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The Nose Plays: Nasiform Negotiations at Newington Butts

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ABSTRACT

Shakespeare's Shylock, Marlowe's Barabas, and other Jewish characters are often thought to have been portrayed on early modern stages with a large false nose. This essay will explain how this commonplace view began as a falsified proposition by John Payne Collier in 1836, which subsequent scholarship has failed to properly dispel, instead projecting a post-Enlightenment stereotype onto early modern culture. I argue that by studying the use of the false nose in recycled fashion across contiguous plays in repertory it becomes possible to recognise that this stage property called on its audiences to negotiate its meanings from a range of possible sources, including the other plays in the same sequence. Using the repertory of the Lord Admiral's Men and Lord Chamberlain's Men at Newington Butts in 1594, I discuss some of the ways in which the stage nose represented villainy, risibility, and ribaldry without necessarily signifying Jewishness at this time. That Barabas could signify all of these things and also be a Jew may nevertheless have contributed to later generations identifying the nose as one of the stereotypical features of the early modern depictions of Jews on stage.

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The practice of recycling stage properties from one play to another by Elizabethan playing companies was undoubtedly aided by visual codes enabling audiences to know on sight what a specific item normally signified. As Frederick Kiefer observes, early modern visual culture revolved around shared meanings that may be reconstructed by following the advice of Henry Peacham to aspiring Jacobean gentlemen, to gaze upon the statues of antiquity, 'Whereby we are taught to know Jupiter by his thunder-bolt, Mars by his armour, Neptune by his trident'.[1] Looking to the visual forms of early modern England, the modern scholar equally discerns a culture built around practices of shared meaning such as heraldry, masques, pageantry, and, of course, the

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[1]Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), qtd. Frederick Kiefer, *Shakespeare's Visual Theatre: Staging the Personified Characters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 15.

public playhouses. Thus we know that Yorick's skull signifies not just Hamlet's dead childhood jester but the figure of death within the culture of the *ars moriendi* writ large. Similarly, it seems, scholars have long 'known' that a long false nose would be worn by an actor to signify that a character was Jewish, as Edward Alleyn did for the part of Barabas in Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* and Richard Burbage did when portraying Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Yet how confident should we be that these noses were to Barabas or Shylock as the thunder-bolt was to Jupiter? James Shapiro explains that the development of a visual stereotype of Jewish features was the process by which English writers set out 'to define what distinguished the Jews from themselves'.[2] Religious difference was thus visually coded through physical markers of racial difference, but Shapiro also concedes this picture of the racial characteristics of Jews did not emerge until the Enlightenment.[3] How is it, then, that scholars 'know' a false nose was worn on the early modern stage as a racial marker? I argue here this post-Enlightenment 'knowledge' is a rhinological myth, and I propose that study of a stage nose across a repertory reveals its meanings were still being negotiated in this period.

When Kiefer uses the example of Peacham's advice to the 'compleat' gentleman, it is in part to point out that modern scholarship cannot simply replicate the procedure of gazing upon Jupiter's statue, since the spectacle of the early modern period was very much bound up in the ephemera of performance events like masques, pageants, and plays. We rely, then, on what few visual representations survive of such events or on their textual traces, which is why play texts are such a valuable record of the visual aspects of performance. The few surviving inventories of costumes and stage properties, such as the Revels Office accounts or records of the Rose playhouse entrepreneur Phillip Henslowe, also furnish the imagination of the theatre historian with a rich supply of names for different types of objects but invariably without the detail that might better enable a clearer picture of what the object looked like.[4] Nevertheless, a reference to a particular object in the play text or in an inventory confirms the existence of that object and provides information about its use and potentially the meanings it conveyed in performance. Thus, a number of scholars have referred in recent decades to a 'jews nose' in Henslowe's list of the properties of the Lord Admiral's Men, which will become one of the main points of focus for the first section of this essay. I will show that the 'jews nose' is in fact a modern invention. Scholars who refer to the item do not actually provide a page or foliation for the entry in Henslowe's original because it simply is not there. Tracking the scholarship related to claims about noses and Jewish characters on the early modern stage, I argue that this 'jews nose' is merely the recent version of an older tendency to look for and

[2]James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 14.
[3]Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 33–34.
[4]See Albert Feuillerat, ed. *Documents Relating to the Office of Revels in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (Louvain: A. Uystprust, 1908); R.A. Foakes, ed. *Henslowe's Diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

find in the plays the visual characteristics that the early moderns are presumed to have attributed to Jewish people.

