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Tales from the Levant: The Judeo-Arabic Demonic 'Other' and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*

By

Sharihan Al-Akhras

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of English Studies

Durham University

2017

Abstract

This thesis revisits Milton's employment of mythology and the demonic, by shedding a light on a neglected, yet intriguing possible presence of Middle-Eastern mythology – or as identified in this thesis – Judeo-Arabic mythology in *Paradise Lost*. The mythographic reception of Milton's work has been rightly discussed within a Greco-Roman frame. However, this thesis offers for a consideration an analysis of the unique role of Judeo-Arabic mythology. By doing so, the thesis not only aims to enrich the dualistic analyses of 'East-West', 'Christian-Muslim' and 'Anglo-Ottoman' relations, when tackling this angle of Early Modern studies, but also to generally demonstrate the way seventeenth-century literature encompassed multifaceted and interchangeable allusions to both Islam and Judaism in Catholic and Protestant writing.

The thesis directs its attention towards examining the possible presence of two Judeo-Arabic demonic figures in *Paradise Lost*: the Islamic devil, *Iblis*, and his consort in the Jewish tradition, *Lilith*. The argument demonstrates the way Milton's deployment of the Judeo-Arabic demonic not only mirrors the Biblical story of the Fall, but also connects with the political and religious upheavals of his age, including the emergence of the first English translation of the Qur'an in 1649. Furthermore, by examining the two Judeo-Arabic demonic figures in *Paradise Lost* not only the treatment of the demonic in Milton's work is revisited in a way that allows for a wider scope of literary analysis, but the complex treatment of gender, identity and 'the Other' are similarly understood within a more pluralistic context. The thesis then concludes with the first discussion of the contemporary reception of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in the writings of Arab women specifically, exploring the way the very same demonic, discussed throughout the thesis, is deployed by these female Arab authors while resisting and redefining the role of gender in religion, society and politics.

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Dedication

To My Teta

My Grandmother...

Who knew that the Cavptivating Tales...

Passed on by an Illiterate Woman...

About Ghouls, Tree Spirits and Women with Serpentine Tails

Could Grant another Woman...

The Key to Fullfiling her Childhood Dreams?

Your Sweet Words and Unmatched Wisdome...

It Seems...

Forever...

Will Be

...A Part of Me.

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Desipte the standard words of acknowledgment written in every thesis, this thesis really would not have even had the glimpse of hope of nearing completion had it not been for the people mentioned here. I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to:

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- To my parents who have been waiting for this moment longer than I can remember. My mother is every inspiration I need to understand the real definition of the term ‘strong woman’. My father has endured unbearable pain due to health complications. He taught me the meaning of the word ‘survivor’. I hope with the completion of this degree, I can inspire a moment of happiness in their lives.
- To my best friend Miss Lillian Sammour. Her beautiful spirit, sense of humour and fierce personality has brought happiness to my difficult journey. Her strength and independence continue to inspire me in moments of despair.
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No matter how much I thank you all, no thanks can do you justice. My greatest wish is that one day, somehow, I can repay your kindness. From the bottom of my heart:

Thank you.

Copyright/Declaration

Declaration

No material in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university.

Chapter 3 has been published as a co-authored paper with Dr Mandy Green. See Al-Akhras, Sharihan and Mandy Green, 'Satanic Whispers: Milton's Iblis and the "Great Sultan"', *The Seventeenth Century*, 31.3 (2016): 1-20.

Chapter 4 has been published as a book chapter; however, the psychoanalytic approach used in that chapter is not applied here. See Al-Akhras, Sharihan, 'The Anima at the Gate of Hell: Middle Eastern Imagery in Milton's *Paradise Lost*', in *Translating Myth*, ed. by Ben Pestell, Pietra Palazzolo and Leon Burnett (Oxford: Legenda, 2016).

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Thesis Outline

John Milton, one of England's most influential voices, undertook what might seem a daunting task: that is, to relate to his reader one of the most powerful stories in human history – the story of human creation and the beginning of existence – the story of the Fall of the first man and woman and their loss of Paradise. Milton's epic poem, *Paradise Lost* (1667), was written at a time when the poet experienced great loss, confusion and uncertainty, a time when his long-ascertained beliefs – as well as identity – were challenged by religious, philosophical, even military upheavals.[1] It embodies Milton's personal struggles, as a blind author who lost his sight and mourned the loss of two of his wives in childbirth, as well as the death of two of his children in infancy. It also sheds a light on the losses Milton suffered as a public figure, including his grave disappointment, as a champion of religious, political and civil liberty in many prose tracts, at the eventual failure of the Commonwealth and the Restoration of the monarchy.[2] He had been the voice of the revolution, the first to uphold publicly the right of the people to execute their

[1] Milton's age was one vexed by political and religious turmoil. The civil war period (1642-1651) remains a crucial period in English history, when anti-monarchical, republican forces, to which Milton contributed a powerful voice, succeeded, albeit temporarily, in seizing power from the English throne and dismantling the church hierarchy. For more on this topic see: John Milton, *Prose: Major Writings on Liberty, Politics, Religion, and Education* ed. by David Loewenstein (Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2013); Stevie Davies, *Images of Kingship in Paradise Lost: Milton's Politics and Christian Liberty* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983); Barry Coward, *The Stuart Age: England 1603-1714*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1994); Stephen M. Fallon, *Milton among the Philosophers: Poetry and Materialism in Seventeenth-Century England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

[2] For Milton's argument for the disestablishment of the Church of England, see, most notably *Of Reformation Touching Chvrch-discipline in England, and the Cavses That Hitherto Have Hindred It: Two Bookes, Written to a Freind [sic]* (London: Printed for Thomas Underhill, 1641), pp. 5-87. See also C. A. Patrides, *Milton and the Christian Tradition* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966); William B. Hunter, Jack H. Adamson and C. A. Patrides (eds.), *Bright Essence: Studies in Milton's Theology* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971). For Milton's argument in support of political liberty, see *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (London, 1649), pp. 1-41 and *The Readie and Easie Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (London: Printed by Thomas Newcomb, 1660), pp. 17-88; and for his arguments in favour of domestic liberty see the divorce tracts, especially *The Doctrine & Discipline of Divorce: Restored to the Good of Both Sexes, from the Bondage of Canon Law, and Other Mistakes, to the True Meaning of Scripture in the Law and Gospel Compared* (London, 1643), pp. 4-47.

sovereign if he proved a 'Tyrant' or 'Wicked King';[3] indeed, he had sacrificed his sight for this cause.[4] However, while his voice was silenced for a time,[5] it was heard once again with the publication of *Paradise Lost*, Milton's most profound literary masterpiece.

As a text that is charged by significant personal as well as universal struggles, it is not surprising then that this tale retold in the seventeenth century, a time that in some ways arguably resembles our own, is finding its importance being rediscovered by readers familiar with its historical aspects and religious argument. Furthermore, what is even more fascinating is that *Paradise Lost* has had a unique appeal to those from other cultural backgrounds who relate to its fundamental message as proclaimed by its author: to 'justifie the ways of God to men' (*Paradise Lost*, I. 26). Most notably, for the past three decades, Arab readers have been increasingly drawing on Milton's epic poem, and at times, tailoring its message, religious language and characters, in a way that makes it their own.

The earliest recorded interest in *Paradise Lost* by Arab thinkers and readers emerges in twentieth-century Egypt, where anti-monarchical revolutionary movements merging with anti-Colonialist British sentiments dominated the Egyptian political sphere. This period marked the first attempt to complete a full Arabic translation of *Paradise Lost* by Muhammad Anani, who worked on a line by line translation, in order to preserve Milton's poetical genius to the best of his abilities. He worked on the project over a period of two decades beginning his endeavour in 1982 and finally completing his translation in

[3] See John Milton, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates: Proving That It Is Lawfull, and Hath Been Held so through All Ages, for Any Who Have the Power, to Call to Account a Tyrant* (London: Printed by Matthew Simmons, 1649).

[4] Milton talks about this at the beginning of his *Second Defence*. He informs us that he was warned by his physicians that if he continued with his task, that is, to write the *Defence*, he would lose his sight. By that time, Milton had almost lost his sight in his left eye. When Milton completely lost his sight in both eyes, his enemies celebrated it as a punishment for writing against the King. Despite Milton admitting that his political writing hastened his blindness, he nonetheless asserts that 'The loss of my eyesight has not left me sluggish from inactivity but tireless and ready among the first to risk the great dangers for the sake of liberty'. See Milton's *Second Defence*, in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. by Don M. Wolfe, vol. IV, pt. 1, (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 591.

[5] A large number of Milton's Puritan pamphlets were publicly burned, under Charles II, while he was in hiding. Due to their 'sundry treasonous passages', Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (1649) and *Defensio* (1651) were amongst the burned texts at the Old Bailey on 27 August. See Barbara Lewalski, *The Life of John Milton: A Critical Biography* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), p. 401.

2002.[6] It was then that Milton's politically charged message, as a learned author and an eloquent voice of the English revolution, with powerful anti-monarchical arguments and stimulating religious views, began to be echoed amongst authors and academics in Arabic literary circles. However, with the recent political upheavals in the Arab world, particularly after 2010, and with the emergence of what came to be known as the 'Arab spring',[7] more attention began to be paid to Milton's influence on Arabic revolutionary thought.[8]

The recent interest in Milton's reception in the Arab world, as a fresh and valid approach to Milton studies, was first explored in Eid Dahiyat's *John Milton and the Arab-Islamic Culture* (1987), republished later as *Milton and the Orient Wave* (2012).[9] In his study, Dahiyat provides a brief, yet rewarding, discussion of Arab writers of the twentieth century who were influenced by *Paradise Lost*, including Abbas Al-Aqqad and Tawfiq Al-Hakim, both of whom will be discussed in the final chapter of this thesis. Yet when speculating whether Milton himself could have been interested in Islamic or Arabic thought, Dahiyat concluded that, due to the lack of evidence that Milton ever learned Arabic or read the first English translation of the Qur'an in 1649, the poet was unlikely to have been directly exposed to any Arabic text, and that most of his knowledge of the East[10] and Arabia was probably gained from Western sources.[11]

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[6] See Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion of Anani's translation. See also Nabil Matar, '*Paradise Lost* as an Islamic Epic: Muhammad 'Anānī's translation (2002/2010)', *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015): 6-20.

[7] The Arab Spring is a term given to a series of anti-governmental protests and uprisings first emerging, in 2010, in Tunisia, followed by Egypt, Syria, Libya and Yemen.

[8] One example of such scholarship is Islam Issa's 'Milton's *Areopagitica* in the Arab World Today', a paper delivered at the conference: 'Reading Milton through Islam', Beirut, (May 2014).

[9] Eid Abdallah Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave: Milton and the Arab Muslim World* (London: Hesperus Press, 2012).

[10] It is appreciated that such terms as the 'East', 'West', and 'Orient' may be considered anachronistic when engaging in a study of the Early Modern period. However, whenever such terms are used in this thesis, they are deployed within a sixteenth- and seventeenth-century context, as they would have been understood in that period. What is meant by this claim is that it is essential not to project post seventeenth-century literary criticism of East-West relations, such as Edward Said's *Orientalism*, onto the Early Modern period. At this time, to the anxious European and English mind, what may be termed the 'Muslim East' undeniably enjoyed a position of superior political and economic power, leading to feelings that Gerald MacLean has identified as 'imperial envy'. For more on this discussion, see Chapter 1. See also Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Hegan Paul, 1978); Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 19-20; and Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-*

Perhaps relying on Dahyiat's observations, not much attention has been dedicated to investigating the influence of Arabic thought on Milton.[12] Apart from a few scholars, such as Gerald MacLean, Nabil Matar, and Feisal Mohamed, Arabic influence on Milton remains a field wanting further scholarly attention. Recently, Gerald MacLean and Feisal Mohamed have tackled this otherwise controversial topic, both arguing for a possible Islamic presence in *Paradise Lost*. MacLean, in 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans',[13] proposes a possible similarity between Satan and his Islamic counterpart, Iblis, by examining the account of the Fall in the Islamic tradition. Mohamed in his 'Milton's Enmity towards Islam and the *Intellectus Agens*', similarly argues for the probability of an Islamic presence, by comparing the Islamic philosophical tradition of the *Intellectus Agens* to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, suggesting that Milton may have deployed it in his evocation of light.[14] In addition, Muhammad Sid-Ahmad in his article, 'Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Milton's Adam',[15] argues compellingly that specific points in Milton's representation of Adam's earliest moments of consciousness in *Paradise Lost* may have their origin in the Arabic philosophical story of *Hayy bin Yagthan*, brought to England by William Pococke, the first professor to hold the Laudian Chair of Arabic studies in Oxford.[16]

In a more recent attempt to explore the often neglected field of Milton and Islamic and Arabic Studies, 'Reading Milton through Islam', the first issue of a journal to be

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1685 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 11-12; and Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, *Britain and the Islamic World, 1558–1713* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[11] Dahiyat, pp. 102-26.

[12] Much similar scholarship, such as Islam Issa's recent study *Milton in the Arab-Muslim World* (New York: Routledge, 2017), remains largely focused on the reception of Milton's work in the Arab world.

[13] Gerald MacLean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', in *Milton and Toleration*, ed. by Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 284-98.

[14] Feisal Mohamed's 'Milton's Enmity towards Islam and the *Intellectus Agens*', Special issue, 'Reading Milton through Islam', ed. by David Currell and François-Xavier Gleyzon, *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015): 65-81.

[15] *Hayy bin Yagthan* ('Alive son of Awake') is a philosophical Islamic treatise that narrates the story of a man who first comes into existence alone and finds himself isolated on an island with no human company. The tale explores how he reaches an understanding of God without any human influence through solely relying on reason.

[16] Muhammad Sid-Ahmad, 'Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Milton's Adam', in *Milton and Questions of History: Essays by Canadians past and Present*, ed. by Feisal Mohamed and Mary Nyquist (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2012), pp. 355-87.

dedicated exclusively to such a topic, was published in January 2015, with five articles exploring the topics of Milton, Arabic and Islam.[17] In addition to the editors' introduction, the article mentioned above by Feisal Mohamed, and another on Milton's influence on the Arab Spring by Islam Issa, were published in this issue, along with three other articles: 'Meditations on Mediation: John Milton and the Muslim Jesus' by David Currell; '*Paradise Lost* as an Islamic Epic: Muhammad 'Anānī's translation (2002/2010)' by Nabil Matar; and 'Holistic Typology: "Uniting the Dissevered Pieces": Qur'anic Retention and Protension in Milton's *Areopagitica* and *Nativity Ode*' by François-Xavier Gleyzon. While Matar's article provides an excellent discussion of how Anani's translation introduced and adapted Milton's Christian argument and terminology to a Muslim audience, both Currell and Gleyzon follow an opposing approach, exploring points of theological convergence between Islam and Protestantism through focusing on the figure of Jesus. By examining a corpus of Early Modern Biblical and Protestant discussions of the figure of Christ, the articles follow an intriguing approach to re-examine specific verses of Milton's *Paradise Regained*, when portraying the divinity of Christ, while echoing Islamic theological and philosophical arguments. None of the articles, however, forge a link between Arabic demonology as presented in the first English translation of the Qur'an, the *Alcoran of Mahomet* (1649), and *Paradise Lost*, as this thesis aims to produce.[18]

Indeed, apart from such a few, yet rewarding endeavours, much remains to be said about Milton's reception in contemporary Arabic writing, particularly the work of female authors like Nawaal Al-Saadawi, Joumana Haddad and Rehab Abuzaid, as explored in the final chapter of this thesis. Likewise, much remains to be discussed when contemplating the influence of the rich culture of the 'Muslim East' on Milton's own work. Most

[17] David Currell and François-Xavier Gleyzon (eds.), 'Reading Milton through Islam', *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015).
[18] Alexander Ross, (trans.), *The Alcoran of Mahomet translated out of Arabique into French by Du Ryer, and Newly Englished* (London, 1649).

academic scholarship, when considering any possible role for Islam on Milton's representation of the East, rightly directs its attention to the political aspect of Milton's writings, particularly when examining *Paradise Lost*. However, very little attention has been devoted to the cultural role of mythology and folklore in shaping the views of Early Modern England, in general, and that of Milton, specifically, towards what was perceived as Christianity's most vital threat. This thesis, therefore, not only aims to highlight the presence of Arabic and Middle-Eastern mythology, in Early Modern English literature, but also to demonstrate how such oral myths and legends were usually politicised to vindicate 'true' Christianity amidst competing faiths, all the while particularly focusing on Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In order to situate Milton's great epic within this otherwise wide topic of scholarly discussion, the thesis will first examine religious and political writings on Islam and Muslims – and less overtly Judaism and Jews – from the Early Modern period, before directing its main focus of attention to the often ignored role of Arabic mythology and folklore in accentuating the allusions of the East in *Paradise Lost*.[19]

Furthermore, since Milton's age was challenged by a barrage of religious, political and economic concerns, the analysis will follow a pluralistic approach. The thesis argues that, while the dualistic approach of examining Anglo-Ottoman relations, Anglo-Jewish relations or Christian-Islamic studies may be enlightening, there is yet to be a study that examines specific aspects of Early Modern representations of 'the other' from a pluralistic perspective. Therefore, rather than simply focusing on Milton and Islam or Milton and Arabic culture, the thesis will follow an inclusive approach through examining the manner in which at this time competing faiths, including Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and Islam, were constantly evoked in Christian religious and political dialogues. Not only will

[19] This is not to suggest that all portrayals of the East, Islam or Judaism were necessarily polemic or negative. But in this instant, the focus of this thesis is on particular demonic figures in Arabic and Judeo-Arabic folklore. Therefore, I limit my analysis on the negative imagery of the Judeo-Arabic demonic in *Paradise Lost*.

this mode of analysis stress that a plethora of religious and literary writings alluded to Muslims and Jews as figures upon whom local political and religious critiques could be projected, but it will also argue that Judeo-Arabic themes and imagery were used interchangeably according to the particular purposes of the author. Indeed, at times, a Muslim or a Jewish character would be compared favourably to a Catholic character (in Protestant writing), or to a Protestant character (in Catholic writing); both were situated on the diametrically opposing side of what the true Christian faith ought to be, and deemed to be a dark and distorted reflection of Christian truth.

Accordingly, this thesis aims to be the first academic endeavour to provide a detailed analysis of the representation of both Islamic and Jewish mythology, or, as I will be referring to it throughout the discussion, Judeo-Arabic mythology, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. In order to do so, the thesis will consider two of the most popular demonic figures in the Islamic and Jewish tradition: Iblis, the Qur'anic Satan, and Lilith, Satan's consort and the first created woman, according to the Jewish tradition. Since Iblis, in the Islamic tradition, and Lilith, in the Hebraic tradition, occupied an important role in the story of the Fall, it was appropriate to examine how Milton evokes these male and female figures, as described in Jewish and Arabic mythology, and tailors them into his own masterpiece of the fallen. Therefore, I also provide a detailed comparative analysis of instances where the male and female demonic figures, mentioned above, converge with their male and female counterparts in *Paradise Lost*: Sin and Satan.

In order to do so, however, I provide a brief discussion – in Chapter 2 – of the multitude of texts be they religious tracts, political discussions or works of drama, alluding to Muslims and Jews in general, before eventually tracing the presence of the Judeo-Arabic

demonic figures in *Paradise Lost*. Given that the figure of Muhammad,[20] the Prophet of Islam, and the figure of Lilith were habitually evoked in Early Modern writings as examples of a non-Christian, negative other and as fallen (satanic) shadows of the true Christian faith, I would argue that Milton does indeed evoke these Judeo-Arabic demonic figures, but in a way that conforms with his own version of the story of the Fall, that is, to emphasise all that is false and misguided in comparison to true Christianity. Finally, the thesis will also highlight how the two demonic figures themselves, Iblis (Satan) and Lilith, are so much an integral part of Judeo-Arabic religious and literary writing that it might be the case that writers of demonological studies in Early Modern England were aware of, and referred to, the oral Arabic folkloric tradition and elaborated on them. This in turn, I argue, directly influenced Milton's knowledge of these demonic figures, particularly when tracing their presence in the writings of Arabists and travellers whom Milton read, most notably, John Selden and George Sandys.

Indeed, there are a number of essential works that trace the earliest representation of Arabic culture and figures in English writing. *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* and *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* remain two of, if not the most, rewarding works to investigate the history of Arabic thought, in manuscripts and print in Europe and England in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.[21] Nabil Matar has focused more widely on the influence of Islamic and Arabic culture over Early Modern Europe in *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism*; it also provides a commendable study of the development of the representation of Islam and Muhammad in

[20] The figure of Muhammad was continuously evoked in Early Modern writings as an Antichrist or Satanic figure. For more on this point see Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. See also Galen Johnson, 'Muhammad and Ideology in Medieval Christian Literature', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 11.3 (2000): 333-46.

[21] G. A. Russell (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994); G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

English literature.[22] Matthew Dimmock's *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammed in Early Modern English Culture* was particularly useful for the purposes of this research: it offered invaluable help in tracing the earliest presence of Arabic culture and Islamic thought in English culture, politics and literature through the representation of Muhammad.[23] In *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England,* Dorothee Metlizki argues how even before the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, English interest in Arabic, Islamic philosophy, Arabic culture, oral tradition and literature already formed a substantial presence in Christian Europe's theological debates, political stances, even in literature.[24] Finally Jennie Malika Evenson's 'Judaism, Islam, and English Reformation Literature' was also particularly useful in pointing out the rewarding results of adopting a pluralistic method of comparative analysis where Judaism, Islam and Christianity form what might be considered a triangulation in Reformation literature rather than following the more accustomed but restrictive view of binary discussion.[25]

When examining the role of Lilith in Early Modern writing, it was Stephanie Spoto's 'The Figure of Lilith and the Feminine Demonic in Early Modern Literature' that was undeniably fruitful to the argument of this thesis.[26] While there is no discussion in Spoto's work of the Arabic or Islamic aspects of the figure of Lilith, which this thesis endeavours to supply, her detailed historical analysis remains one of the most useful studies of the figure of Lilith to date. A psychoanalytic approach, notably that of Sigmund Hurwitz in *Lilith – The First Eve*,[27] was certainly illuminating in its discussion of the

[22] Nabil Matar, *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).
[23] Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[24] Dorothee Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).
[25] Jennie Malika Evenson, 'Judaism, Islam, and English Reformation Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Michigan, 2005).
[26] Stephanie Spoto, 'The Figure of Lilith and the Feminine Demonic in Early Modern Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Edinburgh, 2012).
[27] Siegmund Hurwitz, *Lilith, the First Eve: Historical and Psychological Aspects of the Dark Feminine* ed. by Robert Hinshaw and trans. by Gela Jacobson (Einsiedeln, Switzerland: Daimon Verlag, 1992).

Arabic equivalent of Lilith, the Ghoul, in Islamic, Babylonian and Greek history. While Hurwitz points out the way Early Modern writers, including Milton, often alluded to this feminine figure, he unfortunately does not provide any specific citations to support this claim. However, Hurwitz, does usefully mention the different aspects of this mythical demoness including, the Ghoul and the Queen of Sheba, which will be discussed in detail in the Chapters 4 and 5.

The first published work to consider the Arabic aspect of Lilith, the Ghoul, and her possible influence on Milton's *Paradise Lost* is a paper based on the research of this thesis: 'The Anima at the Gate of Hell: Middle-Eastern Imagery in Milton's *Paradise Lost*'.[28] Likewise, the first work to provide a detailed textual comparison of Milton's Satan with his Islamic and Qur'anic counterpart, Iblis, is a paper co-authored with Dr. Mandy Green, also based on the work of this thesis entitled: 'Satanic Whispers: Milton's Iblis and the "Great Sultan"'.[29]

The thesis provides two general introductory chapters (Chapter 1 and Chapter 2), followed by three chapters investigating Judeo-Arabic mythology in *Paradise Lost*. It concludes with a final chapter that discusses previous themes explored in the thesis in twentieth-century and contemporary Arabic writing; this entails discussion of the role of mythology, gender and the demonic in literary writing as tools of criticisms towards social, political and religious norms.

Chapter 1 offers valuable contextualisation for this study and outlines briefly the newly emerging points of contact in Anglo-Ottoman relations initiated in the Elizabethan

[28] The article was first published in Spanish as 'Ghouls and Hellish Hags: Middle Eastern Imagery of the Demonised Feminine in Milton's *Paradise Lost*', *Cuadrivio* (June 2014). See 'The Anima at the Gate of Hell: Middle Eastern Imagery in Milton's *Paradise Lost*', in *Translating Myth*, ed. by Ben Pestell, Pietra Palazzolo and Leon Burnett (Oxford: Legenda, 2016), pp. 43-57. See Sharihan Al-Akhras and Mandy Green, 'Satanic Whispers: Milton's Iblis and the "Great Sultan"', *The Seventeenth Century*, 31.3 (2016): 1-20 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0268117X.2016.1252279>.

[29] Parts of the article were first shared as conference papers: 'Milton, Islam and the Demonic: Iblis – the Fallen Sultan' at the conference: 'The Charm of the Unfamiliar: Myth and Alterity in Early Modern Literature', Durham University (June 2015).

age, while focusing on the development of Arabic studies in Early Modern England. It discusses the earliest established Anglo-Ottoman political relations that influenced the beginning of what Dimmock has called an organised period of Arabic and Qur'anic studies in England.[30] Looking at leading Arabists such as William Bedwell and Edward Pococke, Chapter 1 also explores the academic sphere of Arabic reception in seventeenth-century England before eventually situating Milton amidst the discussion.

The first chapter also investigates how the transmigration of Arabic manuscripts to England and the interest in Arabic language did accompany anti-Islamic sentiments, highlighting fears and anxieties about the enemy at the European shores. However, scholars of Arabic, in the seventeenth-century, despite sharing the popular anti-Islamic views of the time, demonstrated a certain openness towards Arabic thought and literature, as the language of intellectual treasures and ancient knowledge. Sources and historical documents included in this chapter are: letters on the importance of Arabic studies and Arabic manuscripts present in the Bodleian such as the Islamic Hadith,[31] Arabic poetry, cosmology and demonology. Chapter 1 aims to prepare for the discussion in the chapters that follow of Milton's probable knowledge of one of the most important translations from Islam and Arabic culture in seventeenth-century England: the first English translation of the Qur'an (1649). Based on this chapter, the circumstances surrounding the translation of the *Alcoran*, its suppression and its association with heresy, carnality and Turkish tyranny are closely analysed (Chapter 3) in association with Milton's arguments against the suppression of controversial works and of tyranny in his *Areopagitica*.

[30] Dimmock, p. 155.

[31] The Hadith is considered the most accredited religious text after the Holy Qur'an in Islamic theology. The text is a recording of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, reflected through his actions and words, which were circulated orally, even after his death. The two largest Islamic sects (Sunnis and Shias) believe in separate bodies of Hadiths; however, the texts of the Hadith are treated in this thesis solely within a literary scope, and the theological aspects of their narrations will not be the focus of concern in his study. See Cyril Glassé, *The New Encyclopedia of Islam: A Revised Edition of the Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002).

Chapter 2 provides a pluralistic and detailed analysis of how both Islam and Judaism were invoked in Reformation literature. The chapter explores the way travel accounts, a genre that became particularly popular in the seventeenth-century, described actual encounters with non-Christian figures. This development in Anglo-Ottoman relations, as demonstrated in the chapter, paved the way for actual encounters with non-Christian characters, resulting in an intriguing mixture of fact and fiction when referring to Muslims and Jews. Furthermore, the chapter proposes a more interconnected study of representing Judeo-Arabic figures in Early Modern England, exploring how both Muslims and Jews were particularly influential in Reformation dialogue, and how both Catholic and Protestant authors turned to Islamic and Hebraic thought for their own purposes. For example, Catholic thinkers would accuse Protestant thinkers of plotting to replace the Pope with the Sultan, and Protestant authors would conflate Turkish tyranny with the power of the Pope. Such depictions, as argued in the chapter, became so intricate and engrained in Christian writings, which so ardently sought to expose the misguided ways of rival religions, that, at times, Muslim or Jewish characters would be depicted in a more favourable light than Catholic or Protestant figures.

The chapter then directs its attention to two specific Judeo-Arabic figures, the figure of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam (as a satanic false idol and a reincarnation of the Antichrist) and, less overtly, Lilith, the first created woman according to the Jewish tradition (as a prototype of Eastern seductiveness).[32] It argues that both these male and female figures were routinely evoked in the Reformation period by way of comparison and self reflection. In a period when the English mind encountered a multitude of competing religious and political powers, the two figures became habitually evoked in religious and political writing in order to highlight the corrupt, false and immoral ways of the religious or political 'other' and to emphasise the 'true' Christian belief of the author. While

[32] Lilith will be examined in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Muhammad, and his *Alcoran*, represented all that is deceitful, Lilith, though not necessarily mentioned by name, reflected powerful anxieties towards the role of gender, and was similarly evoked, I argue, when depicting Eastern women. Such allusions to demonised Islamic and Jewish figures are traced in the works of English scholars and authors ranging from prose writers, travellers and scholars, such as Thomas More, George Sandys and John Selden, to poets and dramatists like Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare. Throughout the discussion, the chapter aims to prepare for the three chapters that follow which provide a detailed comparative study of the two demonised figures: the Islamic devil, Iblis – connected with Muhammad as an Antichrist and satanic figure – and Lilith as a fallen wife and deformed woman, together with their respective alignments with Satan, Sin and Eve in *Paradise Lost*.

Chapter 3, 'Satan as Iblis, the Fallen Sultan', applies the argument of the previous chapters by focusing on specific scenes in *Paradise Lost*. The chapter examines precise instances where the figure of Muhammad converges with the Qur'anic Iblis who himself directly parallels the description of Milton's Satan. The chapter argues that because of his well-rounded character, Iblis, the Islamic Satan, could have interested Milton as providing material for his own depiction of Satan. Furthermore, it proposes that it is likely that Milton alluded to the devil, as he appears in the first translation of the Qur'an, to undermine the authority of the Ottoman Sultan. Specific mythical attributes of Islamic demonology are compared to important scenes in the epic poem to support this argument.

Chapter 4, 'Sin at the Gate of Hell', investigates the possible presence of a Judeo-Arabic feminine demonic in the depiction of Milton's hellish woman, Sin. Sin's haunting representation in the epic, with her deformed appearance, abortive motherhood, infanticidal nature and incestuous relation with Satan, displays notable similarities with the Judeo-Arabic demoness Lilith (the Ghoul). The chapter refers to instances of translation

associating Lilith (or Allatu) with the Ghoul (*Alghoula* الغولة), such as the Arabic translation of Isaiah and a segment of Selden's *De Dis Syris* ('On Syrian Gods'). Similarly, extracts from the *Arabian Nights* and the Hadith are considered which show points of intersection between the narrative relating to the Ghoul and Lilith in order to demonstrate the former's Judeo-Arabic origins.

Chapter 5, 'The Reflective Eve', elaborates further on the importance of considering Judeo-Arabic mythology by arguing that Eve's lake scene may not be solely elucidated through an Ovidian Narcissistic framework. It proposes that Milton's portrayal of Eve's earliest moments of consciousness does allow for a reading that aligns her experience with Lilith. The chapter also emphasises the artistic allusion to Judeo-Arabic demonology by discussing other, less active, demonic figures in the epic, such as Asmodeous and the Queen of Sheba. As the Queen of Sheba is Lilith's counterpart in numerous instances in the Judeo-Arabic tradition, it seems reasonable to argue that the Qur'anic account of the Queen of Sheba should not be entirely dismissed. By doing so, the chapter attempts to demonstrate how Eve's mirror scene functions as a symbolic device that reflects to the reader the dark shadows, embodied in Judaism and Islam, that attempt to 'mirror' the true Christian voice.

Expanding on the idea of reversal and reflection, the final chapter, Chapter 6, 'Rewriting Milton', focuses on how Arab writers responded to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The chapter begins by providing an overview of the critical work on Milton's reception in the Arab world as investigated by Eid Dahiyat, Nabil Matar and Islam Issa. Following this, the chapter investigates the influence of Milton's Satan on Arabic writing of the twentieth century, while referring to: Abbas Al-Aqqad, one of Egypt's most reputable writers, and Tawfiq Al-Hakim, an author whose efforts in reshaping Egyptian drama and theatre remain dominant in the Arabic literary sphere until this day. The chapter then proceeds to provide

the very first endeavour to ever consider Milton's influence on Arab feminist writing. Three influential feminist authors were interviewed: Nawaal Al-Saadaw, Joumana Haddad and Rehab Abuzaid for the purposes of this discussion. While it is only Abuzaid whose work is certainly influenced by Milton, particularly his Eve,[33] Al-Saadawi's and Haddad's representation of Eve and Lilith powerfully relate to the Judeo-Arabic feminine discussed throughout the thesis. Finally, the chapter is followed by a case study on teaching Milton in the Arab world.[34] The Egyptian academic, Mona Prince, was interviewed in order to explain how teaching Milton's *Paradise Lost* has led to her suspension and contributed to her demonization in society, becoming herself a contemporary example of an Eve-Lilith prototype.

Through examining the usage of two (male and female) demonic figures, Satan and Lilith, the thesis explores how the male and female aspects of the demonic were deployed to project political and religious anxieties throughout different cultures, time-periods and authors, but particularly in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. It also provides a fresh and pluralistic method of comparative study where views of 'the other' are explored through seemingly opposing cultures. While such cultures adopt differing religious beliefs – in a period where enmity was more prominent than friendship – they share a powerful literature of resistance, anti-tyrannical views and powerful stances towards individual freedom, all deployed through their usage of the very same demonic. It offers for consideration a multitude of instances where the story of the Fall, through its varying religious sources, authors and readers, continues to regenerate itself, constantly renewing its heroes and villains, including the most provocative of all, Satan and Eve.

[33] In my correspondence with Joumana Haddad, she did inform me that she had read parts of *Paradise Lost*.
[34] See the Appendix.

Chapter One: Anglo-Ottoman Relations in Early Modern England & Seventeenth-Century Arabic Studies

> *I must not, however, omit to mention the Saracens [who] enlarged their empire as much by the study of liberal culture as by force of arms.*[1]
>
> *– John Milton, Prolusion VII*

Whenever a scholarly endeavour to examine John Milton's literary work in relation to other cultures or schools of thought takes shape, Arabic literature and Islamic thought are not the first cultural contexts that come to mind; it is to the Greco-Roman world that such academic compasses generally point.[2] Unlike other renowned Early Modern writers, whose works have been scrutinised within Arabic or Islamic frameworks, such as Marlowe, Shakespeare, Massinger amongst others, Milton curiously remains strictly excluded from this dialogue.[3] Perhaps due to the notable Christian emphasis of his epic, *Paradise Lost*, Milton's association with Arabic thought, culture and language has been largely passed over and confined to the reception of his work in contemporary Arabic literary forms.[4]

[1] John Milton, *The Riverside Milton* ed. by Roy Flannagan (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998), p. 870. Unless otherwise stated all quotations from John Milton's poetical and prose works are taken from this edition.

[2] See, for example, Charles Martindale, *Milton and the Transformation of Ancient Epic*, 2nd edn (Bristol: Bristol Classical, 2002); Richard J. DuRocher, *Milton and Ovid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); John Mulryan, *'Through a Glass Darkly': Milton's Reinvention of the Mythological Tradition* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1996); Francis C. Blessington, *Paradise Lost and the Classical Epic* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979); and Mandy Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

[3] See Mohamed Hassan Abu-Baker, *Representations of Islam and Muslims in Early Modern English Drama from Marlowe to Massinger* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Glasgow, 1997). See too, Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); and Matthew Birchwood, *Staging Islam in England: Drama and Culture, 1640-1685* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007). Birchwood demonstrates how a preoccupation with Islam permeated religious, political, diplomatic and commercial discourse in this period. Islam was identified with 'the Turk' in the popular mind; this explains why so many references to the Qur'an at this time view Islam narrowly in terms of Turkey and the Ottoman Empire, the superpower of the day.

[4] Scholars interested in points of contact between Milton and Arabic culture tend to focus on the recent Arabic reception and translations of Milton's work. For more on this topic, see Jeffrey Einboden, 'A Qur'anic Milton: From Paradise to Al-Firdaws', *Milton Quarterly*, 43.3 (2009): 183-94; Dahiyat's 'Aspects of John Milton in Arabic', *Milton Quarterly*, 18.1 (March 1984): 5-13; Islam Issa, 'Transforming *Paradise Lost*: Translation and Reception of John Milton's Writing in the Arab-Muslim World' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Birmingham, 2014).

Other than a few scholars such as Eid Dahiyat, Nabil Matar, Gerald MacLean and, more recently, Islam Issa, the study of Milton's writings within the context of Arabic literature, culture, and mythology is yet to receive focused attention and detailed exploration. Such a paucity of literature, on an otherwise poetically and politically interesting and rich topic, possibly stems from a general dismissal of Milton's interest in, or knowledge of, Arabic culture, including its philosophy, language and literature.[5] Indeed, interest in Arabic literature and the language itself, specifically in the Early Modern period, has been similarly overlooked until recent scholarship began to reconsider this field of comparative studies.[6]

Perhaps the common disregard for the influence of Arabic thought and culture, including its language, religious writings, even mythical tales (all elements that will be explored in this thesis), stems from the medieval polemical accounts that fostered a sense of 'otherness' and polarity, situating the language of the rival religion and military power of Islam as an opposite, infernal realm when compared to Christianity. Such accounts, despite the evident advancement of medieval Islamic and Arabic thought, be it in science, mathematics or its role in translating and transmitting Greek knowledge, largely cast Islam as a false belief, a great Christian heresy, if not the greatest of heresies, as proclaimed, for example, by Peter the Venerable, the Abbot of Cluny (1122).[7] It is with this view of Islam in mind that he commissioned at his own expense a translation of the Qur'an into Latin, which was completed in 1143 by an English scholar, Robert de Ketton.[8] Such hostile

[5] Indeed, Gordon Campbell and Sebastian Brock have claimed that 'Milton could read three ancient Oriental languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac'. See Gordon Campbell and Sebastian Brock, 'Milton's Syriac', *Milton Quarterly*, 27 (2007): 74-7 (74).

[6] Dorothee Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); G. A. Russell (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994); and G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

[7] James Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 141. See also Abu-Baker, p. 9.

[8] See Minou Reeves and Philip J. Stewart, *Muhammad in Europe: A Thousand Years of Western Myth-Making* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), pp. 90-1.

attitudes towards the rapidly expanding religion date as far back as the eighth century with St. John of Damascus. In his *Fount of Knowledge* (ca. 743 AD) St John became one of the earliest writers to establish an *ad hominem* polemical tradition. The manuscript is considered to be the first orthodox Christian refutation of Muhammad and his new religion, and it was to play a significant role in influencing future anti-Islamic writings in medieval Europe.[9] In this treatise, St. John deems Islam to be a heresy, a 'deceptive superstition of Ishmaelites',[10] and 'Mohammed' himself to be 'the fore-runner of the Antichrist'.[11] In fact, the very title 'Antichrist' is believed to have been first bestowed on Muhammad by St. John, for the latter perceived him to be a false Prophet who 'concocted' the Qur'an from bits of the Old and New Testaments, with the help of a renegade monk called Bahira or Sergius:[12]

> From that time to the present a false prophet named Mohammed has appeared in their midst. This man, after having chanced upon the Old and New Testaments and likewise, it seems, having conversed with an Arian monk, devised his own heresy. Then, having insinuated himself into the good graces of the people by a show of seeming piety, he gave out that a certain book had been sent down to him from

[9] It is worth noting that this response to 'Mahometanism' did not originate in Christian Europe, for Christian polemical tradition, was initiated by Arab authors. The *Risalah* by Al-Kindi disproving the authority of the Prophet is a good example of such writings. Also note that the terms Mahometanism, Mohammedanism or Mohammedan law were the general terms ascribed to Islam as it was perceived more as a political movement than a religion of its own merit. See Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 1-3; p. 83.

[10] According to St John of Damascus the Ishmaelites are the decendants of Ismael, 'born to Abraham of Agar, and for this reason they are called both Agarenes and Ishmaelites. They are also called Saracens [...] These used to be idolaters and worshiped the morning star and Aphrodite'. See Frederic H. Chase, Jr. (ed. and trans.), *Saint John of Damascus Writings. The Fathers of the Church: A New Translation,* Vol. 37 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1958), p. 153.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid. See also Abu-Baker, p. 4. For more on this topic, see Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The 'Heresy of the Ishmaelites'* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), pp. 68-70; p. 133. As late as the sixteenth century, Henry Smith dismisses 'Mahomet' as 'a deceiuer, a false Prophet'. He continues to claim that he was born 'an Heathen, and his mother an Ismalite, whereby it come to passe, that whilest his mother taught somewhat of the religion of the Hebrewes, and his father on the other side of the religion of the Gentiles, *Mahomet* (like a dutifull child, but not like a discreet sonne) obeyed both, and that was some cause of the mixt and patched religion.' See Henry Smith, *Gods Arrow against Atheists* (London: 1593), p. 44; available online here: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175035161630;view=1up;seq=56>.

> heaven. He had set down some ridiculous compositions in this book of his and he gave it to them as an object of veneration.[13]

Between the ninth and the thirteenth-centuries, long before the arrival of the threatening military power of the Ottomans, and with the continuing spread of the Islamic tradition in Arabia, North Africa and Europe, it was clearly felt to be essential to counter the wave of conversions to Islam, by directly attacking the religion and its founder. Mohamed Abu-Baker interestingly argues that it was in a defensive spirit that Christianity first reacted to Islam; in such an embattled situation, it was very natural for the Christian community to develop 'a polemic that would help confirm their members in their faith'.[14] The Islamic expansion was complemented by a cosmopolitan civilisation, generating economic, as well as intellectual, wealth. Therefore, the economic riches of the Ottoman Empire and its exotic allure, as well as the emergence of Islamic thought as a rival creed, all fostered a strong sense of anxiety in Christian Europe. Consequently, rather than being directed towards the 'Islamic enemies', Christian polemical writings on 'Islam' and the 'Muslim East' mainly targeted, at first, Christians who were felt to be 'particularly vulnerable to conversion', either due to the economic or intellectual appeal of the Empire.[15] This attack, Abu-Baker concisely explains, comprised rather straightforward methods: by depicting Islam as a 'false and immoral' religion and 'through attacking the character of its prophet' by proving Muhammad a fraud, Islam is thus dismissed and Christianity is vindicated.[16] It is in this manner, Norman Daniel informs us, that earlier medieval Christian thinkers similarly created a polemic in which 'the beliefs of the opponent had to be made to seem not only wrong, but so repugnant as to make conversion unthinkable'.[17]

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[13] John of Damascus, p. 153.
[14] Norman Daniel, *Islam, Europe and Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), p. 3.
[15] Abu-Baker, p. 3.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Daniel, p. 4. See also G. N. Amjad, *Islam and the World Religions* (Lahore: Mufid-i-Am Kutab Khana, 1977).

Considering such religious and political tensions, it is readily apparent why it was not Arabic *per se* that interested medieval thinkers, but rather 'the content of texts [and] the knowledge preserved in Arabic', which included 'Greek and Hellenistic philosophy, science, and technology, enriched by Persian, Chinese and Indian influences'.[18] This great advantage, however, began to wane with the Renaissance recovery of Greek originals; gaining access to original sources, the transmission from Arabic (to Latin) seemed to have lost its previously established 'intellectual prestige' for Western thinkers, since scholars began to reprint older translations and modify them. Russell believes that this development exacerbated humanists' hostility towards Arabic thought in general in what they now perceived to be 'the corrupting influence of Arabic on the classical tradition'.[19] For example, in his important discussion of the advancement of science and learning, Francis Bacon, in his *Novum Organum Scientiarum* ('A new instrument of science'), published in 1620, claims that 'only three revolutions and periods of learning can be properly reckoned; one among the Greeks, the second among the Romans, and the last among us, that is to say, the nations of Western Europe'; therefore, 'the Arabians' do not need to be 'mentioned' at all, for they 'in the intermediate times rather crushed the sciences with a multitude of treatises, than increased their weight'.[20] Bacon deems the works of Arab scholars to be insignificant, believing that what had been 'added' by them was 'not much

[18] Russell, pp. 2-3.
[19] Russell, p. 3.
[20] This English translation is quoted from *The Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, and Lord High Chancellor of England* ed. by James Spedding, Robert Leslie Ellis and Douglas Denon Heath (London: Longman and co., 1858), p. 77. For the original Latin: *Tres enim tantum Doctrinarum revolutiones & periodi recte numerari possunt: Una, apud Graecos; Altera, apud Romanos; Ultima, apud nos, Occidentales scilicet Europae nationes: quibus singulis vix duae Centuriae anorum merito attribui possunt … Neque enim causa est, ut vel Arabum, vel Scholasticorum mentio fiat: qui per intermedia tempora Scientias potius contriverunt numerosis tractatibus, quam pondus earum auxerunt. Itaque prima Causa tam pusilli in Scientiis profectus, ad angustias Temporis erga illas propitii, rite & ordine refertur*, see *Francisci Baconis de Verulamio summi Angliæ cancellarii, Novum organum scientiarum* ed. by Andreas Tosi (Venetiis, Typis G. Girardi, 1762), pp. 68-9 (LXXVIII in the text); available online: <https://archive.org/stream/1762novumorganum00baco#page/68/mode/2up/search/saracen>.

nor of much importance; and whatever it is, it is built on the foundations of Greek discoveries'.[21]

This dismissive sentiment continued to persist, as Abu-Baker has justly observed, even in the Renaissance, an age 'that was otherwise shaped by an unprecedented expansion of knowledge and the ascendancy of a humanistic world view, [yet] Islam remained a pariah, a rival religion that was feared more than tolerated'.[22] With reasons such as these so much to the fore, Russell has drawn attention to the way that unlike the earlier period of interest in Arabic,[23] when medieval Europe was at a disadvantage intellectually, 'the occurrence of a "second wave" of "Arabick" interest' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was not only unexpected, but in fact 'astonishing'.[24]

Moreover, the specific historical (religious and political) context of Early Modern England only re-enforced this hesitancy in approaching sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature that seemed to show an Arabic interest; considering the inevitable Islamic association accompanying the Arabic language, it was largely viewed as the 'tainted' language of the religion of the supreme military power of the time, the Ottomans, whose established presence and military prowess was a strong reminder to the European mind of the insidious threat of their continual advance.

It was in 1529 that the Ottoman forces, led by Suleiman the Magnificent,[25] advanced into Austria in an attempt to capture the city of Vienna, in what became known

[21] See Russell, p. 2. See also Bacon, p. 77.
[22] Abu-Baker, p. 24.
[23] According to Sid-Ahmad, the first period of Islamic-Christian relations begins in the seventh century, a period of 'mutual ignorance'. The second stage, from the eleventh to the thirteenth century is believed to be the 'high-water mark of conflict', and the third extends from the medieval period to the Early Modern period, an age of cultural exchange, Milton's age. See Muhammad Sid-Ahmad, 'Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Milton's Adam', in *Milton and Questions of History: Essays by Canadians Past and Present*, ed. by Feisal Mohamed and Mary Nyquist (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2012), pp. 355-56; Stephen O'Shea, *Sea of Faith: Islam and Christianity in the Medieval Mediterranean World* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006), p. 8.
[24] A perception that only increased in late Renaissance (even post-Renaissance) Europe, for this period is perceived to be one in which there was a radical transformation of scientific and intellectual ideas, where the emphasis of knowledge and achievements of the time began to centralise around '"progress" [rather than] the achievements of antiquity'. See Russell, pp. 2-3.
[25] Suleiman X, known as Suleiman the Magnificent, was arguably the most powerful of Ottoman rulers.

as the Siege of Vienna. The siege, however, signalled the pinnacle of the Ottoman Empire; for after a century of conquests throughout Eastern and central Europe,[26] the Ottomans failed to capture the city.[27] Nonetheless, considering the Empire's power and the maximum extent of Ottoman expansion in central Europe (Hungary and Serbia), sixteenth-century England remained in a state of anxiety about the threat of Islam whose very presence was, to say the least, unsettling. Indeed, in a period that witnessed continuous political and military confrontations with the Ottomans, a sense of collective European unanimity was fostered against this lurking military threat, despite the deep political and religious divisions within the continent, particularly after the traumatic Fall of Constantinople in 1453. Perhaps one of the most notable examples of such a unifying stance is highlighted, two decades onwards, at the siege of Malta in 1565, where communal prayers were offered throughout England, 'for the deliverance of the island and its Christians from the Muslim enemy'.[28]

Notably, the Ottoman withdrawal from Malta in 1565, and Sultan Suleiman's last campaign against Vienna in 1566, 'marked the decline of the Ottoman encroachment in Europe',[29] and European perception of the Ottomans as an invincible power began to finally be eroded. Similarly, 'the last great Ottoman military success', the conquest of Cyprus in 1570-71, was quickly negated by the destruction of the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. With such an unexpected defeat, effected by Don John of Austria at Lepanto in October 1571, celebrations took place in all corners of Europe. The victory was even commemorated in verse by King James VI of Scotland in his famous encomium entitled

[26] With their victory at the Battle of Mohács in 1526, the Ottoman Empire had annexed Central Hungary and Transylvania became a vassal state for the Sultanate.
[27] According to Arnold J. Toynbee, 'The failure of the first [siege of Vienna] brought to a standstill the tide of Ottoman conquest which had been flooding up the Danube Valley for a century past'. See Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridgement of Volumes I–VI by D. C. Somervell (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 119.
[28] Abu-Baker, p. 35.
[29] Jennie Malika Evenson, 'Judaism, Islam, and English Reformation Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Michigan, 2005), p. 8.

'Lepanto' (1585),[30] which is considered to be one of the most popular 'heroic' poems by James VI:[31]

> I know thou from that city comes,
> Constantinople great,
> Where thou hast by thy malice made
> The faithles Turkes to freat.
>
> Thou hast inflamde their maddest mindes
> With raging fire of wraith
> Against them all that doe professe
> My name with feruent fayth.
>
> How long, O Father, shall they thus
> Quite vnder foote be tred
> By faithles folkes, who executes
> What in this snake is bred?
>
> Then Satan answerd, Fayth? quoth he,
> Their Faith is too, too small;
> They striue, methinke, on either part
> Who farthest backe can fall.
> (48-63)[32]

Unsurprisingly, the Turks were portrayed as the advocates of satanic malice only circumvented by the power of the one true Christian faith, thus distancing Christianity from its devilish Islamic shadow. This could only mean that this victory did not only

[30] The poem was composed at that date, yet the earliest known published edition is dated 1591. It was also republished in 1603. For more on James' political usage of the poem, in its different dates of publication, see Peter C. Herman, '"Best of Poets, Best of Kings": King James VI and I and the Scene of Monarchic Verse', in *Royal Subjects: Essays on the Writings of James VI and I*, ed. by Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier (Detroit Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 2002), p. 77.

[31] Helen Ostovich, Mary V. Silcox and Graham Roebuck (eds.), *Other Voices, Other Views: Expanding the Canon in English Renaissance Studies* (Newark, New Jersey: University of Delaware Press, 1999), p. 202. See Matthew Birchwood, p. 21. See also Thomas Roe, *The Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe, in His Embassy to the Ottoman Porte, from the Year 1621 to 1628...* (London: Printed by Samuel Richardson, at the Expense of the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, 1740), p. 412.

[32] See James I (then James VI of Scotland), *His Maiesties Poeticall Exercises at Vacant Houres* (Edinburgh: Printed by Robert Waldegraue, 1591).

deliver the long-awaited vindication of Christianity against the Ottomans, but it also embodied a sign of divine intervention in support of the 'true faith'. Intriguingly, the poem holds a particular religious and political significance as it celebrated the victory over the Ottomans, as a 'glorious God-given triumph', in such a way as could be exploited by advocates for both Catholicism and Protestantism. As Houlbrooke points out, in Lepanto, both Catholic and Protestant propagandists aligned 'the justice of the cause of the winning side to their consequent victory', using charged expressions such as 'just cause' and 'divine support'.[33] In Southern Europe the battle was already presented as the 'jewel in the crown of the Catholic propaganda effort'. For example, in the *Sala Regia*, the papal throne room in the Vatican, Lepanto along with the massacre of St Bartholomew's Day are depicted as 'twin images of Catholic victory'. Meanwhile, James was attempting to 'appropriate' the very same battle for his purposes in Protestant Scotland.[34] Although James' efforts had not come to fruition, Abraham van der Myl, the Dutch translator of the poem, utilised the battle in a way that presented to his reader a clear parallel between this Christian triumph over the Turks with 'their own [Protestant] struggle against Spain', thus subsuming the poem as a text representative of Protestant turmoil.[35]

Indeed, by the late sixteenth century 'no Englishman could ignore the threatening Turkish naval incursions on the south coast of England';[36] this led to an exacerbation of religious and political anxieties, which are clearly projected in the literary texts, political debates, even religious sermons of this time.[37] This viewpoint is very well exemplified by Thomas Newton's account in his *Notable Historie Of the Saracens* (1575), where he

[33] Ralph A. Houlbrooke (ed.), *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2006), p. 20. See also David Quint, *Epic and Empire: Politics and Generic from Virgil to Milton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 198.
[34] Houlbrooke argues that James was trying to utilise the poem to highlight Protestant glory. However, the 'hypersensitive Calvinists among his Scottish subjects' were not convinced, for they 'weighed his words against his actual policies'. See p. 20.
[35] Houlbrooke, pp. 20-1.
[36] Abu-Baker, p. 1; Nabil Matar, '"Turning Turk"': Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought', *Durham University Journal*, 86.1 (1994): 33-41 (33).
[37] Evenson, pp. 1-60.

warned his readers that the Ottomans 'were (indeede) at the first very far off from our Clyme & Region, and therefore the lesse to be feared, but now they are even at our doores and ready to come into our Houses'.[38] Such a view certainly stemmed from the unfavourable medieval accounts of the Ottomans and continued to be nourished further by the advancement of Ottoman troops into central Europe in the Early Modern period. But with Elizabeth's ascent to the throne, a more tactful communication with this long-established enemy began to take shape, in the service of new religious and economic alliances.

The Flourishing Anglo-Ottoman Relations of the Elizabethan Age

It was not until the end of the 1570s, in the reign of Elizabeth I, that England was ready to join its European neighbours in establishing diplomatic and commercial ties with the Ottoman Empire,[39] then under the rule of Sultan Murad III. Influenced by inner religious divisions, together with political conflicts throughout Europe, England began expanding its geopolitical interests in order to forge new alliances. Due to England's rift with the Roman Church, which tended to isolate England from the rest of Catholic Europe, innovative means were sought to face such political and religious challenges. As Lisa Jardine asserts, 'Elizabeth I's strategies for outflanking her European economic and commercial competitors reached a long way to the East, far beyond the familiar boundaries of the Mediterranean region - beyond Christendom itself'.[40] Perhaps it was Pope Pius V's decision, in February 1570, to excommunicate the 'pretended Queen of England', and to

[38] Newton expresses this anxiety about the Turkish threat in the dedication to his translation of Celio Augustino Curione's *Sarracenicae Historia* to 'the Ryghte honorable the Lorde Howarde'. See Celio Augustino Curione, *A notable historie of the Saracens... With a discourse of their affaires and actes from the byrthe of Mahomet their first péeuish prophet and founder for 700 yéeres space*, trans. by Thomas Newton (London: By William How, for Abraham Veale, 1575), A3.

[39] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), p. 57.

[40] Lisa Jardine, 'Gloriana Rules the Waves: Or, the Advantage of Being Excommunicated (And a Woman)', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series, 14 (2004): 209-22 (210).

declare 'her followers, heretics',[41] that specifically resulted in the expansion of English political and commercial ties towards the Muslim East. Now that the English were free from the 'Catholic Church's embargo on (and punitive fines for) trading in the infidel oriental marketplace',[42] and with the Ottoman's need of munitions during their conflict with Persia, it was the perfect convergence of circumstances to initiate what can otherwise be considered a heretical alliance. As Suzan A. Skilliter explains:

> The English were now free and eager to export cloth for soldiers' uniforms and metal for arms, especially the precious tin. Flaunting their liberty, English ships would carry to the infidel the scrap-metal resulting from the upheavals of the Reformation — lead from the roofs of ecclesiastical buildings, old bells, and broken metal statuary [...] It cannot be a coincidence that the new contraband trade with Turkey followed almost immediately after the Queen's excommunication.[43]

Indeed 1581, the year Elizabeth I issued a charter to the Levant Company, and the year 1583 are considered key dates for Elizabethan-Ottoman relations. While the French had already established political relations with the Ottomans, sending their first ambassador in 1535, it was not until 1583 that England sent its first representative, a great achievement, as Richard Haklyut states.[44] Following the orders of the Queen herself, William Harborne, the first English ambassador to Turkey,[45] had endeavoured to fulfil the daunting task of

[41] Jardine, p. 211.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Suzan A. Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey 1578-1582: A Documentary Study of the First Anglo-Ottoman Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 23; Jardine, p. 211.
[44] In the dedication of the first edition of *The Principall Navigations*, Hakluyt writes 'which of them [the kings of this land before her Maiesty] hath euer dealt with the Emperor of Persia, as her Maiesty hath done, and obteined for her merchants large & louing priuileges? who euer saw before this regiment, an English Ligier in stately porch of the Grand Signor at Constantinople? Who euer found English Consuls & Agents at Tripolis in Syria, at Aleppo, at Babylon, at Balsara, and which is more, who euer heard of Englishman at Goa before now?'. See Richard Hakluyt, *The principall nauigations, voiages and discoueries of the English nation made by sea or ouer land, to the most remote and farthest distant quarters of the earth* (London: Imprinted by George Bishop and Ralph Newberie to the Queenes most excellent Majestie, 1589), p. *3 (left side). The work appeared in one large volume in 1589. A second three volume edition was published, one volume a year, between 1598 and 1600.
[45] Kenneth Parker (ed.), *Early Modern Tales of Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 48.

negotiating Anglo-Ottoman political and commercial ties. Harborne's role is traced in a letter dating 25 October 1579 in which Queen Elizabeth wrote to the Sultan as follows:

> Most Imperiall and most invincible Emperor, we have received the letters of your mightie highnesse written to us from Constantinople the fifteenth day of March this present yeere, whereby we understand how gratiously, and how favorably the humble petitions of one William Harebrowne a subject of ours, resident in the Imperiall citie of your highnesse presented unto your Maiestie for the obteining of accesse [...] to come with merchandizes both by sea & land, to the countries and territories subiect to your governement, and from thence againe to returne home with good leave and libertie, were accepted of your most invincible Imperiall highnesse.[46]

Jennie Evenson points out that the goal of Harborne's mission, was not solely to advance political relations but also to obtain 'special trading privileges for England, enabling the export of specific goods to the Levant and cutting out Venetian middleman on Turkish imports'.[47] As evidence of Harborne's success, Sultan Murad III signed a trade agreement in 1581 granting English merchants to Turkey or 'Turkey merchants',[48] far superior rights to any other European trading city, including Venice and those in France or Venice, which were the established trading nations of the time.[49] Furthermore, by fostering commercial and political relations with the Ottomans, Elizabeth was hoping not only to 'circumvent the French, to whom in 1536 the Turks granted the right to be the protectors of all Christian nations at the Porte, the Ottoman court in Constantinople', but also to seek an ally against

[46] Hakluyt, p. 165. Jardine points out that the letter is a response to a previous letter by Sultan Murad written on 7 March 1579. The letter, along with its Latin translation, was beautifully executed in calligraphy, lavishly sealed by the Sultan's official signature and placed in a 'satin bag and fastened with a silver capsule', p. 209. See also Skilliter, pp. 69-70.
[47] Evenson, p. 9.
[48] 'On 11 September 1581 the Turkey company which later […] united with [the] Venice [Company] to become the Levant Company was founded by royal charter. The Ottoman government lowered the customs rate for the English to 3 per cent, the French and other foreigners paying 5 per cent until 1673'. See Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix, 1994), p. 138. See Jardine, p. 210.
[49] Jardine, p. 210.

Catholic Spain.[50] Harborne was able to draw the attention of Murad III towards the danger that Spain presented, especially after the latter forcibly annexed the kingdom of Portugal, which highlighted the advantages of a mutual alliance by uniting against this common Catholic enemy.[51]

With attitudes of enmity surviving from medieval thought, however, and 'anti-Islamic prejudice and hostility once again becom[ing] the fashion' in Renaissance Europe,[52] it is more likely that Elizabethan Anglo-Ottoman relations, at least initially, were more tactical than amicable. Indeed, it is highly likely to be the case that Elizabeth was hoping to manoeuvre Turkey and Spain, two 'limbs of the devil' against each other, a notion that was expressed by Sir Francis Walsingham, the principal secretary to the Queen.[53] In 1585, Walsingham instructed Harborne to form a military alliance with the Sultan. At the same time, it was also Walsingham's objective to occupy Spain in a Mediterranean clash with the Ottomans so that the two would be engaged in conflict. Such a ploy would be beneficial, according to Walsingham, not only to 'her Majesty presently, but to all Christendom hereafter'.[54]

What is of particular interest, however, is that in spite of the long tradition of political tension, the development of Western commercial and diplomatic relations with the Ottoman Empire facilitated access for travellers and scholars.[55] As Fatima Belgasem notes, 'with the growth of English trade with the East and the increased number of

[50] Evenson, p. 33.
[51] In order to help cement the alliance, the similarity between Protestantism and Islam, in their respective views on idolatry, were emphasized in these political exchanges. According to Skilliter, in the letters Elizabeth sent to Murad III, the 'Queen insists on her title "Defensatrix Fidei", her worship of the one, true God, and her abhorrence of idolatry. She is appealing unmistakably to the basic religious tenets of her Islamic correspondents and separating herself from her Catholic neighbours'. See Skilliter, pp. 74-5; Jardine, p. 216.
[52] Abu-Baker, p. 50.
[53] See Conyers Read, *Mr Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), pp. 226-28; Franklin L. Baumer, 'England, the Turk, and the Common Corps of Christendom', *American Historical Review*, 50.1 (1944): 26-48 (39).
[54] As cited in Baumer, p. 39. See also Read, pp. 226-28.
[55] Nabil Matar points out that the sea route was safer for Western travellers than the land route especially in this turbulent period in Europe. See Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558-1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 2.

English merchants who worked or settled in the Ottoman dominions, the English initiative towards the Porte was inevitable'.[56] Naturally, such economic and political points of contact facilitated an increase in actual encounters with Muslims, so the Ottoman Empire ceased to be an entirely alien concept, limited to figments and fabrications of the imagination, and became grounded in experience.

Renewed studies of Anglo-Ottoman relations, such as Birchwood's *Staging Islam in England* and Matar's *Islam in Britain*, remind us that, despite the standard hostility towards the Ottomans and their religion, contact with this supposed enemy was not comfortably simplistic. Of course, the religious rivalry caused evident anxieties and stimulated approaches towards criticism and even self reflection,[57] especially in the Reformation period,[58] when economic relations between the Ottomans, the Muslim East and Christendom had clearly shifted from the earlier political disassociation, as explained above.[59] Therefore, the complex dynamics of Anglo-Ottoman relations fluctuated significantly: the 'attitude of a Renaissance Briton to the Turks was [...] an attitude of fear, anxiety, and awe'.[60] Yet whether feared, detested or admired, Europe's response to the rising power of the Ottomans was certainly one of great ambivalence; the complex and multiple ways the Turk was viewed left many Renaissance thinkers unable to explain the swift Muslim expansion in the early sixteenth century. Furthermore, as sources of religious authority were a fundamental issue dividing the Christian world, it was a challenge to

[56] Fatima Essadek Ali Belgasem, 'Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Times' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Durham, 2013), p. 4.
[57] The zealous religiosity of the Turks had not gone unnoticed by English travellers and scholars. Muslim's religiosity was presented as an example to follow, to Christian readers, Protestant and Catholic alike. Ross, in the introduction of the first translation of the *Alcoran*, alludes to this very point specifically. See Chapter 2 for more detailed analysis of this discussion.
[58] Indeed, with the wealth of the Ottomans and the allure of 'Mahometanism' increasing, the religion of course was associated, in polemical accounts, with earthly carnality similar to that of the 'corrupted Catholic church'. See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, pp. 77-89.
[59] References to both Islam and Judaism, in what is demonstrated as approaches towards comparison and self criticism will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, through discussion of travel literature and literary texts.
[60] Nabil Matar, *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), p. 8.

reconcile the 'earthly' success of the Ottoman Empire with its heretical religion.[61] In fact, one of the main explanations offered for the Empire's success was not so much focused on Islam itself, but rather on the weakness of the Christians as a result of their religious divisions. Indeed, it was often concluded that Islam had been sent as a scourge by a wrathful God, who was justly offended by the sins of Christendom, sins such as religious disunity and constant rivalry. Henry Smith in *Gods Arrow Against Atheists* (1593) claims that the success of Islam owed more to divisions among Christians than to the merits of Islam as a credible religion. According to Smith, Mahomet 'tooke the aduantage of the time, [...] a time of dissention among Princes, and of diuision amongst those which called themselues Christians'. He goes on to explain:

> The Church was troubled with diuers sectes and heresies, as with Nestorians, Iacobites, Monothelites, &c. And then was there contention amongst the Bishops, who should haue the proud title of vniuersall Bishop. God was highly displeased with this wickednes, and suffered Nations to rise as a rodde or scourge to whippe his people: for where the hedge is broken, there it is easie for the beasts of the field to enter and spoyle.[62]

It is not surprising that similar accounts of Muhammad would resurface in Christian writing, in what appeared to be a similar period of Christian conflict with the East.[63] Such accounts, on the one hand, would reassure their readers that Christianity is the one true faith, and on the other, they would emphasise the notions of Islam as a heresy, and the success of the Turks was merely attributable to their role as the 'scourge' of God, punishing their divisions. What is essential to grasp is that this Eastern power became what could be considered a dark reflection that evoked a self-critical process and defensive

[61] See the reference to the 'sweet fruition of an earthly crown' in the first part of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (2. 7. 29). Marlowe associates Tamburlaine's ambitions for power with Ottoman carnality. See Abu-Baker, pp. 54-5.
[62] Henry Smith, p. 48.
[63] Ibid. It seems that Smith here assimilates the early rise of Islam, dominating the Levant and the North African parts of the Byzantine Empire, to its current rise in the sixteenth century.

attacks in Europe and Christianity. As Abu-Baker so aptly puts it, 'To Europe Islam was not an independent entity in its own right but an entity which represented whatever Christianity was not; an entity that was, and to a certain extent still is, Christianity's negative "other"',[64] an 'other' that rose primarily due to the failings of Christendom and its inward division. Therefore, it is essential to note that within the seventeenth-century context, England was politically engaging with a more powerful and active East, a situation that would begin to evolve again in time.[65] For the time being, however, this 'other', including its religion, culture, language and thought, continued to be perceived as a dark and demonic manifestation of the true faith.

Arabic as the Language of the 'Muslim East'

Early Modern scholars, such as Gerald MacLean and Nabil Matar, are careful to emphasise the different definitions the general terms of 'East', 'West', 'Orient' and 'Europe' embody in a pre-Colonial context. They remain hesitant to expand more recent theories of East and West studies, such as Edward Said's *Orientalism*,[66] due to the incompatible power dynamics shaping the differing periods. According to MacLean, English views of the Early Modern period 'took shape within a series of contradictions that' he aptly describes as 'imperial envy'.[67] This entailed, as MacLean demonstrates, contradicting fantasies about Turks wanting to renounce their religion and wanting to be English, to tales describing their zealous religious nature with a clear 'admiration for specific features of the great

[64] Abu-Baker, p. 10.
[65] By the end of the seventeenth century, with the slow yet steady shift of power dynamics tilting westward, as the Ottoman Empire began to decline and Europe began to expand economically, it would be only logical to finally dismiss Islam and the language of the Qur'an as no longer of pressing concern. But even long after the 'Islamic threat was finally contained' when the Ottomans were 'driven back' from the walls of Vienna in 1683 and were 'obliged to sue for peace and to accept the hard terms of the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699', the threat of Islam remained lurking in European minds, and the Turk continued to be viewed as a common enemy that needed to be 'understood, defined and finally contained'. See Abu-Baker, pp. 1-8; Paul Coles, *The Ottoman Impact on Europe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), pp. 184-95.
[66] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).
[67] Gerald MacLean, *Looking East: English Writing and the Ottoman Empire before 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 19-20.

empire: its power, potency, military might, opulence and wealth'.[68] The notion of imperial envy, according to MacLean, 'better suits the pre-colonial period. It involves identification as well as differentiation, of sameness as well as otherness, of desire and attraction as well as revulsion'.[69] Daniel Vitkus, following MacLean's observation, examines the reception of Muslim thought and figures in Early Modern English plays that incorporate Turkish themes and characters. Vitkus remarks that 'English writers began to gather knowledge' about the Muslim East 'from a position of inferiority, not power, and so a Saidian "orientalist discourse" based on power and the control of knowledge was not possible'.[70] The English admiration of, and attraction towards, Oriental culture as noted by Vitkus is clearly apparent in English drama of the period, where Islamic culture is depicted as 'powerful, wealthy, and erotically alluring. For these playwrights, Islam is a religion of temptation', as will be demonstrated in the following chapter in the writings of Marlowe, Shakespeare and Milton.[71] The tempting East was so powerful that, as Matar rightly observes, English writers 'knew they had either to confront or to engage' with Muslim powers. This inevitably led to an increase in translations – of Arabic and Islamic works – and descriptive texts about the Turks in the vernacular, in England and on the continent, rather than in Latin, as had been customary.[72]

George Sandys, an English traveller and author, who visited the Ottoman Empire, provides an intriguing account of his experiences there in *A Relation of a Journey*.[73] For example, Sandys discusses Islam's abhorrence of idolatry while also focusing on its rejection of the trinity and the denial of the divinity of Christ. He, nonetheless, like his

[68] MacLean, *Looking East*, p. 20.
[69] MacLean, *Looking East*, p. 22.
[70] Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. 31.
[71] Vitkus, p. 108. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed analysis of this aspect.
[72] See Matar, *Islam in Britain*, pp. 11-2. See also the first text written by an English author about the military and political history of the Ottomans: Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turks from The first beginning of that Nation to the rising of the Ottoman Familie*, 2nd edn (London, 1603), also cited in Matar, p. 12; p. 200.
[73] George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610, 6th ed.* (London, 1670).

contemporaries, contrasts the divisions within Christianity to the admirable and charitable nature of the Turks, reserving his greatest admiration for the respect in which the Turks hold God's name. As evidence of this, he remarks how 'if they find a paper in the street, they will thrust it in some crevice of the adjoining wall, fearing that the name of God might be on it and thus be defiled by being trodden underfoot'.[74] Indeed, Sandys' account demonstrates the conflicting views about the Turks and Islam that emerged when confronting this competing culture in actuality rather than relying solely on the previously established views in polemical accounts.

