



Muslims in the Western Imagination

Sophia Rose Arjana

Print publication date: 2015

Print ISBN-13: 9780199324927

Published to Oxford Scholarship Online: December 2014

DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199324927.001.0001

Turkish Monsters

Sophia Rose Arjana

DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199324927.003.0004

Abstract and Keywords

This chapter looks at the Muslim monsters located in Renaissance art, Elizabethan drama, and several other milieus, including food and courtly games. The fact that the majority of these monsters are identified as Turkish is a reflection of the anxiety posed by an expanding Ottoman Empire. Renaissance painting continues to express the co-identification of Jews and Muslims popularized in earlier centuries, often through the use of turbans or other Ottoman dress worn by characters appearing in scenes of the Crucifixion or execution of Christian saints. In Shakespearean drama, Muslim monsters include Tamburlaine and Othello, non-Turkish characters whose monstrosity is situated in their bloodlines, tied to the monstrous races believed to inhabit non-Christian lands. Images of the Turks also populate commercial signage and food, often portraying Muslims as deformed and frightening figures.

Keywords: Turks, Ottomans, Renaissance, Muslim, Tamburlaine, Othello

The year 1453 marks the beginning of Ottoman rule in a conquered Byzantium, a period that commences with the sacking of Constantinople. In writings from the period, Christians described the “ravishment” and “horrifying details” of the sacking of the former Byzantine capital, at the same time that charges against the “barbarian” North African Muslims were made, a descriptor summarily attached to the Turks in that year.¹ At this point, Turkish monsters emerged alongside Arab/Saracen and African Muslim monsters. As the Ottomans increased in power, the Turk became an icon of difference and a symbol of monstrosity. In a Christian account of the siege of Rhodes, the Grand Turk is described as a “wild beast” whose “thirst for human blood was insatiable.”²

Other descriptions of monstrous Turks followed in dramatic works, literature, art, and even food. Lutheran commentaries described the Turks, like the Jews, as devious bloodhounds and the “personification of the Devil,” among other things.³ Although medieval anxieties about Saracens and Africans persisted, they were joined by new fears surrounding the Ottomans.

European attitudes toward the Ottomans generated the dominant symbols that will be examined in this chapter. The Ottoman Empire was frequently described as the Antichrist, a monster, or a beast, as “that monster of Turkish tyranny [that] hath too long reigned and laid the earth desolate.”⁴ The inhabitants of Ottoman territories didn’t fare much better. Turkish people were identified with Satan, much like the Saracen in earlier centuries. “Prejudices against the Turks reached a climax in the oft-expressed notion that they were incarnate devils or at any rate the chosen followers of Satan, that they all derived from hell or were all going there.”⁵ Renaissance studies that focused on the possible origins (p. 59) of the Turks frequently relied on medieval fables of monstrous races and mysterious lands. In some cases, the ancestry of the Turks was linked to the Scythians, one of the groups associated with monstrous races in Shakespearean dramas and other writings. Scythians were often featured in medieval writings about monsters, and a Scythian origin, when not explicitly linked to monsters, was still cited as an explanation of the Turk’s barbarism.⁶

Political alliances with the Ottomans did little to temper European attitudes. France had extended periods of positive relations with the Ottomans, but this did not result in a change in French attitudes toward Turkish people.⁷ French Renaissance philosophers writing about the grotesque named it the “arabesque,” thus linking Islam with disgust.⁸ Michel Baudier charged, “18 out of 20 Ottoman sultans abandoned themselves to the love of boys and used them as women.”⁹ Pope Pius II accused Turks of being “wallowed in lust” and “addicted to prostitution and rape.”¹⁰ Early Protestants harbored similar views. Luther famously referred to the pope and Muhammad as the “bloodhound and the devil,” and accused Muslims of “dog-marriage,” a charge reflecting earlier characterizations of Muslims as dogs.¹¹ He and other Protestants also referred to Catholicism as “Turkopapalism.”¹² Vitriol against Muslims, including their portrayal as monstrous characters, was spread through literature and art.

The end of the Middle Ages, rather than resulting in a reduction in monsters, opened the door to all kinds of “scientific” studies of miraculous creatures living on newly discovered islands and continents. Fantasies about giants, Amazons, and others were fairly common, and while these subjects will be examined more fully in the subsequent chapters, it is important to say something here about the new opportunities for monster-making. When Europeans encountered these new territories, their imaginations went into overdrive; thus during the Age of Exploration numerous monsters were purportedly observed in the Americas, the South Pacific, and other colonial spaces. This began with the sighting of islands

in the Americas and the South Pacific, places that inspired a sense of mystery and wonder. For the European, “the unknown island is conceived as a self-contained possible world for the colonial imagination, a place where anything unexpected can happen.”¹³

In Elizabethan drama and other genres of contemporaneous literature, we see this in the “monsters and other wonders [that] were so important in Renaissance literature.”¹⁴ Monsters were not limited to the New World or Oceania, however. Encounters with the monstrous races and creatures **(p.60)** that lived in the East continued to occupy the European *imaginaire*. Andre Thevet’s description of a Red Sea “monster of the size and proportion of a tiger without a tail, but [with] the face of a well-formed man” is but one example of the human-animal hybrids that continued to be associated with Muslim territories.¹⁵ Turks figure prominently in these stories of monsters, due to the many geographical spaces they occupied as well as the threat that Ottoman power posed to the Europeans.

As in the Middle Ages, Muslims in the Renaissance were viewed as creatures alienated from God, a fact demonstrated in the monstrous races featured in Shakespearean-era dramas. The role of imagination is a critical part of this story. The English had a particularly astute understanding of how this faculty functioned in relation to the mind; in fact, this understanding bears an uncanny resemblance to Bourdieu’s concern with fantasy masquerading as reality. According to this view, “[a]lways the imagination of fantasy is seen as a power operating in a framework of other faculties and functions. In a definite hierarchical order of communication, knowledge travels from the so-called ‘outer’ senses (the five primary senses), to the ‘inner’ (Common Sense, Imagination and/or Fantasy, Sensible Reason, and Memory, which occupy cells in the brain), and thus to the highest rational, incorporeal powers (the Intellect or Wit or Understanding, and the Will).”¹⁶ The internalization of fantasies about Jews and Muslims depended upon “the transmission of data through a hierarchy of powers.”¹⁷

Other monsters were found at home, showing that the belief in supernatural creatures was not restricted to the appeal of the exotic and foreign. Stories of monstrous births surged with the reign of Elizabeth I, symptomatic of the male anxiety provoked by women in power.¹⁸ Domestic political events were often blamed on the birth or sudden appearance of non-human or hybrid creatures. In 1645, a pamphlet claimed that the birth of monsters served as an ominous sign of the first English Civil War: “Hath not Nature altered her course so much, that women frame of pure flesh and blood bring forth ugly and deformed Monsters; and contrariwise, Beasts bringeth forth humane shapes contrary to their kind.”¹⁹ Reports of monsters were made in the American colonies as well, often in reference to religious and political outsiders, as found in the stories and artistic depictions of Mary Dyer’s monstrous infant.²⁰

Some Muslim monsters—Saracen giants and Black Saracens, Jewish and Muslim *cynocephalie*—disappeared from texts and paintings. In particular cases, cultural types replaced the families of Muslim monstrous (p.61) races that medieval artists painted. For example, the foreign characters in Giotto's frescoes were patterned after Mediterranean and Asiatic peoples, "[i]n all these cases the representatives of historically and geographically distant countries no longer appear as monsters, masks, or puppets, but as human beings, sometimes of authentic portraiture."²¹ However, this did not entail an end to Muslim monsters.

