rather “so stuf with *'Sociations, Noble Peer's Speeches; Holy Leagues, and Covenants, &c.*”⁷⁷ This child “drawing its Mouth on one side, Cry'd, You must all turn *Turks* or be Damn'd” – a proclamation which gave Oates a “great Ambition to leave off [his] Hypocritical Jump, and turn *Mufty*.” The pamphlet ends with Oates asking Teckley to prepare the Seraglio for him and have two thousand whores made ready, as he intended to “out-do *Sallomon* in *Letchery*, *Mahomet* in *Blasphemy*, and *Judas* in *Perjury* and *Treachery*.” Oates’s “treachery” appeared to exceed the greatest examples of anti-Christianity.

L'Estrange similarly satirized Oates in the *Observer*, further demonstrating the supposed ease with which Oates transgressed religious boundaries. Invoking topical current events for viciously direct political satire, L'Estrange made the *Observer* into a register of the news related to printers, booksellers, and political actors while also serving as a partisan interpretation of and commentary on those events. On September 1, 1683, a

⁷⁵ Teckley was the Anglicization of Count Imre Thököly, who led the Hungarian Protestants in their fight against the Austrian Habsburgs.

⁷⁶ *Dr. Oats's Answer to Count Teckleys Letter intercepted at Dover* (London: Printed for J. Dean, 1683).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

letter sent to Katherine Radclyffe in Dilston related news of a dispute at the Amsterdam Coffeehouse, which had occurred the previous Thursday. The fact that such news spread to a parish in northern England within a week reflects not only the noteworthiness of this dispute but also the speed and sophistication of news networks radiating out from London. As the letter related, in a debate regarding whether the Turks or the Christians were the “honestest men,” one gentleman sided with the Christians and expressed over familiarity with the Salamanca Doctor – Titus Oates – who was one of the other disputants.⁷⁸ Angered, Oates “told him he was a rascal and struck him two or three blows over the head with his cane”; though the gentleman was wedged on the wrong side of the table and “could not make [Oates] a return, but only with a dish of warm coffee in the eyes of him.”⁷⁹

Word of this episode became further fuel for L’Estrange’s attacks, as Oates’s unhappy experience with the coffee became the basis of his satirized initiation into the Islamic faith. In the issue of September 6, 1683, the character of the *Observer* related a story of the conversion of a certain gentleman to Islam at the Amsterdam Coffeehouse. Plainly a satire of Titus Oates – the *Observer* mentioned that the gentleman might have been christened “Turk Titus” – the anecdote related how the “*Candidates Face was Washt* with a dish of *Hot Coffee*; which being a *Turkish Liquor*... might be a *Turkish Ceremony* for the *Introducing* of a *Teckelite-Christian* into the *Turkish Communion*.”⁸⁰ L’Estrange thus made Oates’s defense of Turks and the outcome of the argument into evidence of his apostasy. Also as with governmental authorities who viewed coffeehouses as hotbeds of sedition, L’Estrange suspiciously regarded these venues as

⁷⁸ *CSPD July-Sept. 1683*, Vol. 25, 351, Newsletter to Madame Katherine Radcliffe at Dilston, 1 Sept. 1683.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *The Observer*, no. 399 (6 Sept. 1683).

enabling the spread of dangerous opinions, complaining that almost every coffeehouse was “furnished with News-Papers and Pamphlets (both written and Printed) of Personal Scandal, Schism, and Treason.”⁸¹ Interestingly, when Oates was finally arrested on charges of *scandalum magnatum* on May 10, 1684, he was at the Amsterdam Coffeehouse.⁸²

L’Estrange cast into sharp relief the religious issues at stake, seeking to open his readers’ eyes or re-enable them to “see” with the type of dispassion and reason that had come to mark Protestants’ self-conception of what differentiated them from popish – and now Islamic – beliefs and practices. The “Preface of Dr. Martin Luther” in the 1679 publication *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* spoke to this type of Protestant awareness and rationality as distinguished from the blindness of both Turk and Pope, asking readers to consider “with what blindness God hath smitten the Heathens, Turks, Jews, and the Pope.”⁸³ The preface warned of the danger when the devil or the “Prince of this World seizes us, and forces us to believe as he pleases... for when the Power of God forsakes us, then the Power of the Devil seizes us, and forces us to render our selves his Vassals and Slaves.”⁸⁴ Playing upon these themes, L’Estrange attempted to undo what he saw as the process by which Plot fever “turned Protestantism into a religion of ‘visions,’ of ‘superstitious credulity’” and thereby made individuals slaves to their fears.⁸⁵ The irrationality of passions had fueled “Plot fever” and revealed how quickly people might

⁸¹ Roger L’Estrange, *A Word Concerning Libels and Libellers* (London: Joanna Brome, 1681), 12. Cited by Hinds, 325.

⁸² “Oates, Titus (1649–1705),” Alan Marshall in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20437> (accessed September 14, 2013).

⁸³ *The Alcoran of the Franciscans* (1679), 142.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Mark Goldie, “Roger L’Estrange’s Observator and the Exorcism of the Plot.” In *Roger L’Estrange and the Making of Restoration Culture*, ed. by Anne Dunan-Page and Beth Lynch (Hampshire, U.K.: Ashgate, 2006), 77.

succumb to paranoia and become blinded by fear and hysteria. Tracing L'Estrange's fascination with the psychology of mass delusion, Mark Goldie attributes that fascination to the tendency of hysteria "to turn barefaced lies into incontestable truths, to empower otherwise insignificant people, to humiliate and destroy the innocent."⁸⁶ L'Estrange firmly believed that those who embraced such delusions or "antichristian" judgment could not be given responsibility for the political and religious order. He used his *Observer* as a "register of mass delusion," guiding readers to what they already knew."⁸⁷ In doing so, he trained his readers to recognize what he viewed as the Whigs' and nonconformists' duplicity.