Notably, more accurate information thus began to circulate not just in history books, but also in travel accounts and religious writings.[75] The demand for authentic information on the Ottomans, Islam and Arabic was fed by the 'availability of at least 1,600 items of source material (poems, ballads, histories, etc.) printed between 1500 and 1640 in all European languages including English',[76] marking an evident interest in Arabic culture. However, and as demonstrated earlier, with the long tradition of strained religious and political relations, there was a marked hesitancy in accepting Arabic as a viable language that could contribute to European political and religious discourse; instead it was thought of as the nurturing language of this competitive power. Additionally, the prejudice generated by the perceived distance between Arabic – the language of the Qur'an and the Islamic tradition – and European languages, merging with the hostility caused by the threatening geographical expansion of the Ottoman Empire, was only fuelled further by an often overlooked factor that would play a significant role in intra-Christian religious dialogue in the Reformation period: the fact that unlike other beliefs Islam was the first religion to succeed Christianity. As Marshall Baldwin points out, Islam was the only

[74] Sandys, p. 43. See also Abu-Baker, p. 30.
[75] See the coming part of the discussion (and Chapter 2) where more detailed analysis is provided on this specific aspect of Arabic scholarship.
[76] Louis Wann, 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama', *Modern Philology*, 12 (January 1915): 163-87 (170). See also Abu-Baker, p. 36.

religion, 'subsequent in time to Christianity', from which it had taken 'large territories and inflicted upon it major military defeats'.[77] When compared to Judaism, not only was the former in existence before the advent of Christianity, making it less directly a rival religion, but it was not a military threat in the same way that Islam was. Therefore, it is easy to see how Islam posed an external threat whereas Judaism was mainly considered an internal one, situating Islam further as a polarised other.[78] Both religions, however, were continuously evoked in intra-Christian dialogue by way of criticism, comparison and internal reflection,[79] as I will demonstrate in the next chapter.

It is not surprising, then, that 'there is no lack of references to Islam, The Koran, and the Prophet Muhammad in English literature' of the Early Modern period.[80] However, it is only recently that academic scholarship has seriously investigated the presence and role of Arabic language and literature in Early Modern political, religious, and literary discourse. In fact, scholars of Arabic or Islam in Early Modern England, have been re-examining the reasons why Arabic was not considered as a language that contributed much to the Renaissance or Early Modern England. Ironically, such reasons have begun to be perceived as the very same causes that Arabic interest was not only present in England, but rising rapidly. Arabic has been generally overlooked, as mentioned earlier, because of its perceived corrupting influence on Greco-Roman thought, its religious association with

[77] Marshall W. Baldwin, 'Western Attitudes Towards Islam', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 28 (1942): 403-11 (403).

[78] For more on this aspect and the reception of Jews and Judaism see Evenson, p. 10; see also James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941); Peter Berek, 'The Jew as Renaissance Man', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 51.1 (Spring 1998): 128-62.

[79] English scholars began to follow a comparative approach in Biblical studies through examining Judaic and Qur'anic texts and referring to them in theological discussions. See Evenson, pp. 62-150. The military force of the Ottomans and their political laws were also scrutinised and compared to the Catholic Church or to English Monarchs, depending on the purposes of the author and the views of their political or religious patron. See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, pp. 64-200.

[80] See Abu-Baker, p. 2. See also Wann, p. 170. Chapter 2 will examine in more detail the allusions to Muhammad and the Qur'an in the writings of sixteenth-century authors such as Marlowe and Shakespeare, amongst others. Chapter 3 will direct its attention to Milton.

Islam, and due to the political and religious tensions dominating Christian-Islamic relations; nevertheless, Russell rightly registers astonishment at how:

> The roots of the second wave of the interest in Arabic lie, in fact, in the very movements which seemed to rule out any possible basis of its existence: the Protestant Reformation, the Humanist classical revival and the "expansion" of Europe and its emergence as the centre of the world.[81]

Amidst the political and religious changes taking shape at the time, the interest in Arabic language and literature began to noticeably increase in order not only to understand the language of the threatening religion of the Ottomans, but also to utilise the language for intellectual as well as economic progress. This view was shared by most Arabic scholars during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, who continued to hold reservations against Islam and the Ottomans, but admired the Arabic tongue. Indeed, as a notable instance of this recognition of the pressing importance of learning Arabic and acquiring Arabic texts, a letter was issued under King Charles's I name, on 15 February 1634, which commanded all merchants sailing to Turkey that every ship

> At euery voyage that yt makes should bring home one Arab: or Persian MS. Books to be delyuered presently to the Master of your Company, and by him carried or sent to the Lord ArchBishop of Cant [...] There is a great deale of Learning and that very fitt and necessary to be knowne, that is written in Arabicke, and there is a great defect in both our Vniversityes, very few spending any of theyr time to attaine to skill eyther in that or other Easterne Languages.[82]

It is not surprising that with an increase in Arabic manuscripts and texts, Arabic scholarship was advancing in seventeenth-century England. Attesting to the new-found recognition of its importance, in the seventeenth century, not only did Arabic language

[81] Russell, p. 3.
[82] PRO, SP 16,260, no. 116, as cited in Toomer, p. 108.

become a requirement for the degree,[83] but was taught at the two universities,[84] and even certain grammar schools, such as Westminster.[85]

The Rise of Arabic Studies in Early Modern England

Recent academic scholarship generally concurs that it is the first half of the sixteenth century that marks the beginning of the 'modern history of Arabic studies in Western Europe'.[86] At this point, Arabic studies began to take a more systematic shape, unlike the medieval period when Arabic thought was approached in more of a reactionary manner as indicated earlier. It was then that, as Birchwood puts it, 'Western Europe had seen the emergence of a distinct group of writers and theologians who were equipped, ostensibly at least, for a more informed appreciation of this rival religion: the Arabists'.[87] With the exception of Robert Wakefield,[88] a Cambridge graduate who 'travelled on the continent to acquire a knowledge of Hebrew and Syriac as well as a little Arabic',[89] and who was something of a precursor of the Arabists at Cambridge and Oxford, England was behindhand compared with Europe, where experts in Arabic and Oriental studies were already very much sought after and highly prized.

For the rest of Europe, particularly Catholic Europe,[90] a rise in interest in Arabic was manifested by the first centres of Arabic emerging in Italy and France, for example,

[83] See Sid-Ahmad, p. 358.
[84] This led to Arabic professorships in both Cambridge (1632) and Oxford (1634).
[85] Sid-Ahmad, p. 358.
[86] Russell, p. 20.
[87] Birchwood, p. 27; Toomer, pp. 26-7.
[88] Wakefield returned to England in 1519, becoming chaplain to Henry VIII. He lectured at Cambridge and Oxford, and became the first Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford in 1540.
[89] Wakefield, in his lecture '*De laudibus et utilitate trium linguarum'*, delivered at Cambridge in 1524, spoke of the value of Arabic particularly for Biblical studies. According to Toomer, the text asserts that the Book of Job was written in Arabic. See Toomer, pp. 53-4.
[90] As Abu-Baker observes, originally, in England, the knowledge of Islam came through the channels of the Catholic Church through Latin translations. The Latin translation of the Qur'an authorised by Peter the Venerable is a key example of such texts. 'Other channels of information', Abu-Baker continues, 'included word of mouth derived from pilgrimages and Crusades, as well as from travellers and scholars who travelled

where Hebrew and Arabic had been taught at the University of Paris since 1517.[91] Attesting to its newly established religious importance, the first Arabic book to be printed with movable type, in 1514, was a religious text: the *Book of Hours*; it was published with the missionary purpose of reaching Christians in the Levant.[92] In 1584, Pope Gregory XIII founded the Maronite College in Rome, where the first press to use movable Arabic type, *The Tipografia medicea orientale*,[93] was established under the patronage of Cardinal Ferdinand de Medici in the same year.[94]

As mentioned above, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, 'England had lagged behind the rest of Europe in Arabic and specifically Qur'anic studies'.[95] Yet with the efforts of William Bedwell (1563-1632), one of the pioneers of Arabic studies,[96] perceived by Early Modern historians as 'the Patriarch of the English Arabists',[97] English scholars of Arabic began to explore this rich field of scholarly studies. Indeed, it is a testimony to the philological importance of Arabic, that the 'first Englishman, after the Middle Ages, to undertake the serious study of Arabic', Bedwell, was a clergyman.[98] Bedwell's scholarly prowess in Arabic was known all over Europe, which stimulated scholars to visit him in his home 'to admire his recondite knowledge'.[99] Furthermore, as an interpreter 'for the Government's correspondence with Arabic speaking potentates', Bedwell's knowledge of

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to the world of Islam in search of the knowledge possessed by Arab and Muslim scholars and brought back accounts of their travels and sources from their researches'. See Abu-Baker, p. 17.

[91] Birchwood, p. 27.

[92] The work was printed by a Venetian printer in Venice. See Toomer, p. 20; Anna Contadini and Claire Norton (eds.), *The Renaissance and the Ottoman World* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014), p. 26.

[93] A second press was set up approximately ten years later in Leiden by Francisus Raphelengius. See Birchwood, p. 27.

[94] Russell, p. 21. By then a substantial collection of Arabic manuscripts had already been accumulated in Rome. See Birchwood, p. 27.

[95] Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 73.

[96] William Bedwell was a collector of Arabic manuscripts, a translator to the crown and the first to bring Arabic type into England. He also authored 'an ambitious Arabian dictionary' to facilitate grammatical studies, but it was never published. See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 155.

[97] Russell, p. 21.

[98] Other examples are Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Chichester, Ely and Winchester, and William Laud, Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury; the latter was also the creator of the chair of Arabic at Oxford in 1636. See Russell, p. 5.

[99] Toomer, p. 57.

Arabic had certainly played a substantial role in facilitating political exchanges with Muslim officials; to exemplify, he met the Moroccan delegation during their visit to London in 1600-01, and translated a letter to King James I of 1609 from Sultan Mawlay Zaydan.[100]

In 1612 Bedwell visited Leiden,[101] where he arranged – at the Raphelengius press – for the production of the only Arabic text by him that saw print:[102] the *Johannine Epistles*, dedicated to King James I.[103] With this publication, he became the 'English writer [who] made the first published contribution to Arabic scholarship in the form of a translation of the Epistle of John'.[104] The work makes use of Arabic as 'an ancillary to the study of Hebrew as the language of the Bible',[105] and thus highlights the particular value of Arabic to English theologians in Biblical studies.[106] In an effort to emphasise this point, Bedwell, commenting on the importance of Arabic, states: 'no language (except Greek and Latin) contains more records of solid and scientific erudition'.[107] In the preface Bedwell is keen to impress upon his reader the wide-reaching importance of the language in the contemporary world:[108] he draws attention to the 'wide extent of the lands inhabited by Muslims,[109]

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[100] See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 155; Toomer, p. 57; and H. de Castries, *Les Sources inedites de l'histoire du Maroc, Archives et Bibliotheques d'Angleterre*, vol. II (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1925), pp. 418-21.

[101] Bedwell did not benefit from the institutional support enjoyed by his European counterparts. See Birchwood, p, 28.

[102] Alistair Hamilton, *William Bedwell, the Arabist, 1563-1632* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985), p. 124; Toomer, p. 59.

[103] Hamilton, p. 19; p. 27. See also Toomer, p. 59.

[104] Birchwood, p. 28

[105] Kees Versteegh, *The Arabic Language* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 4 and Kees Versteegh, 'History of Arabic Language Teaching', in *Handbook for Arabic Language Teaching Professionals in the 21st Century***,** ed. by Kassem M. Wahba, Zeinab A. Taha and Liz England (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), p. 7. See also Hamilton, pp. 15-29.

[106] Interestingly, it was a Jew who converted to Christianity in 1106, Pedro de Alfonso, who is credited as being 'one of the first Western writers who knew Arabic and wrote on Islam'. See Daniel Martin Varisco, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid* (Seattle: University of Washington, 2007), p. 83.

[107] See Hamilton, pp.118-19; P. M. Holt, 'Background to Arabic Studies in Seventeenth-Century England', in *Arabick Interest*, ed. by Russell, p. 26.

[108] In his lecture, *Oratio pro linguae Arabicae professione*, delivered in Oxford in 1626 and published the following year, Mathias Pasor also stressed the importance of Arabic studies. Pasor explained that in 'Turkey, Persia, India and Tartary, where the superstition of Mahomet rages, even though other languages may be in common use, yet in almost every house there will be at least one who understands Arabic'. See Holt, p. 26.

"from the furthest shores of the extreme West, that is from the Fortunate Islands, even to the islands of the Moluccas in the extreme East"'.[110] As well as its geographical significance, he is also careful to emphasise the political, commercial, and social implications of its extensive presence:

> In almost all these places, the privileges and diplomas of kings and princes, the instruments and contracts of merchants and nobles, finally the familiar letters of all, are expressed and written almost solely in this Arabic language.[111]

However, unsurprisingly, given the prevalent need that was then felt to refute Islam, it was the rebuttal of the heretical Alcoran itself that was invoked as the most pressing justification for the study of Arabic.[112] For that reason, Bedwell's Arabic scholarship pioneered the 'call for greater understanding of its language and religion',[113] making him one of the few to publish detailed material on the life of Muhammad[114] with his virulent attack: *Mohammedis Imposturae: That is, A Discovery of the Manifold Forgeries, Falshoods, and horrible impieties of the blasphemous seducer Mohammed*.[115] As Birchwood notes, the work, which translates three supposedly authentic dialogues between two Mahometans,[116] is designed as a targeted attack on the Islamic creed.[117] The text also

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[109] This emphasis would be partly because much of the interest in Arabic in the Early Modern period was heightened by missionary zeal.
[110] Holt, p. 26.
[111] William Bedwell, *D Iohannis apostoli et evangelistae epistolae catholicae omnes* (Leiden, 1612), Praefatio. Reprinted in Hamilton, *William Bedwell*, pp. 118-29. As cited in Holt, p. 26. For the original Latin, see 'The Preface', pp. 3-4 (A2-A3) here: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=CessljGPEUEC&source>.
[112] Birchwood, p. 28.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield (eds.), *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400-1660* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillian, 2008), p. 142.
[115] Along with the *Epistle*, this is the only other work by Bedwell that is related to Arabic. See Toomer, p. 61.
[116] It is indeed significant that prior to Bedwell none of the English scholars of Arabic published any material directly focusing on Muhammad. Bedwell believed that the work on which he based his text was translated from an Arabic text by an unknown author and was printed in Rome. It was first written, 'as the Author himselfe seemeth to intimate, about 600 years since. Who he was, and what, I dare not for certaine affirme' ($A2^r$). Bedwell's powerful account was re-issued with a different title page (*Mahomet Unmasked*) in 1624. See also Hamilton, *William Bedwell*, p. 67.
[117] According to Dimmock, the text was exposed as a Christian forgery 'designed to exploit key Mahometan weaknesses'. See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 156.

criticises and challenges the veneration of Muhammad, his arguments and alleged miracles,[118] while still remaining intent on advancing Arabic studies.

Mohammedis Imposturae was attached to two small treatises. The first consisted of a list of the chapters of the Qur'an, its verses and theological commentaries: the *Index Assuratarum Muhammedici Alkorani, That is, A Catalogue of the Chapters of the Turkish Alkoran*' [...] *1615*. It contained the numbers and names of the chapters, transliterated into the Roman alphabet and translated into Latin; sometimes descriptions or notes about the history and composition of the Qur'an were also included. The second was *The Arabian Trudgman*, which included the list of the names for positions of authority in Muslim regions and provided detailed information on Arabic governmental ranks.[119] Accordingly, the whole work[120] was designed to facilitate 'vnderstanding of the confutations of that booke'.[121]

What is indeed fascinating is that the intra-religious scholarship scrutinising the Islamic tradition not only focused on the Qur'anic verses but also showed familiarity with Islamic religious commentaries including the Hadith (the orally transmitted sayings and teachings of Muhammad). This certainly testifies to an expansion in English knowledge and interest in the language and the religion in general. Bedwell's work, is especially noteworthy in that he took the trouble to familiarise himself with multiple Islamic sources in an attempt to deliver more compelling and seemingly knowledgeable counter-arguments to refute and to demonstrate the falsity of Islamic doctrine and its Prophet. To exemplify,

[118] See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 156
[119] Toomer, p. 61.
[120] In *The Arabian Trudgman*, for example, Bedwell comments on the meaning of the word 'Alesalam', which is the law of God: 'If he had said, the law of damnation, and of the diuell, he had said well' (L2^{v}). See Derek Dunne, 'William Bedwell, *Mohammedis Imposturae* (London, 1615)', *Reading East: Irish Sources and Resources*, (undated and unnumbered); available online: <http://www.ucd.ie/readingeast/essay4.html>.
[121] The full title is as follows: *Mohammedis Imposturae: that is, A discovery of the manifold forgeries, falsehoods and horrible impieties of the blasphemous seducer Mohammed with a demonstration of the insufficiencie of his law, contained in the cursed Alkoran* (London: Imprinted by Richard Field dwelling in great Wood-streete, 1615). See also Bedwell's reasoning behind delving into such controversial scholarship, dedicated, as he puts it, 'For the better vnderstanding therefore not onely of this present Treatise of ours, but generally of all histories of the Saracens, Persians, Indians, Turks, & Africans: as also of all bookes and treatises written of their superstition and ceremonies'. Bedwell, K4^{r}.

this passage from *The Arabian Trudgman* is ostensibly designed to give detailed information about the life of Muhammad but does so in such a way that he is clearly presented to the reader as a false Prophet who misled his followers and whose doctrines are mere superstition:

> MOHAMMED, (*Mem* being doubled by Teshdid) *Mohammad*, *Muhammedes*, *Muammeded*, *Mohammetus*, *Machomet*, *Moammetus*, was the name of that famous *impostour* and *seducer* of the *Arabians* or *Saracens*, the first author I meane and *inuentor* of the *Alkoran* and lawes of that *superstitious faction*. He was borne in Arabia, as the Hisoriographers do report, on the 22 day of Aprill (x. *Kal*. *Maij*) in the yeare after the birth of Christ 596: He dies on the 13 of March (3. *Id*. *Martij*) in the yeare of our Lord 637, being of the age of 41 yeares, and hauing reigned 10. He was buried in Mecha, a city of Arabia Felix.[122]

Likewise, Bedwell also questions the authenticity of Islamic teachings, such as the Hadith, in a line, that is as if spoken by one of the sceptical characters, which perpetrates suspicions about the authenticity of Muhammad's teachings: 'thou wouldest haue all things that our Prophet hath written to be sound, and yet he himselfe saith, I haue spoken 12000 sayings and sentences; of which 3000 onely are true: the rest are grosse absurdities'.[123] Thus, it is evident that while Bedwell's work demonstrates a solid knowledge of Arabic, it is clearly unsympathetic to Islam and seeks to expose its perceived inconsistencies to the Christian reader.[124] Indeed, with this important work,[125] Bedwell sets the image of Muhammad as an imposter for the next generation of Arabists,[126] since his *Mohammedis*

[122] Bedwell, *Mohammedis Imposturae*, sig. N.ir-N.iv; Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 157. For more on Arabia Felix and Muhammad as an imposter, see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.
[123] Bedwell, F4^{v}.
[124] In 1617, Samuel Purchas published the third edition of his *Pilgrimage* in which he drew on Bedwell's discussion of the Islamic creed, including the seven opening verses of the Qur'an, otherwise known as the *Fatiha* ('The Opening'). Samuel Purchas, *Pvrchas His Pilgrimage or Relation of the World and the Religions Observed in all Ages and Places* (London, 1617), pp. 283 ff, as cited in Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 74.
[125] As Dimmock notes, while the work adds little to the already circulated material about Muhammad, it consists of new elements of the Islamic story of Ascension, where Muhammad ascends to the realms of the Afterlife and converses with angels and prophets, known as the journey of *mi'raj*. See Chapters 2 and 4 for more on the legend of Ascension.
[126] See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, pp. 155-57.

imposturae remained an essential source for knowledge of Muhammad and his holy book, alongside later works authored by Edward Pococke and Abraham Wheelock.[127]

In 1636 Edward Pococke, who had been a pupil of Bedwell, became the first to hold the Laudian chair of Arabic at Oxford, thanks to the patronage of Archbishop Laud. At this point, 'we move', as Holt justly remarks, 'into a new period of organized Arabic studies at the universities';[128] in which Pococke became 'the leading Arabist of the next generation'.[129] Pococke first developed his commendable proficiency in Arabic with supervision from Bedwell himself and lectures by the German Arabist Mathew Pasor at Oxford. However, after graduating from Cambridge, he took up residency in Aleppo and became Chaplain to the factory of the Levant Company in 1629,[130] and this in particular played an invaluable role in enhancing his proficiency in 'spoken as well as written Arabic'.[131]

Pococke's highly developed knowledge of Arabic allowed him to communicate with Arabic speaking scholars and ordinary native speakers. As Toomer confirms, Pococke hired a native speaker, known as Hamid, to be his personal attendant and made arrangements with a Muslim Sheikh called Fathallah in order to improve his spoken as well as literary language.[132] He had, in fact, two teachers, one Jewish, Rabbi Samuel, and the other Muslim.[133] While he was at Aleppo, Pococke made the acquaintance of 'a Muslim named Al-Darwish Ahmad, who was probably one of his Arabic teachers there'.[134] During a second visit to the Levant, which Pococke made in 1637-41 with the express

[127] See Chapter 3 for a more detailed discussion of Wheelock's Arabic scholarship at Cambridge.
[128] Holt, p. 22.
[129] Holt, p. 21. At this point, 'English teachers and students of Arabic were largely dependent on the grammars and textbooks produced in Leiden', and, in 1637, Oxford University was using 'Arabic type produced from equipment also bought in Leiden […] used to print, among other works, Pococke's editions of historical texts', see Russell, p. 23.
[130] Birchwood, p. 29.
[131] Ibid., see also Leonard Twells, *The Theological Works of the Learned Dr. Pocock... To which is prefixed, An Account of his Life and Writings never before printed*, vol. I (London, 1740), p. 6.
[132] Toomer, pp. 121-22.
[133] Toomer, p. 121; Sid-Ahmad, p. 357.
[134] See Holt, p. 24. Pococke's correspondence with Al-Darwish Ahmad remains preserved at the Bodleian Library.

purpose of collecting Oriental manuscripts, he 'kept in touch' with Al-Darwish Ahmad.[135] Letters at the Bodleian Library show that the latter was purchasing manuscripts on Pococke's behalf; a letter signed in the name of 'The poor Dervish Ahmad', reads as follows:

> [...] we have obtained Ikhwan al-Safa which you saw previously, an illustrated one, for sixty piasters. We have obtained it at this price only because Guglielmo asked us for it as that one which you saw on the day you travelled from Aleppo was unobtainable, so that you may know. As for the history of al-Jannabi the judge, some quires of which you saw and said to me that I must take it to the consul when I had finished writing it out, when it is finished, we will take it to him, if God on high wills.[136]

It is clear from this letter that Pococke would entrust Al-Darwish Ahmad with the task of obtaining rare Arabic texts to be utilised later in his scholarly endeavours.[137] One of the textbooks Pococke used, for example, was a collection of proverbs ascribed to Ali bin Abi Talib,[138] which had been published anonymously in 1629 at Leiden. Pococke's eighteenth-century biographer, Leonard Twells, describes the dedicated efforts he made in teaching the language:

> Upon his Book, observing the Directions of the *Archbishop* in the Statutes he had provided, he spent an Hour every *Wednesday* in *Vacation-time*, and also in *Lent* explaining the Sense of the Author, and the Things relating to the *Grammar* and *Propriety* of the *Language*; and also showing the Agreement it hath with the *Hebrew* and *Syriack*, as often as there was Occasion. The *Lecture* being ended, he usually tarried for some Time in the publick School, to resolve the Questions of his

[135] Holt, p. 24.

[136] I rely on both Holt's translation of the letter and Toomer's detailed analysis of it. See Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East* (London: Frank Cass, 1973), pp. 42-5; Holt, 'Background to Arabic Studies in Seventeenth-Century England', pp. 24-5 and Toomer, p. 123.

[137] In a letter addressed to Pococke, Laud commissions him to buy 'such ancient Greek coins, and such manuscripts, either in Greek or in Oriental languages, as he should judge most proper for an university library'. See William Owen and William Johnston (eds.), *A New and General Biographical Dictionary: Containing an Historical and Critical Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons in Every Nation; Particularly the British and Irish...* (London: Printed for T. Osborne, J. Whiston and B. White, W. Strahan, T. Payne, W. Owen, W. Johnston, 1761), p. 423.

[138] Ali is Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. He is also a most revered figure of Islam for certain Muslim sects.

> Hearers, and satisfy them in their Doubts; and always, in the Afternoon, gave Admittance in his *Chamber*, from One-a Clock till Four, to all that would come to him for further Conference and Direction.[139]

Commenting on this insight into his teaching methods, Holt adds that Pococke 'followed up his weekly lecture-hour with three hours of tutorials'.[140] Furthermore, two other courses given by Pococke were on prominent Arabic poetical texts, such as 'the first' *Maqama* by Al-Hariri ('The Assemblies of Al-Hariri' مقامات الحريري), and on a twelfth-century poem by Al-Tughra'i known as *Lamiyyat Al-'Ajam*.[141] The *Maqama* is a prosimetric work of the twelfth-century author Abu Muhammad Al-Qasim Al-Hariri, born in Basra, Iraq. The text is considered one of the most challenging literary productions of the Arabic language, as it centres on a protagonist who displays such rhetorical mastery of Arabic that it allows him to charm and trick whomever he encounters, influencing them into doing his bidding.[142] The rhetorical and stylistic techniques in this text were so advanced that it was even consulted in Arabic schools of theology and language (*Madrasa*),[143] throughout the Arab world, for its utilisation of rare Bedouin terminologies and advanced Arabic lexicography. The second text, *Lamiyyat Al-'Ajam*, was also famous for its stylistic and linguistic form. For example, every line of the verse would end with the letter *lam* or 'L', explaining the title *Lamiyyat*.[144] This text, along with the famous proverbs of 'Ali, was republished in 1661 in a Latin translation as *Carmen Togari* by Pococke.[145] This work was notable for its comprehensive commentary on the way 'almost every word deals with syntax and

[139] Leonard Twells, *The Lives of Dr. Edward Pocock, the Celebrated Orientalist, by Dr. Twells*, vol. I (London, 1816), p. 39.
[140] Holt, 'Background to Arabic Studies in Seventeenth-Century England', p. 22.
[141] Ibid.
[142] The genre is also popular in Hebraic poetry.
[143] The schools were generally for boys who would start their education around the age of six and continue on, if circumstances allowed, until adulthood. With a focused study of the Qur'an, religious exegesis and Arabic language, students would be able to continue their studies into becoming religious scholars and Sheikhs.
[144] The title explains the rhythmic trait and rhyme scheme of the poem, which is achieved by the continuous repetition of the letter 'L' or *lam* (in Arabic) at the final word of every line. The closest literal translation of the title is: a poem of the rhyme 'L' *lam* or more precisely the *lam* poem: lamyya.
[145] Holt, p. 22.

etymology, and frequently makes comparisons with cognate words in Hebrew and Syriac'.[146]

Such detailed knowledge of Arabic language and literature was accompanied by a steady growth in the availability of Arabic texts, including those by Arabic or Muslim scholars. Latin translations from Arabic were revised and new translations were produced that had been made after directly consulting the original Arabic texts. *Al-Qanun fi Al-Tibb* ('The Canon of Medicine' القانون في الطب),[147] by Avicenna, the Persian philosopher, is a well-known example of this process of translation. The medical encyclopaedia combined the remedial tradition of Galen and Hippocrates with Aristotle's natural philosophy, with the aim of producing a *summa* of medical knowledge to date. Although the text was finally compiled in five books, in 1025, it continued to be influential until the sixteenth century, when humanists began to consult the original Greco-Roman texts rather the Arabic translations and commentaries of these texts.

One important example of such translations from Arabic texts is Pococke's Latin translation of Abul Faraj's life of the Prophet Muhammad known as *Specimen historiae Arabum, sive Gregorii Abul Faraaji* (1650).[148] The text draws on various Arabic and Islamic beliefs, and provides a detailed discussion of the Islamic creed, its tenets, history, customs, traditions, and the origins of famous Arabic tribes, as well as stories about Muhammad himself.[149] The work is believed to be the first direct translation of an Arabic source for educated English readers and Pococke's most important work.[150] In fact, as

[146] Holt, p. 17.
[147] The canon was translated into Latin as *Canon Medicinae* by Gerard of Cremona (also known as Gerard de Sabloneta) in the twelfth century. The earliest known copy of the *Canon* dates from 1052. See Avicenna, *Avicennae Arabvm Medicorvm Principis Canon Medicinae* ed. and trans. by Gerardus Cremonensis *et al.* (Venetiae: Apud Juntas, 1608).
[148] Edward Pococke, *Specimen historae Arabum, siue, Gregorii Abul Farajii Malatiensis, De Origine & moribus Arabum* (Oxford: Excudebat H. Hall, impensis Humph. Robinson in Coemeterio Paulino, ad insigne trium Colombarum, 1650), pp. 1-28.
[149] Dimmock believes 'some of the myths surrounding Mahomet [are recounted] with evangelical intent'. See *Mythologies*, p. 155.
[150] Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 82.

Matar justly observes, the translation became 'an excellent source on the Qur'an and its history for English readers'.[151] What is fascinating, however, is that the text provides a considerable number of episodes of Islamic folkloric beliefs and orally transmitted tales, from around the Islamic world, which would usually be dismissed in theological writing. For example, the text speaks of the torments of the afterlife, the tortures of Hell, the Heavenly virgins (*Al-Hour Al Ein* الحور العين), and mythical creatures of the desert, such as ghouls, ominous owls and jinn.[152] The work also dedicates special attention to the Islamic devil, Iblis,[153] translated into Latin as *Diabolus*.[154]

Indeed, it is noteworthy that the primary importance of learning Arabic for Pococke was to glean authentic information about Islam in order to avoid 'attributing false errors to the Muslims', and thus avoid 'render[ing] ourselves ridiculous in trying to refute their real errors'.[155] In addition, Pococke made a case for the relevance of Arabic studies for theological studies; he argued that it could throw light on 'Hebrew scriptures', particularly because some principal rabbinic authorities, such as Maimonides, wrote in Arabic.[156] Indeed, Pococke's scholarly efforts influenced the views and approaches of English Arabists, historical scholars and travellers alike. For example, Sandys, in his *Journey*, drew directly on accounts of the life of Muhammad, based on the writings of Averroes (*Ibn*

[151] Ibid.
[152] It is of interest indeed that Pococke referred to mythical Arabic and Islamic creatures of the desert in his discussion of Islam and Arabic culture. This does emphasise his interest in Judeo-Arabic folklore and mythology as well as Islamic and Hebraic theological discussions. See Chapter 4 for more on these Arabic folkloric creatures.
[153] Pococke, p. 306. The page includes Hebrew writing as well.
[154] Pococke, pp. 250-320.
[155] As translated in Toomer, p. 214.
[156] For example, the Arabic philosophical tale *Hayy bin Yaqthan* was translated into Hebrew by Moses of Narbonnne in 1349. The text was later translated into Latin by Pico della Mirandola in the second half of the fifteenth century. Pococke showed great interest in the religious theme of the Arabic manuscript, which narrates the story of a man who found himself alone on an island, yet came to the knowledge of God solely through relying on reasoning and contemplation. Pococke then brought the text back with him to England from Aleppo in 1636 with the aim of producing the first English translation. However, this translation never emerged and a Latin rendition appeared in 1671 by his son, who was also called Edward Pococke, thus causing initial confusion about the identity of the author. The text, *Philosophus autodidactus siue epistola Abi Jaafar, Ebn Tophail de Hai Ebn Yokdan* (1671), was accompanied by an introduction by Pococke senior, however. The first translation into English was by the Quaker George Keith in 1674. The second English translation was made directly from Arabic by George Ashwell in 1686. See Muhammad Sid-Ahmad, 'Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Milton's Adam', pp. 355-77.

Rushd) and Avicenna (*Ibn Sina*)[157] – both of whom were known to be prominent thinkers, philosophers and Islamic scholars – and whose works were also amongst the Pococke collection.[158] Likewise, Henry Stubbe's account of the life of Muhammad,[159] *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism, and a Vindication of him and his Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians* (1671),[160] drawn largely from Pococke's account, was, as can be seen from the title, sympathetic in approach.[161] Most importantly, as Toomer observes, in the wake of Pococke's revolutionary work on Arabic studies, Islamic history and Arabic 'mythology religion and cultic practice', began to be 'assessed by the same historical and philological criteria, as the Greek and the Roman culture which had hitherto been the standard for European scholarship'.[162]

It is certainly the case that much of the increase in such Oriental and Islamic collections in English libraries largely stemmed from English merchants to Turkey and manuscript collectors ranging from ambassadors, churchmen and scholars to merchants and amateur Arabists; the texts and manuscripts not only boomed but also varied greatly in number, topic and quality.[163] By the first half of the seventeenth century, the Bodleian Library, which opened to the public in 1602, developed from a single Arabic

[157] See Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 87; p. 135. For more on Sandys and Muslim thinkers, see Brinda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani (eds.), *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2009), p. 210.
[158] As mentioned earlier, Pococke worked diligently on acquiring rare Arabic manuscripts. He is also credited with advancing some of Laud's own collection (whose Arabic manuscripts alone reached a couple of hundred). After Pococke's death, his collection, which contained about 420 manuscripts, was bought by the university in 1639. See Holt, *Studies in the History of the Near East*, p. 32.
[159] This account is, surprisingly, much more sympathetic than the earlier texts, for it challenges the previous English polemical versions of the life and death of Muhammad. The text, for example, does not view the Qur'an as a forged book, denies that Muhammad spread his religion by the sword and negates the medieval legends surrounding his death and burial (see Chapter 2 for more on this point). For further discussion of this topic, see Nabil Matar, *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 169-83. Feisal Mohamed notes that Stubbe defended Milton in his writings; see p. 66.
[160] Henry Stubbe, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism, and a Vindication of him and his Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians* (London: 1671-79).
[161] The death of Muhammad was one of the most noticeable changes in later accounts, choosing a 'feasible' manner of death rather than a 'fabricated' one designed to repulse the reader and prove Muhammad's lack of divinity. See Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 193.
[162] Toomer, p. 160.
[163] Ibid.

manuscript,[164] and grew to house almost one thousand five hundred volumes, 'covering all the various traditional fields of Arabic learning'.[165] Between the years 1630-35, Colin Wakefield notes, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of the University, presented to the library 'over one thousand manuscripts in four separate donations'.[166] The Laudian Arabic collection alone contained a wide range of materials from the Islamic tradition including manuscripts of the Qur'an, Qur'anic commentaries, grammar, lexicography, medicine, astronomy, proverbs, poetry and the occult. This included works by Al-Waqidi,[167] a seventh-century historian and biographer, specialising on the campaigns of Muhammad; Al-Tabari, a tenth-century prominent lexicographer, theological philosopher and exegete of the Qur'an; Al-Razi, a notable scholar of medicine and philosophy; and Ibn Khallikan, one of the most outstanding Arab historians and sociologists, whose *Muqaddimah* ('Introduction') was a main text for seventeenth-century Turkish historians.

Furthermore, by 1640, Philip Williams and Thomas Perle, who were English merchants to Turkey and the Levant, presented, respectively, a copy of *Al-Sihah* by Al-Jawhari, one of the main Arabic dictionaries in the medieval period, and *Al-Qamus Al-Muhit* ('The Surrounding Ocean') by Al-Firuzabadi, which was one of the most frequently used Arabic dictionaries for about five centuries (from the fifteenth until the twentieth century). Furthermore, in 1657, Archbishop William Juxon presented the library with Al-Bukhari's *Sahih*, the collection of Islamic Hadith, most highly acknowledged for its authenticity.[168] Likewise, bi-lingual editions of Arabic texts, grammars and dictionaries

[164] This manuscript is believed to be a Qur'an given by John Wrothe in 1601. Another miniature Qur'an was donated by Sir Henry Wotton in 1604, and, another Qur'an was given by Thomas Culter in 1606. As Colin Wakefield points out, an Arabic copy of the Psalms in Arabic was donated in 1609 by William Hebert, Earl of Pembroke, who was later Chancellor of the University of Oxford. See Colin Wakefield, 'Arabic Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library: The Seventeenth-Century Collections', in *Arabick Interest*, p. 129.
[165] Wakefield, p. 128.
[166] Wakefield, p. 130.
[167] Al-Waqidi also wrote a commentary on Ghouls which is discussed in Chapter 4.
[168] Wakefield, p. 131.

were prepared and printed, most importantly by John Selden, a friend of William Bedwell, and a renowned Arabist himself.[169] Most of the Arabic manuscripts Bedwell had managed to collect over the course of his lifetime were bought by Laud and John Selden. Selden's own manuscripts totalled three-hundred and fifty eight; according to Wakefield, they were 'divided equally between oriental and Greek' manuscripts, with one hundred and seventeen of them being in Arabic.[170] By 1659, the Bodleian contained 'over eight-thousand volumes of manuscripts and printed books' related to Arabic writings on philosophy, medicine, cosmology, poetry and religion.[171] Interestingly, by the end of the century, the Qur'an was so commonplace that it was specifically excluded from letters calling for Oriental manuscripts, as the Library 'already had a number of copies'.[172] What is essential to bear in mind is that the increase in Arabic scholarship, particularly marked in the 1640s, in association with Greek and Hebrew, was specifically connected to religious controversy and the Civil War.[173] Nowhere is this more apparent than with what can be considered as the most crucial English translation of an Arabic text, the first English *Alcoran* of 1649, as the following chapters aim to demonstrate.

Despite the generally negative attitudes ascribed to the language (including its literature mythology, folklore and oral tradition) – because of the threat of Islam and the Ottomans – the value of Arabic as a rewarding language continued to intrigue scholarly minds. As contemporary scholars of the Early Modern period are beginning to find out, seventeenth-century English scholars were not entirely oblivious to Arabic language and culture as they were believed to be. In fact, recent studies of the Arabic movement in seventeenth-century England indicate that, quite often, while almost all scholars of Arabic

[169] See Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion of Milton and Selden.
[170] Wakefield, p. 131. All of Laud's and Selden's manuscripts remain available at the Bodleian until this day. See Toomer, p. 58
[171] Wakefield, p. 131.
[172] Wakefield, p. 130.
[173] Birchwood, p. 32.

rejected Islam out of hand, they were keen on emphasising the importance of Arabic, and representing authoritative accounts of its culture that would correct the deficiencies of the largely polemical medieval texts.

Matar interestingly argues that to John Milton, 'the Arabs provided the model which he hoped England would emulate – power not just through military force but through originative imagination'.[174] Even when Milton was a student at Cambridge, he had remarked in Prolusion 7, one of his assignments, upon the way the Arabs had forged their imperial civilisation not only by the sword but also by the pen:

> I must not, however, omit to mention the Saracens… [who] enlarged their empire as much by the study of liberal culture as by force of arms.[175]

Given the rekindling of interest in the Arabic language, an increase in the number of Arabists and the number of translations from Arabic that had become available, it becomes evident that a new look at Anglo-Ottoman relations, particularly the role of Arabic literature and culture, is essential if we are to understand the impact on Milton's own cultural, intellectual, literary and religious milieu.

[174] Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 87. See also Feisal Mohamed's 'Milton's Enmity towards Islam and the *Intellectus Agens*', Special issue, 'Reading Milton through Islam', ed. by David Currell and François-Xavier Gleyzon, *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015): 65-81 (66) where he argues that Milton distinguished between Ottoman tyranny (and military rule) and Arabic philosophy and culture. He proposes that Arabic philosophy may have had an influence on Milton's evocation of light in *Paradise Lost*.

[175] Mohamed demonstrates how Milton, in the same text, defended this position by arguing that Arabic culture paved the success of Ottoman power: 'How are we to answer the objection that the Turks of to-day have acquired an extensive dominion over the wealthy kingdoms of Asia in spite of being entirely devoid of culture?… [The] Saracens, to whom the Turks are indebted almost for their existence, enlarged their empire as much by the study of liberal culture as by force of arms'. Ibid. See also *The Riverside Milton*, p. 870. However, in the *Tenure of Kings* Milton deems an Englishman 'no better then a Turk, a Sarasin, a Heathen', if he forgets 'all Laws, human, civil and religious offend against life and libertie'. See *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (London, 1649), p. 20.

Chapter Two: Demonising the Judeo-Arabic 'Other' in English Literature of the Reformation: Eastern Seductiveness and False Faiths

> *Gentiles and Jews, Turkes & Christians in the world, and in diverse nations of diverse religions, every one thinketh he serveth God and that he shall find salvation in his owne religion.*[1]

With a rising tide of Arabic studies in England in the seventeenth-century, as explained in the previous chapter, Arabic thought, literary texts and Muslim figures began to appear more regularly in works of Early Modern literature, such as historical treatises, religious polemics, travel narratives, drama, poetry and plays.[2] With an increase in Oriental manuscripts, including Arabic, Hebrew, Persian and Urdu, prominent English scholars, such as John Selden and Edward Pococke, with William Bedwell before them,[3] pioneered the expansion of Oriental studies.

Since the pioneers of the movement were often also Hebraic scholars and, given the complex religious upheavals of the Reformation, a key aspect of Biblical scholarship began to flourish, where Judeo-Christian studies began to recognise the value of a knowledge of Arabic. English Hebraic scholars, such as Robert Wakefield and John Selden, became leading advocates of a more pluralistic approach, emphasising the role of Semitic languages, including Hebrew and Arabic, in Biblical studies.[4] Therefore, as

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[1] Philippe de Mornay, *A Woorke Concerning the Trewnesse of Christian Religion, Written in French: Against Atheists, Epicures, Paynims, Jewes, Mahumetists, and other Infidels*, trans. by Sir Philip Sidney and Arthur Golding (London, 1587), p. **iiiir; available online: <https://archive.org/stream/woorke00morn#page/n21/mode/2up/search/gentiles>.

[2] See Jennie Malika Evenson, 'Judaism, Islam, and English Reformation Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Michigan, 2005), p. 13. I am indebted to the work of Evenson for its originality and its rewarding knowledge of interreligious dialogue in the Early Modern period. It was of especial importance for this chapter in helping shape its argument as well as including important religious reformists and critics.

[3] The role of Bedwell and his interest in Arabic is explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

[4] Sir Thomas Adams, the founder of the Arabic chair in Cambridge, 'bore the expense of a translation of the Gospels into the Persian language for circulation in that country with a view to the conversion of

explained in Chapter 1, there is no denying that, at least initially, a general missionary approach dominated the sphere of Arabic studies where the language of the holy book of Islam, the Qur'an, was not only essential for political and economic exchanges with kingdoms of the East, but also for enriching religious dialogue, be it within or outside Europe.[5]

When examining the distinguishing features of Anglo-Ottoman relations in the Early Modern period, particularly in the period of the Reformation, what becomes evident is the more complex nature of the religious and political discourse compared to the more polarised views of medieval Europe. Expanding from the narrow focus on the leading figure in Islam, Muhammad, as a dark Antichrist figure, and his religion as a parody of the true religion, an inverted mirror of Christianity, representations of Islam – as well as Judaism – became more critically involved in the religious and political dialogue being mobilised in establishing an anti-Catholic rhetoric. While Catholic authors would equate Protestant 'heresy' with Islamic and Judaic beliefs, aspects of Catholicism targeted by Protestants, such as idolatry and ceremonial practices, were often discussed with reference to both Judaism and Islam, as I shall demonstrate in this chapter.[6]

As religious treatises, particularly in the Reformation period, continuously addressed the religious falsity of Judaism and Islam – at times demonising their followers – it is easy to comprehend why the European imagination understood some Islamic and Hebraic figures, both real and fictional, as distorted images of their 'Christian' counterparts.[7] For example, Muhammad was habitually portrayed as the Antichrist or

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Mahometans'. G. A. Russell (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), p. 76.

[5] See the discussion in Chapter 1 of the exchange of letters between Queen Elizabeth I and the Ottoman Sultan Murad III.

[6] While the actual process of including Arabic and Qur'anic studies in Biblical exegesis will not be incorporated here, the politicised allusion to Islamic and Judaic figures and beliefs, in the service of Christian thought, will be the main focus of the discussion.

[7] This is not to suggest that all depictions of Judeo-Arabic culture and figures were negative. The focus of this thesis, however, is on dark depictions and allusions to the demonic.

conflated with the Pope.[8] Likewise, demonic feminine figures, such as Lilith, would be aligned with Eastern enchantresses, whose aim was to seduce innocent victims into eternal damnation, thus embodying a powerful reversal of acceptable characteristics of femininity in the Early Modern period.[9]

In this chapter I examine this aspect of the representation of the Judeo-Arabic 'other' in English Reformation texts in detail by consulting religious polemical discourse, travel accounts of Early Modern travellers to the Ottoman Empire, such as Richard Wrag and Thomas Dallam,[10] and popular plays of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English dramatists, including Marlowe, Shakespeare and Massinger. The first part of the chapter directs attention to references to Judaism and Islam in Protestant and Catholic religious tracts before examining travel writing that give the early firsthand accounts of journeys to the Ottoman Empire. The second half of the chapter considers the way Muslim figures, notably the Ottoman Sultan and Muhammad, were depicted in travel literature and works of drama, before finally examining Eastern seductiveness associated with a demonised representation of femininity. The aim of this chapter is not only to establish a multitude of allusions to Islam and Judaism in English Reformation and post-Reformation literature, but also to demonstrate that the dark allusions to Judeo-Arabic figures, both male and female, were evoked by renowned authors in a way that reflects political and religious anxieties of the time; anxieties that were fostered by an increased contact with the East and a turbulent religious atmosphere at home.

[8] The chapter will examine this aspect in detail.
[9] See the final part of this chapter. Also, Chapters 4 and 5 elaborate on this specific point through examining the roles of Eve and the demonised Sin in particular.
[10] It is indeed interesting that early travellers to the Ottoman Empire where not confined to a particular status or social class. While Wrag was a member of the English delegation to Constantinople, Dallam was an English organ-builder and travelled on the merits of his adequate skills to deliver the Queen's gifts rather than his status.

Islam and Judaism in Reformation Literature

Prior to the Early Modern period, the views of medieval Christian writers on 'religious others' – including Muslims and Jews – were based less on objective and factual knowledge than prejudiced accounts and were mostly reliant upon 'ecclesiastical authorities' with a vested interest in 'disfigur[ing] the beliefs and customs of the infidels'.[11] A prevalent approach in response to religious and political anxieties, awakened by the presence of Islam, was to depict the Muslim as a '"crude reversal" of the Christian' where he is 'always the "other", the negative'.[12] In *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, Richard Southern argues that Muslims 'were subjected to the most extravagant excesses of the Western imagination,'[13] and that distorted images of Islam and its followers persisted in numerous literary texts. As Abu-Baker remarks, a multitude of negative depictions had been readily cultivated in works of fiction through the Middle Ages from the *Song of Roland* to the *Song of Geste*,[14] in which Muslims were demonstrated as 'idolatrous, violent, and barbaric' and Muhammad was dismissed as an imposter and an idol.[15] In keeping with countless medieval depictions, the *Song of Roland* presents Muhammad as a false idol who deserts his followers, and Muslims themselves are seen as a faithless people who turn

[11] C. Meredith Jones, 'The Conventional Saracen of the Songs of Geste', *Speculum*, 17 (1942): 201-25 (203). See also Mohamed Hassan Abu-Baker, *Representations of Islam and Muslims in Early Modern English Drama from Marlowe to Massinger* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Glasgow, 1997), p. 12.
[12] See Abu-Baker, p. 12. This view was indeed emphasised by the association between the Arabic tongue, the 'satanic' message of the *Alcoran*, and the threatening power of 'Turkish law', leading to an apparent conflation of the three in medieval polemics and later English texts. Bear in mind that it is an Arab, Al-Kindy, who is believed to be the first polemicist to deem Muhammad's message as Satanic. His polemical writing is considered a great influence on Western medieval polemicists; see *The Apology of Al Kindy: Written... in defense of Christianity against Islam*, trans. by William Muir (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1882), p. 20; available online <https://archive.org/details/apologyofalkindy00abdarich>.
[13] Abu-Baker, p. 11; Richard William Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 28-9.
[14] C. Meredith Jones, 'The Conventional Saracen of the Songs of Geste,' pp. 201-25.
[15] Abu-Baker, p. 11.

against their 'deity' and 'Throw the idol of Mohammed into a ditch / And pigs and dogs bite and trample it' (187. 2590-91).[16]

Religious hostility was certainly a dominant force in shaping these depictions, for, as explained in Chapter 1, the Catholic Church was vital in producing Latin translations of Arabic texts with the aim of further understanding Arabic thought, culture, and Islam. Furthermore, as Abu-Baker has observed, information about Muslims – that fluctuated between fact and fiction –[17] also spread by 'word of mouth derived from pilgrimages and Crusades, as well as from travellers and scholars who travelled the world of Islam in search of knowledge possessed by Arab and Muslim scholars'.[18] And so, with the continuing English encounters with Muslims 'both imagined and "actual"', 'notions of the "turke"' began to multiply and become more sophisticated.[19] This shift was certainly encouraged, as explained in the previous chapter, by England's rift with the Catholic Church and Elizabeth I's excommunication by the Pope.

The reason for this strong hostility, as Norman Daniel argues, is that a large number of Christians converted to Islam when the new religion spread in the Christian East.[20] Even in the first half of the seventeenth century, Sir Henry Blount lamented 'how many daily goe from us to them, and how few of theirs to us'.[21] Because Christianity had lost so much

[16] The English translation is quoted from Gerald J. Brault (ed.), *The Song of Roland: An analytical edition*, 2 vols. (University Park, PA; London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), p. 159.

[17] It is no coincidence that the *Arabian Nights*, a text that tailors Arabic, Persian, Indian and other Eastern tales to a Western audience, emerges orally and spreads throughout Europe centuries before it was finally translated to English and published first by John Payne, under the title *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night* (1882-84) and immediately after by Burton in 1855. See Richard Francis Burton, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night. A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainment*, 10 vols. (Benares: Printed by the Kamashastra Society for Private Subscribers, 1885-88).

[18] Abu-Baker, p. 17.

[19] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 10; Belgasem, p. 13.

[20] Norman Daniel, *Islam, Europe and Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966), pp. 3-4. See also Norman Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960). According to J. B. Gramaye, in 1619, there was more than 'sixe thousand' converts in Algiers alone. See *Relations of the Christianitie of Africa, and especially of Barbarie, and Algier: written by J. B. Gramaye* (1619) in Samuel Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus* or *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, vol. IX, 20 vols. (New York: A M S Press, 1965, first published 1905-07), p. 272, also cited in Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 3; p. 16.

[21] Henry Blount, *A Voyage Into the Levant* (London, 1636), p. 113 [mispaginated, p. 133]. Similarly, during his imprisonment in the Tower of London, in what can be considered a clear defiance of Henry VIII's

of its territories and so many of its followers to Islam, it was to be expected that Christian polemics would consist of fierce attacks upon this newly dominant religion that threatened Christianity's primacy. The purpose, therefore, as discussed in the previous chapter, was to produce 'a polemic that would help confirm their members in their faith' making the beliefs of the opponent 'so repugnant as to make conversion unthinkable'.[22] The account of the early seventeenth-century Czech Protestant writer, Wenceslas Budova, typifies this widespread view in his comments on Islam's holiest book, known to him as the Turkish 'Alkoran'. Budova first informs his readers how he became a member of one of the numerous embassies that accompanied the ambassador John of Zinzendorf to Constantinople. After a short stay at Constantinople, most of his companions continued their travels to 'Jerusalem, Damascus, Babylon, Arabia, and Persia', but Budova stayed behind, having accepted the position as master of the ceremonies to the ambassador. 'I then,' Budova explained:

> decided to make inquiries as to what the religion, or rather irreligion, of the *Turks* really was, and, as it were, to outline and depict for others that *Turkish Antichrist* with his *fables* and other *frauds*. It was of great assistance to me that I had with me a copy of the *Alkoran*, which in Spain had been translated from the ancient *Arabic*, such as it was at the time of *Mahomet*, into the Latin speech.[23] [Emphasis added]

Budova's commentary is particularly informative: he justifies his interest in exploring the religion by laying stress on the necessity of familiarising himself with its 'fables' in order

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religious Reformation, Sir Thomas More, in his last work, lamented the way 'the Turk is in few years wonderfully increased, and Christendom on the other side very sore decayed; and all of this worketh our wickedness, with which God is not content', *A Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation* (London: Charles Dolman, 1847), p. 6. While the work was published in 1553, it was written by Thomas More during his imprisonment in 1534.

[22] Daniel, *Islam, Europe, and Empire*, pp. 3-4. See also Abu-Baker, p. 3. John of Damascus' encapsulated this position in his treatise, *The Fount of Knowledge* (completed in or after 743 AD), that Islam was a heresy, a 'deceptive superstition of the Ishmaelites', and Muhammad was a false Prophet, 'the fore-runner of the Antichrist,' as quoted in Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The* '*Heresy of the Ishmaelites'* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 133.

[23] As quoted in Edmund Gosse, *Short Histories of the Literatures*, pp. 245-46. Edmund Gosse (ed.), *Short Histories of the Literatures of the World* (New York: D. Appleton, 1907); available online: <http://www.archive.org/details/ahistorybohemia01ltgoog>.

to subvert its power and refute its religious arguments. Furthermore, it is evident that Budova understood the importance of knowing the original Arabic or, at least, obtaining a translation that came as close as possible to it to ensure its authenticity. Only then, he insisted, would 'Mahomet' and the 'Turkish Antichrist' be exposed. Commenting on the 'fables' of the Qur'an, Budova continues:

> This book was then, at the time of Luther, about the year 1550, printed with a preface by Philip Melanchthon. I, possessing this work, often entered into discussions, not only with the Turks, but also with the renegades — that means those who have *fallen from the Christian faith*, and of such *there are here not hundreds but thousands*. The result was that they themselves were surprised, and had to laugh at those *most foolish fables* (of the Koran), which are sillier than anything that has been taught by any heathens since the beginning of the world.[24] [Emphasis added]

According to Budova's account, the most effective way of countering the spread of Islam was a detailed knowledge of the Qur'an which could then be used to expose the folly of its teachings both to Muslim Turks and renegade Christians who clearly did not possess sufficient knowledge to recognise its errors. Here, once again, conversion to Islam is evoked as an imminent threat dangerously close to home with the number of renegades continuously rising. Notably, as is the case with numerous depictions of Muslims in medieval and Early Modern writings, they are quick to betray their faith when confronted with Christian truth.[25]

Of course, allusions to non-Christian thought – Islam and Judaism – in Western literature, were not limited to the medieval period, but continued to be present in Early Modern English literature. However, they became better accustomed to the increasing exposure towards the East, in accord with the religious and political discussions of the

[24] Gosse, p. 246.
[25] See, for example, the discussion later in this chapter of the Muslim princess Donusa who converts to Catholicism in Philipe Massinger's *Renegado*.

time. As Jennie Evenson stresses, discussions of Islam in English political, religious and dramatic texts are correlated with the rise in economic and political points of contact with the Ottoman Empire, as described in the previous chapter. The founding of the Levnant Company in 1581, and the appointment of an English ambassador to the Sublime Porte in 1582, for example, facilitated travel to the Ottoman territories and enabled 'a greater number of English people to trade, visit and reside in the Grand Signior's[26] dominion'.[27] Also essential to note is the religious tolerance practised within the Ottoman Empire towards non-Muslims that was of interest to English travellers;[28] Constantinople (or Istanbul), for example, functioned as a major cosmopolitan city where diverse races and religious groups interacted peaceably.[29] Indeed, merchants of many faiths were 'drawn to this economic hub, [and] Jews played a particularly important role in the economic livelihood of Istanbul'.[30] As William Biddulph succinctly noted, 'there are many Iewes in *Constantinople, Aleppo, Damascus, Babylon, Grand Cayro,* and euery great Citie and place of Marchandise throughout all the Turkes dominions'.[31]

Understandably, with this increase in direct exposure to Judeo-Arabic culture, it was only to be expected that there would be an accompanying increase in Muslim and Jewish characters in English literature, especially in drama. In fact, Linda McJannet has

[26] The term referred to the Ottoman Sultan in sixteenth-century writing.
[27] Fatima Essadek Ali Belgasem, 'Representations of Ottoman Sultans in Elizabethan Times' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Durham, 2013), p. 22.
[28] By the time Milton was born, MacLean notes, 'information about Ottoman attitudes and policies towards non-Muslims was widely available in English as well as other European languages'. Anglo-Protestant writers 'often employed' the argument that the 'Ottoman sultan was less intolerant than the Pope' as a 'stick to beat Roman Catholicism'. See Gerald MacLean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', in *Milton and Toleration*, ed. by Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 284-98 (286). For more on English enchantment with Ottoman diversity, see also James Mather, *Traders and Travellers in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). For a negative view on the life of Christians under Ottoman rule, see Richard Wrag's comment pp. 74-6 in this chapter.
[29] Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); see also, Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); see too, Bernard Lewis, *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age* of *Discovery* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).
[30] Evenson, p. 29. For the role of 'Jewish intermediaries' as agents for Elizabethan merchants, see James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 147. See too, Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, 1992).
[31] William Biddulph, *The Travels of Certaine Englishmen* (London, 1609), p. 72.

estimated that approximately '16% of the characters listed in extant Elizabethan plays were classified as "oriental," "Moorish," or "Turkish," and of all references to Jews and Judaism that appear in the literature of this period, many occurred in this group of texts'.[32] Louis Wann's essay, 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama' (1915), is considered the earliest attempt at a systematic study of Eastern characters, themes and imagery in English drama.[33] By examining Elizabethan and Jacobean plays, Wann demonstrated that 'the average Elizabethan' not only acquired accurate knowledge about the East, particularly the Ottoman Empire, but was also familiar with a multitude of Oriental figures ranging from Turks, Moors, Arabs, to Egyptians, Tartars and Persians.[34] Such a fact is hardly insignificant considering that, as explained in Chapter 1, the Elizabethan age witnessed an increased interest in literature of travel and exploration.

Inspired by the overseas ventures of the Spanish and the Portuguese, and with the rise of political and economic exchanges between England and the Ottoman Empire, more interest in the Arabic language became widespread, perhaps, most importantly, to facilitate English trade on the Ottoman borders. Rather than looking westward to 'the New World' that represented a promise of wealth and gold to the Spanish, the English primarily ventured further to the 'Muslim East'.[35] Accordingly, as travel literature began to emerge as a genre that compelled readers' interest, 'early adventures widened the English horizon and motivated the literate elite to read about foreign nations and places'.[36] By travelling to the East, English travellers 'came into regular contact with Jewish and Muslim merchants,

[32] Linda McJannet, 'Mapping the Ottomans on the Renaissance Stage', *Journal of Theatre and Drama*, 2 (1996): 9-34, as cited in Evenson, pp. 16-17.
[33] Belgasem, p. 7; Louis Wann, 'The Oriental in Elizabethan Drama', *Modern Philology*, 12 (January 1915): 163-87.
[34] See Wann, p. 181.
[35] Of course, this is not to suggest that the English only travelled to Muslim lands. See Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
[36] Belgasem, p. 21. Sir John Hawkins, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Martin Frobisher, Sir Francis Drake, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Sir Richard Grenville and Sir John Gilbert are considered some of the most known Elizabethan travellers, see Edwin Goadby, *The England of Shakespeare* (London and New York: Cassell, Petter & Galpin &, 1881), p. 48.

ambassadors, and translators'.[37] It began to be possible to have access to firsthand accounts of those who had experienced direct contact with this unfamiliar culture, only known otherwise through older religious and political texts, which had, of course, been influenced by the polemical mind-set that typified the medieval period, as well as more imaginative contemporary accounts that eroticised and exoticised the East. Indeed, Fatima Belgasem has usefully summarised the important role of English writing in expanding knowledge of the East: 'travel texts took a step back from the realm of imagination and fabrication [and] travelogues became dependent more on personal observations and eyewitness testimony.'[38] Because of the increase in genuine encounters documented in travel literature, the genre became particularly popular amongst seventeenth-century writings,[39] and more accurate. First-hand knowledge of the East fed into political, religious and historical accounts.[40] Similarly, the presence of non-Christian, especially Muslim and Jewish, characters in religious, political and literary texts, was no longer a rarity.

As Protestantism developed within this period, when 'cross-cultural contact with diverse faiths was increasing',[41] and Europeans travelled more frequently to 'distant ports in search of travel and trade', it is principally in Protestant writings that the utilisation of Muslim and Jewish characters evokes intra-religious criticism.[42] Evenson strongly believes

[37] Evenson, p. 7. For more on this aspect of Anglo-Ottoman relations see Samuel Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1937); Gerald MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire: 1580-1720* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); and Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* (New York: Palgrave, 2003).
[38] Belgasem, p. 21.
[39] Travel writing was not a homogeneous genre at this time. As Barbara Korte explains, approaches varied so much that it could be difficult to decide whether they should be thought of as narrative accounts, autobiographical texts or even texts aiming to provide scientific observations. Therefore, Korte reasons, 'in Europe, more specifically in England, our contemporary understanding of the travelogue as the account of authentic, autobiographical travelling experience does not emerge until the Early Modern period'; see Barbara Korte, *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations*, trans. by Catherine Matthias (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), p. 21. See also Belgasem, p. 21.
[40] For more on such publications, see Edward Godfrey Cox, *A Reference Guide to the Literature of Travel: Including Voyages, Geographical Descriptions, Adventures, Shipwrecks and Expeditions* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969).
[41] Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan, *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West: Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 49.
[42] Evenson, p. 2.

that it was 'contact with the East – and with the Muslims and Jews that populated the area – that most occupied the imagination of the English and most affected the development of English Protestantism'.[43] Accordingly, accompanying this rise in exposure to differing traditions, there arose a need to distinguish the Protestant faith, not just from Catholicism, but also from the 'diverse' faiths that were posing a challenge. Considering the rising political, economic and ideological contact with the East, English theologians had to respond to 'the pressures of expanding global relations by engaging other religions on specifically theological and ecclesiastical terms'.[44] This of course demanded a proper understanding of these 'diverse' religions (Judaism and Islam) in order to truly distinguish the 'true faith'. Indeed, it became essential for Protestant thinkers to examine 'their (real and imagined) adversaries and to understand themselves in relation and in contrast to other religions, all the while maintaining enough common ground to broker political and economic alliances'.[45] With the realisation that Christianity, albeit the largest, was one amongst a number of competing faiths, religious dialogue began to involve comparisons between Islam and Judaism. In *A World Concerning the Trewness of Christian Religion* (1592), Philippe de Mornay had wryly observed in his Preface to the Reader:

> Gentiles and *Jews*, *Turkes* & *Christians* in the world, and in diverse nations of diverse religions, every one thinketh he serveth God and that he shall find salvation in his owne religion.[46]

For Protestant writers such as de Mornay, who were well aware of the continuously changing political and religious dynamics around them, the external threat of the competing Ottoman culture and intra-Christian divisions were concerns usually repeated and, at times, conflated in their writing. Notably, de Mornay's phrase 'diverse religions'

[43] Evenson, p. 8.
[44] Evenson, p. 7.
[45] According to Evenson, Protestant literature demonstrates 'a painful awareness of their position as one of many religious groups vying for power, status, and believers'. See p. iv; p. 3.
[46] De Mornay, p. **iiiir.

highlights a key element in Protestant writing, that is, the embattled state of Protestantism, the 'true religion'. Indeed, Protestant thinkers contemplated the matter, as Evenson argues, 'through a kind of relativism: how were they to know the right path in the array of religions, all of which purported to be the singular salvation?'.[47] With so many competing faiths, whether within Christianity or non-Christian belief,[48] what made a true Christian was inevitably a significant conundrum.[49] In *The Roots of Anti-Semitism*, Heiko Oberman contends that both Judaism and Islam were important to the Reformation, demonstrating how influential leaders of the movement, such as Martin Luther, frequently referred to the practices of Muslims and Jews to clarify their own position.[50] For example, in his Latin *Commentary on Galatians* (1535),[51] Luther associates Catholic ceremonial customs with a refutation of the Jewish and Muslim practice of circumcision, asserting that

> Whosoever teach that there is any Thing necessary to salvation (whether they be Papists, Turks, or Jews […]) besides Faith in Christ, or shall devise any Work or Religion, or observe any Rule, Tradition or Ceremony whatsoever, with this Opinion, that by such Things they shall obtain Forgivness of Sins, Righteousness and everlasting Life; they hear in this place the Sentence of the Holy Ghost pronounced against them by the Apostle, that Christ profiteth them nothing.[52]

Likewise, in the English Reformation, the attempt to establish Protestantism as *the* true faith was approached in a similar fashion, through integrating other religions into the discourse of reform, using Islam and Judaism, as well as Catholicism, 'to define what

[47] Evenson, p. 1.
[48] Despite the fact that Islam and Judaism were distinct from Christianity, they remained closer to it than other religions, philosophies and faiths, such as Hinduism and Buddhism.
[49] As Evenson stresses, 'European and English reformers were under tremendous pressure to articulate why Protestantism was the one "true" faith'. See p. 1.
[50] Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Roots of Anti-Semitism: In the Age of Renaissance and Reformation*, trans. by James I. Porter (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1983).
[51] The text was translated into English as *A Commentary of M. Doctor Martin upon the Epistle of S. Paul to the Galatians* (London, 1575) and reprinted in 1577 and 1580. A revised edition appeared in 1588. There were later imprints from 1602, 1616, 1635 and 1644, making it one of the most popular texts by Luther in English.
[52] The English translation is quoted from Martin Luther, *Dr Martin Luther's Commentary Upon The Epistle To The Galatians: Abridged, without Any Alterations: Together with Edwin, Bishop of London's License and Commendation of the Work, as Done by the Translators out of Latin, 28 April, 1575...* (London: Printed for J. Brotherton and J. Oswald, 1734), p. 185.

Protestantism was not'.[53] From the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) to Richard Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1593), questions regarding how Protestantism should differ from Catholicism often found their answer through comparisons to Judaism and Islam.[54]

Indeed, increasing numbers of English authors, scholars and theologians began to be profoundly knowledgeable about Judaism and Islam, benefiting from information circulating across multiple genres, such as travel literature, poetry and drama.[55] To some, however, this signified a 'dangerous familiarity' with Muslims and Jews, and threatened a possible betrayal of their Christian identity.[56] For example, Robert Parsons attacked John Nichols, who had recanted Catholicism in 1581 after publicly professing the faith in 1577. In his *Discoverie of J. Nichols, Minister* (1581), Parsons accused Nichols of being no better than a 'Turke' who sought 'to bring the Pope [to] hatred'.[57] Nichols responded to Catholic attacks, such as Parsons', by reasoning thus:

> If I recanted, eyther for feare of punishment, or for prefermentes sake, you mought count me then (if it were so, as it is not) to be farre worse than a Turke or Pagan, who never received the trueth. Howe can I be a Protestant outwardly, and a Papist in heart, with a minde to be saued? [...] I am sure that no man is a true christian,

[53] Evenson, p. 12.
[54] Even theological scholars who were considered to uphold mediating views between Catholicism and Protestantism, such as Hooker, would invoke Judaism and Islam in their theological discussions: 'we must remember that by conforming rather our selues in that respect to *Turkes*, we should be spreaders of a worse infection into others than any we are likely to draw from Papists by our conformity with them in ceremonies. If they did hate as *Turkes* do, the Christians; or as Cananites of old did the Iewish religion euen in gross; the circumstance of locall neerness in them vnto vs, might happily enforce in vs a duty of greater separation from them, then from those other mentioned'; see Richard Hooker, *Of the lavves of ecclesiasticall politie, eight bookes* (London, 1604), pp. 180-81. The first four books were published in 1594. In 1597 the fifth book was published. The final three were published after his death which occurred in 1600.
[55] In the second part of this chapter I will be referring to texts by Marlow, Shakespeare and Milton.
[56] Evenson, p. 12. Frances Dolan makes an interesting point of how depictions of witches would similarly symbolise anxieties directed towards both the 'familiar' and the 'unfamiliar', much like the anxieties directed towards 'cultural others' including Jews and Moors. See Dolan, *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crimes in England, 1550-1700* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 175.
[57] Robert Parsons, *A Discoverie of J. Nichols, Minister* (Stonor Park [Pyrton]: Greenstreet House Press, 1581), [unnumbered] <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A09101.0001.001/1:3.4?rgn=div2;view=fulltext>.

