

**BLURRING BOUNDARIES:
THE TRANSMISSION OF MILLENNIAL INFORMATION
ACROSS THE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY JUDEO-
CHRISTIAN FRONTIER**

by

Brandon John Marriott

Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminology, Simon Fraser University, 2004

Bachelor of Arts degree in History, Simon Fraser University, 2006

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APPROVAL

Name: Brandon John Marriott
Degree: Master of Arts in History
Title of Thesis: Blurring Boundaries: The Transmission of Millennial Information Across the Seventeenth-Century Judeo-Christian Frontier

Examining Committee:

Chair: Dr. John Craig
Professor and Chair of the Department of History

Dr. Luke Clossey
Assistant Professor, Department of History
Senior Supervisor

Dr. Thomas Kuhn
Assistant Professor, Department of History
Supervisor

Dr. Derryl MacLean
Associate Professor, Department of History
Supervisor

Dr. Paulo Horta
Assistant Professor, Department of World Literature
External Examiner

Date Defended/Approved:

20 March 2008



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ABSTRACT

This study explores the manner in which religious ideas transcended political, geographical, linguistic, and religious frontiers in the seventeenth century. Focusing on the Judaic Sabbatian movement in the Ottoman Empire and the Christian Fifth Monarchy Men in England, this project examines the networks of communication that merchants, diplomats, and millenarians utilized in order to spread millennial news between these two locations and groups. As such, this study blurs the boundary between the Sabbatian movement and Fifth Monarchy Men by highlighting their interconnections and simultaneously provides insight into early-modern cross-religious interactions and globalization.

Keywords: Sabbatian Movement; Sabbatai Sevi; Fifth Monarchy Men; Fifth Monarchy Movement; England; Ottoman Empire; Christianity; Judaism; Syncretism; Early-Modern World; Merchants; Diplomats; Millenarians; Intellectual History; Apocalypticism; Millennialism; Cross-Religious Influence; Cross-Religious Transmission; Networks of Communication; Early-Modern Globalization

Subject Terms: Shabbethai Tzevi, 1626-1676; Sabbathaians; Fifth Monarchy Men; Millennium Eschatology

DEDICATION

To my brother, with hopes that one day he will write his own.

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I once heard a professor remark that every master's thesis is essentially co-authored. This thesis is no exception. The guidance, advice, comments, and questions of my senior supervisor, Dr. Luke Clossey, have influenced this thesis and my academic work and perspective in more ways than I am truly cognisant of. Alongside Dr. Clossey, I would like to thank the other professors at Simon Fraser University whose excellent teachings have been instrumental in facilitating my decision to study history and whose assistance has helped me pursue and complete my master's degree, in particular, Dr. Thomas Kuhn, Dr. Derryl MacLean, Dr. Paulo Horta, and Dr. Paul Sedra. Thanks to Dr. Alex Dawson and Dr. John Craig for graciously chairing my thesis prospectus defence and my thesis defence respectively, and to Dr. Andrew Redden for his thoughts and advice on this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank my family members, Ron, Gwen, Jason, and friends, Michael, Laura, Pheroze, Zoe, who have read and commented on my thesis or have had to listen to me talk about this project for the past two years.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	viii
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW, AND HISTORIOGRAPHY	1
Introduction	1
The Fifth Monarchy Men	5
The Sabbatian Movement	8
Defining Millennial	11
The Historiography	14
Chapter 2: MERCHANTS AND DIPLOMATS	20
The Merchant Routes.....	20
Written Merchant Transmission.....	29
The Diplomatic Routes	33
Written Diplomatic Transmission.....	37
Chapter 3: MILLENARIANS	44
The Millenarian Routes	44
Written Millenarian Transmission	67
Chapter 4: COMPARING, BLURRING, AND INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCES	76
Comparing Similar Stories	76
One Source, Two Letters	81
Cross-Religious Influences	83
Blurring of Agents, Paths, and Information.....	85
Conclusion	94
Reference List	99
Archival Sources	99
Ben Zvi Institute, Jerusalem:	99
Bodleian Library, Oxford:	99
Bristol Public Record Office, Bristol:	99
Jewish Theological Seminary, New York:	99

New York Public Library, New York:	100
National Archives, Kew, London:	100
Primary Documents.....	100
Secondary Studies	101

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Charting Conclusions	5
Figure 2: Picture of James Nayler and Sabbatai Sevi	27
Figure 3: Merchant Transmission Map	29
Figure 4: Diplomatic Transmission Map	37
Figure 5: Millenarian Transmission Map.....	67

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, OVERVIEW, AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

Introduction

One morning in 1651, a five-year-old girl awoke in England and told her father, the Presbyterian vicar of Earls Colne, that Jesus had come to her and said he should “rayne upon the earth 10000 years.”¹ Fifteen years later, a hundred Jews travelled to the city of Hebron in the Ottoman Empire. Once they reached the designated place, they removed all of their clothes and rolled around naked in the snow. The Jews continued this practice for several days, and according to Abraham Cuenque, “The Muslims beheld it every day.”²

Although these two events occurred over three thousand kilometres away from each other, they are both part of a larger socio-religious trend in which millennial ideas spread across the Judeo-Christian world. These millennial movements were distinct, due to their specific historical contexts, and alike, based in underlying similarities and connections. The first anecdote illustrates the growth of Christian millennial thought in England as witnessed by the emergence of the Fifth Monarchy Men. The second account describes a snow immersion ritual, a custom of the Judaic Sabbatian movement. While religious, political, military, and linguistic frontiers separated these two movements, the

¹ Bernard Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-century English Millenarianism* (London, Faber and Faber, 1972), 38.

² John Freely, *The Lost Messiah: In Search of the Mystical Rabbi Sabbatai Sevi* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2001), 76.

Fifth Monarchy Men were connected to the Sabbatian movement through a dense network of religious communications and ideas.³

An example of early-modern cross-religious transmission is revealed in examining the spread of the two-messiah theory. The Christian scholar Guillaume Postel (1510-1581) advanced the theory that there could be two messiahs, one for the Jews and one for the Gentiles. This theory was co-opted by the French Marrano Isaac La Peyrere (1594-1676),⁴ who put forth a modified version that attracted the attention of the prince of Condé and Queen Christina of Sweden. In 1654, Menasseh ben Israel, a Jewish rabbi from Amsterdam, met La Peyrere, the prince of Condé, and Queen Christina in the Habsburg Netherlands. Ben Israel was impressed with La Peyere's two-messiah theory and shared it with his Christian friends, including the millenarian Nathaniel Holmes in England. Ben Israel, however, did not present it as La Peyere's idea. Instead, he portrayed it as an ancient Jewish view. When Holmes heard this theory, he employed it alongside his Christian beliefs to accept the messiahship of Sabbatai

³ This study employs the terms "Judeo-Christian boundary" and "Judeo-Christian frontier" in different manners. The Judeo-Christian boundary refers to the artificially constructed historiographical division that the most authoritative historians of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian movement have created by examining these movements only within their specific religious context, while neglecting or demonstrating hostility towards cross-religious influences and connections. Following Richard White, this study uses the term "Judeo-Christian frontier" to describe a "middle ground" in which people in the seventeenth century shared their different ideas and conceptions with each other creating new forms and practices. As such, the Judeo-Christian frontier refers to an intellectual space in which seventeenth-century Christians and Jews discussed their millennial ideas, shared them with each other, and created syncretic beliefs that incorporated elements from both traditions. For more on the idea of the "frontier" or the "middle ground," see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁴ These individuals have also been labelled "New Christians" and "Conversos." This study will employ the term "Marranos" to refer to these people, even though it has been used in a pejorative manner to mean "filth" or "swine," because other historians, such as Barnai, use this term to refer to this group.

Sevi. The growth of this theory was so profuse that by the end of the seventeenth century Christian theologians were publishing material to refute it.⁵

The spread of the two-messiah theory is an example of cross-religious transmission and syncretism. While a Christian scholar created the theory, a Jewish rabbi appropriated it. The theory was then transmitted across the Jewish-Christian frontier a second time when the rabbi shared it with his Christian friends. These Christians used the theory to reconcile competing Christian and Judaic millennial principles, creating a set of syncretic beliefs.

The movement of this theory and its contrasting usage by different individuals acts as an example of the overall approach of this study. Utilizing a network analysis methodology, the following chapters explore the circulation of millennial ideas across the seventeenth-century Judeo-Christian frontier.⁶ The first chapter describes the beliefs and actions of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian believers. It also explores the historiographies of these movements and cross-religious interactions. The remaining chapters, two through four, discuss the paths of millennial communication by three sets of agents: merchants, diplomats, and millenarians. These chapters include a thematic examination of the written millennial news that was transmitted by each group. The study ends with a preliminary investigation into the cross-religious influences of the information that was spread along these routes.

⁵ Richard Popkin, "Jewish-Christian Relations in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: The Conception of the Messiah," *Jewish History* Vol. 6 No. 1-2 (1992), 164-166.

⁶ Although this study centres on communication between England and the Ottoman Empire, it also includes millennial transmission from Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Overall, this study discusses both the general modes in which millennial ideas were circulated between England and the Ottoman Empire and the specific paths that connected Fifth Monarchists to Sabbatian believers.⁷ These latter routes are important in demonstrating connections across the artificially constructed Judeo-Christian frontier. Moreover, they show that the seventeenth-century religious boundaries and identities were more porous than acknowledged, which challenges the historiographical perspective that categorizes and divides the creation and growth of early-modern Judeo-Christian millennial thought according to its specific religious tradition.⁸ The following chart highlights the conclusions of this study. It lists the agents who transmitted the millennial news, the type of information they spread, and their paths of communication.

⁷ This thesis is concerned with both contact and content. The first part of every section focuses on establishing the routes of contact, while the latter part discusses the content of information that was transmitted along these paths. Although this project centres on connections, it is necessary to note that the individuals in this study are not indicative of the general population in the seventeenth century. In England, continental Europe, and the Ottoman Empire, many people were interested in these millennial ideas; however, the individuals that this study focuses on had above average education, linguistic skills, ability to travel, and knowledge of religious doctrine. Therefore, while these people and their connections are extremely important, they are not representative of the general early-modern population.

⁸ This Judeo-Christian frontier is artificially constructed by the most authoritative historians of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian movement who focus on discussing each movement only in its specific religious history (see footnote 3). This leads them away from exploring the cross-religious connections between the two movements, which further solidifies the historiographical perspective that divides them based upon religion. As such, this study demonstrates that this boundary constructed by these historians is more porous than they acknowledge.

Figure 1: Charting Conclusions

Agents	Types of Transmission	Judaic → Christian	Christian → Judaic
Merchants	Oral and Written	- Ottoman Empire to England - Ottoman Empire to Continental Europe and England	- <u>England to the Ottoman Empire</u>
Diplomats	Written and by Individuals	- Ottoman Empire to England - <u>Ottoman Empire to Continental Europe</u>	
Millennialists	Oral and Written	- Ottoman Empire to Continental Europe and England - <u>Continental Europe to England</u>	- <u>Continental Europe to the Ottoman Empire</u>

— This path is connected as the information was transmitted from diplomats to millennialists
— This path is contested
— This path is unconfired

The Fifth Monarchy Men

Millennial movements have occurred throughout all historical periods in a variety of religious traditions and locations. In the seventeenth century, two movements emerged within the Judeo-Christian world. The Christian Fifth Monarchy Men rose to prominence in England,⁹ while the Judaic Sabbatian movement was founded in the Ottoman Empire.

The Fifth Monarchy movement emerged in England in the early 1650s as a “political and religious sect” that anticipated the return of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The movement began with the execution of King Charles I in 1649, an

⁹ The seventeenth century was an important period for Christian millennialism. Millennial movements occurred in both Protestant Christianity and Catholicism, as there was a rise of literal millennialism among Calvinists in Europe and Protestants in England. For a history of Christian millennialism, see Bernard McGinn, “Wrestling with the Millennium: Early Modern Catholic Exegesis of Apocalypse 20,” *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 148, 158.

event the Fifth Monarchists viewed as the symbolic removal of the earthly ruler to make way for the kingship of Jesus.¹⁰ Although the Fifth Monarchy Men gained thousands of members, it was never egalitarian. Instead, it was an urban, literate movement.¹¹

Overall, the Fifth Monarchy movement was “loosely coordinated” and did not contain a “common programme.”¹² It was not a unified whole because members were divided over many issues, including the usage of violence to fulfil their goals.¹³ Despite these tensions, Fifth Monarchists all shared a fundamental platform. They believed in the nearness of the millennium.¹⁴

The Fifth Monarchy Men did not have a specific prophet or leader.¹⁵ Many individuals played important leadership roles in the movement. These leaders were often employed as ministers, sheriffs, army officers, justices of the peace, and members of the Council of the State. Puritan preachers comprised the

¹⁰ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 50, 51.

¹¹ Individuals in urban centres had higher literacy rates, which allowed them to read about millennial ideas in pamphlets. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 63, 76, 79.

¹² Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 38, 131, 135: Capp’s description of the Fifth Monarchy Men as “loosely coordinated” parallels Kathryn Babayan’s description of the early-modern Islamic millennial movement called the Nuqtavi, which Babayan (94) describes as “loosely organized; there was not one single spiritual guide.” Moreover, Babayan (102) states that social and ethnic hierarchies in the movement were blurred. As such, these appear to be common features of early-modern millennial movements. For a more thorough discussion of the Nuqtavi, see Kathryn Babayan’s *Mystics, Monarchs, and Messiahs*.

¹³ Violence initiated by Fifth Monarchists in Bristol over two nights in 1660 resulted in thirty-two deaths and over sixty imprisonments. Other Fifth Monarchists responded against such violence by circulating letters condemning these acts. See *Letter to Sam Hugh Smith from John Ashburnham from Bristol: 9 Jan 1660/1* (Bristol Public Record Office: AC/C/74/12) and *Circular Letter of John Owen, London: 9 Jan 1653* (Bodleian Library: MS Carte 81/16-17).

¹⁴ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 38, 131, 135.

¹⁵ Kenelm Burridge, *New Heaven, New Earth: A Study of Millenarian Activities* (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 11: Burridge states that certain millennial movements do not have a prophet or specific leader. The Fifth Monarchy Men were one such movement.

secondary leaders for the movement. They were instrumental in spreading Fifth Monarchist beliefs to their congregations.¹⁶

While the army was particularly important for Fifth Monarchist support,¹⁷ the Fifth Monarchy Men attracted members from all social classes,¹⁸ including labourers, servants, and journeymen. Rhys Evans, a tailor and member of a Fifth Monarchist congregation, utilized the millennial claims to assert he was Jesus. Although the movement was known as the “Fifth Monarchy Men,” several prominent women, such as Anna Trapnel and Mary Cary, were Fifth Monarchy prophetesses.¹⁹ Other women harnessed millennial sentiments by simply claiming they were pregnant with the messiah.²⁰

While the Fifth Monarchy Men were primarily based in England, individuals from North America were also involved in the movement. Hansard Knollys, Thomas Millam, William Aspinwall, and Thomas Venner all lived in New

¹⁶ According to Michael Adas, secondary leaders are important, yet often neglected, participants in millennial movements. There is often a relationship between the growth of able secondary leadership and the length and size of the movement. Michael Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements against the European Colonial Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 132-133.

¹⁷ A letter to the member of parliament John Ashburnham notes that they were having problems with the Fifth Monarchists in the “old army” and new prisoners were being taken every day. It adds that thousands of these people have a “horrid design in this kingdom.” See *Letter to the honour GG John Ashburnham: 28 Oct 1662/3* (Bristol Public Record Office: AC/C/74/39).

¹⁸ O’Leary argues that millennial thought crosses class and religious lines. Stephen D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9. This is seen in the Fifth Monarchy movement. Moreover, this argument is furthered by Amanat (8) where he writes that these movements are almost always socially inclusive. See Abbas Amanat, “Introduction: Apocalyptic Anxieties and Millennial Hopes in the Salvation Religions of the Middle East,” *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002).

¹⁹ Capp (41) states that Anna Trapnel had many prominent visitors, including Colonel Sydenham of the English Council of State, colonels West, Bennett and Bingham, who were all members of parliament, and Thomas Allen who became the mayor of London. All of these individuals visited her during the month of January 1654.

²⁰ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 42.

England, but returned to England in the 1650's to join the Fifth Monarchy Men after promoting millennialism in America.²¹ Although millennialism in America may have been more "low-key" than in England, numerous people in both places were fervently awaiting the establishment of the Fifth Monarchy.²²

The Fifth Monarchy movement grew substantially in the 1650's and 1660's; however, the Restoration led to its persecution during the reign of both Charles II and James II.²³ The persecutions created a dichotomy amongst the Fifth Monarchists. Some became submissive and took a quietest approach, while others, such as Thomas Venner, continued their vocal activism and were put on trial and executed.²⁴ The Fifth Monarchy movement ended with the failed rebellion of the duke of Monmouth in 1685.²⁵

The Sabbatian Movement

As Fifth Monarchy membership grew in England, the Sabbatian movement arose in the Ottoman Empire. Sabbatai Sevi (1626-1676), the messiah of the movement, had his first vision in 1648. By 1666, he had gained mass support

²¹ John Davenport, John Cotton, Samuel Danforth, and Nicholas Noyes lived in North America and preached or published material containing traditional Christian millennial themes, including the return of Jesus, the conversion of the Jews, and the second resurrection. While these men employed biblical evidence in a manner similar to Fifth Monarchists, they were not Fifth Monarchists themselves until they went to England. Stephen J. Stein, "American Millennial Visions: Towards Construction of a New Architectonic of American Apocalypticism," *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 194, 195: Fifth Monarchists also considered going to America when support for the movement faltered. Anna Trapnel noted that "she was getting little encouragement, and was thinking of crossing the sea." Louise Fargo Brown, *The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England During the Interregnum* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1911), 101.

²² J.F. Maclear, "New England and the Fifth Monarchy: The Quest for the Millennium in Early American Puritanism," *The William and Mary Quarterly* (1975), 223, 225.

²³ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 14, 85, 195.

²⁴ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 199, 200, 216.

²⁵ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 221.

among the Jewish community. Sevi studied Lurianic cabbalism and engaged in extensive peregrination.²⁶ During his journeys, he was often accompanied by the prophet Nathan who, in a role of secondary leadership, played a vital part creating, propagating, and recording the doctrine of the Sabbatian movement.²⁷ Sevi travelled throughout the Ottoman Empire, predominantly between Smyrna, Jerusalem and Cairo, committing “strange acts” in which he would transgress the traditional Jewish law. Sometimes he even pronounced the ineffable name of God.²⁸

The Sabbatian movement consisted of a great diversity of people: men and women, the poor and the rich, and the young and the old.²⁹ Prominent rabbis, such as Samuel Primo, Judah Sharaf, and David Yishaki were believers.³⁰ The millionaire Abraham Pereira from Amsterdam even offered his entire fortune to the messiah.³¹ The movement was also diverse geographically. Jews in places as far

²⁶ Burridge (157) writes that prophets usually have special training and are well travelled. Adas (119-121) also states that leaders of millennial movements are often well educated, engage in widespread travels, and are exposed to esoteric beliefs. Sevi met all of these criteria as he travelled frequently and studied Lurianic cabbalism, a messianically oriented doctrine developed in the Galilee region of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century and became the dominant form of Jewish cabbalism in the seventeenth century. Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), 7.

²⁷ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 130.

²⁸ Sevi also once quoted Isaiah 14:14, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High,” and then asked his friends if they had seen him floating. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 21, 22.

²⁹ Certain historians have portrayed Sabbatian members as “the poorest Jews, including ‘fishermen, venders of eggs and poultry, oarsmen in the port, and servants, and more of this sort of noblemen, even the richest of whom had nothing to lose.’” Scholem, however, argues that this was not the case. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 65.

³⁰ Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 43, 82, 83: While Scholem states that the Sabbatian movement was structured with the elites among the believers drawing support from ordinary people, some of the prophets who disseminated information were not men of stature. Sabbatai Raphael, one of the leaders of the movement, was known as a charlatan. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 331, 781.

³¹ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 5.

away as Yemen, Persia, Poland, Holland, and the West Indies were Sabbatian believers.³² The millennial beliefs of these people varied because their rabbis reacted in contrasting manners to the messianic reports.³³

As the Sabbatian movement grew, the Ottoman authorities noticed it and brought Sevi before the Sultan.³⁴ The Sultan Mehmed IV questioned Sevi, and when Sevi answered in Turkish, the Sultan replied that he “spoke very badly for a Messiah, who ought to have the gift of tongues.”³⁵ The Sultan then asked Sevi if he could perform miracles. Sevi answered, “Sometimes,” so the Sultan gave him an ultimatum. He could either convert to Islam or be stripped naked and have arrows shot at him to determine if he was invincible.³⁶ Sevi chose to convert and Vani Mehmed oversaw his Islamic tutoring.³⁷ Sevi even changed his name to Sabbatai

³² Many of these individuals were preparing for the journey to Jerusalem. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 80, 118.

³³ Each rabbi interpreted and explained the reports in the manner that suited him best. Some accepted Sevi’s claim openly, others conservatively, and some even argued skeptically that they had not seen any miracles that were supposed to accompany the advent of the messiah. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 504, 505.

³⁴ The Ottoman authorities may have perceived Sevi as a threat because he was gaining a large following of Jews and some of them were claiming that he should be given authority over the Ottoman lands that they believed they were entitled to based upon biblical claims. Hathaway (665) argues that the growth of the Sabbatian movement occurred during the rise of the Islamic Kadizadelis, a “rigorously anti-mystical group of Muslim preachers.” The end of the Sabbatian movement was directly connected to the actions of the grand viziers who were patronizing the Kadizadelis. See Jane Hathaway, “The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah: The Sabbatai Sevi Controversy and the Ottoman Reform in Egypt,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* Vol. 117 No. 4 (1997).

³⁵ Peter Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel* (London: Printed for A. Maxwell, 1666: DS 124 G6 1666).

³⁶ Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel*.

³⁷ Vani Mehmed was a preacher from the city of Van who became the religious advisor to to Grand Vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha who had the confidence of the Sultan. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 133; Hathaway, “The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah,” 667.

Mohammad Sevi and became known as Aziz Mehmed, Vani Mehmed's personal attendant.³⁸

Despite Sevi's apostasy, he still maintained his messianic beliefs. In a 1676 letter to the Jewish community of Berat, in present-day Albania, he signs his name, "Messiah of the God of Israel and Judah, Sabbatai Sevi."³⁹ The prophet Nathan also carried on Sevi's message; however, he reformulated the doctrine to accommodate the apostasy.⁴⁰ While the widespread support for the movement faded, Sabbatian beliefs are still found today among the Turkish Dönme.⁴¹

Defining Millennial

This study employs the term "millennial" in numerous manners, including in "millennial information" and "millenarian." While it primarily refers to these movements by their names, it still classifies both the Fifth Monarchy Men and the

³⁸ Dönme tradition, however, holds that Vani Mehmed himself became a Sabbatian. Hathaway, "The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah," 667.

³⁹ Scholem (133) states that Sevi tried to convert everyone to Islam during his moments of illumination; however, Sevi also drew pictures of snakes on his letters because the characters in the Hebrew word "snake" have the same numerical value as the word "messiah." As such, Sevi used "snake" as a code word for "messiah." See *Autographed letter by Sabbatai Sevi to the Jewish community of Berat, Albania: Aug 1676* (Ben Zvi Institute: Facsimile of MS. 2262/79). Amanat (3) notes that millenarians often utilize numerology and esoteric knowledge of letters, and this appears to be what Sevi is doing.

⁴⁰ Many Sabbatian believers claimed that Sevi's apostasy was part of the necessary apocalyptic drama, which only he understood and would eventually explain to them. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 139.