THE ALLIANCE OF THE HUNGARIAN PROTESTANTS & THE OTTOMAN TURKS

The other development that further enabled the conflation of Whigs with the Turks was the sympathy that certain notorious nonconformists publicly expressed for the Hungarian Protestants and their Ottoman Turkish allies. As discussed in the previous chapter, in the autumn of 1682 the prominent nonconformist publisher Francis Smith printed *The Declaration of the Hungarian War*, which offered a justification for the Hungarian Protestants' decision to seek Ottoman aid in their struggle against the Habsburgs. The fact that one of his main rival polemicists had demonstrated such sympathy for the Hungarians and their league with the "Turks" presented L'Estrange with the opportunity to challenge his opponents' religiosity and rationality – an opportunity which he gleefully exploited. L'Estrange focused on the seeming irrationality of turning to a religious "other" to protect one's religious order. In doing so, he embraced

⁸⁶ Ibid., 76.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 76, 81.

an argument employed by the Catholic Habsburgs and even ironically Philip II against Elizabeth I in the 1580s: one cannot claim to defend Christendom when the “Turks” are encouraged to serve as the foot-soldiers.

In the *Observer* issue of September 13, 1682, the *Observer* and the Whig discuss the latest news from Hungary. When the Whig asserts that the “*Turk* has been very kind of late to the *Persecuted Protestants*” in Hungary, the *Observer* sarcastically comments, “And so he may well; for I’m sure they have been kind to him.”⁸⁸ The *Observer* then twists the discussion to ask whether the Gospel or the Qur’an would emerge in a better position, forcing the Whig to evade the question by simply asserting that, though the Emperor would not give the Hungarian Protestants liberty of conscience, the Turk would. The *Observer* denies the Whig subtlety of argument, depicting the events in Hungary as a simple matter of setting Muhammad against Christ and then letting Christendom take what would follow from this contest. As the *Observer* indicates, one cannot view it any other way “unless you will have this Late Incursion of the Ottoman Power, to be Design’d for the Advantage of the Gospel.” Arguing that the Whigs undermined Christendom’s defenses by condoning a Protestant alliance with the Turks, the *Observer* concludes, “I look upon the *Whole Body of Christendom* to be Concern’d in *Every Inch of Ground* that the *Grand Signor* gains upon the *Territory* of the *Empire*.”⁸⁹ The Whigs appeared as accessories to – or willing partners in – Christendom’s destruction: “Our *Protestant Dissenters*, do the *Office*, both of the *Turkish Janisaries*, and of the *Pensioners of France*, at one and the same time.”⁹⁰

⁸⁸ *The Observer*, no. 204 (13 Sept. 1682).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Concerned with the emptiness of words like “Protestant” and “conscience,” L’Estrange recognized that the latter could be deployed to validate a range of pernicious agendas. In one issue the *Observer* warns the Whig of the dangers of condoning “*Dissenting Subjects to Joyn with Turks, and Pagans against their Christian Sovereigns.*”⁹¹ As the *Observer* explains, “’Tis but *Blessing the Apostacy or Rebellion; with the Baptism of the HOLY CAUSE, and Every Sword, and Gun that’s Employ’d in’t, is as much Consecrated as Ravillac’s Dagger.*”⁹² L’Estrange thereby depicted the dissenters’ empty rhetoric as sanctioning regicide in the same vein as the Catholic zealot François Ravillac who murdered King Henri IV. In another issue, the *Observer* comments, “But the *Abuse is Founded in the Dissent, and the Opening of That Gap once, into the Order of the Government, makes way for All Impostors to break in upon it. Conscience is a Ticket that lie’s in Turks as well as Christians, and serves for a Pasport to All Pretensions.*”⁹³ Rhetoric appeared to mask darker designs.

Tory polemicists further cemented the rhetorical association between the English “True Protestants” and the Turks in the late summer of 1683 as word of the Ottoman advance towards Vienna reached London. That summer a polemical sheet entitled *News from Vienna, Contained in a Letter from a True-Protestant-Turk* circulated in the city. This satire – written as a supposed letter to a “Mahumetan Dissenter in England” – suggested that the Turks and the “True Protestants” of England had formed a league and were working to circumvent the “danger of losing both their hopes of Vienna, and all

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ *The Observer*, no. 387 (15 Aug. 1683).

further footing the Christian Territories.”⁹⁴ As the letter declared, the Grand Signor looked upon the progress of the English “True Protestants” as a “good Introduction both to his Temporal and Spiritual Authority” and thereby would stand by them with his life and fortune.⁹⁵ The author further encouraged the “True Protestants” by reminding them that “Great and Thorow-Reformations” as intended by them and the Turk were “never brought to pass without *Blood, Treason, and Massacre*.” In this regard, the author satirically commended the True Protestants for having “quite out-strip the worst of Turks.” A deep concern with the political disruptiveness of dissent coursed through Tory polemic. Such a concern was intimately tied to issues of obedience – the implication being that those who condoned or followed the Turkish example rather than the established church and state had “othered” themselves. Such dissenters appeared to mask their adoption of Turkish practices in political rhetoric involving liberty and conscience and thereby make “Turkish” maxims Christian. In the late summer of 1683, L’Estrange spoke to this notion by having his *Observator* refer to a “Mahometan *Maxim* turn’d *Christian: a Principle* that lays the *Foundation of Religion in Bloud; a Principle* that *Wages War* with *Providence* it self; Destroys the very Ground, as well as the End of Government.”⁹⁶ Dissenters’ practices appeared foreign to, at odds with, or dangerous for the laws established.

L’Estrange continually forwarded his views regarding the extent of the nonconformists’ antichristian delusions through his title character, the *Observator*. Mentioning another ongoing design to reconcile the True-Protestants and the Turk, the

⁹⁴ *News from Vienna, Contained in a Letter from a True-Protestant-Turk Residing at the Camp before Vienna, to his Friend, a Mahumetan Dissenter in England* (1683).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *The Observator*, no. 384 (8 Aug. 1683).