> which with his lippes doeth professe Christ, and with his heart doeth flatly denye him.[58]

Nevertheless, after being denounced in this way, Nichols resided for a time in Turkey, ironically entertaining the possibility of him 'turning Turk',[59] as Evenson has pointed out, before a colleague convinced him to return to France.[60] In *Calvino-Turcismus* (1597), William Rainolds, a Catholic theologian like Parsons, accused those who adhered to Calvinist beliefs of following a system similar to Islam with an aim of displacing the Pope and destroying the Christian faith. What is noteworthy is that Rainolds depicts Calvinism in such a negative light that Islam emerges as the superior religion:

> The fundamental principles of Muhammadanism are far better than those of Calvinism, Both seek to destroy the Christian faith, both deny the Divinity of Christ, not only is the pseudo-Gospel of Calvin no better than the Qur'an of Muhammad, but in many respects it is wickeder and more repulsive.[61]

Similarities between the Islamic rejection of the Trinity and the Calvinistic refutation of it were an indication to Rainolds that the foundations of Calvinism took numerous religious arguments from Islam. Likewise, he charged Protestants with interpreting Biblical passages through reference to Jewish texts, such as the Talmud.[62] Matthew Sutcliffe responded to Rainolds' accusations in *De Turco-Papismo* (1599),[63] where he asserted, the Papacy 'was marred by avaricious leaders bent on power—not unlike Mohammed, that "idol" of the

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[58] John Nicholls, *A declaration of the Recantation of John Nichols* (London, 1581), pp. Fvi-Fvii. See also Michael Questier, 'English Clerical Converts to Protestantism, 1580–1596', *Recusant History*, 20 (1991): 455-77.
[59] Evensons, pp. 140-42
[60] In 1582, the year following Parson's attack, Nichlos emigrated to France from England.
[61] The English translation is quoted from Albert Hourani, *Europe And The Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 26. Rainolds was also against Anglo-Ottoman trade relations, see the Latin original *Calvino-Turcismus* (London, 1597), p. 378. Rainolds died in 1594. The text was published by his friend William Gifford (1597-1603). The Latin edition (1603) is available online: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=7xm5SUI-2QAC&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.
[62] Rainolds, *Calvino-Turcismus*, p. 707. Hugh Broughton translated large sections of Biblical text from the Hebrew. See, for example, Hugh Broughton *et al*, *Daniel His Chaldie Visions and His Ebrevv: Both Translated after the Original: And Expounded Both, by Reduction of Heathen Most Famous Stories Vnto the Exact Proprietie of His Wordes* (London, 1596).
[63] Matthew Sutcliffe, *De Turco-Papismo* (London, 1599).

Muslim people' and also that 'Popery borroweth Diverse Fashions from the Jewes'.[64] Many of Sutcliffe's arguments were represented in a more elaborate fashion in his work, *An Abridgement or Survey of Poperie* (1606),[65] in which he likened the Islamic Ottoman rule of the Sultan to that of the Pope, while also including detailed comparisons of Islam and Catholicism which emphasised differences between them:[66]

> *Turkes* in their fasts abstaine from all meat and drinke. Doth it not then appeare, that they fast better then Papists, that drinke wine and eate all dainty fishes and banketting meats, vpon their fasting daies.[67]

Indeed, the notion of linking Ottoman rule with the Papacy was so prevalent that it was also manifested in powerful works of art. Matthias Gerung, in the sixteenth century, elaborately contrasts the demonic forces of the Turks and the Pope to the divine manifestation of Christ. As seen in the image below, Turkish forces lead the military siege with swords and a banner entitled *Alcoran*, while the Pope, followed by bishops, clerics and cardinals, appears alongside another decorated banner that reads 'Decret', referring to the papal decrees. As devils appear amongst Catholic and Muslim armies, Christ, representing the faith of the true Church, is exalted on a cloud, preaching, while surrounded by St Peter, St John, St Paul and Moses.[68]

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[64] As cited in Evenson, p. 37.

[65] See, in particular, chapter 47: 'That Popery in many points is more absurd and abominable, then the doctrine of Mahomet' and chapter 48: 'That Christians are lesse oppressed under the Turke, then under the Pope', in Matthew Sutcliffe, *An Abridgement or Survey of Poperie* (London, 1606), pp. 294-301.

[66] Evenson, pp. 36-7.

[67] Sutcliffe, p. 298. Sutcliffe's account incorporates such detailed knowledge that it was difficult to confine his work to one or two examples. He also refers to Judaism when attacking Popish ceremonies: 'it appeareth sufficiently, that Popish religion is either grossely heathenish, or ceremoniously Iewish, or at the least corruptly and stiffely hereticall', p. 166.

[68] Smith notes that the images of Gerung visually connect 'the Pope and Turk, with the concept of the Antichrist by employing demonic identities'. See Charlotte Colding Smith, *Images of Islam, 1453–1600: Turks in Germany and Central Europe* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), pp. 82-3.

Fig. 1: Matthias Gerung, *Apocalypse and Satirical Allegories on the Church* (*c.* 1558) [British Museum, 1911,0708.122].[69]

Notably, when anti-Islamic or anti-Jewish rhetoric was analysed, this triangulation of Christianity, Judaism and Islam in Early Modern English texts tended to go unnoticed. Typically, in Early Modern studies, scholarly discussions of Christian-Jewish and Anglo-Ottoman relations have, for the most part, taken place in isolation.[70] Academic analyses of

[69] The woodcut belongs to a series of satirical illustrations that were prepared by Gerung for a German translation of a Swiss anti-papal commentary on the Apocalypse.

[70] For detailed studies of Anglo-Ottoman relations, Early Modern Europe and Islam see: Ralf Hertel, Sabine Lucia Müller and Sabine Schülting (eds.), *Early Modern Encounters with the Islamic East: Performing Cultures* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016); Kenneth Parker (ed.), *Early Modern Tales of Orient: A Critical Anthology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999); Matthew Birchwood and Matthew Dimmock (eds.), *Cultural Encounters between East and West: 1453-1699* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2005); and Jyotsna G. Singh and Ivo Kamps (eds.), *Travel Knowledge: European 'Discoveries' in the Early Modern Period* (New York: Palgrave, 2001). For more on Jewish relations with Early Modern Europe and England, see Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Dean Phillip Bell, *Jews in the Earl Modern World* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008); Eva Johanna Holmberg, *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012); and Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews in England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941). There are just a few studies that examine this aspect of cross-cultural relations such as: Mark R. Cohen, Arnold E. Franklin *et al* (eds.) *Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Medieval and Early Modern Times: A Festschrift in*

this particular topic are thus largely restricted to a 'binary opposition [between] Catholic and Protestant, England and its others' rather than encompassing a more pluralistic rhetoric.[71] Such a binary analysis, however, is challenged by the confluence of politics, trade, and religion, which generated a more 'complex rhetoric'.[72] This is emphasised by the fact that treatises and sermons of this period show that the discussions were not solely limited to intra-Christian dynamics, but drew from interconnected relations between Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and Islam.

As Evenson convincingly argues, looking at such dynamics from a dualistic perspective – Islam against Catholicism or Judaism against Protestantism – can be quite simplistic, since 'tropes, examinations, and repudiations of Judaism and Islam were fundamental to promoting Protestant reform'.[73] This is certainly the case in Henry Smith's *Foure Sermons* (1599), where he argued for the conversion of 'sinners' to Protestantism: the true reformed faith. These sinners include 'the Turk, the Pope, and the King of Spain' who can be 'perswaded to forsake their idolatry and superstition' if confronted with Protestant truth.[74] Likewise, in a sermon given by John Foxe (1578), it is Catholic idolatry that is blamed for Jews' rejection of the Christian faith.[75]

> […] image worship, bread worship, wine worship, crosse worship, signs & portraits of visible creatures; the view whereof caused the true and sincere profession of the Christians to be loathsome to the Jewes, to their great hindrance and prejudice.[76]

Honor of Mark R. Cohen (Leiden: Brill, 2014) and Avigdor Levy (ed.), *Jews, Turks, Ottomans: A Shared History, Fifteenth through the Twentieth Century* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2002).

[71] Evenson, p. 4.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Evenson, pp. 6-7.

[74] Evenson, pp. 15-6. See also Henry Smith, *Foure Sermons Preached by Master Henry Smith* (London, 1599), [unnumbered] <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A12429.0001.001/1:9?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>.

[75] John Foxe, *A Sermon Preached at the Christening of a Certaine Jew* (London, 1578), pp. Aiii- Giii.

[76] *The Writings of John Foxe, John Bale, and Miles Coverdale* (London, 1831), p. 380; available online: <https://archive.org/details/writingsofjohnfo00foxeuoft>.

Similarly, in *Acts and Monuments* (1563), Foxe contends that the main reason Muslims were posing a powerful threat to Europe were related to the contamination of Europe's Christian culture with Catholic practices:[77]

> The Turke hath preuayled so mightely, not because Christ is weake, but because that Christians be wicked, and theyr doctryne impure. Our temples with Images, our hartes with idolatry are poluted: Our priestes stinck before God for adultry, being restrayned from lawfull matrimony.[78]

Certainly, in order to reproduce such 'intermixed representations' of Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam,[79] it became more customary to refer to Judeo-Arabic thought and culture. It is not surprising, then, that much of this discourse was transmitted to popular works of drama or poetry, nor that a substantial number of English texts incorporated Jewish or Muslim characters in this period. Nevertheless, it is the manner in which these writers engaged with such characters, and the way they were then situated in relation to religious and political dialogue that will concern us here. Of course, it would be an oversimplification to equate the reception of Muslim and Jewish characters; after all, the situation was significantly different for, unlike 'Muslims associated with the Ottoman Empire, and unlike Catholics associated with European power, neither Levantine nor European Jews presented a military threat to England'.[80] What they do have in common, however, is that Jewish and Islamic figures were manoeuvred into a purposeful narrative in which a Christian character, either

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[77] Indeed, as Milton would expostulate: 'how can any Christian object it to a Turk, that his Religion stands by force only; and not justly fear from him this reply, yours both by force and money in the judgment of your own Preachers. This is that which make Atheists sin in the Land; whom they so much complain of; not the want of maintenance or Preachers, as they allege, but the many *Hirelings,* and Cheaters that have the Gospel in their hands, hands that still crave, and are never satisfied'. Milton here blames religious pretenders who allowed the 'ignominious, levelling or rather undervaluing Christ beneath *Mahomet*'. See Milton, *A supplement to Dr. Du Moulin, treating of the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the Church of England* (London, 1680), pp. 25-6. Also cited in *Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove hirelings out of the church* (London, 1659), pp. 144-45.

[78] See John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* (1583 edition) (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011), p. 760; available online: <https://www.johnfoxe.org/>. See also John Foxe, *The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe: With a Life and Defence of the Martyrologist* ed. by George Townsend and Josiah Jr. Pratt (London: 1870), p. 19.

[79] Evenson, p. 11.

[80] Evenson, p. 10.

Catholic or Protestant, depending on the standpoint of the author, is represented with noticeably worse traits than either a Muslim or Jewish figure in order to reinforce a political or religious position. For example, in *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), Richard Knolles, despite his lack of respect for Islam – he considered it to be a belief prompted by Satan – recounted with admiration an incident in which a Turk offered himself to be abused and beaten by a Jew in order to win him over to Islam.[81] The same spirit of religious competitiveness is echoed in Ross' translation of the first English Qur'an (1649), where Muslims' religious devotion is described in a way that puts his fellow Christians to shame:

> indeed if Christians will but diligently read and observe the Laws and Histories of Mahometans, they may blush to see how zealous they are in the works of devotion, piety, and charity, how devout, cleanly, and reverend, in their Mosques, how obedient to their Priests, that even the great Turk himself will attempt nothing without consulting his Mufti.[82]

Religious rivalry remained undeniably present, yet English writers did not entirely neglect aspects they admired in the competing traditions.[83] As interests in these faiths increased, depictions of Muslims became more sophisticated and the positive qualities ascribed to them began to be utilised in a way that targeted the factions within Christianity. In *The Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the fifth booke of Moses* (1583), Calvin provides an interesting argument that assimilates Judaism and Islam with Catholicism in order to

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[81] Richard Knolles, *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, 5th edn (London: Adam Islip, 1638), p. 1332. The 1603 text is accessible here: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=eebo;idno=A04911.0001.001>.

[82] The quotation is taken from a 'Caveat' Ross added for those who 'want to know...if there be danger in reading the *Alcoran*'. See *The Alcoran of Mahomet [...] Newly Englished* (London, 1649), [unnumbered]; available online: <https://archive.org/stream/alcoranofmahomet00dury#page/n443/mode/2up/search/mufti>.

[83] Matar notes that the attractive 'cultural and religious' characteristics of Islam remain unexplored by historians, p. 14. For more on this topic, see Dorothy M. Vaughan, *Europe and the Turk: A Pattern of Alliances, 1350–1700* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1954); Paul Coles, *The Ottoman Impact on Europe* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968); Bernard Lewis, 'Politics and War', in *The Legacy of Islam*, ed. by Joseph Schacht and Clifford E. Bosworth, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), pp. 200-01; and Robert H. Schwoebel, *The Shadow of the Crescent: The Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969).

distinguish them from the true faith.[84] He does so by explaining how despite the fact that Judaism and Islam seemingly embody correct approaches towards worship (both being anti-idolatrous in nature), they remain erroneous faiths due to their rejection of Christ:

> The Turkes at this day doe say they worship the God that made heauen and earth: but yet it is but an idoll which they worship. And howe so? They name him the maker of heauen and earth, and they haue none images. That is true: but yet for all that, they haue but an idoll for in stead of God, bicause they admit not our Lorde Iesus Christ, who is the liuely image of God his Father […] Therfore they have not God, but an idoll. As much is to be said of the Iewes. The Iewes boast of their hauing of the lawe, and of their worshipping of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob. But what for that? They bee but backsliders and haue renounced Gods lawe, for as much as they haue rejected Iesus Christ who is the soule of the lawe.[85]

What is worthy of note is not so much Calvin's attempt to refute the two religions and highlight their errors, to be expected of an author of his time, but the fact that he acknowledges the religious arguments of both faiths during his refutations. Much like the Christian faith, the two religions follow the same heavenly 'God of Abraham', yet according to Calvin, as it is the case for Catholicism, these faiths remain false. Intriguingly, in his attempt to face Catholic attacks, Thomas Cartwright in *A Replye to an Answere Made of M. Doctor Whitgifte* (1573), went so far as to purposefully favour ceremonial tropes of Judaism and Islam over Catholic observances contending: 'it were more safe for us to conform our indifferent ceremonies to the Turks which are far off, than to the papists, which are so near.'[86]

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[84] See Evenson, p. 38

[85] *Sermons of M. John Calvin upon the Fifth Books of Moses Called Deuteronomie*, trans. by Arthur Golding (London: Henry Middleton for George Bishop, 1583), p. 269 (Z3). A digital copy is available online: <https://archive.org/stream/sermonsofmiohnca1583calv#page/268/mode/2up/search/turkes>.

[86] Thomas Cartwright, *A Replye to an Answere Made of M. Doctor Whitgifte* (London, 1573), p. 131; John Whitgift, *The Works of John Whitgift* ed. by Rev. John Ayre, Parker Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 440. See also Evenson, p. 64.

Fig. 2: The crescent-shaped silver medal used by the Dutch mercenary naval forces (Geuzen/Sea Beggars) (1574) at the time of Dutch Revolt against Catholic Spain. [Wikimedia Commons/Public Domain].[87]

In continental Europe, by the end of the sixteenth century, the slogans, *Liever Turks dan Paaps* ('Rather Turkish than Papist'), and also *Liever Turksch dan Paus* ('Rather Turkish than Pope'), spread during the Dutch Revolt, and were used against Catholic Spain by the Dutch mercenary naval forces known as the 'Sea Beggars'.[88] Although the motto should not be considered as a serious expression of a desire to reside under the Ottoman dominion, it was certainly a powerful testimony to anti-Catholic sentiments towards Spanish rule. So too, as Benjamin Schmidt has pointed out, the Flemish nobleman D'Esquerdes had protested against Catholic religious persecution by asserting that 'he would rather become a tributary to the Turks than live against his conscience and be treated according to those [anti-heresy] edicts'.[89]

It becomes evident then that with the intersected threads of religious and political discourse, representations of Islam and Judaism were not necessarily confined to strictly positive or negative depictions or viewed separately from one another,[90] but were adapted

[87] Inscriptions: on the obverse, *Liver Tvrcx Dan Pavs* ('Rather Turk than Papist'); on the reverse, *En Despit De La Mes* ('In spite of the Mass').
[88] William Rainolds' *Calvino-Turcismus* is a reminder of the way Catholic thinkers rejected these tendencies.
[89] Quoted from Benjamin Schmidt, *Innocence Abroad: The Dutch Imagination and the New World, 1570-1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 104. For more on this topic, see Alexander H. de Groot, *The Ottoman Empire and the Dutch Republic: A History of the Earliest Diplomatic Relations, 1610-1630* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut Leiden/Istanbul, 1978).
[90] Evenson, p. 14.

to the political and religious purposes of the author and his targeted audience. As such, by the seventeenth century, treatment of Islam was no longer simplistically dualistic, but more sophisticated and fluid. This is in accord with Burton's views in *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama*, 1579-1624, where he argues that English representations of Islam became more 'complex and nuanced, moved by a variable nexus of economic, political, and cultural forces [and that] New pressures at home and abroad disrupted old stereotypes and forged new and sundry models to make sense of Islam and Muslim people'.[91] In fact, depictions of Moorish, Turkish, Muslim and Jewish characters began to form and become interchangeable considering the central role occupied by Jewish merchants in Istanbul.[92] With the increasing contact with, and exposure towards the East and the Ottomans, and the rise in Arabic studies, a more complex treatment of non-Christian faiths began to be manifested in English literature, including works of poetry and drama, as will be examined in more detail in the following parts of this chapter.[93]

Tales of Demonic 'Others'

In *New Turkes: Dramatizing Islam and the Ottomans in Early Modern England*, Matthew Dimmock suggests that attitudes towards the 'Turke' must be understood as responses to certain crises in English Christian society, most importantly 'the ideological upheavals of the Reformation', for this 'contested figure' prompted dialogue between the most

[91] Jonathan Burton, *Traffic and Turning: Islam and English Drama, 1579-1624* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), pp. 11-2.

[92] See Avigdor Levy, *The Sephardim of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, 1992); Minna Rozen, *A History of the Jewish Community in Istanbul: The Formative Years, 1453-1566* (Leiden & Boston: E. J. Brill, 2002); Aryeh Shmuelevitz, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Late Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centur*ies (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984); and Jonathan Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985). See also the discussion of Othello at the end of this chapter where his religious identity remains ambiguous.

[93] Many Elizabethan authors referred to Judaism and Islam while reflecting current political and religious concerns. For example, in *A Christian Turned Turk* and *The Jew of Malta*, the theme of fake conversion emerged, corresponding to the Elizabethan concerns about Catholics 'switching allegiance' for convenience's sake. See Nabil Matar's, '"Turning Turk": Conversion to Islam in English Renaissance Thought', *Durham University Journal*, 86.1 (1994): 33-41 and 'The Renegade in English Seventeenth-Century Imagination', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 33 (1993): 489-505.

'radically opposing positions' of political views.[94] Political and religious anxiety was indeed a major, if not the main, instigator of stereotypes and myths shaping the image of 'the religious other'. With the ongoing Ottoman threat, religious upheavals, and political and economic instabilities, projections of 'the other' – helping identify what England or true Christianity 'were not' – continued to occupy English minds, with 'the Turk' remaining a primary focus of these comparisons. As Robert H. Schwoebel notes, the religious, political and commercial tensions between Anglo-Ottoman relations and the rest of Europe influenced the Europeans to cast onto the Ottomans 'the role of barbarians, the counterpart of the old foes of Greece and Rome'.[95] Even though English writers became steadily more aware of this alien 'Oriental' culture, through reliable firsthand, as well as more imaginative, accounts in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, representations of 'Eastern' figures, including Muslims and Jews, ranged between the factual and fictional, authentic and imaginative, but continued to be generally hostile in character.

The Sultan

Situated at the forefront of the political and religious strength of the Ottoman Empire, the Sultan was an intriguing figure on whom the projection of 'the other' was often fixated, particularly in the firsthand accounts of travel writers, as I will demonstrate shortly. But first it is worth stressing that, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, travel writing tends to deal primarily 'with the encounter between the self and the Others' in order 'to represent those Others to the readers at home'.[96] Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that travel literature was not solely popularised due to a mere love of travel and

[94] Matthew Dimmock, *New Turkes*, pp. 10-14; see also Belgasem, pp. 12-3.
[95] Robert H. Schwoebel, 'Coexistence, Conversion, and the Crusade against the Turks', *Studies in the Renaissance*, 12 (1965): 164-87. See p. 164.
[96] Belgasem, p. 23.

adventure,[97] but 'venturing away from home was commonly motivated by utilitarian goals'.[98] For example, in the 1590's, Richard Wrag, John Sanderson and Thomas Dallam all travelled to Constantinople 'to serve their own or their sovereign's interests'.[99] In reading their accounts, it becomes evident that for these early English travellers the experience of exploring Ottoman territories and encountering 'the other' first hand, challenged notions of their religious and national identity, stirring considerable anxiety and ambivalent feelings.

Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to insist that all descriptions were subject to the widespread stigma attached to notions of 'the Turk', especially given the newly fostered diplomatic relations between Elizabeth I and Murad III. Positive accounts, highlighting the sultanate's dominance, for instance, would usually do so by way of celebrating 'Englishness',[100] thus continuing to evoke a polarised dynamic between the self, the English, and the other, the Ottoman. To exemplify, in the wake of the establishment of Anglo-Ottoman commercial relations, Richard Wrag,[101] one of these early visitors to the Ottoman Empire (1593), provides a telling eye-witness account of early English perceptions of Ottoman power. As a clear testimony of Wrag's proud English identity, the diplomat recounts in great detail the way the salutatory display of the English ship *The Ascension* to the Sultan impressed the Ottoman ruler very favourably and thus represented the English monarch appropriately.[102] To Wrag's relief, the Sultan delightedly admired 'the shippe in such brauery' setting out 'in their best maner with flagges, streamers and

[97] See Glenn Hooper and Time Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writings* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 13-26; Joan-Pau Rubies, 'Travel Writing as a Genre: Facts, Fictions and the Invention of a Scientific Discourse in Early Modern Europe', *Journeys*, 1.1 (2000): 5-35.
[98] Belgasem, p. 22.
[99] Ibid.
[100] See Belgasem, pp. 23-32.
[101] Wrag was a member of 'the English diplomatic delegation that delivered the royal gifts sent from Queen Elizabeth to Sultan Murad III in 1593', Belgasem, p. 23.
[102] Wrag's travel account was published in Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations*, first published in 1589, see note 44 on page 26.

pendants of diuers coloured silke, with all the mariners, together with most of the Ambassadours men'.[103]

Commenting on the patriotic motivation behind the English attempt to trade under their own flag, Arthur L. Horniker explains that rising nationalism under Elizabeth I made the question of a national flag 'assume great importance in English eyes'.[104] But what is worthy of note is that Wrag's account celebrates Englishness through maintaining a safe distance from Ottoman culture. This is most apparent in Wrag's attitude during his journey in which he is continuously at pains to emphasise the importance of distinguishing true English identity from the erroneous ways of Constantinople under the Sultan's infidel rule.[105] While the cosmopolitan city included people of diverse races and religions,[106] Englishness was, according to Wrag, set apart by Protestantism, the 'true religion of Christ,' and the 'peace and prosperity' that all Christians have enjoyed during the reign of his sovereign, Queen Elizabeth:[107]

> [In] the streets of *Constantinople* [...] either *Christian* or *Iew* could without danger of losing his money passe vp and downe the city. What insolencies, murders and robberies were committed not onely vpon Christians but also vpon Turks I omit to write, and I pray God in *England* the like may neuer be seene: and yet I could wish, that such amongst vs as haue inioyed the Gospel with such great and admirable peace and prosperity vnder her Maiesties gouernment this forty yeeres, and haue not all this time brought forth better fruits of obedience to God, and

[103] Wrag's quote is taken from a more recent edition: Hakluyt, *The principal nauigations* (Imprinted at London: By George Bishop, Ralph Newberie, and Robert Barker, Anno 1599-1600), p. 305.
[104] Before 1553, when Sultan Suleiman granted a privilege to Anthony Jenkinson, the first English trader in the Ottoman lands, no Englishman was able to trade without being under French protection. The English did not use this privilege because they hoped to 'obtain spices directly and more cheaply'. Therefore, 'they sought other routes, particularly the road from Moscow, through Iran to Hormuz.' See Belgasem, p. 5; Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age 1300-1600* (London: Phoenix, 1994), p. 138.
[105] Belgasem, p. 32.
[106] It seems Wrag's attitude to this this way of life was not favourable. When faced with the cosmopolitan air of Constantinople, Wrag's English and Protestant identity become notably invoked, pitying the life of 'Christians and others' away from the home of true Christianity, Protestant England.
[107] Hakluyt, p. 307.

> thankfulnesse to her Maiesty, were there but a short time to beholde the miserable condition both of Christians and others liuing vnder such an infidell prince.[108]

Wrag's own Protestant allegiance is clearly evoked in a way that not only attests to anti-Islamic sentiments,[109] but also provides more than a hint of anti-Catholic rhetoric. This should not come as a surprise since Protestant authors, as mentioned earlier, happily compared the Pope with the Sultan, and at times, Muhammad himself. For instance, in his *Image of Both Churches* (1547), John Bale had uttered dire warnings of the way both might appear 'verye aungels of lyght' to those susceptible to their 'glorious…pretenses', whereas they are in fact 'very deuils':

> So gloriouse are the pretenses of Romyshe pope and Mahomete, that they seme unto them which regarde not these warnynges, the verye aungels of lyght, & their churches moost holye congregacyons, being very deuils with ther filthy dregges of darkenesse.[110]

Bale continues affirming how the Pope with his 'execrable decrees' and Muhammad with his 'wicked Alchorane' murder men 'without measure', for they 'outwardly appear very virtuous', yet in reality they are 'the malignant ministers of Satan'.[111] It is no coincidence that Turkish lavishness would be associated with Catholic corruption in Protestant writings as indications of religious falsity.[112] This sentiment was manifested in the work of Luther

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[108] Wrag here is speaking about a 'space of two moneths' during 'great preparations for the Hungarian wars'. Hakluyt, p. 307. See also Belgasem, p. 31.

[109] In *Eikonoklastes* Milton would question royalist arguments that emphasised the merits of 'English Liberties' enjoyed by subjects under the king by alluding to 'Turkish Monarchy' stating: 'Where are then the English Liberties [...] what Privilege is that, above what the *Turks, Jewes, and Moores enjoy under the Turkish Monarchy, For without that kind of Justice, which is also in Argiers, among Theevs and Pirates between themselvs, no kind of Government, no Societie, just or unjust could stand*'. See *Eikonoklastes in answer to a book intitl'd Eikon basilike* (London, 1650), pp. 203-04.

[110] Quoted from John Bale, *Image of Both Churches: after the most wonderful and heauenly Reuelation of saint Iohn the Euangelist* (London: Printed by Thomas East, 1570), p. 10 (B4); available online: <https://archive.org/details/BaleJohn.TheImageOfBothChurchesAfterTheMostWonderfulAndHeavenly>.

[111] Bale, p. 47.

[112] This notion is highlighted, for example, in an anonymous treatise ascribed to Milton, where it is stated: 'Though the *Mahumetan* sect be grosse, and carnall, and the *Mahumetans* themselves exceeding devout in their kinds, and superstitious, having their Church-men in great reverence [including the Turkish Muphty] and though otherwise the Nation very covetous, yet I thinke it will not be easie to shew that their chiefe Church-men in generall, in any temporall greatnesse or riches, doe not much rather resemble the mendicant

himself, who saw in Protestant reform the sole chance of defeating the erroneous forces of Catholicism and Islam: 'The pope is the spirit of the antichrist, and the Turk is the flesh of the antichrist'.[113] Even Judaism was habitually evoked in a triangulation with Islam and Catholicism when discussing false beliefs.[114] In fact, the Jew, the Pope and the Sultan emerged as an unholy alliance, perceived as interchangeable with the Antichrist himself.

Fig. 3: *The Antichrist with Three Heads* from the seventeenth-century [Bridgeman Education].[115]

Orders among the Papists [...] who yet professe themselves Leaders in so spirituall, so heavenly, and sublime, so world-renouncing a way, faith and doctrine'. See *A soveraigne salve to cure the blind* (London: Printed by T.P. and M.S., 1643), p. 31.

[113] Quoted from Luther, *The Table Talk of Martin Luther* ed. and trans. by William Hazlitt (London, 1875), p. 193. The text is a collection of Luther's popular sayings recorded by students who sat at his dinner table (1531-1544). It was first published in 1566. Luther also referred to Turks in association with Jews: 'I would rather have the Turks for enemies than the Spaniards for protectors; for, barbarous tyrants as they are, most of the Spaniards are half Moors, half Jews, fellows who believe nothing at all', p. 360. See also pp. 347-58.

[114] See the discussion of John Foxe earlier in Chapter 1.

[115] The three heads, in the woodcut, represent the Pope wearing the triple tiara, the Turk wearing the turban, and the Jew.

Demonising Muslim rulers, including Muhammad himself, and identifying them as satanic figures was certainly exacerbated by feelings of imperial envy and a sense of inferiority.[116] The difficulty of gaining an audience with the Sultan coupled with the humiliation of the ceremonial protocol whereby visitors were required to kiss the hem of his garment, not his hand, served to fuel nationalistic sentiments.[117] Moreover, given Protestant sensitivity to all forms of idolatry, the powerful visual effect of seeing the Sultan elevated on a raised platform covered with satin carpets embroidered with 'silver, oriental pearls and great turquoises', encouraged the view that he had set himself up as a godlike figure to be worshipped like a pagan idol and served to intensify anti-Islamic feeling.[118]

Indeed, the long-established myths surrounding the Ottoman Sultans and their brutal traits remained dominant, and accounts of their bloodthirsty nature continued to spread, making their way into English literature including works of drama. In Fulke Greville's *Mustapha* (1609), for example, the religion of the Ottoman 'evil empire', ruled 'Vnder the Humors of Sultans raigne' (II. 220),[119] was depicted as 'the most repressive form of religion' that 'fosters and breeds tyrannical power',[120] while Muslims, in Greville's *Alaham* (1633), were placed in hell in the company of 'tyrants that corrupt authoritie'.[121] This image of a tyrannical, infernal Sultan was only engrained further in the English imagination with the brutal practice of Ottoman fratricide. Sanderson's vivid account of Mehmed III's assassination in 1595 of his male siblings, 'which weare in number 19', provides telling evidence of the incident's impact on European observers. The account describes the execution of Mehmed III's rivals for power in his presence. One by one,

[116] See Chapter 1.
[117] See also Belgasem, p. 29; Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576-1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 32. See Chapter 3 for further discussion of this imagery in *Paradise Lost*.
[118] Belgasem, p. 29.
[119] Fulke Greville, *Selected Writings of Fulke Greville* ed. by Joan Rees (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), p. 82.
[120] Abu-Baker, p. 186.
[121] Greville, p. 61. See also Abu-Baker, p. 199.

'They ar brought [...] before him, and he seeth them both alive and dead. I did see them carried to the burial the next day after their dead father'.[122] Of course, Ottoman fratricide was practised long before this instance, but, as Belgasem points out, this event in particular received more publicity in England because 'English merchants and diplomats were able for the first time to see it for themselves', and the reception of this incident certainly testifies to the influence of travelogues at this time.[123] As might be expected of such shockingly memorable tales, they made their way into English drama, and, in this instance, Shakespeare's lines demonstrate their widespread reach, as the new king, Henry V, reassures those around him:

> Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear:
> This is the English, not the Turkish court;
> Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
> But Harry Harry.
> (*Henry IV*, part ii, V. ii. 46-9)[124]

Sanderson further elaborates on Sultan Mehmed's turbulent rule, while describing the horrific execution, in 1660, of Esperanza Malchi, a Jewish attendant to his mother Safiye:

> [she] was brought out of hir house and stabbed to death in the Viseroys yeard; thence, by a window in the Serraglio wall, where the Grand Signior, Sultan Mahomet, stood to see, shee was drawne with ropes to the publiquest place in the citie, and ther, between a peramide pillor erected by Theodotiouse and the brazen tripled serpent, laid for the doggs to eate.[125]

Perhaps the first documented encounter with an Ottoman Sultan of a largely positive nature is that of Thomas Dallam, described by MacLean as 'the first and most intimate direct

[122] John Sanderson, *The Travels of John Sanderson in the Levant 1584-1602* ed. by William Foster (London: Hakluyt Society, 1931), p. 58.
[123] Belgasem, p. 35.
[124] All quotations by Shakespeare are taken from *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, the Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford edn (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1996).
[125] See Sanderson, p. 57. For more on the circumstances behind this execution, see also Belgasem, p. 37-8.

encounter between an ordinary Englishman and an Ottoman sovereign'.[126] Nevertheless, the incident still reveals deep-rooted anxieties about the quasi-idolatrous reverence shown to the Sultan and Dallam's likely fate if he were to be held captive by the Turks. Dallam had set sail for Constantinople after being ordered by the Levant Company to deliver a special organ[127] as a gift from Queen Elizabeth I to Sultan Mehmed III.[128] The day before his audience with the Sultan, the English ambassador Henry Lello met Dallam with special instructions as to how he should conduct himself the next day. Lello informed Dallam that after he had kissed the 'kne or [the] hangginge sleve' of the Sultan, he would be:

> presently ledd awaye, goinge backwards as longe as I can se him, and in payne of my heade I muste not turne my backe upon him, and therefore yow muste not louke to have a sighte of him.[129]

Dallam was permitted to have an audience with the Sultan because he was the only person familiar with the organ. In his personal diary,[130] Dallam reveals himself to have been duly awed by the magnificence of what he beheld before him: 'the sighte whearof did make me almoste to think that I was in another worlde […] I stood dastlinge me eyes looking upon his people that stood behind him'.[131]

Despite the narrator's fascination with the Ottoman palace, the sight of the Sultan, his entourage, and being able to sneak a gaze into the forbidden harem, as explained later in the account, Dallam's abiding anxiety about the possibility of being held captive

[126] In 1599, Dallam accompanied Sanderson on his last trip to Constantinople on *The Hector*. See MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel*, p. 41, and Belgasem, p. 39.
[127] The musical instrument was designed to combine a clock with the organ.
[128] To make sure of the suitability of the present the Queen had personally inspected the gift at Whitehall before it was sent to the Grand Signior. See Belgasem, p. 40.
[129] Thomas Dallam, 'Master Thomas Dallam's Diary', in *Early Voyages and Travel in the Levant,* ed. by Theodore Bent (London, 1893), 1-98, see p. 65.
[130] His narrative is of especial interest because it was a personal record, not written with publication in view; hence his diary was not published until 1893.
[131] Dallam, p. 65.

emerges strongly at times. When one of the Sultan's friendly *jemeglans*[132] jokingly pretended to hinder his departure by force – perhaps sensing the latter's apprehensiveness and unwillingness to stay – informing him that his presence was required to oversee the movement of the organ to another location in the palace, Dallam's instinctive response was one of obvious panic and mistrust. After learning about the prank, Dallam politely stated that he did not need to be kept by force as he would willingly 'stay longer to offer any service for the Sultan', but later in his account Dallam confessed:

> I was in a Wonderful Perplixatie […] which I ever feared, and that was that he in the end would betray me, and turne me over into the Turkes hands, whear I should Live a Slavish Life, and never companie againe with Christians.[133]

Belgasem observes that Dallam's fear of being enslaved by the Turks is a fear that was fuelled by accounts that circulated of slaves being taken as prisoners of war or children forcibly removed from their parents as 'a form of tax'.[134] Indeed such anxieties may well have been projected into European oral folkloric tradition, feeding into popular myths and legends, such as the legend of Krampus, for example. Krampus was an inverted demonic shadow of St Nicholas, who would abduct children at Christmas time; the superstition seems to have been at least in part a response to the collective fears fostered by the captivity of European children by Turks. As C. Meredith Jones has remarked, reflecting on the depiction of Muslim figures in French epic poetry, ever since the medieval period, Muslims continued to be represented as[135]

[132] The word is derived from adjem-oglans: the sons (oglans) of foreigners or strangers (ajems). The boys were either war captives or taken from Christian parents in their youth. See Jyotsna G. Singh and Ivo Kamps, *Travel Knowledge*, p. 59.
[133] Dallam, p. 76.
[134] Belgasem, p. 47.
[135] For specific examples, see Jones, 'The Conventional Saracen of the Songs of Geste,' pp. 204-05.

evil people; they spend their lives in hating and mocking Christ and in destroying his churches. They are the *children of the author of all evil, the Devil*; like their ancestor, they hate God and are constantly placing themselves under the protection of Satan […] They are frequently presented as *physical monstrosities*; many of them are giants, whole tribes have *horns* on their heads, others are black as *devils*. They rush into battle making weird noises comparable to the *barking of dogs*.[136]

Fig. 4: An anonymous artist's depiction from the 1900s of Krampus in a card entitled: *Gruss vom Krampus* ('Greetings from Krampus') [Public Domain].[137]

[136] Cf. the depiction of Sin discussed in Chapter 4; see also Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, & Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), pp. 159-60; pp. 215-23.

[137] Note the dark-skinned appearance of this demonic monster along with its satanic horns: common tools for demonising Muslims since the medieval period.

Jewish Enchantresses: Lilith the Infanticidal Eve

It was also the case that 'otherising' Jewish communities was a familiar practice;[138] for example, the Jewish ghettoes in Venice were believed to emit a foul smell, *Foetor Judaicus,*[139] which later became associated with Jewish demonic figures. The correlation between Jews and filth stems from a well-established medieval belief, that a Jew would only lose his smell through the purifying water of baptism. Furthermore, similar tales of kidnapping children who are then forced into conversion was a motif found not only in association with Muslim perpetrators, but also with Jews. Such legends circulated widely in literature from Chaucer's 'Nun's Priest's Tale' (1387-1400) to the tale of John Selden in Samuel Purchas' *Purchas, His Pilgrimage* (1613).[140]

Selden, in his first publication, *Of the Jews sometimes living in England* (1617), makes a further contribution to this scare-mongering when he claims that it was 'an usual crime' for the Jews to kidnap a Christian boy at Easter, circumcise and then crucify him.[141] In his second publication, *De Diis Syris,*[142] a work that discusses figures mentioned in the Old Testament but also ancient Syrian deities, Selden speaks of the Judeo-Arabic demoness Lilith,[143] who was reputed to have killed the sons of Eve and drunk their blood. Tales of Lilith, as an infanticidal shadow of Eve, became widespread in the sixteenth and

[138] Strickland, pp. 157-211.

[139] 'The innate stench of the Jews' was a notion that was popular in European depictions of Jewish figures, and continued to be utilised up until the twentieth century as a racial marker that defined Jewish identity. See David Seed (ed.), *A Companion to Twentieth-Century United States Fiction* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 101; see too, Jay Geller's *The Other Jewish Question: Indentifying the Jew and Making Sense of Modernity* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011), p. 273.

[140] Evenson, p. 115. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage* (London: William Stansby for Henrie Fetherstone, 1613). In particular, see the story of John Selden, p. 152.

[141] George W. Johnson, *Memoirs of John Selden and Notices of the Political Contest During His Time* (London: Orr and Smith, 1835), p. 49.

[142] First published in 1617, and then printed in 1627 at Leyden and at Leipzig in 1662 and 1680, attesting to its importance and popularity. See Johnson, *Memoirs of John Selden*, p. 50. According to Thomas N. Corns 'recent scholarship has identified a pervasive debt [to Selden] in key sections of Milton's poetry'. Corns continues to assert that, 'when Milton depicts heathen Gods and fallen angels in *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* and *Paradise Lost*, he draws silently on Selden's *De Diis Syris* (1617, 1629)'. See Corns (ed.), *The Milton Encyclopedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 333.

[143] Selden comments in some detail on the process of cultural transmission and its influence on the name of the Judeo-Arabic figure, including both her Hebraic and Arabic names and aspects, which, I argue, possibly influenced Milton. See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of this topic in relation to Milton's *Paradise Lost.*

seventeenth century.[144] According to Early Modern Christian writers, the figure of Lilith presented a distorted image of accepted Christian womanhood, where a similar politicisation of the demonic is transmitted though this female sorceress: 'Jews of today believe Lilith to be an enemy to women in childbirth and their children, and, according to ancient rites, they superstitiously write charms on waxen tablets'.[145]

The Judeo-Arabic demoness, Lilith, emerged in numerous European texts as not only an inverted shadow of the celebrated Mother of Mankind, Eve, but also as the ultimate false wife, the dangerous succubus and the infanticidal mother.[146] Similarly powerful depictions of demonic figures, such as Lilith and the Krampus, are a timely reminder of the way European minds responded to unsettling fears directed towards this mysterious, powerful and disturbing 'other'. Before examining the role of Judeo-Arabic mythology in English literature – particularly *Paradise Lost* – in the coming chapters,[147] the next half of this chapter will explore depictions of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, and his demonised position in numerous literary texts, and then investigate the way a similar approach can be detected in the treatment of Eastern female figures in Spenser, Shakespeare, Marlowe and Milton himself.

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[144] Milton speaks highly of Selden's exceptional scholarship in *Areopagitica*: 'Wherof what better witnes can ye expect I should produce, then one of your own now sitting in Parlament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. *Selden*...'; see *Riverside*, p. 1005.

[145] Cited from a translation of a chapter on Astarte in Selden's *De Dis Syris*; see Stephanie Spoto, 'The Figure of Lilith and the Feminine Demonic in Early Modern Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Edinburgh, 2012), pp. 263-65. For the Latin original, see John Selden, *De Dis Syris* (London, 1617), p. 161 <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=DzMVAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.

[146] There were numerous direct and indirect allusions to this powerful and haunting female figure. For a detailed study of this aspect of the feminine demonic, see Spoto. See also Chapters 4 and 5 for a detailed analysis of her presence in *Paradise Lost*.

[147] Indeed, Judeo-Arabic traditions inspired a commanding interest amongst Milton's scholarly circle. Given the cultural assumptions of Milton's age, that stories from pagan mythology were 'crooked images' that distortedly reflect the 'one true history' recorded in the Scriptures and given the encyclopaedic ambition of Milton's project to accommodate classical mythology to a Christian purpose, it seems likely that he would subsume any 'shadows' of Christian truth that he encountered in his reading, including Judeo-Arabic ones. Reflecting on the resemblance between pagan fiction and Christian truth, Godfrey Goodman had concluded: 'as truth is most ancient, so falsehood would seem to bee the shadow of truth and to accompanie her'; see Goodman, *The Fall of Man; or, The Corruption of Nature Proved by the Light of Our Natural Reason* (London: F. Kyngston, 1616), pp. 398–99. See too Mandy Green, '"Ad Ferrum [...] ab auro": Degenerative and Regenerative Patterning in the Final Books of *Paradise Lost*', *Modern Language Review*, 102.3 (2007): 654-71.

Rethinking Muhammad: Satanic Whispers and the Antichrist

With the rising presence of Islam in the East, North Africa and Eastern Europe, Western literature, particularly religious and literary writings, began to vilify the figure of Muhammad with an aim to denigrate his character, legacy and, most importantly, his message.[148] Tales about Muhammad's life began to spread in texts that ranged in style, theme, length and genre with the intent of demystifying his prophetic status and stripping him of his credentials as a man of God. In order to do so, in most of these accounts, continuous attacks on his personal life would often follow an *ad hominem* nature: authors would conclude that he could not be divine in nature since he was of low birth (an orphan) and that he was polygamous, branding him as a sensualist.[149] His rise to power later in life was attributed to his seduction of a rich older widow 'Cadygan' who naively fell in love with him; this allowed him to have access to her fortune after her death and to rule Mecca.[150] Likewise, his tribal feuds were highlighted in order to emphasise his militaristic and violent nature in a way that contrasted starkly with the image of Jesus Christ.[151] Even his death was moulded in a way that would present a horrendous end unfit for a Prophet chosen by God.[152]

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[148] For a detailed study of this topic, see Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Ahmad Gunny, *Prophet Muhammad in French and English Literature: 1650 to the Present* (Markfield: Islamic Foundation, 2010); Minou Reeves and Philip J. Stewart, *Muhammad in Europe: A Thousand Years of Western Myth-Making* (New York: New York University Press, 2003); and Michelina Di Cesare, *The Pseudo-Historical Image of the Prophet Muhammad in Medieval Latin Literature: A Repertory* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012).

[149] See Galen Johnson, 'Muhammad and Ideology in Medieval Christian Literature', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 11.3 (2000): 333-46. See also Ranulf Higden, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Hidgen Monachi Cestrensis: Together with the English Translation of John Trevisa* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Library, 2006); available online: <http://name.umdl.umich.edu/AHB1341.0001.001> and John Lydgate, *The Fall of Princes*, part III, ed. by Henry Bergen (London: Oxford University Press, 1924-27); available online: <https://archive.org/details/lydgatesfallofpr0000bocc>. All quotations from Lydgate and Higden are taken from these editions.

[150] In Higden's *Polychronicon*, Muhammad was also described as a charlatan who tricked his rich mistress Cadygan the 'wedewe' that was 'quene' into marriage, and thus he was 'made lorde' of his 'province', p. 23.

[151] Muhammad's military campaigns were first given particular attention in Celio Augustino Curione's *Sarracenicae Historia*; see Celio Augustino Curione, *A notable historie of the Saracens ... With a discourse of their affaires and actes from the byrthe of Mahomet their first péeuish prophet and founder for 700 yéeres space*, trans. by Thomas Newton (London: By William How, for Abraham Veale, 1575).

[152] The alleged circumstances of his death are discussed later in this chapter.

Unsurprisingly, most of the early accounts of his life centred on emphasising his falseness and triviality by portraying him as a trickster, a necromancer, a magician and an Antichrist figure whose aim was to trick the feeble-minded into following his satanic message.[153] In such accounts, he was an idolater and a heretic who was born in Arabia, yet schooled in Judeo-Christian religious thought as he was always in the 'companye of Iewes and Cristen men' as a travelling merchant.[154] Such tales were particularly useful in justifying Muhammad's disconcerting knowledge of the Judeo-Christian creed,[155] which is evident throughout the Qur'an.[156] Accordingly, Islam became reduced to a mere heresy.

It was rumoured that he was taught Christian heresies by a renegade monk called *Bahira* or Sergius with the aim of spreading Christian heresies in pagan Arabia.[157] In other legends, he emerged as the heretical monk himself whose schisms with the Church motivated him to seduce the innocent people of Arabia. Therefore, any alleged divine miracles he claimed were quickly dismantled by allegations of sorcery or trickery. These allegations ranged from using demonic spirits that assisted him in deluding innocent victims, to training birds (a dove or a pigeon) to come at his signal and pretending that they were delivering divine messages to his ear in what was seen to be a demonic inversion of the Christian concept of the Holy Spirit, as I will demonstrate shortly.

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[153] Even Sandys' account of Muhammad echoes medieval polemical writing: 'Mahomet the Saracen law-giuer: a man of obscure parentage', whose rise to prominence is accounted for through 'witchcraft'; see *A Relation of a Journey Begun An. Dom. 1610: 4 Bookes* (London, 1615), p. 52; available online: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=itRaAAAAcAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.

[154] Higden, p. 23.

[155] In *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, Miguel Palacios explains that a number of medieval Christian thinkers, including John of Damascus, regarded Islam as a heretical sect of Christianity where the only differences between the two religions were over the concept of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ (Islam denied both doctrines). Mention was made of Muslim scholars, such as Al-Ghazali, who argued that apart from these two points, most Christian doctrines are true. See Miguel Asín Palacios, *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, trans. by Harold Sunderland (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2008), p. 81.

[156] For a detailed study of Judeo-Christian references in the Qur'an see Brannon Wheeler (ed.), *Prophets in the Quran: An Introduction to the Quran and Muslim Exegesis* (London: Continuum, 2002); Kai Borrmann, *Jews in the Quran* (Norderstedt: Books on Demand GmbH, 2010) and Fred Maina Macharia, *Tracing Jesus in the Bible and the Quran* (Berlin: Viademica, 2004).

[157] Interestingly, a variety of such tales, particularly those stemming from polemical medieval literature, were largely drawn from early Arabic writings on Islam, such as The Epistle *Risalah* by Al-Kindi later used by Peter the Venerable, for example, then recycled in the coming centuries, and tailored to suit the purposes of the author referring to them. See Chapter 1, and see also Dorothee Metlitzki, *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 204.

Indeed, it is in Dante's *Divina Commedia* in the early fourteenth century that we encounter one of the most striking portrayals of Muhammad in Western literature. With his chest split open, Muhammad is depicted suffering an agonising torment, along with other schismatics, in what is considered to be one of the earliest and most elaborate literary damnations inflicted upon him in the West. With fiery mosques as prominent architectural structures of the city of Dis (*Inferno*, VIII. 2-4), the antithesis of the heavenly city, Dante's *Inferno* incorporates Islamic motifs in this dark manifestation of hell.[158] In addition to the figure of Muhammad, other Islamic figures such as the renowned scholars, Averroes the great commentator (IX. 144), and Avicenna (IX. 143), as well as the powerful leader Saladin (IX. 129), are present. Yet, unlike Muhammad, they are placed amongst virtuous pagans, such as Aristotle and Plato. Because of the gravity of his transgressions as the founder of Islam, Muhammad was regarded as more culpable than his Muslim followers from Dante's perspective, and his punishment in hell was bound to be much more extreme. As John S. P. Tatlock observes, Muhammad's punishment in the Ninth Circle of Hell 'is not only the most hideous mutilation of all in the valley; it is hardly equalled anywhere else in the *Inferno* for its repulsiveness'.[159] Dante's passage presents a monstrous vision of the self-inflicted torments of Muhammad thus:

> *Tra le gambe pendevan le minugia;*
> *la corata pareva e 'l tristo sacco*
> *che merda fa di quel che si trangugia.*
> *Mentre che tutto in lui veder m'attacco,*
> *guardommi e con le man s'aperse il petto,*
> *dicendo: "Or vedi com' io mi dilacco!*
> *vedi come storpiato è Mäometto!*

[158] Richard H. Lansing explains that after the changes Jerusalem underwent under the Mameluks, Dante portrays the city as a 'city of Turks and Saracens, a city of the "infidel" and of unbelief.' He, therefore, presents a hellish inversion of what the Holy City ought to be. See Richard H. Lansing (ed.), *Dante: The Critical Complex, Vol. 7 Dante: Dante and Interpretation* (New York and London; Routledge, 2003), p. 204.
[159] John S. P. Tatlock, 'Mohammad and His Followers in Dante', *Modern Languages Review*, 27 (1932): 186-95 (192).

Dinanzi a me sen va piangendo Alì,
fesso nel volto dal mento al ciuffetto.
E tutti li altri che tu vedi qui,
seminator di scandalo e di scisma
fuor vivi, e però son fessi così.
Un diavolo è qua dietro che n'accisma
sì crudelmente... ".

... his entrails were hanging between his legs, and the vitals could be seen and the foul sack that makes ordure of what is swallowed. While I was all absorbed in gazing on him, he looked at me and with his hands pulled open his breast, saying, "Now see how I rend myself, see how mangled is Mohammed! In front of me goes Ali weeping, cleft in the face from chin to forelock; and all others whom you see here were in their lifetime sowers of scandal and schism, and therefore are thus cleft. A devil is here behind that fashions us thus cruelly...".
(*Inferno*, XXVIII. ii. 25-38)[160]

Fig. 5: Gustave Doré, *Inferno, Canto 28 : Fomenters of discord and schism: the mutilated shade of Mahomet, illustration from 'The Divine Comedy' by Dante Alighieri* (1885) (digitally coloured engraving) [Bridgeman Education].[161]

[160] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy, I. Inferno. Part 1*, translated with a commentary by Charles S. Singleton (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), pp. 294-95.
[161] Ali, his cousin, son in law and fourth successor, is placed along with Muhammad – as a schismatic figure – for his murder is believed to have caused the Sunni-Shia division within Islam just as Muhammad is believed to have caused divisions between Muslims and Christians.

Muhammad's terrible fate stems from the understanding in Dante's time that he was a 'pseudopropheta' and a heretical Christian renegade. This belief, as Dorothee Metlitzki notes, developed from 'a natural confusion of the person of Muhammad with that of his traditional teacher', Sergius or Bahira.[162] Muhammad became popularly known as a Roman cardinal who had been promised that he would become Pope should he successfully convert the Saracens in the East.[163] After the cardinals broke their promise, Muhammad's revenge was to 'divert people from the path he had shown them and to preach the contrary to Christian truth'.[164] This probably explains Dante's less punitive treatment of Islamic thinkers compared with Muhammad, which reflects the generally shared views of Catholic thinkers of the time who considered Muhammad less of a Prophet and more a schismatic,[165] whose sole purpose was 'to destroy the true church'[166] and inflict segregation upon its followers.[167]

In *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, Miguel Palacios interestingly explains that it is not just the presence of these Islamic figures and the architectural features of hell, that suggest Islamic motifs; the work in its entirety, he argues, can be understood as an inverted

[162] Metlitzki, p. 204.
[163] See Frederick Quinn, *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 52; Dimmock, *Mythologies*, p. 17. Telling evidence of the influence of myths surrounding the life of Muhammad derives from the way commentators on Dante added two ingredients to the allusion to Muhammad that emerged in later texts, such as Jacobus de Voragine's *Golden Legend* or *Legenda Aurea Sanctorum* (first printed in English in Westminster by William Caxton in 1483). These two ingredients were the legend of the malignant cardinal and the miracle of the dove. While Christian authors used the former to explain the uncomfortable similarity between Islam and the Judeo-Christian tradition, they evoked the latter to assert Muhammad's falseness. See Metlitzki, pp. 204-07. For the Latin text of the *Legenda Aurea*, see *Legenda aurea vulgo historia lombardica dicta* ed. by T. Graesse (Leizig, 1850). See also F. S. Ellis, *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints as Englished by William Caxton*, 7 vols. (London, 1931).
[164] Metlitzki, p. 204. For more on Muhammad as a Roman cardinal, see G. Raynaud and H. Lemaitre (eds.) *Le Roman de Renart le Contrefait* (Paris: Champion, 1914).
[165] Some Christian scholars, such as Jacob de Voragine, distinguished between what they perceived to be 'truer history' and 'table-talk' about the topic of Muhammad, to which the legend of the dove and the matter of Muhammad as a Christian cleric belong. For more on the Bahira legend considered as authentic history, see Metlitzki, pp. 204-05.
[166] Note that accusations of wanting to destroy the Church and the true faith continued to be evoked by Catholic authors in the Reformation period. See Christopher Highley, *Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 62.
[167] Belgasem, p. 19.

allegory of the Islamic legend of Ascension, *Al-Isra wal Miraj*.[168] While in the Islamic legend, Muhammad emerges as the chosen Prophet of the one true religion and the saviour of mankind, in Dante's *Inferno,* he is demonised as a divisive figure, destined to endure eternal punishment for his transgressions. Likewise, both Dante's *Inferno* and the Islamic hell (*jahannam* جهنم) implement the principle of Contrapasso,[169] where the soul's punishment in the afterlife is equated to those sins committed before death. While Muhammad's fate is celebrated as the saviour of humanity and the intercessor of sin in the Islamic legend, it is reversed in the *Inferno* where he is eternally punished for creating religious division and misleading his followers. Following Muhammad's division of his people, being the *seminator di scandalo e di scisma* (*Inferno,* XXVIII. 63), his body is similarly divided from chin to groin.[170] Both Metlizki and Palacios stress that Dante's view of Muhammad as a divisive figure indeed reflects the views of his contemporaries, for like most of his peers, 'Dante did not consider Muhammad as the founder of a religion but as an instigator of heretical strife'.[171]

Similar hostile beliefs surrounding the figure of Muhammad would determine the narrative in accounts discussing his life for centuries to come. Tales of his rise to power through marriage, trickery of the feeble minded and his heresy, continued to be retold in

[168] Al-Isra wal Miraj is a celebrated event in Islam when the Prophet is believed to have ascended to the higher abodes. There, he learned of otherworldly knowledge, including the rewards and punishments of heaven and hell, future prophecies and the nature of supernatural beings. He also encountered previous Prophets, including Adam (who is believed to be the first human and Prophet according to the Islamic tradition), Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Some versions of the story propose that, unlike no other man before him, the Prophet saw the Creator himself.

[169] *Contrapasso* or 'Counter-suffering' is a retributive principle by which the souls serve a fitting penance according to the nature of their sins committed on earth. See *Dante Alighieri*, p. 139; Rachel Jacoff (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Dante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 77. For more on the Latin and medieval religious discussions, see Suzanne Conklin Akbari, *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient, 1100–1450* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2012), p. 230.

[170] The religious discords are expanded from Christian-Muslim to include Sunni-Shia by the inclusion of Ali, the second convert to Islam after Muhammad's wife Khadija, or as known in Christian sources, Cadygan.

[171] Metlitzki, p. 204.

medieval accounts, particularly in Mandeville's *Travels*[172] and Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon,*[173] marking the beginning of a period where 'well rehearsed' depictions of Muhammad are produced and recycled in English texts.[174] In these early accounts, there appears to be a systematic approach to question Muhammad's claim on Prophethood, with a success that was believed to be credited more to the 'discord & stryf of Cristen men' than to the merits of this 'false prophete' and 'witche'.[175] Indeed, polemics largely followed two main prongs of attack: to blacken Muhammad's character, deeming him a fraud, a liar, a magician – anything but a saviour – and to emphasise his exposure to the Old and New Testaments with a mission to heretically alter Christian teachings.[176] With the continuous reproductions of these tales, a seemingly authoritative narrative for the life of Muhammad was created, a narrative that became a 'rich source material for subsequent generations of historians, polemicists and playwrights'.[177]

The legend of the dove,[178] for example, was one of the most persistent tales of Muhammad's abuse of his followers by which he tricked them into believing he was the recipient of divine revelation, and thus accepting his religion. The tale claims that Muhammad trained a dove – the form taken by the Holy Spirit in the Bible – to come to his ear through placing seeds in it. It was claimed that he exhibited the dove to the people as the Holy Spirit inspiring the writing of the Qur'an. As Minou Reeves rightly points out, 'the story had of course no basis in Muslim History and furthermore there is no doctrine of

[172] First printed in English by Pynson in 1496, see John Mandeville, *Here begynneth the boke of Iohn Maunduyle* (London: Richard Pynson, 1496).
[173] First printed by Caxton in 1482, see Higden, *Polychronicon* (Westminster: Printed by William Caxton, 1482). Ranulf Hidgen was a Benedictine monk from St Werburgh's Abbey in Chester.
[174] I borrow the term from Dimmock's *Mythologies*.
[175] Higden, p. 19 and p. 17.
[176] See Abu-Baker, p. 3.
[177] Dimmock, p. 25.
[178] Even in less common reproductions of the legend of the dove (or pigeon in some instances), Muhammad's law, including the *Alcoran*, remained linked with Arab fables and false teachings. See Sandys, pp. 52-6. See also Hidgen where he speaks of Muhammad training a wild camel (in other versions a bull) to respond only to 'mete' from 'his owne honde', p. 35.

the Holy Spirit in Islam.'[179] However, it proved irresistible in confirming Muhammad's image as a cunning imposter, and the tale continued to feature in English texts from the early medieval period through to the seventeenth century. To exemplify, in *Piers Plowman* (1370-90),[180] William Langland evoked the legend of the dove to emphasise Muhammad's diabolical cunning. Here, the legend is recounted as a reminder of Muhammad's falsity and powers of deception:

> He daunted a *dowve*,
> And day and nyght hire fedde,
> The corn that she cropped
> He caste it in his ere;
> And if he among the peple preched,
> Or in places come,
> Thanne wolde the clovere come
> To the clerkes ere
> Menygne as after mete.
> (Passus XV. ii. 399-403)[181]

Almost a century later, John Lydgate, who was both monk and poet, recycled the legends that clustered around Muhammad (including the legend of the dove) in his popular work, *The Fall of Princes* (1440).[182] Lydgate cites the authority of 'bookis olde' for his characterisation of Muhammad as 'A fals prophete and a magician' who was 'Born in Arabia but of low Kynreede' and spent 'Al his lyue an idolastre in deede' (IX. ii. 53-6).[183] Much in line with the purpose of similar accounts of Muhammad's life – to present him as a fraudulent, corrupt Christian who abused the power of the Holy Spirit – Lydgate also alludes to Muhammad's Judaic and Christian schooling and background (IX. ii. 62-3).

[179] Reeves, p. 106.
[180] The earliest known printed edition is *The vision of Pierce Plowman now fyrste imprynted by Roberte Crowley* (London: R. Grafton for Robert Crowley, 1550).
[181] Quoted from *The Vision and the Creed of Piers Ploughman, Newly Imprinted* ed. by T. Wright (London, 1842), p. 319.
[182] First printed by Richard Pynson in 1494, see Lydgate, *Here begynnethe the boke calledde Iohn bochas describing the fall of princes* (London: Printed by Richard Pynson, 1494).
[183] Lydgate, *The Fall of Princes*, p. 920.

Muhammad is charged with falsely claiming to be the saviour: he 'Saide openly that he was Messie' (IX. ii. 75) and pretending to receive 'his instruccion' from 'the Hooli Goost' (IX. ii. 89):

> On his shuldre[s] wer ofte tymes seyn,
> Whan he to folk[is] shewed his presence,
> Milk whit dowes, which that piked greyn
> Out of his eris.
> (IX. ii. 92-5)

After the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, the printing and circulation of such accounts became even more urgent pressed into the service of Christianity against Islam. Typically, emphasising Muhammad's lack of divinity, such texts reflect a desire to obscure any possible connection between Islam and Christianity except to suggest that the former was derived from the latter. To this end, Muhammad was not simply presented as a false Prophet, but, it was claimed, his teachings were so absurd that they would meet with wholesale derision if its adherents were permitted direct access to the Qur'an. A second prong to the attack was to highlight the paradoxically idolatrous nature of Islam, claiming that it encouraged the worship of its earthly founder and his ultimate successors, the Ottoman Sultans. As Dimmock notes, the name Muhammad itself was corrupted into 'maumet' or 'mammet', thereby linking it with 'maumetry' (the act of worshipping idols),[184] thus further distancing 'Mahomet's lawe' from Christianity.[185] The desire to set a distance between Islam and Christianity was so prevalent that the figure of Muhammad was refashioned 'in stark opposition to Christ', and his life presented as 'an inversion of

[184] According to the OED, the word 'mammet' (n.) is defined as an 'image', a 'doll' or a 'puppet'. The origin of the word is believed to be Middle English resulting from 'the common medieval Christian belief that the Prophet Muhammad was worshipped as a god'; see *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017) <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/mammet>.

[185] Metlitzki, p. 204; Dimmock, p. 29. In the seventeenth-century, many of the attempts to associate Muhammad with paganism were also directed against Catholicism. See the final part of this chapter.

the biblical narrative of Jesus related in the New Testament'.[186] The English traveller Thomas Coryat (1616), for example, 'reframes Islam' as the religion of Mahometans,[187] thereby suggesting the quasi idolatrous way in which its founder was revered. Coryat contemptuously catalogues the main contours of the tradition, including yet again the legend of the dove as a symbol of Muhammad's falseness and corruptive claim to be the recipient of divine revelation, even though by this time it had little claim to credence.[188] However, what is perhaps of more interest for our purposes is the way, Coryat, who, while ostensibly addressing a Protestant audience, speaks beyond them to alert Muhammad's countless followers to the way they have been duped, and to reflect how, if they could be made party to the truth, they would repudiate the Qur'an out of hand:

> I know better than any one of the Mahometans amongst many millions: yea all the particular circumstances of his life and death, his Nation, his Parentage, his driuing Camels through *Egipt*, *iria*, and *Palestina*, the marriage of his Mistris, by whose death he raised himselfe from a very base and contemptible estate to great honor and riches, his manner of cozening the sottish people of *Arabia*, partly by a tame *Pigeon* that did *fly* to his *eare* for meat [...] the truth whereof if thou didst know as well, I am perswaded thou wouldst spit in the face of thy *Alcoran*, and tample it vunder thy feete, and bury it vnder a laxe, a booke of that strange and weake matter.[189]

[186] Dimmock, p. 26.
[187] Dimmock, p. 3.
[188] The legend was so much a part of popular knowledge that Shakespeare alludes to it in passing in *King Henry VI* part 1 (1591). In these lines, Shakespeare's only explicit reference to Muhammad, convey a less sceptical response to the myth is conveyed, as Charles exclaims to the warlike Joan 'Was Mahomet inspired by a dove? Thou with an eagle art inspired then' (I. ii. 140-41).
[189] Dimmock, p. 2. As Edward Terry explains, during his time in India, Coryat (sometimes cordyte, cordite or coryte) addressed the Mahometans 'in their owne language' saying that 'La alla illa alla. Hasarat Esa Ben-all' (there is no God but one God and the Lord Christ the Son of God). He also added that Muhammad was an imposter, a statement which, as Terry stresses, 'in many other places of Asia, would have cost him his life with as much torture as cruelty could have invented'. Coryat's words clearly defy the Islamic testimony of faith which states that: 'There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet'. Altering the second half of the testimony and replacing it with the Lord Christ the Son of God demonstrates a common understanding of Muhammad as an inverted image of Christ. See Edward Terry, *A voyage to East-India: Wherein some things are taken notice of in our passage thither...* (London, 1655), p. 253. See also Sabine Schülting, Sabine Lucia Müller and Ralf Hertel (eds.) *Early Modern Encounters with the Islamic East: Performing Cultures* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), p. 1 and Mohammad Azhar Ansari, *European Travellers under the Mughals, 1580-1627* (Delhi: Idarat-i-Adabiyyat-i-Delli, 1975), p. 103.

Even the alleged circumstances surrounding the death of Muhammad – much like the fabrications that attached themselves to his life – were exploited in Christian polemic to discredit his authority and deride him as a false Prophet. In an oft-repeated account, he was rumoured to have fallen down 'drunke thro wyne' and, as Hidgen recounts it, was 'devourede and gnaven allemoste of swyne'.[190] The grotesquely humiliating circumstances of his death were evidently invented to undermine any pretensions Muhammad had to a divine calling and to explain why Muslims refrain from eating pork and drinking wine. Here is Lydgate's graphic description of the ignominious episode:

> Lik a glotoun deied in dronkenesse
> Bi excesse of mykil drynkyng wyn,
> Fill in a podel, deuoured among swyn.
> (IX. ii. 152-54)[191]

In another version, recorded by Alan of Lille, he was reported to have been eaten by dogs,[192] while Jacobus de Voragine speaks of him having been poisoned.[193]

However, in his account of Muhammad's ignominious end, the English Protestant polemicist Christopher St Germain went significantly further in his attempt to discredit Muhammad by establishing a clear polarization between Christ and Muhammad in the aftermath of their respective deaths. Whereas Christ had been gloriously resurrected from the dead on the third day after his death, Muhammad humiliatingly failed to do so. St Germain records how, expecting to be taken to heaven three days after his own death, Muhammad had ordered his followers not to bury him:

> obeyenge his commaundement [they] sufferyd him to lye still / not onely thre dayes after his deth but .xii. days to se when he sholde be takyn into heuen [...] perceyuynge in hym nothygne but an intollerable stynke ... they threwe hys

[190] Higden, p. 39.
[191] Lydgate, p. 923. Lydgate is following Higden's account; see Dimmock, pp. 38-40.
[192] See Norman Daniel's *Islam and the West*, where he discusses Alan of Lille's account in which Muhammad was eaten by dogs, pp. 126-27.
[193] Daniel, p. 125-26; Dimmock, pp. 36-40.

> wretchyd body nakyd without any honour in to the grounde. This was the miserable ende of Mahumet.[194]

One of the most common and colourful myths surrounding the death of Muhammad was his failure to rise from the dead. His faithful successor 'Ebubeer' (*Abubaker* أبو بكر) – the first Muslim Caliph – built 'a splendid tomb in "mecha" [which is] 'sete aboute with yron and set secretly Adamantys' or magnetic stones into the ceiling, causing the tomb to float mysteriously in the air in order to reinstate Muhammad's reputation for sanctity and trick his followers into believing the false Prophet's claims to divine favour.[195] This myth is invoked in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1586) when the devout Orcanes swears:

> By sacred Mahomet, the friend of God,
> Whose holy *Alcoran* remains with us
> Whose glorious body, when he left the world,
> Closed in a coffin, mounted up the air
> And hung on stately Mecca's temple roof.
> (*Tamburlaine the Great*, part ii, I. i. 137-41)[196]

This is a fitting example of the way in which such colourful old tales resurfaced in a way that reflected the times, tailored to fit the new politicised rhetoric,[197] for it proved effective in its anti-Islamic and anti-Catholic purposes by hinting at its similarity to Catholic idolatry and superstition in its veneration of relics.

