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Grafting Onto `the Jew': The Importance Of Being Jew-Ish To Early Modern English Christian Identity

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**GRAFTING ONTO 'THE JEW': THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING JEW-ISH TO EARLY MODERN
ENGLISH CHRISTIAN IDENTITY**

by

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

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Approved by:

Advisor

Date

DEDICATION

For Lloyd

You and I—we're not like the other kinds...

Young Galaxy

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INTRODUCTION

There can be little doubt that Jews became a significant source of popular debate for early modern Englishmen. From the 1550s through the 1650s, representations of Jews found their way into a substantial number of early modern English texts. Indeed, I chose this one hundred year period because it is framed by the publication of two extremely popular translations of a work about Jews by a Jew. Book three of Abraham ben David ha-Levi Ibn Daud's¹ *Sefer ha-Kabalah* (1160-1) depicts the destruction of the Jewish nation at the hands of the Romans in 70 CE. Moreover, although the two translations of Ibn Daud's book were published nearly one hundred years apart, each version was published in multiple editions; ten editions from 1558-1615 and nine editions between 1652 and 1689. What had made a book about first century Jews of such interest to early modern Englishmen? The timing of the first appearance of each translation may be the reason: both works were written during periods of intense religious upheaval in England. Evangelical Peter Morwen's (1530?-1573?) translation entitled *A compendioius and most marueilous history of the latter tymes of the Iewes commune weale*, first appeared in 1558, the same year Elizabeth I ascended the throne and England was once again shifting from the Roman Catholic Church to Reform. Historian and political writer James Howel's (1594?-1666) translation entitled *The Wonderful, and most Deplorable History of the Later Times of the Jews*, was first published during the Interregnum in 1652, a time when "religious toleration [and] diversity" had led to religious "chaos" (Bucholz and Key 267). It seems significant that Englishmen who were involved in their own intense sectarian disputes

¹ Abraham ben David ha-Levi Ibn Daud (ca. 1110-ca.1180), a Spanish Jew, was an astronomer, philosopher, and historian.

during these periods, were interested in a book that addressed the moment when the Jewish nation was destroyed by a pagan religious force, Rome.

However, these translations of Ibn Daud's *Sefer ha-Kaballah* were not the only books about Jews on the market during this one hundred year time period. Many other early modern English texts featuring Jews had made their way to booksellers as well. From the 1550s through the 1650s, Jews were a primary focus in Reformation commentaries and sermons analyzing Paul's Letter to the Romans; they were discussed in dedicatory letters appended to published translations such as Ibn Daud's work which, as noted above, focused on Rome's destruction of the Jewish nation in 70 CE; Israelites as well as contemporary Jews of the Mediterranean and Venice were dramatized on stage and in published versions of these plays; actual Jews were discussed in histories and newsbooks about the Turks and Turkish trade; and hypothetical groups of foreign Jews were the focus of pamphlets debating Jewish readmission.² Curiously,

² Other works about Jews existed as well. Before and during the readmission debates, pamphlets purporting to be written by Jewish converts refuting Judaism and championing Christ were prevalent: *The Converted Jew or Certain Dialogues between Micheas A Learned Jew and others...* (1630); *The blessed Jew of Marocco* by Rabbi Samuel (trans. by Thomas Calvert, 1648); *A Brief Compendium of the vain Hopes of the Jews Messias: The ignorant Fables of their Rabbies, and the Confuting of the Jewish Religion* by Eleazar Bar Gishai(1652); *A Vindication of the Christian Messiah* by Eliazar bar Isajah (1653); *The Messiah of the Christians and the Jewes* by Paul Isaiah (1655). Each of these works has the same basic premise; to use Jewish authority to refute the idea that England would benefit by readmitting and/or converting Jews. Less prevalent works about Jews contain prognostications. *Newes from Rome* (1607), for example, contains "certaine prophecies" of a Jew whose name, interestingly enough, is Caleb Shilocke. Identifying a prognosticator as Jewish had the benefit of making the prediction seem authoritative, as the bible contains several books of Jewish prophecy. The name Shilocke, one assumes, was borrowed from Shakespeare's play, perhaps due to it being a memorable "Jewish" name. My project does not discuss these works. Firstly, I doubt the veracity of the works by Jewish converts; it seems to me they were easily fabricated by the Christian authors who appended dedicatory letters to these works. Moreover, the assumptions these supposed converts have about Judaism were often mistaken. Although it is true that these pamphlets indicate that there were many Englishmen who opposed Jewish readmission, I felt it better to make this point using works by authors whose works were based, to some extent, on historical record. For a discussion of some of these texts and others like them, see James Shapiro's *Shakespeare and the Jews* (Columbia UP, 1996), 151-157. As for works of Jewish prognostication, these seem to contain doomsday warnings. Since there were few pamphlets such as these, they did not seem to have been of great note to most early modern Englishmen. Finally, Shapiro has also noted the large body of early modern English works featuring Jews. His list of these works can be found on page 88 of *Shakespeare and the Jews*.

early modern English writers seem to have been disproportionately interested in a group of people who were virtually non-existent in early modern England.

The proliferation of Jews in English literature might be easier to understand had Jews been a substantial threat to, or a significant presence in, early modern England. However, for centuries prior to and including the early modern period, few Jews (and no publically practicing ones) lived in England. King Edward I had banished the Jews from England in 1290. It was also illegal to practice Judaism throughout the early modern period; therefore even if there were people of Jewish descent living in England (as there were in Bristol and London), they practiced (at least ostensibly) whatever form of Christianity had been mandated by English policy. According to James Shapiro,³ “in Shakespeare’s England, [there were] probably never more than a couple of hundred [Jews] at any given time in the whole country” (76); what Jews there were, however, lived as Christians. These circumstances meant that English citizens had little to no contact with Jews, who lived in foreign lands, mainly in the Ottoman Empire,⁴ where they could worship according to Jewish rite. In addition, since there was no Jewish nation in early modern times, Jews were not feared as a potential military force capable of invading a nation. As Samuel Purchas’s discussion of Jews indicates, early modern Englishmen understood Jews to be a scattered nation who “haue not for their Mansion, any peculiar Countrey” (119).

My project demonstrates that English representations of Jews more often applied to conflicts brewing within English Christianity than to conflicts Englishmen may have had with Jews themselves. Even though it redirects critical focus away from historical Jews and toward

³ *Shakespeare and the Jews*, Columbia: U P, 1996.

⁴ Up until the Inquisition and the expulsions of Jews from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497, there had been a significant number of Jews living in Iberia. However, the Inquisition had forced these Jews to convert or immigrate.

fictional representation, the project acknowledges that most previous work has examined the ways in which early modern England perceived living, breathing Jews. However, this assumption can be problematic. English laws against Jews and Judaism prevented English writers from having much contact with practicing Jews. As a result, it has been difficult to account for early modern England's obsessive and ambivalent preoccupation with Jews. In this introduction, then, I will identify some major trends in early modern Jewish representation as well as in scholarship and criticism about Judaism in the early modern period. By addressing and responding to these trends, this introduction sets the stage for my intervention: to uncover the force which drove and directed early modern English treatment and representations of Jews.

Early Modern Representation of Jews

Scholarly criticism has often assumed that Jewish representations in early modern English texts reflect how English writers felt about and perceived Jews as actual people. One difficulty with this school of thought, however, is that English writers are not consistent in their treatment of Jews and Jewishness. Depending on the writer and the context of his or her work, Jews might be represented positively or negatively, and it has been challenging to discover why this is. It certainly cannot be denied that tensions and anxieties about actual Jews are palpable in early modern English texts. It is quite clear, for example, that English writers exhorted English Christians, regardless of sectarian predilection, to shun Jewish practices and rituals that had been abrogated by Christ's advent, which of course implies that Jews themselves should also be shunned. In a 1558 dedicatory epistle to his translation of Ibn Daud's *Sefer ha-Kaballah* book 3, evangelical Peter Morwen warns readers not to behave as Jews: "As whe[n] thou seeest [sic]

the lewes here afflicted with divers kindes of miserie, because they fell from G O D: then maiest thou be admonished hereby to see the better to thyne owne wayes, lest the lyke calamities light upon thee” (A4). While Morwen worries that Christians acting like Jews will suffer the Jews’ calamitous fate in 70 CE, other English writers depict Jews and Jewish behavior as inherently immoral and repugnant. In Christopher Marlowe’s play *The Jew of Malta* (1590), the Jew Barabas is represented as conducting a murderous rampage against Malta’s Christian populace. In 1596, William Shakespeare’s famous stage Jew Shylock attempts to legally murder his enemy, the Christian merchant Antonio, by proposing and accepting as bond a pound of flesh rather than remuneration. In less canonical but still popular dramas featuring Mediterranean trade, Jews might be depicted as in league with Turks to entice Christians into treacherous webs of avarice, apostasy, and violence.

Non-fictional living Jews could also be represented negatively in texts. Seventeenth-century pamphlet writers opposed to Jewish readmission were not generous in their descriptions of England’s medieval Jews or about potential groups of foreign Jews purportedly poised to enter England should the readmission law pass. In his 1655/6 anti-readmission pamphlet, William Prynne⁵ reminds his readers that “Jews had been formerly great Clippers and Forgers of Mony, and had crucified three or four Children in England at least” (A4). Prynne, as well as writers of other anti-readmission pamphlets, sometimes expressed the fear that Jews, if readmitted, might convert Christians to Judaism.

However, sympathy and empathy for Jews were also palpable in English texts. Many writers could empathize with the biblical Jews who, as they believed, had been led away from

⁵ William Prynne (1600-1669) was a Puritan by religion (although he did not side with all causes purporting to be Puritan) and a lawyer by profession. He also was a politician and prolific pamphlet writer.

belief in Christ by their own leaders. Indeed, England's own sectarian struggles illustrated how the same situation had arisen among Christians. During the early years of the Reformation, reformers accused the Roman Catholic Church of having led Europe's Christians astray by departing from scripture-based interpretations of doctrine and forms of worship. After the Elizabethan Settlement (1559-63) and well into the seventeenth century, various reformed and Protestant sects accused each other of doctrinal changes not in keeping with scriptural precept. In other words, English Christians of all sects could parallel their own experiences with that of the Jews who, according to Christian belief, had failed to recognize Christ as the prophesied messiah due to mistakes made by their own leaders, the Pharisees and Sadducees.

As well, some English writers agreed with the Apostle Paul that the immoral and repugnant behavior of Jews could be reversed if Jews could be converted to Christianity. Perhaps it is this possibility of Christian redemption that informs the repeated moments of potentially sympathetic characterizations of Jews—even murderous ones—on the early modern stage. Marlowe's Barabas embarks on his murderous rampage only after Christians have unfairly cheated him out of everything he owns. Shakespeare's Shylock seeks to end prejudice against Jews by appealing to Christian humanity in his famous speech which begins "Hath not a Jew eyes?" (3.i.58-59). In Mediterranean trade dramas, Christians can be presented as worse than Jews; in *Three Ladies of London* (1584), Robert Wilson's Jew Gerontus is willing to forego a bond if his debtor, Mercadore, will agree not to forsake his Christianity for Islam simply to avoid paying the Jew his debt. And in pro-readmission pamphlets dealing with the potential readmission into England of real life Jews, writers like D.L. and Joseph Copley exonerate Jews of

crimes allegedly committed in medieval England, by claiming these crimes had been fabricated by Catholic propagandists (D.L. 2; Copley 2).

Scholarly and Critical Trends about Judaism in the Early Modern Period

One way scholars have attempted to understand English writers and their ambivalent textual treatment of Jews has been to analyze representations of Jews through the lens of the period's racial tensions. This approach has been challenging since it requires scholars to account for the presence of racial anxiety in the absence of its target. Unsurprisingly then, these scholars focus on texts where the lives of practicing Jews and Christians (English and otherwise) come together: that is, primarily in the fictional world of plays. James Shapiro, Ania Loomba,⁶ and Daniel J. Vitkus⁷ have examined plays such as *The Jew of Malta*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and various Mediterranean dramas featuring Jews and Turks. Through their analyses they suggest that early modern racial tensions between Englishmen and Jews increased when the two groups, along with the Turks, competed for mercantile opportunities in the Mediterranean. According to these scholars, medieval stereotypes about Jews merged with real life Mediterranean experiences and intensified racial tensions and anxieties between Englishmen and Jews (as well as Turks) during the early modern period. Each of these scholar's works depends on the assumption that real life Jews are the focus of English writers when representing Jews in their texts. In chapters 2 and 3 of my project, I offer alternative readings of Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, and Mediterranean dramas featuring Jews and Turks. My readings expand upon Shapiro, Loomba, and Vitkus's findings by

⁶ *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism*. New York: Oxford U P, 2002.

⁷ *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

examining the possibility that Jewish figures may not always signify Jews and Turkish figures may not always signify Turks.

Scholarly exploration of racial tensions between Englishmen and Jews can be useful because it offers insight into the ways in which English playwrights describe the culture shock that Mediterranean encounters generated. Moreover, multicultural analyses help to get at the causes of anxieties experienced by early modern Englishmen abroad, because they focus on how cultural, religious, and physical difference might have influenced the actions of England's pirates and merchants. Indeed it is true that in some medieval and early modern texts Jews have been physically racialized; for example, they have been assumed to have distinctive noses, a peculiar smell, red hair, and darker skin tones.⁸ Noting some of these representations, Shapiro observes that "[f]or Shakespeare's contemporaries, Jews were not identified by their religion alone but by national and racial affiliations as well" (173). Shapiro further notes that in various travel narratives, Jews in the Mediterranean and in areas with warmer climates had been described as having dark or black skin. The term "black," however, seems to have been an exaggeration, because Shapiro also claims:

The accumulated experience of over a hundred years of travel, trade, and conquest had convinced Europeans that some of the accepted stereotypes of Jewish racial otherness, including the belief that Jews were black, needed to be qualified. (171)

It is quite probable, then, that Jews living abroad seemed racially different to the Englishmen who encountered them there. However, the "couple of hundred" Jews living in England

⁸ For discussions of Jews and race, see James Shapiro's *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 170-173 and Ania Loomba's *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism*. For an interesting take on Jewish noses, see "The Jewish Nose in Early Modern Art and Music" by Don Harrán, *Renaissance Studies* 28.1 (2013): 50-70. For Jews and red hair, see Ruth Mellinkoff's "Judas' Red Hair and the Jews" in *the Journal of Jewish Art* 9 (1982). An abstract of Mellinkoff's article can be found on the web at *Jewish Heritage Online Magazine* < <http://www.jhom.com/topics/color/judas.htm>>.

(Shapiro 76) seem not to have been considered as racially different from other Europeans. As I demonstrate in chapter 4, one member of a clandestinely practicing community of London Jews was initially identified in 1655/6 as Spanish, primarily due to his name which was Antonio Roderigues Robles; he had to reveal his identity as a Jew in order to effect the return of his goods which had been confiscated. In other words, if Robles had “looked like” a Jew, one assumes he would have been unable to successfully hide his faith.

Even though foreign Jews may have been considered racially distinctive, my project takes into consideration that most English playgoers had never met a foreign Jew, whether at home or abroad. I argue that early modern Englishmen most often encountered Jews (e.g. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) in the bible where “Jewish racial otherness” is not emphasized. While stage Jews and Turks may well have been costumed in Mediterranean garb with darkened faces, I suggest that stage encounters with turbaned Turks and Jews wielding scimitars might only create a momentary anxiety akin to that created by a supernatural stage character such as a ghost. It may be, then, that racial anxiety created by stage encounters with Jews and Turks did not cause a similar concern on a social or political level for the majority of Englishmen.

Analyses of racial difference in Jewish representations have the further disadvantage of mainly focusing on negative characteristics of Jews. Scholars such as Richard H. Popkin⁹ and Jason P. Rosenblatt¹⁰ fill this gap by analyzing the period’s positive representations of Jews. This approach also focuses on practicing Jews who lived during the early modern period, because it

⁹ Popkin, Richard H., and Gordon M. Weiner, eds. *Jewish Christians and Christian Jews: From the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994.

¹⁰ *Renaissance England’s Chief Rabbi: John Selden*. Oxford: U P, 2006.

examines how Jewish scholars and potential converts were of use to reformed theologians. Popkin and Rosenblatt reveal how English theologians welcomed the aid of Jewish scholarship when translating Hebrew texts. Throughout the Reformation, English bible translators and exegetes turned to Jewish rabbis and scholars because they could provide the most accurate translations of Hebrew scriptures. Jewish scholars also offered invaluable assistance in navigating important Hebrew exegetical works such as the Talmud and Midrash.

The positive approach to Jewish representation also points out the beliefs of millenarian Christians in the seventeenth century in order to suggest that some English writers were philo-Semitic. Millenarian ministers were eager to allow Jews access to English churches due to a prediction made by the Apostle Paul who said that when the “fulnes of the Gentiles be come in” “all Israel shalbe saued” (Romans 11.25-26). For this reason, millenarians were interested in admitting Jews to England in order to convert them. Through their work on reformed theologians and millenarian ministers, scholars such as Popkin and Rosenblatt have claimed that there was a strong philo-Semitic attitude among early modern Englishmen. The philo-Semitic approach is useful to my research because it demonstrates that real life Jews were used by Christians to advance Christian goals such as accurate interpretation of Hebrew texts. Similarly, my project demonstrates that English writers used fictional and real life Jewish figures as rhetorical devices to advance Christian agendas, analyze and explore Christian questions, and assist in sectarian disputes.

In addition to focusing on either positive or negative depictions of Jews, scholars do acknowledge the ambivalent nature of Jewish representation in early modern English texts and

have developed theories regarding it. Peter Berek,¹¹ Daniel J. Vitkus, and James Shapiro feel that English ambivalence towards Jews stems from the instability of Jewish identity during the early modern period. Jews had lost their national identity in 70 CE due to the Roman defeat of Jerusalem; as a result, they had been forced to reside in Muslim, Catholic, and some Protestant regions and had learned to survive by shifting as seamlessly as possible between complex sets of cultural mores.

Some scholars who adopt this idea about the fluidity of Jewish identity also associate it with the corresponding increase in social fluidity experienced by early modern Englishmen. In 1998, Peter Berek posited that due to the “new entrepreneurship and social mobility” of the early modern period, “Jews claiming to be converted to Christianity, [were] plausible representations of the idea that identity [was] not stable” (130). Similarly, James Shapiro claims that Jewish converts were seen as “consummate actors for whom Jewishness, no less than Christianity, was a role to be assumed or shed, sometimes with a change of costume, if the situation demanded it” (20). Daniel J. Vitkus applies Jewish fluidity to the stage, arguing that because “Barabas the Jew” is a “slippery, self-fashioning devil” he is nicely “adapted to the conditions of the early modern marketplace” (186). For these scholars, the idea that Jewish people embodied changeability explains “the Jew’s” depiction in plays and other texts as “both a stranger *and* familiar; an object of esteem *and* odium; a progressive universalist *and* a racial particularist” (Cheyette 268).¹² Scholarship that focuses on English Christian ambivalence toward and about the Jews seems plausible when one considers that human reaction to those

¹¹ “The Jew As Renaissance Man.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.1 (1998): 128-162.

¹² Although Bryan Cheyette’s book *Constructions of ‘the Jew’ in English Literature and Society* (Cambridge: U P, 1993) analyzes post-1745 English representations of Jews, his description here can apply to early modern depictions of Jews as well.

who are foreign or different is not likely to be straightforward or one-sided. In other words, understanding ambivalence as an integral part of Jewish representation lessens the need to label early modern English representations of Jews as either anti-Semitic or philo-Semitic. In reminding us that people's opinions are multifaceted rather than one-dimensional, ambivalent readings of Jewish representations invite us to explore human complexity rather than to label it.

All of these approaches undoubtedly represent various facets of early modern English thought about Jews. Yet none of these approaches fully squares the quantity of textual Jewish presence with the corresponding lack of Jewish physical presence. My work proposes another approach. First, it asks whether there could be a connection between Jews and a central problem (or problems) being faced by early modern England. One obvious answer to this question is the religious upheaval England experienced as a result of the Reformation and its fallout. Throughout the Reformation, each form of mandated English religion was hotly contested, causing English Christians to splinter into sect after sect after sect. Since Judaism is the root religion from which every form of Christianity stems, it seems to me that English writers were examining questions about Jews because, in doing so, they were able to make queries that paralleled and / or dovetailed into questions being asked about the chaotic state of English Christianity. In other words, a Jew might represent not Judaism, but Christianity, and the stereotype of the Jew's changeability might allow for an honest consideration of the (in)stability of Christian faith. A central focus of my research, then, considers whether texts containing Jewish representations are in fact linked to reformed / Protestant doctrines such as

election and justification by faith versus law; in other words, doctrines that were strongly disputed among Christians in Reformation England.

It must be noted, however, that this project does not provide a full Christian perspective on Jewish representations. I focus mainly on the points of view of Reformation theologians and reformed laypeople of various sects because reformed Christians were the governing force in England. In researching my project, however, I have found that there is little scholarship regarding the views and attitudes of the Roman Catholic Church towards Jews. I hope to explore this idea further at a future time.

Methods

To understand the religious links that might enable this representational slippage between Christians and Jews, I turned to a book in the bible that was very frequently referenced in early modern English writing: Paul's Letter to the Romans. R. Ward Holder explains how Romans was a key text in shaping Reformation doctrine:

The sixteenth century revolves around the epistle to the Romans. ...The history of the Reformation is incomprehensible without Luther's discovery of righteousness as gift, which he claimed to have found in Romans 1.17. The text of the letter was the central battlefield for many of the crucial polemics between Catholic and Protestant theologians. The freedom of will, the nature of justification, and the issues of election drove theologians, pastors and lay Christians time and again to Paul's letter. (1)

Of particular interest to reformed Christians were the doctrines of election and justification by faith versus law. Both of these doctrines were key to understanding how Gentile believers in Christ could partake in God's grace, and both had originated with covenants made to the Hebrew patriarchs Abraham and Isaac in the Hebrew scriptures. In their many attempts at

defining these doctrines to ministers and lay people, Reformation theologians often came into contact with Paul's discussion of the link between Jews and Gentile Christians.

In Romans, Paul stresses how Jews had been the first people to receive the promises of God. Paul relates how in Genesis 35, God had given Jews "the adoption, and the glorie, and the Couenantes, and the giuing of the Law, and the seruice of God, and the promises" (Romans 9.4-5). Paul further reminds readers that Jews had the honor of being genealogically linked to Christ. However, he also shows that Jews had "stombled" away from those promises by becoming enmeshed in following God's law rather than relying on inward faith to fuel their righteousness (Romans 2.28). This stumbling, Paul asserts, was a chief cause in preventing Jews from believing in Christ as the messiah prophesied about in Hebrew scripture; as a result of this unbelief, these Jews had been cut off from the promises God had made to them in Genesis (Romans 11.17-18). Although Paul admits that this circumstance seems to privilege Gentile believers who have now been "grafte in for them, and made partaker" (Rom. 11.17) in the covenants previously only offered to Jews, Paul warns that Gentiles, through unbelief, are just as capable of being cut off from God's promises as had been the Jews. In this way, unbelieving Jews and their experiences become an example to all Christians of what could happen to them should they follow the same path as the unbelieving Jews. In other words, Jewish experience becomes a template for Christian behavior.

In early modern England, the positive and negative aspects of Jews that Paul outlined in Romans provided much ammunition for Christians of all sects when dealing with their opponents. In attempting to assert their doctrinal authority, many sects claimed to be exhibiting the admirable behavior of righteous Jews, such as the patriarchs of the Hebrew

scriptures, Jesus, and Paul, while simultaneously accusing their opponents of being like the Pharisaical Jews who, by clinging to law and rejecting Christ, had “stumbled.” Secular writers also made use of this rhetorical approach. Stage plays and pamphlets mixed biblical allusions to Jews with medieval Jewish stereotypes (such as poison, usury, and avarice) to create villains who warned English audiences about how easily Christians could repeat the mistakes of Jews. Even popular rhetoric imagined England as a new Jerusalem, a positive claim that nevertheless involved anxiety about the fall of the first Jerusalem in 70 CE. I argue that in making these connections between Jews and Gentiles, early modern English texts had a common goal: to warn Christian Englishmen that through their bad behavior England was courting the same divine punishment as God had wrought on the Jews. This punishment, early modern Englishmen believed, would imitate what had happened to the Jews in 70 CE: invasion by a foreign nation, massacre, and exile.

Key Terms

Throughout this project it has been difficult to find consistent ways to distinguish between the types of Jews represented in early modern texts as well as the types of Christians, biblical and English, who were interested in them. Since this project refers often to biblical Jews, I will begin with them. Generally speaking, biblical Jews fall into two categories in early modern Christian thought: those Jews who are considered paragons of faith and righteousness (e.g. the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and those Jews who, like the Pharisees and Judas, blindly follow the law and end up taking responsibility for Christ’s death (see Matthew 27.25). For clarity’s sake, I generally refer to the former as patriarchal Jews, and in the gospels, as believing Jews; the latter I refer to as Pharisaical Jews or unbelieving Jews. Non-biblical Jews

also fall into two categories within this project: fictional Jews, as appear in plays and prose, and living Jews. Fictional Jews appearing in plays I often refer to as stage Jews. Living Jews, however, can fall into several categories: practicing Jews are those who practice Judaism, mostly live outside of England, and are sometimes referred to in this project as foreign Jews; Jewish converts practice Christianity and may live in England; hypothetical practicing Jews are those described as potential émigrés in pamphlets debating the efficacy of readmitting Jews to England; and medieval Jews are those who appear in England's history books.

Christians discussed in this project have been far more difficult to categorize. In the bible, the term Christian was not yet in use. Thus, when discussing Paul's Letter to the Romans, I sometimes use believing Jews to refer to Jews, such as Paul, who followed Christ. Non-Jewish believers in Christ are termed Gentiles (even though in Paul's Letter to the Romans he sometimes refers to them as Greeks). Categorizing English Christians is yet more difficult. As is well known, from the 1520s to the 1650s, English Christians splintered into many sects. In chapter 1, which deals with the early Reformation (roughly speaking, the 1520s-1558), I use the terms reformers, reformed Christians, and Reformation theologians as a general way to denote those who opposed the Roman Catholic Church; since chapters 2-4 mainly discuss works written decades after the Elizabethan Settlement, I use the term Protestant or English Protestants to indicate non-Roman Catholics. For the sake of clarity, throughout the project I use the term Roman Catholic Church to denote the church based in Rome with the Pope at its head. Terms like Calvinist and Lutheran are used to denote specific schools of thought within reformed Christianity. The terms Puritan, Seventh Day Baptist, Evangelical, Independent, Presbyterian, and so on are used when referring to specific sects. The term millenarian is used

when referring to those English Christians who believe conversion of the Jews will assist in bringing about Christ's second coming.

When discussing religious matters, I use the word doctrinal to mean scripture based concepts followed by various sects. For example, the reformed concepts called election and justification by faith rather than law (also known as faith versus works) are doctrines derived from scriptural passages in Genesis and Paul's Letter to the Romans. It is also important to note that what has been commonly referred to as faith versus works in many Christian texts, is indeed a more complex idea than the common phrase indicates. In early modern texts I have found the word "works" to describe actions taken in blind obedience to Mosaic law as well as rituals that are mandated by Roman Catholic Church law, such as transubstantiation. I therefore often refer to this doctrine as faith over law or faith versus law. The term "faith" also has an alternative connotation. It can mean following the "spirit" of the law rather than its "letter." In *Merchant of Venice* when Shylock insists upon collecting his bond according to its letter, meaning literally to take a pound of flesh from Antonio, he is urged by the play's Christians to accept Antonio's money instead, which is in keeping with the spirit of the law.

Another key doctrine for reformed Christians is the term election. Election refers to God's mysterious selection of his followers. In Genesis, the story of Jacob and Esau teaches that being elect is not inherited; of the twins born to Isaac, only Jacob is selected by God. Throughout the project I use the term "elect" in its general sense to mean those God has selected as his people; I use its antonym "reprobate" to mean those whom God has rejected.

Chapter Breakdown

This dissertation, then, focuses on restoring the reformist / Protestant religious context of Jewish representations to early modern English texts. In doing so, the project opens up the possibility that Protestant English writers were not writing about Jews in order to disparage them (they might not even have been thinking about Jews at all), as much as they were intent on using Jewish characters as a device to expose Christian error. Without dismissing the idea that Jewish figures and representations are in part based on actual Jews, my project nevertheless demonstrates that there is a significant way in which Jews and Jewishness metonymically represent erring English Christians and Christian heresy of all types.

Chapter 1 lays the foundation for this metonymic relationship by demonstrating how significant Reformation doctrines were disseminated to the English laity through translations of Romans commentaries and sermons by Reformation theologians Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Peter Vermigli. I also discuss how Jewish characters in the anonymously written *Jacob and Esau* (1568), Thomas Garter's *Susanna* (1578), and William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* act out these key Reformation doctrines on the stage. Each of the texts reviewed in this chapter exemplifies how, for better or worse, Jewish behavior parallels Christian behavior.

In chapter 2, I detail how fictional Jewish characters work to expose and raise awareness of the ways in which Christians can err and make other Christians vulnerable to divine punishment. Works discussed in this chapter include Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (1590), Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* (1596), along with less-canonical plays such as Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (1584), Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (1612), and a prose piece, Francis Bacon's *The New Atlantis* (1627). Each of these works demonstrates

England's growing awareness of the subtle ways mercantilism and greed can cause Christians to perceive themselves as righteous when, as the Jewish characters expose, they are indeed dangerously "playing the Jew."

Similarly, chapter 3 demonstrates that Jewish figures in plays continued to metonymically warn Christians of the consequences of "playing the Jew" even when these figures are depicted as being in league with Turks against Christians. Although the works reviewed in this chapter¹³ are certainly racially charged, they nevertheless reveal that due to Reformation doctrine, English Christians harbored distinct and separate anxieties concerning Muslims and Jews. English Christians saw Ottoman Muslims as a threat, and feared they would destroy their nation for its unchristian behavior. I show that wrong behavior in stage Jews, however, was meant to represent less a direct threat to individual Christians than a demonstration and warning of what might become of English Protestants should they, like Jews, turn away from scriptural teachings. Chapters 2 and 3, then, show that in addition to commenting on the racial nature of Jews through stereotype and bias, stage Jews exposed how errors committed by Christian Englishmen could lead to divine punishment.

Chapter 4 expands on the idea that instead of disparaging Jews as individuals, Jewish representations in early modern texts criticize the state of English Christianity. Some playwrights merged Christian into Jew in order to suggest how English Christians could fully transform into the kind of villain capable of bringing divine punishment to England. Thus, even in plays with no named Jewish characters, Jewish stereotype could still be used to make a point about villain characters and to serve as a foil to correct modes of Christianity. Playwrights like

¹³ Robert Greene's *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks* (1594), John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins's *The Travailes of the Three English Brothers* (1607), and Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (1612), among others.

John Marston (*lacke Drums Entertainment*, 1600), William Shakespeare (*Othello*, 1603), and Thomas Heywood (*A woman kilde with kindnesse*, 1607) create sinister Christian villains with stereotyped Jewish traits who are not otherwise identified as Jews. Further, this chapter demonstrates that during the Civil Wars and Interregnum, political pamphleteers used Jewish stereotypes to vilify their opponents and to criticize the Commonwealth's religious chaos. This chapter more than any other deals with the idea that English writers may have been expressing anti-Semitism in their derogatory descriptions of Jews. However, even though playwrights and pamphleteers seem to resort to anti-Semitic rhetoric by reviving medieval Jewish stereotypes, I argue that they did so either to criticize individual English Christians or to disparage the Commonwealth's efforts to stabilize English religion during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Conclusions

My project, then, encourages scholars to add an additional mode of inquiry to the existing approach of examining constructions of anti-Semitism and race when discussing early modern Jewish representations. First, I question whether the term "anti-Semitism" even fully applies to pejorative Jewish rhetoric when it targets Christians rather than Jews. When English writers use negative Jewish terminology to expose how Christians are capable of acting like Jews, then Jewish error ceases to be solely Jewish. The Turkish judge in Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* suggests this very construction when he notes that "lewes seeke to excell in Christianitie, and the Christians in lewishness" (17.53-54). Indeed, if Jewish error can be committed by everyone, Christian and Jew alike, then error becomes, quite simply, error. The Apostle Paul arrived at the same conclusion after showing the ways in which Jews and Gentiles

are connected. At Romans 10.12, Paul writes, “there is no difference between the Jew and the Grecian: for he that is Lord over all, is rich unto all that call on him.”

My project also reveals that the idea of religion-as-race loses its impact when doctrinal similarities between Jew and Christian are exposed. Our current understanding of racial tension involves an unreasoned intolerance and/or fear of physical or cultural difference. As far as early modern Englishmen were concerned, however, Jews and Christians shared a common denominator, the patriarchs of the Hebrew scriptures who were (and are) revered by Christian and Jew alike. Nevertheless there are doctrinal differences between Christians and Jews. Jews, for example, are genealogically connected not only to the biblical patriarchs and the covenants God made with them, but also to Christ himself. This direct connection between the patriarchs, Christ, and the Jews certainly did cause tension between Jews and Christians, because it suggests that non-Jews cannot partake in covenants God made with Jews. However, the advent of Christ was supposed to have resolved that particular tension. Still, the success of Christianity depended in some ways on its Jewish roots. As Paul explains in Romans, to partake in covenants God had initially formed with Jews, Christians must graft themselves onto the Jews through belief in Christ. The necessity of being so close to Jews as to be grafted onto them significantly complicates the idea that early modern Christians saw themselves as racially different from Jews.

Understanding doctrinal connections between Jews and Christians helps explain the ambivalent treatment of Jewish representations in early modern English writings. At the end of his book *Shakespeare and the Jews*, James Shapiro also acknowledges the value behind a religious reading of Jewish representation. After warning his readers that “issues of criminality,

conversion, race, alien status, and national identity” are not the “only ways in which Jewish questions informed early modern English attitudes and policies,” Shapiro writes:

Race, nation, and gender not only need to be read in conjunction with religion but also read through it if we are to make sense of the categories of thought that the early modern world has bestowed upon us. (226)

This project seeks to be one of those readings: that is, it seeks to understand various aspects of Jewish representation within a doctrinal context. In doing so, my project takes early modern representations of and references to Jews outside the standard rubrics of race and anti-Semitism and instead explores the ways in which Jews can be shown metonymically to represent crucial issues in Christianity and thereby help shape and improve reformed English Christianity.

Today, prominent Christian theologians still recognize the significant doctrinal connections between Jews and Christians in Paul’s Letter to the Romans. In a letter to Italy’s *La Repubblica* published in the September 11, 2013 online edition, Pope Francis writes:

[W]hat to say to our Jewish brothers about the promise God made to them: Has this been forgotten? And this--believe me--is a question that radically involves us as Christians because... we have discovered that the Jewish people are still, for us, the holy root from which Jesus originated. ... What I can say, with the Apostle Paul, is that God has never stopped believing in the alliance made with Israel and that, through the terrible trials of these past centuries, the Jews have kept their faith in God. And for this, we will never be grateful enough to them, as the Church, but also as humanity at large. Persevering in their faith in God and in the alliance, they remind everyone, even us as Christians that we are always awaiting, the return of the Lord [.]

Much as had early modern English reformers some 400 years earlier, Pope Francis recognizes how Jews and Jewish behavior can be a guide and example to Christians and Christianity. For early modern English writers, because Paul had snugly situated Jews as inseparable components of Christianity, Christians were doctrinally bound to view the Jew as an example of

righteousness as well as a cautionary tale of what might become of Christians should their belief in Christ fail.

**CHAPTER 1: WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH THE JEW? EXTRACTING THE JEWISH ROOT WITHOUT
FELLING THE GENTILE TREE**

SHYLOCK TO SALERIO:

He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses,
mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends,
heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath
not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the
same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the
same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?
If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do
we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? (3.1.50-62)

SHYLOCK TO HIMSELF:

How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him! (1.3.39-49)

In *The Merchant of Venice*, the Jewish usurer Shylock, although grotesquely bent on excising a pound of flesh from Christian merchant Antonio, appears at times to be a reasonable spokesman against discrimination. In his most famous speech (printed above, top), we learn that he is subject to humiliation and Antonio's derision simply because he is a Jew. As Shakespeare, through Shylock, outlines here, marginalization makes the Jew vulnerable to hate crimes perpetrated by the dominant Christian culture of Venice. However, in his private reverie (printed above, bottom), we learn that Shylock subscribes to a similar prejudice as his adversary: he hates Antonio "for he is a Christian" and, from the perspective of a blatant loan shark like Shylock, a poor businessman. Are we to sympathize with Shylock that he is spat upon, kicked like "a cur," called a dog? Or should we fear and despise his vicious hatred of Christians

and revile his lack of charity and mercy? What should we do with this Jew? While this question certainly disturbs modern readers who cannot help but read Shylock through a scrim of holocaust images and politically correct policy, I argue that the question of what to do with the Jew was in fact a central conflict within Christian doctrine since Christianity's inception, and remained a point of extreme concern throughout the Middle Ages and well into the Reformation.

