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The Impact of Former European Prisoners of North Africa on their Community

Case study English Prisoners (1580-1830)

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Dedication

This research is wholeheartedly dedicated to our beloved parents, who have been our source of inspiration and gave us strength when we thought of giving up, who continually provide their moral, spiritual, emotional, and financial support.

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Abstract

During the early modern period, English seamen and merchants sailing to the Mediterranean were subject to attack by Muslim privateers who attempted to seize their cargo and carry their crew to the slave markets of North Africa. After being sold into slavery, some prisoners escaped, ransom payments gave others freedom, some converted to the Muslim faith, and more remained in captivity for years. A few of those who returned to England recounted their experiences in printed narratives that entertained and informed British readers. These exciting narratives recount the experiences of Englishmen abducted by the Barbary pirates of North Africa. After being sold into slavery, the narrators succeeded in returning to their homeland where their stories were printed. Never before available in a modern, annotated edition, these tales describe combat at sea, extraordinary escapes, and religious conversion, but they also illustrate the power, prosperity, and piety of Muslims in the early modern Mediterranean.

Key words:

- English seamen
- Barbary pirates
- Prisoners
- Ransom
- Muslim faith
- Narratives

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General introduction

The English victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588 inaugurated diplomatic and military coordination between the monarchs of England and Morocco, namely Queen Elizabeth I and Mulay Ahmad al-Mansur. This cooperation brought to London Moroccan ambassadors, who inspired the complex and disturbing figure of the Moor in Elizabethan drama, starting with George Peele's The Battle of Alcazar (1589) and ending with Shakespeare's Othello (ca. 1602) and Thomas Heywood's The Fair Maid of the West, Part I (ca. 1600–1603). From the death of Queen Elizabeth on, relations between Britain and Barbary swung between cooperation and conflict, trade and piracy, and were often determined by the crisis of captivity .The captivity of thousands of English—men, women and children—and the inability or unwillingness of the monarchs to liberate them, drove numerous members of Parliament to join in an opposition to King Charles I that, along with other issues, finally led to the Civil Wars of 1642. Meanwhile, the crisis of captivity was effecting an important change in the social roles of women: the first political movement of women (mostly wives) in early modern England came into being as a result of the Barbary captivity of male breadwinners. Women organized themselves as petitioners and approached both king and Parliament with their "wifely" appeals for ransoming their kinsmen. Other women were themselves taken captive in Barbary and subjugated and enslaved. For the first time in the history of Britain, change was forced on its political and social culture by the world of Islam. The evolution in British naval and commercial power in the early years of the Interregnum enabled the English to expand their slave trade from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, and to expand from capturing and selling sub-Saharan Africans to trading in Libyans, Tunisians, Algerians and Moroccans—the "Moors" (in Arabic, the Magharibi).

This leads one to raise the following questions:

- Why European afraid from Islam?
- Why there was more focus on the history of European captives in North Africa than of Muslims in Christendom?

As possible answers, one might suggest the following hypotheses:

- Islam was spreading everywhere and became a dangerous militarized threat to godly Christians
- Perhaps it has been easier and more ideologically convenient to focus on European and ignore Muslim suffering

In order to find answers to the abovementioned questions, this dissertation has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter, titled Origin and Type of Relationship between North Africa and Europe (1589–1689), as this chapter shows, the imperial desire remained confined to English imagination. Although writings urging the occupation of the North African regions appeared as of the early 1600s, the seizure by the Barbary corsairs of captives from all over the British Isles circumvented the fulfilment of that desire, as a result of which, and until the middle of the century, British involvement in the Islamic Mediterranean remained confined to trade, negotiations, freeing of captives and, only once, a successful naval campaign (against Salé). The North Africans fought back against the intrusion of British (and French) merchant fleets by capturing sailors, travellers and traders, men, women and children. The Second chapter charts the highest proportion consisting of captives who were at one time reported to have numbered over five thousand in Algiers alone. Hundreds of other English visited the Muslim Mediterranean world on their own initiative and stayed there either to conduct business, to seek employment, to visit for weeks, or to settle for years. The majority of these English were men but there were a few women too. But on the whole the British exposure to Muslims was predominantly confined to the male population. , Finally, in the last chapter, I will focus on how literature played a provocatively imaginative role in the early modern period, and how writers described in autobiographical accounts as well as in drama and sermon

Chapter One

Origin and Type of Relationship between North Africa and Europe(1589–1689)

Anthony Pagden and Barbara Fuchs have pointed to the Spanish model of, and sources for, the development of the British overseas imagination. In the same way, that Spain colonized North Africa while it was colonizing South America, so did some British writers conceive of colonizing not only North America but also the Barbary region. Notwithstanding the protection of the Mediterranean by the Ottomans, the sea battle of Lepanto in 1571, which ended with the defeat of the Ottoman fleet, ensured that west of the Rome-Tunis axis; the region was open to reconfigurations of alliances and military aspirations. Travellers and captives, diplomats and geographers started to learn about the differences in the ethnography, culture, languages and geography of Barbary: they ranged in their imagination from one country to another, plotting against an Atlantic port in Morocco and in the same breath describing the wealth of Algiers. Whether it was the coast of Virginia or of Barbary.

1. Trade relationship between England and North Africa (1572-1637)

Morocco was the most attractive and accessible location in the Muslim world for English soldiers, pirates, and traders. The country had amicable dealings with England, and the English felt relatively safe there—and relatively free from English social control and law. Some of the English viewed Morocco as an easy place to commit a murder against a hated compatriot. Such was the case in 1585 when Elizabeth sent her envoy Ralph Skydmoore to Mulay Ahmed al-Mansur. The envoy had been there since 1579, but unfortunately, he did not live long for he was poisoned by an English merchant in 1585. The murderer was later extradited to face "condigne punishmente"[1] .Others saw it as a good place to escape to after a brush with the law at home. John Herman, an English rebel, fled England to Morocco in 1587, but was captured after the queen demanded his extradition. Most importantly, as T. S.Willan's Studies [2] in Elizabethan Foreign Trade has shown in detail, Morocco was an excellent trading partner where numerous