In the English Reformation, representations of Islam and Muhammad were moulded to suit 'anti-papal rhetoric' with a particular focus on the theme of idolatry. William Tyndale, for example, stated that the 'Turks' and 'Saracens' not only 'made an

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[194] Christopher St Germain, *Here after followeth a lytell treatise against Mahumet and his cursed sect* (London: Peter Treveris, 1531), p. ff. 20v-21r, also quoted in Dimmock, p. 60.
[195] Dimmock, p. 60; Guibert de Nogent's twelfth-century account of the floating tomb is reproduced in John Toldan's *Saracens*, pp. 143-44.
[196] Unless stated otherwise, all quotations by Marlowe are taken from Marlowe, *The Complete Plays* (London: Penguin, 2003).
[197] Milton was later to link 'Turkish Tyranny' with the current political tensions in England after the execution of Charles I, observing: '*the Parlament have hung the majestie of Kingship in any airy imagination of regality between the Privileges of both Houses, like the Tombe of Mahomet* [in Mecca]'. See *Eikonoklastes*, p. 94.

idol of God,'[198] but venerated Muhammad himself as an idol, a view that allowed Tyndale to accuse Muhammad of setting himself up to be worshipped by his followers. As Fulke Greville puts it in his play *Mustapha* (1609): 'Mahomet himself an idol makes / And draws Mankind to Mecha for his sake'.[199] John Knox had argued that, as with 'Mahometan law' which could be similarly viewed as a product of 'the arte of Satan', the reason the Pope forbade religious inquiry and debate was because 'whensoeuer the papisticall religion shall comme to examination, it shalbe founde to haue no other grounde, then hath the religion of Mahomet'.[200] After the papal bill (*Regnans in Excelsis*) excommunicating Elizabeth I was issued by Pius V in 1570, the practice of linking Muhammad with the Pope and Islam with Catholicism became commonplace in public sermons and religious tracts.[201] Both religious figures were equated as faces of the Antichrist who had contaminated the true faith.[202] As Eusebius Pagit had demanded in his translation of Calvin's *A Harmonie upon the Three Evangelists* (1584): 'from[m] whence came the religion of the Pope & Mahomet, saue onely from the wicked additions whereby they feigned themselues to fill vppe the doctrine of the Gospel?'[203]

Unlike earlier accounts of Muhammad as a necromancer with mysterious supernatural powers, there was a growing tendency to explain the so-called miracles as merely tricks contrived to promote the illusion of the Prophet as a holy man. In particular, Dimmock believes that a trend developed 'of denying a divine Mahomet by focusing upon the means by which he created an illusion of divinity that prompted civil unrest and armed

[198] See William Tyndale, *The Parable of the Wycked Mammon* (London, 1547), p. Iii.
[199] See Fulke Greville, *The Remains of Sir Fulke Grevill Lord Brooke: Being Poems of Monarch and Religion: Never before Printed* (London, 1670), p. 518.
[200] See John Knox, *The appellation of Iohn Knoxe from the cruell and most iniust sentence pronounced against him by the false bishoppes and clergie of Scotland* (London, 1558), p. 49. See also Dimmock, p. 88.
[201] According to Calvin 'Mahomet and the Pope haue a common principle of religion'. Jean Calvin, *A Harmonie upon the Three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke* (London: George Bishop, 1584), p. 340. See also note 107 earlier on John Bale's *The image of both Churches* (1547) and Dimmock, p. 85; p. 88.
[202] See Dimmock, pp. 87-8.
[203] Calvin, *A Harmonie*, p. 95.

struggle'.[204] Muhammad's military campaigns were utilised as a 'demonising tool'[205] by Catholic as well as Protestant polemicists, oscillating in accusations as to which was 'most like to Mahomet'.[206] Catholic religious scholars similarly evoked Muhammad to attack reformist efforts.[207] Cardinal Jacques-Davy Duperron, for example, aligned the 'Reformists' with 'the Turks', pointing out that Muhammad too had 'inuented, and pretended a reformation of the Roman Church' by the 'industry & policy of *Sergius*'.[208] He believed that Luther and Sergius were similarly heretical in their distortion of the Christian faith[209] and in their attempts to destroy the true religion.[210]

Even plays with a Catholic orientation, such as Philip Massinger's *The Renegado* (1624), denigrate Muhammad's background and lifestyle, and he remains ever the imposter who dupes his followers with fraudulent tricks. When Donusa, a Turkish princess, fails to convert the Venetian gentleman Vitelli to Islam, he responds vehemently by delivering a passionate tirade that conjures up all the common myths known of Muhammad and his holy book:

> I will not *foule* my mouth to speake the *Sorceries*
> Of your *seducer*, his *base birth*, his *whoredomes*,
> His strange *impostures*; nor deliuer how
> He taught a *Pigeon to feede in his eare*,
> Then made his credulous followers beleeue
> It was an Angell that teaches him

[204] Dimmock, p. 172.
[205] See Thomas Newton's translation of Curione, *A notable historie of the Saracens* (London: By William How, for Abraham Veale, 1575), pp. 3b-5a in which he discusses Muhammad's military campaigns.
[206] Dimmock, p. 98.
[207] Note the work of the Catholic apologist William Rainolds *Calvino-Turcismus* (1597).
[208] See Jacques-Davy Du Perron, *Luthers Alcoran being a treatise first written in French by the learned Cardinal Peron of famous memory, against the Hugenots of France, and translated into English by NNP* (1642), p. 30. Dimmock adds that Du Perron referred to Bibliander's *Alcoran* to connect Mahometanism and Protestantism. See Dimmock, p. 93; and Du Perron, pp. 48-50; pp. 68-9. The anonymous text is considered an 'anti-French Huguenot work translated as royalist propaganda that is interested in linking Puritans to Mahometan Turks'. See Humberto Garcia, *Islam and the English Enlightenment, 1670–1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 249.
[209] The concept of the Trinity and the taking of more than one wife (polygamy) are some of the sixty positions Duperron raises. For the discussion of the Trinity, see Du Perron, pp. 49-68; 98-105; and 177-89. For his discussion of polygamy, see pp. 81-5; p. 121; and p. 158.
[210] Dimmock, p. 93.

In the framing of his Alcoran.[211]
(*The Renegardo*, IV. iii. 125-31; emphasis added)

Notably, unlike the fate of Muslims or converts to Islam in the majority of Protestant plays that include such figures, for instance, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Shakespeare's *Othello* and Daborne's *A Christian Turned Turk* (1612),[212] Massinger grants Vitelli a happier ending with more hopeful prospects: not only does he manage to remain true to his religion, but he also succeeds in converting the Muslim princess to Christianity.

Indeed, the reason for the general tone of the play, in which renegades are depicted as 'violent, quarrelsome and treacherous',[213] is explained by historical circumstances and the chilling statistic that 8,000 British captives were seized by 'Barbary corsaries in the early 1600s, and many of them apostatized to Islam'.[214] It is in this vibrant period of religious dissent and political turbulence, in the mid seventeenth century, that one of the most important enterprises to engage the threat of Islam and Muhammad directly was brought to completion: the first translation of the *Alcoran* into English was published in 1649; coincidentally, the year in which Charles I was executed.[215] The translator, Alexander Ross, confidently proclaimed that Muhammad 'arrived in England, & his Alcoran, or gallimaufry of Errors... [and] hath learned to speak English'.[216] At this point English scholars had already began to take a step back from relying entirely on Christian

[211] Massinger alludes to a verse in the Qur'an where Muslim women are asked to conceal their beauty. Philip Massinger, *The Renegado* ed. by Michael Neill (London: Methuen Drama, 2010), p. 118.
[212] See the final part of this chapter.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Andrew Hopper, *Turncoats and Renegadoes: Changing Sides during the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 13. For a detailed study of English diplomacy and Mediterranean piracy, see Nabil Matar, *British Captives from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1563–1760* (Leiden: Brill, 2014) and *Britain and Barbary, 1589–1689* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005).
[215] This is, of course, not to suggest that the two events are related.
[216] *The Alcoran of Mahomet,* p. 436 (Ee).

accounts of Muhammad's life and turn to texts either written in Arabic or by Arab scholars and philosophers.[217]

Of course the increased contact with the Ottoman Empire as well as the growing collection of Oriental manuscripts in Oxford and Cambridge had resulted in a demand for more 'authentic' studies of Islam and its Prophet, since it was felt to be essential to understand this religion and the way it had so quickly spread through the Arabian Peninsula, North Africa and parts of Asia and Europe. Furthermore, since the Caliph[218] was believed to rely upon the authority of the Qur'an, it was hoped that refuting the teachings of Muhammad, as inscribed in the Qur'an, would bring about the downfall of Ottoman power.

Seen through the lens of Christianity, Islam was not perceived to be an autonomous and independent religion but a conflation of different faiths. As well as being charged with strong anti-Catholic sentiment, Henry Smith's attack on Islam in his sermon, *God's Arrow Against Atheists* (1593), targets its motley and derivative nature, cuttingly dismissing it as merely a 'patched religion, mixed partly with Iudaisme, partly with Gentilisme, partly with Papisme, partly with Christianisme'.[219] In a similar vein, Budova drew attention to 'the extraordinary edifice composed of parts of the New and Old Testament, in which that *Satan* (i.e. the *Sultan*) *endeavours to hide himself with his Alkoran*'.[220]

Likewise, viewed as the '*Turkish antichrist*', the figure of Muhammad became completely politicised and merged with the tyrannical and Satanic image of the Ottoman

[217] See Chapter 1. By the late seventeenth century, there was an unprecedented approach to Muhammad that attempted to 'reclaim' his figure and more positive accounts began to emerge by dissident authors such as Henry Stubbe and John Toland. Dimmock, p. 182. See also Henry Stubbe, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism, and a Vindication of him and his Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians* (London: 1671-9) and Nabil Matar, *Henry Stubbe and the Beginnings of Islam: The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), pp. 169-83.

[218] Muhammad's successor and the chief civil and religious ruler of Muslims. The Ottoman Sultan at this point.

[219] See Henry Smith, *Gods Arrow against Atheists* (London: 1593), p. 43; available online: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.31175035161630>.

[220] See Gosse, *Short Histories of the Literatures of the World*, p. 246, and also pp. 56-7 earlier in this chapter.

Sultan. This politicised depiction of Muhammad as himself the first Sultan is powerfully illustrated by this image from Michel Baudier's *Historie General de la Religion des Turcs*. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that while any association with the figure of Muhammad was largely negative, there remained a few instances where he was not portrayed with such hostility.[221] However, Abu-Baker points out that even in instances where English texts depict Muslims in a favourable light, they remain driven by partisan attitudes: 'By making the Muslims appear more devout the author's condemnation of his fellow Christians becomes more emphatic and he has a better chance to prod them into shape'.[222] But what remains evident is that the demonised figure of Muhammad, and his *Alcoran* continued to foster a wide range of allusions in English writings.

Fig. 6: *Mahomet Prophete des Turcs* from Michel Baudier's *Histoire générale de la religion des turcs* (Paris: Claude Cramoisy, 1625) [British Library Board, 149.c.8].[223]

[221] See the note above on Henry Stubbe.
[222] Abu-Baker, p. 24. Cf . Ross''Caveat' in the *Alcoran* in p. 70. For more on the *Alcoran* see Chapter 3.
[223] See also Dimmock, p. 108.

Fears of Conversion: Dangerous Wives

Religious and political tensions of the Reformation period, especially fears surrounding apostasy and conversion to Catholicism or Islam, were often centred on beautiful and seductive female figures that lured male victims into temptation,[224] idolatry and damnation.[225] Female sexuality was deemed unsettling for it was thought to be especially effective as a means of 'turning' Christians susceptible to carnal appetites who wanted to enjoy worldly pleasures.[226] Consequently, a considerable number of Protestant plays with an anti-Catholic orientation would evoke anti-Islamic imagery – at times while also evoking Judeo-Christian Biblical female figures – particularly when alluding to the powers of female sexuality. Therefore, the final part of the chapter directs its attention to this particular association, between the tempting feminine and religious anxieties towards conversions, in a way that prepares for coming chapters in which such anxieties are manifested by the allusion to the Judeo-Arabic Lilith.

In Edmund Spenser's Protestant epic *The Faerie Queene*,[227] for example, the confrontation between the Protestant and Catholic Church is rendered through the opposition between truth and falsity, as conveyed by the mirroring of two female figures, Una and Duessa, who are situated at either ends of a complex binary which unite and oppose a range of antitheses. Una's name ('oneness') represents the 'one true church', that

[224] According to David Norbrook, idolatry was viewed as spiritual fornication. Religious rationality – particularly 'Calvinist rationalism' – equated the 'irrational with what were seen as feminine elements of the personality'. Greville's work, for example, closely associated fear of idolatry with fear of women: 'Man's superstition hath Thy truths entomb'd / His Atheisme againe her pomps defaceth / That sensuall vnsatiable vaste wombe / Of thy seene Chruch, thy vnseene Church disgraceth' (Sonnet CX. 13-6). See David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 107.

[225] Daniel Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); Molly Murray, *The Poetics of Conversion in Early Modern English Literature: Verse and Change from Donne to Dryden* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Jane Hwang Degenhardt, *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

[226] See Daniel Vitkus, *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p 15. It is worth noting that employees of the Levant Company in Turkey were strictly forbidden to marry without the approval of the director of the company. See also J. Theodore Bent, 'The English in the Levant', *The English Historical Review*, 5.20 (1980): 645-64 (658).

[227] All quotations from *The Faerie Queene* are taken from *Spenser: The Faerie Queene* ed. by A. C. Hamilton, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2013).

is, of course, the Protestant Church, and the unity of Truth. Her uniqueness is stressed by the emphasis on 'only' in lines that describe her as the King's 'onely Daughter deare, / His onely Daughter, and his only Heyre (*FQ*, I. xii. 21) where the old spelling brings out the etymological force of 'one-ly'. She is first seen simply and soberly dressed in a 'blacke stole', leading a 'milke white lambe' (I. i. 4); the lamb not only associates her with Christ as the Lamb of God, but is also emblematic of her virginal purity. Indeed, she was: 'So pure and innocent, as that same lambe, / She was in life and euery vertuous lore' (I. i. 5). As Hackett reminds us, in Spenser's multi-layered allegorical narrative she represents truth, chastity [...] England, and Elizabeth I', for 'By this stage in her reign Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen, was widely seen as personifying the virtuous and independent English Church and nation'.[228] Elizabeth I, Head of the Protestant Church of England, was famed for her virginity too of course, and her motto *semper eadem* ('always the same') was likewise an expression of her constancy, integrity and equanimity. For her eventual bethrothal to the Red Cross Knight, Una casts her 'mournefull stole aside' and 'now a garment she did weare / All lilly white, withoutten spot, or pride' (I. xii. 22) in a way that cannot help but remind the reader of 'The marriage of the Lamb' (Rev. 19:7), held by Protestants to signify the mystical union of Christ and his Church, and how his bride was then 'arrayed in fine linen, clean and white' (Rev. 19:8). Nevertheless, Una's attire fails to compare with 'The blazing brightnesse of her beauties beame, / And glorious light of her sunshyny face' (I. xii. 23); the way Truth is now fully revealed in all her brightness and beauty plainly alludes to the 'woman clothed with the sun' (Rev. 12:1), and looks forward to the final triumph of the Protestant Church.[229]

[228] Helen Hackett, 'England looking outwards in the 16th and 17th centuries', *UCL European Institute*, 9 (October 2011): p. 3; available online: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/european-institute/highlights/england>.
[229] All quotations here are taken from (King James) Bible. For the Revelation quotes, see *Bible Hub* - Bible Study (2017) <http://biblehub.com/revelation/12-1.htm>.

Duessa, on the other hand, appears beautiful, but is not what she seems. As with Una, her name plays on the Latin etymology ('twoness') in keeping with the duplicity of her character. She represents everything that Una is not, that is, among other things, 'deceit, lust, the Catholic Church, foreignness, and Mary Queen of Scots', who was 'widely seen by English Protestants as a personification of all these vices'.[230] It is after the Redcrosse knight has been separated from Una that he first encounters this mistress of disguise, accompanied, surprisingly, by a Muslim Knight, San Foy. Redcrosse's attention rapidly turns to his 'faire companion', and he is easily taken in by 'The false *Duessa*, cloked with *Fidessaes* name' (I. vii. 1) – the Church of Rome masquerading as the true faith. She seemed:

> A goodly Lady clad in scarlot red,
> Purfled with gold and pearle of rich assay,[231]
> And like a *Persian* mitre on her hed
> She wore, with crownes and owches garnished,
> The which her lavish louers to her gaue;
> Her wanton palfrey all was ouerspred
> With tinsell trappings, wouen like a waue,
> Whose bridle rung with golden bels and bosses braue.
> (II. ii. 13)

What is most striking is the flamboyant ostentatiousness of her attire in contrast with Una's demure dress. The splendour and ornate embellishment of Duessa's outer garments distract the eye and give the observer no hint of her true nature that lies hidden beneath the artifice of this decorative facade.[232] Most obviously this is to suggest the rich trappings and carnality of the 'false bride', the Catholic Church, and draws attention to the way 'the

[230] Hackett, p. 4.
[231] Cf. Satan likened to a Sultan on his throne, see Chapter 3.
[232] Fradubio tells Redcrosse Knight how this 'false sorceresse' (II. xxxiv. 305) had put him under an enchantment after he had glimpsed Duessa's true form: 'Her neather parts misshapen, monstruous, / Were hidd in water, that I could not see. / But they did seeme more foule and hideous, / Then womans shape man would beleeve to bee' (II. xli. 361-64). However, Redcrosse still fails to connect his lady Fidessa with the 'divelish hag' (II. xlii. 370) Duessa.

ornamentation of the churches [...] tempted the faithful to lapse into idolatry' through utilising deceptively attractive surfaces, much like 'lascivious women' use their sexual allure to 'seduce upright men'.[233] Indeed, once in Fidessa's clutches, the Redcrosse knight will soon be discovered without his armour, dissolutely indulging in sensual pleasures: 'Pourd out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd' (I. vii. 7).

Moreover, Duessa's lavish attire corresponds closely with that of the infamous Whore of Babylon who 'was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls' (Rev. 17:4). This identification with the Whore is completed when she rides out with the Giant Orgoglio to confront Prince Arthur, who has been urged by Una to rescue the captive Redcrosse knight. Bearing a 'golden cup' which is 'replete with magick artes' (I. viii. 14) Duessa advances:

> High mounted on her many-headed beast;
> And euery head with fyrie tongue did flame,
> And euery head was crowned on his creast,
> And bloody mouthed with late cruell feast.
> (I. viii. 6)

By evoking the powerful account from Revelations: 'I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns [...] a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication' (Rev. 17:3-4),[234] Spenser suggests the nature of Duessa's power over the Redcrosse Knight is solidified through sexual pleasure.

In the woodcut 'The Whore of Babylon' from Albrecht Dürer's visions from the Book of the Revelation of St John, *Apocalypse*, the scene to the left is crowded with

[233] See Norbrook, p. 107. George Herbert likens poetic embellishments to cosmetic arts in 'Jordan I and II'; see *The English Poems of George Herbert* ed. by Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). For a detailed study of the culture of cosmetics, see Farah Karim-Cooper, *Cosmetics in Shakespearean and Renaissance Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006).
[234] See *Bible Hub* - Bible Study (2017) < http://biblehub.com/revelation/17-4.htm>.

figures dressed in contemporary clothes, the most prominent of whom are three men in Turkish headgear. They are wearing, from left to right, a janissary bork (a style of hat worn by the Ottoman military), a top hat and a turban.[235] It is upon them that the Whore fixes her attention as she holds her cup aloft.[236] Their inclusion emphasises that the Whore is worshipped by Muslims as well as Christians and, as Charlotte Smith explains, it also reinforces 'the link between the Muslim infidel and the apocalypse'.[237]

Fig. 7: Albrecht Dürer, *The Great whore and the Beast, Apocalypse* (1497) [Bridgeman Education].

[235] As noted by, Charlotte Colding Smith, 'Ottoman Turks are depicted in turbans or the janissary *bork*, and occasionally top hats' in European art; see *Images of Islam, 1453-1600: Turks in Germany and Central Europe* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), p. 34.
[236] In what is seen as the founding act of Protestantism, Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses to the church door in Wittenberg in 1517. Around the same time, Albrecht Dürer's Whore of Babylon 'became a crucial image in the theological and ideological battles of the Protestant Reformation'; see Hackett, p. 2.
[237] For more on Albrecht Dürer and images of Ottomans and the Muslim East, see Charlotte Colding Smith, pp. 36-40.

As well as suggesting the similarities between Catholicism and Islam, Duessa's association with the Muslim knight may also imply the spiritual emptiness of religious belief under her influence for, unlike the faithful followers of Christ, this 'faithlesse Sarazin [...] cared not for God or man a point' (I. ii. 12). Indeed, pairing Duessa with a Muslim knight seems to amplify the image of vain excess in a way that suggests an affinity between the earthly materialism of the Catholic Church and the Muslim East. This impression is reinforced by the reference to Duessa's 'Persian mitre' (II. ii. 13), since the mitre was a tall, ornamental headdress worn by Catholic bishops as a symbol of office, but was also, as Evenson has pointed out, a term used 'by sixteenth-and seventeenth-century travellers to describe the turban, a headdress widely recognised as a symbol of Islam during this period',[238] and therefore, through this collocation, Spenser would seem to be purposefully associating the ornate trappings of the Catholic Church with the Muslim riches of the Orient.

When Duessa has finally been defeated, Una insists that the former be stripped naked so that 'Such as she was, their eies might her behold' (I. viii. 46). With her true nature as 'A loathly, wrinckled hag' (I. viii. 46) thus exposed, she flies into the wilderness, 'And lurkt in rocks and caues long vnespide' (I. viii. 50).[239] While on one level this clearly suggests how ceremony and ritual disguise the spiritual poverty of the Catholic faith, what is of special interest here is that Spenser also draws on the tradition wherein the seductiveness of the East and its glamorous appeal were conventionally associated with a seductive, if not demonic, female character, who, like the Ottoman empire, appears to be fruitful and promises pleasure, but in fact, is foul, monstrous and false.

[238] Pope Urban II (who was Pope from 1088 until his death in 1099) was referred to as 'Pope Turban'; see Edmund Gibson and John Cumming, *Supplement to Gibson's A Preservative Against Popery: Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy* (London: British Society, 1849), p. 11. See also Evenson, p. 22.
[239] Cf. The description of Lilith (who also lurks in caves) in Chapter 4.

Like Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Marlowe's *Tragicall History of the Life and Death of Dr Faustus*[240] also provides a brief, but nevertheless haunting, representation of the alluring and deceptive demonised feminine.[241] Just after Faustus' ambition for political power fades, his attention immediately turns to the satisfaction of his sexual needs.[242] Faustus' first request is for a companion, a wife: 'let me have a wife, the fairest maid in Germany, for I am wanton and lascivious, and cannot live without a wife' (II. i. 141-43). Even though his motives are primarily carnal in nature, Faustus' very first wish must be denied him, since marriage is a sacrament imparting God's grace. Instead, Mephistopheles instantly tries to content him instead with 'a Devil dressed like a woman, with fireworks,'[243] and then scoffs at marriage when Faustus repudiates her:

> MEPH. Tell me Faustus, how dost thou like thy wife?
> FAUSTUS A plague on her for a hot whore!
> MEPH. Tut Faustus, marriage is but a ceremonial toy;
> If thou lovest me, think no more of it.
> (II. i. 148-51)

Mephistopheles then tempts him with the advantages of serial polygamy, offering the prospect of an infinite variety of sexual pleasure fulfilling his every desire:[244]

> I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans,
> And bring them every morning to thy bed:
> She whom thine eye shall like, thy heart shall have,
> Be she as chaste as was Penelope,

[240] Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* contains strongly anti-Catholic sentiment with the Pope as the main target of the satirical attack, whereas the anonymous sequel, *The Second Report of Dr Iohn Faustus* (1594), focuses on Turkish threat and the Muslim 'Souldan'. Just as Faustus had played tricks on the Pope, here Wagner executes a number of practical jokes designed to humiliate the Sultan. Interestingly enough, the final sentence looks optimistically to an end to dissension and the unification of Christendom in its triumph over the common enemy as 'with great joy [the Christian princes] caused generall feasts and triumphs to be performed in all theyr kingdomes, provinces, and territories whatsoever' (sig. K2^{r}).
[241] The first performance is believed to have been staged in 1592.
[242] See also Spoto, p. 79.
[243] See 'stage direction' in Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus – A 1604 Version Edition* ed. by Michael Keefer, 2nd edn (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2007), p. 112.
[244] See Stephen Orgel, *The Authentic Shakespeare: And Other Problems of the Early Modern Stage* (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 255.

> As wise as Saba, or as beautiful
> As was bright Lucifer before his fall.
> (II. i. 152-57)

In what appears to be a cautionary approach towards female attraction, Marlowe distances beauty from the more socially acceptable feminine traits. Chastity and wisdom, the virtuous feminine qualities in the lines above, are attributed to female characters: Penelope the epitome of loyalty and the witty Saba (the Queen of Sheba), who visited Solomon to test his wisdom and 'to prove him with hard questions,' (I Kings 10:1).[245] Beauty, however, is deemed to be a devilish attribute possessed by Lucifer himself.[246] Moreover, it might be the case that feminine chastity and wisdom were introduced first in an attempt to pave the way for the more dangerous threat of Luciferian beauty that preceded Faustus' Fall, skilfully foreshadowing his infernal fate.[247] Beauty becomes in Mephistopheles' hands a powerful strategy to 'distract Faustus from the possibility of his salvation'.[248]

Like Spenser's Duessa, Marlowe's succubi, whether represented by the devilish 'wife' or the alluring female figures from myth, are nothing more than bait set to trick Faustus and secure his damnation. In Marlowe's play 'what appears to be beautiful and good actually helps to pull Faustus away from the heavenly and into hell'.[249] Indeed, Marlowe certainly drew on harrowing imagery from the Islamic hell, *jahannam*, and had shown an impressive degree of familiarity with the Qur'an in *Tamburlaine*. In a passage that conflates the more familiar classical mythology with Islamic imagery, Orcanes imagines Sigismund's torments in the afterlife:

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[245] See Chapter 5 for more on the Queen of Sheba.
[246] As Bevington and Rasmussen note, 'we might expect the name of a woman as the personification of beauty; but to Mephistopheles, being in hell, nothing could be more beautiful than Lucifer before his fall'. See Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, ed. by David M. Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 437.
[247] See also Spoto, pp. 79-82.
[248] Spoto, p. 80. Cf. Chapter 4 where the Arabic demonic is used to lure travellers away from their path and to distract Muhammad from his heavenly journey to the higher abodes.
[249] Spoto, p. 80.

> Now scalds his soul in the Tartarian streams,
> And feeds upon the baneful tree of hell,
> That Zoacum, that fruit of bitterness
> That in the midst of the fire is engraft
> Yet flourisheth as Flora in her pride,
> With apples like the heads of damned fiends.
> (*Tamburlaine*, part ii, II. iii. 17-22)

'Zoacum' clearly alludes to the description of how 'Zacon, the tree of hell ... cometh out of the bottom of hell, it riseth high, and the branches themselves resemble the heads of devils; the damned shall eate of the fruit thereof, they shall drink boyling water' (*Alcoran*, Ch. XXXVII, 276-77).[250] As Abu-Baker observes, Marlowe 'had clearly done his research, and offers the Islamic view of hell with an authority equal to that which the Christian and classical views of the afterlife were conventionally offered'.[251]

Shakespeare's *Othello* departs from Marlowe's and Spenser's apparent method of deploying infernal female sexuality as an agent of eternal damnation caused by false beliefs. As a play that examines an intriguing conversion narrative tailored to a Protestant audience, it can nonetheless be seen to tackle anti-Catholic and anti-Islamic sentiments in a way that still acknowledges female influence in facilitating religious conversion, albeit in a less visibly dangerous manner.[252] Desdemona, a Venetian Catholic and the play's principal female character, is, of course, not the dangerous beauty who typically featured in the kind

[250] See *Alcoran*, p. 276.
[251] Abu-Baker, p. 90.
[252] See also *The Tempest*, where Shakespeare follows a similar method by presenting the Algerian hag and witch Sycorax who was 'so strong / That could control the moon, make flows and ebbs, / And deal in her command without her power' (V. i. 169-71), see *The Complete Works*, p. 1158. Bear in mind that with the Capture of Algiers (1529), Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent was formally invited to accept sovereignty over the territory and to annex Algiers to the Ottoman Empire. For Sycorax, European power and Islamic expansion, see Barbara Fuchs, 'Conquering Islands: Contextualizing *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 48.1 (April 1997): 45-62. While searching for a connection to Sycorax's North African heritage, a parallel was found in *Shokereth* שוקרת, 'a [Hebrew and] Arabic word meaning "deceiver"'. See Natali Boğosyan, *Postfeminist Discourse in Shakespeare's The Tempest and Warner's Indigo: Ambivalence, Liminality and Plurality* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2012), p. 109. Similarly, Spoto links the witch with Lilith, pp. 157-62. For Sycorax as a voice of African women under Colonial powers, see Abena P. A. Busia, 'Silencing Sycorax: On African Colonial Discourse and the Unvoiced Female', *Cultural Critique*, 14 (1990): 81-104.

of English text that we have been considering; she is portrayed as an honourable Venetian woman whose love for Othello, a Moorish general in the Venetian army, is genuine. However, her supposed power over Othello, I argue, does carry a hint of anti-idolatrous sentiments merged with anxieties towards Islam.

This is particularly emphasised through Othello's apparent infatuation with his wife, a weakness that allows the malicious Iago, Othello's unfaithful ensign, to manipulate him and bring forth his violent nature. Iago realises that Desdemona's influence over Othello is so powerful that she could persuade Othello to do or think anything, even: 'To win the Moor, were't to renounce his baptism' (II. iii. 342). Othello is shown to be lacking in constancy: not only has he already renounced the religion of his birth – I follow the view that it was Islam – but he is also seen as capable of recanting Catholicism should Desdemona beseech him to do so.[253] What is worthy of note here is that, at this point, Desdemona is viewed as an idol with the power to 'play the god' (II. iii. 346). Should she choose to manipulate him, we presume that Othello will be easily influenced by her.

Shakespeare subtly highlights Desdemona's influence over Othello which simultaneously suggests a feeble religious nature ascribed to his suggested previous Islamic background.[254] Indeed, as Evenson accurately notes, Othello's religious identity as a Muslim or Catholic is 'productively intermixed and fungible; his idolatrous character becomes a lynchpin for the inextricably linked anti-Catholic and anti-Islamic representations'.[255] It is Othello's fundamental instability of character that is exposed

[253] For more on Othello as a Muslim character see Catherine M. S. Alexander and Stanley Wells (eds.), *Shakespeare and Rac*e (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 209; Degenhardt, *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage*, pp. 57-8; and Julia Reinhard Lupton, 'Othello Circumcised: Shakespeare and the Pauline Discourse of Nations', *Representations*, 57 (1997): 73-89. Othello's identity does remain ambiguous, however, since his dark skin does not necessarily imply his adherence to Islam; Andrew Hadfield and Paul Hammond state that 'Nothing in *Othello* shows that the Moor was a "Muslim"'. See Hadfield and Hammond (eds.), *Shakespeare and Renaissance Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), p. 247.

[254] In this way, Othello is represented as the Moor who is easily susceptible to idolatry, in keeping with the view of Muslims explained earlier.

[255] Evenson, pp. 48-9.

rather than Desdemona's dangerous potentiality. Once Iago has wrested control of Othello by persuading him of Desdemona's betrayal of him,[256] he 'turns Turk' once more, speaking of Desdemona with a savage violence: 'I will chop her into messes' (IV. i. 201). Othello's death can thus be claimed to represent the final triumph of his Christian self over his Muslim identity. As he kills himself, Othello is thereby, as Hanital Ismail has persuasively argued, finally able to eradicate the Muslim identity that 'permeated within him', and which had hindered his successful assimilation with his Venetian self.[257] Indeed, before stabbing himself, Othello tellingly relates below:

> [...] in Aleppo once,
> Where a malignant and a *turbaned Turk*
> Beat a *Venetian* and traduced the state,
> I took by the throat the *circumcisèd dog*,
> And smote him, thus.
> (V. ii. 353-57)

Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turned Turk* (1612)[258] provides a more telling example of the dangers of seductive femininity played out in conjunction with anxieties over conversion to Islam; this tragedy similarly ends with the recantation and suicide of its convert. The Muslim governor of Tunis and his Jewish assistant Benwash, a wealthy merchant, enlist the captain of the janissaries in Tunis, Crosman, to help convert the English pirate John Ward to Islam, by deploying Crosman's sister, the beautiful Voada to ensnare him. The pirate is based on a historical figure of the same name, John Ward, also

[256] An example of what might be considered as female betrayal is presented in *The Merchant of Venice* where the daughter of the Jewish Shylock, Jessica, abandons him for the Christian Lorenzo, after stealing his gold. See *The Complete Works*, pp. 388-415.
[257] Hanita Ismail, *Shakespeare's 'Othello': Seventeenth-century Religious Identity and Its Disguised Act* (N.A: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing, 2011), p. 22. It is certainly significant that the play is set against a battle between the Venetians and the Turks for control of Cyprus.
[258] Robert Daborne, *A Christian turn'd Turke, or, The tragicall liues and deaths of the two famous pyrates, Ward and Dansiker : as it hath beene publickly acted* (London, 1612), available online: <https://archive.org/details/christianturndtu00dabo>.

known as Jack Ward.[259] Although Ward himself does not appear to have converted because of sexual entrapment, Daborne goes to great lengths to make it appear so through the highly sexualised role of the Muslim Voada. Voada is depicted as a dangerous Muslim Turk seductress whose aim is to lure Ward into converting to Islam, as suggested in Crosman's words to Benwash: 'What Divels dare not moue / Men to accomplish, women worke them to' (VII. 87-8).

Like Spenser's lavishly ornamented Duessa, whose embodiment of deceptively beautiful appearances disguises the ugly reality of false beliefs, Voada embodies the vain beauty of Islam that seduces Christians away from salvation. When Ward's shipmate attempts to warn him against conversion saying: 'Sell not your soule for such a vanity / As that which you term Beauty, eye-pleasing Idol' (VII. 206-07), Ward responds: 'Her lookes inchant me' (VII. 233),[260] indicating not only the dangers of Voada's seductive power but also its association with the false, carnal pleasures that Islam promises. As Evenson states, 'From the moment Voada enters the stage, she is treated as a Muslim enchantress able to persuade a god to forego immortality; she is the very image of an "idol" that tempts Ward to sell his soul'.[261] In a complete loss of self control, Ward confesses: 'I am no more mine own... Heere is an orator can turne me easily. / Where beauty pleades, there needs no sophistry. /Thou hast o'vercome me *Voada*' (VII. 159; 164-66). Finally, Ward submits to a ceremony of conversion in which he is made to swear on 'a mahomet's head' – an image that is set to distance Islam from Protestant Christianity, which rejects such idolatrous images – while simultaneously tarring Catholic idolatry.[262]

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[259] The pirate, according to Vitkus, had made a deal with the Turks that allowed him to remain in Tunis where he could attack Christian ships. See Daniel Vitkus, p. 24. He converted to Islam and adopted the name Reis Yusuf. Jonathan Gil Harries, *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism, and Disease in Shakespeare's England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), p. 153.

[260] See Chapter 4 for further discussion of Beauty's charms.

[261] Evenson, p. 46.

[262] Jane Degenhardt interestingly argues that in *The Renegado* Massinger reversed the plot of *A Christian Turned Turk*; while the latter concludes that the only consequence of conversion is death and eternal damnation, Massinger allows his convert to repent of his sins. The fact that Vitelli evaded circumcision,

Naturally with the threatening presence of the Ottomans, the considerable number of renegades and the confusing richness of this 'devilish empire', fears about religious conversion to Islam were considerably heightened. European minds became generally sceptical towards the nature of the converts, and the motives behind their conversions were usually believed to be carnal and sinful. It was said that renegades were bad Christians who became even worse Muslims attracted to the earthly riches of the Sultanate. For example, Budova describes from experience the kind of people who, in his eyes, are inclined to become 'renegades', as mercenary servants of Muslim powers:

> they did not believe in God and in eternal life, [...] they considered every religion as a political institution, and favoured such religious doctrines as were convenient to their *bodily welfare*, and contributed to their *glory and advantage in the world*. And as at Constantinople I saw all this with my eyes.[263]

By questioning the character of the converts,[264] Budova aims to belittle the importance of their choice and to minimise the Islamic influence on them. He continues to rationalise (or explain the lack of rationale in) their choices by arguing that Islam lures its targets by promises of wealth and riches, which testifies to the falseness of this religion that was seen to share much of its materialism with the Catholic Church.[265] This criticism embodies two

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Degenhardt argues, symbolises that his 'sexual transgression has not yet converted his body and thus can be reversed through spiritual cleansing'. Degenhardt in *Islamic Conversion and Christian Resistance on the Early Modern Stage*, p. 126; p. 132.

[263] Gosse, p. 246.

[264] Ward is evoked as a telling example of renegades who were amongst 15,000 individuals to convert to Islam, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, being either former slaves or those looking for wealth. As Faisal Al Yafai states, 'the English pirate Captain John Ward [was amongst] men who rose to great status and wealth attacking Europe's shipping'. See Faisal Al Yafai, 'Pirates of the Bou Regreg', *The National*, (2009): [unnumbered] <http://www.thenational.ae/lifestyle/travel/pirates-of-the-bou-regreg#full>.

[265] In a similar stance of evoking the feminine in religious dialogue in order to highlight carnality and corruption, Milton, in *Apology for Smectymnuus*, accused the Romanized Church of England of giving 'up her body to a mercenary whoredom under those fornicated arches which she calls God's house, and in sight of those her altars which she hath set up to be ador'd, makes merchandise of the bodies and souls of men'. See John Milton, *Prose Works of John Milton: with a Biographical Introduction* ed. by Rufus Wilmot Griswold, vol. I (Philadelphia: J. W. Moore, 1856), p. 83; John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy: Satire and Polemic in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 71. In the same text, Milton warns against false temptations that seek to tempt and deceive, by reminding his reader 'what was that which made the Jews, figured under the names Aholah and Aholibah, go a-whoring after all the heathen's inventions, but they saw a religion gorgeously attired and desirable to the eye?'. See also *The Prose Works of*

essential points: on the one hand converts were highly influenced by such lavish display and promises of wealth and power; on the other, by laying stress on its satisfaction of earthly desires, it highlighted the fraudulent nature of the religion, making it irrefutably false and spiritually empty. Notably, Budova's account does not specifically accentuate sexual appetite as the sole motivator of conversion, neither did the actual pamphlets bringing news of Ward's conversion.[266] In Daborne's play, however, Ward explicitly rejects promises of wealth, status and riches; only Voada succeeds in turning him, thus betraying Daborne's intention to deliver an overtly sexualised image of Islam and Muslim women.[267]

In Milton's late work *Samson Agonistes* (1671) women and sexuality are 'firmly associated with idolatry'.[268] As Thomas Corns explains, unlike Milton's earlier texts such as *Paradise Lost*, where 'Edenic sexuality' is celebrated, and *Comus*, where the Lady 'represented the godly person', holiness in *Samson* is distinctly 'masculine'.[269] Male attraction to female sexuality is equated to the attraction to idolatrous ornaments and temptations. It is through Samson's disloyal, or false, wife, Dalila, that this depiction is strikingly apparent. Like the demonic female characters discussed earlier in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* and Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Dalila is not what she seems to be, or at least what she seems to Samson.[270] In a passage that shares some affinities with the previous examples of female seductiveness and enchantment, Dalila is depicted in a singularly mysterious and compelling way, having lavished care on her appearance and the

John Milton, ed. by Robert Fletcher (London: Westley and Davis, 1835), p. 95 and David Lyle Jeffrey, *A Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1992), p. 28.

[266] Degenhardt, p. 15.

[267] In Massinger's play, Francisco warns Vitelli against 'Turkish dames', compares them to chained savage mastiffs and comments on their dangerous "lust" (I. 3. 11) and uncontrollable sexuality. See Judy A. Hayden, '"Turkish Dames" and "English Mastiffs": The "Turk" and the Female Body in Massinger's *The Renegado*', *The Seventeenth Century*, 28.4 (2013): 349-61; available online: <http://elibrary.bham.ac.uk/default-elibrary.asp>. See also Nabila Husson Bibi Shah, 'At Sea, in Text, and on Stage: Islam and Muslims in Early Modern English Drama' (Unpublished Masters Dissertation: University of Birmingham, 2014), p. 50.

[268] Thomas N. Corns, *A New Companion to Milton* (Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 2016), p. 86.

[269] Ibid.

[270] Of course, Samson realises Dalila's dangerous nature because of her betrayal of him to her people, the Philistines.

embellishments of her attire, she is strongly associated with exotic journeys. As she is first sighted approaching Samson, Dalila is heralded by the chorus as an unfamiliar 'thing', difficult to distinguish or identify:

> But who is this, what thing of Sea or Land?
> Femal of sex it seems,
> That so bedeckt, ornate, and gay,
> Comes this way sailing
> Like a stately Ship
> Of *Tarsus*, bound for th' Isles
> Of *Javan* or *Gadier*
> With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
> Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
> Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
> An Amber sent of odorous perfume
> Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
> Some rich *Philistian* Matron she may seem,
> And now at nearer view, no other certain
> Then Dalila thy wife.
> (*Samson Agonistes,* 710-24)

While the simile of the ship (714-21) was 'traditionally an image of prostitution', Corns astutely observes that the language of the passage embodies deeper religious connotations in a way that reflects Spenser's Duessa in their association with the Whore of Babylon. Since the Biblical figure was identified by 'ardent Protestants with the Church of Rome', Corns concludes that Milton's motives behind alluding to Spenser here is to 'transform the biblical Dalila into the literary daughter of Duessa' where she emerges as 'a figure of false religion'.[271] The moment Samson divorces himself from his false wife,[272] he successfully rejects idolatry and is freed from his 'idolatrous past'.[273] Furthermore, the description of

[271] Corns, p. 87.
[272] For Milton's views on divorce, see John Milton, *The Doctrine & Discipline of Divorce Restor'd to the Good of Both Sexes* (London, 1645) and *Tetrachordon* (London, 1645).
[273] Corns, p. 87.

Dalila as an unfamiliar 'thing', that 'seems' to be a female who 'seems' as something otherworldly, but is none other than Samson's wife, is indicative of a sudden disenchantment with her and an exposure of her reality and truth, much like the way Duessa is stripped of her rich attire and her true ugliness exposed. It is after the description of her alluring Eastern perfume that Dalila appears in her true form. Indeed, the language of this passage is reminiscent of the moment in *Paradise Lost* when the delightful sensations that greet Satan on reaching Eden are likened to the experience of those voyagers welcomed by the 'Sabean Odours' from Arabia Felix:

> [...] As when to them who saile
> Beyond the *Cape of Hope*, and now are past
> *Mozambic*, off at Sea North-East windes blow
> *Sabean* Odours from the spicie shoare
> Of *Arabie* the blest.
> (*PL*, IV. 159-63)

Milton's views on Anglo-Ottoman relations, I propose, are possibly reflected in these two passages:[274] while, as mentioned earlier, English nationalism was clearly celebrated, the journey or the commercial adventures with the Ottomans continued to evoke religious and political anxieties.[275] According to Feisal Mohamed, while Milton was in the role of Secretary of Foreign Tongues, the state letters 'reveal a Comonwealth that wished to keep the Meditteranean open to English ships'.[276] However, they 'certainly do not foster any illusions about a burgeoning affection for Islam'.[277] When one of the ships that carried

[274] In *Eikonoklastes*, Milton compared the lack of liberty enjoyed under Monarchical rule to the liberties 'Turkish Vassals enjoy [...] under Mahomet and the Grand Signor', p. 205.
[275] In *Fair Maid of the West*, for example, Degenhardt argues that the play tackles concerns about trade relations with the Ottomans and the Moroccans where global trade was perceived as a threat at that time. See Jane Hwang Degenhardt, 'Gold Digger or Golden Girl? Purifying the Pursuit of Gold in Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, Part I', in *Historical Affects and the Early Modern Theater*, ed. by Michelle Dowd, Ronda Arab and Adam Zucker (New Work: Routledge, 2015), pp. 152-68.
[276] Mohamed, p. 72. See also Matar, *Islam in Britain*, p. 82.
[277]. Ibid. Mohamed adds that the Commonwealth sent 'encouraging words' when there was talk of 'a Muscovite campaigne against the Turks', ibid. See also Milton, *A brief history of Muscovia* (London, Printed by M. Flesher, for Brabazon Alymer, 1682) and *Declaration of Letters or, Letters patents of the election of*

goods for the Turkish Sultan himself, 'rice, sugare and coffe', *The Little Lewis,* broke away from the Ottoman fleet to Livorno, the Commonwealth sent word to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand, to seize the ship and restore 'those goods to the *Sultan*' in order to avoid 'exposing the Christian Name to scandal', and to protect 'our Merchants living under the *Turks* [from] Violence and Ransack'.[278]

Such political and economic anxieties fostered by Anglo-Ottoman trade, are mirrored, I suggest, in *Paradise Lost*, with the figure of Satan who embarks on sea journeys and is welcomed by Sabean winds and Arabian perfumes.[279] Satan's demonic nature is linked to a surprising sense of homely welcome, ease and comfort as he approaches the land of 'Arabie the blest' (IV. 163), suggesting a peculiar link between the demonic figure's comfort nearing Arabian shores.[280] Similarly, Dalila, the Philistine,[281] approaches Samson, 'courted by all the winds' (*SA*, 719) and 'Amber sent of odorous perfume' (720); her demonic nature is further emphasised with the accompanying imagery of serpentine women as her 'damsel train' (721) trails behind.[282] It might be the case that much like the devilish wife offered in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine,* Dalila is presented as a false demonic wife, set to tempt Samson and weaken his faith.[283] While Satan became subsumed within the exotic perfumes and was momentarily submerged within this state, Samson can only be redeemed by withstanding the baits, lures and false promises of Dalila.[284]

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this present King of Poland, John the Third (London, 1674), pp. 1-8, where Polish victory against the Turks is celebrated.

[278] See *Letters of state written by Mr. John Milton, to most of the sovereign princes and republicks of Europe, from the year 1649, till the year 1659* (London, 1694), p. 266; pp. 282-84. See also Mohamed, p. 71.

[279] It is also worth noting that the Commonwealth instructed Admiral Blake Robert to bombard the city of Algiers 'should its rulers refuse to release' the English prisoners. Mohamed, p. 72. For more on delivering 'all Christians groaning under *Turkish* Servitude', see *Letters of State*, pp. 273-75

[280] See Chapter 5 for an analysis of Satan's sensations here.

[281] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, pp. 75-6.

[282] Note that the chorus describes Dalila as a 'manifest serpent by her sting / Discovered at the end' (997-98).

[283] Samson resists Dalila's enchanting powers stating ' Nor think me so unwary so accurst / To bring my feet again into the snare / Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains / [...] thy ginns, and toyls; / Thy fair encanted cup, and warbling charms / No more on me have power' (*SA*, 930-35).

[284] See Chapter 4 for a detailed analysis of Eastern female seductiveness in *Paradise Lost*.

As demonstrated in this chapter, a considerable amount of exposure towards non-Christian thought, particularly Islam and Judaism, is revealed in the work of Early Modern reformists, playwrights, travellers and scholars. Much of this knowledge, attained due to the expansion of Anglo-Ottoman relations, was utilised in religious narratives and literary texts to tailor compelling arguments that would resonate with the political and religious needs of the time. Whether to support a particular political figure (such as the favourable portrayals of Queen Elizabeth alluded to earlier), to strengthen a religious argument or merely to vilify a rival faith or leader, English writers repeatedly turned to Judaism and Islam as an imaginative resource.

Often such depictions of Judeo-Arabic thought and culture were presented as flawed and distorted versions of true Christianity, and non-Christian figures, such as Muhammad, the Ottoman Sultan or 'Eastern' women, were discussed in a way that emphasised their presence as demonic reflections of their virtuous Christian counterparts. Biblical allusions were also evoked to further situate Islam and Judaism as distorted pretences of the true faith. The chapters that follow limit their analysis to examining the presence of two figures from Judeo-Arabic mythology in Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Iblis, the Islamic devil, and Lilith, his consort and the first Eve in the Jewish tradition, as inverted shadows of the Biblical Satan and Eve. While Iblis, I argue, forms an infernal triangulation with the teachings of Muhammad and the military might of the Ottoman Sultan, Lilith embodies the ultimate Eastern seductress and false wife discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Satan as Iblis, the Fallen Sultan

> *Once he read an inscription on the gates of paradise, and it read: There is a servant among the most highly favoured servants of the Almighty Lord, and for a long time he will be obedient and serve his Lord well. There will come a day, however, on which he will oppose his Lord and disobey, and he will be driven from His gates and be cursed. Iblis, who was then still called Azazil, read and wondered at this prediction. 'How can that be,' he asked, 'that one of the closest servants to the Lord should grow disobedient to the Lord of the Worlds and be driven from His Holy Nearness?'; 'Oh Lord,' he pleaded, 'give me permission to curse that rebellious one, whoever he may be.' The Lord gave him permission, and Iblis showered curses upon that future sinner for one thousand years, knowing not that it was to be himself.*[1]

It might surprise Western readers unfamiliar with Arabic or Middle-Eastern beliefs to learn how frequently readers familiar with Islamic teachings recognize in the account of the Fall in *Paradise Lost* a narrative that bears remarkably close parallels with the Qur'anic account in a number of important instances. As Gerald MacLean points out: 'writers schooled in the Islamic tradition can and do recognize common cause with the Christian tradition; at least with Milton's often revolutionary version of it'.[2] Most notably, it is in Milton's depiction of Satan that readers well versed in the Islamic tradition find a representation that speaks to Islamic belief; indeed, Omar Farrukh, former professor of Philosophy at the Lebanese University, has gone so far as to claim that Milton was greatly influenced by the 'Qur'anic account of Satan's disobedience of God's orders'.[3]

Perhaps stemming from a generally dismissive attitude to Milton's possible knowledge of Arabic literature or Islamic belief in favour of an overly exclusive emphasis on his interest in classical literature, critical analysis has not attributed to Milton's work

[1] Oral Arabic folklore: [undocumented]; available online at the link below: <http://www.ummah.com/forum/showthread.php?144569-The-Story-of-Jinn-Azazil-amp-Iblis>.
[2] Gerald Maclean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', in *Milton and Toleration*, ed. by Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 284-98 (293).
[3] Omar Farrukh, *Hakim Al-Ma'arrah* (Beirut: Al-Kashshaf, 1948 [reprint 1994]), p. 127, also cited in Eid Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave: Milton and the Arab-Muslim World* (London: Hesperus, 2012), p. 102; p. 157. See too, MacLean, 'Milton, Islam, and the Ottomans', pp. 293-98, where he detects a general similarity between Satan and Iblis.

any significant Arabic or Islamic influence;[4] in fact, there is a marked tendency to reject this possibility.[5] Recently, however, a few scholarly endeavours have reconsidered Milton's attitudes towards Islam and its most influential text, the Qur'an.[6] The main obstacle that has hindered such studies is, as Eid Dahiyat has stressed, conclusive proof that Milton ever read the Qur'an,[7] and yet, given the fascination it held for Milton's intellectual and religious milieu, it would surely be more remarkable if he had not.

When considering the possible presence of Islamic ideas and imagery in Milton's poem, it is important to bear in mind the intellectual environment that was beginning to take shape when Milton was a young man: as we have seen in the previous chapters, the early part of the seventeenth century was a time of significant expansion in Arabic studies, and Cambridge University was at the forefront of these important developments. Although Abraham Wheelock was only installed as the first Sir Thomas Adams' Professor of Arabic

[4] Scholars interested in points of contact between Milton and Arabic culture tend to focus on the recent Arabic reception and translations of Milton's work. For more on this topic, see Jeffrey Einboden, 'A Qur'anic Milton: From Paradise to Al-Firdaws', *Milton Quarterly*, 43 (2009): 183-94; Dahiyat, 'Aspects of John Milton in Arabic', *Milton Quarterly*, 18.1 (March 1984): 5-13; and Islam Issa, 'Transforming *Paradise Lost*: Translation and Reception of John Milton's Writing in the Arab-Muslim World' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Birmingham, 2014).

[5] For example, Dahiyat states: 'there is no concrete evidence that Milton read the Qur'an. Milton's depiction of Satan, the war in Heaven, and the fall of the devil and his followers are derived from the Old and New Testaments, the books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Talmud and Tagrums, as well as from classical mythology'. See Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 102.

[6] There have been a few works that have given some consideration to Milton's representation or knowledge of Islam. See MacLean, 'Milton among the Muslims', in *The Religions of the Book: Christian Perceptions, 1400–1660*, ed. by Matthew Dimmock and Andrew Hadfield (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008), pp. 180-94, and 'Milton, Islam, and the Ottomans', pp. 284-98; David Currell and François-Xavier Gleyzon (eds.), 'Milton and Islam Bridging Cultures', *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015): 1-5; and Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*. For work that argues for Arabic, Islamic or Middle-Eastern influence on Milton's *Paradise Lost*, see Feisal Mohamed, 'Milton's Enmity towards Islam and the Intellectus Agens', *English Studies*, 96 (2015): 65-81, where he proposes an influence of Islamic philosophy on Milton's invocation of light. See also Muhammad Sid-Ahmad, 'Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Milton's Adam', in *Milton and Questions of History: Essays by Canadians Past and Present*, ed. by Feisal Mohamed and Mary Nyquist (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), pp. 355-78; and Sharihan Al-Akhras, 'The Anima at the Gate of Hell: Middle Eastern Imagery in Milton's *Paradise Lost*', in *Translating Myth*, ed. by Ben Pestell, Pietra Palazzolo, and Leon Burnett (Oxford: Legenda, 2016), pp. 43-57.

[7] Dahiyat's *Once Upon the Orient Wave* was the first work to ever tackle the possibility that Milton read the Qur'an. However, he dismisses the possibility and lays stress on there being no supportive evidence to suggest that Milton read the Qur'an; he also fails to find a Qur'anic influence on Milton's Satan, and, indeed, a substantial part of his argument is devoted rather to Milton's influence on the depiction of Satan in Arabic literature (see pp. 111-26). Nevertheless, MacLean has challenged Dahiyat's conclusions by his timely reminder that 'absence of evidence has never been evidence of absence'. See 'Milton, Islam, and the Ottomans', p. 294.

in 1632,[8] just as Milton was leaving the University, he had been appointed University Librarian three years before in 1629. Wheelock immediately showed himself eager to develop an Arabic collection, and he wrote to Bedwell asking him to donate his copy of 'Alcoran' to the university library:[9] Bedwell promised to do so, writing *in sha'allah* in Arabic, and made good on his promise in 1631 when the volume was bequeathed to the library.[10] Wheelock was also instrumental in ensuring that an important collection of Arabic manuscripts that had been amassed by Thomas Van Erpe, the first Leiden Professor of Arabic, came to the university in 1632.[11] It seems unlikely that Milton would have been altogether unaware of the exciting developments in Oriental studies that were taking place around him at Cambridge.[12]

In the 1640s, with the early blossoming of Oriental scholarship at Oxford as well as Cambridge,[13] attention increasingly focused on the need for an authoritative edition and

[8] The chair was endowed by Sir Thomas Adams, who had made his fortune as a London draper, with the expressed hope that it would be 'not only to the advancement of good literature by bringing to light much knowledge which as yet is locked up in that learned tongue; but also to the good service of the King and State in our commerce with those Eastern nations, and in God's good time to the enlarging of the borders of the Church, and propagation of the Christian religion to them who now sit in darkness'. As cited in Christopher Brooke and Roger Highfield, *Oxford and Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 180.

[9] The earliest translation of the Qur'an into a Western language was the Latin text, provocatively entitled, *Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete* (1141-1143), led by Robert de Ketton, under the auspices of Peter the Venerable of Cluny. Despite the doubts thrown on the accuracy of this translation, and the incomplete nature of the work, many accounts of Arabs and Muslims still relied on this twelfth-century translation into Latin. See David Thomas and Barbara Roggema (eds.), *Christian Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History, Volume I (600-900)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 511; see also Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom, 1140-1560* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2007).

[10] On the first leaf of the manuscript is an inscription in Wheelock's hand, marking the donation (Ms Ii.6.48 l.1). Bedwell had been planning to publish the first Arabic-English dictionary, and had also bequeathed his notes, together with a set of damaged Arabic type, to the University for that purpose, but the project never came to fruition. For a more detailed account of the establishment of Arabic studies at Cambridge, see G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 85-93.

[11] The collection was purchased by the Duke of Buckingham on Erpe's death in 1624. The Duke was elected Chancellor of the University in 1626, but after his sudden death two years later, it seemed unlikely that the University would benefit from the collection. However, Wheelock wrote to the Duke's widow, urging her to donate the collection to the University: as he put it, it lacked 'only matter & store of Bookes to encourage & cherish this new Studdy amongst us'. See Toomer, p. 93.

[12] It is interesting to note that a decade or so later, Milton's and Wheelock's signatures appear together in an album belonging to Christopher Arnold, a German scholar who travelled to England in 1651. Milton also met John Greaves, an Arabic scholar at Oxford. See Dahiyat, p. 45.

[13] Edward Pococke became the Laudian Professor of Arabic in 1636; Archbishop Laud (Chancellor of the University, 1633-45) endowed the chair in perpetuity in 1641. Laud also purchased materials for the Bodleian Library; in a letter of thanks, the University acknowledged that he had 'greatly enriched' its

translation of the Qur'an,[14] regarded as an essential tool for refuting the errors contained in the sacred text of Islam. Abraham Wheelock had undertaken an ambitious Latin-Greek translation of the Qur'an accompanied by a thorough refutation of its teachings in Arabic. Although Wheelock was seeking to advance Oriental-Arabic studies, his motives were still primarily polemical,[15] as he strongly affirms in the lines that follow:

> I would not set out the Alcoran onlie to tell the Latin Church, who know it to well already, nor yet put it into Greek to boast of that skil be it that little soever, in that Language; but by the helpe of Merchants I would have the Methode of confuting it, and the discoverie of the plaine fallacies thereof, be without noise, if it may bee, be communicated to some well minded Christians at Aleppo &ce and in Persia and other places [...] Set aside some grosse idolatries of the church of Roome, & their Tyrannicall government, the only pressure on the bodie of the Church of Christ is Mahomets Alcoran, I desire to breath out my Last breth in this cause, and to my poore skil, I would endeavour to write Notes against the Alcoran in the Language of the Alcoran, which is the Arabick.[16]

While the project enjoyed widespread support at the University, and approval had even been won for forging a new Arabic font at the University's expense, it was eventually abandoned after Wheelock had sent a sample of his work to Samuel Hartlib, and it failed to find favour: 'Mr. Hartlib returned my Papers, and told me they were not, or else my

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treasury of books 'by importing Araby into Oxford'. See Matthew Birchwood, *Staging Islam in England: Drama and Culture, 1640–1685* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), p. 30.

[14] Such an approach was only heightened in the seventeenth century, when there was a notable increase in translations of the Qur'an into the vernacular, including: the German translation *Alcoranus Mahometicus* (1616), the Latin *Turcarum Alcoranus* (1632), the French *L'Alcoran de Mahomet* (1647) and the Dutch *Mahomets Alkoran* (1657). Much in line with the missionary nature of Arabic studies earlier in the century, such as Bedwell's *Mohammedis Imposturae*, these translations sought to facilitate Muslim conversion. Ross, having noticed translations in 'Latin, Italian, French' and other European languages, as he stated, decided to undertake an English translation, despite the fact that Ross did not know Arabic, and had to rely on the French version that appeared in 1647. See Nabil Matar, *Islam in Britain, 1558–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 76.

[15] The earliest translations sought to disprove 'the law of Mahomet', and it was believed that if accurate information about him and Islam was made available then his claims would be refuted. It was to this end that Peter the Venerable had commissioned the translation of the Qur'an into Latin mentioned in the note above. The emergence of such translations highlighted the similarities between the Qur'an and Judeo-Christian teachings to such an extent that Peter believed salvation was possible for Muslims: he was driven by his belief that Muslims were the enemy of Christ in the sense that they rejected his salvation, but since they venerated him and the Virgin Mary, as they did believe in the virgin birth, they could be saved through conversion. Farhad Daftary, *The Assassin Legends: Myths of the Isma'ilis* (London: Tauris, 1994), p. 58.

[16] Hartlib Papers, 33/4/2 (12 Sept. 1642), as cited in Toomer, p. 89.

Intention was not, approved. I purposedly was desirous to be ignorant who should give this severe Censure.'[17]

In the summer of 1648, Samuel Hartlib was notified that John Boncle was also at work on 'an exact Concordance upon the Alcoran' which he planned to produce with the original text and a translation, together with evidence to prove 'how ignorantly and falsly Mahomet hath taken his stories and doctrines out of the Bibel or other Legends'.[18] Interest in the Qur'an was thus not simply confined to scholars of Arabic: it is clear that Samuel Hartlib was at this time particularly interested in such undertakings and was playing a key role in gathering information about their progress.

By June 1648, Moses Wall had let Hartlib know that a 'friend' of his had finished an English translation of the Qur'an but was waiting for 'a Historie of Mahomet's life and his Religion' before proceeding to publish. Just six months later the first English translation of the Qur'an, together with 'The Life and Death of Mahomet, the Prophet of the Turks, and Author of the Alcoran' was entered in the Stationer's Register on 29 December 1648. It would not be unreasonable to assume that Milton was aware that such an eagerly-awaited project had come to fruition through his own association with Hartlib,[19] and perhaps also through an acquaintanceship with Abraham Wheelock and Moses Wall himself. Hartlib had known both Milton and Wall since the early 1640s, and Milton may have known Wall since their time together at Cambridge.[20]

[17] HP 15/6/27A; Ussher, *Works*, 16:176. Although Wheelock refused to speculate about who was responsible for his failure to secure Hartlib's support, it has generally been attributed to the manoeuvrings of Christian Ravius who had embarked on a similar project. For a more detailed account of these and similar projects, see Mordechai Feingold, '"The Turkish Alcoran": New Light on the 1649 English Translation of the Koran', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 75 (2012): 475-501.

[18] *Ephemerides* (1648), HP 31/22/9A-B, as cited in Feingold, p. 499.

[19] Both Milton and Wall are listed with other names by Hartlib under the heading, 'commissioners for the Act of Councel for schooling' in an undated note, possibly dating from 1647. See Noel Malcolm, 'Moses Wall: Millenarian, Tolerationist, and Friend of Milton', *The Seventeenth Century*, 27 (2012): 25-53 (38).

[20] Wall entered Emmanuel College as a pensioner in 1627 and took his BA in 1632; Milton was at Christ's from 1625-32. While it is uncertain whether or not Milton knew Wall during the five years that they were both at Cambridge, in a letter Wall wrote to Milton in 1659, thanking him for his *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, he recalled his 'Respect for your Friendliness to Truth in yor early Years', which may suggest that he knew Milton as a young man at Cambridge. See Malcolm, p. 25.

Given the commotion that followed the announcement in Parliament that the first translation of the Qur'an into English was about to be published,[21] it would seem even more plausible to credit Milton with having read the Qur'an than to presume that he would have neglected to read it,[22] especially when the timing of this particular incident is taken into account. It was on 19 March 1649, the day before Milton was inducted into his new role as Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Council of State,[23] that Colonel Anthony Weldon had caused a stir in the House of Commons by an inflammatory speech in which he sought to bring to members' notice the forthcoming publication of the English translation of the Qur'an. After Colonel Weldon had petitioned the Council of State against the translation, the Council immediately issued a warrant to 'Search for the Press, where the *Turkish* Alcoran is informed to be now printing, and to seize the same, and the papers: also to apprehend the printer'.[24] Two days later the incident was referred to the Council of State 'further to examine the Matter'.[25] After a short delay, publication of The *Alcaron of Mahomet* went ahead towards the end of April, albeit now accompanied by a lengthy 'health warning', penned by Alexander Ross: 'A needfull Caveat or Admonition for them who desire to know what use may be made of, or if there be danger in reading the *Alcoran*'.[26]

[21] *The Alcoran of Mahomet* was itself a translation of Andre Du Ryer's *L'Alcoran de Mahomet*, a direct translation of the Qur'an from Arabic into French (Paris, 1647). For a detailed discussion of the controversy surrounding the publication, and its perceived significance, see Malcolm, 'The 1649 English Translation of the Koran: Its Origins and Significance', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, LXXV (2012): 261-95; and Feingold, pp. 475-501.

[22] The book was much in demand and ran to a second edition within the year.

[23] On 13 March 1649 the Council of State decided to invite Milton to become its Secretary for Foreign Tongues. Milton accepted the post two days later on 15 March, and was inducted on 20 March 1649. See J. Milton French (ed.), *The Life Records of John Milton*, 5 vols. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1949-58), p. 234.

[24] *Journal of the House of Commons*, 6:168.

[25] *Journal of the House of Commons*, 6:170.

[26] That the publication was not suppressed has been attributed to the prevalence of 'tolerationist sympathies' in the Council of State at this time, see Malcolm, 'The 1649 English Translation of the Koran', p. 294.

Alexander Ross prudently recommended circumspection when approaching the Qur'an:[27] 'they only may surely & without danger read the *Alcoran*, who are intelligent, judicious, learned, and throughly grounded in piety, and principles of Christianity', cautioning that 'weak, ignorant, inconstant, and disaffected mindes to the truth, must not venture to meddle with this unhallowed piece, lest they be polluted with the touch thereof'.[28] Thomas Ross, the likely translator, understandably put a more positive construction on how his translation, by exposing this 'gallimaufry of errors',[29] would strengthen rather than damage the reader's faith: 'viewing thine enemies in their full body, thou mayst the better prepare to encounter, and I hope overcome them'.[30] His approach has much more in common with Milton's combative spirit in the *Areopagitica* (1644) where the latter had urged that the wars of truth should be openly fought with the confident assurance that Truth will never come off worse if she were permitted to grapple in a 'free and open encounter' with Falsehood.[31]

Indeed, in the *Areopagitica* Milton had explicitly likened the wilful suppression of truth by the Roman Church to the deliberate imposition of ignorance on the followers of Islam. From this perspective, licensing was 'first establisht and put in practice by Antichristian malice and mystery on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light

[27] According to Matar, as Ross was 'the beneficiary of the English Monarch', he may have planned to publish his translation with the hope of receiving royal patronage. However, by the time Ross finished his translation, *The Alcoran of Mahomet* (1649), the king was dead, executed on 29th January of that year. See Matar, p. 76.
[28] See 'Caveat' in *Alcoran*, p. 451. All quotations from the *Alcoran* are taken from the following translation: *The Alcoran of Mahomet [...] Newly Englished* (London, 1649).
[29] Intriguingly, this relatively unusual expression is echoed in a tract published two years later that has been fancifully attributed to Milton, *The Life and Reigne of King Charls, Or the Pseudo-Martyr discovered*, (London: Printed for W. Reybold at the signe of the Unicorn in Pauls Church-yard, 1651) in which Falsity is once again allied with Islam and Truth with the reformed faith. The author argues that the 'grand Imposture' practised by the *Eikon Basilike* could only satisfy those that 'have a desire to be cosened out of their understandings', staunchly concluding that, 'I think an Asian beliefe would better fit them than an European Faith, a gallymaufried Alcoran, rather than a true and rationall Remonstrance, drest with no other Rethorick than the naked truth' (186). Indeed, in the preface, Charles I is himself explicitly aligned with Muhammad in the egregious nature of their alleged deceit: 'with his picture praying in the Frontispiece, purposely to catch and amuse people, magnifying all his misleads for pious actions, canonizing him for a Saint, and idolizing his memory for an innocent Martyr, an imposture without other parallel than that of Mahomet' (sig. A.8r-*A.IV).
[30] Ross, 'The Translator to the Christian Reader' in *The Alcoran of Mahomet*, A2.
[31] *Riverside*, p. 1021.

of Reformation, and to settle falsehood', thus little differing from 'that policie wherewith the Turk upholds his *Alcoran* by the prohibition of Printing',[32] the implication being that Islam would no longer hold sway over its adherents were the Qur'an to be published and its deficiencies and errors fully exposed.[33]

It is interesting to note that the suppression of truth by the Roman Church and the deliberate imposition of ignorance by Islam are linked together here in Milton's mind. Milton's association of the two is very much in keeping with the rhetoric of religious dissension discussed in the previous chapter. Even if Milton's interest was not piqued by the publication of the first English version of the *Alcoran*,[34] he may well have looked at the Latin translation that had been readily available since the mid-sixteenth century when Theodor Bibliander had published *Machumetis saracenorum principis eiusque successorum vitae ac doctrina, ipseque Alcoran* (Basel: Joannes Oporinus, 1543), heavily based on the translation produced four centuries earlier by Robert of Ketton. The Parker Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Marlowe's college, had a copy of the second edition (1550), and certainly, the playwright, as mentioned in the previous chapter, shows an impressive degree of familiarity with the Qur'an in *Tamburlaine*. If Marlowe cited the Qur'an to add authenticity to this Islamic view of the afterlife, then it would seem

[32] *Riverside*, p. 1017.

[33] That the Turks themselves are prohibited from reading the Qur'an, 'for feare lest the vniuersality of learning should subuert their false grounded religion and policy; which is better preserued by an ignorant obedience' was a line of argument expounded by George Sandys in his popular travel narrative *A Relation of a Iourney Begun An: Dom: 1610*, STC 21726 (London, 1615), p. 64. Richard Holdsworth, one of the tutors at Cambridge, had included it in his recommended reading for students: 'Directions for a Student at the University'. For further discussion of Holdsworth's curriculum, see Bryn Roberts, *Puritanism and the Pursuit of Happiness: The Ministry and Theology of Ralph Venning, c. 1621–1674* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), pp. 30-3. Following the line of reasoning anticipated by Sandys and Milton before him, Alexander Ross wryly remarked: 'that merchandise may justly be suspected which will not be sold, unlesse unseen'. Ross, 'The Translator to the Christian Reader' (*Alcoran*, sig. A3-A3v).

[34] This edition remained the 'only full translation available to the English reader until the publication of George Sale's translation in 1734', see Birchwood, p. 33. It proved very popular; as Matar points out, 'thinkers from all sectors in English society read Ross's "Alcoran" and alluded to it', see p. 81. For example, in 1664, Thomas Smith turned to the *Alcoran* and to Arab histories in search of information regarding the origin of the Druids, see Matar, p. 82.

likely that the scholarly Milton would be as concerned to acquaint himself with its teachings and to mine its imagery for his own purposes.

However, aside from his exploitation of the image of 'Turkish tyranny' in political polemic and, most famously, to discredit Satan's republican stance in *Paradise Lost*, John Milton has generally been passed over in scholarship concerned with the influence of Arabic studies on Early Modern literature. However, since Islam was recognized to be one of the great challenges to the true faith at this time, it would be surprising if its presence were not felt in Milton's great Protestant epic, *Paradise Lost*. Given that together with 'paganisme' and 'Popery', "Mahumetanisme' was viewed as one of the three 'grosse mistakes' that had been 'raised in the darke'[35] by the devil himself, the place to look for its presence would surely be Hell and, more specifically, in the representation of Satan, the leader of the fallen angels.

This chapter aims to demonstrate how Milton's depiction of Satan is intriguingly similar to his Qur'anic counterpart Iblis.[36] Without overstating the Qur'anic influence, it offers for consideration a number of significant instances where the outlines of both fallen angels converge together in a way that may be felt to amplify our understanding of the particular narrative moment. While scholars have frequently acknowledged the potent symbolism attached to the image of 'Turkish tyranny' in Early Modern literature, Milton's own writing included, little attention has been accorded to the reception of Arabic or Islamic mythology. Readers are familiar with the way Milton appropriates narrative

[35] Thomas Hill, *The Militant Church, Triumphant over the Dragon and His Angels* (London, 1643), p. 19.
[36] Recently, the word Iblis has been phonologically linked with the Greek διάβολος through the Syriac *d.b.l.s* (as diblūs or diābūlūs). It has been suggested that while the Arabic term was borrowed from the Greek, through the Syriac, the initial 'd', *dal*, was either mistook for an 'a' *alef* and dropped, or the dālath was assumed to be the genitive particle that often precedes nouns in Syriac; therefore, it was dropped transforming diabolos into Iabolos and eventually Iblis. See G. S. Reynolds, 'A Reflection on Two Qurʾānic Words (Iblīs and Jūdī), with Attention to the Theories of A. Mingana', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 124 (2004): 675-89. The devil in the Islamic texts is referred to as Shaytan (Satan) as well as Iblis ابليس, a word that derives from the Arabic root *balasa* بلس (he despaired) which comes to mean desperation and rebellion: rebelling against God and despairing his mercy. For more on the difference between the two names and Milton's possible employment of the Islamic devil, see Gerald MacLean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', pp. 293-98.

paradigms from classical epic both to enhance Satan's characterization and subvert classical conceptions of heroism; it is interesting to speculate whether he also deployed a similar, though not so extensive, strategy, in relation to Islam, drawing on Qur'anic imagery in the cause of Christian truth, while at the same time tarring Muhammad's teachings as impostures of Satan.

