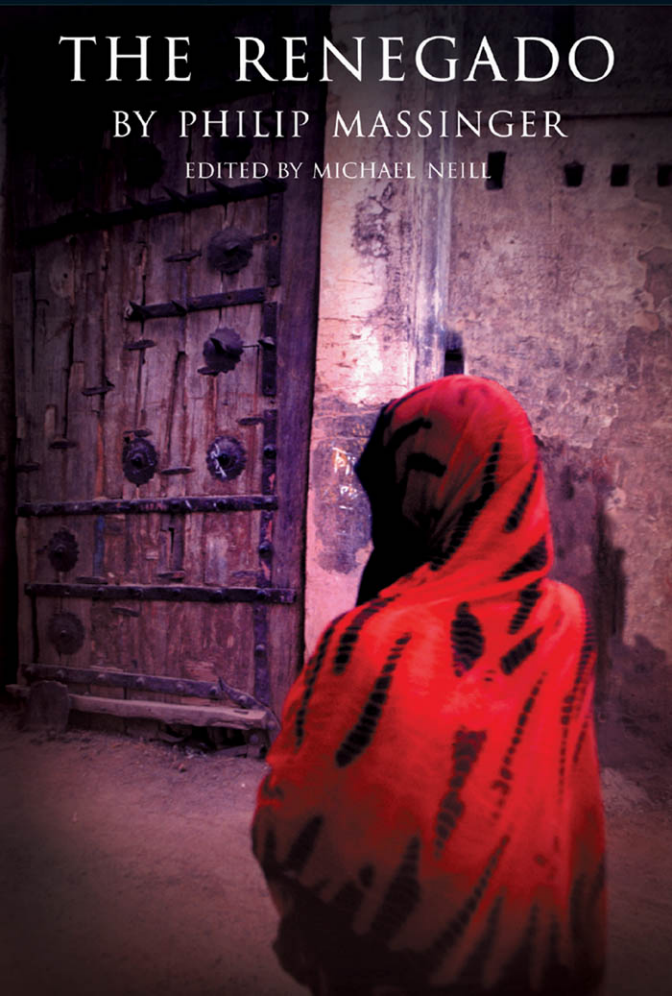


ARDEN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

THE RENEGADO

BY PHILIP MASSINGER

EDITED BY MICHAEL NEILL



ARDEN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

General Editors: Suzanne Gossett,
John Jowett and Gordon McMullan

THE RENEGADO,
OR,
THE GENTLEMAN
OF VENICE

ARDEN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

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ARDEN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

THE
RENEGADO,
OR, THE
GENTLEMAN
OF VENICE

Philip Massinger

for the Lady Elizabeth's Men at the Cockpit

Edited by

MICHAEL NEILL



Arden Early Modern Drama



1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

This edition of *The Renegado* edited by Michael Neill, first published
2010 by Methuen Drama

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Arden Shakespeare is an imprint of Methuen Drama

Methuen Drama
A & C Black Publishers Ltd
36 Soho Square
London W1D 3QY
www.methuendrama.com
www.ardenshakespeare.com

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library
Hardback ISBN: 978 1 408 12518 2
Paperback ISBN: 978 1 904 27161 1

The full text of Cervantes' *Los Baños de Argel*, in a translation by Gwyn Fox, can be
found on the book page for this edition on the Arden Shakespeare website.

General Editors
Suzanne Gossett, John Jowett, Gordon McMullan

Printed by Zrinski, Croatia

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The Editor

Michael Neill is Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Auckland. He is the author of *Issues of Death: Mortality and Identity in English Renaissance Tragedy* (1997) and *Putting History to the Question: Power, Politics, and Society in English Renaissance Drama* (2000). He has edited *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Othello* for the Oxford Shakespeare and *The Changeling* for New Mermaids.

For Kubé, my faithful renegade

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GENERAL EDITORS'

PREFACE

Arden Early Modern Drama (AEMD) is an expansion of the acclaimed Arden Shakespeare to include the plays of other dramatists of the early modern period. The series publishes dramatic texts from the early modern period in the established tradition of the Arden Shakespeare, using a similar style of presentation and offering the same depth of information and high standards of scholarship. We define 'early modern drama' broadly, to encompass plays written and performed at any time from the late fifteenth to the late seventeenth century. The attractive and accessible format and well-informed editorial content are designed with particular regard to the needs of students studying literature and drama in the final years of secondary school and in colleges and universities. Texts are presented in modern spelling and punctuation; stage directions are expanded to clarify theatrical requirements and possibilities; and speech prefixes (the markers of identity at the beginning of each new speech) are regularized. Each volume contains about twenty illustrations both from the period and from later performance history; a full discussion of the current state of criticism of the play; and information about the textual and performance contexts from which the play first emerged. The goal of the series is to make these wonderful but sometimes neglected plays as intelligible as those of Shakespeare to twenty-first-century readers.

