

Early Modern English Anxieties: English-Ottoman Encounters in

The Fair Maid of the West Parts I & II, and The Renegado

by © Tracy O'Brien

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Abstract

The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries marked a period during which England increased its participation in overseas exploration, trade, and colonization, and was embroiled at home in religious discord and the transference of the English crown from Queen Elizabeth I to King James I and then to King Charles I. Playwrights responded to the sense of uncertainty that emerged from such social and political instability through fictionalized depictions of English-Ottoman encounters in the Mediterranean that involved romance, violence, and religious conversion. This project contains analyses of three such plays: Thomas Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West Part I* (c. 1600) and *Part II* (c. 1630), and Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (c. 1624), and interrogates the dramatists' portrayals of conflicts between Ottomans and Europeans in the Mediterranean. This thesis considers how such portrayals signify the anxieties of the early modern English through themes of race, sexuality, gender, class, nation, and religion, and how these intersecting factors contributed to on-stage representations of nascent English identity.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis explores dramatists' representations of early modern English anxieties about national identity, trade, and foreign relations in three plays: *The Fair Maid of the West Part I* (c. 1600) and *Part II* (c. 1630), and *The Renegado* (c. 1624). The thirty-year span during which these plays were written and first performed marked a period during which England increased its participation in overseas exploration, trade, and colonization, and was embroiled at home in religious discord and the transference of the crown from Queen Elizabeth I to James I and then to Charles I. Playwrights responded to the sense of uncertainty that emerged from such social and political instability through fictionalized portrayals of English-Ottoman encounters in the Mediterranean that involved romance, violence, and religious conversion.

The last three decades of the sixteenth century and the first three of the seventeenth century were a tumultuous period in England during which emergent relationships with foreign cultures and markets steered the English towards an understanding of “themselves by comprehending their difference from outsiders” (Vitkus *Turning* 27). These identities, however, “were also changing” as people’s “outlook and behavior were affected and altered by foreign practices that they were learning to emulate” (Vitkus *Turning* 27). Simultaneously, tensions between Catholics and Protestants, failed British overseas expeditions, local repercussions of an economy gradually becoming more and more international, and ongoing Anglo-Spanish conflict

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created a climate of apprehension and national disunity. These phenomena increased English uncertainty about their identity as their religious and moral codes were often at odds with their political and economic aspirations. Members of a pre-imperial nation at the time, English citizens' concerns were amplified by the fact that the concept of "nation" was tenuous, Englishness being identified both in terms of religion and geographical boundaries. Furthermore, a Europe that was divided on religious grounds exacerbated worry about the threat of encroachment by a rapidly expanding Ottoman Empire, compelling England to participate in territorial expansion by seeking out foreign trade partners to strengthen itself against its more powerful Spanish and Ottoman competitors.

Scholars note the importance of the English theatre as a location of public discourse on matters of social, political, and economic concerns during the early modern period. Vitkus describes the theatre as a "site for cultural production where the flood of messy information about the rest of the world was absorbed, reconfigured, and represented" ("Common" 27). It is not, then, just texts that are of relevance to those wishing to examine early modern drama, but the "theatrical context" in which they were acted out as it reveals "the role theatre performed in public debate and the articulation of ideas" (Jowitt *Voyage Drama* 7). Included in these ideas is Englishness itself, a category of identity sustained through performative acts. It is on the London stage that these acts were carried out through scenarios that would challenge and highlight English cultural and racial differences, as "English writers attempted to articulate and define their own emerging sense of nationhood" (2).

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This period of increasing relationships with foreign cultures and markets saw the “emergence of a new national identity that would characterize Englishness in terms of England’s engagement with the global trade system” and it was on the stage that the “image of the venturing hero was projected” (Vitkus “Common” 27). For the early modern English, national identity was accompanied by an expectation of loyalty to the crown and faith in the Christian God, a God that was sometimes conceived of as Protestant and sometimes Catholic in the plays I examine. Mixing fact with fiction, dramatists portrayed the venturing hero as a Christian European who is confronted with a morally corrupt Muslim leader, thus “constructing notions of [English] national identity by means of an Orientalized, indeed Ottomanized, other” (MacLean226). Given that concepts of nation and national identity were evolving in Europe during the early seventeenth century, and that my thesis addresses matters of English drama and audiences, national identity in this paper refers to Englishness as “a supposed fraternity of subjects within an imagined community defined in part by a bounded geographical essence and in part by cultural and racial *differences* from other such imagined communities” (Howard 101).

Dramatists who wrote plays representing Islamic power chose themes centered on English activities in the Mediterranean and worked within a stock plotline: a virtuous European Christian female is desired by an Islamic Turkish or Moorish ruler and is taken to his court; a heroic Christian male arrives to rescue the woman and is desired by a beautiful lascivious Muslim woman; Christian faith and steadfastness prevail as the European woman and man escape unscathed, at times joined by the converted Muslim woman; defeated, the Islamic ruler is left to ponder the failings of his faith, leadership,

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and strength, often to wonder at the Christian Europeans' impressive display of honour and virtue. The threat of conversion to Islam features centrally in the plotlines, with early modern dramatists encoding public perceptions of conversion in the vocabulary of their plays. The three plays I am concerned with all employ "conversion" or "turning" under specific conditions. "Conversion" refers to the Muslim becoming a follower of Christianity. "Turning" refers to the Christian becoming Muslim. The positive connotations invoked by the use of "conversion" in contrast with the negative connotations of "turning" are an important aspect of my analysis of the plays in my thesis, as they reflect desires and anxieties of English audiences at the time.

The early modern English defined themselves not only in terms of geography, culture, and religion, but in part by how they differed from others racially, a concept that for them constituted a relationship between the body's exterior appearance and a person's interior qualities. Valerie Traub notes that race "is implicated in power, knowledge, kinship, nationhood, social status, reproduction, and religion" but that scholars continue to debate "the extent to which 'race' can be understood to exist or signify in the early modern period at all" (20, 22). Edward Said's model of *Orientalism*, for example, fails as an approach to the racial analysis of early modern English encounters with Islamic cultures (the engagements centered in this thesis) as it is a postcolonial theory "based upon the historical experience of Western imperialism and colonization," two systems, as Said understands them, that did not exist in Elizabethan or Jacobean England (Vitkus "Turning" 11). Complicating matters is that terms such as "moor" and "blackamoor" in many early modern plays, including those in this paper, "were both associated with blackness and sometimes referred specifically to a person from North Africa" (Brookes

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“Inhaling” 173). Vitkus points out that these terms, along with “Turk,” were also “sometimes used to refer specifically to the people of Morocco or Turkey, but more often they signified a generalized Islamic identity” (“Turning” 91). For the purposes of this essay, the terms “moor,” “blackamoor,” and “Turk” are used as they are in the plays, even though the terms are conflated, and racial analysis follows Ania Loomba’s approach, which is “concerned with the relationship between physical attributes of the body (such as skin colour) and the inner qualities of a person (such as religious faith and morality)” (236).

The roles of race and religion in the formation of early modern English identity grew as contact with foreigners became more frequent. Scholars such as Valerie Forman (2008), Barbara Fuchs (2000, 2001, 2015), Claire Jowitt (2007, 2010), Nabil Matar (1998, 2005), and Daniel Vitkus (2000, 2001, 2003) have noted that during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, the English had to balance the need to establish foreign trade with the threat of encroaching foreign powers, and that playwrights dramatized this balancing act through plots built on romance, violence, and conversion. In particular, a number of early modern plays focused on “an anxious interest in Islamic power” held by Europeans towards the rapidly expanding Turkish empire, which “posed a sustained threat to Christian rule in Europe” (Vitkus *Three* 3). As outlined below, scholarship on what Vitkus refers to as “Turk plays” converges on how early modern playwrights staged categories of identity (i.e., race, gender, class, religion, and sexuality) that “do not exist independently of one another, but intersect in dynamic, mutually informing, and historically contingent ways” such that they reflected not only how

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Muslims were perceived by the English, but also the emergence of English identity and nationhood (Traub 5-6).

Matthew Dimmock (2004, 2013) and Nabil Matar (1998, 1999, 2005, 2009, 2014; MacLean and Matar 2011) have observed that many early modern English “writers, theatre-goers, and sailors” did not have a clear understanding of Islam or its history. Their ignorance, along with the earlier mentioned confusion of terms such as “moor”, “blackamoor”, and “Turk”, “led to a superimposition of the Ottomans’ imperial danger onto religion so that Islam became synonymous with Ottoman military expansion” (MacLean and Matar 32). Furthermore, authors “used the denigration of Mahomet and Mahometanism as a way of attacking their Christian enemies” and “invented all sorts of negative depictions of early modern “Turkes” in order to humiliate and denigrate enemies at home” (Matar “Review” 244). Vitkus writes, “English images of Islamic culture often exhibited exaggeration and demonization, but increasingly these images were based on real contact with Muslim peoples in the Mediterranean” as reports of actual overseas encounters made their way around England (*Three* 3). Gerald MacLean observes that in “Turk plays”, “the East represents a militarized, meritocratic space where the defining standards and normative values of Christendom are suspended, subverted, and brought to crisis” (247).

A number of recent studies have been focused on relationships of domination and subordination between European Christians and Turkish Muslims and on how gender is used as “a primary way of signifying relations of power” in Renaissance drama (Loomba and Sanchez 4). Matar, for example, has stated that “if the Christian-Islamic confrontation of the Mediterranean Renaissance is to be “gendered,” it will show that

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male domination was associated with the Muslims and female subordination with the Christians,” basing his argument on “the power associated in the English imagination with the Muslim empire” (“Britons” 377–378). Other scholars, however, including Barbara Fuchs (2001), Jean Howard (1994), Claire Jowitt (2003), Virginia Mason Vaughan (1994), and Clare McManus (2013) have explored dramatized intercultural romances, concluding that they typically result in the failure of the Muslim male to seduce and convert the European female, thus effeminizing him and, with him, Islam. Scholars argue that the plays portray the *success* of the male European visitor, however, in his efforts to seduce and convert a Muslim female (after her failed attempts at doing the same to him), thus rendering the Muslims “safely inferior to their European visitors” (Howard 113). Scholarship on the “Turk plays” also points to a prevailing understanding among English audiences that the threat posed by conversion to Islam is not only a renunciation of faith in the one true God, but also “that if the white European gives himself to the customs of Barbary, his manhood may be lost” (Howard 115). As Howard argues, in these plays, Islam is gendered and racialized in a way that subordinates it to Englishness and ties English identity to whiteness and “a patriarchal masculinity insistent of the control of female sexuality” (117).

Female sexuality was a concern to the early modern English, as its regulation was believed to ensure preservation of the English bloodline, particularly during this era of increased foreign relations. It was difficult to temper the frequency of English encounters on foreign waters and soil, however, because the driving force behind these encounters was economic, due in large part to the need for “new and secure markets for English cloth” (Jowitt *Culture* 52). England could not insulate itself politically or economically

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from trade with other nations because it would have been absorbed by more powerful foreign empires, and so had to participate on the world stage. Burgeoning international relationships brought social concerns to England that playwrights sought to acknowledge while simultaneously reminding audiences of the need for diversification and the risks associated with it. Although women were not typically engaged in trade, the depiction of trade and Islamic courts on stage had a metaphorical relationship to concerns about controlling English women *in* England. Bess, in *The Fair Maid of the West*, for example, can be read as an allegory for Queen Elizabeth I and English concerns about female rule. Dramatists' depictions of foreigners' immoral indulgences, such as those represented in Mullisheg's harem in *The Fair Maid of the West*, reflect "early modern concerns with the maintenance of an English racial identity ... in the face of intimate encounters with others against whom the English defined themselves" (Brookes 173). "Intimate encounters" carried with them the threat of miscegenation, an act that would pollute and dilute the English "race".

Some scholars debate the extent to which early modern plays represented sexuality as a real-world threat to race and religion. In her discussion of sexuality and religion in *The Renegado*, Jane Hwang Degenhardt comments on "how the threat of the Turk was imaginatively construed as a sexual threat with potentially reproductive consequences" and that "the stage conveyed the importance of regulating and controlling racial purity through sexual intervention" ("Catholic Prophylactics" 80). It is the women, however, whose sexual activity required regulation, control, and intervention, given that at the time "the perceived genetic dominance of the male partner" meant that the English understood that the father's lineage, but not the mother's, would be passed on to the

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child. Degenhardt further states that early modern plays involving Muslim-Christian romance and the threat of conversion “facilitated through sexual intercourse suggests its translation of the religious, commercial, and imperial threat of the Ottoman Empire into a personal, bodily threat that is distinctly racialized” (“Catholic Prophylactics” 66). While these observations may be true of the English stage, Matar proposes a more tempered view of the reality of Muslim-Christian romance, saying that records indicate “an environment that did not view miscegenation as totally objectionable” (*Turks, Moors* 41).

Reproductive consequences were of concern not only to people interested in protecting English racial purity, but also to those committed to preserving English class structure, since class was understood to be a heritable trait. Scholars interpret the use of reproduction in early modern plays as “a primary technology for maintaining the social hierarchy of rank” (Traub 366). The plays I am concerned with were written during a time when the developing English middle class was blurring what were once clear demarcations between upper and lower social strata, and adding to prevailing cultural and political uncertainties (Fuchs 2000; Howard 1994; Traub 2016; Vitkus 2008). As we will see, this blurring contributed to the rise of an English identity shared by those who sought to attain wealth and position through conquest, if not having acquired them through birth, and threatened to destabilize traditional understandings of “social identity” that were “in large part constituted ... by one’s place in vertical status hierarchies” (Howard 101). Intersecting with religious and racialized identities, then, were the “social production and reproduction of gendered, sexualized, and classed bodies in early modern England” (Traub 366).

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The depiction on the English stage of conversion, violent encounters in the Mediterranean, and the demonization of Islam and Muslims are common tropes across a number of early modern plays and have been widely examined in the literature. For example, Joshua Mabie compares the three plays I am investigating and observes that they reveal how “Turkish captivity, and the suspicions of sexual adventure, cultural transformation, political treason, and religious conversion that accompanied it, pressured all aspects of a person’s identity and undercut a person’s standing in English society” (301). Scholars, however, rarely provide a contrastive examination of these three particular plays within a historical context, nor do they provide sustained close reading of the dramas they probe. It is just such an analysis that I undertake here.

In selecting plays, I sought out works that have, to date, received less scholarly attention than more frequently performed and researched plays (for example, William Shakespeare’s *Othello* or Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine*), but that are intriguing in terms of what they reveal about early modern English identity and relationships with foreign powers. I narrowed my choices to works that are comparable in their basic plot components and that address similar themes, but that differ in tone, resolution, and specific thematic focus. I examine intersections of race, sexuality, gender, class, nation, and religion in *The Fair Maid of the West Parts I & II*, and *The Renegado* by joining together: (i) critical scholarship, (ii) historical context, i.e., English domestic politics, foreign trade, overseas exploration, religious conflict, piracy and privateering, and (iii) literary analyses of the three plays that concentrate on key relationships and scenes in each.

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I employ what Valerie Traub describes as an intersectional approach to the multifaceted relationship between components of power and identity during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England. Although understandings of categories of identity such as race and sexuality were unstable during this period, I include them in my analysis since they are embedded in “systems of power” that underlie “other forms of identity and oppression” such as class and gender (Traub 6). As mentioned earlier, emerging English identity was also complicated during this period by matters of religion and nation, which “played an integral part in defining Englishness, since part of being English was to be Christian (and specifically Protestant) as opposed to Jewish or Muslim” (Britton 72). It is exactly this unstable intermingling of categories of identity that contributed to English anxieties during the early modern period and that form the focus of my investigation.

The historical context for my inquiry centers on late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English notions of nationhood and identity, and is drawn from a number of sources: scholarly introductions to the plays; peer-reviewed articles that historically contextualize and examine the three plays I am investigating; and scholarly books discussing early modern piracy, early modern relationships between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, and early modern English perceptions of Islam. Many of these sources also address English Renaissance drama and its representations of gender, sexuality, race, religion, class, and nationhood. My research relies on a particular understanding of how the early modern English construed the concept of nation. During the time period this project addresses, “Britain” did not exist as a nation, and European identities were being shaped by “the complexities of the simultaneous development of nations and of empires” (Fuchs “Another” 416). In addition to overseas trade as an

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activity reaching outward and which was in its infancy in England, Europeans were preoccupied by the threat of marauding foreign powers, particularly Spain. With this threat to geographical boundaries came a threat to cultural and religious boundaries, such that an attack by Spain on England, for example, was an attack by Catholicism on Protestantism, and an attack by the Ottomans on Spain or England was an attack by Islam on Christianity. As Matthew Dimmock remarks, “To attack the ‘Turk’s’ religion was to attack the ‘Turk’” (*Mythologies* 10). English national identity, then, was being shaped by religious discord among the English, as mentioned earlier in the chapter, and the influence of foreign powers perceived as religiously unified, i.e., the Catholic Spanish and Muslim Ottomans, and these concerns were dramatized and played out on the early modern stage. In my analyses of the three plays in this thesis, I include scenes that demonstrate such dramatizations, and consider them in relationship to broader historical contexts.

