

# Women and Islam

in Early Modern English Literature



BERNADETTE ANDREA

CAMBRIDGE

This page intentionally left blank

## WOMEN AND ISLAM IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

In this innovative study, Bernadette Andrea focuses on the contributions of women and their writings in the early modern cultural encounters between England and the Islamic world. She examines previously neglected material, such as the diplomatic correspondence between Queen Elizabeth I and Safiye, the Ottoman queen mother, at the end of the sixteenth century, and resituates canonical accounts, including Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's travelogue of the Ottoman empire at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Her study advances our understanding of how women negotiated conflicting discourses of gender, orientalism, and imperialism at a time when the Ottoman empire was hugely powerful and England was still a marginal nation with limited global influence. This book is a significant contribution to critical and theoretical debates in literary and cultural, post-colonial, women's, and Middle Eastern studies.

BERNADETTE ANDREA is Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas, San Antonio.



# WOMEN AND ISLAM IN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH LITERATURE

BERNADETTE ANDREA



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521867641](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521867641)

© Bernadette Andrea 2007

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provision of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published in print format 2008

ISBN-13 978-0-511-38897-2 eBook (Adobe Reader)

ISBN-13 978-0-521-86764-1 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of urls for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

# Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	page vii
Introduction: “The borrowed veil”: reassessing gender studies of early modern England and Islam	i
1 Early modern queens and Anglo-Ottoman trade	12
2 The imaginary geographies of Mary Wroth’s <i>Urania</i>	30
3 Early Quaker women, the missionary position, and Mediterraneanism	53
4 The female wits and the genealogy of feminist orientalism	78
5 The scandal of polygamy in Delarivier Manley’s <i>roman à clef</i>	105
Coda: Arab women revisit Mary Wortley Montagu’s <i>hammam</i>	118
<i>Notes</i>	131
<i>Index</i>	180





## *Acknowledgments*

A project that incubated for over ten years would require a companion volume to acknowledge all sources of professional and personal support. Hence, I begin with my apologies to those whose names could not fit into the space of a page, since so many have shared their insights and energies over the past decade of research, writing, and revising.

This project began during my time as a PhD candidate at Cornell University, where I pursued “parallel tracks” in the Departments of English and Near Eastern Studies. In the former, I answered the question I had broached while completing my master’s thesis at the University of Calgary on Milton’s representation of the mediated woman: what did women in seventeenth-century England have to say for themselves? When I began this investigation fifteen or so years ago, modern editions of early modern women’s writing were scarce (though many were in the works) and access to early modern texts on the World Wide Web was scarcely a dream. Hence, much of my work was archival, which involved a commitment to establishing the textual basis for an investigation of women’s writing in the period rather than privileging representations of women in books written by men. Without such archival work, as my assessment of the continuing absence of sustained attention to women’s writing in studies of early modern England and Islam underscores, women continue to be left out of this discussion as speaking subjects. Many of the groundbreaking scholars who toiled to make early modern women’s writing accessible in modern editions are acknowledged in my endnotes.

While delving into the archives of early modern women’s writing for my doctoral dissertation, I also pursued the study of Arabic, which is a heritage language for me, with generous teachers such as Munther Younes, Samer Alatout, and David Powers of Cornell’s Near Eastern Studies Department. At that time, incredibly, a graduate student from English in an Arabic class was a curiosity, with most students linking western European literature and Islam coming from Romance language departments. Although I did not

have the opportunity to work directly with Ross Brann or Leslie Peirce of the Near Eastern Studies Department at Cornell, my contact with them through study groups, lectures, and other settings influenced me immensely. Leslie Peirce's generosity in writing a letter of recommendation for the postdoctoral fellowships I ultimately received, even though she did not know me well, undergirds this study, as does the generosity of Mary Nyquist, of the University of Toronto, in writing a similar letter. Walter Cohen, of Cornell's Department of Comparative Literature, sustained an interest that led first to an Ottoman exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, and has culminated in this publication. I acknowledge him with much appreciation, as well as the faculty in the Department of English who read my doctoral dissertation: Laura Brown, Barbara Correll, Jonathan Culler, and Timothy Murray. Ironically, little of that dissertation found its way into this book. The flexibility of Cornell's doctoral program, however, enabled the "parallel tracks" that ultimately crossed during my postdoctoral year at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

