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Shakespeare and the Marginalized "Others"

Carole Levin

When we think of the London and England of Shakespeare and Elizabeth I, traditionally we have assumed a fairly homogeneous society. But more recently scholars have recognized that England, and especially the London of early modern England, was instead a truly heterogeneous place, as was the Edinburgh of early modern Scotland. In early modern British cities, there was a wide range of peoples of different statuses and backgrounds. This chapter discusses the actual lives of those somehow perceived as different, attitudes about them, and how these attitudes were reflected in the drama of the time, especially in the works of Shakespeare. One issue I examine is representations of parents and children among those perceived as deeply different. I also look at one of the ways those who were "other" were viewed as less human by the English: in their ability to make and appreciate music.

There were many foreigners who had come to England for a variety of reasons, often economic or religious. For centuries, the French had been the classic, most prominent enemy of the English, though in the latter part of the sixteenth century that role shifted to the Spanish. Some French Huguenots came to England as religious refugees; other French people came as foreign traders and merchants, and as part of the entourage of the French ambassadors to the court. Some of the Spanish people came as spies or were there underground to reconvert England to the Catholic faith.

The French were most familiar to the English because for centuries they had been England's closest enemies, and this is depicted throughout Shakespeare's history plays, especially those set during the Hundred Years War. In *Henry V*, the night before the battle of Agincourt, which occurred in 1415, Shakespeare depicted the French dauphin and

his nobility as self-satisfied and pompous. The Duke of Orleans says of Henry V: "What a wretched and peevish fellow is this King of England, to mope with his fat-brain'd followers so far out of his knowledge!" (3.7.132-4) In *1 Henry VI*, the French are not contemptuous of the English, but of one another. Joan of Arc, herself a Frenchwoman, shows her disdain for her countrymen when, after she has convinced the Duke of Burgundy to abandon the English, she says as an aside: "Done like a Frenchman – turn and turn again" (3.3.85). She recognizes that the French are not to be trusted but will go with whoever offers them the most at the moment. They "turn and turn again." At the end of the play Joan herself shows poorly; she denies her own father because he is a peasant, claiming she is nobly born. At first, assuming that being a virgin will keep the English from having her killed, she says of herself:

> Joan of Arc hath been
> A virgin from her tender infancy,
> Chaste and immaculate in very thought.
> (5.4.48-50)

Once she realizes that a claim to virginity will not save her, Joan instead states that she is with child, hoping that the English will not execute a pregnant woman. When the English mock the first man whom she names as father of her child, she keeps naming one man after another, hoping to find one that will satisfy the English, in a frenzied, unsuccessful attempt to save her life.

> O, give me leave, I have deluded you.
> 'Twas neither Charles nor yet the Duke I named,
> But Reignier, King of Naples, that prevailed.
> (5.4.76-8)

The last we see of her, she is cursing the English as she is being dragged off to be burned, the stereotype of the French woman as whore as well as witch.

But it is not only the French who are so depicted. A number of Shakespeare's villains have Spanish names, most notably Iago in *Othello*. Iago was a Spanish version of James, and the name would have resonated with Shakespeare's audiences. St. James the Apostle was the patron saint of Spain. Many thought that he went to Spain to convert the infidel, and after his death back in Judea in 44 CE his body floated

back to Spain in a rudderless ship. But many also believed in a later tradition that he appeared to fight for the Christians at the battle of Clavijo in 844, and he became known as St. James the Moor-slayer. In the early modern period St. James on horseback wearing red and trampling on the Moors on the ground was a frequent subject for paintings and statues.

While the French and Spanish appeared strange and negative to the English, others were even more different. There were people in Shakespeare's England who were neither white nor Christian. While some Jews and Africans lived relatively unmolested, others found themselves harassed, ridiculed, or even in peril of their lives. The English thought themselves the best of people and their isle the finest of living places. One foreign visitor scornfully remarked that those English who had some reason to leave their homeland complained that they were leaving the world, as if they believed England were the world. Especially at times of religious, social, economic, or cultural crisis the English would often turn on those they perceived as different, as other, though that perception of "other" could include a very wide range.