Yet by debunking the rhinological myth running through theatre history, I do not wish to suggest that the presentation of Jewish characters in early modern English drama was free of this racializing strain. Ania Loomba has demonstrated that English encounters with Jewish traders of the Ottoman Empire 'complicated the anti-semitic ideologies that had percolated down from earlier times', creating complex new sets of associations based on the prevailing cultural and racial attitudes towards Moors and Muslims which find expression in the plays of Marlowe, Shakespeare, and their contemporaries.[5] My primary interest here, however, is the prospect that a false stage nose was nevertheless used in some of the plays of this period and what this nose might signify to the audiences of these plays if not a physical characteristic of a Jew. I accept that the part of Barabas very likely did benefit from the use of a nose property of some description given the obvious humour Marlowe derives from it in the play's dialogue and in Barabas's unsuccessful disguise. Faced with the prospect that *Jew of Malta* could have required this property, I propose that potential additional meanings may be gleaned if we look at other plays in which the nose property could have been recycled by virtue of being part of the same repertory sequence.

The eleven days that the Admiral's Men and Lord Chamberlain's Men both played at Newington Butts in June 1594 strikes me as a particularly useful test case for this exercise. I have explained elsewhere that the two companies very likely combined for this short period, as members of both companies had also performed together in previous years.[6] Importantly, for my purposes here, it is worth noting that the Admiral's Men had been performing at the Rose before being compelled to leave due to inundation in the Thames floodplain, and the Lord Chamberlain's Men were completing a tour (begun as Derby's Men) when high waters prevented them from gaining road access past Newington Butts.[7] With both companies thus performing at reduced capacity away from a home theatrical venue, they would not have had immediate access to their full stock of garments and properties and so curated a repertory that would enable them to recycle portable items from one play to another. *The Jew of Malta* was performed twice during this sequence, the second (4 June) and last (13 June) performances prior to the companies parting ways again.[8] Another key play in the sequence was the now lost *Hester and Ahasuerus*, performed first (3 June) and also a second time towards the end of the sequence (10 June). As a play based on the biblical tale of Esther, a

[5]Ania Loomba, *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 143–47, esp. 143.
[6]On the companies playing together or alternatively, see Laurie Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse: Eleven Days at Newington Butts* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 113–20; 146–47.
[7]Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse*, 140–44.
[8]Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, 21–22.

Jewish woman who won the heart of the Persian king, the potential for *Hester* to create shared meanings with *The Jew of Malta* around the representations of Jewish characters is significant. David McInnis has argued that comparing other features of these plays rather than their representations of Jewish characters reveals 'a coherence in the companies' repertories that is less apparent when we focus exclusively on the "figure"'.[9] While McInnis maintains that the two companies more likely performed apart at Newington Butts, it is worth noting that his comparisons of these plays and others in the same sequence reveal numerous points of convergence, suggesting 'each company's choice of offerings was governed in some way by an awareness of the other's repertory and staging possibilities'.[10]

For mine, such points of convergence can be explained by combined performance but it is enough to acknowledge here that the potential overlap I find across a single repertory of eleven days' length is also identifiable when studying the same sequence as two repertories performed alongside each other, in alternation. Importantly, McInnis observes that the plays do not merely converge in terms of their themes, with *Hester* being a shrew-taming play right alongside *Taming of a Shrew* (11 June), for example, but also in the use of an elaborate stage device for presenting onstage public executions by hanging in both *Hester* and the Admiral's Men play of the capture and execution of the thief Belin Dun (8 June).[11] If the two companies did perform separately, then here would be an example of the same large stage property being shared between them for different plays. By focusing here on a much smaller property in the form of the false nose, I suggest we have an object that lends itself even more readily to being recycled from one play to another. We need not think of this as a rubbery prosthetic, since it could simply have been worn on the face like a Halloween nose, tied behind the head, rather like in Richard Willis's description of a performance of *The Cradle of Security* in Gloucester sometime around 1570–1574, with a Prince transforming his face into that of a pig using 'a swines snout upon his face, with three wire chains fastned thereunto'.[12] Substitute this snout with a large nose and the potential is there for a property that could be used time and again, so long as it was not restricted to being used only for the representation of Jewish characters. In both *Jew* and *Hester*, and in other plays performed by these companies at Newington Butts, I will argue the nose invited audiences to draw on multiple sources along with the other plays in the same repertory to continually redefine and renegotiate what the nose signified.

