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Merlin: The Medieval Embodiment of Overcoming the Devil

Merlin, child of a demon and pious woman, first appears in late twelfth century literature and develops uncanny prophetic abilities and unnatural powers rooted in his supernatural heritage, transforming him into a mysterious figure empowered by knowledge and cloaked in dichotomies resulting from his mixed parentage. The Cantigas de Santa Maria, a mid-thirteenth century Iberian collection of exemplum honoring Holy Mary reportedly composed by Alfonso X of Castile, H P S K D V L] H 0 H U O L Q ¶ V F hrow Merlin [± Q H D W W X U H Q F U H G D W L ³ Q D W D Q retaliated against a Jew who insulted Holy Mary by S S H D O L Q J W R * R G W R F D X V H W

F U H D W H D S U R S K H W Z K R Z L O O [3] F R Q Y [illegible] W K H S H R S
deceive men and women alike, just as the prophets worked against [demons] when [demons] had
W K H P [5] K H [illegible] most prophets, who work to strengthen belief in God and religious
practice, the demons made Merlin as an aid to help induce sin. [6] Robert H [S O L F L W O \ V W D W H V
demons plotted to conceive a man who would work to deceive R W K [7] H U V ´ O L Q ¶ V F R Q F H S W L
was the result of this plan.

According to Robert, the demon assigned to conceive a demonic prophet labored deviously for
years, deceiving and tormenting a family in pursuit of one of its pious, virginal daughters.
Eventually W K H G H Y L O ¶ V

convinces him that her prior sent her to speak with him and lead him home. Demonic trickery causes him to break his silence and follow a woman. He eventually realizes that the demon is deceiving him, causing the demon to flee and inflict him with storms. This story implies that anger WKH VDPH WUDLW WKDW RQH HQFRXQWHUV GHPRQV GHPRQVWUDWHV relating how his initial anger enabled the demon to trick him.

Nancy Caciola argues that medieval work feminized demons, and demonized females, connecting them as evil sexual lures to delegitimize female political and religious influence.[23] Caesarius connects demons with femininity by a trait that Merlin also displays in the story by

P D Q N L Q G F H D V H W R [34] This prophecy exhibits multiple apocalyptic and nightmarish themes that pervade Merlin¶ V

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the greatest contemporary knight, Balain.[61] However, unlike the fallen angels whose hubris goes unpunished, Merlin is punished because he utilizes his knowledge to profit Britain and the kings, not to usurp their power.

Even though he ultimately works to better Britain, many of his prophecies predict destruction and turmoil reminiscent of Hell. Wall explains that Hell is commonly depicted as a chaotic flaming

Despite the fact that Merlin exhibits many demonic characteristics, he associates himself with God. In Robert G H % R U R Q, ¶ 0 H U O L Q D Q G E R X Q G W V W L I L H V ³ ¶ 7 K D W > K H K D V @ N both

Ilana BenEzra

Phillip Emeritz

Feminine Power in the Ottoman Harem

Women in Muslim culture are often viewed in the Western world as oppressed, powerless beings; within the harem, they are no more than slaves and sexual objects. However, women were, in fact, deeply integrated into Muslim society.[1] The purpose of this paper is to illuminate some of the misconceptions and realities concerning women in Islamic culture. More specifically, it examines the *valide sultans* , in the Ottoman imperial harem during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, arguably the height of female power in Islamic history.

The term harem comes from the Islamic root *h-r-m*, which denotes a sacred area with no gender specifications.[2] It is only through rumor and misinterpretation that the Western world has assigned such a confined, erotic image of this social structure. It cannot be questioned that women were unequal with men in society, but women commanded a surprising amount of

-dominated society.[3] These bargains shaped female subjectivity and ideology, and were susceptible to change through historical transformations. The power exercised by the *valides* in the Ottoman Empire is an excellent example of this concept as it reveals the extensive changes in Ottoman royal life and political authority during this period. The harem has been described by historians as a political arena for women as early as between the 4th and 11th century.[4]

Patronage in Islamic society was an important signifier of status and influence.[5] The sixteenth and seventeenth century witnessed a shocking rise in female architectural patronage coupled with a dramatic decrease in public projects bestowed by the sultan. This is one of the significant aspects of the *valide*. This essay analyzes female patronage in general as well as two specific cases; the Atik Valide Mosque commissioned by Nurbanu Sultan in the sixteenth century and the Yeni Valide Mosque endowed by Hatice Turhan Sultan in the seventeenth century. These two *valide sultans* appropriately represent the rise and height of the period that many historians have

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[6] The harem was not a prison for women; it was merely another stage for political power.

