

## **Playwrights and Apostates: Individuality, Conversion and the Interfaith Marriage in Early Modern English Drama**

*ABSTRACT:* This paper discusses a small group of English plays from the early seventeenth century that produced images of Turkish figures and culture from the eyes of the Englishman. Past analyses of these “Turk plays” have focused on the image of the Turk or the English renegade. My analysis, however, examines the plays’ characterizations of Turkish and English identity as they meet within interfaith marriages and heterosexual relationships. I argue that the plays empowered individuals by claiming that their actions within the interfaith marriage had consequences on an international scale. This empowerment, in turn, redefined English notions of masculinity and empire. In my analysis, I use close readings of three plays while maintaining a historicist approach. This paper will be useful to those interested in English representations of Islam, English patriarchy, and the cultural context of the interfaith marriage.