[1] Condign punishment is suitable or right for a particular crime: Britons resided for extended

periods. In 1569, Mulay Abdallah al-Ghalib wrote to Queen Elizabeth assuring her that English traders would not be harmed in his realm; by 1572, there was already an English merchant, Thomas Owen, living and trading in Morocco (he would remain there until 1600), who, it was noted in a letter from a Moroccan customs officer, had mastered Arabic. In 1574, Britons trying to establish a monopoly for trade with North Africa complained to the queen that an Englishmen were already trading with Barbary, but not paying custom duties because they were using illegal harbors as points of departure and return. No doubt before the incorporation of the Barbary Merchants (about which there were heated arguments for and against), numerous English traders and agents settled in North Africa without leaving any trace behind them. The "factor [long] resident" in Barbary, George Gyppes, is just one example. In Elizabeth's ambassador to Mulay Ahmad, Henry Roberts, reported that there were numerous English merchants living in the Moroccan kingdom, including "M. Richard Evans, Edward Salcot, and other English merchants." In 1591 there were numerous "merchants" from London working in the "realm and dominions of Barbary . . . about fewer years now last past." And in 1603, John Wakeman, an English merchant, was described as having had a "long residence in Barbary." Alongside these merchants and factors were assorted English ranging from musicians to spies to women relatives who interacted with Muslims. In 1577, the Moroccan ruler Mulay Abdel Malek asked Edmund Hogan to send him a few English musicians to reside in his court; he promised to "let them live according to their law and conscience."

It is clear, then, that the first Muslim country to which Englishmen were exposed was Morocco, and that as they moved outside their European parameter of commercial and financial interaction,

[2] .Willan, Studies in Elizabethan Foreign Trade, pp. 108 ff. and the unit on "Sugar and the Elizabethans."

[3]. The Governor and Company of Merchants of England trading into the Levant Seas—usually referred to as the Levant Company or Turkey Company—was founded by royal charter in 1581. Its powers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were derived from fresh charters in 1606 and 1661 that gave to its members the sole right to trade between England and the Ottoman Empire.

the first people they encountered, traded with, and settled among, were the Moors. Other Englishmen traded with and resided in the Ottoman Empire

2. Imperial Desire and its Implications on England

The establishment of the East Levant/Turkey Company [3] in 1580 and of the Barbary Company [4] in 1585 confirmed the Elizabethan commercial interest in the Mediterranean, while Hakluyt's [5] 1589 and 1599 Navigations included numerous writings by English travellers about the wealth and opportunity in the Islamic Levant and North Africa. Even captives discovered that their accounts about their ordeals in Barbary could provide their country with men with useful information. In 1595, Richard Hasleton described his captivity in Algeria and drew his readers' attention to the "pure metals, as gold, silver, and lead; and good iron and steel" and "among the dross of the iron, very perfect gold," which the natives did not recognize. John Pory's 1600 translation of Leo Africanus' [6] account about Barbary provided an extensive description in English of the regions with their differing religions, peoples and cultures. The book also alerted the readers to Spain's numerous possessions in North Africa—Oran, Ceuta, Tangier, Melilla, Pennon and Mazagan (the ancient name of the present city of el Jadida, fortified city built by the Portuguese at the beginning of the xvi).The author pointed to the employment opportunity for Europeans in North Africa—particularly if they had experience in land and naval warfare. The Barbary region offered temporary work for the unemployed among Britain's growing population, long-term residence, immigration and dreams of wealth. In some men, it also planted the seed of imperial desire. for conquering Barbary was sounded. In April 1603, immediately upon the death of Queen Elizabeth, the first "imperial" call

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[4]. Company was a trading company established by Queen Elizabeth I of England in 1585 through a patent granted to the Earls of Warwick

[5]. Hakluyt (English geographer), Principal Navigations, 6:282–83.

[6]. Beazley, C. Raymond, ed. Voyages and Travels Mainly during the 16th and 17th Centuries. 2 vols. Westminster: Constable, 1903.

Chapter One Origin and Type of Relationship between North Africa and Europe (1589–1689)

The English agent in Morocco between 1585 and 1589, Henry Roberts, wrote to the new king, James I, to inform him about the "new" lands of Barbary that needed to be conquered for king and Christ. Roberts told the king that he had kept his ideas secret for the past fifteen years, until after the death of Queen Elizabeth. He urged the king to recognize the value of the conquest of a region that was by far less difficult to reach than North America and that was rich in "commodities." There were "very great and rich [lands]" the possession of which would not only bring glory to Christianity but also profit .Roberts listed what the country yielded—in a manner similar to listings that had appeared during the Elizabethan period about North America: he described terrain, fauna and flora, minerals and other exploitable natural resources. "The soil,"

wrote Roberts, was "very fertile [producing] Wheat, barley and peas, abundance and very good seeds and sugar, very good dates, wines, oils, raisins, hides, goat skins, wax, honey and raw silk. Saltpetre more plenty and better than in any country."[7] Roberts continued with separate listings of beasts, fowls and fruit. The country was rich, and its acquisition could prove profitable to the new king.

Barbary was instrumental in forming and transforming British ideology from trade to conquest. Under Elizabeth, trade had been the Englishmen's sole goal: Barbary was a market and a source of natural imports. But with the advent of King James I, and with royal intervention into the policies and politics of the chartered companies.[8], a change occurred that slowly moved English ideals closer to the Spanish model. The Spaniards and the Portuguese had always viewed conquest as the roadway to the control of natural resources and of subsequent trade. The English slowly moved toward the Spanish model: although trade remained their dominant goal, they started to associate the success of trade with the conquest of land. But North Africa was not North America,

[7]. The account by Roberts in Hakluyt's Principal Navigations, 6:426–28.

[8]. The charter usually conferred a trading monopoly upon the company in a specific geographic area or for a specific type of trade item.

and conquest of North Africa was more easily said than done. As a result, and instead of total conquest and settlement with conquistadors flooding the conquered territories, The English conceived of the seizure and occupation of strategic locations that would enable them to control trade and, control the natural resources in those locations.