[9]David McInnis, *Shakespeare and Lost Plays: Reimagining Drama in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 69–70.
[10]McInnis, *Shakespeare and Lost Plays*, 70.
[11]McInnis, *Shakespeare and Lost Plays*, 70.
[12]Audrey Douglas and Peter Greenfield, REED *Cumberland/Westmorland/Gloucestershire* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 363.

Commonplace and Myth: Thumbing a Nose at the Stereotype

The belief that a large false nose was widely used to signify a stage character as a Jew can be traced initially to John Payne Collier's claim in 1836 that Shylock in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* 'was originally played in a false nose as well as in a false beard'.[13] Since there is no direct reference in *Merchant* to Shylock's nose or to him having any beard, Collier based this claim instead on precedent: 'Of old, it was the custom so to dress Jews and usurers on the stage'.[14] As examples of this 'custom', he cited William Rowley's reference in *A Search for Money* (1609) to 'the artificiall Iewe of Malta's nose' as proof that Alleyn had used the nose prop in his portrayal of Barabas, and Collier added George Chapman's *Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1598), in which the hero is disguised as 'Leon the usurer' with the use of a large false nose.[15] Collier also found support for his claim about Shylock in two pieces of indirect evidence: an extended version that he had discovered of the funeral elegy for Burbage, which ascribed to him the part of 'the red-hair'd Jew', hence the false beard; and a verse adaptation by Thomas Jordan from 1663 called 'The Forfeiture: A Romance', with the villain renamed as the 'Deformed Father' and described as having 'chin turn'd up' and 'nose hung down' so that 'both ends met together'.[16]

Jordan's ballad was real enough, published in *A Royal Arbor of Loyal Poesy* (1664), but as Katherine Romack has pointed out, it was composed in direct response to debates in the 1650s over the formal readmission of Jews and was, 'I contend, the first manifestly antisemitic adaptation of Shakespeare's play'.[17] Rather than a faithful record of Shylock's depiction in earlier performances of Shakespeare's play, Jordan's ballad seeks instead to heighten the difference between Shylock and Antonio by resorting to caricature. Yet if the use of Jordan's ballad as proof of Shylock's appearance was a case of simple misreading by Collier, his 'discovery' of the additional lines to Burbage's funeral elegy was revealed by Clement Ingleby as early as 1874 to be a forgery, an assessment confirmed by later, more rigorous investigations.[18] With these two pieces of indirect evidence thus being set aside, Collier's claims only ever hinged on the 'custom' for which he offered two examples. To these he added, 'It would not be difficult to multiply similar instances'.[19]

[13]John Payne Collier, *New Particulars Regarding the Works of Shakespeare in a Letter to the Rev. A. Dyce, B.A.* (London: Thomas Rodd, 1836), 38.
[14]Collier, *New Particulars*, 38.
[15]Collier, *New Particulars*, 38–39.
[16]Collier, *New Particulars*, 30, 36, 38.
[17]Katherine Romack, 'Thomas Jordan's 'The Forfeiture': A Mercantilist Rewriting of Shakespeare', in *The Merchant of Venice: The State of Play*, ed. M. Lindsay Kaplan. The Arden Shakespeare (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), 70, 72.
[18]Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Scholarship and Forgery in the Nineteenth Century*. 2 vols. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 2.1117–18.
[19]Collier, *New Particulars*, 39.

This sense that there must be plenty of additional cases of stage Jews with false noses has persisted despite the relative paucity of concrete examples being offered by any other scholar. Perhaps most baffling in this respect is the persistence of the claim that Shylock was decked out with a false nose and red beard, with editors such as David Bevington, Stephen Greenblatt, and Jay Halio stating this to be true.[20] There are also scholars who, like Jeffrey Wilson, cast doubt on Shylock originally being performed with a false nose, only to agree with the notion that such a custom was widespread by asking, as Wilson does, 'why did Shakespeare abandon this theatrical tradition?'[21] Invariably, though, when modern scholars invoke this sense of the prevalence of the practice, the only examples still tend to be the quotations from Rowley and Chapman, with some also adding the character of Mammon the usurer from John Marston's *Jack Drum's Entertainment* (1601), whose listing in the *dramatis personae* is accompanied with the descriptor, 'with a great nose'.[22] The 'similar instances' that Collier had claimed would be easy to multiple have amounted in fact to just the one extra example, and even then it should be noted that while Leon and Mammon are identified as usurers, neither is explicitly identified in these plays as Jewish.[23]