Those perceived as the most extreme "others" of the time were Africans and Jews. In both cases, although there were extremely negative portrayals, the situation was more ambiguous. Some of the Jews in England, who had to at least outwardly present themselves as Christians, lived fairly unnoticed, and not all their presentations were horrific. Black people, often called Moors though this was a term used loosely about a wide range of people, sometimes endured intense actual ill-feeling and hideous portrayals, but even some of the villains in brief moments showed a different side, and the portrayal of black people in city pageants was often more representative of the exotic than the monstrous. Yet those who were different were all too often targeted when life became difficult, which it especially was at the end of Elizabeth's reign. Poor harvests caused starvation; inflation, over 400 percent over the whole of the sixteenth century, was especially a problem at the end of the century.

Africans

The English found justification of their exploitation of Africans in the long-held popular perception that blacks were demonic, savagely behaved, unintelligent, and/or inherently lustful. In part this view was promoted by the bizarre descriptions of Africans found in many "travel books." One example comes from Johannes Boemus' *The Far-*

dle of Facions Conteining the Auncients Manors, Customes and Lawes of the Peoples Enhabiting the Two Parts of the Earth called Affrike and Asie, translated into English by William Waterman in 1555. He described one tribe, the Icthiophagi, as a people who went naked their entire lives. This lack of garments was an outward manifestation that they had no ethical principles. Each night the men feasted on shellfish – was it the seafood that caused their immorality? – and afterwards had sexual relations with whichever women and children were most easily available. *A Summary of the Antiquities and Wonders of the World … Out of Sixteen First Books of … Pliny,* published in 1556, was even more bizarre. The book was filled with descriptions of the various peoples of Africa as monsters in body and behavior. The book included examples of cannibalism. There were descriptions of a black race whose people had dogs' heads, and yet another who were born without heads at all – their eyes and mouth having been relocated to their breasts.

The British not only read about Africans. They saw them presented in court masques and city pageants and also had actual Africans live amongst them. The first African community was one in Edinburgh established about 1500; fifty years later there was one in London. Those in the small black community in Edinburgh in the sixteenth century were descendants of slaves seized from a Portuguese ship by order of James IV about 1500, in recompense of a Scottish ship that had been taken by the Portuguese. The Scottish king, who loved fighting, tournaments, and dressing up, held a tournament of the black knight and the black lady. While he was the black knight, the black lady was an actual African woman, gorgeously dressed at court expense, who served as the "prize" of the tournament (Fryer 1984).

The appearance of blackness, however, was negative even when not allied with the idea of "Moor," or ethnic identity. In many medieval plays the devil appeared as a black man, and this idea continued in the sixteenth century, when frequently the devil was so depicted in witchcraft trials and pamphlets. Sometimes the depiction of a black person was that of a devil or villain, but sometimes just an object of exotic strangeness. As early as 1510 the young Henry VIII had a court masque where some of the characters were portrayed as black people, by wearing black stockings, gloves, and masks. Six of the characters were female, and they were portrayed by young women of the court, including Henry's younger sister Mary. There were at least six more such masques in the next hundred years, the most famous being the 1605 *Masque of Blackness* by Ben Jonson, created for Anna of Denmark, wife of James I, who was also James VI of Scotland.

Every October 29 the Lord Mayor's Pageants were held in London to celebrate the inauguration of the new Lord Mayor. Between 1585 and 1692 in at least nineteen of the Lord Mayor's Pageants, some trade guilds presented pageants with black characters. As Anthony Gerard Barthelemy has pointed out (1987), these black characters were not villains or monsters, and their function was not to cause the crowds watching the pageants to be afraid, but instead to increase the feelings of strangeness, of mystery, and extravagance. The black characters represented the feelings of success and accomplishment the English had about their explorations and world trade. In 1585 playwright George Peele organized the Pageant. In the midst of it was a black man riding a lynx, and he described himself to the crowd as "a stranger, strangely mounted." He went on to praise both the city of London and Elizabeth I, saying that both place and sovereign were famous throughout the world, known for their renown and power. To the crowd, such a statement by such as this proclaimed English supremacy. A later pageant had a Moorish king riding a leopard and happily throwing coins to the crowds: "Then commeth the King of Moores, gallantly mounted on a golden Leopard, he hurling gold and silver every way about him" (Munday 1616).