3. Captivity and the Barbary Corsairs

Only after the mid-seventeenth century would it be possible to attempt such control. From the beginning of the Jacobean period [9] and well into the first years of the Cromwellian period [10], whatever imperialism [11] there was, was mere talk, for the facts on the Barbary ground and at sea presented a completely different and often grim and unpromising picture. Most destabilizing was the captivity of English in the Barbary States. In the coastal towns and sea ports of England and Ireland, on the high seas of the Mediterranean or the Atlantic, and in other parts of the Islamic world, English encountered a persistently unconventional religious and military adversary—pirates and privateers who seized ships and sold the passengers and crew as slaves in slave markets ranging from Salé to Algiers and Tunis. Against these pirates and privateers, the infamous "Barbary corsairs," little could be done to protect the sailors and the investors. Much as Harrison and Blake thought of conquest, and much as Heylyn [12] realized that Britain's modernizing technology would secure naval victory over the corsairs, they all soon realized that the Barbary regions were able to fight back in a very effective manner. If the purpose of venturing into North

[9] The Jacobean era refers to the period in English and Scottish history that coincides with the reign of James VI of Scotland (1567–1625), who also inherited the crown of England in 1603 as James I

[10]. Oliver Cromwell (25 April 1599 – 3 September 1658) was an English military and political leader

[11]. Imperialism, state policy, practice, or advocacy of extending power and dominion, especially by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other areas

[12] Peter Heylin or Heylyn (29 November 1599 – 8 May 1662) was an English ecclesiastic and author of many polemical, historical, political and theological tracts.

Africa was to pursue trade and profit, and if England was to use its naval power to enforce such trade, the Barbary populations could retaliate not with their less powerful fleets, which the British navy could overcome, but by a much-tried way: piracy. They would attack the small trading ships, capture the merchants and their cargos, enslave the sailors and entice them into their society—thereby depleting British naval manpower, forcing negotiations and ransom, and ultimately generating handsome incomes to their coffers. This dangerous strategy of the corsairs was confirmed in numerous publications and plays that reflected public anxiety about Barbary. In the Knight of the Burning Pestle (1607) [13], Francis Beaumont described a barber with the ominous name of Barbaroso (recalling the famous corsair in Algiers of the first half of the sixteenth century) who holds men and women captive—and treats them in the same manner as captives in North Africa described their ordeals. The Jacobean era refers to the period in English and Scottish history that coincides with the reign of James VI of Scotland , who also inherited the crown of England in 1603 as James I "This bread and water hath our diet been," wails a captive woman, "Together with a rib cut from a neck / of burned mutton; hard hath been our fare" .

This description coincided with the ongoing seizure of women and men, sailors and mariners who were taken on the high seas or abducted from their coastal Welsh and English villages—and subsequently languished in the hope of benevolence from their monarchs or collections from their parishes to effect their release. Perhaps that is why Beaumont sarcastically introduced a quixotic figure who liberates the captives, since King James neither advanced nor secured the safety of merchants and their employees in the Mediterranean.

To add to the danger of captivity, and throughout the Jacobean period, merchants believed that the navy was doing nothing to prevent the attacks of the Barbary pirates. Between 1609 and 1616, North African privateers captured hundreds of English and Scottish ships in the

[13]. Beaumont, Francis. The Knight of the Burning Pestle. In Elizabethan and Jacobean Comedy: An Anthology, edited by Robert Ornstein and Hazleton Spencer, 205–45. Boston:D. C. Heath, 1964.

Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and in 1616, a "Turkish pirate" entered the Thames and reached Leigh in Essex, just a few miles above Southland; by 1618, Lord Carew informed Sir Thomas Roe that the "Turkish pirates do great harm to our ships in the Mediterranean; if they are not destroyed, the Levant trade will be at an end; they also damage the coast of Spain much." In 1621,
Sir Henry Mainwaring, who had been a pirate with the Tunisians before returning to serve in the English navy, reported that a battle had taken place between Turkish and English ships in which six English ships were lost. In that same year, the English fleet unsuccessfully tried to attack Algiers in order to free the captives. Not only had the Barbary corsairs grown stronger, but the naval forces of England (and other European countries) had grown weaker—a fact that the seventeenth-century Tunisian historian Ibn Abi Dinar confirmed: European Christians of the early seventeenth century, he wrote, did not send out large ships, as a result of which the Muslim privateers who sailed in frigates were able to capture much booty.

4. The Wars of the Three Kingdoms (1639-1651)

During the reign of Charles I, a crisis developed around the captives seized by the Barbary corsairs that added another cause to the constitutional and ecclesiastical conflicts that culminated in the Civil Wars. Although K. R. Andrews has argued that the captives and their "clamorous" relatives had a "small influence" on the course of events leading up to the Civil Wars, and although other historians have completely ignored the crisis of captivity, the seizure and enslavement of English in Barbary cities played an important role in compounding the conflict between King Charles and members of the parliamentary opposition, many of whom were closely associated with the Levant and East India Companies whose sailors and merchants were the target of Barbary attacks. These companies lost hundreds of employees and scores of ships to the corsairs and blamed the king for not spending the monies raised through customs, tonnage and poundage, forced loans and Ship Money (which had been intended to improve the fleet and extend British

sovereignty over the seas) on maritime security. Similarly, seamen's wives and their families blamed the king and his ministers for the failure to ransom their kin. By not acting decisively to resolve this foreign policy challenge, and by ignoring the numerous petitions that were presented to him by kinsmen and employers of the captives, King Charles allowed Parliament to take the initiative in helping, or appearing to help, the captives, and in adding one more cause to the Civil Wars. The captives not only impeded British imperial strategy but also played a role in changing the course of Britain's domestic history.

5. Conclusion

King Charles failed to recognize that any foreign crisis would in turn cause an internal crisis. By this failure, he opened the door for the opposition in Parliament to seize the initiative toward the captives and mobilize popular support against royal inefficiency and indifference.

Chapter two

Soldiers, Pirates, and Captives, English among the Muslims

At the same time Muslims were going to England, the English were going to North Africa and the Levant in greater numbers. They went (or were taken) in the thousands, The writings of a few of these English—particularly those of William Harborne, Thomas Roe, and Dudley North—are both fascinating and informative about the Renaissance interaction with Muslims. However, the careers and writings of soldiers and captives, along with the sundry other "small" English who lived and worked among the Muslims, provide a more intimate and careful portrait.

1. The English Soldier activity in North Africa (1558- 1649)

From the reign of Queen Elizabeth until the Caroline period, the English joined the armies of the Muslim dominions, both in the Levant, in central Asia, and in North Africa. Some of these English were from the nobility but most were either common soldiers who found reliable pay among the Muslims or seamen and gunners captured by the North Africans and willingly or unwillingly put to military service. The regencies of Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripoli, along with Morocco and Persia, offered both attractive employment and honourable service: «Your Wars are manly, stout and honourable," Sir Anthony Shirley is supposed to have said to the Persian Sophie/Shah in a play published in 1607. "Your Arms have no employment for a coward."[14] As a result, English entered Muslim military service: North Africa, the Ottoman and the Persian Empires fulfilled for Britons their military ideals and financial needs. It is no wonder that throughout his reign King James repeatedly issued royal proclamations calling on English and Scottish sailors and soldiers to return from abroad and serve at home. There was too much allure in the dominions of the Muslims.