Let us first outline some of the Western misconceptions about the harem and women in Islamic society. Juxtaposing these ideas with the prominence of the *valide* will reveal how inaccurate these assumptions are and the reality of feminine power in the Ottoman Empire. The European traveler Hans Derschwam visited Istanbul in the mid-sixteenth century and commented that women were entirely invisible and separated in society.[7] He noted their lack of public appearance, use of retinues and the veil while outside, and the intense restrictions of Islamic law on women. However, this observation was quite inaccurate
prejudices rather than understanding of Islamic society. Asli Sancar reinforces this erroneous

the harem without any individual [8] Western observers did not have the information available to historians today, which would have completely upset their ideas concerning the harem. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, female architectural projects increased dramatically.[9] Buildings were constructed by or dedicated to women in both Istanbul and the Ottoman provinces. Public endowments were one of several activities that women engaged in, which are discussed further below. What is particularly ironic about Derschw
and Western ideology is that they assumed the veil was a sign of subjugation and disenfranchisement, when it fact it was a practice most commonly promoted by the upper class.[10] Lower class women were much more open in public, which was a problem in Ottoman society addressed by law edicts, or kanunnames, issued by the sultans. Women of means fashioned the veil as a form of esteem and respect in Islamic society rather than it bearing shame or punishment.

Another Western misconception about the harem is that it was gender specific, when it actually referred to male as well as female spaces.[11] The imperial harem, *harem-i humayun*, was the name given to the third and innermost courtyard of Topkapi palace, which was reserved specifically

into the *haremlik*, the area allocated for women, and the *selamlik*, the area prescribed to men.[12] Gendered quarters were separated in the palace, but women were secluded from men almost as much as men from women. In fact, the seclusion of women to their own space resulted in the development of a private society.[13] Women established their own community in the harem and

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[22] Moreover, the changing significance of female roles affected the hierarchy of power and thus caused conflict between royal women. The emergence of the *valide* was preceded by the *haseki*
mother became more important than that of wife, the two positions clashed.[23] A primary example of this conflict is between Mahpeyker Kosem Sultan and Hatice Turhan Sultan, which is examined in the section regarding the seventeenth century *valide*.

Lastly, it is important to recognize the role of women in the public sphere of Muslim societyoy.

sultans commissioned very few public projects and only the queen mothers endowed buildings within the capital city.[31] This was in part a result of the chaotic system of succession in the Ottoman dynasty, where an heir ascended to the throne if they were capable of eliminating their rivals. Due to this unpredictable and violence-
political survival in order to establish their own authority.[32]

In the sixteenth century, the royal family was confined to Istanbul and only the sultan could travel outside the capital.[33] This greatly expanded the inhabitants of the imperial harem at Topkapi palace and affected the political operations therein. Royal women that were not mothers, as well as the women of a deceased sultan, were moved to the Old Palace.[34] Coupled with this transformation was a reconsideration of dynastic succession. Rather than having an open throne upon the death of the sultan, dynastic continuity through seniority was established.[35] This ended the rampant fratricide and civil war that accompanied the deaths of previous sultans and created a stable line of succession. Now, let us examine the emergence of the position of *valide sultan* as it generally played into Ottoman politics. Then, we will elaborate on the client networks used by the *valide* as well as the reflections of architecture on gendered roles. With all of that information provided, it will be easy to recognize the reigns of Nurbanu and Turhan in terms of Muslim female power and sociopolitical transformations in Istanbul.