The reformulation of Sabbatian doctrine after Sabbatai Sevi's apostasy parallels similar events in the Islamic Hurufi tradition. After the Hurufi leader Fazallah died unexpectedly, the members renegotiated their beliefs to include both the leader's death and burial. For further information on the Hurufi movement, see Shahzad Bashir, "Deciphering the Cosmos from Creation to Apocalypse: The Hurufiyya Movement and Medieval Islamic Esotericism," *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 180.

⁴¹ After Sevi's death, several hundred of Sevi's followers converted to Islam and started a secret sect that the Ottomans knew as the Dönme, which is Turkish for "apostate". This religious group remained distinct from both the Muslim Ottomans and the Jews in Salonika and Istanbul and did not marry outside their community until very recently. Outwardly, they appear to be practicing Muslims, but they believe that Sevi will one day return as their messiah. John Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 2, 3, 9, 17, 31. For more on the Dönme, see the work of Marc Baer.

Sabbatian movement as “millennial.” In particular, “millennial” is defined as anything relating the “imminent advent of redemption.”⁴² This definition is based upon a quote from Scholem, and it is particularly well suited for the Judeo-Christian framework because, as O’Leary writes, an eschatological perspective based in this thought “offers the perfection of time as the redemptive solution to the problem of evil.”⁴³ As such, the millennial beliefs held by these Jews and Christians acted as a solution to the problem of evil because it allowed them to focus on their expected redemption.

In relation to Jewish beliefs, millennialism refers to the rise of the expected messiah who will usher in a period of redemption. Sabbatai Sevi used this as the basis of his messianic claims. Scholem notes that it was written that “the Spirit of God descended upon him...[and] he heard the voice of God speaking to him, ‘Thou art the saviour of Israel, the messiah, the son of David...and thou art destined to redeem Israel, to gather it from the four corners of the earth to Jerusalem.”⁴⁴ Hathaway describes the Sabbatian movement as “an extreme manifestation of Kabbalistic fervour tinged with millenarianism.”⁴⁵ In the Christian context, this refers to the expected second coming of Jesus Christ, which the Fifth Monarchists believed would lead to the establishment of Jesus Christ’s Fifth Monarchy on earth. As such, both the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian movement can be labeled millennial based upon this broad definition formulated from a quote in Scholem’s book.

⁴² Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 479.

⁴³ O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse*, 33.

⁴⁴ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 136.

⁴⁵ Hathaway, “The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah,” 671.

“Millennial information” refers to any news pertaining to the expected advent of redemption. It includes information concerning the Fifth Monarchy Men or Sabbatian movement specifically, and more general Christian or Judaic millennial news. This news contained numerous types of information. First, it took the form of statements informing the reader about the millennial movements or leaders, such as information concerning Sabbatai Sevi’s recent visits, and even his apparent miracles, including walking in fire.

Second, it included words of encouragement for believers from the leaders and information relating to the proper practices, including quotes from the prayer books written by the prophets. For instance in England, the information from Sabbatian prayer books was even published in certain pamphlets for a Christian audience. Third, it sometimes did not even relay any information about the movement, but simply defended beliefs and prophecy that held certain that the millennium and redemption was at hand. Often, however, the millennial information that was transmitted was a mixture of these types of news because the authors blended new information about the leaders with stories of miracles and prophecy, and then analyzed it in order to show that the millennium was near. Although this study examines the millennial information in more specific terms, it limits the discussion of the news to this broadly defined concept.

“Millenarians” were individuals who propagated these sentiments and believed that their redemption was imminent according to God’s eschatological plan. While millenarians could have other occupations, their primary concern was religious, and many were religious scholars. These individuals were often

responsible for publishing pamphlets defending prophecy and millennial beliefs. For instance, Peter Serrarius was a prominent millenarian who not only believed that God's plan of redemption for humanity was coming to fruition, but he also promoted these views by writing letters and pamphlets spreading millennial news and prophecy based upon the current socio-political situation in the world.

The Historiography

This study is the fruit of the application of two types of historical works: the specific studies focused on the millennial movements and individuals in this paper, and the general projects conducted on cross-religious transmission. The first group includes the most authoritative in-depth, non-comparative texts of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian movement. The two most critical works on the Fifth Monarchy movement are Bernard Capp's *The Fifth Monarchy Men* (1972) and Louise Brown's *The Political Activities of the Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men in England during the Interregnum* (1911). Capp's book provides a historical narrative of the Fifth Monarchy movement, an analysis of the reasons for its growth and success, a discussion of the socio-economic and political positions of its members, and an extensive list of Fifth Monarchy publications. While Brown's book is only half dedicated to the Fifth Monarchists, its focus on their political activities complements Capp's work.

Although Capp and Brown's texts are detailed and well grounded, they only examine the Fifth Monarchy Men in its specific political and religious context. Brown states that her book is focused on the actions of the group towards the English government, which limits her analysis to England. While Capp's

historical framework includes political events in Europe, he does not explore non-European activities.⁴⁶

In relation to the religious nature of the Fifth Monarchy Men, both historians only examine the movement within a Christian context. Capp emphasizes the influence of Christian millenarians, such as Joseph Mede, on the movement. He broadly states,

“The origins of seventeenth-century millenarianism are to be found in the tensions created by the Reformation, and in the new exegesis of the prophetic texts which these tensions produced.”⁴⁷

Capp attributes the creation and spread of seventeenth-century millennialism to solely Christian causes.

While Brown completely neglects the Sabbatian movement, she notes the importance of the restoration of the Jews in Fifth Monarchist thought.⁴⁸ Capp expands this discussion by considering the actions of Sabbatai Sevi and an earlier Jewish messiah, Josias Catzias. He even dedicates a few paragraphs to examining the Sabbatian movement.⁴⁹ Capp, however, does not explore the possible influence of the Sabbatian movement on the Fifth Monarchist Men, and despite his short digression on Sevi, the historiography of the Fifth Monarchy Men firmly places the movement in its English, European, and Christian context only.

⁴⁶ Brown, *The Political Activities*, viii.

⁴⁷ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 23, 29.

⁴⁸ Brown, *The Political Activities*, 23.

⁴⁹ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 190, 191, 213, 214.

Gershom Scholem's *Sabbatai Sevi* (1973) and John Freely's *The Lost Messiah* (2001) are the two most important works on the Sabbatian movement. Like Capp's text, Scholem's book is the most authoritative and comprehensive study of the Sabbatian movement. Scholem discusses numerous aspects of the movement, from the early education and rise of Sabbatai Sevi and the prophet Nathan to Sabbatian believers in the Middle East and Europe. Although Freely's text is heavily reliant upon Scholem research, he presents Scholem's theologically dense work in a concise narrative that focuses on the believers.

Like Capp and Brown, Scholem and Freely place the Judaic Sabbatian movement in its specific political and religious context. While Scholem and Freely discuss the concurrent rise of Christian millennial thought, they are hostile to its possible influence on the Judaic movement.⁵⁰ Both he and Freely argue that the Sabbatian movement was born out of the Jew's seventeenth-century experience of exile and expulsion combined with the specific religious conditions of the time.⁵¹ They also argue that there was only synchronicity between the rise of Christian and Judaic millennial thought. Freely states,

"The [Christian] pamphlet [*The Restoration of the Jews*] makes no mention of Sabbatai or Nathan, and so, as Scholem suggests, the

⁵⁰ Scholem believes that there is "no causal connection" between the growth of Christian millennial literature and Sabbatai Sevi's development." Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 153, 154.

⁵¹ In particular, the popularity of eschatological mythology among the Jewish masses and intellectuals, and the heritage of Luranic cabbalism was influential on the thinking of the prophet Nathan. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 7; Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 16.

Legend of the Lost Tribes may have revived independently of the new messianic movement.”⁵²

Therefore, the four most authoritative studies of the Fifth Monarchy Men and the Sabbatian movement all seek to discuss and explain the advent of their movement in terms of its specific religious situation, dividing the concurrent growth of seventeenth-century millennialism across the world by religious tradition.

Michael McKeon, Jacob Barnai, and Richard Popkin question this religious divide. While McKeon’s “Sabbatai Sevi in England” is designed to supplement Scholem’s book, he argues against Scholem in one of his notes by stating that Sevi’s rise was possibly affected by Christian millennial sentiments. Barnai’s “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos” questions Scholem’s thesis that the single most important cause for the development of the Sabbatian movement was the spread of Lurianic cabbalism.⁵³ Instead, Barnai argues that there was a “subtle but undeniable relationship between Christian and Jewish messianism” and between the Marrano communities and the birth and growth of the Sabbatian movement.⁵⁴

⁵² Scholem (154) argues that Judeo-Christian discussion over the advent of the messiah probably occurred in Europe in all periods, making this connection nothing exemplary. While this may seem extraordinary due to the amount of scholarship that focuses on hatred and persecution, other historians, such as David Ruderman, promote this idea. Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 71.

⁵³ Jacob Barnai, “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos: The Emergence of Sabbateanism in Smyrna,” *Jewish History* Vol. 7 No. 3 (1993), 119.

⁵⁴ While Scholem acknowledges this connection, he argues that Marranism spread Sabbateanism, whereas Barnai suggests that this interaction may have occurred in the opposite direction. Unfortunately, he states that one cannot prove this theory until other unknown archives are found. Barnai, “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos,” 122.

Richard Popkin has written various articles on both the Sabbatian movement and cross-religious transmission in Europe. In “Three Tellings of the Sabbatai Zevi Story,” Popkin explores the multiple printings of Paul Rycout’s account of Sabbatai Sevi.⁵⁵ In “Jewish-Christian Relations in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries” and in *The Third Force in Seventeenth-Century Thought*, he discusses early-modern cross-religious transmission.⁵⁶ Popkin focuses his studies on examining networks of Jewish and Christian intellectuals in England and Western Europe.⁵⁷ This study uses Popkin’s approach; however, it expands his European framework to include cross-religious transmission across the early-modern world.

Alongside these studies are other works that are critical in theoretically informing this thesis. These articles and texts explore cross-religious influences and promote the idea that religious identities and boundaries are more blurred than normally acknowledged. David Ruderman’s “Hope Against Hope” utilizes a cross-religious framework in order to explore Christian influences on Jewish messianism and Jewish influences on Christian messianism in the medieval period.⁵⁸ Sanjay Subrahmanyam’s “Turning the Stones Over” and “Connected

⁵⁵ He elaborates upon these ideas in “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi.”

⁵⁶ In both studies, Popkin explores the dialogue that occurred between Christians and Jews in the seventeenth century.

⁵⁷ Richard Popkin, *The Third Force in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 91.

⁵⁸ Ruderman states that, although Jewish and Christian messianic beliefs would have flourished independent of each other’s influence, cross-fertilization occurred through both written texts and oral interaction. David Ruderman, “Hope Against Hope: Jewish and Christian Expectations in the Late Middle Ages,” *Exile and Diaspora* (1991), 194, 195. Robert Wilson (65) writes, “Jewish apocalypticism, both inside the Bible and outside of it, exerted a major influence on Christian apocalypticism.”

Histories” move past comparing phenomena, such as millennial movements, and seek to connect them.⁵⁹ This study utilizes the methodological and theoretical framework of these works to re-examine and connect the seventeenth-century Judeo-Christian millennial movements.⁶⁰

Certain statements in Kenneth Burrige's *New Heaven, New Earth* also illustrate cross-religious interaction among millennial movements. For instance, Burrige (32-33) argues that the largest number of early-modern and modern millennial movements are found within Europe and European influenced areas overseas due to the influence of the Christian tradition of millennialism. Moreover, he states, “[O]utside the ambience of Christian missionary work in India, China, central Asia, Japan and South-east Asia—an area containing the large bulk of the world’s population—we find even fewer instances.” Reading these statements against the grain reveals the importance of missionaries spreading Christian ideas, which influenced the growth of millennial movements in regions where they are not usually found. As such, these studies discuss cross-religious influence and interaction. See Robert R. Wilson, “The Biblical Roots of Apocalyptic,” *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002), 59-68.

⁵⁹ Subrahmanyam (748) notes that ideas and mental constructs that accompany trade are an often-overlooked historical component. Pomeranz (69, 71) states that the process of making connections between different regions of the world is a predominant feature of the study of world history. Patrick Manning notes, “[W]orld history is the story of connections within the global human community. The world historian’s work is to portray the crossing of boundaries and the linking of systems in the human past.” This definition is also accepted by Merry Wiesner-Hanks. See Kenneth Pomeranz, “Social History and World History: From Daily Life to Patterns of Change,” *Journal of World History* Vol. 18 No. 1 (2007), Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), and Merry Wiesner-Hanks, “World History and the History of Women, Gender, and Sexuality,” *Journal of World History* Vol. 18 No. 1 (2007), 53-68.

⁶⁰ Ranajit Guha’s *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1983), especially the chapter entitled “Transmission,” and Julia Clancy-Smith’s *Rebel and Saint: Muslim Notables, Populist Protest, Colonial Encounters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) also inform this study as these books discuss the transmission of religious ideas and rumours.

CHAPTER 2: MERCHANTS AND DIPLOMATS

The Merchant Routes

The Greek god Hermes was originally the god of boundary stones. As time progressed, he became the god of merchants, the “professional boundary crossers.”⁶¹ Hermes was also considered a messenger.⁶² As such, the role assigned to the god Hermes shows that individuals recognized merchants as important movers of information across frontiers.

In the seventeenth century, English merchants continued to transmit news by establishing themselves in trade settlements in the Ottoman Empire.⁶³ Merchants moved millennial information alongside merchandise on two paths between England and the Ottoman Empire. The primary sea route was known by the English as the “Christian route.”⁶⁴ The Levant Company preferred this passage because it

⁶¹ Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6.

⁶² Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History*, 6.

⁶³ The early-modern period witnessed the rise of global sea routes and advances in trade, and ideas and mental constructs accompanying trade also transcended political borders. Michael McKeon, “Sabbatai Sevi in England,” *AJS Review* Vol. 2 (1977), 132 note; Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History*, 2.

⁶⁴ The English returned to the Mediterranean in the late sixteenth century and re-established sea routes because they desired to obtain Levantine products directly from their source. These sea routes were expanded in the seventeenth century because merchants who had preferred to entrust their merchandise to land routes began sending it by sea. Gigliola Pagano De Divitis (trans. Stephen Parkin), *English Merchants in Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 4, 5, 80, 88, 183.

The exploration of long-term interactions across bodies of water, such as the Mediterranean, are important because they highlights exchanges, including biological and cultural, that other geographical units of analysis obscure. This is especially true in relation to early-modern Mediterranean trade because there are underlying scholarly assumptions that the Mediterranean became a backwater to the Atlantic Ocean in this period. See Jerry Bentley, “Sea and Ocean Basins as Frameworks of Historical Analysis,” *Geographical Review* Vol. 89, No. 2 (1999), 216-217.

provided greater shelter from currents and wind when ships were sailing east to west.⁶⁵ The Christian route connected London to Smyrna and Iskenderun through Cadiz, Malaga, and Alicante in Spain, and Livorno, Naples, and Messina in Italy.⁶⁶ The port of Livorno was the best equipped in the Mediterranean, and the English decided to concentrate most of their commercial activities there. This made Livorno a crucial link in English trade.⁶⁷

Merchants spread information along the Christian route through Livorno. Merchants in Smyrna wrote newsletters relaying their concerns about the ongoing economic and political events in the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁸ During 1666, substantial sections of these newsletters were dedicated to issues surrounding the Sabbatian movement. The authors of these newsletters appear to have been English Christian merchants located in Smyrna because the newsletters are written in

⁶⁵ Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 61.

⁶⁶ Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 61.

⁶⁷ Livorno was critical to English merchants because they could obtain the money they needed for the markets in the Levant there. Thus, Livorno became the port in which English exports and re-exports were converted into currency. English merchants in Livorno also used this transit trade to bring the Italian ports under the authority of London. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Christian route was firmly established, and on March 6, 1663, seventeen English ships left the port of Livorno and eight of them were returning from the Levant to London. Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 102, 114, 116, 118, 122, 123, 183.

⁶⁸ Merchants were transporting numerous products from the Levant to England and during the seventeenth century, and in particular, cotton was a sought after commodity. Goffman (106-107) states that merchant vessels were importing approximately 43,000 pounds of cotton through the port of London each year. The Levant Company established consuls in these Ottoman cities and allowed them the flexibility to negotiate trade. The merchant consuls in Smyrna sent frequent newsletters informing their partners in Livorno of the latest trade developments. While this study only explores newsletters sent from merchants in Smyrna, this process was most likely common practice for English merchants in other locations. For more on English trade in the Ottoman Empire, see Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, Daniel Goffman, *Izmir and the Levantine World, 1550-1650* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990) and Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman & Bruce Masters, *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir, and Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

English, express joy at “our victory over the Dutch,” refer to Jesus as “our Saviour,” and have a strong economic focus.⁶⁹

These newsletters were sent from Smyrna to the English merchant Thomas Dethick in Livorno. While Dethick resided in Italy, he sent many letters relating to trade along the Christian route to Sir Joseph Williamson, the Secretary of State in England.⁷⁰ As Dethick’s partners in the Ottoman Empire were informing him about the Sabbatian movement, it is highly probable that he also passed this news along to Williamson.⁷¹ In fact, it would have been commercially irresponsible of him not to inform Williamson, especially since Williamson was interested in the Sabbatian movement and was trying to acquire Sabbatian news from other sources during this period.⁷²

Alongside the Christian merchants connected to Thomas Dethick, merchants associated with the East India Company moved millennial information through the Mediterranean between Gaza, in the Ottoman Empire, and Livorno, in Italy. These merchants transmitted news of a prophet in Gaza and they conclude, “*That the Restauration is near.*”⁷³

⁶⁹ This victory most likely refers to one of the wars fought between England and the Spanish Netherlands in the seventeenth century. *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 97/18/211); *Newsletter of 7...1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 97/18/214).

⁷⁰ Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 14 note.

⁷¹ The information needed to substantiate these claims is found in the folder SP 98/8 in the Public Record Office in London. While Pagano de Divitis examines these documents to discuss English trade in the Levant, he does not explore them for information relating to Sabbatai Sevi.

⁷² It would be commercially irresponsible of him not to inform Williamson because this movement was affecting trade negatively. *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 29/136/93).

⁷³ Emphasis in original. Peter Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel* (London: Printed for A. Maxwell, 1666 – Jewish Theological Seminary: DS 124 G6 1666).

Jewish merchants also brought millennial news from the Ottoman Empire to Italy. These Jews, originally from Europe and primarily from Livorno, settled in Egypt and established trade routes connecting Egypt and North Africa to Italy and Holland. Raphael Joseph Celebi and Hosea Nantawa used their commercial networks to spread Sabbatian news from Egypt to Italy.⁷⁴ Thus, English and Jewish merchants transmitted written and oral Judaic millennial information by sea from the Ottoman Empire to Italy, and English merchants most likely continued to spread this news by sea to England.⁷⁵

Merchants moved the millennial news that arrived in Livorno on overland trade routes through Europe. Due to piracy and war in the Mediterranean, merchants preferred to transport luxury items, such as silk, by land.⁷⁶ These goods were transferred overland on varying courses from Livorno and Venice to Antwerp and Amsterdam, where they were put on ships and transported to London.⁷⁷ Alongside these goods, Judaic millennial news about a fictitious Jewish army

⁷⁴ It was along these trade routes that both Sabbatian news and the Sabbatian movement spread. Hathaway, "The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah Hathaway," 668, 670, 671.

⁷⁵ We can ascertain that oral information was transmitted because some merchants kept written records that claim that they engaged in conversations with the local Jewish community regarding Sabbatai Sevi. Moreover, according to Pagano de Divitis (111) merchandise was also moved along an England-Newfoundland-Mediterranean route, which included ports in North America. As Sabbatian news was spread to the Americas, it is possible that it was brought along this route. This path, however, needs to be explored further.

⁷⁶ Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 76, 80, 88-89: The seventeenth century witnessed the intense development of overland trade routes. Armenian merchants played an important role in this trade, working with Jewish brokers to transport Persian silk to Europe. This led to the establishment of Armenian communities in Livorno and Venice; however, in relation to overland trade in Eastern Europe, Jewish merchants were more important than their Armenian counterparts. See Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History*, 179, 199, 203.

⁷⁷ In fact, much of the silk that was destined for London was transmitted overland to Amsterdam where it was loaded on ships and moved to London. Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 76, 80, 88-89.

marching on Mecca was transmitted from Livorno to Amsterdam.⁷⁸ Moreover, merchants associated with the East India Company spread the millennial news in *Gods Love to his People Israel* along this path to Amsterdam.⁷⁹

In Amsterdam, merchants received millennial news. The Jewish merchant Josuah ben Elezar received the information that ended up comprising the English pamphlet, *News From the Jews, Or a True Relation*.⁸⁰ The millennial news that was sent to Christian and Jewish merchants in Amsterdam was passed on to individuals in England who published it. One millennial pamphlet was addressed to “the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers,” which demonstrates the importance of merchants in London receiving millennial information from the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Jewish and Christian merchants employed both sea and land routes to spread millennial news across the Judeo-Christian frontier from the Ottoman Empire to England.⁸¹

⁷⁸ On occasion, this army was connected to Sabbatai Sevi who was their apparent leader. See *The Restoration of the Jewes: Or, A true Relation of Their Progress and Proceedings* (London: R.R, 1665). *The Last Letters, To the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers* (Imprinted for G. Cotton, 1665) also discusses this army; however, this pamphlet refers to the leader of the “Wandering Israelites” as the “Holy Captain-General.” In this manner, the pamphlet makes him both a military and religious leader.

⁷⁹ The pamphlet actually refers to them as “our Christian merchants.” This demonstrates that Christian merchants were responsible for spreading Judaic millennial news. It also shows that the author of the pamphlet is concerned with the religion of the merchants. Serrarius, *Gods Love to his People Israel*.

⁸⁰ It appears that the written millennial information followed earlier oral versions of the same news. The letter to Josuah ben Elezar notes that his contact received news that Sabbatai Sevi had written an account of his life and that he would have a copy of it by the next post. Until then, however, he states that this is a short account of it, “as I had it from a very good hand.” *News From the Jews, Or a True Relation of a Great Prophet* (London: Printed for A.G., 1671 – Jewish Theological Seminary: BM 755 545 N4 1671), title page, 3.

⁸¹ It was not unusual for seventeenth-century merchants to spread millennial news across religious frontiers. The *sophy* (king) of Persia found out about Sabbatai Sevi from letters sent by merchants in the Ottoman Empire. See *Two Journeys to Jerusalem* (London: Printed for Nath. Crouch, 1685), 179-180. Thus, the relationship between the merchants in Smyrna and Thomas Dethick appears to be mirrored by these merchants with connections to Persia who moved millennial information across the Judeo-Islamic frontier. This path needs to be further explored.

Merchants also spread millennial information across the Judeo-Christian boundary in the reverse direction. In England, Fifth Monarchists were responsible for creating millennial predictions relating to the year 1666. This year was important because 1666 was believed to be related to the number 666, which was a critical number for Christian eschatological calculations.⁸² The pamphlet *Of the number 666* explicitly makes this connection. It states that predictions relating to the year 1666 were produced in England by “som of those are fift Monarchy Men, others of more refined judgement.”⁸³

Merchant communities established by trade diasporas often act as springboards for the expansion of the diasporas’ religious tradition.⁸⁴ English merchants living in the Ottoman Empire probably did this by spreading millennial ideas formulated by Fifth Monarchists in England to Sevi and the Sabbatian believers. Specifically, merchants of the Levant Company employed Sabbatai

⁸² The importance of the number 666 and its usage in numerous millennial and eschatological calculations, including the calculating of people’s names, goes back to the twelfth century. O’Leary (82) states that speculation around the year 1666 was part of the history of dates, which affected the rise of millennial activity. Moore (146) argues that people were probably preaching that the world was about to end around the year 1000 and the Muslim year 1260/1844 (the latter date was the thousandth anniversary of the occultation of the imam). Therefore, it is not unusual for a date, such as the year 1666, to create support for millennial thought. For more, see R.I Moore, “Medieval Europe: Religious Enthusiasm and Social Change in the ‘Millennial Generation,’” *Imagining the End: Visions of Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002): 129-147.