“Turk plays” implicitly endorsed trade while cautioning audiences to be vigilant regarding the influence of foreign cultures, and comforted theatregoers through portrayals of the redemptive nature of Christianity, English virtue and steadfastness. My analyses of *The Fair Maid of the West Parts I & II*, and *The Renegado* interrogate dramatists’ portrayals of conflicts between Ottomans and Europeans in the Mediterranean. The purpose of this thesis is to consider how such portrayals signify the anxieties of the early modern English through themes of race, sexuality, gender, class, nation, and religion, and how these intersecting factors contribute to on-stage representations of nascent English identity.

Chapter 2

The Fair Maid of the West Part I

Scholars widely agree that approximately thirty years separated the composition of *The Fair Maid of the West Part I*, probably composed around 1600, and *Part II*, believed to have been written around 1630 (Turner xiii). Together, the plays provide an opportunity to explore shifts that occurred during those thirty years in the emerging discourse of English nationalism. Jean Howard, for example, interrogates such discourse through a case study of *The Fair Maid of the West Part I*, which, she says, reveals “how gender, race, sexuality, and national identity were interarticulated in productions of the public playhouse in the twilight years of Elizabeth’s reign or shortly thereafter” (102). Claire Jowitt investigates *The Fair Maid of the West Parts I and II* to demonstrate how Queen Elizabeth I’s gender was represented in early modern colonial writing, noting that the time between *Part I* and its sequel “is significant since changes in the representation of Bess reveal the ways that powers of queenship were, after Elizabeth, revised, remodeled and reduced” (*Voyage* 40).

Together, *Part I* and *Part II* form an adventure narrative notable for its portrayals of race, upward social mobility, its treatment of gender-defined roles, and the shift in tone that occurs between the two parts. Beginning with *The Fair Maid of the West Part I*, this chapter discusses how Heywood addressed early modern English anxieties about cross-culturation, and how he represented race, class, gender, and sexuality as components of nascent English identity. This discussion is developed in the next chapter for *Part II*, with commentary on how these components are transformed and reimagined in the second

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play to reflect changes in the political and cultural climate that occurred during the three decades separating *Part I* and *Part II*.

Race was a concern for the early modern English because it was a component of English identity at risk due to intercultural contact. Since race was associated with sexuality, religion and nationality, dramatists often portrayed English-foreign encounters in a manner that exalted the light-skinned Christian English and denigrated the dark-skinned Muslim foreigner, regardless of whether or not it was a realistic representation. Valerie Traub argues that early modern “English contact with the Ottomans and Mughals complicates black-white binaries” such that it threatened to collapse those binaries by which the English defined themselves (21). In a discussion about Elizabethan views on the race and religion of Moors, Nabil Matar states, “the Moors on the stage and the street did not represent subdued natives but rather men of stealth, ambition and triumph. It was because of their fearsomeness that Elizabethan playwrights racially excoriated the Moors on stage” (*Britain and Barbary* 33). Race and sexuality intersect prominently in *Part I* during scenes centering on the naïve tapster Clem’s behaviour in the Moroccan court, Bess and *The Negro*, and a discussion between Mullisheg and Joffer regarding the king’s harem.

In Act V, Heywood constructs a scene in the Moroccan court in which sexuality is commodified and racialized as Bess trades intimacy for a prisoner’s freedom. Clem’s comments, in particular, draw attention to concerns about race and sexual threat, and designate skin colour “as a defining mark of difference and one basis for establishing relations of dominance and subordination between the English and Mullisheg and his court” (Howard 113). When Bess successfully requests that Mullisheg release a French

The Fair Maid of the West Part I

Merchant without paying a fine, for example, Clem declares, “May’st thou never want sweet water to wash thy black face in, most mighty monarch of Morocco” (V.ii.64-65). These lines are an expression of Clem’s gratitude, but also equate the King’s skin colour with uncleanness, emphasizing skin colour as a racial boundary between the English and non-English. In this case, it is a boundary representing the superiority of the former to the latter, since even though Mullisheg is the court’s ruler, it is white, English Bess who successfully influences his judgment and secures the French Merchant’s freedom. Later, when a Christian preacher is condemned to death in court the stakes for Bess are raised. Mullisheg decides that “A kiss shall be his pardon” (V.ii.79) and Bess complies. This physical contact is an explicit demonstration of the type of intimacy between the English and non-English that was feared as a threat to the purity of English blood during the early modern period. The kiss compels Clem to respond, “Must your black face be smooching my mistress’s white lips with a Moorian? I would you had kiss’d her a—“ (V.ii.80-81). While this sexual commodification appears unproblematic for the characters and early modern audience, the racial connotations of the interaction are not. Heywood plays here on the semantics of “with a Moorian” and the phonologically similar phrase “with a murrrian”, which Turner glosses as “plague on it!” (*Fair Maid* 87). Clem equates Mullisheg’s kiss with the spread of plague, thereby encoding racial contamination as a sexually transmittable disease. Bess’s sexual exchange allows her to dominate Mullisheg, which is an immediate victory for the English, however there remains the longer-term danger to the English bloodline. Clem’s repeated comments on skin colour remind audiences of the threat of miscegenation and reassert “the construction of Englishness” through “the simultaneous construction of what is non-English” (Howard 110).

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Intentional or not, Heywood also draws attention to skin colour and the construction of what is non-English by having Bess name her ship *The Negro*. It is unclear whether the designation is meant to reflect the dangers inherent to overseas travel, or if it should be interpreted as an expression of Bess's grief over Spencer's presumed death. Given the racial overtones of the play's text, it is also possible that *The Negro* is another example of "the English desire for mastery and command over ... dark peoples"(Howard 110).

When Bess first acquires her ship, she says to Goodlack:

Then first, you said your ship was trim and gay;

I'll have her pitch'd all o'er: no spot of white,

No color to be seen, no sail but black,

No flag but sable.

Goodlack 'Twill be ominous

And bode disaster fortune.

Bess I'll ha't so.

Goodlack

Why then she shall be pitch'd black as the devil.

Bess

She shall be call'd the *Negro*. When you know

My conceit, Captain, you will thank me for't. (IV.ii.77-84)

By 1600, when this play was first performed, audiences had become familiar with the perils and promise of overseas exploration from reading travel narratives that both detailed the potential bounty in foreign territories, and illuminated the dangers inherent to

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overseas travel, such as disease, lack of food and water, hostile natives, and the omnipresent threat of the sea and weather. On stage, *The Negro* has the power to transform the theatre into an imagined foreign space filled with these dangers and wealth, creating worlds and movement in which viewers can experience the exotic and reimagine themselves as the foreign visitor, thus reinforcing their English identity.

While mercantile travel was profitable, it was a risky venture for the reasons listed above and because of piracy. An otherwise successful commercial voyage could result in financial ruin, injury, and death if a vessel were raided by a more powerful opponent. Heywood acknowledges the ever-present danger of sea travel by having Spencer appear to be killed in battle while on a voyage. Bess is determined to retrieve his body, but first commands Goodlack to have the “trim and gay” ship painted entirely black. Though a transparent poetic device on Heywood’s part, it appears that Bess is compelled to remove anything emblematic of gaiety from her life while she is in mourning. Goodlack alludes to the threat of violence at sea when he cautions Bess that naming her ship *The Negro* will be “ominous / And bode disaster fortune.” Not only will they have to face weather and other inherent dangers, but may be inviting hostility and potential disaster by painting the ship black. *The Negro*, then, becomes a metaphor for the familiar threat of ruin, captivity, and death under which the English lived, their economy reliant on overseas diplomacy and trade.

Heywood’s juxtaposition of “white” and “black” at the end of lines 78 and 79 suggests a racial connotation that becomes more meaningful in Act V when blackness is used repeatedly to describe the King of Fez. Goodlack’s observations that the colour is “ominous” and will “bode disaster fortune” develops the racial connotation by equating

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blackness with death and disaster. His comment that the ship will be “black as the devil” associates blackness with both the demonic and with Muslims, exemplifying how “In scripts for the stage and in other accounts, the facts about Islamic or Ottoman culture and its power are often embedded within or distorted by demonizing fantasies” (Vitkus *Three* 6). Such demonization in this play links the blackness of the ship over which the white English heroine has control to the skin colour and character of the people in Mullisheg’s court, whom she will soon encounter.

Conversely, Mullisheg interprets the ship’s name as a sign that bodes well for his potential relationship with the English woman on board. When informed of her arrival, he says, “Ominous / Perhaps to our good fate; she in a *Negro* / Hath sail’d thus far to bosom with a Moor” (V.i.7-9). Though he responds positively to the *Negro*’s imminent arrival, his remarks affirm “the conventional association made by European Christians between Islam and promiscuity” by revealing his lust for Bess (Vitkus *Turning* 88). Thus, the *Negro* becomes a metaphor for how the early modern English exaggerated and misrepresented Muslims during the early modern period, as evil, lascivious, and inferior in order to define themselves, in opposition, as merciful, virtuous, and superior.

Mullisheg’s desire for Bess equates sexual exchange with foreign trade. The growth of free trade during the early modern period raised English concerns about cross-cultural contamination resulting from the exchange of goods between domestic and foreign markets and increasing frequency of encounters with foreign people. Heywood captures these anxieties by associating sexual desire with commerce, commodifying the female body, and by treating the body as an object of exchange. In doing so, he acknowledges the English audience’s heightened concerns regarding the moral

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implications of their country's increasing participation in the developing international economy. For example, in *Part I* the King of Fez discusses his harem at length in terms that "demonstrate the link between cross-cultural commerce and sexual exchange that is frequently made in English representations of Islamic culture" (Vitkus *Three* 14):

But what's the style of a king,
Without his pleasure? Find us concubines,
The fairest Christian damsels you can hire
Or buy for gold, the loveliest of the Moors
We can command, and Negroes everywhere.
Italians, French, and Dutch, choice Turkish girls
Must fill our Alkedavy, the great palace
Where Mullisheg now deigns to keep his court. (I, IV.iii.27-34)

The language in these lines objectifies and commodifies women's sexuality and bodies. Heywood maximizes the shock value of this list of goods by placing "Christian damsels" at the top with the implication that they are available for "hire" or "purchase." Their sexuality is for hire and bodies for purchase from whoever currently owns them, their value measurable by quantities of "gold". Mullisheg's palace becomes a gallery exhibiting his extensive international wealth and power as he declares to his bashaws and attendants that they "must fill" their "Alkedavy" with the "fairest" and "loveliest" women from around the world. Given that the English audience held monogamy and chastity as virtuous, they would have condemned the harem as immoral. Heywood juxtaposes the Christian audience's expectations of the "fairest" women with their description as prostitutes. The king's palace is a site of international trade where a variety of cultures

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are compelled or paid to participate in a sexual market that is accessible to, and made accessible by, an Islamic ruler. Thus, while the international inventory of the harem portrays the potential for wealth in an open market, Heywood also uses this scene to caution audiences morally about the perils of greed via the lust of the Moroccan king.

The sixteenth- and seventeenth-century open market paved a path to wealth for hardworking English and contributed to the emergence of a middle class and the development of meritocracy (Burton; Fuchs *Mimesis*; Vitkus *Turning*). Because this path served to benefit those not born to wealth and title, it was a threat to England's longstanding hierarchical social structure and to the class component of English identity. The English associated upper class membership not only with wealth, but also honour, loyalty, generosity, and chivalry: traits that were supposedly not acquired through hard work, but through heredity. It is likely that early modern audiences would closely watch English behaviour in staged meritocratic spaces, such as that of Fez, and imagine such transformations in the economic and social structures in England, attributable to open market growth. In *Part I* of *Fair Maid*, Heywood tests the boundaries of early modern English class reconstruction through the words and actions of Spencer, Goodlack, and Bess, characters who seek to affirm and elevate their wealth and social position through hard work, bravery, loyalty, and patriotism. These ambitions and motivations contrast with those of Clem, whose social aspirations are driven purely by self-interest.

The opening of *Part I* draws immediate attention to the collapsing divide between upper and lower classes as two sea captains and a gentleman enter, commenting on the revelry in Plymouth's streets as people celebrate the recent English military success in Cadiz and anticipate the upcoming voyage to the Azores. In the following

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passage, Heywood denotes the growing wealth and position of the emergent middle class with clothing:

1 Captain

How Plymouth swells with gallants! How the streets

Glister with gold! You cannot meet a man

But trick'd in scarf and feather, that it seems

As if the pride of England's gallantry

Were harbor'd here. (I.i.11-15)

“England's gallantry” is a mark of the successful burgeoning English nation whose “expeditions against Spain serve to gild the average man in Plymouth and raise him beyond his station” (Fuchs “Faithless” 58). The city is filled with men “trick'd in scarf and feather”, adornments marking their wealth and position. The captain declares that Plymouth “swells with gallants”; it is bursting with an abundance of wealth and men who epitomize Englishness. They are brave, heroic, daring, chivalrous, honourable, and gracious.

The passage conveys an air of pride and optimism for England's future, with Heywood's language mirroring that of travel narratives describing the copious riches of foreign lands. He writes that “the streets glister with gold,” possibly alluding to Sir Walter Raleigh's 1595 report of El Dorado, a city containing such an “abundance of gold” that the inhabitants blow powdered gold “upon their naked bodies, until they be all shining from the foot to the head” (Raleigh 14). In scenes I and II of the play, Heywood sets a tone of excitement, wealth, and anticipation by writing “great success” (I.i.5), “golden spoil” (I.i.10), “gold” (I.i.12), “shining” (I.ii.10), and variations of “gallant”

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(I.i.11, 14, 21, 26; I.ii.10). These words generate pride among audience members and would serve to fortify English support for further expeditions with the promise of securing England's prosperity and standing on the world stage.

Scene II of the play acknowledges the early modern clash between value systems that found burgeoning middle-class English in pursuit of material wealth and upper-class English extolling the virtues of undertaking voyages for the honour of service. In an impassioned debate, the aristocratic Spencer and his companion Captain Goodlack discuss the value of embarking on a dangerous voyage. Goodlack is of the ambitious middle class, seeking to grow his fortune through conquest at sea, and standing in contrast to his friend, Spencer, who was born to the upper class. Spencer defends the honour of serving on a risky expedition as reason enough, while Goodlack argues that it is in the attainment of wealth through plunder that one finds purpose:

Goodlack

Pray resolve me,

Why, being a gentleman of fortunes, means,
And well revenu'd, will you adventure thus
A doubtful voyage, when only such as I,
Born to no other fortunes than my sword,
Should seek abroad for pillage?

Spencer

Pillage, Captain?

No, 'tis for honor; and the brave society
Of all these shining gallants that attend

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The great lord general drew me hither first,

No hope of gain or spoil. (I.ii.3-12)

Goodlack relies on risky ventures for “gain or spoil” and is perplexed at Spencer’s reasons for undertaking “A doubtful voyage” when he is already wealthy. Goodlack repeats the word “fortunes” in these lines, playing on its multiple meanings of luck and assets. He points out the Spencer had the luck of being born into a family with money and privilege, and thus has no reason to risk his well-being on “a doubtful voyage”. He contrasts Spencer’s circumstances with his own where any means he has acquired have been through his sword. Goodlack creates his own luck by seeking “abroad for pillage”, which is something Spencer does not have to do. He codifies plunder as violent and dangerous by referencing the “doubtful voyage”, his sword, and the pillaging likely to follow.

Spencer, however, codifies plunder as a daring act of bravery. He admonishes Goodlack for misconstruing the voyage as one of violence and theft rather than what he understands to be a noble act. Whereas Goodlack draws attention to the violent realities of the expedition, Spencer repeats the language used earlier to describe Plymouth: “shining gallants” and “brave society”. According to his aristocratic thinking, it is incumbent upon a proper Englishman to offer his service in fellowship with “The great lord general”. Such men prove their worth through the honour of service rather than measuring profit. Spencer’s response that he seeks “honor” and the company of “these shining gallants” points to intangible qualities that separate those who are legitimately upper class (i.e., by birth) and those who are not, thus protecting this culturally entrenched class component of English identity.