Robert Lublin has identified additional examples but begins by mentioning that the stage nose would originally have been a signifier for Satan, as in Ulpian Fulwell's *Like Will to Like* (1568) twice referring to the Devil as 'bottle nosed' and Thomas Garter's *The Most Vertuous and Godly Susanna* (1569) calling the same figure a 'crookte nose knave'.[24] The figure of the Jew, Lublin then claims, would have been understood to be a usurer and villain by virtue of bearing 'Satan's theatrical nose', with the example of the Jewish Benwash in *A Christian Turned Turk* (Robert Daborne, 1612) described with a 'fiery nose'. One problem with this example is that the phrase is not used in the play to describe Benwash; rather, when his servant Rabshake is discussing the qualities of the English pirate captain with Agar and Voada, and the question turns to whether religion can determine the 'shapes of men', the servant replies:

> RAB. Altogether. What's the reason else that the Turke & Iew is troubled (for the most part) with gowty legges, and fiery nose, to expresse their heart-burning; whereas the Puritan is a man of vpright calfe, and cleane nosthrill. (Scene 4)

To these observations, Voada turns tail on Rabshake and tells him, 'Setting aside your nose, you should turne Christian'. It is thus Rabshake, and not Benwash, whose nose is pinpointed for direct comment on stage in this

[20]See the excellent summary in Emma Smith, 'Was Shylock Jewish?' *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64, no. 2 (2013): 201–02.
[21]Jeffrey R. Wilson, 'Hath Not a Jew a Nose? Or the Danger of Deformity in Comedy', in *New Readings of the Merchant of Venice*, ed. Horacio Sierra (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 134.
[22]Wilson, 'Hath Not a Jew', 132. See also Robert I. Lublin, *Costuming the Shakespearean Stage: Visual Codes of Representation in Early Modern Theatre and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 158–60.
[23]Smith, 'Was Shylock Jewish?', 200, 203.
[24]Lublin, *Costuming*, 158.

scene, although I concede that the 'fiery nose' is used by the servant to first stereotype Jews and Turks alike. Lublin's other example is the Portuguese usurer Pisaro in William Haughton's *Englishman for My Money* (1598), mockingly called 'signor bottle-nose', but then he is also not called a Jew and so it is Lublin who relies on the stereotype to draw the circular conclusion: 'His trade, however, identifies him as a Jew, and his visage bears the mark'.[25]

Propping up this myth is the canard that a 'jews nose' is recorded in the inventory of the Admiral's Men's stage properties among Philip Henslowe's accounts. Even scholars who seek to correct the myth of Shylock's false nose, for example, also claim as fact that one was nevertheless listed in this inventory. Thus we find, for example, Kirk Melnikoff confirming that 'Barabas's nose was likely an impressive affair, drawing attention to itself *as* costume. It turns up as one of the properties listed in Henslowe's *Diary*', and Gary Taylor comments on the lack of evidence of specialisation by observing that any actor could be painted with a black face to play a Moor and likewise any actor 'could put on a "jew's nose" (one of Henslowe's properties) to play Marlowe's Barabas or Shakespeare's Shylock'.[26] Melnikoff does not provide a page number to indicate where this nose 'turns up', and Taylor's use of the small 'j' and quotation marks suggests he is citing the inventory directly, but no page number or source is given here either. The point is that neither could offer a source detail even if they wanted to do so, as the only property in the inventory with the word 'Jew' is a 'cauderm for the Iew' (that is, the cauldron required to stage the death of Barabas in *The Jew of Malta*).[27] The inventory contains no nose, Jewish or otherwise.

I cannot say for certain where the idea first emerged that the inventory includes a nose among the properties, unless it began with Patrick Cheney, who as recently as 1997 made the claim that Ovid's influence on Marlowe may have extended to suggesting the use of the stage nose for Barabas as a pun on the poet's full name, Ovidius Naso: 'Barabas's fake nose is not simply a detail in the text or a lone costume item in the repertoire of an acting company'.[28] Where Cheney obtained this information about the fake nose being an item in the inventory of an acting company is not at all clear. He adds a citation to Millar MacLure's collection on the critical heritage of Marlowe (page 93) but on this page of the edition cited by Cheney the reader will only find text from Alexander Dyce's introductory essay to his 1850 edition of the works of Marlowe.[29] Dyce, in turn, merely repeats Collier's

[25]Lublin, *Costuming*, 159.
[26]Kirk Melnikoff, '"[I]ygging vaines" and "riming mother wits": Marlowe, Clowns and the Early Frameworks of Dramatic Authorship', *Early Modern Literary Studies* Special Issue 16 (October, 2007): 10; Gary Taylor, 'Shakespeare Plays on Renaissance Stages', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, ed. Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11.
[27]Foakes, *Henslowe's Diary*, 321.
[28]Patrick Cheney, *Marlowe's Counterfeit Profession: Ovid, Spenser, Counter-Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 141.