⁸³ These predictions included the expectation that the Jews would be restored to Israel and converted to Christianity. While the author of this pamphlet does not list the people who he labels “of more refined judgement,” his differentiation between Fifth Monarchists and these individuals shows that he viewed Fifth Monarchists as inferior. *Of the number 666* (Bodleian Library: MS Ashmole 241/200).

⁸⁴ Jerry Bentley, *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 9.

Sevi's father, Mordecai, and all his brothers as commercial agents in Smyrna.⁸⁵ As such, Sevi was likely made aware of these Christian millennial sentiments through these individuals. This indirect influence may partially explain why "Christian influences akin to Trinitarian beliefs entered Sabbatianism."⁸⁶

Sevi's father is believed to have worked for a Quaker merchant who was probably a former follower of self-proclaimed Quaker messiah James Nayler.⁸⁷ A Polish pamphlet about the Sabbatian movement even makes this cross-religious connection. The pamphlet notes the excitement in Bristol over Sevi, calls Sevi a "Quaker Jew," and contains a woodcut of a picture of Sevi facing Nayler titled, "The two great impostors."⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 14. Goffman (24) states that Jews were well suited to act as intermediaries between Europeans and their Ottoman counterparts because they were religious minorities in both Europe and the Ottoman Empire and were familiar with the languages and prominent features of both host societies. As such, Jewish merchants were instrumental in bridging the "ideological chasm" that separated Europe from the Ottoman Empire. For more, see Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁸⁶ Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos," 121.

⁸⁷ James Nayler was a Quaker in Bristol who proclaimed that he was Jesus in 1656 and rode into the city in the same fashion that Jesus entered Jerusalem. Popkin, "Three Tellings," 47.

⁸⁸ Richard Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi" *Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture* (Kluwer, 2001), 93-94.

Figure 2: Picture of James Nayler and Sabbatai Sevi⁸⁹



Therefore, Quaker merchants with millennial beliefs who fled from England to the Ottoman Empire may have been responsible for bringing Fifth Monarchists millennial prophecies that influenced the emergence and growth of the Sabbatian movement.⁹⁰

An English merchant in Smyrna verifies this cross-religious dialogue. He writes,

“We have had many discourse with the Jews about this man [Sabbatai] from ye beginnige and never could finde ought he did that might be provided a mirackle, the Jews themselves say that nothing made them so willing to believe as the friar Predictions on

⁸⁹ This woodcut refers to James Nayler (left) as Iacob Nayler. Original copy is located in the Jewish Theological Seminary (PNT G2137).

⁹⁰ After Nayler was captured, he was punished severely, and his followers fled from England to “the outposts of the Quaker commercial world,” in places such as Amsterdam, the Levant, and the American colonies. Popkin, “Three Tellings,” 47.

the yeare 1666 and the flockinge of the Jews from all Parts upon the reports of a Messiah."⁹¹

This quotation shows that former Sabbatian believers in the Ottoman Empire were aware of the millennial predictions relating to 1666 and were claiming that these predictions influenced the growth of the Sabbatian movement. It also demonstrates that Christian merchants were engaging in conversation with Sabbatian believers and conducting cross-religious millennial discourse.⁹²

Alongside these Christian merchants, Jewish merchants who recently emigrated from Amsterdam to Smyrna could also have spread these ideas. Fifth Monarchist thought influenced Christian millenarians who corresponded with the rabbi Menasseh ben Israel in Amsterdam. The Jewish merchants who moved from Amsterdam to Smyrna were in contact with ben Israel and possibly other Christian millenarians.⁹³ As such, they may have brought Christian millennial news to Smyrna where it could have influenced the beginnings and support of the Sabbatian movement.

While cross-religious transmission by merchants from England to the Ottoman Empire is contested, the evidence suggests that various sets of merchants conducted this dialogue.⁹⁴ Is it merely a historical coincidence that Sabbatian

⁹¹ *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.* This is the same quotation McKeon uses to refute Scholem's claims.

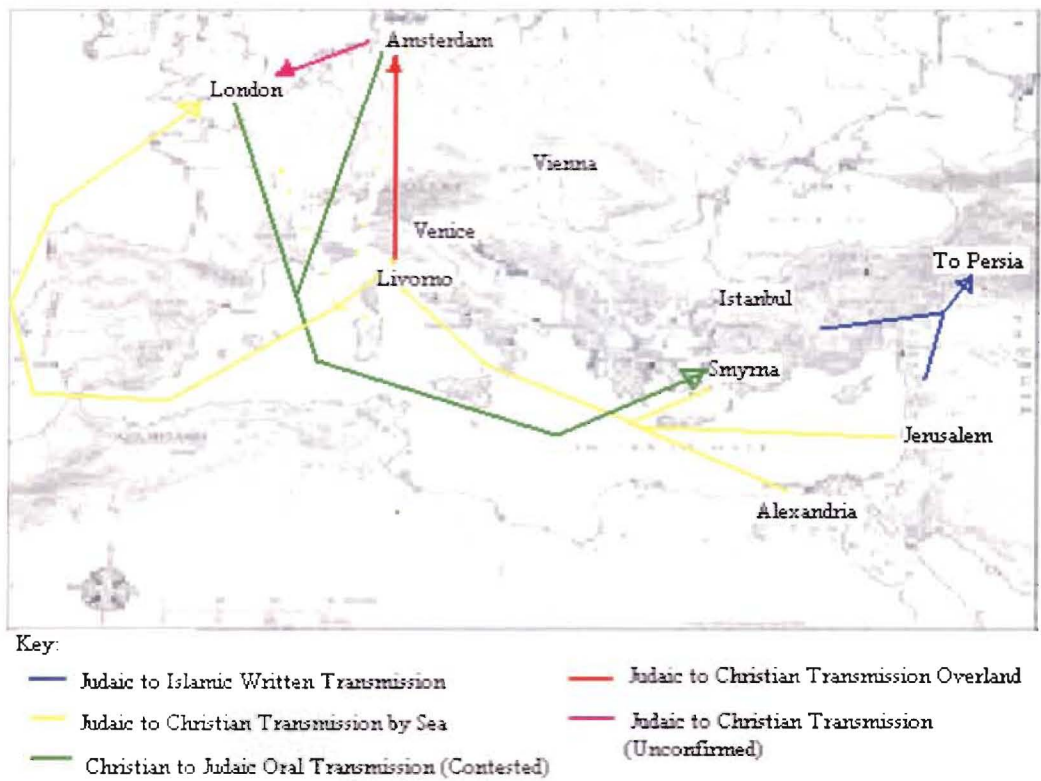
⁹² This idea is furthered by Paul Rycout, who worked in Smyrna and knew Sabbatai Sevi's father and other prominent Jewish members of the Sabbatian movement. Rycout believed that the Jews, "this subtle people judged this Year [1666] the time to stir, and to fit their Motion according to the season of the Modern Prophecies." See Popkin, "Three Tellings," 47.

⁹³ Popkin, "Three Tellings," 47.

⁹⁴ In this case, the cross-religious transmission took the form of oral dialogue between English merchants and Jewish Sabbatian believers.

doctrine became more and more Christian,⁹⁵ at precisely the key chiliastic year for Christians between the first and second millennia on the Gregorian calendar?

Figure 3: Merchant Transmission Map



Written Merchant Transmission

While merchants spread millennial news, the amount of written material they produced and transmitted was minimal. They did not even publish any of their millennial information. Instead, they primarily wrote and sent newsletters in 1666 that contained Sabbatai information. These newsletters were moved

⁹⁵ Scholem argues that Nathan's religious terminology contains more of a Christian character in 1666 and 1667. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 283-284.

alongside merchandise from the Ottoman Empire to Europe.⁹⁶ The merchant newsletters were written during the height of the Sevi's popularity because the merchants' occupation was based on trade and they were concerned with the economic impact of the Sabbatian movement. This explains why the merchants never focus solely on the movement, but instead, present it in relation to their overarching economic concerns.⁹⁷ For example, one merchant newsletter notes that when Sevi leaves a city, the Jews return "to their senses and trade will revive."⁹⁸ Moreover, the merchants associated with the East India Company state that the news of a prophet in Gaza has led the Jews in Cairo and Alexandria to tell their correspondents not to send them business because, "they will have no further thoughts of it, but of higher matters."⁹⁹

There was a direct correlation between the growth of the Sabbatian movement and the amount of space dedicated to it in the merchant newsletters. The earlier newsletters only briefly mention Sevi; however, as support for the movement grew and its impact on business expanded, the sections devoted to the Sabbatian movement also increased significantly. By the fall of 1666, almost two-thirds of the September newsletter was dedicated to issues surrounding the

⁹⁶ Such as the newsletters sent to Thomas Dethick.

⁹⁷ The merchant newsletters sent to Thomas Dethick always discuss other political and economic matters before they mention Sevi. One letter begins by discussing problems between French and Turkish merchants and diplomats.

⁹⁸ *Newsletter from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Company: 15...1666* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 97/18/210).

⁹⁹ *Gods Love to his People Israel*, 6. It is noteworthy to mention that this source's claim that the merchants were associated with the East India Company appears odd because the Levant Company was responsible for commercial interactions in Egypt and especially Alexandria. As such, the reasons for this statement should be investigated further.

Sabbatian movement.¹⁰⁰ Even in this newsletter, the merchant's economic focus is revealed as the author notes the amount of money that Sevi is paid per day by the Sultan after his conversion to Islam.¹⁰¹

The Sabbatian movement was affecting trade negatively. Therefore, the merchants write despairingly towards Sevi. One merchant newsletter states that the Jews were in such a "frenzie" that "tis not to be expressed how farr they were gone in delusion."¹⁰² The merchants even include Jewish sources that attack the Sabbatian leaders for contriving the messiahship. One merchant writes,

"[B]ut those who have been the Opposition of this Imposture say that this Sevi with another false Pretended Prophett...Nathan have

¹⁰⁰ Despite the overwhelming focus on Sevi, the newsletter still begins by discussing other economic and political concerns. *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.*

¹⁰¹ He notes his "pay is @ 150 [a] day." While the other sets of agents are stunned by Sevi's apostasy and discuss it in detail, the merchant newsletter simply mentions it and notes Sevi's new wages. They are the only set of agents to state the amount that Sevi is paid. See *Newsletter of 7...1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.* This form of cooptation used by the Sultan was extraordinarily effective in halting the spread of the Sabbatian movement. This incident and other forms of state cooptation of messianic leaders or millennial thought is a field that deserves further study.

¹⁰² In particular, they write that the Jews sold their land in order to prepare for the journey to Jerusalem. The memoir of Glickel of Hameln substantiates this idea. The author describes how her own family was caught up in the millennial excitement and sold all their goods and prepared for the journey. She states, "Many sold their houses and lands and all their possessions for any day they hoped to be redeemed..."She continues, "My good father-in-law left his home in Hameln, abandoned his house and lands and all his goodly furniture, and moved to Hildesheim. He sent to us in Hamburg two enormous casks packed with linens and with peas, beans, dried meats, shredded prunes and like stuff, every manner of food that would keep. For the old man expected to sail any moment from Hamburg to the Holy Land." While this occurred in Europe, it demonstrates that Jews throughout the world were selling their goods and neglecting business and trade. A merchant newsletter notes that after Sevi's apostasy, the Jews "now begin to Selle and promise to follow trading as before, which they had totally Neglected." See *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co; Newsletter from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Company: 15...1666*; Dean Philip Bell, *Judaism in the Early Modern World* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007).

been neere Twenty yeeres contriving this designe and by their Emissaries spread it into all parts inhabited by Jewes.”¹⁰³

The tone in the merchant newsletters is short, concise and pointed. They begin with simple introductory phrases, such as “Have followes news from Smirne,” and “Sir,” and end with statements like, “your humble servant...”¹⁰⁴ There is no supplementary information pertaining to unrelated issues in these newsletters. Instead, the tone is straightforward, business oriented, and hierarchical. The merchants’ term their millennial information “intelligence,” and they are the only agents who plainly state when they are unaware of a certain event. One merchant writes that he cannot inform the reader if Sevi is dead or alive.¹⁰⁵ This demonstrates that the merchants relay the Sabbatian information they have obtained while notifying the reader when they do not know certain news.

While merchants transmitted millennial news between England and the Ottoman Empire in both directions, the amount of written millennial information they spread was minimal. The material they did move condemned the Judaic Sabbatian movement in a concise, business oriented manner.

¹⁰³ *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co*: Disparaging merchant attitudes towards Sevi are part of a history of negative merchant views towards Jewish messiahs. In 1665, a merchant newsletter titled *Newsletter from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co in Legorn: 27 Feb 1665* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 97/18/156) notes that the “[d]istraktion amongst the Jewes nation is not yet over here...[and their great prophet] having proved him an Imposture shall his punishment...through the City mounted on a buffalo with burning candles stick into his...” This newsletter also has a focus on trade. It states that it will take some time before the Jews return to their mercantile businesses, “which is not small in detriment to trade.” These merchant’s also do not use any capitalizations when referring to the Jewish prophet. This discussion comes after news concerning other political and economic concerns, which parallels the later Sabbatian news. Therefore, this newsletter about another Jewish prophet is similar to the ones written about Sabbatai Sevi.

¹⁰⁴ *Newsletter from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co in Legorn: 27 Feb 1665; Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.*

¹⁰⁵ They add, however, that they should know the truth within a day or two. *Newsletter from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Company: 15... 1666.*

The Diplomatic Routes

Diplomats were the second set of agents who spread millennial information across the seventeenth-century Judeo-Christian frontier. In particular, European diplomats working in the Ottoman Empire spread Sabbatian news to England.¹⁰⁶ John Evelyn and Paul Rycaut wrote about the Sabbatian movement in *The History of the Three Late Famous Impostors*¹⁰⁷ and *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* respectively. Although Evelyn published the former pamphlet, Rycaut is really the author of both works.

Paul Rycaut (1629-1700) was a member of a merchant family from the Spanish Netherlands who settled in London in 1600.¹⁰⁸ Rycaut had a history of noting Judaic millennial information because he was present at a political meeting that was held at the Protector's council in 1655 and preserved Oliver Cromwell's millennial-laden speech in favour of the readmission of the Jews.¹⁰⁹ Although Rycaut was in England during the height of the Sabbatian movement, he returned to the Ottoman Empire after Sevi's apostasy and wrote an account of the movement in 1666 and 1667.¹¹⁰ Rycaut knew Sevi's father, and other

¹⁰⁶ Although European diplomats may have brought millennial news from Europe to the Ottoman Empire when they took up their posts, there is no evidence to substantiate such claims.

¹⁰⁷ The choice of this title is particularly interesting because there was a constant rumour in the early-modern world of the existence and circulation of a book about Moses, Jesus, and Mohammad titled, "The Three Impostors."

¹⁰⁸ Sonia P. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna: Paul Rycaut at Smyrna, 1667 – 1678* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 19.

¹⁰⁹ He was also a member of an important Royalist family. Popkin, "Three Tellings," 46.

¹¹⁰ Evelyn's version is simply Rycaut's work with an added introduction and slight changes. Popkin, "Three Tellings," 44.

prominent Jews who were part of the movement, including rabbi Abraham Gabai who was Rycaut's publisher and a Sabbatian believer.¹¹¹ Rycaut could also speak fluent Turkish, Greek, and Spanish,¹¹² which enabled him to communicate with both the Sephardic Jews in Smyrna and the ones who had recently moved there from Amsterdam.¹¹³ As such, Rycaut had the skill set and connections to write about the Sabbatian movement.¹¹⁴

After Rycaut finished writing his account, he gave it to Pietro Cesii, a Persian traveller of "Italian extraction" who physically carried Rycaut's manuscript from Smyrna to London.¹¹⁵ When Cesii reached England, he passed Rycaut's manuscript to Lord Henry Howard who enlisted his, and Rycaut's, friend John Evelyn to publish it as a pamphlet.¹¹⁶ In this manner, the written millennial

¹¹¹ Gabai may have been the individual who translated some of the key Sabbatian documents from Hebrew into Italian for Rycaut. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 213.

¹¹² Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 108.

¹¹³ Popkin, "Three Tellings" 44, 45, 50.

¹¹⁴ Rycaut also had non-Jewish informants including Thomas Coenen, the Dutch chaplain at Smyrna. Coenen witnessed the events first hand and was Rycaut's principle informant. While Coenen sent his manuscript home, where it was published later, Rycaut used Coenen's copy in Smyrna to write his own account. The English ambassador at Constantinople, Heneage Finch, who was the third Earl of Winchilsea, was also one of Rycaut's sources of Sabbatian information. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 213; Popkin, "Three Tellings," 45.

¹¹⁵ Cesii embarked on the *Zante Frigate* in early 1668 on his way to settling in England. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 211; Popkin, "Three Tellings" 45.

¹¹⁶ Popkin, "Three Tellings" 45; While Cesii wrote the other accounts that were published alongside Rycaut's work, Cesii had written these in Italian and Evelyn had to edit them. Evelyn also wrote an introduction to the pamphlet. Rycaut notes the friendship between himself and Evelyn in a letter to Evelyn's son, where he call Evelyn "his good old friend." See Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 213-214.

information that became one of the major publications on Sabbatai Sevi was transmitted personally from the Ottoman Empire to England.¹¹⁷

Although Rycaut's version was published by Evelyn in *The History of the Three Late Famous Impostors*, he reclaimed it when he returned from the Ottoman Empire and published it himself in *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*.¹¹⁸ The account written by Rycaut and published by Evelyn is known as the Rycaut-Evelyn version, and it is the most popular pamphlet on the Sabbatian movement. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth century, it was reprinted in at least twenty-seven editions in English, French, German, Dutch, Polish, Russian, and Welsh.¹¹⁹ This version was also printed three times in New England in the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ The numerous reprinting of this edition demonstrates the early-modern transmission of millennial information across religions, languages, continents, and oceans.

¹¹⁷ Rycaut wrote this version because he knew there was audience for a well informed pamphlet on Sabbatai Sevi. The Sabbatian movement was so popular in England that Jews there were giving ten to one odds that the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire would pay homage to Sevi within the next two years (the author of this study is unaware if any money was actually exchanged). Rycaut's interest in the Sabbatian movement had been aroused by both the Whitehall settlement conferences in England in 1655, where he witnessed the discussion over the readmission of the Jews, and by the actions of the Jewish communities from Istanbul to Buda where the Jews were preparing for their redemption. Lord Howard Henry had allow witnessed the growth of the movement when he was in the Balkans, and this could have encouraged him to help Rycaut get his account of Sevi published. See Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 211, 212, 213.

¹¹⁸ Evelyn hints at Rycaut's authorship in his publication. In his own work, Rycaut places the Sabbatian movement in proper chronological order with all the other socio-political events. Rycaut's version also differs from Evelyn's because he omits the names of the Jews that Sevi claimed to be the Kings of the World, he discusses what happened to Sevi and his Jewish believers after the apostasy, and he describes the advent of a second Jewish messiah who was rejected by the Jews in 1671. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 214; Popkin, "Three Tellings," 45, 47-48.

¹¹⁹ This pamphlet was reprinted at least two times between 1666 and 1700. Anderson, *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 44, 215.

¹²⁰ Popkin, "Three Tellings," 44, 45, 47-48.

Like their English counterparts, French diplomats in the Ottoman Empire recorded and spread Sabbatian information. The French ambassador de Chaumont wrote a report to king Louis XIV laced with millennial news. According to a pamphlet published in England during the height of the Sabbatian movement,

“The French Ambassador, Mr. de Chaumont, is said to have written to his king, that neither he, nor any other Ambassador, could have any audience at the Court of the Grand Seignor, because the whole court is taken up with the affairs of the King of the Jews.”¹²¹

This report was sent throughout Europe, and was obtained by an unnamed individual in Amsterdam who used it as an authoritative source to substantiate his other millennial claims.¹²²

Moreover, portions of a letter from the French ambassador in Istanbul to his brother, a French diplomat in Venice, a letter from the French consul in Smyrna, and part of a letter from Paris, all of which related to Sabbatai Sevi, were collected and passed on to individuals in London, where they were published.¹²³ Diplomats were also responsible for transmitting Judaic millennial news around Europe. The Spanish ambassador in Rome wrote a letter to the governor of the Netherlands, in Brussels, stating that he had received information

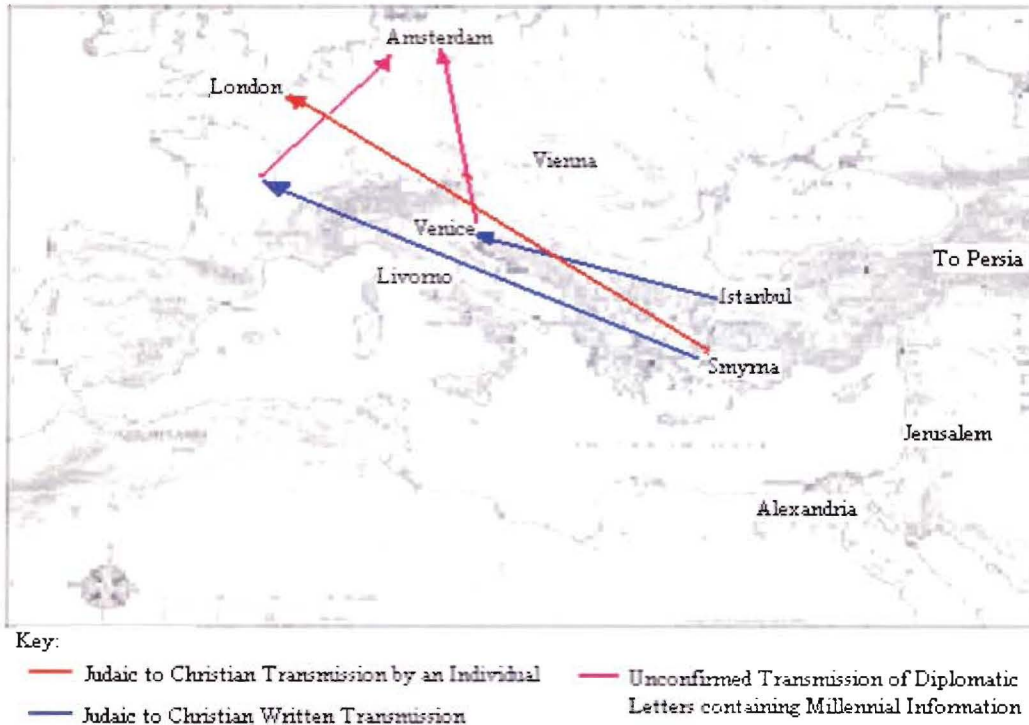
¹²¹ Lira Maraschalck, *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, 1666 (New York Public Library, *KC 1666), 7.

¹²² The “King of the Jews” refers to Sabbatai Sevi. Maraschalck, *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, 7.

¹²³ As France had been a long-standing ally of the Ottoman Empire, their ambassadors may have been in a favourable position to acquire intelligence. All of this aforementioned information was collected and published in *A New Letter Concerning the Jewes, Written by the French Ambassador at Constantiople* (London: A. Maxwell, 1666).

in Rome of a new Jewish king and prophet, and an exceeding amount of people who were marching to Jerusalem through Tartary.¹²⁴

Figure 4: Diplomatic Transmission Map



Written Diplomatic Transmission

European diplomats in the Ottoman Empire wrote and sent letters about Sabbatai Sevi to Europe. Unlike the merchants, the diplomats published their material in pamphlets. The publications about the Sabbatian movement were predominantly written after Sevi's apostasy, post-1667.¹²⁵ The overall context in which the diplomats present the Sabbatian movement is similar to the merchant

¹²⁴ Early-modern Europeans used the term "Tartary" to refer to central and northern Asia. Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel*.