In order to appreciate more fully the points of convergence between Satan and his Qur'anic counterpart Iblis, it is worth looking briefly at the narrative trajectory of the latter's rise and fall as it is traced in the Qur'an. Before looking carefully at the story of the Fall in both accounts, I will, as a point of departure, refer to the angelic figure Azazel, who is singled out for mention in *Paradise Lost* as Satan's standard-bearer, but is held to be Satan himself in the Judeo-Arabic tradition. This will be followed by a comparative analysis of the fall of both devils, as narrated in the *Alcoran* and *Paradise Lost*, in which I shall also elaborate on the striking similarity between their devilish tactics, before finally relating this analysis to the way Satan and his forces are conveyed through the well-established military imagery of Islam and the Ottoman Sultanate as evident in Milton's rendering of hell.

The Devout Azazel

In keeping with the militaristic image of Islam and Muhammad, discussed in the previous chapter, Milton conjures up the famous legends of military conflict between Christians and Saracen or 'Infidel' knights:[37]

> In Fable or *Romance* of *Uthers* Son
> Begirt with *British* and *Armoric* Knights;

[37] For more on the battles with the Saracens as described in the *Song of Roland* and *Orlando Furioso* echoed in the passage above, see John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Merritt Yerkes Hughes (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2005), note to I. 548.

> And all who since, Baptiz'd or Infidel
> Jousted in *Aspramont* or *Montalban*,
> *Damasco*, or *Marocco*, or *Trebisond*
> Or whom *Biserta* sent from *Afric* shore
> When *Charlemain* with all his Peerage fell
> By *Fontarabbia*.
> (*PL*, I. 580-87)

In contrast with these scenes of single combat, Milton memorably introduces the massed military might of the fallen angels. As the resplendent forces of the infernal army parade before their leader, 'Ten thousand banners…/With Orient Colours waving' (I. 545-6), the standard-bearer Azazel raises 'Th'Imperial Ensign' in a breathtaking show of strength, as Satan

> Then strait *commands* that at the *warlike* sound
> Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard
> His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim'd
> *Azazel* as his right, a Cherube tall:
> Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld
> Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't
> *Shon like a Meteor* streaming to the Wind
> With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
> Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while
> Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:
> At which the universal Host upsent
> A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond
> Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.
> (*PL*, I. 531-43; emphasis added)[38]

Not only do the allusions to the conflict with the Saracens enrich the powerful depiction of Ottoman military force, but the timely evocation of Azazel adds a theological depth to the politically embedded lines. Most commentaries on Milton's motive for making Azazel the

[38] I have emphasised the lines above due to their intriguing similarity with the Qur'anic depiction of fallen devils chased by heavenly planets and meteors. The following part of this chapter elaborates on this point of resemblance in more detail.

infernal standard-bearer usually attribute it either to a regular adaptation of common demonological accounts of the time or to an erroneous derivation of the Hebrew ‘’azaz’ as ‘to be strong’.[39] According to A. W Verity, it is generally now held that ‘the word was the title of some evil demon’, and by ‘making him one of the fallen angels’, Verity believes that Milton ‘simply followed some tradition of mediæval demonologists.’[40] Likewise, in their commentary on these lines in *Paradise Lost,* Miner, Moeck and Jablonski turn to the ‘learned’ Dr. John Spencer who demonstrates, in *De Hirco Emissario,* that the name Azazel refers to ‘some demon or devil’ used by ‘several ancient’ Jewish and Christian authors. For Miner *et al*, the name embodies ‘a proper appellation for a standard-bearer to the fallen angels’ since it derives from two Hebrew words, ‘*Az* and *Azel*, signifying “brave in retreating”’.[41]

However, more recently Judith and Brendan Wolfe have drawn attention to Denis Saurat’s earlier study, *Milton: Man and Thinker* (1925), for the way it has brought to light to ‘peculiarities in [*Paradise Lost*] which are indefensible by any Christian precedent but explicable as fruits of [Milton’s] acquaintance with a medieval corpus of Jewish mystical writings commonly styled the *Zohar*’.[42] One such unorthodox view is Milton’s representation of the fallen angels as being ‘led by a certain Azazel’.[43] According to Saurat, the presence of the infernal Azazel, as he concedes, ‘has always been a hard angel to explain’; especially given the prominent role he is accorded here in the narrative. Saurat

[39] Earl Roy Miner, William Moeck and Steven Edward Jablonski (eds.), *Paradise Lost, 1668-1968: Three Centuries of Commentary* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), p. 80.
[40] John Milton, *Milton’s Paradise Lost I and II* ed. by A. W. Verity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), p. 91.
[41] Miner *et al*, p. 80.
[42] For a detailed discussion of Saurat’s analysis of Milton’s unorthodox views, see Judith Wolfe and Brendan N. Wolfe (eds.), *C. S. Lewis and the Church: Essays in Honour of Walter Hooper* (London: T & T Clark, 2011), pp. 31-5 (32).
[43] Ibid, pp. 32-3.

argues that Milton is most likely to have turned here to the Book of Enoch where Azazel is described in telling detail:[44]

> Azâzêl taught men to make swords, and knives, and shields, and breastplates, and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them... [He also taught men] bracelets, and ornaments, and the use of antimony, and the beautifying of the eyelids, and all kinds of costly stones, and all colouring tinctures.
> (Enoch, VIII. 1).[45]

Saurat draws parallels between this account of Azazel's military background – in addition to his skills as a master craftsman – and the description of Azazel as the maker of 'Th' Imperial Ensign'. This, as he suggests, may help explain the peculiar phrase: 'as his right', since Azazel carried the imperial ensign as an allusion to his skills as a lapidary in the making of the device.[46]

On the other hand, Alastair Fowler suggests that Milton could have learned of Azazel from the Old Testament, and from writings on the Cabbalistic tradition[47] by Johannes Reuchlin, Archangelus of Borgo Nuovo, and Robert Fludd.[48] However, in an endeavour to further understand the association between Satan and Azazel in *Paradise Lost*, both Hughes and Saurat suggest that Milton might have been familiar with Origen's

[44] Saurat argues that Milton was familiar with Jewish legends of the fall from a text known as *Chronographia*, a fragment of old tales from the Book of Enoch preserved by the Byzantine historian Georgius Syncellus. For more on this argument see Saurat, *Milton, Man and Thinker* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1970 [reprint of 1925]), pp. 253-58. See also Judith and Brendan Wolfe, p. 33, where they point out that it is Azazel's skills as a lapidary that are highlighted here.

[45] R. H. Charles (trans.), *The Book of Enoch* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1917), p. 19 (C2).

[46] Furthermore, Saurat argues, since sensuality is considered to be one of the main reasons behind the fall of the angels in the Hebraic tradition (particularly in the Book of Enoch), by evoking the ungodly nature of Azazel, Milton accentuates the reality of hell, and emphasises his reference to the account in Enoch, where it is stated: 'there arose much godlessness', amongst the men Azazel corrupted, 'and they committed fornication, and they were led astray, and became corrupt in all their ways' (Enoch, VIII. 2). See Saurat, pp. 253-54.

[47] It is in the cabbalistic tradition with which, as Gordon Campbell explains, Milton was familiar that 'the spirit Azazel is represented as an angel who serves in Satan's army as a standard-bearer'. See John Milton, *Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained* ed. by Gordon Campbell (London: Vintage, 2008), note to I. 533-34.

[48] For more on this aspect of demonological transmission, see note to I. 533-34 in John Milton, *Paradise Lost* ed. by Alastair Fowler, 2nd edn (Oxford: Routledge, 2013).

Contra Celsum in which Azazel is identified with Satan himself.[49] Elaborating on the similarities between Satan and Azazel, Origen identifies the serpent as none other than

> […] (the goat) the averter in Leviticus,[50] which the Hebrew text called Azazel. (*Contra Celsum*, IV. 43)[51]

This proposition that Satan and Azazel are closely associated is much in line with Islamic interpretations where the name Azazel is ascribed to Satan before he disobeys and becomes a fallen angel. MacLean, in 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', suggests that the Islamic tradition could have influenced the demonological accounts found in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England: 'since cabbala is really esoteric', Reuchlin, Archangelus and Fludd, he posits, could have consulted Islamic demonology as one of 'their sources when enquiring into the secret traditions of Jewish mysticism'.[52] Not only does MacLean remind us of the Islamic presence in Judeo-Christian Biblical studies in the Early Modern period, but also that Islam too took much of its angelology from that very Judaic tradition. Therefore, he rightly suspects that 'it would not be too difficult to discover among their common sources that the jinn,[53] whose piety raised him to Heaven […] until he was expelled, and the standard-bearer in Satan's army, are closely related'.[54]

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[49] Hughes, p. 225; Saurat, p. 255.

[50] When consulting the Hebraic tradition, namely *Leviticus* (XVI. 8-26), the word 'Azazel' is rendered as scapegoat, referring to the goat that carried the sins of Israel annually into the wilderness. See Hughes, p. 225. Similarly, Campbell, commenting on the angelic figure in the poem, states that Azazel 'was the name of the spirit living in the wilderness to whom the goat was sent', see John Milton, *Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained*, note to I. 533-34.

[51] The passage affirms that he 'was the cause of man's expulsion from the divine Paradise, and deceived the female race with a promise of divine power and of attaining to greater things', see Origen, *Contra Celsum*, translated with an introduction and notes by Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 360; see also Miner *et al*, p. 80.

[52] MacLean, p. 297.

[53] The word 'jinn' is known to be associated with invisible spirits that can be good or evil (mostly evil). These spirits are capable of shape-shifting, transforming and inciting illusions including visions and dreams. See Qur'an 55:15; 18:50; 27:17; and the chapter of 'Al-Jinn' (number 72). The complete Noble Qur'an, along with an English translation and transliteration, is available online here: <https://quran.com/>. All quotations from the Qur'an – that are not taken from the *Alcoran* (1649) – are taken from this digital edition. For more recent studies on jinns see, Amira El-Zein, 'Jinn', in *Medieval Islamic Civilization – An Encyclopedia*, ed. by Josef W. Meri and Jere L. Bacharach, vol. I (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 420-21; Amira El-Zein, *Islam, Arabs, and the intelligent world of the Jinn* (Syracuse, NY:

It is indeed in the Islamic tradition that a more direct connection between Satan and Azazel emerges. In Islamic folklore, Iblis, the devil, known as Azazel before his fall,[55] devoted himself to the worship of God for countless ages, surpassing all his fellow angels in piety. Originally, Azazel was one 'of the spirits who inhabited the earth', but was 'among the most industrious and dedicated, [and was] renowned for insight and learning'.[56] Therefore, due to his astounding dedication to worshipping God, he gradually began to ascend through all the seven skies.[57] After a thousand years of worship, he first reached the first sky, or as it is known in Islamic literature, *Al-sama Ad-dunya* (السماء الدنيا). And after thousands of years of continuous worship and ascension at every sky, he finally reached the Throne of God itself.[58] It was at this point that his unfortunate fall occurred.[59]

Syracuse University Press, 2009); and Robert Lebling, *Legends of the Fire Spirits: Jinn and Genies from Arabia to Zanzibar* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010).

[54] MacLean, pp. 297-98.

[55] In the same way, Satan 'the Adversary was known as Lucifer ('the Light Bearer') before the Fall: 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!' (Isaiah 14: 12-5).

[56] Awn, p. 25.

[57] In the Islamic tradition, specifically the Hadith, we learn that there are seven skies and God rests on his throne above the seventh sky. The devils are not allowed to ascend to the higher skies; they are limited to the lowest surface of the first sky where they attempt to eavesdrop on the angels as they converse in the hope of attaining divine knowledge. As narrated by the Prophet: '... (the jinn snatches) what he manages to overhear and he carries it to his friends. And when the Angels see the jinn they attack them with meteors. If they narrate only which they manage to snatch that is correct but they alloy it with lies and make additions to it'. See Hadith n. 171; available online at *Sahih Muslim* - Hadith (2017) <https://sunnah.com/muslim/39/171>. See also Moiz Ansari, *Islam and the Paranormal* (Lincoln, New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2006), p. 12. For more on eavesdropping jinns, see Muḥammad Ma'rūf, *Jinn Eviction as a Discourse of Power: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Moroccan Magical Beliefs and Practices* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 98-100.

[58] Al-Diyarbakri, the sixteenth-century writer, recounts different versions of the story of Iblis. See, Muhammad Al-Diyarbakri, *Tarikh Al-khamis fi anfus nafis*, 2 vols. (Cairo: n.p., 1283 A.H. - 1886 C.E), as cited in Awn, 30.

[59] Whether Iblis is a fallen angel or a devil remains a matter of dispute in Islamic accounts. This debate will not be a focus of concern in this chapter, since the *Alcoran* of 1649 does not make reference to this otherwise crucial discussion in Islamic theology. The devil in the English *Alcoran* is presented as a fallen angel. MacLean suggests that this translation might be more influenced by Christian belief than Judeo-Islamic thought. In the latter, discussions of angels' propensity to sin or capacity to have progeny are more common than in the Christian tradition where angels are less sexual or sinful than darker spirits (like demons or jinn), pp. 293-98.While the word 'jinn' is known to be associated with spirits that can be good or evil (mostly evil), Awn notes that certain Qur'anic commentators interpret the word as the name of an angelic 'tribe or clan of angels to which Iblis belongs' thus establishing his angelic status. In fact, the 'jinn, and Iblis in particular', according to Awn, 'are angels entrusted with significant tasks; they are the guardians (Khazana) of Paradise (al-janna or al jinan)', p. 26.

Satan and Iblis: Demons of Melancholy

Perhaps due to its powerful effectiveness and evocative imagery,[60] the tragic story of the fall of the Islamic devil has inspired numerous accounts[61] in Arabic oral and written literature lamenting his unfortunate fate.[62] However, it is in the first English translation of the Qur'an in the 1649, that Iblis' tragic fall appears to English readers in greater detail, as God introduces his newest creation, Adam, to the heavenly host. After ordering the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam, all but Iblis obey. A conflict arises between Iblis and his Lord. Following this act of defiance, a crucial exchange takes place between the two in which God recounts how he has interrogated Iblis about his reasons for disobedience, and the latter, in response, claims that he is superior in nature to this new creature that has been created:

> We[63] created and formed you, and commanded the Angels to worship *Adam*, which they performed, except the devill, to whom we said, what hindered thee to worship *Adam*, when we commanded thee? He answered, I am better then he, thou hast created me of fire, and hast created man of the mire of the earth.
> (*Alcoran*, Ch. VII, 91-2)

[60] It is in Giovanni Paolo Marana's 'To Mahummed, the Illustrious Ermite of Mount Uriel in Arabia' that Iblis appears by name in a way that links him with his tragic fall for Western readers. There Marana invokes Iblis, or, as he called him, 'Ablis', citing his fate as reminder of what happens to 'those who […] forget to pay the due veneration we owe to the author and source of providence and good success'. The haunting expression 'the demon of melancholy', as used by Marana, indicates that the author's knowledge reaches beyond the Qur'anic tradition, into perhaps the oral tradition that amplified the figure's unhappy fate. See Giovanni Paolo Marana, *Letters Written by a Turkish Spy, Who Lived Five and Forty Years Undiscovered at Paris: Giving an Impartial Account to the Divan at Constantinople...from the Year 1637, to the Year 1682*, 26th edn (London: A. Wilde, 1770), p. 103. The letters were translated from Arabic to Italian and finally to English.

[61] Bear in mind that Iblis' account was known to Christians who were familiar with Syriac. See Sergey Minov, 'Satan's Refusal to Worship Adam: A Jewish Motif and Its Reception in Syriac Christian Tradition', in *Tradition, Transmission, and Transformation from Second Temple Literature through Judaism and Christianity in Late Antiquity*, ed. by Menahem Kister, Hillel Newman, Michael Segal and Ruth Clements (Leiden: Brill, 2015), pp. 230-71. See also Tommaso Tessei, 'The Fall of Iblis and its Enochic background', in *Religious Stories in Transformation: Conflict, Revision and Reception*, ed. by Alberdina Houtman Tamar Kadari, Marcel Poorthuis and Vered Tohar (Leiden: Brill, 2016), pp. 66-81.

[62] See the final chapter for more on the representation of Satan in Arabic literature.

[63] Note that the 'We' in the Qur'an is a 'royal we', perhaps translating the Arabic pronoun *nahnu* used for respect or glorification, not an expression of plurality. The *Alcoran* of 1649 dismisses the concept of the Trinity, three persons in one Godhead, out of hand, stating: 'Certainly, they who affirme the Messiah, the Son of *Mary*, to be God, are impious; […] Such as affirm there are three Gods, are impious: there is but one God' (*Alcoran*, Ch. V, 71).

Iblis' powerfully worded answer intensifies the confrontation, which concludes with God banishing Iblis from Heaven with the latter's loss of his elevated status and heavenly state as punishment for his proud defiance. But first Iblis beseeches God to delay his punishment until Judgement Day and to allow him to tempt and lead humankind astray, in an attempt to prove their unworthiness for the elevated position given to them amongst God's creations. God accedes to Iblis' demand and defers his punishment until the end of time, at which point Iblis will be doomed to an eternity of hell fire together with those he has succeeded in seducing:

> then said we to him, depart out of Paradise, it is not the habitation of the proud, though shalt be in the number of them that shall be laden with ignominy; the devill answered, let me alone until the day of the Resurrection of the dead; wherefore hast thou tempted me? I will seduce men from the right way, I will hinder them on the right hand, and on the left, and on all sides, to believe in thy Law, and the greatest part of them shall be ungratefull. We said to him, be gone out of Paradise, thou shalt be abhorred of all the world, and deprived of my mercy; I will fill hell with such as shall follow thee.[64]
> (*Alcoran*, Ch. VII, 92)[65]

While the most common reason in the Islamic and Christian traditions behind Satan's fall is his pride and disobedience to God's command, it is worth noting that, despite Iblis' disobedience, certain Sufi interpretations do not regard him as a malevolent figure. In fact, Iblis is viewed as a model for a Sufi life, where an individual seeks to reach the highest and the closest position to God and is capable of enduring the most painful sacrifice: being exiled from the sight of God. As a true believer should, he refused to prostate himself to

[64] In *Paradise Lost*, the reader is reminded that Satan's ability to tempt humankind is also ultimately sanctioned by God when He permits Sin to open Hell's gate for his passage to earth and observes, with his Son, Satan's progress towards Eden. God's refusal to extend mercy to Iblis is also in accord with the Father's reasoning that because unlike Man, Satan was 'self-tempted and self-depraved', it is entirely equitable and reasonable that 'Man therefore shall find grace, / The other none' (*PL*, III. 131-32).' For Milton's Christian reader, this implicitly 'corrects' the Qur'anic version in which Iblis feels himself unjustly treated by God because he has been led into temptation: 'wherefore hast thou tempted me?' (*Alcoran*, Ch. VII, 92).

[65] Quotations from this translation do not imply that Milton had this text to hand and/or was working from it.

none other than God, thus proving his true belief and rejecting *shirk* (شرك), the sin of worshiping any other but God. Accordingly, Iblis represents the true believer who would sacrifice all for God even if it meant the pain of being exiled from his mercy.[66]

Despite the climactic challenge, Iblis' request, according to the Sufi tradition,[67] emerges from a sophisticated method of worshipful prayer rather than a position of disobedience: Iblis did not arrogantly challenge God's command, but sought his permission to prove his own worthiness over the new supposedly 'higher' race by enduring the most dreaded fate: eternal exile. Therefore, in Sufi mysticism, it is love rather than pride that drove Iblis to disobey God's command. Iblis was desperate for God's mercy, and this desperation led him to disobey.[68] While there is no denying that Satan is driven by overweening pride, his characterization is more finely nuanced too, and both motifs of hopeless suffering and desperation are certainly in tune with the soliloquy he utters on reaching Eden and recalling the previous happy state of which he is now deprived:

> Me miserable! which way shall I flie
> Infinite wrauth, and infinite *despaire*?
> Which way I flie is Hell; my self am Hell;
> And in the lowest deep a lower deep
> Still threatning to devour me opens wide,
> To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
> O then at last relent: *is there no place*
> *Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?*
> *None left but by submission*; […]
> So farwel Hope, and with Hope farwel Fear,
> Farwel Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
> Evil be thou my Good.
> (*PL*, IV. 73-110; emphasis added)

[66] See Awn, pp. 146-50.
[67] Ibid. See also, Awn, pp. 122-34; p. 183; and Husayn Ibn Mansur Al-Hallaj, *Le Diwan d'al-Hallaj* ed. and trans. by Louis Massignon (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1913), pp. 33-4.
[68] Note that the root of the word Iblis is *balasa* which means 'to despair'. See note 36 above.

It can be argued that the Devil in the Qur'an seems to share more intriguing similarities than differences with the Devil in *Paradise Lost*.[69] While pride is certainly a defining character trait in both figures,[70] there remains a vital difference between the Islamic devil and Satan. As both defy God's command, the object of veneration is crucially different in each case, which highlights a fundamental difference in theology, particularly the doctrine of the Trinity. Indeed, for Milton's Christian reader, it would be unreasonable for God to demand that the angels prostrate themselves before anyone other than their creator and God, in the person of his Son, while according to the Islamic teaching, it is unreasonable that Satan should prostrate himself to anyone other than God. Although the chronological order of the events comprising the respective falls of Iblis and Satan are not entirely identical in the Qur'an and *Paradise Lost*, this is a natural consequence of the crucial change in the incident that provokes the rebellion in each case.

Despite this apparent point of difference, it seems that the tactics and aims of both devils are almost identical. While Iblis, along with his progeny, seeks to lead humankind astray in order to prove to God their worthlessness, in *Paradise Lost*, Satan, who has seduced other angels to his cause and has attempted to supplant God by force of arms, fixes upon mankind as the instrument of his revenge upon God.[71] Furthermore, like Iblis who views God's new creation, Adam, as inferior to him, Satan and the rebel angels

[69] Christian scholars found the Qur'an uncomfortably similar to the Judeo-Christian tradition. In fact, numerous theologians considered Islam as a dangerously heretical sect of Christianity because of its similarity. Its widespread appeal was of interest in Christian reformist dialogue by way of comparison and self-reflection. For more on this perspective on Islam, see Matthew Dimmock, *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 64-111, and Jennie Malika Evenson, 'Judaism, Islam, and English Reformation Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Michigan, 2005).

[70] The Islamic tradition including Qur'anic commentaries, Hadiths and oral folkloric narratives have amplified the story of Iblis. Whether a devil damned for his overweening pride, as generally understood in orthodox Islamic teachings, a devout worshipper, as interpreted by certain Sufi literary texts, or a symbolic representation of the 'lower nature in man' as understood by Bahai readings, the devil has continuously engaged the minds of numerous writers. For a history of the Muslim devil in Sufi literature, see Awn, pp. 18-26. Despite the unique reading of the Sufi tradition, the Sunni tradition, which remains the most prominent, adopts the view that pride was the main motive influencing Satan's disobedience.

[71] MacLean has argued that in the Judeo-Islamic representation of Satan's sexuality and progeny, Milton found an intriguing depiction of a devil that combines both angelic and carnal traits; see MacLean, pp. 293-98.

understand the ‘new Race call’d Man’ to be ‘less / In power and excellence’ than themselves (II. 348-50), at most ‘equal or not much inferior’ (Argument to Book II), certainly not superior to them. Mankind thus becomes an easy target, but rather than wreaking revenge by destroying God’s ‘favour’d’ (II. 350) race by force, they determine upon a more than ‘Common revenge’ (II. 371). Just as Iblis wants to prove to God mankind’s unworthiness, by ‘seduc[ing] men from the right way’, the rebel angels’ devilish plan is likewise to ‘Seduce them to our Party’ (II. 368) and reap the satisfaction of seeing

> […] when his darling Sons
> Hurl’d headlong to partake with us, shall curse
> Thir frail Original, and faded bliss,
> Faded so soon.
> (*PL*, II. 373–76)

Moreover, both Iblis and Satan lament the loss of their previous state, lost without hope of recovery after their respective acts of disobedience and rebellion. This is echoed in Satan’s compellingly affective soliloquy, as he arrives in view of Eden,[72] prompted by his contemplation of the glorious majesty of the sun,

> O thou that with surpassing Glory crownd,
> Look’st from thy sole Dominion like the God
> Of this new World;
> (*PL*, IV. 32-4)

and his melancholic reflections on the loss of his own previously elevated, almost godlike rank, far in advance of the sun, since lost by pride and ingratitude:

[72] It seems noteworthy too that the imagery that most directly introduces an association between Satan and Arabia is the allusion to *Arabia Felix*, which marks Satan’s arrival in Paradise to tempt Adam and Eve after his journey from the infernal realms. See (*PL*, IV. 159-65).

> [...] how I hate thy beams
> That bring to my remembrance from what state
> I fell, how glorious once above thy Spheare;
> Till Pride and worse Ambition threw me down
> (*PL*, IV. 37-40)

While the reasons for rebellion may differ slightly between Iblis and Satan,[73] the latter's elevated rank and his very closeness to God had tempted Satan to supplant Him:

> [...] lifted up so high
> I sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher
> Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
> The debt immense of endless gratitude.
> (*PL*, IV. 49-52)

After Iblis loses his elevated position and preeminent power, as the closest to God's throne and highest of the angels, he, like Satan, who had been 'great in Power, / In favour and præeminence' (V. 660-61)', must likewise resort to 'fraud or guile' (I. 646) to exert his influence.[74] Indeed, God sardonically urges the devil: 'deceive by thy speeches them whom thou shalt be able to deceive, seduce whom thou canst seduce [...] whatsoever thou shalt promise them shall be but vanity and falsehood' (*Alcoran*, Ch. XVII, 174). Whispering sinful thoughts into the ears of his victims becomes Iblis' characteristic mode for ensnaring his prey, who may, in turn, become conduits for transmitting his false teachings. Understandably, such imagery was not unknown to Early Modern Christian Europe, as exemplified in the detail from the fresco below. The Antichrist, masquerading as a Christ-like figure, is preaching to the people, but it is Satan, standing so close beside him that his

[73] Such differences are to be found not only between the Qur'an and *Paradise Lost*, but also amongst varying religious traditions: Sunni readings of the Qur'anic narrative, unlike some Sufi interpretations, are closely in line with the Christian narrative, in the sense that Iblis' pride was the main reason for his challenge to God and refusal to obey his command and worship an inferior being, Adam: 'I am better then he, thou hast created me of fire, and hast created man of the mire of the earth' (*Alcoran*, Ch. VII, 92).

[74] Of course, even before the war in heaven, Satan had stooped to 'Ambiguous words' (V. 703) and 'caluminous Art' (V. 770) to draw over a third of the angels to his side. Likewise, the Islamic tradition is rich with exhortations warning against the temptations, the illusions and the fraudulent ways of the devil. See for example: *Alcoran*, Ch. VIII, 110; Ch. XI, 86; Ch. XXIII, 213 and Ch. XXXVIII, 283.

hand looks to be a continuation of Satan's arm, who is whispering in his ear and telling him what to say. What is of especial note is that, as explained in the previous chapter, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such imagery is particularly associated with representations of Muhammad, who is frequently depicted as preaching or taking dictation of the Qur'an with the devil at his ear. The intention is clearly to discredit the origins and message of Islam by exposing the devil's whisperings as the source of the inspiration for Muhammad's false teachings and to portray its founder as the Antichrist.[75]

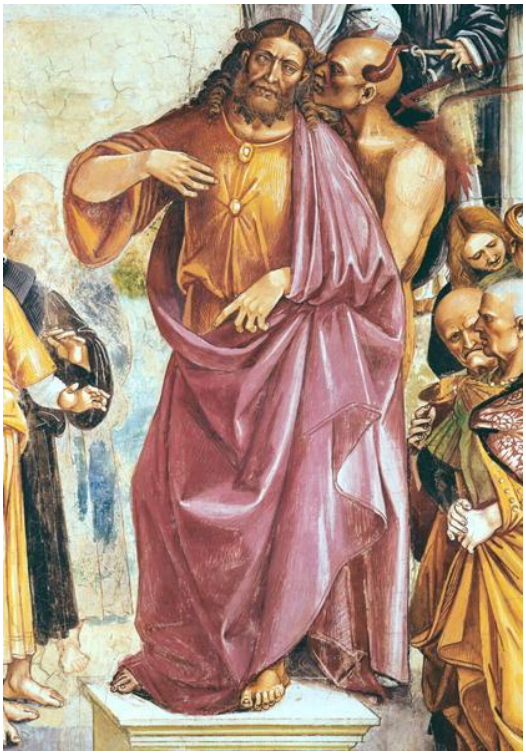

Fig. 8: Luca Signorelli, *The Preaching of the Antichrist*, detail of Christ and the Devil; the Chapel of the Madonna di San Brizio, (1499-1504; fresco) [Bridgeman Education].

[75] Muhammad was often regarded as a mirror image of Christ. In *The Devil in Legend and Literature*, Maximilian Rudwin observes how, just as 'Jesus was the incarnation of God, Muhammad', it was reasoned, 'was the incarnation of the devil or Antichrist'; see *The Devil in Legend and Literature* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 1977), p. 21. See too, Suzanne Conklin Akbari, 'The Rhetoric of Antichrist in Western Lives of Muhammad', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, 8.3 (1997): 297-307 (297-302). See also Chapter 2.

Fig. 9: Wynkyn De Worde, *Here begynneth a lytell treatise of the turks lawe called Alcoran. And also it speketh of Machamet the Nygromancer* (London: 1515), facing title page [British Library Board, C.25.k.13].[76]

For example, in Wynkyn De Worde's *Here begynneth a lytell treatise of the turks lawe called Alcoran*, Muhammad is shown preaching from a pulpit, while a horned devil, with a firm grip on his shoulder, whispers into his left ear.[77] The manner in which the two figures are depicted in such close proximity, suggests that Muhammad is merely a mouthpiece of the devil, or an extension of the devil himself. Even a century later, Thomas Heywood's *The Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells: Their Names, Orders and Offices; The Fall of Lucifer with His Angells*, similarly suggests that the Qur'an is, effectively, the devil's handiwork. The image, shown in Figure 10 below, depicts the devil, his work complete, glancing back approvingly as he strides away, while Muhammad is shown intent upon his task of writing down the Qur'an.

[76] Figures 9 and 10 are also reproduced in Dimmock's *Mythologies*, at p. 55 and p. 186 respectively.

[77] In an unusually sympathetic portrayal of the Prophet and his teachings, Muhammad is pictured with a white dove resting on his left shoulder with its beak positioned close to his ear as if it were whispering to him (Fol.243r in ms fr.226, Bibliothèque nationale de France); in this case, the iconographical detail of the white dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit, emphasizes the divine source of his inspiration. This is in evident contrast to the general and more sceptical reading of the incident as demonstrated fully in Chapter 2.

Fig. 10: Thomas Heywood, *The Hierarchie of the Blessed Angells* (London: Adam Islip, 1635) [The British Library Board, 1653/530].

It is evident that seventeenth-century scholars habitually emphasised the falsity of Islam in their writings. Given Milton's attitudes towards the *Alcoran*, highlighted earlier in this chapter, and the way he specifically refers to the Qur'an when attacking the Catholic and Turkish tyranny in *Areopagitica,* it can be of our interest to examine Milton's possible allusions to the Qur'anic account of Iblis in more detail. Satan's demonic tactics and deluded views of good and evil, so similar to the Islamic story of Iblis' fall, I argue, provided an opportunity to reflect the falsity of the Muslim East and the infernal nature of its rising political and religious power. What is of particular interest, however, is that Milton did not restrict himself to common political tracts or religious polemics, but additionally utilised evocative Arabic folklore and mythology, as I demonstrate in the following section.

Devilish Tactics: Whispering, Eavesdropping and Shape-shifting

Arabic literature, occult, folklore and oral tradition are replete with descriptions of malicious devils who attempt to interfere with the lives and actions of humankind. Much of this imagery is influenced by religious demonology where accounts describing how devils seek to obtain and utilise sacred knowledge, gained from eavesdropping on the heavenly discourse – in order to trick and tempt humanity – are abundant. According to the Qur'an, the chief of these malicious spirits is none other than Iblis, the evil enticer, the tempter and, more importantly, the whisperer (*alwaswas* الوسواس), who inspires sinful thoughts into the 'hearts' and minds of his dangerously susceptible targets. Indeed, due to the harrowing descriptions of the powerful temptations of the devil, the Islamic tradition is rich with warning exhortations against the whispers of Iblis and other evil spirits. For example, an entire Qur'anic prayer is dedicated to provide a supplication to repel Satan's whispering threats, reminding the believers to: 'Say, "I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, […] From the evil of the retreating whisperer – who whispers [evil] into the breasts of mankind"' (Qur'an, 114.1-5).[78]

Qur'anic imagery of this kind has influenced Islamic folklore and demonology describing, often in graphic detail, how the devil dangerously attempts to influence humankind. The Islamic Hadith, elaborating on the Qur'anic tradition, encompasses numerous warnings against the dangers of the devil's whispering, describing in great detail Iblis' power to lead his victims astray. The malicious devil is continuously depicted as an evil spirit, able to utilise and combine various demonic tactics, including deception, temptation, beguilement and shape-shifting to affect his malign goals. The following Hadith, for example, relates how the shape-shifting Iblis is able to approach victims who remain oblivious to his assaults:

[78] This prayer for protection is indeed one of the most popular in the Islamic tradition.

قَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: "سَأَلَ رَجُلٌ رَبَّهُ أَنْ يُرِيَهُ مَوْضِعَ الشَّيْطَانِ مِنْ قَلْبِ ابْنِ آدَمَ، فَلَمَّا كَانَ فِي الْحَوْلِ رَأَى فِيمَا يَرَى النَّائِمُ جَسَدَ رَجُلٍ يُشْبِهُ الْبِلَّوْرَ يُرَى دَاخِلُهُ مِنْ خَارِجِه، وَرَأَى الشَّيْطَانَ فِي صُورَةِ ضِفْدَعٍ قَاعِدٍ عِنْدَ مَنْكِبِهِ الأَيْسَرِ بَيْنَ مَنْكِبِهِ وَأُذُنِهِ، لَهُ خُرْطُومٌ طَوِيلٌ رَقِيقٌ، قَدْ أَدْخَلَهُ مِنْ مَنْكِبِهِ الأَيْسَرِ إِلَى قَلْبِهِ يُوَسْوِسُ إِلَيْهِ، فَإِذَا ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خَنَس".

> Omar bin Abdulaziz, May Allah be pleased with him, said: "a man asked his Lord to show him where Al-Shaytan [Satan] dwells in the heart of the son of Adam. He saw in a dreamlike manner the body of a man whose insides and outsides are transparent as a crystal, and he saw Al-Shaytan [Satan] in the image of a toad, resting on his left side between his shoulder and ear. He [Satan] had a long thin trunk, which he has inserted from his left side into his heart whispering to it. If he [the man] recalled Allah Azza wa Jal (Mighty and Majestic is He [God]), [Satan] is silenced."[79]

While it is less likely that Milton was familiar with the specific extract from the Hadith above, compared to the more readily available *Alcoran*, it remains noteworthy that the first victim of such an assault, according to *Paradise Lost*, is Eve, the first woman.[80] After first spying upon Adam and Eve, Satan enters the bower while the couple are asleep; he is discovered there by the angelic guard. Not only does Satan disguise himself in the shape of a toad as he approaches Eve, akin to Iblis in the Islamic tradition, he also attempts to influence her through illusions, phantasms and dreams.[81] The similarities between the

[79] The translation is my own. For more discussion of this Hadith, including other versions of it where, intriguingly, it is *Isa Ibn Mariam* (Jesus the son of Mary) who sees Satan, in the shape of a snake, attempting to influence the hearts of his victims, see Badr Al-Din Shibli, *Kitab Ahkam Al-marjan Fi Ahkam Al-jan* (Al-Qahira: Publisher Not Identified, 1908). The Hadith is also available online on the link below: <http://library.islamweb.net/hadith/display_hbook.php?bk_no=4024&pid=666121>.

[80] Iblis' love for God in the Sufi tradition is treated in poetry in a register similar to that used by human lovers. It is worth comparing this aspect of Iblis' loving nature with the feelings of longing that Eve evokes in Satan in *Paradise Lost*; see IV. 455-93. Both devils are capable of emotions that transcend pride, envy and vengeance. For representations of Satan in Arabic and Sufi literature, see Awn, pp. 122-83. It has also been pointed out that Satan's manner of seduction, when approaching Eve, is distinctly sexual and that his language recalls the language of courtly love. See Thomas N. Corns, *A New Companion to Milton* (Sussex: John Wiley and Sons, 2016), p. 85.

[81] For instance, in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, it seems interesting that Aaron 'the barbarous Moor' (V. iii. 4) is held ultimately responsible for the tragedy, and is accused of being 'Chief architect and plotter of these woes' (V. iii. 122). However, what is particularly notable here is the way in which Aaron demonstrates the extent of his villainy by actually calling for 'Some devil' to: '[...] *whisper* curses in mine *ear*, / And prompt me, that my tongue may utter forth / The venomous malice of my swelling *heart*' (V. iii. 11-13).

'Devilish art' practised by Satan and that of Iblis are so striking that the passage is worth quoting in full:

> […] him there they found
> Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of Eve;
> Assaying by his Devilish art to reach
> The Organs of her Fancie, and with them forge
> Illusions as he list, Phantasms and Dreams,
> Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
> Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise
> Like gentle breaths from Rivers pure, thence raise
> At least distemperd, discontented thoughts,
> Vaine hopes, vaine aimes, inordinate desires
> Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.
> (*PL*, IV. 799-809)

Satan's choice of assuming the shape of a toad is important, not only because toads were thought to be poisonous,[82] but also because it is the form, according to Arabic and Islamic demonology, specifically ascribed to the whispering Iblis, though he could also assume a range of animal forms like Satan. What is also remarkable is that the Islamic tradition depicts Iblis whispering in this manner not only to emphasise his cunning nature but also to stress his degradation; he is transformed to an agent of evil reduced to being the 'one who flatters with ruses' in the guise of a toad,[83] a lower form of life.[84]

[82] Mary E. Robbins, 'The Truculent Toad in the Middle Ages', in *Animals in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays*, ed. by Nona C. Flores (New York: Garland, 1996). Alastair Fowler draws attention to the significance of the toad in alchemic allegory and the way 'More generally, the toad symbolized death and the devil, and figured in medieval shape-shifting', see note to IV. 800 in *Paradise Lost*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Routledge, 2013).
[83] Awn, p. 57.
[84] Ibid.

Fig. 11: P. P. Bouche, an engraving of Satan in the shape of a toad from the first illustrated edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1688) (digital copy) [British Library HMNTS 644.m.16].[85]

This is entirely in keeping with the spirit of the passage from *Paradise Lost*, where Zephon's acerbic retort to Satan's contemptuous scorning of the angelic guard – when they at first fail to recognize him in his true form – draws attention to own Satan's debasement:

> Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
> Or undiminisht brightness, to be known
> As when thou stoodst in Heav'n upright and pure;
> That Glorie then, when thou no more wast good,
> Departed from thee, and thou resembl'st now
> Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foule.
> (IV. 835-40)

[85] Lower left detail of an illustration to book IV in the first illustrated copy of *Paradise Lost* (1688), see Milton, *Paradise Lost A Poem in Twelve Books* (London: Printed by Miles Flesher, for Richard Bently, 1688), p. 85r. The image used above is a digitally brightened image by the British Library copied from Milton, *The poetical works of Mr. John Milton ... together with explanatory notes on each book of the Paradise Lost, and a table never before printed* (London, 1659).

Satan's outward physical transformation highlights his degraded status and devalued worth. Like Iblis, Milton's Satan is no longer the angel closest to God, whom 'one step higher' might have set him 'highest' (IV. 50-1), as once he claimed; he is now the 'Artificer of fraud' (IV. 121), who acts with 'sly circumspection' (IV. 537) plotting against humankind. Both devils undergo a physical fall from the heavenly realm followed by a spiritual fall represented in their assumption of a bestial disguise and the eclipsing of their power; the only influence left to them is to deceive, tempting through illusions, dreams or fantasies, and resorting to spying in order to attain knowledge from which they have been excluded.

As described earlier, the outcast devils, in the Qur'an, hungry for celestial knowledge now denied to them, attempt to pry into heavenly secrets by eavesdropping upon the angels as they converse together in the hope of attaining knowledge that could be useful in tempting humankind. The *Alcoran* provides a detailed description of how, when the malicious devils are discovered, the heavenly bodies protect the security of heaven, and they are driven away, pursued by flaming meteors and threatened by eternal torment:

> We have adorned the Heaven and the Earth with Planets, and we kept them safe from the malice of the Devils; they cannot hear what is spoken in the Firmament, they are shamefully driven away on all sides, and shall be eternally tormented; if they hear any thing spoken, they hear it greedily, and follow [it] speedily, but the shining Planet [a meteor or a shooting star][86] pursueth them, and detecteth their malice.
>
> (*Alcoran*, Ch. XXXVII, 275)[87]

[86] So too, in the 'Chapter of Devils' it is alleged that 'some devils have said, we have been as high as heaven, and found it furnished with guards and stars; we staied in a place a little distant to hear; there is one star that watcheth them that hearken, & drives them away' (*Alcoran*, Ch. LXXII, 364).

[87] Cf. Lancelot Addison, *The Life and Death of Mahumet* (London, 1679), p. 13, where he refers to 'Ablisus the old Devil' relating how: 'The Moors believe that the Devils were wont to ascend into Heaven, and to hear the private discourses of the Holy Angels, and to steal away their sayings'. Because of their access to this hidden knowledge, attempts to communicate with these spirits through such means as fortune telling, cup reading and scrying were not uncommon occult practices in the Islamic world. It seems not without significance that in *Paradise Regained*, Satan boasts to the Son of God that he is not debarred entirely 'from

Note the strong affinities between the way the devilish spirits are repelled from the heavenly realms in the Qur'an and the situation in Paradise when the night watch discover Satan at the ear of Eve and drive him out of Eden. Milton prepares for the confrontation by introducing a celestial guard under Gabriel, appointed to keep Eden secure; there is a tense air of expectation as the 'Chief of th'Angelic guard' waits for nightfall while

> About him exercis'd Heroic Games
> Th' unarmed Youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
> Celestial Armourie, Shields, Helmes, and Speares
> Hung high with Diamond flaming, and with Gold.
> (*PL*, IV. 551-54)

Together with the weaponry of the angelic guards, the timely arrival of Uriel, Regent of the Sun, who comes 'gliding through the Eeven / On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting Starr' (IV. 555-56) create a dazzling effect. Thanks to Uriel, Gabriel learns of an evil spirit lurking somewhere in the garden, and the angelic guard divides into two bands to search him out, 'As flame they part / Half wheeling to the Shield, half to the Spear' (IX. 784-85). The depiction of the celestial guards and the fearsome defence they mount against malicious interlopers is evidently powerful in both accounts.[88]

Just as in the Qur'an, where the heavenly bodies (stars, planets and meteors), repel the eavesdropping devils, in *Paradise Lost* we learn how 'the Starrie Cope / Of Heav'n' would have been 'disturbd and torne / With violence of this conflict' (IV. 992-95) had not Satan took flight. Moreover, like the Qur'anic verse, which threatens the spying rebel

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the Heav'n of Heav'ns' (*PR*, I. 366), and claims that 'by presages and signs, / And answers, oracles, portents and dreams,' he offers advice to humankind 'Whereby they may direct their future life' (*PR*, I. 394-96).

[88] Cf. 'we created signs in heaven, and adorned them with Stars, to content the minds of them that consider them; we sheltered them from the assaults of the devill, but the Butterflie followeth everything that Shines, and believeth it to be a Star' (*Alcoran*, Ch. XV, 159). In a similar, yet more elaborate verse on the torment that awaits the devils who attempt to disturb the protected spheres of heaven in spite of the stars, planets and meteors that are set to repel their advances, the *Alcoran* reads: 'We have adorned the heaven, and the world with Stars; we expelled thence the Devils, we prepared for them a great fire, and the torments of hell [...]' (Ch. LXVII, 356).

spirits with the prospect of being eternally tortured by hellfire: 'We have adorned the heaven, and the world with Stars; we expelled thence the Devils, we prepared for them a great fire, and the torments of hell [...] (Ch. LXVII, 356)', Gabriel, on uncovering the motive for Satan's mission, that he had come to 'spie [on] / This new created World' (936-37), offers to drag him 'Back to th' infernal pit' (965).

In Islamic and Arabic demonology, the devils utilize the knowledge gained from eavesdropping in order to tempt humankind to disobey the word of God. Iblis is the evil enticer, the tempter, and more specifically 'the whisperer' who whispers sinful thoughts into the hearts of his victims. By eavesdropping on Eve's conversation with Adam, Satan learns that the fruit from the tree of knowledge has been forbidden to them. Satan succeeds in persuading Eve to disobey God by tempting her to eat the forbidden fruit; he prepares the ground for this act by familiarising her with the idea and enticing her with his dreamlike whispers. It is not only the single image of a whispering devil in the shape of a toad that is analogous in both accounts, but also the surrounding context of this act that is undeniably similar. This is not, of course, to suggest that these satanic traits are by any means exclusively Islamic, nor that the figure of Iblis is the main source for Milton's Satan, but rather that, by ascribing such Islamic imagery to his devil, Milton not only enriches the texture of his verse by drawing upon on accounts of Islam with which his reader might be familiar, but also undermines the political authority of the *Alcoran* and thereby the authority of the Sultanate.

Satan the Great Sultan

When depicting the Muslim East, seventeenth-century accounts, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, had highlighted its evil allure and promises of materialistic riches together with the tyrannical rule of Ottoman Sultans. Similarly, when considering Milton's

possible allusion to Islamic culture, much of the discussion has rightly focused upon his views of the political movement of Islam, represented by the militaristic strength of the Ottoman Empire and the autocratic rule of the Turkish Sultans. The most familiar aspect of Milton's demonization is, of course, his association of Satan's rule of the infernal realm with 'Turkish Tyranny'. Hossein Pirnajmuddin has usefully summarized the way in which 'connotations of corrupt and corrupting luxury, spectacle, tyranny, disbelief, and evil', all associated with 'the Muslim East in the Renaissance mind',[89] are powerfully created in a number of memorable narrative moments, such as the rich splendour and exotic spectacle of Satan displayed 'High on a Throne of Royal State', breathtaking in its opulence:

> [...] which far
> Outshon the wealth of *Ormus* and of *Ind,*
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Showrs on her Kings *Barbaric* Pearl and Gold.
> (*PL*, II. 1-4)

Not only does Milton name a Muslim Caliph, Almansor,[90] whose kingdoms covered Fez, Algiers and Sus, but the poem also explicitly and repeatedly associates Satan's monarchical style with that of Muslim rulers.[91] In fact, Milton directly identifies Satan as the first 'great Sultan', whose military might is far more menacing even than that of the Ottoman Turks.[92] It is a strikingly well-visualised passage that it is worth quoting in full:

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[89] See Hossein Pirnajmuddin, 'Milton's "Dark Divan" in *Paradise Lost*', *The Explicator*, 66.2 (2008): 68-71 (70). It is perhaps not without significance that during the early 1660s, Charles made a dramatic change in royal fashion, abandoning the traditional French coat and adopting the so-called Persian vest. It is possible that Charles was influenced by the popularity of plays based on events in Turkish history, such as William Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes* (1662) and Lord Orrery's *The Tragedy of Mustapha* (1665), which were presented before the king.

[90] For a discussion of which Almansor Milton meant here and what possible sources on the East he read, see Gordon Campbell and Roger Collins, 'Milton's Almansor', *Milton Quarterly*, 17.3 (October 1983): 81-4.

[91] The secretive and unholy nature of the deliberations of Satan's council of state is suggested by the expression 'dark *Divan*' (*PL*, X. 457), intimating that this mode of government finds its origins in Hell itself.

[92] See also: 'Of that bright Starr to *Satan* paragond. / There kept thir Watch the Legions, while the Grand / In Council sate, sollicitous what chance / Might intercept thir Emperour sent, so hee / Departing gave command, and they observ'd. / As when the *Tartar* from his Russian Foe / By *Astracan* over the Snowie Plaines / Retires, or *Bactrian* Sophi from the hornes / Of *Turkish* Crescent, leaves all waste beyond / The Realm of *Aladule*, in his retreate / To *Tauiris* or *Casbeen'* (X. 426-36).

So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear
Of thir great *Sultan* waving to direct
Thir course, in even ballance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;
(*PL*, I. 344-50; emphasis added)

Unsurprisingly, these lines have been read as a direct demonization of Muslim rulers, as well as forming an attack on Islamic religious institutions.[93] Indeed, if we assume Milton's possible knowledge of the *Alcoran* (1649), it seems even more likely to be the case that Milton's lines were intended as both: a de-legitimisation of Muslim rulers, which at the same time posed a challenge to the authority of Islam's most holy text. By identifying the origins of Islam and the Sultanate with Satan, Milton thereby seeks to disenchant the reader who might be otherwise drawn to the exotic allure of the Muslim East.[94]

It is thus worth speculating at this point whether the purpose here is, even if less overtly, to allude to the Qur'anic account of Iblis', particularly the account of the origin of Iblis' powers of temptation, and how this reflects upon Milton's representation of Satan as the 'great Sultan' (*PL*, I. 348). The Qur'anic account is rich with exhortations warning against the temptations of the devil. After the dramatic confrontation between God and Iblis, which leads to the latter's loss of his elevated status and exile from heaven, Iblis beseeches God to grant him only one wish: the ability to tempt, beguile and trick His new creation, the human race, in whatever way he can. God agrees to grant him this power, and delays his punishment until the Day of Judgement. Iblis is warned, however, that he will

[93] Walter S. H. Lim, 'John Milton, Orientalism, and the Empires of the East', in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, ed. by Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (New York: Palgrave, 2010), pp. 203-36.
[94] Such an approach is in keeping with a large number of Protestant discourses in the seventeenth century. See, for example, Wenceslas Budova's preface to the *Anti-Alkoran* in Chapter 2.

have no authority or power over true believers (إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَك عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَان). In a reassuring verse, the faithful are reminded to:

> [...] implore God to deliver thee from the malice of the devill, abominable to all the Creatures, he hath *no power* over them that trust in his divine Majestie, his *power* extendeth over such as goe astray, who obey not him, and adore many Gods […]. (*Alcoran*, Ch. XVI, 168; emphasis added)

The word 'power' in the English translation above replaced the original Arabic ('sultan'). In the Qur'an, the extent of Iblis' 'power' or *sultan*, in the verses above, is mentioned in both affirmative and negative terms: Iblis has no power (*has no sultan* or is not the sultan) over God's true believers; correspondingly, he has despotic power (*he has sultan* or he is the sultan) over those that are beguiled by him, including the fallen angels. It is surely significant that, in the first annotated edition of *Paradise Lost*, Patrick Hume draws attention to this essential etymological link, emphasising that the words: 'Soldan or Sultan, are esteemed to be of Arabian, by others of Persian Original, and to signifie Power, Dominion'.[95] It is noteworthy that Milton chooses the word 'Sultan' to describe Satan's absolute authority over his followers; much in keeping with the Qur'anic description: Milton's Satan is the Sultan of the unbelievers, rebellious or the fallen. For Milton, such a connection, in its suggestive irony, could not have been overlooked. Satan, the fallen angel, and the infernal Sultan, represents all that is misguided. Like the Ottomans and their *Alcoran*, Satan seemingly enjoys evident, albeit temporary, power, a connection that becomes further emphasised by merging the Qur'anic verses with the political figures of the Muslim empire. In fact, it might be the case that Milton intended to play on the words Satan and Sultan (I. 348); only 54 lines earlier, he seems to make a similar play to 'some great *Ammiral*' (I. 294; emphasis added) where the word Ammiral, especially when capitalised, might reflect a supposed etymological link to the Arabic *Amir* ('prince' أمير).

[95] Patrick Hume, *Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1695), p. 49.

Through careful analysis, it becomes evident how the more diversified reading of the Iblis myth, allowing multi-perspective representations of the fallen angel, highlights remarkable points of convergence with what is arguably an unorthodox depiction of Satan in *Paradise Lost*.[96] Like Iblis, Milton's Satan is not bound within interpretive limitations, but continues to engage the reader by displaying moments of apparent sincerity, dedication, love, as well as doubt, jealousy and defiance. Likewise, Satan and Iblis both argue eloquently and convincingly their reasons for choosing to be alienated from God. In the Qur'an an intelligent conversation unfolds between Iblis and God that allows various interpretations, one of which goes to the extent of claiming Iblis acted out of selfless, sacrificial love rather than hubris and jealousy. Similarly, in *Paradise Lost*, Satan's powerful stance against a tyrannical heaven presents him, even if momentarily, as a revolutionary and admirable character. Both demonic figures, however, undergo a similar tragic fall that was preceded by a coveted elevated status. To achieve their goals, both demonic figures are prepared to do whatever is necessary to effect their plan; shape-shifting, whispering, enticing demonic fantasies, even facing fiery heavenly bodies and eternal damnation, Satan and Iblis are determined to pursue their journey and bring about the downfall of humankind.

As a poet who aimed to write a work of encyclopaedic comprehensiveness, it seems unlikely that Milton would fail to incorporate Islamic imagery, especially in his representation of Hell. It would seem likely, too, that he would turn to the *Alcoran* to ensure the faithful portrayal of an authentic Islamic demonic. As Green points out, 'Milton's poetic fusion of scriptural fact with pagan fiction does not simply establish the ontological superiority of Christian substance over pagan shadow, but discovers the

[96] More sympathetic readings of Satan, including critical analysis of his character, consider him as a heroic figure, particularly in the Romantic period. It is also generally acknowledged that Arab authors of the twentieth century are influenced by this analysis of Milton's Satan. See Chapter 6.

fragments of truth to be found in myth itself'.[97] By appropriating aspects of Iblis, the Qur'anic devil, for his portrayal of Satan, Milton extended the range of mythographic 'shadows' of Christian truth within the epic. Furthermore, by drawing attention to the unreasonable nature of God's command, adduced as the cause of Iblis' fall from grace in the Islamic tradition, he simultaneously undermined the authority of the Qur'an itself. The reader is reminded that the earthly dominion of the Ottoman Sultanate and its threatening military power are bound eventually to fade in the face of Christian truth. Since Satan's character, despite its convincing and admirable decisions, fails to deliver a solid heroic model, the Islamic tradition, by default and as alluded to by Milton, fails to present a solid threat to Christian Protestant England. It might be the case that Feisal Mohamed was not wrong to propose that 'The most prominent Muslim in Milton's writings, of course, is Satan'.[98]

[97] Mandy Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. xi.
[98] Mohamed, p. 65. Awad went as far as stating that Milton himself was 'a pious Muslim'. Luwis Awad, 'Al-Adab Al-Inglizi adab alami' ('English Literature is an International Literature'), *Al-Hilal (The Crescent*), (1967), pp. 219-22, as cited in Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 156.

Chapter Four: "[…] through the Air she comes / Lur'd with the smell of infant blood": Sin at the Gate of Hell

> *'Return to Adam without delay,' the angels said, 'or we will drown you!' Lilith asked: 'How can I return to Adam and live like an honest housewife, after my stay beside the Red Sea' 'It will be death to refuse!' they answered. 'How can I die,' Lilith asked again, 'when God has ordered me to take charge of all newborn children: boys up to the eighth day of life, that of circumcision; girls up to the twentieth day. None the less, if ever I see your three names or likenesses displayed in an amulet above a newborn child, I promise to spare it.' To this they agreed; but God punished Lilith by making one hundred of her demon children perish daily; and if she could not destroy a human infant, because of the angelic amulet, she would spitefully turn against her own. Some say that Lilith ruled as queen in Zmargad, and again in Sheba; and was the demoness who destroyed Job's sons. Yet she escaped the curse of death which overtook Adam, since they had parted long before the Fall.*[1]

This chapter will explore some intriguing similarities in the portrayal of the female characters in *Paradise Lost* – Sin, daughter to Satan and mother by him of Death, and Eve, the first woman created according to the Christian tradition – with Judaeo-Arabic mythical female figures, the Jewish Lilith and the Arabian Ghoul. This approach aims to establish a Judaeo-Arabic influence on *Paradise Lost* evoked through the depiction of the female characters in the poem. The representation of these female figures in specific locales in the poem, particularly liminal spaces, such as the gateway to Hell and the lake in Paradise,[2] I would argue, reflects a possible allusion to those Judaeo-Arabic mythical female characters. By examining tales which migrated westward, through the process of oral and written cultural translation, the Judeo-Arabic demoness, I argue, made its way to literary works of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe.[3]

[1] Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Myths* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), pp. 65-9. See also Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. by Henrietta Szold, 7 vols. (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[2] This aspect of Eve's 'mirror scene' will be discussed fully in Chapter 5.

[3] For more on the figure of Eve in different traditions, including Islam, see John Flood, *Representations of Eve in Antiquity and the English Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2011) and Kristen E. Kvam, Linda S. Schearing and Valarie H. Ziegler (eds.), *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis*

During the course of this discussion, I will look at the way Milton's serpentine and first fallen female character, Sin, is at times provocatively aligned with the pre-lapsarian Eve, but also with the Middle-Eastern female monster, the Ghoul. Moreover, I will also demonstrate how the latter is associated with the first woman created, according to the Jewish tradition, the 'first Eve', Lilith, hence, highlighting a possible rendering of the Judaeo-Arabic feminine demonic in Milton's poem.

Traditional readings of certain scenes in *Paradise Lost* – including Satan's encounter with Sin at the Gates of Hell – are generally related, and understandably so, to tales and figures from Greco-Roman mythology. It is, however, essential to acknowledge other possible interpretations, which allow a wider scope for scholarly investigation, such as those affected by Islamic culture, including the legend of Ascension.

In the seventh century, the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, embarked on a night journey in which he visited the heavenly and hellish abodes and conversed with angels and previous prophets in what is known as the story of Ascension (*Al-Isra wal Miraj*). Upon his return, the Prophet narrated the incidents of his journey, including descriptions of the afterlife, unearthly beings and the manner of existence in Heaven and Hell. This legend developed into one of the most eminent and celebrated incidents of Islamic belief, prompting a literature of vivid allegories and imagery for describing the afterlife and supernatural beings. The motifs of the nocturnal event exerted a profound influence on Arabic literature, such as the oral stories that shaped the well-known *Arabian Nights*.[4] As

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and Gender (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999). For more on the cultural translation process between Islam and Early Modern Europe, see Peter Burke and R. Po-Chia Hsia (eds.), *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[4] The well-circulated folkloric tales of medieval Arabic, Egyptian, Indian, Persian even Mesopotamian literature were collected, documented, and complied, over many centuries, by various authors and scholars, resulting in the famous *Arabian Nights*. Although the documentation began around the twelfth century, the first European translation is Antoine Galland's *Les Mille et une nuits, contes arabes traduits en français* [Thousand and One Nights, Arab Stories Translated into French]. The authenticity of the translated work was questioned and a more original representation of the translation of the *Arabian Nights* was found in Edward William Lane's significant English translation: *The Thousand and One Nights, Commonly Called, in England, The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, which was published in three volumes between (1838-1841).

Miguel Asín Palacios has observed, Muslim 'mystics were not long in arrogating to themselves the role of protagonist that had hitherto been reserved for Mahomet', resulting in numerous written accounts that narrated personal journeys towards Heaven and Hell.[5] Al-Maari's *Epistle of Forgiveness* (424H/1033AD) and Ibn Arabi's *Meccan Revelations* (*Futuhat*) are important examples of literary productions which adopt significant themes that originate from the story of Ascension.[6] Although it was not until almost ten centuries later, that Milton produced his own description of Heaven and Hell in *Paradise Lost*, I intend to posit the possible presence of the Islamic legend of Ascension, despite the unusual nature of such a venture, and the supposedly alien nature of Middle-Eastern thought.

The 'Snakie Sorceress' of Hell

In one of the most shocking and haunting scenes of *Paradise Lost*, John Milton introduces the first female figure in his epic, the guardian of the Gates of Hell, Sin:

> [...] Before the Gates there sat
> On either side a formidable *shape*;
> The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,
> But ended foul in many a scaly fould
> Voluminous and vast, a *Serpent* arm'd
> With mortal sting: about her middle round
> A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd
> With wide *Cerberian* mouths full loud, and rung
> A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,

An annotated edition was published after his death in 1883. See Ulrich Marzolph and Richard van Leeuwen (eds.), *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia. Vol.1.* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC CLIO, 2004). Lane's edition published in 1865 is the one selected for the purposes of this chapter.

[5] Miguel Asín Palacios, *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, trans. by Harold Sunderland (New Delhi: Goodword, 2008), p. 44.

[6] Ibn Arabi began working on his *Meccan Revelations* upon arriving at Mecca in 598H/1202AD for a period of thirty years, finishing it around 628-632H/1231-1235AD. Two years before his passing, he decided to rewrite it, making many amendments and additions between 632H/AD1235 and 635H/1238AD. See Ian Richard Netton (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilization and Religion* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013).

> If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her *woomb*,
> And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and howl'd
> Within unseen.
> (*PL*, II. 648-59)

The reader first encounters Sin with Satan here as he prepares to embark on his journey to Paradise. At first Satan fails to recognise his daughter after the hideous serpentine transformation of her lower body that she has suffered as a consequence of the birth of their offspring, Death. But Sin reminds him of their past incestuous relationship in Heaven and graphically recounts to him the horrifying fate she has endured at the hands of their son Death who had fathered, by rape, the hellhounds that now continuously torment her. Despite being a former inhabitant of Heaven, she is now a hellish monster. The female portress of Hell – as the reader now learns from Sin herself – was created in Heaven from Satan, but was later swept up in the 'general fall' (II. 773) of the rebellious forces from Heaven into the Deep. As the reader first encounters her in Hell, the first 'fallen' woman is an inherently complex and ambiguous figure: Sin seems a beautiful maiden to the waist and a monstrous serpent below;[7] she is a helpless damsel in distress and a powerful 'Snakie Sorceress' (724); her beauty and 'attractive graces' (762) are sexually enticing, but deadly. The offspring she has borne to Satan is horrifying, no less than Death himself. Moreover, at the time of her fall, Sin assumes her role as guardian of the Gates of Hell, a role by no means negligible:

> [...] in the general fall
> I also; at which time this powerful Key
> Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
> These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass
> Without my op'ning.
> (II. 773-77)

[7] The motif of duality or a beautiful woman who is later exposed as 'foul' is present in Dante's *Purgatorio* (19. 7-33) and Spenser's Duessa, see Chapter 2.

By assigning to her the fateful key to the kingdom of Hell, God has given to her the power to confine Satan to the infernal realm and foil his mission against mankind. Instead she chooses to enable Satan's enterprise and ensures the downfall of mankind. Milton's positioning of Sin as gatekeeper of Hell is clearly in accordance with Tertullian's vituperative attack on women at large:

> *You* are the devil's gateway [...] *you* are the first deserter of the divine law; *you* are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. *You* destroyed so easily God's image, man. On account of *your* desert – that is, death – even the Son of God had to die.[8]

However, it should be noted that the full force of the strongly misogynistic features of the tirade are thereby diverted away from Eve and her daughters and directed towards the infernal figure of Sin.

Despite the graphically detailed account of her incestuous relationships with her father-lover and rapist-son, and the crucial role given to her in the epic, as gatekeeper of Hell, Sin has often been disparagingly dismissed, perceived as little more than a reductive literalisation of the lines: 'when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death' (James, 1:15).[9] While Sin obviously offers up such an allegorical reading – through this double-formed figure – Milton successfully captures the initially alluring, yet ultimately repugnant and tormenting aspects of sin; she is not a simple two-dimensional figure.[10] Although at first, in her relationships with Satan and

[8] Quintus Tertullian, 'On the Apparel of Women' in Kvam, Schearing and Ziegler (eds.), p. 132. See also Tertullian, 'On the Apparel of Women', trans. by S. Thelwall, in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by Alexander Robersts and James Donaldson, vol. IV (New York: Christian Literature Company, 1890), p. 14.
[9] Available online: *Bible Hub* - Bible Study (2017) <http://biblehub.com/kjv/james/1-15.htm >.
[10] For further discussion of the allegory, see Noam Reisner, *John Milton's 'Paradise Lost': A Reading Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011); John N. King, *Milton and Religious Controversy: Satire and Polemic in Paradise Lost* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Mindele Treip, *Allegorical Poetics and the Epic: The Renaissance Tradition to Paradise Lost* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1991); Kenneth Borris, 'Allegory in *Paradise Lost*: Satan's Cosmic Journey', *Milton Studies*, 26 (1990): 101-33; Catherine Gimelli Martin, *The Ruins of Allegory: Paradise Lost and the Metamorphosis of Epic Convention* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Philip J. Gallagher, '"Real or Allegoric": The

Death, Sin is a surprisingly passive figure, the object of Satan's narcissistic desire and the victim of Death's rapacious sexual assault, she does intervene heroically in the internecine combat that threatens to take place between Satan and Death, interposing herself between father and son (II. 719-26), but it is, significantly, after the success of Satan's enterprise in Eden, that Sin comes into her own. No longer cowed by her son and their hellish progeny that have continually tormented her, she becomes herself a Hell-hound to torment mankind. Realizing her full potential she assumes a new sense of active agency and takes the lead[11] in the 'Adventrous work' (X. 255) that lies before herself and Death in expanding the unholy trinity's infernal empire.

Fig. 12: William Hogarth, *Satan, Sin and Death* (1792) [Bridgeman Education].

Ontology of Sin and Death in *Paradise Lost*', *ELR*, 6 (1976): 317-35 and also Louis Schwartz, *Milton and Maternal Mortality* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[11] Milton places significant emphasis on the way Sin now takes the initiative when addressing both Death (X. 234) and Satan (X. 352-53).

However, it is no coincidence that Sin's allegorical significance is overshadowed when we encounter the main female protagonist in the poem, Eve. Despite the shockingly unforgettable story that Sin has related, her narrative presence is undoubtedly eclipsed as the reader journeys with Satan to Eden, leaving Sin and Death to follow in his wake after the success of his venture. Nevertheless, the reader is unable to lose sight of Sin altogether when Eve comes on the scene. Just as we encounter a parodic version of Heaven in Hell before we witness Heaven itself, we are shown a disturbing view of sexuality and motherhood in the dysfunctional infernal family, before we encounter Adam and Eve. Sin's monstrous fecundity, a continual torment to her, is clearly set against Eve's fruitful motherhood celebrated in anticipation by Raphael at the luncheon party he shares with the happy couple:

> Haile Mother of Mankind, whose fruitful Womb
> Shall fill the World more numerous with thy Sons
> Then with these various fruits the Trees of God
> Have heap'd this Table.
> (*PL*, V. 388-91)

In spite of the fact that Eve is created to be Adam's 'image' and other 'half' and the celebrated 'mother of humankind', she constantly seeks a more independent existence;[12] Sin, on the other hand, despite powerfully controlling the Gates of Hell, chooses to follow her author, Satan, and experiences a continuous and overwhelmingly strong bond between them, as 'som connatural force / Powerful at greatest distance to unite / With secret amity things of like kinde' (X. 246-48). By carefully aligning the lines of narratives for both these female characters, Milton emphasises the connection between Sin and Eve, who appear at times as mirror images of one another, while at the same time Milton introduces an aspect of double potentiality for them both.

[12] See Chapter 5 for a detailed analysis of this aspect of Eve.

However, it is the significance to be attached to the obvious and clearly intended similarities between Sin and Eve that pose a particular challenge to the reader, and the implications of this powerful associative, rather than strictly narrative, relationship demand closer scrutiny. Before the Fall, the darker potentiality of the feminine can be seen to be embodied substantially in the figure of Sin herself but its shadow is cast upon Eve from the moment of her creation.