argument, with no mention of the nose or beard belonging to an acting company. In sections of text that MacLure omits from his abridged reprint, Dyce in his 1850 essay does offer further discussion on the use of false noses and observes that Henslowe provides evidence of the popularity of the play, but the nose is not mentioned in relation to the Henslowe papers.[30] By citing MacLure, Cheney is deflecting from the fact that the source of the information he paraphrases is really Collier, but then none of Collier, Dyce, or MacLure claimed that there was a 'jews nose' in Henslowe. To be fair to Cheney, he never specifically makes this claim either, but readers may well be forgiven for thinking from the use of a citation that Cheney is indicating the 'lone costume item' has a documentary source. I suspect this comment may have given rise to the belief in the presence of the false nose in the inventory.

Shapiro may have inadvertently played a part as well. In *Shakespeare and the Jews*, published a year earlier in 1996, Shapiro generally dismisses the idea that the caricature of the Jew was prevalent on the early modern stage, as I have already noted. Yet one endnote discusses the case for Barabas or Shylock being played with a large false nose, and demands that scholars construct a 'better case … that this was standard practice, or even the occasional practice, of companies using Henslowe's stage properties'.[31] The mention of Henslowe here is unusual given that Shylock is one of the examples under consideration, and Shakespeare's *Merchant* is not a title one associates with Henslowe. Shapiro's offhand endnote makes me suspect that even before Cheney made the suggestion, then, a 'jews nose' claim was already circulating on the conference circuit or in an unpublished paper, prompting Shapiro's riposte. Whether this inaccurate factoid is twenty-five or closer to thirty years old, though, my point stands that though it is of relatively recent invention, it contributes to the perpetuation of a much older claim made by Collier almost two centuries ago with the support of falsified evidence.

As Brett Greatley-Hirsch has observed, however, there is evidence that 'Jew' did operate as shorthand for a recognisable costume, with John Webster's *The Devil's Law-Case* (1623) providing at least one explicit example of a character disguising himself 'in the habit of a Jew'.[32] The evidence of what such a costume comprised also remains relatively elusive, but contemporary descriptions and images suggest a turban and yellow garb could contribute to the portrayal of the stage Jew.[33] From such pictorial and written representations, there

[29]Millar MacLure, ed. *Christopher Marlowe: The Critical Heritage* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 93. Whereas Cheney elsewhere uses 'rpt'. to signify a reprint source being cited, he does not do so in the citation from MacLure to indicate that the source is in fact Dyce.

[30]Rev. Alexander Dyce, 'Account of the Writings of Marlowe', in *The Works of Christopher Marlowe* (London: William Pickering, 1850), xx–xxi.

[31]Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 240.

[32]Brett D. Hirsch, 'Jewish Questions in Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London*', *Early Theatre* 19, no. 1 (2016): 40–41.

[33]Hirsch, 'Jewish Questions', 42–45. See also Eva Johanna Holmberg, *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 108–12.

is no clear indication that the shape of a nose was a consistent trope in identifying somebody as Jewish during the early modern period. Indeed, it was not until the mid-seventeenth century, in caricatures like Jordan's 'Deformed Father', that the stereotype began to gain purchase. Don Harrán's study of depictions of Jewish noses in early modern art found the earliest genuinely parodic image of a long hooked nose appears in Francesco Bertelli's engravings of Venetian masks from 1642, with the noses on the masks of two figures identified as Jews rather more resembling penises, supported by an inscription in which they declare themselves to be sodomites.[34] Importantly, the image did not purport to represent an actual Jewish face and even Jordan's representation of exaggerated features is passed off as a deformity.

Yet the circular reasoning applied to Jewish stereotyping in early modern culture by modern scholars relies on this idea that any hooked nose in art or on stage was manifestly a symbol of the Jew even when not made explicit. Arata Ide argues for example that 'Jewish stereotypes were often applied to Catholic priests and conspirators', and offers as evidence the anecdote of Lord Burghley in 1586 asking three watchmen how they hoped to identify a group of Babington plot conspirators, to which he was told 'one of the partye hath a hooked nose' – Ide suggests the watchmen knew about the nose from portraits of the conspirators, leading to this conclusion:

> These watchmen unanimously assumed that one of the Catholic conspirators would display Jewish characteristics … Though it is not clear whether these portraits were made to look Jewish or were interpreted as Jewish, this interesting episode seems to suggest that Catholics were easily associated with Jews.[35]

Burghley makes no mention of any portrait appearing or being interpreted as Jewish, yet the hooked nose leads Ide to conclude that this was how the early moderns must have interpreted the conspirator's features, thus propping up the argument about the ubiquity of the stereotype.