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The tension in this classist demarcation is intensified in the character of Bess, a bar maid and member of the lower class who attains power and wealth. Spencer tells his companion that he visits a particular tavern, *The Castle*, to see Bess. Goodlack is aghast that Spencer would seek out a woman of such low stature compared to himself, exclaiming “One of your birth and breeding thus to dote / Upon a tanner’s daughter!” (I.ii.16-17). Goodlack is reminding Spencer that Bess’s beauty alone does not compensate for the social and financial shortcomings of her family, particularly her father whose tanning business failed with the consequence that his daughter now has to work in a tavern. A short time later Spencer himself comments on the problem of her social position: “Were her low birth but equal with her beauty, / Here would I fix my love” (I.ii.52-53). The play also endows her with attributes associated with the gentry and aristocracy: virtue, leadership, generosity, and an ability to unite men in pursuit of a common cause (Howard 104). Finally, the point is driven home by Bess who expresses her humility and grace when she tells Spencer “I could wish / I had been born to equal you in fortune/ Or you so low to have been rank’d with me” (I.ii.80-82). It is for these qualities and her unparalleled physical beauty that Spencer falls in love with her and that her class ascension is acceptable.

Bess’s declaration that she loves Spencer whether they both be rich or poor is a testament to the honor that sets her apart from Clem and, possibly, is the reason later in the play for her success and Clem’s failure in transcending their social rank. In addition to her humility and honesty, and to the astonishment of everyone, Bess rejects all of the many sexual advances from *The Castle*’s male visitors, thus maintaining her chastity, “a virtue / But seldom found in taverns” (I.ii.62-63). Barbara Fuchs suggests that Bess’s

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chastity “affords her a symbolic status that locates her beyond class struggle” (“Faithless” 61). It can be argued, however, that Bess’s chastity, among her other intangible noble characteristics, helps her succeed in her class struggle, not locate her entirely beyond it. Bess’s behaviour makes her worthy to take a place by Spencer’s side. From the outset of the play, then, the audience is made aware that this woman “is kin to ballad and chapbook heroines who, though lower class, are ennobled by modesty and virtuous love” (Turner xiii-xiv).

Clem, by contrast, suffers for trying to transcend his social rank. Though Goodlack and Bess shifting class position may have been problematic for audiences at the time, they are tolerable because the characters preserve important intangible components of upper class English identity, most notably honour, bravery, and loyalty. Clem’s failure can be understood as a consequence of his attempt to elevate his position by replacing rather than serving his superior, Spencer. In *Part I*, Act V, Scene ii, Spencer is brought in to Mullisheg’s court and Bess asks the King to spare him. Mullisheg concedes, declaring:

He shall have grace and honor. – Joffer, go

And see him gelded to attend on us.

He shall be our chief eunuch. (91-93)

Interpreting this as an opportunity to gain stature as a courtier, Clem inserts himself, pleading with Mullisheg to allow *him* to be “gelded” instead: “Please your majesty, I see all men are not capable of honor. / What he refuseth, may it please you to bestow on me” (99-100). Ironically, it is Clem who is behaving dishonorably by trying to displace his superior, Spencer, from acquiring what Clem assumes to be a position of wealth and

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power. His failure here is threefold: he is unaware of the physical transformation required to become a eunuch; he has no understanding of the subtleties embedded in his own “rigidly hierarchical society” that requires of him certain behaviours and circumstances in order to be accepted in and by the upper class; and he expects great wealth and honor, mishearing “gilded” for “gelded” (Fuchs “Faithless” 61; Bosman 142). This lust for riches is the impetus for his rash, irreversible action. However, even if Clem could acquire the financial means to at least *appear* to transcend his social rank, his impatience and greed preclude him from acceptance in the upper echelons where there is an expectation of honorable behaviour. His actions are guided by self-interest, as he is willing to submit himself to Mullisheg in order to attain a level of social status in the Moroccan court that he believes unattainable in England. On stage, Clem is the embodiment of what the early modern English feared regarding their countrymen abroad: that they would succumb to the luxurious material and sexual temptations offered in foreign cultures and abandon their Englishness. From the audience’s perspective, Clem’s castration is punishment for acting on his character flaws and jeopardizing the honorable reputation of the English.

While Clem’s castration and subsequent outrage reflect class issues and are a source of humour for audiences, they also draw attention to English concerns at the time about the impact of cross-cultural contact. Clem, for example, adopts Moorish dress in the scene before his castration, entering “as a fantastic Moor” (V.i.109). While his desire to gain stature in Fez is clear, he is adamant that his religious faith remains true: “I hold myself as good a Christian in these clothes as the proudest infidel of them all” (V.i.118-119). His castration, however, would indicate otherwise to audiences since at the time

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“conversion to Islam was associated with becoming a eunuch” (Bosman 142). Joshua Mabie captures what Clem learns too late, that “captivity, and the suspicions of sexual adventure, cultural transformation, political treason, and religious conversion that accompanied it, pressured all aspects of a person’s identity and undercut a person’s standing in English society” (301). Indeed, Clem’s flippant attitude towards Muslim customs and the resultant diminishment of his masculinity would have served as a cautionary example to audience members about the risks associated with cross-cultural encounters.

While the aristocratic attributes endowed upon Bess aide her in her class struggle, the power and autonomy that she demonstrates when she embarks on a quest to retrieve Spencer, pillaging Spanish ships along the way, are problematic for the early modern English as they subvert traditionally defined gender roles. This is true even though, as Susan Frye argues, “women rulers . . . were actually common in Europe in the early modern period. Only their uncanny deviance from what Western culture ‘remembers’ as the norm, male sovereignty, causes us repeatedly to forget them” (113). The reality of women rulers likely amplified anxiety regarding female power, since, as Jowitt comments on “the ‘naturalness’ of a Protestant, imperial, and male model of monarchy”, the early modern English understood power as a divine male right attributed by the Protestant God (*Voyage* 17). Given these expectations, both Bess, as a female leader of men, and Mullisheg, as a male power figure but Islamic, would have been problematic for audience members. Heywood uses gender as “a primary way of signifying relations of power” in *Part I of The Fair Maid of the West* to address English concerns about female

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rule and the Ottoman threat by allegorizing Queen Elizabeth through the character of Bess, and by emasculating the King of Fez (Loomba and Sanchez 4).

As indicated earlier, *The Fair Maid of the West Parts I and II* were written during a period when the monarchy was under female and, later, male rule, and reflect English sentiments regarding “different political opinions about female rule” and “appropriate female ‘queenly’ behaviour” (Jowitt *Voyage* 39). At the beginning of the play “Bess is trapped in the role her gender proscribes: she is a heroine in a romance, the passive object of competing male attention” (Jowitt *Culture* 120). After Spencer is reported dead, however, Heywood transforms Bess into “a device for uniting men of different classes into a homosocial community of brothers, into a nation” (Howard 102) and she becomes a staged representation of Queen Elizabeth I.

As Valerie Traub notes, however, “the exceptional woman is vulnerable to being framed through knowledge practices that position her as a ‘whore’” (76). It is this positioning the audience witnesses where, in the “early tavern scenes featuring Bess, the implication of prostitution is ever-present” (Vitkus *Turning* 131). In Act I, scene I, upon approaching The Castle, two captains discuss the barmaid with 1 Captain saying “Her beauty draws to them more gallant customers / Than all the signs i’th’ town else” (20-21). 1 Captain also comments on her reputation as being chaste, to which Carrol responds:

Honest, and live there?

What, in a public tavern, where’s such confluence

Of lusty and brave gallants? Honest, said you? (24-26)

Carrol is incredulous that a low-class barmaid would preserve her virginity while working in an establishment frequented by “lusty” and “gallant” “English nouveau riche

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merchants” (Vitkus *Turning* 133). This scene intersects class, sexuality, and gender by demonstrating the expectation that a tapstress would sell her body along with wine, if given the opportunity. Bess, however, subverts these expectations both at the tavern and later in Fez at Mullisheg’s court. Bess withstands men’s aggressive propositioning and “preserves her chastity . . . whether trading with the lustful Muslim rulers or selling wine to horny sailors” (Vitkus *Turning* 133). By remaining steadfast and resisting both domestic and foreign sexual and material temptations, she is a symbol of England’s leadership. Her “sense of English assuredness” reassures audiences of their fellow citizens’ ability to preserve their virtue and honour while abroad, and hence to maintain their Englishness.

Heywood allegorizes Queen Elizabeth in such a way that she is celebrated as a cunning negotiator with Moroccan leader Mulay al-Mansur, and as a worthy opponent of the Spanish. *The Fair Maid of the West, Part I* was written during the Anglo-Spanish war when “the English traded diplomatic missions with the Moroccan court and allied themselves with the Moroccan kings” (Vitkus *Turning* 129). Heywood acknowledges “the very real economic superiority and political power of Muslim port authorities when dealing with English merchants” (Vitkus *Turning* 129) when Mullisheg orders:

That all such Christian merchants as have traffic
And freedom in our country, that conceal
The least part of our custom due to us,
Shall forfeit ship and goods. (IV.iii.16-19)

In order to secure their country, replenish their post-war coffers, and afford entertainment, the Moroccans determine the amount charged to the “Christian merchants”

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for doing trade on Moroccan soil. English audiences would have known that they would be powerless here; the traders must be skilled negotiators or risk loss. These and the lines regarding Mullisheg's harem, discussed earlier in the chapter, portray the Moors as possessing military, political and financial might, both in domestic and foreign affairs. It is in this setting that Heywood dramatizes "the relation between the English queen and al-Mansur through the figure of Bess" (Matar *Britain* 34).

With Bess's arrival in Fez, London audiences see her power sexualized and the English become the exoticized other. Bess must broker a deal securing safe passage for herself and her crew, but the only valuable commodities she has are her beauty and chastity, both of which Mullisheg desires. "Bess, like Queen Elizabeth, is trafficking with the Turk" when she shrewdly negotiates with Mullisheg (Matar *Britain* 34):

Keep off; for till thou swear'st to my demands,
I will have no commerce with Mullisheg,
But leave thee as I came.

Mullisheg

Were't half my kingdom,

That, beauteous English virgin, thou shalt have. (V.1.46-49)

Bess, aware of Mullisheg's desire for the "beauteous English virgin" elicits a hyperbolically positive response from him before she has even stated her demands. She goes on to secure safety, freedom, and nourishment for herself and her crew while in Fez, portraying for theatre-goers "a masculinized Englishwoman" successfully establishing "an imaginary version of the Anglo-Moroccan and Anglo-Ottoman trade agreements" (Vitkus *Turning* 133). The treaty Bess negotiates with Mullisheg resonates in the theatre

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because it reflects “the hopes of the seamen and traders in the audience: to be safe and to be able to revictual in Morocco, without having to make national or religious concessions to the Moors” (Matar *Britain* 35).

In return for agreeing to meet her demands Mullisheg asks for no military, financial, or religious compensation; he simply asks to receive a kiss from Bess. Given his royal status and customary English greetings, Bess’s reputation and chastity are not at risk and she complies, telling him “’Tis no immodest thing / You ask, nor shame for Bess to kiss a king” (V.i.65-66). Such physical contact taps into early modern English concerns about miscegenation, as discussed earlier in the chapter, but Bess treats it as a benign greeting. Hence, although her virtue remains intact, Heywood continues to reinforce the sexualized characterizations he has constructed of Bess and Mullisheg that address English concerns about female rule and foreign power at the time.

Through Bess and with real world “relations prospering between the English queen and the Moroccan ruler ... Heywood projects a happy and promising picture of mutually beneficial cooperation,” however he also addresses queenship and the ongoing Anglo-Spanish war (Matar *Britain* 35). Queen Elizabeth’s victory over the Spanish Armada and her successful alliance with Morocco against Spain afforded her admiration. She is celebrated in the “pro-English universe” of this play through, for example, Bess’s Spanish captives who refer to the queen as “Famous Elizabeth” (IV.iv.122) (Hoenselaars 225). Mullisheg also alludes to the queen when he describes Bess as a “maid of England, like a queen” (V.ii.7).

Scholars such as Claire Jowitt, Daniel Vitkus, Barbara Fuchs, and Jean Howard have persuasively argued that Bess’s portrayal in *Part I* as a virtuous leader victorious in

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sea battles is an allegory for Queen Elizabeth I's reign and, by extension, England itself. She is a victorious leader and combatant, attacking Spanish ships as she makes her way to retrieve Spencer's body:

Oh, this last sea fight

Was gallantly perform'd! It did me good

To see the Spanish carvel vail her top

Unto my maiden flag. (IV.iv.1-4)

As a symbol for England, however, "Heywood is careful to show the English as more charitable and honourable than the Spanish Bess encounters and defeats" (Fuchs *Mimesis* 131):

'Las these poor slaves! Besides their pardon'd lives,

One give them money. – And, Spaniards, where you come,

Pray for Bess Bridges, and speak well o'th' English. (IV.iv.57-59)

Prior to these lines Roughman suggests to Bess that they begin avenging Spencer's death on these captured Spanish fishermen. Since they are honest and innocent, however, Bess treats them kindly and with generosity, asking them to spread positive reports about the English she represents. In so doing, Bess is demonstrating the noble quality of charity and honouring the ideals expected of the monarchy. The good work Bess is doing for the reputation of England repeats later in the scene when she is speaking with a Spanish captain after defeating his ship. As she releases him, she asks him to "pray for English Bess" (IV.v.120) to which he responds:

I know not whom you mean, but be't your queen,

Famous Elizabeth, I shall report

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She and her subjects both are merciful. (IV.iv.121-123).

Since Bess is dressed in men's clothing at this point, the captain assumes she is speaking of Queen Elizabeth. In these lines, then, with the queen's persona embedded in Bess, the captain comments on both Elizabeths – the queen herself, and Bess who is mirroring her by transgressing gender boundaries, defeating the Spanish, strengthening the reputation of the English, and practicing honour, generosity, and mercy.

Bess also proves herself to be a brave military leader and diplomatic strategist.

Given her gender, Bess's crew suggests she maintain cover during battle, but she refuses:

I will face the fight,

And where the bullets sing loud'st 'bout mine ears,

There shall you find me cheering up my men. (IV.iv.91-94)

Here her character diverges from that of Elizabeth I as it would be unwise of the monarch to enter battle and put the crown at risk. Bess, however, will join those under her command and maintain morale among those who fight for her, hearkening back to the conversation between Spencer and Goodlack in Act I regarding honour, service, and "brave society" (I.ii.9). She is a prudent and discerning leader, respecting political boundaries that would be critical to Queen Elizabeth and England's foreign relationships. As Claire Jowitt notes, for example, Bess "is highly successful in gaining plunder from the 'rich Spaniard and the barbarous Turk', whilst sparing 'the French and Dutch' (IV.v.7-8)" (*Culture* 123). As leader, she possesses the characteristics of an English monarch. Heywood celebrates these qualities, but Bess is only able to achieve her goals at sea when she is dressed as a man, and on land when she is sexualized. Thus, Heywood is confronting the worrisome issue of the impact of female rule on English power and

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masculine identity. By making Bess much more competent than any of the men who accompany her, he conveys a concern that Elizabeth I's success may come "at the expense of her principal naval commanders" and threaten to unman them (Jowitt *Culture* 123).

Bess's cross-dressing can be read as an effort to modify her lack of English masculinity, however her seafaring and military "skills are so impressive throughout her play that there is always the potential that she might 'unman' the men before her and undermine the sexual integrity of her male subordinates" (Fuchs *Mimesis* 133; Jowitt *East* 61). As Howard argues, Bess "embodies the extraordinary power of Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen" and is able "to provide imaginary resolutions to actual social tensions," however "she is also a figure of crisis [...] who continually evokes men's fears of women's power and sexuality" (Howard 109). Hence, the men over whom Bess (as a stand-in for the Queen) rules are both drawn to her and threatened by her, calling her leadership into question since, as demonstrated in Mullisheg's court, female leadership has the potential both to render Englishmen impotent and to save them from emasculation.

Heywood dramatizes this tension in Act V when Bess accompanies Mullisheg in his court. It is during this scene that Clem offers to replace Spencer and thereby improve his own social position by becoming Mullisheg's chief eunuch (V.ii.90-106). What Clem does not immediately understand is that this "honor" requires castration. Bess, then, through her sexual control over Mullisheg, uses her power to rescue Spencer's masculinity at the expense of Clem's. Her influence does not stop there, however, as "in response to Bess's beauty [...] the sexually predatory king becomes effeminized himself"

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(Jowitt *Voyage* 46). As discussed earlier in the chapter, Mullisheg is unable to refuse Bess anything she requests, as long as she stays by his side and permits him physical contact. Her female sexuality, though used to Christians' benefit in the play, is powerful enough to emasculate Mullisheg entirely.