'Rest or Intermission none I Find'

Eid Dahiyat has drawn attention to the way Satan's sensations upon his approach to the prelapsarian Paradise are likened to those of sailors, who, after rounding the Cape of Good Hope, encounter the wind-borne odours of Arabia Felix:[13]

> […] As when to them who sail
> Beyond the *Cape of Hope*, and now are past
> *Mozambic*, off at Sea North-East windes blow
> *Sabean* odors from the spicie shoare
> Of *Arabie* the blest.
> (*PL*, IV. 159-63)

According to Dahiyat, Arabia Felix and its sweet-smelling breezes serve as an analogue to the prelapsarian Paradise; Milton utilises this imagery along with the metaphor of the 'fruit' to establish the connection between Arabia Felix and the Garden of Eden.[14] The fruit in *Paradise Lost* and its smell, he argues, not only highlight the sacred nature of the place, but also become a symbol of Eve's 'loveliness, frailty, and vulnerability'.[15] This interesting connection between Paradise and Arabia allows us to dwell upon the repeated association

[13] Eid Abdallah Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave: Milton and the Arab-Muslim World* (London: Hesperus Press, 2012), pp. 62-5.
[14] Dahiyat, pp. 65-9. See also, John R. Major, *The First Four Books of Milton's Paradise Lost: With Notes, Critical and Explanatory, Selected and Original* (London: B. Fellowes, 1835), p. 173.
[15] Dahiyat, p. 66. For further discussion of Eve's association with fruits and flowers, see Mandy Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 77-98; pp. 149-80.

between Eve and the 'fruit' in Paradise, in its relation to the Fall as well as Eve's expected fruitful maternity. Moreover, the sense of double potentiality credited to Eve, through her capacity to bring death as well as life into the world, invites us to investigate her association with the Judeo-Arabic depiction of the fallen feminine that took place in the very same land depicted as Paradise.[16]

Earlier endeavours, such as Gerald MacLean's 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', detect a degree of likeness in the attitude of Milton's fallen angel, Satan, and his Islamic counterpart, *shaytan* or Iblis.[17] Similarly, Robert Ellwood has drawn attention to these two traditions when examining the power of the Miltonic Satan over Adam and Eve, and his manner of convincing Eve to eat the forbidden fruit.[18] Despite the accuracy of Ellwood's observation, that Iblis is the only one to suffer the consequences of the Fall in the Islamic tradition, Phillips convincingly expands on the underlying, yet strong, dynamics associating the fallen feminine and the evil serpent. This bond, and the twofold potentiality of Eve's nature, is undeniably emphasised by considering the very name of Eve, *Hawwah*, and its connection to the Hebrew *hay* ('alive'); *haya* ('to live') together with the Arabic *hayah* ('life' حياة), which have an interesting relation to both the Arabic *hayyah* حيّة, and the Aramaic *hiwya* ('serpent'), which inevitably suggests an affiliation with the tempting serpent that brought death upon humankind.[19]

The Arabic and Aramaic etymology of Eve's name is clearly encapsulated in the words the fallen Adam casts at Eve after she has persuaded him to eat the forbidden fruit: 'Out of my sight, thou Serpent' (X. 867), which highlight his bitter anger and disgust at this point. We are surely to bear in mind Adam's privilege in naming all creatures, so the

[16] 'Paradise' is notably an English transliteration of the Persian 'pairidaeza' (OED).
[17] MacLean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', in Milton and Toleration, ed. by Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 284-98; see also Chapter 3.
[18] Robert Ellwood, *Tales of Darkness: The Mythology of Evil* (London: Continuum, 2009).
[19] This association between woman and the snake was 'toyed with' by the Rabbis, but 'did not become current in religious exegesis until the Middle Ages'; see John A. Phillips, 'The Serpent-Mother' in *Eve, the History of an Idea* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), pp. 40-1; Pamela Norris, *Eve: A Biography* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), p. 318.

significance of his choice of the word 'serpent' as most befitting the fallen Eve is telling.[20] Significantly, the first female character encountered in the epic is, as we have noted, the elaborately rendered 'Snakie Sorceress' Sin (II. 724). Despite being a former inhabitant of Heaven, she is now a hellishly deformed monster: 'to the waist'; she 'seem'd Woman' and endowed with a heavenly beauty (II. 650), yet her lower half:

> […] ended foul in many a scaly fould
> Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd
> With mortal sting.[21]
> (II. 651-53)

The serpentine shape of Sin would seem to owe a good deal to the persistence of the iconographic tradition where a narcissistic affinity between Eve and Satan is posited through depictions of the serpent with a woman's face. Petrus Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, a widely read Biblical paraphrase from the twelfth century, is considered one of the most influential texts to document the popular tradition in which Satan was thought to have fixed upon a particular 'kind of serpent […] which had a face like a maiden's' as a calculated choice, 'since like approves of like, *similia similibus applaudunt*'.[22] The tradition continued well into the Early Modern period, and is frequently to be found in the visual arts, such as Michelangelo's famous depiction of Eve's temptation in the Sistine Chapel in which the serpent has a face that clearly mirrors Eve's features. Notably, Milton chooses not to draw on the misogynistic implications of this tradition in his temptation scene, but rather displaces it onto the already fallen figure of Sin, and only onto Eve once fallen.

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[20] For more on the significance of naming in *Paradise Lost* see John Leonard, *Naming in Paradise: Milton and the Language of Adam and Eve* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve*, p. 133.

[21] The motif of duality or a beautiful woman who later turns 'foul' is also to be found when Dante dreams of a beautiful woman whose ugliness and stench are exposed by Virgil (*Purgatorio*, 19. 7-33); see Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri* trans. by Charles Eliot Norton (United States: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), pp. 143-45; available online: <https://archive.org/details/divinecomedyctra00dantuoft>. See also the figure of Duessa, as discussed in Chapter 2.

[22] As quoted in Norris, p. 318.

Fig. 13: Michelangelo Buonarroti, *The Original Sin and The Expulsion from Paradise*, Sistine Chapel fresco (1508-12) [Bridgeman Education].

This monstrous hybrid, half-woman and half-serpent, may not, at first glance, seem related to the images of the female monsters in Judeo-Arabic literature, for Sin is habitually associated primarily with Ovid's Scylla or Spenser's Error and Duessa, and rightly so.[23] While it might be true that such prior literary and mythical figures are the main female prototypes with which to compare Sin, it would be ill-judged to disregard other possible influences that could have played a role in shaping this peculiar character.

Through careful investigation, one may encounter specific instances in which Judeo-Arabic mythical figures, the Ghoul and Lilith, seem to have migrated westward and were evoked in European texts, before eventually reaching Milton's *Paradise Lost*. As previously mentioned, the orally transmitted folkloric stories of the Ghoul – the nocturnal Arabian female desert monster – were widespread before their documentation in literary works (from a European perspective) such as the *Arabian Nights*.[24]

[23] For more on this topic, see Julia M. Walker, *Medusa's Mirrors: Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and the Metamorphosis of the Female Self* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1998).
[24] Bear in mind that the stories of the *Arabian Nights* can be considered as a narrative that projects how the European imagination viewed the exotic, eroticised yet dangerous East. For an opposite study which centers on the way Arab minds viewed Europe, see Nabil Matar, *Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578–1727* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

Notably, through the circulated Hebraic tradition, the Judeo-Arabic female monster influenced numerous literary works and legends in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England.[25] The two most important works that Milton definitely read, as noted by Dahiyat, are Leo Africanus' *De totius Africae descriptio* ('History and Description of Africa', 1632) in which he would have encountered the Judeo-Arabic belief in supernatural desert monsters;[26] and John Selden's *De Dis Syris* ('On the Syrian Gods', 1617),[27] to which 'recent scholarship has identified a pervasive debt […] in key sections of Milton's poetry'.[28] As Thomas Corns has pointed out, 'when Milton depicts heathen Gods and fallen angels in *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity* and *Paradise Lost*, he draws silently on Selden's *De Diis Syris* (1617, 1629)'. In his influential work, Selden comments in some detail on the process of cultural transmission and its influence on the name of the Judeo-Arabic figure:

> 'Alilat'[29] comes from the most learned Arabs '*Halilath*',[30] and all, who would ask, would signify Luna and the rising, or horned, moon, also Noctiluca, or night-

[25] In 1613, Sebastian Michaelis states that 'Saint *Ierome* translateth and thinketh [Lilith] to be a Sorceresse. *Ibi cubauit Lamia*: whereby is meant such women as vse to goe in the night […] and from her are such kinde of women by the Latines called Lamiae, whose custome was (as *Ieremy* hath it) to shew and offer their breasts vnto children, thereby to still them, and to allure them to come vnto them, that so they might strangle them with greater sercresie'; see Michaelis, 'A Discovrse of Spirits', in *The Admirable History Of The Possession And Conuersion of a Penitent woman. Sedvced By A Magician That Made her to become a Witch*, trans. by W. B. (London: Felix Kingston for William Aspley, 1613), p. 81. Stephanie Spoto argues that 'Lilith here is the exemplary anti-maternal Witch-Figure, who – like the characters Lady Macbeth and Elizabeth Sawyer – turns her woman's ability to nurture and feed children into an inverted representation of motherhood in infanticide'. See Spoto, 'The Figure of Lilith and the Feminine Demonic in Early Modern Literature' (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis: University of Edinburgh, 2012), p. 141. Similarly, the line: 'secret, black, and midnight hags' (*Macbeth*, IV. 1. 49) describing the witches who create a potion using the 'finger of birth-strangled babe' in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is certainly of interest. For more on witchcraft and the figure of Lilith in Early Modern literature see Stephanie Spoto, and Katelyn Marie McCarth, 'Transvestism, Witchcraft, and the Early Modern Lilith' (Unpublished Masters Dissertation: Lehigh University, 2012); available online: <http://preserve.lehigh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2376&context=etd>.

[26] See Dahiyat, pp. 52-9.

[27] Milton speaks highly of Selden's exceptional scholarship in *Areopagitica*: 'Wherof what better witnes can ye expect I should produce, then one of your own now sitting in Parlament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. *Selden...*'; see *Riverside*, p. 1005.

[28] John Selden, *De Dis Syris* (London, 1617); Thomas N. Corns (ed.), *The Milton Encyclopedia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 333.

[29] In pre-Islamic Arabia, the Goddess Allat, also known as Allatu, ruler of the underworld, mother of *Manat* ('death' مناة), was a Goddess worshiped in Nabatean Arabia depicted holding a snake and 'suckling two lions'; see Charles Russell Coulter and Patricia Turner, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2000), p. 37.

> shiner. Hence, Lucia of the Latins is to be translated, that is Ilethya of the Greeks, who is none other than Luna or Diana and is called Lilith among the Jews; who flows from the name Halilath of the Arabs, the source of Lailah, namely that is the Night, and therefore Lilith. Lilith, however, is rendered as Noctiluca, or *night demon* […] But of Lilith, we see in Isaiah xxxiv, 14. And the Jews of today believe Lilith to be an enemy to women in childbirth and their children, and, according to ancient rites, they superstitiously write charms on waxen tablets, with these words: Adam, Chaua, Chutz Lilith, or Lilith be far from here.[31]

Stephanie Spoto singles out the way in which Selden 'is greatly interested in the migration and linguistic mutation of phonemes in the creation of various gods and goddesses, and claims that Alithya, Lilith, Luna, Lucina and various other goddesses occupy the same function, it is only the sounds that have shifted based on geographical location'.[32] It is evident then that this Judeo-Arabic female monster had engaged the interest of Milton's scholarly circle. Futhermore, given the cultural assumptions of Milton's age, that stories from pagan mythology were 'crooked images' that distortedly reflect the 'one true history' recorded in the Scriptures (as discussed in Chapter 2), and given the encyclopaedic ambition of Milton's project to accommodate classical mythology to a Christian purpose, it seems unlikely that he would limit himself to the mythic figures of Greece and Rome, but would subsume any 'shadows' of Christian truth that he encountered in his reading.[33]

What is of especial interest is that Milton's representation of his female characters, in certain instances, does seem to reflect a knowledgeable incorporation of the Judeo-

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[30] The word *Laila* 'night' and *Hilal* 'crescent', seem to connect both female figures with Diana and Luna and with one another, a concept Milton would have been familiar with through Selden's *De Dis Syris*. See Frédéric de Rougemont, *Le Peuple Primitif, Sa Religion, Son Histoire Et Sa Civilisation*, 3 vols. (Genève and Paris, 1855-57), p. 348, where he discusses the etymological connection between the names: Lilith, Alitta, Eilethyia, Ilthyie, and alludes to the demoness' presence in Selden's *De Dis Syris*.

[31] As Cited from Spoto's translation of Selden's chapter on Astarte from *De Dis Syris* [p. 161]; see Spoto, pp. 263-65.

[32] Spoto, p. 146.

[33] Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World* (London, 1614), p. 91. Reflecting on the resemblance between pagan fiction and Christian truth, Godfrey Goodman had concluded: 'as truth is most ancient, so falsehood would seem to bee the shadow of truth and to accompanie her'; see Goodman, *The Fall of Man; or, The Corruption of Nature Proved by the Light of Our Natural Reason* (London: F. Kyngston, 1616), pp. 398–99. See too Mandy Green, '"Ad Ferrum [...] ab auro": Degenerative and Regenerative Patterning in the Final Books of *Paradise Lost*', *Modern Language Review*, 102.3 (2007): 654-71.

Arabic account of the legend of Lilith. Just a few lines before the introduction of Sin – the night hag and portress of Hell – Milton delineates fearful Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimeras, who by nature come to dwell in caves, lakes, bogs, and dens. It is valuable to speculate whether Milton's imagination was recalling at this point certain female characters, such as the ancient mother of demons, Lilith (or even her Arabic prototype, the Ghoul). Just as the Judeo-Arabic female monster appears unexpectedly to travellers, the sudden and striking manifestation of Sin, likewise, interrupts Satan's journey to Eden. Moreover, like Sin who dwells in the grisly wilderness and desolate caves,[34] we come across a reference to Lilith in the Old Testament, where it is stated:

וּפָגְשׁוּ צִיִּים אֶת-אִיִּים, וְשָׂעִיר עַל-רֵעֵהוּ יִקָּרָא; אַךְ-שָׁם הִרְגִּיעָה לִילִית, וּמָצְאָה לָהּ מָנוֹחַ.

> And there shall the beasts of the desert meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; the Lilith also shall settle there, and find for herself a place of rest.
> (Isaiah 34:14)

Siegmund Hurwitz traces the development of the Lilith Myth to its Babylonian and Assyrian origin, relating her to earlier gatekeepers:[35] Shedû and Lamassû, the 'guardians of the royal house and tutelary gods of the Assyrian people'.[36] He also refers to Montgomery's translation of the names 'Shelanitha' and 'Chatiphata', where 'Hag means something like witch, while the word ghoul is the specific Arabic word for a demon,

[34] It is worth pausing and reflecting on the Lady's anxiey at the way: 'A thousand fantasies / Begin to throng into my memory / Of calling shapes, and beckning shadows dire, / And airy tongues, that syllable mens names' (*Comus*, 205-08), particularly given the surprising location of these tempting figures, which are to be found 'On Sands, and Shoars and desert Wildernesses' (*Comus*, 209). See *Riverside*, p. 132. I am grateful for Dr Green for recommending the inclusion of these lines that are in keeping with the discussion.

[35] Interestingly, Allatu is also identified with the Sumerian *Ereshkigal*, the queen and keeper of the underworld. Theresa Bane, *Encyclopedia of Demons in World Religions and Cultures* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), p. 30.

[36] Siegmund Hurwitz, *Lilith, the First Eve: Historical and Psychological Aspects of the Dark Feminine* ed. by Robert Hinshaw and trans. by Gela Jacobson (Einsiedeln, Switzerland: Daimon Verlag, 1992), p. 34.

somewhat similar to the Arabic djinni', which are found to be present along with the name Lilith in an Aramaic magic text.[37]

It is to the Jewish tradition that we must first turn to learn more of Lilith, whom God had created simultaneously with Adam as an equal to him.[38] Adam, however, struggled to accept her position of equality. This struggle reached a climax when Adam ordered Lilith to lie beneath him in the marital bed; Lilith refused. Adam continued to insist on his demands until Lilith eventually pronounced the divine name of God (YHWY). At this point, Lilith grew wings and flew to the Red Sea, where she inhabited caves. There she took other sexual partners; one of the most important was Satan.[39]

When God sent three angels to persuade her to return, she refused, stating that 'it could be no paradise to her if she was to be the servant of man'.[40] Due to her rebellious decision, Lilith was banished and cursed to witness one-hundred of her demon children die daily. As a result, she vowed vengeance against man and the sons of (the second) Eve by feeding on the blood of infants, and seducing pious men or travellers of the night in their sleep in order to increase her demonic race. After seducing these men, Lilith killed and devoured them.

[37] Hurwitz, p. 96. According to Bob Curran, the Arabic legends and stories about the ghoul have a faint trace in the European mind in the seventeenth century, possibly influenced by Arabic astronomical accounts. The sinister stories of the Ghoul had left their mark on the name 'the Ghoul's head', *Rhas Al-Ghul* ('demon star'), or as more predominantly known, *Eye of Medusa*. As Curran remarks, the 'ascendancy of Algol was also a time when the powers of black magicians were at their height in the Arab world'. Bob Curran, *Encyclopedia of the Undead: A Field Guide to the Creatures That Cannot Rest in Peace* (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page, 2006), p. 125. Note Milton's lines: 'But Fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt / *Medusa* with *Gorgonian* terror guards / The Ford' (II. 610-12). For more on Medusa in *Paradise Lost*, see James Dougal Fleming, 'Meanwhile, Medusa in *Paradise Lost*', *ELH*, 69.4 (2002): 1009-028.

[38] See James S. Forrester-Brown, *The Two Creation Stories in Genesis: A Study of Their Symbolism* (J.M. Watkins: London, 1920).

[39] See Graves, p. 65; Barbara Black Koltuv, *The Book of Lilith* (York Beach, Me: Nicolas-Hays, 1986), pp. 29-30; p. 103.

[40] A possible echo may be found in Satan's motto: 'Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven' (*PL*, I. 263).

Fig. 14: John Collier, *Lilith* (1892) [The Atkinson Art Gallery, Southport, England].

In *Sefer Raziel Hamalakh* or *The Book of Raziel* (a book of wisdom and knowledge given to Adam by the angel Raziel after the Fall), prayers that provide protection against the terrifying night hag Lilith address her thus: 'I conjure you, *first Eve*, in the name of Him who created you, and in the name of the three angels[41] whom the Lord sent to you and who found you on the islands in the sea […]'.[42] Notably, the description of Sin, which identifies her with the nocturnal shape-shifting hag that flies in search of infants' blood, relates powerfully to the Judeo-Arabic winged demoness:[43]

[41] For more on the connection between the first and the second Eve, see Hurwitz, pp. 140-51 and pp. 177-97.
[42] Steve Savedow, *Sepher Rezial Hemelach: The Book of the Angel Rezial* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 2000), p. 43, cited in Hurwitz, p. 128.
[43] Bear in mind that the Hebrew name Lilith translates into 'night hag', and the Arabic name 'Ghoul' (ghal) relates to the Arabic verb *yataghawal*, which means to shape-shift, see *Mujam Al-Ma'ani* - Arabic Dictionary (2017) <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/يتغول>.

> Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call'd
> In secret, riding through the Air she comes
> Lur'd with the smell of infant blood.
> (*PL*, II. 662-64)

The female characters, Sin and Lilith, are both literally transformed into cursed creatures, Eve only temporarily and metaphorically so. The fall of Lilith and Sin is accompanied by a permanent physical transformation that befits their fallen state; they are no longer endowed with heavenly traits, as they are now shape-shifting, deformed monsters who dwell in caves. Both suffer a cursed fertility: Lilith has to witness a hundred of her demon children die daily, while Sin, as well as being Satan's incestuous daughter, is forced to become mother to innumerable hellish offspring by their son Death, and because of this abominable union, gives birth continually to these hellhounds which return to the womb whenever they choose.[44] Moreover, while Lilith sprouted wings and flew through the air to a Cave near the Red Sea where she became Samael or Satan's consort and mother of demons, Sin, too, experiences a new sense of power and likewise grows wings which enable her to follow her author and consort, Satan, after his success in Paradise:

> Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
> Wings growing, and Dominion giv'n me large
> Beyond this Deep.
> (*PL*, X. 243-45)

It is worth noting that the possible influence of this Judeo-Arabic myth in shaping Milton's characters is not confined to Sin alone. Milton's depiction of Adam and Eve lying 'Strait side by side' (IV. 741) in their nuptial bower (no one on top) is certainly of interest, for it embodies, I would argue, the more harmonious relationship between Adam and Eve

[44] Sin's incestuous relationship with her father, Satan, has been compared with Kabbalistic myths where 'it is a law, which applies also to the Sephiroth that the female first issues from male' and then couples with him. See Saurat, Denis, *Milton, Man and Thinker* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1970 [reprint of 1925]), p. 285.

compared to the previous conflict between Adam and Lilith over this specific matter.[45] Moreover, Adam's lamentations after discovering that Eve has eaten the forbidden fruit and his wondering whether God would 'create another *Eve*' (IX. 911) as a consequence, and Eve's own fears that Adam would be 'wedded to another *Eve*' (IX. 828), taken together, strengthen the notion that replacing Eve in the Garden is not an unfamiliar concept to Milton and strongly implies his awareness of this tradition.[46]

It becomes evident that despite the initial antithetical portrayal of Eve and Sin, the two female characters present an indispensable linkage. Furthermore, the description of the hellish Sin, as a previous inhabitant of Heaven, and Eve as a serpentine woman in her fallen state, embraces this liminal aspect. Despite Sin's transformation into a hellish monster, we are not to disregard her beautiful upper body, reminiscent of her previous existence in Heaven. Similarly, the Arabic root of Eve's name encompasses, as previously mentioned, the double meaning of 'a life giver' and 'serpent', alluding to the fallen Eve's capacity for deception. In fact, in his bitter fury, Adam demands that it is only fitting that Eve's 'heav'ly form' should undergo a similar external metamorphosis appropriate to her 'hellish falshood':

> […] nothing wants, but that thy shape,
> Like his, and colour Serpentine may shew
> Thy inward fraud, to warn all Creatures from thee
> Henceforth; least that too heav'nly form, pretended
> To hellish falshood, snare them.
> (*PL*, X. 869-73)

The depth and complexity of these female characters undeniably endows them with a sense of mystery, possibility and power. Both Sin and Eve share winningly 'attractive graces',

[45] I am grateful for Dr Green for pointing this out. The gardening debate, which leads to the fatal separation of the couple on the morning of the Fall, may, of course, be seen as stemming in part from Eve's desire to gain the upper hand in their relationship.
[46] Interestingly, Milton makes multiple allusions to Jewish tradition in his *Doctrine & Discipline of Divorce: Restored to the Good of Both Sexes* (London, 1643).

and their influence on their male partners, as well as their ability to affect the development of the narrative, is certainly apparent. It is necessary for Satan to escape the realm of Hell to accomplish his scheme; had it not been for Sin, the serpentine woman at the gate, Satan's escape from Hell would not have been effected. Such power is not lacking in Eve whose tempting beauty stirred Adam's anxieties as he feels weak 'Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance' (VIII. 533).[47] When Adam acknowledges these insecurities to the angel Raphael, the latter warns him against such vulnerabilities and reminds him of his superior status, attempting to strengthen Adam.

This specific theme is found in certain accounts of the Islamic story of Ascension. While sleeping in Mecca, Muhammad is awakened by *Jibril* ('Gabriel' جبريل) in order to visit the otherworldly realms. Before his ascent, a mysterious temptress with unearthly beauty suddenly appears and begins to call the Prophet's name in an attempt to distract him from his divinely ordained path to the Heavens. Just as Raphael attempts to strengthen Adam, Jibril plays a similar role by warning Muhammad to keep away from the woman and neither answer nor look at her. Jibril explains that the woman, who is 'concealing under splendid adornments' her true nature and attempting to 'draw him from the path by flattery and alluring gestures', is 'a symbol of the temptation of the world'.[48] She appears to be beautiful, but in reality she is an old and ugly hag symbolising the 'false felicity of the world'.[49] Jibril reveals that, had the Prophet answered her calls, he would have doomed himself and his followers. The episode from the Hadith is related thus:

[47] The unstable perspective through which we gain access to the interplay between Sin and Eve can be demonstrated once again through the twofold potentiality of Eve's 'attractive graces': while it is tempting to exclusively focus on the way 'the charm of beauty's powerful glance' (VIII. 533) would seem to foreshadow the way Eve, once fallen, will entice a still-innocent Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, it should also be remembered that these same 'graces' will play a crucial role in Adam's return to God after the Fall. See Mandy Green, 'Mortal Change: Life After Death in *Paradise Lost*', *Milton Studies*, 58 (2017): 57-93 (80).
[48] Palacios, p. 36. Here Palacios believes that the woman, who appears in Dante's dream in the fourth circle of purgatory (*Purgatorio*, 19. 7-33), bears strong affinities to the old seductress appearing to Muhammad in his journey.
[49] Palacios, p. 37.

> The Prophet continued travelling and then passed by a woman with bare arms, decked with every female ornament Allah had created. She said: "O Muhammad, look at me, I need to ask you something." But he did not look at her. Then he said: "Who was this, O Jibril?" He replied: "This was the world, (*al-dunya*). If you had answered her, your Community would have preferred the world to the hereafter".[50]

After the Prophet has rejected this woman, Iblis (Satan), disguised as an old man, likewise attempts to draw Muhammad to him and deflect the Prophet from his journey to the higher abodes, albeit unsuccessfully once again:[51]

> As the Prophet travelled on, he passed by an old man who was a distance away from his path saying: "Come hither, O Muhammad!" But Jibril said: "Nay, go on, O Muhammad!" The Prophet went on and then said: "Who was this, O Jibril?" He replied: "This was Allah's enemy, Iblis. He wanted you to incline towards him".

By first rejecting the tempting, shape-shifting old hag through the help of Jibril, Muhammad is thus made ready to reject Iblis and to embrace and experience the spiritual world. If he had answered the invitations of Iblis, he would have doomed himself and his followers to everlasting suffering.

In the pre-Islamic Arabic tradition, a belief in perilous desert monsters, such as the shape-shifting old woman who appeared to the Prophet, was prevalent. One of the most well known, which remains popular in oral folklore till this day is the Ghoul (*Al-Ghul* الغول), believed to be a predominantly female shape-shifting monster, who appears to be beautiful, yet in reality is ugly and terrifying. She attempts to lure travellers in the desert back to her cave, where she mates with them and, afterwards, devours them. The Ghoul is also the name of shape-shifting Jinns (demons) that appear to travellers, usually in the form

[50] This passage from Hadith, and the one that follows, are taken from Al-Sayyid Muhammad Ibn 'Alawi, *The Prophets in Barzakh / The Hadith of Isra and Mi'raj / The Immense Merits of Al-Sham / The Vision of Allah* trans. by Gibril Haddad (Fenton, MI: As-Sunnah Foundation of America, 1999), p. 64.
[51] Note that in *Paradise Lost* Sin is closely associated with Satan just as this false temptress is associated with Iblis.

of a serpent.[52] Al-Masudi's discussion of Bedouin myth, culture and history, in which he traces Bedouin tradition back to the creation of Adam and Eve, describes desert monsters as beings that reside in the wilderness, dwell in lavatories and waste areas, and live in the air in the form of flying snakes.[53]

Al-Rawi explains that after the spread of Islam, and despite the Prophet's denying of the existence of the Ghoul, certain Muslim scholars, such as Al-Waqidi,[54] believed that 'Ghouls lived at that time [before and at the beginning of Islam], but they perished later'.[55] Abi Al-Sheikh Al-Asbahani, Al-Rawi continues, acknowledged the existence of the Ghoul, describing it as 'a kind of a female demon that is able to change its shape and appear to travellers in the wilderness to delude and harm them'.[56]

This terrifying female creature is a dominant character in the stories of the *Arabian Nights* where she is identified as the Ghoul, a shape-shifting desert monster who, until this day, is colloquially referred to by these euphemistic titles: 'mother of boys' (*Um Al-Subyan* أم الصبيان) and 'our mother the ghoul' (*Umna Al-Ghula* أمنا الغولة). The 'maternal' feature of the Ghoul is highlighted in 'The Tale of the Prince and the Ghooleh', where the prince encounters a beautiful woman lost in the desert. The distressed damsel beseeches the prince for help, claiming that she has lost all trace of her companions. When the prince decides to follow her without her knowledge, thinking she is alone, she transforms herself back into her true form. To his surprise, he discovers that 'she was a Ghulah, a wicked Ogress', who was saying to her brood, "O my children, this day I bring you a fine fat

[52] See Abu Uthman Al-Jaḥiz, *Al-Ḥaywân* (Beirut: Dar Aḥya Al-Turath Al- Arabi, 1969) and David E. Jones, *Evil in Our Midst: A Chilling Glimpse of Our Most Feared and Frightening Demons* (Garden City Park, New York: Square One, 2002).
[53] Ali Bin Al-Ḥusayn Al-Mas'udi, *Muruj Al-Dhahab*, vol. II (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Almyah, 1986), p. 171.
[54] Al-Waqidi's work was available at the Bodleian, as mentioned in the Chapter 1.
[55] Ahmed Al-Rawi, 'The Mythical Ghoul in Arabic Culture', *Cultural Analysis*, 8 (2009): 45-69 (48); Muḥammed Bin Umar Al-Waqidi, *Al-Maghâzī*, vol. I (Beirut: Âlam Al-Kutub, 1984), p. 104.
[56] Quoted in Al-Rawi, p. 47; see also Abi Al-Sheikh Al-Aṣbahânī, *Al-'Âṣamah*, vol. IV (Riyad: Dâr al 'Âṣimah, 1987).

youth, for dinner"'.[57] It is possible that this trait is a reminder of the ancient understanding of the purpose of Lilith's creation[58] before her demonization: to be the mother of humankind (reversed afterwards into a child-killing demon).[59] Finally, like Lilith who promises to spare her innocent victims (mostly children) if amulets of protection are worn, the prince only escapes his otherwise inevitable fate by imploring Allah to save him from the demoness; only then is the ghoul vanquished.

Fig. 15: An engraving of the Ghoul trying to tempt the prince from Edward Lane's *Thousand and One Nights* (1865).[60]

[57] 'The Story of the Envious Wazeer and the Prince and the Ghooleh', in *The Thousand and One Nights, Commonly Called, in England, The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, trans. by Edward William Lane, vol. I (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, 1865), pp. 81-2.

[58] Victor Hugo (1984), in his *Fin de Satan*, depicts Lilith as the daughter of Satan 'La fille du demon' and refers to her as 'Le Goul'. In varied sources she is depicted as Satan's companion and wife. 'Je suis Lilith-Isis, L'âme noire du monde. / Tremble ! L'être inconnu, funeste, illimite / Que l'homme en frémissant nomme Fatalité / C'est moi. Tremble ! Anankè, c'est moi. Tremble ! Le voile, / C'est moi'. See Victor Hugo, *La Fin de Satan: Nouvelle édition augmentée* (N.A: Arvensa editions, 2014), p. 220.

[59] Perhaps aware of the widespread and evident folkloric connection between Lilith and the Ghoul, even before the latter was mentioned in 1786, Sir Richard Francis Burton, the British Arabist who translated the *Arabian Nights* and travelled in disguise to Mecca, describes the Ghoul 'as being the equivalent of the Hebrew Lilith or Greek lamia, a female demon seeking pray in the waste'. He also identified her with 'ogresses and flesh-devouring figures from folklore'; see T. S. Joshi (ed.), *Icons of Horror and the Supernatural: An Encyclopedia of Our Worst Nightmares, Vol. 1* (London: Greenwood Group, 2007), p. 244.

[60] Lane, p. 82.

In an interesting incident in the Hadith, a Ghoul visits the home of Abu-Ayuub Al-Ansari three times before finally promising not to return, but then only under the condition that specific verses of the Qur'an are recited:[61]

> Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari had a storehouse in which he kept dates. A Ghoul would come and take from it, so he complained about that to the Prophet. So he said: "Go, and when you see her say: 'In the Name of Allah, answer to the Messenger of Allah.'" He said: "So I caught her, and she swore that she would not return, so I released her." He went to the Prophet and he said: "What did your captive do?" He said: "She swore not to return." He said: "She has lied, and she will come again to lie." He said: "I caught her another time and she swore that she would not return, so I released her, and went to the Prophet." He said: "What did your captive do?" He said: "She swore that she would not return." So he said: "She lied and she will come again to lie." So he caught her and said: "I shall not let you go until you accompany me to the Prophet." She said: "I shall tell you something: If you recite Ayat Al-Kursi in your home, then no Shaitan, nor any other shall come near you." So he went to the Prophet and he said: "What did your captive do?" He said: "I informed him of what she said, and he said: 'She told the truth and she is a continuous liar. '"[62]

The infanticidal nature of the Ghoul, particularly in her serpentine form, is suggested in another Hadith where we read an exhortation to 'kill the snakes having stripes over them[63] and short-tailed snakes, for these two types cause miscarriage (of a pregnant woman)'.[64] If the snakes are of a different kind then, like the Ghoul in the previous Hadith, they are given a three-day warning (for they are believed to be shape-shifting djinnis) and an invocation of protection is recited:

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[61] As mentioned earlier, the Hadith is considered the most accredited religious text after the Holy Qur'an in Islamic theology. The largest two Islamic sects (Sunnis and Shias) believe in separate bodies of Hadith, however, as previously noted, the texts of the Hadith, in this chapter, are treated solely within a literary scope. The different religious implications, according to the varied religious sects, will not be the focus of this chapter. See Cyril Glassé, *The New Encyclopedia of Islam: A Revised Edition of the Concise Encyclopedia of Islam* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002)

[62] The passages from the Hadith herafter are taken from the largest and most comprehensive online source of the Islamic Hadith: *Sahih Muslim* - Hadith (2017) <https://sunnah.com/>. For more on the Hadith above, see <http://sunnah.com/urn/631150>.

[63] Cf. the arrow snakes accompanying the reference to Lilith in Isaiah (34:14).

[64] See *Sahih Muslim* - Hadith (2017) <https://sunnah.com/muslim/39/177>.

حَدَّثَنَا هَنَّادٌ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي زَائِدَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي لَيْلَى، عَنْ ثَابِتٍ الْبُنَانِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي لَيْلَى، قَالَ قَالَ أَبُو لَيْلَى قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ ’إِذَا ظَهَرَتِ الْحَيَّةُ فِي الْمَسْكَنِ فَقُولُوا لَهَا إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكِ بِعَهْدِ نُوحٍ وَبِعَهْدِ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ دَاوُدَ أَنْ لاَ تُؤْذِينَا فَإِنْ عَادَتْ فَاقْتُلُوهَا‘.

> Narrated Abu Laila: That the Messenger of Allah said: “When a snake appears in your dwellings then say to [her]: ‘We ask you—by [the] Covenant of Nuh, and by the covenant of Sulaiman bin Dawud—that you do not harm us.’ If [she] returns, then kill [her]”.[65]

Interestingly, following the process of translation, it should be noted that the Arabic original differed slightly in the English translation when referring to the nature of the snake. The Arabic words ‘if she returns’ (*Fa’in ’Adat* فَإِنْ عَادَتْ) are translated by ‘if it returns’, ascribing to her a strictly animalistic nature, and neutralising her femininity. Therefore, I have here, and in the following instances in square brackets, amended the translation to closely reflect the Arabic original, which by the use of ‘Laha’ refers to a feminine singular [her].

The feminine allusion is difficult to disregard especially when comparing the similarity of the Ghoul’s negotiation in the first Hadith with the one Lilith makes in an attempt to convince the three angels not to return her to Adam. Lilith’s promise not to harm the children who are protected with sacred amulets mirrors the Ghoul’s promise not to return if *Ayat Al-kursi* (‘the verse of the throne’) is recited. Similarly, the two-striped (female) snakes which cause miscarriage and child death, as described in the second Hadith, indeed resemble, in this instance, the infanticidal Lilith.[66] In the last Hadith, the

[65] See *Sahih Muslim* - Hadith (2017) <http://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/18/27>.

[66] Note that the ‘reference to the abortive figure of Lilith parallels the “hell hounds” which are ripped prematurely from Sin’s womb in perpetual abortion’; see Spoto, p. 248. The similarities between Lilith’s demonised state and Sin are noted further in the following lines from *Paradise Lost*: ‘These yelling Monsters that with ceasless cry / Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv’d / And hourly born, with sorrow infinite / To me, for when they list into the womb / That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw / My Bowels, thir repast; then bursting forth / A fresh with conscious terrours vex me round, That rest or intermission none I find’ (*PL*. II. 795-802).

theme of invocation for protection from a female snake demon correlates to the prayer for protection from the 'first Eve' mentioned earlier.[67]

Although the analogues in the characteristics of the Ghoul in the Hadith and the story of Lilith in the Jewish tradition are significant, a direct translation that would associate Lilith with the Ghoul is wanting. While such a connection is not to be found in the Hadith, it is to be found in the Arabic translation of the Book of Isaiah. There the word Lilith is literally translated in some versions as *layl* or night, while in other translations as الغول (the Ghoul),[68] a translation that alludes to her shape-shifting power:

تتلاقى الوحوش وبنات آوى ويتنادى معز الوحش إليها، هناك تستقر الغول وتجد لنفسها مقاما.

> But the *cormorant* and the bittern shall possess it; the *owl* also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness […] And there shall the beasts of the desert meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; the *Lilith* also shall settle there, and find for herself a *place of rest*. There shall the arrow-snake make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her *shadow*; there also shall the vultures be gathered one with another.[69]
> (Isaiah, 34: 11-15)

In this instance of translation, the two demonic temptresses who originated from earlier Babylonian and Assyrian belief, become identified with a single Judeo-Arabic figure,

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[67] It is worth comparing these motifs to the charm John Selden mentions in *Titles of Honor*, in which he explains that the Jews believe Lilith to be: 'a Spirit very Dangerous to yong Children or Women in Childbirth, whereupon their custom is (especially of the *German Iews)* at the Birth-times of their Women, to chalk out on euery of the walls of the Chamber in a Circle, this charme: […] Adam, Heue, Hence (or out) Lilith.' John Selden, *Titles of Honor* (London: William Stansby for John Helme, 1614), pp. 164-65. See Spoto, p. 143.

[68] 'The screech owl - לילית Lilith, the night-bird, the night-raven' is linked with 'ליל layil, or לילה lailah, the night'. In other versions Lilith is replaced by the term night spirit, monster, or creature. In the commentaries 'Gesenius supposes it is so called from its howl, or nocturnal cry - from an Arabian word signifying to howl.' Interestingly, I would argue that the 'H' in Howl may have replaced the 'G' in ghawl (the Arabic root of Ghoul); see *Bible Hub* - Bible Study (2017) <http://biblehub.com/isaiah/34-14.htm>.

[69] As translated in the 'Good News Arabic' or ('Ecumenical') translation of the Bible. In the Jesuit Arabic translation of the Bible, the same term is directly translated into '*lilit*' (ليليت). The 'G N A' version, produced and published in 1992, reaffirms the current understanding of the connection between Lilith and the Ghoul. For the full Arabic text, see *Coptic Orthodox Church Network* - Bible in Arabic (NJ: St. Mark Coptic Church, 2017) <http://www.copticchurch.net/cgibin/bible/index.php?r=Isaiah+34&version=SVD&btn>.

correlating in haunting characteristics, thematic narrative, and cultural resonance. Following these parallels, it becomes evident that, despite the variations in the name of the fallen feminine, a similar representation joins the female characters that initially seemed unrelated in the diverse literary texts. The harmful attributes of the Judeo-Arabic female demons are possibly utilised in shaping the depiction of Milton's female characters in *Paradise Lost*. The name 'Eve' bears linguistic connotations to the word 'serpent' in Arabic and Aramaic, and she is openly identified as one by Adam after the Fall in *Paradise Lost*. The deformed, serpentine gatekeeper, Sin, along with her association with Satan and her cursed maternal state, parallels the narrative of Lilith's myth in its Assyrian origin and Jewish depiction. Finally, the names shelanitha and chatiphata that are associated with Lilith, in an Aramaic magic text, are translated to 'hag and ghoul', and in the Arabic version of Isaiah, the word 'Ghoul' is directly attributed to her.

Through these suggestive connections, the reader may detect a clearly formed lineage of inherited imagery, through a delicate process of cultural translation, in which Judeo-Arabic mythology made its way to Milton's epic, and was actively deployed by him in the portrayal of Sin and, to a lesser extent, Eve. The female characters, from the different traditions, have undoubtedly displayed certain exceptional similarities in their traits and habitations. While not essential to our understanding of the passages discussed, the presence of these Judeo-Arabic demonesses adds a deeper resonance and suggestiveness when recognised.

Given the cultural assumptions of Milton's age, that stories from pagan mythology were 'crooked images' that distortedly reflect the 'one true history' recorded in the Scriptures, and given the encyclopaedic ambition of Milton's project to accommodate classical mythology to a Christian purpose, it seems unlikely that he would limit himself to the mythic figures of Greece and Rome, but would subsume any 'shadows' of Christian

truth that he encountered in his reading.[70] What is of special interest is that Milton's representation of his female characters, in certain instances, does seem to reflect a knowledgeable incorporation of the Judeo-Arabic narrative. It is evident then that this Judeo-Arabic female monster had engaged the interest of Milton's scholarly circle. Whether Milton subsumed these mythical figures as part of his mythographic enterprise is a proposition that remains inconclusive, yet is no longer out of the question.

[70] Reflecting on the resemblance between pagan fiction and Christian truth, Godfrey Goodman concludes: 'as truth is most ancient, so falsehood would seem to bee the shadow of truth and to accompanie her'. Goodman, pp. 398–99, and Raleigh, p. 91. See also Green, '"Ad Ferrum [...] ab auro"', pp. 655-56.

Chapter Five: The Reflective Eve: Judeo-Arabic Imagery of the Demonic Feminine in Eve's mirror scene

> *[…] Now I am a lake. A woman bends over me,*
> *Searching my reaches for what she really is.*
> *Then she turns to those liars, the candles or the moon.*
> *I see her back, and reflect it faithfully.*[1]

> *[…] every mirror is a gateway to the Other World and leads directly to Lilith's cave. That is the cave Lilith went to when she abandoned Adam and the Garden of Eden for all time, the cave where she sported with her demon lovers. From these unions multitudes of demons were born, who flocked from that cave and infiltrated the world. And when they want to return, they simply enter the nearest mirror. That is why it is said that Lilith makes her home in every mirror. […] Now the daughter of Lilith who made her home in that mirror watched every movement of the girl who posed before it. She bided her time and one day she slipped out of the mirror and took possession of the girl, entering through her eyes. In this way she took control of her, stirring her desire at will.*[2]

The iconic moment in which Eve is captivated by her reflection in the lake, in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, has captured the interest of Miltonic critics, students, artists and readers alike. By letting Eve take over the narrative, introducing her own account of the beginnings of her existence and describing her earliest moments of consciousness, Milton allows the reader a unique insight into her character, while at the same time he creates a scene of compelling thematic and mythical resonance. The importance of this decision – of allowing Eve to take control of her account of her earliest memories – cannot be exaggerated. Undeniably, the episode, for which there is of course no Biblical precedent, enriches Milton's portrayal of Eve and her importance within the narrative. Although on the surface it appears to conform to traditional representations of feminine vanity,[3] a

[1] 'Mirror' by Silvia Path. See Sylvia Plath, *Sylvia Plath: The Collected Poems*, ed. by Ted Hughes (New York: Quality Paperback Book Club, 1993), p. 173.
[2] Howard Schwartz, *Lilith's Cave: Jewish Tales of the Supernatural* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 120-21.
[3] Katherine Marie Dopulos explains, by 'retelling to Adam her own experience, unlike Narcissus, who is narrated by a third party, Eve disrupts a traditional reading of woman as inherently second to man, but rather participates actively in a non-traditional dialogic experience'. Dopulos further demonstrates how 'Milton is able to work within a previously established narrative framework by choosing to act invisibly, enacting his

deeper analysis reveals a powerful meeting point of evocative mythological imagery from the West and the Middle East.

The episode begins with Eve relating to Adam the story of her coming into being; she recalls that what she first remembers is waking up from sleep 'repos'd / Under a shade of flours' (*PL*, IX. 450-51). While wondering where she was, and how she was brought into existence, she became aware of the 'murmuring sound / Of waters' that 'issu'd from a Cave' (IX. 453-54) as the passage conveys so suggestively in lines that are worth quoting in full:

> That day I oft remember, when from sleep
> I first awak't, and found my self repos'd
> Under a shade of flours, much wondring where
> And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
> Nor distant far from thence a murmuring sound
> Of waters issu'd from a Cave and spread
> Into a liquid Plain, then stood unmov'd
> Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n;
> (*PL*, IV. 449-56)

When Eve follows the 'voice' which leads to the cave, she sees her 'self' for the first time reflected in the water of a lake.[4] There she has her first encounter with what she believes to be another being, but is lead away from the lake by a Divine guiding voice, which explains to her that what she had assumed to be another being is but her own image:

> [...] I thither went
> With unexperienc't thought, and laid me downe
> On the green bank, to look into the cleer
> Smooth Lake, that to me seemd another Skie.
> As I bent down to look, just opposite,

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reflective revisions through the voices of his characters'; see Dopulos, 'Back I Turn'd: Eve and Milton and the Power of Coming Second', (Unpublished B.A Thesis: Haverford College, 2013), pp. 20-1.

[4] For more on the concept of women being an object of beauty (or art), or for more on women as 'images', see A. R. Sharrock, 'Womanufacture', *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 81 (1991): 36-49; Mandy Green, *Milton's Ovidian Eve* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 25-7.

A Shape within the watry gleam appeard
Bending to look on me, I started back,
It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
Pleas'd it returnd as soon with answering looks
Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
With thee it came and goes.
(*PL*, IV. 456-69)

Fig. 16: Jules Rihomme, *Eve's reflection in the water*, from a French edition of *Paradise Lost*, engraved by St. Eve and Lalaisse, published 1868 (litho) [Bridgeman Education].

At this point, Eve is summoned away from the lake and informed of her true purpose, that is, to become the Mother of humankind:

> [...] but follow me,
> And I will bring thee where no shadow staies
> Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
> Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
> Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare
> Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd
> Mother of human Race.
> (*PL*, IV. 469-75)

A ubiquitous subject of interest and debate by Miltonic critics and commentators is Eve's Narcissus-like reaction when first seeing her reflection. Some were drawn to Eve's childlike innocence and excitement, interpreting the scene accordingly.[5] To exemplify, Majorie Hope Nicolson considers it 'entirely possible to explain Eve's supposed "narcissism" by saying that Eve was still an infant – just now created – and her experience was that of any child for the first time noticing its reflection in mirror or water'.[6] However, others viewed in Eve's response a more suggestive inkling into the nature and motives of her character. Maggie Kilgour has observed how 'since the advent of Christianity especially, Ovid's Narcissus has seemed synonymous with satanic self-love, selfishness and egotism',[7] and more often than not, critics, like Douglas Bush, saw in Eve's attraction to her image in the lake at least 'a faint trace of latent vanity and self-centredness'.[8] Such proleptic readings of the passage 'seek', as Green notes, 'to expose weaknesses that are

[5] See Alvin Snider, 'The Self-Mirroring Mind in Milton and Traherne', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 55.4 (1986): 313-27. According to James W. Earl the scene is 'not the correction of a moral error, but psychological growth'; see Earl, 'Eve's Narcissism', *Milton Quarterly*, 19 (1985): 13-6 (13).
[6] Green, p. 38; Majorie Hope Nicolson, *John Milton: A Reader's Guide to His Poetry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1964), p. 242.
[7] See '"Thy Perfect Image Viewing": Poetic Creation in Ovid's Narcissus in *Paradise Lost*', *Studies in Philology*, 102.3 (2005): 307-39, where Maggie Kilgour notes how the Ovidian subtext in Book IV is still most often read 'through allegorical interpretations of Ovid that identify Narcissus with pride and self love', p. 311. Douglas Bush cites the tradition in which the danger of self love is emphasized in his edition of *The Complete Poetical Works of John Milton* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965).
[8] Douglas Bush, *Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in English Poetry* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1932), p. 638.

later exploited in full by Satan', who is present in the scene 'eaves-dropping on this intimate and private audience in the guise of a cormorant'.[9] The highlighting of such potential weaknesses has also been discussed by Bartlett Giamatti who believes these early flaws anticipate the inevitable Fall, by providing a 'repository of doubt for later exploitation', particularly, by the tempting snake.[10] On the other hand, like Christine Froula and Donald F. Bouchard, Richard DuRocher feels the episode of Eve's narcissism as her 'only period of integrity before she is forced to enter a realm of inequitable relationships, where she is matched imperfectly with Adam as part of a patriarchal plan by which her own value is diminished'.[11] Indeed, discussions of the scene are numerous and provide a range of readings debating Eve's traits, motives and nature, either adumbrating or challenging her predisposition towards the inevitable Fall.[12]

Of course, the main theme critics typically focus on when referring to the Narcissus myth is self-love, *philautia*, rather than knowledge. However, since self-knowledge is an integral, yet neglected, part of the myth, it would be rewarding not to limit the reading of Eve's encounter with her reflection solely to an interpretation centred on her apparent vanity. Although self-love is the focus of the Narcissus myth, it remains nonetheless only one of its significant motifs.[13] As Green observes, while the *Metamorphoses* would 'seem to have little to offer' for the events surrounding Eve's nativity, 'Eve's account of her first

[9] Green, p. 38.
[10] A. Bartlett Giamatti, *The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 316. On the Narcissus allusion as a sign of Eve's vulnerability, see Richard J. DuRocher, *Milton and Ovid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 85-93. On Eve's flaws and 'resistance to teaching', see Douglas A. Day, 'Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost* IV', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 3 (1961): 369-81 (378).
[11] As cited in Richard J. DuRocher, 'Guiding the Glance: Spenser, Milton, and "Venus looking glas"', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 92 (July 1993): 325-41 (325). Christine Froula, 'When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy', *Critical Inquiry*, 10 (1983): 321-47; and Donald F. Bouchard, in *Milton: A Structural Reading* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1974), p. 75, where he reads this scene as evidence of the unfallen state of language in the poem.
[12] For more on this discussion, see Arnold Stein, *Answerable Style: Essays on 'Paradise Lost'* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1953); Beverley McCabe, 'Eve: Victim, Villain or Vehicle? The Forewarnings and Prefiguration of the Fall in *Paradise Lost*', *College Language Association Journal*, 43.1 (1999): 73-88; and Green, pp. 28-53.
[13] The sub-elements echoed within Milton's reworking of the Narcissus framework have been recently analysed in relation to Ovid by Green, Kilgour and Katherine Marie Dopulos.

moments of existence is generally acknowledged to be one of the most unequivocal examples of a specifically Ovidian episode in the poem'.[14] By invoking the concept of self-knowledge in the Narcissus myth, Milton highlights the complexity of the supporting themes of 'reflection and echo, sameness and otherness, shadow and substance', in the narrative.[15]

Similarly, commenting on the theme of self-knowledge in the Narcissus myth, Knoespel clarifies how Milton crafted the scene in such a way as to introduce a Christian aspect that is integral to the theme of knowledge: 'While Ovid ironically stressed the role of understanding in regard to individual perception, Milton shows through Satan and Adam, as well as Eve, that understanding and correction can never come from reliance on individual perception alone but must come from guidance'.[16] The guiding voice that intervenes to correct Eve's initial thoughts was unavailable to Narcissus; the warning voice of the narrator remains at a remove from his character. The presence of Eve's providential guide helps exemplify Milton's poetic purpose in correcting the pagan tradition in Christian writing. As Genevieve Lively concludes, by offering the reader a female Narcissus, Milton made use 'of this pagan poem [...] transforming and absorbing Ovidian motifs into his Christian narrative'.[17]

[14] William Anderson explains, 'We possess no other extended narration about Narcissus, and, although some people argue that much of Ovid's achievement should be credited to a lost Hellenistic source, there is no evidence whatsoever for such material'; see *Ovid's Metamorphoses: Books 1-5* ed. by William S. Anderson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), p. 372.
[15] Green, p. 29.
[16] Kenneth Jacob Knoespel, *Narcissus and the Invention of Personal History* (New York: Garland Pub., 1985), p. 80, as cited in DuRocher 'Guiding the Glance: Spenser, Milton, and "Venus looking glas"', p. 326.
[17] Genevieve Liveley, *Ovid's 'Metamorphoses': A Reader's Guide* (London: Continuum, 2011), p. 158.

Fig. 17: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Narcissus* (1597-99) [Bridgeman Education].

It was Patrick Hume, in the first annotated edition of *Paradise Lost*, who first pointed out the allusion to Ovid: in his opinion, '*Milton* has improved the Fable of *Ovid*, by representing *Eve* like a She *Narcissus* admiring her self'.[18] Defending Milton's usage of the myth, Hume observed that 'he has made it much more probable, that a Person who had never seen any thing like her self, should be in love with her own faint reflected Resemblance'.[19] Other Early Modern commentators on the Ovidian myth were also troubled by its implausibility. In his influential commentary, *Ovid's Metamorphosis: Englished, Mythologiz'd, and Represented in Figures*,[20] George Sandys had sceptically dismissed the idea of someone falling in love with a reflection of themselves as if it were a separate person, protesting: 'how absurd is it to believe, that any should be so distracted or

[18] See Patrick Hume in *Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1695), p. 150. He was 'also the first of those emphasizing the danger of self love'. See also DuRocher, 'Guiding the Glance'.
[19] See note to IV. 461 in Hume, p. 150.
[20] George Sandys published his translation of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* into rhyming couplets in 1626. He then added a commentary and published the text again in 1632. See Geoffrey Miles (ed.), *Classical Mythology in English Literature: A Critical Anthology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 114.

besotted with affection, as not to distinguish a shadow from a substance?'.[21] Unconvinced by the nature of Narcissus' encounter, Sandys turned to another version of the myth by Pausanias which gave a more rationalistic account of the episode. According to Pausanias, Narcissus' peculiar infatuation with his reflection was to be explained by the love he had for his twin sister who had died. As Sandys explains:

> Narcissus had a sister borne at the same birth, so exceeding like as hardly distinguishable; alike also their haire in colour and trim, and alike their habites; who, accustomed to hunt and exercise together, with her brother fell violently in love: and she dying, repaired oft to this fountaine, much satisfying his affection in gazing therein, as not beholding his owne shaddow, but the image of his sister.[22]

It might be the case that Milton's recreation of the Narcissus Myth innovatively couples the two accounts by Ovid and Pausanias. The communicative encounter with an otherworldly shadow is subtly hinted at Milton's account with the employment of the word *umbra*. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* the narrator explains the nature of Narcissus' mistake (who, unlike Eve, cannot hear the guiding words), clarifying that what Narcissus sees is merely a shadow:

> *credule, quid frustra simulacra fugacia captas?*
> *quod petis, est nusquam; quod amas, avertere, perdes.*
> *ista repercussae, quam cernis, imaginis umbra est:*
> *nil habet ista sui: tecum ventique manetque,*
> *tecum discedet, sit u discedere possis.*
> (*Met*, III. 432-36)[23]

> O Foole! That striv'st to catch a flying shade!
> Thou seek'st what's no-where: Turn aside, 'Twill fade.
> Thy formes reflection doth thy sight delude:

[21] Sandys is quoting Pausanias here. George Sandys, *Ovid's Metamorphosis: Englished, Mythologiz'd, and Represented in Figures. An Essay to the Translation of Virgil's Aeneis* (Oxford: Imprinted at Oxford by Iohn Lichfield., 1632), p. 105; see also Green, p. 29.
[22] Sandys, p. 106.
[23] The Latin is taken from Anderson's edition, p. 99.

> Which is with nothing of its owne indu'd.
> With thee it comes, with thee it staies; and so
> 'T would goe away, hads thou the power to goe.[24]

Just as Milton deviated from Ovid with this detail in the narrative, it might be the case that he attributed to Eve's shadow a more sinister nature. Notably, as Kastan and Hughes have remarked, the word *umbra* bears a double meaning: either 'shadow or ghost (a shade), and similarly *imago* could refer both to likeness or, again, to the disembodied dead'.[25]

Since Milton's familiarity with Ovid has been examined in conjunction with Sandys' translation and commentary on the *Metamorphoses*,[26] it seems at least worth considering the implications of Pausanias' version of the myth and not simply dismissing it out of hand.[27] The possibility of a sinister presence in the lake in Eve's nativity scene is in keeping with this version of the myth where the experience of communicating with a shadow or 'a deceased person in spring water' enriches the rather limited theme of self-love that became the standard reading of the Narcissus myth.[28] In addition, the neglected theme of self-knowledge or knowing oneself, *γνῶθι σεαυτόν* – that is the initial teaching of the myth – is skilfully utilised, I argue, in Eve's encounter with the her reflection in the lake.

While examining the motif of self-knowledge, Max Nelson traces the similarities between the Narcissus myth in Pausanias' account and the early tradition of scrying (gazing into a reflective surface, usually water, until a demonic presence appears), which

[24] Sandys, pp. 90-1.
[25] Max Nelson, 'Narcissus: Myth and Magic', *The Classical Journal*, 95.4 (2000): 363-89 (378). Also see note to IV. 470 in *Paradise Lost*, ed. by David Scott Kastan and Merritt Yerkes Hughes (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2005), p. 125: 'Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3. 417, uses the same word *umbra* = shadow'.
[26] See Green, pp. 7-8; p. 34 and Maggie Kilgour, *Milton and the Metamorphosis of Ovid* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 264.
[27] In England alone the catalogue of the British Museum 'totals thirteen translations into English of the text, [by Ovid] these being the work of John Brinsley (1618) and, especially, George Sandys (1626), whose version was the most accurate and influential'; see Antonio Ballesteros González, 'Lost in Paradisiacal Beauty: Milton's Re-Writing of the Narcissus Myth', *Sederi VI*., (1996): 7-13 (7).
[28] See Nelson, p. 382. Nelson argues that Pausanias's alternate version of the myth, through evoking a presence or a shadow in water, relates more to the tradition of scrying, as it does not merely focus on the theme of self-love that is emphasised in Ovid's account.

was used to gain knowledge of the future. Nelson emphasizes the way, rather than simply presenting a 'narcissistic' scene of self-absorption, Pausanias' account offers intriguing similarities between the figure of Narcissus gazing into the water and the Judeo-Arabic embodiment of scrying. In this ritualistic practice, a boy medium – still a virgin – gazes at an image in the water that is 'said to be beautiful', like Narcissus, who gazes at the spring water used 'to call upon the dead'. The connection, Neslon argues, was made known through certain occult texts from Morocco found to be circulating in Europe in the late medieval and Early Modern period, where it is explained that – like Narcissus – the boy medium must be sixteen of age, naive and a virgin in order to successfully fulfil the requirements of the ritual.[29]

Through scrying, the medium is able to conjure up the dead not only to see a being separate from his own image appearing in the reflective water – his underworld counterpart being 'black as spirits of the dead' usually were – but also to 'question it, and then to hear a voice in reply'.[30] A very similar description appears in an Arabic text that, according to Nelson, dates to 1328, but appears in a modern translation by William Worrell,[31] where it is noted that 'a black slave [...] will appear to the gazer. And that is the sign of the response; and if there appear something other than this it is a deception'.[32] Through such ritualistic practices, the medium would attempt to communicate with the demonic presence in order to attain knowledge and answers to specific questions.

Indeed, it is unlikely that Milton was aware of this particular Moroccan tradition. While the 'virgin' Eve does receive knowledge as she stares at the reflective surface of the water, she experiences this encounter with her internal 'shadow' self. Furthermore, while

[29] Nelson also argues that Narcissus is naive because, at first, he does not recognise his own image in the water, and a virgin because he rejects Echo and avoids all other advances upon him; see Nelson, pp. 371-72.
[30] Nelson, p. 379.
[31] See note 63 in Nelson, p. 378.
[32] See William H. Worrell, 'Ink, Oil and Mirror Gazing Ceremonies in Modern Egypt', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 36 (1916): 37-53 (45).

the essential motif of attaining knowledge, be it prophesised or 'stolen' knowledge,[33] is a key aspect of Eve's mirror scene as well as her character; I argue that her pursuit of knowledge becomes particularly evident when she is compared to certain Judeo-Arabic female characters, as will be demonstrated in the course of this chapter. However, it is first worth noting in passing that Islam itself descends upon Muhammad as a revelation while he engages in contemplation in a cave. Like Eve, Muhammad is guided by an invisible Divine voice that reveals to him the importance of knowledge, as specified by the first word in the Qur'an: the imperative verb *Iqra'* ('Read' إقرأ). This documented incident in the Qur'an represents a pivotal point in the Prophet's journey, marking the change from him being a figure who seeks knowledge to becoming one who is divinely guided. Divine revelation that leads to knowledge, then, became a key motif in Islamic teaching, just as it is in Milton's account. While the two episodes may be treated as entirely independent, unrelated incidents, simply manifesting similarities of a trope common to many cultures,[34] parallels in motifs, narrative and the descriptive detail present a possible case for a deeper association.[35] However, my particular focus here is directed – away from the scrying tradition – towards an incident in the Qur'an in which knowledge and true revelation have a bearing on a female character, one who has fascinated Western tradition, that is, the Queen of Sheba and her Judeo-Arabic equivalent Lilith.[36]

[33] See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of the similarities between Satan and Iblis when attempting to appropriate prophetic knowledge.

[34] The Miltonic episode has been analysed in association with Plato's 'Allegory of the Cave' in *The Republic*. See Richard Arnold, *Logic of the Fall: Right Reason and [im]pure Reason in Milton's Paradise Lost* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), pp. 59-72 (67-8).

[35] It is worth stressing that, in Milton's *Areopagitica*, the search for knowledge is shown to be of fundamental importance to Milton, and the right to the free circulation of ideas is a principle he passionately defends. 'Truth is compar'd in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetuall progression, they sick'n into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition'. Furthermore, 'the-Turks Alcoran' is cited within the body of the argument against restrictions on the publication of controversial texts. See *Riverside*, p. 1015 and p. 1017 respectively.

[36] While the Queen of Sheba is most known as a historical figure who visited Solomon in the Old Testament, and Lilith as the first Eve who reaches back into the beginnings of time, the final part of this chapter explains the way the two figures, at times, appear interchangeably in Judeo-Arabic legends, folklore and mythology.

In this chapter, I will elaborate on a possible sinister and demonic interpretation of the mirror episode, allowed by certain versions of the Narcissus myth in which demonic or dead spirits are evoked, and also argue for a darker, perhaps demonic potentiality in Eve represented by her shadow self. Moreover, I would propose that this specific motif is suggested in the scene through the employment of Judeo-Arabic references and myths which are present in the fourth book. The aim of this analysis is to argue for the possible inclusion of certain Judeo-Arabic female mythical figures at play in Eve's creation account and in her encounter by the lake. Therefore, this reading will discuss the experience of these female figures who, like Eve, face a decisive test by being placed in front of a reflective surface and/or water. While associating these female figures with Eve, the reading will not aim to disregard the well-established significance of the Narcissus myth to this episode, but rather to complement particular readings of Ovid's account that are in fact similar to the Judeo-Arabic tradition. By doing so, I would argue that Eve's encounter does indeed demonstrate the Ovidian structure of the Narcissus myth, but it is not limited by it; this will become more apparent once we have considered the neglected Judeo-Arabic imagery and demonstrated its purposeful employment within the narrative, particularly here in Eve's mirror account.

In the course of this discussion, I will be referring to the specific Judeo-Arabic mythical figures that are alluded to in the fourth book just prior to Eve's creation account: Asmodeus, the Queen of Sheba and less directly, Lilith. I will argue that by invoking these particular figures, Milton intended to enrich the Narcissus subtext as well as Eve's character. I intend to demonstrate that Milton did not structure Eve's creation scene merely to highlight her naive and narcissistic traits, but rather to evoke another equally important thematic motif, associated with her character, that is, Eve's journey in pursuit of knowledge. Before pursuing this discussion, however, it is worth comparing briefly

Adam's and Eve's creation accounts in order to fully appreciate the distinguishing qualities in Eve's lake scene, and the importance Milton evidently attaches to Eve's quest for knowledge as being a fundamental driving force in her character.

'Wisdom [...] alone is truly fair'

In Eve's creation account, feminine elements, themes of inner contemplation and a sense of fulfilment and completion are pointedly contrasted to Adam's creation account which rather highlights his masculine attributes, sense of outer contemplation, and 'fragmented' form of self-admiration. To exemplify, unlike Eve, when Adam first 'comes to life' he 'looks up directly towards the heavens' as he explains: 'Strait toward Heav'n my wondring Eyes I turnd' (VIII. 257). After standing 'upright' (260) and observing his surroundings, Adam looks down to survey himself 'Limb by Limb' (267). Adam then 'addresses the world in his quest for knowledge of this "great Maker" (VIII. 278), the nature of his existence and his surroundings'.[37] However, his questions regarding himself: 'who [he] was, or where, or from what cause' (270), he came, remain vague and to his questions, 'answer none return'd' (VIII. 285) until he, through the power of reason, comes to the realisation that he did not come to life from his own 'self' (278) but from the presence of 'power præeminent' (279).

Eve, on the other hand, first awakens 'repos'd / Under a shade of flours' (IV. 450-51) emphasising her feminine representation. A curious sound of water interrupts her inquisitive thoughts, and by this murmuring voice she is led to a lake where she bends down (460) to experience her own presence for the first time, beginning her quest for self-knowledge. The different postures of Adam and Eve have been identified as one of the most marked differences between the two accounts: while Adam is depicted standing

[37] Green, p. 41.

upright, 'self-knowing, and from thence / Magnanimous to correspond with Heav'n' (VII. 510-11), and 'privileged to see the "shape Divine" of his maker' (VIII. 295), Eve is depicted bending down, contemplating her reflection within the water which she mistakenly thought was 'another Skie' (IV. 459).[38] Therefore, Eve's first communicative attempt is evidently inward and self-reflective in contrast to Adam's, whose direction towards the heavens, and God, is undeniably more direct.[39]

Although Eve's bent posture suggests a less instinctive orientation towards the heavenly realms, we are not to dismiss the significance of Eve encountering herself, in full, in contrast to Adam, who can only inspect himself in a fragmented fashion and does not see his own face or himself in full view. By placing Eve in front of a reflective surface and through this encounter in the reflective water, not only are Eve's especial characteristics revealed, but her thoughts about her own self and the inner, most intriguing aspects of her nature are exposed. As Eve describes the earliest moments of her existence, Adam learns that she, like him, first awakes to a state of curiosity and uncertainty, 'much wondering where / And what [she] was, whence thither brought, and how' (IV. 451-52). However, in contrast to Adam, who first observes his surroundings before beginning to question his nature, Eve is directly introduced to her own facial image which she inspects in detail. Instantly, the significance of Milton's choice in shaping Eve's first thoughts as questions about her own nature and self is immediately apparent. It is safe then to suggest that the first trait of Eve's character introduced to the reader is her inquisitive nature, a trait that remains to the fore throughout the development of her character as will be demonstrated shortly.

[38] Green, p. 42.
[39] For more on the significance of Adam's upright posture vs Eve's prone positioning see: Green, p. 42; Susannah B. Mintz, *Threshold Poetics: Milton and Intersubjectivity* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), pp. 60-2.

Surely a purposeful choice by Milton is the water element which accompanies Eve's representation in this scene.[40] Thus, the water of the lake ceases to be simply a geographical location where Eve happens to experience her earliest encounter with her shadow self; it also creates the first sound Eve hears after she comes into consciousness. Bearing in mind that her inquisitive trait has been highlighted, and as the 'murmuring sound of water' is the first sound to interrupt Eve's reflections, one cannot help but sense that the water is almost responsive to Eve's inquisitive thoughts, as if almost whispering answers to her questions, drawing her towards the cave where, through a reflective space, she encounters her own image and is introduced to her own *self* for the first time. Indeed, it is not without significance that her reflection is the first image she observes closely in Eden, and the sound of water is her first auditory experience. Taken together, her lack of empirical knowledge and 'unexperienc't thought' at this point, result in Eve mistakenly believing that she is encountering another person who is likewise drawn to her and communicating with her, or at least, responding to her inquisitive thoughts, as hinted in her narrative here:

> As I bent down to look, just opposite,
> A Shape within the watry gleam appeard
> Bending to look on me, I started back,
> It started back, but pleas'd I soon returnd,
> Pleas'd it returnd as soon with *answering looks*
> Of sympathie and love
> (*PL*, IV. 460-65; emphasis added)

The importance of Milton's choice of phrase 'answering looks' cannot be stressed enough; at this point, Eve thought that the shape in the lake was not only imitating her actions, but actually responding to them. The lines here further reinforce this sense by demonstrating a mirroring technique throughout the passage, reflecting the depth of this encounter and its

[40] The significance of water is examined in detail later on in the chapter.

impact on Eve's understanding of the nature of her existence and sense of self. The reader is, of course, immediately aware that the shape is Eve's own reflection. However, the line endings not only highlight the mirroring process, they also suggest a momentary lapse in time between the two actions by keeping the two distinct: Eve's movements are contained in one line, and the responsive actions of the shape appear in the line that immediately follows:

> ... I started back,
> It started back, […] pleas'd I soon returnd,
> Pleas'd it returnd as soon ...
> (*PL*, IV. 462-64)

The scene so far is of an ordinary and amusing encounter of an inexperienced**,** childlike figure who encounters their reflection for the first time. The following lines however, interrupt this continuous, self-enclosed circle. Firstly, the word 'answering', contrasting with Adam's unanswered questions, I would argue, provide an added value to the dynamics of this encounter; Eve, looking at her own reflection in this mirroring surface offered by the lake, believes that the figure looking back at her was actively responding to her initial state of confusion by reassuring her with 'answering looks / Of sympathy and love'. The longer Eve stares at the shape, and admires its sympathetic expression, the more it is perceived as a separate entity that is communicative and responsive. This depiction is enhanced by the words 'as soon' that deliver not only a subtle sense of delay between the exchanged looks, hinting that they belong to two different individuals, but also emphasise the understanding that the shape was indeed responsive and communicative rather than merely echoing Eve's advances. Secondly, and more importantly, Eve is undeniably satisfied with this encounter and with the responses of the shape until the 'Divine voice' interrupts this state of fascinated absorption, revealing to her that what she thought was another being is in reality merely a shadow of herself. As Eve explains, had she not been

informed otherwise, and had she not been warned against succumbing to the false temptations of vain desires,[41] she would have remained convinced that her communicative experience was completely satisfying:

> ... there I had fixt
> Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
> Had not a voice thus warnd me, What thou seest,
> What there thou seest fair Creature is thy self,
> With thee it came and goes:
> (*PL*, IV. 465-69)

This marks yet another apparent difference between Adam and Eve's defining characteristics. Unlike Adam's creation account, which stresses his awareness of being alone and in which he reasons correctly that he is incomplete in himself ,[42] Eve promptly engages with her image or 'self' and draws a sense of wholeness from her encounter with her reflection. This episode thus arguably demonstrates her need for true companionship too, and her main role, that is, to be the Adam's loving partner and thereby to be mother of humankind, as the Divine voice had prophesised:

> [...] follow me,
> And I will bring thee where no shadow staies
> Thy coming, and thy soft imbraces, hee
> Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
> Inseparablie thine, to him shalt beare
> Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd
> Mother of human Race.
> (*PL*, IV. 469-75)

[41] It is worth stressing that they are 'vain desires' not only because of the latent vanity here, but because they are futile or 'in vain'. The shadow self cannot offer complete satisfaction because it is insubstantial whereas the flesh and blood Adam, whom God will lead her to, can offer 'substantial embraces', see Green, 34-7 (36).
[42] As evident in Adam's words in (VIII. 355-66), particularly 'In solitude / What happiness, who can enjoy alone, / Or all enjoying, what contentment find?' (364-66).