Starting in the mid-fifteenth century, sultans only took slave concubines as their sexual

was guaranteed.[40] The *valide* became deeply entrenched in the political affairs of the sultan, her son, and operated as a co-regent to the Ottoman ruler. When Turhan died near the end of the

spatial politics and historical transformations resul [48] In this

the sultan and the post sexual matriarch. Kosem remained in power and cha
rule, accordingly due to the new *valide*
Suleyman II, whose mother could more easily be manipulated.[61] However, Turhan was not going

Meleki Hatun, betrayed her plans to Turhan, who then had Mahpeyker killed by the black eunuchs during a political coup.[62]

Turhan became *valide sultan* in 1651 with the death of Kosem.[63] She was supported by the Muslim society because of the investment in queen mothers and quickly began exercising her power as co-
patron was creating the two forts Seddulbahir and Kumkale on the Dardanelles, the strait connecting the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara.[64] This was an unusual endowment for a *valide*, but is understandable in the context of her ascension. Turhan claimed the role of queen mother through a violent coup and it was critical that she assure the Muslim society that she was a capable leader. The construction of these military strongholds on an important naval passage impressed the idea of Turhan as a protector of the empire. She secured her position in the

was the Yeni Valide Mosque Complex. This structure had been started by Safiye Sultan at the end of the sixteenth century, but was not finished until Turhan commissioned its completion in 1670.[65] As noted above, one of the key features of the structure was the

War. For four years Bishop and the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG)

Exploring the 1983 U.S.-led invasion of Grenada, this paper is primarily a story of diplomacy, military interventionism, and foreign-

does send."[28]

Prior U.S. military maneuvers, administrative hype, and official reports, however, indicated otherwise that policymakers anticipated some type of conflict. In the early eighties American naval fleets participated in a series of exercises called Operation Ocean Venture around a set of Puerto Rican islands called "Amber and the Amberdines." This could have been a codename for Grenada and the Grenadines. Grenada was also off the Venezuelan coastline and could have affected sea lines of communication (SLOC), including important oil tanker, cargo ship, and naval routes around the Atlantic and South America. Moreover, President Reagan repeatedly claimed that Grenada's construction of a military-grade airport would serve as a transit point for Soviet and Cuban arms shipments and soldiers to and from proxy wars and hotspots in Africa and Central America.[29] One Grenadian commented, "I'm inclined to believe it [the airport] was more a propaganda push…I can see no evidence at all to indicate it could have been anything else."[30] Yuri Pavlov, head of the Soviet Foreign office's Latin American division, remarked, "No one in his right mind was thinking in Moscow…of turning Grenada into yet another Cuba. It was too small and too susceptible to economic and political pressures and could not be defended militarily."[31] Despite the lack of proper intelligence, the Reagan administration's Cold Warrior rhetoric nonetheless remained strong through the first term. After the October massacre, Herbert E. Meyer, Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council (NIC), wrote, "To be sure, we have no direct evidence of Soviet involvement in the Grenada coup [but] it is standard Kremlin procedure to violently replace an ally with a stooge."[32] "Our intelligence there was primitive. There was virtually none, really," insisted National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane.[33]

Even without clear information on Soviet involvement, U.S. officials still viewed Cuban communist adventurism and the evolving crisis on the island as possible regional destabilizers. Conservative Caribbean leaders, aligned with American interests, held this perspective, as well. The heavily armed island, stockpiled with foreign-supplied weapons, was close in proximity to other nations, a chief concern in the Eastern Caribbean. "We could have supplied the Caribbean," noted former political prisoner and lawyer Lloyd Noel.[34] The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), chaired by Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica, cited a potential threat to surrounding islands. Governor General Scoon, under RMC house arrest and the sole remaining official with legitimate constitutional power, managed to send Charles secret messages requesting intervention. Backed by Prime Minister Tom Adams of Barbados, Prime Minister Edward Seaga of Jamaica, and other Caribbean leaders, Charles and the OECS requested U.S. assistance for "a pre-emptive defensive strike in order to remove a dangerous

[28] Steele, *Grenada*,415.

[29] Strober, *Reagan*, 251; Edward A. Lynch, *Central America* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 129.

[30] Government official, interview by author.

[31] Yuri Pavlov, Episode 18 "Backyard," Cold War Series, National Security Archive/George Washington University, published 21 February 1999.