At the heart of the question of what to do with the Jew is the Apostle Paul (5-c. 67 CE): former slayer of Jewish "heretics" turned Christian; mysteriously and publicly elected to grace by God on the road to Damascus; missionary to Gentiles within his reach; and, despite believing in the Jews' relatively recent complicity in the crucifixion of Christ,¹⁴ a self-proclaimed Jew openly clinging to his Jewish identity. The Gentiles to whom Paul preached wondered how Paul could claim to be both Jew and a believer in Christ. More importantly, why would he want to claim to be both? In his Letter to the Romans, Paul seeks to clarify his situation as both Jew and Christian. He also seeks to define the relationship between the Jews and Gentile Greeks he addresses in his first chapter, in order to "reconcile both communities under Christ's new dispensation" (Klepper 172).¹⁵ In doing so, he defines the roles of Gentile and Jew in the Reformed Judaism (i.e. Christianity) he is preaching. Moreover, in defining Jew and Gentile, Paul finds himself obliged to spell out terms like election and justification by faith versus law. As this chapter shows, what emerges from Paul's efforts to outline the new, Christ-based faith becomes a doctrinally motivated mindset adopted by Reformation theologians and

¹⁴ Although the Romans arrested, tried, and ordered Christ's crucifixion, certain Jews assisted in the process (e.g. Judas, the high priest Caiaphas, etc.).

¹⁵ At Romans 1.16, Paul states, "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Grecian."

disseminated to the laity through biblical translations, commentaries, sermons, and stage plays. It is this mindset, based on doctrines pertaining to Jews, Gentiles, election, and justification by faith versus law as presented by Paul in Romans, that was the driving force which directed Christian treatment and representation of Jews throughout early modern English culture.

Paul's Letter to the Romans and the Reformation

According to R. Ward Holder, during the Reformation, “the most widely-regarded theologians... clearly saw that Romans was the key text in their own seeking out of Christian truth”; because it dealt with terms like “the nature of justification and the issues of election[,]” Romans became “the central battlefield for many of the crucial polemics between Catholic and Protestant theologians” (Holder 1). Moreover, Romans commentaries proliferated: Holder states that “[c]ounting both Protestants and adherents to Rome, over seventy commentaries on Romans were published in the sixteenth century” (1). Because it is a biblical text that seeks to make sectarian distinctions within one religion (Judaism), as well as settles differences between two groups vying for religious supremacy (Gentiles and Jews), Paul’s Letter to the Romans was the best scriptural guide for reformers who were trying to wrest a doctrinally sound Christian identity from the long-established Roman Catholic Church. In other words, because Reformation theologians were trying to establish a new, faith-based Christianity from what they saw as a corrupt, ritual-laden one, they found they could rely on Paul who, in his letter, was similarly laying the foundation for transforming a law-centered religion (Judaism) into a Christ-based theology (Christianity).

In Romans, Paul seeks to explain the doctrinal status of Gentiles and Jews due to the advent of Christ. Until Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection, Jews had been God’s only chosen

people. As Paul paraphrases, in Genesis 35 God had given Jews “the adoption, and the glorie, and the Couenantes, and the giuing of the Law, and the seruice of God, and the promises” (Romans 9.4-5). Gentiles had not been included in this initial covenant. However, Paul explained that, as had been prophesied in Isaiah 8,¹⁶ some Jews had “stombed,” that is, fallen away from God, and that “through their fall saluation commeth vnto the Gentiles” (Romans 11.11). As “the Apostle of the Gentiles” (Romans 11.13), Paul was busy urging non-Jews to join the covenant through belief in Jesus Christ. However, because Paul’s missionary work was controversial to both Jews and Gentiles, he had to address several concerns. Given that Jews were connected to the original covenants God made with Isaac and Moses, were unbelieving Jews still part of the original covenant? Given that Gentiles were not originally partakers in that covenant, how did belief in Christ connect them to it? Did Jews who believed in Christ have, as the original chosen people, preference with God? By engaging these questions, Paul outlines two doctrinal concepts that become key points in Reformation polemic: election by means of God’s mysterious grace, and justification by faith through an inward, rather than outward, adherence to law. Significantly, Paul also describes how Jews and Gentiles are interconnected.

In Romans, Paul explains how Jews and Gentiles must be justified by faith rather than obedience to laws. To illustrate this, Paul recounts Abraham’s obedience to the command of circumcision in order to demonstrate that God honors the faith Abraham showed rather than the act of circumcision itself. Asserting that inward acts of faith are more spiritually motivated

¹⁶ The 1560 *Geneva Bible* summary for Isaiah 8 reads: “The captiuitie of Israel & Iudah by the Assyrians. The infidelitie of the Iewes. The destruction of the Assyrians. Christ the stone of stombling to the wicked. The worde of God must be inquired at.”

than outward acts of obedience, Paul writes: “For he is not a lewe,¹⁷ which is one outwarde: nether is that circumcision, which is outwarde in the flesh: But he is a lewe which is one within, & the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God” (Rom. 2.28-29). As Paul shows, Jews needed to leave behind rigid adherence to the letter of the law in order to become faith-based believers; that is, Gentiles did not need to participate in outward circumcision if they were justified inwardly, by faith. After laying the foundation for Jews and Gentiles to share in the election covenant, Paul proclaims at Romans 10.12 that “there is no difference between the Jew and the Grecian: for he that is Lord over all, is rich unto all that call on him.” Here Paul shows that because God’s very word demonstrates that both Jew and Gentile are eligible for elect status, God does not favor one group more than the other.

Paul also visually links Jew to Gentile by means of a botanical analogy. In Romans 11, Gentiles who accept Christ are imagined as having been grafted onto Judaism as a root religion. Paul describes the Jews as belonging to “a right oliue tre” (v.24), “the first frutes” of which form from the “holie” root (i.e. the Jews) (v.16).¹⁸ In this way, Paul’s analogy makes clear that Gentiles could be grafted on to the original tree (of Judaism) and become partakers in God’s original covenant with the Jews. However, Paul also addresses the problem of Jews who reject Christ. As Paul observes, some of the original tree’s branches, analogically the Jews of God’s original covenant with Jacob/Israel (Gen. 35.11), had been cut off from the election covenant

¹⁷ When Paul here refers to the word Jew, he means Jews like himself who have come to believe in Christ’s gospel.

¹⁸ The olive tree analogy is Paul’s exegesis of Jeremiah 11. 16-17: “The Lord called thy name, A grene oliue tre, faire, and of goodlie frute: but with noise and great tumult he hathe set fyre vpon it, and the branches of it are broken. For the Lord of hostes that planted thee, hathe pronounced a plague against thee, (for wickednes of the house of Israel, and of the house of Iudah) which thei haue done against them selves to prouoke me to angre in offering incense vnto Baal” (*Geneva*, 1560).

due to unbelief in Christ. Nevertheless, Paul gives Gentiles two reasons why they must not revile Jews for this unbelief. First, Paul claims that Jews who initially reject Christ could (as had Paul himself on the Damascus road) “be graffed” back “in[to] their owne oliue tre” (v.24).¹⁹ Secondly, Paul offers protection (if somewhat meager) for those Jews who continue to reject Christ. He writes: “As concerning the Gospel, [Jews] are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election they are beloued for the fathers sakes” (v.28). In other words, Christians may hate Jews for their rejection of Christ, yet they must also love them for their connection to revered biblical patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.²⁰ It is this injunction to both love and revile Jews that saves Jews, at times, from the full brunt of Christian displeasure.²¹

Paul’s attempt in Romans to resolve issues between Jews and Gentiles ran parallel to conflicts between reformed theologians and the Roman Catholic Church. To reformed Christians, when Roman Catholics prioritized rituals and ceremonies over scriptural precept, they simulated the actions of the Pharisaical Jews, whose focus on Mosaic law had caused them to reject Jesus. However, to Roman Catholics, reformed Christians were inventing a new religion that was not grafted on to the Jewish root. For example, in the dedicatory letter to his

¹⁹ Paul bases these ideas on prophecies in Isaiah claiming a “remnant” of the Jews will be restored. See Isaiah 4:2-6; 25; 28:5,6.

²⁰ It is worthwhile noting that other groups, such as the descendants of Abraham’s first son Ishmael (by his concubine Hagar) from which Muslims were believed to derive, were, according to the Hebrew scriptures, outside of all covenants God had promised to Jews. Thus, as far as Reformation theologians were concerned, there was no biblical exhortation from Paul to love, say, the Turks (i.e. Muslims) as necessary potential converts to Christianity. As God’s original elect, therefore, Jews were the only non-Christians who warranted the stipulation Paul makes them at Romans 11.28. The ways in which early modern Reformed Christians viewed Jews as doctrinally different than Muslims (Turks), is discussed at length in Chapter 3 of this project.

²¹ In saying this, I am by no means denying or even softening the sad fact that Jews have been treated deplorably throughout history. However, as this project demonstrates, Jews in early modern England were at times treated with respect, in part due to Paul’s injunction at Romans 11.28.

A godlie and short discourse, reformed preacher Christopher Rosdell²² responds to the heresy-
implied charge of Roman Catholics, that reformed doctrines were creating a “new religion”:

It is an opinion... not so true, as commonly beleueed and holden of a great manie, that the doctrine, faith and religion which the Popish Romanists professe and maintain, is the olde and ancient religion, ordained of God, witnessed by the Prophets and Apostles, and practised of all godly from time to time: and that the doctrine or religion now professed in England, is a new doctrine, which had his beginning but hereby. (A2).

Rosdell vehemently disagrees with this belief. He maintains that because reformed Christianity is scripture-based and because in the scriptures Christians “are taught the true, immutable, and most ancient faith and religion of the Patriarches, Prophets, and holy Apostles,” any form of Christianity “which concordeth with them can not be newe” (A2v). As can be seen by Rosdell’s argument, proving that one had been “graffed” onto the Jews “holie” root “and made partaker of the root and the fatness of the Oliue tre” (Rom. 11.16-17), demonstrated that “the reformation... in England [was] not a bringing in of a newe Religion, but a reducing againe of the olde and auncient fayth” (Rosdell, title page).

Jews, then, were integral to Reformation polemic. In following Paul, Christian theologians could not fully erase their connections to Jews and Judaism; indeed, they often actively sought to preserve these connections because Hebrew scriptures, as well as Paul’s Letter to the Romans, unambiguously revealed how Christianity was a legitimate offshoot of the “elect” religion, Judaism. Moreover, this religious link between Christians and Jews was not

²² Other than his role as translator of Latin books and the title page of his translation of Calvin’s Romans commentary (1583), which styles him “preacher,” there is not much known about Christopher Rosdell. In addition to his translation of Calvin’s commentary, Rosdell also published four editions of his *Godlie and short discourse* text defending reformed doctrine as non-heretical. This text, first published in 1589 and the full title is: *A godlie and short discourse shewing not onely what time the inhabitants of this land first receyued the Christian faith: but also what maner of doctrine was planted in the same. Whereby may appeare, howe the reformation at this day in England is not a bringing in of a newe religion, but a reducing againe of the olde and auncient fayth*

merely a matter of theological interest; these links were also palpable in lay materials such as plays, pamphlets, and newsbooks. For instance, in the book *Blood Relations* (2009), Janet Adelman acknowledges the theological significance of Shylock in relation to the Christians in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Adelman's purpose in making this analysis is to suggest that Shylock's depiction reflects Christian "anxiety" resulting from Christians being "jealous" of Jews and of Jews' relationship to God as his chosen people. However, Adelman's thesis can be taken further. As I demonstrate throughout this project, English Christians were jealous not of Jews (since there were none ostensibly practicing Judaism in England), but of each other because there were several Christian sects (e.g. Puritanism) still struggling to achieve doctrinal national supremacy in England. For these English sects to achieve this supremacy, not only was it necessary to show theologically how Jews were separate from Christians, but also to show how specific aspects of Judaism, applied to Christianity by a given group, proved one's particular form of Christianity was the truest form.

Romans and Reformed Theologians Luther, Calvin, and Vermigli

Representations of Jews became common in early modern England largely due to the widespread diffusion of reformed doctrines which were based on Paul's Letter to the Romans. During the sixteenth century, as Reformation ideals struggled to take root, various theologians and playwrights worked to make newly envisioned reformed doctrines authoritative and accessible to the laity through the pulpit, the stage, and the book. The Letter to the Romans, containing, as John Calvin (1509-1564) famously put it, "the most secrete treasures of the Scripture" (JJr), was so important doctrinally to reformers it moved Martin Luther (1483-1546) to claim it was "mete that every christen man not only know it by roote and with oute the boke

but also exercise hym sylfe therein evermore continually as with the dayly bredde of the soule” (trans. by Tyndale, a2r). Reformed theologians make clear in the dedicatory epistles to their Romans commentaries that their intended audience is the laity. In the letter (dated 1558) before his Romans commentary (published in 1568), Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562) tells Anthony Cooke of his wish to “put abrode, and make common to all men those thinges which I had noted for my selfe alone or a few of my frendes” (A5r-v). Similarly, John Calvin’s dedicatory letter²³ to Swiss theologian Simon Gryne, expresses his concern to make clear those confusions in previous Romans commentaries that “greatly troubleth the simple reader” (n.p.). Thus, Romans commentaries were seen as important vehicles to disseminate and make manifest the authority of reformed doctrine.

To make their interpretations of Romans authoritative and consistent with one another, reformed theologians such as Calvin, Luther, and Vermigli were careful to situate their Romans commentaries within the writings of the church fathers as well as within the works of their contemporaries. There is some evidence in the dedicatory epistles of these commentaries that reformers were attempting to present a united front to the Roman Catholic Church. John Calvin, in particular, felt this to be an important strategy. Calvin was a French theologian whose doctrinal interpretations, later referred to as Calvinism, became one of the main influences on Reformation England. In 1540, Calvin wrote a letter to Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger (1504-1575) expressing the need for consistency, or as G. Sujiiin Pak puts it, to express his “concern for Protestant agreement”:

What... should more anxiously occupy us in our letters than to keep up brotherly friendship among us by all possible means.... It is therefore our duty to cherish

²³ First written in November 1539, but Englished by Christopher Rosdell in 1583.

true friendship for all preachers of the word and to keep the churches at peace with one another. As far as in me lies, I will always labor to do so. (qtd. in, and trans. by, Pak 130)

In the dedicatory epistle to Gryne (which precedes Calvin's Romans commentary), Calvin has a similar concern. Although Calvin admits that it is impossible for all theologians to come to agreement, he nevertheless expresses the wish "that there were a perpetuall consent amongst [them] in expounding the places of scripture," and warns against exegesis that is motivated "through lust of defaming others" or is "ticked with any ambition." Above all, Calvin believes, it is "an abominable boldnesse to use the Scripture at our pleasure, and to play with them, as with a tennis ball" (n.p.).

Moreover, in his letter to Gryne (1539), Calvin uses a standardizing trope to situate his Romans commentary within the conversation of exegetes ranging from the church fathers to those of his own day. Calvin writes:

I will speake nothing of the olde writers: [they] are of such authoritie that wee ought to contemne nothing..... to recite all those that liue at this day were to no purpose. Therefore I wil declare my mind touching those who haue bestowed speciall paines heerein: Philip Melancthon,... . After him cometh Bullinger.... Finally Bucer... (n.p.)

Calvin assures Gryne that it is not his desire to "take from [Melancthon, Bullinger, or Bucer] the least part of prayse. Let them haue that fauour and authoritie, which by the confession of al good men they haue deserved" (n.p.). In alluding to these past and contemporary Romans commentators, Calvin assumes some of their authority. He also assures Gryne (as well as other readers) that he has not radically departed from patristic writers (e.g. Augustine, Jerome) nor does he contradict the reformed doctrinal interpretations of his contemporaries. In other words, Calvin wants readers to see that his interpretation of reformed doctrines is grounded in

the foundation set by the church fathers while at the same time is consistent with that of his fellow reformers.

Calvin's style and tone here may be a standard way among reformed theologians to present their commentaries as in agreement with the patristic commentaries already accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. Peter Martyr Vermigli uses a similar construction in his dedicatory epistle to Sir Anthony Cooke, written in 1558 and published ten years later. Vermigli's letter uses much the same language as Calvin:

I did not at the first take in hand this charge to write an exposition upon this epistle, for I knew right well that the fathers both Greke and lattines haue with great labour and fruite exercised themselues herein. Neither was I ignorant that there are of the latter writers, which haue done the same. First Phillip Melancthon,... hath more then once explained this epistle. Afterward Martin Bucer,... Bullinger,..., and Calvine.... (a5r)

Like Calvin, Vermigli points out that even though it is "not... euery way... agreeable" to those of his colleagues, still he assures Cooke that he has not written his commentary with any "desire to gaynesay, or of a lust to reprove any man," and specifically emphasizes that he has "not broken the unity of the Church" through any of his divergences from Melancthon, Bucer, Bullinger or Calvin (a5v). Thus both Calvin and Vermigli seek to place their Romans commentaries in the conversation with patristic writers and contemporary exegetes but with the caveat that they are not negating, gainsaying, or disrespecting any other commentary.

In the early seventeenth century, there is evidence that sects stemming from the Reformation used the same standardizing trope as Calvin and Vermigli, by placing their Romans commentaries within the framework of prior, more famous texts. In the dedicatory letter to his Romans commentary entitled "The Authors Epistle, to the Christian and Courteous Reader" (1614), Church of England clergyman Thomas Wilson (1562/3-1622) writes:

All this while, I had not a peece of a purpose to publish [the commentary]... part[ly] because diuers learned Commentaries of Moderne Writers, both forreigne and domestically, and some of them in our Mother-tongue were already extant upon this Epistle [.] (A2r)

As did Calvin and Vermigli, Wilson does not name his famous predecessors, but calls them “Moderne Writers,” much as Calvin alludes to patristic theologians as “olde writers” and Vermigli refers to them as “Greke and lattines.” And although Wilson does not allude to or mention the Church Fathers, nevertheless Wilson’s word choice is undeniably similar to Calvin’s and Vermigli’s.

As Katrin Ettenhuber has observed about seventeenth-century English writers defending the reformed faith, situating reformed doctrinal interpretations within the exegetical works of the church fathers was both common and crucial:

Defenses of the English church in the early seventeenth century... demonstrate a special affinity with primitive Christianity. By highlighting moments of contextual analysis in the Fathers’ [Augustine’s, in particular] exegetical works and emulating their approach, Protestant polemicists were able to claim the hermeneutic high-ground in two ways: it allowed them to reassert their status as professed heirs to the early church and, at the same time, to reject specific doctrinal positions that were at the core of disputations with their opponents in the Roman Catholic Church. (215)

Alluding to theologians of more note than they were at the time, helped situate and authorize Calvin, Vermigli, and Wilson’s presentations of Paul’s Letter and enabled them to demonstrate solidarity with past and present reformers. This strategy was doubtless designed to breed confidence in readers, particularly in the laity, who would feel reassured by the reformed position that these challengers to the Roman Catholic Church were not being radical but carrying forward centuries’ old religious doctrine and tradition.

Jews Representing Christians

Paul's Letter to the Romans provided another strategy for reformed theologians to employ against their opponents. In their Romans commentaries, reformers used the distinctions that Paul had made between believing and unbelieving Jews to authorize their doctrines over those of the Roman Catholic Church. In outlining Christ-based doctrine for his Gentile audience, Paul focused much of his Letter to the Romans on why some Jews had failed to believe in Christ, while others had embraced salvation. For Paul, unbelieving Jews were like the Pharisees because they rejected Christ and rigidly adhered to the law. Believing Jews, however, remained connected to their righteous ancestors in the Hebrew scriptures (e.g. Abraham, Isaac, and David) through their faith in Christ. Hence, for reformed theologians, patriarchal Jewish behavior came to represent reformed Christian doctrine, while Pharisaical Jewish behavior denoted Roman Catholic practices. For instance, in his Romans commentary (published in English in 1568), Reformation theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli demonstrates how Paul's inward / outward valuation of faith over law indicted Roman Catholic rituals and ceremonies. While discussing Romans 3, where Paul considers to what extent God's "preferment of the Jewe" (v.1) is binding, Vermigli compares the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to Jews who read the law literally and thus "neglected" to "comprehend" in it "the promiss of Christ, and of saluation" (L.iv.v). Vermigli tells how Jews,

endeuored themselues to the setting forth and extolling of circumcision, and outward rites. Euen as do our men also now in our dayes: who, when the sacramentes are set before them, and especially the supper of the Lord, haue a regard only unto the simbols and signes.... (L4v)

Here Vermigli aligns reformers with Abraham, who, as Paul had taught, had inward faith before observing the outward law of circumcision (which was only a sign of his faith, not in itself

sufficient). In other words, Vermigli appropriates Paul's concept of inward and outward Jew so that the Roman Catholic Church becomes the community of outward Jews who needlessly continued to embrace "signes and simbols," such as the law of circumcision, over inward Jews whose faith is in the gospel.

A similar typology²⁴ which equated Roman Catholic lawmakers to law bound Jews is also found in student William Watkinson's 1594 translation of Martin Luther's published lectures on Romans. Watkinson takes advantage of the ways in which Paul's discussion of Jews in Romans²⁵ can be applied to lawmakers and those who "fayn themselues holy":

In the second Chap. he doth more at large shew that euen those little holy ones, and those glorious hypocrites (as namely the Iewes then, and now in these dayes all the Justiciaryes which go about by their owne strength and power to fulfill the lawe) are also sinners, and who doing outwardly the good workes of the lawe: notwithstanding inwardly nourishing that greife of their hart, doo hate the lawe. (B6)

The "Justiciaryes" Watkinson mentions here are later equated to Roman Catholics when in his commentary to Romans 12, Watkinson refers to "the workes of the Justiciaryes" and the margin note next to this phrase states: "Papists works what they are" (C8). Interestingly, this typology does not appear in Tyndale's translation of Luther,²⁶ and so may have been added by

²⁴ The term "typology" is used here and elsewhere to refer to the ways in which theologians use biblical actions and events to form connections with later actions and events, whether intra-biblical or contemporary to their own era.

²⁵ This chapter, according to the 1560 *Geneva Bible* preface to Romans 2, in part focuses on "[t]he Gentiles by their conscience, The Iewes by the Law written."

²⁶ There is no overtly anti-Catholic typology in Tyndale's translation and this is perhaps unsurprising on two counts. First, Luther himself may have been still a member of the Roman church. Luther did not publish a commentary on Romans per se. His lectures on Romans were written in 1515 or 1516 and published "as his commentary" (Holder 2). It is therefore impossible to say with "bullet-proof confidence that [his sermons] occurred before his conversion" in 1516 (Holder 2). But even more interestingly, this 1526 printing may have been a result of the Diet of Speyer, which reached the "consensus that the edict of Worms could not be executed in the Empire" (Lindberg 219). The edict of Worms had outlawed Luther and his writings, making even possession and publishing of his works punishable by death. The decision reached by the Diet of Speyer was "that agreement [on dealing with "heretics" like Luther] could not be reached, and that in reality each territory and city was a free

Watkinson. Here, Watkinson's translation or loose interpretation of Luther reasserts that privileging works over faith is a part of the Roman Catholic Church's identity, similar to the way Paul, in Romans 2, was making distinctions between pre-Christian Judaism and the new Judaism, the gospel, which Paul was expounding. Thus Watkinson types the Roman Catholic Church ("papists") as Pharisees and Sadducees who were the "Justiciaryes" of Paul's time. By implication, then, Watkinson associates supporters of the Reformation with Paul's missionary movement. In using Romans to authorize the doctrines of the reformed church, Vermigli and Luther (via Watkinson) find that Jews, patriarchal and Pharisaical, are potent metonymic figures for Reformation Christians and Roman Catholics respectively.

Making clear who was and was not grafted on to the Jew became important for Reformed Christianity, because as a new and radical movement, they were ever in danger of being seen as heretical. As Edwin W. Tait notes, "The future [of the Reform Movement] lay with those, like Calvin, who were willing to construct a sharply defined identity against other Christians" (57). In constructing this identity, and in keeping with their vow to base doctrine solely on scripture, Reformers defined themselves against the Roman Catholic Church by following the distinctions Paul made between inward Jews, outward Jews, and Gentiles as found in his Letter to the Romans. To better distinguish between inward and outward Jew, Reformers developed a rubric based on Paul's Letter to the Romans as well as its exegetical works, as is expressed in the table below:

agent" (Lindberg 219), meaning free to handle Luther's heresy as it would. Until the Diet reconvened in 1529, Luther and those possessing or printing his works were no longer officially under threat. Tyndale's translation does not mention Luther or the printer on the cover, and the name "William Tyndale" has been inked in, further suggesting the printing may have been done cautiously. The ESTC, however, assumes it is Luther's and it is an authentic translation by Tyndale. It is also interesting to note that the only work by Luther listed on the ESTC for 1526, is Tyndale's translation of Romans.

Who is or becomes associated with unrepentant Jews?	Who becomes associated with the elect (election covenant)?	Relevant Scripture & Commentary
Follows letter of law: Jews, but also the traditional Church	Follows spirit of law: Christians, particularly Protestants / Reformers	Romans 2.29: "...in the spirit, not in the letter [of the Law]...";
Predestined as reprobate—part of covenant but did not receive God’s free grace (not based on works) e.g. Esau and Muslims (as will be discussed in Chapter 3). Also, Christians and Jews could be considered suspect of reprobation	Predestined as elect—part of covenant and received God’s free grace (not based on works) (e.g. Jacob); offered to Gentiles after Christ due to so great a number of Jews rejecting Christ as prophesied in Isaiah. Jews who truly convert to Christianity were included here, as well as Christians, although being elect for both groups was not something that could be conclusively determined.	Romans 3.24: “And are iustified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Romans 3.28: “Therefore we conclude that a man is iustified by faith without the workes of the Law.”
Outward Jews, including believing Jews & Gentiles who subscribe to letter of law over its spirit)	Israelites and inward Jews later called Christians	Romans 2: 28-29: “For he is not a lewe, which is one outwarde: nether is that circumcision, which is outwarde in the flesh: But he is a lewe which is one within, & the circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.”
Cut off from covenant or, as Paul puts it, from the original root.	Already part of covenant, such as faith-driven, pre-Christian Israelites, (e.g. Abraham), or grafted onto (Gentiles) or grafted back into (Jewish converts) the original root, in other words, the covenant.	Romans 4.9: “For we say, that faith was imputed vnto Abraham for righteousness.” Romans 11.20: “Wel: through vnbelefe [the holie braunches] are broken of.” Romans 11.17: “thou being a wilde oliue tre, wast grafte in for them, and made partaker of the roote, and fatnesse of the oliue tre.]” Romans 11.23: “And thei also, if thei abide not stil in vnbelefe, shalbe grafed in: for God is able to graffe them in againe.”
“Papists” & assorted heretics	Reformers, as well as converts to Reform, such as “Papists,” heretics, and Jews	Interpretations of Romans by Luther, Calvin, et al.

This matter of inward and outward Jew, then, had little to do with ethnicity or genealogical descent of Jews contemporary or biblical. As Tait notes, “Paul’s overarching purpose [in Romans] is to describe how human beings are saved, rather than simply address questions of

ethnic particularism and the boundaries of the chosen people” (65). Thus the question of who is the Jew was not a matter of identifying a noxious foreigner amongst English Christians. As was suggested in Paul’s Letter to the Romans, the term inward and outward Jew referred to any group whose faith or lack thereof indicated whether they were eligible to partake in the election covenant which led to salvation. For Reformation theologians, inward and outward Jew referred to the faith-based Reformers and the ritual-laden Roman Catholic Church respectively.

Mainly by following Paul’s comments on Genesis in Romans, but also through their own exegesis of Genesis where the election covenant had its inception, Reformation theologians had arrived at a complex set of conclusions regarding Israelites, Jews, Gentiles and the election covenant which favored their interpretation of Christianity over that of the Roman Catholic Church. They wanted to demonstrate that, because the Israelite Jews, beginning with Abraham, had obeyed God and left behind pagan polytheism to follow the one God, they became favored of God, that is, his “chosen people.” They noted that God had distinguished Israelites from the pagan community (later known to Jews as Gentiles) by ordering Abraham and his descendants physically to mark themselves by means of circumcision. This initial election covenant was extended to Isaac, the son of Abraham’s legitimate wife Sarah, but not to his illegitimate son with Hagar, Ishmael. Later in Genesis, Isaac’s wife Rebecca gave birth to the twins Jacob and Esau, and though Esau was the firstborn, Jacob’s line continued the Israelite line of descent and promises were subsequently made to Jacob, who was renamed Israel, and added to the covenant.

Using this evidence, Reformers suggested that the Israelite saga progressed throughout the Hebrew scriptures and that the covenant with the Israelites was expanded in two important

ways. First, it is the Israelites to whom God personally gave his laws, straight from heaven as it were, and commanded them to follow those laws. Second, and critically for Christians eager to graft onto those laws and elections, though the Hebrew prophets constantly predicted the Israelites would fall away and later return to the covenant, they also prophesied that the messiah would descend from King David of Israel, who had been born into the tribe of Judah, the tribe from which the term “Jew” derives. The reformers wanted to demonstrate that when Jesus appeared as the seeming fulfillment of this prophecy, his truest Jewish disciples believed he was the promised Christ and began preaching the same.

However, because most Jews rejected Jesus as the promised messiah, “God[,] beeing angrie with the Jewes for their infidelitie, conuerteth his fauour vnto the Gentiles” (Calvin, *Thirteene Sermons*, 330.r), and thus a shift in God’s favor began, toward Christians, the new “internal Jews.” Moreover, reformers confirmed that Jesus’ death put an end to many outward rites in the Hebrew scriptures such as circumcision. Indeed, circumcision was seen to have been replaced by faith in Christ who could enter the body through the Holy Spirit, the inward mark of what Augustine called “the New Law” and Paul considered reformed Judaism. This shift from external, law based practices, to internal, faith based practices was key to the reformed argument, grounded in Paul, that their “new” Christianity was the true graft onto the root of Judaism. The Roman Catholic Church, however, was typologically represented as outdated and corrupt as had been the Pharisaical Jews of Paul’s era.

For many reformers, then, the question of their identity was closely connected to the identity of inward and outward Jew as had been defined by Paul in Romans. Swiss reformer Martin Bucer affirms this deduction. According to Tait, in his 1536 Romans commentary Bucer

“identifies the issue between Paul and his opponents as one of identity. Who are in fact God’s people? Those who practice the ceremonial laws and thus partake in God’s promises, or those who perceive the spiritual meaning behind the signs of the covenant, receiving in faith the saving reality that those signs represent?”(65). For Bucer and other reformers, Christians who, like Pharisaical Jews, were clinging to ritualistic laws that Christ had negated, were not “God’s people.” Many Roman Catholic rites and ceremonies were considered to be works designed to impress God, when God was in fact impressed by faith. As Calvin tells us in his commentary, Paul makes this clear at Romans 9.32 where he demonstrates that “fayth and the merites of woorkes are compared together, as things utterly contrary” (Fol. 133). Significantly, Calvin next does as Paul had done before him; he demonstrates how Christians can commit the same wrongs as Jews since they stem from the same root. Calvin uses the Jewish example as a warning. He writes, “For this example of the Jewes ought iustly to terrifie all those, who seeke to obtayne the kingdome of God by woorkes” (Fol. 133). For reformed Christians, Jews became the example of what was desirable and undesirable in Christianity. It was desirable for Christians to present themselves as being grafted onto the Jew which was the “holie” root of all things Christian. However, it was undesirable to be aligned with the branches that had been cut off, that is, the Pharisaical Jews who had sought God through “woorkes” associated with the laws.

Thus, what has often been lost in conversations about early modern attitudes towards Jews, is that Jews were inextricably linked to the church and its perceptions of Christian doctrine—and this doctrine was deeply rooted in Paul’s Letter to the Romans. When we talk about early modern representations of Jews, then, we cannot separate them from what the

apostle Paul in Romans and all the notable theologians who read and commented on that book knew: God had irrevocably chosen the Jews as his “peculiar people” (Calvin, *A commentarie*, Fol. 158v), and his prophets had predicted their current rejection of Christ, as well as the preservation of a definite but undetectable remnant who would be brought back to God through the example of Christian Gentiles. If one was to believe in the promises of God, it was necessary to view Jews, whose “preposterous zeale” had caused them to “reiect the righteousnesse of God” (Calvin, *A commentarie*, Fol. 146v), as crucial to the Christian doctrine, vision, and mission. It is no wonder then that although it is probably true that by the late sixteenth century, early modern English men and women exhibited a “generally low level of religious literacy and enthusiasm” (Bucholz and Key 123), reformed doctrines from Romans, since they stemmed from such a strong and long-standing tradition and had been widely disseminated to the sixteenth-century public in the form of commentaries, sermons, and plays, had made their way, regardless of how consciously or unconsciously, into early modern attitudes towards Jews.

Paul’s Jews on Stage

In the sixteenth century, Pauline interpretations of biblical Jews appearing on stage mimicked the typology which Reformation theologians had created between Paul’s Jews and the reformed and Roman Catholic Churches. In Thomas Garter’s *The Commodity of the moste vertuous and Godlye Susanna* (1578) as well as in the anonymously written *Historie of Iacob and Esau* (1568), Israelite Jewish characters represent the elect and faith-based reformed position, while Ishmaelite Jews as well as pagans represent the non-elect, law-bound status of the Roman Catholic Church. Garter’s *Susanna* uses this typology to drive home the reformed

position on the Romans doctrines of faith versus law as well as election. Based on the apocryphal biblical story called in the 1560 *Geneva Bible* “The Historie of Susanna, which some ioyne to the end of Daniel and make it the 13. chap.,” Garter’s story depicts Susanna, wife of Joachim, both of the tribe of Judah but exiled in Babylon. Two Babylonian judges decide to seduce Susanna, but when she resists, they claim they caught her committing adultery with a young man, take her to court, and, as a result, she is sentenced to death. The young prophet Daniel is sent by God to intervene in this miscarriage of justice and is able to reveal the lies told by the corrupt judges through separate interrogations.

Calling upon the Romans doctrine of faith versus law, Garter’s play attributes Daniel’s intervention in Susanna’s plight in part to Joachim’s faith, namely his practice of praying to God for guidance in judging cases rather than relying on his law books. Thus, while the corrupt judges, named Voluptas and Sensuality in the play, are depicted as sitting “at a Table [and] turning... bokes” in preparation of their cases, Joachim “kneel[s] on his knees” and prays, “Therefore good Lorde since thou haste plaste, me for a Ruler here, / Graunt that no word may passe my mouth, without thy loue and feare”(B3v). According to Garter, Sensuality and Voluptas’ need of physical books as an outward sign of their adherence to law is inferior to Joachim’s inward faith-based counsels with God; as a result the two corrupt judges are easily led by Satan’s son, Ill Report, into the temptation to seduce and lie about Susanna. In this way, the play demonstrates the Romans doctrine that faith is rewarded while reliance on law can lead one into Satan’s clutches.

Garter’s drama is also connected to Paul’s focus on the election covenant because it aligns the judges, Voluptas and Sensuality, with Esau, whom God “hated,” while Joachim and

Susanna are connected to Jacob, whom God “loued” (Rom. 9.13).²⁷ During the trial, Daniel scolds Voluptas and Sensuality, calling them the “wicked seede of Canaan, and not of Juda²⁸ kynde” (E4r). Daniel’s allusion to Canaan harks back to Esau, who in Genesis, lost his birthright to his brother Jacob. As a result, Esau did not inherit the covenants God made with the Israelite Jews; instead, Jacob, who was renamed Israel, was made heir and progenitor of Jews who were bound to God through the covenant. After this event, Esau married two Hittite women. As Calvin tells us in his tenth sermon on Jacob and Esau,²⁹ Esau had thereby ignored God’s injunction to keep Israel and Canaan apart. This meant that Esau had gone over to Canaan, something Calvin connects to rejecting salvation: “What doth he therefore, when he taketh two wiues of the inhabitants of Canaan, whom God had accursed? This was asmuch as if he had forsaken the promise of saluation” (Fol. 130r). Daniel’s action underscores the idea that those who value law over faith are descended from the non-elect Esau rather than the elect Jacob. For Garter, then, the elect merge with the doctrine of faith, while the non-elect meld with a blind focus on law; both of these reflect doctrinal interpretations favored by the reformed position.

Garter’s Romans based interpretation of the trial scene in *Susanna* bears some small resemblance to the trial scene in Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* (1596). Although I discuss Shakespeare’s famous “Jew” play in detail in chapter 2, *Merchant* is also significant to my current discussion because, like Garter, Shakespeare appropriates the Daniel character from the Susanna story in order to distinguish faith-based behavior (in this case mercy) from strict

²⁷ Paul quotes the Hebrew scriptures, Malachi 1.3.

²⁸ Judah was the fourth son of Jacob and Leah. His name is thought to be the origin of the word “Jew.”

²⁹ Calvin’s *Thirteene Sermons* (preached in 1559, published in French [1562] and in English [1579])

adherence to law. *Merchant* is contemporary to the early modern period; thus the doctrinal struggle between faith and law appears on stage in the form of a Pharisaical Jewish merchant versus mercy-minded Christians. Nevertheless, Shakespeare depicts the trial in a way which is parallel to the biblical Susanna story as well as to Garter's play.