Observer in an issue of August 1683 declared, “What an *Ornament* will the *Half-Moon*, bring to the *Scutcheon* of a *Christian!*”⁹⁷ The Observer further relates a conversation in which one stated, “And I do not Despair yet of Living to see the Turk Pluck down the Pope of Rome.” To which his fellow conversant replied approvingly, “I am sure the Protestants will have better Quarter under the Turk, then under the Papists.” After relating this conversation, the Observer sarcastically concluded, “Why if this Work goes on, I do not know but Wee may have the *Four-Evangelists*, and the *Alcoran*, Bound up together, for the Advancement of the Purity of the Gospel: And (if the Fates Please) for the Service of *Evidences* of the *Next Edition*.”⁹⁸ L’Estrange emphasized the dual irony that the Whigs and their nonconformist allies would seek Turkish aid in advancing the Gospel and Turkish protection against tyranny – a trope often associated with the Turks. In L’Estrange’s view, these “Pretended Protestants” revealed their true colors by assailing Christianity all the while heralding Turkish civility. They had essentially “turned Turk.” Other Tory polemicists reiterated this theme in satirical ballads. The ballad “A New Song, Being the Tories Tryumph” proclaimed that “Bleu *Protestants* can make no work, / Unless like *Hungary*, / They for Religion Joyn the *Turk*, / For *Christian Liberty*.”⁹⁹ Going one step further in its indictment of the Whigs, the ballad “Vienna’s Triumph” asserted that the Whigs were ready to convert: “To the *Turks* they no Martyrs / but Converts would be, / But in time we may see / them all dye by the Tree.”¹⁰⁰

From the Tory perspective, the publication of *The Declaration of the Hungarian War* by Francis “Elephant” Smith offered tangible evidence of Whig and nonconformist

⁹⁷ *The Observer*, no. 394 (29 Aug. 1683).

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *A New Song, Being the Tories Tryumph, OR, the Point well Weathered* (London, Printed for J. D., 1682).

¹⁰⁰ *Vienna’s Triumph; with the Whigg’s Lamentation for the Overthrow of the Turks* (Printed for J. Deacon, at the Sign of the Angel in Guiltspur-street, 1683).

apostasy. As L'Estrange's *Observer* declared in one issue, the printing of the declaration appeared a criminal act in that it popularized seditious and rebellious principles. Yet what appeared even more troubling was the "applying of it" to the English context and the nonconformists' "hope of Disposing the *English* to follow the *Hungarian Example*."¹⁰¹ Thus, the publication of the *The Declaration* represented a turning point: as the *Observer* indicated, from the moment that the pamphlet was printed from the Transylvanian copy, dissenters had more openly championed the Hungarian cause and "asserted the Turks against the Christians," thereby "fighting under MAHOMET'S Banner, instead of CHRIST'S."¹⁰² With "*Elephant Smith*" acting as the "*Head of their Church*," the dissenters appeared an "*Anti-Christian Sort of Skittish Pretended Protestants*" who sought Turkish protection.¹⁰³ By way of conclusion, the *Observer* proclaimed that publication of *The Declaration* was "rather a *Translation* of the *Hungarian Rebellion* into *England*, then of the *Hungarian Declaration*, into *English*." With the "*Scene layd*" in *Hungary*, the dissenters prepared "a *Tragedy* to be *Acted* in *England*."¹⁰⁴

In contrast to the seeming pretended Christianity of the nonconformists, a group of young nobles received Charles II's permission to fight on the Habsburg side against the "Turks." While these nobles fitted within a larger tradition of sending men to fight for Christendom's cause – Queen Elizabeth I had similarly approved men to aid the Emperor – the prominence of these men in terms of their association with the Anglican Royalist cause doubtless helped to solidify the Tory case regarding who stood as Christendom's

¹⁰¹ *The Observer*, no. 407 (20 Sept. 1683).

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

true defenders.¹⁰⁵ A newsletter of late March 1683 reported that, whereas James Touchet, the third earl of Castlehaven, “has given over his thoughts from goeing against the Turks,” “severall of the young Nobility designe speedily to sett forward.”¹⁰⁶ On March 28, Charles Granville, the Lord Lansdowne and the Earl of Danby’s son-in-law, craved the King’s leave to accompany the rest of the gentlemen, and the King granted the request.¹⁰⁷ The performative nature of this military deployment would have broadcast the Court’s intent to stand on Christendom’s side – a message that appeared particularly necessary and timely given that only a month earlier the Turkey Merchants had received news that a number of their ships at the Port of Alexandria were forced by the Turks “to unlade & to stand for Egypt to Transport Soldiers from them to Salonica in order to be employed in the Warr against Hungaria.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, England could appear to aid Christendom in men at a moment when its own allegiances risked being called into question.

THE ISSUE OF OBEDIENCE

Discourses involving the “Turks” in these propaganda wars appeared intimately tied to the issue of obedience, as the Tories criticized their opponents who – blinded by their passions – would heedlessly trade one ruler for another and thereby disregard the

¹⁰⁵ For instance, in 1600 John Smith joined the Austrian Habsburgs in fighting against the Ottomans and gained promotion to captain after the Siege of Limbach. Yet such deployments of men to aid other rulers - particularly Catholic ones - did sometimes lead to uneasiness or suspicions regarding political and religious loyalty. For instance, Thomas Arundell, who fought the Turks in Hungary and was made an imperial count by Rudolf II in 1595, faced Queen Elizabeth I’s disapproval and was committed to prison upon his return.

¹⁰⁶ Newdigate newsletter, L.c.1356, London, 29 March 1683. See also “Touchet, James, third earl of Castlehaven (*bap.* 1612, *d.* 1684),” Sean Kelsey in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2011, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27577> (accessed February 18, 2014).

¹⁰⁷ Newdigate newsletter, L.c.1356, London, 29 March 1683.

