Cambridge

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information

CHAPTER 1

# Preliminaries

I

Pierre Delacroix, the central character of Spike Lee's satirical film *Bamboozled*, wants to create a television show so offensive that he and his arrogant white boss will be fired. He develops a pilot for *Mantan: The New Millennium Minstrel Show*, expecting that audiences will riot when they see two African-American males blacked up as "coon" figures tap-dancing in a watermelon patch. To his surprise, audiences black and white love *Mantan*. Wearing blackface make-up suddenly becomes hip: the camera pans over a packed house of noisy blackfaced fans, gladly proclaiming themselves to be "niggers." As Pierre's father, the comedian Junebug, opines, "Everybody white want to be black. Everybody want to be black; they all act, sound black."[1]

Lee's racial satire shows white fantasies scripted onto black bodies. Delacroix's collection of "Negrobilia"[2] – old money boxes and other artifacts employing images from the minstrel-show tradition – points to a long history of the material appropriation of blackface images. Shakespearean scholars are certainly aware that the role of Othello was originally performed by a white actor in black make-up, even though the general public is now used to actors of African heritage in the title role. When *Holiday Inn* is shown on television, new generations are exposed to outdated conventions as they watch Bing Crosby don blackface for the Lincoln's birthday musical number. Reruns of *The Al Jolson Story* are also reminders that blackface was once a staple of American entertainment. When blackface is mentioned, however, the form that readily comes to most people's minds is the nineteenth-century minstrel show, and several recent studies of this genre

[1] Spike Lee, Director, *Bamboozled*, USA, New Line Productions, 2000.
[2] Hugh Quarshie coined this term to describe his own collection in *Second Thoughts about Othello*, Occasional Paper no. 7 (Chipping Camden: International Shakespeare Association, 1999), p. 3.



© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



explain how this obsolete form of entertainment reflected the complicated social and political conditions of the period.[3]

Nineteenth-century minstrel shows did not invent blackface impersonation. Nor did Shakespeare. The performance practice of "blacking up" thrived in religious pageants of the middle ages as a simple way of discriminating evil from good. Cycle and morality plays set up oppositions between black and white, damnation and salvation, evil and good. Until the latter half of the sixteenth century when the cycle plays were repressed, generations of Englishmen and women enjoyed the yearly ritual of watching good angels pitted against bad angels at the feast of Corpus Christi and other festivals. The sixteenth century's shift to modernity was marked by a transition, however, from the religious identifications of the middle ages to a "racially defined discourse of human identity and personhood,"[4] and that shift was reflected in blackface performances on the English stage. Take Shakespeare's Aaron. When the blackfaced Moor of *Titus Andronicus* gleefully proclaims, "Aaron will have his soul black like his face,"[5] he taps into a premodern religious sign system that identified the bearer as a damned soul, capable of all manner of deviltry. But Aaron's statement also evokes geographical and physical resonances that were beginning to racialize the older religious signification of blackness; as a black Moor among the white-faced Goths who attack Rome, Aaron suggests a range of what Keir Elam terms "secondary meanings" that relate blackness "to the social, moral and ideological values operative in the community of which performers and spectators are part."[6] Blackface had become more than a simple analogy – blackface equals damnation – and taken on multiple meanings, participating in several readily recognized codes at once. By the time Shakespeare wrote *Titus Andronicus*, blackface functioned as a polyphonic signifier that reflected changing social contexts and helped to create expectations and attitudes about black people.

In the chapters that follow, I present some snapshots of plays, groupings of scenes and characters from early modern English dramas, that highlight the most important theatrical conventions – appearance, linguistic

[3] See, for example, Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Susan Gubar, *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and William J. Mahar, *Behind the Cork Mask: Early Blackface Minstrelsy and Antebellum American Popular Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

[4] David Theo Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), p. 24.

[5] Quoted from *Titus Andronicus*, ed. Jonathan Bate, Third Arden Series (London: Routledge, 1995), 3.1.206.