AEMD editors bring a high level of critical engagement and textual sophistication to their work. They provide guidance in assessing critical approaches to their play, developing arguments from the best scholarly work to date and generating new

perspectives. A particular focus of an AEMD edition is the play as it was first performed in the theatre. The title-page of each volume displays the name of the company for which the play was written and the theatre at which it was first staged: in the Introduction the play is discussed as part of a company repertory as well as of an authorial canon. Finally, each edition presents a full scholarly discussion of the base text and other relevant materials as physical and social documents, and the Introduction describes issues arising in the early history of the publication and reception of the text.

Commentary notes, printed immediately below the playtext, offer compact but detailed exposition of the language, historical context and theatrical significance of the play. They explain textual ambiguities and, when an action may be interpreted in different ways, they summarize the arguments. Where appropriate they point the reader to fuller discussions in the Introduction.

CONVENTIONS

AEMD editions always include illustrations of pages from the early texts on which they are based. Comparison between these illustrations and the edited text immediately enables the reader to see clearly what a critical edition is and does. In summary, the main changes to the base text – that is, the early text, most often a quarto, that serves as the copy from which the editor works – are these: certain and probable errors in the base text are corrected; typography and spelling are brought into line with current usage; and speech prefixes and stage directions are modified to assist the reader in imagining the play in performance.

Significant changes introduced by editors are recorded in the textual notes at the foot of the page. These are an important cache of information, presented in as compact a form as is possible without forfeiting intelligibility. The standard form can be seen in the following example:

31 doing of] *Coxeter*; of doing *Q*; doing *Raml*

The line reference ('31') and the reading quoted from the present editor's text ('doing of') are printed before the closing square bracket. After the bracket, the source of the reading, often the name of the editor who first made the change to the base text ('Coxeter'), appears, and then other readings are given, followed by their source ('of doing *Q*: doing *Rawl*'). Where there is more than one alternative reading, they are listed in chronological order; hence in the example the base text *Q* (= Quarto) is given first. Abbreviations used to identify early texts and later editions are listed in the Abbreviations and References section towards the end of the volume. Editorial emendations to the text are discussed in the main commentary, where notes on emendations are highlighted with an asterisk.

Emendation necessarily takes account of early texts other than the base text, as well as of the editorial tradition. The amount of attention paid to other texts depends on the editor's assessment of their origin and importance. Emendation aims to correct errors while respecting the integrity of different versions as they might have emerged through revision and adaptation.

Modernization of spelling and punctuation in AEMD texts is thorough, avoiding the kind of partial modernization that produces language from no known period of English. Generally modernization is routine, involving thousands of alterations of letters. As original grammar is preserved in AEMD editions, most modernizations are as trivial as altering 'booke' to 'book', and are unworthy of record. But where the modernization is unexpected or ambiguous the change is noted in the textual notes, using the following format:

102 trolls] (trowles)

Speech prefixes are sometimes idiosyncratic and variable in the base texts, and almost always abbreviated. AEMD editions expand contractions, avoiding confusion of names that might be similarly abbreviated, such as Alonzo/Alsemero/Alibius from *The Changeling*. Preference is given to the verbal form that prevails in the base text, even if it identifies the role by type, such as 'Lady' or 'Clown', rather than by personal name. When an effect of standardization is

to repress significant variations in the way that a role is conceptualized (in *Philaster*, for example, one text refers to a cross-dressed page as *Boy*, while another uses the character's assumed name), the issue is discussed in the Introduction.

Stage directions in early modern texts are often inconsistent, incomplete or unclear. They are preserved in the edition as far as is possible, but are expanded where necessary to ensure that the dramatic action is coherent and self-consistent. Square brackets are used to indicate editorial additions to stage directions. Directions that lend themselves to multiple staging possibilities, as well as the performance tradition of particular moments, may be discussed in the commentary.

Verse lineation sometimes goes astray in early modern play-texts, as does the distinction between verse and prose, especially where a wide manuscript layout has been transferred to the narrower measure of a printed page. AEMD editions correct such mistakes. Where a verse line is shared between more than one speaker, this series follows the usual modern practice of indenting the second and subsequent part-lines to make it clear that they belong to the same verse line.

The textual notes allow the reader to keep track of all these interventions. The notes use variations on the basic format described above to reflect the changes. In notes, '31 SD' indicates a stage direction in or immediately after line 31. Where there is more than one stage direction, they are identified as, for example, '31 SD1', '31 SD2'. The second line of a stage direction will be identified as, for instance, '31.2'. A forward slash / indicates a line-break in verse.