The Nose Plays at Newington Butts

Dispensing with this myth, I wish to return with fresh eyes to the noses that were used on the early modern stage. If they did not automatically signify as Jewish, what did they mean and, perhaps more importantly, how did they signify this meaning? A close analogue might be the Pantalone figure from the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, a figure with a prominent nose and beard and who represents the personification of greed, but then the Zanni or servant figure also tended to sport an even more prominent nose, and the principle of mask design for all *commedia* characters involved some form of exaggeration

[34]Don Harrán, 'The Jewish Nose in Early Modern Art and Music', *Renaissance Studies* 28, no. 1 (2013): 56–57.
[35]Arata Ide, '*The Jew of Malta* and the Diabolic Power of Theatrics in the 1580s', *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 46, no. 2 (2006): 260–61.

of the nose as a symbol of that character's relationship with the world.[36] I therefore avoid the temptation to view analogy as evidence of any direct borrowing from the Venetian comedy tradition collapsed into a single figure on the English stage. Indeed, Rowley's reference to an artificial nose would seem to indicate a single appendage rather than the half-mask or full mask of the *commedia*. If we come back to *The Jew of Malta*, on this point, recall that Rowley referred to 'the artificiall Iewe of Malta's nose', which only tells us that the character was played with a false nose. To better understand the relationship between this nose and the world of the play in which it was deployed, I want to also consider the way this play formed meaningful links with other plays staged during the same repertory, creating a semiotic gap of sorts within which audiences would be invited to negotiate new meanings.

In *Jew*, the prospect that Barabas sports a large nose can be corroborated by two jokes made by the servant Ithamore at his master's expense: upon being told that the Christians will suffer, Ithamore tells Barabas, 'I worship your nose for this!' (2.3.176); and he also refers to Barabas elsewhere as a 'bottle-nosed knave' (3.3.10). Given the importance that scholars have placed on Ithamore's joking about his master's nose, we might expect there to be more than these two examples in the text. I suggest instead that two jokes in the text are enough. What is likely to have happened in performance is that these minimal textual cues would have been grafted by the Clown playing Ithamore onto extemporised comedy about the false nose – when *Jew* was performed by Lord Strange's Men in 1593 and again by the Admiral's-Chamberlain's Men's combination in 1594, Alleyn would have been Barabas and Ithamore would have been played to the nines by the great Will Kempe.[37] Some hint about the kind of comedy used in such a performance might be provided in *Hamlet*, a play that in some early version was played at Newington Butts. In the 'rogue and peasant slave' speech, Hamlet wonders at what the player would do if he had the same motivation, and then reflects on his own inaction and accepting his punishment if somebody calls him a coward, 'plucks off my beard' (TLN 1613), and 'Tweaks me by the nose' (TLN 1614). He may thus be describing extemporised actions with which audiences of *Jew* were well familiar.

Indeed, these were actions with which the players themselves were too familiar, with Alleyn's brother John (a fellow member of Admiral's Men) having once been threatened by Burbage with the same treatment. Regarding violent altercations at the Theatre in 1590, the deponent Nicholas Byshop deposed on 29 January and 6 April 1592 that Burbage 'scornfully and disdainfully playing with this deponent's nose' said that he would beat him further if he persisted in trying to collect the widow Margaret Brayne's share of the playhouse

[36]Mace Perlman, 'Reading and Interpreting the Capitano's Multiple Mask Shapes', in *The Routledge Companion to Commedia dell'Arte*, ed. Judith Chaffee and Olly Crick (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 84.
[37]See Johnson, *Shakespeare's Lost Playhouse*, 148–50.

profits.[38] Further, Alleyn deposed on 6 February and 6 May 1592 that when he and other members of his company approached Burbage eight days later for their own dividend from performing at the Theatre, Burbage threatened that he would do the same to them.[39] Yet it is possible that no noses were tweaked in *Hamlet*: this use of 'tweaks', which appears in the Second Quarto (Q2) and Folio (F) texts of *Hamlet*, represents the only instance of the word in the Shakespeare canon, but in the First Quarto (Q1) the word used is 'twites', a common variation of 'twits', which is used elsewhere. To twit is to taunt, usually with a rude gesture, an action that I think makes more sense in this context.