¹⁰⁸ Newdigate newsletter, L.c.1342. London, 24 Feb. 1683. Both the Ottomans and Venetians had similarly deployed English ships in the Cretan War in the late 1650s.

rule of law. Manifesting a “bias towards dissent,” Whig propaganda implied that subjects were no longer bound to obey a ruler who failed to protect his subjects’ liberties and rule according to law.¹⁰⁹ With disobedience and even rebellion thus seemingly justified through the political rhetoric of rights and liberties, Tory propagandists sought to illuminate the implications of this position by tying it to larger European conflicts. The question became whether it was lawful for any people “*to take up Arms, and call in the Turk, or any Other to Help them against their King, if he breaks his Word and Contract with ’em, as the Emperor had done with the Hungarians, & some Other Princes with Their Subjects.*”¹¹⁰ Tory party propagandists and ministers were quick to identify such rebellious subjects as treasonous criminals with no concern for the political, religious, or social order. In his discussion of the ballad “Vienna’s Triumph; with the Whigg’s lamentation for the overthrow of the Turks,” Anders Ingram noted the ways in which the author attacked the Whigs for fomenting civil discord through appropriating the events and personages of the siege of Vienna. The Whigs’ faithless and subversive principles appeared in contrast to the loyalty displayed by the Habsburg commander Charles V, Duke of Lorraine:

His [Charles V’s] Loyalty true
all the World doth admire,
But the *Whiggs* who look blue,
And Commotions desire:
Ruine and strife is
Whiggs Element still,
They’r an obstinate People,
If crost in their Will...¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Harris, *Restoration*, 158.

¹¹⁰ *The Observer*, no. 399 (6 Sept. 1683).

¹¹¹ See Ingram, “The Ottoman Siege of Vienna, English Ballads, and the Exclusion Crisis,” 70.

Yet the very posturing of Whigs and nonconformists as loyal subjects became a focal point of Tory censure. Indicating that these subjects masked their treasonous designs with a façade of innocence, the satirical ballad “True-Blew-Protestant Dissenter” had the dissenters proclaim:

*Associate, mount, raise the rude Rabble,
Reform the Kingdom to a Babel,
Cry up false Jelousies and Fears:
Turn Paring-shovels into Spears!
Yet Brethren, boast your Innocence,
Religion being your Pretence,
Torture the Text to any Sence.*

*And cry aloud, We love the King,
Though we intend not such a thing;
For our Designs do drive us rather
To serve him as we serv'd his Father...*¹¹²

As Tory propagandists stressed, this inclination to trade stability for chaos and thereby undermine the Christian state and church represented the extreme of antichristian practices and beliefs.

The fact that the Hungarian Protestants had already turned to the Turks to help them oppose their Habsburg ruler allowed the Tories to explore the opposition between Christian obedience and antichristian “rebellion.” L’Estrange emphasized the distinction by allowing the *Observer* to comment wryly that the Turks’ way of proceeding had not only “gain’d mightily upon the *Protestants in Hungary*” but also “upon the *True-Protestants in Newgate* too.”¹¹³ In L’Estrange’s view, those who would betray their church and state with such principles belonged in – and were backed by those criminals already in – Newgate Prison in London. As the *Observer* commented, one prisoner in

¹¹² *A New Ballad, Or, The True-Blew-Protestant Dissenter* (Printed for W. Davis, in Amen-Corner, 1682). The ballad associates the dissenters with those who brought about the regicide of Charles II’s father, Charles I, in 1649.

¹¹³ *The Observer*, no. 399 (6 Sept. 1683).

Newgate had already stated that “*You shall see the Turk shortly in the Heart of France; And ‘tis better Living under Him, then under the Emperour, the French King, the Venetian, and Some Others too that he could Name.*”¹¹⁴ Such beliefs indicated the extent of the individual’s delusion, thereby justifying the Observator’s further invectives: “*Why These are a sort of People, to Poyson an Hospitall, and to Debauch the Common Jayl.*”¹¹⁵ The Observator further exclaimed, “*Are we not come to a Fine Pass, d’ye think, when Appeals shall be made to a Barbarous and Infidel-Tyrant, from a most Gracious, and our own Native Prince? And People shall rather Joyn with the Capitall Enemy of the Gospell, for the Extirpation of Christianity it self, then Submit to the Laws of the Land for the Suppressing of Conventicles?*”¹¹⁶ In associating nonconformists with apostate criminals and thereby making dissent repugnant to moderates, Tory propagandists stressed that passive obedience was the only alternative to a seemingly radical and religiously suspect position.

As Tory propagandists censured their Whig and nonconformist opponents for daring to condone the use of antichristian forces in resisting a Christian ruler, the deployment of the “Turk” in debates over obedience took on a British dimension. From the Tory perspective, the Whigs’ association with a religious and political “other” manifested itself on more than a theoretical level of sympathy for the Hungarian Protestants: developments north of the border reinforced the Tories’ sense that the nonconformists were launching their own attacks on the church and the state with the

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

help of an “other” – in this case radical Scottish Presbyterians.¹¹⁷ The Scots had risen up in rebellion in 1679 at Bothwell Bridge, and a group of radical Presbyterians continued to pose great opposition to the government.¹¹⁸ The Tory press pinpointed the radical Scottish Presbyterians as a grave danger, and L’Estrange compared this danger to the situation in Hungary.¹¹⁹ In an issue of October 23, 1682, the *Observer* emphasizes the intimate connection between domestic matters and the progress of the “*Dissenting Protestants*” in Hungary. As the *Observer* exclaims,

Is not the *Hungarian True-Protestant Rebellion*, the very same with the English True-Protestant Rebellion? And their Calling in the Mahometan *Turks* to their Brotherly Assistance, every joy as warrantable as Our Calling in the Christian *Turks*, The *Scottish Covenanters*, to Our *Brotherly Aid and Assistance*? Is not the Alcoran as Sacred, as either the *Old Solemn League*, or the *Modern Association*? And is not the Faith and Honour of *those Turks*, more to be Confided-in then we have found the *Faith and Honour of These*?¹²⁰

Indeed the next summer radical Whig conspirators attempted to draw on the support of discontented Scots in the Rye House Plot – a plot to assassinate Charles II and the Duke of York returning from the spring races – and in the wider revelations of the foiled plot, the government carefully publicized this information.¹²¹

Through managing the revelations in June 1683 of the Rye House Plot, the government and its supporters stressed the parallels between dissenting, treasonous subjects and the Turks. Late that summer the government-sponsored *London Gazette* published addresses to the King from elites and local officials which denounced the conspirators and expressed gratitude for the King’s and the Duke of York’s deliverance.