¹²⁵ Diplomats were responsible for publishing Sabbatian news written by other diplomats. For instance, John Evelyn published Paul Rycaut's pamphlet in 1669.

because they focus on the economic impact of the movement. The Rycaut-Evelyn version states, “I perciev’d a strange transport in the Jewes, none of them attending to any business unless to winde up former negotiations, and to prepare themselves and Families for a Journey to Jerusalem.”¹²⁶ The diplomatic works, however, also place Sevi in a political context. In both of his publications, Evelyn categorizes Sevi alongside other political “imposters,” such as Padre Ottomano and Mahomed Bei.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ He also writes, “The Jews leaving their Merchantlie course, and advices, what prizes and commodities bear and matters of Trafique, stuffed their letters for Italy and other parts, with nothing but wonders and miracles wrought by their False messiah.” The letter from the French ambassador contains a similar perspective. It notes, “the Jews here meddle no more with trading.” There are many examples of Evelyn’s economic focus, and his surprise at the Jews neglect of business. In his own words, “And here I leave you to consider, how strangely this Deceived People was Amused, when these Confident, and vain Reports, and Dreams of Power, and Kingdomes, had wholly transported them from the ordinary course of their Trade, and Interest,” and “now all the Cities of Turky where the Jewes Inhabited were full of the expectation of the Messiah; no Trade, nore couse of Gain was followed.” Evelyn, *The History*, 48, 52, 99.

¹²⁷ Padre Ottomano pretended to be the son of the late Ottoman Sultan and Mahomed Bei claimed to be a prince of an Ottoman family. Evelyn, *Imposters, Heresiarchs, and Heterodox*, 1; Evelyn, *The History*, title page: The categorizing of religious prophets as impostors by political and diplomatic sources appears to be a common trend in the early-modern world as the Mughal Emperor Jahangir characterizes Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, the “Renewer of the Second Islamic Millennium,” as an “impostor.” See Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, 82.

Like the merchant newsletters, the diplomatic pamphlets do not centre their discussion on the Sabbatian movement. Evelyn only presents Sevi in the third section of his publication after two other political impostors. Rycaut (174) also does not focus on the Sabbatian movement. He places the story of Sevi in its chronological place among all the other political and economic events in the Ottoman Empire. He begins his discussion of Sabbatai Sevi, “We shall begin this Year with the strange rumour and disturbance of the Jews, concerning Sabatai Sevi...”

A diplomatic newsletter, titled the *Muddiman Newsletters*, also discusses Sevi in relation to political and economic concerns. In between news of several vessels that were ready for a battle and an Englishman who was found guilty of manslaughter in Copenhagen, it notes that Sevi was put in chains for several hours and was hit on the feet before he confessed to being persuaded to act as he did by some Jews. As a result, the “Great Turke has imposed a farther fine on severall Jewes for punishment.” This demonstrates that the newsletter was discussing the Sabbatian movement as simply another political event that needed to be considered. In this manner, the newsletter focuses on the economic impact and aspects of the Sabbatian movement by centring their discussion on its effect on trade and the fine that the Jews received. These comments reveal that for the diplomats, much like for the merchants, the importance of the Sabbatian movement was not socio-religious, but its impact on the economic and political situation that directly affected English economic interests.

While only the merchant newsletters' context reveals their reasons for discussing Sabbatai Sevi, the Rycout-Evelyn pamphlet explicitly states its purpose. In Evelyn's own words,

"This, though but a Pamphlet in bulke, is very considerable for the Matters it containes, and for that it endeavours to informe, and disabuse the World of a current Error, which has mingled, and Spread it selfe into divers grave Relations that have been Printed, and confidently published many Yeares without Suspition."¹²⁸

Moreover, Rycout writes,

"According to the Predictions of several Christian, Writers, especially of such who Comment on the Apocalyps, or Revelations, this Year of 1666 was to prove a Year of Wonders...This Opinion was so dilated, and fixt in the Country of the Reformed Religion, and in the Heads of Phanatical Enthusiasts, who Dreamed of a Fift[h] Monarchy."¹²⁹

As such, the diplomats wrote and published their accounts of the Sabbatian movement in order to demonstrate the foolishness of the Jews in believing in Sevi and to undermine the growth and support of English millenarians.¹³⁰

Further, the aforementioned quotation of Rycout connects English interest in the

¹²⁸ While Evelyn (Dedicatory) explicitly relays his purpose, he also notes his intended audience. He writes that he hopes this pamphlet "will be a service to both His Majesty and other Christian Princes." Thus, Evelyn seeks to explain the movement for the benefit of the political elite. Evelyn, *The History*, "To the Reader."

¹²⁹ Evelyn, *The History*, 41-42.

¹³⁰ Evelyn wanted the English population to become like the former Jewish Sabbatian believers who returned to their senses after they realized their millennial beliefs were false. Popkin, "Three Tellings," 45-46.

Sabbatian news to Fifth Monarchists, albeit in a circumspect manner.¹³¹ Rycaut even attributes the development of the Sabbatian movement to the millenarian reports and “Modern Prophecies” that “flew from place to place” and created an environment in which “[m]illions of People were possessed” when Sevi claimed he was the messiah.¹³²

The publications produced by diplomats present the Sabbatian movement as “a strange height of madness amongst the Jews.”¹³³ The diplomats refer to Sevi as the “False messiah” and “Impudent Jew.”¹³⁴ They even appear elated at Sevi’s apostasy. One pamphlet states, “[T]he Reader may be pleased to pause a while, and contemplate the strange point of consternation, shame and silence, to which the Jews were reduc’d” after Sevi’s apostasy.¹³⁵ The diplomats eventually ridicule the Judaic millennial beliefs. After noting that Sevi promoted the belief that the prophet Elias was invisibly present among the Jews, the Rycaut-Evelyn version notes,

¹³¹ Evelyn portrays the Fifth Monarchy Men in a negative manner, which parallels both his and Rycaut’s views of the Sabbatian movement. In one of his pamphlets, Evelyn (13) attacks the Fifth Monarchists, stating that they have trapped a number of individuals and are a menace to Christianity. He continues, “But, Sir, I will not longer tire your patience with these Monsters (the subject of every contemptuous Pamphlet) nor with the madness of the Anabatists...Fifth Monarchy-Men and a Cento of unheard of Heresies besides, which, at present, deform the once renowned Church of England.” See John Evelyn, *A Journey to England, With some account of the manners and customs of that nation* (1700).

¹³² Evelyn, *The History*, 42-43: Matar (135) notes that this anti-millenarian attitude is prevalent in Rycaut’s work because he blames the growth of the Sabbatian movement on Christian millenarian prophecies and expectations about the Jews. This furthers the idea that there was a Christian influence on the growth of the Sabbatian movement.

¹³³ The Rycaut-Evelyn version even describes this “madness.” It includes stories of Sabbatian believers who fasted until they died, given themselves lashes, and buried themselves naked in their gardens. Evelyn, *The History*, 78.

¹³⁴ Again, note his choice of capitalization. Evelyn, *The History*, Dedicatory, 99.

¹³⁵ As always, the Rycaut-Evelyn report comes back to the impact of these strange beliefs on business. Rycaut writes that when Sabbatian believers are performing rituals of mortification their shops are closed. Evelyn, *The History*, 53, 54, 78.

“[T]he Jewes began to expect [Elias] hourelly, and with that attention and earnestness, that every Dreame, or Phantasme to a weak head was judged to be Elias...leaving a chief place for the Lord Elias, whom they believed to be invisibly present at the entertainment...Many other things the Jewes avouch of Elias, so ridiculous, as are not fit to be declared.”¹³⁶

The tone in the diplomatic publications is similar to their merchant counterparts.¹³⁷ The addresses in the pamphlets do not even begin by addressing the reader. Evelyn’s work, for instance, opens with a dedication to the “Right Honourable Henry, Lord Arlington, &c. Principal Secretary of State” and he concludes his dedicatory with, “My Lord, Your Honors Most obedient, obliged, and humble Servant J.E.”¹³⁸ These quotations demonstrate the professional nature of the sources written by diplomats.

Unlike the merchant newsletters, the diplomatic publications contain anglicizing influences. In particular, the Rycout-Evelyn version includes the following quotation from a letter from Sevi,

“Whereas we are informed that you are indebted to several of the English Nation: It seemeth right unto us to en-order you to make satisfaction to these your just debts: which if you refuse to do, and not obey us herein: Know you, that then you are not to enter with us into our Joys and Dominions.”¹³⁹

¹³⁶ This pamphlet also notes the importance of publications in furthering millennial beliefs. It states that once the apparition of Elias was published, “everyone began to obey the Vision.” Evelyn, *The History*, 80-84. Other diplomatic sources portray the Sabbatian movement negatively. The *Muddiman newsletters* note that the Sabbatian movement was a hoax that Sevi undertook after being convinced to do so by several Jews. Despite this portrayal, the newsletter does give Sabbatai the title, “New Messiah of ye Jewes,” capitalizing it, but referring to Sevi as merely the new messiah, which assumes that there were others before him.

¹³⁷ This study was unable to acquire any original diplomatic letters containing millennial information.

¹³⁸ This could demonstrate the importance of Evelyn’s diplomatic ties and state responsibilities. Evelyn, *The History*.

¹³⁹ Evelyn, *The History*, 70-71.

While this letter is superfluous, its addition reveals Rycaut's interest in relaying any Sabbatian information that is relevant to the English populace.¹⁴⁰

The diplomats claim their Sabbatian news as authoritative because it comes from at least one eyewitness.¹⁴¹ Evelyn states that his particular informant is credible because he has "already gratified the Publique with the Fruit of many rare and excellent observations...so as your Lordship having been so pleas'd with the first Relation, cannot be less with the following."¹⁴² As such, Evelyn uses his informant's reputation and prior work to substantiate the credibility and authority of his account of the Sabbatian movement. While Evelyn does not name his informant, the informant is Paul Rycaut.¹⁴³ Evelyn does not name Rycaut as the author because he believed that it might inconvenience Rycaut if he returns to the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁴

Rycaut claims his information as authoritative indirectly. He had access to many first-hand accounts of the Sabbatian movement because he knew many Sabbatian believers and Sevi's father. Rycaut's connections to the Jewish

¹⁴⁰ This letter is superfluous because it does not fit in with the overall focus of the pamphlet and it appears to serve no other purpose except to show a connection between Sabbatai Sevi and the English public. Popkin (51) writes that the Rycaut-Evelyn account of the Sabbatian movement was written in order to undermine the growth of English millenarians at the time by condemning the "bad millenarians, fifth monarchists, etc." Even when this pamphlet was republished in 1708 as the *Devil of Delphos*, it was printed in order to counter the support of the followers of the French prophets in England. Therefore, the Rycaut-Evelyn account was published to counter the developments of millennial beliefs in England, showing an anglicizing of Sabbatian news. The inclusion of this letter also reaffirms Rycaut's focus on the economic affects of the movement. This letter, however, portrays Sevi positively as it notes that he is ordering the Sabbatian believers to pay their debts to the English if they want to receive supernatural benefits.

¹⁴¹ Evelyn, *The History*, Dedicatory.

¹⁴² Evelyn, *The History*, A3, Dedicatory.

¹⁴³ Rycaut wanted his work to be published anonymously because he had to work with the Sabbatian believers who were merchants and brokers in Smyrna and he feared being attacked if they knew he had written an unflattering report about Sevi. Popkin, "Three Tellings," 51.

¹⁴⁴ Evelyn, *The History*, To the Reader.

community are revealed when he writes that Sabbatai Sevi is the “Twenty-Fifth Pretender” to the messiah, “as I am credibly inform’d, it stands in their own Records.”¹⁴⁵ The Rycout-Evelyn account substantiates its claims by incorporating numerous letters and quotes from Sabbatian leaders. This version includes translated full-length letters from the prophet Nathan to Sevi, from Nathan to the Jewish community in Aleppo, and even a letter from Sevi himself.¹⁴⁶

European diplomats transmitted millennial news from the Ottoman Empire to Europe. English diplomats, in particular, were responsible for writing and publishing the most famous account of the Sabbatian movement. Like the merchant sources, the diplomatic publications contain a negative perspective of the movement and focus on its impact on trade. Unlike the merchant newsletters, the diplomatic pamphlets anglicize Sevi and place him in a political context.

¹⁴⁵ Evelyn, *The History*, To the Reader: Despite the Rycout’s incredible access to first-hand accounts of the Sabbatian movement, he does not appear to have questioned the Jews in regard to the reasons why they accepted Sevi as the messiah. Instead, both he and Evelyn assume that the movement was just a spin-off from the millennial sentiments that were growing in England. See Popkin, “Three Tellings,” 50.

¹⁴⁶ While Evelyn notes that the letter from Sevi was originally written in Hebrew, he adds that it was faithfully translated for him into Italian, and then presents both the Italian copy of the letter, and his English translation. Evelyn, *The History*, 49-52, 58-61.

CHAPTER 3: MILLENARIANS

The Millenarian Routes

Millenarians comprised the third group of agents who spread millennial ideas across the Judeo-Christian boundary. While merchants and diplomats may have moved ideas that linked the two movements, millenarian transmission tangibly connected Sabbatian believers in the Ottoman Empire to Fifth Monarchists in England.

Sabbatian leaders, such as Sabbatai Sevi and the prophet Nathan, created written millennial information in the Ottoman Empire.¹⁴⁷ These individuals sent letters and missives to Sabbatian believers, which were circulated to Jewish communities throughout the Ottoman Empire and continental Europe. This included correspondence to Raphael Joseph Çelebi in Egypt.¹⁴⁸

Oral millennial ideas expounded by Sabbatian leaders were also spread by Jewish believers in written form. Certain individuals recorded what they had witnessed after they had spent time with Sevi and passed this information on to

¹⁴⁷ The letters were originally written in Hebrew; however, they were often translated as they were spread throughout the early-modern world. One letter written in Hebrew by Sabbatai Sevi was translated into Italian and then translated from Italian into English and included in the Rycaut-Evelyn account. See, Evelyn, *The History*, 58-61. The only remaining letter by Sabbatai Sevi is located at the Ben Zvi Institute in Jerusalem and is also written in Hebrew.

¹⁴⁸ The content of these letters included proper devotional practices, words of encouragement, prophecy, and answers to previously posed questions. According to the Rycaut-Evelyn account (51) certain letters, such as one by Nathan, were sent to "Publish this Doctrine of himself, and the Messiah more plainly."

their friends and family.¹⁴⁹ Judaic millennial information often entered continental Europe from the Ottoman Empire through Venice and Livorno because each new shipment of mail to these cities brought dozens of letters relaying Sabbatian news.¹⁵⁰ In particular, Egypt was a beachhead for the spread of Sabbatian information to Italy.¹⁵¹ Raphael Joseph Çelebi in Cairo and the chief rabbi Hosea Nantawa in Alexandria were zealous Sabbatian believers who helped introduce the Sabbatian movement to Italy where it was then promulgated throughout northern Europe.¹⁵²

Like in the merchant routes, Livorno and Venice were key transit points in the spread of Sabbatian news by millenarians because these cities contained large Jewish communities.¹⁵³ Letters were also sent from the Ottoman Empire to

¹⁴⁹ These individuals, such as Italian emissaries who visited Sevi in Smyrna, would often swear an oath to the truth of their reports once they returned home. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 269-270, 376.

¹⁵⁰ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 469-470: The Rycout-Evelyn account of the Sabbatian movement notes the importance of Italy for the spread of Sabbatian news. It states, "The Jews were stuff[ing] their Letters for Italy and other parts, with nothing but wonders and miracles wrought by their false Messiah." See Evelyn, *The History of the Three Famous Impostors*, 99.

¹⁵¹ Hathaway (667-668) claims that Egypt was an outlet for the spread of the Sabbatian movement to Europe because Sabbatai Sevi travelled to Cairo in 1662 and established a loyal following with funding from Raphael Joseph Çelebi and Hosea Nantawa.

¹⁵² Hathaway, "The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah Hathaway," 667-668.

¹⁵³ This similarity is most likely based upon the interaction of the merchant and millenarian routes because the information transmitted by both sets of agents from the Ottoman Empire to England followed the same path. This is substantiated by the fact that many of the Jews played important roles in commercial activities, which demonstrates the blurring of these categorical divisions.

The formation of these Jewish communities started during the Inquisition when the Jews were recruited to Livorno from Spain and Portugal because they were known as rich trading merchants. The Jewish community in Livorno quickly became wealthy and ensured Livorno's position as a vital link in international trading networks due to their contacts throughout the Levant and North Africa. By 1645, there were 1,250 Jews in Livorno out of a total population of 10,079 and 80 Jewish merchants out of a 171 merchant residents in 1642. These figures demonstrate the prominence of Jewish merchants in Livorno. See Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 95, 115, 119.

Alcaire, Italy.¹⁵⁴ In Italy, letters containing Sabbatian news were compiled by Jewish believers and passed on to Jewish family and friends all over Europe. These letters written in Livorno, Venice, and Alcaire were sent to the Jewish communities of Amsterdam and Vienna, where they were distributed throughout the community and even read in the synagogue.¹⁵⁵ Amsterdam and Vienna were centres for the movement of Sabbatian millennial ideas because they contained large Jewish populations.¹⁵⁶ There are numerous examples of this routing, including the aforementioned letter to Alcaire, a letter containing Sabbatian news sent from a Jew in Sale to his brother in Holland,¹⁵⁷ and a letter sent from a rabbi who accompanied Sevi to Istanbul in March, 1666.¹⁵⁸ The millennial information

¹⁵⁴ A copy of a letter from a rabbi at Jerusalem who witnessed a Sabbatian miracle was sent there. Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel*.

¹⁵⁵ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 176: These letters appear to have been received positively among the Jewish communities in Europe because the Jews were holding public prayers in their synagogues for the prophet, and some Jews stated that they would be happy to help him in order to one day be able to “enjoy our ancient Liberties, and no longer in Bondage and Captivity among the Gentiles, but shall be a free people; and all people shall come to our city [Jerusalem] to worship.” See *News from the Jews, Or a True Relation*, 5.

¹⁵⁶ These large Jewish populations probably existed due to the increased freedoms Jews had in these cities compared to other places in Europe. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 469-470.

¹⁵⁷ R. R., *A New Letter From Aberdeen in Scotland, Sent to a Person of Quality* (London: A. Maxwell, 1665), 4.

¹⁵⁸ The report from this rabbi is also important because it illustrates that the Jewish individuals who spread this news were not inactive transmitters. Instead, they participated in creating and changing the information they passed along because this April report from the rabbi was “freely embellished by fond imaginings and hopes” and its information was “slightly twisted.” Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 455.

in one document written in Amsterdam comes from letters from Jerusalem and Gaza via Livorno and Venice.¹⁵⁹

In Amsterdam, Jews shared the Sabbatian news with Christians. The Jewish authors of these letters did not intend this cross-religious transmission to occur. Some of them explicitly warn against sharing the news with individuals outside of the Jewish community. Moses ben Monasseh in Aleppo tells Josuah ben Eleazar in Amsterdam to “[c]ommunicate this news only to those of our own Tribes, and not to the Gentiles; lest they deride and mock at us.”¹⁶⁰ Gorian ben Syrach repeats this warning,

“We desire likewise that you will communicate this joyful News to all the Jews that inhabit in the countries about you, giving them charge to keep it to themselves, and not to reveal it to the Gentiles.”¹⁶¹

Although the Jewish community was attempting to remain separate from their Christian counterpart, two individuals in Amsterdam were instrumental in facilitating cross-religious communication, Menasseh ben Israel and Peter Serrarius.

¹⁵⁹ Serrarius, *Gods Love to His People Israel*, 2: The Sabbatian movement followed the routing of its letters. Scholem (518) argues that most of the reports from the Ottoman Empire passed through Italy creating the first European wave of Sabbatian messianic excitement. This idea is corroborated in *Gods Love to his people Israel* (6) where it states that the movement is not only in Judea, but also in Livorno and Venice and “our Jews in Amsterdam will follow.” Similarly, the Rycout-Evelyn version (72) notes that Sabbatai Sevi had visitors from “Poland, Germaine, Legorne, Venice, Amsterdam...” and three of these cities were also important in the path of transmission. As such, the spread of the movement mirrors the path of its letters.

¹⁶⁰ This letter was originally sent to rabbi Gorian ben Syrach at Adrianople from Moses ben Monasseh in Aleppo. *A True Relation of a Great Prophet*, 3.

¹⁶¹ *A True Relation of a Great Prophet*, 5: The Jewish idea of remaining separate from the Christian community appears to be common because a Christian publication notes that when the Jews first heard that the rabbi Nathan Shapira had received support from the Christians, they were angry at him for directly soliciting their support. See *An Information, Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation in Europe and Judea* (London: R.W., 1658), 6. Sabbatai Sevi even told his followers that on his birthday feast days, they should not work or talk to Christians. Evelyn, *The History*, 74.

Menasseh ben Israel was a Jew who was born in France in 1604 and raised in Lisbon. He moved to Amsterdam as a teenager.¹⁶² By seventeen, ben Israel had written his first manuscript and was entrusted with introducing the new Marranos to Judaism.¹⁶³ He eventually came to occupy an important place in the intellectual life of Holland and was on close terms with many scholars at the University of Leiden. While he was not a great rabbinical scholar, ben Israel was on staff at the Ets Haim academy and taught the Talmud.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, he had an impressive knowledge of languages. He spoke Portuguese, Spanish, Hebrew, Latin, English, Greek, Dutch, Arabic, French, and Italian.¹⁶⁵

Ben Israel's prominent position in the Jewish community gave him unprecedented access to Sabbatian news from the Ottoman Empire. His patron was even Abraham Pereira, the millionaire from Amsterdam who offered his entire fortune to Sevi.¹⁶⁶ Although ben Israel was a rabbi, his primary interest was in the Christian Bible and his writings confirm the existence of a meeting point between Christian and Jewish messianic hopes.¹⁶⁷ As such, he became

¹⁶² Ben Israel was an exceptional student and obtained an official position as a preacher by the age that most youths were still completing their education.

¹⁶³ It was a manuscript on Hebrew grammar that was passed from individual to individual in the Jewish community. Popkin, *The Third Force*, 155; Cecil Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel: Rabbi, Printer, and Diplomat* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945), 27, 37, 43, 100.

¹⁶⁴ The Ets Haim academy or "Tree of Life" academy is a research and educational institute that is still in existence and serves to explore and discuss issues surrounding Jewish culture and life. This academy had a vital role in seventeenth-century northern Europe in furthering the study of Jewish-related topics.

¹⁶⁵ Ben Israel published works in five of these languages at his own printing press that was active for over thirty years. In spite of his intelligence, ben Israel was uncritical. He apparently accepted any traveller's tale and repeated stories of how people in India could devour food with their eyes. Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 39, 40, 41-42, 140.

¹⁶⁶ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 117.

¹⁶⁷ Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos," 120.

known as a Jewish apostle to the Gentiles,¹⁶⁸ and developed friendships with Christians, including the millenarian Peter Serrarius (1600-1669). These two men became close friends and worked together out of ben Israel's home in Amsterdam. When ben Israel received millennial news, he would go to Serrarius' house to inform him about the latest developments.¹⁶⁹

Serrarius was born in London in 1600.¹⁷⁰ He was a scholar with a doctoral degree,¹⁷¹ and a Protestant who believed in the imminent coming of the millennium as prophesied by Saint John in the book of Revelations.¹⁷² Serrarius not only believed that the conversion of the Jews and their restoration to the kingdom of Israel was a necessary step in the destruction of the fourth beast prophesied in the book of Daniel,¹⁷³ but he also believed that the fulfilment of this prophecy was "at hand."¹⁷⁴ Serrarius' teleological perspective led to an interest

¹⁶⁸ While ben Israel's early work was created for the Jewish community, they did not value his work as highly as the gentiles did. As such, his success in the non-Jewish world led him to write and publish his work in Spanish and Latin primarily for Christians. Ben Israel was also familiar with the Greek and Latin writings of the Church Fathers. He was able to converse with Christian theologians on an equal level, and he became the first Hebrew printer in the Netherlands and an expert for the Christian world on Jewish subjects. Ben Israel was also aware of the mystical study of the Zohar, showing a knowledge of both Christian and Judaic millennial thought. Ben Israel's work was so widespread that it went from Brazil to Sweden, Silesia, and England. His book was even published in Rouen, a city that did not allow an open Jewish community. Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 40, 42, 60, 65, 86, 106; Popkin, *The Third Force*, 177.