I continued my study of Arabic under the direction of Hannah Kassis of the Department of Religious Studies at UBC during a postdoctoral year made possible by the generous support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Izaak Walton Killam Foundation. In subsequent years, I benefited from grants from the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Mellon Foundation, the William Andrews Clark Library/Center for Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies, and the National Endowment of the Humanities, as well as research support from West Virginia University (WVU) and the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). I first presented material on early modern English women and the Ottoman empire at Green College's Comparative Literature Colloquia (UBC). I thank Anthony Dawson and John Michael Archer for their attendance at the lecture, with the latter attending my lecture at Harvard University's Humanities Center as this project drew to a close. I also presented portions of this material at the International Conference on Medieval Studies, the Modern Language Association, the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies, the West Virginia Shakespeare and Renaissance Association, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, the Renaissance Society of America, the South Central Modern Language Association, the Shakespeare Association of America, Attending to Early Modern Women, and the South Central Renaissance Conference. I thank the journals *English Literary History*, *In-between: Essays and Studies in Literary Criticism*, and *The Muslim World*,

as well as the collection on the Mediterranean and early modern England, edited by Goran Stanivukovic, for providing forums for my work on women and Islam in early modern England. I am grateful for their permission to include portions of these articles, much revised, in this book.

I am most appreciative of Bob Markley's support, which began while I was at my first post as an assistant professor at WVU. I further acknowledge Mona Narain, a colleague at my current post as an associate professor at UTSA, who read an early draft of the entire manuscript. Bindu Malieckal, of St. Anslem College, also read the entire draft of the manuscript in its penultimate form. Su Fang Ng, of the University of Oklahoma, helped with the cover image. David Estrin and Kay McKechnie provided copyediting. I value the ongoing support of Ray Ryan (senior commissioning editor), Maartje Schelens (assistant editor), Jodie Barnes (production editor), and others at Cambridge University Press who have helped usher this book through publication. Of course, I bear full responsibility for all that appears therein.

My colleague and *compañero*, Ben Olguín, who has commented on countless drafts over the past decade, remains my best reader and supporter. And without Ross, I would not have had the courage or cheer to continue. My father, Bernard Anthony Andrea, always has a place in my heart. If, as Virginia Woolf writes, "we think through our mothers if we are women," all my efforts return to Mary Diane Andrea, may she rest in peace. She, along with my sisters Jennitta, Jacquie, and Kerri, model all that women can be. With them, I continue to acknowledge mothers and grandmothers – stretching from the south of England, the colonies of France, the isle of Malta, the coast of Lebanon, and the plains of Syria – whose lives resonate in these pages.

Portions of the following articles, with revisions, appear in this book by permission of the following copyright holders:

Andrea, Bernadette, "The Missionary Position: Seventeenth-Century Quaker Women and Global Gender Politics," *In-between: Essays and Studies in Literary Criticism* 11.1 (2002), 71–87. Reprinted with permission of the editor.

Andrea, Bernadette, "Pamphilia's Cabinet: Gendered Authorship and Empire in Lady Mary Wroth's *Urania*," *ELH* 68.2 (2002), 335–58. © The Johns Hopkins University Press. Reprinted with permission of The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Andrea, Bernadette, "Lady Sherley: The 'First' Persian in England?" *The Muslim World* 95.2 (2005), 279–95. © Hartford Seminary. Reprinted with permission of Blackwell Publishing on behalf of Hartford Seminary.

Andrea, Bernadette, "From Invasion to Inquisition: Mapping Malta in Early Modern England," *Remapping the Mediterranean World in Early Modern English Writings*, ed. Goran V. Stanivukovic (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 245–71. © Palgrave Macmillan. Reprinted with permission of Palgrave Macmillan.