¹¹⁷ Scottish Presbyterians had earlier embraced the color blue, and Tory propagandists underscored nonconformists’ affiliations with these northern neighbors by calling them “True-Blue-Protestant Dissenters.”

¹¹⁸ Harris, *Restoration*, 203.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 242.

¹²⁰ *The Observer*, no. 228 (23 Oct. 1682).

¹²¹ George Southcombe and Grant Tapsell, *Restoration Politics, Religion, and Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 116.

Alongside these addresses appeared letters from the Imperial Army at Vienna offering the latest news regarding the Ottoman siege. For instance, one account from August 4 indicated that the “Turks had raised several Batteries against Vienna, which were chiefly managed by Renegadoes of all Nations.”¹²² In treating these two “assaults” – one against the King and one against Christendom more broadly – the newsbook allowed its readers to draw parallels between the two threats and recognize similar disruptive forces at work. Both forces presaged the destruction of political and religious institutions; the connections that Tory propagandists like L’Estrange drew between disobedient, factious individuals and the desolation of the state and church appeared validated. The “fields of blood and confusion” as seen to mark the Ottomans’ advance also appeared to imperil the kingdom due to the activities of rebellious spirits.

The addresses from the localities employed the same language that L’Estrange and other Tory propagandists had used to describe both the Turks and the supposedly like-minded Whigs and nonconformists. Conspirators appeared as barbarous infidels who threatened not only the Protestant religion but also the “laws of God, man, and nature.” For instance, the Deputy Lieutenants, Justices of the Peace, Officers of the Militia, and other gentlemen of the county of Glamorgan wrote to Charles II, celebrating the Stuarts’ deliverance from the “Merciless Hands of those Barbarous Miscreants,” who stopped at nothing to envelop the kingdom in “Blood and Confusion.”¹²³ Those at the General Quarter Sessions at Monmouth on July 12, 1683, wrote of how such rebellious individuals had given the advantage to the enemies of the Protestant religion to triumph. Regarding these individuals, the address exclaimed,

¹²² *London Gazette*, no. 1849 (6-9 Aug. 1683), News from Frankfort of Aug. 4. The idea that renegades led Turkish military expeditions was an old trope, which reflected deeply rooted cultural anxieties.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

A Reproach they are not only to Christianity, but even to Humanity. What greater Guilt could the most Unsanctified Infidel be guilty of, than the shedding the Blood of its Lawful Prince, and exposing all his fellow Subjects to Ruine? How have they broke through the Laws of God, of Man, and of Nature, to act such Horrid Villainies under the specious Pretext of Religion?¹²⁴

Yet another address spoke to the attempts of these rebels to seduce His Majesty's subjects in order to destroy the Church and all religion. These rebels would have introduced a tyranny of the people and "reduced [the kingdom] to the lowest Bondage and Slavery."¹²⁵ These rebels' disobedience appeared foreign to the rule of law, suggesting a preference for arbitrary government of a rabble-rousing mob rather than the powers of the monarch by law established.

Clergymen also drew upon these themes to preach obedience and loyalty to the Crown, using the press to further propagate their message. Following revelations of the Rye House Plot, an investigation by authorities led to a series of arrests and the executions of Lord William Russell and Algernon Sidney, two members of the alleged "Council of Six" supposedly responsible for hatching the plot. Commemorating deliverance from the Rye House Plot on September 9, 1683, both Thomas Long and Benjamin Calamy delivered sermons in which they invoked the "Turk" to underscore dissenters' odiousness and political disruptiveness. The recourse to the "Turk" proved not only compelling but timely, given that news continued to reach London regarding the Ottomans' siege of Vienna. For both Long and Calamy, the Rye House Plot provided evidence that dissenters would go to any length to destroy the church and state – a single-minded intention that seemed to mirror the assault on Vienna by the Ottomans and their

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Hungarian allies.¹²⁶ Declaring that the Protestant Religion had received another “indelible Blot” from the “true Protestants,” Long censured those men as “more odious than the most treacherous Papists, or those Hungarians that fight under the Great Turk against Christianity.”¹²⁷ Expressing a similar attitude, Calamy sardonically commented that nonconformists “could heartily wish that Vienna had been much nigher, and were very sorry to hear that the Turk was likely to go home again, without making some greater fright, some jumble and alteration in our Affairs.”¹²⁸ In his view, these men were disposed towards rebellion, eager to betray their state and church. Thus, Calamy preached the importance of passive obedience as the antidote to political and religious fragmentation.

A couple of months later on November 5, 1683, Edward Pelling, chaplain to the Duke of Somerset, delivered a sermon before the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen at St. Mary le Bow in which he condemned the duplicity of nonconformists and preached passive obedience and hereditary right. As Pelling cried, “What Peace can we hope for from *Them*, who make a shew of Piety onely to *Cheat* the World, and to serve a *Turn*?”¹²⁹ These men appeared ready to usher in the tyranny of unlawful rule. He expressed distrust for such men who were, as he declared, “ready to *Exchange* (I will not say Christianity for Turcism, but) a Christian Monarch for an Infidel: I am sure that they, who have of late been so favourable and kind to the *Mahumetan* Interest, go upon such *Reasons* as would

¹²⁶ Anders Ingram has also noted the analogies drawn between the siege of Vienna and the Rye House Plot. See Ingram, “The Ottoman Siege of Vienna, English Ballads, and the Exclusion Crisis,” pp. 53-80.

¹²⁷ Thomas Long, *King David's danger and deliverance, or, The conspiracy of Absolon and Achitophel defeated in a sermon preached in the Cathedral Church of Exon, on the ninth of September, 1683* (1683), 36.

¹²⁸ Benjamin Calamy, *A sermon preached at St. Lawrence-Jury, London, upon the 9th of September being the day of thanksgiving* (1683), 32.