Instead of treating the king's emasculation as a warning to the English of the dangers lurking in overseas locales, Fuchs proposes that "Heywood's text presents emasculation as already characteristic of England's relation to other empires" since England had a female sovereign at the time (*Mimesis* 133). Subordinated women and men can be read as addressing matters of female rule in England, with, for example, the powerful female character and the emasculated male Muslim character representing "the aggressive, castrating potential of queenship" and a risk "to the integrity of English manhood" (Jowitt *Voyage* 47). While it is true that England was in the subordinate position in its alliances with the more powerful Morocco, Queen Elizabeth's victory over the Spanish Armada made her "a viable military and diplomatic ally" and one who could assist Mulay al-Mansur in his desire "to take his rightful place on the European stage" (MacLean and Matar 52). Given that England would require Morocco's support in any military confrontation with Spain or its allies, and that the English were keenly aware of their country's delicate position, it is likely that "audiences would have been gratified by Heywood's theatrical reversal that showed the Moroccan ruler doting on English Bess and obeying her every wish and whim" (MacLean and Matar 61). In the same way early modern playwrights racially excoriate Muslims, Heywood emasculates the King of Fez in order to render him and the foreign power he represents inferior to the English. Once

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again, the dramatist constructs what is non-English – the emasculated Muslim – in order to construct and reinforce what is English, namely the powerful Christian ruler.

As discussed, in *The Fair Maid of the West Part I*, gender roles are subverted as the virtuous and heroic English tapstress, Bess Bridges, sets out to retrieve her suitor, Spencer, who has fled England after a fatal duel, and defeat the Spanish, becoming, in effect, a female privateer. In the next chapter, I discuss *Part II* where we find that Bess is still depicted as chaste, but she no longer has the virtues of leadership, honour, bravery, and diplomacy that she possessed in *Part I*. Instead, these qualities are bestowed upon Spencer, the mature, morally upright authority who corrects the previous play's subverted gender roles and reestablishes his "identity which is based on the innate superiority of Christian, English, chivalric and male honour" (Jowitt *Voyage* 50). Analysis of both plays offers the opportunity to consider how political and cultural ideologies and policies shifted between 1600 and 1630, and how such changes were interpreted and conveyed to the public via the stage.

Chapter 3

The Fair Maid of the West Part II

Scholars have examined the prominent differences in overall tone between *Parts I* and *II* of *The Fair Maid of the West* (Howard 1994; Jowitt 2003, 2010; Matar 2005, 2014; Turner 1967; Vitkus 2003). *Part I* was written during Queen Elizabeth's reign¹ and ends in an air of celebration and camaraderie, with the release of Spencer and Bess, and Mullisheg's offer to host their wedding. Relations between the Moroccans and the visiting English are so positive at the end of *Part I* that Spencer's final words in the play are a respectful declaration to Mullisheg: "Mighty King, we are your highness' servants" (I V.ii.145-146). Written after Elizabeth, however, and likely during the reign of Charles I, *Part II* of *Fair Maid* joins other Jacobean and Caroline plays "about the violent and "raging" Turk" and confirms "in [the] English imagination the perils of the East" (Matar *British* 56).

Part II's shift in tone reflects changes in England's socio-political climate that occurred after *Part I*'s composition. As discussed in Chapter 2, Heywood establishes a jubilant air at the opening of *Part I* as the streets of Plymouth "Glister with gold!" (l.11). In his introductory notes to the play, Robert Turner remarks that Heywood is drawing on excitement resulting from the successful raid of 1596 in which the English attacked "the Spanish fleet based at Cadiz", rendering the Spanish ships unable to defend their towns, attack England, or assist Irish rebels (198). According to Turner, the triumphant

¹ While no concrete evidence has yet been found to determine the exact publishing dates, scholars tend to agree that *The Fair Maid of the West* was written "in two parts, the first in the last years of Elizabeth I's reign, and the continuation about 30 years later" (Jowitt "East" 57).

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atmosphere in the opening of the first part of Heywood's play is reversed in the second part, however, where the moral tone "becomes viciously charged": the King of Fez's character is more self-serving than in the earlier play; his wife, Tota, a new character, is vengeful and lustful; and duplicity runs rampant (xviii). Matar notes "the death of Queen Elizabeth and the beginning of a civil war in Morocco in 1603 brought an end to England's cooperation with Morocco" and partly contributed to the transformation in the Moors' representation in *Fair Maid* and their subsequent disappearance altogether in English drama (*Britain* 36). Rule under King James and then Charles I saw England separate "itself politically and imaginatively from Barbary" (Matar *Britain* 36). When Heywood wrote *Part II*, then, "the image of a cooperative and benign potentate, which had been acceptable and credible under Elizabeth, was no longer possible" (Matar *Britain* 53). The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to exploring how *The Fair Maid of the West Part II* addressed the social and political shifts that occurred in the years following *Part I*'s composition. Heywood responded to these changes and to "the continued interest and involvement of English subjects in Mediterranean and Islamic affairs" in *Part II* by modifying how he represented "the powerful conjunction" of racial, sexual, classist, and gendered "anxieties in early modern culture" (Vitkus *Turning* 162).

Racial and cultural dichotomies feature early in *Part II* when Queen Tota summons Clem and asks him how the English differ from "our people" (Part II, I.i.67). By framing the conversation this way it is clear that the English are not the only party aware of the racial and cultural differences, and importantly, that it is not only the English who are wary of the other group. The Queen of Fez is gathering information about the English as she feels threatened by the Englishwoman, Bess. Clem remains

The Fair Maid of the West Part II

stalwart in his response to the queen, telling her “I hold our nation to be the cleaner ... Because they never sit down to meat with such foul hands and faces” (73-76). In this comic scene, Clem is unabashed in his comparison of “fair” Englishwomen and “black” Moroccans:

You shall meet some of them sometimes as fresh as flowers in
May and as fair as my mistress, and within an hour the same
gentlewoman as black as yourself or any of your Morians.

Tota

Can they change faces so? Not possible.
Show me some reason for't.

Clem

When they put on their masks.

Tota

Masks? What are they?

Clem

Please you to put off yours and I'll tell you.

Tota

We wear none but that which nature hath bestowed on us
and our births give us freely. (Part II I.i.78-87)

The intended humour within the play's dialogue is in the juxtaposition of Tota's literal response to Clem's absurd proposition that she remove her mask. As Anston Bosman notes, “In the play world, the joke is that Tota wears no mask; in the world of the players, it is that whoever impersonates her is neither black nor a woman” (144). Clem is

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implying here that since Tota is a woman she is inherently untrustworthy, her “mask” being how she deceptively presents herself to others and removable, if she so wished. His comments draw attention to race as well, however, since the actor playing the role would have been in black makeup. Without costume or “mask”, the audience knows that they would be looking at a white male on stage, rendering Clem’s comments ironic and representative of gender and race as performative.

Clem’s diction when comparing African and English women indicates early modern English beliefs that people’s internal characteristics were signified by their outer appearance. Race and gender, then, had implications for English understandings of otherwise invisible practices and beliefs regarding, for example, sexuality and religious faith. Clem describes Queen Tota and her people as “black” and pairs this against English women who are “fresh” and “fair”. This black-white juxtaposition not only emphasizes physical differences, but associates beauty, purity, and vigor with fair English women, and darkness and death with the non-English. His comparison of English ladies and gentlewomen to flowers suggests they are delicate, fertile, untouched, and according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “inexperienced”, “untainted”, “pure”, and “look healthy or youthful” (“fresh”). Clem’s carefully constructed phrasing also derides the female gender, however, as he tells Tota that the English women may turn “as black as yourself or any of your Morians,” in an “allusion” to “female inconstancy” (Bosman 143). He reasserts this judgment when Tota asks him to clarify what he means by “masks” and he responds, “Please you to put off yours and I’ll tell you” (85). In saying this, he reveals that though he acknowledges racial differences between the English and their hosts, he views all women as treacherous, including Queen Tota. Clem’s parallels between English

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and Morian women warns the audience that “Tota’s dark identity, both literal and metaphorical, may be assumed by Bess [...] at any point” (Jowitt “East” 68). This scene conveys a concern about the implications of intercultural contact, particularly where females are concerned, and the potentially deleterious influences of powerful foreigners whose behaviour is governed by “intangible, invisible, inner traits” (Loomba “Identities” 241).

Heywood’s use of “black” recalls the racial connotations made in *Part I* by the naming of *The Negro* and the demonization of Mullisheg, but is more disparaging in *Part II* where blackness is tied to a “lack of faith” and “many types of sin, including a propensity for sex, as well as for non-normative sexual practices” (Loomba “Identities” 237). Loomba notes that medieval and early modern Christianity conceived of embodiment as a relationship between the soul and the physical body, such that the body was understood to both house and reflect the soul. She states that “there is ‘the blackness of sin’, which resides within the soul, and this kind of blackness is embodied in unbelievers, whose sin is rooted in their faithlessness, and then manifested in bodily terms”, e.g., skin colour (“Identities” 237). These interpretations are conveyed throughout *Part II*, when, for example, Goodlack contemplates Mullisheg’s attempt to blackmail and threaten him into arranging for Bess to be taken from Spencer and given to the king. After reading Mullisheg’s letter, Goodlack describes it as having been inked in “the blood of basilisks” (I.i.311), and “of serpents’ venom or of vipers’ stings” (I.i.315). These references to snakes portray Mullisheg as deceitful and treacherous, as he tempts Goodlack with wealth and power to betray his friend and country. The serpentine metaphor suggests Mullisheg is a sinner by relating him to the creature responsible for

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Original Sin in Christian mythology. Hence, we have on the English stage a depiction of a morally corrupt non-Christian whose sinful nature is exposed by his dark skin.

Moving forward in the play, Mullisheg's attempt to manipulate Bess into his bed continues to be a point of intersection between race, religion, and sexuality. Goodlack remarks further on the letter: "Who but a Moor, / Of all that bears man's shape likest a devil, / Could have devis'd this horror?" (I.i.328-330). Goodlack is direct in these lines, stating not only that Mullisheg, but all Moors, have "shape likest a devil" thus profiling the Moroccans in terms of race and religion. The devil simile complements Goodlack's allusions to snakes a few lines earlier and serves to reinforce Mullisheg's characterization as deceitful, wicked, and a tempter of honourable men. Later, in Act II, having foiled the king's plan to take Bess, Spencer says of him, "His lust outweigh'd his honor, and as if his soul / Were blacker than his face, he laid plots / To take this sweet night from me" (II.vi. 75-77). Through Mullisheg's dangerous desire to draw the English woman to his bed, Heywood "makes only too clear the sexual underpinnings of racial thought" and draws "a connection between blackness and religious belief" (Loomba "Identities" 241). The playwright fuses sexuality, race, and religion in these lines, portraying Mullisheg as a poorly disciplined leader whose appetite for sexual gratification outweighs all other obligations or moral codes. Note here that Spencer identifies the king's soul as "blacker than his face", again pointing to Christian beliefs at the time that the physical body is an outer manifestation of the quality of one's soul. Spencer draws attention to Mullisheg's predilection for satisfying his lust rather than obeying his honour, unlike Spencer himself or his companions. Again, then, Heywood excessively demonizes the non-English in

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order to exalt the English. In this case Goodlack is the idealized honourable Englishman who is rewarded for remaining loyal to his compatriots despite threats and temptation.

Heywood continues to centre attention on Moorish “religious difference, skin colour, and sexual waywardness” through Acts II and III with the use of bed-tricks (Loomba “Identities” 239). In early modern drama, bed-tricks are “the convention by which wives reclaim straying husbands or women force reluctant men to fulfill promises of marriage” (Desens 59). This convention is also used “by husbands to test their wives’ fidelity” (Desens 78).

With Tota and Mullisheg we have a straying husband, but in this case the wife seeks vengeance on him, not to reclaim him. Her use of the bed-trick is damaging to her character since it is not being used to protect her marriage, but to satisfy her lust and rage. Mullisheg, meanwhile, aims to sleep with Bess by whatever means necessary. He intends to execute a bed-trick as an act of infidelity, not as a test of his wife’s fidelity. In this part of the plot, Heywood relies on “the trope of black shamelessness, wantonness, and guile that can be traced throughout the early modern period” to reveal the supposedly manipulative, lascivious nature of the Muslim characters and magnify the beneficence of the English who use the situation as an opportunity to reconcile the King and Queen (Loomba “Identities” 238). In a double bed-trick, “a third party ... deceives a husband and wife, each intent on pursuing an extramarital affair, into sleeping together” (Desens 78). The English use the double bed-trick to make their escape and to correct the behaviour of Mullisheg and Tota who are unable to either identify the source of their marital tension nor resolve it themselves.

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The bed-trick calls attention to Tota's sexual desires, and reinforces her characterization as a duplicitous, vengeful, lascivious Muslim woman. In a double bed-trick, the wife's intent, like the husband's, is to commit adultery. Unlike single bed-tricks where the wife reforms the husband and "can be portrayed in an idealized manner by the dramatists," in a double bed-trick "the dramatists are acknowledging that women have sexual desires but they are also suggesting that those desires must remain hidden" from their stage husbands in order for the scenario to be acceptable to audiences (Desens 80). As in *Part I*, real-world concerns about miscegenation are reflected on stage in *Part II*, indicating that English anxiety regarding sexual cross-cultural encounters did not abate during the three decades between the composition of play's parts. Marliss Desens notes that, compared to male infidelity, "female infidelity was viewed as a more serious matter and was a source of considerable male anxiety" (80). Control over women's sexuality was a tool to protect the English bloodline, an idealized Christian masculine identity. Any threat to this control, either by women over their own bodies or by manipulation (as with the bed-trick), was a threat to masculine power and to the English.

The double bed-trick in *Fair Maid* also serves to address the danger of the powerful female (Tota) and to weaken the image of the powerful male non-Christian foreign leader (Mullisheg). Bed-tricks "in which men have sex with the wrong women effectively deprive the men of the capacity to consent, thwarting their sexual wills and rendering them strangely passive" (Waldron 620). This perspective paints a particularly threatening portrait of Tota and further diminishes Mullisheg's authority. Tota's attempt to trick Spencer is indicative of her duplicitous nature and thirst for power, though ultimately it is the English who outwit her, escaping unscathed and morally superior. The

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outcome of the bed-tricks in this play is that Mullisheg unintentionally sleeps with his wife, thus failing at his attempt to bed Bess and rendering him a victim of both the English and his Queen. He is stripped, then, of his political power and his masculinity, while Tota's behaviour is corrected by the Englishmen who trick her into remaining faithful to her husband.

Ultimately, Heywood's use of the bed-trick in *Fair Maid* "develops further the theme of cultural competition, which here is put in terms of sexual performance" (Vitkus *Turning* 137). While the bed-trick may be considered ethically questionable by modern standards, the English success at outwitting and correcting the behaviour of their captors made it an acceptable means of comic resolution and a comfort to early modern audiences. Combined with cultural assumptions that surpassed the theatre walls, this plot device contributes to the villainous characterization of the Queen and of Mullisheg in *Part II*, and is excused since these Moroccan royals are morally corrupt. It also serves to perpetuate English suspicions about non-English morality and to justify concerns about cultural influences.

Clem's character, in particular, is representative of early modern apprehension about cross-cultural contact and conversion, "a concept that includes the religious conversion of individuals but also describes a collective cultural and economic transformation that English society was undergoing" (Vitkus *Turning* 162). His ambition for wealth and to elevate his social position results in his castration, effectively rendering him "Turkish" in the view of audiences, due to his "willingness to change identity and serve or emulate Muslim masters" (Vitkus *Turning* 162). Clem's attempt at self-transformation begins in Act V scene ii of *Part I*, where he makes the misguided decision

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to volunteer to become eunuch. At that point, the audience has already seen Clem enter the stage in the previous scene dressed “as a fantastic Moor” declaring “I hold myself as good a Christian in these clothes as the proudest infidel of them all” (*Part I V.i.118-119*). Though he states his devotion to Christianity he also acknowledges his Muslim appearance as part of his Moorish performance. Theatregoers would understand the implications here of the outer transformation reflecting a possible inner shift comprised of an abandonment of Christian faith and along with that, English loyalty, honour, and identity.