Conversely, it is essential not to dismiss too hastily the way in which this moment, marked by Eve's first encounter with another 'presence', is also the earliest 'answer' offered to her questions. The significance of Eve's shadow, I would argue, is not limited to being merely a reflection of her vanity, but, as Eve states, the shadow, even if mistakenly, was the first to answer her self-inquisitive urges, a point that will unlock telling information about the development of Eve's character in preparation for the Fall, as well as her relationship with Adam, and also Satan.

This becomes more apparent when noting that Eve not only reflects her own characteristics when placed in front of a receiving gaze, but she also exposes Adam's traits and flaws as well. Since Eve's shape is described as a 'watry image' (480), this hints that Eve's reflection is a shadow of a shadow, for Eve is supposedly Adam's 'image' who himself is the image of God.[43] In this instance, critics have detected a key similarity manifested in the narcissistic tendencies Adam and Eve demonstrate in their early moments of existence.[44] Eve's first narcissistic action is believed to be her self-absorbed response to her image. Likewise, Adam's initial reaction towards Eve betrays a similarly narcissistic approach: 'I now see / ... my Self / Before me' (VIII. 494-96). Furthermore, like Eve, who believes the shape to be responsive to her advances, Adam also mistakenly believes that Eve is responsive to his in their first encounter.[45] It is Eve that Adam sought, and God delivered his 'hearts desire' (VIII. 451).

The apparent similarity, in the narcissistic tendencies represented in Adam and Eve towards their images, however, does not extend to include the nature and the driving motives of both characters, for the two characters demonstrate different purposes and aims

[43] Green, p. 35.
[44] Claudia M. Champagne, 'Adam and His "Other Self" in *Paradise Lost*; A Lacanian Study in Psychic Development', *Milton Quarterly*, 25 (1991): 48-59; Green, p. 47.
[45] While Eve admits that Adam appeared to be 'less amiablie milde, / Then that smooth watry image' (479-80), Adam attributes her reaction to her 'Innocence and Virgin Modestie' (VIII. 501), as well as her 'vertue and the conscience of her worth, / That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won' (502-03).

towards one another. Eve follows the warning advice of the Divine voice and removes herself from her first communicative experience, breaking the evident spell of the encounter. Adam, on the other hand, misinterpreting 'the nature of the connection' between himself and Eve, as Green notes, sees her still as an intrinsic part of his being, and this is one of the reasons he could 'see no other alternative but to fall with her' than suffer her loss.[46] Therefore, it is Adam who proves to be more dependent on Eve, in a way more attached to his 'image' when compared to Eve, making her, in fact, a less narcissistic character in comparison to Adam.[47] This becomes confirmed by noting Adam's continuing inability to separate himself from his 'other half' throughout the poem. Eve, on the other hand, is undeniably realised as a more independent and autonomous individual, an aspect that is demonstrated repeatedly in a number of significant instances when she first meets Adam. This is seen in Eve's hesitance to be his companion when she first sees him (IV. 477-89); her preference for her own reflection over Adam's appearance and her desire to return to it (480), and in Adam's seizing of her hand in an attempt to hinder her return to the lake and force her to remain with him (489). Even when Adam succeeds in persuading her to stay with him, Eve's ability to resist the temptation to return to the 'fairer image' and more superficially rewarding experience by the lake, deciding to choose instead wisdom over beauty, is in itself notable (490-91). Furthermore, Eve's eagerness to go to the garden alone, in pursuit of a more independent experience, defies the earlier role attributed to her as Adam's image and establishes her as an autonomous character in control of her own narrative. Eve's independence, her pursuit of better knowledge and her desire to separate herself from her reality in pursuit of a more elevated existence and an authentic personal experience, are all traits, I would argue, first established in her creation account.

[46] Green, p. 42.
[47] Champagne observed a 'sense of oneness Adam feels with Eve' making 'him feel whole, complete', p. 53.

It seems likely then that Milton, while representing Eve to the reader, was also highlighting, through these points of emphasis in her early encounters with Adam, a subtle element of foreshadowing that, while remaining entirely innocent, may in retrospect anticipate the characteristic flaws which lead each to fall. We are also to bear in mind that, in as much as such narcissistic tendencies tend to reflect characteristic flaws, they are nonetheless flaws that reflect a sense of lack or something missing which both characters seek to find. Adam's sense of loneliness, so strongly stressed in his creation account is considered one of the main reasons for his Fall, given his inability to be without Eve. This approach is paralleled in Eve's creation account; however, here it is for a different reason, that is, her search for knowledge. Both creation accounts are intended to highlight the peculiarly defining characteristics of Adam and Eve, establishing the primary reason for each Fall. Rather unexpectedly, Man, as represented by Adam, is seen to be dependent on Woman, or Eve; she, however, is more inquisitive about her own self, intrigued by the various answers given to her throughout the poem: first by her image, then by the Divine voice, followed by Adam and eventually Satan. Through comparing the two creation accounts of Adam and Eve, one could argue that while Adam values Eve as his most precious possession, Eve, on the other hand, values wisdom. It is knowledge that Eve seeks, and it is wisdom that is the true value that Eve appreciates as expressed in her own words: '[…] beauty is excelled by manly grace / And wisdom, which alone is truly fair' (IV. 490-91).

It is worth reflecting then, whether the episode is constructed following the framework of the Narcissus myth solely in order to highlight Eve's potential vanity. If that were the case, then we have to wonder, why did Eve separate herself from her beloved object, or her reflection, unlike both Adam and Narcissus? The importance of this question should not be understated as it has an important bearing on our understanding of Eve. It

could be argued that, as demonstrated above, Eve succeeds in removing herself from her shadow because of her urge to seek a true answer for her earliest questions, rather than merely admiring her own beauty. As Eve realises that her communicative attempts are unrewarding, she follows the guidance of the voice in the hope of finding what she seeks.

Additional weight is given to this when we note that Milton chose to use the English translation 'shadow' of the Latin word *umbra*, as observed in the introduction to this chapter.[48] What is of interest here is that when Eve describes her shadow, she, unlike Narcissus, imparts a sense of distance when referring to it, despite the advancement of her knowledge later in the narrative. This is hinted at by the usage of 'a' shape and 'it' instead of 'my' shape or 'I'. This choice of words has been presumed to be a way of stressing Eve's mistake in thinking her shape is another being. However, unlike the Narcissus account in which he addresses his reflection with the more ardent lines: 'Thou smil'st my smiles: when I a teare let fall, / Thou shedd'st an other; and consent'st in all' (Sandys; *Met.* 111. 454-55),[49] Eve never once demonstrates such an intimate connection. Despite Eve's realisation that this shape is her, as she makes clear to Adam as she relates her encounter, the shape remains 'a' shape that she exchanged looks with. With this subtle detail that differs from Ovid's account, Milton could have been hinting at the possibility that the shape Eve communicates with is not entirely hers, in the sense that it represents other aspects of her character that are not yet known to her, or it might represent a sinister, demonic manifestation that reflects Eve's deepest desires: knowledge and wisdom.[50] In both instances, Milton deviates from the Narcissus tradition in the mirror-lake in order to highlight Eve's especial qualities: her inquisitiveness together with her loving and maternal nature.

[48] See note 24 above.
[49] Sandys, p. 91.
[50] Since the word *umbra*, as mentioned earlier, can mean 'shadow', it seems almost as if the lake was functioning as a sinister gateway to the underworld.

I now intend to explore further these two crucial motifs: Eve's pursuit of knowledge and her destined role as the 'Mother of humankind', and the way these are placed under considerable tension by Milton, through looking at the dangerous cross-currents that lie just below the smooth surface of the lake scene and observing how shadowy presences, lurking at the peripheries of the text, attempt to subvert her potential for good and pervert her natural fruitfulness.

The 'murmuring sound / Of waters'

Despite the traditional readings of the lake scene where Eve's description of the water as 'another sky' is attributed to her lack of experience, I would argue for the possibility that, in this instance, Milton was covertly introducing the suggestion of evil presences by the lake and its environs. Christine Mohanty has noted the ambivalent deployment of water imagery in the poem,[51] observing how, 'just as Milton's water holds the potentiality of life, it bears as well that of death'.[52] It is through the River Tigris, for instance, that Satan, after being driven off by Gabriel and the angelic guard, returns to Eden, using it as a conduit, as the narrator explains:

> […] There was a place,
> Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wraught the change,
> Where *Tigris* at the foot of Paradise
> Into a Gulf shot under ground, till part
> Rose up a Fountain by the Tree of Life;
> In with the River sunk, and with it rose
> Satan involv'd in rising Mist, then sought
> Where to lie hid.
> (*PL*, IX. 69-76)

[51] Mohanty alludes, in passing, to other texts by Milton such as *Paradise Regained*, *Lycidas* and the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.
[52] Christine Mohanty, 'Death by Water in Milton', *Milton Quarterly*, 14.4 (Dec. 1980): 122-26 (122).

Mohanty, commenting on this example, notes how 'impending moral death infiltrates the Garden of Eden through water as Satan rises out of the fountain which is the heart of this idyllic zone soon to be corrupted'.[53] By employing water imagery in this way, Milton not only announces the return of Satan's evil presence in Eden, but also evokes the moral fall that will accompany him, thus poisoning the source of life and suggesting the contamination that is to spring from the Fall to come.

However, this ambivalent aspect to water is first suggested in the particular circumstances that surround the lake scene, and the way it is linked with Satan's arrival in Eden. The depiction of Satan voyaging through the pleasing perfumes that greet his senses, like the 'Sabaen odors' that waft from the shores of Arabia Felix to herald the end of a long sea-passage to weary travellers, plays a significant part in establishing the importance of water imagery in Book IV. Ironically, Satan comes to rest on the Tree of Life and, perched on a branch in the guise of a waterbird, the cormorant, is able to listen in to the conversation of Adam and Eve and learn how to bring death to them both and, through them, to all their descendants; moreover, he gains a profound insight into Eve, her values and her understanding of herself, which will prove of paramount importance as the epic unfolds.

Given the way in which water is employed to suggest the infiltration of an infernal presence, it seems worth pausing over the choice of disguise assumed by Satan here when eavesdropping on Eve's account of her encounter by the lake. Satan flew through Eden and came to land

> [...] on the Tree of Life,
> The middle Tree and highest there that grew,
> Sat like a Cormorant.
> (*PL*, IV. 194-96)

[53] Ibid.

Editors frequently acknowledge that the passage is reminiscent of an episode in Homer's *Iliad* (7. 58-60), in which 'Athene and Apollo…in the likeness of vultures sate them upon the lofty oak of Zeus' [A. 321. 226].[54] However, it seems curious that Satan should appear at this point in the likeness of a waterbird in particular, especially since cormorants are not customarily to be found watching for their prey in trees. Of course, Milton's choice of bird is partly accounted for by its sinister appearance, with its dark plumage and long neck making it seem almost reptilian, together with its predatory nature and reputation for greed. Given the bird's habitual location, a shadowy presence lurking by water, it seems suggestively in keeping with the scene that he is actually eavesdropping upon, Eve's account of her encounter by the lake, and almost works retrospectively to locate him there.

Fig. 18: John Martin, *Satan Contemplating Eve in Paradise* (1827) [Bridgeman Education].

[54] Earl Roy Miner, William Moeck and Steven Edward Jablonski (eds.), *Paradise Lost, 1668-1968: Three Centuries of Commentary* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2004), p. 173.

Of more significance still, I would argue, is the way the passage can be found to allude to verses in Isaiah, which are also, notably, the sole reference to Lilith in the Hebrew Bible. The passage is a powerful account of the desolation of Edom; it is rich with a number of significant references for our purpose and so is worth quoting in full:

> But the *cormorant* and the bittern shall possess it; the *owl* also and the raven shall *dwell* in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness […] And there shall the beasts of the desert meet with the jackals, and the wild goat shall cry to his fellow; the *Lilith* also shall settle there, and find for herself a *place of rest*. There shall the *arrow-snake* make her nest,[55] and lay, and hatch, and gather under her *shadow*.
> (Isaiah, 34: 11-15; emphasis added)[56]

While a number of editors have commented on the allusion to Isaiah's account of the 'death and destruction in ancient Edom', and how the cormorant, 'being a voracious sea-fowl' thus becomes 'a proper emblem of this destroyer of mankind', none, to my knowledge, have noted the likelihood of an association with Lilith in spite of the explicit reference to her just a few lines later.

Indeed, it is not the infamous winged demon and notorious shape-shifter, Lilith, the night-owl, who is mentioned in the poem as eavesdropping in a birdlike manner; rather, Satan himself has become, as it were, a manifestation of Lilith. This possibility is reinforced further when we become aware that 'murmuring', the expression Eve uses to describe the sound of water that first lured her to the cave by the lake, is the very same word used to describe Satan, as he is driven from Eden by Michael in the last line of Book IV, when he flees 'Murmuring and with him fled the shades of night' (IV. 1015). While 'the shades of night' may merely be a descriptive detail here to suggest the approach of sunrise, in the context they seem charged with a more sinister significance. Moreover,

[55] Cf. the Islamic Hadith which states: 'kill the snakes having *stripes* over them and short-tailed snakes, for these two types cause miscarriage (of a pregnant woman)' in Chapter 4.
[56] Unclean bird (vomiter) known to inhabit areas near the Red Sea in Palestine and the Jordan Valley; *Bible Hub* - Bible Study (2017) < http://biblehub.com/isaiah/34-11.htm>.

given that the reference to the cormorant is located just a few verses before Lilith is mentioned in Isaiah, it clearly strengthens the possibility that Milton could also have had the demonized first Eve in mind while he was shaping this scene. I shall now show how Lilith, the 'first Eve', may be felt to stand between Eve and the promise of fulfilment by suggesting how the shape in the water may be given a more sinister inflection through its likeness to the shadow self.

'Multitudes like thy self': The Promise of Motherhood

Suggestively aligned with Eve's shadow, that 'came and goes' (IV. 469) with her, following her every move, is a belief in a darker self, double or spirit that accompanies a person from the moment of birth until death, which survives from pre-Abrahamic pagan and tribal beliefs until this day in the Middle East, leaving its echoes in the oral tradition, folklore and even in ritual practices associated with the occult. The Judeo-Arabic belief in evil shadows that hinder or harm the bond of marriage by seducing partners, causing infertility or abortive births, is evident particularly in the rural areas of Greece, Turkey, the Middle-East and Africa, where folkloric songs, traditional costumes and even superstitious medical rituals – to influence fertility – still reflect such beliefs.[57]

Both the Judeo-Arabic and Islamic tradition warn of the harmful companion (*Qarina* قرينة) or the follower (*Tab'a* تابعة),[58] an evil shadow or spirit that is created with the person at the moment of existence, and which attempts to influence them by determining

[57] Aref Abu-Rabia argues for a connection between the Qarina, Lilith and the Greek Lamia and provides case studies of women who have been medically assessed with possession or mental illness, in the Middle-East and North Africa, when infertile. See 'Don't touch my Body: The Qarina and Bedouin Women's Fertility' in *Indigenous Medicine Among the Bedouin in the Middle East* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015), pp. 170-85 (170-73).

[58] Abu-Rabia, p. 171. Stories of Muhammad's and Solomon's encounters with shadowy female creatures that are vanquished after a confrontation or a prayer are repeatedly narrated in the Judeo-Islamic tradition. See Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1990); Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls. Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press and Leiden: Brill, 1985), p. 118; and Robert Lebling, *Legends of the Fire Spirits: Jinn and Genies from Arabia to Zanzibar* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010).

their decisions and ultimate destiny.[59] Zwemer explains that according to 'the Koran and Tradition man is created with a double-ego or two souls (the Qarina)'.[60] The Qur'anic verses stress that every individual is born with an invisible shadow, usually enticing the doing of evil, which remains with them from the moment of birth until death.[61] These beings are most powerful when the individual strays from God's path as related in the verse: 'And whosoever turns away from the remembrance of the Most Beneficent, we appoint for him Shaytan to be a *qarin* to him' (Qur'an, 43:36). The same verse is narrated in the *Alcoran* (1649) thus:

> I will cause to fall headlong with the Devils, such as shall reject the Law of the mercifull; the Devils shall be their companions, they shall seduce them from the way of Salvation. (*Alcoran*, XLIII, 305)

For readers who are familiar with this Arabic and Islamic tradition, the correlation with the creation of Eve, who was instantly associated with a sinister presence or shadowy reflection in the water, almost as if lurking there, just like Satan in his guise on the Tree of Life, is astounding. Even if coincidentally, Eve's shape in the lake is noticeably similar to the Qur'anic description, in the way that its attempts at communication with Eve were quelled by the interference of the Divine voice. Had the shape succeeded in hindering Eve from following the Divine voice, she would have remained contemplating her reflection and would not have become Adam's companion and the mother of humankind, thus deflecting her from fulfilling the divine purpose of her creation.

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[59] For more on the association between Lilith and Al-Qarina see: Rosalind Franklin, *Baby Lore: Superstitions & Old Wives Tales from the World Over Related to Pregnancy, Birth & Babycare* (Sussex: Diggory, 2005), p. 24; Samuel M. Zwemer, *The Influence of Animism on Islam: An Account of Popular Superstitions* (New York: The Macmillan company, 1920), pp. 107-24.

[60] Zwemer, p. 21.

[61] Interestingly, one of the descriptions of these evil companions precedes, by a few lines, the description of the tree of hell, Zoacum, which appears in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, as discussed in Chapter 2: 'I had on earth a companion, who asked me if I believed in Resurrection; and if after being reduced to earth, bones, and dust, we shall rise again? [...] neer to Zacon, the tree of hell?' (*Alcoran*, Ch. XXXVII, 276).

Fig. 19: Two manuscripts from the early fifteenth century, of the Arabic devil Iblis entitled *Iblis, Lord of All Demons* and his consort, Lilith, entitled *Tabia* [Oxford Digital Library, Ms. Bodl. Or. 133; folio 33a and folio 29b respectively].[62]

Notably, in this instance, the Hebraic tradition likewise speaks of evil doppelgangers, doubles that are malicious in nature. More specifically, in the *Zohar*,[63] it is Lilith who directly emerges as Eve's evil 'twin' or darker shadow[64] in the same way as the Arabic *Qarina* shadows women.

> 99 As soon as she saw Eve cleaving to the side of Adam, beauty above, as soon as she saw the complete *image*, she flew away [...]
>
> 100 She dwelled there until Adam and his wife sinned. Then the blessed Holy One plucked her form there, *and she rules over all those children* – small faces of humanity – who deserve to be punished for the sins of their fathers. She flies off, roaming through the world [...]

[62] See also Abd Al-Hasan Al-Isfahani, *Kitab Al-Bulhān* [Book of Wonders] (N.A: 1390); available online: <https://archive.org/details/KitabAlBulhan>.
[63] *The Zohar* is a group of books that form the foundation of Jewish mystical thought, discussing God, the universe and humanity. It first appeared in Spain in the thirteenth century, but was ascribed to second-century Hebraic scholars who wrote under Roman persecution. Joseph Jacobs and Isaac Broydé, 'Zohar', *the online Jewish Encyclopedia*, (2008): [unnumbered] <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/15278-zohar>.
[64] See Chapter 4.

> 101 As the flame revolves she flees and roams the world, *finding children who deserved to be punished. She toys with them and kills them*. This happens in the waning of the moon.
> Zohar 1:19b (Bereshit: Passages 99-101; emphasis added)[65]

The passage from the *Zohar* explains here the way Lilith began to haunt the children of Eve and kill them, making her a reversed shadow of Eve the nurturing mother. This similar connection between Lilith and the Qarina, as an appointed spirit over children (in the Jewish tradition), or at the moment of birth (in Islam), has been observed by numerous scholars, including Hurwitz, who remarks: 'In the Zohar, too, Lilith is described as "mother of children"', a 'description' that 'appears to have been borrowed from the Arabic'.[66]

Indeed, the critical literature that examines the presence of the figure of Lilith in *Paradise Lost* is scarce. Spoto's *Figure of Lilith and the Feminine Demonic in Early Modern Literature* is the sole study, to the present time, that investigates traces of Lilith's presence in Milton's work. Spoto believes there to be 'at least one instance which amalgamates the two women into one; namely, that of Eve's temporary abode by the lake and the bargaining for children'.[67] The Miltonic scene deviates in this crucial detail from the Narcissus myth, which lacks the theme of procreation and specifically the idea of maternal promise. As Spoto points out, a voice promising children is lacking in both the Narcissus myth and in the Genesis account.[68]

It is worth noting that the association between water and the demonic is well established in the Jewish tradition surrounding the first woman, Lilith. The reason Lilith flees to water, as recorded in the *Zohar*, is that 'The waters nourish Lilith'; thus water

[65] Cited from Mark Wayne Biggs, *The Case for Lilith* (N.A: Samson Books, 2010), p. 112.
[66] Hurwitz, p. 136. Bear in mind that, in both traditions, Divine intervention or a prayer of protection is needed to evade the maliciousness of this demonic spirit.
[67] Spoto, p. 255.
[68] Ibid.

becomes a distinctive locus for the demoness (1. 34).[69] Spoto also notes that after Lilith flees from Adam the angels find her '"in the Red Sea" and "beside the Red Sea" […] in this way, Lilith is beside the sea, and within it at the same time; correspondingly, Eve lays beside the lake, but also sees her reflection within the lake'.[70] Interestingly, the Jewish account is noticeably reversed in the Miltonic scene. In the Jewish tradition, primarily the Zohar,[71] after Lilith abandons Adam and flies away to the Red Sea, three angels pursue her and command her to return as ordered by God. Because of her refusal, she is punished by being forced to witness the death of her infant children daily.[72] Eve, unlike Lilith, chooses to follow the bidding of the Divine voice, thus ensuring the fulfilment of the maternal role promised to her.

Notably, the Divine test facing both women, which is to determine their future fates, takes place near water: Lilith by the cave near the Red Sea, and Eve by the lake that issues from a cave. Eve escapes the unfortunate fate of Lilith (who is doomed to abortive fertility) and Narcissus (who withers away, doomed to a fruitless self-love). The different myths are skilfully merged together, sharing important motifs such as the importance of true self-knowledge and the dangers associated with misleading illusions. The maternal promise highlighted in the Miltonic lines '[thou] shalt beare / Multitudes like thy self, and thence be call'd / Mother of human Race (IV. 473-75), however, has more of a direct bearing on the myth of Lilith than the story of Narcissus.

What is of particular interest here is that, from the moment Eve is created, both potentialities (that of fruitfulness and sterility) are present, embodied by Eve and her

[69] See Barbara Black Koltuv, *The Book of Lilith* (York Beach, Me: Nicolas-Hays, 1986), p. 8, where Koltuv also remarks that it is the South wind that carries Lilith's influence.
[70] Spoto, pp. 255-56. See also Ginzberg and Graves, cited by Spoto in the first half of the statement. Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. by Henrietta Szold, 7 vols. (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998), p. I 65; Robert Graves and Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Myths* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), p. 65; available online: <http://gnosis.org/lilith.htm>.
[71] *The Zohar*, trans. by Harry Sperlin and Maurice Simon (London: The Soncino Press, 1931). See also Gershom G. Sholem (ed. and trans.), *Zohar, The Book of Splendor: Basic Readings from the Kabbala* (London: Rider and Company, 1997).
[72] See Chapter 4 for further discussion of this point.

ominous shadow. As discussed in the previous chapter, the name Eve itself, in Arabic, toys with the relation between woman and the snake, combining the antithetical forces of life (represented by the womb) and death (represented by the ominous snake). The Arabic *Hawwah* حواء and its Hebraic equivalent *Hawwa* or *Chavah* (as exemplified in Bereshit Rabbah 4:1) convey the meaning of 'life', 'she who makes life', 'the mother of all living' but also 'serpent'.[73]

If we consider a dark presence within the cave that inhabits the water of the lake, and which appears in the water as Eve's shadow, then the warnings of the Divine voice, urging Eve to remove herself from this shape, are undoubtedly telling and have an additional significance to the weight they usually bear. The Divine voice explains to Eve that what she sees in the lake is her 'self' that 'came and goes' with her, as if following her every move, but that he will bring her where 'no shadow staies / [her] coming' (470-71). The choice of verb, 'staies' is doubly charged: its most immediate sense here is evidently 'waits for'; that is, He will bring her to where a substantial being, Adam, eagerly awaits her presence, but 'staies' may also mean 'hinders', thereby introducing a sinister possibility into the scene, that her shadow self is attempting to impede her meeting with Adam.[74] Thus Eve's shadow in the lake had the potential to hinder the fulfilment of her destined role, that is, to be the mother of humankind.[75]

Eve herself confesses that had she not removed herself from the encounter, she would have fixed her 'eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire' (IV. 466), and, as a consequence, would not have consummated her marriage. Without the words of warning uttered by the Divine voice, Eve would have remained by the lake, the danger of her

[73] Andrew Collins, *From the Ashes of Angels: The Forbidden Legacy of a Fallen Race* (Rochester, VT: Bear, 2001). The word *Ihtawa* and its root *Hawa* حوى also means 'to embody'; 'to cuddle a child'. It can similarly refer to a snake tightening around its prey. For more on this definition, see *Mujam Al-Ma'ani* - Arabic Dictionary (2017) <https://www.almaany.com/ar/dict/ar-ar/احتوى>.

[74] In other words, 'stays' means 'waits for', '(but the meaning "hinders" lurks here)'. See note to IV. 470 in Kastan and Hughes, p. 125.

[75] Contrast with Milton's Sin, a monstrous figure who dwells in caves, and her abortive births. There is a possibility that Milton was subtly linking Eve's shadow self with Sin here.

continuing separation from Adam would have been achieved. By following the voice, and abandoning the shadow lurking in the lake, the Divine voice promises Eve that she will find Adam whom she 'shalt enjoy' 'Inseparablie' hers (IV. 472-73), whereas Lilith, who insists on staying by the water and refuses to return to Adam, is punished for her choice of continuing their separation by suffering the loss of her children.

While these two female figures, Eve and Lilith, reflect one another, their stories are mirrored, yet reversed. Eve fulfils the purpose of her creation, that is to be the mother of humankind and Adam's other half, while Lilith repudiates hers and has to endure what can be considered to be an inverted and darker fate in contrast with Eve's, that is to kill infant children and sow discord between newlyweds.

Fig. 20: Dante Gabriel Charles Rossetti, *Lady Lilith* (1868) [Bridgeman Education].

Strengthening this understanding of the scene is the curious reference to Asmodeus which is tellingly positioned after the reference to the delightful 'Sabean odours' that strike Satan's senses as he arrives in Paradise. The demonic figure of Asmodeus introduces another neglected subtext refracted through the lake scene. The demon Asmodeus, also known as *Ashmadai* (آشماداي) or *Ashmedai* (אַשְׁמְדָאִי) is believed to have originated from Arabia.[76] In the Jewish tradition, Asmodeus is one of Lilith's demon lovers with whom she mates in her Cave near the Red-Sea, and in other versions, he is even Lilith's spouse and King of Demons; together both become infamous for enticing their victims towards evil and attempting to drive a wedge between newlyweds. These aspects feature in the *Testament of Solomon*, an anonymous text believed to be written by Solomon himself as a warning against sexual temptations.[77] Solomon encounters and converses with numerous demons, including Asmodeus and Lilith, and attempts to bind their powers. Asmodeus introduces himself and announces the nature of his schemes against humankind which seem to have a particular bearing on the discussion here:

> 22:2 ...I am called Asmodeus among mortals, and my business is to plot against the newly wedded, so that they may not know one another.
> 22:3 And I sever them utterly by many calamities, and I waste away the beauty of virgin women, and estrange their hearts.[78]
> (*Testament of Solomon*)

After Solomon binds Asmodeus' power with an authoritative exhortation, a number of demons appear and proclaim their powers, including Lilith who approaches Solomon as a limbless demonness whose 'hair was dishevelled' (57.1):[79]

[76] Charles Russell Coulter and Patricia Turner, *Encyclopedia of Ancient Deities* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2000); Toorn, K. Van Der., Bob Becking and Pieter Willem Van Der. Horst., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible DDD* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); James Barr and John Barton, *Bible and Interpretation: The Collected Essays of James Barr* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[77] While the text claims to provide a firsthand account on building the Temple of Solomon, written by Solomon himself, its publication dates go back only to the 1st and 5th centuries CE, one thousand years after Solomon's death. See F. C. Conybeare, *The Testament of Solomon*, *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, 11.1 (1898): 1-45 (1).
[78] *Book of Solomon* ed. by Apostle Arne (N.A: New Apostle Bible Covenant, 2015), pp. 90-1.

> 58.2 ...I am called among men *Obizuth*;[80] and by night I sleep not, but go my rounds over all the world, an visit women in childbirth. And divining the hour I take my stand; and if I am lucky, I strangle the child.[81]

While Milton may not have had direct access to the *Testament of Solomon*, what is certain is that he was familiar with the Jewish account of Asmodeus in the Book of Tobit (6:13) in which such behaviour is attributed to him:[82] Asmodeus is held responsible for slaying in turn each of Sarah's seven husbands before the marriage can be consummated. This is clearly demonstrated by the following lines which form part of the passage that describes Satan's arrival in Paradise. His arrival is linked

> [...] to them who saile
> Beyond the *Cape of Hope*, and now are past
> *Mozambic*, off at Sea North-East windes blow
> *Sabean* Odours from the spicie shoare
> Of *Arabie* the blest, with such delay
> Well pleas'd they slack thir course, and many a League
> Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles.
> So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend
> Who came their bane, though with them better pleas'd
> Then Asmodeus with the fishie fume,
> That drove him, though enamourd, from the Spouse
> Of Tobits Son, and with a vengeance sent
> From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.
> (*PL*, IV. 159- 71)

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[79] Cf. Eve's 'Dishevelled' hair (IV. 306), although Eve's hair is attractively so.

[80] The demoness was associated with Lilith in the Jewish tradition and with Gylou in Byzantine culture and would later come to be known as Galu or Ghoul. See Mary Margaret Fulgum, 'Coins Used as Amulets in Late Antiquity', in *Between Magic and Religion: Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Mediterranean Religion and Society*, ed. by S. R. Asrivatham, C. O. Pache and J. Watrous (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2001), p. 142; see also A. A. Barb, 'Antaura. The Mermaid and the Devil's Grandmother: A Lecture', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 29 (1966): 1-23 (5).

[81] Arne, p. 101.

[82] Such actions are also attributed to the female companion, 'Qarina', and also to Lilith. For further discussion of the Queen of Sheba, see the final section of this chapter.

Frank Kermode concludes that the purpose of these lines is 'simply to get into the context a bad smell',[83] which arrives in the Garden with Satan, and yet, that Milton should refer here to Asmodeus just a few lines following Satan's arrival in Eden is surely significant. The sinister intentions of Satan, his fierce desire and envy of Adam and Eve's relationship, his cunning eavesdropping on the couple's private conversation, are all thematic threads that converge together to play an essential role in the development of the poetic plot. And indeed, David R. Clark takes this further to argue that the imagery surrounding Asmodeus is to suggest Satan's 'inner thoughts': Asmodeus' relief at escaping from the stench of rotting fish mirrors 'Satan's unconscious pleasure in taking a break from smelling his own foulness',[84] just as the pleasure he feels at observing Eve tending her flowers gives him a momentary respite from his evil nature (IX, 455-66).

Given Asmodeus' reputation, and the way in which Satan will attempt to supplant Adam's marital role as her guide, it seems important to bear in mind that Eve's first encounter with Adam is rendered as that of an estranged bride who turns away from her promised spouse:

> … I espi'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
> Under a Platan, yet methought less faire,
> Less winning soft, less amiablie milde,
> Then that smooth watry image; back I turnd.
> (*PL*, IV. 477- 80)

Even if only momentarily, the influence of the tempting shape is patent: Eve was tempted to return to the lake and choose sterile and unrewarding 'Satanic self love',[85] like Narcissus. However, she eventually responded to Adam's claims upon her and followed

[83] Frank Kermode, Adam 'Unparadised', in *The Living Milton*, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), pp. 108-09.
[84] David R. Clark, 'Asmodeus and the Fishy Fume: *Paradise Lost*, IV, 153-171', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 12.1 (1972): 121-28 (129).
[85] Kilgour, 'Thy Perfect Image Viewing', p. 311.

the guidance of the Divine voice, unlike the 'first Eve', Lilith. Nevertheless, the looks exchanged between Eve and the shape in the lake affect her profoundly, representing a turning point for, from this moment, she realises her lack of knowledge, and continues to be curious about herself, her surroundings, and her place within the world. Indeed, the prime strategy of these demonic figures – reversing God's greatest blessing of fruitfulness by obstructing marriage, separating newlyweds and preventing motherhood – seem covertly at work in the lake scene which thereby subtly prepares for Eve's response to the more direct demonic influence of Satan in the dream temptation and in the Garden on the morning of the Fall in which Satan exploits his understanding of Eve's desire for knowledge by offering to her a different estimation of her 'self' and her position in the world.

'To know no more / Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise'

Milton effectively prepares the ground for Satan's dream temptation not only by having Satan hear Eve's own account of her experience by the lake and her first meeting with Adam but also through the scene that unfolds as night draws on and Adam pronounces: 'Night bids us rest' (633). At this point it would seem that Eve has fully accepted Adam's guidance on all matters and is made to respond with these woodenly didactic lines:

> My Author and Disposer, what thou bidst
> Unargu'd I obey; so God ordains,
> God is thy Law, thou mine: to know no more
> Is womans happiest knowledge and her praise.
> (*PL*, IV. 635-38)

However, these lines modulate surprisingly into a beautifully poised and lyrical statement of Eve's love for Adam, the first ever love poem, indeed the first ever poem of all time. 'With thee conversing I forget all time' is an exquisitely formed mirror poem. The first half

catalogues the rich variety of delights in paradise that are rendered delightful by the presence of Adam, who completes her happiness. The lines accentuate the pleasures inspired by Adam's company upon whom Eve's flattering words and loving advances are dependant:

> Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
> With charm of earliest Birds; pleasant the Sun
> When first on this delightful Land he spreads
> His orient Beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flour,
> Glistring with dew; fragrant the fertil earth
> After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
> Of grateful Eevning milde, then silent Night
> With this her solemn Bird and this fair Moon,
> And these the Gemms of Heav'n, her starrie train
> (*PL*, IV. 641-49)

Then at line 650, with the pivotal 'But', or volta, the composition turns back on itself, to protest that none of this profusion of delights would please in his absence. At this point, the lines dramatically emphasise the loss of all pleasures without him by the continuous repetition of the negating 'nor':

> But neither breath of Morn when she ascends
> With charm of earliest Birds, nor rising Sun
> On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, floure,
> Glistring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
> Nor grateful Eevning mild, nor silent Night
> With this her solemn Bird, nor walk by Moon,
> Or glittering Starr-light without thee is sweet.
> (*PL*, IV. 650-56)

Hillier has compared the directly contrasted views of Eden in Eve's poem here to the verbal mirroring 'of syntactic structures' in the lake scene.[86] He argues that 'Eve's

[86] González, p. 9.

experience of awakening by the pool and laying eyes upon her own reflection is an opening move to her attainment of a full awareness of what presence and absence mean for her', a concept Eve goes on to explore in her mirror poem when she imagines the possibility of Adam's absence and its effects.[87] There is, then, a pleasing symmetry, Hillier suggests, between Eve's mirror poem and her account of her encounter with her image beside the lake.[88] Both incidents represent a reflective space for Eve in which her true aim is highlighted, that is, to pursue knowledge.[89] When comparing both narratives, we may conclude that the answers given to Eve by Adam, emphasising her role as his companion, and the shadow in the lake, reflecting her loving nature, did not prove sufficient. Knowledge plays an essential part in the preparation for the Fall; it is Satan's knowledge and his eavesdropping on Eve's accounts that allowed him to deliver the most appropriate 'answer' to Eve and convince her to eat from the tree.[90] Indeed, Froula has claimed, 'it is not primarily narcissism to which the beautiful talking serpent tempts Eve but knowledge: to cease respecting the authority fetish of an invisible power and to see the world for herself'.[91]

The significance of this connection is further elaborated in what Hillier has termed Eve's 'lapse' in the mirror poem. At first glance, there is a seemingly precise duplication of items across the line of symmetry. However, if the reader attends more carefully, the word 'tree' is found to be missing from the items listed in the second half. In the prefatory lines to the poem, Eve proclaims that a woman's 'happiest knowledge' (638) is 'to know no more' than what is mediated to her through Adam (637); Adam is her happiness and

[87] Hillier, pp. 2-3.
[88] Hillier, p. 5.
[89] It is worth remembering that the Renaissance was an age that manufactured mirrors, see Hillier, p. 5.
[90] The mirroring technique here is extended to a whole scene involving two characters: Eve and Satan. While Eve describes her earliest memories, seeking knowledge (or wisdom), Satan's question (on how to seduce God's new creatures) is in fact answered. Later Satan misleads Eve with false answers leading to her Fall.
[91] See Diana Hume George, 'Stumbling on Melons: Sexual Dialectics and Discrimination in English Departments', in *English Literature: Opening Up the Canon*, ed. by Leslie A. Fiedler and Houston A. Baker (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 120-26, as cited in Froula, 'When Eve Reads Milton', p. 329.

with him ‘herb, tree, fruit and flour’ (644) are delightful. In the second half, however, Eve explains that without Adam there is no pleasure to be taken from ‘herb, fruit and floure’ (652); yet here she omits the significant word ‘tree’. Eve’s slip might be revealing here; there is a suggestion that as long as the tree of knowledge remained, the Garden would still have much to offer her. Hillier reflects upon her thought processes here: ‘Eden is no Eden “without thee,” that is without Adam; but perhaps the additional thought is worrying away at Eve that Eden will be impoverished “without th[r]ee”’.[92] Once again, Eve chooses knowledge as the greatest good.[93]

It seems not by chance then that immediately after the close of the mirror poem, Eve abruptly changes the mood by demanding of Adam:

> But wherfore all night long shine these, for whom
> This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
> (*PL*, IV. 657-58)

By suggesting that the stars shine to no avail once they are both asleep, thereby questioning the divine economy, Eve would certainly seem to be revealing a desire to know more. Even more disconcerting is the way Adam’s answer is exposed as insufficient.[94] This allows Satan to offer a different perspective on the workings of the universe. Although not physically present to overhear this interchange, the reader cannot help but notice that Satan supplies a more appealing answer in the dream temptation. Drawing Eve away from Adam, if only in a dream, Satan offers her a more flattering prospect in which

> [...] now reignes
> Full Orb’d the Moon, and with more pleasing light

[92] Hillier, p. 5. Whereas for Adam the Garden without Eve’s informing presence would be a wasteland of ‘wilde Woods forlorn’ (IX, 910).
[93] Meanwhile, Satan had already gained knowledge on how to bring their fall: ‘Yet let me not forget what I have gain’d / From thir own mouths; all is not theirs it seems: / One fatal Tree there stands of Knowledge call’d, / Forbidden them to taste: Knowledge forbidd’n?’ (IV. 512-15).
[94] Adam himself feels the need to follow a similar line of questioning in the astronomy debate with Raphael in Book VIII (15-38).

> Shadowie sets off the face of things; in vain,
> If none regard; Heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
> Whom to behold but thee, Natures desire,
> In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
> Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
> I rose as at thy call, but found thee not.
> (V. 41-8)

In the temptation itself, moreover, Satan will imply that Adam is too 'shallow to discerne' (IX. 544) her true worth, who through her superior beauty, as the 'Fairest resemblance of thy Maker faire' (IX. 538), deserves to be 'A Goddess among Gods' (IX. 547). In this way, Satan deflects Eve's quest for self-knowledge by corrupting her earlier innocent narcissism.

Seeking after Wisdom: The Queen of Sheba

Taking into consideration that Eve's thirst for knowledge first sprung up by water and that the divinely sanctioned role of maternity was also first assigned to her by water, it might prove fruitful to reflect upon whether the earlier reference to the 'Sabean Odors', that waft over the water from Arabian shores, might prove to have a further significance attached to its geographical location. There is no denying that the adjective 'Sabean', in Milton's lines, is used primarily in its geographical sense referring to 'Saba' in Arabia, famous for its aromatic spices.[95] As Verity, notes, 'Saba' is the classical form of 'Sheba', and that 'Elizabethan writers' constantly used the word Saba to refer to the most famous of all its denizens, the Queen of Sheba (*Malikat Saba* ملكة سبأ), who remains unnamed in the Bible.

[95] See note 161 in *Milton's Paradise Lost, with Copious Notes, Explanatory and Critical, Partly Selected from Addison, Bentley, Bowle, Calmet... and Partly Original, Also a Memoir on His Life*, ed. by James Prendeville (Paris: Baudry, 1841), p. 364.

The Queen of Sheba, an intriguing figure in herself, was a popular subject in Renaissance art and literature.[96] In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century usage, she is most commonly cited as an embodiment of female wisdom, as is the case with the allusion in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, for example.[97] The Biblical account in the Old Testament relates how the Queen, having heard of Solomon's reputation for wisdom, journeyed with sumptuous gifts of spices and gold in order to allay her thirst for truth by seeking answers from him to the questions that troubled her. The Queen attests to Solomon's extraordinary gift of wisdom and the passage celebrates the munificence of the latter's generous reception of the queen:

> And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions.
> **2** And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.
> **3** And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not [...]
> **6** And she said to the king, "It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom.
> **7** Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard" [...]
> **13** And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.
> (1 Kings 10 1-13)

[96] Her story is told in Boccaccio's *De Mulieribus Claris* in which she is held to be the queen of Ethiopia, Egypt and Arabia. As well as the depiction in stained glass of her giving gifts to King Solomon in King's College Chapel in Cambridge, Milton would no doubt have seen the celebrated bronze relief of her arrival in Jerusalem, cast by Lorenzo Ghiberti on the doors to the Baptistry in Florence, when he stayed there in 1629.

[97] See note to IV. 162 in *Paradise Lost Books III and IV* ed. by A. W. Verity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 136. See Chapter 2 for further discussion of this allusion by Marlowe. Gordon Teskey also notes that the words 'Elysian dew' (*Comus*, 966) were originally 'Sabean dew' in the Trinity manuscript, recalling the 'spices brought to Solomon by the queen of Sheba'. For more on the significance of the adjective 'Sabean' in Milton's work and on the amendments to *Comus* relating to his usage of this word, see: Gordon Teskey, *The Poetry of John Milton* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. 107; p. 117.

The unnamed queen is also clearly evoked in the New Testament where she is referred to by the title 'the queen of the south' in verses that characterise her as one in search of wisdom: 'The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here' (Mark 12:42).[98] The verse 'Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all she desired' (1 Kings 10:13) has been interpreted as signifying a sexual relationship subsisted between the two, and indeed, 'the queen of the south' has been identified with the bride in the Song of Solomon (Canticles) who describes herself as 'black, but comely' (1:5).

In another intriguing tradition recorded in the *Zohar*, the enigmatic figure of the Queen of Sheba is identified as a manifestation of Lilith, the 'queen' of demons:

> Some say that Lilith ruled as queen in Zmargad, and again in Sheba; and was the demoness who destroyed Job's sons. Yet she escaped the curse of death which overtook Adam, since they had parted long before the Fall.[99]

As demonological accounts continued to be retold, rewritten and revised in medieval and Early Modern Europe, the association between Lilith and the Queen of Sheba similarly continued to be emphasised. In the sixteenth century, with the development of a renewed occultist tradition influenced by humanism,[100] the older legends surrounding these Judeo-Arabic female figures, Lilith and the Queen of Sheba – taken from works such as the *Zohar* and the *Testament of Solomon* – became interwoven, merged together and reintroduced to Early Modern readers.[101] In one story, the Queen of Sheba appears as a

[98] The verses from the Gospel of Luke are virtually identical; see Luke 11:31.
[99] See Gen. Rab. 17.4, B. Yebamot 632 and Targum of Job 1.15. See also Graves and Raphael Patai, pp. 65-9. The queen's association with King Solomon helps mediate another similarity between the Qarina and Lilith, for in Arabic literature the Qarina is constantly vanquished by a male hero, who is none other than King Solomon himself; see Huwitz, pp. 136-39.
[100] For a detailed study of the history of occultism, with a particular focus on Lilith, see Spoto, pp. 21-125.
[101] One of the developments is that the Queen of Sheba became associated in numerous texts, circulated in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, with Asmodeus and Lilith. See Simon J. Bronner (ed.), *Encyclopedia*

Lilith-like female who snatched and drowned children.[102] In another, it is said Lilith took the shape of the Queen of Sheba in order to seduce Solomon.[103] In the *Testament of Solomon,*[104] for example, the king clearly ascribes Lilith's attribute of being a sorceress to the Queen of Sheba:

> 109:1-3 The *queen of the South,* being a *witch,* came in great concern and bowed low before me to the earth. And having heard my wisdom, she glorified the God of Israel, and she made formal trial of all my wisdom, of all love in which I instructed her, according to the wisdom imparted to me.[105]
> (*Testament of Solomon*; emphasis added)

When turning to the Islamic tradition, the queen is, once again, highly ambivalent figure. She is also linked in a remarkable way to a decisive incident that took place by water which seems to be illustrated in one of the stained glass windows at King's Chapel Cambridge. It therefore seems worth comparing the Qur'anic account of the meeting of Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. The queen is infatuated with Solomon, who possesses such power and wisdom that he is able to rule over and communicate with all kinds of living creatures, including humans, animals, birds and even jinns.[106] Having learnt from his jinn servants that the queen is not fully human but a demon (she is half human and half jinn) with hairy legs and cloven feet, King Solomon becomes wary and suspicious of her.

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of American Folklife (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2006); Morris B. Margolies, *A Gathering of Angels in Jewish Life and Literature* (New York: Ballantine, 1994) and Schwartz.

[102] Susannah Heschel states, 'Until recent generations the Queen of Sheba was popularly pictured as a snatcher of children and a demonic witch'; see Susannah Heschel, "LILITH", *Encyclopaedia Judaica,* 13 (2007): 17-20 (18). In an almost complete accordance with the Queen of Sheba and Lilith, the Qarina is blamed in incidents of miscarriage, separation of newlyweds. According to another Arabic belief, if a woman's children die, it is said that the Qarina has strangled them.

[103] This identification of Lilith with the Queen of Sheba is 'based on a Jewish and Arab myth that the Queen of Sheba was actually a jinn, half human and half demon'; see Enid Dame, Lilly Rivlin and Henny Wenkart (eds.), *Which Lilith?: Feminist Writers Re-create the World's First Woman* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1998), p. 11. See also Margolies, p. 169.

[104] For more on Milton's interest in Solomon, see Douglas A. Brooks (ed.), *Milton and the Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 85-9.

[105] Arne, p. 113.

[106] See Chapter 3 for further discussion of the nature of 'jinn'.

In order to expose her true nature, the king orders his jinn servants to construct a lake with fish and cover it with highly polished glass. On approaching this reflective surface, the Queen of Sheba mistakes it for a lake. Thinking that she is about to step into water, the queen lifts her skirts and her legs are exposed to view.[107] The queen, realising that she has been tricked, understands the extent of her ignorance and her imperfect judgement. She chooses to follow Solomon, and his wisdom, and abandons her pagan beliefs.[108] The *Alcoran* describes the incident thus:

> when she beheld the pavement, she believed it to be water; and in lifting up her robe, fearing to wet it, discovered her leg. Solomon told her, that the pavement was of pollished glass, and exhorted her to embrace the Law of God. Then she said, Lord, I am too blame in having offended thee; I am obedient with Solomon, to the commandment of the God and the universe.
> (*Alcoran*, Ch. XXVII. 233-34)

Although in the Islamic tradition Solomon suspected the Queen of Sheba of being a jinn, in the Hebraic version of the account, he suspected her of being none other than Lilith herself. The hairy legs, or demonic hooves in certain accounts, become converged and reminiscent of Lilith's peculiar birdlike feet.[109]

Notably, both versions of this incident share some thematic similarities with Eve's lake scene, but the Qur'anic account is closer in that it also embodies motifs relating to misguided senses, reflective truth and recognising the limitations to the extent of one's inner knowledge. The watery and/or mirroring surface represent for both women a contemplative space where their true shape is expected to appear. This reflective surface measures their knowledge and seeks to elevate their consciousness. The fact that the queen

[107] Oliver Leaman, 'Appearance and Reality in the Quran: Bilqis and Zulaykha', *İslâm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, (2003): 23-37.
[108] Ibid.
[109] For more on this discussion see Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning*, trans. from Hebrew by Jacqueline S. Teitelbaum (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 386, and Michael Wood, *In Search of Myths and Heroes* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2005), p. 205.

is not aware of the nature of the mirror surface, thinking it a lake, echoes Eve mistakenly thinking the lake a sky. Both women, due to their misconceptions, mistrust their own judgment and 'follow' (IV. 469) their new destiny.

At first sight, one might not see a direct connection between these Judeo-Arabic myths and the Miltonic lines above other than the reference to 'Sabean Odors', which may in itself remind the reader of the Sabean Queen, and her coming to King Solomon with enchanting spices and perfumes. Furthermore, taking into consideration that the reference to 'Saba' in the previous lines from the *Alcoran* is the sole example to be found in the English translation,[110] it might be more likely that Milton was evoking her in relation to the Lilith counterpart or simply turned to Judeo-Christian accounts that associate Sheba with the demonic Lilith. The latter possibility is further strengthened due to the mentioning of the demon 'Asmodeus' who was associated with the Queen of Sheba, in the Arabic tradition, but more so with Lilith.[111] It is difficult to entirely dismiss a possible joint allusion of the Queen of Sheba and Lilith due to their strong connection in the complex Judeo-Arabic legends, especially in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries as mentioned earlier.[112]

Satan journeys to Paradise to tempt Eve. In order to do so, he exploits her inquisitive nature that is displayed in her first moments of consciousness, as she awakes with questions about her nature and existence. Like the Queen of Sheba, who challenges

[110] The word Saba is found in Ch. XXVII of the *Alcoran* where the verses mention the Kingdom of Saba. 'I come from the Kingdome of *Saba*, whence I bring certain tidings; I have found a woman, their Queen' (Ch. XXVII. 232). The word Queen is mentioned only twice in that page, otherwise, the Queen of Sheba is alluded to by the feminine pronouns 'she' and 'her'.

[111] Note the subtle reference to Arabian shores, in *Paradise Lost* (IV. 159-71), when mentioning Asmodeus. For more links between Arabic mythology, Lilith, Asmodeus and the Queen of Sheba, see Koltuv, p. iv.

[112] It was even proposed that the 'riddles which the Queen of Sheba posed to Solomon are a repetition of the words of seduction which the first Lilith spoke to Adam'; see Enid Dame, Lilly Rivlin and Henny Wenkart, p. 11. Lilith and the Queen of Sheba are indistinguishable in certain versions of Judeo-Arabic legends; see Jacob Lassner who argues that both oral and written lore demonstrate 'that the biblical queen was transformed over time into the likes of [...] the demonic Lilith ... [who] lures Jewish children and drowns them'. Jacob Lassner, *Demonizing the Queen of Sheba: Boundaries of Gender and Culture in Postbiblical Judaism and Medieval Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 24.

Solomon's wisdom, Eve seeks answers;[113] a point that was observed by C. S. Lewis who notes that in the conversations between Adam and Eve, Adam 'is the sum of all human Knowledge and wisdom who answers her as Solomon answered the Queen of Sheba'.[114] But Eve gradually understands that Adam's knowledge is limited, that he, like her, hasn't all the answers.[115]

While Eve's answers were provided to her first by her own reflection, then the Divine voice, followed by Adam and Satan in turn, it was the answers of the latter, in the dream temptation and their garden encounter, that were the ones of most effect on the progression of the narrative.[116] Eve's self-inquisitive nature that had caused her to mistakenly draw a false sense of wholeness from her shape in the water, while innocent in itself, cannot entirely evade a negative connotation due to its ultimately being one of the main contributory factors towards the Fall. The warning voice failed to completely satisfy Eve's curiosity, the answer given to her, that is to see herself becoming Adam's companion and the mother of humankind, proved insufficient. Satan's answer, however, which correlates to the one offered by the shape (as both give credit to Eve's beauty and captivating charm), but more importantly promising her knowledge in addition, carried more conviction with Eve. Challenging God's commandment that they should not eat the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, Satan demands of Eve: 'Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe, / Why but to keep ye low and ignorant' (IX. 703-04). As Polina Mackay and

[113] Bear in mind that a sinister side has been attributed to Eve's 'charm'; see too, Adam's words to Raphael which express his anxiety about 'the charm of beauty's powerful glance' (VIII. 533).
[114] C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (New Delhi; Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2005), p. 113. Note that the part of the garden 'tended by the solitary Eve' is linked to the garden 'where the Sapient King / Held dalliance with his faire *Egyptian* Spouse' (*PL*, IX, 442-43), referring to King Solomon and his bride. See Walter S. H. Lim, 'Adam, Eve, and Biblical Analogy in *Paradise Lost*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 30.1 (1990): 115-31 (119).
[115] This is made clear at the opening of the astronomy debate in Book VIII, as discussed earlier.
[116] Lim argues that Milton evoked the specific allusion of Solomon when depicting Adam and Samson's 'fall into the sin of fornication, the transgression of succumbing to the wiles and lures of women' and that 'three of Milton's four references made to Solomon in *Paradise Lost* point to his idolatry and susceptibility to women.' p. 117; p. 118.

Kathryn Nicol explain, Eve's need 'for knowledge and equality that Satan promises' increase her desire for that 'Fruit forbidd'n' (IX. 904).[117]

Likewise, when examining Eve's words in her creation account, it is the responsiveness of the watery reflection that attract Eve rather than her image. Once the Divine voice explains to her its evanescent reality, Eve abandons her image and follows the voice in order to find what she was promised. Despite the fact that the attractive qualities of the reflection are less matched by Adam, Eve chooses his knowledge over beauty. This incident is narrated by Eve while Satan is eavesdropping, and so it is at this point that he learns of the best manner to approach Eve, that is, to diminish the appeal of Adam's knowledge and provide a more intriguing possibility, an allure of an elevated reality. Satan learns through the narrative of her earliest memories that seducing Eve to whet her desire to acquire knowledge is the most effective path towards accomplishing his aims. It is knowledge that Eve seeks to acquire, and it is Eve that Adam seeks. Both will fall.

Given Milton's strategy in deploying pagan myth in the service of Christian thought, it is indeed telling that he also seems to have evoked figures from Judeo-Arabic mythology, almost interchangeably, for a similar purpose, that is, to cast all shadows of Christian truth in an unfavourable light in comparison to the solid and substantial truth of Divine Christian guidance. The fact that Milton echoed the Judeo-Arabic Lilith while also ascribing to Satan a particularly Islamic air, not only reflects his own views of the almost indistinguishable flaws between the two, but also reflects his knowledge of the continuous usage of Judeo-Arabic figures pressed into service of the true faith, an approach that was common in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dialogue as examined in Chapter 2. It is not without significance that Narcissus' ill-fated destiny, as well as that of Lilith and Satan, is

[117] Polina Mackay and Kathryn Nicol (eds.), *Kathy Acker and Transnationalism* (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), p. 59.

compared unfavourably to the seeds of redemption that will issue from the Fall of Adam and Eve. While the narrator addresses the yet unfallen couple with the cautionary words, 'O yet happiest if ye seek / No happier state, and know to know no more' (IV. 775), the author of the *Areopagitica* wryly noted:

> It was from out the rinde of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evill as two twins cleaving together leapt forth into the World. And perhaps this is that doom which *Adam* fell into of knowing good and evill, that is to say of knowing good by evill. As therefore the state of man now is; what wisdome can there be to choose, what continence to forbeare without the knowledge of evill?[118]

Once more Milton's Biblical knowledge is expanded to encompass all shadows of false tales. In the story of Adam and Eve, Milton demonstrates how, after the Fall, in order to truly fathom good, humanity is bound to experience evil, and in order to attain the grace of redemption, humanity has to know sin. Likewise, in order to identify the falsehood of other faiths, it is essential to understand their teachings. Milton's rewriting of the Narcissus myth not only prepares the reader for the main argument of the poem, but also adds the key theme of guiding knowledge amidst a world of multiple false faiths. The mirroring technique extends here, even if momentarily, to include Milton himself, where he becomes a guiding voice for his readers leading them away from all shadows of truth just like the Divine voice that exposes to Eve the true reality of her shadow.

[118] *Riverside*, p. 1006.

Chapter Six: Rewriting Milton in Literature of Resistance by Arab Women

This thesis has considered the presence of the Judeo-Arabic demonic – both male and female – in Milton's *Paradise Lost* through focusing on two demonic figures: Iblis and, his consort, Lilith. This final chapter contemplates an opposing proposition; that is, the influence that *Paradise Lost* has had on Arab scholars, particularly female authors and academics. Generally speaking, studies of Milton in relation to the Arab world remain scarce indeed and confined to an early stage of academic interest.[1] Moreover, such studies remain limited to the writings of twentieth-century male, usually Egyptian, authors, due to their undeniable role in what is held to be the 'contemporary stage' of the Arab Renaissance.[2] Only very recently has Eid Dahiyat's *Once Upon the Orient Wave: Milton and the Arab-Muslim World* ceased to be the only academic endeavour to have ever investigated Milton's influence on Arab authors with the publication of Islam Issa's *Milton in the Arab-Muslim World* (2016).

The commendable work of a few Arab Miltonists, such as Eid Dahiyat, Nabil Matar and Islam Issa, have opened the door for this neglected aspect of Milton studies; however, there has been no dedicated study, to this date, that gives attention to the reception of Milton's work by female Arab authors. Therefore, while I acknowledge the importance of the ground-breaking work of these scholars, which has established a

[1] Eid Abdallah Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave: Milton and the Arab Muslim World* (London: Hesperus Press, 2012); Dahiyat, *John Milton and the Arab-Islamic Culture* (Amman: Shukayr & Akasheh, 1987); Dahiyat, 'Aspects of John Milton in Arabic', *Milton Quarterly*, 18.1 (March 1984): 5-13; Nabil Matar, '*Paradise Lost* as an Islamic Epic: Muhammad 'Anānī's translation (2002/2010)', *English Studies*, 96.1 (2015): 6-20; Islam Issa, 'Fragmentation, Censorship and an Islamic Journal: A History of the Translations of Milton into Arabic', *Milton Quarterly*, 46.4 (2012): 219-32; and Issa, *Milton in the Arab-Muslim World* (New York: Routledge, 2016). See also the 'Thesis Outline' for a detailed discussion of these studies.

[2] Arguably, 'the golden years of the Arab Renaissance, known as the *nahda* (النهضة), are usually marked as the turn of the twentieth century'; see Jacob Rama Berman, *American Arabesque: Arabs, Islam and the 19th-Century Imaginary* (London and New York: New York University Press, 2012), p. 114.

concrete and informed foundation for this discussion, my aim is rather directed towards casting fresh light on another overlooked aspect of Milton studies in relation to Arab writing: the voices of female authors and their role in analysing Arab society, politics and gender.

While focusing on female authors, I demonstrate that *Paradise Lost* is indeed a text that appeals to a number of Arab authors, both male and female, who, like Milton, incorporate 'the other' as a way to tackle sensitive social and political matters of their time. Indeed, this point of convergence has been observed by Ahmed M. F Banisalama who reasons that the 'many similarities between Arabic poetry and Milton's' are due to the fact that 'most Arab poets tend to veil their political affiliations under highly allegorical language in order to avoid punishment by their dictators'.[3] During the discussion that follows I shall elaborate on this observation by demonstrating the way the demonic in Arabic literature projects social, religious and political critiques. While doing so, I shall simultaneously compare the utilisation of demonic figures, in selected Arabic texts by female authors, to Milton's Satan, Eve and, less overtly, Lilith.

I shall offer a concise discussion of the treatment of Eve – and her shadow, Lilith – in feminist writing by female Arab authors, in order to prepare for a detailed analysis of the way Milton's Eve has shaped the unique voice of feminist resistance in the writings of Arab women such as the Saudi author Rehab Abuzaid. Keeping *Paradise Lost* in view, I intend to demonstrate the way these female Arab authors have redefined the role of the feminine, in general,[4] and Eve, in particular. But first, I shall prepare the ground for this argument with a brief discussion of early translations of *Paradise Lost* into Arabic that were undertaken in the twentieth century and their influence on critics and authors of the time, most notably the influential writers Abbas Mahmoud Al-'Aqqad and Tawfiq Al

[3] Ahmed M. F. Banisalamah, 'Milton's Anti-Monarchical Stances and His Poetical, Phonetic, Rhetorical, and Theological Crafts', *Canadian Social Science*, 11.1 (2015): 30-4 (34).
[4] See also the Appendix.

Hakim. In this way, we may fully grasp the growth in the extent of Milton's influence from these early translations of *Paradise Lost* until the present day.[5]

Early Influence: Translations and Literary Works

It was in the early twentieth century[6] that an interest in Milton began to take hold in Arabic intellectual circles,[7] with the first attempted translation of *Paradise Lost* into Arabic by Zaki Najib Mahmud in 1937.[8] However, it was not until almost half a century later that a complete translation finally became available with Muhammad Anani's *Al-Firdaws Al-mafqūd* ('Paradise Lost' الفردوس المفقود).[9] With the emergence of this second translation, we encounter, as Dahiyat proclaims, 'the first academic attempt in the Arab world to translate and explain Milton's epic to Arab readers'.[10] The author succeeded in completing the whole work over a period of two decades:[11] the first two books were published in 1982; the

[5] An Arabic translation of Milton's complete poetical works remains wanting. The focus on translating Milton largely remains on *Paradise Lost*.

[6] The twentieth century marks the beginning of an important period in which interest in English literature was emerging in the Arab world. There had been a noticeable evasion in translating or engaging with English literature, due to, amongst other circumstances, the growth of Arab pride in their own vernacular literature and heritage as a direct response to Colonialism. The delayed interest in English culture was also, in part, connected with the understanding that it is pagan in nature particularly due to its association with Greek and Latin Literature. See Issa, 'Fragmentation', p. 224.

[7] Zaki Najib Mahmud, as well as being an established academic, teaching philosophy at a number of universities including institutions in Egypt, Kuwait, and the USA, was also 'a respected Egyptian writer, academic and thinker', Issa, p. 222. It was Mahmud's ability to present complex philosophical ideas for the 'common Arab reader' that caused him to be regarded as a key participant in the 'renaissance of Arabic literature'. See Issa, 'Fragmentation', p. 222, Matar, p. 10 and Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 127.

[8] In 1937, Mahmud translated the first one hundred and fifty-five lines of the poem, and had it published in *Al-Risalah*, an intellectual and cultural magazine as well as in a book edited by his brother some years later. See Zaki Najib Mahmud, 'Min Al-Fidaws Al-Mafqud' [From Paradise Lost], *Ar-Risalah*, (January 1937): 778-80. See Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 158 and Issa, 'Fragmentation', p. 221; p. 232. According to Dahiyat, Mahmud's achievement is commendable because of the effort he dedicates to preserving Milton's 'poetic qualities', blank verse and 'elevated diction'. However, Dahiyat also points out that Mahmud manipulates, in various instances, 'words, images and references' in an attempt to associate *Paradise Lost* more closely with Arabic poetry and Islamic belief. See Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 127 and 'Aspects of John Milton in Arabic', p. 10, respectively.

[9] Muḥammad 'Anānī (trans.), *Al-Firdaws Al-mafqūd* [Paradise Lost] (Cairo: Longman, 2002. Full translation reprinted 2010). Anani 'has also translated the only Arabic versions of *Paradise Regained*, *Areopagitica*, and the Preface to Book 2 of *The Reason of Church-Government Urged against Prelaty*, all published in 2009', see Issa, 'Fragmentation', pp. 222-23.

[10] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, pp. 128-29.

[11] Mahmud's translation, albeit incomplete, was highly appreciated, and clearly gave Arab readers a taste for Milton's epic. Anani's version, however, was 'shaped by the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, in which the last King of Egypt, Farouk I, was overthrown by an army coup d'état', see Issa, 'Fragmentation', pp. 223-24. In

third, fourth and sixth books were translated in 1984, but were published the following year in 1985. In 2001, books seven, eight and nine appeared in print; and the translation of books ten, eleven and twelve was finished in 2002. In the same year the entire work appeared in a single volume.[12] Nine years later, in 2011, another complete Arabic translation, by the Syrian literary critic and translator Hanna Aboud, was published. Abood's translation presents the epic in twelve books, and came with an introduction and annotations. However, according to Issa, this latest translation has not been widely circulated due to the unfortunate timing of its publication, which coincided with the Syrian uprising that began at precisely the same time.[13]

Certainly, Anani's translation has been well received by Arab critics and academics; Dahiyat went as far as stating that Anani's Arabic translation 'matches the sublimity and splendour of the original English text'.[14] Indeed, it is because of Anani's academic prowess that his work, according to Dahiyat, had its own appeal:[15] 'The fact that he is an academic specialising in English Literature' meant that he had a particular insight into the nature of the text and its contextual background.[16] Another reason for its success was that, like his predecessor, Zaki N. Mahmud, Anani uses Qur'anic terminology to render Milton's Biblical references; yet, unlike Mahmud, who renders Milton's religious

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this respect, the spirit of Milton's epic and Anani's translation is similar, and the political and social circumstances are interestingly paralleled. Issa points out that Anani had just become a teenager during the period of revolution (which writers supported), witnessing an Egypt that underwent a 'period of change and reform' and was raised during events that 'epitomized and substantiated the challenging of religious, social, and political conformity', p. 224.

[12] See Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, pp. 127-29.

[13] Issa adds that the General Egyptian Book Organisation 'is more renowned than its Syrian counterpart, and its publications are more widely distributed', see 'Fragmentation', p. 222. Notably, when Matar published his article '*Paradise Lost* as an Islamic Epic' in 2014, his introductory lines remind the reader that the publication of Anani's translation coincided with 'a destabilization' of Egypt and therefore did not receive the attention it deserved. See Matar, p. 6.

[14] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 130.

[15] Anani was also 'the Editing Supervisor of the Contemporary Arabic Literature in English series, which has published over fifty-five books'; see Issa, 'Fragmentation', p. 223.

[16] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, p. 130.

lines ‘too much’,[17] Anani’s translation provides a preface, notes and a comprehensive introduction to the ‘seventeenth century background material, including Milton’s life, and his angelic and cosmic views’.[18]

Indeed, the presence of a complete translation not only opened the door to Arabic critical analysis of the poem, but also inspired a renewed attention to the reception of Milton’s writings in the Arab world,[19] particularly, as mentioned earlier, his influence on twentieth-century Arabic literature. Furthermore, Milton’s depiction of Satan, in particular, is believed to have left its mark on the representation of the devil in Arabic writing of that period.[20] For scholars of the modern period of Arabic literature, this was felt to have been partly brought about, amongst other reasons, by the exposure to multiple sources of literary studies, including Western literature, in the post-Colonial period. As Almansour asserts, Arab poets became no longer confined ‘in their knowledge to Arabic poetry alone’, but

[17] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, pp. 127-30. Like Mahmud, who was careful to render Christian terminology with appropriate Islamic references, Anani was aware of the need to be religiously sensitive. Matar argues that avoiding certain terminology has hindered, to an extent, delivering Milton’s key mission to the Arab reader. In fact, Milton’s expressed intention to ‘justifie the wayes of God to men’ (I. 26) was altered in both translations (Mahmud’s and Anan’s) to avoid this problematic concept that God should need to be justified. The phrase was rendered by ‘showing the ways of God in Mankind’, thus avoiding what could have otherwise been considered an heretical concept to a Muslim reader, see Matar, p. 15. Another approach Anani followed was the incorporation of the Qur’anic names for Biblical figures, if it did not change the meaning of Milton’s lines. For example, Anani decides to use the name Iblis for Milton’s Satan, so highlighting the parallel portrayal of both devils in the two accounts, the Qur’an and *Paradise Lost* respectively. ‘In using Iblīs, therefore, Anānī was able to fit the Miltonic Satan squarely into the Qur’ānic Iblīs’, Matar, p. 12. What is also of special interest is that Anani amends the word ‘Sultan’ to *ra’īsuhum* (‘their chief’ رئيسهم), in a clear attempt to obviate the negative connotation associated with the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the negative depiction of Satan that Milton intended is absent here and geo-political references are avoided; see Matar, p. 12. For a detailed comparative analysis of the translators’ linguistic, stylistic and theological approach towards adapting *Paradise Lost* to an Arab audience, see Matar, pp. 10-20; Dahiyat, pp. 95-136; and Issa, pp. 225-28.

[18] Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient Wave*, pp. 129-30.

[19] In pre-Islamic Arabic poetry the devil was considered to be the main source of poetic revelation. For the pagan Arabs, the role of the demonic in everyday life, and the general understanding of what the demonic represented, was not necessarily entirely associated with evil. In fact, numerous poets personalised a relation with their ‘poetic devils’, by boastfully acknowledging the role of their shadowy companions in producing elevated poetry. Poets went as far as naming their devils and attributing to them poetic lines and narratives of their own, see Ali Saleh Almansour, ‘The Character of the Devil in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* and Selected Arabic Poetry’ (Unpublished Masters Dissertation: King Saud University, 2009), pp. 84-93. Poetic ‘genius’ was so powerfully associated with these devils that the adjective *Abqări* (genius) is believed to bear an etymological association with Abqăr, the word for genie or devil, amongst other names, see Dahiyat, p. 159.

[20] Al-Aqqad is considered one of the most important authors who first deployed this transformation in the character of Satan.

began to be more 'familiar with world literature'.[21] Likewise, in the literary criticism consulted in that period, Romanticism held sway, and Shelley's view of Satan as Milton's dynamic and rebellious hero remains the most acknowledged critical reading when discussing the reception of the character of Satan by Arab writers, intellectuals, poets, and critics,[22] most notably, Al-Aqqad and Al-Hakim.

Al-Aqqad,[23] known as 'one of the most outstanding twentieth century Arab writers', was certainly one of the most influential thinkers and critics of modern Arabic literature.[24] He dedicated an entire book, entitled *Iblis*, to examining the ways in which different cultures, including the Western and Arabic world, have treated this particular figure, Milton's Satan included.[25] Indeed, as MacLean has observed, Al-Aqqad wrote '*Iblis* (1969) that re-examines the history of the devil with Milton's Satan ever before him'.[26] In this influential work Al-Aqqad avers that Milton's Satan:

قد تضطرب صور الشيطان بين موقف و موقف إلا صورة واحدة تثبت له في جميع مواقفه، وهى الصورة التي ترضى الشاعر حين يتخذ لسانا ناطقا بحجج المتمردين.