We hope that these conventions make as clear as possible the editor's engagement with and interventions in the text: our aim is to keep the reader fully informed of the editor's role without intruding unnecessarily on the flow of reading. Equally, we hope – since one of our aims is to encourage the performance of more plays from the early modern period beyond the Shakespeare canon – to provide texts which materially assist performers, as well as readers, of these plays.

PREFACE

In the course of preparing a scholarly edition, one accumulates more and greater debts than one can readily discharge in a short preface. In the case of *The Renegado*, I am particularly conscious of how much I owe to the support of my General Editors – to Gordon McMullan and Suzanne Gossett for their critical acumen and intellectual generosity, and above all to John Jowett for his meticulous advice and unsurpassed mastery of all things textual. The editorial team at Arden have been unfailingly helpful, despite the burden laid on them by a difficult period of transition involving two changes of ownership. I am especially indebted to the patience and good humour of Margaret Bartley, to the sharp eye of Jane Armstrong – perhaps the most accomplished copy editor I have been lucky enough work with – and to the perseverance of Charlotte Loveridge and Anna Brewer in helping to gather the illustrations. Thanks, too, to Jason Gray and Martin Coombs for the map on p. 3. Perhaps my largest debt is to Gwyn Fox for her translation of Cervantes's stylistically tricky play *Los Baños de Argel*, part of which is included as an appendix to this edition.

Needless to say, I am grateful for the assistance of the excellent staff at the several libraries where I worked on the edition: the Cambridge University Library, the British Library, the libraries of Trinity and King's College, Cambridge, the Auckland University Library and the Folger Shakespeare Library (where Georgianna Ziegler and Betsy Walsh have, as always, been wonderfully obliging).

I began work on *The Renegado* whilst on sabbatical leave from the University of Auckland in 2005; and I received invaluable support from Trinity College, Cambridge (where I was a Fellow

Commoner for most of that year), and subsequently from the Folger Shakespeare Library where I held a short-term fellowship until mid-2006. In 2008 Vanderbilt University generously enabled me to travel to Cambridge for the summer, where Trinity once again provided me with accommodation and technical assistance. For their intellectual support and unstinting hospitality, I owe more than I can say to my Cambridge hosts, Anne Barton and Adrian Poole. I am indebted to Katherine Duncan-Jones for information about the family of George Harding, Baron Berkeley, to whom Massinger dedicated *The Renegado*.

It is always useful to try out arguments on one's peers, and I am grateful to the organizers of two conferences who made it possible for me to present material from the Introduction to unusually discriminating audiences: Subha Mukherji and Raphael Lyne invited me to their Cambridge conference on tragicomedy in 2005, while Heather James and Albert Braunmuller asked me to join a two-day seminar on drama and politics at the Huntington in 2009.

A great deal of what goes into an edition such as this derives, needless to say, from conversation and occasional correspondence with friends and colleagues. In this connection, I should particularly like to mention Colin Gibson, Nabil Matar, Michael Questier, Benedict Robinson and Daniel Vitkus. I have also benefited enormously from the ideas and expertise of Süheyla Artemel, Richmond Barbour, Kate Belsey, Anston Bosman, Graham Bradshaw, Jonathan Burton, Thomas Cogswell, Jane Degenhardt, Jean Feerick, Jonathan Gil Harris, Jean Howard, John Kerrigan, Peter Lake, Leah Marcus, Linda McJannet, Patricia Parker, Gail Kern Paster, Linda Peck and David Schalkwyk. To them, and to the many others from whose friendship and support I have benefited, I offer my warmest thanks.