Unfortunately for Clem, his social aspirations have a physical cost that marks him as having been contaminated by the Moors. He becomes a casualty of the beliefs that the play perpetuates, where “phobic representations of those who have turned Turk depict converts as villains, dupes, or tragic victims” (Vitkus *Turning* 162). He makes clear his regret throughout *Part II* with sporadic comments about the “barbers of Barbary” (I.i.50), his emasculation and multiple euphemisms alluding to his castration, e.g., he remarks that he can be “chaste” because he has “ta’en a medicine for’t” (I.i.91), and that he “shall be sure never to be troubled with the stone” (I.i.51-52). Failing to reintegrate with his English community, he tries in vain to elicit respect by reasserting his Moorish identity, announcing “I am Clem of Foy, the Bashaw of Barbary, who from a courtier of Fez am turned a drawer in Florence” (IV.v.52-53) and in the final scene of the play, “I am Bashaw of Barbary, by the same token I sold certain precious stones to purchase the place” (V.iv.133-134). Clem’s fellow Englishmen, however, demonstrate little sympathy for his condition or respect for his position in Fez, and continually mock him:

Roughman How, Clem? Where’s he?

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Goodlack

He has got a service hard by and draws wine.

Roughman

His master may well trust him with his maids,

For since the bashaws gelded him, he has learn'd

To run exceeding nimbly. (*Part II* IV.vi.178-182)

Turner notes that Roughman's comments suggest that Clem runs "nimble" "not only because he is scared" since he has been castrated by the Moors, "but also because he now has no "stones" to weigh him down"(*Fair Maid* 176). Once again the English deride Clem for deciding to have himself emasculated by becoming a eunuch, effectively extracting critical components of his English identity: his masculinity and his honour, and rendering his faith as a Christian suspect. Clem's emasculation is a representation of the threat posed by the emerging middle class to England's socio-economic hierarchy, and of English society's adoption of "new procedures and identities that were based on a Mediterranean experience defined by an instability of identity and a questionable moral and religious status" (Fuchs "Faithless" 61; Vitkus *Turning* 162). As such, Clem is emblematic of English cultural conversion and serves as a reminder of the dangers to English identity accompanying such transformations.

Clem's ostracization is juxtaposed with the rewards and success earned by Spencer and his English companions who remain loyal in spirit, behaviour, and appearance to their country and compatriots. Vitkus argues that the English are tested throughout Part II in order to "define English virtue in contrast to the others" (*Turning* 137). Roughman and Goodlack, for example, are threatened by Tota and Mullisheg to

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bring Bess and Spencer to their respective beds. Neither one wishes to betray his compatriots, but “fearing the sultan’s threats and tempted by the offer of wealth and power” they agree, at least initially, to cooperate with the queen and king (Vitkus *Turning* 137). Rather than succumbing to their fear and temptation, Goodlack and Roughman ultimately band together. Holding onto their virtue and honour, they successfully carry out the double bed-trick that simultaneously releases them, repairs Mullisheg’s and Tota’s marriage, and frees Bess and Spencer. In doing so, the English resist “the Moors while maintaining their dignity and projecting the noblest image of their culture and religion” (Matar *Britain* 53). In contrast to the Moors and with the exception of Clem, then, the English group preserves their honour and virtue, and with these qualities, their identity.

Through loyalty, hard work, and honour these English are able to elevate their wealth and social position. In his discussion of *Part I* and *Part II* Matar asserts that *Fair Maid* was intended “to motivate English men and women to sail, barter, gain wealth, and ultimately to return to king and country” (Matar *Britain* 54). Heywood’s plot supports this claim as we see a group of English sailors unite first under Bess and then under Spencer to combat Spanish, Moorish, and Italian foes and to emerge victorious and wealthy with their Christianity, virtue, and loyalty to the Crown unblemished. Matar posits that it is the “seeming social classlessness of the English and the commitment to each other” that results in their success (*Britain* 54). Audiences would have witnessed hardworking sailors and members of the emerging merchant class return to England with their honour and souls intact and their wealth greatly increased. For example, when Bess encounters Florence in Act IV, she reveals to him “all the wealth / I had from Barbary is

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perish'd in the sea. / I that this morn commanded half a million" (i.140-142), thus enticing theatregoers with the promise of riches abroad, while warning them of the hazards of sea travel.

Non-English characters are also rewarded for emulating English behaviour. Joffer, for example, is promoted by Mullisheg for "nobleness" in his service to Spencer who has demonstrated to the king that "These English are in all things honorable" (III.iii.157):

Mullisheg

And, Bashaw, for thy nobleness to a gentleman

Of such approved valor and renown,

We here create thee Viceroy of Argiers

And do esteem thee next our queen in grace. (III.iii.164-167)

In recognition of Joffer's loyalty to Spencer, Mullisheg multiplies his wealth and raises his social and political position. Mullisheg is praising Joffer here for qualities that the early modern English admired as ideal English traits. Using "nobleness," "valor," "renown," and "grace" he is equating Joffer with an English aristocrat. He is honourable and brave, and he is well known for these. Mullisheg also links Joffer, a Muslim, with Christianity by using the word "grace, a term that can relate to a number of religions, but is used "originally and predominantly in Christian contexts," to describe a divinely endowed gift or virtue ("grace"). Mullisheg, then, rewards a non-English character for his Christian English behaviour, as Joffer undergoes a gradual cultural conversion.

Heywood depicts Mullisheg as proselytizing on behalf of the English as Joffer, the non-Christian inhabitant of a Mediterranean country adopts English traits. Rather than

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fulfilling a fear that Spencer's dishonor will be broadcast, Mullisheg promises that "all the world shall know" of the virtues taught to them by the English (III.iii.169). The expectation is that the foreign characters will go on to spread the gospel of English honour, religion, and money. Hence, by not concealing their true nature, the English will reap financial reward and will have converts to further spread the gospel.

Recognizing "the value of the Englishman's chivalric honour" Joffer, at the end of *Part II*, follows his cultural conversion with a spiritual one. In Act V, when the Duke of Florence releases Joffer without penalty, the Moor is "inspired by this latest display of Christian "honor" and virtue" and "chooses conversion to Christianity" (Vitkus *Turning* 139):

Joffer

Such honor is not found in Barbary.

The virtue in these Christians hath converted me,

Which to the world I can no longer smother.

Accept me, then, a Christian and a brother. (V.iv.184-187)

Heywood constructs parallel oppositions whereby the words associated with Islam and containment, i.e., "Barbary" and "smother," are rhymed with and juxtaposed against words associated with Christianity and fraternity, i.e., "converted me" and "brother." It is notable that "smother" can also mean to conceal or mute something. In the above lines, Joffer declares that he "can no longer" hide his conversion and, like Mullisheg, intends to share the news of his transformation and of Christian virtue "to the world." This conversion completes Joffer's transformation, making him an ambassador for the Christian English and affirming for audiences the moral superiority of the divinely

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endorsed English crown. Regarding *Part II*, Vitkus states that “it is the performance of cultural competition that holds the episodic plot together” (*Turning*137). Joffer’s conversion to Christianity attests to the English as the clear victors in this cultural competition. Contesting early modern audiences’ fears of sacrificing their faith, identity, and citizenship overseas, then, Heywood uses this former Muslim’s success to reassure theatregoers that their English identity is secure, and indeed profitable, as long as one remains loyal and honorable.

Heywood writes Spencer as the embodiment of early modern aspirations for Englishness by characterizing him as having an unyielding code of masculine honour. Aside from skin colour, religious faith, and sexuality, masculine honour is the primary trait differentiating the ideal English identity from that of the non-English. From his discussion in *Part I* with Goodlack regarding the purpose for embarking on dangerous voyages and, especially, all through *Part II*, Spencer never wavers in his sense of honour, eventually impressing even Mullisheg. As Vitkus summarizes “when Spencer keeps his word and arrives at the court in time to save Joffer from execution, Mullisheg marvels at Spencer’s chivalric one-upmanship, and at the fact that the English, scorning the gifts obtained earlier from Mullisheg, left the gold and jewels behind” (*Turning* 138). Spencer arrives at court at line 37 of Act III scene iii, and from there debates his character with Mullisheg for 58 lines. Each time the king accuses Spencer of an act for which he is either justified or innocent, Spencer corrects him, and only asks that Mullisheg execute him and release Joffer: “lay all on me. / I’ll pay the debt; then set the bashaw free (62-63). Finally, Mullisheg offers to spare Spencer’s life if he surrenders *The Negro* and Bess, however Spencer vehemently refuses:

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Rather than yield my basest ship boy up
To become thy slave, much less betray my bride
To thee and to thy brutish lust, know, King
Of Fez, I'd die a hundred thousand deaths first. (III.iii.91-94)

Spencer's outrage is conveyed by his hyperbolic exclamation that he would "die a hundred thousand deaths" before agreeing to the king's offer. He intersects class, sexuality, and religion as he tells Mullisheg he would not trade his "basest ship boy," the person lowest on *The Negro's* social hierarchy, much less his virgin bride, to a lustful king the audience knows to be Muslim. He rebukes Mullisheg for suggesting he trade Bess for his own life, expressing his anger with alliterative bilabials "basest," "boy," "become," "betray," "bride," and "brutish" that indicate he is 'spitting mad.' These lines demonstrate Spencer's integrity and intense loyalty to those he leads. His code of honour is so strong that he will not barter any life for that of his own, and he maligns Mullisheg for being despotic, violent, and lascivious.

Spencer's honour is unassailable, setting him apart from those he leads and making him an example to his crew and to the Moors. While Goodlack, Roughman, and Joffer eventually do choose virtuous actions, they are first loyal to themselves and Mullisheg's demands. Goodlack and Roughman only shift their behaviour when they devise a solution to their predicament that will prevent them from harm, while Joffer does not begin to transform until he learns from Spencer the virtues of being honourable. Ultimately, Spencer's companions do come to his aid, as he would have for them, showing "the importance of commitment and honour" and demonstrating for the audience that "the English have retained their Christian courage and then escaped from

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the Moors – even won them over” (Matar *Britons* 54). In this cultural competition it is the merchant class English who emerge victorious. Unlike *Part I* of *Fair Maid*, however, they are under the leadership of a virtuous Christian English upper-class male rather than a cross-dressing barmaid. By *Part II*, Heywood has adjusted the rules determining who can be a member of the ruling class. The shifts in Bess’s and Spencer’s roles between *Part I* and *Part II* demonstrate the desired exclusion of women from positions of power due to, as Heywood would have audiences believe, their inability to possess or understand honour. In *Part I* honour is a matter related to class membership, but in *Part II* it becomes a matter of gender.

The plot of *Part II* is constructed to frame honour and power as inherently masculine traits and to alleviate concerns about female sovereignty. Spencer accumulates respect and power throughout *Part II* by continuously exhibiting chivalric honour. Alternatively, by portraying Bess as “utterly unable to appreciate male standards of honour” and Tota as a lascivious and vengeful despot, Heywood writes women as naturally lacking in qualities required for leadership (Jowitt “East” 64). Reflecting the shifts in England’s monarchy during the thirty years between the plays’ compositions, *Fair Maid of the West* “offers different political opinions about the dangers of female rule in *Part I* and *Part II*” (Jowitt “East” 58). Heywood conveys these opinions by depicting Bess as a woman unable to comprehend the importance of male honour, and by developing the character of Tota, an irrational powerful female representing the emasculating threat of female sovereignty. Bess, furthermore, the once virtuous and heroic allegory for Queen Elizabeth I, is reduced to the status of contained female,

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becoming what Jowitt identifies as “a reflection of the type of more passive consort-style queenship recommended for Henrietta Maria” (“East” 59).

In *Part II*, Spencer, rather than Bess, represents the embodiment of idealized English identity, as Heywood portrays him as an ambassador for economic and political interests abroad. In *Part I* it was Bess who projected the good reputation of England and its sovereign by displaying courage, mercy, virtue, and honour in battle and in court. In the second play, however, it is Spencer who does this work no matter the personal cost to him. For example, he tells Bess he must leave her and return to Mullisheg’s court as he promised to Joffer because his “honor, faith, and country are engag’d” (III.iii.101). Later, as the group is leaving Fez, Mullisheg praises Spencer for his “virtues”, “faith”, and “zeal” (III.iii.162-163) and declares “Y’have quenched in me all lust, by which shall grow / Virtues which Fez and all the world shall know” (168-169). As discussed earlier, he outright states his admiration for the prized English traits of virtue and faith, and implies that these foreigners have corrected a fault in his character – his lust – and taught him to be virtuous. English proselytism and the Muslims’ promise to continue it on behalf of the English reassures early modern audiences that, though dangerous, overseas voyages are economically, religiously, and politically profitable.

Heywood is careful to distinguish Spencer’s conduct from that of the women in the play by eroding Bess’s character from *Part I* and writing Tota as bloodthirsty and governed by her passions. This has the effect of rendering English power as a singularly masculine domain, especially important after Elizabeth’s reign, reflecting an early modern England where “it was not male desire for other men, but excessive male subjection to women that constituted effeminacy” (Loomba “Identities” 231). Spencer’s

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impervious code of honour in *Part II* is juxtaposed with Bess's "lack of understanding of and hostility towards ideas of chivalric male honor" (Jowitt *Voyage* 49):

Bess

Prize you my love no better than to rate it
Beneath the friendship of a barbarous Moor?
Can you, to save him, leave me to my death?
Is this the just reward of all my travels?

Spencer

I prize my honor and a Christian's faith
Above what earth can yield. Shall Fez report
Unto our country's shame and to the scandal
Of our religion that a barbarous Moor
Can exceed us in nobleness? No, I'll die
A hundred thousand deaths first. (III.ii.127-136)

The words "prize," "rate," and "reward" commodify Bess's relationship with Spencer, and are reminiscent of *Part I* where the only valuable commodities she had to trade with Mullisheg were her beauty and chastity. She speaks of her rescue mission here, her "travels," and her love as objects of exchange, reminding audiences of the mercantile nature of overseas voyages. Bess exaggerates Spencer's actions, accusing him of abandoning her to her death when in fact he is assuring her safe return to England. Her thoughts are only for her own "reward" for having travelled to find him, and she disparages Joffer by referring to him as "a barbarous Moor". Spencer tries to correct her racially charged tirade by telling her that his honor, faith, and country hold primacy over

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all else in his life, sentiments that he repeats in III.iii.101, and that he will not allow Mullisheg to broadcast his dishonour. He also exclaims here that he will “die a hundred thousand deaths” before compromising these components of his identity; again using a phrase he will repeat in III.iii.94. The presentation of these ideas in the play suggest that Heywood is proselytizing idealized English traits through repetition and hyperbole. There is a contrast in Bess’s and Spencer’s lines as well, between worldly and spiritual rewards, as Bess focuses on the former and Spencer, the honourable Christian hero, on the latter. In these lines Spencer asserts his masculinity by refusing to submit to a woman’s will and highlights “contemporary perceptions of the problems attendant upon, and perceived limitations of, female rule and political ambition” as women are too much guided by their own passions (Jowitt “East” 59). Bess desires the reckless option of escape with Spencer at the risk of recapture and death. Spencer, however, acts in accordance with the components of his English identity: his chivalric honour by ensuring the safety of Bess and the others; his Christianity by fulfilling his promise to Joffer; and his loyalty to England by representing his country honourably.

As Jowitt observes, the fears about female rule that are enacted through “Mullisheg’s eroticized court” in *Part I* do not disappear with Bess’s gradual domestication in *Part II*, but are manifested in the character of Queen Tota (“East” 58). As the audience sees Spencer and other male characters marginalize “Bess and her threatening erotic power” it also witnesses “the newly introduced character of Queen Tota, who is represented as sexually predatory, manipulative, ruthless and bloodthirsty, and a witch” (Jowitt “east” 69, 57). Tota’s earlier attempts “to force Clem and Roughman to enact her adulterous schemes” signifies that she, like Bess, “places her personal

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satisfaction above the honorable claims of nationality or religion” (Jowitt “East” 66, 67). As such, unlike *Part I*, this play “is a patriarchal fantasy concerning the reduction of female power as national and religious values are successfully promulgated solely by men” (Jowitt “East” 53).