¹²⁹ Edward Pelling, *A sermon preached before the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at St. Mary le Bow, on Nov. 5, 1683 being the commemoration-day of our deliverance from a popish conspiracy* (London: Printed for Will. Abington next the Wonder Tavern in Ludgate-Street, 1683), 20-21.

make them wish the *Turk* the same good success in *England* (were he at *Our* doors) which they have already wisht him at the Gates of *Vienna*.”¹³⁰ Pelling further declared that these men wished them “to *conform our selves in Orders and Ceremonies to the Fashion of the Turks, than to the Papists*” and to have a “*Bassa* rather than a *Lord Mayor*, a *Mufti* rather than a *Bishop*, and a *True-Protestant Grand Seignior* rather than a *Christian Prince*.”¹³¹ Such men preferred the “Turkish” model to the Christian one.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have sought to trace the ways in which those at the forefront of Tory reaction in the early 1680s deployed anti-Turkism to mark the Whigs and their nonconformist allies as politically disruptive and religiously suspect. This thread of argument gained its fullest articulation at L’Estrange’s pen. In his view, the nonconformists had incriminated themselves doubly: firstly, by allowing passions to flair up with the popish plots and blind them and, secondly, by sympathizing with those who followed the “great impostor” Muhammad. Though the propagandists of both the Whig and Tory parties did not necessarily represent uniform views, it is important for us to consider how even a vocal few could fuel a potent cultural discourse involving the “Turks” to define and undermine the opposing party or opposing viewpoint. The perceived delusions and destructive practices of the “Turks” created a frame of reference from which Tory propagandists could argue that those who sought to alter the established church and state had introduced foreign principles and thereby not only “othered” themselves but also surrendered their right to represent the political and religious order.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 21-22.

Claiming to be true Protestants when they were seemingly the opposite, these people appeared not only disobedient but also disloyal to rightful laws and institutions. They had “turned Turk” in a manner, and their supposed hypocrisy was revealed through indications that they would protect Christian laws and institutions only through recourse to antichristian practices and the support of infidels. Such themes coursed through different genres of material and oral culture, indicating how compelling the conflation of Whigs and nonconformists with Turks had become. Amidst competing visions of national development, the “Turks” came to mark those who seemingly had become opposed to and separated from an Anglo-Protestant character. It was precisely due to the great level of uneasiness regarding political and religious loyalties that the framework of religious and ethnic categories could prove so useful. Tory propagandists attempted to inscribe perceived dangerous principles and beliefs onto a racial framework and thereby fix and better illustrate the danger.

Such debates happened not only in newsbooks and pamphlets but also in coffeehouses, taverns, and other public spaces. The circulation of discourse between oral and material culture ensured that individuals across class and space were exposed to, participated in, and shaped these debates. Thus, we cannot treat the themes forwarded in polemic and propaganda as separate from the discussions that transpired in the streets and the Royal Exchange, for instance. In a world in which the debates that played out on the pages of pamphlets and newsbooks were a continuation or extension of those in coffeehouses, conversations were not cordoned off, insulated, or removed from one another. During the Exclusion Crisis, the Whigs sought to reach a wide geographical and social base through both print and manuscript materials, gaining support for their

interpretation of events.¹³² Those at the forefront of the Tory Reaction similarly recognized the need to engage with public opinion. Yet L'Estrange recognized the problematic nature of entering into the realm of public debate and responding to the Whigs and their nonconformist allies: in doing so, he demonstrated the great value placed upon public opinion and indicated a recognition that authority rested upon winning opinion to one's side. Opinion was – in its nature – subjected to the irrationality of subjectivity. L'Estrange engaged with Whig arguments in print to strip events – and his opponents' rhetoric and interpretations of these events – of the passions that spawned paranoia. In his view, irrationality appeared not only ethnically and religiously embedded but also transferable based upon a particular group's appropriation or adoption of those “alien” characteristics. By offering the “true” interpretation of events, L'Estrange worked to draw the moderates away from the willful deceptions of the “artificial seducers,” or those who forwarded a seemingly dangerous alternative model of political and religious organization.¹³³

Whereas Habermas argued that the free flow of communication in an unregulated public sphere enabled reasoning subjects to engage in rational-critical debate, in these propaganda wars the Tories laid claim to rationality and thereby justified their right to speak for the national interest.¹³⁴ Particular interpretations of religious or ethnic difference were mobilized to demarcate what constituted reason and sound judgment. The Tory party propagandists not only placed the “Turk” within dichotomies of superstition versus reason traditionally rooted in anti-Catholic polemic but also made the Whigs'

¹³² Tim Harris, ““Venerating the Honesty of a Tinker,”” 205.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 210.

¹³⁴ See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. by Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), 24-6.

perceived sympathy for the Turks evidence of an ideological affinity. Thus, the Tories engaged in a work of triangulation involving the Whigs, the Turks, and the Catholics. It was this third actor – the “Turks” – that became the agent by which the Whigs’ hypocrisy was “revealed.” With the breaking down and exposure of the falsity of the Popish Plot, Tory propagandists could deploy the “Turk” with great effectiveness. The conspirators and informants had appeared as “artificial seducers” who would enshroud the nation in blindness and follow the precedent set by the papists and the “impostor” Muhammad and his followers. In the larger propaganda wars, it was not simply that the Tories’ invocation of the “Turk” turned the tide but that the “Turk” crucially helped solidify an ideological point – a point that was all the more compelling and timely because of the Ottoman siege of Vienna. In a sense, this assault proved the point.

Composed at the end of 1683 and published in early 1684, the Tory poem *The Third Part of Advice to the Painter* illustrated the extent to which the Whigs’ and nonconformists’ principles had become satirically wedded to “Turkish” rebellion and deception in Tory propaganda. Rather than upholding Christian laws, those “Mufties” now prayed for the Turkish cause:

Painter once more thy Pencil Reassume,
And in a Lanskip draw me Christendom.
But first draw out the Turkish Empire, then
Paint out in Collours their devison.
Paint me that mighty Powerful State a Shaking;
And their great Prophet, *Teckely*, a Quaking.
Who for Religion made such busling work,
That to Reform it he brought in the Turk.
Next Paint our English Mufties of the Tub,
Those great Promoters of the *Teckelites* Club.
Draw me them praying for the Turkish Cause,
And for the overthrow of Christian Laws.
Next Paint the Turks Seraglio, then
Paint our English Mufties entring in;

That and Rebellion is their Darling Sin.