INTRODUCTION

THE PLAY

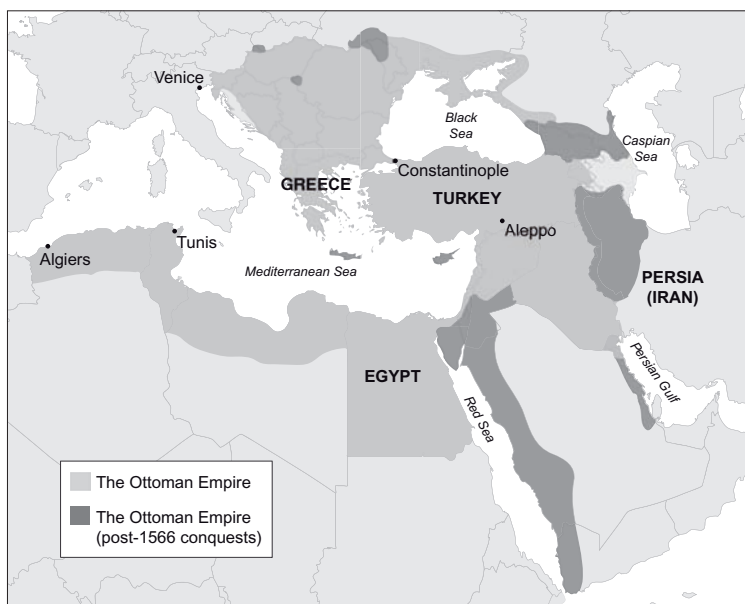
The Renegado is one of the most entertaining plays of its period: the variety of its situations and characters, the liveliness of its plot and its shamelessly theatrical brio help to explain how Massinger emerged as the most commercially successful dramatist of his day, rising to become the successor of William Shakespeare and John Fletcher as principal dramatist for the King's Men. Building on a number of texts by Miguel de Cervantes, in which the Spanish writer drew on his own experiences as a captive in Algiers, Massinger's play was pitched at a theatre audience that took particular pleasure in the vicarious enjoyment of colourful foreign locations.¹ Looking forward to such better-known oriental extravaganzas as Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, *The Renegado* introduced the eroticized captivity narrative to the English stage, combining it with the long-popular romance motif of a Christian wooer's conquest of an exotic princess. Onto these Massinger grafted the story of a Venetian renegade who, like a number of notorious English sea-captains, has 'turned Turk' and thrown in his lot with the corsairs of the Barbary Coast. For the original audience, the presence of the renegade, together with the inclusion of an English eunuch amongst the princess's slaves, must have given the play a more urgently contemporary twist, since the corsairs were pirates and slave raiders whose forays reached the coasts of Britain and Ireland, reminding their populations that no part of Christendom could remain entirely isolated from the

1 See the remarks of the Swiss visitor Thomas Platter, in Clare Williams (ed.), *Thomas Platter's Travels in England, 1599* (1937), 170.

struggles of the Mediterranean world. Thus, even as it indulges in romantic fantasy, *The Renegado* exploits real anxieties occasioned by the endemic conflict between trade-hungry Europe and the expansionist Ottoman Empire (Fig. 1) – a conflict that involved competition for control of Eastern commerce as well as battles for territorial supremacy, but that was typically interpreted as an extension of the long war between Christendom and Islam that stretched back to the beginning of the Crusades. To the extent that English involvement in a revived crusading impulse was a significant focus of King James's ecumenical aspirations, *The Renegado* also appealed to immediate national concerns. At the same time, the play's carefully articulated theological arguments show a playwright alert to the contentious sectarian politics of the mid-1620s. As the energetic satire of such plays as *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam* demonstrates, Massinger knew how to tap in to the liveliest social, political and religious issues of his time, whilst avoiding the open controversy that landed contemporaries like Ben Jonson, John Marston and Thomas Middleton in such trouble. Massinger seems to have written *The Renegado* early in 1624, at the height of the extended political crisis provoked by King James's attempt to negotiate a Catholic marriage for his heir; yet although he placed a Jesuit priest at the moral centre of its action, the play's first performances seem to have passed off without any public furore. Perhaps this had something to do with the distraction created by its ostentatious anti-Mahometanism on the one hand, and the shamelessly theatrical brio of its romantic plotting on the other.¹

Although the play's title seemingly identifies the renegade Grimaldi as its protagonist, the main plot centres on Vitelli, a gentleman of Venice, who has travelled to Tunis in search of his missing sister, Paulina. In order to avoid the suspicion of the Ottoman authorities he has disguised himself as a merchant,

1 Throughout this edition I use the old forms 'Mahomet' and 'Mahometan' to distinguish seventeenth-century English constructs of the Islamic world from the historical realities of Islamic peoples and their faith.



1 Map showing the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, 1300–1700

with his manservant, Gazet, posing as his apprentice. Shortly after his arrival, Vitelli learns from his friend and counsellor, the Jesuit Francisco, that Paulina was abducted by Grimaldi and that she has been sold to the Turkish Viceroy, Asambeg. The Viceroy now dotes upon his beautiful Christian slave and is determined to conquer her virtue. With the aid of a powerful relic given her by Francisco, Paulina is able to resist Asambeg's lustful designs. Her brother, however, proves less fortunate: as he peddles his tawdry trade-goods in the market-place of Tunis, Vitelli attracts the attention of Princess Donusa, niece of the Turkish Sultan, who lures him to her palace and seduces him. The dangerous bravado with which Vitelli abandons himself to his desire for this alluring unbeliever ('Though the Devil / Stood by and roared, I follow!', 2.4.134–5) initially recalls Faustus's surrender to the demonic Helen of Troy in Marlowe's popular tragedy. But Massinger

deliberately frustrates the expectation he creates, for Donusa's triumph is short-lived: the besotted Christian is rescued from spiritual peril by the earnest remonstrations of Francisco, and returns to the palace determined to break off his liaison; here the lovers are surprised by Donusa's Moorish suitor, Mustapha, and a furious Asambeg, who announces that the penalty for such a liaison is death. In the scenes that follow, Vitelli's steadfastness in the face of his persecutors so impresses Donusa that she abandons her efforts to undermine his faith and announces her own conversion. The action then moves to its conclusion through a sequence of elegantly symmetrical reversals of fortune: Paulina's chaste refusal to 'turn Turk' is set against the Turkish princess's voluntary decision to turn Christian; Vitelli carries Donusa off to Italy in a neat inversion of the original abduction of Paulina; and his assistant in this act of virtuous piracy is none other than Grimaldi, who has himself been brought to repentance by the ministrations of Francisco.