Turbaned Villains

Renaissance paintings of the Crucifixion often feature a snarling dog, a symbol of the Jew-dog, and turbaned figures who are shown harassing and injuring Christ or taking part in the execution of a Christian saint—much like the images of dog-headed men in medieval paintings. Jews also continued to be identified as canines in literature. *The Merchant of Venice* describes Shylock as a dog. "[Shylock is] the embodiment of his species. And the Jew's Jewish heart is wholly obdurate. He is a force of evil as strong as nature itself. No longer a dog to be controlled by beating and kicking, he has become an untamable wolf, an inferno of evil and hatred."²² The turban, a common feature of medieval depictions of Saracens, persisted as a dominant symbol of the Muslim during the Renaissance. Curiously, it also appears in depictions of Jews in some paintings, possibly caused by the association of the turban with rabbinic clothing:

In 1624 the theologian Joseph Hall associated the turban with the Israelite High Priest, but more than anything else, the English associated the turban with Islam. Throughout the seventeenth century, travel books with frontispieces portraying the divisions of the world and the empires of man presented the Turk/Muslim potentate with a turban. Even the engraving of the Prophet "Mahomet," which appeared in Alexander Ross's survey of world religions, shows that seventeenth-century Britons believed the turban to have first been donned by the founder of Islam himself.²³

The portrayal of Jews with turbans may have also been due in part to the "Orientalizing" of both Jews and Muslims, who often appear side by side in Renaissance paintings wearing turbans. One case is found in Giovanni Antonio de Pordenone's painting of the Crucifixion in Cremona Cathedral. Turbaned Jews appear in Renaissance paintings that lack Muslim characters, such as the Limbourg Brothers' *Nativity*, which (p.62) features a Jewish figure with a "bulky 'Turkish'-style turban."²⁴ Ivan Davidson Kalmar has examined the use of the turban on Jewish subjects in Renaissance paintings, such as the example in Rembrandt's *David and Uriah*: "In Christian art, it is a common practice to represent Biblical Jews as if they were Muslims."²⁵ In some cases, Turkish imagery was incorporated into the Jewish figures: "In *David and Uriah*, for instance the two men's Ottoman-style turbans play a dominant part on the

composition.”²⁶ Here, Jewish and Muslim imagery is used much as it was in the Renaissance—to create a Jewish Muslim. In the Renaissance, these figures are not Jewish Sarrazins but Jewish Turks—Jews wearing turbans, Ottoman coats, and other Turkish accoutrements.

Another way that the presentation of Jewish and Muslim monsters altered during the Renaissance involved artistic skill. Instead of relying on purple or black skin, canine heads, or pig faces to represent monstrosity, the portrayal of facial expressions became popular. The production of Passion plays and the publication of Renaissance writings on the Passion influenced the graphic representations on the canvas, seen in the torment on Christ’s face as well as the sinister and grotesque faces of the villains, who were often Jews and Muslims.²⁷ During the Renaissance, Jews and Muslims continued to be presented as a related enemy that helped to constitute European identity—“the shadow of an ageless ghost.”²⁸

In the Renaissance, the peoples of the Orient also appeared as decoration, a convention that began in thirteenth-century Italy, as a result of both Muslim tourists visiting Siena and Florence and the Italian tourists who visited the Islamic cities of Damascus, Aleppo, and Cairo. Trade played a significant role in these encounters, both in the promotion of tourism and the creation of wealth—the production of which supported the building projects in Venice inspired by Oriental architecture.²⁹ In addition to the Eastern styles subsumed in Venetian architecture, another result was seen in great paintings. Much like the Oriental characters, settings, and accoutrements present in Shakespearean drama, in Renaissance painting we see a continued interest in the East: “There are peasants and Bedouins in short coats and small turbans, or in North African hooded mantles; Syrians and men from Iraq with strongly-marked, bearded faces, long-flowing garments, often with embroidered Tiraz bands on their upper arms, mighty turbans and long neck- or breast-cloths; stout, brown Egyptians and Nubians with small turbans,” and others, including Turks.³⁰

In Renaissance art, the placement of figures, as in earlier centuries, spoke volumes about the themes being communicated. In some cases, **(p.63)** Jewish and Muslim villains are shown actively participating in crimes against Christians; in other cases, they are presented as the enemy through their placement on the canvas, even when the figures are inactive. In the *Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (c. 1340, Pisa, Santa Caterina), Averroes (Ibn Rushd), the great Muslim philosopher, appears below the Saint’s feet, and his text is turned upside down to symbolize its blasphemous status.³¹ In fifteenth-century painting, depictions illustrating the Church’s victory over heresy were directed at the Turkish threat, although at times they showed both Jew and Muslim, “in the representation of symbolic threats.”³²

Jewish and Muslim characters also continued to appear in paintings depicting the suffering of Christ, as onlookers, instigators, or the murderers of the Son of God. In some examples, they wear turbans and have hooked noses—identifying them with Satan. This graphic quality was inspired by the popularity of the Passion.³³ Medieval and Renaissance narratives of the Passion co-identified Jews and Muslims, through such conventions as Jews praying to Mahomet and Muslims identified as Romans. These stories greatly impacted the art of the period.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate between Jewish and Muslim characters in many Renaissance paintings of Christ's arrest, torture, and death. Both continued to be portrayed as Christ-killers, appearing in scenes of the Crucifixion and executions of Christian martyrs. These are graphic depictions of violence, at times almost pornographic in their display of bodies and the violence done to them. In one depiction of the martyrdom of a Christian child titled the *Ritual Murder of Simon of Trent* (Cerveno, Parocchio San Martino), murderers surround the young victim in a scene that includes a turbaned man. Whether this figure is a Jew or Muslim is hard to say, given that Jews were sometimes portrayed with turbans. Jews and Muslims were often represented as co-criminals. In some paintings, the hierarchical arrangement was shifted, and the Muslim villain was replaced with a Jewish one, or vice versa. In the *Norsa Madonna* (c. 1499), the Muslim figure of Averroes seen in the Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas (c. 1323) is replaced with a Jewish family.³⁴ These paintings represent the ways in which Jews and Muslims were interchangeable in the minds of Christians as enemies *par excellence*.

Inspired by the medieval tradition of Muslim Christ-killers, and encouraged in part by the Passion and its anti-Semitic themes, Renaissance artists often depicted the executioners of Christian saints with turbans, typically wearing Turkish costumes. These depictions of **(p.64)** Turks as Christ-killers required a kind of time travel—an assumption that Ottomans were somehow present during an era that predated them by more than a thousand years:

Muslim Turks were shown performing the biblical Massacre of the Innocents. A turbaned Pontius Pilate festooned a decorative balcony in Lorch in Upper Austria and elsewhere. Jesus's tormentors on his way to Calvary, along with the Pharisees and their henchmen, wore Turkish headdresses and brandished scimitars. Turks were coupled with the trials of this world as well. Sometime after 1480, the cathedral church of Graz commissioned a picture of God with three lances named 'Hunger, Sword, and Pestilence.' Beneath them were three specific plagues—locusts, the Plague, and the Turks.³⁵

But of course this makes sense, given the medieval association of Jews and Muslims, seen in the charges that Muslims were “New Jews,” the images of Jewish Sarrazins, and other examples of co-identification. In Renaissance painting, Jewish and Muslim figures often appear side by side, accompanied by symbols that further confuse the categories of Jew and Muslim. On a wall painting at the San Sacro Benedictine monastery in Subiaco, the flags surrounding the scene of Christ bearing the Cross include flags with Jewish badges and Muslim crescents.³⁶

Christian attitudes toward the body changed with the Renaissance, due in part to a renewed interest in medicine and the sciences. During earlier centuries, there was a fear of bodily mutilation and dismemberment, an anxiety that contributed to the resurrection narrative expressed in the cannibalism mythologies that dominated medieval narratives featuring Muslim monsters.³⁷ During the years leading up to the Renaissance, in the period often identified by scholars as the proto-Renaissance, some of the taboos surrounding dissection and autopsies were lifted, resulting in the (purported) discovery of miracles hidden inside the bodies of saints and martyrs. These miracles served as proof that the miracle of Christ was evident in the mutilated bodies of his most devoted followers. For example, in 1308, Chiara of Montefalco died in the monastery where she served as abbess. The narrative about her body begins with a miracle—there is no bodily decay for five days, despite the summer temperatures—and continues after her body is preserved and then eviscerated.³⁸ Several years later, at her *processus* (which was unsuccessful), a nun from Chiara’s **(p.65)** Umbrian monastery who was present at the dissection testified about what she had witnessed:

And after the other nuns had left, Sister Francesca of Foligno, who is now dead, and Illuminata and Marina and Elena, who is now dead, went to cut open the body, and the said Francesca cut it open from the back with her own hand, as they had decided. And they took out the entrails in the oratory that evening. On the following evening, after vespers or thereabouts, the said Francesca, Margarita and Lucia and Caterina went to get the heart, which was in the box, as they later told the other nuns. And they said Francesca of Foligno cut open the heart with her own hand, and opening it they found in the heart a cross, or the image of a crucified Christ.³⁹

The claims made about Chiara’s body suggest that mutilation and resurrection were evidence of “the association of dismemberment and sanctity [that] continued to permeate popular attitudes into the sixteenth century.”⁴⁰ Stories of mutilation and death at the hands of a religious enemy allowed the Church to suggest that the existence of miracles was inherent in the only true religion.