Draw all the Loyal Subjects, Joyful Hearts,
Draw out their Loyalty in all its parts:
Whilst other murmuring Rebels down are hurl'd;
Confounded here, and dam'd in to'ther World.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ *The Third Part of Advice to the Painter* (London: Printed for Walter Davis in Amen-Corner, 1684).

CONCLUSION

During the period under consideration, as Englishmen and women negotiated not only political and religious choices but also, more broadly, national and local identities, they invoked the “Turks” as a means of holding a mirror up to their own policies, practices, and values and thereby of charting a way forward in moments of crisis. Underlying – and in many cases driving – this engagement was the awareness that England was not simply the antithesis of Turkey. While contemporaries attempted to demarcate principles of good governance as opposed to corrupt or arbitrary power, liberty versus subjugation, rationality versus irrationality, reason versus passion or delusion, and the public good versus private gain, they acted with the deeper understanding that no such clear-cut dichotomies existed. Boundaries proved unstable, and one was never far from descending into the same tyranny or irrationality for which one blamed others. This awareness made recourse to the “Turk” – a rich, conceptual field – all the more important in testing the parameters of what it meant to be English and in navigating competing political and religious visions. The “Turk” as a mirror had the power both to reveal one’s essence and to reflect what one had become or had the potential to be. Interestingly, a late sixteenth and early seventeenth usage of “Turkish” included the meaning “to transform” and “to turn into something different”; though the usage implied a transformation for the worse, the concept fittingly speaks to the various permutations of communal and national identity and the ways in which the “Turk” sheds light on the extent and nature of those

permutations.¹ My study has sought to interrogate the nature of this identity formation and permutation, employing the mirror as an organizing principle that describes England's engagement with the "Turks" as a form of doubling. As Robert Zaller has argued, the mirror embodied certain tensions, suggesting both separation and distinction while also revealing that this separation "was artificial and unstable and that antithesis would collapse upon identity."²

By the early 1680s, there was a sense that those boundaries had finally collapsed. Both Whigs and Tories sought to pull back the veil of deceit and unmask their political opponents, revealing them for what they had become – new "Turks" – and thereby laying claim to the Protestant conception of a privileged "religious seeing" that was a "dispassionate act" rooted in intellectual discipline.³ Indeed, the very ability both to recognize others' errors and to orient oneself along the path of Anglo-Protestant truth, grounded in protection of English liberties and religion, distinguished one from the delusions associated with popery and later "Mahometanism." Greater insight into Islam as well as increased exposure to Ottoman Turkish government and society through diplomacy and trade provided contemporaries with a broader foundation from which to assess and compare their own policies and practices. Thus, whereas one might appear to "out-Turk" the Turk in the late sixteenth century in terms of outward shows of might and ambition, by the late seventeenth century it was possible for individuals and groups to appear as Turks themselves due to more subtle religious and political markers. This shift

¹ "turkish, v.," *OED Online*, Sept. 2013, Oxford University Press, <http://www.oed.com.revproxy.brown.edu/view/Entry/207648?>

² Robert Zaller, "The Figure of the Tyrant in English Revolutionary Thought." In *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (1993), 586-7.

³ Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 179, 183.

reflects a process by which “Turks” became more understandable in some part of the popular imagination and thus more readily available for satire.

We may read the moments of contemporaries’ dynamic engagement with the “Turks” within a larger sixteenth- and seventeenth-century concern with moral certainty and dissimulation.⁴ For contemporaries, dissimulation signified “dissembling, feigning, concealing, or keeping secret” and often seemed to manifest itself in the domains of politics and religion.⁵ In the former, there was a real concern that kings “might degenerate into tyrants” and “tyrants might mask themselves as kings,” while “clandestinity and deceitful conformity” through religious dissidence became a “significant reality” in the latter.⁶ Each of the historical moments that I considered sheds light on contemporaries’ negotiation of these anxieties through deploying the “Turk” as a means of “unmasking” the truth and differentiating between deceit and vice on the one hand and the truth and virtue on the other. For instance, experiences with and discussions of “Turkish” pirates in the mid-1620s encouraged contemporaries to probe the extent of corruption in the political system. Later amidst the political polarization surrounding the Exclusion Crisis, the “Turks” provided Tory propagandists with a compelling framework for arguing that their Whig and nonconformist opponents were politically disruptive and religiously suspect. Tories thereby sought to undermine Whigs’ claims to protect the liberties of subjects and the stability of the realm. In *Vanities of the Eye*, Stuart Clark argues that many decisions about real and false appearances in Renaissance Europe had

⁴ Barbara Shapiro has explored the early modern pursuit of moral certainty and embrace of a “culture of fact,” illustrating how empirically grounded natural history and experimental philosophy came to resolve such anxieties for contemporaries. See Shapiro, *The Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003).

⁵ Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 3, 7, 13.

⁶ Zaller, 586-7; Zagorin, 13-4.

“enormous moral consequences in the fields of religion and politics.”⁷ Similarly, the ways in which contemporaries invoked the “Turks” in political, religious, and economic debates had significant moral consequences and ramifications for who had the best right to represent and speak for the nation.

The claim to represent the national interest revolved around a notion of moderation – a moderation that the “Turks” critically helped to demarcate. Other scholars have argued that early modern European culture was characterized by the trope of antithesis or binary oppositions “of vice and virtue, of the king and tyrant, [and] the Christian emperor and Antichrist.”⁸ Yet I argue that rather than returning to the question of whether binary oppositions informed contemporary culture, it is important to recognize that contemporaries were aware that the “other” was never truly that different from oneself; indeed, one might become the “Turk” or manifest qualities associated with that conceptual field. The “other” was manipulable. Thus, it is more productive to explore how and why actors, who exercised this awareness, deployed the “Turk” as a form of binary at particular moments. They did so in order to define the contours of debates at these moments as well as to steer a middle course or *via media* – what Ethan Shagan describes as the notion that “every virtue was a middle way between two vices.”⁹ Exploring the ways in which moderation “saturated early modern thought” and became identified with the English Reformation, Shagan indicates that moderation in both politics and religion “centered on ideas of restraint, limitation, governance or control” and

⁷ Clark, *Vanities of the Eye*, 238.