Some of the English who went to the Muslim empires in the Mediterranean and in Central Asia were men who found themselves without military employment at a time in Renaissance England when there was no professional army or class of soldiers with a secure pay. These

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[14.] Sha'ban, "The Mohammedan World in English Literature, c. 1580–1642: Illustrated by a text of the Travailes of the Three English Brothers," p. 226.

writings, with their heroic image of the Britons, may have served to promote such a career to the reading and theatregoing public in England.

A more detailed account of those English soldiers in the service of Zaidan appeared in R. C.'s A True Historicall discourse of Muley Hamets rising to the three Kingdomes of Moruecos, Fes and Sus (1609),he was advertising the good financial conditions of English soldiers among the Muslims, he continued to invoke the idea that English captains and soldiers were fighting with the Muslims not only for pay, but more importantly, for honor.They were men of courage and chivalry who not only lived by those ideals, but died by them too.

As long as there was political cooperation between London and Marrakesh or Istanbul, there was the possibility of military cooperation between the two peoples. English travelers, traders, and foreign policy strategists were eager to see their compatriots actively involved in the military affairs of Islam.And Muslim rulers, aware of the growing technological gap between them and Christendom, were eager to employ European soldiers. Perhaps the most important event in the history of Renaissance Anglo- Islamic military cooperation occurred in 1637. This was the first time an English monarch actually approved his fleet's support for one faction of Muslims against another.There had been hundreds of English soldiers, gunners, and military personnel in North Africa for decades, but they had never been specifically sent by the monarch to carry out military action on the Muslim side. In 1637, King Charles authorized his fleet to assist Siddy Hamed al-Ayyashi of Old Salee against his rival in New Salee: "English gunners" were sent to the old town and "did fearful execution among the crowded defenders of New Sallee, battering the walls beyond repair." By so doing the gunners helped reduce "Sally to the obedience of the [Moroccan] Emperor." Soon after, however, a rebellion broke out against the emperor, and eighteen English gunners were sent to fight on his side until victory, "and then with love and leave"

returned to England.[15] For the first time since England had entered the Mediterranean, its fleet succeeded in altering the course of events among the Muslims—with royal approval.

By placing the English among the Muslims, praising their military and diplomatic capability, and showing that they could work among non-Christians while retaining their commitment to their monarch and God, writers confirmed a heroic image of their compatriots and explicitly advertised the Muslim dominions to the unemployed, the unfulfilled, and the ambitious.

2. Seamen in the Mediterranean (1586-1630)

Simultaneous with this idealized view of soldierly activity among the Muslims, and for another kind of British cooperation with Muslims, it is important to consider seamen and those who came to be described as pirates, either by their compatriots or the Muslims. In the period under study, as Fernand Braudel, have shown, English seamen played an important role in the Mediterranean, particularly in the Muslim dominions. Captains and sailors established extensive contacts with Muslims by providing them with transportation. At times of high traffic, especially when Muslim pilgrims headed to Cairo on their way to Mecca, English and Scottish ships and their crew fulfilled a much needed service by providing them with safe transit across the North African coast. Often such services developed into personal friendships. In 1603 Henry Timberlake recalled how he had carried three hundred pilgrims from Algiers to Cairo (which was the North African hub of pilgrimage to Mecca) on his ship. Later, one of the passengers surprised Timberlake by remembering his name and offered to help him get into Jerusalem: “such kind care had the Infidel of me, as he would not leave me unaccompanied in this strange Land.”The “Infidel” (whose name Timberlake seemed not to have remembered) stayed with him throughout his journey in the Holy Land. In 1614 William Davis recalled how the English ship on which he was serving, the Francis, carried “Turkish Goods by Turkes, and some Turks aboard with us.” Although such services were

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[15]. Baker, Piracy and Diplomacy, Pennell, ed., p.126

sometimes condemned by The English, who were offended at their compatriots' collusion with the Muslims, English and Scottish ships were very active in the Mediterranean. As a result, many English established friendly relations with Muslims—with great benefit to themselves. It was the letter sent by a Moorish sea merchant on behalf of Sir Henry Middleton to the basha that "saved my Life," recalled the Englishman after his captivity in the Arabian harbor of Mocha. While some sailors were able to establish amicable (and legal) relations with the Muslims, others turned to piracy. Ever since the Middle Ages, English monarchs, like their Western European counterparts, had issued letters of marque to legitimate the piracy of their subjects against their adversaries. But the line between royally legitimized plunder (privateering) and lawless piracy was never clear, and privateers did not always abide by the limitations set by the foreign policy of their monarchs. Although in the second half of the sixteenth century, English privateers such as Raleigh and Drake specifically targeted Spanish ships, other Britons were not as discriminating; despite the amicable relations between their queen and the rulers of Turkey and Morocco, they attacked Muslim traders and travellers. In 1586, pirates from England attacked a Spanish ship in Moroccan waters, and as a result, the Moroccan ruler imprisoned an English merchant. "I am here imprisoned amongst a number of heathens,"[16] he wrote, adding that he would stay there until the pirates made proper restitution to the ruler.

English, Scottish, Welsh, and Irish pirates flourished under Muslim flags. While many of them converted to Islam and settled in North Africa, others "worked" there until they made enough money to buy a pardon and return home. For them, settling among the Muslims was financially lucrative and professionally rewarding. Although these pirates operated chiefly in the Mediterranean, others were known to plunder from the Cape of Good Hope to China and Japan,

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[16]. Baker, Piracy and Diplomacy, Pennell, ed., p.135

including the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Throughout this period, piracy was a thriving profession and British pirates among the Muslims were very successful professionals.