## Introduction

### *“The borrowed veil”: reassessing gender studies of early modern England and Islam*

The starting point for this study is the significance of women’s agency in the inaugural Anglo-Ottoman encounter, which began during the sixteenth century and extended through the early eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> The English realm, excluded from Catholic Europe because of its turn to Protestantism, sought unorthodox diplomatic, economic, and military ties with the Ottoman empire, whose dominions stretched across Asia, Europe, the Arabian peninsula, and North Africa. Sustained engagement with the Islamic world during this period also encompassed the Persian and Mediterranean realms bordering the Ottomans, though involvement with the Islamic empire of the Mughals was minimal.<sup>2</sup> These ties affected English culture from the middle of Queen Elizabeth I’s reign (1558–1603), when her ambassadors brokered the first Anglo-Ottoman trade agreement, through the next century and a half, when the balance of power shifted in favor of the nascent British empire. Elizabeth propelled this encounter through her diplomatic correspondence with Muslim sovereigns, including the Ottoman queen mother or *valide sultan*. Over the course of the seventeenth century, this encounter would include English women from the highest to the lowest ranks as writers and travelers, such as the first English woman to publish original works in the prestige genres of Renaissance romance and sonnet sequences, the first generation of Quaker women missionaries and polemicists, the first female playwrights for the English stage, and the first English woman to compose a travelogue of her “embassy” to the Ottoman empire.

Despite the detailed historical documentation of England’s initial encounter with the Ottomans, literary and cultural studies of the era present two striking lacunae. The first derives from the false dichotomy between a constantly powerful West and a correspondingly subordinate East resulting from anachronistic applications of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978).<sup>3</sup> As part of a cadre of scholars who recognize that early modern imperialism in the “Greater Western World” involved Ottoman, Spanish, and

only belatedly English claims, I consider the decisive place Islamic powers occupied in this network.<sup>4</sup> The second lacuna results from the effacement of women's agency in recent studies on Anglo-Ottoman relations, most of which focus on gendered representations in male-authored travel narratives and dramas to the exclusion of sustained attention to women's cultural productions. Such studies pay little attention to the archive of early modern women's writing accessed since the 1980s or to the methodologies of women's studies developed to recover alternative voices from male-dominated sources.<sup>5</sup>

In response to these gaps, I argue for the necessity of integrating gender *as articulated by women sovereigns, writers, and travelers* when analyzing the discourses informing the era's Anglo-Ottoman – and more broadly, Anglo-Islamic – relations.<sup>6</sup> Where these discourses consist of writing by men, as in the public theater and popular travelogues of the era, this approach constitutes a “feminist critique.” In her landmark essay, “Towards a Feminist Poetics” (1979), Elaine Showalter defines feminist critique as “concerned with *woman as reader*” and encompassing such subjects as “the images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions of and misconceptions about women in criticism, and the fissures in male-constructed literary history.” Although incorporating the techniques of feminist critique, this study emphasizes the field of *la gynocritique* or “gynocritics,” which is primarily “concerned with *woman as writer*.”<sup>7</sup> It further endorses Margaret Ezell's *Women's Literary History* (1993), which questions the application of the post-nineteenth-century model of imaginative literature and individual authorship to earlier women's writing.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly, my analysis focuses on collaborative textual productions such as diplomatic letters, travelogues, and religious tracts, as well as more conventional forms of prose fiction, poetry, and drama. Finally, the relatively rare studies of early modern English women and the Islamic world, including Billie Melman's *Women's Orient: English Women and the Middle East, 1718–1918* (1992), typically begin with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*, based on her travels throughout the Ottoman empire during the early eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup> While these *Letters* remain crucial for any analysis of Anglo-Ottoman relations, Montagu's “embassy” is falsely construed – most famously by Montagu herself – as *sui generis*. I address this truncated genealogy by turning to earlier publications that advance our understanding of how women negotiated conflicting discourses of empire when England remained a marginal player in the great power politics of Europe – which included the Ottomans – even as it aspired to global imperial status.<sup>10</sup>

As my investigation shows, cultural agency for early modern English women generally involved a negotiated subject position, though by the turn of the eighteenth century the oppositional position of “feminist” was emerging.<sup>11</sup> From the late sixteenth century, when the act of the objectified female speaking itself constituted a radical assertion of agency, to the early eighteenth century, when a discourse of women’s rights began to be articulated by the first feminists, these women approached the era’s conflicting discourses of empire from a distinctively gendered position. Oftentimes, they aligned themselves with patriarchal anglocentric discourses casting them as superior to “the ‘other’ woman of empire,” even if that empire was more imaginary than real in the early modern period.<sup>12</sup> However, because the Ottomans cast the English nation as subordinate, many women therein identified with their counterparts from the Islamic world to compensate for their domestic marginality. Examples include Safiye, the Ottoman queen mother, whose correspondence with Queen Elizabeth was preserved in Richard Hakluyt’s *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation* (2nd edn, 1598–1600); the Persian Circassian Lady Teresa Sampsonia Sherley, whose travels with her husband, Robert Sherley, informed the first original prose romance by an English woman, Lady Mary Wroth’s *Urania* (1621); the mid-century sect of pseudo-Muslim women “from beyond the Sea” associated with the early Quaker movement, which produced most of the publications by English women in the seventeenth century; the accounts of Muslim women co-opted by late seventeenth-century English female playwrights from their male contemporaries’ travelogues; and the firsthand record of Muslim women’s lives as recounted by Montagu. Hence, women from the Islamic world, most of whom were Muslim, became part of *English* literary history.