This elaborate braiding of plots is further complicated by subsidiary actions involving the frustrated ambitions of Mustapha and the fortunes of a gallery of servant figures – notably the hero's ambitious, conniving, but absurdly naive manservant, Gazet. The pleasures of exotic romance are sharpened by a number of devices designed to sheet the action home to its English audience. Vitelli's merchant guise and the commercial setting in which he enters the play invite a reading of his rich prize as an allegory of mercantile desire, while Grimaldi's ferocious piracy animates the dark side of such ambition, reminding seventeenth-century playgoers of the threat to English enterprise posed by corsairs who included renegade Englishmen (such as the notorious John Ward, also known as Yusuf Reis). The satiric commentary placed in the mouths of Gazet and the English eunuch Carazie repeatedly links the action to contemporary critiques of English vice and folly, while the presence of a Jesuit priest as spiritual adviser to Vitelli and Grimaldi raises theological issues closely bound up with the fierce religious controversies attending the

final years of James I's reign – especially those provoked by his efforts to secure a Catholic marriage for his son and successor, Charles. The inclusion of such potentially explosive material at a time of political crisis might have invited the kind of trouble that befell the King's Men later in the same year, when they staged Thomas Middleton's satiric allegory of the abortive Spanish match, *A Game at Chess*; but Massinger's deft interweaving of disparate materials, combined with a mastery of tone that enables *The Renegado* to insist on its ultimately playful status as a sentimental fantasy, seems to have protected it from both Protestant opprobrium and official sanction.

The pace and verve of the play's action, the unexpected turns and counterturns of its plot and the effortless shifts of tone through which the voices of its various characters are realized, all mark *The Renegado* as the work of a consummate professional – one whose long apprenticeship as a collaborator with the leading playwrights of his day (Fletcher, Middleton and Thomas Dekker among them) had given him a sure feel for managing the pleasures of an audience. Massinger's well-honed skills, like those of Middleton and other contemporaries, have for too long been obscured by the extraordinary pre-eminence of Shakespeare; but successful revivals of several of his plays, including *The Roman Actor*, *Believe as You List* and *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, have demonstrated the sharpness of his theatrical instinct. Perfectly adjusted to the tastes of the elite 'private' playhouse for which it was written, *The Renegado* is equally well calculated to delight modern playgoers; and its involvement with the long and troubled history of relations between the Christian West and Islamic East make it a text of peculiar interest to the present time.

CRITICAL APPROACHES

For a long time, critical and theatrical attention to Massinger's extensive *oeuvre* has tended to concentrate on a small number

of relatively well-known plays: the lively social satire of his comedies *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* and *The City Madam*, and the metatheatrical reflexivity of his tragedies *The Roman Actor* and *Believe as You List*, in particular, have attracted the interest of critics and, to some extent, of theatre directors; but the tragicomedies have been less well served. *The Renegado*, despite its obvious theatrical flair, has suffered peculiar neglect, barely rating a mention in the two books that set out to reawaken interest in Massinger towards the end of the twentieth century.¹ Over the last decade, however, a number of convergent factors have combined to remedy this situation. Most conspicuously, perhaps, anxieties about the so-called ‘clash of civilizations’ have stimulated an interest in literature that mirrors the vexed history of relationships between Christian Europe and the Muslim world. This in turn has provided a new direction for the longstanding critical concern with works that reflect or refract England’s emerging preoccupation with mercantile enterprise and dreams of empire – a preoccupation that was often complicated by envious awareness of the belated and fragile character of English expansionism.² At the same time, various critics, perplexed by the choric role allotted to the Jesuit priest, Francisco, have attempted to situate the play’s conflict of faiths in the complicated religious politics of the early 1620s and the anxieties stirred up by the prospect of a Catholic marriage for the Prince of Wales.