[6] Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London: Routledge, 1980), p. 10.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE
Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



tropes, speech patterns, plot situations, the use of asides and soliloquies, and other types of dramatic signification – which shaped the ways black characters were "read" by white audiences.[7] Many of these conventions were repeated from play to play, often with modifications that stretched or inverted audience expectations. Thus blackface – and the theatrical patterns associated with it – accrued a readily recognizable set of meanings that repeated, expanded, and modified over time. While theatrical performance cannot be equated with the everyday performativity that, as Judith Butler argues, helps to construct our conceptions of race and gender, it shares performativity's "repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being."[8] The bodies of others, as David Theo Goldberg notes, are "unproblematically observable, confronted and engaged." And the body is "central to ordinary experience and offers a unique paradigm: It is a symbol of a 'bounded system,' a system the boundaries of which are formed by skin at once porous but perceived as inviolable and impenetrable."[9] If Goldberg's analysis is correct, the actor's blackened skin is a particularly powerful signifier of otherness to English audiences, even though its temporary and performative qualities undermine its seeming inviolable nature. Its recurrence on stage was, as

[7] Several highly regarded studies have provided ample inventories of the black characters who appeared in dramas from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but their focus is not on performance. Eldred D. Jones's *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) laid the ground-work for studies of the drama's representation of black characters. While anyone working in this area today is deeply indebted to him, his mission, characteristic of the turbulent 1960s, was to prove that there was an awareness of Africa in early modern England, that Africa indeed mattered. Elliot H. Tokson's *The Popular Image of the Black Man in English Drama, 1550–1688* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1982) cast a wide net over the traditional dramatic canon and showed the negative stereotypes that shaped its impersonations of black characters. But in the process he collapsed chronology, grouping early and late plays together, looking for character types that would recur for centuries. Anthony Gerard Barthelemy's *Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987) followed five years later, but it, too, flattened the landscape without registering the immense social, economic, and political changes between England's first contacts with Africa (1550s–1580s) and a century later, when many English men owned black slaves and participated in a colonial plantation economy.

[8] In her Preface to the second edition of *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999), Butler warns that race and gender "ought not to be treated as simple analogies" (p. xvi); however, in *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993) she shows how heterosexuality and race are mutually constituted, a concept especially relevant to representations of "lascivious Moors" that will be discussed below. Butler's discussion of "performativity" cannot be universally applied to theatrical performance, but her analysis of the ways in which reiteration acts to congeal layers of signification is certainly apropos. Quotation from *Gender Trouble*, pp. 43–44.

[9] Goldberg, *Racist Culture*, p. 54.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



Butler contends, "at once a reenactment and a reexperiencing of a set of meanings already socially established."[10]

In the theatre, the repetition of a trope or a gesture or a conventional plot comforts the audience by presenting what is familiar. Moors were expected, for example, to be cruel and lascivious, and in plays of the 1590s new black-faced figures might push those stereotypes a bit further than their homiletic forebears but they might also contradict or complicate audience expectations in new ways. Theatrical performance is by definition a masquerade, which by its very nature negates essentialist notions of reality. The white actor in blackface may speak and act in ways that reinforce stereotypes about black people, but because he is not the thing he pretends to be and the audience knows it, his gestures and attitudes suggest that his identity is adopted, not inherited.[11]

The performer's facial expressions, hand movements, gait, and other forms of body language are particularly expressive. "The moving actor's body," notes Curdella Forbes, can "negotiate relations among multiple levels of consciousness and experience." The actor feeds upon the audience's responses, creating "kinetic energy" in the playing space.[12] Such dynamics are difficult, if not impossible, to recapture for early modern performances for which we have only a script as a record of performance. In the performances under discussion here, however, it is clear that blackface coated the performer's most expressive non-verbal signifier, his face. By reading the scripts that have come down to us with the dynamics of performance in mind, we can tease out some insights as to what the audience might have seen when they looked at a black Moor and how they might have interpreted that experience.

The language of blackness, too, was multivalent. Many blackfaced characters are referred to as "Moors," a slippery term at best.[13] Although in some texts early modern writers distinguished between "tawny" Moors of

[10] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 178.