In other cases, black men themselves were equated with exotic or dangerous beasts. We can find an extreme example of this in the report of the pageant for the baptism of the Scottish king James VI's son Prince Henry in 1594. The organizers had originally planned for a lion to pull the royal carriage; but then they feared that a lion might get out of control and scare or hurt someone, particularly if it were startled by noise and the flashing of torches. So the organizers substituted a "Black-Moor," an actual black man from the Edinburgh community, who was given rich and exotic apparel and "great chaines of pure gold." The organizers even figured out a way to propel the carriage, so the man only had to pretend to haul it. London city pageants of 1613 and 1616 also had characters described as the kings of the Moors. But though kings, they were not in the pageant to demonstrate their own power. Rather, the pageants showed these kings as not only lacking in command, but also happy with that condition.

Most blacks living in England in the late sixteenth century were "employed" as household servants, entertainers, or prostitutes for wealthy men. Elizabeth herself had several black dancers and musicians in her court. The Africans, however, became an all too easy target when the economy was in a down turn. In a proclamation in 1601, Elizabeth expressed her discontent at what she claimed was a great number of black people living in her kingdom. She referred

to the Africans as "infidels," and argued that Africans got the help and jobs that her own liege people needed. Given the jobs open to Africans, and the relatively few there were in England, this concern might well appear more symbolic than real. The queen promised a ship to take the Africans back to their own continent whether they wished to go or not; even though some Africans in England had converted to Christianity, Elizabeth made no exceptions for them. Despite Elizabeth's decree, many stayed behind; whether this was because the ship never materialized or because their "masters" refused to give them up, we do not necessarily know. Further, more were brought into England throughout the seventeenth century (Cowhig 1985: 5-6).

George Peele in 1588 or 1589 wrote the play *The Battle of Alcazar* (published in 1594), which featured the first black Moor of any dramatic significance. Peele's source for the play was John Poleman's *The Second Part of the Book of Battailes, Fought in Our Age* (1587), which contained one section on the 1578 battle fought between the forces of Sebastian, king of Portugal, and Abdelmelec, the king of Morocco.

Peele portrays the villain Muly Mahamet as cruel and treacherous, and his evil is associated directly with the blackness of his skin. He is introduced as

> the barbarous Moore,
> The Negro *Muly Hamet* that with-holds
> The Kingdome from his unkle Abdimelec,
> Whom proud *Abdallas* wrongd,
> And in his throne instals his cruell sonne,
> … Blacke in his looke, and bloudie in his deeds,
> And in shirt stained with a cloud of gore,
> Presents himself with naked sword in hand,
> Accompanied now as you may behold,
> With devils coted in the shapes on men.
> (1.16-10, 16-20)

To secure the kingdom of Barbary for himself and his son, Muly Mahamet murders most of his own family. Eventually he battles his uncle Abdimelec, who though he clearly is also black is not referred to in the way Muly is.

After losing to his uncle, Muly Mahamet camps out in a desolate wilderness, feeding only on the raw flesh of wild animals, which suggests that Muly is something of a wild animal himself. Unrepentant to the end, he drowns in the river. His corpse is recovered, then dese-

crated and put on display. As a warning to potential traitors, the order is made that his body is skinned.

> That all the world may learne by him to avoide,
> To hall on princes to injurious warre,
> His skin we will be parted from his flesh,
> And being stifned out and stuft with strawe,
> So to deterre and feare the lookers on,
> From anie such foule fact or bad attempt,
> Awaie with him.
>
> (5.1.1441-7)

What does it say that Muly Mahamet's skin is stuffed and preserved as an exhibition? Is it a statement that he is not truly human but rather a wild animal, as the play has previously hinted, to be gawked at? Like any animal, is his value only in his hide? Will this display, in a region populated mostly by black people, be a way to keep them from acting up? Throughout the play, the other characters treat Muly Mahamet's skin color as his defining characteristic, and he is doomed to be dehumanized and reduced to mere spectacle in death as much as he was in life.