Generic play: The Renegado as tragicomedy

The title-page of the 1630 Quarto identifies *The Renegado* as

- 1 Douglas Howard (ed.), *Philip Massinger: A Critical Reassessment* (Cambridge, 1985), and Ira Clark, *The Moral Art of Philip Massinger* (Lewisburg, 1993).
- 2 Two important studies that place writing about Moors and Turks in the wider contexts of European imperial desire are Barbara Fuchs’s wide-ranging *Mimesis and Empire: The New World, Islam, and European Identities* (Cambridge, 2001) and Jonathan Burton’s more closely focused study (Burton, *Traffic*). See also Daniel J. Vitkus, ‘Trafficking with the Turk: English travelers in the Ottoman Empire during the early seventeenth century’, in Kamps and Singh, 35–52. In the opening chapter of *Turning Turk*, Vitkus sensibly stresses the gap between England’s emerging idea of empire and the lack of ‘a real, material empire on the ground’ (6).

'*A Tragicomædie*', advertising its affiliation with the Italianate genre that had been developed in England by Massinger's mentor and frequent collaborator, Fletcher. The play is Fletcherian in its exploitation of exotic romance motifs, as well as in its deployment of the structural conceits celebrated by contemporaries in their relish of 'the Plots swift change, and counterturn'¹ – that witty orchestration of peripeties by which an apparently tragic sequence of events is raised to a pitch of danger before being brought to a miraculously happy conclusion. Praising the craftsmanship of *The Renegado*'s elaborately symmetrical design, Maurice Chelli observes that in its piling up of 'disguises, surprises, naive ruses, swift and touching conversions, sudden and burning amours . . . this play has everything necessary to make it a perfect epitome of conventional tragicomedy.'² It is, moreover, unusually self-conscious in the way it handles the conventions of the form.

Tragicomedy is by definition a mixed mode, but one of the distinctive things about the design of Massinger's play is the way its unexpected switches of tone and direction are produced by yoking together elements from a wide variety of genres and subgenres – as if in defiance of Sir Philip Sidney's famous strictures on this 'mongrel' kind.³ Apart from its links to voyage drama and to other Turk plays,⁴ *The Renegado* recalls Marlovian heroic tragedy in the blustering rant of the renegade Grimaldi (see, for example, 1.3.42–6), and revisits citizen romance through Vitelli's bourgeois disguise as 'A poor mechanic pedlar' (3.3.80) who wins the love (and dowry) of an oriental princess. Even more striking are the disorienting recollections of city comedy: Massinger's Tunis is a very different city from the Algiers remembered by Cervantes; its symbolic centre has shifted from the prison to the market-place – a point that Massinger underlines

1 The phrase is from William Davenant's epilogue to *The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House* (London, 1656).

2 Chelli, 132 (editor's translation).

3 Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apology for Poetry*, in Edmund Jones (ed.), *English Critical Essays (Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)* (1947), 46.

4 The designation is borrowed from Daniel Vitkus, whose introduction to *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* includes a useful discussion of the genre.

by casting his Christian characters as citizens of Venice, a republic famous for the wealth it garnered from trade with the Orient, and by introducing his hero as a Venetian merchant, come with his apprentice to set up shop in the Tunis bazaar.

Beneath his disguise, of course, Vitelli is '*The Gentleman of Venice*' invoked by the play's original subtitle, but he opens the play with a blunt demand better fitted to the commercial world satirized in Jacobean city comedy than to the aristocratic and romantic ambience conventionally associated with Fletcherian tragicomedy: 'You have hired a shop, then?' (1.1.1). The dialogue of 1.1 and 1.3 compounds this generic confusion: capitalizing on the 'free trading' allowed to foreigners in the 'mart-time' (1.1.45–6), and whipping up custom for their 'toys and trifles' (1.3.105) with the pedlar's cry of 'What do you lack?' (1.3.1, 5, 35, 92, 99), Vitelli and Gazet lay out their stock of 'choice China dishes . . . pure Venetian crystal . . . and curious pictures of the rarest beauties of Europa' (1.3.1–5). The glass and china may be flawless (1.1.1–4), but the same cannot be said for their supposed court portraits – images which they seek to pass off as masterpieces of that 'great Italian workman' Michelangelo (1.3.131–2), even as they privately identify them as mere 'figures / Of bawds and common courtesans in Venice' (1.1.4–13), cheap paintings of the kind used for advertisement in the Venetian sex trade.¹ This milieu of fleshly appetite, commercial appetancy and petty fraud is immediately reminiscent of Jonson and Middleton; and Gazet, in particular, who takes his name from a small Venetian coin, is a character whose combination of opportunism, naivety and greed would not be out of place in *Bartholomew Fair* or *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*.