[11] See Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, pp. 187–222. In work that is complementary to mine, Ian Smith discusses the audience's double consciousness that the actor is externally black but internally white in "White Skin, Black Masks: Racial Cross-Dressing on the Early Modern Stage," *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 32 (2003), 33–67.

[12] Curdella Forbes, "Shakespeare, Other Shakespeares and West Indian Popular Culture: A Reading of the Eroticized Errantry and Rebellion in *Troilus and Cressida*," *Small Axe* 9 (2001), 44–69; quote from 51–52.

[13] See Jack D'Amico, *The Moor in English Renaissance Drama* (Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991) for a survey of characters depicted as "Moors" and the use of Moroccan settings in early modern plays. D'Amico's approach is complementary to mine, but he is primarily concerned with the depiction of peoples from northern Africa regardless of pigmentation, whereas I am concerned with European impersonations of blackness.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



northern Africa and "blackamoors" from the sub-Saharan region, the two were often conflated in the popular mind. As the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes, well into the seventeenth century, "the Moors were commonly supposed to be mostly black or very swarthy." My focus is the dynamics of performance, and consequently my criterion for discussing characters and plots is not geographical, but rather the cues in the text that indicate that the actor blackened his face in order to perform a particular role.[14] For the most part, the Moors discussed here would have been considered "blackamoors" in the early modern period, as opposed to the tawny Moors of northern Africa. And unlike previous surveys of the black characters in early modern English drama, this book will not discuss *every* blackfaced character. My emphasis is on patterns – character types, plot situations, tropes, and other performative tactics – that are repeated from play to play.[15]

This examination of early blackface performances is intrinsically interesting to theatre historians, but it may also make a contribution to what is now termed "whiteness studies," the examination of the ways in which English men and women in the early modern period came to think of themselves as constituting a "white" norm in opposition to people of darker pigmentation. In *Playing in the Dark*, Toni Morrison asked critics of American literature to reexamine how the black "Africanist" figures in canonical texts such as *Huckleberry Finn* were imagined. "What are the signs, the codes, the literary strategies designed to accommodate this encounter? What does the inclusion of Africans do to and for the work?" Morrison asked us to recognize that "The fabrication of an Africanist persona is reflexive; an extraordinary meditation on the self; a powerful exploration of the fears and desires that reside in the writerly conscious."[16]

The figures discussed in this book are indeed Africanist personae,[17] whose presence shadows and shapes the audience's responses to characters white and black as well as their own sense of identification. When all is said and done, the black characters that populated early modern theatres tell us little about actual black Africans; they are the projections of imaginations that capitalize on the assumptions, fantasies, fears, and anxieties of England's

[14] In his study of blackfaced characters, Anthony Gerard Barthelemy maintained a geographical distinction between north African Moors and sub-Saharan Africans by devoting one of his chapters to "white moors." See *Black Face, Maligned Race*, pp. 182–99.

[15] Tokson lists early modern English plays that feature black characters and black characters by name in the Appendices to *The Popular Image*. See pp. 139–41.

[16] Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), pp. 16 and 17.

[17] See also Arthur L. Little Jr., *Shakespeare Jungle Fever: National-Imperial Re-Visions of Race, Rape, and Sacrifice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 99 and 101, for a discussion of how the performance of black personae helps to invent whiteness.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



pale-complexioned audiences. An English proverb dating from the early fifteenth century teaches that "Black best sets forth white,"[18] a sentiment reiterated by Edmund Spenser in *The Faerie Queene*:

> But neuer let th'ensample of the bad
> Offend the good: for good by paragone
> Of euill, may more notably be rad,
> As white seemes fayrer, macht with blacke attone.
> (III.ix.2)[19]

Blackfaced characters in early modern dramas are often used in just this way, to make whiteness visible so that it can be "read" and in the process to make it seem fairer by contrast.[20]