Aaron, the villain of Shakespeare's early play *Titus Andronicus,* is in certain ways in the same mode of villain as Muly. Shakespeare presents Aaron as godless and lecherous. Aaron takes great pleasure in his villainy, and he orchestrates many of the rapes, murders, and dismemberments that occur throughout the play. He too is completely unrepentant, and takes great pride in the artistry of his crimes. He makes it clear that his skin is dark: "Let fools do good, and fair men call for grace, Aaron will have his soul black like his face" (3.1.204-5). The other characters demonstrate their horror and contempt for Aaron, not necessarily for his actions, but for his blackness. They refer to him as "coal-black Moor," "wall-eyed slave," "black dog," "barbarous Moor," "accursed devil," and "inhuman dog."

Aaron, however, is not a two-dimensional monster. He does not suffer from self-hatred because of how he is perceived. Rather, he takes pride in his blackness.

> Is black so base a hue?
> …
> Coal-black is better than another hue,
> In that it scorns to bear another hue.
>
> (4.2.71, 100-1)

In some ways this speech prefigures the Jewish moneylender Shylock's speech in *The Merchant of Venice* about his nature as a Jew: "Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? … If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that" (3.1.55-7, 62-4). Aaron is proud of being black; Shylock proclaims his humanity as a Jew.

We finally see at least glimpses of Aaron's humanity when he receives news that his lover, the empress Tamora, has given birth to his son. The baby is detested by its nurse for its blackness, and by Tamara's two adult sons for that and also because, since the child is black, he threatens them all with discovery of Tamora's affair. The nurse describes the child as a "joyless, dismal, black, and sorrowful issue … as loathsome as a toad," (4.2.67-8) and instructs Aaron to kill him. But it is his son's blackness that finally touches Aaron in a meaningful way and leads to the speech quoted above. His protection of his son is a defense and validation of both his blackness and his humanity. Barthelemy argues that "Though it does not effect a redemption, Aaron's uncompromising paternal devotion does soften the otherwise harsh and vile portrait of him. This chink in the allegation of blackness, however slight, separates Aaron from Muly Mohamet" (Barthelemy 1987: 97). While Muly is an uncomplicated picture of evil because of blackness, Aaron has far more complexity.

Jews

Jews were often viewed as being equally inhuman. From the early medieval period, the established Christian church had often described Jews as being responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus; in the following centuries throughout Europe, and certainly in England, Jews came to be associated with everything demonic and immoral, including sorcery, poisoning, and the ritual murder of Christian children. Often they were blamed for outbreaks of the plague because it was believed that they had poisoned the drinking water. Many Jews fled to England from France and elsewhere in Europe in the eleventh century, when the calling of the first Crusade led many to wonder why they should go all the way to the Holy Lands to slay the Infidel when they could do it so conveniently right at home. But England as more tolerant soon proved illusionary. For the coronation of Richard I in 1189, the new king called for the exclusion of all women and Jews from the ceremony. Perhaps militaristic, homosexual Richard

feared that the presence of Jews and women at such a sacred ceremony would be polluting. Some Jewish leaders came anyway to profess their loyalty. Word soon spread, though untruly, that Richard in retaliation ordered the extermination of all Jews in England, leading the next year to the deaths of about one hundred and fifty Jews in York at Clifford's Tower.

A century later, Edward I, having first confiscated their wealth, ordered that all Jews who did not convert to Christianity leave England on pain of death; they could take with them only what each could carry. As a result, virtually all Jews left England in 1290, and were not legally allowed to return as Jews until the 1650s. But even if Jews converted to Christianity, the English often did not accept them as "true Christians," and feared that their mere presence in the country would weaken the Christian faith and cause people to convert to Judaism. In the centuries after the expulsion, while there were few or no actual Jews in England, the image of the Jew as dangerous monster only continued to grow.