[21] Almansour, p. 56.
[22] Dahiyat argues that Al-Aqqad misunderstood Milton's Satan and was influenced by a Romantic critical reading of the devil transmitted through reading Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* (1821). See Dahiyat, pp. 118-22.
[23] Al-Aqqad (born in Aswan, Egypt in 1889) began his life with indoctrination into traditional Islamic teachings and Qur'anic studies before joining elementary school. Al-Aqqad's exposure to Western culture began in his early years through his interaction with Western tourists visiting the historic city of Aswan. While his interests were possibly manifested after his exposure to Western literature, and appreciation of ancient Egyptian (Pharonic) heritage, Al-Aqqad remained an avid reader and a strong admirer of the Arabic classics. Al-Aqqad appears in a rare televised interview that was conducted in his home. It aired two months before his death, see Al-Aqqad, 'An Interview with Al-Aqqad' (1964): [Ch. 2, Egypt]; available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbumcLHIArw>.
[24] Hayfa Khalafallah, ''Abbas Al-'Aqqad: The Historian', *The Arab Studies Journal*, 3.1 (Spring 1995): 80-93; Robin C. Ostle, 'Three Egyptian Poets of "Westernization": 'Abd Al-Rahman Shukri, Ibrahim 'Abd Al-Qadir Al-Mazini, and Mahmud 'Abbas Al-'Aqqad', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 7.3 (1970): 354-73.
[25] In *Iblis*, Al-Aqqad explores the cultural, historic and religious definitions and the meanings of the power of evil in varying cultures and religious beliefs. His work aims to present a comparative examination of the demonic in mythology and its developing process throughout varied cultures and beliefs including those from: ancient Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, India, Mesopotamia, and Greece before he proceeds to consider Hebraic beliefs, Christianity, Islam and finally Satanism. During his discussion, he alludes to concepts of evil as manifested by malevolent spirits, witches and old hags that were popular in folkloric traditions.
[26] Gerald MacLean, 'Milton, Islam and the Ottomans', in *Milton and Toleration*, ed. by Sharon Achinstein and Elizabeth Sauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 292.

> ... may take different roles and assumes various qualities, but the one thing that never changes is that Milton puts him as the spokesperson of all the rebels.[27]

Indeed, Al-Aqqad's representation of Satan (or Iblis), in *Iblis* and his other works, marked an important literary transition in modern Arabic literature where the devil transformed from being a traditionally malicious figure into one that critiques God's role of him as an instrument to tempt mankind.[28] This literary transformation, as Jaber Asfour points out, accompanied Al-Aqqad's own changed views and the development of his political involvement. Much like Milton's monarchical resistance that challenged and criticised Charles I, Al-Aqqad, through his poems, defied King Fouad of Egypt[29] Moreover, Ahmad Hijazi believes that Al-Aqqad broke from the traditional religiously influenced view of Satan once he joined the Egyptian national movement under Saad Zaghloul, who was best known as an Egyptian revolutionary, and the leader of Egypt's most powerful nationalist liberal party: The Wafd party.[30] Al-Aqqad then dedicated his literary efforts to a defence of democracy and freedom, and to resisting the power of King Fouad who collaborated with Al-Azhar (the main religious institution in Egypt). After these political decisions, Al-Aqqad was imprisoned for insulting the 'monarchical self'; it was then that Al-Aqqad understood true rebellion.[31]

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[27] As cited in Almansour, p. 26; and Dahiyat, *John Milton and the Arab-Islamic Culture*, p. 139. For the Arabic original see Al-Aqqad, *Iblis* (Cairo: Nahdat Msr lil-tibaa'a, 2005), pp. 38-9 (39); available online: <https://download-free-arabic-books-pdf.blogspot.co.uk/2017/07/pdf_8.html>.

[28] It is in Al-Aqqad's poetry that both MacLean and Dahiyat trace a strong Miltonic presence, namely in: 'Tarjamatu Shaytān' [A Biography of a Devil] and 'Sibāq Al-Shayatīn' [Contest of Devils]. For example, Dahiyat argues how in 'Tarjamatu Shaytān', the manner in which the angels notice the disfiguration of Iblis' face echoes the scene in Book IV, where the angelic guard do not at first recognise Satan because of his changed appearance (835-40). See Dahiyat, *Once Upon the Orient* Wave, p. 120 and Almansour, p. 79. See also Abbas Mahmoud Al-Aqqad, *Majmu'at Al-amal Al-Kalimah Complete Works*, vol. XII (Beirut, 1979).

[29] See [in Arabic] Jaber Asfour who also states that Milton's influence has affected Al-Aqqad's poetry, particularly his 'Tarjamatu Shaytān' in that it defies the Romantic legacy that surrounded the authors of his age. See Jaber Asfour, 'Al-Aqqad Ba'd Arba'een Sana' [Al-Aqqad Fourty Years Onward], *Al-Rukn Al-Akhdar*, (online 2006): [page unnumbered] <http://www.grenc.com/show_article_main.cfm?id=676>.

[30] See [in Arabic] Ahmad Abdul-M'outi Hijazi, 'Mizan Al-Fan? Am Mizan Al-Deen?', *Al-Yawm Al-Sabe*', (online 2009): [page unnumbered] <http://www.youm7.com/story/2009/6/4/105409/ميزان-الفن-أم-ميزان-الدين>.

[31] Ibid; [in Arabic] Hanan Abdul-Hadi, 'When Al-Aqqad Insulted the Monarchical Self', *Al-Rai*, (online 2010): [page unnumbered] <http://www.alraimedia.com/ar/article/issues/2010/08/17/209713/nr/nc>.

Like that of Al-Aqqad, the literary influence of Tawfiq Al-Hakim (1898-1987)[32] was situated at an important and pivotal period of Egyptian and Arabic literature, when Arabic authors witnessed rapid changes in political, religious and literary spheres. Due to Al-Hakim's pioneering efforts in literature,[33] making accessible complex philosophical ideas by embodying them in recognisable types from everyday Egyptian society, his work has received considerable attention and demonstrated widespread appeal.[34]

A year after the 1952 revolution,[35] Al-Hakim published his collection *Show me God*. (1953).[36] Al-Hakim's sentiments of political disappointment with President Gamal Abdel Nasser had not yet come to head. In fact, Abdel Nasser was one of Al-Hakim's fervent admirers:[37] around the year 1963 of Al-Nasser's rule, 'at the President's personal insistence and despite the objections of the Chief of Protocol', a decoration usually reserved for Heads of State was bestowed upon Al-Hakim, and a Cairo theatre was named

[32] Born in 1898 to a prominent Egyptian judge and a Turkish or Circassian mother, who was 'reputed to have considered herself a cut above Egyptians', Al-Hakim developed a bi-cultural background, beginning his life a little differently to what would have been the case in a typically traditional Egyptian family. See Pierre Cachia, 'Idealism and Ideology: the Case of Tawfiq Al-Hakim', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 100.3 (1980): 225-35 (225).

[33] In his youth, Al-Hakim continued to enrich his multi-cultural understanding, and in 1925 went to France to pursue a PhD at the Sorbonne, Paris. He nonetheless decides to abandon his education in favour of utilising his ideas to transform Egyptian theatre, taking on the challenge of establishing a new dramatic genre in Egyptian literature that creatively deviates from traditional comedy and melodramatic translations of European work. Eventually, as William M. Hutchins points out, Al-Hakim became the founder of an entire literary tradition, and is most remembered 'for his role in creating a viable theatre tradition in Arabic literature', where Egyptian Drama became noticeably freighted with critiques of Egyptian political, religious and social life. For further discussion, see William M. Hutchins, *Tawfiq Al-Hakim: A Reader's Guide* (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 2003), p. 121.

[34] See Rasheed El-Enany, 'Tawfīq Al-Ḥakīm and the West: A New Assessment of the Relationship', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 27.2 (2000): 165-75. The Egyptian reception, however, did not entirely embrace Al-Hakim's plays. For example, *Ahl Al-Cahf* [The Cave Dwellers, 1933], based on the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, to which there is a cryptic reference in the Qur'an, flopped. Despite Al-Hakim's dissatisfaction with the production of the play, he continued to compose critical works with a philosophical dimension, such as *Pygmalion* (1942) which, like *Ahl Al Cahf*, 'argues that the artist's perfect vision ill accords with the pettiness of everyday life', see footnote n. 3 to Cachia, p. 226. See also Luc-Willy Deheuvels, 'Tawfīq Al-Ḥakīm, Pygmalion et le "Théâtre de l'esprit"', *Arabica*, 41.1 (1955): 1-50.

[35] The revolution was lead by army officers such as Muhammad Naguib and Gamal Abdel Nasser. It aimed at overthrowing the Egyptian Monarchy, ending the British occupation and establishing a Republic.

[36] All Arabic quotations of the story will be taken from this edition: Tawfiq Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', in *Arini Allah* [Show me God] (Cairo: Dar Msr lil-tibaa'a, N.A [first published 1953]), pp. 16-31; available online: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2392677>.

[37] Cachia, p. 226.

after him.[38] However, it was on the twentieth anniversary of the revolution, in the year 1972, that Al-Hakim's views on the political developments in Egypt were clarified as he 'recorded the story of his initial enthusiasm for, and eventual disenchantment with, the Nasserite regime' in *Awdat Al-Wa'y* ('The Return of Consciousness').[39] Indeed, speaking against faulty political authority had been a longstanding position that Al-Hakim had adopted in his writing even in his earlier years. In 1959, for example, Al-Hakim had written *As-Sultan Al-Ha'ir,* ('The Perplexed Sultan'),[40] to warn the president 'against encroaching upon Law and Freedom, [...] [President Abdel Nasser] read it and understood it as such, but went his way nevertheless'.[41]

Al-Hakim's work continued to be vibrant with socio-political allusions where, as mentioned above, the complex circumstances of Egyptian society are simplified within readily identifiable Egyptian symbolism. Most importantly, Al-Hakim explores intricate layers of political questions examining concepts of good and evil in a political context, and does so by drawing on mythology as a safe imaginative space to propose such challenging concepts.[42] As Cachia notes, Al-Hakim's preoccupation with the character of an individual who is in a position to do good or evil is consonant with statements scattered throughout Al-Hakim's works, such as that 'the first step on the way to liberation from the power of darkness is the final elimination of the desire of the strong to attack the weak'.[43] In Al-

[38] See Cachia, p. 226; Tawfiq Al-Hakfm, *Awdat Al-Wa'y* (Beirut, Dar ash- Shuruq, 1974), p. 40.
[39] In the same year, Al-Hakim issued a 'Declaration by Writers and Men of Letters', challenging Egypt's new ruling power in support of students who were then 'agitating for greater freedom of speech'. This, as Cachia remarks, angered the political ruling class in Egypt and 'incurred the displeasure of Egypt's new master', see Cachia, p. 227.
[40] Written in 1959, first published 1960. See Al-Hakim, 'The Sultan's Dilemma', in *The Fate of a Cockroach and Other Plays*, trans. by Denys Johnson-Davies (London, Heinemann, 1973). See also Farouk Abdel Wahab, *Modern Egyptian Drama: An Anthology* (Minneapolis, Bibliotheca Islamica, 1974).
[41] Cachia, p. 233.
[42] For example, in his play *Izis* (1955), Al-Hakim illustrates a political struggle by using figures from Egyptian mythology, and a situation in which the good Horus is set to battle the cunning Typhon. With the help of his mother Izis, who resorts to 'bribes, deceit, and misrepresentation' (Act 3, Sc. 1), Horus triumphs. See Cachia, p. 231, and see also Al-Hakim, *Izis* (Cairo: Maktabat Al-Adab, 1955).
[43] In *Sultan Az-Zalam*, p. 47, as cited in Cachia n. 31, p. 231.

Hakim's short story *Al-Shahid* ('The Martyr' الشهيد), this struggle is most powerfully manifested, I believe, through his depiction of Iblis.[44]

The author entertains a hypothetical scenario in which Iblis decides to repent, desperately attempting to end his own damnation as it is recorded in all three Abrahamic religions, and return to God's service. At the same time, Al-Hakim mulls over the likely consequences of such a momentous decision on the devil's part. The story begins with a nostalgic Iblis, noticeably reminiscent of Milton's depiction of Satan's renewed feelings upon arriving in sight of Eden. Milton's Satan experiences strong visitations of conflicting thoughts, and briefly wonders if there is 'no place / Left for Repentance, none for Pardon left?' (IV. 79-80), before he finally acknowledges the impossibility of this wish, uttering:

> [...] therefore as farr
> From granting hee, as I from begging peace:
> All hope excluded thus, behold in stead
> Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
> Mankind created, and for him this World.
> So farewel Hope, and with Hope farewel Fear,
> Farwel Remorse: all Good to me is lost;
> Evil be thou my Good.
> (*PL*, IV. 103-10)

Al-Hakim's Iblis, on the other hand, despite finally reaching the very same conclusion, departs from Satan's course by deciding to pursue the possibility of repentance first.[45] The

[44] This part of the chapter is based on a conference paper, 'Satan as the First Rebel: The Demonic as a Form of Political Resistance in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Tawfiq Al Hakim's "The Martyr"', at the 'Converging Worlds Conference', Durham University, (Jun 2016). In that conference paper, I argued that Al-Hakim's Satan, in many respects, like Al-Aqqad's Satan, is an intriguingly sympathetic character with human traits such as weakness, desperation and hopelessness. And like Al-Aqqad, the author renders his demonic figure in a manner that builds towards inviting the sympathetic feelings of the reader; in this way, Al-Hakim challenges the common prejudice towards the devil as the source of evil who deserves neither sympathy nor consideration. This is achieved by the core plot of 'The Martyr', where Satan's journey and strong desire for repentance are skilfully narrated.

[45] The English translation utilised in this chapter is taken from Al-Hakim, 'The Martyr', in *Arabic Writing Today: The Short Story*, ed. by Mahmoud Ali Manzalaoui, trans. by David Bishai and revised by Ronald Ewart (Cairo: Dar Al-Maaref, 1968), pp. 36-46. For the original Arabic, see Tawfiq Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', in *Arini Allah* [Show me God], pp. 16-31.

first few lines of the story establish the setting as Christmas time: Iblis' need to worship God is reawakened after listening to Christmas prayers and Church bells. In a scene that is highly reminiscent of Mephistopheles' manifestation to Faustus, Iblis decides to call on the 'Pope's Palace' (the Vatican) and show himself to this key representative of the Christian faith, the Pope.[46]

وسدد البابا إليه البصر، ورآه في صورة رجل، فقال له بصوت مرتجف:

- أنت؟!...

- نعم أنا...

- وماذا تريد منى؟...

- الدخول في حظيرة الإيمان...

- ماذا تقول أيها اللعين ؟!...

لفظها البابا هامساً، وهو كالغارق في ذهول... ولكن الزائر الغريب بادر بصوت ممتلئ بالصدق، ملتهب بالإخلاص يقول:

- ماعدت استحق هذا الوصف.. إني جئت أليك لأتوب.

> The Pope looked fixedly at his visitor, as he stood before him in the image of a man and his voice trembled as he exclaimed, "you?"
>
> - "Yes, it is I."
>
> - "And what do you seek of me?"
>
> - "To enter into the haven of faith."
>
> - "What are you saying, you cursed creature?" The Pope spoke in a whisper, lost in bewilderment, but the visitor said in a voice ringing with truth and sincerity:
>
> - "I no longer deserve to be called the Accursed. I have come to you in repentance…"[47]

After engaging in a heated debate, the Pope rejects Iblis' pleas for repentance, for the pragmatic reason that it would endanger essential pillars of Christian theology and history

[46] See the reference to Faustus, in the same collection, in the story 'Imra'a Ghalabat Al-Shaytan' [A Woman who Conquered the Devil], pp. 130-36; a woman makes a pact with the devil, but finally succeeds in tricking him and saving her soul. See also *'Ahd Al-Shaytan* [Pact with Satan; 1938], where Marlowe's influence is apparent, although here Al-Hakim depicts a devil who buys the souls of innocent victims. See *'Ahd Al-Shaytan* [here translated as The Devil's Pledge] (Cairo: Dar Msr lil-tibaa'a, N.A [first published 1938]), pp. 13-26; available online: <https://www.booksera.net/pdffiles/alkutub.net_LqMHilr.pdf>.

[47] Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', pp. 17-8. For the English translation, see Al-Hakim translated and revised by Bishai and Ewart pp. 37-8. Hereafter cited as Bishai and Ewart.

(as well as its art and heritage) including Eve's temptation,[48] the Flood and the Day of Judgement. The Pope harshly shuns Iblis and tells him to turn to another religion. Afterwards, Iblis repeats the same attempt with a Rabbi and a Sheikh. He is, nonetheless, rejected by the representatives of all three Abrahamic religions. All three individuals see in Iblis' yearning to be taken into the fold and embrace obedience once more, a destruction of core theological doctrines that establish belief: not only would history itself become problematic and great works of religious art be rendered meaningless, but also religious hegemony would be endangered.

Like the Pope, the Rabbi and the Sheikh explain to Iblis why it would not be in their own and their religion's interest to consider his wish. The Rabbi, for example, worries about Jewish authority over other races, given by the Old Testament by declaring them 'the chosen people':

إيمان إبليس سيدك صرح التفوق اليهودي... ويهدم مجد بني إسرائيل.

> Satan's finding of faith would make the structure of Jewish privilege collapse, and destroy the glory of the sons of Israel.[49]

Given that the Qur'an – a book considered, in Islamic theology, the direct and infallible word of God – elaborates on cursing the disobedient Iblis and warning against his temptations, the Al-Azhar Sheikh likewise fears the possibility that, if Iblis repents, its authority would be undermined and its message rendered redundant.[50] Therefore,

[48] Tawfiq Al-Hakim's early career was criticised for misogynistic views towards women. In fact, he was criticised by Muslim clerics for blaming Eve for Adam's temptation and expulsion from Paradise, since the Qur'an does not attribute to Eve the blame for the Fall; it blames Satan for tempting both Adam and Eve.
[49] Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', p. 22; Bishai and Ewart, p. 40.
[50] Recently, in a video published in 2009, Sheikh Abu-Ishaq Al-Heweny, one of the best known Salafist figures, rejected and criticised this depiction of the devil in Al-Hakim's 'The Martyr', believing it to be heresy set to disturb the meaning of the true faith. Al-Heweny, Abu-Ishaq, 'Religious Seminar', (2009): [YouTube Video]; available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vbfz0Wc1BOA>.

ironically, Iblis fails to convince the religious leaders to grant him the forgiveness he seeks so wholeheartedly.[51]

It is evident that Al-Hakim's innovative depiction of Satan offers a direct challenge to the self-interest that corrupts authority, even if it was confined to the religious sphere. The allusion to religious leaders undeniably criticises religious institutions that claim to be all accepting and all embracing of sinners' repentance. Furthermore, the religious discussion assimilating Judaism, Christianity and Islam is essential. Al-Hakim equates all three religions in their rejection of what is considered as an 'outsider' or an 'other'. Although all three religious leaders consider their own individual beliefs as true, nevertheless, they all unite in their view of Satan as the main outsider who must remain an outcast.

This is highlighted in the monologues of the religious leaders, as each in turn contemplates the danger to his own religion if Iblis repents. Al-Hakim satirically demonstrates that for these religious leaders, it is not the concepts of faith or repentance that are important, though they would claim otherwise, and which is ironically what Iblis pleads for, but to them it is the figure who repents, and what he stands for, that is most important. The leaders not only fail to overcome their long-established prejudices against the devil or God's adversary, closing their doors to a desperate believer, but ironically they also commit what they sought to avoid, undermining, even refuting their religious creeds and proving that it is not repentance that matters most, but safeguarding religious favouritism and supremacy by suppressing whomever that might threaten it. The devil, then, is not a mere character whom all three religions rightly condemned as an eternally disobedient sinner, but an

[51] Milton's account of Satan's reflections on repentance deliberately sidesteps this troubling possibility by avoiding putting God's powers of forgiveness to the ultimate test by showing Satan choosing in the end not to seek His forgiveness.

instrument Al-Hakim employs to expose self-interests and prejudices. The devil is indeed shunned, not, however, because of his evilness, but because of the 'greater good' of these religions. Iblis demands:

> إلى من أتجه إذن؟... ألستم رؤساء الدين؟... كيف أصل إلى الله إذن؟... أليس يفعل ذلك كل من أراد الدنو من الله؟!

> Who should I turn to then? Are you not the heads of all religious teachers? How then can I reach God? Is this not what anyone who is seeking to approach God should do?[52]

In a last desperate attempt, Iblis, being in considerable pain as he watches all the 'goodness' around him that he cannot enjoy, decides to ascend once more and to knock with his hand on the doors of Heaven to plead for repentance and forgiveness. Gabriel himself gives an illuminating account to Iblis of his tragic fate, explaining the essential role that has been ascribed to him:

> زوالك من الأرض يزيل الأركان و يزلزل الجدران [...] فلا معنى للفضيلة بغير وجود الرذيلة... ولا للحق بغير الباطل... ولا للطيب بغير الخبيث ولا للأبيض بغير الأسود... ولا للنور بغير الظلام؛ بل ولا للخير بغير الشر؛ - بل إن الناس لا يرون نور الله إلا من خلال ظلامك.

> Removing you from earth will be removing its foundations and shaking its walls [...] Virtue has no meaning without sin.. truth has no meaning without error.. there can be no righteousness unless evil exists, no light without darkness: mankind cannot see the light of God save through your own blackness.[53]

Iblis appeals against this doom with tears that fell like 'dark meteors and as falling stars' over humanity, in imagery reminiscent of the Qur'anic account which describes how the

[52] Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', p. 24; Bishai and Ewart, pp. 41-2. This begs an interesting question because, of course, in Protestantism rather than Catholicism, the individual would not need any institutionalised mediation, but could approach God directly. It is intriguing to compare the situation with that in *Paradise Regain'd* where, after countless ages have elapsed, entrenched in obduracy, Satan finds hope stirring once more, as he begins to entertain the possibility of Jesus acting as *his* mediator, though all to no avail; while he cannot obtain grace, Milton's Satan may still yearn for it (*PR*, III. 204-22).

[53] Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', p. 27; Bishai and Ewart, p. 43. Cf. the lines from Milton's *Areopagitica* concerning the virtuous who 'can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better', *Riverside*, p. 1006.

fallen angels are driven away as interlopers when they near Heaven to eavesdrop on celestial discussions.[54] While drawing on this Qur'anic imagery, Al-Hakim utilises the episode not to simply to damn Iblis nor to allude to the way that his advances can be repelled with fiery meteors, but rather to dramatize Iblis' inner pain and torment. Indeed, the reader is even able to detect a degree of sympathy in Gabriel's responses by his kindly manner as he informs Iblis that he has no choice but to accept his fate in remaining eternally shunned as an outcast.[55] The tragic story ends with a suffering Iblis who descends dramatically back to earth while uttering a painful exhalation, as he proclaims: 'I am a martyr. I am a martyr' to which all the heavens seem to respond in sympathy and return his cry:

> وترك السماء مذعنا... وهبط الأرض مستسلمًا... ولكن زفرة مكتومة انطلقت من صدره وهو يخترق الفضاء... رددت صداها النجوم والأجرام في عين الوقت؛ كأنها اجتمعت كلها معها لتلتقط تلك الصرخة الدامية:
> - إنى شهيد!...إنى شهيد!...

> And he left heaven submissively and descended upon earth. But a stifled sigh burst out from him as he winged his way down through space; instantly, it was re-echoed by every one of the stars as though all were joining with him to cry out his agony:
> I am a martyr… I am a martyr.[56]

With these words, Iblis seals his fate and becomes doomed to eternally suffer painful exile in order for universal balance to be sustained. Al-Hakim's Iblis is then a victim of a harsh fate which he is unable to alter, virtually challenging the credibility of the justice of the Creator himself.

[54] Bishai and Ewart, p. 44. See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of this Qur'anic episode.
[55] Satan 'held back his tears. "Try and bear your destiny," said Gabriel to him, speaking now in a gentler tone'; see Bishai and Ewart, pp. 44-5.
[56] Al-Hakim, 'Al-Shahid', p. 31; Bishai and Ewart, p. 46.

Readers who are familiar with Al-Hakim's and Milton's anti-monarchical views can detect a degree of similarity in the way both authors deploy their narrative, and Satan in particular, to allude to contemporary religious and political discussions. Al-Hakim masterfully deploys Iblis' situation to embody a criticism of monarchical and political hierarchy through setting the final dialogue in the higher abodes where, despite all his efforts, Iblis is only to receive a pitiless response from God's messenger. In 1952, Al-Hakim confessed, that he, along with other intellectuals, was 'content to see the young officers sweep away Constitutional forms of government'.[57] As he explained,

> In my view principles are of no value without the individuals who will apply them faithfully, who believe in them and guard them. What we had [under the monarchic regime] was principles and constitutions in the hands of individuals who manipulated them for the sake of their interests and purposes. What we dreamed of and constantly awaited was the emergence of sincere individuals.[58]

Al-Hakim not only invites his reader here to challenge preconceived beliefs but also to reject any oppressive regime regardless of its self-professed legitimacy. I would argue that Al-Hakim's scepticism towards political transparency is similarly reflected not just in these lines, but also in Iblis' journey towards 'repentance' in the sense that such aspirations can only be unsuccessful and destructive if the source of power is not 'sincere'. It might be the case that Al-Hakim's Iblis is set before us to present a fate that the reader seeks to avoid or perhaps change.

What is of particular interest, however, is that whether Satan rebels or repents his fate is consistently tragic. Like Milton's Satan, Iblis attempted to question his fate. While doing so, like Satan, he delivered politically charged arguments and religious critiques. While Al-Hakim deviates from Milton's plot, by presenting a defeated, victimised Satan rather than a rebellious one, nevertheless, the Devil remains in both accounts a complex

[57] Al-Hakim, *Awdat Al-Wa'y*, p. 22. Also cited in Cachia, p. 231.
[58] Cachia, p. 231.

character who defies the fate cast upon him in pursuit of emancipation.[59] The fact that the figure constantly fails, I would argue, is not solely confined to a Romantic reading of the text, but partly to an invitation for the reader to contemplate the reasons 'why' this should be so.

Milton's Eve and the Narrative of Resistance in Arabic Feminist Writing

> *Can you believe that what terrifies me the most is living eternally in heaven, more than the idea of death itself?*[60]

Over the centuries the myth of the Fall has been used in the social construction of gender, redefining and re-examining gender roles, most obviously, the role of Eve as the 'everywoman'. In the second half of the twentieth century there began a widespread re-visioning of the myth of the Fall, as well as classical mythology amongst women writers.[61] As Marilyn Sewell observed: 'Realizing that our cultural mythology is so often degrading for women, female writers are bent on telling the stories anew,' in a way that challenges the most fundamental assumptions. The mythographic work of three Arab writers here can be seen to be a significant intervention in this feminist reclaiming of myth and its misogynistic undercurrents.[62]

With no lack of influential feminist writing in the Arab world,[63] the figure of Eve has become the focus of particular interest. Internationally renowned writers, such as the

[59] Bear in mind that Dahiyat credits Romanticism for this particular reading of Milton's Satan which later came to influence Arab writing, see pp. 95-136.
[60] Rehab Abuzaid, *Dancing on Arrowheads*, trans. by Nairi Translation Services (N.A: Partridge Singapore, 2015), p. 94
[61] Patricia Phillippy, for example, has expertly explored the role of women in Early Modern England. See 'The Mat(t)er of Death: The Defense of Eve and the Female Ars Moriendi', in *Debating Gender in Early Modern England, 1500-1700*, ed. by Cristina Malcolmson and Mihoko Suzuki (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 141-60.
[62] Marilyn Sewell (ed.), *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women's Spirituality* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), p. 14.
[63] All of the female authors discussed in this part of the chapter were either interviewed by telephone between August and October (2016), or contacted in a series of email exchanges in the same period. I would like to

Egyptian Nawal Al-Saadawi, who is a pioneer in Arab feminist writing, a novelist and religious critic, have dedicated admirable efforts to challenging and re-envisaging the role of femininity and womanhood as understood in contemporary Arab society.[64] Her novels, *Two Women in One*, *The Innocence of the Devil*, *The Hidden Face of Eve*, amongst others – the very titles of which show her preoccupation with the nature and position of women – are powerfully loaded with mythographic imagery of resistance and challenge.

In her writing, Al-Saadawi has endeavoured to challenge the connection made between women, sin and damnation, by revising their predetermined role in Abrahamic societies, a position that has persisted ever since the association of Eve with the Fall and evil.[65] In *The Innocence of the Devil*, for example, the relationship between women and Satan is made manifest to the reader in a way that conforms to the widespread association of the feminine and the demonic in order to provide an in-depth critique of its underlying patriarchal structure. The name of her female protagonist, Ganat ('Paradise') purposefully alludes to the story of the Fall, and Al-Saadawi is careful to present a woman who symbolises the most ominous fears associated with womanhood in Egyptian society.

Since the moment of her creation, Ganat comes to life as a sinister presence: at her birth, she begins life with opened eyes, unlike other children who are born with closed eyes. On first seeing the baby and wondering whether Ganat 'was a human or a jinn', her grandmother spits in a ritualistic attempt to drive away any demonic presence.[66] As Hetata and Malti-Douglas explain, 'Ganat embodies the eternal woman, doomed to destruction.

express my extreme appreciation and thank Nawaal Al-Saadawi, Joumana Haddad, Rehab Abuzaid and Mona Prince for their time and knowledge.

[64] Lila Abu-Lughod (ed.), *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); Margot Badarn and Miriam Cooke (eds.), *Opening the Gates: An Anthology of Arab Feminist Writing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Anastasia Valassopoulos, *Contemporary Arab Women Writers: Cultural Expression in Context* (London: Routledge, 2008), and Marilyn Booth, *May Her Likes Be Multiplied: Biography and Gender in Politics in Egypt* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001).

[65] Nawal Al-Saadawi, *Two Women in One* (Seattle, WA: Seal, 1986); Al-Saadawi, *The Innocence of the Devil*, ed. and trans. by Sharīf Ḥetātah, Introduction by Fedwa Malti-Douglas (Berkeley: University of California, 1998); Al-Saadawi, *The Hidden Face of Eve: Women in the Arab World*, ed. and trans. by Sharīf Ḥatātah (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1982).

[66] Malti-Douglas, 'Introduction', in *The Innocence of the Devil*, p. xxxvi.

The color of her eyes is yellow, like that of a serpent's eye, her nose is like that of a sphinx, her skin is black like Eblis's. Women and the Devil are brought together in a combination familiar to readers of El-Saadawi'.[67] Not only is Ganat represented as a serpentine woman, but she embarks on a relationship with the devil himself. Ganat declares:

> I love you
> Because you are the only one amongst the slaves
> Who refused to kneel
> Who said no.[68]

Here Ganat alludes to the incident that provoked Iblis' fall in the Qur'an and Satan's rebellion in *Paradise Lost*.[69] In the novel, however, Al-Saadawi deploys the figure of Iblis to expose the faulty and unjust part that has been prepared for him in God's plan for the universe. Much like Al-Hakim's Iblis, Al-Saadawi's Iblis is a mere pawn in a grander scheme in which he must participate. Furthermore, like Al-Hakim's Iblis who is rejected by the religious leaders of Judaism, Christianity and Islam for fear of catastrophically changing the order of the universe, Al-Saadawi's Iblis is essential in, perhaps even a victim of, the 'patriarchal' order of the Deity.[70]

Both devils are coerced into enduring demonization enforced upon them in the service of God's plan. However, as Malti-Douglas observes, Al-Saadawi 'has gone a step beyond her male compatriot'. By adding 'a feminist twist to the encounter', she 'has redefined the monotheistic struggle between God and the Devil'.[71] While Al-Hakim's devil is doomed to exist eternally suffering the tragic fate assigned to him by the Deity, Al-

[67] Malti-Douglas, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.
[68] Ibid; Al-Saadawi, p. 216.
[69] Of course, in *Paradise Lost*, the Father commands that all angels should pay obeisance to his Son: 'And by my Self have sworn to him shall bow / All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord' (V. 607-08). For further discussion of this crucial distinction, see Chapter 3.
[70] Malti-Douglas, p. xii.
[71] Malti-Douglas, p. xxxix-xl.

Saadawi's Devil as well as her Deity are both destroyed:[72] 'no eternal life can be had for either of them. Their destruction means the destruction of the patriarchal system from which they emanate'.[73]

Although Al-Saadawi is very familiar with the character of Lilith, Eve's evil shadow, she remains more focused on the figure of Eve in her writings. When asked about her views on Eve, and what she thinks of this figure who embodies the beginning of the Fall for women in society, Al-Saadawi responded wryly:

> We are continuously told that Eve was the first to eat from the fruit and bring about death to the world, but we ought to remember that Eve was the first to taste from the pleasures of knowledge and we know that deities hate knowledge.[74]

For Al-Saadawi womanhood has always been the source of life and wisdom, and when women became demonised for possessing this power, and were suppressed, perhaps by force, their long journey of social oppression began.[75]

Unlike Al-Saadawi, who has examined the role of womanhood in society through redefining the figure of Eve, Joumana Haddad, a poet, journalist, feminist author and activist, dedicates more attention to the earlier and darker side of Eve as represented by the figure Lilith, reminding her readers of Lilith's rebellious nature and celebrating her for this quality. In *Awdat Lilith* ('The Return of Lilith' or 'Lilith Returns'), Haddad accentuates the typically repressed forms of femininity in society by evoking the Lilith myth and her unfortunate fate.[76] Haddad is not afraid to highlight feminine sexuality in her writings;

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[72] Since the novel is set in a madhouse, Al-Saadawi is able to cast the battle between Good and Evil onto two of the inmates known as God and Iblis, see p. 232 where Al-Saadawi's Iblis echoes Al-Hakim's.
[73] Malti-Douglas, p. xxxix.
[74] As expressed in an interview by telephone. Al-Saadawi also believes women had to relinquish power under military or weaponised force.
[75] Telephone interview; see also Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Men, Women, and God(s): Nawal El Saadawi and Arab Feminist Poetics* (Berkeley: University of California, 1995); Diana Royer, *A Critical Study of the Works of Nawal El Saadawi, Egyptian Writer and Activist* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2001). For criticism of Al-Saadawi's work, see: Jurj Ṭarabishi and Nawal Al-Saadawi, *Woman against Her Sex: A Critique of Nawal El-Saadawi with a Reply by Nawal El-Saadawi* (London: Saqi Books, 1988).
[76] Joumana Sallum Ḥaddad, *'Awdat Līlīt* (Bayrūt: Dār Al-Nahār Lil-Nashr, 2004).

constantly rejecting the roles imposed on women in society, she passionately criticises all the preconceived moulds of womanhood that determine the path of female conduct and punish any woman who resists it. Therefore, her interest in the figure of Lilith naturally complements her feminist narrative:

> I am Lilith, the lascivious angel. Adam's first steed, corrupter of Satan. The shadow of stifled sex and its purest scream. I am the shy maiden of the volcano, the jealous because I am the beautiful whisperer of the wilderness. The first paradise could not stand me. I was pushed out to sow conflict on earth and arrange in beds the matters of my subjects [...] I return to mend Adam's ribs and rid the men from their Eves. I am Lilith, returned from exile to inherit the death of the mother to whom I gave birth.[77]

Haddad here reintroduces Lilith in an ecovative way that allows the demonised woman to reclaim her identity. The repeated use of the pronoun 'I' and the formulation 'I am' not only powerfully amplify her presence, but also rebels against the long-established demonic roles cast upon her. Lilith returns to restore her true image and reinsert her presence after being erased from the history books for so long.

Similarly, in *I killed Scheherazade*, Haddad amplifies her rebellious stance against the Arabic and Middle-Eastern conception of silenced women by disposing of one of the most, if not the most, famous female literary characters in Arabic literature: Scheherazade, the main narrator of the stories of the *Arabian Nights*.[78] For those familiar with the *Nights*, Scheherazade is the embodiment of coy femininity. She is the meek virgin who succeeds in captivating the heart of a tyrannical Sultan, who, having been convinced that all women are faithless and false, has vowed to put to death each of his wives after their wedding night. Scheherazade saves her life by her verbal and imaginative skills, entrancing him with fascinating tales for a thousand and one nights. As dawn approaches she would whet his

[77] Joumana Haddad, *The Return of Lilith*, *Banipal: magazine of modern Arab literature*, issues 19-24 (1998): 100-03; available online: < http://succubuspoetry.weebly.com/the-return-of-lilith.html>.
[78] Joumana Ḥaddad, *I Killed Scheherazade: Confessions of an Angry Arab Woman* (Chicago, IL: Lawrence Hill, 2011).

curiosity to hear the next tale, so that he would put off her execution from day to day. Eventually the Sultan falls in love with Scheherazade, repudiates his vow and marries her, thus freeing all other women from the danger of being chosen as his bride.

It is in Scheherazade's captivating speech, and more importantly through her powerful silence,[79] that she is able to defy the Sultan's power, preventing him from controlling her fate. For Haddad, however, Scheherazade is no longer powerful and in control: she is merely a 'sweet gal with a huge imagination and good negotiation skills ... [who] did what she had to do'. Haddad decides to kill Scheherazade nonetheless.[80] To the author's surprise, instead of resisting her fate, like any courageous character would, the 'silly woman' offers Haddad a story in return for sparing her life.[81] Haddad then strangles Scheherazade until 'she breathed her last story'. Haddad explains her decision by asserting that 'there's an angry Arab woman out there. She's got her own "not-intended-for-negotiation" stories, her own "not-granted-by-anybody" freedom and life, *and* the perfect murder weapon. And there's no stopping her now'.[82]

In a televised appearance in which Haddad discussed the limited extent of female freedom in Arab society, she adamantly rejected the predestined role of Eve as a definitive archetype of submissive womanhood. When asked about the most important step that ought to happen so that Arab women can attain their full rights, Haddad turned to the figure of Eve. According to Haddad, only by redefining and reclaiming Eve for themselves can women determine their own fate. As Haddad proclaimed, women should repeat this

[79] The fact that Scheherazade ceased speaking at the dawn of every morning in order to force the Sultan to delay her execution demonstrates the extent of her power and strength. The Sultan could not but helplessly wait for the next night until she spoke once more.
[80] Haddad, *I Killed Scheherazade*, p. 143.
[81] Ibid. What is meant here is that Haddad, through her narrative, makes *Scheherazade* come to life so that she demonstrates to the reader that *Scheherazade* is only capable of pleading for her life. Her stories are not powerful; they are, in fact, a desperate attempt to remain alive. Therefore, Haddad rejects that model of female vulnerability and erases her from existence.
[82] Haddad, p. 147.

mantra: 'I am not a rib... To repeat ... I am not a rib'.[83] Much like Scheherazade, Haddad feels that Eve, even if partially, needs to be erased from history or at least redefined. Only when Eve erases her predetermined moments from history and rewrites her new role in society, can she truly regain her autonomy and determine her own destiny.[84]

While the figure of Eve, including her demonised aspect Lilith, are habitually alluded to in Arab feminist writings, finding specific evocations of Milton's Eve, is frustratingly, but unsurprisingly, not as common. Perhaps it is owing to the precise role that Milton's Eve occupies in Western literature, or her closer association to the Greco-Roman tradition rather than Middle-Eastern thought, that Milton's first woman tends to remain confined to the minds of Milton scholars, students and readers.[85] However, it is in the work of Rehab Abuzaid, the Saudi writer, that we do encounter an intriguing trace of Milton's Eve and her journey towards knowledge and self-fulfilment. The Saudi author first became acquainted with *Paradise Lost* in her postgraduate studies, but it is through independent reading that Abuzaid began to fully appreciate the rich literary features and philosophy of the poem in general, and the representation of Eve in particular.

In her *Dancing on Arrowheads,* Abuzaid introduces the reader to her own Eve who courageously embarks on a personal journey towards independence, seeking different choices in pursuit of answers. The female protagonist, Al-Batool, which translates to 'Virgin' in Arabic,[86] constantly resists the expected roles of femininity imposed on her by Saudi society. Whether these social pressures originate from her family, her social circle, peers or potential partners, Abuzaid's female protagonist is represented with various obstacles that make her relatable to the wider potential group of readers in Saudi society,

[83] Haddad appeared on the TV show, *Shabab Talk*, which airs from Germany in Arabic. For the full debate, see Joumana Haddad, in 'My Brain and My Body belong to me... How is it your Concern?', *Shabab Talk*, (2016) [DW TV, Germany]; available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68Q_H88ofgE>.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Note the absence of a direct reference to Eve in the Qur'an. Perhaps this inevitably makes associating Milton's Eve with the Qur'anic Eve more challenging in comparison to other figures, such as Satan or Adam.
[86] 'Al-Batool is used as a proper noun to refer to the female character. In Arabic, it means *the virgin*, the *pure one*', see Abuzaid, p. 2.

specifically, and Arab, even international readers in general.[87] As Mississian notes, non-Arab readers will appreciate this work not only for the universal themes it incorporates, but also for 'the wonderful insight into life in a part of the world with which they may not be familiar'.[88]

Commenting on Milton's writings specifically, Abuzaid informed me that it was his stand against censorship, his support of divorce on the grounds of mutual incompatibility and his appetite for reformation that have greatly appealed to her. These standpoints find echoes in her work, particularly in the monologues of her female protagonist, Al-Batool who strongly opposes 'censorship'[89] and courageously champions the need for 'reform'.[90] The heroine not only resists the preconceived norms of womanhood in society, but as a thinker and writer herself, she exposes the extent to which female authorship is repressed in male oriented journalistic and literary spheres. In an intimate discussion with a female companion, Al-Batool wonders, 'Where do you think the lack of women's freedom of speech will lead us, but to hell?'[91] The revolutionary spirit of Al-Batool and the heated debate that ensues with her friend Wafa[92] on this crucial topic inspires the latter to plagiarise her opinions and publish them without Al-Batool's consent. Wafa's immoral ways enable her exploitation of their friendship. Abuzaid skilfully suggests through this development that Saudi women, perhaps obliviously, become self-censored even within female circles due to the competitive nature that has been encouraged by the process of socialization.

Even in her personal life, Al-Batool is seen to be no ordinary woman; the freedom she seeks is intellectual as well as emotional. In a society that celebrates marriage and

[87] See preface by Nayiri Mississian, Director of Nairi Translation Services, p. vii.
[88] Abuzaid, p. vii.
[89] Abuzaid, p. 65
[90] Abuzaid, p. 63.
[91] Abuzaid, p. 65.
[92] Wafa's name means 'faithfulness' or 'loyalty' which ironically is at odds with the actions of her character.

prioritises it above all other possibilities, Al-Batool rejects the view that marriage is a woman's only path to happiness. When Al-Batool realises that she is trapped in an unhappy marriage, but prior to determining on the weighty decision to seek a divorce, she ponders the implications of this move, wondering if she will be 'punished for liberating [herself] from the worst pain ever that life has inflicted upon [her]'.[93] Eventually she succeeds in breaking the chains of a miserable marriage, not once, but twice, and finds 'freedom' in divorce.[94] Al-Batool seriously contemplated the possibility of a divorce and 'could not help but feel a little gloomy, but an exhausted smile appeared on her face as she pondered that divorce was the beginning of a new, exciting journey'.[95]

Indeed, Milton's influence on Abuzaid, as manifested in the similarities between Eve and Al-Batool, are not merely incidental. Eve's journey towards self-knowledge, her early moments by the lake, and her interaction with Adam have a bearing on the development of Al-Batool's own inquisitive thoughts about herself and her relationships with her male partners. In a manner analogous to Milton's Eve, who begins her journey by a lake with speculative questions about herself and her nature, Al-Batool admits that by 'nature, I am inquisitive and eager to dive into the ocean to explore its depths'.[96] Furthermore, like Eve who believed the answers to her questions were in the reflective water of the lake which appeared to be 'another sky', Al-Batool finds herself looking 'up to the sky trying to find answers'. Significantly, the sky reminds her of her University, which can be interpreted as a contemporary equivalent for a source of knowledge:[97]

> As she looked in the mirror the next morning, it cunningly murmured to her:
> "Good morning! The stars of a new day must be full of hope. I wish I could protect myself from the arrows coming from your sad eyes. I wish you would smile!"

[93] Abuzaid, p. 47
[94] Abuzaid, p. 51.
[95] Abuzaid, p. 50.
[96] Abuzaid, p. 22.
[97] Abuzaid, p. 40

> She serenely gazed at her image. That morning she looked better [...] she opened the window and looked up to the sky.
> "This reminds me of the sky at university. But how?"[98]

In *Paradise Lost*, Eve's mirror scene exposes her desire for answers and the beginnings of her quest for knowledge; by the lake she mistakenly believes the 'murmuring' sound of water was offering her answers to her inquisitive thoughts. Similarly, Al-Batool's mirror 'Murmured' the 'sought answers to her many questions'.[99] When Eve contemplates her image in the reflective surface of the lake, she is told to seek Adam (whose image she is) and to abandon the looks of 'sympathy and love' (IV. 465) of her shadow self.[100] Likewise, Al-Batool informs her lover Turki how: 'Like a mirror, [your eyes] reflected the essence of my soul'.[101] Moreover, while both women momentarily, yet mistakenly, believe that their 'other half' embodies the answers they sought, both women come to the realisation that such answers are not to be found exclusively in the men in their lives. Indeed, as Al-Batool begins her emotional separation from her partner, she recollects how:

> I vividly remember the day when I first saw your eyes. I fixated my eyes on yours, and did not notice the distance between your paradise and your fire; your goodness and badness, your stubbornness and mildness, your pureness and ugliness, your hesitation and impulsiveness [...] I delved into the deep waters of your blue eyes, and did not see the sediment beneath the serenity of your blue waters.[102]

The passage audibly echoes Eve's account of her earliest memories:

> That day I oft remember, when from sleep
> I first awak't, and found my self repos'd
> [...]
> Nor distant far from thence a murmuring sound
> Of waters

[98] Abuzaid, pp. 20-1.
[99] Abuzaid, p. 30.
[100] See Chapter 5.
[101] Abuzaid, p. 35
[102] Abuzaid, p. 36

[...]
Of sympathie and love; there I had fixt
Mine eyes till now.
(*PL*. IV, 449-66)

While Turki, Al-Batool's partner, functions in the same way as Eve's admired image, his insincerities eventually drive her to choose the option of separation. She, like Eve, favours the choice of separating herself from her desired object in favour of a more rewarding future. This is evident in Al-Batool's utter disappointment with Turki, as she painfully expresses how he was her 'dearest illusion', which is reminiscent of Eve experience when she learns that the image she desires is but a mere shadow.[103]

Al-Batool's repeated disappointments with her male partners throughout the novel emphasise her journey towards independence. While she believes that she may be 'Losing [her] innocence' in the process,[104] she becomes more attuned to her 'inner voice' and is able to 'talk with herself for hours with no restrictions'.[105] Although their pathway will ultimately bifurcate, she is, like Milton's Eve, a woman who 'had to fall in love with herself in order to find love'.[106]

When Al-Batool comes to terms with her true reality and frees herself from the guilt imposed by society on women whose choices are less conventional, her narrative becomes more obviously empowered. By the end of the novel, Al-Batool has defied almost all of the restrictions imposed upon her. She is no longer the woman who merely looks 'like a delicious apple' to the male gaze,[107] nor is she ashamed of her true desires. She is finally at peace with her instinctive nature and true self.

[103] Abuzaid, p. 36.
[104] Abuzaid, p. 25.
[105] Abuzaid, p. 17; p. 19.
[106] Abuzaid, p. 38.
[107] Abuzaid, p. 29.

In a way that is comparable with Lilith's refusal to return to Paradise and live with Adam, which led to her exile and demonization, as discussed earlier in this thesis,[108] in the final chapter of the novel, Al-Batool confides to her friend Eman ('Faith') in an intimate conversation: 'Can you believe that what terrifies me the most is living eternally in heaven, more than the idea of death itself?'[109] At this point, Abuzaid frees her female protagonist from all the restrictions imposed on her. As Abuzaid explains:

> Ironically the main virgin in the novel is not a virgin; Al-Batool is not a Batool (virgin), nor should she necessarily be. While one male character steals her emotional virginity, another steals her physical one. Al-Batool learns to overcome all of these obstacles.[110]

Commenting on the similarities between the journeys of discovery undertaken by Milton's Eve, Lilith and her female character, Al-Batool, Abuzaid reasons compellingly that:

> In our society we are told that our freedom is in the Eden of marriage. Therefore, Paradise, for Batool, is marriage. Leaving this Paradise was a dangerous choice, yet the most essential.[111]

Reflecting on Al-Batool's inner being, Abuzaid reveals to the reader, 'if you looked inside her, you would find a fierce battle, deadly protests, and a struggle to attain freedom'.[112] Therefore, perhaps it is most appropriate to conclude here with the words of Al-Batool which could be said to encapsulate the original thoughts of Milton's Eve, influencing her journey towards knowledge and risking the path that involved death whatever that might be: 'I cannot live without questioning! ... I choose the route of wisdom'.[113]

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[108] See Chapter 4 in particular.
[109] Abuzaid, p. 94.
[110] As expressed in an interview by telephone (August 2016).
[111] Telephone interview (August 2016).
[112] Abuzaid, p. 32.
[113] Ibid., pp. 31-2. Cf. Eve and her intellectual gifts, demonstrated by her questioning of the divine economy in *Paradise Lost*: 'But wherfore all night long shine these, for whom / This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?' (IV. 657-58). As demonstrated in Chapter 5, Eve also asserts that 'wisdom [...] alone is truly fair' (IV. 491).

Conclusion

'John Milton' and 'the Judeo-Arabic demonic' may seem at first sight an unlikely coupling. However, as this thesis has endeavoured to demonstrate, when examined together, they can tease the reader with a suggestive hint – a tale – that attempts to piece together the mysterious puzzle of a richly intriguing past.

It is undeniably challenging to align literary texts that are products of distant time-periods and geographical locations, as well as from differing political and religious frameworks. However, this thesis has postulated a variety of fascinating links that may bridge the East-West divide. English Reformation authors, as presented in Chapter 2, and Arab authors, as presented in Chapter 6, are situated on opposing sides of a literary dialogue, yet their views of 'the other' are shaped by similarly turbulent political and cultural experiences and challenges.[1] Despite such antithetical fears of 'the other', created by the encroachment of the Ottoman Empire into Europe for the English authors, and English Colonialism in the Arab world for Arab authors, these writers have manifested similar anxieties in their rendering of the 'other'. Like writers in the Reformation period, contemporary Arab authors are drawn to reflect on the political, religious and cultural issues of their time. Furthermore, like Milton, these Arab authors, male and female alike, exhibit an intriguingly similar evocation of the demonic to reflect anxieties about the need for political and religious reform, and gender issues, in their reworking of the myth of the Fall.

[1] This is not to suggest, of course, that the 'turbulent political and cultural experiences' are similar or identical. Indeed, English authors of the seventeenth century and Arab authors of the twentieth century and onwards encountered widely different cultural contexts and historical struggles. The aim here is to highlight the fact that both authors drew on 'the demonic' and 'the other' to uniquely reflect on the upheavals of their times. At times, they would allude to the opposing cultures as demonic or cultural 'others'.

In pursuing this cross-cultural analysis in all its aspects, the thesis has eschewed a dualistic focus in favour of a more pluralistic approach which attempts to recognise the complexities of the cultural forces at work. This has led to the recognition of a Judeo-Arabic understanding of what is currently known as 'Middle-Eastern' culture. Similarly, attention was drawn to the similar complexities of the Reformation period in which rival branches of the Christian faith competed to identify themselves as the 'true Church'. So too, the simple oppositional dynamics of East versus West, Christian versus Muslim and Anglo versus Arab were complicated by a plethora of strong textual cross currents at work that resulted in a less clear-cut demarcation of 'the self' and 'the other'.[2]

The discussion has focused on two demonic figures, Iblis, the Qur'anic devil, and Lilith, Satan's consort and the first Eve in the Jewish tradition, who were viewed in conjunction with Satan, Sin and Eve from *Paradise Lost*. The scenes examined in the poem were largely scenes – from Book II and IV – located at what might be viewed as 'liminal' spaces in the poem, where characters undergo what could be considered a 'first experience' that takes place in a 'reflective' space that mirrors their double potentiality and symbolises a transformation of some kind.

To exemplify, Chapter 3 traced Satan's journey between the realms of Hell and Eden and his slow realisation of his debasement. It also considered Eve's dream temptation where Satan is found by her ear in an attempt to beguile her for the first time. Chapter 4 analysed Satan's and Sin's encounter at the Gate of Hell, their first meeting after their respective Falls, when Sin reminds Satan of his forgotten past as he meets Death, his son, for the first time. Chapter 5 explored Eve's first moments of consciousness near the lake, her first sight of Adam and her first test which takes place by water. During the analysis of

[2] For more on notions of 'the other' and 'the self' and a debate of their emergence as concepts in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries, see Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self*: *Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-49; Timothy J. Reiss, 'Revising Descartes: On Subject and Community', in *Representations of the Self from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. by Patrick Coleman, Jayne Lewis and Jill Kowalik (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 16-38.

these three chapters, the characters were discussed in relation to Islamic and Arabic texts, in particular, the Qur'an, the Hadith, the Islamic legend of Ascension and the *Arabian Nights*, where intriguing similarities between specific aspects of the representation of Milton's characters and the figures from Judeo-Arabic mythology were highlighted.

Indeed, not only has Milton's Satan demonstrated significant similarities to the Islamic Iblis, be it in his elevated status before the fall, his ability to experience regret, nostalgia, love, envy and rage and his vow to bring about the Fall of humankind, but also the political and religious debate surrounding the first English translation of the Qur'an in 1649 was shown to reinforce the likelihood of such a pairing. In addition, after examining the well-established negative view of the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad (in Chapter 2), a triangulation of Muhammad, Iblis and the Ottoman Sultan was proposed as a manifestation of the Antichrist.

Chapters 4 and 5 focused upon Sin and Eve, two female protagonists in *Paradise Lost*, and highlighted the way these female characters not only demonstrate an important linkage to one another but, taken together, powerfully relate to two female figures from Judeo-Arabic mythology: Lilith and the Ghoul. The similarities in the depiction of Sin and Lilith (the latter in her aspect as the Ghoul): their abortive motherhood, their serpentine lower part, their strong association with Satan and their previous heavenly status – now contrasted with the torments suffered for defying their divinely sanctioned roles – are by no means negligible. The Judeo-Arabic understanding of these mythical females, evil shadows notorious for their ability to seduce men, harm women and children, cause abortions and estrange newlyweds, are all themes similarly explored in Chapter 5 in relation to Eve and the test she faces by water, and where an association with the Qur'anic Queen of Sheba was also proposed.

The thesis aimed to establish that when considering the possible presence of Arabic thought and culture in early modern England, it was not just politics or religious anxiety that dominated the literary sphere. Attention should also be drawn to the role of mythology, in this instance Judeo-Arabic mythology, which was found to be a substantial presence not only in the writings of Shakespeare, Marlowe and others, but also in Milton's epic poem itself.

Moreover, not only did the thesis posit a strong, yet subtle, presence of Judeo-Arabic mythology in the poem – unlike previous critical studies[3] that dismissed such a possibility; the fact that these Arabic myths were fused together with Jewish myths is in itself extremely telling. Whether this testifies to Milton's knowledge of the strong similarities binding both cultures, or whether it is designed as a definitive dismissal of both myths as false representations of Christian truth, or both, remains a matter left open for further debate.

Indeed, more work remains to be done in a number of areas. While there has been some consideration of influence travelling in the opposite direction, with the possibility that Milton's epic and his political stance have had a significant impact on contemporary Arab writers, it is to be noted that female Arab authors have been excluded from such discussions. A more extensive analysis of their important work in redefining the role of gender – be it in mythology, literature or the arts – and its influence on politics, culture and religion, remains of extreme significance, but has yet to be attempted.

Moreover, while travel accounts and diplomatic exchanges from the early modern period were considered as evidence of how Europeans viewed the Muslim East in the introductory chapters (Chapters 1 and 2), further investigation as to how, in turn, England was viewed by Arab travellers to Europe could be revealing. In fact, Arab or Muslim female voices, in particular, remained neglected in the early modern period, as today,

[3] See the 'Thesis Outline'.

despite, for example, the numerous politically charged letters exchanged by Ottoman Sultanas, such as Safiye Sultan (the mother of Sultan Mehmet III) with Queen Elizabeth I.[4] Furthermore, given that the Judeo-Arabic tales discussed in this thesis are considered treasured folklore in the Middle East and North Africa and are recounted to children to this day,[5] a study that explores the imaginative space such myths occupy in children's minds could be illuminating, but remains wanting.

Indeed, the importance of the oral tales examined in this thesis – tales told and passed on largely by women – has become strikingly apparent. The tales not only survive as audible echoes of a rich past, but also can be considered as landmarks in history, reminding us of significant political and cultural occurrences.[6] The fact that such tales have been analysed here, to investigate Milton's relation to Arabic thought and the reception of Milton by Arab authors, should not be a matter of surprise. Rather, my approach has been long overdue. It might be the case that such tales, particularly when evoked in literature, not only reveal to us our own timeless fears and anxieties about this unknown 'other', but also, in part, help to expose the way this demonic 'other' is a very much part of ourselves. As James Baldwin rightly states, 'The power to define the other seals one's definition of oneself'.[7]

[4] Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 228.
[5] The tales discussed in this thesis are considered tales from the Levant area and coincidentally began to be more appreciated after the arrival of Oriental manuscripts brought to England by the Levant Company.
[6] During the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Lilith myth was used in relation to the rising death of young Arab men during the October war (from 6-26 October1973). Lilith was understood as an ominous presence that warned of coming male deaths, particularly in her owl form. When an owl would land on a house's wall, women would chant: 'Soor soor put the girls in palaces, Soor soor place the boys in tombs'. Soor soor intended to imitate the voice of the ominous owl. Soor also means 'wall' in Arabic, possibly relating to the place owls would land on. I am thankful for my late grandmother for this information.
[7] Lynn O. Scott, *James Baldwin's Later Fiction: Witness to the Journey* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002), p. 172.

Appendix

The Lilith or Demonised Eve of Arab Academia: Dr Mona Prince – A Case Study

As demonstrated earlier, Arab feminist writing is rich in examples of literary texts that re-examine, redefine and reclaim the role of the feminine and the space it occupies in social, religious and political dialogues. While Eve is celebrated and sympathetically treated within numerous texts, she is rewritten, recreated, even rejected in others. In the midst of this journey towards self-affirmation and self-understanding, Arab women continue to face considerable challenges to achieve their goals in finally proclaiming the Eve they desire and choose; the Eve that resembles them the most. Until they do so, they continue to battle the long established and entrenched binary roles of the feminine in society: the celebrated or the demonized.

The Egyptian academic Dr Mona Prince is an intriguing example of a woman who occupies a liminal space between these two realms.[1] As a respectable member of staff at Suez University, Egypt, an author, a translator and a political figure,[2] Dr Prince is considered a model of empowered Arab women who controls the narrative of her existence. However, Dr Prince has publicly rejected the imposed concepts of virtue and modesty that have long accompanied the definition of acceptable femininity in Arab

[1] The material in this appendix is mainly drawn from an interview I conducted with Dr Mona Prince after her suspension as a result of teaching *Paradise Lost* to her students. The interview was published on 2 September 2017 in READ Research in English at Durham, a University blog that publicises research from Anglo-Saxon sagas to contemporary world fiction conducted by the Department of English Studies at Durham University. The interview was published following a Q&A format; however, it was revised and rewritten to be more in keeping with the larger body of this thesis. Most of the material is largely the same as the original publication, however, in order to retain Prince's responses to my questions. For the original interview, see Sharihan Al-Akhras, 'John Milton, Liberty and Arab Academics: The Case of Mona Prince', *READ*, (2017) [unnumbered]; available online: <https://readdurhamenglish.wordpress.com/2017/09/02/john-milton-liberty-and-arab-academics-the-case-of-mona-prince/>.

[2] Dr Prince informed me that she is planning to run in the Egyptian presidential elections in 2018.

societies. Her interest in dance, for example, has brought immense trouble to Prince and led to what she called a public 'witch hunt', especially when one of her private dance videos was shared maliciously online in an attempt to target and tarnish her image as a respectable member of academia in Egyptian society. Indeed, slanderous names such as 'witch', 'hag' and others, which would be inappropriate to mention, began to be used as a matter of course whenever her case was discussed. What is of interest for the purposes of this study, is the way the demonization of Mona Prince shares a surprising link to the writings of Milton himself, particularly *Paradise Lost*.

On the 28th of August 2017, at Suez University, Egypt, Prince had to attend a disciplinary hearing. The reason for this formal disciplinary meeting was to discuss the academic transgressions Dr Prince had allegedly committed. They included: 'divergence from the scientific description of [her] academic courses', 'spreading destructive ideas' and attributing 'falsehoods' and 'oppression to the person of God, the just king' and 'for calling for the glorification of Satan', as the University's initial report, shared with me by Prince, had unequivocally stated.[3] These allegations came after a six-month investigation, following the suspension of Dr Prince in February 2017, as a result of discussing Milton's *Paradise Lost* in one of her lectures. Despite her suspension, members of staff – at her University – continued to express their disapproval in the way 'she conducted herself' on campus and in public.

It was even the case, Dr Prince informed me, that digital material she had uploaded online on social media, including Facebook content, had been subsequently downloaded, saved and used against her by staff from the University to tarnish her reputation as an academic who is expected to uphold a certain image for the public, and to provoke students and colleagues. Pictures of her at the beach, out with friends, and even videos of her dancing in her private farm, were shared in tabloid websites and TV stations in an attempt

[3] Dr Prince has also publicly shared the University's report on her social media websites.

to attach a negative image to her person. Prince jokingly added: 'Thanks to me, Egyptian Media began to genuinely discuss whether a public figure even has the right to upload personal content online [laughs]. I have lost all feelings of privacy and began to receive verbal attacks, as well as threats. Life quickly became really difficult'. The University itself stated that it cannot guarantee Prince's safety should she return to campus. Two of Prince's students accompanied her for an entire day to ensure her safety. 'It is a shame indeed,' she ruefully observed, 'I believe my job as a University academic is one thing and my personal life is another. I am not ashamed of my lifestyle. I am an Egyptian, and I invite you and your readers to visit Egyptian temples where you will see love of music, dance, art and life celebrated in ancient Egypt'.

When asked about the reasons behind her suspension, Prince stated that she began facing allegations of misconduct and disrespecting tradition ever since the 2011 revolution.[4] She believes the main reason is that a large number of faculty members, along with the department, follow a socially conservative policy. Therefore, her innovative teaching methods, that aimed to reinvent outdated ones, were continuously opposed. Prince stated that she was keen on allowing students to speak freely and discuss controversial topics related to modern-day Egyptian society, such as interreligious (Christian-Muslim) relations, sexual harassment etc. The general academic approach at her University, however, remained mundane; there was no focus on developing creativity, improving critical thinking skills or fostering an environment that supports scientific analysis and methodology. Students were not allowed to discuss their ideas freely, but were dictated what to learn and what to reproduce in the exams. Moreover, plagiarism would go unnoticed while copying and pasting internet content had become a common practice.

[4] Also known as the January Revolution (ثورة يناير). The 2011 revolution belonged to the series of revolutions known as the Arab Spring, see note 7, p. 3.

It was also the case, as Prince continued to explain, that many students have been forced to purchase material that was copied from the internet, as prepared by numerous members of staff. Such prepared books would cost much more than books approved and suggested, by the faculty, to the students in the formal curriculum. Prince expressed her surprise that discussing a text by Milton would be received with accusations of academic wrongdoing while actual transgressions as above would go unchallenged.

While Dr Prince believes the University has targeted her for years because of her 'liberal' lifestyle, it was discussing Milton's *Paradise Lost* that provoked the University into finally conducting its formal investigation. By discussing the characters of God and Satan, as described in Milton's epic poem, the University – according to Prince – perceived her to be guilty of a clear distortion of the image of God 'the King' with an unacceptable 'glorification' of Satan. It was also the case that *The Telegraph* covered the incident under the title: 'Egyptian Academic Accused of "Glorifying Satan" after Teaching Milton's *Paradise Lost*'.[5]

According to Prince, the University does not seem to be acquainted with John Milton, the author of the epic: 'They are not familiar with what he stood for, his defence of liberty and the discussion of all ideas, including 'bad' ones':

> Good and evill we know in the field of this World grow up together almost inseparably ... It was from out the rinde of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evill as two twins cleaving together leapt forth into the World. And perhaps this is that doom which *Adam* fell into of knowing good and evill, that is to say of knowing good by evill.[6]
> (*Areopagitica*)

[5] For *The Telegraph* story, see Sanchez, Raf, 'Egyptian Academic Accused of "Glorifying Satan" after Teaching Milton's *Paradise Lost*', *The Telegraph*, (August 2017) [unnumbered]; available online: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/08/22/egyptian-academic-accused-glorifying-satan-teaching-miltons/>.
[6] *Riverside*, p. 1006.

‘These are some of the values I attempted to introduce to students’, she averred. Prince protested that her aim was certainly not to change anyone’s values, beliefs or principles, but to enrich the literary reception of this text by her students, through considering multiple literary angles of analysis. Once more, her teaching choices were not received well by the University administration, where a senior academic criticized her decision to teach such literary texts as he, according to Prince, did not see any value in discussing such controversial writings.[7] The excuse is such discussions may offend the religious feelings of students (both Christians and Muslims), yet the majority of students would reject this policy and prefer to benefit from differences of opinions where there is a free circulation of ideas rather than ‘a muddy pool of conformity and tradition’ (*Areopagitica*).[8]

Remarkably, given the furore it caused, Prince had not even dedicated an entire module to Milton. It was merely one lecture for a course entitled: ‘English History’ and the controversial lecture in question was called ‘The Age of Milton’. Since *Paradise Lost* is considered Milton’s most important work, Prince intended to give it the attention it deserved. In fact, Prince attempted to bridge the cultural and historical gap between Milton and her Arab students, as she felt the text might be too difficult. ‘I thought I could make it more stimulating by proposing that students compare the character of Satan in the poem with the character of Satan in Arabic literature, for example, in Amal Dunqul’s *Spartacus*’:

> Glory to Satan; god of winds
> who said “no” in the face of those who said “yes”
> Who taught humans to tear apart nothingness
> He who said “no” thus did not die
> And remained a soul eternally in pain.[9]

[7] Even before discussing Milton, Prince informed me that she had faced trouble for teaching *Animal Farm*.
[8] *Riverside*, p. 1015.
[9] Amal Dunqul, ‘Spartacus’ Last Words’ [Kalimāt Spartacus Al-akhīra] in *Ala’ mal Al-kamila,* (Cairo: Maktabat Madbuli, 1983), pp. 73-78 trans. by Sumeela Mubayi in *Jadaliyya*, (August 23 2012): [page unnumbered]. Also available online at the link below:
<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/6998/amaldunqul_spartacuslastwords>.

Prince also suggested comparing the political events taking place in the age of Milton, as well as his anti-monarchical and revolutionary stances with similar political movements in twentieth-century Egypt. For that reason, she suggested they look at *Children of Gebelawi* ('Awlad Haritna' أولاد حارتنا), a novel published in 1981 by the Egyptian author, Naguib Mahfouz, who later won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988. By so doing, Prince intended to make the seventeenth-century poem more relevant to students' concerns by analyzing it alongside pertinent Arabic literature.

Respectful of matters of religious sensitivity, Prince decided that it would be appropriate to discuss the text following a purely literary approach. Her class steered away from any mention of theology or the concept of God and Satan (or his Arabic equivalent, Iblis) in Islam. As she wryly noted, 'The fact that they conflated these concepts – the literary and the theological one – indicates obvious unfamiliarity with the texts I teach'. Since she is the only academic to face such a campaign, Prince suggested that the main aim seems to have been to use this text to ruin her image and portray her 'as a woman who disrespects tradition, religion and who worships Satan'.

Prince continued to highlight the irony that by teaching Milton, an author who supported liberty and questioned pre-publication censorship, she was charged with having 'destructive ideas' and became censored herself. Similarly, I would also point out the irony in the fact that by teaching a text that discussed the Fall of humanity, and portrayed God, Adam, Eve and Satan, Prince was reintroduced to Egyptian society as a demonised, immoral woman who did not deserve her honourable employment and celebrated status as a University lecturer and scholar. 'I can't help but feel what is happening to me is very similar to what happened at Salem's witch trials,' she observed, 'If the allegations directed against me to-date, which include insulting "the holy books of the three monotheistic

faiths", are accepted, then I may face three years in prison. But I am not afraid to fight for my beliefs', she defiantly concluded.

Since my discussion with Prince, I learnt that the outcome of her disciplinary hearing was a further suspension of three months. Until then, Dr Prince will remain unsure about her future at the University. Her case is neither the only one nor the most controversial. However, it does pose essential questions not only regarding the future of academia in the Arab world, but the world in general. Four centuries on from Milton's *Areopagitica*, where the author himself defended the importance of knowledge and criticised censorship, Dr Prince finds herself in a place where she is asked to defend her intellectual liberty. It is indeed the first time that a text by Milton has been linked to such a controversial suspension of an academic in the Arab world. The author has been an important and respected poetical force, whose influence is marked in twentieth-century Arab writing. Whether a change in this approach is amongst us – where the author loses his literary immunity – is highly doubtful, yet seems to no longer be out of the question. Perhaps the best way to conclude is with a reminder of Milton's powerful words – that resonate with numerous Arab authors, including female authors – reminding us that Truth, Liberty and Freedom stand in stalwart opposition to darkness and ignorance:

> Ye cannot make us now lesse capable, lesse knowing, lesse eagarly pursuing of the truth, unlesse ye first make your selves, that made us so, lesse the lovers, lesse the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formall, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous, as they were from whom ye have free'd us.[10] (*Areopagitica*)

[10] *Riverside*, p. 1020.

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