Matthew Steggle uses this same speech to describe the potential resonances between *Hamlet* and the lost play *Cutlack* – using evidence that Alleyn played the Danish King as a roaring, stalking figure, he suggests that the Danish Prince's speech in *Hamlet* appeared as a commentary on the other Danish play.[40] Steggle is describing a *Hamlet* that reflects on *Cutlack* from many years in the future, based on the premise that Shakespeare's play appeared long after *Cutlack* was performed. But at Newington Butts in 1594, the *Hamlet* play was performed just three days after *Cutlack* (6 June), making the commentary a contemporary one. It is thus possible that *Cutlack* also contained the kind of mock violence described by Hamlet, including a false beard and nose, or at the very least one character decked out with the artificial nose and another, a Clown, that mocks the nose *extempore*, in similar fashion to Ithamore's mockery of Barabas. This nose would not have been out of place in *Hamlet*, either, where it could be played for laughs. In the Q2/F versions, 'nose' only appears once more, when Hamlet reveals the whereabouts of the body of Polonius, stating 'you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the Lobby' (TLN 2698). Hamlet's word seems more deliberate here than if had simply said 'you shall smell him', so perhaps Polonius was played as a fool with obviously false nose and beard. In Q1, there is a third 'nose' mentioned, with Hamlet describing a braggart gentleman: upon his arrival, he smells like a 'musk-cod' (TLN 3595.1), and after he exits, Hamlet states 'y'are spiced, Else he had a bad nose could not smell a foole' (TLN 3644–44.1). If the text of Q1 is in fact that of the earlier *Hamlet* performed at Newington Butts and elsewhere, as some scholars have argued, then this third 'nose' reference is significant.[41] It could be an indication that the player who performed as Corambis (the name of the Polonius character in Q1) doubled as the braggart gentleman, making references to the 'bad nose' that is unable to smell the 'foole'

[38]Glynn Wickham, Ralph Berry, and William Ingram, ed. *English Professional Theatre, 1530–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 360–61.
[39]Wickham, Berry, and Ingram, *English*, 361–62.
[40]Matthew Steggle, *Digital Humanities and the Lost Drama of Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 75–76.
[41]See Terri Bourus, *Young Shakespeare's Young Hamlet: Print, Piracy and Performance* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Laurie Johnson, *The Tain of Hamlet* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013).

serve as a reminder of the prop he wore prior to the death of his character in the bedchamber scene.

The eighth play in this sequence is recorded by Henslowe as 'the tamynge of A shrowe' (11 June), and it remains unresolved whether this was Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* or the play that has survived in quarto as *The Taming of a Shrew* (1594). Either way, there is evidence in both plays that the figure of the fool, to whom Sly draws explicit attention, could have enhanced the comedy with the aid of a long false nose. In *A Shrew*, for example, the servant Sander mocks Polidor's boy for his sorry excuse for a beard ('you have many boies with such Pickadeuantes I am sure') and threatens to give him a 'bloudie nose for this', in a verbal gesture that suggests Hamlet's plucking and tweaking, unless the true comedy in the moment is achieved by a 'twit' that draws attention to Sander's own beard and nose (8.2–5).[42] Indeed, the extra interjections by Sly in this version of the play, calling again for the return of the fool after he appeared in a couple of short exchanges, would suggest that the fool Sander is played for laughs with much more than the quality of the dialogue alone. In a later scene, Ferrando makes a telling threat to Sander, but again it is played hyperbolically as he only wants help in removing his boots: 'Come hether you villaine Ile cut your nose, / You Rogue' (9.28–29). While Shakespeare's Grumio does not quite replicate these moments, and indeed Shakespeare's Sly is much less obsessed with the fool than his counterpart in the anonymous play, there is nevertheless a suggestion that the part could be played with a false nose, such as Grumio's brag, 'Am I but three inches? Why, thy horne is a foot and so long am I at least' (TLN1445–46). What is undoubtedly a phallic comment could also be played with reference to an ample nose, a metaphorical connection that was already a Rabelaisian staple of comedy.[43] One famous prior example comes from the great clown Richard Tarlton, whose *Tarlton's Jests*, published posthumously in 1588, offers a ribald exchange in which the clown propositioned a country wench with 'I would my flesh were in thine', and she replied, 'I would thy nose were in my I know where'.[44]

The nose thus appears in all of these examples to have been an object of risibility, and there is no consistent character type among them. Barabas bears the nose not as a marker of his specific religion, as if one's faith could determine the shapes of men, but after the manner of the satanic nose of an earlier visual tradition, as Lublin correctly notes before attempting incorrectly to confirm the presence of the Jewish stereotype in early modern English drama. The artificial

[42]Source line numbers are from the quarto *The Taming of a Shrew* as edited by Frederick J. Furnivall (London: C. Praetorius, 1886).