A large part of this “reduction of female power” is dedicated to the erosion of Bess’s gender-subversive independence, ultimately leading to her complete submission to her husband, Spencer. A number of scholars² analyse “changes in the representation of Bess” as revealing “the ways that powers of queenship were, after Elizabeth’s [death], revised, remodeled, and reduced” (Jowitt *Voyage* 40). Throughout the play what was earlier Bess’s admirable independence is reduced to acts of jealousy and selfishness. As with her outburst upon his return to Mullisheg’s court in Act III, she becomes enraged in Act V when Spencer chooses to uphold his oath to Florence rather than embrace Bess when they are reunited:

But I’ll be so reveng’d
As never woman was. I’ll be a precedent
To all wives hereafter how to pay home
Their proud, neglectful husbands. ’Tis in my way ;
I’ve power and I’ll do it. (V.ii.78-82)

Her hyperbole and threat, “I’ll be a precedent / To all wives hereafter,” are a subversion of the justifiable rage Spencer showed toward Mullisheg’s loathsome offer in Act III, and of Mullisheg’s honourable vow to broadcast English virtue. Bess declares that she will have revenge on Spencer for upholding his honour instead of embracing her. More

² See Crupi 1998; Fuchs 2001; Howard 1994; Jowitt 2003, 2010; Vitkus 2003.

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dangerous, however, is her promise to broadcast to all women, at the expense of English masculine honour, how to take vengeance on their husbands. In these lines Bess verbalizes exactly that which concerned the early modern English about a woman in power – that uncontained she might act as an example to other women, resulting in the emasculation of husbands country-wide and the diminishment of the English identity.

Bess's containment is not fully realized until the end of the play when Joffer enters. At this point, the last remnants of her transgressive inclinations are erased as Spencer leaves her to welcome his friend: "Bashaw Joffer? – Leave my embraces, Bess, / For I of force am cast into his arms. – / My noble friend!" (V.iv.155-157). The scene has religious and gendered overtones as the once-Muslim man is now in the embrace of the Christian man, while the Christian woman is cast aside. Hence, Bess is "silenced" and "rendered as a possession" as "the men align themselves together as an honorable elite" (Jowitt *Voyage* 53). By the end of the play, then, Heywood has modified the female role to one that is executed in the "private home, the space allotted to women in the emerging nation state" where female sexuality and power can be regulated and contained by the husband within the confines of marriage (Howard 116).

Sexuality is woven through *Part I* and *II* of *Fair Maid* as it represents on stage the power dynamic between the dominant and the subordinate: The English over the non-English, the elite over the low class, and the male over the female. In the following play we see added to this dynamic the Christian over the non-Christian, and the ultimate portrayal of the idealized early modern English identity as an honorable, white, upper-class Christian male representative of the divinely appointed English crown. Though conversion is not a centrally featured plot device in *The Fair Maid of the West*, Heywood

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acknowledges the defining role of religion in early modern English identity when Goodlack responds to Spencer's insistence on returning to prison, "But what's the lives of twenty thousand Moors / To one that is a Christian?" (III.ii.120-21).

Chapter 4

The Renegado

Written in 1624, Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* presented to English audiences a narrative comprised of Italian Catholic and North African Muslim characters that focused on commercial trade and religious conversion. The play has surprised scholars for both its success and lack of censure, given "its positive portrayal of a Jesuit priest, its investment in a sacred relic and the sacramental powers of the Eucharist, penance, and baptism, and its valorization of female chastity" during a period of hostility towards Catholicism (Degenhardt "Catholic Prophylactics" 84). The play lists only one English role, that of Carazie "a eunuch, enslaved to Donusa", though, as Claire Jowitt points out, "in this drama, as in many others of the period, the Italians act as surrogate English" ("Massinger's" 46). In the seventeenth century, "commercial interests brought more Englishmen into direct contact with Islamic culture throughout the Mediterranean region" causing playwrights to modify how Muslim power was represented on stage (Vitkus *Three* 45). Earlier portrayals reflected English anxieties about the Islamic threat and ongoing Anglo-Spanish warfare through tyrannical Muslim potentates on stage. Seventeenth-century portrayals, however, began to reflect more complex understandings of Muslim power as "trade with the Turk and peace with Spain had changed the cross-cultural context" (Vitkus *Three* 45). Rather than focusing action and conflict on the tyrannical Muslim, later plays focus attention on the convert, or potential convert, including renegades.

Unlike plays such as Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (c.1609) that condemned piracy on religious and moral grounds, *The Renegado* was well received in

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playhouses perhaps because piracy was not altogether denounced by the English public, and also because of the entertainment value and morale boosting delivered by reports of successful English privateering in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. Privateering is understood in terms of a triangulation of privateer-pirate-renegade. All three figures plunder ships and colonies for material gain, but only the privateer acts in the name of the crown; raiding for the profit of England, and with state endorsement, his theft is within the bounds of the law. The pirate, however, acts independently, illegally, and often for personal gain. The renegade is a pirate or privateer who converts to Islam from Christianity, thus rejecting not only the law, but the English crown, and Christianity; he represents an abandonment of faith, nation, and English identity.

Piracy was of great political and economic importance to the early modern English, but brought with it the risk of religious and cultural conversion. Jane Hwang Degenhardt points out that “while the renegade hero manifested the excitement of English privateering and imperial fantasies, he also evoked anxieties about cross-cultural commerce and the unstable identity of the English privateer” that were exacerbated by these Christians’ “particular vulnerabilities to conversion” (“Catholic Martyrdom” 89). While religious conversion is at the center of *The Renegado*’s action and was a pervasive concern among the early modern English about their Christian sailors abroad, Massinger uses it “as an erotic temptation” but then changes the fortunes of the key players such that death is avoided and all who embrace Christianity are rewarded (Vitkus, *Three* 41).

The Renegado permits an examination of the issues of religion, identity, sexuality, and power in a narrative similar to that of other travel and adventure plays from the period. It is unique among plays of the era, however, in that it allows a Christian male

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who has committed a sexual act with a Muslim woman to be redeemed. This is “a sharp departure from previous dramas in which any contact with a Turk was potentially a prelude to permanent conversion” (Degenhardt “Catholic Prophylactics” 64). In this play, it is the Muslim woman who ultimately converts to Christianity, thus portraying a European victory over Ottoman power. Scholars largely agree that *The Renegado* serves the purpose of “affirming the power of Christianity to “redeem” both Muslims and renegades,” thus providing some comfort to English audiences worried for the souls of their comrades overseas (43; Neill, *The Renegado* 17; Neill, “Turn” 156). Like *The Fair Maid of the West*, *The Renegado* allows me to examine how political power is encoded in acts of conversion, and how the strength of one’s national allegiance and identity is represented by that person’s ability to resist sexual and material temptation. This chapter discusses how Massinger conveyed early modern English uncertainties about their own identity and the impacts of cross-culturation through scenes confronting issues connected to race, religion, sexuality, class, and gender.

Race is less centrally figured in *The Renegado* than in other plays of the period, but language throughout the drama reveals it as a concept understood by the English, at least to some degree, as revealed by skin colour. In his introduction to the play, Michael Neill writes “the clash between the play’s European and Turkish worlds is imagined in religious rather than racial terms” (“Introduction” 30). Massinger expresses English concerns about cross-culturation largely with regard to Christian-Muslim interactions, however, these scenes also intersect deeply with race and sexuality. As Hwang Degenhardt states, “the stage’s propensity to represent the threat of Islam as a threat of conversion facilitated through sexual intercourse suggests its translation of the religious,

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commercial, and imperial threat of the Ottoman Empire into a personal, bodily threat that is distinctly racialized” (“Catholic Prophylactics” 66). In this section, I examine Massinger’s use of racialized language to demonstrate that he ties the “fair” to Christianity and the dark to Islam, ultimately linking light skin, Christianity, and virtue with the English representatives on stage.

Racial connotations are introduced early in the play to associate the quality of being fair with goodness; this association is later called on in Vitelli’s evaluations of Donusa’s character. In Act I Francisco counsels Vitelli: “Be cheerful, man, for know that good intents / Are in the end crowned with as fair events” (1.1.161-162). Francisco’s lexical choices are uplifting, i.e., “cheerful”, and serve to equate intentions that are morally sound, or “good”, with rewards described as “fair” or white. A further association can be made here that links “fair events” with England as such events are not simply rewarded, but “crowned” as though from a higher, or monarchical, power.

The Renegado offers several “instances of whitening or becoming fair: reversions or conversions to Christianity, sexual renunciation or vows of chastity, and ultimately a return to Europe” (Bosman 144). For example, when Donusa’s commitment to Islam begins to waver, Vitelli uses language of warfare and racially charged language, after making the sign of the cross on her forehead:

You shall, like me, with scorn look down upon
All engines tyranny can advance to batter
Your constant resolution. Then you shall
Look truly fair, when your mind’s pureness answers
Your outward beauties. (4.3.143-147)

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By saying he and Donusa will “look down” on those that would harm them, Vitelli uses hierarchical language that situates Christianity as the superior religion. He describes their enemies as siege “engines” or cannons that “batter” Donusa’s “constant resolution” through tyranny, supposedly a form of rule associated with Muslim courts at the time of this play. He also reassures her that her agreement to convert will bestow upon her the ability to resist foils and temptations just as he remained “constant” in the face of her seductive allure, though only after having first succumbed to her. Burton notes that in this and the subsequent conversion scenes the “sullied” Donusa is whitened anew [...] as she is converted into a submissive Christian wife” (153). Similar to what Heywood does in the depiction of race in *The Fair Maid of the West*, Massinger acknowledges here early modern beliefs regarding the outer body revealing the condition of a person’s inner self. Now that she has chosen Christianity, Donusa “shall look truly fair” as her “outward beauties” reflect her redeemed soul. Donusa’s physical beauty, then, once a signifier of her Muslim duplicity and lasciviousness, becomes a reflection of her redemption and Christian purity upon her decision to convert.

Massinger, like Heywood in *Fair Maid* and other dramatists of the period, racializes and demonizes Muslim characters and renegades by using vocabulary related to the devil and blackness. While he associates “fair” with “good” in Act I, he establishes the relationship between Islam, Satan, and darkness shortly before this:

Would you have me tame now? Can I know my

sister

Mewed up in his seraglio and in danger

Not alone to lose her honour but her soul –

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The hell-bred villain by, too, that has sold both
To black destruction – and not haste to send him
To the Devil, his tutor? (1.1.128-133)

These lines portray Islam and its followers in opposition to Christianity and the English. The renegade Grimaldi has sold Paulina who is now held captive by Asembeg and stands not only to lose her virginity to the Muslim tyrant, but her honour and her soul, as she may be forced to turn. In effect, through sexual intercourse with a Muslim man she would become Muslim herself and wholly forfeit her Christian European identity. Where Donusa's soul is cleansed "fair" by her embrace of Christianity, Paulina is condemned to "black destruction" in an Islamic world, brought on by the actions of an apostate "hell-bred villain" taught by "the Devil", presumably an allusion to Mahomet.

Prior to Donusa's conversion, Massinger intensifies the racial ridicule of Muslim characters by having her reject her suitor, Mustapha. Her revulsion towards him is brought on by her sexual liaison with and preference for the Italian Catholic, Vitelli. What stands out in this scene, however, is not her promiscuity or betrayal of Islam, but that Massinger "shows one African literally denigrating another" (Bosman 145). For example, though North African herself, Donusa berates Mustapha on the basis of his skin colour, criticizing his "wainscot face" and "tadpole-like complexion" (3.1.48, 50). Michael Neill glosses these phrases as "dark" and "black" respectively, meaning that she is insulting Mustapha as though he is racially separate from her. Neill glosses "wainscot face" as "resembling the oak used for paneling: hard, dark and perhaps wrinkled or scarred" (*The Renegado* 153 n.48, 50). She is not only alluding, then, to race but to his overall appearance, implying he is old and weathered, her tone quite different from that

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which she used when addressing Vitelli seductively in Act I scene iv. Her use of “tadpole-like complexion” links his skin, and thus, race, to infection as it is not only glossed as “black,” but also as “a mass of corrupt poisonous matter” (*The Renegado* 153). Massinger may be drawing on early modern English concerns of miscegenation as racial contamination, and linking these with allusions to communicable disease, for example, plague. Given her harsh language, it is possible that Donusa’s sexual encounter with Vitelli has already triggered her conversion process, or has instilled doubt in her regarding her faith, and that she is beginning to identify with the Europeans, since she “expresses her revulsion in terms of European prejudice” (Bosman 145). If this is the case, it would align with early modern understandings of miscegenation and racial contamination, though it would imply a reverse-contamination from the English perspective, since Vitelli’s Christian European blood would potentially be introduced to the Ottoman bloodline.

Donusa’s rejection of Mustapha can also be read as signifying her changeability, what Clare McManus identifies as a clichéd feminine attribute (47). Her disloyalty to Mustapha and, ultimately, to her faith has the effect that the audience will extend her characterization to all Ottomans, and will thus see them and their religion as unstable. In contrast, Vitelli’s staunch commitment to his faith redeems him and empowers him to redeem Donusa through conversion, comforting her that Christianity will give her the strength of “constant resolution” (4.3.145). Massinger constructs a scenario here where a Muslim woman betrays her religion, breaks her commitment to her suitor, and is sexually unrestrained. Her behaviour reinforces early modern beliefs about female inconstancy, the importance of containing female sexuality, and the threat posed by increased contact

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with untrustworthy, disloyal Muslims governed by their passions. For English audiences, portrayals of such Muslim characters offered reassurance that their own value system, ostensibly based on honour, chastity, Christianity, and patriarchy, and reflected in their fair physical appearance, was morally sound and divinely favoured.

The unequal distribution of spiritual redemption that occurs in *The Renegado* points to how the early modern English identified themselves religiously during this period of international and cross-cultural exploration and trade. The overlap of religion, nation and sexuality is expressed through conversion, or turning, as the instrument of Muslim power, and its resistance as the distinct marker of Christian virtue. Tension between Islam and Christianity is at the forefront of the play, and depicts Turkish women as so sexually powerful that Christian men will risk damnation to be with them. As discussed above, however, *The Renegado* contains scenes where roles are reversed such that the Christian male, Vitelli, resists turning and the Muslim woman, Donusa, becomes Christian. Such scenes of resistance and conversion convey Christianity's triumph over Islam and can be interpreted as symbolic Christian victories over the Ottoman Empire.

Faith and nation are inextricable in *The Renegado* as indicated by Gazet in the play's opening scene. Vitelli enquires as to his servant's religion, to which Gazet replies noncommittally: "Live I in England, Spain, France, Rome, Geneva, / I am of that country's faith" (1.1.36-37). Gazet's response "intimately yokes religious identity with geographical location," permitting Massinger to use religion as the weapon with which to fight this "war of opposed civilizations" on stage (Britton 75; Neill "Turn" 161). Since Christianity is understood as encoded in English identity, and Islam as encoded in Ottoman identity, conversion or turning becomes a defeat of one nation over the other

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and represents a genuine threat to nationhood. In *The Renegado* it is the Italians who emerge victorious over the Turks, time and again, through Vitelli's rejection of Donusa's efforts to turn him, Donusa's renunciation of Islam and conversion to Catholicism, and Paulina's heroic resistance of Asembeg's attempts to coerce her into a sexual relationship with him.

After Vitelli's liaison with Donusa it appears that his faith is at great risk, however, once out of her physical presence, he realizes his error and seeks Francisco's guidance. His request for penance and promise to Francisco to "do something that may hereafter to my glory / Speak me your scholar" (3.2.12-14) reveals his intent to learn from his sinful mistake and repent. Massinger uses a scholar/student and teacher trope here that is repeated throughout the play to place followers of Christianity and Islam in a subordinate position to their respective religious leaders. That these leaders can teach their students how to better adhere to their faith suggests that human frailty is forgivable and reparable. Hence, Massinger offers reassurance to early modern viewers that English sailors who falter in their faith can be redeemed. Vitelli's recommitment to the faith coincides with Grimaldi entering at 3.2.26 to seek redemption for his own sin against Christianity. This renegade's redemption, which will be explored more deeply later in the chapter, relates to Vitelli's preceding scene because it further addresses the early modern English concern about sailors going abroad and turning Turk. Matar cites the scenario of Vitelli and Grimaldi seeking and achieving redemption as a much-needed "make-believe victory on the seventeenth-century stage" since, as discussed earlier, conversion to Islam was a prevailing threat across the English Christian community ("Renegade" 501).