But Jews were on occasion in England, and if they became Christian, their conversion was celebrated, and their move away from the margins toward a more English center was proclaimed with a new name. In 1532, in one of her last acts as queen, Catherine of Aragon with her daughter Mary served as godmothers to two Jewish women from southern Europe, Aysa Pudewya and Omell Faytt Isya, who converted to Catholicism, a perhaps ironic choice given that only a year later England broke from the Catholic church with Henry VIII, now married to Anne Boleyn, as the Head of the Church of England. Aysa became Katherine Whetely and Omell became Mary Cook (Adler 1939: 328-30).

In the 1530s, as part of the way to make Henry VIII's court more glamorous, Thomas Cromwell invited musicians from Italy, nineteen of whom were of Jewish background. But within a generation or two most of their descendants were practicing Christians. There was, however, in the sixteenth century a small, organized Jewish community in London that practiced the religion in secret, and a similar community in Bristol. These Jews were mostly ones who had fled the Iberian Peninsula.

When Elizabeth became queen she officially tolerated Jewish refugees as long as they outwardly conformed to the Anglican church. And again, some conversions received acclaim. On April 1, 1577, Jehuda Menda, who had lived in London for six years, publicly stated that he utterly forsook his former idolatrous ways and strange wor-

ship, leaving behind the false search for a new Messiah. He also forsook his name and asked to be called Nathaniel. Following his conversion, John Foxe preached for four hours (Adler 1939: 331-2).

Elizabeth's own physician, Roderigo Lopez, was of Jewish background, his father being forced in Portugal to convert. Lopez settled in London in 1559, was soon admitted as a fellow of the College of Physicians, and was a physician at St. Bartholomew's Hospital. His reputation was excellent and he prospered, along the way marrying Sarah Anes, the English daughter of wealthy Portuguese Jewish parents. Lopez and his family outwardly practiced Anglicanism but apparently secretly continued as Jews. Lopez became the physician of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, and in 1581 of the queen herself, for which he was well rewarded. Lopez's success made him notable and vulnerable. He was accused of using poison and performing abortions in an anonymous tract against Leicester in 1584. A decade later, Leicester's stepson, Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, eager to gain Elizabeth's favor and prove he was keeping her safe from harm, accused Lopez of attempting to poison her. Though Lopez was most likely not guilty, Edgar Samuel suggests that he had acted "stupidly and dishonestly" (Samuel 2005), which made him an easy target. At his treason trial Attorney General Edward Coke had stressed Lopez's secret practice of Judaism. Lopez was quickly found guilty; after a few months' hesitation, Elizabeth agreed to his execution, though she returned most of his estate to his wife Sarah and their children. A decade after Lopez's death, the Spanish ambassador to England, Count Gondomar, wrote to his monarch, Philip III, that Lopez had been innocent and his conviction and execution unjust. In the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Lopez case was often an element in the creation of the idea of monstrous Jews.

Another particularly vicious attack that eventually became a popular ballad well known during the Elizabethan period occurred in Lincoln in 1255. An illegitimate 8-year-old boy named Hugh disappeared at the end of July. His body was discovered a month later in a well on the property of a Jewish man. On threat of torture and promise of pardon if he only confessed, the Jew told the authorities that the most prominent Jews of England, in Lincoln for a wedding, had participated in the murder since, he confirmed, they crucified a Christian boy every year as a ritual. Henry III had the Jew's pardon revoked and the man was brutally executed; close to one hundred Jews were taken to London and imprisoned. Eighteen or nineteen were executed, and Henry III confiscated their goods and wealth. This event was eventually por-

trayed in the popular ballad *Sir Hugh, or the Jew's Daughter,* where the Jew's daughter lures young Sir Hugh into her house, slaughters him, and hides his body in a gutted pig carcass. There are many versions of the ballads that developed over the centuries, and the Jew's daughter becomes more and more a monster.

> She laid him on a dressing-board,
> Where she did sometimes dine;
> She put a penknife in his heart,
> And dressed him like a swine.
> (Child 1965: 245)

How fascinating that the child so low in status had become a noble, the murderer a Jewish woman, and the well a gutted pig.