Similar to the way Garter's Babylonian judges Voluptas and Sensuality attempt to use the law to lie about Susanna's guilt, Shakespeare's Jew Shylock uses the law in an attempt to commit legal murder. At first the law seems to support the wording of the Jew's bond, which grotesquely allows him to take a pound of Antonio's flesh rather than remuneration for his loan. Portia / Balthazar claims that the bond as Shylock has fashioned it must stand because "there is no power in Venice / Can alter a decree established" (4.1.216-17); delighted, Shylock proclaims her "A Daniel come to judgment: yea a Daniel!" (4.1.221). Here Shylock perceives himself to be in the right because in the Susanna story, Daniel aided Susanna, the person who was in God's eyes, justified.

However, when Portia / Balthazar asks Shylock to eschew the letter of the law in favor of its spirit, to have "mercy," and accept Antonio's money rather than his life, Shylock refuses to alter the letter of his bond and clings to the law. Unexpectedly, Portia follows the Jew's lead which ironically ends up thwarting Shylock's purpose. Since his bond does not include blood-letting and death, Portia / Balthazar voids it. Yet, even in defeat, Shylock adheres to the letter of the law and concedes this legal point. Having refused to have mercy on Antonio by accepting payment rather than the Christian's life in return for his bond, Shakespeare demonstrates that the Jew does not appear to have the grace that would qualify him as elect. Instead, the Christian Antonio is released from his bond by Portia / Balthazar, who, like Daniel in the

Susanna story, identifies the truly justified individual. Gratiano confirms this interpretation of Portia / Balthazar's role in the trial scene by proclaiming her "A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!" (4.1.331; 338-39). As in Garter's *Susanna*, justice in Shakespeare's *Merchant* swings from the non-elect Pharisaical wrong-doer to the elect, faith-based victim. Thus, Garter's bible-based play as well as Shakespeare's contemporary drama reinforce the Reformation doctrines of faith over law and election as gleaned from Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Similar to Garter's *Susanna*, the anonymously written play called the *Historie of Iacob and Esau*³⁰ also makes use of biblical Jewish characters to enact, on stage, Reformation doctrines linked to Paul's Letter to the Romans. As the use of Jacob and Esau's story from Genesis 27 implies, this play focuses on who is elect and who is not. Although Jacob and Esau are twins whose father and grandfather are the patriarchs Isaac and Abraham with whom God had already made a covenant, Genesis 27 demonstrates that Jacob, despite being second-born, is God's covenantal heir. The story of Jacob and Esau had much significance to Reformation theologians. First, Paul uses it in Romans, to demonstrate that Jews could not rely on their genealogical connection to Abraham as a sign that they were still part of the election covenant. For reformers Paul's interpretation of the Jacob and Esau story, similarly seemed to negate the claim made by the Roman Catholic Church that their traditional link to the Apostles Peter (their first Pope) and Paul made them "the only church in the worlde" (Calvin *Sermons* B4r). Second, the reformed church considered itself a second-born branch of Christianity. This assumption nicely aligned them typologically with God's chosen one, Jacob. It also conveniently aligned the

³⁰ The full title is *A newe mery and wittie Comedie or Enterlude, newly imprinted, treating upon the Historie of Iacob and Esau, taken out of the xxvii. Chap. of the first booke of Moses entituled Genesis*. According to Paul Whitfield White, the play was performed during the early 1550s and again during the reign of Elizabeth I. Both Michelle Ephraim and Naomi E. Pasachoff consider the character Rebecca to be "an allusion to Elizabeth Tudor" (Ephraim 50).

Roman Catholic Church, as a self-proclaimed firstborn Christian entity, with the rejected son, Esau.

The connection of the play *Jacob and Esau* to “the most secrete treasures of the Scripture” (JJr), Paul’s Letter to the Romans, is demonstrated by its framing: both the prologue and epilogue are directly linked to specific verses in Paul’s Letter. The prologue contains language lifted almost verbatim from Paul’s discussion of Jacob and Esau in Romans 9, though altered to fit the playwright’s rhyme scheme:

But before Jacob and Esau yet borne were,
Or had eyther done good, or yvil perpetrate:
As the prophete Malachie and Paule witnessse beare,
Jacob was chosen, and Esau reprobate:
Jacob I loue (sayde God) and Esau I hate,
For it is not (sayth Paule) in mans renuing or will,
But in Gods mercy who choseth whome he will. (A2v)

The poet uses much the same wording as found in Romans 9 verse 13 (“I haue loued Jacob, & haue hated Esau”) and verse 18 (“he hathe mercie on whome he wil”), a line that signifies to reformed Christians that mysteriously and for reasons of his own, only God chooses who is elect; one cannot inherit election. This interpretation of the election covenant was of great service to reformed theologians wishing to defend themselves from charges that they were heretics for having invented a new religion. In the dedicatory letter to the English edition of Calvin’s Romans commentary (1583), Christopher Rosdell speaks of “the romish prelates at this day” who “blush not, (how contrary soeuer they be to the pure doctrin of Christ & his apostles) to boast themselues for the only catholikes of the world, & successors of Christ & his Apostles” (C4). For Calvin and his reformed church, Jacob and Esau’s story was an important text enabling them to argue that the Roman Catholic Church was not the sole inheritor of God’s covenants.

The epilogue of the play also emphasizes how election is mysterious by again directly borrowing Paul's language, this time from Romans 11.33, as translated in the 1550 *Great Bible*: "O the depnes of the riches, both of the wisdome and knowledge of God: howe unsercheable are hys iudgementes, and his wayes past fyndynge out?" The playwright transforms this verse into the following rhyme:

All must be referred to Gods election,
and to his secret iudgement, it is meete for us,
with Paule the Apostle to confesse and say thus:
Oh the deepnesse of the riches of Gods wisdome,
How unsearcheable are his wayes to mans reason?
...Then to put full trust in the goodnesse of the Lorde,
That we be of the number which shall mercy haue: (G5v)

Positioning a play about Jacob and Esau between two poetic paraphrased passages from Paul's Letter to the Romans suggests the playwright's knowledge of the significance of this Letter and its interpretation of the election concept for Reformation England.

It seems all the more likely that the anonymous poet of *Jacob and Esau* was consciously staging a play featuring reformed doctrines when we consider that the play may have been circulating at around the same time as Calvin's *Thirteene Sermons* about Jacob and Esau. These sermons were preached in 1559 and first published in Latin. They were next published in French in 1562, and first translated into English in 1579. Both the play and Calvin's sermons focus on passages from Romans: as Gary Neale Hansen observes, Calvin "makes a number of ethical judgments on characters in Genesis, grounding his judgments in Romans" (86). Also similar to the play, Calvin draws heavily on Paul's exegesis of Jacob and Esau's story in Romans 9 (to which he refers in his marginalia). In doing so, Calvin often pauses to observe how Isaac and

Jacob represent the righteous election of reformers, while Ishmael and Esau denote the rejected status of the Roman Catholic Church.

In his "First Sermon of Jacob and Esau," Calvin connects Ishmael directly to the Roman Catholic Church against which he is arguing:

[T]he person of Ismael ought also to be wel marked: for hee came out from the house of Abraham, which at that time was the only Church in the whole worlde: he bare also circumcision, as if he had bene an inheritour of the kingdome of God: yeah he was the first borne, and had the swindge in the house... Now it is euen so likewise at this day concerning the Papists: for they are not strangers from the church, but they are bastard children. They will say also that they have antiquitie on their side, and they were before vs... And yet for all this they are but bastards as Ismael was, forasmuch as they were not begotten by the gospel as we haue heard, which is the seede of freedome: but haue corrupted them selues. Behold, how we may account them for Ishmaelites. (B4r)

Here Calvin informs the reformed church and those considering joining it that simply because the Roman Catholic Church was "first born" and, for all practical and political purposes, the "only Church in the whole worlde," it is not immune, as Ishmael was not, to the kind of corruption which provokes God's rejection.

Calvin makes a similar move in his second sermon, this time likening Esau to Ishmael in order to emphasize how the "Papists" can, like Ishmael and Esau, reject election through "pride and rebellion":

[Ismael] received the sacraments that might assure him that God accounted him of the number of his children, that was a member of Iesus Christe, that the curse which was drawen from Adam, was abolished: yea but this stode him in no steed at all. Asmuch may be said of Esau, & of all their like: but howsoever it was, we must not despise the benefite that he shewed towards all the stocke of Abraham. As at this day when wee speake of the inestimable blessing that God hath bestowed vpon vs, when his Gospel was preached: ... Men will say that God hath vsed a very singular mercie towards us... that we should know the way of salvation. In the meane time, we see others that wander in darckenesse and confusion, as if God had forgotten and altogether cast them off. Beholde the

Papists, albeit they bee ful of pride and rebellion yet they are tossed too & fro of Sathan... . (D3r)

Calvin ultimately preaches thirteen times to the laity of his church about the election and predestination of reformed doctrine over that of the Roman Catholic Church. For Calvin, the Roman Catholic Church has been cut off from the election covenant like Ishmael and Esau “and all their like.” What Calvin calls “the Church,” meaning those who are reform-minded, are the true inheritors of the covenant promised long ago in the first book of Moses’ Torah, just as Isaac and Jacob were the true elect. Seeing as the play’s publication, 1568, overlaps with the appearance of this book of sermons in its various translations (1562 and 1569), and since both play and book rely on similar passages from Paul’s Letter to the Romans, it seems probable that their doctrinal foci might overlap as well.

The play’s publication date of 1568 has another possible significance. In 1568, the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559-63 was still being hotly contested by returning Marian exiles, many of whom “tend[ed] to be strict Calvinists,” who “chafed at its accommodations with Catholicism,” (Bucholz and Key 123). It is possible, then, that the anonymous author of this “mery and wittie Comedie” about Jacob and Esau had in mind the agenda of the returning Marian exiles when writing his/her prologue and epilogue. After all, the play certainly was a convenient way for reform-minded individuals to assert that the reformed church was, like Jacob, the legitimate heir to Christianity while the Roman Catholic Church was, like Esau, rejected.

It is worth noting, however, that the reformed slant of the play has been questioned primarily due to debates surrounding its date of publication. As Michelle Ephraim states, “there is considerable disagreement about the play’s date of authorship, its views on predestination,

and, subsequently, the degree of its political subversiveness” (50, *n.* 5). Much critical debate has hinged on the play’s authorship and although no author appears on the published version of the play, speculation centers around William Hunnis, “imprisoned during 1557-8 for allegedly plotting to take Mary off the throne,” and Nicholas Udall, “a schoolteacher involved in the staging of a number of Marion [sic] masques” (Ephraim 51, *n.* 5). Most critics such as David Bevington (1988), Naomi E. Pasachoff (*Playwrights, Preachers, and Politicians: A Study of Four Tudor Old Testament Dramas*, 1975) and Paul Whitfield White (1992) favor Hunnis and claim *Jacob and Esau* to be a Calvinistic play (Ephraim 51, *n.* 5).

However, in 1969 Helen Thomas argued in her article “*Jacob and Esau: ‘Rigidly Calvinistic?’*” that the play could have been written by Nicholas Udall and been “pro-Catholic” (Ephraim 51, *n.* 5). Thomas favors the idea that the play was written “in the fifteen thirties with the express purpose of explaining St. Paul’s ninth chapter of Romans against the Lutheran position and in agreement with Erasmus, whom [Udall] admired” (212). She bases this on the moment in the epilogue of *Jacob and Esau* that states:

Yet not all fleshe did he then predestinate,
But onely the adopted children of promise:
For he forknewe that many would degenerate,
And wylfully giue cause to be put from that blisse. (ll. 1801-04)

Thomas claims that these lines from the play exemplify not Calvinist but Roman Catholic doctrine in that “God decided to save ‘mankynde’ according to man’s individual merits” (201-02) and that “God’s foreknowledge of man’s future actions is given as the cause of His choice of the elect and the reprobated” (202). Thomas then demonstrates how the play is based mainly on Paul’s verses in Romans 9 rather than on Calvin’s *Institutes* (1536), a work from which she assumes Calvinist doctrine emanates. She devotes only scant paragraphs at the end of her

article to her argument that the play was written by Udall in the 1530s (with no evidence for these assumptions other than the play's ill-defined resemblance to Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister*) as well as her belief that Udall was paying homage to Erasmus with those four lines in the epilogue quoted above.

While I agree that the play is indeed largely based on Paul at Romans 9, Thomas's assumption that Udall, if indeed he did write the play, was sympathetic to the Roman Catholic Church is problematic. Udall was also linked to reformers, for as Thomas herself points out, Udall became involved with "suspected" Lutherans while at Oxford and "after 1545, he came out in bold defense of the Reformation" (212). Even more interestingly, Thomas provides what I argue is a likelier reason for the possible "pro-Catholic" stance she locates in the epilogue:

If Udall wrote the play earlier than the reign of Mary, he might well have ended it originally in line with the Lutheran doctrine on predestination. Then he could have made it acceptable for registration in Mary's reign by adding the lines [from the epilogue] on foreknowledge. (212)

In other words, Udall may have added the lines to avoid persecution and even to garner favor in Mary's court as "he was prominently connected with the production of plays for the court" (Thomas 212). If we believe that Udall is the author, then indeed he may have added lines more in line with the Marian religious ideal in order to offset the play's Calvinistic overtones.

Thomas's argument for the play's pro-Catholic stance is also put into question when she admits that aside from the epilogue, the idea that God decides election based on "man's future actions" and "individual merits," a Roman Catholic Church position, is "not even hinted at in the prologue or in the play itself" (202). Moreover, throughout the article, Thomas does not point to any other part of the play that seems Erasman. Thus it seems that even if we could prove that Udall wrote this play and paid homage to Erasmus, the play's overwhelming reformed

stance suggests Udall would have been more focused on disseminating Reformation ideals during a moment when these ideals were most threatened—during Mary’s reign, or when the English Reformation was still nascent as it was during Edward’s reign or the early days of Elizabeth. Regardless of who wrote it or when it was written, I would argue that the connections between *Jacob and Esau* and Reformation interpretations of the election covenant as gleaned from Paul are very clearly present. Reformed Christians saw themselves as second-born like Jacob; following this analogy, they, like Jacob, were directly connected to God’s covenant. Conversely, reformers identified the Roman Catholic Church’s claim of first born Christianity with Esau: a doctrine that, like Jacob’s older brother, should be rejected. The play’s publication date of 1568, which was a time when the Elizabethan settlement was being contested, seems to back this assumption.

The Jacob and Esau story continued to resonate throughout the sixteenth century. In 1596, Shakespeare offers his own brief interpretation of the Jacob and Esau story in *Merchant of Venice*. Representing the biblical principles in Genesis are Launcelot Gobbo as both Jacob and Esau, and his “sand-blind” father, Old Gobbo, as Isaac. Like Jacob, Launcelot lies to his blind father about his identity. When he reveals who he is, Old Gobbo does not believe him, so he touches his son to establish his identity. This scene from *Merchant* is parallel to the anonymous play of *Jacob and Esau* (as well as the biblical story), in which blind Isaac seeks to distinguish Esau’s identity from that of Jacob through touch. As well, just as Esau was known to be “rough of heare as any goate” (F1r), Launcelot is, to Old Gobbo’s surprise, hairy. Old Gobbo expects Launcelot to be smooth like Jacob, but instead finds his son “changed” for he finds Launcelot with “more hair on [his] chin than Dobbin [his] fill-horse has on his tail” (2.2.90-91). As both

Jacob and Esau, Launcelot begs for his father's blessing (2.2.75), just as the biblical twins sought their own father's blessing.

As is true in the Jacob and Esau story, where the receiver of the blessing becomes elect, Old Gobbo's blessing may be a moment of conversion for his son, Launcelot. The blessing Launcelot asks of his father is deliverance from his service to the Jew, Shylock. He therefore hopes his father will advocate for him to join the service of the Christian, Bassanio. Shakespeare's language seems to suggest this interpretation, for when Launcelot and Gobbo confront Bassanio, and the latter wants to know why Launcelot would "leave a rich Jew's service, to become / The follower of so poor a gentleman[,]” Launcelot responds: "The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough" (2.2.140-144). Here, Launcelot seems to recognize that God's grace is more important than riches. The entire scene with Launcelot, his father, and Bassanio can be read to suggest that the servant was wavering between the elect and reprobate states. As was true in the Jacob and Esau story, he who receives his father's blessing and help becomes elect; for Bassanio hires Launcelot who then becomes a key player (albeit a cynical one) in Jessica's turn from Jewishness, in the form of her father, towards grace, her love for the Christian man Lorenzo. As Jessica exclaims to Launcelot later in the play: "I shall be sav'd by my husband,--he hath made me a Christian!"(3.5.18-19).

Although it is probable that Shakespeare relied on the biblical story to depict this scene, there is also a possible connection to the anonymous *Jacob and Esau* play. Launcelot bears some resemblance to the servant, Ragau, a character that only appears in the play. In *Jacob and Esau*, after Jacob tricks Isaac into giving him Esau's birthright, Isaac says, "O Esau, Esau, thou

commest to late, / An other to thy blessing was predestinate, / And cleane gone it is from thee Esau" (F4v). Because he serves Esau, Ragau is the one who suffers under his master's vagaries. Ragau fantasizes about leaving Esau, saying, "But Esau nowe that ye haue solde your birthright, / I commende me to you, and god geue you good night" (F4r), even though Ragau in fact ends up going into exile with Esau. Despite the fact that Esau is fond of hunting, Ragau also repeatedly complains about being starved, at one point ironically asking, "Haue I taken so long paine you truly to serue, / And can ye be content that I famishe and sterue?" (F4r).

Similarly, when we meet Launcelot Gobbo in Shakespeare's play, he is arguing with himself about leaving the Jew, Shylock, who, he believes, "is a kind of devil" (2.2.22-23), and his reason, which he later tells his father, echoes Ragau's both in reasoning and language: "I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs" (2.2.101-102). The figure of the starving servant who is employed by a Jewish stage figure is, in English plays, certainly a trope or stereotype associated with Jews. Not only does it apply to Ragau and Launcelot, but also to the Jew Sheva (Jubal) in Richard Cumberland's play *The Jew* (1794). Presumably the scene between wealthy Jewish master and needlessly starving servant was a way for English authors to iterate the stereotype of the mean and miserly Jew.

Although it is, of course, impossible to say to what extent or even whether Shakespeare was familiar with the 1568 play of *Iacob and Esau*, it is clear that the Calvinist idea that election is mysterious was familiar enough to be contemporized by Shakespeare in 1596. After all, a clown and a Jewess seem unlikely metonymic stand-ins as recipients of election; thus, their conversion in Shakespeare's play emphasizes, somewhat comically, God's selection of them as mysterious. It is also possible to read this scene as a plea not to allow greed (i.e. by choosing

the rich Jew over a Christian) to “turn” one from God’s grace. In the late 1590s and into the early decades of the seventeenth century, the rise in free market competition particularly as concerned markets in the Mediterranean had caused concern that Englishmen were losing sight of their religious convictions. Speaking of plays involving Mediterranean trade between Jews, Turks and Christians,³¹ Daniel J. Vitkus writes:

Free market competition becomes a contest to see who can swindle, confiscate, and accumulate the most, and the contestants shift and trade public roles, morphing and replicating with the force and speed of an invasive, alien monstrosity. Renegades, apostates, and imposters change sides and exchange stolen commodities. (194)

Clearly greed and trade do play a role in the world of Shakespeare’s *Merchant*; indeed, the ever-strapped Bassanio wonders why Launcelot does not opt to stay in the more lucrative service of the Jew despite the fact that Launcelot feels Shylock “is the very devil incarnal”(II.ii.23) . However, along with this reading, there is also a way in which Launcelot Gobbo’s eventual decision to leave the Jew Shylock for the Christian Bassanio and even to play a role in converting the Jew’s daughter, can be read as representing a Calvinistic interpretation of the turn to grace on the part of the elect.

Doctrine derived from Paul’s Letter to the Romans, then, was a driving force which directed the representation of the Jewish figures in Garter’s *Susanna*, the anonymously written *Jacob and Esau*, and Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*. Interestingly, although many of the characters in all three plays are Jewish, these plays are not meant to address Jews and Judaism. Instead, these plays use Jews and Judaism to instruct Christians through reformed doctrines such as election and justification by faith. Thus, the Jews in these plays are patterned after

³¹ Vitkus reviews Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta* (1590), Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), and Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turk* (1612).

biblically inspired Jews, rather than real life Jews. After all, Englishmen were not familiar with practicing Jews because England had expelled its Jews in 1290 and had not readmitted them. Although in early modern England there were “probably never more than a couple of hundred” Jews (Shapiro 76), what Jews there were, practiced the state-mandated form of Christianity (at least in public). The Jews early modern Englishmen were most familiar with and were most concerned about were the ink and paper variety found in bibles, histories, and other religious documents. Due to the Reformation’s focus on Romans as polemical touchstone between Catholics and Protestants, biblical Jews were directly related to reformed doctrinal matters. As this chapter has argued, the anonymous author of *Iacob and Esau*, Garter, and Shakespeare use tensions between Jews, reprobates, and Christians to reinforce reformed Christian doctrines.

Although Shakespeare’s *Merchant* is contemporary rather than biblical, and a strong case can therefore be made for the idea that Shakespeare’s representation of Shylock is targeting Jews and Judaism, I have laid the groundwork here for a claim I will develop in chapter 2: namely, that the Jew Shylock is another facet of Paul’s warning to Gentile Christians about Jews as outlined in Romans. Paul suggests at Romans 11.11,³² that Christian spirituality should be such that it inspires unbelieving Jews to convert to Christianity. Shylock, however, represents a Jew who, in following Christian example, is led astray because the Christians with whom he deals are corrupt. By channeling this doctrinal idea from Romans, Shakespeare uses a Jew to underscore how far from grace early modern Christianity has fallen. Because of *Merchant*’s allusory relationship to Paul’s statement about Jews in Romans, as well as to

³² According to the 1560 *Geneva Bible*, Paul states: ““Haue [the Jews] stombled that they shulde fall? God forbid: but through their fall saluation commeth vnto the Gentiles, to prouoke them to follow them.”

Romans-based reformed interpretations of the Susanna and Jacob stories, Shylock's villainy becomes a comment on Christian rather than Jewish behavior.

CHAPTER TWO: “‘WHICH IS THE MERCHANT HERE? AND WHICH THE JEW?’ CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE AND THE EARLY MODERN STAGE JEW

In a former dining hall of Baker College, Rice University³³, on a small, rudimentary stage with only a roughly constructed bridge to indicate a Venetian setting, a young psychology major³⁴ in the guise of Launcelot Gobbo shakes and shimmies his way through the central clown scene (Act II, Scene ii) in Baker Shakespeare’s 2013 production of *The Merchant of Venice*. Launcelot’s exaggerated gesturing and loudly vulgar voice, coupled with the outstanding physical comedy of the alumnus³⁵ who plays his “sand-blind” father, Old Gobbo, force the audience to consider what a slapsticky treat Shakespeare’s clown scenes could have been for early modern playgoers. This performance, which featured additions such as a live laugh-track in the form of an audience “embedded” production-member, as well as masked characters from commedia dell’arte,³⁶ is meant to fulfill Director Haley E. R. Cooper’s vision for *The Merchant of Venice*: namely, to present what has famously been identified as a “problem comedy” as “wonderful,” and to tell “a tale full of wild shifts from comedy to tragedy and back again” while respecting the general feeling that it is impossible to “perform an unsympathetic Shylock in a post-Holocaust world” (“Director’s Notes,” playbill). Assessing Cooper’s success in this endeavor depends largely on the individual playgoer’s perspective on comedy; in other words, it was as possible to view the scene’s overblown comedy as annoying and distracting as it was to find it fresh and entertaining. Since I had just finished interpreting that same scene as

³³ Houston, Texas, the March 16, 2013 performance.

³⁴ Travis Hoyt.

³⁵ Joseph “Chepe” Lockett.

³⁶ This term refers to traveling troupes of actors in sixteenth-century Italy who were masked and uniquely costumed to represent stock characters such as a clown, a merchant, or a doctor.

Shakespeare's presentation of a Calvinistic turn to grace on the part of the elect,³⁷ Director Cooper's interpretation confirmed an earlier suspicion I had had but not yet thought fully about: that Shakespeare was parodying the Calvinist doctrine of election. My first instinct was to dismiss the idea, since, due to the potential political danger that often accompanied public displays of religious criticism during the early modern period, it seemed unlikely Shakespeare or his company would take such a risk. But when the scene's comedic extremes were exploited on stage in Cooper's production, it suddenly seemed possible that the physical mugging and verbal flights of fancy delivered by the actors may have been designed to soften the play's potentially dangerous critique of Christian duplicity.

This chapter explores the possibility that a central purpose of Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* (as well as other late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century plays and prose featuring Jewish figures) was to use a Jewish character as a way to expose a concerning increase in England's unethical behavior. I examine Robert Wilson's *Three Ladies of London* (1584), Christopher Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* (c. 1589), Shakespeare's *Merchant* (1596), Robert Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (1612), and Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis* (1627) in order to show how each work uses a Jewish figure as a foil against which England's Protestant policy can be measured. This chapter argues that because Jews were known to be doctrinally linked to Christians and consequently played a crucial role in defining Christianity in its truest form, Jewish actions and attitudes in plays do not target Jews as much as they work to expose hypocritical Christian behavior.

³⁷ See chapter 1.

As I discussed last chapter, during the early modern period, there were no known practicing Jews in early modern England; there *was*, however, a volatile struggle for dominance among England's Christian sects. Moreover, because during the early modern period Jews had no national homeland or base, they did not have a nation or community capable of threatening England's fledgling status as an emerging European power. However, wrong-headed Christian belief, primarily from the English Protestant perspective, was perceived as a threat to England's aspirations for itself as well as its status among other European powers. The topic of erroneous Christianity, then, more than the topic of Jewish infiltration, was the cause of much national strife. Given the nature of England's struggle to establish Protestant conformity, it is unsurprising that in each work examined in this chapter, the Jewish characters comment on some unsavory aspect of Christian behavior versus what "true" Protestant doctrine dictates. These Jewish characters are surprisingly aware of what this doctrine is supposed to be, and they, oftentimes more than the Christian characters in the play, are appalled and voice their concern when Christian characters abandon what should be their religious tenets, especially when the unethical behavior of the Christians negatively affects Jewish lives. This chapter therefore looks at how authors used Jewish figures in early modern English plays and prose as a means of exposing how, despite its formative intentions, Protestant policy in England had become distinctly unchristian in its application. In particular early modern England's most famous stage Jews, Marlowe's Barabas and Shakespeare's Shylock, pointedly demonstrate how following adverse Christian examples set by Christian characters could destabilize a nation's Christian, and in the case of England, Protestant aspirations.

Christian (mis)treatment of Barabas and Shylock in their respective plays, exposes unethical behavior in Christians by demonstrating how an important doctrinal point between Christian and Jew was being abused. According to the Apostle Paul, Christians were exhorted to be examples to Jews, capable of leading them to salvation. As discussed in the previous chapter, Protestant doctrine regarding Christian behavior towards Jews followed Paul in Romans as well as commentaries and sermons written by Reformation-era theologians. One doctrine found in these theological works stated that since Gentile believers had been raised to elect status after Christ's advent, they should conduct themselves in such a way as to encourage non-believers to emulation and, hopefully, to salvation. According to Paul, unbelieving Jews were to be the particular target of Gentile believers, for in Romans 11.11 he writes, "Haue [the Jews] stombled that they shulde fall? God forbid: but through their fall saluation commeth vnto the Gentiles, to prouoke them to follow them." The marginal note in the 1560 *Geneva Bible* stresses the verse's important injunction: "The lewes to followe the Gentiles." Paul's assertion in Romans was also discussed in subsequent Romans commentaries throughout the centuries. In *Hexapla: ... A Six-fold commentarie vpon the most Diuine Epistle of the holy Apostle S. Pavl to the Romanes* (1611), Andrew Willet helpfully sums up centuries-long Romans commentaries. In Question 15 dealing with Romans 11, under the heading "How the lewes were prouoked to follow the Gentiles," Willet writes, "as Lyranus expoundeth, and before him Photius, that saith the Gentiles were *exemplaria*, examples herein to the lewes, or *invidendo*, in envying the faith and knowledge of the Gentiles" (F. 501). Further on in Question 15, Willet shows how reformers like Peter Martyr Vermigli, John Calvin, and Theodore Beza agreed, along with previous theologians like Lyra and Photius, that God "should prouoke the

lewes to emulation by the example of the Gentiles” and that though some “stumble and fell away... yet the whole nation was not cast off” (F. 502). By referring to all the commentaries before him, Willet’s *Hexapla* emphasizes the importance of the reformed interpretation of this doctrine for early seventeenth-century English Protestants.

This chapter proposes that early modern England’s two most famous “Jew plays,” Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*, closely work with this facet of Protestant doctrine, creating from it a mocking reversal of the doctrine’s intention for the sake of a didactic message about Christianity and national security. Namely, instead of Christians setting righteous examples that, because admirable, would incite Jews and other non-believers to convert, the plays of Marlowe and Shakespeare reveal how easily so-called Christian behavior towards Jews (and others) could be, in fact, adverse to Protestant doctrine. Moreover, through clever deployment of the Jewish figure, these plays emphasize how adverse Christian behavior, particularly that which results in unfairly persecuting Jews, is not only against Protestant English doctrine, but also has direct negative consequences, as it incites the vicious actions of Jews by encouraging them to emulate false Christianity as a mocking form of revenge.

Although today the most famous Jewish characters in Renaissance literature are Marlowe’s Barabas and Shakespeare’s Shylock, other early modern works also used Jewish figures to illuminate flaws in Christianity. It is to these plays we will first turn our attention. In the 1584 drama *Three Ladies of London*, Robert Wilson creates a Jew named Gerontus as a yardstick against whom he can measure how corrupt the Christian Italian merchant Mercadore

has become as a result of doing business in Turkey.³⁸ The Jewish usurer Gerontus allows Mercadore quite a bit of latitude in paying his debt, but finally, in exasperation, takes the Italian to court. When Mercadore vows to convert from Christianity to Islam to take advantage of the law that all his debts would thereby be forgiven, the Jew Gerontus forgives Mercadore's debt so it will not look as if he, Gerontus, has required Mercadore to disrespect his faith for money. It becomes clear that this scene exists in the play as a way to argue Wilson's overall point—that in the name of avarice Christian merchants abroad will stop at nothing, even if it means betraying Christ. Wilson creates a rather splashy punchline to this scene, when the judge, a Turk, tells Mercadore: "One may iudge and speake the truth, as appeeres by this, / Iewes seeke to excell in Christianitie, and the Christians in Iewishness" (17.53-54). Here Wilson presents a Jewish figure who, contrary to stereotype, holds faith more sacred than money, while a Turkish "infidel" delivers this clever indictment against Christianity. It is as if Wilson wants his audience to ask whether Christian greed has reached the point that even avaricious Jews would be shocked by the acquisitive behavior of Christian merchants. Using a Turk judge to point out that an unbelieving Jew is a better Christian than an Italian merchant nicely emphasizes Wilson's worrying critique of Christian behavior when trading with the Turks abroad. As do Marlowe and Shakespeare, whose "Jew plays" appear scant years after *Three Ladies*, Wilson uses a Jewish character to get audiences to consider the extent to which the actions of the play's Christians are, in fact, truly Christian.

Jewish figures continue to be used to expose Christian error well into the seventeenth century. In *A Christian Turn'd Turk* (1612), Robert Daborne stages a short scene between a

³⁸ The relationship of practicing Jews to "Turks" or Muslims as they appear on stage and other early modern works is detailed in chapter 3 of this project.

Jewish servant, Rabshake, and Voadia, the Turkish sister-in-law of his Jewish master, which addresses several Christian flaws. When Voadia suggests Rabshake “turn Christian,” Rabshake refuses, saying: “How? I turn Christian? They have Jew enough already amongst ‘em.” Rabshake’s retort blurs Christian and Jewish identity to suggest there is little distinction between Christian and non-Christian behavior. Rabshake then enumerates several “Christian” examples as the reason he will not convert:

First, [Christians] suffer their wives to be their masters. Secondly, they make men thieves for want of maintenance and then hang them up for stealing. Lastly, they are mad four times a year, and those they call term-times³⁹, and then they are so purged by their physicians (which they name lawyers), some of ‘em are never their own men after it. I turn Christian? They shall have more charity amongst ‘em first! (6.20-25)

Rabshake also goes on to claim Christians “eat up one another! You have an innocent Christian called a gallant—your city Christian will feed upon no other meat” (6.29-30). Rabshake expresses disgust at the so-called Christian examples he (as a Jew) is expected to follow. As well, Rabshake’s criticisms of Christian marriage, lawyers, and the city Christian who devours the “innocent” Christian “gallant” mesh with several early modern Christian concerns expressed in earlier sixteenth-century works: Shylock’s remark about Christian husbands, *Merchant’s* trial scene, as well as Thomas Lodge’s depiction of a merchant usurer in *An Alarum against Usurers* (1584).⁴⁰

³⁹ According to Daniel J. Vitkus, term-times are “those times of the year when the London law courts were in session” (n.23, 174).

⁴⁰ Although some of this will be discussed below, I include a synopsis here. In *Merchant*, after Bassanio and Gratiano say they will sacrifice their wives’ lives to save Antonio, Shylock, expresses his shock: “These be Christian husbands. I have a daughter; / Would any of the stock of Barrabas / Had been her husband rather than a Christian” (IV.i.291-293)! Also, in *Merchant*, Bassanio plots to become a Lord by means of his wife’s money and good will, and Lorenzo, too, takes a bride whose father’s money must support him. In this way, the Christians Bassanio and Lorenzo effectually make their wives their masters. Similarly, it is Portia as the lawyer Balthazar who “purges” Antonio of the fatal consequences surrounding his imprudent loan to a prodigal youth and his unwise bond.

Another seventeenth-century writer, Francis Bacon, also makes use of a Jewish character as a yardstick for Christian practices in his utopian prose piece entitled *The New Atlantis*. Published in both Latin and English, *The New Atlantis* appeared in multiple editions from 1625 through 1685, often as part of Bacon's final work *Sylva Sylvarum*, an anthology of classical works as well as Bacon's philosophical thoughts. Because the genre and publishing history of *The New Atlantis* suggest that Bacon envisioned an academic audience for this work, it is interesting that Bacon's characterization of his Jewish figure reflects and therefore confirms characterizations made by earlier dramatists. In *New Atlantis*, Bacon's narrator describes how Bensalem (Bacon's utopian state), has "some few stirps of Jews yet remaining among them, whom they leave to their own religion" (9). The narrator also emphasizes that Joabin was one of these practicing Jews, stating he is "a Jew and circumcised" (16). When the narrator carries on a conversation with Joabin, Bacon, like other writers of his time, uses this Jewish figure to critique Christians. Similar to Rabshake, Joabin takes issue with the dubious state of European marriage. Joabin critiques Europeans for "having put marriage out of office" because, he claims, many men have chosen not to marry so they can lead "a libertine and impure single life" (17). Joabin also complains of those who marry solely to make money from the "alliance" (Bacon 17). Joabin claims that the inhabitants of Bensalem

... hear [Europeans] defend these things, as done to avoid greater evils; as advoutries [adulteries], deflowering of virgins, unnatural lust, and the like. But they say this is a preposterous wisdom; and they call it Lot's offer, who to save his guests from abusing, offered his daughters: nay they say farther that there is little gained in this[.] (Bacon 17)

Finally, Rabshake's denunciation of the "city" merchant who feeds upon the "innocent" landowners reminds one of the usury scam Thomas Lodge exposes in his pamphlet *An Alarum against Usurers* (1584) which will be detailed later in this chapter. As did other early modern English writers, then, Daborne uses a Jewish figure, in this case, Rabshake, to emphasize the adverse Christian behavior.

As was done in the plays examined above, Bacon uses a Jewish figure to expose Christian error, in this case, that even a Jew can appreciate the true meaning of Christian marriage better than many professed Christians. Unlike in the plays, however, the Christian narrator in Bacon's *New Atlantis* openly admits this is the case. When the "good Jew" pauses in his discourse, the narrator remarks: "I would say to [Joabin], as the widow of Sarepta said to Elias: "that he was come to bring to memory our sins;" and that I confess the righteousness of Bensalem was greater than the righteousness of Europe" (Bacon 17-18). Gerontus, Rabshake, and Joabin, then, are three Jewish figures used "to bring to memory" Christian "sins." Having a Jewish figure make this point is a particularly powerful statement. Jews were thought to be a people rendered nationless by having ignored their scriptures and committed heresy. Who better than a Jew, who had experienced the dire consequences of falling away from God, to warn Christians against behavior that runs counter to Protestant doctrine?

Early modern England's most famous stage Jews, Barabas and Shylock, also "bring to memory" Christian sins. However, since the roles of both characters dominate the plays in which they appear, the impact of Barabas and Shylock on the ethic of Christian example is more complicated and, it can be argued, more influential. In *Jew of Malta*, Barabas's treachery is set in motion by the dubious actions of Malta's Christian governor, which prompt the Jew to follow the flawed "Christian" example as he enacts his revenge. In the beginning of the play, Barabas and the other Jews of Malta are forced by Governor Ferneze to pay half their wealth in order to cover ten years of Malta's unpaid tribute to the Turks. When Barabas protests that all of Malta should be taxed and not just the Jews, the court punishes him by taking all his wealth and holdings. This action prompts Barabas to set in motion a spectacularly deadly plan of revenge,

much of which is patterned after medieval stereotypes about Jews. For this reason, the play has often been noted for its anti-Semitism. However, I argue that the play's anti-Catholic overtones would have resonated more strongly with its intended early modern audience. Throughout the play, Malta is consciously being depicted as a Catholic nation, with nuns, friars, and a convent. Moreover, Malta's court openly defies Protestant principles in its treatment of Jews. In exacting his revenge, then, Barabas sardonically follows the Catholic example that has been set him by blasphemously twisting Protestant interpretations of Paul's Letter to the Romans.