[32] "The Importance of Grenada," NIC 7692-83, Herbert E. Meyer, 26 October 1983, CIA Freedom of Information Act Reading Room.

[33] Strober, *Reagan*, 262.

[34] Lloyd Noel, interview by author, tape recording, 22 June 2009, St. George's, Grenada.

threat to peace and security to the region."[35] Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger reflected that the Charles "made a particularly eloquent plea to President Reagan, pointing out the very real threat Grenada's radical government (by then virtually an anarchy) posed to all of the outer Caribbean states."[36] Colonel Oliver North, later embroiled in the Iran-Contra Affair, remembered that "her influence was critical. She was the Margaret Thatcher of the Caribbean. She was regarded across the Caribbean as a staunch believer in democracy."[37] Scholar Russell Crandall encapsulates the Caribbean perspective, "In fact, from the beginning of the crisis, the Caribbean nations were out well ahead of the United States in their belief that a U.S.-led invasion was both desirable and necessary."[38]

Regarding the dire situation on Grenada itself, the Reagan administration

Reagan's hawkish decision to invade Grenada may have been hasty, as the administration only gave a few days for planning a full-on raid and assembling a joint operation among the armed services and participating Caribbean nations. Deemed Operation Urgent Fury, military commanders scrambled to coordinate logistics, reroute naval fleets, and mobilize traditional forces and special operations. U.S. Atlantic Command Admiral Wesley McDonald, who had overall control of Urgent Fury, remarked, "The planning time was very compressed." Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf, commander of the Second Fleet, took control of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), "I received orders to stand by for the rescue of U.S. citizens who were in peril…I was told to send a flotilla—which was on its way to Beirut as a normal rotation relief—south. And that got my attention: What were we going down there for?"[42] Reagan's chief objectives for Urgent Fury "were to protect and evacuate approximately 1,000 U.S. citizens, neutralize the Grenadian and Cuban forces, and stabilize the internal situation so that democratic government could be restored."[43] Building on the Executive's goals, Metcalf provided three military strategies, "to protect the lives of US citizens caught in the factional fighting between rival Grenadian leftists; to restore order and conditions for democratic government; and to eradicate Cuban, Soviet, and other East Bloc influences on the island."[44] Commodore Robert S. Owens, deputy chief of staff for operations, mentioned, "Commanders were directed to ensure minimum casualties to both friendly and Grenadian people. We didn't want to go down there and tear the island apart."[45] Despite such measures and goals, concern for the well-being of the Grenadian people themselves was by and large absent through these diplomatic and military developments. Because of the lack of intelligence and an understanding of local conditions, American and pan-Caribbean perceptions of the situation differed from how the common Grenadian, not American students or foreign nationals, felt on the ground. Again, the Cold War mentality was not particularly relevant to local people, but many Grenadians hoped that external action would overturn the RMC's marshal law. Frederick asserted, "That period represented a kill or be killed scenario."[46] An intervention was "the only way things would be different in Grenada," expressed Governor General Scoon.[47]

At the U.S. Embassy in Barbados, Caribbean leaders further pandered to Ambassador Milan Bish, who informed the Reagan administration of the known request for intervention. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Charles Gillespie also joined the meetings to discuss responses to the situation. Contrary to some prior interpretations on the OECS request, Grenadians knew of plans to invade and evacum[(1ꝋ38 4tude4(nts( )] TJETBT1 0 0 13271.33 2

for special and conventional elements to carry out their missions. Engaged combat quickly corrected the intelligence community's blunder, exposed pragmatism among soldiers and their superiors, and allowed for last-minute changes to plans. Although most tasks succeeded, to be sure, communication errors and bad intelligence caused some to fail in misfortune or embarrassment.[68] T

hardly a fraction of the weapons and accoutrements available to the US forces and their Caribbean auxiliaries…the Grenadian forces and their Cuban allies were nevertheless ready when the US troops landed to put up a fiercer fight than Washington or any outside observer foresaw."[74] The construction workers, supplemented by Cuban soldiers, certainly knew how to fight and confirmed U.S. estimates that they were militarily-trained. In