Before turning to the gynocritical analyses that are my focus, I must address the continuing effacement of women’s agency in literary and cultural studies of early modern England and the Islamic world. The reiterated trope, “turning Turk,” which has assumed the status of a “false universal” in current criticism, signals this effacement.<sup>13</sup> Featured in Philip Massinger’s play, *The Renegado* (1630), it has been used to link early modern imperialism, commerce, conversion, and masculinity.<sup>14</sup> However, Massinger’s play contains a related but more ambiguously gendered term for conversion: “apostata.”<sup>15</sup> A feminist critique of Massinger’s play highlighting the effaced gender differential of this alternative draws attention to the importance of seriously engaging early modern women when addressing the Anglo-Ottoman encounter. To reiterate, such critiques remain incomplete if we

do not attend to the cultural productions of these women, which is the goal of the balance of this study.

TURNING FROM “TURK” TO “APOSTATA”: GENDERING  
CONVERSION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

As suggested above, the masculinized tropes of the “renegade” and “turning Turk” have been deployed by various scholars seeking to challenge the transhistorical application of Said’s *Orientalism* to the early modern period. Nabil Matar, at the crest of the current wave of attention to Islam and England during the Renaissance, draws on early modern sources to identify a “renegado” as “one that first was a Christian, and afterwards becommeth a Turke.”<sup>16</sup> In *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (1998), Matar demonstrates that, *contra* post-colonial anachronisms, during the early modern period “Britain did not enjoy military or industrial power over Islamic countries. Rather, the Muslims had a power of self-representation which English writers knew they had either to confront or to engage.”<sup>17</sup> As he elaborates in *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (1999),

Historians and critics who have inaccurately applied a postcolonial theory to a precolonial period in British history forget that in the Elizabethan and early Stuart periods, England was not a colonial power – not in the imperial sense that followed in the eighteenth century. Although England had colonized Wales and Scotland and was waging a colonial war in Ireland, at the time Queen Elizabeth died, England did not yet possess a single colonial inch in the Americas.<sup>18</sup>

Working within the disciplinary framework of Ottoman studies, Daniel Goffman in *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642–1660* (1998) confirms this ongoing reorientation with his conclusion, “[p]erhaps the nineteenth-century Briton could get under the skin of the colonial; in the seventeenth-century Mughal and Ottoman empires, it was more likely the Englishman whose shell would be pierced.”<sup>19</sup> In sum, the balance of power constituting orientalism during the nineteenth-century peak of western European colonialism cannot accurately be applied to England’s proto-colonial era prior to the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, it cannot be dismissed as entirely irrelevant, since the anglocentric project of global imperialism imagined at the close of the sixteenth century frequently represented the Ottomans as positive foils.<sup>20</sup>

Augmenting the historicist accounts of Matar and Goffman, literary critics such as Daniel Vitkus in “Turning Turk in *Othello*: The Conversion and Damnation of the Moor” (1997), Barbara Fuchs in “Conquering



Islands: Contextualizing *The Tempest*" (1997), and Jonathan Burton in "Anglo-Ottoman Relations and the Image of the Turk in *Tamburlaine*" (2000) complicate approaches to early modern English drama by exploring how increasingly racialized representations of religious conversion placed profound cultural and political pressures on English *men's* sense of their national identity.<sup>21</sup> However, as emphasized above, literary and cultural studies have yet to pursue a sustained analysis of women's writings as a constituent element of the discourses accruing from this encounter. My explication of *The Renegado* – the text most frequently cited in studies on early modern England and Islam for its dramatization of the complications involved in turning Turk – underscores the need for a differential gender analysis, as the conditions leading to male versus female conversion to Islam are distinct. Strictly speaking, while a man is required to convert to Islam upon marrying a Muslim woman, a woman, if she is from the monotheistic Abrahamic tradition, is not required to convert upon marrying a Muslim man. A common motif in early modern English travel accounts involves Christian men "coerced" into converting by being placed in compromising positions with Muslim women. Although personal conviction certainly played a part in actual conversions, English documents in the period focus on the rewards for renegades in the Ottoman empire, which allowed an upward mobility for men not possible in class-bound Europe.<sup>22</sup> Christian women's upward mobility occurred largely through marriage or concubinage in the harems of powerful men, which, to reiterate, did not require their conversion.<sup>23</sup> Reliance on the false universal "turning Turk" effaces these gender differences. The following explication of *The Renegado*, as a prelude to incorporating women's writing into this discussion, seeks to expose the fissures in such assumptions.