¹⁶⁹ When Menasseh ben Israel found out about the two-messiah theory, he immediately went to Serrarius' house to tell him that the return of the messiah was imminent. Popkin, "Jewish-Christian Relations in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," 164-165.

¹⁷⁰ Hall, "Additions and Corrections," 144.

¹⁷¹ *The Last Letter to the London-Merchants* uses the title "Dr." Serrarius. This was probably done to make the source and therefore the information appear more authoritative.

¹⁷² Freely, *The Lost Messiah*, 70.

¹⁷³ The destruction of the fourth beast would establish the Fifth Monarchy.

¹⁷⁴ He writes, "As to the Time of the Conversion of the Jews, and the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel (of which the Prophets are full) and by consequence the end of the terrible 4th Beast of Daniel, that it is at hand." Although Serrarius was not a Fifth Monarchist, his views show that he accepted the Christian millenarian principles relating to the Fifth Monarchy. Serario, *An Awakening Warning*, 27, 39.

in the Sabbatian movement, and he became friends with Jews in Amsterdam, such as ben Israel. These relationships allowed Serrarius, a Christian millenarian, exceptional access to Sabbatian news.

Ben Israel escorted his Christian friends to the Jewish synagogue in order to show them how Jewish worship was conducted.¹⁷⁵ Serrarius developed close relations with these Jews and became a Sabbatian believer who spent time in the synagogue trying to interpret certain signs.¹⁷⁶ For instance, in 1664, Serrarius and the rabbis concluded that the appearance of a comet and the birth of a two-headed calf foretold the coming of the messiah in 1666. As such, when the Jewish synagogue received the letter from Sabbatai Sevi announcing the beginning of the messianic age, they shared it with Serrarius.¹⁷⁷

Serrarius' information did not only come indirectly in letters from his Jewish friends in Amsterdam. In 1655, the Jewish community in Jerusalem sent Nathan Shapira, a rabbi with great skill in the Cabala, to Europe to seek financial assistance from their fellow Jews. In Amsterdam, Shapira became "accidentally acquainted with some of our Christian friends," who, according to the Christian pamphlet, gave Shapira more money than he received from all the Dutch

¹⁷⁵ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 141.

¹⁷⁶ Ben Israel may have been the individual who originally introduced Serrarius to the Jews in the Amsterdam synagogue. An anecdote related to the ben Israel-Serrarius friendship is seen in their connection with the Quaker community and Spinoza. One of ben Israel's students was Spinoza and one of Serrarius' friends was Adam Boreel, the leader of the Quaker community in Amsterdam. Ben Israel and Serrarius introduced Spinoza to the Quaker community. Spinoza became the translator for the Quaker community, and he is most likely the translator of two Quaker pamphlets whose goals were to convince the Jews to convert. Serrarius eventually became the patron of Spinoza and he acted as a link between Spinoza and his English correspondents Henry Oldenburg and Robert Boyle, taking books and letters back and forth between them. Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92; Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 130.

¹⁷⁷ Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92.

Jews.¹⁷⁸ One of these Christian friends was Serrarius. When Shapira dined with Serrarius, they examined the gospel of Matthew together and Shapira said that the Sermon on the Mount was “the teaching of our finest rabbis.”¹⁷⁹ Serrarius even helped Shapira obtain money from the Jews in Amsterdam, which illustrates the close connections he had developed with their community.¹⁸⁰ The Jews of Jerusalem wrote a letter of “Acknowledgement and Thanks, dated at Jerusalem the 22 of April, 1657” to Serrarius.¹⁸¹ Shapira remained in correspondence with his Christian millenarian friends and informed them of the messianic sentiments that were growing in the Levant.¹⁸² This proves a path of communication between the Jews in the Ottoman Empire and Serrarius independent of the Jewish community in Amsterdam.¹⁸³

Serrarius tried to acquire millennial information from every available source. He collected written Judaic millennial news from Christian merchants and European diplomats in the Ottoman Empire and gathered letters containing Sabbatian news sent to Christians in Amsterdam. He procured one letter from

¹⁷⁸ *An Information, Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation in Europe and Judea*, 5.

¹⁷⁹ Shapira even presented a multiple messiah theory to the Christians in Amsterdam in which he argued that a messiah comes in every generation but mankind is too wicked for the messiah to stay. The effect of Shapira’s view on Christian messianic theory is uncertain. Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 91; Popkin, “Jewish-Christian Relations in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” 166.

¹⁸⁰ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 333-334.

¹⁸¹ *An Information, Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation in Europe and Judea*, 5.

¹⁸² Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 92.

¹⁸³ This connection is even circumspectly noted in the opening words of *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers* where the author writes that the information comes from, “The Last Letters from Dr. Serarias, and the City of Jerusalem.” In this manner, he places these two subjects side by side.

Smyrna by way of Marseilles that was sent to “severall Christians here, but none unto ye Jews.”¹⁸⁴

After he acquired the information, Serrarius would translate, compile, analyze, and resend it.¹⁸⁵ He would combine millennial news from a letter from Livorno with another part of a letter from Venice. If both Christians and Jews in numerous places confirmed a certain piece of information, it would be regarded as more accurate than if it came from only one source.¹⁸⁶ Quite simply, for the authors and readers of these pamphlets multiple reports equalled authenticity.

Serrarius organized his millennial information to promote the belief that current events were fulfilling biblical prophecy.¹⁸⁷ In Serrarius’ own words,

“Now Candid Reader do thou judge, whether by those things which we have before minded, concerning all those signes, and those we

¹⁸⁴ As such, written Judaic millennial news from the Ottoman Empire was not only sent to Jews in continental Europe, but also to Christians in Amsterdam. The addition of the “none unto ye Jews,” illustrates that Christians were receiving letters related to the Sabbatian movement even when the Jews were not. *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666.*

¹⁸⁵ Although no sources specifically mention Serrarius translating the material he received, *An Information Concerning the Present State* contains a letter written by Serrarius that includes both English and Hebrew script.

¹⁸⁶ The process of compilation occurs in numerous works by Serrarius. In *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers* (2), he writes that alongside the good news from Jerusalem, “many of our Christian Merchants have received the like from Alexandria.” In *Gods Love to his People Israel*, Serrarius uses both diplomatic and merchant sources. He quotes a diplomatic letter about a new king and prophet in Judea from the Spanish ambassador of Rome to the Governor of Brussels and a letter from Livorno that claims its source is from the East India Company. Compilation appears to be an important and common theme because the author of *News From the Jews, Or a True Relation* writes, “By these Two Letters confirming the story, I cannot really believe other than the truth of it.”¹⁸⁶ Moreover, *The Congregating of the Dispersed Jews* states that its information was “Certified and related by Caravans, and Letters from Morrocca, Salea, Sus, Amsterdam and London.”

¹⁸⁷ According to Collins (77, 78) apocalyptic writings give a descriptive account of the world as the author perceives it and seeks, “[F]irst of all, to change perception and understanding... They are written first of all to persuade the reader of hidden realities” Both this pamphlet and Serrarius’ other works fit into Collins outline for apocalyptic writings because in *An Awakening Warning to the Wofull World* (21) Serrarius combines biblical prophecies with millennial rumours, such as the story of an infant in Denmark who cried from his mother’s womb, “Woe to Denmarke, Woe to the whole world” in order to persuade the reader of the truth of both these events and biblical prophecy.

see done in our Age in Heaven and Earth, and which we still expect according to the Lords Prophesie, it may not justly be concluded, That even now, the Redemption of the Jews, and consequently the coming of Christ to his Kingdom (2 Tim. 4:1) and the judgements by fire upon the world of ungodly (2 Pet. 3:7) draws nigh.”¹⁸⁸

In this manner, Serrarius placed specific events and rumours into a historical framework based upon biblical prophecy in order to claim that Jesus Christ’s millennial kingdom was imminent.¹⁸⁹

While Serrarius was a Christian millenarian and ben Israel was a Jewish rabbi with an interest in Christian theology, they both had access to Sabbatian information. Moreover, they were in contact with the same set of people in England. Serrarius wrote letters to these English correspondents sharing the Sabbatian information and Christian millennial news he acquired.¹⁹⁰ Whereas Serrarius initiated contact with the English correspondents, these people from

¹⁸⁸ Note Serrarius’ usage of bible verses in his passages to authenticate his statements. This pamphlet differs from his other English works because it is the only one published in Amsterdam, it is written in a highly intellectual and theological manner, and it implements the science of astrology. His other works mainly just pass on letters. *An Awakening Warning to the Wofull World*, 33.

¹⁸⁹ For instance, he also claims that recent wars, famines, and fires that have all followed the recent conjunction of planets should be read in relation to the words of Jesus when he said, “And then Shall be Signs in the Sun, and Moon, and Stars...” See Serario [Serrarius], *An Awakening Warning*, 22-23. This is a common theme in his work as he uses other bible verses to explain the occurrence of socio-political and astrological events in order to argue for the veracity of biblical prophecy and his belief that the return of Jesus would occur shortly.

¹⁹⁰ Popkin (43) asserts that Serrarius wrote some of the most exciting and inspiring pamphlets that circulated in England during this period. Serrarius often ends his pamphlets, including *Gods Love to his people Israel* (4), by mentioning that he is either expecting more letters soon, or that he has just received letters, which he needs to peruse before he passes on the information. Although it may appear odd that Serrarius does not wait to send the letter until he has read the recently received material, it shows that Serrarius was receiving and sending these letters frequently enough not to worry about sending newly acquired news, which is extraordinary considering the price of postage in the seventeenth century.

The process in which Judaic millennial information was written, passed across the Judeo-Christian frontier, translated, compiled, analyzed, and sent to England appears to have taken anywhere from two to six months. Judaic millennial news transiting from Persia through Vienna and Amsterdam to London took approximately five months. See *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*.

England first commenced communication with ben Israel. As ben Israel's reputation grew among Christians, he gained more and more Christian correspondents who sent him approximately half a dozen letters a week.¹⁹¹

Three groups of individuals in England were in contact with Serrarius and ben Israel: Christian millenarians, political advisors, and Fifth Monarchists. The first set includes the millenarians John Dury, Samuel Hartlib, Nathaniel Holmes, and Henry Jessey. John Dury (1596-1680) was a millenarian and an important theologian based out of Germany and Switzerland.¹⁹² While he was from a Scottish Protestant family, he studied at the French Reformed Seminary at Leiden.¹⁹³ Dury became a pastor in Cologne and in Elbing, near Danzig,¹⁹⁴ and spent twenty-five years trying to convert the Jews to Christianity. Dury worked with Samuel Hartlib in publishing major Jewish works in order to advance the knowledge of Judaism to further their own Christian beliefs.¹⁹⁵ He even argued

¹⁹¹ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 4, 65, 77; Popkin (43) claims that Ben Israel's reputation grew so large that hardly any "foreign savant" came to Amsterdam without going to see him.

¹⁹² Popkin, "Christian Interests and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92; Hall, "Additions and Corrections," 145; Dury left England in 1661 and remained abroad until his death in 1680. See Rupert Hall and Marie Hall, "Some Hitherto Unknown Facts about the Private Career of Henry Oldenburg," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* Vol. 18 No. 2 (1963), 98, 100.

¹⁹³ Serrarius may have met Dury while they were both attending the French Reformed Seminary. Popkin, *The Third Force*, 94.

¹⁹⁴ It was in Elbing where Dury met Comenius and Hartlib and forged a group that Popkin labels "scientific-religious." These men were heavily involved in the founding of the Royal Society. Popkin, *The Third Force*, 94. This proves that there was not necessarily a division between the two types of knowledge, religious and scientific.

¹⁹⁵ These individuals used Jewish prophecy in order to substantiate their Christian millennial claims. Therefore, they spread Jewish doctrine that supported this perspective. Popkin, *The Third Force*, 3, 96, 109; Schorsch, 197.

for missionary work to the Jewish inhabitants of New England when he was the chaplain to Princess Mary at The Hague. As such, Dury provides a “nexus between evangelism and millenarianism.”¹⁹⁶

Dury was in correspondence with ben Israel and Serrarius. When ben Israel found out about the possibility of indigenous people in the Americas engaging in Judaic practices, he discussed it with Dury.¹⁹⁷ In particular, Dury was responsible for drawing ben Israel into a public debate in which ben Israel’s views were made to serve Christian interests.¹⁹⁸ Although Dury utilized ben Israel’s ideas, ben Israel benefited from this relationship because the success of his book in England was due to Dury’s influence. Ben Israel had sent several Latin copies to Dury, who distributed it to his friends and facilitated its translation

Both Dury and Hartlib were disciples of the renowned millenarian Joseph Mede, and through this correspondence Dury developed his method for interpreting scripture. Mede’s millennial philosophy was also instrumental in informing Fifth Monarchist principles. Further, Dury and Comenius met Descartes and these two meetings have been described as the “great non-meetings of minds.” Dury was creating his answer to scepticism using a millenarian interpretation at the same time that Descartes was formulating his theory and neither seemed to understand what the other was doing. Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 234.

¹⁹⁶ Ismar Schorsch, “From Messianism to Realpolitik: Menasseh Ben Israel and the Readmission of the Jews to England,” *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* Vol. 45 (1978), 197: Dury could have met ben Israel when he was in the United Provinces. Dury also wrote a letter about the fictional meeting of the Jews that was published in the Rycaut-Evelyn version and in *Two Journeys to Jerusalem*, and many of his letters are in Hartlib’s papers. Popkin’s “The Fictional Jewish,” 11. These letters are found in MS 4/2/5 and 8, and they would be interesting to explore. Popkin (94-95) also notes that Dury spent fifty years personally trying to unite the evangelical churches throughout Europe and North America, travelling from one conference to another trying to further his project, which shows a North American connection.

¹⁹⁷ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 181; Popkin, *The Third Force*, 94.

¹⁹⁸ In particular, Christian missionaries and millenarians used ben Israel’s views to promote their belief that the Gospel should be spread to the aboriginals in North America. Schorsch, “From Messianism to Realpolitik,” 199.

into English.¹⁹⁹ Dury even wrote a dedication for ben Israel's *The Hope of Israel*.²⁰⁰

Serrarius also sent letters to Dury, including one discussing his visit with Nathan Shapira in Amsterdam and another from Sabbatai Sevi announcing the start of the messianic age.²⁰¹ Dury used the information he received from Serrarius to determine what role Sevi played in the Christian eschatological framework.²⁰² He published this information in the pamphlet *An Information Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation* immediately after receiving a letter from Serrarius.²⁰³ In this manner, Dury facilitated the publication of material written by Serrarius and ben Israel in England.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁹ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 190.

²⁰⁰ Moses Wall, the "wild millenarian," translated this work, which led to the co-opting of ben Israel's writings by Christian millenarians. Wall even included a plea for the conversion of the Jews in this work and Dury's dedication was issued to the English parliament. Popkin, "The Fictional Jewish Council," 19.

²⁰¹ At this point Dury was in Switzerland. Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92; Popkin, "Jewish-Christian Relations," 166.

²⁰² Popkin, "Three Tellings of the Sabbatai Zevi Story," 43.

²⁰³ This pamphlet was designed to portray that the conversion of the Jews as imminent. Dury even started a fundraising effort for the Jews of Palestine. Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 91. Perlove (58) states that, while Dury received information from Dutch sources, both he and Comenius were also financed by Dutch industrialists.

²⁰⁴ Many of Serrarius' letters were published, including *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers*. Some English pamphlets, however, do not give Serrarius credit for his authorship. This shows that Serrarius may just have been sending these letters to friends, and was not expecting them to be published. Scholem argues that Serrarius probably wrote *The Restoration of the Jews: or, A True Relation* and *A New Letter from Aberdeen in Scotland* because they have no stated authors.

A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages is another pamphlet with no stated author that may have been written by Serrarius. This publication centres on a letter from Moreshalck Lira that was passed on through Vienna and "very lately sent into England by a worthy man to his good Friend in London." After the letter, there is a third-party analysis, which includes the following statements: "And besides, Letters of the like substance are come to the Hague, and here also to Amsterdam," "Our last letters from Legorn and Smyrna say..." "This week I understood from a Jerusalymitan rabbi," and "Our Jews have..." This stylistic combination is characteristic of Serrarius who often refers to the Jewish community in Amsterdam as "our Jews," was in contact with Jews in Jerusalem, obtained millennial news in letters from Livorno and Smyrna, and sent similar material to friends in England.

Ben Israel and Serrarius were in correspondence with the English millenarians Nathaniel Holmes and Henry Jessey. Both Holmes and Jessey wrote ben Israel inquiring about the advent of the messiah. Although ben Israel responded by courteously stating that he had no idea when the messiah would come, he did not always receive these letters warmly because almost every Christian scholar who wrote him tried to convert him.²⁰⁵ Holmes helped to arrange the publication of ben Israel's book,²⁰⁶ and Serrarius' connections to Henry Jessey are substantiated in *Gods Love to his people Israel* where Serrarius dedicates the pamphlet to his "dear friend Mr. Jesse."²⁰⁷ In *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants*, Serrarius includes a letter sent from "Saley in Barbary" to "Dr. Holmes," which shows Serrarius' correspondence to Nathaniel Holmes.²⁰⁸

While Serrarius was in communication with the aforementioned individuals in order to share similar millennial beliefs, these same people contacted ben Israel because there was a widely held belief among Christians that the Jews had a secret knowledge of God. Dury and Hartlib proposed to found a college for the study of Judaism in London whose staff would include ben Israel.²⁰⁹ In particular, these English millenarians used ben Israel's writings to interpret the Jewish exclusion from England as the last identifiable obstacle to the Christian

²⁰⁵ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 184-185.

²⁰⁶ Popkin, "The Fictional Jewish Council," 10.

²⁰⁷ See *Gods Love to his People Israel*.

²⁰⁸ "Saley" refers to Salé in present-day Tunisia. The letter notes that its' Judaic millennial news was passed on to the author in Sale from a convert rabbi, who affirmed the truth of the information by swearing on the book of the law. *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants*, 4.

²⁰⁹ Popkin, "Jewish-Christian Relations," 163, 164.

messianic redemption based upon the book of Daniel.²¹⁰ They also combined ben Israel's news of Andean natives who were believed to be practicing Judaism with information from New England that the Indians there were Jewish, too, in order to claim that the indigenous population of the Americas were Jewish.²¹¹ Using these paths, millenarians transmitted information from Amsterdam to England. Serrarius passed on Judaic millennial news to his friends who employed ben Israel's work in a Christian eschatological manner to further their own beliefs and interests.²¹²

²¹⁰ Schorsch, "From Messianism to Realpolitik," 187, 188.

²¹¹ The idea that the indigenous population of the Americas were Jewish was an often cited argument among Christian theologians during this period. Popkin, "The Fictional Jewish Council," 10.

²¹² Menasseh ben Israel was not only in communication with Protestant millenarians, he also met the Jesuit Antonio de Vieira (1608-1680) twice in Holland in 1648, when Vieira was sent on a diplomatic mission as an advisor to the king of Portugal. While Vieira was known as the apostle of Brazil, when he was in Amsterdam he made a point of going to hear ben Israel preach and sought him out after the sermon. They had so much in common that they planned to meet on Vieira's next visit.

Vieira's discussions with ben Israel challenged him to develop his understanding of Judaism and its relationship with Christianity. After Vieira travelled to Brazil where he was subsequently imprisoned, he developed his theoretical linkage between the conversion of the Jews and the conversion of the Americas, ideas that he had originally started to ponder in Amsterdam. It was "Vieira's series of conversations with rabbi Menasseh ben Israel inspired him to forge what proved to be a fateful link between the Jewish belief that the Ten Lost Tribes would be restored to Israel and his own incipient belief in redemption by a Portuguese king who would serve as the temporal vicar of the Fifth Monarchy."

Vieira became an ardent millenarian who viewed Portugal as the messianic kingdom and incorporated the Americas into his eschatological framework. Moreover, while ben Israel published his work *The Hope of Israel*, Vieira wrote and circulated privately his own publication in 1659, similarly titled, *The Hopes of Portugal*. As such, Vieira's interaction with ben Israel influenced his own messianic and millennial views.

Like the Fifth Monarchists and ben Israel, Vieira also used the book of Daniel to formulate his millennial vision; however, he interpreted the Fifth Monarchy scripture in a manner that placed Brazil in a privileged position. He also believed that one needed to understand the mysteries of the scripture in a literal sense. This demonstrates that not only were there connections between seventeenth-century Jews and Protestant millenarians, but the same Jewish rabbi was also connected to a Catholic millenarian who analyzed the same information as the Protestants in a contrasting manner. For more on ben Israel and Vieira, see Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel* and Thomas Cohen, "Millenarian Themes in the Writings of Antonio Vieira," *Luso-Brazilian Review* Vol. 28 No 1. Messianism and Millenarianism in the Luso-Brazilian World (1991): 23-46.

Ben Israel and Serrarius were also in communication with Henry Oldenburg. Oldenburg, the secretary of the Royal Society in England, copied letters from Serrarius in his own hand and passed them on to Joseph Williamson, the above-mentioned member of the English government,²¹³ and his patron Robert Boyle.²¹⁴ Like ben Israel and Serrarius, Oldenburg was an active translator with “superb linguistic facility.” He spoke Dutch, French, Italian and English.²¹⁵ Oldenburg’s connection to Williamson allowed Serrarius’ information to be circulated among the English government.

Oldenburg received numerous reports about Sabbatai Sevi from Serrarius; however, he did not accept them at face value. Instead, he tried to verify the news by through correspondence with Benedict de Spinoza. In 1665, Oldenburg wrote to Spinoza, “For myself, so long as this news is not conveyed from

²¹³ Oldenburg had these letters sent to Joseph Williamson’s office because the amount of foreign correspondence he was receiving was quite high. Oldenburg was in contact with at least fifty people and this process allowed Williamson’s office to pay for the postage on the incoming letters. Oldenburg would pick up the letters from Williamson’s office and would copy out any news that was relevant for the English government. A. Rupert Hall & Marie Boas Hall, “Additions and Corrections to ‘The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg,’” *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, Vol. 44 No. 2 (1990), 145.

The process of copying letters for circulation appears to be an early-modern trend that was prevalent in relation to millennial activities because Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi in Central Asia had his millennial laced letters copied in order to spread his ideas. Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi: An Outline of His Thought and a Study of His Image in the Eyes of Posterity* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3.

²¹⁴ Boyle and Oldenburg also became friends with Spinoza. Ben Israel most likely met Robert Boyle at the house of Boyle’s sister, the Countess of Ranelagh, and he met Henry Oldenburg when he was entertained by Adam Borel in England. This Adam Borel appears to be the same person who was the leader of the Quaker community in Amsterdam. See Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 252-253, Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 92, and Popkin, *The Third Force*, 280.

²¹⁵ It also appears that he could understand Hebrew as a letter to Oldenburg from Boulliaud thanks Oldenburg for translating a text in Hebrew for him. Oldenburg had worked as a diplomat in the middle of the seventeenth century and he retained acquaintances with Dutch theologians. These theologians may have included Serrarius, however, this is not certain. There are 715 letters in the Royal Society archives addressed to Oldenburg that should be explored for Sabbatian material. R. K. Bluhm, “Henry Oldenburg, F.R.S. (c. 1615-1677),” *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, Vol. 15 (1960), 186, 187, 193; Hall and Hall, “Some Hitherto Unknown Facts,” 94-95; Hall and Hall, “Additions and Corrections,” 148.