By contrast, the subtitle's identification of Massinger's protagonist as '*The Gentleman of Venice*' invites comparison with two very different plays: *The Merchant of Venice* and

1 See, for example, Angelica Bianca's use of a portrait to advertise her charms in Aphra Behn's *The Rover*.

Othello – otherwise known as *The Moor of Venice*.¹ The story of Grimaldi – a Venetian Christian turned Turk who repents and returns to his former allegiance – resembles a reverse image of Shakespeare's Moor-turned-Christian whose tragic destiny is (in his own imagination at least) to 'turn Turk' again. By the same token, the successful enterprise of a young Venetian who wins himself an exotic bride endowed with fabulous wealth recalls the rich matches achieved by Bassanio and Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice* – not least in the way that Vitelli successfully elopes with a convertite bride whose dowry, like Jessica's, consists of rich jewels and a casket crammed with treasure. Yet even as *The Renegado*'s subtitle highlights its relation with *The Merchant of Venice*, it distances the action from the milieu of commerce by emphasizing that the play's real concern is with the fortunes of a 'gentleman', whose true rank fits him to the more elevated world of Fletcherian tragicomedy;² and, while both plays pivot on a scene of narrowly averted execution in which an infidel turns Christian, the model for Donusa's spectacular conversion lay closer to hand, in the work of Massinger's old collaborator Fletcher.

Fletcher's *Island Princess* had been staged by the King's Men little more than a year before *The Renegado* was performed by their rivals, the Lady Elizabeth's Men, at the Cockpit, and it seems likely that Massinger's play was conceived partly in response to the success of this oriental fantasy. Fletcher's tragicomedy also centres on the fortunes of a gentleman adventurer who achieves his ends by assuming the guise of a merchant – a device that conveniently validates English commercial ambitions, even as the play ostensibly disavows them with the pretence that merchant enterprise is no more than a convenient cover for old-fashioned chivalric heroism (Neill, 'Material flames'). Both plays exploit

1 This appellation appears not only as the play's subtitle in both Q1 and F, but as the full title for the 1604 court performance recorded in the account book of Edmund Tilney, Master of the Revels.

2 On status divisions in the play, see Barbara Fuchs: 'the world of *The Renegado* . . . tolerates conversions far better than it does change in social status' (Fuchs, 64).

the glamour of exotic settings; and like *The Renegado*, *The Island Princess* climaxes in the conversion of an infidel princess who is so moved by her Christian lover's fortitude that she surrenders herself to his inspirational faith.¹ Considered as a theatrical meta-commentary on Fletcher's play, however, *The Renegado* exhibits some important differences – not least in its attitude towards cultural contact. The precipitate escape of Massinger's Venetians from Tunis contrasts with the amity and 'universal gladness' celebrated by the triumphant Portuguese and their East Indian allies at the end of *The Island Princess*, where the King of Tidore is sufficiently impressed by Armusia's steadfast courage, and by his own sister's conversion, to contemplate turning Christian himself. But Massinger's Mahometan potentates, while they may admire Vitelli's unwavering refusal to betray his faith, feel no such admiration for Donusa's apostasy; nor do they ever falter in their determination to punish the offenders. As a result, where the final scene of *The Island Princess* brings Tidoreans and Portuguese together in a circle of cross-cultural reconciliation, *The Renegado* deliberately frustrates conventional tragicomic expectation by concluding on a note of enraged bafflement and mutual recrimination, as Mustapha and Asambeg discover the captives' escape and face the prospect of exile or torture at the hands of their 'incensed master', the Sultan (5.8.31–9).² In this, it departs even from the ending of its principal dramatic source, Cervantes's *Los Baños de Argel* (*The Prisons of Algiers*), which

- 1 The parallel was first noted in Marvin T. Herrick, *Tragicomedy* (Chicago, 1955), 291.
- 2 Benedict Robinson, likening the Venetians' flight to the abandonment of Prospero's island at the end of *The Tempest*, argues that Massinger 'abandons the possibility of any legitimate contact with "Turks"', because such intercourse can only be 'contaminating' ('Commodities', 141). However, given that the hero departs with a sizeable fortune in Ottoman jewels – the portion of a princess who has herself been figured as the choicest commodity of all – the conclusion we are to draw about his adventuring is not, perhaps, quite so clear-cut: in fact, it might well seem that Massinger's fugitives are allowed to have it both ways, returning from their enterprise laden with wealth even as they celebrate their departure from Tunis by launching a defiant 'broadside' at their infidel pursuers. Such equivocation is in accord with the divided attitude towards Ottoman Turkey described by Burton, who shows how 'a discourse of captivity and degeneracy' competed with more positive reactions designed to encourage trade – sometimes within the same text (*Traffic*, 24).

focuses on the happiness of its reunited lovers as they flee the scene of their captivity.