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Vitelli secures an Italian victory over the Turks, and so a symbolic Christian English victory over the Turkish Muslims, through his rejection of Donusa. He rejects her in two instances: the first occurs in Act III and results in his arrest, and the second occurs in Act IV when he refuses to turn Turk in order to save her, and himself, from execution. When Vitelli initially rejects Donusa, he tells her that while she is still too beautiful for him to look upon, she is less so since having given in to her lust:

You are still –

Although the sating of your lust hath sullied

The immaculate whiteness of your virgin beauties –

Too fair for me to look on (3.5.2.3-6)

Race, gender, sexuality, and religion intersect in this hypocritical speech where Christianity is associated with whiteness, and Vitelli speaks as though innocent when, in fact, he had an equal part in their transgression. Vitelli places the sin of the sexual act he shared with Donusa strictly on her, using the second person possessive pronoun, i.e. “your,” to indicate that Donusa, but not he, has given into and satisfied “lust.” Having excluded himself, the Christian male, from sin he uses colour-coded language to exalt virginity. He equates virginity with beauty, and these with whiteness, suggesting that the white European is inherently more beautiful than darker skinned women. The use of “immaculate” is strongly linked with Christianity, as it is tied to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Vitelli, then, is phrasing his speech such that Donusa’s sin, but not his, has pushed her away from grace, and that this sin has tarnished her soul, which is revealed in her “sullied” appearance. As discussed earlier in this chapter, these sentiments are reversed in Act IV when Donusa commits to conversion;

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Christianity whitens her soul, thus restoring her “outward beauties” (IV.iii.147). Vitelli’s speech indicates that he may be feeling conflicted about his transgression, since though she is “sullied” by sin, he still cannot look on her because she is so beautiful. While he is presuming himself to have the moral high ground here, he is still tempted by her beauty, putting his faith at risk again.

Vitelli is fulfilling audience expectations that this Muslim woman relies on ethereal beauty and charm to seduce otherwise virtuous Christian Englishmen into sin. He resists her “Charms” (21) and “enchantment” (24) and calls upon “holy thoughts and resolutions” (38) to help him stand “against this fierce temptation” (39). Although his “human frailty” (12) weakens him in the presence of this woman’s supernatural temptation, he perseveres by drawing strength from what he and the audience believe to be the one true faith. Vitelli, here, is becoming a martyr figure, a process that Massinger develops further in Act IV, as he surrenders himself and his fate to divine power upon realizing he has erred.

It is possible to read Vitelli’s refusal to turn Turk as an act of martyrdom that counters English worries about the prevalence of Christians turning Turk. In Act IV he is being tortured in jail and passionately refuses Donusa’s offer of turning and marriage, though it would save both of them. Burton argues that “the histrionics of Christian resistance to conversion in the Turkish plays would seem to suggest a kind of dramatic over-compensation for actual instances of Christians turning Turk” (152). Vitelli’s enraged diatribe goes on for twenty-five lines against Donusa’s religion at her request that he turn Turk, even threatening violence against her:

The Devil, thy tutor, fills each part about thee,

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And that I cannot play the exorcist
To dispossess thee – unless I should tear
Thy body limb by limb, and throw it to
The Furies that expect it – I would now
Pluck out that wicked tongue that hath blasphemed
That great Omnipotency at whose nod
The fabric of the world shakes. (4.3.107-114)

Drawing on early modern English associations of Islam with the Devil, Vitelli explicitly states the relationship here and suggests that Donusa's faith is not a religion but a demonic possession. Since he "cannot play the exorcist," he proposes to "pluck out" her tongue or enact raw physical violence on her by tearing her limbs off and throwing her remains to "The Furies." His reference to these "classical deities responsible for revenge" or "tormenting spirits" is also a form of threatened violence that would subject her body and soul to torture and torment even after death (*The Renegado* 204). Conversely, he is so awed by and reverential towards the Christian God that he does not utter the word on stage, instead referring to "that great Omnipotency". His use of an indirect reference to God serves the plot, however, as Neill notes, the 1606 Act to Restrain Abuses of Players prohibited the use of God's name onstage as it was considered blasphemy (*Renegado* 204). His aggressive reaction to Donusa's pressure becomes an attempt at Christian triumph over Islam at a time when "English theatregoers were increasingly aware of the power of the "Grand Seigneur" in Turkey, and of the complex manifestations of Islamic domination in the maritime sphere and in central Europe" (Vitkus *Three* 44). Donusa's pleas and Vitelli's repeated refusals cast him as the Christian figure who resists

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temptation, in this case of the flesh, and highlight racial, cultural, and religious differences between the Europeans and the Tunisians. He is thus cast as a martyr figure by remaining staunch in his faith, even under the threat of execution.

This scene may have been gratifying for English audiences, but as Burton points out, “the resistance of Massinger’s Vitelli to apostasy yields improbable astonishment and even less likely consequences” (152). The unlikely consequence of Vitelli’s resistance is Donusa’s abrupt conversion to Christianity. Vitelli’s abhorrence at the suggestion of turning, and towards Donusa for proposing it, compels her immediately to submit to *him* in awe of his display of faith. Donusa is not merely impressed by Christianity, as, for example, Joffer and Mullisheg are in *Fair Maid*, but she is willing “to embrace Christian martyrdom” and join Vitelli in death (Bosman 153). She responds to his speech by telling him “I came here to take you, / But I perceive a yielding in myself / To be your prisoner” (4.3.147-149). She confirms her abandonment of Islam a few lines later: “Then thus I spit at Mahomet” (4.3.158). She commits to conversion when she is shown what true faith is, thus implying to the audience that conversion to Christianity is ensured if non-Christians are exposed to strong demonstrations of faith, and asserting Christianity as the one true faith. In reality, however, the only way for a Christian man to marry a Muslim woman was for him to become Muslim as well. The Muslim male, meanwhile, was free to marry a Christian woman without any requirement for conversion. As such, the scene Massinger creates “is unlike anything in the travelers’ narratives ... putting the Christian man in a position to overcome both Islam and forceful women” (Burton 152).

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Paulina's mock conversion puts a Christian woman in the position to overcome Islam and forceful men. Turk plays portray sincere conversions of Muslims to Christianity, however Christians are not typically shown turning unless it is in support of their country, faith, and/or comrades. *Fair Maid's* Clem seems to refute this claim, but his turn was neither shown on stage nor sincere, as he acted the part of the Muslim to gain court favour, he regretted his decision, and left Fez with his English companions. According to Vitkus, "no representation of a Christian man or woman's genuine conversion to Islam exists in the canon" as any shifts in faith are inevitably accompanied by the convert's regret and despair at having been duped into damnation (*Turning* 30). Christians perform apostasy on stage in order to protect themselves from, or to outwit, a Muslim foe. Such is the case with Paulina's repeated resistance of the aggressive, lascivious Asembeg in front of whom she "feigns conversion" in Act V:

Paulina

I now will run as fiercely to your arms
As e'er longing woman did, borne high
On the swift wings of appetite.

Vitelli

O devil!

Paulina

Nay, more – for there shall be no odds betwixt us –
I will turn Turk. (5.3.148-152)

Given that Islamic Law would not require Paulina to convert in order for Asembeg to marry her, Paulina's announcement has the effect of both ensuring Asembeg's

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cooperation with her and delighting the audience with a shocking turn of events. Her apparent apostasy appeases Asembeg; overwrought by his desire for her, he grants her wish that Vitelli and Donusa be given “twelve short hours’ reprieve” (5.3.162), thus providing an opportunity for Donusa and the Europeans to escape (Vitkus *Turning* 30). The audience, then, is treated to an exhibition of Christian devotion that supports this English woman’s ability to cleverly prevail over the Turk by putting her fate in God’s hands, making her an embodiment of English Christian virtue.

Through Vitelli and Grimaldi, Massinger addresses early modern English real world fears that their loved ones’ souls would be forever damned by their activities in the Mediterranean. Massinger confronts such concerns by inviting the audience to consider Vitelli’s sins in comparison to those of the renegade, Grimaldi. While in prison Vitelli’s Christian resolve only grows stronger; like Mullisheg’s admiration of Spencer’s virtue in *Fair Maid*, Asembeg is impressed with his prisoner’s steadfastness, though not so much as to release him. He tells Mustapha that Vitelli is stronger in mind than the pirate Grimaldi, as he is “armed in himself, entrenched and fortified / with his own virtue” even though he is “acquainted only with a civil life” (5.3.39-40; 38). The contrast between these two European characters reassures the early modern English audience that though the Islamic threat is real, their Christianity is strong enough to withstand it and protect their souls if only they remain faithful; however, those English who abandon their religion and country through piracy and apostasy will fall into despair.

Grimaldi’s struggle for redemption is much more difficult than that of Vitelli, the difference between the two representing contradictions in early modern English religious and nationalistic codes of behaviour, imperial ambitions, and economic conditions. As

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Burton explains, “reductions of the English naval and privateering forces at the turn of the century left many of the working class without incomes. Apostasy presented underpaid and brutalized English sailors an opportunity to break with a class system that kept them impoverished” (104). Regardless of the validity of their reasons for turning, however, “these renegades were considered even worse than the men who had converted them; they had known the true faith and abandoned it” (Burton 103).

Because of renegades’ association with Islam and perceived betrayal of England and Christianity, characters such as Grimaldi were portrayed in the same disparaging manner as the Turks. In *The Renegado*, for example, the audience cannot see physical evidence of Grimaldi’s turn, which has taken place before the play begins, so in order to convey his apostasy, Massinger assigns him “the three most common stereotypes of Turks on the stage: lasciviousness, intemperance, and power” (Mabie 309). Likewise, Jowitt observes that at the beginning of the play “Grimaldi’s behaviour conforms to the anti-piracy stereotype of debauchery, violence and irreligion, appearing swaggering and drunk in the marketplace” (*Culture* 188). When Grimaldi arrives at the market he tells Gazet he is lacking: “...if thou hast A handsome one, thy sister for a whore!” (1.3.38-39). He exclaims “Swounds!” (42) and “Slight” (83), both clipped phrases meaning “God’s wounds!” and “God’s light” (Neill *The Renegado* 112). He grabs Gazet by the ears and maligns him for saying he will pray: “You had best go find a corner / To pray in and repent. Do, do, and cry –” (1.3.84-85). Adding to what they witness on stage, the audience is also aware that he has sold Paulina to Asembeg, thus establishing Grimaldi as a treacherous, immoral, lustful, violent, blaspheming apostate. He is the manifestation of all the cultural foreign influences the English fear will destroy their sailors in the

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Mediterranean. If Massinger, then, can persuasively depict the redemption of this renegade who has fallen so deeply into sin, there may be hope for sailors abroad who wish to return home and to be “English” again.

Turning and conversion did represent a threat to early modern Christendom, but the English were also wary of renegades and others who returned to England seeking redemption because it was impossible to determine their religious and national allegiance based on appearance. Conversion from Christianity to Islam represented not only an abandonment of faith, but also a renunciation of the crown. The renegade represented “that great threat to European ideas of selfhood and nationhood – the danger of inconstancy, of internal contradiction, of disrupted identity” (Maclean 229). His choice to embody national and religious renunciation through circumcision makes it difficult to judge whether or not any returned sailor has remained faithful to Christianity and the crown, because it can be concealed, making the renegade an insidious threat, being both traitor to and within the nation. Turk plays, therefore, like *The Renegado*, “express the uneasy relation ... between outward appearance and religious identity” with the unsettling result that they “undermine the early modern desire to make correlations between religious and national identity” (Britton 73).

The uneasy relation between outward appearance and religion in seventeenth-century England was also entwined with class identity. As mentioned earlier, due to economic shifts in England and opportunities for wealth in the Mediterranean, “a significant number of Englishmen willingly forsook their homes and faith in hopes of greater financial success” abroad (Burton 103). These socio-economic changes, along with the developing merchant class and increasing reliance on foreign trade, alarmed

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many of the English since, as Barbara Fuchs explains, “if the aristocracy stoops to trade for the sake of riches, while the lower classes trade to improve their station, the hierarchies of the social echelon risk becoming meaningless in the pursuit of commerce” (*Mimesis* 137). In addition to domestic religious discord and the threat of encroaching foreign powers, the English were confronting the dissolution of their deeply entrenched social hierarchy and the possibility of a new social system unfamiliar to them. Massinger dramatizes concerns about class structure by constructing scenes in which class, religion, and sexuality intersect; he compels the audience to further question the relationship between outer and inner identities by beginning the play in the market where Vitelli is posing as a merchant, by transforming Vitelli into a courtier, and by dooming Gazet’s efforts to improve his social position.

Initially, Vitelli infiltrates Tunisian society by dressing as a merchant and setting up shop in the marketplace, however his true class identity is revealed to the audience quickly. He reveals his true self when Francisco scolds him for his impatience: “How poorly it shows in you!” (1.1.86). Vitelli immediately checks his behaviour and acknowledges that he has been behaving out of character, responding:

I am schooled, sir,

And will hereafter to my utmost strength

Study to be myself” (1.1.86-88).

Massinger uses language here that again associates schooling with a religious figure.

Whereas in Act IV scene iii, as discussed earlier, the implication is that the Muslim

Donusa is a student of Satan, here the Christian is a student of a Jesuit Priest. Thus,

Massinger presents two people belonging to different faiths as subordinate to religious

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figures who can teach them good (i.e. Christian) behaviour, or bad (i.e. Muslim) behaviour. Joshua Mabile notes that though Vitelli says these words, he spends most of the play dressed as a merchant even though he is a gentleman. Mabile argues “the self that he promises to study is noble – his outward disguise cannot change who he really is” (311). Upon discovering, a few lines later, what has happened to his sister he declares, “Farewell, all disguises! / I’ll show in my revenge that I am noble” (1.1.119-120). According to Neill, “the code of honour required that a man of rank carry out his revenge openly” (*Renegado* 97). In this scene, then, the audience learns Vitelli’s reason for being in Tunis, and his identity as a gentleman who, though clothed in merchant’s garb, cannot entirely conceal his inner characteristics, as his inherited sense of chivalric honour will not permit it.

Vitelli’s external identity shifts again in Act II, after he has transgressed sexually with Donusa, but this time it becomes a concern to his companions. Francisco comments, “I think he’s lost” (2.6.1) and “I am troubled, / Troubled exceedingly” (2.6.7-8) regarding Vitelli’s rich clothing, hoping his young student has not forgotten his promise to study himself. Gazet’s remarks do nothing to comfort Francisco:

’Tis ten to one of that:

I ne’er knew citizen turn courtier yet
But he lost his credit, though he saved himself.
Why, look you, sir, there are so many lobbies,
Out-offices and dispartitions here
Behind these Turkish hangings, that a Christian
Hardly gets off but circumcised. (2.6.1-7)

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Massinger renders visible evidence of Vitelli's sexual activity through his clothing and behaviour at the opening of Act II, Scene VI, and confers upon that clothing sexual and religious significance. That is, the change in Vitelli's appearance indicates to the characters and audience that his spirituality is in danger because of a sexual liaison with a Muslim woman. The overt reference to circumcision reminds the audience that due to his sexual transgression, Vitelli is in danger of a transformation that is deeper and more permanent than a change of clothing.

When Francisco addresses Vitelli directly, he expresses concern that Vitelli has acquired his rich clothing at the cost of his chastity and soul. Francisco's comments in lines 19 to 22 address Vitelli's physical change and highlight its potential spiritual repercussions:

'Tis he,
But strangely metamorphosed.
[to Vitelli] You have made, sir,
A prosperous voyage – heaven grant it be honest:
I shall rejoice then too. (2.6.19-22)

Michael Neill glosses “metamorphosed” as meaning “Vitelli's physical transformation from merchant to richly attired court favourite”; Francisco's use of “heaven” and “honest” remind the audience of the spiritual and moral offense Vitelli has committed by providing Donusa with “entertainment”. The language here also draws on what the early modern English were experiencing and hoping for at the time – that their voyages to the Mediterranean would, indeed, be prosperous, but not at the expense of their virtue and honour, and that heaven would endorse and reward their journeys. Francisco's words are

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both an acknowledgement and warning of concerns about English behaviour and identity, with the message that those who *do* sin risk suffering a permanent transformation internally and having their transgressions revealed publicly.

