

# The Sultan Speaks

## The Sultan Speaks

DIALOGUE IN ENGLISH PLAYS  
AND HISTORIES ABOUT THE  
OTTOMAN TURKS

Linda McJannet



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"The Sultan Speaks" is the first study of English historical plays about the Turks in relation to their sources and analogues, including histories originating in Greek, Arabic, and Turkish. Drawing on Bakhtin's concept of the dialogic and on narrative theory, McJannet traces the transmission of these eastern sources and analyzes Richard Knolles's citation of the "Turks' own chronicles," the historiographic equivalent of letting the sultan speak. She demonstrates that while the historians increasingly contain the sultan's words with adverse authorial commentary, playwrights such as Marlowe and Fulke Greville use both dialogue and commentary to "enhance the sultan's stature and to mitigate his negative acts.

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