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978-1-107-00735-2 - Reading and the History of Race in the Renaissance

Elizabeth Spiller

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READING AND THE HISTORY OF RACE IN THE RENAISSANCE

Elizabeth Spiller studies how early modern attitudes toward race were connected to assumptions about the relationship between the act of reading and the nature of physical identity. As reading was understood to happen in and to the body, what you read could change who you were. In a culture in which learning about the world and its human boundaries came increasingly through reading, one place where histories of race and histories of books intersect is in the minds and bodies of readers. Bringing together ethnic studies, book history, and historical phenomenology, this book provides a detailed case study of printed romances and works by Montalvo, Heliodorus, Amyot, Ariosto, Tasso, Cervantes, Munday, Burton, Sidney, and Wroth. *Reading and the History of Race* traces ways in which print culture, and the reading practices it encouraged, contributed to shifting understandings of racial and ethnic identity.

ELIZABETH SPILLER is Professor of English and Director of the History of Text Technologies Program, Florida State University. She is the author of *Science, Reading and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge, 2004), and editor of the two-volume *Seventeenth-Century English Recipe Books* (2008). She has been awarded fellowships from the NEH, the Fulbright, and the Mellon foundations, and her article "Situating Prospero's Art: Shakespeare and the Making of Early Modern Knowledge," which appeared in *South Central Review*, was awarded the Kirby Prize by the SCMLA for the best article of 2009. Her work has been published in such journals as *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Studies in English Literature*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, and *Renaissance Drama*.

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107007352

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First published 2011

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
Spiller, Elizabeth.

Reading and the history of race in the Renaissance / Elizabeth Spiller.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-00735-2 (hardback)

1. Race awareness—Europe—History—16th century. 2. Books and reading—Europe—History—16th century. 3. Race awareness in literature. 4. Europe—Intellectual life—16th century. I. Title.

HT1507.S75 2011

305.80094'09024—dc22

2011008030

ISBN 978-1-107-00735-2 Hardback

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*For Tim,
and in memory of
Robert Spiller
(1930–2009)*

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Acknowledgements

Like early modern romances, this book often seemed to spread out across a long plain, taking many turns in its plots. Over the course of imagining and writing this book, I have incurred many debts, personal and intellectual. Barbara Lewalski, Alan Shepard, and Roland Greene all supported this project from the outset and I appreciate their generous and unwavering support. Portions of this book have been presented at conference sessions and invited talks at MLA, RSA, SAA, Arizona State University, Trinity University, and Vanderbilt University: my thanks to Lynn Enterline, Heidi Brayman Hackel, Leah Marcus, Steve Mentz, Willis Saloman, Kathryn Schwarz, Ayanna Thompson, and Mary Floyd-Wilson for hosting and organizing those events. I had an opportunity to lead a seminar on “Figure, Form, and Color: Race and Genre in Early Modern Literature” at the 2008 Shakespeare Association of America: I learned a great deal from all of the participants in that seminar, some of which I hope informed my thinking in this book. Bruce Bohrer, Mary Thomas Crane, Katherine Crawford, Jonathan Crewe, Peter Erickson, Marjorie Garber, Carla Mazzio, Elizabeth Scala, Laurie Shannon, Kathryn Schwarz, Gary Taylor, Doug Trevor, Henry Turner, and Will West shared their thoughts and expertise, providing encouragement at key moments and listening patiently to my long accounts of even longer plots. I began thinking about this book while working on race and romance in Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*: that essay did not make it into this book, but I would like to thank Jeff Masten and Wendy Wall for encouraging my thinking on these topics. I also appreciate the vibrant intellectual community of English Department and the History of Text Technologies program at Florida State University: my colleagues and friends have helped shape this book in a hundred ways for which I am truly grateful.

This book was supported by a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. I am very grateful to the NEH for this

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generous support which allowed me to spend the kind of time reading these romances that they had demanded from their original readers. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this book do not necessarily reflect those of the National Endowment for the Humanities. I spent time reading both Wroth and Heliodorus at the Newberry Library and thank the Newberry for the short-term fellowship that made that possible.

Last and first, my family deserves all my thanks. From Matthew and Samantha, I have seen new versions of romance – and the new technologies of reading that go with them – as they unfold on the computer screen in anime fan fiction; Tim has been the model reader of and for this book on the history of reading. My love and thanks to each of them.