During the Renaissance, artists often included Turkish figures participating in the torture, mutilation, and execution of Christian saints. Three examples are Altichiero's *Beheading of St. George*, the Master of the Figdor Deposition's *Martyrdom of St. Lucy*, and Balthasar Moret's *Martyrdom of St. Tarbula*. Altichiero's painting is the mildest in terms of the violence depicted, as St. George is shown kneeling, awaiting his execution, surrounded by a large group of turbaned figures. The other two paintings are far more gruesome. In the *Martyrdom of St. Lucy*, turbaned figures look on as Lucy, who has already been put to the flame, stands in prayer. A Roman soldier pierces her heart. In the last example, the *Martyrdom of St. Tarbula* (Figure 3.1), turbaned figures observe the dismemberment of the saint. According to the narratives surrounding her death, Tarbula was cut in half, then dismembered and burned.

These Renaissance scenes display the suffering and martyrdom of the saints through decapitation, fire, and dismemberment, functioning in a similar way to the medieval theme of Saracen cannibalism. Both images reinforced the Christian narrative of the resurrection. Such scenes relate that even after torture, death, and decay, the eventual restoration by the hand of Christ will take place: **(p.66)**

Medieval images of the body have [their] role in medieval piety. . . . Medieval images of the body have less to do with sexuality than with fertility and decay. Control, discipline, even torture of the flesh is, in medieval devotion, not so much the physical rejection of physicality as the elevation of it—a horrible but delicious elevation—into a means of access to the divine.⁴¹



Figure 3.1 *Martyrdom of St. Tarbula*. Petro Bivero. Belgium, c. 1634. Utrecht, University Library, WRT 98-60, p. 61.

Although Turkish figures, typified by light skin and turbans, were commonly featured in Renaissance depictions of Christian martyrs, black Muslims make appearances as well. It is likely that this character is the **(p.67)** Black Turk, a character as connected to the devil, much like his predecessor, the Black Saracen. In some cases, this character was identified as a “Moor,” a word used as a general descriptor for all Muslims. Black Muslims were often featured in scenes that portrayed the devil. Following the Battle of Lepanto in 1571, there was a parade featuring a Black African as Charon, the ferryman who transported souls to Hades, as well as the occupant of the boat, an Ottoman, both symbols of Islamic damnation.⁴² In a painting that depicts the murder of Justine, a black African wields the dagger that will end her life, while Ottomans look on.⁴³ This scene is repeated in several paintings that illustrate the martyrdom of saints, scenes in which Ottomans are present, as either fair-skinned or African, playing the role of onlookers, instigators, or participants.

Black Muslim characters appear in venues other than painting, including the African Muslim monsters featured in Shakespearean-era drama and the Austrian theater masks depicting Satan as a Black Saracen.⁴⁴ In some of these masks, the physiognomy of Satan was replicated in an exact fashion in a representation of a Black Muslim. Late medieval theater masks of Satan feature black skin with warts, a large hooked nose, and a crown. In a detail from the painting *Resurrection of Christ*, a Muslim is depicted in just that way, with black skin, a wart on his cheek (the other cheek is hidden), a large, hooked nose, and a turban (see Figure 3.2).

During the Renaissance, the black Muslim continued to occupy a place in the Christian imaginary as a nefarious figure and enemy of Christendom, as in Figure 2.5, where he participates in the torture of Christ. Satan continued to be called a long list of names related to skin color, including the black knight, black man, big Negro, black Jehovah, and black Ethiopian.⁴⁵ Medieval and Renaissance art are certainly not the only places we find such depictions, but they are more overtly linked to Satan than in later periods. *The Disrobing of Christ* is another painting featuring a villain—a Black Saracen, Moor, or Turk. In this example, a Muslim is



shown harassing Christ; also of interest is a character who carries a shield with an African man's face on it, mirroring a medieval painting of Saracens carrying shields with African

men on their faces. In this case, the African is depicted with black skin, a large, hooked nose, and a turban. In these images, we see the persistence of the trope of the Black Muslim. Through his skin tone, he is implicated as a sinister enemy.

Figure 3.2 Resurrection of Christ. Artist of Wolfgang Katzheimer's Circle. Germany, c. 1490, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck.

According to the Renaissance episteme, God's punishment was often expressed on the bodies of Muslim characters. The existence of the Turks was seen as a punishment for Christian sin. Evidence of God's wrath was **(p.68)** seen in many spaces. "The Renaissance detected scourges of God everywhere. They ranged from Timur, particularly under his Marlovian guise as Tamburlaine, to the less probable instance of lawyers ('Corrupt Lawyers are no doubt a scourge of God'). The most consistent invocation of this traditional belief was made in connection to the Ottoman Empire."⁴⁶ This way of seeing the Ottomans as both a curse and an enemy helped to create the Muslim monsters of the age.

Turcica, German collections of stories about Turks, include fantastic tales of perverse sexual behaviors and other disturbing stories of Ottoman life. The *Turcica* often focus on behaviors known as *sodomia*, a collection of acts that referred to any sexual act deviating from "normal" Christian **(p.69)** practices. Stories narrated in these collections detail the victimization of innocents, including children, females, and dead Christians. In one story, Turkish soldiers have sex with corpses—Christians killed in the fall of Constantinople.⁴⁷ Another tale claims that Muslims "have it off with those fish that possess sexual organs."⁴⁸ One strongly disturbing story tells of an old woman who disguises herself as a man, revealing herself to the bride—a beautiful virgin—on her wedding night.⁴⁹

Other European literary genres feature milder Turkish monsters. English literature and drama typically portray the Turks as heretics who prayed to a god named "Mahomet, Mawmet, Mahoun, or Mahound," part of a pantheon that included "Apollin, Termagent, and other devilish idols."⁵⁰ Shakespeare and his contemporaries, who often presented Muslims as the central villains in their plays, often showed a fondness for Oriental accoutrements—carpets, costumes, tapestries, and furniture, as in *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew*. Examples include, "In the desk / That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry," "My hangings all of Tyrian tapestry," and "Turkish cushions boss'd with pearl."⁵¹ Few positive accounts of Muslim characters are found in Elizabethan writing, dramas or otherwise, usually following the old formulas of Islam as a heresy, Muhammad as the Antichrist, and Muslims as monsters. One exception is a purely descriptive, and thus non-polemical, account of Muslims

that includes details of the Moors' rituals: "They turne their faces eastward when they kill anything. They use beades, and pray to saints."⁵² Such descriptions reflect the Renaissance practice of describing foreigners in what we might call academic terms, seen as well in Venetian and other schools of painting.