grouped…and slowly began to engage in reconnaissance. The Yankee planes landed on the runway. I kept watching their movements. A few minutes later we were attacked. I had a rifle and shot back."[87] In the city itself, U.S. troops snaked their way through the streets of St. George's. They were "maneuvering through the drains on either side," one Grenadian remembered. Some individual soldiers' stealth movements shocked and surprised locals. An islander recollected, "I remember sitting on my parent's veranda…I suddenly looked up and looked straight into a pair of eyes of an American soldier. It was the most startling thing!"[88] On Richmond Hill, just below the prison, Frederick and his friends watched the invasion forces near the coast. Witnessing a violent act, he recounted, "We were looking through binoculars and saw when the guy came out of the [American] helicopter with his hands up and the guy [resistance] shot him…And then he dragged him...there was a beach on the side and he dragged him down to the water." Frederick conveyed, "It was a grueling experience.x Ꝺ Ꝺ Ꝋ

tasks succeeded as planned.[94]

an invasion. It was a rescue mission."[100]

Concurrent with psychological operations, U.S. and Caribbean soldiers and intelligence officers rooted out and interrogated revolutionaries and foreign nationals. On his way to setting up a defensive line in the parish of St. David, the 82nd Airborne captured Chester Humphrey and placed him under detention at Point Salines, along with other PRA and Cuban fighters. Humphrey would be arraigned and released numerous times and later became a labor unionist leader. U.S. personnel searched extensively for other members in St. George's. Ferron Lowe recounts his experience:

> I was one of the people taken out by the Americans…I was taken about five or six days after the invasion because there were different agents telling them who were involved…They mashed up my home…When they pulled me out they put me down in the street and put their feet on my head and my face on the bare street…They really terrorized my parent's house [and] took all my personal documents."

Like Humphrey, soldiers took Lowe to Point Salines. Confined behind barbed wire with other Grenadian resistance, as well as Cubans who awaited deportation, Lowe was detained and sleep deprived for four days. Americans interrogated Lowe about his involvement in the revolution and his connections to other communist countries. "Eventually after four days they realized I'm not one the bigwigs," he remarked. "The main thing was to break you psychologically."[102] Peter David, too, had been questioned. "I was detained on several occasions," he said. "Certain persons were painted in a certain way [and sought after]." After a series of interrogations, officials released David and ordered him not to take part in any political activities. He recollected, "You've already been detained and questioned and you are…no longer a threat. [The Americans then] gave me a green card that permitted me to travel throughout my own country."[103] Moreover, U.S. personnel had interRRN0p[illegible]1NBC0SJ[illegible]N0VA(00U[illegible]

> from an oppressive regime, U.S. combat casualties were insignificant, hundreds of students had been evacuated without a single injury, it was all over comparatively quickly, and American troops had been welcomed as liberators by many.[106]

After combat operations ended on November 2, the 82nd Airborne and a Caribbean peacekeeping contingent stayed behind to keep order during the island's transition. Most troops left by late December, in time for the Christmas holiday. At the request of Grenada's Advisory Council and Caribbean leaders, as well as the Reagan administration's urging, a couple hundred U.S.-

The U.S.-led invasion of Grenada was certainly, then, in many ways an aberration during the Cold War, especially in the developing world. The U.S. often supported western-style democracies, repressive regimes, or counterrevolutionaries through direct assistance or backdoor channels. Regionally, the Grenada episode was a unique case in Latin America and the Caribbean. While many countries willingly accepted or appealed for economic aid, not too many places in the developing world resoundingly supported military interventions or openly received American boots on the ground.

USAID Officer Hariadene Johnson reflected, "I'd never been any place where Americans were not more popular than Grenada. They really and truly appreciated the fact that Ronald Reagan had sent the troops down. They did not feel that it was an invasion. They felt that the troops came to save them and they went out of their way to express appreciation to any American, tourist, government official, or what have you. At the same time, they were bitterly disappointed, because they felt that by coming down there that America had more or less adopted the island and why didn't we turn it in to another Puerto Rico and that Puerto Rico was their symbol for success in the Caribbean," *American Memory Project*, interview by W. Haven North, 8 September 1998.