Gazet erroneously concludes that Vitelli's clothing permits him to improve his station and enter court, and decides to follow his master's path. Gazet fails to understand that it is Vitelli's obsession with Donusa that leads him to practice poor judgment and to don Tunisian garb. Thus, admiring what he sees as Vitelli's upward mobility, Gazet seeks to mimic it by changing his appearance. Vitelli's costume is so convincing that Gazet does not at first recognize his master, mistaking him for a French ambassador, and then asking, "do I dream, or is this mine own natural master?" (2.6.18-19). Gazet's pursuit of higher social status begins when Vitelli, in an act of grandiosity, grants him his freedom. Vitelli gives him gold and tells him:

There's gold – be thou free, too,

And master of my shop and all the wares

We brought from Venice. (2.6.25-27)

Gazet, now "a master in his own right," sees himself as a near equal to Vitelli and as someone with the potential to gain even greater social stature (Neill *Renegado* 148 n.25-7). What he does not understand, and what Massinger seems to be addressing, is that some English were uneasy about excessive social mobility. While many people took advantage of opportunities to climb, others worried that such mobility had the potential to threaten stability, since each echelon of society's hierarchy was understood to have inherent traits, e.g., virtue, that could only be transmitted by birth. Commerce development and an emerging merchant class permitted lower classes to acquire wealth

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and earn their way up the social ladder. This made it difficult to determine status by appearance, and called into question the heritability of privilege, thus threatening to erode England's social structure.

Gazet cannot settle for his newfound merchant status and attempts to further follow Vitelli, risking "being punished for his excessive climb in the social world" (Fuchs *Mimesis* 136). Dressed in his master's clothing, he becomes overconfident and tries to follow Vitelli to court, however the eunuch, Carazie, who recognizes Gazet's true identity as a servant, reveals Gazet's ignorance about the inner workings of the upper class. In a comedic scene, Gazet's ambition and ignorance nearly cost him his manhood:

Gazet

I'll be an eunuch, though I sell my shop for't
And all my wares.

Carazie

It is but parting with
A precious stone or two. I know the price on't.

Gazet

I'll part with all my stones; and when I am
An eunuch, I'll so toss and touse the ladies!
Pray you, help me to a chapman.

Carazie

The court surgeon
Shall do you that favour.

Gazet

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I am made! An eunuch! (3.5.50-56)

Gazet is unaware that his path to court will lead to castration, saying he intends to “toss and touse the ladies” though his position as eunuch will prevent exactly such behaviour. Though addressing genuine social concerns in this scene, Massinger provides some comic relief to the audience who would understand Gazet’s predicament and that as he will be “made” as “an eunuch”, he will be unmade as a man. Similar to the case of Clem in *Fair Maid*, Gazet’s leap from servant to courtier comes at a much higher price than his master’s more lateral, and reversible, move from gentleman to courtier. Fuchs suggests that Massinger may be responding to Jacobean English beliefs that “once subjects are offered the possibility of social mobility, they will take it as far as possible, even if their imperfect knowledge of upper-class mores threatens to emasculate them” (*Mimesis* 136). Vitelli’s and Gazet’s transformations throughout *The Renegado* speak to early modern concerns about England’s “adoption of trade as a part of national identity” and how such a shift would affect England’s long-standing masculine class-based identity.

Massinger’s portrayal of virtuous, brave, Christian European men can be read as his response to England’s reliance on the growth of foreign trade, which rendered its masculine Christian identity vulnerable. Burton observes that *The Renegado* is “concerned with the feeble state of Christian masculinity” and portrays it on stage by relating castration to commerce (*Traffic* 150). Massinger appears to be fortifying the strength of Christianity as a masculine construct, presumably to counter perceived weakness in the religion because of sailors who turned Turk. Exacerbating such concerns was the reality that while overseas “during the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods business was normally carried out in a posture of humble submission to North African port

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authorities and their policies” (Vitkus *Turning* 153). To the entertainment of audiences, *The Renegado* depicts a reversal of these submissive positions whereby the European Christian emerges as the superior figure via the emasculation of the Muslim leader, Asembeg.

Like Mullisheg in *Fair Maid*, Asembeg is weakened by his overwhelming attraction to a Christian woman. He puzzles over her effect on him:

And robs me of the fierceness I was born with?

Stout men quake at my frowns, and in return

I tremble at her softness. (2.5.107-109)

Despite “his fierce and cruel nature” (1.1.116), which terrifies those under his leadership, Paulina does not “quake” at his frowns. Instead, it is Asembeg who trembles in front of her. This counterpoint of “stout men” who fear Asembeg, and his trembling “at her softness” emasculates him. His obsession with her, like Vitelli’s with Donusa, compromises his judgment and diminishes his authority and ability to rule. Even though he recognizes the shift in himself, he is powerless to reverse it until she is out of his presence and upon her exit, says “’Tis fit I take mine own rough shape again” (2.5.165). Asembeg’s effeminization mirrors that which “Christian men feared suffering in their encounters with Muslims” (Burton 114). The tyrant himself acknowledges his emasculating change in “nature”, telling Paulina “I will be your nurse, / Your woman, your physician and your fool”, thus declaring his submission and servitude to her, a Christian woman (2.5.152-153). He equates his love with service, explicitly stating the role of “woman” and listing other roles associated with caretaking, support, and submission. He embraces these roles and surrenders to her authority, thus feminizing

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himself. His desire for her compels him to defer to her, subverting gender roles and expectations. Burton notes that in the Turk plays “only the Muslim men experience this kind of gender-confusion”, thus allowing English audiences to “enjoy a theatrical fantasy of inviolable Christian manhood” (112). In *The Renegado* the Muslim man is resisted and outwitted by a Christian woman. The Muslim woman, meanwhile, is seduced and converted by the male Christian hero.

That Paulina’s steadfastness and bravery ultimately rescue the Europeans “does put some strain on patriarchal ideas of womanhood” in the play (Burton 114). Both Paulina and Donusa represent early modern English concerns about female power and the regulation of female sexuality, with both characters’ behaviour altered by the end of the play to reflect gender role expectations. Paulina’s resistance is modified when “she is made to perform a “proper” subordination to Christian male authority”, while Donusa, as discussed earlier, converts to Christianity (Burton 114).

Massinger makes Paulina’s character acceptable to English audiences by portraying her as a fiercely proud Christian in front of Asembeg, but “humble and deferential” when with Francisco (Burton 114). Paulina’s threat to Christian male authority is also negated in the play by her vulnerability as a woman whose chastity and spiritual purity are permanently and irrevocably lost if she engages in sexual intercourse. Her captivity by Asambeg puts her in acute danger of not only being violated physically, but also of contaminating her race. Hwang Degenhardt writes that Paulina’s vulnerability “demonstrates a collusion of racial and patriarchal logic in which the female body is susceptible to racial reinscription in ways that the male body is not” (“Catholic Prophylactics” 66). Paulina’s captivity and resistance are not just points of conflict and

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resolution in *The Renegado*, but are meant to address “how the threat of the Turk was imaginatively construed as a sexual threat with potentially reproductive consequences” among the English and are an example of how “the stage conveyed the importance of regulating and controlling racial purity through sexual intervention” (Hwang Degenhardt “Catholic Prophylactics” 80). It is the women, however, whose sexual activity must be regulated, controlled, and intervened upon, given that at the time “the perceived genetic dominance of the male partner” meant that *his* lineage would be passed on through the child at the expense of hers (Hwang Degenhardt “Catholic Prophylactics” 81). Therefore, while Paulina is at risk of polluting the white Christian European bloodline by giving birth to a “racial other”, no such risk is posed to Donusa because her offspring will be “cleansed” by Vitelli’s European blood. These circumstances make Paulina particularly vulnerable and her heroism no threat to the presumed natural dominance of her male Christian companions.

Massinger approaches issues similar to those in *Fair Maid*, regarding what Judy Hayden refers to as “a patent gender rebellion, which ... has destabilized the English male hegemony” (353). The play uses the Ottomans to address domestic English threats from unruly women, with the fierceness of Donusa’s sexuality resulting from its chaining and her conversion being about subduing English women (Hayden 352; 357). Donusa recognizes and acknowledges the power imbalance of the patriarchal system, though she ultimately accepts her socially imposed role in it when she converts. Donusa’s character also reveals early modern English understandings of people’s inner and outer identities in terms of gender, adding another dimension to the contradictory beliefs the English had regarding what could be interpreted about the invisible based on the visible.

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The Renegado reflects anxieties about internal, and thus, invisible sexuality. The internalization of women's sexuality, in particular, makes them inherently suspicious as far as the early modern were concerned. Massinger conveys this suspicion, for example, during Manto and Donusa's discussion of the concealment of the loss of their virginity:

Donusa

And could thy friends

Read in thy face, thy maidenhead gone, that thou

Hadst parted with it?

Manto

No, indeed. I passed

For current many years after – (3.1.12-14)

Initially, Donusa is unable to discern whether or not Manto is a virgin based solely on her appearance, thus raising the concern about the invisibility of women's sexual activity.

Manto's revelation that she concealed the loss of her virginity "For current many years after" (3.1.15) until she became pregnant is reassuring to Donusa who needs to conceal

her own transgressions. Massinger uses this moment to tie commerce to sexuality as

"passed / For current" means "was accepted as genuine coinage (i.e. as a real virgin)"

(*The Renegado* 151). As Heywood does with Bess's chastity in *Fair Maid*, so Massinger

does here by commodifying Manto's virginity, and suggesting that her passing as a virgin

is akin to financial fraud. Manto's comments, however, reinforce everything the English

fear regarding female promiscuity, deceit, and disregard for preserving the sanctity of the

bloodline.

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Massinger rights this supposed female propensity for deceit by having Mustapha correctly discern that Donusa has betrayed him. His suspicion that Donusa has lost her virginity, based on her rude behaviour towards him, thus reassures audiences of male intellectual superiority even though neither of the characters is Christian or European. On one hand, then, with a female's national, religious, and sexual identity as the prize, Mustapha is overtaken by a European Christian male, thus securing victory for the English over the Ottoman. On the other hand, as it is a woman in this scenario who betrays a man, the gender hierarchy must be modified in order to ensure the male occupies the dominant position, and so Mustapha is written as the person who reveals Donusa's apostatic and illegal transgression. Her lascivious, deceitful actions portray her as embodying "the permissive, "immoral" aspects of Islam", therefore she "must be "converted", just as the English woman at home, who takes license and pleasure in her own desire, needs to be subdued and re-appropriated – and hence reconverted – within the English patriarchal hegemony" (Hayden 357).

To the comfort of English audiences, "hierarchical gender roles are restored not only at the expense of Muslim masculinity but also at the expense of powerful women who were understood as no less threatening to patriarchal sovereignty" (Burton 115). Recall that this theme also emerges in Part II of *Fair Maid of the West* when Bess's masculine behaviour is corrected by her marriage to Spencer, which will usher her, as Jean Howard states, "from the public eye into the private home, the space allotted to woman in the emerging nation state. "Englishness" will then be identified with heterosexual marriage and with the masculine enclosure of female sexuality ... within the English home" (116). Given the recurring mercantile motif and theme of the redemptive

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power of Christianity throughout *The Renegado*, it seems appropriate that all is resolved by the spiritually and morally superior European Christian male, Vitelli, who redeems not only his spirituality, but his manhood, by converting a Muslim woman.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Playwrights addressed early modern concerns about England's cultural instability by dramatizing European-Ottoman encounters in the Mediterranean. In travel plays, such as *The Fair Maid of the West Part I & Part II* and *The Renegado*, ideas about English identity and the effects of England's shift to a mercantile model of economy are expressed through intersecting components of identity: race, religion, class, gender, and sexuality. Returning to Valerie Traub's proposition regarding "categories of identity," first mentioned in the Introduction, it is critical when analysing identity to bear in mind that categories "do not exist independently of one another, but intersect in dynamic, mutually informing, and historically contingent ways" (6). As discussed throughout the thesis, these components intersect in *Fair Maid* and *The Renegado* in ways that point to early modern English understandings of how a person's true nature is revealed by their physical appearance, and of identity as a recognition of the self through difference from others.

The early modern English had competing beliefs regarding the relationship between an individual's inner life and external appearance, and these beliefs were entangled with issues of class, race, religion, and sexuality. On one hand, as we see, for example, with Vitelli's costuming and Gazet's failed attempts to elevate his social position, the English understood class to be heritable. It was not something that could be attained or bestowed, at least not in any way that would internalize it. The English during this period were able to elevate their social position through hard work and, especially, by travelling to and attaining wealth in the Mediterranean. It was likely of little or no

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concern to these successful, previously low- and middle-class English that they were not born into their position. The inability to discern the social quality of their bloodline based on their physical appearance, however, may have unsettled some English. As such, though one might acquire wealth and dress as an aristocrat, those who did could not be assumed to possess the intangible traits of those who were born into aristocracy.

On the other hand, as discussed in chapter two, the early modern English believed that one's physical appearance could reveal one's inner life, particularly with regard to race and religion. This was understood, for example, such that dark skin was interpreted as signifying a sinful soul. These conflicting views on what physical appearance reveals about a person's interiority contributed to the anxiety around turning Turk. The issue for the English at home is that an Englishman can return from overseas and (a) hide his circumcision with clothing, thus concealing his conversion, and/or (b) claim to seek redemption and return to Christianity in practice, but remain faithful to Islam in private, since his light skin would not reveal his betrayal of Christianity. The theatre exacerbated suspicion towards renegades, since the ability to create Islamic identities on stage suggested to audiences that "an individual's religious identity could be a theatrical fiction" (Britton 73). Riddled with anxiety about these uncertainties and erring on the side of caution, Christian English communities were unlikely to welcome back apostates because of the risk of contamination to their bloodline and, thus, English identity.

English anxieties were exacerbated by uncertainty about their national identity, which was only beginning to form in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and which they were defining "by comprehending their difference from outsiders" (Vitkus *Turning* 27). Cultural and racial differences were expressed on stage through depictions of

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European-Ottoman encounters that are particularly illuminating about how the early modern English sought to distinguish themselves from others based not only on race, as explored throughout this thesis, but also on complex and controversial intersections of gender, religion, and power. Jonathan Burton argues that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ottoman Turkey became “a discursive site upon which contesting versions of Englishness, Christianity, masculinity, femininity and nobility were elaborated and proffered” (*Traffic* 28).

The plays examined in this thesis differentiate the English from the Turk by highlighting the English as having a value system based on Christian male chivalric honour. As mentioned elsewhere, the playwrights expend a lot of energy exploring the repercussions of female power on masculinity, offering commentary on the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, as well as James and Charles who followed her. As Claire Jowitt argues, “the Queen’s problems were gendered, since her femaleness prevented her from fully exploiting the masculinist chivalric rhetoric of leadership, making her vulnerable to the appropriation of power by her ambitious male subjects” (*Voyage* 140). Specifically, it is Bess’s piracy and successful leadership of the men under her command in *Fair Maid Part I* that can “be read as part of a debate about the merits of the epic potency of England’s Queen as well as exploring the consequences of such a powerful female figure for the masculinity of her male subjects” (Jowitt *Voyage* 61). As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, Bess’s power is reduced and eventually eliminated by the end of the second play, as she adopts the idealized English female identity as a Christian wife who is contained to the home. This relationship between gender, power and religion was not altogether accepted by the English, however, and Massinger seems to address this in *The*

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Renegado. Donusa's comments after her conversion can be read as a rebuke of "male sexual hypocrisy that is apparently sanctioned by religion" (Dimmock *Mythologies* 128). While she is directing her comments towards Islam, Dimmock states that audiences would be aware of parallels "with Anglican religious codes" and that Massinger was taking the "opportunity to comment satirically on the equivalent gender imbalances in contemporary British culture" (128).

The Fair Maid of the West Part I & II and *The Renegado* offer up European-Ottoman encounters in the Mediterranean that can be read as examples of how England's forays into international markets influenced the development of English identity by blurring the boundaries between some categories of identity, such as class, while fortifying other boundaries, such as gender and religion. In his introduction to *The Renegado*, Michael Neill writes "the anxieties attendant upon English weakness in the face of Ottoman power are expressed as a fear of feminization and ultimate emasculation" (20). The realization of these anxieties is placed upon Mullisheg in *Fair Maid* and on Asembeg in *The Renegado* who render themselves emasculated by a "foolhardy obsession with an unattainable Christian woman" (Burton 153). The chivalric male Christian English identity is lauded in these plays through the actions of Europeans who not only resist the Turks' threats and temptations, but also redeem one of their own who has turned, i.e. Grimaldi, convert a Muslim princess, i.e. Donusa, and acquire the admiration of Turkish leaders, i.e. Mullisheg and Tota. Overall, these resistances and conversions are symbolic victories of Christian masculinity over Islamic power. Across the three plays, we see a thematic shift from modifying the emasculated English identity that was perceived under Queen Elizabeth's rule and allegorized in *Fair Maid Part I*, to

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fortifying the reestablished but vulnerable masculine identity in 1624's *The Renegado*. This is a modification that continues and intensifies with Heywood's writing of *Fair Maid Part II* in 1630, thus reasserting England's idealized chivalric masculine Christian identity after decades of instability.

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