3. The captives' experience on North Africa soil

Another dynamic relationship between Muslims and the English on North Africa soil is portrayed in the important but as yet ignored writings of Englishmen who were captured and enslaved by Muslims, who lived and served among them, and then finally either escaped home or were ransomed by their compatriots. In this period, countless merchants and sailors, gunners and soldiers, cabin boys and preachers, lords and commoners, men and women, from England and the rest of the British Isles, were captured by pirates and taken to the slave markets in North Africa and the Atlantic coast of Morocco. These captives lived and worked among the Muslims, not as the mercenaries or traders that were needed and respected by Muslim potentates, but as prisoners and slaves at the beck and call of their Muslim owners. These men saw and wrote about the Muslim world from behind the galley oars or from within the bagnios (slave prisons), from the fields where they labored, or from the mansions in which they served. They experienced the Muslim world from below. Between 1577 and 1704 there were twenty-two accounts written by Englishmen about captivity among the Muslims. In these accounts, former captives and editors were well aware of the many Britons who had renounced England and Christianity during their captivity, had converted to Islam, and had settled among the Muslims. Two of them, Joseph Pitts and Thomas Pellow (whose account appeared in 1739), had done exactly that. They along with the other captives knew that their home communities, which had heard a lot about renegades and apostates, were suspicious of them, and wondered how much captivity had changed them. In the majority of cases where a captive escaped and returned home, the community could only wonder whether he had apostatized and been physically marked by Islam. And short of stripping him naked to see whether he had been circumcised or not, which communities and sea captains sometimes did, there was no definite answer.

The crisis of the captives occurred at a time when the Barbary corsairs were strong and daring—while England, Scotland and Ireland were preoccupied with the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. The failure to pursue the imperial goals as advocated by a few writers and factors stemmed from a unique combination of internal political unrest and Mediterranean and Atlantic danger. Repeatedly, the Barbary corsairs forced foreign affairs to dominate domestic policies. By seizing on English or Welsh, Irish or Scottish merchants and travellers, the Moors and the Turks produced an image of a dangerous "Mahumetan" world in the minds of the British reading, traveling, trading and sailing public. As a result, and instead of viewing themselves as rulers of the waves, Britons were forced to compromise with Muslims, and to negotiate and bargain, plead and appeal—even to submit to the forceful might of the corsairs.

4. English women and captivity

The political impact of the Barbary States on Britain led to a dramatic change in the role of women, both within Britain and overseas. Although the captivity of seamen and sailors was chiefly felt among ship-owners and trading companies, it was also felt at the family and parochial levels. For, in the absence of their breadwinning men, British women were forced to fend for themselves and their children and to devise means for social agitation and expression. They organized themselves into quasi-political movements and began petitioning the monarch, the Privy Council and the houses of Parliament (when and if such houses were in session). The lives of women were changed as a result of the captivity of their kinsmen in the Barbary region: women had to acquire agency in order to conduct affairs independently of patriarchal authority.

Meanwhile, other women (by far fewer in number) were themselves taken captive and enslaved in Barbary. Because fewer records survive about women than about men, it is difficult to determine the number of women captives in this period. Some women were captured from their homes on the coasts of England, Wales and Ireland; others were seized while making the Atlantic crossing, or sailing from London along the southern coast of England and Wales, before

ships launched off to the Americas. Travelers repeatedly mentioned how captains and sailors took their wives with them as they sailed out of London and then dropped them off in the last ports before the ocean. If such ships were captured by the Barbary corsairs, as they sometimes were, the corsairs found not only seamen and travelers but wives, mistresses and children as well. Husbands and kinsmen had now to confront the realization that their womenfolk would be slaves in Barbary and might never return home.

5. Conclusion

Englishmen and other Britons who went or were taken to the dominions of Islam numbered in the thousands. Of those only a few wrote about their experiences. Others were written about in literary and historical documents and others still left depositions and impromptu accounts of their exposure to the Muslims. How much information was transmitted orally to the local communities as sailors, traders, captives, and pirates returned to their homes with fictional and "factional" accounts of the Muslims and their world cannot be known.

Chapter 3

Former European prisoners of North Africa and their home country

The captivity of male and female Britons and other Europeans was part of the price of European empire, as Linda Colley has argued: the more the imperialists reached into other countries and regions, the more danger they faced of being captured and enslaved by the "natives." The captives were the "underbelly of British empire" and its commercial and military expansion—which is why British and other European governments prepared lists, memorandums, reports, depositions, proclamations and other material that described the experiences of captivity as well as the extent of royal and parliamentary efforts to ensure safety on the high seas. Governmental as well as ecclesiastical institutions and trading companies were involved in tracking, counting, negotiating for and ransoming captives, while princes and monarchs sent their fleets to attack and bombard the "pirate states" into submission.

1. Slave or Prisoner

What also needs to be recognized in the study of early modern captivity is the nature of captivity and the crucial difference between Muslim captivity of Christians and Christian captivity of Muslims. The North African Arabic sources present a major difference between the practice of captivity *(asr)* and slavery *('ubudiyya).* The two Arabic terms have been translated by European scholars as "slavery" and have been interchangeably used despite having very different meanings. Although historians of Muslim slavery have examined other terms, such as mamluk, it is important to note that in the Arabic sources of the Maghrib, only '*abd* (slave) and *aseer* (captive) are used. '*Ubudiyya* was practiced by Mediterranean and Atlantic Muslims and Christians against other races such as sub-Saharan Africans or American Indians; and as Christian theologians justified '*ubudiyya* throughout the conquest of the Americas, so did Muslim theologians justify enslaving '*abeed* from the country of the blacks, al-Sudan, to their punctilious rulers. '*Abeed* (pl. of '*abd*) were captives who were to spend the rest of their lives in slavery—as was the case with the Sudanese after their defeat by Mulay al-Mansur in 1591

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Both Muslim and Christian rulers and theologians, along with their God, had no qualms about the buying and selling of ’*abeed,* be it in Africa or America. *Asr,* however, was different from ’*ubudiyya*. *Asr* was a slavery that could be prevented or determined by mutual agreement. It was not the one-sided onslaught on a weaker and more vulnerable race but an exchange and commodification of soldiers and sailors, traders and travelers, men and women and children,
for the purposes of gaining ransom payments, exchanging them with captive coreligionists, or utilizing their skills. Throughout the early modern period, and especially between countries that either traded or fought, *asr* could be controlled, negotiated and bargained for because it pertained to captives who were taken in military or naval encounters between armies or privateers. To use the definition from Alexander H. de Groot (the only historian to recognize the difference), *asr* had the character of a stock exchange, while *’ubudiyya* had the character of a cattle market. The Magharibi always viewed the Europeans within the context of *asr,* where captives could be bargained for and ransomed, sold or bought; they were not ’*abeed*. Indeed, the fifteenth-century jurist Ahmad bin Yahya al-Wansharisi had expressly prohibited ’*ubudiyya*; a European captive *(aseer)* was always to have the opportunity of returning home.The Europeans, meanwhile, especially in Iberia and France, swung between the two modes of slavery. Sometimes the Muslim was an *aseer;* at others, especially in the case of those who refused to convert to Christianity, it was *’ubudiyya* from which there was no freedom and in which the captives lost their status as individuals. Moriscos who were captured during an attempted escape to North Africa were consigned with their wives and children to lifelong *’ubudiyya*. And after Charles V decreed that all Muslims in reconquered Spain had to be baptized,those who resisted were consigned to the same fate. In the appeal for help the Moriscos sent to the Ottoman ruler in 1501, they specifically indicated that they had become *’abeed*. There was no hope for them—unless the sultan intervened militarily, which he did not.