[43]Jennifer Spinks, 'Codpieces and Potbellies in the *Songes drolatiques*: Satirizing Masculine Self-Control in Early Modern France and Germany', in *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline van Ghent (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 102.

[44]Richard Preiss, *Clowning and Authorship in Early Modern Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 79.

Jew of Malta's nose is thus a mark of villainy that cannot be disguised, but this also makes it an obvious target for the Clown. The villainy on show in that play, however, is offset by the noses used to signify the foolish servants in *Hamlet* and *Shrew*, but in the latter (at least in the anonymous version) the humour is used as an opportunity to remind audiences that the nose can also signify villainy, as this is how Ferrando refers to Sander while drawing attention to his nose. This potential for plays within the same repertory sequence to produce more complex meanings from intertextual references brings me at last to the other 'Jew' play in the sequence. *Hester and Ahasuerus* would undoubtedly have contained plot elements from the biblical Book of Esther, but it could also have drawn heavily on the early interlude, *Godly Queen Hester* (c. 1561). In the interlude, as in the Bible, Hester is the Jewish girl who becomes Queen of Persia by marrying Ahasuerus (Xerxes) and exposes the deceitful plot of the King's counsellor Haman to turn Ahasuerus against the Jews. If Hester would have been played as a boyish beauty, then there would still have been an opportunity to portray her uncle Mardocheus with a stereotypical Jewish nose. This would surely have required also that the nose, as with its bearer, was given a moment of triumphant dignity in keeping with the episode in which Haman is compelled to parade the old Jew on horseback to honour his elevation by the King.

Alternatively, the early interlude may provide a textual cue that would prompt a later adapter to depict the villainous counsellor Haman with a prominent false nose. His villainy is, after all, key to the main elements of the story, and as the counsellor to the king he might also foreshadow the use of a false nose for Corambis/Polonius in the version of *Hamlet* staged at Newington Butts. The textual cue that may prompt the use of a false nose to make such links more explicit also calls to mind an Ovidian link akin to the one used by Marlowe in *The Jew of Malta*. No mention is made of Haman's nose in the interlude but the decision to hang him from the very gallows he had constructed for the hanging of Hester's uncle is described as a form of poetic justice with an explicit Ovidian reference: a short speech is given to the figure of Hardydardy, to describe historical analogies of this form of justice and the first of which is the fate of 'Naso Ovid, that eloquent poet' (283). It could be that the earlier *Hester* interlude thereby created the link between a prototypical Biblical villain and the use of the false nose in this dramatic treatment of the same story. Furthermore, it is Hardydardy, the truth-speaking fool, who makes the link explicit. Rather than having one of the Jewish characters bearing a false stage nose in *Hester and Ahasuerus*, the 1594 play would more likely have followed the earlier interlude in identifying Haman as the bearer of a large stage appendage as a symbol of Ovidian comeuppance.

To conclude, I contend that the repertory of the Admiral's and Chamberlain's Men at Newington Butts in June 1594 presents a moment when the false stage nose would have been seen by audiences in numerous plays in

quick succession. With *Hester* shown first, Ovidian resonances of the villain's fate would have been the first set of meanings attached to the item, so when Barabas appears with the same nose in *Jew* on the very next day, the villain's death in the very cauldron in which he planned to kill the Turkish Prince has more of this Ovidian ring to it. With the prospect that Hester also had a figure like Hardydardy to mock Haman's nose, and with Ithamore doing the same to Barabas, these plays also used the stage nose as a focus for risibility as much as for visibility, a feature likely to have also been taken up by the foolish Corambis in *Hamlet* and Sander in *Shrew*. More could be said about the phallic nature of the humour in *Shrew*, noting that the later caricatures of Venetian masks by Bertelli focus on the same image, but space demands that further considerations must needs be held over. It may suffice here to close by confirming that the depiction of Barabas may not have focused solely on him being Jewish, with the use of the false stage nose certainly making a range of meanings available to its early audiences, but later readers also certainly found just enough in Barabas and his nose to confirm what they believed to be true about the early moderns and the stereotypical depictions of Jews on stage.

Disclosure Statement

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