In the ballad the Jew's daughter is even more horrific in her actions than the depiction of the potential queen-murderer Lopez. During the time of the Lopez trial, Christopher Marlowe's play *The Jew of Malta,* written a few years earlier, was put on to standing- room crowds. *The Jew of Malta's* main character in the play was the Jewish villain Barabas. A few years later Shakespeare wrote *The Merchant of Venice*, with his Jewish character Shylock in some ways based on Barabas, and in other ways on Lopez. Both Barabas and Shylock have a daughter, but neither Abigail nor Jessica echoes the horrific behavior of the ballad Jew's daughter; but then neither of them remains a Jew – each abandons her own Judaism and her father to convert to Christianity. Is this the only method by which a Jewish woman character can shed such a monstrous persona? Would she otherwise be a gruesome Jewish woman like the murderous Jew's daughter in the ballad?

Like Aaron, Barabas takes great pride in the artistry of his crimes, and he eventually becomes a monster and a bogeyman-figure. He brags to his Turkish slave Ithamore:

> As for myself, I walk abroad at nights
> And kill sick people groaning under walls;
> Sometimes I go about and poison wells;
> … And [with] tricks belonging unto brokery,
> I filled the jails with bankrupts in a year,
> And with young orphans planted hospitals,
> And every moon made some or other mad.
> (2.3.176-8, 194-7)

Barabas is the embodiment of all the most monstrous beliefs about Jews in Elizabethan England. Similar characters appeared in nondramatic forms of entertainment. For example, Thomas Nashe's 1594 novel, *The Unfortunate Traveler*, features two Jewish villains – one who conducts sadistic medical experiments, and another who enjoys flogging Christian women (Glassman 1975: 72).

Barabas ultimately lacks the humanity Aaron has shown in his relationship to his son; Barabas eventually murders his own daughter Abigail. At first he proclaims how much he loves his daughter, but even then she is merely a cherished possession, an object, like his wealth: "O my girl. My gold, my fortune, my felicity" (2.1.47-8). In *The Merchant of Venice*, Solanio claims Shylock makes a similar statement after his daughter Jessica has run off to her Christian lover with as much of her father's wealth as she could carry: "As the dog Jew did utter in streets: / 'My daughter! O, my ducats! O, my daughter!' " (2.8.14-15). The Christians of Venice are suggesting that Shylock does not know which disturbs him more as he cries out for "my daughter, my ducats," or if the two have coalesced in his mind. In the first act of *The Jew of Malta*, Barabas discusses his love for his daughter:

> I have no charge, nor many children,
> But one sole daughter, whom I hold as dear
> As Agamemnon did his Iphigen:
> And all I have is hers.
>
> (1.1.135-8)

But such a comparison would make the alert theater-goer uneasy. At the bay of Aulis the Greek fleet could not have the wind to sail to Troy because Agamemnon, the military leader, had insulted the goddess Artemis. Agamemnon sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia to appease the goddess and begin his war to retrieve Helen and restore the Greeks' sense of self-honor. As for Barabas, he murdered his daughter Abigail and two hundred nuns with her, after she converted to Christianity and joined a nunnery because of her disgust at her father's actions in causing her two suitors to kill each other. While some villains of Renaissance drama commit murder and then are devastated by their acts afterwards, Barabas shows no remorse. "No, but I grieve that she lived so long; / An Hebrew born, and would becomes a Christian!" (4.1.18-19). Barabas only loved his daughter when she was dutiful; once she was not, she was completely expendable.

Music

Another area in which the English perceived Africans and Jews as inferior was their purported response to music. To the English, music was a way to connect the human on earth to God, and many talked of "the celestial music of the spheres." Many believed that listening to, or participating in, holy music was another way for humans to briefly understand the divine. For the English, the belief that they could truly compose, understand, appreciate, and make beautiful music was part of their sense of superiority. These attitudes were coupled with a belief that those who were "other" were different, could not appreciate or create beautiful music and thus were that much less truly human or able to reach toward heaven. Many of the English believed that the music of Africans was nothing more than dreadful-sounding confusion. In 1555 William Towerson returned from traveling in Africa, and told how the singing of African women "falls ill to our ears" (Barthelemy 1987: 59-60). Boemus' *The Fardle of Facions* says of the seafood-eating, sexually promiscuous Icthiophagi that they enjoy singing but it is "full untuned" (Boemus 1555: II, 39-40).