Constantinople by trustworthy men, I cannot believe it, since that city is most of all concerned in it.”²¹⁶ Despite Oldenburg’s scepticism, he eventually accepted Sevi’s messianic claims and his conversion to Islam.²¹⁷

John Dury and Henry Oldenburg were not only connected through Serrarius and ben Israel. Instead, Dury was Oldenburg’s father-in-law.²¹⁸ Dury may have even facilitated Oldenburg’s connection to Serrarius.²¹⁹ Bluhm states that Oldenburg “carried out the same kind of foreign correspondence, and with many of the same people, as his friend Hartlib and his father-in-law Dury had done before him.”²²⁰ Some of Serrarius’ letters that Oldenburg copied possibly came to him through Dury.²²¹

²¹⁶ Oldenburg was responsible for translating, editing, and even publishing material for Boyle. Hall and Hall (102) assert that Oldenburg probably acted as a publisher for other people as well. As such, Oldenburg may have gotten some of Serrarius’ letters published. Popkin (110) states that Oldenburg originally met Spinoza on a visit in 1661. When Oldenburg was working for the Royal Society, he often tried to get Spinoza’s approval for his work. Oldenburg ended up engaging in correspondence with Spinoza for over fifteen years. Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 92.

²¹⁷ The author is unsure if Spinoza responded to Oldenburg, and if he did respond, if his answer influenced Oldenburg’s decision to accept Sevi’s messianic claims. Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 92.

²¹⁸ Oldenburg knew Dury before the marriage. Hall and Hall (96) write, “Henry Oldenburg married his ward, the sixteen-year-old daughter of his close friend John Dury, in 1668.” Oldenburg’s wife Dora Katherina was a close friends with the visionary John Amos Comenius, which demonstrates that many people in this family were interested in millennialism. Bluhm, “Henry Oldenburg,” 186, 188.

²¹⁹ Dury could have been the person responsible for introducing Oldenburg to Serrarius and in persuading Oldenburg to accept the authenticity of the Sevi’s messianic claims.

²²⁰ Bluhm, “Henry Oldenburg,” 188: Hartlib was a close associate of John Amos Comenius, and while Jerry Summer’s “Millennialism, Globalization, and History” (3) groups Dury, Hartlib, and Comenius together as English millenarians, it appears that these three were also connected through Dury’s daughter who married Oldenburg. Comenius also wrote letters to Oldenburg. See Hall and Hall, “Additions and Corrections,” 145.

²²¹ Hall and Hall, “Additions and Corrections,” 145.

Serrarius and ben Israel were in contact with Fifth Monarchists. Serrarius sent letters to Thomas Chappell in England.²²² Chappell was a Fifth Monarchist.²²³ Ben Israel also communicated with Fifth Monarchists. He met Rhys Evans, the Fifth Monarchist Congregationalist who claimed he was Jesus Christ.²²⁴ Moreover, the Christian millenarians who were in communication with ben Israel and Serrarius, such as Dury, Holmes, and Hartlib, were also in contact with other Fifth Monarchists, including John Rogers.²²⁵ These relationships provide the conclusive link that tangibly connects Sabbatian believers in the Ottoman Empire to Fifth Monarchists in England through intermediary millenarians in continental Europe.

While millenarian transmission connected Sabbatian believers to Fifth Monarchists, Jews in London also received Sabbatian news and passed it on to Christian millenarians who published it in English pamphlets. *The Congregating of the Dispersed Jews* notes that the Jews in London received letters about a Jewish army that marched for over a year and killed a ten-thousand-man army of Turks, took Mecca, and “put all to the Sword, Men, Women, and Children, as it is related, they do so to all the Turks they meet.”²²⁶ Therefore, letters sent directly to Jews in London were passed on to millenarians and published in England.

²²² This correspondence included the report from the rabbi who travelled with Sevi. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 345 note.

²²³ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 214.

²²⁴ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 254.

²²⁵ John Rogers was a prominent Fifth Monarchists who was imprisoned. Despite being in jail, he still managed to write letters to various congregations promoting his millennial beliefs.

²²⁶ See *The Congregating of the Dispersed Jews*. Early-modern Europeans and Christians often employed the term “Turk” as a synonym for “Muslim”. For instance, one English publication notes that Sabbatai Sevi turned “Turk” when referring to his conversion to Islam. This is often used in a derogatory manner.

Judaic millennial information was brought to London along a convoluted route through continental Europe that did not involve Serrarius. A person who claimed to have spent time with the Jewish army in Arabia and Asia spread news relating to the army and their “holy” leader, who speaks “all languages, and worketh Miracles,”²²⁷ to a Jew in Salé. This Jew transmitted the information to his brother in Holland, where it was spread orally to a Christian. The news was then moved to Antwerp where it was written down and sent in a letter to Aberdeen. From Aberdeen, it was spread on to London and published.²²⁸

Millennial transmission occurred in the reverse direction.²²⁹ Ideas from Fifth Monarchists were passed through Serrarius and ben Israel to influence the prophet Nathan and the Sabbatian movement. The English millenarians shared their ideas with Dutch Christians, encouraging the growth of millennial thought in the United Provinces.²³⁰ The Fifth Monarchist prophetess Mary Cary proposed the date of 1655 or 1656 as the onset of the millennium. Leading English and Dutch millenarians,²³¹ including Henry Jessey, John Dury, Samuel Hartlib, and Nathaniel Holmes, accepted this prophecy. These friends of ben Israel used this

²²⁷ *A New Letter from Aberdeen*, 4: It appears that speaking all languages is a sign associated with the messiah because the Sultan expected Sabbatai Sevi to be able to speak Turkish fluently if he was the messiah.

²²⁸ This was most likely done orally because the author states that he disputed the information. See *A New Letter from Aberdeen*. The letter also states that this news has been substantiated in letters from Livorno, which demonstrates the importance of the former routing.

²²⁹ The readers of these pamphlets in England often responded to Serrarius asking him questions pertaining to his pamphlets, which shows the reversing of this path.

²³⁰ Shelly Perlove, “An Irenic Vision of Utopia: Rembrandt’s ‘Triumph of Mordecai’ and the New Jerusalem,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56 Bd., H. 1 (1993), 55.

²³¹ Popkin, “Jewish-Christian Relations,” 164.

date to predict that the conversion of the Jews would take place in 1655 or 1656.²³²

Ben Israel was not a millenarian. He avoided discussions about the advent of the messiah with Nathaniel Holmes and the Czech mystic Paul Felgenhauer prior to 1654.²³³ In 1655, however, he published a work that had an “apocalyptic tendency.”²³⁴ This text discussed Daniel’s dream in the book of Daniel, a passage that ben Israel used to interpret historical events. Similar to the Fifth Monarchists, he claimed that redemption was imminent. Unlike the Fifth Monarchists, ben Israel argued that the Fifth Monarchy was going to be Israel. This shows that Christians and Jews were understanding and employing the same passage in contrasting methods. It also demonstrates that ben Israel may have been influenced by Fifth Monarchist ideas because he wrote his first book with millennial aspects that employed an important passage for Fifth Monarchists the same year that a Fifth Monarchist claimed the millennium was going to begin. As such, the millenarian tendencies in ben Israel’s work may have been a response to, or written under the influence of, the writings and ideas of his Christian millenarian friends.

²³² Popkin, “The Fictional Jewish Council,” 10.

²³³ Ben Israel met Felgenhauer, who claimed he was supposed to save all of humanity, at the home of Peter Serrarius in 1654. When asked about the coming of the messiah, ben Israel changed the subject. Moreover, in a letter to Nathaniel Holmes, he replied that he did not know when the messiah would return. Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 154-155. While Roth uses the term “Czech”, Felgenhauer was most likely from the Habsburg crown-lands of Bohemia and Moravia that formed the republic of Czechoslovakia in the twentieth century.

²³⁴ This was the publication with etchings by Rembrandt. Rembrandt spent his time between 1632 and 1661 painting pictures of daily life in the Jewish community, from rabbis and students to beggars at the entrance of the synagogue. Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 97, 168.

Ben Israel's book was published in numerous places, including Smyrna in 1659. The Smyrnan publication included a selection of poems praising ben Israel, and one of these poems may have been written by Isaac Moron, a close friend of Sabbatai Sevi. Moron links the publication of ben Israel's work to Sevi. According to Barnai, Sevi and his close friends in Smyrna were "unquestionably influenced by ben Israel's work."²³⁵ Therefore, an indirect path of communication and influence starting with Fifth Monarchists in England passed through Christian millenarians and a Jewish rabbi in Amsterdam to influence Sevi.

The Christian influence on Jewish thought is revealed through Serrarius' interaction with Shapira. When Serrarius met Shapira in Amsterdam, he writes that Shapira's ideas regarding the messiah were very similar to his own, "When I heard these things, my bowels were inwardly stired within me, and it seemed to me, that I did not hear a Jew, but a Christian..."²³⁶ As such, Shapira was given a Hebrew translation of Thomas Münster's work to "look into,"²³⁷ and a copy of the gospel of Matthew to translate into Hebrew in order to help facilitate the conversion of the Jews.²³⁸

Sometime after his visit to Amsterdam, Shapira moved to Italy and preached a series of sermons that were "proto-Sabbatian."²³⁹ Shapira's

²³⁵ Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos," 120-121.

²³⁶ *An Information Concerning the Present State*, 11, 13.

²³⁷ Münster is generally renowned for his Christian millennial beliefs. He was also a contemporary of Martin Luther who was a leader in a series of peasant revolts that detrimentally affected the Holy Roman Empire during the early part of the sixteenth century. *An Information Concerning the Present State*, 13.

²³⁸ Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 91.

²³⁹ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 479: Scholem attributes this idea to a historian well versed in Shapira's works.

interaction with Serrarius and his reading of these Christian works may have impacted Shapira's later writings, especially since he continued a correspondence with his Christian millenarian friends.²⁴⁰ As Shapira was the prophet Nathan's teacher,²⁴¹ or at least Nathan was acquainted with Shapira's writings,²⁴² oral Christian millennial information likely passed from a Christian to a Jewish millenarian to influence Nathan and the Sabbatian doctrine.

The Christian millennial ideas that were spread to Amsterdam may have also influenced the ideology of the Sabbatian movement and possibly even reached Sevi through the Marranos.²⁴³ Barnai argues that Christian messianism, Portuguese Marranism, and Sabbatianism "were inextricably tied together." There was a "subtle but undeniable relationship between Christian and Jewish messianism, between these two and the intellectual atmosphere in the Portuguese Marrano communities in both Europe and the Orient" and, in

²⁴⁰ Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92.

²⁴¹ Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 92.

²⁴² Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 68: Freely (78) argues that Nathan's policy of rejecting alms was probably based on Shapira's influential book.

²⁴³ The Marranos were the secret Jews of Spain and Portugal who survived the persecutions and forced conversions of the Inquisition and maintained some form of Jewish identity. From the middle of the sixteenth century onwards, they moved in fairly large groups to the Spanish Netherlands because it was far away from the main centres of the Inquisition. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Amsterdam had become the first free community of Jews in Europe.

These Jews were aware of the growth of Christian millennialism and many Christian theologians built stronger relationships with the Marranos in Western Europe in the seventeenth century. These connections led to a Christian influence on Sabbatian thought because certain groups of Marranos employed Christian notions in their Sabbatian ideology. Abraham Cardozo even admitted that his view of Sabbatai Sevi as a Jewish messiah was shaped by his Christian upbringing. Therefore, groups of Sabbatian believers that were in contact with Christians had their Judaic millennial beliefs shaped and influenced by Christian millennial thought. Popkin, *The Third Force*, 149, 155; Ruderman, "Hope against Hope," 197, 198; Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos," 120-121.

particular, in Smyrna, between both of these ideas and groups and the outbreak and spread of the Sabbatian movement.²⁴⁴

The Marranos likely brought millennial ideas from Amsterdam to Smyrna. The Marranos of Smyrna who came from Italy and Amsterdam maintained close connections with family in Europe. Certain Marranos even travelled back and forth between Amsterdam, Italy, and Smyrna. Many of these Smyrnan Marranos were supporters and even leaders of the Sabbatian movement,²⁴⁵ and the relationship between Sabbatai Sevi and the Marrano community of Smyrna “seems beyond question.”²⁴⁶ Thus, the Marranos moved Christian millennial ideas from Amsterdam to the Ottoman Empire and employed these ideas in their interpretation of Sabbatian doctrine, which demonstrates a cross-religious influence.

There may also have been a direct relationship between English millenarianism and the growth of the Sabbatian movement through Quaker millenarians. Alongside the aforementioned Quaker merchants, Quaker missionaries travelled to the Ottoman Empire. Two such missionaries were arrested in Jerusalem in 1658 or 1659 for preaching the imminent coming of the messiah. Their arrest occurred during the period that Sevi was in Jerusalem.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Barnai, “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos,” 120, 122: Scholem even recognizes that the Marranos were responsible for spreading Sabbatianism to Europe, although he argues that the interaction between Sabbatianism and Marranism was from the former to the latter.

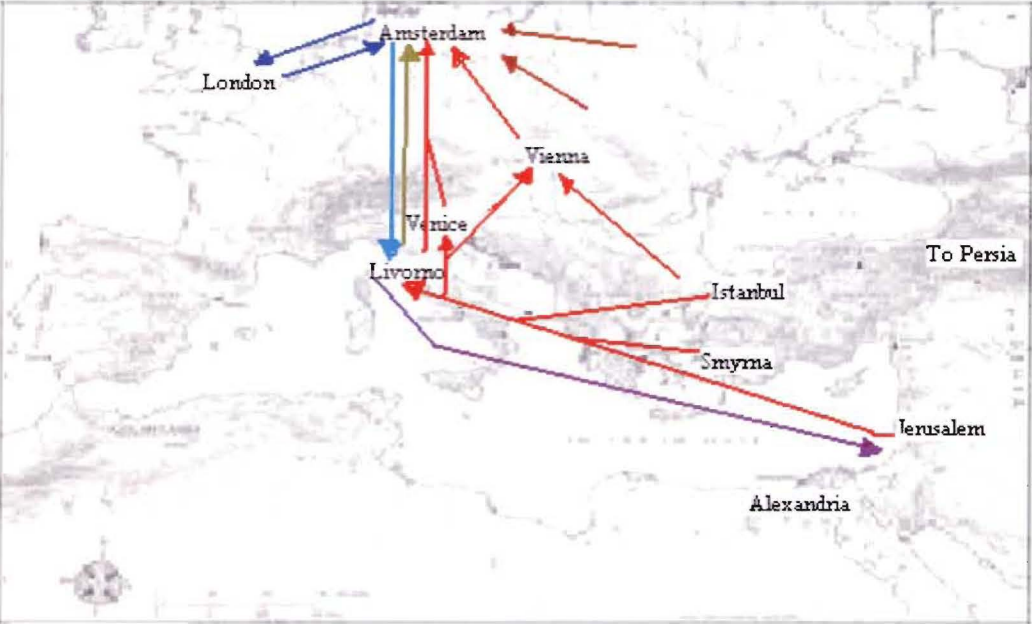
²⁴⁵ Barnai, “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos,” 121, 122.

²⁴⁶ There is, however, no evidence to remove all doubts about a Christian or Marrano messianic influence on Sabbatai Sevi or his close friends. Barnai, “Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos,” 122.

²⁴⁷ Popkin, “Christian Interests” 93-94.

Therefore, English millenarian missionaries may have brought Christian millennial ideas to Jerusalem where they could have influenced Sevi.

Figure 5: Millenarian Transmission Map



- Key:
- Written Transmission by Christians
 - Written and Oral Transmission by Christians
 - Written Transmission by Christians (Unconfirmed)
 - Judaic Transmission by Individual
 - Written and Oral Transmission by Jews
 - Written Transmission by Jews

Written Millenarian Transmission

Millenarians created and moved the most Sabbatian news in letters and publications. Millenarians spread this information both during the rise of the Sabbatian movement and after Sevi’s apostasy. The letters sent by millenarians were often used as the basis for subsequent publications. Many pamphlets simply include full-length versions of earlier letters. Serrarius was transmitting so

much information that he writes that he has received more letters than he has time to add to his pamphlet and he needs to peruse the letters before he passes them on.

Millenarian pamphlets were composed and published by the same few individuals. A. Maxwell was responsible for printing numerous publications in 1665 and 1666.²⁴⁸ While Maxwell provided his full name, other individuals who compiled and printed Sabbatian information often only used their initials.²⁴⁹

While the merchants and diplomats centre their presentation on the economic and political ramifications of the Sabbatian movement, the millenarians focus on the religious aspects of the Sabbatian movement that support their own Christian beliefs.

One historian states that Sabbatai Sevi “was immediately trapped in Protestant millenarianism.”²⁵⁰ For instance, Serrarius discusses the possibility of Sevi restoring the Jews to Israel, which was an expectation of Christian millenarians, including the Fifth Monarchists, for the year 1666.²⁵¹ The

²⁴⁸ These include *The Restoration of the Jews* and *A New Letter Concerning the Jewes*.

²⁴⁹ The initials R.R., R.W., and R.B. reappear consistently in the publication information of millenarian pamphlets. While the first two sets of initials appear to be anonymous, R.B. was Nathaniel Crouch’s pseudonym. Crouch was the bookseller who published Sabbatian information in pamphlets, including *Two Journeys to Jerusalem* (1685) Anderson (215) writes that Nathaniel Crouch evaded copyright laws with these anthologies, which had immense popular followings. This may explain why he used a pseudonym.

²⁵⁰ Matar, *The Idea of the Restoration*, 127.

²⁵¹ Serrarius claimed that the *bashaws* of Jerusalem and Gaza kissed Sevi’s hands and that Sevi was going to ask the Great Turk to give him the land of Judea. The prophet Nathan assured Sevi that the Great Turk would even place the crown on his head. Serrarius ends his pamphlet *Gods Love to his people Israel*, “Your Fellow-writer in the Redemption of Israel, and of all Mankind, P. Secarius,” which shows that he is connecting the redemption of Israel directly to the redemption of all humanity. See *Gods Love to his People Israel*, 3, 4.

millenarian Christianization of Sabbatian news occurs in *Gods Love to his People Israel*,²⁵² when the author portrays the prophet Nathan in a manner similar to Jesus. Nathan is described as a just, upright, and holy man, “whom the Holy Ghost is upon,”²⁵³ and a “man that those at Jerusalem before had despised and rejected.”²⁵⁴ The usage of the term “Holy Ghost” is being applied to a person that would not even self-identify as a Christian. This shows that the millenarian author is Christianizing his description of Nathan.

Millenarians consistently place the Sabbatian news within a Christian context. In *Gods Love to his People Israel*, the opening pages spread new Sabbatian information and the rest of the pamphlet discusses how this news relates to Christian millennial beliefs. It states,

“Now all this I look upon, as relating unto Jeremy 50:4, 5...shall this be necessarily they must come once together, even before they know Christ, in a searching condition...As now they went to the Sepulchre of Zachary the Prophet, to bemoan their sins against him; so the time shall come, that they shall go likewise to the Sepulchre of Jesus Christ...and this King, Sabothi-Levi, and all other kings, will submit unto him.”²⁵⁵

This shows how the millenarians connected actual and rumoured events (Sevi’s claims and the Jewish repentance at the Sepulchre of Zachary) to biblical

These millennial hopes are so prevalent that they are even found in the following publishing information of the pamphlet *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, “Printed in the second Month, and hoped-for Year of Israels Restoration, 1666.” McKeon (161) argues that this Christianization was done in order to tie Christian observers hopes for the year 1666 to the “news from the Levant.”

²⁵² Even the title of this pamphlet illustrates the special role that millenarians believed the Jews play in a Christian eschatological framework.

²⁵³ Serrarius, *Gods Love to his People Israel*, 2-3.

²⁵⁴ Serrarius, *Gods Love to his people Israel*, 2-3: This argument, however, is partially countered by Scholem, the most authoritative historian of the Sabbatian movement, because he uses the term “Holy Spirit” (136). As such, either Scholem is being anachronistic or is using the term in a Jewish conception.

²⁵⁵ *Gods Love to his People Israel*, 5.

prophecies (the Jewish conversion to Christianity) in order to further their Christian millennial perspective.

These letters and publications present the Sabbatian movement positively because Sevi's claims regarding the restoration of the Jews align with their millenarian beliefs.²⁵⁶ Even after Sevi's imprisonment, some of the letters maintain a positive outlook. The Fifth Monarchist Thomas Chappell writes that, although things look low, the prophet Nathan will soon arrive and perform miracles and Sevi has assured the Jews that "Redemption...is at hand," and "the Lord will soon...accomplish his works."²⁵⁷ In this manner, the millenarians connected the Jewish beliefs regarding their redemption to the Christian expectation of the restoration of the Jews and their plan of salvation for humanity.

Millenarians portray Christians who do not support the Sabbatian movement as envious. The author of *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages* notes, "Our Jews here, and every-where grow more and more confident of their Restauration to be at hand...Our Christians, for the most part do as if it were envy: and so can hardly believe such a thing."²⁵⁸ This shows that the millenarians differentiated themselves from Christians who did not support the Sabbatian movement, and believed that God was working through the Jews

²⁵⁶ As already mentioned, Christian millenarians anticipated the conversion of the Jews and their restoration to their kingdom of Israel as a precursor to the second coming of Jesus. When the expected restoration of the Jews did not occur, the millenarians' portrayal of Sevi changed.

²⁵⁷ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666.*

²⁵⁸ *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, 7: This author is most likely Serrairus, who was a Sabbatian believer. This helps to explain why the pamphlet defends the Sabbatian beliefs and attacks Christians who doubt Sevi.

in order to accomplish his plan. As such, they viewed the Judaic movement positively and mocked Christians that did not.

As time progresses, however, the millenarians' presentation of the Sabbatian movement changes dramatically. R.B., the individual responsible for compiling numerous millenarian pamphlets during the rise of the Sabbatian movement, refers to Sevi in the introduction to a 1685 pamphlet as the "Counterfeit Messiah or False Christ."²⁵⁹ This negative portrayal is not as cutting as the diplomats or merchants because R.B. still refers to the Sabbatian movement as a "Wonderful Delusion,"²⁶⁰ which shows that he still considered the movement "wonderful" even if it was only a "delusion."²⁶¹ The most notable difference between the millenarian sources and their merchant and diplomat counterparts is perspective. While the former portrays the Sabbatian movement positively during its rise and only partially negative after Sevi's apostasy, the latter sources consistently present the movement despairingly because it affected trade in a detrimental manner.

The tone in the millenarian works is neither hierarchical nor professional; it is very personal. Letters by Fifth Monarchists Thomas Chappell and John Brown

²⁵⁹ *Two Journeys to Jerusalem*, A2: The millenarians' usage of the title "False Christ" shows the Christianization of Sabbatian information.

²⁶⁰ R.B., however, may be using "wonderful" in a pejorative manner as a synonym for "superstitious." If he is employing it with this negative connotation, it counters this argument. *Two Journeys to Jerusalem*, First page.