The distinction between *'ubudiyya* and *asr* constitutes the chief difference between Euro-Christian enslavement of Magharibi and Magharibi enslavement of Euro-Christians, and helps further explain why there are by far more writings by and about European *asara* in North Africa than there are about Muslim captives in Christendom: more captives returned from among the Muslims than from among the Christians. And while there were thousands of European captives in North Africa, thousands of them who did not die or convert returned to their countries if their ransoms were paid. But of the tens of thousands of Magharibi who were sold in the European slave markets, few of them returned, and if they were transported to the European plantations in America, then there was not even the hope of return. European captives could always be located and ransomed by their governments—if the governments wanted. The Magharibi had no America to where they could send European slaves forever.

2. The main sources of writing about the European prisoners in Algeria

Islamic piracy, enslavement of Europeans and violence against Christians were not sui generis nor were they symptoms of Muslim or native aggression .Such a view can only be upheld if historians are not only selective in their use of the European records of captivity, but more problematically, if they also ignore the records from the Islamic or North African side. True, there are by far more documents recording the history of European captives in Islamdom than of Muslims in Christendom. That is perhaps why it has been easier and more ideologically convenient to focus on European and ignore Muslim suffering. Why Muslims did not leave accounts of their captivity can be credited to many reasons, one of which is the absence of print. Without print, it was not possible to disseminate the numbers, names and dates of captives as in the European tradition, where pamphlets and lists of captives, their places of origin and the ransom prices were repeatedly printed. But instead of print, there was a rich oral culture about Magharibi captives that subsequently appeared in written anecdotes, recollections, biographical entries and letters.

Cumulatively, this material provides a portrait of the experience of Muslim captives in early modern Christendom—material that does not belong to a distinct genre of writing with its distinct set of conventions, as in the European tradition, nor to a body of macrohistorical documents and treatises. Rather, it appears as subtexts in other texts, intrusions into larger polemics, , or histories and religious expositions.

3. The Adventures of Mr Thomas. Smith

To draw further attention to the matter of captivity, a certain A. Roberts published The Adventures of (Mr T. S.) an English Merchant, Taken Prisoner by the Turks of Argiers. The account was supposed to have been written by "T. S.,"[17] who had been held captive from 1648 to 1652 but died before finishing the account. T. S. described his capture by Algerian pirates, the heroism of the English in fighting off the "Turks," and the cruelty of renegades who were more fierce—even cannibalistic—than the native Muslims. In the first few dozen pages, T. S. proposed to show the "strange Examples of the Proceedings of Providence"; the text was to be about Christian endurance—thus the invocation of Job40—and about the falsity of Islam. But as he (or perhaps Roberts) continued, T. S. changed his narrative into a story about life in Algeria that provided useful information to traders, travellers, sea commanders and theologians. He wrote about naval defences and the forts that were strong or weak, the social organization and military preparedness of the Algerians, and the Prophet of "these Heathens." He then told women. In this respect, T. S. is one of the rare Englishmen to claim affairs with Muslim women.Because he was handsome, women, both married and widowed, were attracted to him. One in particular, he reported, was so courageous in pursuing him that he finally fell in love with her and offered to

[17]The adventures of T. S., an English merchant taken prisoner by the Turkes at Argiers and carried into the inland countries of Africa; written by the author, and fitted for the public view by A. Roberts, London, 1670. About his "Happy time of . . . slavery" in which he had had numerous sexual escapades with local

marry her if she would be willing to escape with him back to England. Unfortunately, "She had two Children, a Boy and a Girl, that kept her in that place otherwise I think I had then got my Freedom and carryed her away." His case may well have been the sole account of sexual liaisons between a Christian man who survives and Muslim women in Barbary. After all, a Christian man caught with a Muslim woman was punished by death.42 After being sold from one owner to another, the worst being an English renegade, T. S. finally was sold to an "Officer of the Militia" who put him to military use. He traveled with his master around Algeria, fighting and killing and looting Bedouin tribes in the hinterlands where no European had ever been. In the course of describing troop movements and battles, ambushes and manoeuvres, T. S. presented a documentary overview of the country—its flora and fauna, its peoples and ethnicities, its mountain ranges and cities. This was the second account about Algeria (after Knight) by an Englishman who had personally lived in the land. Despite confirming the negative stereotypes about the sodomitical and superstitious Muslims of Algiers, T. S. showed that even captives could perform great actions among them.

To the reader of the account, captivity did not come across as a disastrous experience; rather, it seemed to open up venues for exploration and heroism. Indeed, T. S. showed how the Restoration captive had become, as Gerald MacLean has so aptly put it, an "ethnographic observer, sex-slave, soldier on the march, war correspondent, big-game hunter, diplomat and political adviser." Furthermore, captivity provided an alternative to the difficult life that T. S. would have led had he stayed in the England of the Civil War and Interregnum, with all the poverty and hunger that people experienced in those years. Finally, after all the difficulties and the excitement, T. S. was released in appreciation of his great English deeds among the North Africans, and he returned to his homeland loaded with gifts from his Turkish master. Perhaps that is the reason why the publisher added a few pages at the end by Richard Norris about the "Tide, and how to turn out of

the Straights-Mouth the Wind being Westerly." T. S. provided information about life within Islamic North Africa, and Norris provided directions on how to sail there.

4. The Moor on the Elizabethan Stage

At no other period in early modern English history did more plays include Moorish characters than in the second half of the Elizabethan period: The Battle of Alcazar, Titus Andronicus, The Play of Stucley, The Merchant of Venice, Lust's Dominion, Othello and the Fair Maid of the West, Part I.1 These plays constitute some of the finest in the Elizabethan repertoire, and important early studies by Eldred Jones, Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, Jack D'Amico and others examined the image of the Moor and its literary derivation. After G. K. Hunter's "Othello and Colour Prejudice" in 1967, historicist and postcolonial critics started treating the Moor from within the racial and cultural legacy of European exclusion and separateness. With the rise of interest in Islam, critics have moved beyond the racial to situate, or rather attempt to situate, the Elizabethan Moor within the context of Islamic-Christian relations and rivalries. In his seminal study The Moor in English Renaissance Drama (1991), Jack D'Amico drew attention to the importance of historical context in many of the "Moor" plays and masques. The commercial and diplomatic connections between England and Morocco, he argued, help explain why English playwrights became interested in Moors during the reign of Elizabeth.