Even though the Jews who came to Henry VIII's court from Italy in the 1530s were brought to England to make music, we see the same belief system about Jews in the drama of the Elizabethan England. In *The Jew of Malta,* Barabas shows his contempt for the music that meant the most to the English audience when he proclaims, "There is no music to a Christian's knell: / How sweet the bells ring, now the nuns are dead, / That sound at other times like tinkers' pans!" (4.1.1-3) Later, he disguises himself as a French musician to more effectively eavesdrop on the traitorous Ithamore. Barabas, however, is unable to play his lute properly, and excuses his poor performance by saying the instrument is out of tune.

In *The Merchant of Venice* some of the characters call the Jewish moneylender Shylock some of the same terms that had been used about Aaron, such as "accursed devil" and "inhuman dog." But Shylock is also portrayed by Shakespeare as a man who not only cannot appreciate music, but whom it actually appears to pain. In Shylock's last scene with his daughter Jessica, he leaves her at home to go to a feast at the home of Bassanio, the man for whom the merchant Antonio has borrowed from Shylock. As he is departing, he urges his daughter to close the windows against the music of the masquers in the street.

> What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica
> Lock up my doors, and when you hear the drum
> And the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife,
> Clamber not you up to the casements then,
> Nor thrust your head into the public street.
> To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces;
> But stop my house's ears – I mean my casements;
> Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
> My sober house.
>
> (2.5.29-37)

For Shylock, this music is not only something that could pollute his house, which has come to represent his own identity enough that he mistakes it for a moment for his ears; it could as well dangerously distract and seduce his daughter. But even more than that, however, hearing music – at least that performed by Christians – actually appears to cause him pain: "squealing of the wry-necked fife."

This is the final time Shylock gets to see his daughter, since Jessica takes advantage of his absence to elope with the Christian Lorenzo, Bassanio's friend. Lorenzo appears delighted with Jessica; whether for herself or for all the gold she has stolen from her father for him, however, is never clear. Though Jessica converts to Christianity, some of the characters still mock her as a "Jewess."

Once Jessica is in Portia's Belmont as Lorenzo's now converted wife, she herself appears ambivalent about music. While Lorenzo and Jessica are out in the gardens in the moonlight, Lorenzo calls for musicians to come and entertain them. When the music starts Jessica tells him, "I am never merry when I hear sweet music." The sadness the music calls forth from her may be a reference to the conflicted relationship Jessica had with her father, and a suggestion of how torn she may be that she had abandoned him for Lorenzo. If Jessica's wistful statement to Lorenzo, "I am never merry …" is a reference to her past, Lorenzo's response will only serve to alienate her further from her father and make her more isolated.

> The man that hath no music in himself
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
> The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus.
> Let no such man be trusted.
>
> (5.1.83-8)

Since Erebus is a dark place near Hell, Lorenzo seems to be telling his wife, and the audience, how the untrustworthy Shylock is so dark and dull that he is damned, an echo of Salerio, who earlier called Shylock "the devil." And one wonders how this would make Jessica feel, to be considered by her husband as the daughter of an untrustworthy, devilish Jew.

Those on the margins of Elizabethan England, especially Jews and Africans, were often feared and despised. The characterizations of members of these groups on stage both reflected and reinforced these attitudes. While in plays such as *The Battle of Alcazar* and *The Jew of Malta* the African and the Jew were unmitigated villains, in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *The Merchant of Venice* there are more glimpses of humanity in Aaron and Shylock. One way those in Elizabeth England demonstrated their sense of superiority over those others in a frightening and changing society was their belief they could appreciate music, that they had music in themselves. But clearly this internal music did little to make the dominant English treat those who were different, "other," in more humane, and human, terms.

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