In Elizabethan England, portrayals of Prophet Muhammad often relied on medieval polemics, resulting in characterizations as a heretic and sexual pervert. In some examples from literature and drama, the Prophet took the form of a monster, a dreaded beast, or as a "Mungrell born" creature with a scalded head.⁵³ As we have seen, by Shakespeare's time, the Turk had replaced the Arab as the dominant symbol of Islam, a shift that impacted representations of Muslim characters, whether of a human or monstrous nature. In William Painter's *The Palace of Pleasure*, the Turk is "wicked" and "cruel," with beastly attributes: the sultan's "madness" is more terrifying than "a wild lioness," and his "beastliness" "far exceeded [that of] beasts."⁵⁴

Negative depictions of Muslim characters featured in Elizabethan drama are numerous as well. Tamburlaine and Othello are representative **(p.70)** of the monsters we are interested in here. As hybrids belonging to more than one monstrous race, they threatened notions of English racial purity. Tamburlaine is the central monster in Marlowe's play *Tamburlaine the Great*. However, before turning our attention to him, there is the Ottoman sultan Bayazid, who was the first portrayal of an Ottoman sultan on the stage.⁵⁵ He, too, is a monster, albeit a less complex one than Tamburlaine. Bayazid is described as a member of the "detestable and cursed sect of Islam," who appeals to his "god" Mahomet—a monster with "purple blood," which courses through the veins of all Turks.⁵⁶ Bajazet, the more prominent Turkish character in Marlowe's drama (the "Great Turk"), is also a dehumanized character, a member of the damned and vile race of Turks. Bajazet is unapologetically Muslim; he swears by "Mahomet's sepulcher, And by the holy Alcoran," and, like an animal, is put in a cage by Tamburlaine.⁵⁷ In contrast, Tamburlaine swears his allegiance to his sword, "that conquered Persia."⁵⁸ In formulating these characters, Marlowe was likely influenced by the account of Turkish history penned by John Foxe, published in 1570 and again in 1576 and 1583, before the publication of *Tamburlaine*.⁵⁹ Foxe relies on medieval theology, and specifically the history of the Church, in his account of the Turks.

The sect of Muhammed began in 666, and the beast of the Apocalypse bore the same number. The rise of the Ottoman empire in 1300 coincided almost exactly with the time appointed for Satan's release and the renewed period of oppression and persecution forecast by Revelation. And it also coincided with the completed corruption of the Church under Boniface VIII.⁶⁰

Tamburlaine's identity as a Muslim is less than subtle, expressed in the set of oppositions established in the text. Much like the set of dissentient characters seen in the medieval bestiary, he is an anti-Christian character. In Marlowe's other masterpiece, *The Jew of Malta*, the structure also establishes "an organizational scheme of Christendom versus its enemies."⁶¹ While in *The Jew of Malta* these conflicts are more overt, displayed in the revenge of the title character against the Christians who surround him, in *Tamburlaine*, the title character's Muslim identity is expressed through the essentially "medieval" conception of Islam and of Christian/Muslim oppositions.⁶²

Tamburlaine is described as a "monster that hath drunk a sea of blood," suggesting that he drinks the blood of humans.⁶³ He is identified **(p.71)** as a hydra, the multi-headed monster with the upper body of a woman and the lower body of a snake.⁶⁴ He is a monster alienated from God:

*A monster of five hundred thousand heads,
Compact of rapine, piracy, and spoil,
The sum of men, the hate and scourge of God,
Raves in Egyptia, and annoyeth us.
My lord, it is the bloody Tamburlaine.*⁶⁵

This description relies on the medieval depictions of Muslims as members of a monstrous race. Tamburlaine is a giant with fiery eyes, like the Saracen giants of medieval romances. His furrowed eyebrows reflect images of the Black Saracen as Satan found on medieval drama masks and in Renaissance paintings:

*Of stature tall, and straightly fashioned,
Like his desire, lift upwards and divine;
So large of limbs, his joints so strongly knit,
Such breadth of shoulders as might mainly bear
Old Atlas' burden; 'twixt his manly pitch,
A pearl more worth than all the world is plac'd,
Wherein by curious sovereignty of art
Are fix'd his piercing instruments of sight,
Whose fiery circles bear encompassed
A heaven of heavenly bodies in their spheres,
That guides his steps and actions to the throne
Where honour sits invested royally;
Pale of complexion, wrought in him with passion,
Thirsting with sovereignty and love of arms;
His lofty brows in folds do figure death,
And in their smoothness amity and life;
About them hangs a knot of amber hair,
Wrapped in curls, as fierce Achilles' was,
On which the breath of heaven delights to play,
Making it dance with wanton majesty;
His arms and fingers long and sinewy,
Betokening valour and excess of strength;*

*In every part proportion'd like the man
Should make the world subdu'd to Tamburlaine.*⁶⁶

(p.72)

Tamburlaine is a member of at least four monstrous races—a hydra, a giant, and the offspring of both the Scythians and Tartars. The Scythians are attached to a 2,300-year-old mythology surrounding their supposed primitivism, cannibalism, and general monstrosity.⁶⁷ Tamburlaine's monstrosity is predicated in part on his Scythian and Tartarian bloodlines, as argued by Burnett: "Certainly, the joint attachment—both 'Scythian' and 'Tartarian'—of Tamburlaine has its place in the period's larger debates about developing national identity. But Marlowe's ethnic detailing comes alive, I would suggest, not only in material and trading connections but also via the mythic 'monstrous' inhabitants peopling Scythia and Tartaria in the social imaginary."⁶⁸ The Church fathers often referred to the Scythians as a monstrous race cursed by God. Tertullian described the Scythians as barbarians and cannibals, Orosius claimed they drank human blood instead of milk, and Jerome wrote that they "devour their slaughtered parents, kinsmen, neighbors, when they reach old age."⁶⁹ According to medieval and Renaissance texts, the Scythians were the offspring of Magog (and Gog), the biblical monster responsible for the plagues of Jews, Muslims, and other non-Christians.⁷⁰ This belief was expressed on maps illustrating the distribution of monstrous races in Europe and Asia. Shakespeare also makes an allusion to the Scythian appetite for human flesh in *King Lear*:

*Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:
For, by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate, and the night;
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist, and cease to be;
Here I disclaim all my paternal care,
Propinquity and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,
Or he that makes his generation messes
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,
As thou my sometime daughter.*⁷¹

According to the *Carta Marina* (1516), the monsters occupying Tartaria—the Tartars—were located behind the mountain range that imprisoned Gog and Magog.⁷² The *Carta Marina*, which is contemporary **(p.73)** with Marlowe and Shakespeare, shows a number of monstrous races that live in Tartaria, including *Parossites* (humans with miniature mouths who do not eat but survive on the steam that rises from cooking meat), *cynocephalie* (this particular variety of dog-heads had feet resembling cattle, a human head, and a dog's face), the unnamed (creatures with kneeless legs and no human speech), and the Samoyeds (wild

men whose clothes and houses were made from animal skins).⁷³ Tamburlaine is the offspring of these creatures. He is a Muslim monster.

The identity of Shakespeare's Othello is a bit more complicated. While he denies his Muslim identity, and speaks strongly against Muslims in the play, his Moorish ancestry is what eventually does Othello in. Othello makes clear his hatred for the Turks, including the final scene before his death, when he calls the Muslim a "circumcised dog."⁷⁴ Yet, his descent into madness is predicated on his racial and religious foundations. He is unable to escape either his blackness or his Muslim bloodlines.

Othello is a hybrid monster of sorts, doubly cursed with African and other monstrous bloodlines. The belief that Africans were demons and monsters still dominated Europe during Shakespeare's time. In Stephen Bateman's study of monsters published in 1581, Africans are called "Black Monsters" and are described as such: "*Ethiopes*, a people in the West part of Ethiopia: also there are those black men, that have four eyes: and it is said that in Eriopia be found very comely bodied men, notwithstanding they are long necked, and mouthed as a crane, the other part of the head like a man."⁷⁵ These fantasies were associated with all Africans, including Moors like Othello, whose black skin was associated with perdition and evil. In the twentieth century, Othello is more commonly associated with the tragic character portrayed on the stage by great thespians like Ira Aldridge and Paul Robeson, rather than with an African monster.⁷⁶ However, Elizabethans "associated [Africans] in the popular imagination with monsters, so that the play's numerous references to monstrosity would have resonated with Othello's racial characteristics to establish his extreme difference to typical Europeans."⁷⁷ Elizabethans thought that Africans *were* monsters. The constellation of attitudes concerning Africans was widespread and historically situated: "From Spanish hatred of the Moors, reinforced by the general Christian hatred of Mohammedans and by experiences of piratical depredations, came the Elizabethan emphasis upon the cruelty of these people—and upon their blackness."⁷⁸

Stories of monstrous births and of demons, hairy beasts, and multi-headed creatures, often connected to the presence of Africans, **(p.74)** abounded in the popular press in newspapers and broadsheets in London and other cities. A 1605 pamphlet titled *Strange News* claims a number of strange and grotesque births; an African is depicted alongside a four-headed monster and a skeletal beast.⁷⁹ This is by no means the only report of an African monster born alongside other monsters. Pierre Boiastuau's 1589 publication includes the following description of beastly infants:

Damascenus a grave author doth assure this to be true, that being present with Charles, the iiiv. Emperor and king of Bohemia, there was brought to him a maid, rough and covered with hair like a bear, which the mother had

brought forth in so hideous and deformed a shape, by having too much regard to the picture of S[aint] John clothed with a beast's skin, the which was tied or made fast continually during her conception at her bed's feet. By the like means Hippocrates saved a princess accused of adultery, for that she was delivered of a child black like a *Ethiopian*, her husband being of a fair and white complexion, which by the persuasion of Hippocrates, was absolved and pardoned, for that child was like unto a [picture of a] *Moor*, accustomedly tied at her bed.⁸⁰

These reports about monstrous births reflect fears surrounding miscegenation. At the same time that *Othello*, a play about the mixing of races through the sexual union of Othello and Desdemona, is performed on the stage, such creatures were thought to exist.⁸¹ According to European sources from the era, the sexual union of different races and even distinct religions created horrible monsters. Ambroise Paré, a physician who lived in sixteenth-century France, wrote a book on these horrors, titled *Des Monstres et Prodiges*, in which he described the dangers of such relations:

There are monsters that are born with a form that is half-animal and the other human, or retaining everything about them from animals, which are produced by sodomists and atheists who "join together" and break out of their bonds—unnaturally—with animals, and from this are born several hideous monsters that bring great shame to those who look at them or speak of them.⁸²

Like many texts on monsters, *Des Monstres* had a sensual element. The original edition contained a section on lesbianism (considered a form of **(p.75)** monstrosity) that included "a graphic description of the female genitals," removed from later editions.⁸³

Miscegenation is a central theme in *Othello*, expressed in both the act of mixed-race sex and the horrors it could create. The image of Othello and Desdemona having sex is described as "an old black ram. . . tugging [a] white ewe" and "the beast with two backs."⁸⁴ This union would result in a family of monsters, illustrated in Iago's warning that, "[y]ou'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins, and gennets for Germans."⁸⁵ Later in the play he issues another warning, stating: "Hell and Night / Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light."⁸⁶ The repulsion surrounding the union of Othello and Desdemona is explicitly tied to the Moor's identity as an African. Public reaction to *Othello*'s racial coupling was expressed centuries later, when a Russian lady described this union in the following way:

Not the Moscow Maly Theatre, but the African jungle should have been filled and resounded with. . . the cries of this black, powerful, howling flesh. But by the very fact that the flesh is so powerful—that is genuinely

black, so naturally un-white does it howl—that savage flesh did its savage work. It murdered and crushed the spirit. . . one’s spirit cannot accept it—and in place of the highest enjoyment, this blatant flesh introduced into art, this natural black Othello, pardon me, only causes. . . revulsion.⁸⁷

Othello’s race identifies him as a monster. Even though he tries to act human, he meets an inescapable fate. Like Edward Scissorhands returning to the house on the hill, Othello cannot escape *what* he is—a monster. He ultimately proves, “*abluis Aethiopem, quid frustra*”—“You wash the Ethiopian, Why the labor in vain.” Othello is and will always be a monster, “demonic hellfire, burnt by hellfire and cursed by God.”⁸⁸ The text is quite clear on Othello’s nature, calling him “horrible and grim.”⁸⁹ Othello’s identity is suggested when he discloses his intimate knowledge of monstrous races, at one point telling Desdemona about “[t]he Anthropophagi, and men whose heads, Do grow beneath their shoulders,” creatures he has obviously seen in person.⁹⁰ He knows about the cannibals and *Blemmyae* because he had lived among them. According to the medieval and Renaissance episteme, Muslims had an intimate knowledge of the domain of monsters. Members of Shakespeare’s audience viewed Africa as a land of horrors, with flames that reached as high as the moon **(p.76)** and cannibalistic Anthropophagi, creatures without heads, satyrs, and Troglodytes who lived in caves.⁹¹

Othello is a pseudo-Mahomet, recycling an old trope about the Muslim prophet—that he was an epileptic. Christian writers often accused Muhammad of being epileptic (considered a mental illness), as in the story cited earlier of his consumption by pigs after a seizure.⁹² Othello is accused of being an epileptic, just like the Prophet:

The Moor’s ordeal parodies the physical collapse that accompanies an episode of divine possession—he kneels with Iago, falls down, and then undergoes a seizure like those experienced by other “prophesying” victims of “the falling sickness,” a malady associated with both sacred and Satanic inspiration. Othello’s epilepsy recalls that of the ur-Moor, Muhammad.⁹³

Othello expresses another threat—the danger of “Turning Turk,” where an Englishman (or woman) would become Turk, transforming into a violent beast. The English were fearful that Islam would turn “good Protestants to a state of damnation” due to the Muslim’s “sexual/sensual temptation” and his (or her) “wrathful passion for power.”⁹⁴ In *Othello*, this is expressed clearly in the lines, “Are we turned Turks, and to ourselves do that, Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?”⁹⁵ The only way for Othello to extinguish this part of himself is by suicide, “killing the Turk he has become.”⁹⁶ Many images of Turks, including those which are cannibalized and decapitated, occupy the European imagination, and I now turn to these.

The Turk's Head

During the Renaissance and for centuries following, the Turk is an eponymous figure—in paintings, in literature and drama, in advertisements, and even appearing as a popular food. Business signage for pubs, coffeehouses, and tobacco houses often displayed a Turk, Saracen, or Blackamoor (“Black Moor”) wearing a turban and brandishing a scimitar. Modern renderings of these signs are still used, typically at pubs and restaurants in Great Britain, such as the one at Waltham Abbey.⁹⁷ These more recent renditions are tame in comparison to the extinct signs of Elizabethan England, which included portrayals of the Turk, Saracen, and Blackamoor as a monster. Written sources provide clues about what (p.77) Elizabethan-era renderings of monstrous Saracens, Turks, and Moors looked like. One source describes an image of a Saracen in the following manner: “[he had] a Sarazins face, his nose too long for his lips, his cheeks like the jawes of a horse, his eyes like a Smithes forge.”⁹⁸ In one commentary on these images that dates from 1634, they are described as having “huge, terrible faces (as you still see on the sign of the Saracen’s head).”⁹⁹ While these images are identified as “Saracen,” Saracens, Turks, and Moors were interchangeable categories, exchangeable descriptors of the Muslim enemy. In most cases, “no clear distinction was popularly drawn between Turks and Saracens.”¹⁰⁰ Much like the late twentieth century, when “the Arab” was often used as a symbol for all Muslims, the Saracen, Turk, and Moor served as fluid signifiers of Muslim identity in earlier centuries.

The class of images identified as “Turk’s Head” signs were often identified with a particular sultan, such as Morat/Amurath or Soliman/Suleiman.¹⁰¹ These signs were more numerous than those depicting the Saracen, suggesting that the Turk functioned as a dominant symbol in this context.¹⁰² Turk’s Head signs were often associated with inns as well as coffee houses, the latter thanks to the introduction of coffee to Europe by the Ottomans circa 1529.¹⁰³ One modern example of a coffee shop with such a sign is Mile’s, established in 1659.¹⁰⁴ Signs showing the Blackamoor’s Head, which are no longer in use, were associated with tobacco houses and often showed “[p]ipe-smoking negroes, with feathered head-dresses and quilts.”¹⁰⁵ The Blackamoor, or Black Moor, functioned as a negative sign, representing darkness, evil, and monstrosity, much as in earlier centuries. The Blackamoor also represented Satan in the “Bag of Nails” sign, popular until the eighteenth-century. This sign is still featured in London with a Turkish figure (see Figure 3.3).

The sign's history is explained here:

The *Bag of Nails* was once a very common sign; there was in Larwood's time one still remaining in Arabella Row, Pimlico, and there is still one in Buckingham Palace Rd. About 1770 there might have been seen at the front of the house the original sign which depicted a satyr of the woods, and a group of Bacchanals. The satyr having been painted black with cloven feet, it was by common consent called the Devil, while the Bacchanalians were transmuted into a *Bag of Nails*. This however was only an old slang name for the house, for, in a conspiracy of 1765 one of the witnesses says "He went (p.78) into a public-house, the sign of the *Devil & Bag of Nails*, for so that gentry called it upon themselves (though it was the *Blackamoor's Head & Woolpack*), by Buckingham Gate." This is presumably the *Bag o' Nails* still remaining in Buckingham Palace Rd.¹⁰⁶



Figure 3.3 Bag of Nails Sign. London. Courtesy of Fatima Van Hattum.