On the surface, the play has a standard plot: boy sees and desires girl; boy encounters obstructing father figures when seeking girl; boy gets girl, finally legitimizing this relationship through marriage. However, its twists and turns dramatize the dynamic of conversion specific to the Anglo-Ottoman encounter in the early modern period: turning Turk includes not only abjuring one's religion, but also one's manhood. The details involve a pair of displaced Venetians in Tunis: a gentleman-cum-merchant, Vitelli, and his mercenary manservant, Gazet. The complication arises when Francisco, a Jesuit redeemer of Christian slaves in the Barbary States, rebukes Vitelli for neglecting the latter's abducted sister, Paulina. This innocent, we learn, has been sold into the harem of Asambeg, the viceroy of Tunis, where she has been pressured into converting to Islam. Her "turning" later intersects with Vitelli's forbidden desire for Donusa, niece to the Ottoman sultan, for

whom Vitelli also converts to Islam. With the eleventh-hour intervention of the priest Francisco, who has secured the backing of the renegade, Antonio Grimaldi (for whom the play is ostensibly titled), these conversions are quickly reversed. Moreover, Donusa turns Christian to marry Vitelli and returns with his entourage to Venice. Western manhood is thus restored and women, of Christian and Muslim provenance alike, are absorbed into its patriarchy.

Presenting a paradigmatic example of the “exchange of women,” which anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss postulates as “the origin of culture” but which Gayle Rubin reconceptualizes as “one of the greatest rip-offs of all time,”<sup>24</sup> the first scene of *The Renegado* stages an exchange between Vitelli and Gazet confirming the convertibility of commodities and women motivating the play’s parallel plots:

VITELLI. You have hired a shop then?

GAZET. Yes, sir; and our wares,  
 Though brittle as a maidenhead at sixteen,  
 Are safe unladen. (249, I.I.I–3)

This shipment features “choice pictures” of western European women, which the merchants plan to palm off as images of royalty and aristocrats for the pleasure of Muslim men (249, I.I.4; cf. 261, I.3.33–35). However, as Gazet reveals, “my conscience tells me they are figures / Of bawds and common courtesans in Venice” (249, I.I.12–13). With this leveling gesture, which will be developed in the central plot featuring Donusa’s desire for the ostensibly lowborn Vitelli, women from the highest to the lowest rank are equally reduced to whores. As a result, when the formerly exemplary Christian heroine, Paulina, who has hitherto resisted assaults to her chastity and her religion, declares she “will turn Turk” (331, 5.3.152), her declaration is met not with disbelief by the Christians in attendance, but with a grim recognition that, to evoke Shakespeare’s *Othello*, women are bound to “turn and turn, and yet go on / And turn again.”<sup>25</sup> The huckster Gazet encapsulates this response in his aside, “Most of your tribe do so / When they begin in whore” (331, 5.3.152–53), which he reinforces with the invective, “That’s ever the subscription / To a damned whore’s false epistle” (332, 5.3.158–59). While dramatic irony allows the viewer to temper Gazet’s crude misogyny with the knowledge that Paulina merely poses as a renegade to redeem her captive brother, this gendered connotation of conversion resonates from the beginning of the play for all its female characters, Christian as well as Muslim.