4.1 The Battle of Alcazar

A play attributed to George Peele [18], the first on the English stage to present Moorish characters. Before the play, Moors had appeared in London pageants and sometimes in miracle plays. In 1585, Peele introduced a man "apparelled like a Moore" in his The Device of the Pageant Borne before Wolstan Dixi, and in 1587, Christopher Marlowe included the kings of Fez, Morocco and Algeria in Tamburlaine. All three kings had been tributaries of the Ottoman sultan, and all were defeated in battle and replaced by Tamburlaine's Persian followers. But Marlowe knew next

to nothing about the North African region except what he saw in Ortelius's atlas and what he had heard or read about the "cruel pirates of Argier"

Peele's The Battle of Alcazar is the only play in the whole Elizabethan repertoire to portray the Christian-Islamic conflict in North Africa with historical accuracy. Samuel Chew, however, was disappointed in it, "so clumsy that not even dumb-shows and a 'presenter' or expositor clarify the situations." But in his study of the play, A. R. Braunmuller [19] focused on what he believed to be its central theme: the question of royal succession. He argued that viewers of the play would recognize in the struggle for the throne of Morocco the struggle that bedevilled England and that had recently led to the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Peele's uses of "rightfull" and "lawfull," as well as other politically evocative terms, Alternatively, Peter Hyland argued that Peele's main concern in the play was the "complex of competing religious and political positions centred on the figure of Sebastian," and the uncertainty about Portugal's future under the Spanish Crown. The play described the rivalry between Spain and Portugal.

England in regard to the status of Portugal. While anxiety about succession and about Spanish control of Portugal was deeply felt by the audience, Peele addressed another more immediate and pressing anxiety by dramatizing from a Euro-Christian perspective the build-up to, and consequences of, the famous but disastrous battle. Although it is not known when exactly Peele wrote the play, John Yoklavich has argued that it must have been written sometime in the

[18] George Peele (baptised 25 July 1556 – buried 9 November 1596) was an English translator, poet, and dramatist, Christopher Marlowe, also known as Kit Marlowe was an English playwright, poet and translator of the Elizabethan era

[19] *A. R. Braunmuller teaches English and Comparative Literature at UCLA; his special interests are Renaissance and modern drama.*

period between July 1588 and 18 April 1589.

There was in this nine-month period such excitement about Moors that for the first time since 1551, the London Lord Mayor's Pageant included a number of Moors among its assemblage of characters. Peele rode the Moorish wave, and in writing a play about Moroccans and their relations with Europeans ten or more years after the actual events he described, he presented in his play not so much the anxiety about succession as excitement over the arrival of the Moroccan delegation from Mulay al-Mansur.

4.2 Thomas Heywood, The Fair Maid of the West, Part I

Thomas Heywood[20] prepared *The Fair Maid of the West, Part I* to celebrate the success of his monarch in dealing with Mulay al-Mansur. Heywood wrote a sea romance about a sailor and his beloved, Spencer and Bess, and the difficulties of commitment in the lives of seamen. But in act 4[21], he diverted the action toward the Anglo-Spanish conflict and the role that Morocco played in supporting England against Spain. The Moroccan material in the play shows some familiarity with, as well as confusion about, the history of the North African region. It could well be that upon the arrival of al-Annuri and his delegation in London, and with the negotiations ending without a firm commitment on the part of the queen, Heywood realized that there was a place for an entertaining Moorish subplot in his play. Heywood was relatively accurate in describing Anglo-Moroccan relations. Where he derived the name of Mullisheg is unclear: it is close to Mulay al-Sheikh, one of the sons of Mulay al-Mansur, but the references to Mullisheg's relations with the English more accurately apply to Mulay al-Mansur than to his son al-Sheikh, who conspire with

[20]Thomas Heywood (early 1570s – 16 August 1641) was an English playwright, actor, and author. His main contributions were to late Elizabethan and early Jacobean theatre

[21]Heywood, *Lust's Dominion*, act 4, scene 3, page 110

Spain. Still, the "intestine broils" to which Mullisheg refers recall the Alcazar battle that finally resolved the matter of succession in Morocco: "now at last established in the throne / Of our great ancestors, and reign King / Of Fez and great Morocco"

Heywood also stated how the English were exposed to Spanish attacks and how they found the Moroccans willing to protect them in the pirate port of "Mamorah" a port that was notoriously known, both in England and in the rest of Europe, to swarm with English pirates working in cooperation with local pirates. Heywood showed Florentine, Italian, French and other Christian merchants and captives in Marrakesh turning to the English Bess for help with the Moroccan ruler, in the same manner that, in the real world, they turned to Queen Elizabeth—in May 1599, the Dutch States General had asked the queen to try to effect the release of Dutch captives held by al-Mansur.

Heywood dramatized the relation between the English queen and al-Mansur through the figure of Bess (Elizabeth Bridges) who arrived at the court of the king of Fez. As soon as Mullisheg saw her, he declared his love for her and for the country from where she had come: Bess was the first English woman he had ever seen. "The English earth may well be term'd a heaven, that breeds such divine beauties". In the "pro-English universe" of this play, Heywood presented Bess as the Virgin Queen: the Spanish captives thought Bess "Famous Elizabeth" ,as did Mullisheg, "maid of England, like a queen". Heywood then continued with a fantasy of assurance and ethno-religious pride: Bess demanded a treaty from Mullisheg to ensure "safe conduct to and from her ship," "to be free from all violence either by the king or any of his people," and to permit "mariners fresh victuals aboard". Such a treaty echoed the demands that Queen Elizabeth and her court had repeatedly made to Mulay al- Mansur—and which the latter prevaricated over in the hope of a military alliance. The treaty to which Bess agreed reflected the hopes of the seamen and traders in the audience: to be safe and to be able to revictual in Morocco, without having to make national

or religious concessions to the Moors. A sense of English assuredness enabled Bess to keep her distance from the Moor despite his willingness to offer half his kingdom to the "beauteous English virgin." Bess was able to assume authority in Fez and to intercede on behalf of "Christians" whom she saved from the galleys. More kissing took place on stage as Mullisheg's "black face" smooched Bess's "white lips"—for the cause of Bess's English queen, her trading coreligionists, and her lover, Spencer. Heywood ended the play with Mullisheg magnanimously giving his blessing to the wedding of Spencer and Bess.