In Act 1, Marlowe's Jew displays an unsettling awareness of Protestant doctrine from Romans 11. After Barabas has learned that his protests have caused Ferneze to order that all his wealth and holdings be seized, the Jew accuses Ferneze of theft. He asks, "Will you, then, steal my goods? / Is theft the ground of your religion" (I.2.95-96)? To Ferneze's rather standard response that often one person must suffer for the many, and the more pointed, anti-Semitic threat that Barabas should be glad Malta "will not banish" him (I.2.99-101), Barabas complains that he cannot make money from nothing and, earlier in the scene, that the law is unfair since only Jews must pay. Ferneze's knight responds by quoting scripture. Malta, he claims, has the right to tax only the Jews because in having accepted blame for Christ's death,⁴¹ or, as the Knight puts it, "your first curse fall heavy on your head" (I.2.108), Jewish "sin" is "inherent" (I.2.110). Barabas, however, proves himself quite capable of responding in kind to this scripture alluding knight. Displaying a complex knowledge of Christian scriptures, Barabas finds a Protestant loophole in the knight's argument. At Romans 11.1-2, Paul had shown that because Jews had not been abandoned by God, Gentile Christians could not fully disregard them. Paul

⁴¹ The knight here refers to Matt. 27.25.

notes: “Hathe God cast away his people? God forbid: for I also am an Israelite, of the sede of Abraham, of the tribe of Beniamin. God hathe not cast away his people which he knewe before.” Paul alludes to an argument he will make a few verses later in Romans 11: that though some Jews will be “cast away,” others can be grafted back in to the promises of God.

Borrowing language from Romans 11.2 (“cast away”), Barabas the Jew cleverly reframes Paul’s question to address the point of view of the misguided Catholic court: “But say the tribe that I descended of / Were in general cast away for sin, / Shall I be tried by their transgression?” (1.2.114-116). This is a particularly Calvinist / Protestant point for Barabas to raise. In effect, the Jew asks the court whether they are certain he is a reprobate Jew whose sin is “inherent.” According to Protestant doctrine, God chooses who will be elect and who is not. In Romans, Paul explains why Jacob was chosen and Esau was not, saying God, “will have mercy on him, to whom [he] will show mercy: and will have compassion on him, on who [God] will have compassion” (Romans 9.15). It could be, then, that Barabas is not reprobate, but elect. The answer the court makes to Barabas’s important doctrinal question is a crucial moment in the play: in a move that Protestants would find blasphemous, the Catholic court defies the Protestant notion that only God decides who is elect, denounces the Jew as reprobate, and confiscates his wealth.⁴² It is this blasphemous court decision that unleashes the vengeful wrath of the Jew, giving him, in effect, *carte blanche* to act as reprobate as he wishes. In other words, it is Ferneze’s profane interpretation of election, which becomes the example which Barabas will follow in his interpretations of other doctrines found in Romans 11.

⁴² Of course, it is likely that some English Protestants would not have blinked an eye at this, since the unbelief of Jews was what was thought, to some, to be proof of reprobation. However, this is not what Paul claims, and many English Protestants, in particular millenarians, were convinced that Jews could be converted if presented with the proper Christian example. In chapter 4 of this project, I demonstrate that the Baptist minister Thomas Tillam was very much of this opinion as were many who wrote in favor of Jewish readmission.

Thus, as part of his revenge scheme, Barabas follows Ferneze's example and twists scriptural doctrine to serve his own purposes. In plotting the murder of Ferneze's son Lodowick, Barabas mockingly claims to be following Romans 11.28 when, in a soliloquy, he tells the audience that Lodowick is "[o]ne that [he] love[s] for his good father's sake" (2.3.30). Barabas here refers to only half of Paul's injunction to Gentiles about Jews: that "as touching the election," Jews were to be "beloued for the fathers sakes"; the other half of this verse, which Barabas tellingly leaves unspoken, allows Gentiles to consider Jews "enemies" "as concerning the Gospel." In having Barabas ignore half of the doctrine, Marlowe sets up a clever parallel. In the above scene, we have seen how Ferneze ignored the possibility that Barabas could be elect in order to justify his desire to abscond with Barabas's wealth. Barabas chooses a similar path. Ignoring the full meaning and context of Romans 11.28, Barabas focuses on the half of the verse that enables him to claim his intended murder of Lodowick is based on Romans doctrine. Thus, Barabas creates a vicious, blasphemous pun. For Barabas, Ferneze had taught the Jew Christianity, like the "fathers" (i.e. the Patriarchs) had informed Christianity. Accordingly, Barabas will "love" the son according to the treachery the father had taught him; by killing the son for the sake of the father's hateful behavior. Like Ferneze, Barabas has blasphemously interpreted Protestant doctrine; thus he has followed Catholic Christian example.

Following his soliloquy regarding Lodowick, Barabas explains in more detail how his plan to "love" Lodowick is derived from his father's Christian / Catholic example. Seeming to be talking to Lodowick about a diamond he plans to give the boy gratis, Barabas sets forth his plan to murder Ferneze's son in a clever series of double entendres:

Your father has deserved it at my hands,
Who, of mere charity and Christian ruth [sic],

To bring me to religious purity,
 And as it were in catechizing sort,
 To make me mindful of my mortal sins,
 Against my will and whether I would or no,
 Seized all I had, and thrust me out o' doors,
 And made my house a place for nuns most chaste. (2.3.69-78)

In this passage, not only does Barabas allude again to Romans 11.28 (see the first line quoted above), but he cleverly explains that in doing so he will be following Ferneze's interpretation of Christian doctrine. Ferneze's denunciation of Barabas as reprobate by making the Jew "mindful" of his "mortal sins," has justified the Catholic governor's selfish need to abscond with Barabas's goods. Similarly, Barabas has vowed to deal with Malta the same way they "have dealt with [him] in [his] distress" (1.2.169). Thus, like Catholic Malta, the Jew too will take scripture and twist it in order to "love" (i.e. murder) Lodowick according to his need to exact revenge on Ferneze.

Barabas also uses Romans 11 to make a crude (though for the early modern period standard) joke regarding Catholic celibacy. In response to Barabas's claim that Ferneze has taken his wealth in order "to bring [Barabas] to religious purity," Lodowick assures the Jew that his "soul will reap the fruit of" his father's efforts (2.3.79). Barabas puns on Lodowick's sanctimonious remark, saying that the prayers of the nuns and "holy friars" who now inhabit his house will no doubt "reap some fruit— / I mean in the fullness of perfection" (2.3.84-85). Lodowick gets Barabas's joke, that the nuns will, despite their claim to abstinence, become pregnant by the friars. However, Lodowick seemingly misses the doctrinal reference. Barabas puns on Romans 11.25-26, where Paul claims that when "the fulnes of the Gentiles... come[s] in... all Israel shalbe saued." These verses were among those favored by millenarian Christians, who believed that when English Protestants had achieved the truest form of religion, i.e. the

“fulnes of the Gentiles,” they would become the proper example to the Jews who, in following them, would be saved. Keeping in mind the Catholic / Protestant typology Marlowe seems to be using here, Barabas’s pun may be implying that Malta’s Catholic Christianity was very far indeed from the ideal suggested by the phrase “the fulnes of the Gentiles.” This reading seems particularly plausible when we consider how far Barabas is from converting due largely in part to the blasphemous Christian example set by Ferneze.

Understanding Marlowe’s Jew as following Catholic example has a further, horrifying implication. In attempting to recruit the Moorish slave Ithamore as a partner in his revenge scheme, Barabas claims to be the very embodiment of many medieval stereotypes attributed to Jews, by claiming to have been guilty of murdering Christians, poisoning their wells, committing national treachery, and engaging in usury (2.3.175-202). Moreover, he fulfills this perception of himself by murdering many of the play’s Christians, often through poison. Barabas’s list of “Jewish crimes” and his subsequent actions can be and have been read as anti-Semitic. However, I agree with Daniel J. Vitkus in his 2003 book *Turning Turk*, that the “effect” of Barabas’s words to Ithamore “is to undermine these absurd claims about Jews” and that this “list of ‘confessions’ indicates that these parts have already been played” (186).⁴³ Indeed, “these parts have already been played,” for Barabas’s list of Jewish stereotypes derives from medieval histories of English Jews that were written before the Reformation. This means these histories carry Catholic overtones. During the readmission debates in the 1650s, pro-readmission authors sometimes made the argument that their opponents were attempting “to

⁴³ Vitkus has a different reason than I give here for making this observation. Vitkus believes that Barabas’s list and the role it plays in his proposed revenge demonstrates that early modern writers had a more sophisticated awareness of medieval Jewish stereotype and used it to represent the “protean meta-villainy” of the Jew (186). I discuss more fully my counterargument to this view in chapter 3.

render that Antient and Honourable Nation of the Jews, odious and detestable” by “fill[ing] mens brains with strange stories” written by “ the rabble of Popish Authors” and enhanced by the “marginall notes of Fryars, and Monkes, and Abbots” (D.L. 2). Since Ferneze and Malta are Catholic, these are the histories about Jews with which they would be familiar. Moreover, since these histories of Jews have not been rewritten even in Marlowe’s time, these are the histories of Jews with which Protestant England is still familiar. Barabas, then, sets out to make these Catholic histories come true. This, then, is another way Barabas follows Catholic example in seeking his revenge.

Christopher Marlowe’s title character in *The Jew of Malta* is vicious, yes, but he patterns his viciousness so that it is sardonically based on the scripturally unsound examples set for him by the play’s Catholics. Even if playgoers are unfamiliar with Protestant doctrine from Romans 11 and its many commentaries regarding how Jews must follow Christian example, the play nevertheless provides verbal and physical action which overtly addresses this doctrine. After the friar Jacomo is tricked into thinking he murdered his colleague Barnardine, Ithamore sardonically chides Barabas for wanting to follow the friars’ “Christian” example:

ITHAMORE. Fie upon 'em, master, will you turn Christian,
 When holy friars turn devils and murder one another?
 BARABAS. No; for this example I'll remain a Jew.
 Heaven bless me! what, a friar a murderer?
 When shall you see a Jew commit the like? (4.1.195-199)

Of course, the audience realizes the Jew has indeed committed the murder and Jacomo is innocent at least of that particular sin. However, the joke serves to underscore the Catholic impetus behind the Jew’s wicked deeds, deeds which very nearly destroy the Catholic isle of Malta as well as the governor himself. For it is Ferneze’s Catholic example, which sets in motion

Barabas's treachery which, however temporarily, delivers Catholic Malta to the "infidel" Turks, and costs Ferneze his freedom, and his governorship.

In this reading of Marlowe's play, we have a Jewish figure who uses Protestant doctrine from Romans 11 to expose the Catholic court's ignorance of scripture (whether accidental or deliberate) and to enact an elaborate revenge scheme against his victimizers. This is an interesting framing of Protestant anti-Catholic sentiment, because it aligns a Jew with the Protestant perspective. However, given the evil acts Barabas perpetrates later in the play, it is difficult to know whether Marlowe is using the Jew to deride Protestants, Catholics, Jews or all three. There is, of course, no way of really knowing what was in Marlowe's mind when he wrote this play. However, I will present one possible interpretation that suggests the Jew Barabas might represent a radical, even subversive, Protestant figure, while Catholic Malta represents English government under the Elizabethan Settlement.

Catholic Malta's unfair taxation of Jews bears some resemblance to Elizabethan England's recusancy laws, which punished families who did not adhere to the Elizabethan Religious Settlement (1558). Recusancy laws allowed fines and other punishments to be levied against all non-conformist Protestants as well as Catholics. Thus, any group who refused to attend England's state established church was fined £20 per lunar month of non-attendance (Wark 73). It was widely understood that this sum was more than most "recusants could bear in full" (Wark 73); as a result, full enforcement was often lax. However, England was as careful as Governor Ferneze in Marlowe's play; English authorities enforced and exploited these laws mainly "where the traffic could bear" (Wark 73). In England's case the wealthiest recusants were fined; in Malta's case the Jews were forced to surrender their wealth because it was

thought to be great enough to pay off the Turks. Therefore, Malta's Jews, like England's Catholics and non-conformist Protestants, were recusants and subject to fine.

Ferneze's actions against the Jews also resemble how recusancy laws worked against Englishmen who could not pay their fines. For those too poor to pay the penalty, England exacted "[a] further penalty to be borne" resulting in "the seizure of [recusants'] goods and two-thirds of their lands, as authorized by the act of 1587" (Wark 73). Although this act was sporadically enforced as well, it is yet similar to Ferneze's decree to confiscate all of the Jews' goods should they refuse to pay the half that was initially demanded.⁴⁴ Also similar to the way in which recusancy laws applied to those who would not follow state-mandated Christian doctrine, Ferneze and his knights feel the tax should apply to those among them who do not follow Christian ways, namely Malta's Jews.

Recusancy could have indeed been on Marlowe's mind when inventing the scene between Barabas and Ferneze's court. In 1588, Lord Strange, whose theater company, *Strange's Men*, had *Jew of Malta* in its repertoire, was much involved in the apprehension of recusants (Wark 69). Marlowe's Jewish figure may represent those Englishmen who, like recusants (and like the Jews in Marlowe's play), were targeted because of their refusal to follow state-mandated religious belief.⁴⁵ Recusancy laws, however, did not as perhaps was hoped,

⁴⁴ The official "articles" pertaining to Barabas and the other Jews are read to them as a decree by an officer: "First, the tribute money of the Turks shall all be levied amongst the Jews, and each of them to pay one half of his estate.... Secondly, he that denies to pay shall straight become a Christian. ... Lastly, he that denies this shall absolutely lose all he has" (Marlowe I.2.68-77).

⁴⁵ Such a move on Marlowe's part could indicate a rather radical risk as it could incur the wrath of his patron. Indeed, many Marlovian scholars such as Emily Bartels and Stephen Orgel have characterized Marlowe as "an unorthodox personality, allegedly atheistic, allegedly homosexual" and allegedly involved in espionage (Erne 28). Although it is tempting to claim that Marlowe's allusion to Lord Strange's involvement with recusants is further evidence of Marlowe's typically subversive (in terms of early modern England) behavior, especially since it would enhance my argument to do so, there simply is not enough biographical information about Marlowe to warrant any assumption about his intentions. I therefore tend to agree with J.T. Parnell that we can make few assumptions

encourage mass conversions or heightened church attendance; on the contrary, these laws as well as other facets of the Elizabethan Settlement, sometimes resulted in rebellious sectionalism among Christians. In short, the policies behind the laws were not the kind of Christianity that would provoke emulation from non-conformist Christians, much less non-Christians. In *Jew of Malta*, Ferneze's tax similarly does not provoke Barabas to join Ferneze's religion. Instead, the Jew sneers at Ferneze and his court, calling them "earth-mettled villains, and no Hebrews born!" (1.2.79). Barabas then declares he "will be no convertite," not even to save himself from Ferneze's demand that he "pay... half" of his estate (1.2. 83-84). In other words, Ferneze's use of force has the opposite effect that Christian example should, by pushing potential converts yet further away from salvation. This scene, then, may indicate an interesting, perhaps radical, Protestant slant to Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.

Considering there was little reason to fear actual, practicing Jews, since such Jews were rarely (if ever) met with by the majority of Marlowe's audience, this reading makes sense. To ensure a successful running of a play, a play's message usually targets important concerns of the audience; in early modern England, one main concern of which the audience would be hyper-aware was its nation's long and intense struggle to settle on a proper form of Christianity. For Protestant playgoers, Ferneze might well represent a Roman Catholic disregard for scripture and a misguided reliance on law in order to confiscate a Jew's goods. Indeed, some militant Protestants did view medieval England as exploitative in precisely this way. In the seventeenth century, William Prynne expressed his belief that England's medieval Catholic

about Marlowe's personality since "the documentary evidence neither supports the commonplaces about Marlowe's involvement in espionage, his alleged atheism and homosexuality, nor adds up to anything like a meaningful biography" (qtd. in Erne 50).

monarchs only tolerated Jews in England to exploit them. Using this as one excuse why England should not readmit the Jews, Prynne writes:

And therefore we cannot now readmit [Jews] in to England upon the self-same Papal pretence and Ground of Gain; without incurring the like Censures from Protestants and Papists too; and bring intolerable Scandal, Dishonor, Reproach, both on our Nation and Religion, in these times of pretended highest Reformation[.] (78)

Although Prynne writes this many decades after Marlowe's play, he nevertheless appeals to long-term suspicions Protestants had against Catholics: that Roman Catholic authorities abused their power in order to exploit those who fell under their power.

However, the Catholic / Jew dynamic in Marlowe's play may cover for a more radical Protestant message. In addition to the ongoing struggle between Protestants and Catholics, early modern England was faced with Protestants vying with other Protestants for religious supremacy. Patrick Collinson notes that among Calvinist Protestants, the late sixteenth century was a time when "the conflict between the godly lives of the elect and the profane lives of the reprobate" were, "in the public sector[,]... socially divisive" (95). As well, England's Elizabethan Settlement had been under criticism from those outside England. French theologian Theodore Beza (1519-1605) distanced himself from English bishops due to his "largely negative appraisal of English religious conditions as falling victim to 'avarice' and 'ambition'" (Collinson 88). Hence, Barabas's doctrinal argument against Ferneze, though purporting to be a conversation between a Jew and a Catholic, may speak to the idea that the Protestant English government was engaging in the exploitation of its own citizens through religion-based laws such as those leveled against recusants. If so, Barabas metonymically represents Englishmen who, like the Jews in Malta, are being victimized by a government that does not fully represent them. This

would be a subversive statement for Marlowe to make indeed, for it suggests that England's populace might eventually become so fed up with perceived hypocrisies committed by its government that it will, like the Jew of Malta, enact a vicious revenge.

When seen in this light, Marlowe's play explores the possible consequences England might face should its leaders willfully depart from the Protestant precepts to which they claim to be devoted. By following the Christian example set by the Maltese government, Barabas mocks Protestant doctrine by "obeying" its injunction that "Iewes [are] to followe the Gentiles."⁴⁶ But since the example set by the Catholics of Malta does not itself follow Protestant doctrine as derived from Paul's Letter to the Romans, adverse Christian (i.e. Catholic) example frighteningly brings a Christian island to the brink of destruction.

Shakespeare also addresses the Protestant doctrine of Christian example in his 1596 "Jew play," *The Merchant of Venice*, although without the overt Catholic implications.⁴⁷ As in Marlowe, Shakespeare's Jewish character encourages early modern Englishmen to examine whether the Christian example England is setting is aiding England's desired reputation as a leading Protestant nation. As was true of Marlowe's Barabas, Shakespeare's Jew Shylock takes revenge on the Christian Antonio largely by following Antonio's own example. Also similar to Marlowe, Shakespeare's Shylock challenges this Christian precept in his most famous speech "Hath not a Jew eyes?" At the end of his moving appeal for his Christian listeners to empathize with Jews, Shylock's speech takes a sardonically sinister turn when he remarks, "if you wrong us shall we not revenge?—if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that." Even more tellingly, Shylock ends this speech with a grim, and doctrinally apt, threat: "The villainy you

⁴⁶ This a footnote attached to the 1560 *Geneva Bible's* note to Romans 11.11.

⁴⁷ Although Venice, like Malta, was inhabited by Catholics, Shakespeare does not exploit this fact.

teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction” (III.i.60-66). Here Shakespeare (like Marlowe) turns around the spirit of Paul’s exhortation at Romans 11.11⁴⁸ to follow Christian example; for instead of meeting with Christians whose good example should provoke the Jew, Shylock, to emulation and salvation, the Christians with whom Shakespeare has Shylock deal, are providing adverse Christian examples for Shylock to follow. In other words, because these so-called Christians have wronged him, Shylock allows himself, as they pretend to wish, to be taught by them.

As if aware of the doctrine that Jews should emulate Christians, then, Shylock chooses a “merry bond”(I.iii.169), one which, though deadly, mocks Christian example by foregoing “usance” in order to go along with Antonio’s Christian sensibilities. Because Antonio claims to be against usury and boasts that he “neither lend[s] nor borrow[s] / By taking nor by giving of excess” (I.iii.56-57), Shylock assures Antonio that he will likewise “take no doit / Of usance for [his] moneys” (I.iii. 136-137). And, to make sure Antonio, Bassanio, and the audience get that Shylock is indeed following Antonio’s Christian example, the Jew says: “This is kind I offer” (I.iii.138).

The term “kind,” in early modern English, can refer to kinship as well as the modern meaning of kindness. In the footnote to line 138 in the 2007 Arden edition of *Merchant*, editor John Russell Brown notes how Shakespeare uses the word in its “double sense,” a “pun”—meaning both this is kindness I offer, as well as this is to show kinship with you. Bassanio’s reply, “This were kindness,” given hastily before he understands what Shylock will be asking as surety, may express both senses of the word: Shylock is kind (in the sense of being generous) to

⁴⁸ “Haue [the Jews] stombled that they shulde fall? God forbid: but through their fall saluation commeth vnto the Gentiles, to prouoke them to follow them.”

charge no “usance”; and, he likens Shylock to Christians who frown on interest. Shylock’s response emphasizes this play on words he has begun with Bassanio: “This kindness will I show” (I.iii.139). However, since Shylock’s use of the word “kindness” precedes an unusual bond of a heinous nature, a pound of flesh the taking of which will certainly kill Antonio, exactly what sort of kindness Shylock means is in question.

Surely this is a moment in the play which the audience is meant to ponder, to think about the ways in which the bond is “kind.” Is Shylock’s “kindness” in substituting a usury-laden bond with one whose forfeit would culminate in death, meant to mock the Christian who finds this “kinder” than a bond to which interest attaches? Perhaps. For although Bassanio’s first instinct is to reject this murderous bond—he would rather “dwell in... necessity” (I.iii.151) than allow Antonio to risk his life—Antonio reacts as if he is getting the deal of the century. As Antonio is sure that his ships will come in a month before the bond is due, he is sure he is getting a fee-free loan. Thus Antonio’s response to this “deal” also puns on the word “kind”. He sarcastically says, “there is much kindness in the Jew” to suggest how like (or kind) Shylock is to a Jew to ask for a pound of Christian flesh;⁴⁹ he then mocks Shylock’s “kindness” saying, “the Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind” (I.iii.174). Here Antonio pretends to go along with Shylock’s own pretense that to a Christian any bond is “kind” so long as it is has no usance attached to it. Even so, Antonio’s desire to avoid the adverse Christian necessity of sealing to an interest-laden bond and to avoid what he assumes will be a high “usance” fee, overcomes any sense that it is also unethical to hazard so precious a commodity as one’s life to secure a loan for a bankrupt prodigal such as Bassanio.

⁴⁹ There was a superstitious belief that Jews ate Christian flesh (Shapiro 104).

It is also possible that Shylock means the “kindness” he is showing is similar to how early modern Christian lenders cleverly use usury to cheat other Christians out of their inheritances. Before they forge their bond, Shylock tells Antonio of how Jacob, Isaac’s son and the Christian emblem of election by grace, managed to make a profit “not, as you would say, / Directly [from] interest” of his Uncle Laban, but by means of a sheep-breeding trick (I.iii.71-72). Perhaps this story was meant to allude to the ways some early modern Christian merchants usuriously tricked sons of nobility out of their inheritances. In 1584, Thomas Lodge wrote his pamphlet *An Alarum against Vsurers* which outlines a scam perpetrated by merchant usurers. According to Lodge, to get around usury laws there were a number of merchants who conspired to cheat sons of the landed gentry while they were studying at the Inns of Court. Interestingly, and as is detailed below, the conspiratorial relationship between members of Lodge’s usury scam resembles the bond that shapes the relationship between Antonio, Shylock, and Bassanio. Like the merchant usurer in Lodge, Bassanio convinces Antonio to take out yet another bad risk loan on his behalf. Also like Lodge’s merchant usurer, Shylock and Antonio avoid breaking the law by finding a way other than usury to repay the loan if Antonio’s ships fail to come in. If we consider that Shakespeare was alluding to Lodge’s usury scam in *Merchant*, Antonio’s lack of hesitation in accepting Shylock’s murderous bond as well as his need to strike it may have suggested to audiences that like many English Christians of the period, Antonio was just as apt to skirt biblical laws regarding usury as were Jews. Once again the Jewish figure is used “to bring to memory [the] sins” (Bacon 17) of the Christian. In having Shylock use a Lodge-like trick to avoid usurious lending, Shakespeare may again be emphasizing that Shylock is but being a Christian “in kind” by following Christian example.

According to Lodge, certain English merchants stalked, by means of a broker, vulnerable wealthy youths at the Inns of Court. The broker would entice his youthful prey to go into debt, often in order to impress a mistress hired by the broker to involve herself with the youth. Both mistress and broker would continue to apply pressure on the youth to borrow more and more until it was impossible for him to pay off the debt. At that time, the usurer would step in and demand payment in the form of all the property attached to the youth. As Lodge puts it, “these couetous malefactors purchase armes now, possesse the place of ancient progenitors, & men made rich by young youth misspendings, doe feast in the halls of our riotous young spend thrifts”(Fol. 4v). Lodge warns moneyed Englishmen not to fall prey to this scam lest upstart merchants take over traditional properties belonging to landed gentry.

It is true that at first blush this usurious trick bears little resemblance to the bond agreed upon between Shylock and Antonio in *Merchant*. Shylock is not after Antonio’s property but his life—so much so, that when Shylock is offered twice, thrice, ten times the sum, even several of Bassanio’s body parts to discharge the bond, he refuses in order to be allowed to kill Antonio legally. Yet I argue that a usury scam such as the one Lodge exposes is part of the parody making up the comedy of Shakespeare’s play. Lodge’s “players” are a melancholy youth, a broker, a mistress, and a usurer (whom Lodge calls “merchant” throughout the pamphlet). A similar relationship to what Lodge describes exists between Antonio, Bassanio, and Shylock. This familiar usurious scheme⁵⁰ that in Lodge takes place between Christians, helps

⁵⁰ Since we can very rarely say with certainty what Shakespeare may or may not have read, I cannot say whether he read Lodge’s pamphlet on usury. According to the English Short Title Catalog, Lodge’s book only had the one edition, in 1584. Nevertheless, the trick has been alluded to with details which are very close to Lodge’s description in several early modern English plays. In *Jew of Malta* Barabas states: “Then after that was I an usurer, / and with extorting, cozening, forfeiting, / And tricks belonging unto brokery, / I filled the gaols with bankrupts in a year, / And with young orphans planted hospitals, / And every moon made some or other mad, / And now and

contextualize the Christian error Shakespeare's comedy exposes. Moreover, Shakespeare's addition of a Jewish figure to Lodge's dynamic, a figure who, as we have seen, often appears in plays to expose Christian hypocrisy, helps create comedy through parody. Shylock's cynical resolve to follow negative Christian examples set by Bassanio and Antonio humorously makes the Christians, albeit temporarily, victims of their own doctrine. Inserting a Jew into Lodge's dynamic emphasizes to Protestants the damage that can be done when members of a Protestant nation set examples that are not all that Christian for outside observers, particularly outsiders they view as enemies,.

Shakespeare seems to align Bassanio and Antonio with the picture of Christians gone astray as painted by Lodge in his *Alarum against Usury*. In doing so, Bassanio and Antonio become poor Christian examples. Moreover, Antonio's and Bassanio's adverse Christian behavior is made more serious by their association with a Jew, who, instead of being led towards salvation by what should be their Christian righteousness, is actually led further away by their bad example. When we first meet Bassanio, he is completely skint and he is approaching Antonio with the express desire to get money from him. Moreover, Bassanio wants this loan because he himself is a dissolute youth; by his own admission he has "disabled" his "estate" and now his "chief care / Is to come fairly off from... great debts," including a previously unpaid loan from Antonio, to which his self-described "prodigal[ity]" has bound him (I.i.126-127). It is important to realize that becoming debt-free is the "chief care" driving

then one hang himself for grief, / Pinning upon his breast a long great scroll / How I with interest tormented him" (2.3.190-199). It is also alluded to in In John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins' *The travailes of the three English Brothers* (1607), Sir Thomas's jailer soliloquizes: "Wee Turkes are to these Christians for all the world like Vsurers to young heyres, make picking meate of their carcasses, euen to the very bones, and then leaue them to the hang-man, for theil none of them" (G3). In William Haughton's *Englishman for My Money, Or a Woman Will Have Her Will* (1616), Walgrave says of the usurer Pisaro: "[H]e kindly takes our Landes, / Swearing, Good Gentlemen you shall not want, / Whilst old Pisaro, and his credite holds" (I.ii.258-260).

Bassanio's scheme to woo a rich heiress into marriage. He tells Antonio that the new loan he wants will aid him in pretending to be solvent, because it will be "the means [he needs] / To hold a rival place with one" of "the many Jasons come in quest of her" (I.i.174, 173). Bassanio considers Portia an easy mark, because, as he tells Antonio, he "did receive fair speechless messages" from her eyes (I.i.163); thus he can assure Antonio that he will "questionless be fortunate," and, by gaining her, gain her estate, which will in turn allow him to "bring [Antonio's] latter hazard back again, / And thankfully rest debtor for the first" (I.i.151-152). In short, this scheme will allow Bassanio "to get clear of all the debts [he] owes" (I.i.134).

However, Bassanio's desire to rectify his situation by marrying a rich heiress and taking over her estate is the sort of poor Christian example that causes Christianity to be mocked by outsiders. In fact, Jewish figures in both Daborne and Bacon criticize this very tendency in Christian marriage. As is illustrated in *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, The Jew Rabshake gives the Christian "habit" of "suffer[ing] their wives to be their masters" as one reason he will "be none of [Christian] society" (Daborne 6.15-16, 20). In Bacon, the Jew Joabin criticizes Europeans for having the attitude that "marriage [is] but a very bargain; wherein is sought alliance, or portion, or reputation, with some desire (almost indifferent) of issue; and not the faithful nuptial union of man and wife, that was first instituted"(17). Joabin claims the fictitious citizens of Bensalem "wonder (with detestation) at... Europe, which permit such things" in marriage (Bacon 17). It can be argued, then, that Bassanio's marriage scheme, as well as Antonio's sponsorship of it, creates an adverse Christian example.

Linking his characters to Lodge's pamphlet also allows Shakespeare to suggest that the friendship between Bassanio and Antonio is contrary to Protestant principle because it is based

on monetary need rather than brotherly love. Although Bassanio is not working for the usurer Shylock to scam Antonio, there are several aspects of Bassanio's character that nevertheless link him to both the broker and the mistress in Lodge's pamphlet. Youths whose prodigality has brought them to the brink of debtors' prison are exactly the characters merchant usurers in Lodge's pamphlet seek to hire as brokers who stalk the usurers' next mark. These desperate youths are only too glad to alleviate their own debt by securing more victims for the usurer in return for a cut of the usurer's profit. According to Lodge, usurers tell these brokers to pander loans to youths who seem melancholy and then to keep these youths on the hook by providing them with a mistress (also on the payroll of the usurer) who elicits further loans from the mark due to her expensive tastes.

The broker / melancholy youth / mistress triangle Lodge describes seems to be going on between Bassanio and Antonio. Since Bassanio is already aware that all Antonio's moneys "are at sea" and Antonio has neither "money nor commodity / To raise a present sum" (I.i.177-178), it seems odd that Bassanio would turn to Antonio rather than Solanio, Salerio, and / or Gratiano for his loan. Similar to Lodge's broker, Bassanio specifically targets Antonio because he knows that Antonio's inexplicable "sadness" as well as his passionate attachment to Bassanio (whether platonic or sexual in nature) has been the reason Antonio has previously lent him money. By aligning Bassanio with the broker employed by corrupt merchant usurers in Lodge's *Alarum against Vsurers*, Shakespeare stresses that Bassanio is acting contrary to Christianity by taking advantage of his friend's long-established love for him simply because he needs money.

Bassanio's desperation for money, which makes him give way to adverse Christian behavior, and Antonio's emotionally involved reaction to Bassanio's plight, are similar to how Lodge describes the process in which the broker is found and put to work for the usurer:

[Merchant usurers] finde out... some olde soaking undermining Solicitour, whom they both furnish with money and erpence, to sette him foorth and gette him more creditte: This good fellow must haunte Ordinaryes, canuasse up and down Powles, [until he finds] some young Nouice, whome, by fortune... hee findeth in melancholyke passions at the Ordinarye. (2r)

Like the "soaking undermining Solicitour" whose desperate situation leads him to the necessary expedience of having to work as a broker for a merchant / usurer, Bassanio's need of money leads him into the adverse Christian behavior of taking advantage of his friend's weaknesses.

Moreover, by giving way to emotion and melancholy as does the youth in Lodge's pamphlet, Antonio is vulnerable to being led astray by Bassanio's unwise request. Thus, Antonio can be seen as the "young Nouice" in Lodge; the first lines of the play have Antonio expressing melancholy: "In sooth, I know not why I am so sad: /... And such a want-wit sadness makes of me, / That I have much ado to know myself" (I.i.1-7). When Bassanio approaches him a few lines later, he overhears Antonio say to Gratiano, "I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano; / A stage where man must play a part, / And mine a sad one" (I.i.77-79). According to Lodge, the broker approaches such a one by giving him to understand that "money... is able to compasse anye thing" and to assure the youth that his "creditte" will enable him to get as much as he needs in order to end his melancholy mood (2r). Although Shakespeare does not present Bassanio as trying to cheat Antonio in his attempt to cheer him up by including him in the list of lenders who will get their money back, Bassanio nevertheless exploits Antonio's sadness as an easy way to persuade his friend to use his credit and take out yet another loan for him with a

usurer. By creating parallels between his own work and Lodge's usury pamphlet and bringing them to life on the stage, Shakespeare can dramatize for audiences how easy it is even for likeable Christians such as Bassanio and Antonio inadvertently to fall away from Christianity. In other words, although Bassanio and Antonio are jovial youths with whom the audience is meant to feel some connection, when money is involved they are easily led to eschew or skirt Christian precepts, as are the conspirators listed in Lodge's usury scam. Even more shockingly, Bassanio's and Antonio's cavalier attitude towards Protestant precepts nearly costs Antonio his life.

Alluding to usury schemes such as Lodge reveals, allows Shakespeare to emphasize how Bassanio's adverse Christian behavior influences Antonio and, as a result, almost leads to Antonio's destruction. For just as Lodge's usury scheme reveals how brokers indebt their youthful marks to men who destroy them, Bassanio's desperate need for money causes him to indebt his friend Antonio to his enemy, Shylock, who clearly wishes the merchant dead. Like Lodge's broker, Bassanio brings the usurer, Shylock, into contact with his prey, Antonio. Lodge writes:

[T]his broking knaue... mak[es] him [the youth] belieue, that by other meanes monie maye not be had, and swear[s] to him, that there will be great losse, and that he could wish the Gentleman would rather refuse than take. But the youth, not esteeming the losse, so hee supplye his lacke, sets him forwarde. (3v)

In *Merchant*, as in the above passage, Shylock seems to be the only "meanes monie maye... be had"; for although Bassanio has "go[ne] forth" to find out what Antonio's "credit can in Venice do" (I.i.179-180), it is curious that he comes back with one of Antonio's enemies, one whom the Christian merchant has called "misbeliever, cut-throat dog" (I.iii.106), and whose business practices he has undermined "[i]n the Rialto" (I.iii.102). This suggests that Bassanio can find no

one else willing to extend more money to Antonio. Another similarity to the above passage is that at one point in the transaction Bassanio tries to dissuade Antonio from over-committing to debt, saying, “You shall not seal to such a bond for me: / I’ll rather dwell in my necessity” (I.iii.150-151). And similar to the naïve youth, Antonio airily asserts that he will be able to pay the bond before the three month agreement is up, which is, incidentally, the same amount of time Lodge’s usurer sets: “the money [is] repayable at three moneths ende” (3v). Shakespeare, of course, alters the relationship between the youth and broker to be one of friendship rather than trickery. In doing so, audiences are faced with an even more troubling scenario. Whether the broker and youth are friends or foes, the result of the transaction is the same; either way the foolish youth ends up dangerously over-committed. Bassanio’s insatiable need for money due to his irresponsible prodigality thus leads Antonio into error which, in turn, nearly leads to the latter’s destruction.