Turks, renegades and merchants: the Islamic context

By Massinger's time, European anxiety about the Islamic East already had a long history, stretching back through the Crusades to the Moorish conquest of the Iberian peninsula in the eighth century. The recurrent presence of a lavishly attired 'King of Moors' in medieval street pageants, a figure at once fearful and glamorously exotic, served as a sign of the ambivalent fascination that the Muslim world exercised upon the popular imagination – a fascination that later fed into Christopher Marlowe's characterization of oriental despotism in *Tamburlaine*. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the rapid expansion of Ottoman Turkey gave a fresh immediacy to such attitudes: overrunning the remains of the Byzantine Empire, Ottoman armies pushed west, reaching as far as the walls of Vienna in 1529 (see Fig. 1).¹ The traumatic fall of Constantinople in 1453 had turned the

- 1 Richard Knolles prefaces his *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603) by lamenting 'The long and still declining state of the Christian Commonweale, with the utter ruine and subversion of the Empire of the East' (sig. A4^v), and by expressing his consternation at an empire 'growne to that height of pride, as that it threatneth destruction unto the rest of the kingdomes of the earth . . . [and] holdeth all the rest of the worlde in scorne, thundering out nothing but still bloud and warre' (sig. A4^v); he goes on to blame the members of the 'Christian Commonweale' for ignoring their common interests as members of a single body, and for being 'so divided among themselves with endlesse quarrels, partly for questions of religion . . . partly for matters touching their own proper state and soveraigntie . . . that they could never as yet . . . joyne their common forces against the common enemy' (sig. A4^v). The author does, however, conclude his massive work with 'A briefe discourse of the greatnesse of the Turkish Empire' designed to show to 'the zealous Christian' how the signs of its decadence and ultimate fall are already apparent, since the empire is 'not much unlike the overgrowne tree, at the greatnesse whereof every man wondereth . . . Which although it be indeed verie strong . . . yet is by many probably thought to be now upon the declining hand, their late emperors in their owne persons so far degenerating from their warlike progenitors, their souldiers generally giving themselves to unwonted pleasures, their ancient discipline of war neglected, their superstition not with as much discipline as of old regarded . . . [Turkey exhibits] all the signs of a declining state . . . the greatnesse of the empire being such, as that it laboureth with nothing more then with the weightnesse, it must needs . . . of it selfe fall, and againe come to nought, no man knowing when or how so great a worke shall be brought to passe, but hee in whose deepe counsell all those great revolutions of Empires and Kingdomes are from eternitie shut up' (sigs 6C1^r–7C8^r).

attention of Humanist scholars to this new Islamic menace. The picture of the Turkish Empire that emerged from their studies was laced with contradictions: as the memory of recent disasters merged with legend, romance and religious dogma, Turks might be denounced 'as amoral barbarian[s], inhuman scourge[s], and even [as the] anti-Christ' (Burton, *Traffic*, 23). Seen as responsible for destroying the great monuments of classical civilization, feared as ruthless slave raiders and corsairs (Fig. 2), they were nevertheless often stigmatized as indulgent sensualists, adherents of 'a sham religion founded on violence and unrestrained lust' (Bisaha, 15). Their spectacular military and political success, however, invited more positive reactions: praised for their 'learning . . . arts, civility, and government', they were sometimes held up as 'paragon[s] of order, piety, and strength', exponents of 'a virtuous, austere culture' (Fig. 3) who were not only 'worthy and capable adversaries', but might even be courted as potential allies (Burton, *Traffic*, 28, 23; Bisaha, 6–9). Thus Ottoman Turkey became in many respects the defining other of Tudor and Stuart culture, functioning, in Burton's words, 'as a discursive site upon which contesting versions of Englishness, Christianity, masculinity, femininity and nobility [were] elaborated and proffered' (*Traffic*, 28). In some respects this response prefigured the later constructions of oriental alterity famously described by Edward Said;¹ but, as both Burton and Richmond Barbour have stressed, the deep ambivalence of English attitudes makes any attempt to view early modern encounters with the Islamic world through a Saidian lens perilous – a misleading 'back-formation' that disguises the fear and anxious sense of inferiority that characterized early modern responses to Turkish power.²

The work of Nabil Matar, in particular, has done much to

1 See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979).

2 See Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 10–11, 19, Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge, 2003), 3–5, and Burton, *Traffic*, 12. Barbour, whilst acknowledging that pre-enlightenment 'orientalisms' were in some important respects ancestral to later formations, nevertheless insists that they 'expressed material, political, and discursive relations profoundly different from those Said finds typical of modernity' (3). See also McJannet, 2–6.



- 2 'Turkish Pirate', from Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi, e moderni di tutto il Mondo*, 1598

reveal and explain the extraordinary place occupied by Ottoman Turkey and the Barbary states in the Tudor and Stuart imaginary.¹ On the one hand, Turkey controlled crucial trade routes to the silks and spices of the East and was a source of coveted luxuries in its own right; on the other, it was the seat of a powerful

¹ See Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (New York, 1998), *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York, 1999) and *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689* (Gainesville, 2005).