²⁶¹ Although the millenarians were bitter at the failure of the restoration of the Jews in 1666, the year 1666 was still important in English thought as late as 1689 because an apparent prophecy written in the year 1666 was sent from Montpellier to Rotterdam and published in English in 1689. See *A Copy of a Prophecy Sent by the late Honourable Algernoon Sydney Esqj in the Year 1666*.

open with the address, "Beloved Brother."²⁶² Even the semi-formal circular letters by millenarians still employ the address, "Beloved and deare Brethren."²⁶³ The millenarian publications have less personal openings. Serrarius' pamphlet begins, "Well-affected Reader."²⁶⁴ These addresses often acknowledge the religion of their intended audience by specifying, "To the Christian Reader."²⁶⁵

Millenarian letters and publications have a spiritual tone. The authors utilize religious, yet not directly millennial statements, such as, "The Lord hath kept many of us by his grace..."²⁶⁶ Sometimes these religious comments are mysterious. An intercepted letter from the imprisoned Fifth Monarchist John Rogers concludes, "From a Mount of Olives in Windsor Castle."²⁶⁷ The religious tone could also be poetic. One publication includes a short poem that expounds upon the expected rule of God and his saints on earth. The poem ends with the lines, "The day invades, wisht for in ev'ry age/ When God alone shall Rule this earthly Stage/ And with him Saints (to whom the promise was)/ To be the Hiers

²⁶² *Copy of an Intercepted Letter from John Browne, a Fifth Monarchist to John Wright at Strensburgy* (Bodleian Library: MS Rawlinson A47/4/30); *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666*.

²⁶³ *Circular Letter of John Owen, London: 9 Jan 1653*.

²⁶⁴ Serario [Serrarius], *An Awakening Warning*, 1.

²⁶⁵ *An Information Concerning the Present State of the Jewish Nation*: Another millenarian pamphlet begins, "True-hearted Christian...this discourse is peculiarly intended for such as are sober-minded, and are acquainted with the Prophecies which concern the Jewish nation." This illustrates the pamphlets' purpose of furthering specific Christian beliefs by using Judaic millennial news. Moreover, the usage of the phrase "sober-minded" Christians acquainted with prophecy demonstrates that the author is writing to Christians claiming that his millennial information is intelligible.

²⁶⁶ *Copy of an Intercepted Letter from John Browne, a Fifth Monarchist to John Wright at Strensburgy*: Also see *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666*. These statements usually come before the specific millennialist material is divulged.

²⁶⁷ *Intercepted letter from J. Rogers, while in Confinement in Windsor Castle to Mr. Brookes, Minister of St. Margarets: 29 Aug 1655* (Bodleian Library: MS Rawlinson A29/51/628-629).

thereof shall come to pass."²⁶⁸ Therefore, while the tone in the merchant and diplomatic sources are professional and pointed, the tone in the millenarian works is affectionate and spiritual.

The millenarian pamphlets anglicize the Sabbatian news. The authors connect Sevi to the English populace with anecdotal evidence. In *Gods Love to his people Israel*, the inside cover contains a short overview of the Sabbatian movement.²⁶⁹ This overview is the first section of the publication that the reader sees, and alongside the history of the movement, it makes two connections between Sevi and the English public. First, it notes that Sevi was the "son to a rich broker of the English." Second, it states, "He [Sevi] ran away with a young English girl of Leghorn...whom he brought with him to Jerusalem."²⁷⁰ Although the first statement is common knowledge, the veracity of the second is debatable because no other source states that Sevi ran off with an English girl.²⁷¹ Therefore, this overview may have been added without Serrarius' knowledge by an individual in England who was trying to make the pamphlet more relevant and interesting to its English audience, which shows that both the diplomatic and millenarian publications anglicized their Sabbatian news.

²⁶⁸ Serario [Serrarius], *An Awakening Warning*, Inside Cover: This poem also includes the line "Believe O mortals this worlds time declines," which furthers Stephen O'Leary's argument that millennial movements describe their current world as one that is progressively declining compared to previous periods. According to O'Leary (5, 46), this is an "age-old lament" and there has yet to be a societal system discovered that "posits a progression from an Edenic golden age to a period of catastrophic evils while locating humanity closer to the point of origin than to the point of ending."

²⁶⁹ This is in a different font and style from the rest of the pamphlet.

²⁷⁰ Serrarius, *Gods Love to his people Israel*, Inside Cover.

²⁷¹ Moreover, Evelyn contradicts this by writing that Sevi ran off with a German or Polish girl. See Evelyn, *The History*, 44.

The millenarians claim their information is authoritative by simply declaring that it is true. The millenarian pamphlet *A New Letter from Aberdeen* includes a letter relaying extraordinary information about sixteen thousand Jews in Arabia who have “slain great numbers” of Turks, and then states, “Thus have I given you an account of the Jews, assuring you, that there’s not a tittle in it but what is truth.”²⁷² The millenarians add the origins and dates of the letters that form the foundation of their pamphlets to substantiate their accuracy. Sometimes the pamphlets even include full translation of these letters.²⁷³ Most letters are from Sabbatian believers in places such as Antwerp, Livorno, and Venice.²⁷⁴ While some publications contain letters from believers in the Ottoman Empire, there are very few sources from the Sabbatian leaders.²⁷⁵ Some millenarian letters assert their information is authentic due to the individual who sent it. Thomas Chappell claims the authority of his information because it “came to my hand from a friend some letters from Mr. Peter Serrarius in Holland.”²⁷⁶

Millenarians spread millennial news in both directions across the Judeo-Christian frontier. Using elongated paths of communication through intermediaries in Europe, millenarian transmission connected Fifth Monarchists in

²⁷² *A New Letter from Aberdeen*, 2.

²⁷³ Serrarius also corroborates his millennial claims by incorporating quotes from Christian merchants that substantiate the Sabbatian news from his Jewish informants.

²⁷⁴ See *The Restoration of the Jews* for an example.

²⁷⁵ The one exception is found in *A New Letter Concerning the Jewes*, which contains a small passage from the prophet Nathan’s prayer book. The subtitle of this pamphlet, however, states, “Written by the French Ambassador, at Constantinople, to his Brother the French Resident at Venice,” which demonstrates that millenarians were dependent upon diplomats for letters directly from Sabbatian leaders.

²⁷⁶ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: July 12, 1666*. By the time the Sabbatian news reached millenarians in England, their claims of authority were very tenuous because the information had already been filtered through numerous individuals. This helps to explain why these individuals were spreading fictitious millennial stories, such as the news of the Jewish army conquering Mecca.

England to Sabbatian believers in the Ottoman Empire. The information that millenarians moved varied significantly from that of the merchants and diplomats. While the merchants and diplomats wrote about the Sabbatian movement because it was affecting the economic and political situation, the millenarians spread the Sabbatian news to further their religious beliefs. They were also the only set of agents who wrote about the Sabbatian movement in a positive manner basing their understanding of Sevi within a Christian eschatological context as opposed to an economic or political framework.

CHAPTER 4: COMPARING, BLURRING, AND INVESTIGATING THE INFLUENCES

Comparing Similar Stories

Merchants, diplomats, and millenarians transmitted Sabbatian news that varied significantly. The different groups of agents presented the Sabbatian movement in contrasting and even opposing manners because each set of agents focused on the aspects of the movement that they perceived to be the most critical according to their socio-political positions and religious beliefs.

A comparison of contrasting Sabbatian news highlights the importance of the agency of each individual in recording and spreading their information.²⁷⁷ The merchants do not include any miraculous stories, despite the copious amount that were constantly circulated. While the Rycout-Evelyn version includes miraculous stories about Sevi, it attributes Sevi's miracles to the devil. This publication employs the term "possessed" twice, which suggests some type of demon possession.²⁷⁸

"For thus farr had God permitted the devil to delude this people, that their very children were for a time possessed, and...fell into a trance, foamed at the mouth, and recanted the future

²⁷⁷ Examining the information transmitted by the rabbi who accompanied Sabbatai Sevi to Istanbul in March 1666 also reveals the importance of this approach. The rabbi's report about his experiences did not just contain factual statements about Sevi. Instead, it was "freely embellished by fond imaginings and hopes," and its information was "slightly twisted." The rabbi's report was sent to Amsterdam and eventually England. As such, the rabbi's personal hopes and beliefs became intertwined with the information in the letter, and both were spread across the Judeo-Christian frontier. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 455.

²⁷⁸ Popkin, "Three Tellings," 47.

prospertie...being effects of Diabolical delusions: as the Jews themselves since have confessed unto me.”²⁷⁹

The millenarian authors provide numerous Sabbatian miraculous stories, which they ascribe to God. Therefore, while the merchants do not discuss miracles, the diplomats and the millenarians accept the validity of Sabbatian miracles; however, the millenarians attribute the miracles directly to God and the diplomats insist that God allowed the devil to do it.

All three sets of agents relay the story of Sevi’s appearance before a *qadi*.²⁸⁰ A merchant newsletter to Thomas Dethick lacks any detail and only notes this event in passing. It claims that a Jew from Europe declared that Sevi was an impostor and this episode led to a discussion between Sevi, the *chocham*²⁸¹ and the *mufti* or *vizier*.²⁸² The diplomat version expands upon the latter occurrence. Rycaut asserts that Sevi got into a heated dispute with the grand *chocham* and then his Jewish believers appeared before the *qadi* in order to justify Sevi as their new prophet and pre-empt any accusations. Apparently, the *qadi* “swallows Money on both sides,” and remits the case back to the Jewish

²⁷⁹ Evelyn, *The History*, 62-63.

²⁸⁰ An Ottoman judge who was a member of the *ulamā* and presided over a sharia court.

²⁸¹ This is most likely the phonetic rendering of the Ottoman Turkish “haham,” which translates as “rabbi.”

²⁸² *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.* A Mufti was a religious cleric in the Ottoman Empire who could administer fatwas, while the Vizier was one of the Sultan’s ministers and a member of the imperial council who had both military and political authority. For more on Ottoman political and religious authorities, see Colin Imber, *The Ottoman Empire* (Houndmills: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002).

authorities where Sevi gains a larger following at the expense of the grand *chocham*.²⁸³

There are two millenarian accounts of this story. One version notes that the Turks brought Sevi to the attention of the *qadi*, who perceived it was the *baffa's*²⁸⁴ responsibility and passed the matter on to him. The *baffa* was angry and gave orders to massacre all the Jews. That night, however, the prophet Elias appeared to him in a fiery column saying, "Take heed of doing any harm to the Jews," and the *baffa* begged his forgiveness and rescinded the order.²⁸⁵ The other millenarian account is found in Thomas Chappell's letter based on material from Serrarius. Chappell writes,

"The Jews have received a letter...from one at Smyrna who accompanied the King [Sevi] to Constantinople...he was at a palace with rabbi, the book of the Law...a pillar of fire...was seen hovering over the place where he was appearing in a Bed Chamber and they sath a confirmation from a vision he had and the man fell down dead."²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Evelyn, *The History*, 56-57: Anderson (243) writes that Rycout believed he was able to treat the situation in the Ottoman Empire and the politics with impartiality because he attributed the faults of the Turks to the corrupting influence of Ottoman constitutionalism and Islam and not any hereditary factors. The aforementioned statement, however, demonstrates a negative view of the Ottoman Empire and Islam. According to Anderson, Rycout's portrayal of the Sabbatian movement is fair and accurate compared to de la Croix's presentation.

²⁸⁴ Baffa is most likely referring to the Ottoman Turkish term, "Paşa," which in this case refers to a local provincial governor.

²⁸⁵ Although the miraculous element appears to be of Christian millenarian origins, the author is invoking the authority of the diplomatic sources by including a letter from the French ambassador at Constantinople and placing it in the title, while the source for this aforementioned story is not important enough to be mentioned in the title. It comes from "divers Letters from Gaza, Smyrna, Livorn, and Venice." Moreover, this miraculous story continues as it notes that Sevi was bathing in a river with cold water in the winter (the author is noting his strange acts) when a constable came up to him and was about to strike Sevi for not replying when he was asked if he was a Jew. The constable's arm, however, grew stiff before he could strike Sevi, and it stayed that way until morning. *A New Letter Concerning the Jews*, 2.

²⁸⁶ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666*: Note the Christian's usage of the name Constantinople instead of Istanbul.

This version does not even mention the *qadi*; however, it retains the story of the bedchamber and the miraculous pillar of fire.²⁸⁷ It also promotes the idea that Sevi was able to commit miracles because he had a vision of a man's death shortly before it occurred.

Although there are internal variations between the millenarian stories, there are greater disparities between the merchant, diplomat, and millenarian reports. The diplomat and millenarian accounts are significantly longer and contain more detail than their merchant counterpart. While the diplomat and millenarian versions note that the *qadi* passed off a decision to another authority, the Rycaut-Evelyn account contains no miracles and much cynicism towards the corruptibility of the judicial system. Serrarius also portrays the "Turks" negatively by claiming that they were responsible for reporting Sevi to the *qadi*; however, he then tells a dramatic story in which the demise of the Jewish population was only halted through miraculous intervention.²⁸⁸

The diplomat and millenarian authors also provide a story about the disappearance of the Jews from Persia.²⁸⁹ *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, published in 1666 by a millenarian, contains the story of ten Jewish ambassadors who show up at the king of Persia's court,²⁹⁰ give him gifts, and tell him that they were sent by a prophet to take the Jews to Israel. The king of Persia meets with his counsel and decides that he cannot allow his

²⁸⁷ Rycaut was also aware of the fiery pillar version of the story, but he refutes it. "Some on a sudden avouched to see a pillar of fire between him and the Cadi...some of whom, who strongly fancied it, vow'd, and swore they saw it."

²⁸⁸ This supports the idea that the Jews play a special role in God's eschatological plan.

²⁸⁹ The merchant newsletters do not discuss this story.

²⁹⁰ This is probably the court of Safavid ruler Shāh 'Abbās.

Jewish population to leave because his kingdom cannot afford to lose their great wealth. When the ambassadors respond that the Jews will leave their possessions, the king agrees because a “dreadfull Tempest” arises, which he believes was “sent from Heaven for the sake of the Jews.”²⁹¹ After the Jews leave, the Persians try to enter the Jewish houses, but they are blinded when they get near to the entrances. As such, they decide to return the possession to the Jews, and when they follow them, they find that the Caspian Mountains have been reduced to an “unwontoned Plain” and the rivers have dried-up where the Jews had crossed them.²⁹² This is a miraculous story about the disappearance of the Jews from Persia between 1663 and 1666 that is directly related to Christian millennial beliefs because it portrays the Jews as God’s chosen people being led to the Promised Land.

A story by Cesii about the Jews’ disappearance from Persia was printed alongside Rycaut’s account of Sevi in Evelyn’s work. Unlike the millenarian pamphlet, this version is primarily negative. It states that a large Jewish community had formed in Persia and grown wealthy at the expense of the Persians. As such, the *sophy*²⁹³ gathered his ministers together and decided to call the rabbis, *chochams*, and leaders of the Jewish community together to ask them questions pertaining to certain beliefs the *sophy* found objectionable.²⁹⁴ After numerous questions, the *sophy* and the Jewish leaders came to an

²⁹¹ *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, 5.

²⁹² *A Brief Relation of Several Remarkable Passages*, 1-6.

²⁹³ In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, “sophy” was the commonly used term to describe the Safavid rulers of Persia.

²⁹⁴ *Two Journeys*, 176: The original source is in Evelyn’s publication.

agreement; however, when the *sophy* heard about the “pretended messiah” Sevi, he became so incensed that he and his ministers agreed on the destruction of the Jews who were a “wicked generation of impostors.”²⁹⁵ This policy was carried out between 1663 and 1666.²⁹⁶ Thus, although millenarians and diplomats published stories about the Jewish disappearance from Persia in England, the stories varied significantly according to the socio-economic position and religious beliefs of the individual who spread the information. The individuals with millennial beliefs told a miraculous story that promoted their religious beliefs whereas the diplomats presented the similar story negatively.

One Source, Two Letters

Comparing two letters from different people whose millennial information originated from the same source reveals the importance of the individual in spreading the news. Peter Serrarius sent letters containing similar Sabbatian information to Chappell and Oldenburg; however, the letters these two men then passed on were markedly different.

Chappell’s millennial faith is evident in his letter. He writes, “[T]hings look very low” in “[t]his day of trouble;” however, the Lord will soon accomplish his work because God is a refuge for those who believe in Him.²⁹⁷ Chappell refers to Sevi as the “King of the Jews”²⁹⁸ and places him in a Christian eschatological

²⁹⁵ *Two Journeys*, 179-180.

²⁹⁶ *Two Journeys*, 179-180.

²⁹⁷ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666* (Public Record Office at the Kew: SP 29/162/85): Chappell’s phrasing parallel O’Leary’s argument that viewing the world in a state of decline is an important element of millenarianism.

²⁹⁸ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666*.

framework.²⁹⁹ Oldenburg's letter is dated three months later and discusses similar news from Serrarius; however, it lacks Chappell's millenarian claims. Oldenburg does not capitalize "king" in reference to Sevi even though he capitalizes, "G[rand]. Signoir."³⁰⁰ Moreover, Oldenburg states that Sevi was "taken with fear, and considering of ye means how to escape danger, he turned Turk."³⁰¹ As such, Oldenburg presented Sevi's conversion negatively, whereas Chappell believed that God would still accomplish his plan through Sevi.³⁰²

Chappell's tone is personal. He addresses James Fitton as "Beloved Brother," and closes his letter with the Christian benediction, "Now to him that is of power sufficient to keep you...your brother, Tho Chappell."³⁰³ These statements show a closeness, informality, and religious faith, which are missing in Oldenburg's letter. His letter contains a formal, hierarchical nature. He addresses Joseph Williamson as "Sir," and reiterates this at the end, "Sir, yr faithful humble servant."³⁰⁴

Chappell was an ardent millenarian who accepted both Fifth Monarchist and Sabbatian beliefs and this is revealed in his letter to James Fitton.

Oldenburg, on the other hand, received his information in a political setting and

²⁹⁹ Chappell also discusses the vengeance and violence of God and his righteous plan. He notes, "the Lord hath soon to threaten us with desolation...[and] the Lord is now thrashing with Sword..." Therefore, Chappell's acceptance of Sevi's messiahship and his faith in God's plan, even if requires violence, are important aspects of his letter that reveal his millenarian faith.

³⁰⁰ *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666*: His usage of the term "king," however, shows that Oldenburg did not consider Sevi an impostor or a fake.

³⁰¹ In other words, he became a Muslim. *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666*.

³⁰² Although Oldenburg is sceptical, he notes that the Jews do not believe it, but "rest confident that this work will goe on." *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666*.

³⁰³ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666*: This closing benediction is not specifically millennial.

³⁰⁴ *Letter for Joseph Williamson: November 10, 1666*.

passed it on to the English Secretary of State Joseph Williamson. Thus, the political nature of Oldenburg's letter compared to the millenarian character of Chappell's explains why each agent presented the millennial news from the same source in contrasting manners. Moreover, this comparison illustrates the importance of each author's socio-political position and religious beliefs in transmitting the millennial information.

Cross-Religious Influences

Merchant, diplomat, and millenarian transmission across the Judeo-Christian frontier were important in facilitating cross-religious influences on each movement. The doctrine of the Sabbatian movement was affected by Christian thought. Sabbatai Sevi's behaviour was modelled after stories from the Gospels and the prophet Nathan's usage of the term "faith" had a "distinctly Christian flavour."³⁰⁵ Barnai even claims, "Christian influences akin to Trinitarian beliefs entered Sabbatianism."³⁰⁶ Specifically, the seventeenth-century English diplomat Paul Rycaut asserts that the millennial excitement among the protestant nations "affected the Jews, always looking for the Messiah, more than any...[and] [r]umours of the discovery of the lost tribes of Israel aroused hopes which naturally produced a self-appointed Messiah, one Sabbatai Sevi."³⁰⁷

Paul Rycaut was primarily referring to Protestant England. Many English Christians, including Fifth Monarchists, were interested in the Judaic movement.

³⁰⁵ An example of Nathan's definition of faith is revealed in a letter to a Sabbatian believer in which he writes that a man is saved by his faith in the messiah and not by doing good works. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 211, 217, 283-284.

³⁰⁶ Barnai, "Christian Messianism and the Portuguese Marranos," 121.

³⁰⁷ Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 213.

“Jewish consciousness has always been a characteristic of Christian apocalyptic thought,”³⁰⁸ and the Fifth Monarchy Men were awaiting the restoration of the Jews.³⁰⁹ The Jewish restoration was a necessary step in Fifth Monarchist eschatological beliefs and as Sevi claimed that this restoration was his divine mission,³¹⁰ the Fifth Monarchists followed the Sabbatian movement with interest. As we have seen, numerous Christian pamphlets were published in England during this period discussing the Sabbatian movement and the restoration of the Jews and this encouraged the growth of Christian millenarianism.

These cross-religious influences and connections were a direct result of the information transmitted by merchants, diplomats, and millenarians that linked Jews in the Ottoman Empire to Christians in England. While this is only a preliminary investigation, the affects of this cross-religious communication are critical in demonstrating that the religious boundaries that historians often employ in the examination of the Fifth Monarchy Men and Sabbatian movement were more porous than acknowledged.

³⁰⁸ John Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 104.

³⁰⁹ *Of the number 666* (Bodleian Library: MS Ashmole 241/200): Christian millenarians expected great things to occur in regard to the Jews in 1666. One pamphlet notes, “He pitches much upon 1666, and confidently believes, That all the Propheesies of the Old and New Testament Centers in it, it being the time that shall give beginning to that holy and Spiritual Kingdome. I have spoken largely of this, believing you will be willing to hear what is related and upon what grounds.” See R. R., *A New Letter From Aberdeen in Scotland, Sent to a Person of Quality...*(London: A. Maxwell, 1665), 3. The role of the Jews in the Christian eschatological framework that was essential for the growth of millennialism in the early-modern period was a continuing manifestation from ancient and medieval Christian thought. See Ruderman, “Hope Against Hope,” 193.

³¹⁰ Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi*, 136.

Blurring of Agents, Paths, and Information

Although this study categorizes the agents according to their socio-economic and religious beliefs that were vital in informing their presentation of millennial news, these constructed categories need to be blurred. There were interconnections between the differing sets of agents. The merchants' and millenarians' information was transmitted by the same people and along the same routes from the Ottoman Empire to England through Italy. Raphael Joseph Çelebi and the chief rabbi Hosea Nantawa were "extraordinarily ardent" Sabbatian believers.³¹¹ While these two men were millenarians, they used their commercial connections to transmit Sabbatian news to Italy. Josuah ben Elezar was an active millenarian who was a rabbi and a merchant.³¹² Therefore, some millenarians were merchants who used their commercial connections to further their millennial beliefs, which demonstrates that these categories are not mutually exclusive.

When the merchant Thomas Dethick resided in Livorno, the letters containing Sabbatian news that the millenarian Serrarius received in Amsterdam passed through the Jewish community of Livorno. As such, there were possible interactions between the English merchants and these Jews because the English merchants often got insurance for their ships from the Jews who played an important role in the English commercial activities.³¹³ The land route through

³¹¹ Jane Hathaway, "The Grand Vizier and the False Messiah: The Sabbatai Sevi Controversy and the Ottoman Reform in Egypt," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* Vol. 117 No. 4 (1997), 668.

³¹² *News From the Jews, Or a True Relation*, Title Page.

³¹³ Pagano de Divitis, *English Merchants*, 95, 104, 119.

Europe that brought Jewish letters containing Sabbatian information to Amsterdam was operated by Jews who also appear to have moved Sabbatian news transmitted by Christian merchants. Thus, the Sabbatian information acquired by Serrarius in Amsterdam came from both Christian merchants and Jewish Sabbatian believers along the same path operated by Jewish merchants.³¹⁴

The Royal Society in England served as an arena for the interaction of these differing sets of agents. Although renowned for its scientific agenda, the Royal Society arguably grew out of the aforementioned invisible college that Comenius, Hartlib, and Dury wanted to create.³¹⁵ When the Royal Society was granted a charter, Hartlib was dying so Oldenburg, Dury's son-in-law, took over his role and became the secretary. Dury was also active in educational and religious reform projects that helped to prepare the foundation for the scientific organization that preceded the Royal Society,³¹⁶ and some of its earliest

³¹⁴ The interconnections between these paths is demonstrated by the fact Serrarius was able to acquire all material from the different agents. For instance, in the *The Last Letters to the London-Merchants and Faithful Ministers (2)* is a compilation of news from Jerusalem and information from "many of our Christian Merchants." Moreover, in *Gods Love to his People Israel*, Serrarius appropriates both diplomatic and merchant sources because he quotes a diplomatic letter about a new king and prophet in Judea from the Spanish ambassador of Rome to the Governor of Brussels and a letter from Livorno that claims its source is from the East India Company.