At no time did Heywood construct the Moor as "a religious threat to England," as Jean E. Howard has carefully noted. This religiously no dangerous Moor is significant because Heywood was the first Elizabethan playwright to link the figure of the Moor to Islam. No previous playwright had associated the racial difference of the Moors with the religion of Islam.

After Heywood, English drama about North Africa either made clear the Christianity of the Moors, or openly associated them with Islam. In The Triumphs of Truth, which was dramatized in 1613, Thomas Middleton captured that clash of color with religion: the Moorish king who appeared on stage saw "amazement" on the faces of his English hosts because his "black" skin revealed to them how far he was from "the true religion" of Christian "sanctity." Because they saw "darkness" and "error" in his face, he hastened to assure them that he had been led to the "true Christian faith" by "English merchants, factors, travellers."

5. The impact of captivity on the English community

The impact of Barbary captivity was an important factor. In similar fashion, the issue of Barbary captivity played a role in the transformation of female social and even political roles

5.1 Economic and military field

The Barbary corsairs threatened British ships in the mouths of the English Channel, the Bristol Channel and the waterways between Ireland and England. By spreading themselves from

Poole around Land's End to the island of Lundy, they endangered all shipping to and from the major western ports of England and Wales. In this respect, the corsairs were a serious cause of commercial and maritime destabilization. Aware of the magnitude of the crisis inherited from his father, and within weeks of assuming power, King Charles sent a letter to the Moroccan ruler, Mulay Zaidan, on behalf of the "many poore Christians made captives in your contry, both Engelishe and Frenche." In his first foray into Mediterranean foreign policy, King Charles reminded his addressee of the close relation between England and Morocco and confirmed the appointment of John Harrison as his representative.[22] Armed with that letter, John Harrison addressed in turn a "generall letter to the Moores" in which he expressed his hope "that Englishmen may no more be made captives as enemies, contrarie to those ancient priviledges in tymes past, but be released and set free."[23]. The letter seems to have had the desired effect: on 30 July 1625, Harrison sent a letter to the commander of the English fleet in the Mediterranean in which he mentioned that a proclamation had been made by the muqaddam (military commander) of Tetuan that "noe Englishman hereafter should bee bought or sould, as hearetofore, by the Turkes, or made captives, but freelie trade.

5.2 Political field

The crisis of captivity was generating an extensive and dissonant debate. Royalists, parliamentarians and members of the Privy Council were all finding themselves getting involved

[22] *Ibid.p73*

[23] *Ibid.p74*

in affairs taking place thousands of miles away, while traders were thinking of strategies to reduce their losses and, importantly, to urge the king to formulate some policy or initiate some action. And while there was a general conviction (and pride) that Britain had the might to confront the corsairs, the reality at sea was both dangerous and complex. Furthermore, there was a clear division between the merchants and the king—which is why the "business"

Already, a divergence was growing between the king's policy and the merchants' need: court and city were beginning the separation that would eventually polarize them on the battlefield. And while the proposals were discussed and debated, little was being done to ransom captives and reduce the danger to sailors and ships. Families and parishes thus reverted to the only action available to them to ransom their breadwinners from "Turkish thraldom": collecting charity even without government approval.

6.Conclusion:

Whatever measure is used to evaluate relations between Britain and Barbary, the evidence of a "diplomatic" community between them is far more extensive than with Turkey, China, Persia or India—notwithstanding the British ventures into those regions. There were more delegations and embassies to and from Barbary, more travellers and merchants, captives and captors, settlers and migrants, than in any other part of the non-Christian world. This level of community helps explain the role that Barbary played in Britain's literature of the Golden Age, from Spenser to Dryden, and in the historical and political changes that occurred in that most revolutionary of centuries. No other non-Christian region wielded as much direct influence on English imagination as did Barbary—an influence that informed plays, poems, novels, autobiographies, memoirs, travelogues and histories, in English as well as in translation from French, Spanish and other European languages. Quite direct too was the impact of Barbary captivity on London's population in the 1630s and 1640s. Although the ecclesiastical and parliamentary conflicts with King Charles

were the most decisive causes of the Civil Wars, the impact of Barbary captivity was an important factor. In similar fashion, the issue of Barbary captivity played a role in the transformation of female social and even political roles. It was fortunate for kinswomen of captives that as their breadwinners were seized into North Africa, and as they turned to agitate and petition, the civic order was being loosened and was giving way to challenges from women writers and "prophets" and sectarian movements. The emergence of women petitioners coincided not only with Britain's expanding commerce in the Mediterranean but also with the destabilization of patriarchal codes by civil strife and military conflict.

General conclusion

General conclusion:

In the seventeenth century, a paradigm shift took place as a result of the political, military and social change that had occurred in Britain. English writings about Barbary corresponded to Britain's transition from a trading to an imperial power. It was a transition from a society that had to negotiate relations with Islam to one that grew militarily and commercially powerful enough to dominate the Islamic seas. the Barbary States and the rest of the Islamic Mediterranean were instrumental in refashioning the British self-image and determining historical, political and commercial choices. Whatever measure is used to evaluate relations between Britain and Barbary, the evidence of a "diplomatic" community between them is far more extensive than with Turkey, China, Persia or India—notwithstanding the British ventures into those regions. There were more delegations and embassies to and from Barbary, more travellers and merchants, captives and captors, settlers and migrants, than in any other part of the non-Christian world. This level of community helps explain the role that Barbary played in Britain's literature of the Golden Age, from Spenser to Dryden, and in the historical and political changes that occurred in that most revolutionary of centuries. No other non-Christian region wielded as much direct influence on English imagination as did Barbary—an influence that informed plays, poems, novels, autobiographies, memoirs, travelogues and histories, in English as well as in translation from French, Spanish and other European languages. Quite direct too was the impact of Barbary captivity on London's population in the 1630s and 1640s. Although the ecclesiastical and parliamentary conflicts with King Charles were the most decisive causes of the Civil Wars, the impact of Barbary captivity was an important factor. In similar fashion, the issue of Barbary captivity played a role in the transformation of female social and even political roles.

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