The Turk's Head is also the name given to a savory pie popular in Britain and France during the Elizabethan period that represented a cannibalistic feast of Turkish flesh. Typically, this pie was a grotesque caricature of a Turk or Saracen's face. By eating it, Christians consumed the enemy in an act of symbolic cannibalism. Its roots lie in a fictitious narrative of Christians eating Saracens in the medieval romance *Richard Cœur de Lion*. The Turk's Head pie and its variations, a jelly and a pastry (p.79) (the *kugelhupf*), are further examples of how the Turk functioned in the European habitus as a dominant monster.

The Turk's Head pie was intended to resemble the bizarre and non-human physiognomy of the Turk or Saracen. Its "outlandish features" and "upturned face" in the crust that decorates the pie constitute a culinary representation of the Muslim monster.¹⁰⁷ A few recipes of the earlier French version of the pastry,

called *Teste de Turke*, survive, including this one, which suggests how the covering on the pie could resemble a monstrous face: “[put] sugar on top, then a generous layer of ground pistachio nuts; the color of the ground nuts, red, yellow, and green. The head [of hair] should be black, arranged to resemble the hair of a woman, in a black bowl, with the face of a man set on top.”¹⁰⁸ Variations on the Turk’s Head included a jelly and pastry and varied in appearance, allowing for the representation of different Muslims, providing an “easy shift between Turk, Moor, and Black.”¹⁰⁹ A recipe for the *Teste de Turke* found in an old French cookbook, is as follows:

Here is a dish which is called Turk’s head. Take pork and hens and cut into small pieces; then grind in a mortar, and put in good spices and saffron; put in plenty of eggs, some bread, and some whole almonds; all of the above-mentioned ingredients are to be ground together thoroughly in a mortar; then take a well-washed pig’s stomach, stuff with the filling, and cook well; when it is done, take a skewer and pierce it through the middle and remove the skin [i.e., the stomach]; then take the egg yolks and beat them well with sugar in a bowl, and brush the roast all over.¹¹⁰

This recipe is a key part of the story of the monstrous Turk, especially in the use of a pig’s skin. There is no evidence that the skin used in a Turk’s Head pie ever came from an actual Turk, but the stomach casing is significant in its reference to the Islamic prohibition against eating pork, which Europeans knew well. By using swine to create an image of a Muslim, one symbolically insulted Islam through a culinary act. This pastry, which survives today, may well be based on a tale in *Richard Coeur de Lion*, in which Christian knights consume Turkish flesh, baked in the form of a pie.

Although the Turk’s Head pie was probably inspired by medieval literature, it was not until the development of the French *tourtes* (the European *torte* and American tart) in the sixteenth century, made possible by the **(p.80)** invention of short crust pastry, that the Turk’s Head pie became a popular food.¹¹¹ The dish signals how Europeans envisioned Muslims. In the consumption of this food, a performance of symbolic cannibalism takes place. “No fourteenth-century English cook is known to have prepared for consumption the flesh of a real Turk, yet [we have] the Turk’s Head, a sweet-and-sour meat pie shaped and decorated to resemble the outlandish features of a stereotyped Saracen.”¹¹²

As we know from the previous chapter, tales of Saracen cannibalism were a popular feature in the medieval imaginary. Anthropophagy often played a prominent role in the *chansons de geste*, but in these stories it is the Saracen—in most cases, a black-skinned or hairy Muslim giant—who consumes the Christian.¹¹³ However, in *Richard Couer de Lion*, there is a reversal of this scenario, when two meals are made with the flesh of executed Saracens; the first for Christian knights and the second for their Muslim guests. Richard “instructs

the cook to behead the highest ranking captives in his prison, shave and boil the heads, and then serve them up, each with a little name label attached to its forehead and with the mouth stretched in ‘a hideous grin,’” a grin that is still seen in modern renderings of the dish.¹¹⁴

The Turk’s Head pie functions as a symbol of Richard’s fictitious cannibalistic meal, a retelling of “the spectacle of severed Saracens’ heads, stripped of hair, cooked, and laid out, face up and grinning, on serving platters.”¹¹⁵ This imagery says something meaningful about the ways in which Muslims are dehumanized. In the case of the Turk’s Head pie, the subject is figuratively decapitated, chopped up, cooked, and eaten, reducing him to a pastry that displays a deformed image of the creature he once was. Cannibalism was not totally unheard of during this era. Some Londoners practiced medicinal cannibalism and preferred that the cadavers they consumed came from Libya.¹¹⁶

The Turk’s Head remained a dominant symbol of Islam in Britain for some time. In addition to its use on signage and in the Turk’s Head pie, it is also found in other parts of Europe. In 2010, I visited Schönbrunn Palace, the summer residence of the Hapsburgs, where I made an unexpected discovery—a painting in Maria Theresa’s “Carousel Room” that depicts the carousel game (see Figure 3.4). In this case, there is a curious addition, the decapitated head of a man floating in the background—a “Turk’s head.”

The Ladies’ Carousel was a favorite pastime of Maria Theresa’s. In one part of the game, an effigy of a decapitated Turk’s head was used. Few (p. 81) references to the Habsburg version of the game exist, but we know quite a bit about the equestrian game that was played in the court of Sweden’s Queen Christina, which was quite similar.

The carousel game played in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at royal courts in Stockholm, Vienna, and other European courts originated in the Middle Ages, where the running of horses and performance of chivalric games like jousting were common forms of entertainment.¹¹⁷ These games evolved into the *trionfi*, popular during the Italian Renaissance.¹¹⁸ Due to its relative isolation and the



Figure 3.4 *Ladies Carousel*. Martins van Meytens. Austria, c. 1765. Schonnbrunn Palace.

closing of all printing presses by Gustavus Vasa, the Renaissance was late in reaching Sweden.¹¹⁹ The carousel game played at Queen Christina's court predates Maria Theresa's reign by a century, as Christina's coronation took place in 1650. There is no image of a floating Turk's head at the court in Stockholm [Storkyran], but there is a good description of the carousel at Christina's procession: "The procession was led by Mars alongside another personification of war and three riders. The equestrian figures represented war (p.82) conducted for the homeland, freedom and religion, that is to say, the righteous war that had been earlier embodied in some of the ballets."¹²⁰

The first record we have of the Ladies' Carousel at Queen Christina's court is in 1654.¹²¹ During the game, "[s]ome women competed with each other in catching suspended rings with their lances, sitting in sledges drawn by horses and with men at the reins."¹²² This detailed description of the carousel game includes an explanation of the floating Turk's head:

These carousels, the entertaining successors of medieval tournaments, were exceedingly popular in the Baroque era. Ladies' carousels continued to be performed in the Winter Riding School until the end of the nineteenth century. As the programme for the ceremony of 1743 days, the participants in the carousel, all ladies of noble birth, were dressed as "amazons" and wore leather trousers underneath their dresses. Like at medieval tournaments, figures, which were "in part Moors, in part other mythological figures," and had heads of clay which had to be knocked off with lances by the riders on horseback and with epees by the ladies driving in the carriages, were put up in the manege of the Winter Riding School. The ladies also had to demonstrate their skill with the pistol and the javelin.¹²³

The ghostly figure in the background of the painting in Austria represents the clay effigy of a Turk's head, an object that, although already decapitated, was knocked off its pedestal. This description from a Habsburg emissary of an Ottoman military commander suggests how Turks were viewed by the Austrians: "A thick bodied eunuch with sallow complexion, he had, 'a sour look, scowling eyes, broad shoulders that stuck up, from which his head extruded as from a valley. With two teeth like boars' tusks dominating his mouth [and] his voice, hoarse. . . he was the Fourth Fury."¹²⁴ The carousel game offered a way for the Turkish monster to be exterminated through the imagination.