Using a familiar usury scheme such as Lodge’s as an integral layer to his comedy allows Shakespeare to suggest that Shylock is also, to some small extent, a victim of Bassanio’s poor Christian example. According to Lodge, deals between the broker, the youth, and the usurer are often conducted over dinner:

This Gentleman [the youth] and the broker must bee invited by the Merchant [usurer], when amongst other table talke, M. Scrape-penie feeles my youth if his monie be gone, & offring speeches of willingnes to provide him always at his need, sets on by a beck his cousoning mate to procure the gentleman to craue more mony, which he doth, the merchant cunningly coulering his craft.... (12 v-r)

In *Merchant*, a parody of this dinner not only forwards the plot point of Jessica’s elopement, but puts emphasis on the Jew as victim. The “broker,” Bassanio, arranges the deal-solidifying dinner between the usurer, Shylock, and the youth, Antonio as a ruse designed to get Shylock

away from his house so that his daughter Jessica can rob her usurer father and escape with her Christian lover Lorenzo. Thus, instead of the usurer being an insidious victimizer of the Christian broker and youth, he is instead a Jew who is prey to both. Although Jessica's elopement mocks Shakespeare's Jewish figure even as he is victimized, there is another less comic way the Jew is being persecuted here. The very act of a Christian inviting a Jew to dinner is an added example of Bassanio's disdain for religious doctrine. In inviting Shylock to dine with him, Bassanio either is unaware, forgets, or ignores that Jews observe dietary laws that are, for them, doctrinal. Interestingly, Shylock does not use his own scriptures to decline the offer. Instead, and as if he is appealing to Bassanio in terms a Christian can understand, the Jew cites Matthew 2.23 where Jesus drives a devil into a herd of swine as the reason he does not eat pork. However, when Shylock later accepts the invitation to meet with the broker and merchant, he may again be following their "Christian" example. Just as Antonio's greed has caused him to set aside his ethical concerns and has driven him to agree to a base bond in order to receive, as he thinks, 3,000 ducats gratis, Shylock's vengeful desire to "feed upon / The prodigal Christian" due to "hate" (II.v.15, 14) has superseded his desire to remain kosher.

Although I do not deny that the play implies that Shylock deserves to be cheated, robbed, and lose all through harsh judgment because he is an unbelieving Jew who leaps at the chance, when provided legally, to kill his Christian adversary Antonio, the allusory presence of Lodge's usury scam suggests another layer to this interpretation. In his exposé, Lodge compares Christian usurers to Jews, asserting that it is Christians whose "incredible & iniurious dealings [are] more th[a]n Judaicall cousonage" (4r). Just as Lodge here uses "Judaicall cousonage" as a yardstick against which to measure Christian usurers in order to highlight practices that run

counter to Christian precept, for Shakespeare, Shylock serves the same function. Shylock's "dutiful" following of Antonio and Bassanio into sin by means of the Christian example set by the pair's dubious dealings, exposes and emphasizes Christian wrong-doing. As will be shown below, in *Merchant* Shakespeare shows how Christians and Jew all use the law legally to commit evil, thus blurring the doctrinal distinctions that should set Christian apart from Jew.

As in Shakespeare, Lodge's pamphlet exposes how merchant usurers manipulate lending laws in order to cheat and take the place of the landed gentry. One of Lodge's main reasons for writing the pamphlet is to expose an ill that is not prosecutable by commonwealth law:

A miserable and wretched state is this,... when such eie soures are not seene in a common weale, when such abuses are winked at, when such desolation is not perceived, & wonderfull it is, that among so many godly lawes, made for the administration of iustice, ther be none found out[.] (4 v)

As Lodge sees it, merchant usurers, their brokers, and hired mistresses manipulate the law so that they will steal everything from their mark, the youth, and not get caught. This is similar to the actions of Bassanio, Antonio, and Shylock in *Merchant*. In order to avoid debtor's prison, Bassanio manipulates the law by using a loan from his friend to outfit himself as if he were still solvent so he can "hold a rival place" (I.i.174) with the wealthy men who go to Belmont to woo the heiress. His success allows him to gain control of the heiress's wealth, and pay back his debts. Antonio also manipulates the law to get a large loan in order to express love and care for his friend; he accepts Shylock's "merry," legal, yet heinous bond, which in effect means he has agreed to sacrifice his life rather than pay an exorbitant interest rate. And Shylock, in getting Antonio to hazard a pound of his flesh, manipulates the law to murder a man upon whom he has long dreamed of being revenged.

By early modern Calvinist standards, due to each man's blatant manipulation of the law, the actions of Antonio, Bassanio, and Shylock before the trial scene would have suggested to the original audience a lack of God's mysterious grace. To live within grace, Antonio would have controlled his love and not have agreed to go into debt for a friend whose prodigality was already well-established; Bassanio would not have exploited his friend's funds and love nor would he have exploited the regard Portia has for him to alleviate his debt, especially since his debt is a result of his own imprudence; and Shylock would have continued to curb his hatred for Antonio by striking with him an ordinary bond with interest rather than a bond that might lead to legal murder. Lodge certainly takes the Calvinist religious view that Christian cheats are without grace, by applying the language surrounding God's grace and election to their deeds. Early on in his pamphlet, for example, Lodge calls the bad merchants "ungracious men" (2v), a Calvinist allusion to those who are reprobate because they lack God's mysterious grace. Later in the pamphlet, Lodge uses the word "reprobate" when he complains that usurers "are growen into a reprobate sense, and haue forsaken the Law of the Lord" (17v). Since the word "reprobate" is used to identify those who are not elect, Lodge implies that these usurious men, though claiming Christianity, are lacking God's mysterious grace which would put them among his elect. Although as a Jew, only Shylock should be considered reprobate, Lodge's rubric suggests, prior to events in the trial scene, that the Christians Antonio and Bassanio are as reprobate as the Jew.

Lodge also distinguishes between bad merchants and good ones by stating that "as among a tree of fruite there bee some withered fallings"(2v). This line calls to mind the "branches [which] be broken off[f]" from the originary root of God's people, about which Paul

speaks in Romans 11.17. Lodge alludes again to the language of Romans 11, when he writes: "All graces whatsoever, all ornaments what so they be, either giuen us by our fore-parent, or grafted in us by experience, are in themselues as nothing: unlesse they be ordered by the power of the most highest" (8r). Here Lodge's words call to mind Romans 11.19-24 where Paul assures Gentiles that they may enjoy the ornaments and graces God gave Jews as recorded in the Hebrew scriptures if, although Gentiles, they are grafted into the election covenant. Paul also asserts that broken off branches, such as unbelieving Jews, can, through belief in Christ, be grafted back into the election covenant. Although this allusion exists, here Lodge appropriates Paul's language in order to claim that without God it matters not whether one is born with the "ornaments" of landed gentry, or grafted into it as are the merchants who gain this status by means of usurious tricks. If the youthful victim's lust causes him to lose those "ornaments," he is as sinful as is the greedy merchant usurer who cheats the youth out of his estate. In this way, Lodge equates the "sin" of prodigality with the "sin" of usury, making victim and usurer equally responsible for the social disorder Lodge exposes. When Shakespeare alters the players in the usury scam by making one of them a Jew, the allusion to being cut off from God's covenants intensifies. Until the trial scene, Antonio and Bassanio, it can be said, are no more Christian than the practicing Jew, Shylock. These unchristian-acting Christians, then, are in danger of losing the "ornaments" of the election covenant and being cut off from God in the same way unrepentant Jews (like Shylock) had been cut off from God for unbelief. When, unlike Shylock, Antonio and Bassanio eventually and voluntarily do repent, Christian supremacy in the play is restored.

Because in *Merchant* Christians and Jew seek to manipulate the law to achieve their various goals, prior to the trial scene, Antonio, Bassanio, and Shylock, like Lodge's usurer and youth, can be seen by the audience as being equal parts reprobate. However, this dynamic changes once it becomes clear to the Christian characters that Antonio has defaulted on the loan and must actually pay with a pound of his flesh. At this point in the play, the Christian characters exhibit remorse and begin to seek ways to correct what they have done. For example, after reading the letter telling him that Antonio has defaulted on his bond with Shylock, Bassanio confesses to Portia that although he had honestly told her he had no money, he had not told her all:

Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
 How much I was a braggart. When I told you
 My state was nothing, I should have told you
 That it was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
 I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
 Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
 To feed my needs. (III.ii.256-262)

Here Bassanio lays out the entire scope of his crime to Portia in the hopes that they might put the situation aright. For the first time Bassanio realizes how selfishly and recklessly he had set aside his knowledge of Antonio's antipathy with Shylock, the dangerous nature of the murderous bond, and the tenuousness of the bond's security and its unsteady reliance to ease his own desperation. But Bassanio's realization and subsequent confession to Portia also bespeaks his willingness to repent this wrong against Antonio, which brings him back within God's grace.

Antonio expresses repentance for his deeds as well, even embracing death in order to "pay [his friend's] debts" (IV.i.275). Antonio tells Bassanio:

Fortune shows herself more kind
 Than is her custom: it is still her use
 To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
 To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
 An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
 Of misery doth she cut me off.
 ...Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
 And he repents not that he pays your debt;
 For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
 I'll pay it presently with all my heart. (IV. i. 263-76)

Antonio's willingness to die to avoid the shame of debt, though an expression of his deep love for Bassanio, is also an attitude which reflects Lodge's claim that gentry who find themselves in hopeless debt to usurers "ungratiously" opt for death. Lodge writes:

Who hauing only the name of gentry left them to promote them to honor, & finding no reliefe any way, are inforced either in forren countries to end their liues miserably or desperatly, some more ungratious, are a pray for the gallous [sic], choosing rather to die with infamie, then to liue to beg in miserie. (4r)

Lodge claims the desire to die on the gallows is "ungratious," that is, a choice further implying the lack of God's grace. Lodge's emphasis is likely due to his desire to accentuate the seriousness of the usury problem to his target audience, which includes those readers of the same mind with radical Protestant Sir Philip Sidney, to whom the first dedicatory epistle is addressed. Antonio's speech during the trial expresses a similarly "ungratious" desire for death, praising fortune for this escape from shame rather than God. Nevertheless, Antonio is provided (as was the virtuous Susanna) "a Daniel," an event which suggests that Antonio's willingness to accept and pay for his mistake with his life is repentance enough. It is only the Jew who does not repent—until forced. And reluctant repentance, based on law rather than mercy, is ultimately what reveals "[t]he difference of old Shylock and Bassanio" (II.v.2), the "difference" between his converted daughter's "flesh" and his (III.i.34), and the "difference of... spirits"

(IV.i.364) between the Venetians and Shylock which the Duke attempts to make Shylock understand during the trial. The difference is being able to repent one's evil deeds and show mercy. Ultimately, Shylock is unable to reconcile his hate and be merciful to Antonio.

During the trial scene the Jew finally surpasses the Christians in wrong-doing. Shylock's refusal to show mercy and his stubborn adherence to law were, for early modern audiences steeped in doctrines from Paul's Letter to the Romans, the classic hallmarks of the unbelieving Jew, and underscore the "difference of... spirits" between Jew and Christian. During the trial, Shylock's insistence on pure justice ("I crave the law") over mercy, exemplifies the difference between Jews who followed Christ during and after his lifetime from those who clung to Pharisaical law. However, Shylock's attitude might more significantly represent Catholics who Pharisaically cleave to rituals found in the mass rather than rely on the interior spirituality known as faith, or those non-conformist Protestants whose uncompromising doctrinal interpretations had caused them to be labeled Puritan. Paul lays the foundation for this difference when describing it in regards to believing Gentiles and Pharisaical Jews in Romans 9:

What shal we say then? That the Gentiles which folowed not righteousnes, haue atteined vnto righteousnes, euen the righteousnes, which is of faith. But Israel which folowed the Law of righteousnes, colde not atteine vnto the Law of righteousnes. Wherefore? Because they soght it not by faith, but as it were by the workes of the Law: for they haue stombled at the stombling stone, As it is written, Beholde, I lay in Sion a stombling stone, and a rocke to make men fall: and euerie one that beleueth in him, shal not be ashamed. (v. 30-33)

The note to verse 33 remarks: "Iesus Christ is to the infideles destruction & to the faithful life & resurrection" (1560 *Geneva Bible*). But how does one discover whether a person is one of the infidels or one of the faithful? As we have seen, *Merchant* does much work to confuse the issue; Shylock, Antonio, and Bassanio all manipulate the law and are therefore of a "kind."

Portia, in her guise as Balthazar underscores this lack of difference when she asks, “Which is the merchant here? and which the Jew?” (IV.i.170). This question emphasizes that up to this point in the play, the Christians have not exemplified what has made them different from non-believers such as Jews. Moreover, as Shylock’s responses to Portia / Balthazar reveal, the example so far set by Antonio and Bassanio has led the Jew so far from the saving grace of Christianity that he is unable to show Antonio any mercy. And, as a result of his refusal to follow the “true” Christian example set by Portia (“[t]hen must the Jew be merciful” [IV.i.178]), the Duke is forced to deal the Jew a harsh sentence.

From the beginning of the trial scene, Antonio and Bassanio have “attained unto righteousness” via repentance but Shylock clearly has not. Nevertheless, Portia / Balthazar gives Shylock three chances to leave his strict adherence to the law and show Christian mercy. First, after remarking on the “strange nature” (IV.i.173) of the murderous bond and receiving Antonio’s confession that he did indeed agree to it, Portia says, “Then must the Jew be merciful” (IV.i.178). Stubbornly sticking to law, however, Shylock aggressively demands to know what “compulsion” of the law requires him to be merciful (IV.i.179). Portia / Balthazar then instructs Shylock in Christianity by, in effect, inviting him to choose to follow the example of God’s mercy rather than strict justice:

It is an attribute of God himself;
 And earthly power doth then show likest God’s
 When mercy seasons justice: therefore Jew,
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
 That in the course of justice, none of us
 Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,
 And that same prayer, doth teach us all to render
 The deeds of mercy. (IV.i.191-98)

It is a simple lesson; if we expect mercy, we should be merciful. However, following Antonio's pre-trial example of mercilessness towards the Jew, Shylock rejects mercy and again states his position: "I crave the law" (IV.i.202). Still, Portia / Balthazar gives Shylock one more chance to show mercy, saying "be merciful, / Take thrice thy money, bid me tear the bond" (IV.i.229-30). However, just as Peter thrice denies Christ, Shylock again refuses, stating he will not agree to a show of mercy not "nominated in the bond" (IV.i.255).

Portia / Balthazar belabors this important point regarding law and mercy because it is a pivotal distinction in Protestant doctrine. In the prologue to his 1594 translation of Martin Luther's *Methodical Preface... before the Epistle to the Romanes*, William Watkinson calls the difference between law and mercy a "principal poynt of Christian religion," asking his readers to

Use and peruse this prologue, and then it wil lighten thine understanding very much in this weighty matter of our saluation in this chiefe and principal poynt of Christian religion: to wyt, whether we do be iustified by the workes of Law, or by the mercy of God only. (A.iii.v)

Shylock's inability to show mercy is what marks him as different from Antonio and Bassanio. The Jew's lack of mercy is what makes him indelibly a Jew, incapable of embracing Christian tendencies on his own. If read in this sense, Shakespeare here seems to be criticizing Jews. However, it is worth noting that justification by faith through mercy is a Protestant tenet, while an insistence on law is perceived as Catholic error, an idea Watkinson alludes to above. If this part of the trial scene is read with Protestant doctrine in mind, Shylock would represent wrong-headed Christianity (in this case, Catholicism) rather than Jewish error. However, there is another Christian-inspired aspect of Shylock's character. In refusing to show Antonio mercy, the Jew is obeying Protestant doctrine and following Antonio's Christian example. Up until this point in the play, Antonio has never shown Shylock mercy; indeed, Antonio had earlier claimed

that he is “as like... / To spet on [Shylock] again, to spurn [him] too” (I.iii.125-26), regardless of how much money Shylock lends him. Given these two ways in which Shylock’s character can be read as falling in line with Protestant doctrine, it seems likely that in addition to his Jewish persona, the figure of Shylock both embodies and represents Catholic and Protestant negative behavior.

Shylock’s adherence to the law rather than mercy during the trial scene is the place where Shylock departs from both negative and positive Christian example, and thus marks the difference Christian audiences have been expecting to see between the Jew and his Christian adversaries. Watkinson’s translation of Luther’s *Methodical Preface... to the Romanes* affirms a Jewish stereotype, gleaned from Paul’s description of Pharisical Jews, that “all the Jewes... make semblance to fulfyl the Law... by doing outward work” (A5). It is true Antonio agreed to the bond which threatens his life thus making it “legal” for Shylock to take the pound of flesh. However, a trial that results in Shylock accomplishing this aim would be but a “semblance to fulfyl the Law” because it requires that another law be broken: the commandment against murder. Portia / Balthazar immediately recognizes that Shylock’s “legal” bond is an “attempt...” though “indirect” to “seek the life of [a] citizen” (IV.i.345-347). As she observes, Shylock’s insistence on the application of “outward” law which allows him to take a pound of flesh is merciless because it will result in Antonio’s torture and death. Moreover, in making her argument to Shylock, Portia follows Romans 2, where Paul warns that those Jews who “gloriest in the Law, through breaking the Law dishonerest... God”(v. 23). For Portia, Shylock dishonors God because he uses one law to break another. To early modern audiences, then, the Jew’s adherence to Venetian law is merely a “semblance to fulfyll” it. Shylock is therefore behaving as

do “all the Jewes” according to Protestant doctrine derived from Martin Luther and the apostle Paul. Nevertheless it is worth remembering that Luther’s statement about Jews making only “a semblance to fulfill the Law... by doing outward work” (A5), was made as a way for him to position his reformed position against practices of the Roman Catholic Church. Here again, then, is another example where Shylock represents not simply a Jew, but wrong-headed Christianity, which in Protestant terms, translates to the Roman Catholic Church.

Moreover, Luther asserts that law must not be manipulated for selfish or sinful purposes:

For though thou seeme to fulfill the Law in thy external actions, eyther for feare of punishment, or for loue of thy self: yet notwithstanding thou dost all these thyngs with an unwilling mynd, with an hard stubborne hart, without al loue and good affection toward God and his law. Insomuch that thou haddest rather there wer neyther Law nor law geuer at all: that so thy lust and concupiscence might not be repressed. (pdf 5-6)

Although earlier in the play Bassanio, Antonio, and Shylock are equally guilty of the “hard dealings” (I.iii.157) Shylock attributes to Christians, and have all selfishly manipulated the law as if “there wer neyther Law nor law geuer at all” to appease their various “lust[s],” only Shylock’s heart remains hard throughout the play. Just prior to the trial’s beginning, the Duke tells Antonio, “thou art come to answer / A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch / incapable of pity, void and empty / From any dram of mercy” (IV.i.3-6). And when Bassanio desperately tries to get Shylock to take other payment for the bond, Antonio vents his frustration: “You may as well do anything most hard, / As seek to soften that—than which what’s harder?—/ His Jewish heart” (IV.i.78-80). This exchange as well as Luther’s commentary addresses Romans 2.5-6, where Paul warns, “But thou, after thine hardnes and heart that can not repent, heapest vnto thy self wrath against the day of wrath and of the declaration of the iuste iudgement of God,

Who wil rewarde euerie man according to his workes.” The trial scene exemplifies Paul’s warning, for ultimately what redeems Antonio and Bassanio is their ability to recognize their wrong-doings and repent. Antonio even shows himself capable of mercy towards Shylock, when he chooses not to take advantage of the Jew’s judgment; instead of taking half Shylock’s money as he is entitled to do, Antonio makes that portion payable to Shylock’s daughter and Lorenzo only after the Jew dies. In other words, Shylock is different than the Christians Antonio and Bassanio because he does not find mercy within himself not to go through with the bond and he cannot be made to embrace mercy when reasoned with.

Although Shylock is certainly pegged as chief wrong-doer throughout the play, the similarity between the actions of Christians and Jew that come from the Jew following dubious Christian example is meant to highlight how easy it is for Christians to forsake Christian precepts. One effective way for Shakespeare to illustrate this is by having his Jewish character continuously point out the lack of good Christian example. Even during the trial scene when Shylock’s lack of Christianity catches up with him, Shakespeare still uses the Jew to set up the play’s final critique of its Christians. After the newlyweds Bassanio and Gratiano say they will sacrifice their wives’ lives to save Antonio from “this devil... this currish Jew” (IV.i.283, 288), Shylock, who is as shocked to hear this as are both Portia and Nerissa, exclaims, “These be Christian husbands. I have a daughter; / Would any of the stock of Barrabas / Had been her husband rather than a Christian” (IV.i.291-293)! We are here reminded, and again during the ring scene, that the love between Bassanio and Antonio more closely resembles that between man and mistress than between man and man. Although Bassanio claims his wife is “as dear” to him “as life itself” he makes it quite clear that his life, wife “and all the world / Are not...

esteem'd above [Antonio's] life" (IV.i.279-80). This gels with Bassanio's earlier explanation to Antonio that he seeks an heiress "a lady richly left" to aid him in dispatching "all the debts" he owes (I.i.161, 134) rather than that he is moved to go to Belmont out of love.

Another conversation confirming the greater love between Bassanio and Antonio as compared to what Bassanio feels for Portia occurs when Salerio describes to Solanio Antonio's parting words to Bassanio as the latter left for Belmont:

Bassanio told [Antonio] he would make some speed
Of his return: [Antonio] answered, "Do not so,
Slubber not business for my sake Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time,
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me—
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there." (II.viii.36-45)

It seems clear that Antonio is aware that Bassanio's love for Portia consists of "ostents"—that is, outward shows of love. According to Salerio, Antonio advises Bassanio not to "slubber... business" simply because Antonio is the real object of Bassanio's affection. Thus another bad example set by Christians in this play is that they frequently set aside regard for others, as well as for the religion in which they claim to believe, in favor of their business dealings and / or homoerotic love.

Following Bassanio's "Christian" example (i.e. confusion over what one should love most: business, God, or fellow humans) Shylock has also had trouble deciding which is more important to him—his ducats, the law, justice, or his daughter. To Salerio, Solanio describes Shylock's "passion so confused" upon learning that his daughter has run away with Lorenzo:

"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!

Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
 A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
 Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
 And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
 Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
 She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats." (II.viii.12-22)

And although Solanio here attributes this "strange, outrageous" utterance to the fact that it is made by a "dog Jew" (II.viii.13-14), we should not forget that the friend he is telling this to, had earlier also worried more about wealth than his own Christian soul. Trying to find a reason for Antonio's sadness, Salerio had noted back in Act I that if his wealth, like Antonio's, depended on the unpredictability of "argosies," he would have the following concern: "[When] I go to church / And see the holy edifice of stone / [I would] bethink me straight of dangerous rocks, / Which touching but my gentle vessel's side / Would scatter all her spices on the stream, / Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks" (I.i.29-34). The struggle to balance one's desire for wealth with spirituality and love is a central concept of Shakespeare's comedy in *Merchant* and is not confined to the Jew; in fact, as I have argued throughout this chapter, the Jew serves to illuminate an important danger that Christians can fall prey to; namely that Christians can slip from God's favor as easily as had the Jews when they had refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah prophesied in Hebrew scriptures. In other words, the "kindness" or likeness of the play's Christians to the Jew and the Jew's constant observations about how he is following Christian example and is therefore of a "kind" with them, creates the tension necessary to make the Christians' triumph a source of comic relief for *Merchant's* original audience.

Although both *Jew of Malta* and *Merchant of Venice* use Jewish figures to represent and emphasize the negative behavior of Christians, the purpose of this representation would have had little to do with any critique the writers wished to make about Jews. Instead, Jews and their

perceived errors represented a particularly frightening reminder of how easy it could be to fall into heresy, a heresy to which Christians felt themselves particularly vulnerable. It is to be remembered that English Protestants thought of practicing Jews as having committed avoidable heresies. According to the Christian scriptures (the New Testament), Jews had assisted in Christ's prosecution. Many had also refused to believe that Jesus was the messiah promised in Hebrew scriptures. For early modern English Protestants, these "Jewish" errors could have been avoided if Jews had heeded warnings found in their own scriptures. Moreover, English Protestants believed that as a result of these heresies, the Jewish nation had been destroyed in 70 CE by Roman invasion, causing Jews to "bec[o]me a traueing Nation indeed, traueing now aboue 1500. yeeres from being a Nation" (Purchas 67). Protestants found this Jewish example frightening because, as a reformed nation, early modern English Protestants were continuously involved in reinterpreting scripture. They therefore operated under the grave fear that they might interpret scripture incorrectly and suffer the loss of their nation, as had the Jews of old. Thus, Barabas and Shylock do not primarily represent a contemptuous critique of contemporary Jews and their practices. On the contrary, in each play these Jews' seeming knowledge of Protestant Christian doctrine often exceeds that of their Christian adversaries and allows these Jewish figures to expose the adverse Christian examples set by their foes. After exposing Christian hypocrisy, both Jewish characters follow the poor Christian examples set by the Christians. In other words, because bad Jewish behavior has been inspired by bad Christian behavior, these plays suggest that Christians have been behaving like the non-Christian Jews they have superciliously dismissed as "infidels."

As with many nuances in early modern plays, lines alluding to bible verses critical to Protestant doctrine are mostly lost. In Act II Scene v of *Merchant*, Shylock shivers at a “dream of money-bags” taking it to mean “[t]here is some ill a-brewing towards [his] rest” (17-18). Of course, the audience knows this premonition is well founded and looks to the actor playing Jessica and the servant Launcelot for signs of guilt, since the two of them have earlier been discussing Jessica’s plan to run away with her Christian lover Lorenzo and take some of her father’s moneybags with her. Perhaps both actors give a guilty start; at any rate, to cover for the awkward moment, Launcelot attempts to distract Shylock from a dream that comes rather too near the truth. The servant “beseech[es]” Shylock to hurry onward to the dinner he is attending with Antonio and Bassanio, saying, “I will not say you shall see a masque, but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on Black-Monday last, at six o’clock i’ th’ morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four in year in th’ afternoon” (II.v.22-27). Launcelot’s wild claim that his bleeding nose presages the performance of a masque, is a way to divert Shylock’s possible suspicion should he run into Lorenzo and company whose plan to steal away Jessica that night includes disguising themselves as masquers. However, Launcelot also means to mock Shylock’s psychic attempt to interpret his dream. Although it is possible for all audiences to laugh at Launcelot’s joke, exposing, as it is, the dubious nature of fortune-telling, the full implication of Launcelot’s reply is lost on today’s audiences. Only early modern playgoers would be aware that one stereotype attached to Jews was the mysteriousness surrounding their supposed reputation for prognostication.⁵¹ Baker

⁵¹ There were several early modern works claiming to be prognostications of Jews. Among them: *A prognostication for euer, made by Erra Pater, a lew, borne in lury, doctor in astromie* (1605), *Newes from Rome [which contains] certaine prophecies of a lew seruing to that Armie, called Caleb Shilocke, prognosticating many strange accidents*

Shakespeare director Haley E. R. Cooper recognizes and discusses the director's dilemma to keep the script as true to Shakespeare as possible while maintaining the play's sense for modern audiences. In her "Notes about the Script" in the playbill for the March 16, 2013 performance of *Merchant of Venice*, Cooper cites Launcelot's bleeding nose joke as an example of lines that she had decided to cut "because [they] were incomprehensible to a modern audience."

Similarly, much of this chapter's interpretation of Jewish figures in plays and prose would be lost on modern audiences. Today's readers and playgoers are as apt to understand the influence of Paul's Letter to the Romans on Protestant Christian doctrine and Reformation positioning as they are to think of Jews as fortune-tellers. Thus the doctrinal significance of a Jewish figure's relationship to a play's Christian characters is of little note to those who will stage "Jew plays" for modern audiences. Yet an increased understanding of the doctrinal importance of Jews in these plays assists our modern sensibility in feeling sympathy towards beleaguered Jewish figures. As Jews who seek to survive in environments not conducive to Judaism, the Jewish characters covered in this chapter do well as long as their adversaries behave according to Christian / Protestant principle. However, in the face of Christian hypocrisy, these same Jewish figures become severe (and in the case of Barabas and Shylock, murderous) critics of Christianity. Early modern English audiences must have felt a grudging sympathy with these Jewish figures; after all, the Christian error these characters reveal could not but be admitted as social problems their nation needed to address. Although these audiences may have disliked having Jewish figures point the finger at them, the fact that these

which shall happen the following yeere 1607 (1606), and *The vandering-Jew, telling fortunes to English-men* (1640).

characters are practicing Jews only adds to the effectiveness and provocation of their message. From a playwright's perspective, what better ethnic group could be used than that which allegedly gave birth to so-called "Judaicall cousonage" in order to emphasize that "Judaicall cousonage" (Lodge 4r) exists in Christian society and must urgently be addressed and resolved? If the Christians in the play had behaved in a "kinder" way towards these Jews, perhaps Jews would consider conversion to Christianity desirable and not feel, as does Rabshake, that due to hypocritical Christian behavior he will "be none of their society" (Daborne 6.17-18).

Unable to rely on her audience's sense of Christian doctrine to create a grudging sympathy towards Shylock, Baker Shakespeare director Haley E. R. Cooper had to depend on her actors' ability to evoke it. When Portia makes Lorenzo aware of the "good comforts" to come to him through "a special deed of gift" from "the rich Jew" (V.i.289-292), the actor playing Jessica⁵² snatches away from him the document which forces Shylock to make the Christian Lorenzo his heir. While the others finish acting out their last lines, Cooper's Jessica reads the deed in horror, regret, and remorse, as the ramifications of her father's sentence wash over her. Although I do not claim that early modern audiences had the same sense of sympathy towards Jews as Cooper attempts to evoke in her post-Holocaust audience by making the Jew's daughter regret her conversion, this chapter does propose that the Jewish figures were not fully unsympathetic and to some extent would have been seen as victims of policy that ran counter to Protestant Christian principles.

However, it must be taken into account that Jewish characters were not depicted as fully Jewish, but rather metonymic stand-ins for bad Christians. Because overtly practicing Jews

⁵² Nicole Moody.

in England were non-existent, it is likely that most early modern English audiences would not have perceived stage Jews as potential enemies of England; instead many playgoers would have focused on the ways in which these Jewish figures revealed how negative Christian example could threaten their nation. In fact, the Turks with whom the English traded, were a much more organized non-Christian threat to England than the scattered nation of practicing Jews.⁵³ Given the focus on religious positioning brought about by the sectional vacillations of the English Reformation, then, it is more likely that for early modern audiences, Jewish figures in plays and prose bore a closer relationship to the Jews discussed in Christian doctrine than to the practicing Jews that occupied foreign lands.

⁵³ This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

**CHAPTER 3: COUNSEL OF A JEW OR CRUELTY OF A TURK: ENGLISH CHRISTIAN QUANDARIES
AND THE MEDITERRANEAN**

English trade in the Mediterranean had been increasing since May 1580 when Elizabeth I and Ottoman Sultan Murad III had formed a “pledge of safeconduct [sic]... for English merchants in Ottoman-controlled seas and ports in the Eastern Mediterranean (or Levant) and along the Barbary coast of North Africa” (Woodhead). As a result, English merchants were increasingly visiting Mediterranean lands where they came into contact with Jews who practiced Judaism and Turks who practiced Islam. Unsurprisingly, then, a number of English plays staged aspects of Mediterranean trade which included Jewish and Turkish characters interacting: Robert Wilson’s *Three Ladies of London* (1584), Christopher Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* (ca. 1589), Robert Greene’s *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks* (1594), John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins’s *The Travailes of the three English Brothers* (1607), Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turk* (1612), and Thomas Goffe’s *The Raging Turk* (1634). Often these plays feature Jews and Turks conspiring together to poison enemies (Marlowe, Greene, Goffe) or attack, cheat, or convert Christians (Marlowe, Day, Daborne).⁵⁴ These conspiracies seem even more sinister when the Jewish and Turkish characters are made to utter violent anti-Christian curses: Day, Rowley and Wilkins’s Jew Zarith claims “the sweetest part / Of a lewes feast, is a Christians heart” (F2v), Marlowe’s Muslim Ithamore brags he has set “Christian villages on fire, /... cut their throats” and laughed to see men he has “cripple[d] / Go limping home to Christendom on stilts” (2.3.204-213). Marlowe’s Jew Barabas tells Ithamore, “we hate Christians both” (2.3.216) and shouts “Damned Christians” before being consumed by fire

⁵⁴ Wilson’s Jewish figure, Gerontus, is the only one not conspiring with a Turk to do evil. For a discussion of Gerontus and his function in Wilson’s *Three Ladies*, see previous chapter.

(5.5.85). The vicious nature of these staged “Jewish-Muslim partnerships” (Vitkus 183) along with Jewish / Muslim geographical (the Levant) and doctrinal similarities (e.g. circumcision) have frequently been used as evidence supporting the recent scholarly idea that early modern Englishmen “widely feared [an] alliance” between Mediterranean Jews and Turks against Christians (Loomba 148).

For those English Christians in foreign trade, Jews went from being ink and paper characters found in bibles, histories, and other religious documents to exotic foreigners prospering in Mediterranean port cities. It is therefore a reasonable assumption that increased contact with real life practicing Jews who were seen in constant interaction with Turks in the Mediterranean might shift English perceptions of Jews from crucial players in Protestant Christian religious doctrine to ruthless merchant rivals in league with the most threatening group of non-Christians, the Ottoman Turks. This socio-historical assumption, however, omits a central, doctrinal distinction between the two groups; namely that English Protestants believed themselves to be connected to the Jewish elect who, biblically, had descended from Isaac and Jacob. Turks, on the other hand, were believed to have been descended from Ishmael and Esau, the reprobate descendants of Abraham.

This chapter, then, explores the following questions: Did increased contact between Englishmen and practicing Jews in the Mediterranean cause the English, as some scholars presume, to begin seeing Turks and Jews as a combined “religious Other” whose “forms of foreignness” had become “blurred, or in some cases, indistinguishable” (Vitkus *Turning Turk* 183, 195)? Had Mediterranean trade caused the English to abandon their concept of Jews as the originators of Christianity, as I discuss in chapter 1, and to begin thinking of them instead as

non-Christian co-conspirators with Turks poised to bring Christendom to its knees? This chapter answers no to both questions. Instead, it suggests that early modern Englishmen understood Jews and Turks as occupying doctrinally diverse roles and, as a result, each group triggered distinct anxieties in English Protestants. As will be shown below, these doctrinal distinctions are clearly present in the period's textual histories and can also be discerned when reading plays featuring Jews and Turks interacting together.

Because Protestant doctrine directed theologians and lay people alike to Paul's Letter to the Romans, Jewish figures had shed some medieval stereotypes. No longer seen merely as "enemies" "as concerning the Gospel," the close linkage between Jews and Gentiles in Romans doctrines such as election, caused Jews to reemerge as "beloved for the fathers sakes" (Romans 11.28). This renewed attention on positive doctrinal associations with Jews in turn caused Protestants to view Jews as examples of good behavior (i.e. patriarchs, disciples, Jesus, and the apostles) as well as of bad behavior (i.e. Jews who refused salvation in Christ and received the punishment of national destruction). Post-Elizabethan Settlement English Protestants of various sects worked towards emulating those members of God's elect who chose the "right" path towards salvation and avoided following those Jews who had rejected the Gospel. Since during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries various forms of English Christianity were still vying for supremacy, Jews still occupied a crucial role in defining Christian doctrine. However, Muslims (or Turks, as they were more often called), being descendants of Abraham's illegitimate son Ishmael, had been cut off from the elect as early as

Genesis 21.12.⁵⁵ Christians therefore had no doctrinal connection with Turks to match the one they felt they had with Jews. Jewish characters interacting with Turks in Mediterranean plays, then, did not necessarily signify a Jewish / Muslim partnership against Christendom; indeed, Jewish figures in these plays continued to be severe critics of the hypocritical behavior of Christians, and often of Turks as well. Moreover, as English histories of the Turks from the 1540s through the seventeenth century make quite clear, English Protestants viewed the attitudes and behaviors of stage Turks as portending a 70 CE-scale punishment for an English Christendom that was often perceived as on the point of collapse. As will be discussed in more detail below, many English Protestants believed Roman Emperor Titus's invasion of Jerusalem in 70 CE was the Jews' punishment for having rejected Christ. Early modern English writers feared that due to English "sins," the Turks would destroy England and thereby render Englishmen nationless, which was the same punishment Jews had suffered for their unbelief at the hands of the Romans.

Chapter 2 of this project has already detailed the ways in which Jewish figures illuminated the troubling problem of unethical examples set by Christians. However, in plays featuring Jews and Turks together, the function of Jewish figures acquires an extra layer. For English Protestants, Jews also represented what might become of Englishmen who followed the usuriously avaricious mercantile dealings associated with Jews while trading in the Mediterranean. Although Turks engaging in Mediterranean trade were also known to be

⁵⁵ After Isaac's birth, Abraham's wife Sarah insists Abraham send away Hagar and Ishmael (because Ishmael had mocked Isaac). Abraham did not want to send his son away, "But God said vnto Abraham, Let it not be grieuous in thy sight for the childe, and for thy bond woman: in all that Sarah shal saie vnto thee, heare her voice: for in Izhak shal thy sede be called." The footnote to this verse in the 1560 *Geneva Bible* states: "The promised sede shalbe counted from Izhak and not from Ishmael" and cross-references Romans 9.7 as well as Hebrews 11.18. A footnote to Genesis 25.17 further explains that Ishmael's descendents "dwelt among the Arabians, and were separate from the blessed sede." Other early modern perceptions of Ishmael's connection to Islam are detailed below.

usurious, Jewish usury was a larger concern for English Protestants because, unlike the doctrinal connection Paul had outlined between Christians and Jews, Christians had no doctrinal link to Turks.

Usury, or lending at interest, was widely debated in early modern England due in large part to those Protestants (Puritans and Calvinists, mainly) who insisted that English behavior be based on scriptural precept. Lending at usurious rates between “brothers,” that is, to members of the same ethnic group, had been forbidden by Mosaic law. In many Christian lands, Jews had been usurers to Christians because, according to Deuteronomy 23, it was permitted to lend “[u]nto a stranger” (v.20).⁵⁶ However, as the latter part of the sixteenth century progressed, moneylending was increasingly needed to allow Englishmen to prosper. Moreover, usury itself was a way for Englishmen to prosper. As David Hawkes notes, “The demand for loans meant that lending even quite small sums at interest was a temptingly lucrative investment for many people”(18).