It is striking how many black characters in these plays call attention to their own complexions, introducing metadramatic elements into their performance. Often they reiterate the proverbial expression that "it is impossible to wash an Ethiop (or blackamoor) white," a saying roughly adopted from Jeremiah 13:23, which in the Geneva Bible reads, "Can the black More change his skin? Or the leopard his spottes?"[21] Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* depicts two washerwomen scrubbing down a naked black man, accompanied by this motto:

> Leave of with paine, the blackamore to skowre,
> With washinge ofte, and wipinge more then due:
> For thou shalt finde, that Nature is of powre,
> Do what thou canste, to keepe his former hue.[22]

In popular parlance "washing the Ethiop white" could refer to any impossibility or "labor in vain." When stage blackamoors recall this expression, they reference a well-established stereotype about the indelibility of black pigmentation. Ironically, even as they cite the proverb, they undercut it because they are white actors known to the audience. Thus, even though the audience may be caught up in the play's theatrical illusion, the repetition of this proverb creates a fissure in the mimesis. Like Cleopatra's inside joke

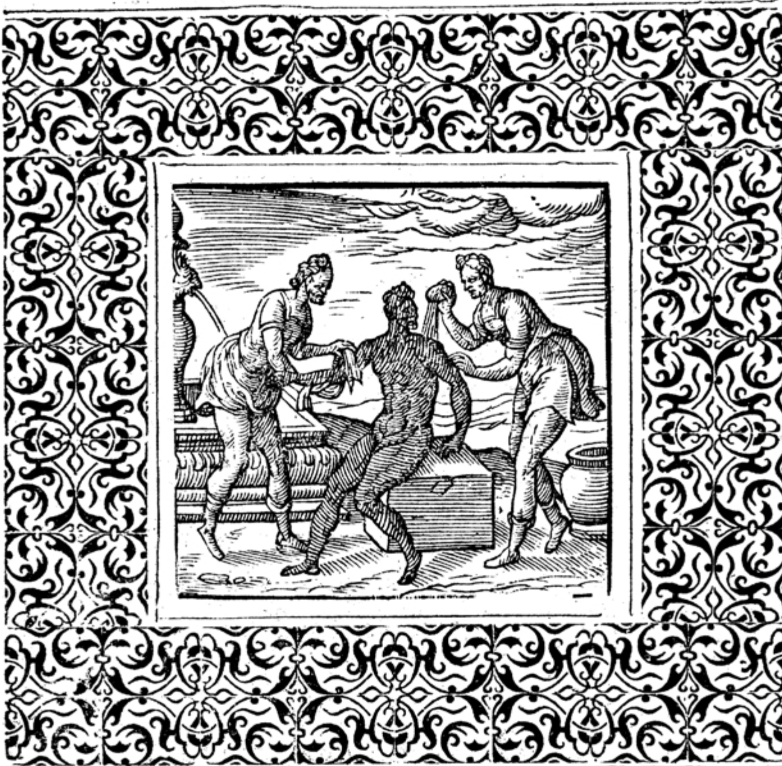
[18] Morris Palmer Tilley, *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1951), B 435, p. 53.
[19] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A. C. Hamilton (London: Longman, 1977), p. 383.
[20] For a fascinating account of the ways in which the tropes of "fairness" and "darkness" used in early modern love poetry were imbricated with racial resonances, see Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).
[21] Tilley, *Dictionary*, E 186, p. 190. The Geneva Bible uses the phrase "The blacke Moore" as a page heading above this verse.
[22] Geoffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (Leiden, 1586). See also Karen Newman, "'And Wash the Ethiop White': Femininity and the Monstrous in *Othello*," in *Shakespeare Re-Produced: The Text in History and Ideology*, ed. Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O'Connor (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 141–62.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information





LEAVE of with paine, the blackamore to ſkowre,
With waſhinge ofte, and wipinge more then due:
For thou ſhalt finde, that Nature is of powre,
Doe what thou canſte, to keepe his former hue:
Thoughe with a forke, wee Nature thruſte awaie,
Shee turnes againe, if wee withdrawe our hande:
And thoughe, wee ofte to conquer her affaie,
Yet all in vaine, ſhee turnes if ſtill wee ſtande:

Eraſmus ex Luciano.
*Abluis Æthiopem fru-ſtrà: quin deſinis artē?*
*Haud unquā efficies nox ſit ut atra, dies.*
Horat. 1. Epiſt. 10.
*Naturam expellas fur-ca tamen uſque re-surret.*

1 This image from Geoffrey Whitney's *A Choice of Emblems* (Leiden, 1580) illustrates the proverb, "It is impossible to wash the Aethiop white."

about the actor "boying" her greatness, repeated references to the washing trope constitute a metatheatrical "wink, wink, nudge, nudge" to the audience.[23]

[23] Andrew Gurr suggests that both playwrights and playgoers were "well aware of their environs" in the uncomfortable London theatres and, as a result, they seldom forgot that they were watching a play. Metatheatrical moments were routine. See *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 106.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



Another frequently repeated trope resonated with the religious and moral signification of blackness. When black villains boast that they cannot blush, they echo a popular expression describing one who has no shame as "blushing like a black dog."[24] In his response to a Gothic soldier's question, "What, canst thou say all this and never blush?" Aaron explicitly echoes this phrase: "Ay, like a black dog, as the saying is" (5.1.121–22). Another proverb from the period claims, "blushing is virtue's color," a sentiment explained more fully in Thomas Wright's *Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604):

> [T]hose that have committed a fault, & are therein deprehended [sic], or at least imagine they are thought to have committed it; presently if they be . . . that is, of an honest behaviour, and yet not much grounded in vertue, they blush, because nature beeing afrayd, lest in the face the fault should be discovered, sendeth the purest blood, to be a defence and succour, the which effect, commonly, is iudged to proceede from a good and vertuous nature, because no man can but allowe, that it is good to bee ashamed of a fault.[25]

A black, unblushing face indicated, in contrast, that the bearer had no virtue and, hence, no shame. Such sentiments circulated freely and reiterated the medieval correlation between evil and blackness; their repeated utterance on the public stage no doubt contributed over time to their discursive power.[26]

Black pigmentation thus served as a marker in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English culture that could more easily be signified on stage than other "racial" characteristics.[27] Used prominently in the medieval period as a marker of religious difference, blackened faces became increasingly complicated by inchoate conceptions of race. Fear of the devil overlapped with fear of the black African other; on the stage, the fascinating and sometimes frightening characteristics dark pigmentation came to signify were acted out.[28] Over time, the actor's blackened face hardened into

[24] Tilley, *Dictionary*, D 507, p. 167.
[25] Thomas Wright, *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (London, 1604), p. 30.
[26] For an insightful discussion of the early modern English conception of "blushing," see Sujata Iyengar, *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), esp. pp. 103–39.
[27] See, for example, Ania Loomba, "'Delicious Traffick': Racial and Religious Difference on Early Modern Stages," in *Shakespeare and Race*, ed. Catherine M. S. Alexander and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 203–24, who argues that the power of blackness as a symbol of alterity should not be underrated, especially as it "articulate[d] itself through other markers of difference such as religion and gender" (p. 204).
[28] Barbara Hodgdon, *The Shakespeare Trade: Performances and Appropriations* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), discusses how theatrical performance served to contain fears about alterity. See p. 44.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



a marker of racial difference;[29] by the Restoration, it denoted slave status, and in the eighteenth century, it could also evoke the audience's pity.

II

The theoretical and practical implications of blackface impersonation depend, of course, upon the material conditions that create it. There is a world of difference, for example, between the exaggerated lips and eyes featured in the make-up used in nineteenth-century minstrel shows and the impersonation of Otello by a world-class opera singer. The performers intend different effects. The former uses grotesque images of black people for comic farce; the latter seeks a convincing representation. Both must use some sort of black make-up, however. Pierre Delacroix's assistant in *Bamboozled* offers the traditional recipe for blackface make-up: "Pour some alcohol on corks and light it, let them burn to a crisp. Make into a powder and then add water. Voila! But please put cocoa butter on your face to protect your skin."