In addition to the example of the carousel painting, other Muslim monsters continued to be generated during the Enlightenment. Carl Linnaeus, the famous Swedish Enlightenment scientist, classified a species of beings—*Homo monstrosus*—monsters that were delineated from human beings.¹²⁵ *Homo monstrosus* was then divided into three types of monsters—*Homo troglodytes*, *Homo caudatus*, and *Homo marinus*.¹²⁶ Linnaeus influenced later generations of

scientists, including those who **(p.83)** traveled on voyages of exploration. Many monsters were purportedly observed on these voyages, including some in regions of the globe that Europeans only “discovered” in the fifteenth century and after.

At this point, we enter modernity, a transition perhaps best understood as a number of shifts in consciousness in which religion remained a powerful force in people’s lives but existed as one of several options, instead of the explanation for all matter in the universe. As Charles Taylor explains, Christians “changed not just from a condition where most people lived ‘naively’ in a construal (part Christian, part related to ‘spirits’ of pagan origin) as simple reality, to one in which almost no one is capable of this, but all see their option as one among many.”¹²⁷ This affected the way monsters were created in profound ways. Because of the Enlightenment, not all monsters were theologically constructed. Many monsters were the result of the scientific imagination. Still, the past continued to influence the present in numerous ways:

Educated Europeans of the early Enlightenment inherited a view of foreign peoples which was part-fantasy and part-hearsay, little more than an exotic fiction with which to expose the venality of European life, as in Montesquieu’s *Persian Letters*, or reportage shaped in such a way as to administer a crude justification for economic penetration and religious conquest, as in Richard Hakluyt or Samuel Purchas.¹²⁸

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Muslim monsters were viewed as existing in a world of limitless possibilities that arose through an age of scientific discoveries and geographic exploration. Inspired by a resurrection of medievalism and the emergence of Orientalism, many new Muslim monsters emerged.

Notes:

- (1) . W. R. Jones, “Image of the Barbarian,” 393.
- (2) . Robert Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453–1517)* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1967), 8.
- (3) . Richard G. Cole, “Sixteenth-Century Travel Books as a Source of European Attitudes toward Non-White and Non-Western Culture,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116, no. 1 (1972): 61.
- (4) . Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose: Islam and England during the Renaissance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937), 133.
- (5) . *Ibid.*, 141.

- (6) . Michael J. Heath, "Renaissance Scholars and the Origins of the Turks," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 41, no. 3 (1979): 458–461.
- (7) . Philip Mansel, "The French Renaissance in Search of the Ottoman Empire," in *Re-Orienting the Renaissance: Cultural Exchanges with the East*, ed. Gerald MacClean (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), 98.
- (8) . Frances K. Barasch, *The Grotesque: A Study in Meanings* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 33.
- (9) . Ibid., 102.
- (10) . Brault, *The Song of Roland*, 208.
- (11) . Ibid., 195, 410.
- (12) . Delany, 210.
- (13) . Antonio Ballesteros Gonzales and Ana Manzananas Calvo, "Monsters on the Island: Caliban's and Prospero's Hideous Progeny," *Atlantis* 19, no. 1 (1997): 16.
- (14) . Anne Lake Prescott, "Rabelasian (Non) Wonders and Renaissance Polemics," in *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Peter G. Platt (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), 133.
- (15) . Wittkower, "Marvels of the East," 183.
- (16) . William Rossky, "Imagination in the English Renaissance: Psychology and Poetic," *Studies in the Renaissance* 5 (1958): 50–51.
- (17) . Ibid., 51.
- (18) . See Ross Hagen, "A Warning to England: Monstrous Births, Teratology and Feminine Power in Elizabethan Broadside Ballads," *Horror Studies* 4, no. 1 (April 2013): 21–41.
- (19) . William E. Burns, "The King's Two Monstrous Bodies: John Bulwer and the English Revolution," in *Wonders, Marvels, and Monsters in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Peter G. Platt (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), 189.
- (20) . See Johan Winsser, "Mary Dyer and the 'Monster' Story," *Quaker History* 79, no. 1 (1990): 20–34.
- (21) . Leonardo Olschki, "Asiatic Exoticism in Italian Art of the Early Renaissance," *The Art Bulletin* 26, no. 2 (1944): 99.
- (22) . D. H. Cohen, "The Jew and Shylock," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1980): 57. See also *The Merchant of Venice*, Part IV.i: lines 70–80. The following chapter examines Muslim monsters in Shakespearean drama in detail.
-

- (23) . Nabil I. Matar, "Renaissance England and the Turban," in *Images of the Other: Europe and the Muslim World before 1700*, ed. David Blanks (Cairo: The American University of Cairo Press, 1997), 40–41.
- (24) . Ivan Davidson Kalmar, "Jesus Did Not Wear a Turban: Orientalism, Jews, and Christian Art," in *Orientalism and the Jews*, eds. Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2005), 123.
- (25) . Ibid., 3.
- (26) . Ibid.
- (27) . James Marrow, "Circumdederunt me canes multi: Christ's Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," *The Art Bulletin* 59, no. 2 (1977): 168.
- (28) . Gil Anidjar, *The Jew, The Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), x.
- (29) . Deborah Howard, *Venice and the East: The Impact of the Islamic World on Venetian Architecture 1100–1500* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 15.
- (30) . Hermann Goetz, "Oriental Types and Scenes in Renaissance and Baroque Painting," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 73, no. 425 (1938): 55–56. Other cases of positive cross-pollination include the influences of Eastern fashion on European dress and the residence of European artists in Islamic courts. Islamic rulers employed Italian artists, such as Bellini's service to the Sultan in 1479–1480. See Goetz, "Oriental Types," 62.
- (31) . Dana E. Katz, "Painting and the Politics of Persecution: Representing the Jew in Fifteenth-Century Mantua," *Art History* 23, no. 4 (2000): 489.
- (32) . Katz, "Painting and the Politics of Persecution," 490.
- (33) . See James Marrow, "Circumdederunt me canes multi: Christ's Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," *The Art Bulletin* 59, no. 2 (1977): 167–181.
- (34) . Dana E. Katz, *The Jew in the Art of the Italian Renaissance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 65.
- (35) . Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration: The Habsburg Empire Confronts Islam, 1526–1850* (London: Reaktion Books, 2008), 52.
- (36) . Cutler and Cutler, *The Jew as Ally of the Muslim*, 103. See pages 101–108 in the same study for numerous examples of Renaissance paintings displaying Jewish/Muslim imagery.
-

- (37) . See Chapter 2 for a discussion of these cannibalistic monsters, which range from Black Saracens to giants with hairy skin and other afflictions.
- (38) . Katharine Park, "The Criminal and the Sainly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 1.
- (39) . Piero Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutilation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3-7, quoted in Park, "The Criminal and the Sainly Body," 1-2.
- (40) . Park, "The Criminal and the Sainly Body," 22.
- (41) . Carolyn Walker Bynum, "The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages," in *Zone: Fragments for a History of the Body, Part I*, ed. Michel Feher et al. (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 161-162, quoted in Katharine Park, "The Criminal and the Sainly Body: Autopsy and Dissection in Renaissance Italy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 21, <http://www.jstor.stable/2863109> [accessed February 1, 2012].
- (42) . Paul Kaplan, "Black Turks: Venetian Artists and Perceptions of Ottoman Ethnicity," in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye, 1450-1750: Visual Imagery before Orientalism*, ed. James G. Harper (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 53-54.
- (43) . Kaplan, "Black Turks," 55.
- (44) . The Black Saracen appears in future centuries in Gothic horror and in early US political culture in the form of the "monsters of Africa," also known as Moors. As recently as 2006, the hyper-racist civilizational gore-fest film *300* features a "Black Persian," a giant, grunting monster who wears a necklace of human skulls around his neck. These characters are discussed in following chapters.
- (45) . Jean Devisse and Michael Mollat, "The Appeal to the Ethiopian," in *The Image of the Black in Western Art: From the Early Christian Era to the "Age of Discovery," Africans in the Christian Ordinance of the World*, eds. David Bindman and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 83.
- (46) . C. A. Patrides, "'The Bloody and Cruell Turke'": The Background of a Renaissance Commonplace," *Studies in the Renaissance* 10 (1963): 130.
- (47) . Silke R. Falkner, "'Having It Off' with Fish, Camels, and Lads: Sodomitic Pleasures in German-Language Turcica," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 13, no. 4 (2004): 402.
- (48) . Ibid., 408.