Other economic factors also played into the rising need for lending at interest. Hawkes writes that in Renaissance England:

Everyday economic business was normally conducted on the basis of credit, and usury was therefore a practical issue in the quotidian lives of early modern English people. But while the shortage of cash, combined with the rapid development of an exchange-based, market economy, made small-scale debt and credit ubiquitous, the traditional moral strictures against usury remained firmly in place. A troubling contradiction thus arose between theory and practice. (18)

⁵⁶ In Deuteronomy 23 the law reads: “¹⁹Thou shalt not give to usury to thy brother: as usury of money, usury of meat, usury of anything that is put to usury. ²⁰Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but thou shalt not lend upon usury unto thy brother, that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to, in the land whither thou goest to possess it.”

In other words, the increasing need for money lending, the relative absence of Jews (and of any “strangers”) to be moneylenders in England (as scripture demanded), and the concept of *sola scriptura*⁵⁷ within Protestantism unhappily collided. It is unsurprising, then, that “[e]very genre of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English writing testifies to the era’s horror of usury” (Hawkes 16). In addition, because it was a “commonplace” “idea that usurers were an especially intensified form of Jew” in early modern English writing (Hawkes 68), Jewish references were often applied to the Christian usurers in order to emphasize how Christians were in danger of following in the footsteps of Jews, a situation Paul had explicitly warned against at Romans 11.24.⁵⁸

Usurious behavior in Jews, then, concerned English Protestants because they believed themselves to be doctrinally grafted onto Judaism. As Thomas Lodge’s *An Alarum against Vsurers* (1584)⁵⁹ and similar pamphlets⁶⁰ had outlined, many English merchants were behaving like Jews by engaging in usurious practices. In his pamphlet, Lodge likens usurers to the behavior of reprobate Jew Jezebel, in order to claim that English usurers are courting God’s wrath; hence, he pleads with them to repent:

You long after Nabals vineyard with Iesebel, but the dogs shall deuour you in the gate: you heape house upon house, land upon land... , as though this world would last euer, but sodainly shal the wrath and curse of the Lord fall upon you, and (without speedie repentaunce) he will consume you in a moment. O turne speedily unto the Lord, and put not off from daie to daie, least his wrath be hot

⁵⁷ *Sola scriptura* or “by scripture alone” was a central belief of Protestant Christianity.

⁵⁸ As discussed previously in this project, Paul had claimed that “if God had spared not the natural branches [the Jews], take hede, lest he also spare not the[m]” (Romans 11.21). According to Paul, Jews had not believed that Jesus was the fulfillment of prophecies found in the Hebrew scriptures (such as in Isaiah). Due to this unbelief, they had been cut off from God.

⁵⁹ Discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

⁶⁰ Many pamphlets on usury were published. Here is very small selection: Thomas Wilson’s *A Discourse on Usury* (1572), Thomas Pie’s *Usury’s Spright Conjur’d* (1604), the anonymous pamphlet *Vsurie Arraigned and Condemned* (1625), and John Blaxton’s *The English Usurer* (1635).

against you, and he make you pertakers of the plagues of Chore and Abiram.⁶¹ (F5v).

For Lodge, usurers are among the greatest Christian sinners; he therefore considers it the grossest hypocrisy that usurers behave “as religious as the best, [and] hannt the Church with the most” (C5v). Lodge does not simply liken usurers to Jews; he claims that their “incredible & iniurious dealings” are “more than Judaicall cousonage” (B5v).

Extreme usurious lending had long been associated with Jews. According to Shapiro, medieval Jews were reported by English histories to have demanded six to eight times more interest from loans than the English rate of ten percent (99).⁶² However, in the sixteenth century, many Christian merchants had begun charging extreme usurious rates for their loans. According to Peter Berek, by 1618, Anthony Munday⁶³ had noted how English “pawnbrokers... t[ook] as security[,] items worth double the money lent, and then s[old] the security at a profit when the debtor default[ed] rather than pay the accumulated interest” (147). Such usurious behavior in Englishmen was seen as a rejection of Protestant Christian principles. Quoting St. Bernard, Munday describes Christian usurers as “*Baptisatos Iudaeos; who take themselves to bee Christians, when they are worse (indeede) than the Iewes ever were for usurie*” (qtd. in Stow 233-234). As well, by behaving as Jews, English usurers were seen as being one of the unethical groups of Englishmen capable of bringing about the punishment God had wrought on the Jews: the destruction of their nation.⁶⁴ As will be discussed below, English histories often

⁶¹ In Numbers 16, Korah (Chore) and Abiram rebelled against Moses. As punishment, God opened the earth and they, their families, co-conspirators, and all their goods were swallowed up.

⁶² Shapiro cites Richard Grafton’s *An abridgement of the chronicles of England*, first published in 1562.

⁶³ In Munday’s revision of John Stow’s *A suruay of London* (1603).

⁶⁴ The dire consequences of the Jews having been cut off from God had been recorded in early modern English translations (ranging from 1558-1689) of Abraham ben David ha-Levi Ibn Daud’s book 3 of his *Sefer ha-Kabalah*,

addressed the possibility that national destruction could be brought about by Christians who engaged in biblically condemned acts such as usury. Moreover, it was believed that this devastation would come from the Turks in the form of a crushing Ottoman invasion.

Although the advancement of England's mercantile interests and contacts with non-Christians in the Mediterranean made usury and the avarice that accompanied it a central concern for Englishmen, there was also a cultural sense that Christian error in general was on the rise and that it was endangering England as a nation. At the end of his book *The Policie of the Turkish Empire* (1597), Giles Fletcher⁶⁵ specifically identifies the rise and threat of the Ottoman Empire as a result of Christian error:

[Y]et hath God suffered these reprobates [the Turks] to preuaile against the Christians, because they haue not walked in the right way and truth of his religion: not with that sinceritie, reuerence and due obedience, as becommeth the Professors of Christian pietie. (82r)

As well, Englishmen were aware of how the "negligence" of other Christian nations had already caused them to succumb to Islam. Chapter 8 of *Purchas His Pilgrims* (1625)⁶⁶ lists many formerly Christian African communities at the end of which the author remarks: "I know not where to finde euen among all the natiue Inhabitants of Afrike, any Christians more" (112). In *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, (1603), Richard Knolles attributes the Muslim conquest of formerly Christian "Asia" to "the carelesnesse of the Christians" and to "the effeminate Christians on that side of Asia" (A4r-A5v). Knolles also brings the Muslim threat to the edges of Eastern Europe, identifying places like "Bulgaria, Seruia, Bosna, Armenia, [and] a great part of

(1160-1), which told how the Jewish nation had been destroyed in 70 CE by Roman invasion. Early modern Englishmen understood contemporary Jews as still suffering this fate

⁶⁵ Although authorship for this work is unclear, the English Short Title Catalog states that this work is "[s]ometimes attributed to Giles Fletcher, the elder" (bap. 1546, d. 1611).

⁶⁶ Entitled "Master Brerewoods Enquiries of the Religions professed in the World: Of Christians, Mahumetans, Iewes and Idolaters; with other Philosophicall speculations, and diuers Annotations added."

Hungarie” (A5v) as having been conquered by the Ottoman Turks. Like Fletcher, Knolles imputes this circumstance to the “Almightie who in iustice deliuereth into the hands of these merciless miscreants, nation after nation, kingdome vpon kingdome” (A5v). In other words, Jews, who were thought to have been punished by God via the Romans for their disobedience and sin, represented a template for what would happen to English Christians who similarly disobeyed God. Turks, on the other hand, were to the sinful English like the Romans had been to the disobedient Jews; that is, an invasion force poised to mete out God’s punishment. English Protestants therefore believed themselves to be in danger of Turkish annihilation as a “iust plague” for their non-Christian “Judaical” misdeeds.

Plays featuring Jews engaging in nefarious mercantile deals in the Mediterranean, then, represented for English Protestants how they might be bringing about their own destruction by practicing doctrinally unapproved forms of avarice such as usury when engaging in dubious lucrative opportunities offered by Muslim Turks. In other words, stage Jews depicted as succumbing to “Turkish” behavior were yardsticks against which Christian behavior was measured, in that Jews, according to Paul, could be seen to predict the behavior of Christians. Similar to the way Paul used unbelieving Jews in the bible to warn Gentile Christians what would happen to them if they failed to keep the faith, early modern stage Jews in league with stage Turks were used to presage the disaster Christians could expect should they follow “Jewish example” and abandon their religious precepts when in league with Turks.

In Robert Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turk* (1612), the Christian pirate Ward follows the Jew Benwash in several sins and finally into the ultimate heresy—denouncing one’s religion by converting to another (in this case, both Jew and Christian convert to Islam). It is worth

noting that Daborne's Ward is based on a real pirate whose story, along with that of another pirate, Danseker (also spelled Dansiker), was reported by Anthony Nixon in his 1609 *Newes from sea, of tvvo notorious pyrats Ward the Englishman, and Danseker the Dutchman*.⁶⁷ Although the real Ward was an unrepentant successful pirate who became a wealthy man in Tunis (Matar 61), Daborne's Ward is fictionalized in order to serve another purpose. In the beginning of the play, Daborne's Ward is the cold-hearted pirate of Nixon's newsbook, fully bent on gaining riches through piracy. However, unlike the real Ward, Daborne's pirate is characterized as sinking to the level of a Jew (Benwash) before repenting. Thus, Daborne's Ward follows the example of this Jew by dealing in slaves, converting to Islam for lust's sake, and renouncing Islam at the last possible moment, just before his self-inflicted death.

Even prior to following the Jew's example by converting to Islam for lust's sake, Ward acknowledges his kinship to the Jew-turned-Turk by verbally announcing it. At the beginning of the scene wherein Ward makes good his decision to sell his French hostages as slaves to the merchant Benwash, Ward is asked whether the plaintive pleas of his hostages have "move[d]" him. Ward responds, "Yes, as the Jew." By linking himself to a Jew-turned-Turk, Daborne has Ward dramatically reverse his connection to elect Israelite Jews such as Isaac, Jacob, and Paul, in order to underscore Ward's unholy alliance with reprobate Israelite Jews like Ishmael, Esau, and Judas. As if to emphasize this unholy kinship to the wrong kind of Jews, Ward immediately turns to the Jew-turned-Turk and asks, "Art not thou moved, Benwash?" Benwash responds, "As a hangman at an execution makes no other holiday in the year" (6.259-260). Daborne leaves no room for doubt—the Christian shows no mercy. Although still Christian, Ward is

⁶⁷ Full title: *Newes from sea, of tvvo notorious pyrats Ward the Englishman, and Danseker the Dutchman. VVith a true relation of all or the most piraces [sic] by them committed vnto the sixt of Aprill. 1609.* STC 25022.

already exhibiting behavior that likens him to the Jew who has turned Turk. This reenactment is a microcosm of a central English fear: that adverse Christian behavior in a Christian (in the form of Ward) allows for a non-Christian third party (Benwash, the Jew-turned-Turk) to step in and enslave European Christians (the French gentlemen). In other words, although Ward was born an English Christian, his ice cold treatment of fellow European Christians was meant to raise ominous shivers along the spines of early modern English theatergoers.

Daborne also emphasizes how the Christian unwisely follows in the Jew-turned-Turk's footsteps, by giving both Ward and Benwash the same reason to convert. Before the action of the play, Benwash had converted in order to marry his Turkish wife Agar.⁶⁸ Benwash describes his conversion to Islam to his Jewish servant Rabshake: "Thou hast forgot how dear / I bought my liberty, renounced my law / (The law of Moses), turned Turk—all to keep / My bed free from these Mahometan dogs" (6.73-76). As can be inferred by the Muslim epithet Benwash utters, the Jew has not converted due to a love of Islam, but for lust.⁶⁹ Similarly, conversion becomes the only way the Christian Ward can "enjoy" the Turkish beauty, Voadā. Because Ward has initially refused the efforts of Tunis's governor, Benwash, and Crosman to convince him to convert on the basis of greater riches, Crosman asks his sister Voadā to use her sexuality to lure Ward to Islam in order to effect "what devils dare not move / Men to accomplish" (7.87-88). When Ward sees the beautiful Voadā, he unwittingly concurs with Crosman's assessment, saying "Here comes an argument that would persuade / A god turn mortal" (7.91-92). On

⁶⁸ Whose name, it might be noted, is the same as Ishmael's mother in the book of Genesis.

⁶⁹ Early modern English sources often indicate that Turks were so intent on converting people to Islam that they would stoop to coercion rather than rely on the natural wish of the convert. In chapter 5 of *Policie of the Turkish Empire*, for example, Giles Fletcher claims that "there bee certaine of [Islam's] Priests... who for a Ducat or some such small reward, wil swear a thousand vntruths, especially if it be to condemne a Christian... because it may bee an occasion to make him forsake Christianity and to turne Turke" (20r).

Crosman's instruction, Voada tells Ward that he must become Muslim: "if you'll enjoy me" says she, "Turn Turk—I am yours" (7.125-127). Although Ward, like the Jew Benwash, has no love of Islam, he eventually gives over his soul for lust, justifying it by saying, "The way that leads to love is no black way" (7.280).

Throughout Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk*, the Christian Ward closely follows the Jew's descent into the "brutish and barbarous" (Fletcher A3r) ways of the Turks. Ward's descent thus visually depicts for early modern Christians Paul's warning that Gentile Christians could be cut off for unbelief as had the Jews before them. Benwash has "renounced [his] law / (The law of Moses)" (6.75-75); he has thereby fully severed his connection to the Jewish root. For although Benwash had been an unbelieving Jew, Paul had claimed such Jews could be grafted back into God's initial covenant through belief in Christ. By being descended from the reprobate Ishmael rather than the chosen Isaac, however, Turks had no such biblical connection to the root of Judaism. By turning Turk, then, the Jew Benwash had moved even further away from his chosen status than he had been as an unbelieving Jew. In one sense, then, Benwash's rejection of Judaism in favor of Islam replays in a contemporary setting how, according to Christianity, the Jews of Paul's day had abandoned their chosen status by rejecting Christ. Moreover, by following the Jew into this selfsame error, rejecting "the belief of [his] ancestors" (7.75) for "the three / The world pursues"—"Beauty, command, and riches" (7.194, 193), Ward enacts Paul's warning that Christians are, like their Jewish forbears, also vulnerable to being cut off from God should they renounce their faith. In Daborne's play, then, Jewish and Christian

figures are cast in the biblical roles suggested by Paul at Romans 11.20-21,⁷⁰ and thus graphically become the fulfillment of Paul's warning.

Throughout the play, the Christian Ward follows the Jew Benwash's bad example: each character has converted to Islam in order to marry the Muslim woman he lusts after (Benwash with Agar, Ward with Voada); each suffers spousal betrayal (Agar sleeps with the pirate Gallop, and Voada is really in love with Fidelio, the cross-dressed sister of one of the French gentlemen); each is arrested (Benwash for murder and Ward on a false accusation), and each commits suicide while renouncing his apostasy. Indeed, in this last act, Benwash and Ward can be said to suffer an annihilation representative of Jerusalem's 70 CE destruction. Rather than suffer punishment for the murder of his wife and servant, the Jew-turned-Turk commits suicide. Similarly, the Christian-turned-Turk kills himself rather than suffer the torture the Turks promise him for the attempted killing of Voada. Placing his fictionalized Ward in close conjunction with the Jew-turned-Turk Benwash, allows Daborne to emphasize how a destruction of biblical proportions could be reaped by avaricious merchants / pirates in the Mediterranean, despite any outward profession of Christianity.

The real Jack Ward, however, did not commit suicide; indeed, in 1615, or three years after the publication of Daborne's play, the real Pirate Ward was living under the Muslim name of Issouf Reis, in a palace in Tunis which he had built from his riches (Matar 61). I suggest Daborne changes Ward's fate in order to demonstrate that avarice in the Mediterranean,

⁷⁰ Paul tells the Gentile Christians in Rome: "Wel: through vnbelefe [Jews] are broken of, and thou standest by faith: be not hie minded, but feare. For if God spared not the natural branches, take hede, lest he also spare not thee."

although remunerative, will destroy a treasure eminently more precious: one's soul.⁷¹ Due to the doctrinal link between Christians and Jews, Daborne fictionalizes Ward so that he follows a Jew down the path to destruction, the same path, according to Christian tradition, that unbelieving biblical Jews had trod long ago. Ward following Benwash in committing suicide also serves this doctrinal purpose. Having pinned all their hopes on what is, according to early modern English Christians, the "false" religion of Islam, both Jew and Christian have no God to turn to, no Christ from whom to beg mercy. Without Christian faith, each man loses his empire, his life, and his soul. Daborne's Christian, following the Jew's example into unbelief, represents what England as a nation felt it could suffer should its merchants turn Turk in pursuit of their avaricious interests in the Mediterranean.

The viciousness of both Jewish and Turkish figures in Daborne and other Mediterranean plays has led some recent scholars to feel that medieval stereotypes attached to these two groups became amplified during this period due to the "Machiavellian" (Viktus 195) nature of Mediterranean trade. Daniel J. Vitkus finds that for England "traditional anti-Semitic images" such as "hoarding usurers[,] treacherous poisoners,... communion bread [thieves] [and] collect[ers of] the blood of Christian babies in order to perform... Satanic rites" "persisted in the

⁷¹ Another real life pirate from Nixon's newsbook, Danseker (spelled Dansiker in Daborne), also features in Daborne's play. The real Simon Dansiker (also known as Dansker) was a Dutchman, and had, like the real and fictionalized Ward, converted to Islam. Unlike the real Ward, however, Dansiker repented of his pirating acts, sought and received pardon from Henry IV in 1609, and returned, for a time, to his wife and children, who lived in France. He was later beheaded by the Ottoman government in Algiers (1611) while negotiating for the release of some French ships (McCabe 88-89). In *A Christian Turn'd Turk* Daborne presents Dansiker as a pirate who has never renounced his Christianity. Fed up with the pirating life, Dansiker tries to redeem himself by enacting a mini-crusade against the Turks of Tunis. He attempts to destroy the piracy ring in Tunis and to "ma[k]e a massacre of the whole town" (16.222-223). In the end, Dansiker is captured and, after confessing his betrayal of Tunis at the court, he kills himself while begging God to "[r]eceive [his] soul" (16.236). It is interesting to note how Daborne fictionalizes each character so that both Christian pirates attempt to redeem themselves, and, when both fail, commit suicide. Perhaps Daborne uses both pirates to warn his Christian audiences that giving way to mercantile avarice will swiftly lead one to the point of no return even should one repent.

late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and after” (165). Although I agree that early modern English writers were well aware of these stereotypes and did allude to them, the idea that medieval stereotypes were still in effect in the same way as in the Middle Ages is a misconception. As this project’s readings of such Jewish figures as Gerontus, Barabas, Shylock, Benwash, and Rabshake demonstrate, although medieval stereotypes still existed, Jews were not thought of exclusively in terms of their villainous actions and could also function as a mechanism through which authors exposed and explored Christian error. Readings which include Renaissance England’s religious context move us beyond the uncomplicated medieval image of the sinister Jewish monster towards a more reasoned consideration of the Jew’s position in Christianity. This move in turn consequently deepens our understanding of the position of the Jewish figure in early modern English drama.

In the absence of a religious reading, post-Holocaust readers and scholars sometimes hesitate to move beyond the assumption that Jewish figures embody early modern anti-Semitic medieval stereotypes. For instance, Daniel J. Vitkus astutely identifies the catalog of Jewish stereotypes Barabas utters to Ithamore in the slave market as “exaggerat[ion]” and “absurd[ity]” (186). However, Instead of thinking of this moment in Marlowe as a significant shift away from medieval stereotype, Vitkus suggests that early modern Englishmen had an *increased* awareness of anti-Semitic stereotype. Thus Vitkus posits that Barabas “rises above the hackneyed images of Jewish villainy to a more sophisticated level demonstrating his protean meta-villainy” (186).⁷² Although Vitkus feels Marlowe has moved beyond “hackneyed” medieval stereotype, he nevertheless considers the play to be an expression of anti-Semitism

⁷² The idea that the “protean” nature of Jews caused anxiety in early modern England has been also proposed by James Shapiro (1996) and Peter Berek in “The Jew As Renaissance Man” (1998)

towards Jews. According to this view, then, Englishmen feared Jews because they could never be sure whether Jews, who “can fawn like spaniels when [they] please” (Marlowe 2.3.20), might, in the next moment, be just as liable to murder them by poisoning their posies (in which way Barabas caused the deaths of Ithamore, Pilia-Borza, and Bellamira).

If, however, we incorporate how Paul claimed Jews should be treated by Christians into Vitkus’s reading of Barabas’s villainous actions, we see how Barabas not only slips beyond medieval stereotype, but has been provided with specific reasons for the villainy he suddenly chooses to commit. For Marlowe, Malta finding itself threatened by a Jew is the direct result of Catholic Christian hypocrisy. As detailed in chapter 2, there are many instances in which Marlowe’s characters, especially Barabas, allude to biblical verses and participate in scenes where professed Christians commit appallingly adverse Christian acts against Barabas as well as other characters. These scenes underscore that an important theme in Marlowe’s play is criticism of behavior that is hypocritical of, or runs counter to, Protestant doctrine. It must also be taken into account how histories detailing the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE were seen as the fulfillment of Paul’s warning that Jews had been cut off from both God and nation for their unbelief as well as a warning to Christians that their own unbelief could lead to the same. After all, Marlowe’s play as a whole depicts a Jew and an army of Turks attempting to destroy a small island due to sinful Christian acts. Given there was a significant contingent of English writers who felt that a weak and fluctuating English Protestantism was capable of bringing about a similar occurrence to the small island of England, Marlowe’s play more likely addresses the idea that any attacks from Jews and Turks represented “a most heaueie vengeance” (Fletcher 82r) brought about by the “Almightie” (Knolles A5v) for Christian sin.

For early modern English Protestants, then, Jews and Turks ceased being seen as the one-dimensional evil godless monsters of the Middle Ages who delighted in ambushing decent and honest Christian Englishmen. Instead, non-Christian aggression in the early modern period had transformed into a more abstract and frightening threat, for attacks by the Ottoman Empire came to be seen less as Muslim or Jewish animosity and more as an embodiment of God's own just judgment against Protestant Englishmen who themselves were becoming increasingly evil and dishonest. Interestingly, even though Jews and Turks were, in this sense, perceived as being used by God as agents to punish Protestant Englishmen, non-Christians nevertheless increased the validity of reformed doctrine. After all, even the mapping of negative biblical history onto English Christianity linked Protestants more closely to Paul, since events in the Mediterranean seemingly proved that Paul's warnings about early Gentile Christian behavior were being fulfilled. Jews were a concern in this rubric because English Protestants who were following the "Jewish" recipe for destruction had been seemingly described by Paul at Romans 11.20-21.⁷³ As the Jews had rejected Christ and become usurious merchants, English Protestants who were engaging in similar activities in the Mediterranean gave rise to the idea that these Christians would, like Mercadore in Wilson's *Three Ladies*, renounce Christ in the name of lucre. Turks, on the other hand, were seen as the new Roman scourge, delivering God's punishment for the sins of English Protestants in much the same way as the Emperor Titus had destroyed the unbelieving Jewish nation.

English histories dating from 1546 to 1625 confirm that a weakening Christianity was at the heart of English Protestant anxieties regarding Turks and Jews. In a 1546 epistle dedicated

⁷³ "Wel: through vnbelefe they are broken of, and thou standest by faith: be not hie minded, but feare. For if God spared not the natural branches, take hede, lest he also spare not thee."

to Sir Rafe Sadler,⁷⁴ translator and rector Peter Ashton claimed he was translating Paolo Giovio's *A Shorte treatise upon the Turkes Chronicles* in order for Englishmen "to amend [their] owen turkische and synfull lyues, seying that God, of his infinite goodness & loue towarde [them], sufferethe the wicked and cursed seed of Hismael to be a scourge to whip [them] for [their] synnes" (*6v). For Ashton, Christians who had forsaken Christianity to live "turkische" lives, were justly, even lovingly, being punished for their sins by God via the Ottoman "scourge." This method of God's punishment had been premiered in the case of his first chosen people, the Jews, whose nation had been destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. As evangelical Peter Morwen describes in his "Epistle to the Reader":

As whe[n] thou seeest [sic] the lewes here afflicted with divers kindes of miserie, because they fell from G O D: then maiest thou be admonished hereby to see the better to thyne owne wayes, lest the lyke calamities light upon thee, unlesse thou be so fonde to thynke God wyll more spare thee, which art but a wyde [sic] Oliue and but graffed into the flocke of faythe... then he dyd the natural braunches of the lewes, which sprang naturally of the route it selfe. (A4v-r)⁷⁵

Here Morwen includes his paraphrase of Romans 11.24 to validate not only that the Roman attack against the Jews was a punishment Paul had foretold for Jewish unbelief, but to warn

⁷⁴ According to Ashton, Sadler was a "knight [and] Maister of the kinges maiesties great wardrobe" (*1r)

⁷⁵ This epistle precedes Morwen's 1558 translation "of Abraham ben David ha-Levi ibn Daud's abstract, in book 3 of his 'Sefer ha-Kabalah', of the anonymous 'Josippon' or 'Yosippon'. The latter has been misattributed to a Joseph ben Gorion, usually identified with Joseph ben Gorion ha-Kohen but occasionally with Flavius Josephus. of Josephus Flavius's account of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE" (English Short Title Catalog). Because this ESTC note is attached to a work used in chapter 4 of this project (James Howel's 1652 translation of *The Wonderful, and most Deplorable History of the Later Times of the Jews*), I assume that Howel's work is a later translation of the same work Morwen translates, the "Sefer ha-Kabalah." However, there is one curious difference in the two notes. For Morwen, ESTC notes the author's name as Abraham ben David ibn Daud, while for Howel's translation ESTC has Abraham ben David ha-Levi. According to Volume I of *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (ed. by Isidore Singer, Ph.D., Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1916), the correct name is Abraham Ibn Daud (though in some works it appears as Abraham ben David ha-Levi Ibn Daud). He is referred to either as Rabad (an acronym from his name to distinguish him from others with similar names) or Ibn Daud (his last name). According to Singer, Ibn Daud was a Spanish "astronomer, historian, and philosopher" and lived ca.1110-ca.1180.

Englishmen of their potential to be destroyed from outside forces in the same way as had been the Jews.

Nearly forty years later, diplomat and author Giles Fletcher the elder echoes Ashton's identification of the Turks as God's "scourge" for doctrinally unapproved Protestant behavior when he writes in his 1597 *The Policy of the Turkish Empire*, that "the crie of [Christian] sinns hauing pierced the Heauens, hath brought downe vpon [Christians] a most heauie vengeance" (82r). In 1603, English historian Richard Knolles similarly identifies the Turks as God's "secret iudgement," calling them "the most terrible executioners of [God's] dreadfull wrath" poised to punish Christendom "for their sinnes"(A5v). Finally, in 1625, cleric Samuel Purchas, collector of English travel narratives, sees the "inlargement" of the Muslim religion in the form of the Ottoman Empire as "the Iustice of Almighty God, punishing by that violent and wicked Sect [i.e. Islam], the sinnes of Christians" (117). As is suggested by this century-long array of sources, it was common for early modern Englishmen to think of Ottoman encroachment and conquest of Christian lands, as well as the threat these actions presented to England and other European nations, as a punishment from God for the errors of Christendom. English writers and translators such as Ashton, Knolles, and Morwen were very concerned about reversing Christian error as one way to prevent Ottoman conquest of England.

Readings of early modern English works which take into account the impact of religious reforms on Renaissance England, reveal that although English writers used medieval Jewish stereotype to represent doctrinally unapproved behavior in Christians, they were not targeting Jews themselves. Instead, Christians were soundly criticizing other Christians for falling into

errors that had been previously typed as “Jewish” such as mercantile avarice and usury.⁷⁶ Ania Loomba notes that “[h]istorically, merchants were the most prominent moneylenders..., could be Christians as well as Jews,” and that “much of the trade English merchants aspired to was in Jewish hands” (151). Since Englishmen were venturing more and more into trades that had been hitherto thought of as Jewish, they feared they might also fall prey to “Jewish” crimes. “Jewish” crime might lead to “Jewish” punishment in the form of invasion and annihilation. Instead of fearing the real life Jews encountered in the Mediterranean, English Protestants feared that the Englishmen who traded there might return home more Jewish than Protestant Christian.

Recent scholarship has suggested that plays featuring Jewish / Muslim interactions speak to an English fear that Jews might join Muslims in the latter’s “singular desire and resolution to aduance and enlarge both the bounds of their Empire and the profession of their religion” (Fletcher A3r). Ania Loomba, for example, has claimed that early modern Christians exploited

Turkish hatred for Jews partly [as] a response to the acute anxieties generated by their widely feared alliance. ...Europe perceived itself to be besieged by militant Islam, and the Jew was regarded as an “Islamic fifth columnist in Christian territory” [Cutler and Cutler 2 and *passim*]. (148)

Here Loomba relies on four primary sources to make this assumption (two Englishmen, an Andalusian Moor, and a French Catholic⁷⁷). According to Loomba’s analysis, these writers speak mainly of their observations that the Jews of India and Fez were hated by the Turks. Although

⁷⁶ For an extended discussion of early modern English usury, see David Hawkes *The Culture of Usury in Renaissance England* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), David W. Jones’s *Reforming the Morality of Usury: A Study of the Differences That Separated Protestant Reformers*, (U P of America, 2004), and Norman Jones’s *God and the Money Lenders: Usury and Law in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989).

⁷⁷ Edward Terry, travel writer (1589/90-1660) and William Davies, English traveler (fl. 1598-1614); Leo Africanus (c. 1494-c.1554; Nicholas de Nicholay (1517-1583)

the writers Loomba analyzes indeed do indicate a limited Turkish intolerance for Jews, the narrow scope of their observations does not seem to warrant the conclusion that a Jewish / Turkish alliance was a “widely” held fear. Moreover, the legitimacy of Loomba’s main secondary source, Allan Cutler and Helen Cutler, who wrote *The Jew as an Ally of the Muslim* (Notre Dame U P, 1986) has been largely disputed.⁷⁸

For Vitkus, who also subscribes to the idea that there was a “Christian perception of a Muslim-Jewish alliance” (181), the concept seems mainly to have developed from certain similarities shared by Jews and Turks. Somatic and ritualistic similarities between Jews and Muslims had been noted since “the era of the Crusades” when, according to Vitkus, “for centuries Western European writers confused the two religious systems” (181). It is of course true that Jews and Turks were non-Christians who had “interlocking histories in Spain” (Loomba 147) with “[a]t one time over 250,000 Jews” residing in the Ottoman Empire (Loomba 144). Both Turks and Jews adhered to circumcision, “a practice not used by early modern Christians in Europe” (Vitkus 182). Based on this evidence as well as readings of medieval pageants,⁷⁹ scholars feel that moments in plays such as when Barabas says to Ithamore, “[W]e are villains

⁷⁸ Although both Vitkus (on page 182) and Loomba utilize the same quote from the Cutlers to support their idea of a Jewish / Muslim alliance, it should be noted that shortly after the 1986 publication of the Cutlers’ book, *The Jew as an Ally of the Muslim* (Notre Dame UP), scholarly reviews cast doubt on its central claim. Although scholars reviewing the book praised the Cutlers for the boldness of their thesis, they have also felt that the Cutlers’ methodology and lack of primary source evidence significantly damaged their credibility. Robert Chazan (1987) describes the Cutlers’ thesis as “unsubstantiated” (167), Steven Bowman (1988) finds their argument devoid of any “real evidence” (388), Bernard Septimus (1987) notes the lack of “a more sober mode of historical analysis” (1189) and Bernard F. Reilly (1988) “finds it impossible to imagine what contribution [their] book is intended to make to an admittedly important topic” (335). Gilbert Dahan (1989) offers this summation of the Cutlers’ book: “The whole method is inadmissible in the field of medieval history, which needs facts and not fanciful constructions. In this way, even some interesting suggestions seem to be of no value” (375).

⁷⁹ Much of Vitkus’s and Loomba’s argument here is based on late medieval sources such as *The Croxton Play of the Sacrament* (ca. 1461) and *The N-Town Play* number 30 entitled “Death of Judas & Trials Before Pilate and Herod” (ca. 1463-75). Although both plays were read in the sixteenth century, they were not in print, but circulated in manuscript form. Moreover, the Croxton play, in support of the transubstantiation of the host, is an anti-Reformation piece and thus does not contain a mindset likely to have been adopted by a majority of late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century English Christians.

both. / Both circumcised, we hate Christians both” (2.3.215-216), represent the early modern fear that like will follow like. Moreover, similarities between Turks and Jews were also physical; since they often occupied the same geographical regions, both groups, according to images from the period, were swarthy, wore robes and turbans, and often had scimitars strapped to their sides. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that for some Englishmen, differences between Turks and Jews would have been “indistinguishable” (Vitkus 195) and that both groups would have been found threatening in English minds, particularly if both figures were represented on the stage in similar garb.

There is, therefore, a way in which Jews and Muslims were linked in English literature and minds. However, this link between Jews and Muslims does not necessarily represent a “larger, systematic threat within the political and economic spheres” (Vitkus 183) as Loomba and Vitkus assume. As this project has been arguing, the nature of this link is best discerned by reestablishing the overwhelming religious tenor of early modern histories concerning the Ottoman Turks. As early modern historical sources reveal, the Muslim Turks, who had been cut off from God’s election covenant in Genesis, were considered a “scourge” sent by God to address Christian sins. Jews, on the other hand, as English Protestants understood them, had lost their nation as a punishment from God. Since then and until the present time Jews had “bec[o]me a traouelling Nation indeed, traouelling now aboute 1500. yeeres from being a Nation” (Purchas 67). Early modern Jews were also not allowed full citizenship wherever they resided, as Purchas notes: “Neither haue they at this present, for anything that is certainly knowne, any other Region in the World, seuerall to themselues” (119). As a result “of their present condition” (Purchas 119), Jews wielded little political power. Although it is true that the idea

that Jews were in league with Muslims is a conspiracy theory, and conspiracy theories by nature are not often based on logic, most early modern sources do not refer to any such fear. Indeed, early modern histories about Jews and Turks seem formed on the doctrinal assumption that God had greatly weakened and disbanded the Jewish nation as punishment for their unbelief, while the Ottoman Turks were proving themselves as capable as the Roman Empire had been, to quash whole nations of Christians. Since the Ottoman Turks were a super-power with sufficient funds to conquer and convert wherever they wished, early modern Christians assumed that Jews, cut off as they were from each other and God, gave their loyalty to anyone who remuneratively engaged them. Hence, Jews were as likely to aid Englishmen (as will be seen below with the English Shirley brothers) as they were to aid the Turks.

I suggest the supposed English fear of a Jewish / Muslim alliance is an assumption that develops from inadequately acknowledging early modern religious understandings of Christians, Turks, and Jews. Loomba states in an earlier chapter of her book her conscious intent to leave religion out of her analysis: "In my view, religion should not obscure or undermine the place of somatic difference [for non-Christian others, particularly Muslims]; instead we need to locate how the two come together and transform each other in the early modern period" (46). While I agree wholeheartedly with the latter part of this sentence, Loomba's book *Shakespeare, Race and Colonialism* (2002) does not significantly treat the religious aspect of this argument. Instead, inadequately acknowledging religious perceptions of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim relations, leads Loomba as well as Vitkus to assume an English anxiety about Jewish / Muslim alliances that historical sources strongly suggest did not exist.

Indeed, far from creating a strong link between Turks and Jews, early modern histories dealing with Turks and Jews emphasize and support the ways in which doctrinal similarities link Jews and Judaism to Christians and Christianity. However, these history texts also reveal that English Protestants were aware of significant doctrinal differences between the ritualistic practices of Jews and Turks. One important difference that distances Turks from both Jews and Christians is the perceived legitimacy of the scriptures each group follows. For Giles Fletcher, author of *The Policy of The Turkish Empire* (1597), Islam is not a legitimate religion because its book, the Koran, was originally created by Mahomet and Sergius, an Arian⁸⁰ monk whom Fletcher describes as “two hellhounds (one of them being an arch enemy to Christ and the truth of his religion, and the other seeming a meere Atheist or prophane person, neyther perfect lew nor perfect Christian)” (2r). It is important to pause here and note that Fletcher implies that the Koran would be slightly more legitimate if the latter “hellhound,” Mahomet, were “perfect lew” rather than part Jew and part “Ismaelite” (a lineage problem Fletcher discusses later in his book) (23v). Because he was part Ishmaelite, early modern English Protestants did not consider Mahomet a descendant of the tribe of Judah, which is the particular “seed of Abraham” God had “preferred” (Fletcher 22r) and from whom God had “determined to select and choose vnto himselfe a peculiar people... by whome he would be serued and worshipped” (Fletcher 22v). Here Fletcher follows John Calvin, who in his first sermon on Jacob and Esau (trans. 1579), claimed that “although Ismael bee so aduanced, that he seeth so many successours as is woonderfull... those children... are reiected and haue no

⁸⁰ According to Robert C. Gregg, Arianism was “[c]ondemned as heresy at councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381)[.] [It] maintain[s] that [Jesus] was both ‘creature’ and ‘God,’ different in essence from the Father but related to him by ‘participation’ and ‘adoption’—i.e., as a creature elevated through obedience to the paternal will” (Grim, Keith, ed. *The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions*, San Francisco: Harper, 1989).

fellowship with that true stock of Abraham which was blessed" (5r). Marking Mahomet as part "Ismaelite" meant that for English Protestants, the prophet descended from the non-elect, illegitimate son of Abraham, Ishmael, rather than from Isaac, Abraham's legitimate son with his wife Sarah, from whom the Jews derive. Fletcher thus feels the original Koran to be illegitimate scripture because, being written by an Arian monk and a reprobate, it had not been inspired by God.