⁸ Zaller, 586. See also Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁹ Ethan Shagan, “Beyond Good and Evil: Thinking with Moderates in Early Modern England.” In *Journal of British Studies* 49 (July 2010), 490.

thereby entailed “governance of the passions or affections by reason.”¹⁰ As my dissertation has illustrated, contemporaries deployed the “Turk” as a way of navigating between extremes and orienting the nation along the middle way. The “Turk” thus helped to shape conceptions of early modern English governance. When Queen Elizabeth I and her councilors crafted their foreign policy at the time of the Spanish Armada, they presented an alliance with the “Turk” as a moderate course given the alternatives of condoning Philip II’s supposedly universalist ambitions or appearing to embrace those same ambitions by solo intervention in European contests. The Muslim converts to Christianity in late protectorate London similarly represented a path of political and religious moderation, serving as “godly instruments” in helping contemporaries chart a path between superstition and irreligion as well as tyranny and anarchy.

The expansion of news media in the seventeenth century enabled an increasing number of Englishmen and women to participate in these critical political and religious debates and thereby to articulate their vision for the nation. As Jason Peacey has illustrated, the press was “exploited to an unprecedented degree” from the late 1630s in attempts to mobilize public opinion.¹¹ Politicians recognized the power of propaganda in encouraging political engagement in favor of the issues that they deemed important. Interfacing with other genres of communication, public print culture not only enabled the wider exposure of contemporaries to various perspectives but also expanded and enriched the conceptual field of the “Turk,” as contemporaries advanced competing definitions and interpretations. In the late sixteenth century, it was still possible for Queen Elizabeth I to attempt to manage the interpretations of both a domestic and international audience. Yet

¹⁰ Ibid., 494, 496.

¹¹ Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda During the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), 303.

by the Exclusion Crisis, Whig and Tory propagandists drew upon and advanced competing interpretations of the Turks in relation to notions of liberty, civility and obedience. Indeed, these different interpretations lent the political parties compelling ideological frameworks in which to package their arguments regarding what they perceived as the most stable, legitimate religio-political model. The proliferation and quickened tempo of the news media at this later moment also encouraged the fluid circulation of discourse across print, oral, and visual culture. Thus, the arguments that contemporaries read in a particular newsbook in the morning often became the basis of their discussion in the coffeehouse in the afternoon.

In tracing the interplay of discourses involving the “Turks” across different genres, I have sought to underscore not only the importance of understanding the mechanisms by which cultural discourses are shaped, manipulated, and deployed but also the extent to which these discourses pervaded the early modern English consciousness. We may gauge the contemporary perceived efficacy of invoking the “Turks” by patterns of dissemination and reception. The heightened vigor of such discourses at moments of political and religious anxiety reflects the potency of the “Turks” in speaking to issues of central concern to Englishmen and women. Additionally, the engagement with “Turks” in everything from sermons and political treatises to pamphlets and ballads reveals the dynamic circulation and, indeed, reprocessing of compelling themes. As contemporaries invoked the “Turks” in different media, the discourses underwent continual permutations that magnified certain conceptual associations while muting others.

At any particular moment, competing visions of political and religious development ensured that there was no one static representation of the “Turk” or

“Turkish” belief and practice. Indeed, who the “Turk” was, where he came from, and what he represented shifted according to the slant and terms of the debate. Exploring these dynamics not only enhances our understanding of the mechanisms that gave rise to and fuelled domestic debates but also highlights the extent to which these debates were embedded within a larger international context. Domestic debates did not unfold in a vacuum; as my dissertation has further sought to illustrate, they were constantly influenced by an awareness and interest in what was happening beyond England’s shores in Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa, and Turkey. Increasingly from the early seventeenth century, news from these parts arrived in London and then radiated out across counties. As contemporaries digested reports and rumors, they developed interpretations of cultural similarities and difference shaped by their specific social context, in turn deploying these interpretations when arguing for matters of critical political and religious interest.

While this study has sought to illuminate the linkages between cultural discourses, propaganda, public opinion, and policy in a particular local and national context, there is still work to be done regarding how such national debates interfaced with larger international contests and concerns. Within England, political and religious actors deployed cultural discourses and propaganda involving the “Turks” in an attempt to establish the contours of critical domestic debates. Yet such attempts at control had to contend with news and information arriving from Europe, and debates within England reflected an awareness of and engagement with discourses circulating across national boundaries. Many cultural ideas and assumptions were translated out of Italian, French, German, and Spanish texts; in the process, these ideas were adapted to new socio-

political contexts, undergoing cultural translation as well. Examining these dynamics and the international conceptual field that was created offers a potentially rich and fruitful line of inquiry.

Regardless of the context, the deployment of cultural discourses is about power – the power to “restrict boundaries of discussion and to control the terms of debate,” as Peacey has described with regards to the use of seventeenth-century English propaganda.¹² Peacey argues that understanding propaganda – and the ways in which it was perceived to be useful – provides great insight into the mechanisms by which political sides were created and the issues that provoked political polarization.¹³ Cultural discourses of the “Turks” offer such insights, as these discourses were often deployed as a form of propaganda to forward a particular political or religious agenda. In discursively engaging with the “Turks,” contemporary Englishmen and women embraced different inflections of this conceptual field not only to clarify and articulate the political and religious issues at stake at moments of crisis but also suggest a way forward for the nation. In the end, the nature of that national destiny was determined by who gained control of the mirror.

¹² Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, 331. In forwarding these arguments, Peacey cautions against conflating propaganda culture with the emergence of the public sphere.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 310-11.

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