(49) . Ibid., 415.

(50) . Daniel J. Vitkus, "Introduction," in *Three Turks Plays from Early Modern England: Selimus, A Christian Turned Turk, and The Renegado*, ed. Daniel J. Vitkus (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 9.

(51) . Naji B. Oueijan, *Progress of an Image: The East in English Literature* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 16.

(52) . Nabil I. Matar, "Muslims in Seventeenth-Century England," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, no. 1 (1997): 74.

(53) . Elie Salem, "The Elizabethan Image of Islam," *Studia Islamica* 22 (1965): 43, 54.

(54) . *The Palace of Pleasure*, lines 250–251, quoted in Linda McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks: Dialogue in English Plays and Histories about the Ottoman Turks* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 149–150.

(55) . McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks*, 63.

(56) . Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005). Also, see *Tamburlaine*, Part I, III.iii, line 269, and Part I, IV.iii, lines 2–4.

(57) . *Tamburlaine*, Part I, III.iii, lines 75–76.

(58) . *Tamburlaine*, Part I, III.iii, line 82.

(59) . William J. Brown, "Marlowe's *Debasement of Bajazet: Foxe's Actes and Monuments and Tamburlaine*, Part I," *Renaissance Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1971): 40.

(60) . William J. Brown, "Marlowe's *Debasement*," 41.

(61) . Dimmock, *New Turkes*, 154.

(62) . Ibid.

(63) . McJannet, *The Sultan Speaks*, 81. The Grand Turk at the Siege of Rhodes was also accused of drinking blood, a charge made against numerous Turks during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

(64) . Burnett, 46.

(65) . *Tamburlaine*, I:IV, iii, lines 7–12.

(66) . *Tamburlaine*, I.iii.

(67) . James William Johnson, "The Scythian: His Rise and Fall," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 20, no. 2 (April 1959): 250, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2707822> [accessed February 1, 2012].

(68) . Burnett, *Constructing 'Monsters,'* 42.

(69) . Johnson, "The Scythian," 254. Also, see Tertullian, *Apology*, IX, trans. T. R. Glover (London: Loeb Classics, 1931), Paulus Orosius, *Seven Books of History*, trans. Irving Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), 49, and George Boas, *Essays on Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948), f.n. 136.

(70) . Johnson, "The Scythian," 255.

(71) . *King Lear* I.i., lines 95–107.

(72) . Chet Van Duzer, "A Northern Refuge of the Monstrous Races: Asia on Waldeesmüller's 1516 *Carta Marina*," *Imago Mundi* 62, no. 2 (2010): 223–224.

(73) . *Ibid.*, 225.

(74) . Kaplan, "Black Turks," 56.

(75) . Stephen Bateman, *The Doome Warning All Men to the Judgment* (London, 1581), 6–7, quoted in James R. Aubrey, "Race and Spectacle of the Monstrous in Othello," *CLIO* 22, no. 3 (1993): 229.

(76) . In 1930, Paul Robeson became the first African-American actor to portray Othello on the stage in a century since Ira Aldridge appeared on European stages as the Moor. Mekhi Phifer played Othello in the well-received 2001 film adaptation of the play called "O."

(77) . Aubrey, "Race and Spectacle," 221–222.

(78) . Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 225.

(79) . See Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose*, 225.

(80) . Pierre Boiastuau, *Certain Secret Wonders of Nature* (London, 1589), 13–14, quoted in Aubrey, "Race and Spectacle," 224.

(81) . Maurizio Calbi, "'Civil Monsters': Race, Eroticism and the Body in Early Modern Literature and Culture," *Sederi* 13 (2003): 18.

(82) . *Ibid.*, 19.

(83) . Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," *Past and Present* 92 (1981): 37.

- (84) . *Othello* I.i., lines 88–89, I.i., line 116.
- (85) . *Othello* I.i., lines 112–113.
- (86) . *Othello* I.iii., lines 402–403.
- (87) . Michael Neill, “Unproper Beds: Race, Adultery, and the Hideous in *Othello*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (1989): 391, quoted in Herbert Marshall and Mildred Stock, *Ira Aldridge: The Negro Tragedian* (London: Rockcliff, 1958), 265–266.
- (88) . Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 91.
- (89) . *Othello* V.ii., line 210.
- (90) . *Othello*, I.iii., lines 146–147.
- (91) . Newman, Karen Newman, “‘And Wash the Ethiop White’: Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello*,” in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, eds. Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O’Connor (New York: Methuen, 1987), 148.
- (92) . Bryan S. Turner, “A Note on Rodinson’s *Mohammed*,” *Religion* 3, issue 1 (1973): 79.
- (93) . Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 85.
- (94) . Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 77.
- (95) . *Othello* I.i., lines 136–137.
- (96) . Vitkus, *Turning Turk*, 106.
- (97) . Jacob Larwood and John Camden Hotten, *English Inn Signs: Being a Revised and Modernized Version of History of Signboards* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1951), 40.
- (98) . Brault, *The Song of Roland*, 147.
- (99) . Bryant Lillywhite, *London Signs: A Reference Book of London Signs from Earliest Times to about the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972), 481.
- (100) . Brault, *The Song of Roland*, 145.
- (101) . Larwood and Hotten, *English Inn Signs*, 40.
- (102) . Lillywhite, *London Signs*, 597.

- (103) . Viennese coffee came into existence after the Battle of Vienna, when Austrians discovered a bag of coffee left by the Ottoman forces after their retreat in 1529. See Jack Goody, *Islam in Europe* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2007), 78.
- (104) . Antony Clayton, *London's Coffee Houses: A Stimulating Story* (London: Historical Publications, 2003), 11.
- (105) . Ibid., 252.
- (106) . Larwood and Hotten, *English Inn Signs*, 209.
- (107) . Nicola McDonald, "Eating People and the Alimentary Logic of Richard Couer de Lion," in *Pulp Fictions of Medieval England: Essays in Popular Romance*, ed. Nicola McDonald (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 125.
- (108) . Constance B. Hieatt and Robin F. Jones, "Two Anglo-Norman Culinary Collections Edited from British Library Manuscripts Additional 32085 and Royal 12.C.xii," *Speculum* 61, no. 4 (1986): 876–877.
- (109) . McDonald, "Eating People," 127.
- (110) . Hieatt and Jones, "Two Anglo-Norman Culinary Collections," 876–877.
- (111) . Barbara Santich, "The Evolution of Culinary Techniques in the Medieval Era," in *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), 68.
- (112) . McDonald, "Eating People," 125.
- (113) . Susan E. Farrier, "Hungry Heroes in Medieval Literature," in *Food in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. Melitta Weiss Adamson (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), 156.
- (114) . Blurton, *Cannibalism*, 126.
- (115) . Farrier, "Hungry Heroes," 136.
- (116) . According to Charles II's chemist, Libyan corpses were the best because of the cause of death—suffocation, which "doth concentrate the spirits in all the parts by reason of the fear and sudden surprisal which seizes on the travellers." See Karen Gordon-Grube, "Anthropophagy in Post-Renaissance Europe: The Tradition of Medicinal Cannibalism," *American Anthropologist* 90, no. 2 (1988): 406, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/677961> [accessed January 6, 2012].
- (117) . Gunilla Dahlberg, "The Theatre Around Queen Christina," *Renaissance Studies* 23, no. 2 (2009): 176.

(118) . Ibid.

(119) . Simon McKeown, "Reading and Writing the Swedish Renaissance," *Renaissance Studies* 23, no. 2 (2009): 141.

(120) . Dahlberg, "The Theatre Around Queen Christina," 177.

(121) . Ibid., 178.

(122) . Ibid.

(123) . Elfriede Iby, "The Ladies' Carousel," unpublished research article (via e-mail on June 14, 2010). Dr. Iby, a scholar in residence at Schönbrunn Palace, graciously sent me her research article.

(124) . Fichtner, *Terror and Toleration*, 42.

(125) . Philip K. Wilson, "Eighteenth-Century 'Monsters,'" 7.

(126) . Ibid.

(127) . Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 12.

(128) . H. L. Malchow, "Frankenstein's Monster and Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain," *Past & Present* 139 (May 1993): 93.