If Paulina's virtue, in the dual sense of her chastity and her Christianity, is ultimately affirmed, her brother's faithfulness in both senses remains extremely tenuous throughout much of the play. Paralleling male travelers' accounts from the period, his physical climax in Donusa's chamber requires his acquiescence to Islam. As such accounts elaborate, ritual circumcision sealed this "turn." For instance, Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turned Turk: or, The Tragical Lives and Deaths of the Two Famous Pirates, Ward and Dansiker* (c. 1609–12), the antithesis to Massinger's ensuing play about "Turks" turning Christian, features the spectacular circumcision of the English pirate, John Ward, who embraced Islam for what the play depicts as the lure of a Muslim woman. Because "turning Turk was associated with becoming a eunuch," western Christian males, who did not practice circumcision during the early modern period, projected their deepest fears onto the figure of the renegade.<sup>26</sup> The ample popular literature (primarily testimonial accounts and ecclesiastical tracts) regarding seventeenth-century English men who converted to Islam foregrounds the troubling rem(a)inder of circumcision at the heart of English Protestant conceptions of the self.<sup>27</sup> In *The Renegado*, this symbolic castration drives the subplot, which involves Gazet's close encounter with the razor as he misunderstands the "price" of a eunuch's upward mobility in an Ottoman court. The pun by the English eunuch, Carazie, whose privileged station in Donusa's harem necessitated "but parting with / A precious stone or two" (298, 3.4.52), thus bears a sharp edge in more than one sense. As another potential English eunuch, Gazet epitomizes the anxieties besetting Christian males faced with the gender-specific ritual for "turn[ing] Turk," which would mean "los[ing] / A collop of that part my Doll enjoined me / To bring home as she left it: 'tis her venture, / Nor dare I barter that commodity / Without her special warrant" (250, 1.1.38–42). Not simply circumcision, then, but the double bind of becoming a eunuch – gaining upward mobility at the "price" of "[a] precious stone or two" (298, 3.4.52) – defines the masculinist discourse of conversion.

Yet, by focusing on male circumcision, scholarship on the play has encouraged a gendering that precludes women. As we have seen, the play follows the era's travel accounts in specifying the ban against consorting with Muslim women as decisive for Christian men's conversions.<sup>28</sup> Even the masculinist equation of conversion with circumcision presumed unruly female sexuality as its *sine qua non*. Moreover, in Massinger's play Christian and Muslim heroines are specifically condemned for "turn[ing] apostata" (254, 1.1.138; 320, 4.3.159), a double standard the Turkish princess Donusa unsuccessfully challenges during her trial for "corporal looseness

and incontinence" (313, 4.2.147; cf. 4.2.116–43). Her apostasy from Islam, traditionally punishable by death, collapses into a specifically gendered condemnation of women in general. "Apostata" was sometimes used generically in early modern England, as in Andrew Barker's *A True and Certain Report of the Beginning, Proceedings, Overthrowes, and now present Estate of Captaine Ward and Danseker, the two late famous Pirates* (1609), wherein John Ward is condemned as "a villaine," "an apostata," and "a reprobate."<sup>29</sup> My explication of the term in Massinger's play serves to highlight the largely overlooked gender differential in current discussions of conversion across Anglo-Ottoman boundaries. Turning apostata does not necessarily equate with turning Turk. It is fitting, therefore, that "the renegado" featured in the title of Massinger's play is displaced from its intended referent, the pirate Grimaldi, onto the female characters whose sexuality renders them suspect to Christian and Muslim men alike.

#### TURNING TO EARLY MODERN WOMEN'S CULTURAL AGENCY

In alternatively positioning gender – particularly as articulated by women – as a crucial category of analysis for the early modern Anglo-Ottoman encounter, the following chapters address a series of distinct but inter-linked cultural moments from the late sixteenth century through the turn of the eighteenth century. This historical sweep, as many scholars have noted, involved the shift from England as a proto-colonial power – whose discourse of global empire as epitomized by Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* in no way matched its dominion – to England as an emerging imperial player with outposts in North America, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and South Asia.<sup>30</sup> This shift nevertheless remained uneven and uncertain throughout the period, rendering any teleological model untenable. Hence, I proceed via an "epochal" analysis, which "recognize[s] the complex interrelations between movements and tendencies both within and beyond a specific and effective dominance."<sup>31</sup> This approach enables a discussion of "emergent" discourses, such as imperialism and orientalism, prior to their instantiation within the anglocentric global empire consolidated in the late eighteenth century. It also militates against reading the "rise" of the British empire back into earlier eras when England remained subordinate to Islamic and Catholic powers.

Accordingly, the first chapter of this study expands conventional methodologies for comparing early modern women's cultural productions across Europe by viewing the Ottoman empire, which during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included most of "eastern" and continually