Early modern performers may indeed have used burnt cork, but there were other ways of signifying blackness. In earlier sixteenth-century court performances, vizards, similar to the masks employed in Italy's *commedia dell'arte*, were used. According to Randle Holme's *Academy of Armory* (1688), a compendium of information related to heraldry, the vizard "is made convex to cover the Face in all parts, with an out-let for the nose, and 2 holes for the eyes, with a slit for the mouth to let the air & breath come in and out. It is generally made of Leather, and covered with black Velvet. The Devil was the inventer of it, and about Courts none but Whores and Bauds, and the Devil Imps do use them, because they are shamed to show their Faces." Holme also insists that "this kind of Mask is taken off and put on in a moment of time, being only held in the Teeth by means of

[29] See Dympna Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing Gender and Race on the Renaissance Stage* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 78. My discussion of the racial implications of blackface impersonation has been influenced by David Theo Goldberg's analysis of racism's origins and subsequent incarnations in *Racist Culture*, but I am also indebted to Anthony Appiah's "Race," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 274–87. Also helpful are Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker's *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London: Routledge, 1994), Ania Loomba's *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), esp. pp. 1–74, and several essays in *Shakespeare Studies* 26 (1998). As should be apparent, I take race to be a socially constructed category with no actual basis in biology. For further discussion of various approaches to the topic of race, see Michael Banton, *Racial Theories*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge University Press
052184584X - Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800
Virginia Mason Vaughan
Excerpt
More information



a round bead fastned on the in-side over against the mouth."[30] Speaking with a bead between the teeth must have been problematic, though not impossible. Court records show that for some performances vizards were combined with velvet or fine linen covering for the arms. Philip Henslowe listed "The Mores lymes," along with "Hercolles lymes, and Will. Sommers sewtte," in an inventory of 1598. Presumably the "Mores lymes" were a black covering for the actors' arms and legs.[31]

Like the *commedia dell'arte* masks, vizards limited the actor's scope. He had to "work within the limitations of persona and [could not] escape into the complexities of personality." The actor became the "prisoner of the mask" and had to play out his part "in terms of the statement *it* makes, rather than in terms of some complex of emotions that go beyond that statement."[32] Once the actor donned the mask of a black Moor or a black devil, the face's emotional range was static. The actor could adopt a variety of poses in hopes that body language would convey different attitudes, but the scope of emotion was more limited than what could be conveyed through facial expressions. In his survey of the development of the vice figure, L. W. Cushman notes the secundus demon in the Townley cycle did not wear a mask because the text calls for him to make faces: he "gryned and ghast."[33] It seems likely that actors who wished to grimace preferred some other mode of blackening than a heavy leather vizard.

Although vizards probably served well for court masques, in which dance and music were more important than the spoken word, the use of vizards in the public theatre may have been restricted to non-speaking roles, such as the Moors who drew in Bajazeth's chariot in Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. The shift from what Dympna Callaghan describes as "exhibition" – the display of black people "as objects, passive and inert before the active scrutiny of the spectator" – to "mimesis" – the simulation of negritude – required a different mode of representation, one which allowed the actor to convey a full range of expressions, not a series of static poses.[34] When actors in the public theatres began to impersonate black characters in speaking roles, the "technology" consequently underwent a profound shift.

[30] Randle Holme, *Academy of Armory* (London, 1688); facs. reprint from Scolar Press (Menston, 1972), V. 64, and III. 87. My thanks to Stephen Orgel for this reference.
[31] Listed in *Documents of the Rose Playhouse*, ed. Carol Chillington Rutter (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 135.
[32] John Rudlin, *Commedia Dell'Arte: An Actor's Handbook* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 35.
[33] L. W. Cushman, *The Devil and the Vice in the English Dramatic Literature Before Shakespeare* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1900), p. 23.
[34] Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women*, p. 77.

© Cambridge University Press www.cambridge.org