³¹⁵ This is a contested idea. In 1641, Comenius travelled to England where he worked with Dury, Hartlib, Boyle, and others planning for the prophesied events they believed would occur in 1655. While Comenius worked on reforming education, Hartlib was supposed to establish a college in London for the development of universal knowledge, and Dury was going to unite all the evangelical churches in preparation for the conversion of the Jews. Comenius was even offered the presidency of Harvard as part of an experimental project to make it a college where Indians and colonialists would "achieve pansophia together." Popkin, *The Third Force*, 107-108, 110, 279.

³¹⁶ Popkin, *The Third Force*, 95, 110.

members, such as Oldenburg, Boyle, and Dury, were interested in millennial ideas.

The Royal Society connected the merchants, diplomats, and millenarians. Joseph Williamson was the English Secretary of State who received reports from the merchant Thomas Dethick in Livorno. John Evelyn was the English diplomat who published Rycaut's account of Sevi in England, and Henry Oldenburg received letters from Serrarius and passed them along to Williamson. All of these men were members of the Royal Society and were in direct communication with each other.³¹⁷

Oldenburg relayed a letter he received from Amsterdam to Williamson that "expresses some doubt of ye news concerning ye Jewish kings being turned Turk."³¹⁸ While the letter discusses Sevi, Oldenburg's phrasing demonstrates that he knew that Williamson was already aware of Sevi, which could have come from either Thomas Dethick or previous letters from Oldenburg.³¹⁹ From 1662 to

³¹⁷ Evelyn and Williamson are also connected because Evelyn dedicated his pamphlet about Sevi to Lord Henry Arlington, the English Secretary of State who was Joseph Williamson's boss.

³¹⁸ *Letter of November 10, 1666.*

³¹⁹ The Sabbatian movement was important enough for the English Undersecretary of State to be kept informed about it in the written reports of Oldenburg. This furthers the argument that Thomas Dethick passed on Sabbatian information to Williamson in his correspondence because it would be surprising for Williamson to choose to be informed about the movement from one source and not the other, especially since the merchants in Smyrna thought that the Sabbatian news was important enough to pass it on to Thomas Dethick.

Although Oldenburg and Williamson were in communication concerning the Sabbatian movement, Oldenburg's connections with Serrarius may have cost him dearly. In June 1667, during the Dutch War, Oldenburg was arrested and incarcerated in the Tower until August on a warrant issued by Lord Arlington. A historian of the Royal Society argues that Oldenburg was imprisoned due to the suspicions of the Government regarding the large amount of correspondence he had with foreigners. As one of Oldenburg's correspondents was Serrarius, who incidentally lived in the country that England was at war with, one has to wonder if it was this correspondence that led to his imprisonment.

1677, Oldenburg was secretary of the society. As the society always had two secretaries, at one time, his counterpart was John Evelyn.³²⁰ Although Evelyn's role was purely nominal,³²¹ he had a positive relationship with Oldenburg and was the only "Fellow" to visit Oldenburg during his imprisonment in the Tower.³²²

Evelyn published a pamphlet that contained a section on Sevi in 1669 and Oldenburg received Sabbatian news from Serrarius. Moreover, Evelyn was a member of the Royal Society committee from 1664 to 1669.³²³ As such, it is highly plausible that Evelyn and Oldenburg discussed the Sabbatian movement and this interaction may have influenced Evelyn's decision to publish the account of Sevi.³²⁴

The differing sets of agents met in discussions pertaining to important millennial themes. While Rycaut wrote about the Sabbatian movement, he was present as an observer at the Protector's council in 1655 when Cromwell held a meeting over the readmission of the Jews.³²⁵ Menasseh ben Israel and Henry Jessey were also at this deliberation because ben Israel had travelled to England

Bluhm argues against this and states that the order probably came from the King himself because Arlington and Williamson had no reason to want Oldenburg in jail since they benefited from this correspondence. Bluhm claims that the reason for his imprisonment was most likely due to his neglect of security in some of his letters. If this is the case, one has to wonder if Oldenburg's neglect of security occurred in the letters he wrote to Serrarius in Amsterdam. Bluhm, "Henry Oldenburg," 185, 186.

³²⁰ Bluhm, "Henry Oldenburg," 187.

³²¹ Bluhm, "Henry Oldenburg," 187.

³²² Bluhm, "Henry Oldenburg," 186, 194.

³²³ George Parks' "John Evelyn and the Art of Travel" *The Huntington Library Quarterly* Vol. 10 No. 3 (1947), 269.

³²⁴ Unfortunately, despite the logical conclusions linking Evelyn and Oldenburg, there are no primary or secondary sources that document this connection.

³²⁵ Popkin, "Three Tellings of the Sabbatai Zevi Story," 46.

to negotiate the readmission,³²⁶ and Jessey was there as a friend of ben Israel.³²⁷ Therefore, Rycout, ben Israel, and Jessey were all present at the same discussion over the readmission of the Jews; however, there does not appear to be any evidence of conversations between these individuals.³²⁸

The socio-political positions and religious beliefs of certain individuals demonstrate a blurring of diplomat and millenarian identities. Oldenburg was originally a diplomat and worked with the English Undersecretary of State, and he became a Sabbatian believer. Moreover, the religious beliefs of Thomas Chappell and Peter Serrarius prove that the boundaries between the Fifth Monarchy Men and Sabbatian movement were porous. Chappell was both a Fifth Monarchist and a Sabbatian believer.³²⁹ Throughout his letter, Chappell chooses to use the term “Lord” over “Jesus.” He only mentions Jesus once and even uses the title “God of Jacob.” Statements such as these highlight his acceptance of both Christian and Judaic principles.³³⁰

Like Chappell, Serrarius held beliefs that contained both Christian and Judaic millennial elements. Serrarius led a group of Christian Sabbatian

³²⁶ Ben Israel travelled to England in 1655, the same year that he completed a messianic publication on the prophecies in the book of Daniel. The English not only expected the restoration of the Jews to be at hand, but by the middle of the seventeenth century most Englishmen apparently believed that God spoke Hebrew, and that this would be the universal language after the restoration of the Jews. Ben Israel addressed Cromwell for permission to settle with his Jewish community in England and assured him that they would conform to English laws and social norms. Yet while he presented the Jews as potential Englishmen, his audience concluded that they were also potential Christians. Popkin, “Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi,” 91; N.I. Matar, “The Idea of the Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought,” 116, 117.

³²⁷ Roth, *The Life of Menasseh ben Israel*, 235.

³²⁸ There was a direct connection between ben Israel and Oldenburg because Oldenburg sent him a millenarian pamphlet. See Hall and Hall, “Additions and Corrections,” 144.

³²⁹ Capp notes in passing that Chappell apparently accepted the divinity of Sabbatai Sevi. Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men*, 214.

³³⁰ *Letter from T. Chappell to J. Fitton: 12 July 1666.*

believers in Amsterdam who reconciled their competing Christian and Judaic beliefs by employing the aforementioned two-messiah theory.³³¹ This demonstrates the creation of a syncretic set of millennial beliefs that reconciled Judaic and Christian eschatological principles.³³² Therefore, the syncretic beliefs of these individuals illustrate that the boundaries between Sabbatianism and Fifth Monarchism were blurred and permeable.³³³

The different sets of agents co-opted each other's millennial sources and perspectives. While the merchant newsletters focus on the economic impact of the Sabbatian movement, they also discuss Sevi's messianic claim in relation to Christian doctrine similar to the millenarian publications. One merchant newsletter states that the Sabbatian believers base their beliefs upon God's promises in the book of Zachariah, but according to the merchants, their minister

³³¹ Serrarius even accepted Sevi's conversion to Islam and he died on his way to the Ottoman Empire to meet Sevi in 1669. Richard Popkin, "David Levi, Anglo-Jewish Theologian," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* Nos. 1-2 (1996), 91 note; Popkin, "Three Tellings of Sabbatai Zevi," 43; Popkin, "Christian Interest and Concerns about Sabbatai Zevi," 91.

³³² The creation of these syncretic belief systems were important because they allowed for the blending of ideas from differing traditions, which made foreign ideas more intelligible and meaningful. This facilitated cross-cultural encounters and this process could lead to the creation of new cultural, or in this case, religious configurations. See Bentley, *Old World Encounters* for more on syncretism

³³³ Although this study broadly categorizes all these individuals as either merchants, diplomats, or millenarians, there is an important exception to these constructed categories. Edward Brown, a young English traveller, wrote an account of his journeys throughout Europe and the Ottoman Empire, which was eventually published. Although he shows little interest in the Jews, he notes that in 1669 during a visit to the Ottoman administrative centre of Larissa he heard Turkish songs about Sabbatai Sevi and his apostasy. He writes that Sevi's conversion became the topic of both a derisive Turkish and Armenian ballad. Therefore, although Brown only discusses Sevi in passing, his writings on Sevi are an important caveat to the method of categorization in this study.

Moreover, de la Croix and Antonio Galland also published writings on Sevi, and although de la Croix's work is far less accurate than Rycout's, his writings on the movement alongside Galland's are not included in this study. For more on Edward Brown or de la Croix, See Roth's "New Light," 220-222 or Anderson's *An English Consul in Smyrna*, 245, respectively.

John Luke argues that these promises have already been fulfilled.³³⁴ Although these comments are minimal compared to their analysis on trade, they do appear, which illustrates that the merchants were interested in exploring the Sabbatian movement in relation to Christian beliefs.

The diplomat pamphlets that are centred on political and economic interests also Christianize their Sabbatian information. The Rycout-Evelyn account discusses the Sabbatian movement's connection to Christian beliefs. Rycout treats the story as an unmistakable imitation of the life of Jesus.³³⁵ Although the Rycout-Evelyn version was written explicitly to counter the growing threat of English millenarians, the pamphlet contains elements of Christian millennial beliefs. It concludes,

“Yet, of his infinite Mercy, one day, deliver them [the Jews], that they may at last See and Believe in Him who they have Pierced; and that so both Jew and Gentile may make One Flock under that One Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, Jesus Christ the True MESSIAH. Amen.”³³⁶

³³⁴ Moreover, the merchants write about the “Appearance of our Lord and Saviour,” and praise God for the English victory over the Dutch. This is most likely referring to the chaplain John Luke in Smyrna who was elected chaplain in 1664. Anderson (103) states that John Luke’s tastes were scholarly. Luke he had a quarter of his salary paid to his friends in England so that they could send him books. This shows that the merchants were using him as an authority for theological questions relating to the millennium. *Newsletter of 29 September 1666 from Smyrna to Thomas Dethick and Co.*

³³⁵ Popkin, “Three Tellings,” 46, 47, 51.

³³⁶ *Two Journeys*, 180: The inclusion of the story in Evelyn’s publication about the conversations between the *sophy* and the Jewish leaders also shows this Christianization. The fact that the author adds a story about the *sophy* questioning the Jews about their beliefs regarding Jesus Christ demonstrates that the authors are Christianizing the story because they are only mentioning the Muslims questioning the Jews in regard to Jesus, instead of any other Muslim or Jewish belief that did not pertain to Christianity. Further, the letter to the Governor of Brussels from the Spanish ambassador at Rome states that the news of a new prophet in Judea and the massive group of people marching through Tartary has led to the general consensus in Rome, “*That now the Antichrist was to come forth.*”

The millenarians appropriated the pamphlets by diplomats on Sevi. While the millenarian sources written before 1667 contain opposing perspectives to the diplomat works written after Sevi's apostasy, millenarian pamphlets published after 1669 contain a negative perspective similar to that of the diplomatic publications. Some millenarian pamphlets even freely plagiarize the Rycaut-Evelyn account. The infamous Christian millenarian R.B. republished this diplomat account in his 1685 millenarian pamphlet titled *Two Journeys to Jerusalem*, but, "Beautifie[s it] with Pictures."³³⁷

This millenarian pamphlet, which uses Evelyn's 1669 work *The History*, not only portrays the Jews as greedy and anti-Christian, it also blames their suffering at the hands of the king of Persia on their belief in Sevi by claiming, "And in truth this late Actions and Miscarriage of their pretended Messiah has rendered them so universally despised."³³⁸ As such, the subsequent failure of the restoration of the Jews created a bitterness and animosity among the Christian millenarians that led them to appropriate a document written by a diplomat that presents both Sevi and the Jewish people negatively.

This bitterness is noted in R.B.'s introduction. He writes,

"We may with our Author [whom he later adds has "undoubted Veracity and Credit"] observe, how signally the hand of the Almighty has been stretcht out against the Jews, so that if they were not under a Judicial hardness of heart, certainly these continued Tokens of Divine Vengeance would cause them to Reflect upon themselves, and by a Serious Repentance and imbracing of the Doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ, the True

³³⁷ This version also translates statements that Evelyn leaves in Latin and removes sections of Evelyn's work, such as the Italian copy of Sevi's letter. *Two Journeys*, 1.

³³⁸ *Two Journeys*, 180.

Messiah and Saviour of the World, to endeavour to remove that Curse and their children, when they Crucified the Son of God."³³⁹

Thus, the millenarian who twenty years earlier was responsible for publishing numerous pamphlets portraying the Jews as God's chosen people is now condemning them by using the work of a diplomat. Still more ironic is R.B.'s usage of the very piece on the Sabbatian movement that was designed by Rycout and Evelyn to dissuade the English populace from believing the information published in earlier millenarian pamphlets.³⁴⁰

³³⁹ *Two Journeys*, To the Reader.

³⁴⁰ *Two Journeys* also incorporate Evelyn's supplemental text about the Jewish council in eastern Europe that discussed Jesus Christ. Although this was a fictitious event and the rabbi Menasseh ben Israel even told his English hosts that it did not happen, this story was reprinted numerous times in millenarian pamphlets for over two centuries, in places such as America and languages such as Welsh. See Popkin, "The Fictional Jewish Council," 11.

An anonymous 1708 publication titled, *The Devil of Delphos, or, The Prophets of Baal: containing an account of the notorious Impostor, call'd SABATAI SEVI, pretended Messiah of the Jews*, in 1666 also employs the Rycout-Evelyn account of the Sabbatian movement. This publication is not centred on Sevi. Instead, it places him alongside other Christian impostors and does not mention any other Jews. Although the account of the Sabbatian movement is located in the middle of the publication, it is the title and comprises the largest section of the work.

The Devil of Delphos was published by Christians at the beginning of the eighteenth century to counter the influence of French prophets who were spreading millennial predictions in England. As such, this work was republished in order to utilize the failure of the Sabbatian movement as an example to convince the English millenarians that their beliefs were problematic. By placing the current millenarian claims into a history of Christian impostors and juxtaposing them to the failure of Judaic Sabbatian movement, the Christian publication is trying to halt this crisis in English Christianity. The author begins the introduction to the Sabbatian movement, "I the more willingly give the Readers the History of this Impostor, because it borders very much on the Ground with the Pretensions of our Prophets... For the Messiah which the Jews expect has been a great Snare to them, and produc'd as many Warnings of his Coming, as the Christian Notion of the Return of Christ to live and reign a Thousand Years on Earth, and call home to Jews and build a new Jerusalem."

This publication demonstrates that the Christian author believed there was a connection between Christian and Judaic millennial thought. The author gives the same explanation for the delusion of both religious groups and incorporates Rycout's claim about the importance of the year 1666 influencing the Judaic movement. It also shows that Christians in the eighteenth century were still employing the Rycout-Evelyn account, with its negative perspective on the Sabbatian movement, in order to stop the growth of later English millennial movements by paralleling them to the Judaic Sabbatian movement.

While each set of agents presents the Sabbatian movement in contrasting manners, there are similarities and linkages between their millennial works. These examples demonstrate the existence of a complex interconnectedness between the written sources that were created by the differing agents because, while each work contains characteristics indicative of the agent who wrote it, the differing agents appropriated each other's perspectives and documents. As such, the differences, similarities, and connections between the sources highlight the importance of each individual's socio-political position and religious beliefs in creating and modifying the Sabbatian information they transmitted.

Conclusion

While the Christian Fifth Monarchy Men and the Judaic Sabbatian movement existed concurrently, the historiographies of each movement are neglectful of, or hostile towards, the cross-religious interactions between them.

James Gordon, "a divine of the Church of Scotland," also appropriates the Rycout-Evelyn account of the Sabbatian movement. Like R.B., Gordon's work (375) is negative as he states that Sevi "became such a grand Impostor, that I believe the like of him did not arise since the days of Mahomet that Prodigy of Impostors." Gordon then adds that for more information one should read the works of Paul Rycout, which illustrates that he is basing his knowledge of the Sabbatian movement on the Rycout-Evelyn version. As Gordon's book was published in 1700, long after the failure of the Sabbatian movement, his negative perspective is most likely based in the bitterness felt by Christians towards the failure of the restoration of the Jews. See James Gordon, *Some observations on the fables of Aesop as commented upon by Sir Roger L'Estrange, kt...*(1700).

A New Letter Concerning the Jews published for the millenarian Robert Boulter also quotes a French diplomat, and a piece on Sevi written by John Edward's work in 1699 also accepts the Rycout-Evelyn account as authoritative. Similar to other millenarian publications that appropriate the Rycout-Evelyn version, Edwards attacks Sabbatian believers by accusing them of being unable to "have the Prophetes look'd into" because the true messiah (Jesus Christ apparently) has already come. As the Jews did not accept him, "they are ready to imbrace any bold Impostor who will lay claim to the Title of Messiah." See Edwards, *A Survey of Various Methods*, 17.

Alongside the appropriation of the diplomatic works by Christians and millenarians, the millenarian sources show an interest in trade similar to the merchants' newsletters. In *The Last Letters* and *The Restauration* (4), the authors note that due to the Judaic millennial news, the caravan will be not be going to Mecca.

Despite the historiographical division, this study has shown that there were paths of communication across the seventeenth-century Judeo-Christian frontier.

Three sets of agents transmitted millennial information between the Ottoman Empire and England. Merchants spread millennial news along trade routes that connected London to Smyrna through Livorno. They also moved this information over land routes through continental Europe. While European diplomats predominantly documented their news in the Ottoman Empire and published it in England, written diplomatic transmission also spread millennial ideas across Europe. The millenarians created and spread the largest amount of information along a variety of paths across the seventeenth-century world. Millenarian transmission was also responsible for connecting Sabbatian believers in the Ottoman Empire to Fifth Monarchists in England.

Although three different sets of agents moved millennial news, there were interconnections between them. Some were in contact with each other, while others were both Fifth Monarchists and Sabbatian believers. As such, there was a blurring of both religious identities and boundaries between the Christian Fifth Monarchy Men and the Judaic Sabbatian movement.

Each set of agents produced written documents that presented their news in contrasting manners due to their socio-political position and religious beliefs. The merchant and diplomat sources were particularly concerned with discussing the Sabbatian movement in relation to trade. This led them to present Sevi in a negative manner compared to the millenarians who focused on the religious significance of the Sabbatian movement and its connections to Christian

eschatological beliefs. Although the millennial sources that were produced were distinct due to the influence of the agent who created it, they were also connected through appropriation.

While this study establishes certain linkages and connections, other similar paths need to be explored and confirmed. Moreover, the effect of the cross-religious circulation of these ideas on each movement needs to be further examined because the study of seventeenth-century religious thought is still in its infancy, and there are “vast amounts of untapped materials” in Europe and America that need to be investigated.³⁴¹ It is necessary to explore the usage of Sabbatian information in eighteenth-century America. A millenarian in New England published the Rycaut-Evelyn version because he viewed the American revolution as a harbinger of the millennium.³⁴² Sabbatian millennial ideas were

³⁴¹ Popkin, *The Third Force*, 3, 283: Some of these sources, include the correspondence of Hartlib and Dury that are found all over Europe, including the Dury Papers in Zurich. See Hall and Hall, “Additions and Corrections,” 143. There are an enormous amount of English translations of the writings and correspondence of Jacob Boehme and Jan A. Comenius with John Rogers at the William Clark Library at UCLA. Moreover, the Boyle Papers in the Royal Society Archives contain communication between Serrarius and his correspondents in England, while Henry Jessey’s letters to Serrarius are located in the Lansdowne folder in the British library.

The letters from Thomas Dethick to Joseph Williamson, the Secretary of State in England, also need to be explored for Sabbatian information in order to confirm or deny the possibility of another path of religious communication accompanying trade across the early-modern world. These letters are located in the Public Record Office in London. Popkin notes that the less-known people of this period can provide insight into the major ones, what is being taken seriously, how it is being transmitted, and why people are thinking what they are thinking.

³⁴² Popkin, “Three Tellings,” 51: Anderson (215 note) asserts that the New England editions of Rycaut’s work are also stocked in many American libraries in the Readex Microprint editions published by the American Antiquarian Society and the Bristol Edition of 1796 was published on microfilm in 1983 by Research Publications in Woodbridge, Connecticut. One should also discuss the effects of this pamphlet when it was published in Russian, Polish, and Welsh.

also transmitted across the seventeenth-century Judeo-Islamic frontier.³⁴³ As such, it is necessary to explore the documents that illustrate the differing interpretations of Judaic millennial news by Muslims.

Employing all of these sources, future work should explore all of the paths across the seventeenth-century Abrahamic religious boundaries, the information circulating along these routes, the cross-religious influence of this transmission, and the beliefs and actions of the individuals who spread the information.³⁴⁴ Thus, while much further research into this field is required, this study challenges the historiographical perspective that categorizes and divides the creation and spread of early-modern Judeo-Christian millennial ideas according to their specific religious tradition.

This study is necessary in demonstrating that examining millennial movements within their specific religious framework neglects broader connections across religious, political, and linguistic frontiers. Studying these

³⁴³ The king of Persia was informed about Sabbatai Sevi through letters sent from merchants in the Ottoman Empire. Muslims in Yemen also chronicled the growth of the Sabbatian movement. One chronicle begins, "In the month of Rajab of the year 1077 [1666] the Jews were overcome by the utmost depravity, for they were making preparation to leave the Yemen and join their brethren in the Holy Land and Jerusalem. They claimed that their king, the Messiah, son of David, had arisen and had restored their kingdom. They sold their belongings at a ridiculous price and prepared to depart in the path of the devil..." See Dean Phillip Bell, *Early Modern Judaism*, 278-279. This also shows that the Jewish Sabbatian believers in the Yemen were ignoring trade.

A Sufi sheikh in Istanbul even attacked the present line of the Ottoman ruling house by arguing that they were no longer Muslims, but instead had been converted to Judaism due to the role played by Vani Efendi in the conversion of Sevi and some of his believers in 1666. See Derin Terzioglu, "Man in the Image of God," 160. Moreover, Arjomand (108, 119) argues that Islam incorporated the science of numerology from the book of Daniel, and there is "unmistakable evidence" of the influence of the book of Daniel on the Quran even though the Quran does not mention the book of Daniel. This connection is often overlooked, and it illustrates the interconnections of Christian-Islamic millennial thought.

³⁴⁴ Future studies should incorporate both the Hebrew historiography of the Sabbatian movement and primary sources in Hebrew in order to not only explore the written sources transmitted in English, but also to include their Hebrew counterparts.

groups strictly within their Christian or Judaic heritage limits our analysis and perspective and ignores the beliefs of individuals whose syncretic ideals do not easily fit into either category. Moreover, this study's exploration of the modes in which cross-religious interconnections were advanced by early-modern globalization demonstrates that, while globalization is often considered a modern trend, seventeenth-century networks of trade and communication created routes in which religious ideas could bridge boundaries. In this manner, this paper has revealed similarities and connections across physical, political, and religious frontiers, which have often acted as barriers to greater understanding.

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