In comparison, Fletcher emphasizes the legitimacy of both the Jewish and Christian scriptures (i.e. what Christians refer to as the Old and New Testaments) by listing their venerable authors whom no Christian can doubt. Fletcher notes how Jews follow the "olde Testament" which was "written by Moyses and the Prophets" and is part of "the whole Bible and sacred bookes of holy Scriptures, [which were] written by the spirit of God himselfe and by the penne of his Prophets and Apostles" (13v). Because Fletcher recognizes how the scriptures and laws given to Jews came from "God himselfe" and are the very promises Gentile Christians laid claim to through their belief in Jesus Christ, Fletcher reflects the general early modern Protestant belief (derived from Paul in Romans) that Christian ties with Jews and Judaism cannot be severed. Turks, however, follow the Koran, which has no legitimacy as far as Fletcher and early modern Christians are concerned. So although Turks and Jews had certain ritualistic and geographical connections, Turks nevertheless were seen as falling outside the doctrinal kinship existing between Jews and Christians.

Even when describing practices Turks and Jews shared, like circumcision, Fletcher gives more legitimacy to the way Jews practice that rite, even to the extent of using the Jewish practice to show where Turks erred. For example, Fletcher clearly feels that unbelieving Jews

were wrongheaded in practicing circumcision due to “the stubbornnes and blindenesse of their hearts” and that they were thereby “opposing themselues against the Diuinitie of Christ the Messiah, and against the trueth of Christian religion” (23v). Nevertheless, Fletcher is careful to emphasize that one purpose of his chapter is to show “wherein these two people [the Turks and Jews] do differ each from other in the vse and observation of this ceremony” (22v). First, Fletcher makes clear that circumcision was originally a legitimate rite because “God instituted the sacrament of Circumcision” in Genesis 17 (22v). Next Fletcher notes that because Christ had “broken downe the partition wall that was betweene Iewes and Gentiles, the ceremonie of Circumcision was from thencefoorth vtterly abrogated, and ought to haue ceased, and ought to haue beene discontinued” (22r). Here we can see that even though for Christians, circumcision is no longer practiced, the Jewish circumcision rite had been commanded by God and was reported in scriptures held sacred by both Jews and Christians.

Towards the end of the chapter on circumcision, Fletcher again strengthens the doctrinal connection between Christians and Jews, by emphasizing the ways in which “Turkish Circumcision... differ[s] and disagree[s] in many things” from the Jewish “forme” (24v). Fletcher praises Jews for performing the ritual “with singular reuerence and solemnity, and with great religion and deuotion... as a parte of their diuine seruice to be performed towards God and vsing it as a visible and assured signe of his grace, loue, and fauour towards them” (25v). Imbuing Jews with the attributes of “reuerence” and “deuotion” stresses the kinship between Jews and Christians because Fletcher had earlier ascribed these same traits to “right” worship by Christians. Moreover, Fletcher claims the Jewish observance of circumcision is a “signe” that God still considers them with “grace, loue, and fauour.” In particular, the word “grace” is

significant. For although Jews were believed to have lost connection to God through unbelief, this situation was only temporary. Fletcher's allusion to "grace" in connection with Jews is Calvinist and implies that "God is able to graffe [Jews] in againe" (Rom. 11.23). Fletcher's view of the Turkish rite of circumcision is not so favorable. Turks, Fletcher assures us, "shewe little or no deuotion: neyther doe they take [the rite of circumcision] as a signification of any special benefite expected from God: but they marke it rather as an occasion to satisfie their owne delights and pleasures, by feasting, banquetting, and such like kinde of triumphes" (Fletcher 25v-r). Although circumcision is a rite that has been abrogated by Christ, Fletcher's support of the Jewish practice over the Turkish, further tightens the bonds of kinship between Jews and Christians and widens the gap between Turks and Christians.

Although there is no doubt that early modern English Protestants disapproved of both Jewish and Turkish "heretical" beliefs, yet I argue that during a period when proper Christian practice was constantly debated, English Protestants in particular guarded and maintained their doctrinal kinship with Jews. This crucial kinship was strong enough to keep Jews distinct from Turks in early modern English minds even after practicing Jews and Muslims had been encountered through trade in the Mediterranean. In other words, while the Turks were perceived by early modern Englishmen to subsume Christian lands, converting these Christians, and making them part of the Ottoman Empire, there is no evidence that Jews were considered co-conspirators in this endeavor. In fact, Fletcher goes to great lengths to show how Turks and Jews had different approaches to religion and life. So although stage Jews and Turks may have been dressed similarly and indeed were often seen in plays to be conspiring against Christians,

this was not because English Christians conflated their non-Christian ethnicity or feared a military alliance.

It is therefore important to understand how stage Jews and Turks were doctrinally based on the English Protestant mindset. Firstly, doing so allows us to home in on the ways in which these two groups functioned in early modern English Protestant thought (as detailed above). Secondly, doctrinally based readings of stage Jews and Turks gel with the non-fiction works of the time period because anti-usury pamphlets, histories about the Turks, and newsbooks detailing events in the Mediterranean also focused on the English preoccupation with Christian sins such as avarice. Omitting the Protestant mindset, however, encourages the notion that Jews and Turks were considered threatening primarily because they were foreign, exotic, or “other.” This in turn leads to readings of plays in which alliances between Jewish and Turkish characters are assumed to be “political and economic” (Vitkus 183) due mainly to this presumed shared “otherness.”

Vitkus, for example, feels that staged alliances between “Muslim officials” and central “Jewish characters” such as Barabas and Benwash, indicate “a larger, systematic threat within the political and economic spheres” of plays about the Mediterranean (183). Vitkus has therefore sorted these plays into a useful, though somewhat misleading, subgenre:

A series of plays written and performed in early modern England dramatizes Jewish-Muslim partnerships: Gerontus and the Turkish judge in Wilson’s *The Three Ladies of London*; Barabas, Ithamore, and Selim-Calymath in Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta*; Abraham and Selimus in Greene’s *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks*; Benwash, Crosman, and the Governor of Tunis in Daborne’s *A Christian Turned Turk*; Zeriph and Halibeck in Day, Rowley, and Wilkins’s *The Travels of the Three*

English Brothers; and Hamon and Bajazet⁸¹ in Goffe's *The Raging Turk*. In all of these texts, Jewish characters seek to gain by doing the bidding of a powerful Muslim figure, and (with the exception of Greene's Abraham) these stage Jews serve as go-betweens or mediators between Muslims and Christians. (183)

It is true that in all the works mentioned above Jews are often seen to do an Ottoman Turk's "bidding." However, in most cases, the "Turk" in question has no more authority than the Jew, the Jew's purpose is not solely for "gain," and the "Jewish-Muslim partnership" quickly deteriorates due to mutual betrayal. When the religious factor is considered in readings of these plays (as it is below), it becomes clear that the relationship between Jews and Turks cannot be reduced to a simple assumption that the two groups conspire together against Christendom.

It is, however, true that in the plays Vitkus lists, Jews and Muslims engage in conspiracies to murder, cheat, and threaten Christians. As these evil traits had long been stereotypes Europeans associated with Jews and Muslims, one might assume the partnerships depicted could provoke the more global fear of Mediterranean Jews joining the Ottoman Empire in their quest to overcome Christendom. However, when the religious aspects and overall purpose of these Jewish/ Muslim partnership plays are taken into account, stereotypes associated with the Jewish half of the partnership pale. In chapter 2, I suggested that Wilson's Gerontus, Marlowe's Barabas, and Daborne's Benwash and Rabshake represent Jewish figures who exposed and condemned Christian hypocrisy and error. However, as Vitkus suggests, each of these Jews also closely interacts with Muslim characters and this interpretation certainly bears examination. For example, in Wilson's play, the Jew Gerontus can certainly be seen as a

⁸¹ This is an error. In Goffe's play, Alexander, Bishop of Rome is ordered by Bajazet to poison Zemes, Bajazet's brother. The Jew Hamon is ordered by Selymus to poison Selymus's father Bajazet. Thus, like Abraham in Greene, Goffe's Hamon partners with Selymus, not Bajazet.

“go-between” or “mediator” (Vitkus 183) between the Muslim judge and the Christian Mercadore, the latter of whom is in debt to the Jew. But instead of being involved in a conspiracy with the Muslim judge against the Christian merchant, Gerontus seeks to prevent Mercadore from joining Islam in order to gain back the money the Christian merchant would otherwise be forced to pay to Gerontus.⁸² In other words, although Gerontus’s action does resolve the case for the Turkish judge, the resolution achieved by the Jew favors Christianity rather than Islam. After all, the Jew has effectually worked to save a Christian soul from conversion and thus prevented Islam from stealing another soul away from Christianity. The Jewish figure of Gerontus, then, overturns the medieval stereotype of the vicious Jew out to destroy Christendom; moreover, he cannot be seen as an ally of the Turkish judge who, one presumes, had hoped to gain another convert.

Marlowe’s Barabas, on the other hand, does viciously join with both his Muslim partners in order to attack Christendom. However, as was stated in the previous chapter, Marlowe presents both his Jews and Muslims as having been victims of hypocritical behavior, that is, Catholic Christian behavior that runs counter to Protestant Christian doctrine. Barabas has been robbed and extorted, Ithamore has been enslaved, and Selim-Calymath has been cheated of Malta’s tribute for a decade. Moreover, Calymath is also double-crossed by Catholic Christian Malta, for when he comes to collect the tribute, Ferneze refuses to pay and declares war on him. Therefore, since the Jew and his Muslim partners have Christian-perpetrated wrongs to redress, Barabas’s reasons for creating partnerships with Muslims does not neatly fit into the rubric that Jews join with Muslims for mercantile reasons. Firstly, Barabas’s

⁸² Converting to Islam would, by law, free Mercadore from his debt to the Jewish moneylender, Gerontus.

relationship with Ithamore, his slave, reverses the idea of a Jew “doing the bidding of a powerful Muslim figure” (Vitkus 183). Secondly, although the alliance between Jew and Moor is frighteningly fatal, it is nevertheless fueled by a personal, rather than global, revenge; that is, the murderous rampage in which Barabas and Ithamore engage is not aimed at Christendom in general. Finally, Barabas’s and Ithamore’s alliance is short-lived; the Muslim slave betrays his Jewish master and the Jew in return murders the Muslim. These details in the partnership between Barabas and Ithamore cast doubt on the idea that Jews and Muslims might unite to form a “larger systematic threat within the political and economic spheres” involved in Mediterranean trade (Vitkus 183).

Barabas’s relationship with the Muslim Selim-Calymath, however, does seem, at first, to be more in line with the idea of “a Jew doing the bidding of a powerful Muslim figure” (Vitkus 183). Indeed, at one point Barabas tells Calymath that he (Barabas) “rests at [Calymath’s] command” in helping the Turk conquer Malta (5.1.81). However, in an aside prior to meeting with Calymath outside Malta’s walls, Barabas informs the audience: “I’ll be revenged on this accursed town, / For by my means Calymath shall enter in” (5.1.60-61). Although Calymath thinks he is in charge and that the Jew helps him in order to “seek... gain” (Vitkus 183) in the form of being handed Ferneze’s governorship, it can be argued that Barabas is the one in control of the situation. The audience knows Barabas is pulling the strings, manipulating Calymath in order to achieve his real purpose; revenge against a Catholic Christian governor

who has used his power to steal and cheat from Jews who, according to Paul, must be “beloued for the fathers sakes” (Romans 11.28).⁸³

Readers for whom the religious aspects of Marlowe’s play are little known and who focus instead on the cold-hearted mercantile interest behind Marlowe’s Jewish-Muslim partnerships, might well feel that “Marlowe’s Malta is a place where contact and mixture involving Jews, Muslims, and Christians leads to violent instability” (Vitkus 185). As a result of this violence, which is indeed highly visible in the play, such readers may also feel along with Vitkus, that “Barabas the Jew has metamorphosed into a new incarnation” of the “neo-medieval representation of the traditional anti-Semitic stereotype,” by becoming “a much more slippery, self-fashioning devil, adapted to the conditions of the early modern market place” (186). I agree with Vitkus that Barabas is a more complicated Jewish figure than his stereotyped medieval predecessors. However, the murkier aspects of Barabas’s complex characterization can be partly explained by including the concerns English Protestants had regarding England’s own inability to behave according to scriptural precept.

Religious readings steer us toward an understanding of the ways in which English playwrights provided a more reasoned consideration of the position of Jews and Turks in Christianity than had their medieval predecessors. This can be demonstrated in examining the relationship between Benwash and Crosman from Daborne’s *A Christian Turn’d Turk*. The Protestant position in Daborne’s play has been described earlier in this chapter and entails how a Christian follows a Jew into the dread sin of apostasy. I revisit it here to demonstrate that

⁸³ In chapter 2, I identified a soliloquy in which Barabas sardonically refers to Romans 11.28. He tells the audience that Lodowick is “One that [he] love[s] for his good father’s sake” (2.3.30). Barabas, however, twists the meaning to mean that similar to how Christians are supposed to “love” Jews because from them stems the teachings which Christians follow, Barabas will “love” Lodowick according to what the boy’s father has taught the Jewish merchant.

when applied to the Jewish / Muslim partnership Vitkus discerns between Benwash and Crosman, the partnership is less threatening than might be assumed if the two groups were believed to be exclusively engaging in the act of conspiring against Christians. Although it is true that the “Jew” Benwash and Muslim Crosman conspire to destroy a Christian through conversion to Islam, Daborne makes several moves that complicate this scenario. Firstly, the Jew has turned Turk; thus, this is in fact a Muslim / Muslim rather than a Jewish / Muslim alliance. Daborne’s configuration, then, gels with early modern historical texts about Turks because a Muslim / Muslim alliance makes Turks the central threat. Moreover, in Daborne, not only has the Jew turned Turk, but the governor, a former Christian, has turned Turk as well. Daborne thus dramatizes what both Fletcher and Purchas had woefully noted in their histories: the expansion of Islam through Koran-mandated conversion.⁸⁴

Secondly, Crosman is not in a position of power over the Jew. Crosman is captain of the Janissaries, but he addresses Benwash as “brother” and is clearly acting for the Jew when he says, “All that art can by ambition, lust, or flattery do, / Assure yourself that this brain shall work him to” (7.440-441). By converting to Islam, Benwash has managed to rise above the Turk-born Crosman, thus emphasizing the opportunities and wealth available in the Mediterranean world. By applying a religious reading to this scene, one can discern how anxiety-producing it might be for English Protestants to witness a Jew, cut off from God for unbelief (Rom. 11.20), enjoying such high status. In other words, although Benwash has gained, through his conversion, great wealth and power, he has also thereby lost what is more precious: all

⁸⁴ Fletcher writes: “And this they doe to the intente the name and doctrine of their Prophet Mahomet maye be euerie where, and of all nations reuerenced and embraced. Hence it is that the Turkes doe desire nothing more then to drawe both Christians and other to embraced their Religion and to turne Turke” (20v). Purchas writes that “all the Regions in a manner, that Christian Religion had gained from Idolatry, Mahumetanisme hath regained from Christianitie” (113v).

connection to the elect seed of Abraham (Isaac, Jacob) and is now inextricably linked to Abraham's reprobate seed (Ismael, Esau). Understanding Benwash's position from the Protestant perspective, then, creates a much more disturbing conspiracy scenario than that between Jew and Turk: namely, the pernicious collaboration between the Jew-turned-Turk and the Christian pirate Ward. For early modern English audiences, individuals who had renounced any link whatsoever to Christianity and who were spectacularly prospering by means of their dealings with the Ottoman Turks, must certainly have provoked fears that other poor countrymen might, as had Jack Ward of Faversham, Kent, leave Christianity behind in order to partake of the many opportunities to be found within the Ottoman Empire.

Thirdly, the conversion that Benwash and Crosman effect as a result of their conspiracy is far from successful. It had been Benwash and Crosman's intention to convert Ward in order to create easy access to the riches the pirate might bring to Tunis. Instead, Ward resists conversion for some time and afterwards vociferously regrets what he has done, commits suicide, and thereby ends all possibility that the Turks of Tunis will prosper by his means. Moreover, as were the partnerships of Barabas with Ithamore and Calymath, this partnership between Benwash and Crosman is short-lived; for Benwash kills himself and Crosman disappears from the play just prior to Ward's conversion. The failure of this conspiracy between Jew-turned-Turk and Turk to create another prosperous member of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the conspiracy's rapid dissolution, suggests that all such partnerships between non-Christians, founded as they are on the vice of avarice, are doomed to fail.

Given the lack of success resulting from the partnership between Benwash and Crosman, it seems unlikely that the play's primary focus is to produce anxiety in audiences that

Jews and Muslims are joining forces against Christendom. Instead, the longer speeches in the play indicate that Daborne's message reflects the larger concern of the period, that English Protestants were abandoning their faith in order to partake in avaricious pursuits. Just prior to his death, Ward delivers a lengthy warning that Christians must not follow him into apostasy, and exhorts them to unite to fend off the "puissant" Ottoman Turks. Thus Ward shouts these dying words at the Turks who have betrayed him:

... O may I be the last of my country
That trust unto your treacheries, seducing treacheries.
All you that live by theft and piracies,
That sell your lives and souls to purchase graves,
That die to hell, and live far worse than slaves,
Let dying Ward tell you that heaven is just,
And that despair attends on blood and lust. (16.315-321)

Imagine for a moment the actor playing Ward staggering toward the audience, bloody dagger in hand, beseeching the audience not to lose their souls to avarice and lust. It is at this moment that Daborne has Ward refer to England as "my country," a phrase which disturbingly emphasizes how it is England specifically the Turks will attack for these sins, tempting though they are to commit. Ignoring the gentlemanly euphemism for pirating (privateering) Ward bluntly calls the capturing of booty "thefts and piracies" and the means used to get it murder driven by greed. Added to these sins is that of selling one's soul, either through actual conversion or by serving two masters, God and wealth.⁸⁵ In other words, in this dramatic moment, Daborne has a doomed pirate turn to the audience and demonstrate the devastating consequences of a life given over to doctrinally unapproved practices in the Mediterranean. For

⁸⁵ In Matthew 6.24, Christ tells his followers that they cannot serve both God and money: "No man can serue two masters: for either he shal hate the one, and loue the other, or els he shal leane to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serue God and riches" (1560 Geneva Bible).

Daborne's *Ward*, then, as well as for writers of late Reformation history books and pamphlets, hypocritical Christian behavior has been allowing the encroachment of the Ottoman Turks on Christendom. Although Daborne's play features both Jews and Turks behaving badly, the critical problem of the play remains about Christians. Jews like Benwash are as much victims of this encroachment as are Christians; the initial refusal of salvation by Jews was seen to have merely made them more vulnerable to the overpowering, non-Christian, world force of the Ottoman Empire. In other words, in Daborne, the lapse and demise of Benwash the Jew serves as a canary in the coalmine for his Christian counterparts.

As can be ascertained from the histories and plays so far reviewed, Protestant religious concerns were central to early modern English concepts of Jews and Turks. Jews were connected to Christians through doctrines linked to Paul's Letter to the Romans. Turks, however, were like the Romans in 70 CE—ready to mete out God's punishment on England as the Romans had on the Jews, should England, like the Jews, not mend its errant ways. This Protestant construct of Jews and Turks is also central to two history plays featuring a Jew interacting with Turks, Robert Greene's *Selimus, Emperor of the Turks* (1594) and Thomas Goffe's *The Raging Turk* (1631). Because it is the religious context that is most important to these playwrights, each of them downplays the poisoning Jewish physician stereotype, even when the need for historical integrity seemingly gives the writer permission to indulge in it.

Both Greene and Goffe depict events leading up to and including the reign of Turkish Emperor Selim I (1512-1520). Each of these plays, which presents Selim I as ruthlessly committing both patricide and fratricide in his desire to be Emperor of the Turks, includes a Jewish physician whom Selimus orders to poison his father, Bajazet II. For Greene and Goffe,

each play's Jewish figure is not central to the overall message, which is to present the naked power, depraved determination, and ruthless cruelty involved in Ottoman conquest. Indeed, the playwrights dare not give full rein to an evil depiction of a poisoning Jew lest that characterization detract from the play's more horrific message: that at least one leader of the Empire with whom England's Christian merchants were trading was a man who did not stop even at patricide (among other perfidies) to attain his throne.

As small as may be the roles of Greene's Jew Abraham and Goffe's Jew Hamon, it is instructive to observe how each playwright downplays Jewish stereotype in order to emphasize the threatening nature of the Ottoman Empire. Utilizing information gleaned from two different historical sources published fifty-four years apart,⁸⁶ each playwright includes a scene in which Selim I ensures that his usurpation of his father's throne will be permanent by hiring a Jewish physician to poison his father, Bajazet II. In Greene's source,⁸⁷ Paolo Giovio's⁸⁸ *A Short Treatise on the Turkes Chronicles* (translated into English in 1546 by Peter Ashton), the unnamed Jew's mention is brief and neutral (except, perhaps, for the need to use the term "Jew" in relation to his career as physician). Goffe's source, Richard Knolles's *The Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603), provides a more detailed and unreservedly stereotyped version of the poisoning Jew. Although each historical source provides ample opportunity to embellish the Jew with medieval anti-Semitic traits, neither playwright takes this liberty. Instead, and despite

⁸⁶ Greene is thought to rely on Paolo Giovio's *A Shorte Treatise vpon the Turkes Chronicles*⁸⁶ (translated into English in 1546 by Peter Ashton⁸⁶); Goffe used Richard Knolles *The General Historie of the Turkes* (1603).

⁸⁷ Scholar Matthew Dimmock claims Paolo Giovio's *A Shorte Treatise vpon the Turkes Chronicles* (translated into English in 1546 by Peter Ashton) was the history that "probably prompted" Greene to write *Selimus, Emperour of the Turks* (171).

⁸⁸ Paolo Giovio was the bishop of Nocera de' Pagani and the work was, according to Ashton translation's cover page, dedicated to "Charles the. v, Emperour."

the briefness of the Jew's role, each playwright seems deliberately to weaken traditional stereotypes associated with Jews.

Nevertheless, in "resolv[ing] to" kill Selimus's "aged father" by using a "potion[] of so strong a force / That whosoever touches [it] shall die"(17.138, 137,133-134), Greene's Abraham does what a sixteenth-century audience might expect of a Jew based on medieval stereotype. As James Shapiro has observed, "The favorite method of the Jews was usually poison, and by the sixteenth century the idea that Jews tried to poison Christians was proverbial" (96). Certainly Greene's Selimus believes he will have no trouble convincing the "cunning Jew, / Professing physic" to poison Bajazet since he believes Abraham "will venture anything for gold" (17.96-97, 100). However, Greene's Jew never himself expresses a desire for this gold; indeed, he prevents his own collection of it by suddenly deciding to drink the poison along with the deposed leader because he is "old as well as Bajazet / And ha[s] not many months to live on earth" (18.83-84). Although having the Jew choose suicide, which is nevertheless a sin, over his "traditional" love of gold, Greene complicates the medieval stereotype of the avaricious Jew. In this way, Greene's Jew is closer to many Christian villains including Dansiker, Ward, and even Shakespeare's Othello, who repent just prior to committing suicide.

Although Greene weakens medieval Jewish stereotype in the case of Abraham, neither does he depict his Jew as a critic of Christian behavior in the same way as other late Reformation playwrights do their Jewish figures. Indeed, Greene's Jew does not interact with Christians. Nevertheless Abraham does criticize the immoral and heinous act of patricide as practiced by his Turkish Emperor. For although Abraham "does the bidding of [this] powerful Muslim figure" (Vitkus 183), by agreeing to poison Selimus's father, Greene assures us that the

Jew does not approve of the act. In an aside, Abraham makes clear that he could “as willingly” poison Selimus as his “aged father Bajazet” (17. 136-137). Abraham, therefore, is not inclined to be loyal to this powerful Turk as the Jewish / Muslim conspiracy rubric suggests. Moreover, despite the supposed avaricious behavior of Jews, Abraham’s suicide can be read as a rejection of blood money offered by an evil patricidal ruler. By rejecting the stereotyped image of a poisoning Jew clutching his moneybags, Greene frees up his Jewish figure to perform a function more common to late Reformation plays: namely, to expose and criticize a horrifically unchristian act committed by a play’s central figure.

Similar to Greene, Thomas Goffe’s *The Raging Turk* (1631) downplays the stereotype of the poisoning Jew. However, unlike Greene, Goffe gives the Jew no asides and therefore no insight into his thoughts; indeed, Selymus must ask the Jew twice to poison Bajazet as the Jew does not at first understand Selymus’s initial veiled request. Goffe’s Hamon, whom he names after the Jew in Knolles’s *Generall Historie of the Turkes* (1603),⁸⁹ expresses neither reluctance nor eagerness to do the job; he merely goes about his business. Moreover, Hamon is offered no remuneration for this task; instead, Selymus makes clear that Hamon’s only reward will be death, saying in an aside upon the Jew’s exit, “Walke, and thy paines, / shall be rewarded highly, with the like / As thou bestowest on Baiazet” (L4r). The play does not give Selymus any reason for his intent to kill the Jew other than an implied inherent “Turkish” treachery. Finally, we never witness the Jew poisoning his patient. At the beginning of the poisoning scene, the stage direction has “Enter Bajazet and Haman [sic] with a Booke and Candle” (N2r). Bajazet

⁸⁹ Interestingly, Hamon, or Haman (spelled both ways in Goffe), though a name biblical in origin, is not the name of a Jew. According to the Book of Esther, Haman was an Agagite, a Persian who was hoping to purge Persia of its Jews, but was stopped by Queen Esther and her kinsman Mordecai.

then orders the Jew to “goe and prouide / The Potion to preuent my Feauer-fit” and Hamon simply exits (N2r). There is no stage direction indicating his (or anyone’s) return with the poison; but when Bajazet feels the effects of the poison, he cries, “Hamon, accursed Hamon stand my soule / Aboue the power of these inuenom’d drugges” (N3r). Throughout the scenes in which he is featured, Hamon’s actions range from robotic to invisible, thus lessening the horror-effect of the evil poisoning Jew.

Goffe’s hands off treatment of Hamon the Jew is interesting given that his source, Richard Knolles, frequently indulges in old-school medieval Jewish stereotype. Knolles spares no opportunity to append pejorative adjectival phrases to Hamon, calling him “[t]he deceitfull lew,” “[t]his cursed lew,” and “the false lew” (495-496). Knolles also highlights the Jew’s avarice by reporting Selymus’s proffered reward of “ten duckats a day during his life” (495). As well, Knolles makes clear that though the Jew is “prone ynough for gaine to do evill” (Knolles 495), Hamon is forced to carry out this task on pain of death. Indeed, Selymus’s threat turns treacherous, for although the Jew willingly commits the act, Selymus nevertheless has his “head presently strucked off” (496). As Knolles observes, “with this exprobaton of [the lew’s] trecherie,” namely, killing his own loyal patient, Bajazet, Selymus felt “[t]hat oportunitie seruing, [Hamon] would not sticke for reward to doe the like against Selymus himselfe” (496). Knolles’s marginal note drives home his overall negative opinion of Jews and their perfidy: “Hamon the lew iustly rewarded for his trecherie” (496).

Goffe’s depiction of Hamon presents none of these Jewish stereotypes on stage though they are readily available in his source. Indeed, Goffe seems only to have included Hamon in *The Raging Turk* because he is the historical explanation of how Selim I murdered his father

Bajazet II. For Goffe, Selymus's patricide is an act that connects directly to the playwright's purpose, which is to highlight the inhumanity of Ottoman rulers. Goffe's reason for downplaying the Jew's mercenary behavior is thus to foreground that of the "Raging Turk"; for as the title suggests, the play's main objective is to show how easily regimes fall before the onslaught of the ruthlessly cold-blooded Ottoman Empire. Further, although the play ends with Selymus's death, and his successor, his son Solyman Selymus declaring his father's acts "treasons, / And black seditions," Goffe assures his audience that the Turks and only the Turks are safe from Selymus's reign of terror (O1r), since Solyman is critical of his father's acts only because they helped raise "Turkish blades / Against [fellow Turks], imbowelling the State with bloody discord" "as if no Christians / Were left to conquer" (O1 r). Clearly the new emperor plans a regime which reinstates what, in his opinion, should be the Turks' main objective: to conquer Christian lands. This focus suggests Goffe is dramatizing the life and death of Selymus in order to remind English audiences that although the Turks are England's business partners in Mediterranean trade, the overall agenda of the Ottoman Empire is to achieve "the monarchie of the whole world" (Knolles A5r). Goffe thereby echoes his source, Richard Knolles, whose letter "To the Reader" emphasizes again and again that the Turks demonstrate a "notable vigilancie in taking aduantage of euery occasion for the enlarging of their Monarchie" (A5r).

Thus this new emperor, the raging Turk's replacement, makes the following threat against Christendom:

[W]hen peace
 Hath knit her knots, then shall the wanton sounds
 Of Bells giue place to thundring Bombardes,
 And blood wash out the smoothing oyle of Peace,
 Euery Souldier l'le ordaine a Priest
 To ring a fatall knell to Christians,

And euery minute vnto earths wide wombe,
Shall sacrifice a Christians Hecatombe. (O2v)

Here Solyman anoints all the soldiers in his far flung empire as priests, implying that his forces are not just to kill Christians, but to convert them as well. Solyman's end of the play epilogue-like speeches focus on his empire's mission: to subsume, one way or another, all Christian nations. Once again, Goffe follows his source, Richard Knolles, who speaks extensively to the fear that weaker and converted Christian nations were falling to Islam.

In "The Authours Indvction to the Christian Reader," Knolles warns that western princes are in imminent danger of being subsumed by the Turks (A4r-A5v). To correct this, Knolles invites King James to engage in the medieval strategy of crusade. Here Knolles follows a humanist tradition in historical writing. According to Margaret Meserve, "Humanist histories of Islam [were] often composed to support arguments for a new crusade" (13).⁹⁰ In his "Epistle Dedicatorie" to "the High and Mightie Prince James" (A3r), Knolles argues that "onely [the] vnited forces" of James along "with the rest of the Christian princes" can "giue remedie" to "the barbarous enemies of greatest terrour," the Turks (A5v). Goffe, like Knolles, wants his audience to consider that when Selim I died in 1520, he freed the Turks from infighting so they could focus on their true intent: to conquer Christendom. The role of the Jewish physician in Goffe's play, then, is historical fact and therefore merely incidental to the play's overall purpose.

However, there is further evidence that Goffe's play is more interested in highlighting Christian fault in the rise and success of the Turks, than it is in preserving the stereotyped image

⁹⁰ Meserve also cautions that "humanists' thinking was more than a particular belief that Islam was bad or that Christianity was good and therefore deserved to triumph"; rather, she claims that their desire for a new crusade was more about returning to "the rightly ordered nature of the universe [and] to God's plan for humankind" (13). In the histories of the Turks discussed in this chapter I have also observed that English historians are less interested in vilifying Islam than they are in showing how Islam could be part of God's plan to destroy English Christianity if England does not mend its ways.

of Jews. Indeed, Goffe reveals his Protestant perspective by identifying Roman Catholic corruption as a primary facet of Christian error. Unlike Greene whose only poisoner is a Jew, Goffe includes a much more developed poisoning scene involving a Catholic poisoner, Alexander, “a bishop” of Rome (Goffe E4r; Knolles 452). Including this episode from his historical source suggests that Goffe is following Reformation-era anti-Catholic typology. Just as Luther, Calvin, and Vermigli likened the Roman Catholic ritual and ceremony to the way Pharisical Jews clung to the law,⁹¹ Goffe is likening the stereotyped greed of the Jew to the greed of a Roman Catholic Pope. In doing so, he follows a similar move made by Knolles, on whose history Goffe is basing the play.

In Knolles’s history, Alexander the bishop is in fact Pope Alexander VI, and his contact with Bajazet II is recorded by Knolles as well as later historical sources.⁹² Similar to his vicious description of the Jew Hamon’s part in poisoning Bajazet II, Knolles’s account of Pope Alexander’s role in Bajazet II’s scheme is scathing. Knolles reports that in return for his help to drive Ottoman forces from Europe (and, in particular, France), Bajazet requested that Alexander VI “would as quickly as possible release his brother [Zemes] from all the troubles of this wicked and transitory world” (Dyer 221), because Bajazet saw Zemes as a rival to his rule. According to Knolles, Alexander VI carried out Bajazet’s wish by means of poison: “the barbarous king with great cunning persuaded the bishop to poyson Zemes his brother” by

⁹¹ As I discuss in chapter 1.

⁹² See John George Keysler’s *Through Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, and Lorrain*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., London Royal Society, 1760, pages 396-397, and Thomas Henry Dyer’s *A History of Modern Europe*, Vol. I, 3rd ed., London: George Bell and Sons, 1901, page 221.

offering “to pay vnto the bishop two hundred thousand duckats, and neuer after, so long as he liued, to take vp armes against the Christians” (451).⁹³

However, Knolles does not consider the Pope’s attempt to end Ottoman animosity towards Christians an acceptable reason to commit murder. In fact, Knolles suspects this “bishop” not only of greed but of a malicious attempt to garner fame. Knolles describes Zemes’s death thus: “with pleasant poison, Alexander the bishop skilfull in that practise (corrupted by Bajazet his gold, and enuying so great a good vnto the French) had caused to be mingled with the sugar wherewith Zemes vsed to temper the water, which he commonly dranke” (452). So although (in Knolles) the “bishop” murders Zemes in an attempt to rid Europe of Ottoman invaders, Knolles does not hesitate to emphasize Alexander’s avarice and self-interest. Similar to his account of the Jew, Hamon, Knolles’ version of this event highlights the treachery of the Turk while making clear that a Catholic “bishop of Rome” is as like to poison for gold as is a Jew. Hence Knolles’s account of Bajazet II’s agreement with Pope Alexander VI is designed to disturb English Protestant readers on two levels. First, Knolles’s history demonstrates (and affirms?) for English Protestants how a Roman Catholic leader can be persuaded, through greed, to sell out all Christendom. Second, the “bishop’s” murder of Zemes stereotypically and typologically aligns Pope Alexander with non-Christian, specifically Jewish, criminality. As a poisoner, the Pope resembles the poisoning Jews of medieval folklore; as a religious leader agreeing to murder an innocent person at the behest of a dangerous enemy, he is like the Pharisaical Jews who accepted the blame for Christ’s death whom they delivered to Rome to crucify.

⁹³ Whether Zemes was really poisoned by Pope Alexander is a mystery. Most modern sources believe that Zemes died in prison when negotiations involving him broke down. However, Goffe uses Knolles as a source and for him, it seems, Alexander VI poisoned Bajazet’s brother Zemes.

Goffe's treatment of the Christian poisoner not only follows Knolles's negative opinion of Roman Catholic clerical leaders but, by delving into Alexander's mindset, emphasizes the ease with which Christian leaders, Catholic or Protestant, can be led into sin. In Goffe's play, the poisoning order comes in a letter that dramatically arrives after the "bishop" has heard Zemes's repentance for his "sinnes" (F1v). Initially Alexander is angered by this letter questioning the "[i]mperious Turke's" right to order "God's Vize-regent here on earth" to commit murder (F1r). Nevertheless, Alexander lays aside his religious quibbles at the prospect of garnering favor with Selymus. He says, "The Turke is great and powerfull, if I winne, / His loue by this, t'will proue a happy sinne" (Goffe F1r). Moreover, Goffe emphasizes that Alexander murders Zemes before the "bishop" could be sure "Whether [God's] soule did trans-migrate / Into [Zemes's] breast or no" (F2r). In Goffe, then, Alexander commits a double murder, of both Zemes's body and his soul. It is to be noted that, from the Christian perspective, Zemes's soul, at least, could have been saved if Alexander had allowed him the time to complete his conversion. Clearly Goffe satirizes how even the head of the Roman Catholic Church will set aside a religious rite, as well as God's own commandment not to kill, when money is involved.

Although unlike Goffe's Hamon, Goffe's Alexander expresses remorse for his action, it is nevertheless clear from the highly negative depiction of Alexander and the relatively neutral depiction of Hamon that, for Goffe, the Catholic Christian's behavior and motives in poisoning at the behest of a powerful Muslim figure are more concerning than the same action committed by the Jew. Goffe does not include the thoughts and motives of the Jew; this move indicates that the Jew's role in Turkish perfidy is not as strong a concern for the playwright or his audience as is the Catholic "bishop's" ethical dilemma. Both for Goffe, who eschews Jewish

stereotype, as well as for Knolles who glories in it, the material issue is the encroachment of the non-Christian, Muslim Ottoman Empire on Christendom. It should be noted that Roman Catholic nations were perceived, along with the Ottoman Empire, as one of the largest threats to English Christendom. It is unsurprising, then, that Goffe and Knolles would be more concerned about a conspiracy between Pope Alexander VI and the Turk Bajazet II, than the conspiracy between a far less powerful Jewish physician and the Turk Selimus I.

Although English Protestants certainly feared an attack on Christianity from non-Christians, plays, histories, and even newsbooks (as seen below) place the blame on the shoulders of Muslims as well as on Christians themselves. Jews, as actual people, were not part of this anxiety. The chief fear Christians associated with Jews was their perception of themselves as capable of “playing the Jew” by taking on traditional “Jewish” roles such as usurer, broker, and merchant. As various early modern writings reveal, English Protestants believed that Englishmen who occupied these “Jewish” roles and used them to engage in avaricious behavior, were in danger of losing their salvation in the same way as had the Jews. It does not follow, however, that this English anxiety translated into fear of a mass conversion to Judaism or of Jewish / Muslim alliances or attacks by actual Jews. Instead, English Protestants feared they could become like Jews as a result of excessive avarice and lust, and in doing so, bring upon themselves a destructive punishment from God. This anxiety was then represented on stage by Christian characters such as the Pirate Ward, the governors of Malta and Tunis (the latter was also a Christian-turned-Turk), and Alexander the “bishop of Rome,” and their interactions with Jews and / or Turks.

Of all the plays in the Jewish/ Muslim subgenre, John Day, William Rowley, and George Wilkins's 1607 play *The Travailes of Three English Brothers* most closely adheres to the idea that the English may have feared "a Muslim-Jewish alliance" (Vitkus 181). This play depicts the Mediterranean activities of three sons of politician and courtier Sir Thomas Shirley⁹⁴ (c.1542-1612): Sir Thomas (1564-1633/4), Sir Anthony (1565-1636[?]), and Sir Robert (1581-1628). Closely following Anthony Nixon's 1607 newsbook *The Travels of Three English Brothers* in that it leaves out the more unsavory aspects of the Shirley brothers' activities, Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's play depicts Sir Thomas as a would-be crusader intent on taking back lands usurped by the Ottoman Empire. As a result, he is captured and ill-treated by Turkish authorities. Sir Robert,⁹⁵ who is left in Persia as surety for Sir Anthony's cause, is depicted as marrying the Persian Sophy's niece, clearing Anthony's name in Venice, and being on the cusp of building a church wherein Persian children could be (like his own half-Persian child) raised as Christians. Sir Anthony is depicted as an ambassador attempting to gain Persian and east European allies for a Christian crusade against the Ottoman Empire. While visiting Venice, Sir Anthony is depicted as having an ill-fated encounter with a Jew who, conspiring with Sir Anthony's own colleague, the Turk Hallibeck, lands the middle Shirley brother in a Venetian prison. It is the scenes involving Sir Anthony, the Jew Zariph, and Hallibeck the Turk that have qualified Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's play for the Jewish-Muslim conspiracy sub-genre.

⁹⁴ Also spelled Sherley.

⁹⁵ The third brother, Robert, did not have any significant interaction with Jews. Thus, this section focuses on Anthony and Thomas. According to Davies, Robert did accompany Anthony to Persia and was left as a pledge for Anthony's ambassador work. However, Robert did not marry the niece of the Persian Sophy, but rather the daughter of a Christian Circassian chieftan named Isma'il Khan. Robert maintained good relations with the Sophy, eventually becoming his ambassador and, later, papal chamberlain.

Interestingly, however, historical source material⁹⁶ both primary and secondary on the Shirley brothers suggests that none of the brothers were victims of a Jewish / Muslim conspiracy. In fact, it was the Shirley brothers, not Muslims, who conspired with Jews in various business endeavors. Indeed, both Sir Anthony and Sir Thomas can be said to have behaved much like Ferneze in Marlowe's *Malta*, since they each concocted elaborate plans to extort money from Levantine Jews⁹⁷ in exchange for these Jews to have "leave" in Christian nations "to get their wealth" (Marlowe 1.2.60) and pursue their own religion. In 1607, both Sir Thomas and Sir Anthony attempted to introduce Levantine Jews into Europe; Sir Anthony, also known as Count Anthony, into Sicily, and Sir Thomas into the British Isles. For his part, Count Anthony attempted to convince the Duke of Escalona to take part in a coin-trading scheme. Because the chequin to leonico exchange rate was better in the Levant than in Europe, Anthony's scheme involved setting up mints and placing in charge of the actual coin trade "forty or fifty families of Levantine Jews imported into Italy for the purpose" (Davies 214). To the Duke's reservations about the influence the Jews might have on the Christian populace, Anthony argued that Jews in "Rome, Avignon, Ancona, Florence, and Germany had not Judaized those places" and he scoffed at the idea that Jews "would act as Turkish spies" since as moneylenders, Jews made far more money than spies were paid (Davies 214). Although here is an instance where a Spanish Duke feared a Jewish alliance with Turks, Anthony, the Protestant Englishman, clearly had no

⁹⁶ These sources include D.W. Davies 1967 biographical book *Elizabethans Errant: The Strange Fortunes of Sir Thomas Sherley and His Three Sons*, the letters written by the Shirleys which Davies includes in his work, and Nixon's 1607 newsbook on the brothers.

⁹⁷ This term, used by D. W. Davies in his 1967 *Elizabethan Errants*, refers to Jews who resided in the Mediterranean.

similar fear. Indeed, Anthony had been accustomed to using Jews as agents, once sending two Jews to help him broker a deal with a Persian silk dealer, Fetchi Beg,⁹⁸ in Venice (Davies 150).⁹⁹

Also in 1607, Sir Thomas lobbied James I to allow Jews into England. According to Davies, Sir Thomas had probably been paid by Levantine Jews to forward their proposal and had every reason to believe that bringing them to England would continue a similar revenue (181). In exchange for religious freedom and permission to build synagogues, Thomas assured James that these Levantine Jews would “pay an ample annual tribute of so much per head” (Davies 181). James, however, “viewed [this suggestion] with disfavor” (Davies 181); undaunted, Sir Thomas then asked for the right to settle the Jews in Ireland for two ducats a head and the right to practice their religion. Sir Thomas argued that these Jews would bring England a large amount of “bullion” from Spain because they were all established merchants who could easily export Irish commodities such as “salted salmon, corn, hides, wool, and tallow” into Spain. There was also the consideration that such a trade would yield customs and excise taxes that “would pour gold into James’s coffers” and from which Sir Thomas could skim a premium (Davies 181).

Sir Thomas further argued that it was wise for James to keep these “Jews in easy reach” because, as Shirley reckoned, Jews were “always good for a loan, more or less forced” and while it was often difficult to extract even £10,000 from English merchants, Shirley felt “his

⁹⁸ This deal goes wrong and Anthony ends up in Venetian prison in 1605. However, Anthony’s imprisonment has to do with his attempt (made by himself and his Jewish agents) to force Fetchi Beg to sell him the silk against the latter’s will. He is not perceived as the victim of a Jewish / Muslim conspiracy, as Day, Wilkin, and Rowley’s play suggests.

⁹⁹ Sir Anthony’s plan to introduce Jews to Sicily, however, did not go through possibly because this was but one of Shirley’s “numerous” proposals that had raised the general suspicion that the English Christian knight “aimed at nothing less than control of Sicily” (Davies 215). In the end, other of Shirley’s proposals became more expedient and the coin-trading idea was dropped.

Jews would be good for a million” (Davies 182). Sir Thomas offered the Duke of Mantua as an example of a ruler over a poor region who was being kept afloat through revenues brought in by the Jews who lived there. Sir Thomas, clearly wanting to profit from this deal as much as would James, also offered himself as mediator, telling the monarch that the “agent that treats with them must be a man of credit and acquaintance amongst them [e.g. Sir Thomas] who must know how to manage them, because they are very subtile people” (qtd. in Davies 182). Although Sir Thomas here resorts to stereotype, his object is clear; he wants to act as overseer in order to ensure “his Jews” (Davies 182) were profitable to him as well as to the crown. Like Sir Anthony’s plan, however, Sir Thomas’s proposal came to naught. Indeed, Sir Thomas was forced to give it up when some of his letters were intercepted and the content of them landed him in the Tower “for attempting to divert the Levant commerce from England to Venice” (Davies 183).

As can be seen by the Shirleys’ actual contact with Jews, these Christian brothers conspired with Jews primarily for personal monetary gain, but secondarily to bolster English profits. Anthony Nixon’s newsbook lauding the three brothers’ activities therefore has nothing negative to say about Jews;¹⁰⁰ so, it is curious why Day, Rowley, and Wilkins’s play, following as it does, both Nixon as well as the Shirleys’s actual exploits, chooses to introduce a Jew, Zariph, who is a throwback not just to various negative actions popularized by Shylock and Barabas, but harking even further back to medieval stereotype.¹⁰¹ According to the playwrights, Zariph,

¹⁰⁰ Nixon’s only mention of a Jew is positive, as will be detailed at the end of the chapter.

¹⁰¹ In addition the argument I suggest, it is possible that the playwrights recognized the crowd-pleasing value of the stereotyped medieval Jew. However, Peter Berek feels that Zariph’s depiction has more to do with the desire to capitalize on Shylock-like characters. He writes, “Zariph is so unwarranted by anything in [Nixon’s pamphlet] and so clearly modeled on Shylock that it is implausible to believe that his appearance in the play was simply the result of

whose brother broke the law and was put in jail on Sir Anthony's information, sets himself on a course of vicious revenge against the middle Shirley brother. The Jew deliberately lends money to Sir Anthony which the latter is unable to repay because, as the Jew has been told by his Muslim partner Hallibeck, the jewel the Sophy had sent Sir Anthony for payment had been intercepted. This Jewish / Muslim scheme lands Sir Anthony in jail, and it is only at the end of the play when Sir Robert exposes Hallibeck as a traitor that Sir Anthony is vindicated and Hallibeck slated for execution.

Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's play, then, differs widely in purpose from the plays previously reviewed. Instead of presenting a warning that Christians must amend their ways in order to prevent the Ottoman "scourge," these playwrights want audiences to consider the Mediterranean as in desperate need of the Christian influence as exemplified by the Shirley brothers. Harking back to medieval Jewish stereotype to emphasize the non-Christian nature of characters one might encounter while trading within the Ottoman Empire is an excellent method to make a Christian knight's Christianity shine more brightly. For according to these playwrights, Sir Anthony is a heroic Protestant knight, bent on serving Christ and England in his every action. Indeed, the Persian Sophy is in awe of the godlike Anthony:

What powers do wrap mee in amazement thus?
 Mee thinks this Christian's more than mort all,
 Sure he conceales himselfe within my thoughts
 Neuer was man so deepely registred,
 But God or Christian, or what ere he bee,
 I wish to be no other but as hee. (A4v-r)

Jacobean hostility to Jews" (155). My analysis agrees with Berek's, as I show how Zariph is patterned after both Shylock and Barabas.

In other words, Day, Rowley, and Wilkins do not present Sir Anthony as a Christian behaving counter to scriptural precept; indeed his actions by this account are as exemplary as the Apostle Paul could wish them to be. As well, Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's purpose reflects that found in a newsbook of the same name¹⁰² published within weeks of their play. In it, Anthony Nixon (*fl.* 1592-1616) states that because the three brothers had been "made strangers here at home" (i.e. England), Nixon became determined to tell the story of the "Three Heroes of our Time" who have fought "against the common Enemy of Christendome" (B2v). In dramatically staging Nixon's newsbook, then, the playwrights do nothing to alleviate the evil role of the Jew Zariph or the Turks with whom the Shirleys interact. For Day, Rowley, and Wilkins, evil non-Christian infidels highlight the need for English Christians like the Shirley brothers to conduct a crusade in the Mediterranean; applying the more evil aspects of Barabas and Shylock to their Jewish figure is useful in serving the larger purpose of their play.

It is true that Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's Jew Zariph critiques the Christian Sir Anthony as do his predecessors Barabas and Shylock, saying, similar to Shylock, "If we be curst we learn't of Christians" (E4v).¹⁰³ However, unlike in Marlowe and Shakespeare, the playwrights make clear that Zariph's critique of Sir Anthony is false because it is based on what is (for English Christians) erring Jewish doctrine. Zariph's critique focuses only on those laws of Moses that Christ's advent had abrogated (kashrut, circumcision); moreover, Zariph falsely associates Gentiles with Hagar's son Ishmael. As well, Zariph's motive for attacking Sir Anthony, similar to the reason for both Shylock's and Barabas's acts of viciousness, is to avenge an assumed wrong

¹⁰² Nixon's newsbook spells *Travailes* as *Travels*.

¹⁰³ Shylock says: "The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction" (III.i.60-66).

against his (Zariph's) brother. However, unlike in Marlowe and Shakespeare, Day, Rowley, and Wilkins justify Sir Anthony's action against Zariph's brother simply by having a witness state, "That was the Law" (E4v). Indeed, Zariph's behavior often embodies the medieval idea of the Jew as one whose refusal of Christ has made him mercilessly desire "To tast a banket all of Christians flesh" (E4v) more than the legal repayment of his bond. Unlike Shylock, however, the Jew does not leave his vicious ways. Indeed, unlike Shylock, Zariph the Jew goes unpunished for his crime against Sir Anthony.

The fact that a vicious Jew was inserted into Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's play even though there was no historical Jew named Zariph mentioned in Nixon (or anywhere else in historical materials dealing with the Shirleys) has led scholars to assume Zariph is the product of early modern English anti-Semitism. I suggest, however, there are alternative reasons for the Jew's inclusion. First, the closeness of Zariph's behavior to that of Marlowe's Barabas and Shakespeare's Shylock suggests a more practical reason for Zariph's presence in the play. Peter Berek notes:

The speech and behavior of Zariph suggest that theater audiences after Marlowe [and Shakespeare] relished the ranting of the stage type invented in Barabas and Shylock, and that given an opportunity to do so playwrights would turn a Jew into such figures. (156)

Berek's assumption does seem reasonable since Day, Rowley, and Wilkins borrow quite liberally from the more famous Jewish figures of Barabas and Shylock. For example, similar to the way Marlowe's Barabas gives Lodowick a jewel gratis in order to set up the latter's death, Zariph gives Sir Anthony a jewel worth 100,000 ducats for the Persian Sophy hoping, like Shakespeare's Shylock, that the Christian cannot pay and must go to jail. Similar to Barabas's claim in Marlowe that "Jews can fawn like spaniels when [they] please" (2.3.20), Zariph accuses

Anthony of acting like “a Christian spaniell [who] clawes, and fauns for gaine” (E4v). Although the Jew admits he loves “Sweet gold” as well as the “sweete lewel” yet does he, like Shylock, desire his Christian mark’s flesh, stating “the sweetest part / Of a lewes feast , is a Christian’s heart” (F2v). Day, Rowley, and Wilkins also borrow the banquet aspect of Lodge’s usury scheme from *Merchant of Venice*. As previously detailed, Shylock attends a dinner he has first refused to attend, ostensibly in order to seal the deal he has made with Antonio. However, this dinner turns out to be a trick to get Shylock out of the way so Jessica can run off with Lorenzo. Similarly, Zariph (who has previously refused Sir Anthony’s proffer of a banquet) and his Muslim cohort, Hallibeck, arrange a meal for Sir Anthony, ostensibly so that the Christian knight can belatedly pay for the Sophy’s jewel. However, Sir Anthony never receives the money because Hallibeck has intercepted the Sophy’s payment. These similarities to Barabas and Shylock seem to be deliberate and it is therefore not unreasonable to suppose these traits were meant to draw in fans of Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* and Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*.

Although Day, Rowley, and Wilkins borrow from Barabas and Shylock, they do so in deliberate opposition to the effect made by Marlowe and Shakespeare. As detailed last chapter, Barabas and Shylock serve to illuminate Christian error. Zariph, however, serves to highlight Christian righteousness. To effect this, the playwrights paint the Shirley brothers (and specifically Sir Anthony) as exemplary Protestant Englishmen whose courageous attempts to bring Christ to the Mediterranean are constantly thwarted, not due to any fault of their own, but due to the stubborn, often vicious attitudes of the region’s non-Christians. In other words, in following Nixon’s attempts to make the brothers become “Three Heroes of our Time” who have fought “against the common Enemie of Christendome” (B2v), Day, Rowley, and Wilkins

must present these three brothers as crusader-knights of medieval legend. Correspondingly, the playwrights must also reach back to medieval stereotype to depict their Jew as an “Enemy of Christendome.”

Thus the plot against Sir Anthony as enacted by Hallibeck and Zariph represents the kind of Jewish / Muslim partnership designed to express the fear that Jews and Muslims might unite against Christendom. However, if we look at other works printed about the Shirley brothers in the first decade of the seventeenth century, we find that these playwrights were not the only writers attempting to rescue the brothers’ reputations. In 1601, William Parry published *A new and large discourse of the Travels of Sir Anthony Sherley, Knight*; in 1602, an unnamed “Gentleman that was in his voyage” published *A True discourse of the late voyage made by the Right Worshipfull Sir Thomas Sherley the yonger, Knight*; and in 1607, the same year that Day, Rowley, and Wilkins’s play was published, appears Anthony Nixon’s newsbook, *The Travels of Three English Brothers*. However, the reason for this onslaught of works championing the Shirley brothers had more to do with the brothers’ need of “salvation” than it did the non-Christian world of the Mediterranean. In fact, the reputation of the Shirley brothers (in particular Sirs Thomas and Anthony) was quite damaged, since for several years they had been bungling their way around the Mediterranean, wreaking havoc on Elizabeth’s (and later James’s) “amicable relations with the [Ottoman] Porte” (Davies 128).¹⁰⁴

From the mid-1590s, Sirs Thomas and Anthony Shirley had been making Englishmen a source of scorn and censure in the Mediterranean. Sir Thomas had been tried for piracy against non-enemy ships, thrown in debtors’ prison, thrown in a Turkish prison for instigating an

¹⁰⁴ The word Porte refers to the “court or palace of the Ottoman sultan at [Constantinople]” (OED).

unauthorized crusade against Turks on the Greek Isle of Kea, and thrown in the Tower for diverting Mediterranean trade away from England. Sir Anthony had been banished from various countries for keeping gifts meant for other recipients, accused of spying for Spain and professing Catholicism, banished from England for upsetting Elizabeth's trade agreement with Sultan Murad III, and thrown in prison in Venice for nefarious mercantile dealings. The Shirley brothers, then, were in desperate need of validation. So although the evil partnership of Jew and Muslim in *Day, Rowley, and Wilkins's* play does indeed raise the fear of a Jewish / Muslim attack against innocent Christians, this situation is exploited by the playwrights as a way to justify the Shirley brothers' otherwise meddling activities in the Mediterranean. The renewal of medieval Jewish stereotype in *Zariph* is therefore anomalous. All the other "Jew" plays reviewed in this project reveal a softening of the Jewish medieval stereotype to reflect reformed Christian doctrine.

It is interesting to note that in order to lionize the Shirley brothers, *Day, Rowley and Wilkins* felt obliged to resort back to old fashioned medieval convention. It is true that these playwrights did indeed reference popular stage Jews of their own generation. However, they very carefully left out early modern alterations inspired by Protestant Christian concepts of Jews and Christians. Moreover, although they marginally depict several actual episodes in the Shirleys's lives, they do so by transforming the brothers into medieval characterizations of crusading knights bent on subduing the infidels. Harking back to medieval conventions, I suggest, was a very necessary measure for *Day, Rowley, and Wilkins*. For only by presenting these English brothers as anachronistic crusader knights who bravely faced down an archetypal evil Jew who fantasizes about "tast[ing] a banquet all of Christians flesh" (E4v), could *Day,*

Rowley, and Wilkins properly rehabilitate the reputations of these “Christian” brothers. After all, to the chagrin of the English court, the real life Sirs Anthony and Thomas had been very busy exemplifying unethically Christian behaviors similar to those that were being acted out by early modern stage Christians and criticized by early modern stage Jews.

It is also an interesting circumstance that Sir Thomas owed his life to a Jew—if indeed Anthony Nixon’s 1607 pamphlet¹⁰⁵ lionizing the Shirley brothers can be believed. For while Sir Thomas languished in a Constantinople prison,¹⁰⁶ “euery houre awaiting the execution of his doome” (Nixon E1v), a “friendly Jew” (Davies 176), having heard of Shirley’s “imprisonment, and his wild manner of handling; and that he was also a Gentleman of account, and estimation in his Country: in pittie and compassion of his estate,” came to advise him (Nixon E1v). This unnamed Jew counseled Shirley to give the Bashaw all or some part of the 50,000 chequins the Bashaw had previously requested of Shirley for his release. This stalling tactic, the Jew reasoned, would allow time either for King James to intercede or the Bashaw to “loose his owne [life], for” as the Jew noted “the nature and qualitie of [the Bashaw’s] place will not hold an officer long” (Nixon E1r).

This unnamed Jew’s visit posed a difficult quandary for Sir Thomas Shirley, Christian knight. According to Nixon, Shirley likened having his life dependent on the advice of non-Christians to “hauing a Woolfe by the eare, wherein there was danger, either to hold or let goe.” Shirley therefore pondered this difficult question: whether it was “best [to] follow the counsell of a lewe, or trust the cruelty of a Turke” (Nixon L1r). Nixon reports that after “well

¹⁰⁵ *The Travels of the Three English Brothers*

¹⁰⁶ In January 1603, Sir Thomas was captured and imprisoned on the Turk-held Greek Isle of Kea (also known as Geo and Zea). He had been trying to wrest the island from the Turks. He was transferred to Constantinople in July 1603.

way[ing]" the Jew's "wordes" and finding nothing that "savoured of deceit" (L1r), Shirley chose to trust the Jew over the Turk. The English knight then offered the Bashaw 40,000 chequins and requested better food, quarters, and a servant, all of which were granted him. Moreover, the Jew's prediction proved wise: the Bashaw was indeed beheaded soon thereafter. And, though nearly a year later, King James did indeed intercede for Shirley who was then released from prison.

It is true that Sir Thomas Shirley's experience with an unnamed Jew is a small, little known episode in the annals of early modern English trade in the Mediterranean; nevertheless, its casual inclusion in Nixon's account of Shirley's incarceration suggests that Nixon's readers would accept at face value Shirley's choice to trust Jews over Turks. Even though it is clear that Shirley doubts both of these non-Christian groups, his choice to trust the Jew's advice would, I argue, raise few eyebrows. After all, Christians and Jews shared kinship due to shared doctrine. Although they were not fully to be trusted by English Protestants due to their rejection of Christ, Jews were nevertheless inextricably linked to Christianity through scriptures and the election covenant. Because Turks had no such link to Christianity, early modern Protestant Englishmen understood Jews to be distinct from Turks. Turks, on the other hand, were considered a sinister, physical threat to England and its conception of itself as a Protestant nation, because "the terrour of their name doth euen now make the kings and Princes of the West... to tremble and quake through the feare of their uictorious forces" (Fletcher A3v).

When the religious dynamic is included in analyses of early modern English plays featuring Jews, Turks, and Christians, a larger, internal English anxiety is revealed. English Protestants feared the destruction they could inflict upon themselves should their Christian

nation give full rein to avarice in the “Machiavellian marketplace” (Vitkus 195) of the Mediterranean. Although Jews and Turks indeed played a role in this English self-perception because both groups were considered portents of England’s destruction, the Jewish role was considered to be significantly distinct from that of the Turks. Jews were the warning, issued by Paul, of the consequences of unbelief. Should English Christians reject their faith in favor of avarice as the Jews had rejected Christ, England, like the Jerusalem of the Jews, would be destroyed by a pagan nation, and Englishmen, like the Jews, would be condemned to nationless wandering. In this rubric, the Ottoman Turks were as the Romans had been to the Jews--the “scourge” that would destroy the Protestant English nation for its unbelief. Moreover, the threat of Ottoman invasion seemed imminent to English Protestants, because histories published from 1546 to 1625 indicated that the Turks had already destroyed Christian nations in Africa, Asia, and eastern Europe due to the weakening of Christianity. One much discussed solution for dealing with the Turkish / Jewish threat was therefore thought to come from within English Protestants themselves, who were repeatedly warned to reinforce their faith in God. Jewish figures in plays featuring Levantine trade, then, served as a warning of what might happen to Protestant Englishmen should they succumb to the seduction of avarice and turn Turk while trading in the Mediterranean.

**CHAPTER 4: "I TURN CHRISTIAN? THEY HAVE JEW ENOUGH ALREADY AMONGST 'EM":
QUESTIONING ENGLAND'S CHRISTIANITY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**

As this project has been arguing, in early modern English plays, the antics of Jewish figures and the stereotypes attached to them rhetorically, enabled writers to expose and critique doctrinally unapproved behaviors in English Protestants. Although these Jewish representations could be quite pejorative, they were not fully focused on vilifying actual Jews, if at all. The previous chapters of this project have demonstrated this by examining plays where one or more Jewish characters interacted with Christian characters. Chapter 4, however, expands my argument in two ways. First, it explores how, even in works with no Jewish figures, playwrights nevertheless applied Jewish stereotypes to identify Christians¹⁰⁷ as villains. Second, it demonstrates how political pamphleteers also used Jewish stereotypes to vilify their opponents and to criticize the Commonwealth's religious chaos.

In plays, Christian villains were "Judiazed;" that is, they were imbued with the same Jewish stereotypes as had been applied to stage Jews Shylock, Barabas, and Benwash, and for the same reason: to underscore how villainies such as usurious avarice could bring destruction of biblical proportions to England. Indeed, Jewish characters from the first three chapters of this project seem to have provided templates for playwrights to create Jewish-style villains even when the targets of these stereotypes were not Jews. In pamphlets, medieval Jewish stereotypes such as host torturing, child crucifixion, and *foetor Judaicus* (the notion that Jews had a peculiar odor) became a way for writers to criticize the inability of Cromwell's Commonwealth to bring under control its own vying Christian factions. This chapter therefore

¹⁰⁷ Mamon and Wendoll are assumed to be English Protestant because they reside in England and are not otherwise described. Since both Othello and Iago live in Venice and claim it as their country they may be Catholic.

suggests that although playwrights and pamphleteers seem to resort to anti-Semitic rhetoric by reviving medieval Jewish stereotypes, they in fact did so either to disparage individual English Christians or to criticize the Commonwealth's efforts to stabilize Christianity during the first half of the seventeenth century.

This chapter more than any other in this project deals with Jewish stereotypes that would today be considered anti-Semitic speech; the purpose of this chapter is not to deny the anti-Semitic and damaging nature of seventeenth-century negative epithets about Jews. Instead, it discourages readers from applying exclusively anti-Semitic values to these stereotypes. Twenty-first century anti-Semitism assumes that pejorative anti-Jewish epithets target Jews and only Jews. In the early modern period in England, however, pejorative Jewish stereotypes, while certainly negative towards Jews and Judaism, primarily targeted Catholics, Catholic and Protestant. I say primarily, because of course these stereotypes are based on negative, untrue, and ethnically biased presumptions about Jews and Judaism. As such, anti-Jewish remarks by definition negatively affect Jews and Judaism by teaching non-Jews that pejorative presumptions about Jews are acceptable.

Nevertheless, during the time period covered in this project (1550s-1650s) there were no openly practicing Jews in England.¹⁰⁸ Through its examination of plays, civil war, and readmission pamphlets, chapter 4 demonstrates that negative Jewish stereotypes rarely targeted Jews as there was little at stake in doing so; after all, why insult those who were, for all intents and purposes, not there? It is true that pamphlets against the readmission of Jews used what today would be called anti-Semitic language ostensibly to target hypothetical groups of

¹⁰⁸ As this chapter will reveal, there was at least one small community of secretly practicing Jews. However, most English Christians were not aware of this small community until 1656.

Jews who might have entered England had the readmission proposal passed. Still, it can be argued that writing anti-Jewish pamphlets opposing Jewish readmission helped polemicists such as William Prynne state their cases against Commonwealth policies with impunity. Early modern English uses of anti-Semitic stereotype, then, were largely used to address various aspects of Catholic and Protestant Christian behavior. Jews were not the primary target.

Judaized Christians in Drama

Despite the fact that Jewish figures appeared only infrequently in seventeenth-century English plays, negative medieval Jewish stereotypes continued to proliferate. Instead of applying medieval Jewish stereotypes only to stage Jews, however, playwrights were creating Christian characters who engaged in Barabas- and Shylock-like forms of vicious usury and bore physical, biblical, and textual traits that had been traditionally associated with Jews. Judaized Christian villains appear in works such as John Marston's *lacke Drum's Entertainment* (1600), William Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603), and Thomas Heywood's *A woman Kilde with kindnesse* (1607).

As I discuss in the previous chapter, the late sixteenth-, early seventeenth-century increase in mercantilism had caused the vice of avarice to become a common concern in England. Because England was a Protestant nation, pamphlets and plays addressing this vice targeted the increasing number of professed English Protestants engaged in profitable mercantile activity. However, due to medieval tradition, avarice was still universally associated with "Jewish" behavior. According to Shapiro, "Jews were commonly identified as usurers and financial brokers in early modern England" and were known for their "outrageous and exploitative lending for profit" (98-99). To early modern Christians, Jews were known for

avariciously setting large interest rates for loans. Although there were doubtless many Jewish merchants and brokers who dealt honestly with the public, “English writers rarely bothered to distinguish between legitimate Jewish merchants and those they found or imagined to be unscrupulous or exploitative” (Shapiro 98). So prevalent was the association of avaricious usury with Jews that Thomas Lodge used the stereotype to strengthen his accusation against Christian usurers. In his *Alarum against Vsurers* (1584), Lodge underscores the villainy of usurious Christian merchants by lamenting, “O incredible & iniurious dealings, O more then Judaicall cousonage” (4v).

In late sixteenth-century plays, images and / or references to avarice helped establish a Jewish character as a Jew. Marlowe’s Barabas first appears on stage “in his counting-house” amid “heaps of gold” (l.i s.d.); in the first scene, after counting his riches and after several merchants appear to report on the success of his ventures, Barabas himself associates avarice with the Jewish nation, soliloquizing:

Thus trolls our fortune in by land and sea,
 And thus are we on every side enriched.
 These are the blessings promised to the Jews,
 And herein was old Abram’s happiness.
 What more may heaven do for earthly man
 Than thus to pour out plenty in their laps[?] (l.i.101-106)

Here Barabas refers to promises made to Abram (later renamed Abraham) at Genesis 17. However, the wealth promised Abram in these verses is not in the form of money, but the promise that Abram’s descendants will be kings, form nations, and occupy great quantities of Canaanite land. English Christians witnessing Barabas’s bold claim, then, might note that he has skewed the meaning of scripture to justify his acquisitive hoarding of mercantile wealth such as

the “[b]ags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts, / Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds, / Beauteous rubies, [and] sparkling diamonds” (l.i.25-27) of which he boasts.

Other playwrights capitalize on avarice as a Jewish stereotype as well. Although in *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare complicates the stereotype by having the Jew Shylock value revenge against Antonio even more than ducats, this is a turn of events that in the play is considered contrary to the expectations of Shylock’s Christian opponents.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, in Robert Wilson’s *Three Ladies of London* (1584), the Jew Gerontus’s decision to forego his bond in an attempt to save a Christian from betraying his faith is seen as Christian behavior while the avaricious Christian, who would sell his soul to avoid paying the bond, is seen as Judaical.¹¹⁰ In Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Wilson’s plays featuring stage Jews, the idea that Jews are avaricious is accepted and familiar enough to early modern playgoers to be a handy device enabling the plot to move forward.

Although avarice is the central Jewish stereotype seventeenth-century playwrights use to characterize unethical behavior in villainous Christian characters, other allusions to traits early modern Englishmen considered to be “Jewish” might be referenced as well. Some unethical figures become the target of nose jokes;¹¹¹ poison, “[t]he favorite method of the Jews” (Shapiro 96), may make an appearance. Indeed, villains might convey poison physically in a potion or powder, or verbally as a way for the Jew to corrupt a vulnerable Christian’s principles. Similarly, avarice may represent the physical as well as spiritual hoarding of wealth. For instance, the unethical Christian character may utter a version of Barabas’s phrase, “O girl,

¹⁰⁹ This was discussed in detail in chapter 2 of this project.

¹¹⁰ As was quoted in Chapter 2, the judge observing this turn of events remarks: “One may iudge and speake the truth, as appeeres by this, / lewes seeke to excell in Christianitie, and the Christians in lewishness” (17.53-54).

¹¹¹ Large noses were connected to some Jewish characters, although the assumption that large noses were considered Jewish is somewhat problematic (as will be discussed later in this chapter).

O gold, O beauty, O my bliss!" (Marlowe 2.1.54). This line was made famous in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* and was paraphrased in subsequent "Jew plays" (Shakespeare, Daborne) to indicate an internal focus on money over love, an indication of spiritual corruption. When several of these Jewish stereotypes converge in a villainous Christian stage figure, that character can be said to have been Judaized by the playwright.

In John Marston's 1600 comedy *Jacke Drum's Entertainment*, Mamon, who is described as a "Vsurer" in the play's *dramatis personae*, is a strongly Judaized Christian character. Marston's play is a comedy which contrasts the sincere love between the play's protagonists Pasquil and Katherine against the mercenary desires of Mamon and Katherine's sister, Camelia, both of whom wish to marry for material reasons such as wealth and physical attraction. Mamon plays the part of an English Christian¹¹² suitor attempting to lure Katherine into marriage with his money rather than through love, an attitude Marston considered Judaical. Although Marston was known as a scathing satirist, his Protestant opinions often dominated his work. After Marston's marriage (the exact date of which is unknown), he left the theater and by 1610 he was a cleric who worked as a curate for his wife's father, who was a royal chaplain. According to Ben Jonson, with whom Marston had often battled in the so-called "war of the theatres,"¹¹³ "Marston wrott his Father-in-lawes preachings, and his Father-in-law his Comedies" (qtd. in Patterson 19). Jonson's remark that Marston uses his plays to preach to audiences is consistent with Marston's overall focus in *Jack Drum's Entertainment*: that

¹¹² I am assuming that since Mamon is an Englishman and the play takes place in England that he is a Protestant Christian. Peter Berek assumes the same, see page 156 of "The Jew As Renaissance Man." *Renaissance Quarterly* 51.1 (1998): 128-162.

¹¹³ During "the war of the theatres" (c.1600-01), Marston and Jonson satirized each other in their plays. Thomas Dekker was involved as well. For further reading on this "war" see W. L. Halstead's "What 'War of the Theatres'?", *College English* 9.8 (1948): 424-26.

Christian merchants who behave as has his character Mamon are as reprobate as a Jew who has rejected Christ and as such is cut off from Christianity.

To emphasize Mamon's wrong-headed approach to wooing, Marston Judaizes the merchant as an avaricious usurer and a big-nosed poisoner; however, avarice is Mamon's main "Jewish" trait and Marston uses several devices (Mamon's name, his trade, and his moneybags) to underscore it. The name Mamon is derived from Matthew 6.24,¹¹⁴ wherein Christ makes clear that humanity cannot serve "two masters," God and riches. Because the Latin Vulgate used the term *mammona* to mean "riches," and since the verse personifies riches as a "master," a shortened version of the Latin term was sometimes used by early modern authors as the name of an avaricious person, that is, one who serves riches instead of God. In Book II, Canto VIII of *The Faerie Queene* (1596), Edmund Spenser personifies the avaricious hoarding of riches by having a character named Mammon preside over a cave representing worldly wealth. In *Paradise Lost* (1667), John Milton names one of his fallen angels *cum* demons Mammon. Marston's Mamon, however, is neither god nor demon, but a much more recognizable figure, one who would be all too familiar to early modern English playgoers—the usurious London merchant. In Judaizing Mamon, Marston relies on familiar Jewish stereotypes and jokes to criticize English Christians who prefer material wealth and beauty over love.

The palpable presence of Mamon's moneybag also underscores his avarice. Because the moneybag was an easily recognizable icon dating back to morality plays, Marston uses it as a deliberate prop in order to signify the non-Christian nature of the Christian usurer. In morality plays, the moneybag symbol belonged to the vice known as Avarice; it was also associated with

¹¹⁴ Matthew 6.24: "No man can serue two masters: for either he shal hate the one, and loue the other, or els he shal leane to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serue God and riches" (1560 Geneva Bible).

the reprobate Jew Judas who took thirty pieces of silver to betray Christ. As Huston Diehl notes, morality play icons continued to appear in the more “mature” plays of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods (“Inversion” 198). Diehl writes:

Although [morality play] icons are usually commonplaces, familiar to any student of the Renaissance, the extent to which the Tudor and Stuart playwrights employ them and the way in which they illuminate character have not been adequately recognized or fully explored. ... The moneybag, a traditional icon of avarice, for instance, associates Barabas in Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta* and D’Amville in Tourneur’s *Atheist’s Tragedy* with the sin of covetousness and thus universalizes their specific acts of miserliness and greed. (“Iconography and Characterization” 118)

Here Diehl’s choice of plays, which feature a Jew and an atheist respectively, underscores the idea that avarice is considered a sign of non-Christian behavior. In plays featuring Jews, the moneybag icon unsurprisingly makes its appearance as an attribute closest to the Jewish character’s heart. Barabas “hugs his [money]bags” (s.d. 2.I.54) when Abigail, masquerading as a nun, throws them down from the window of her convent, their former house. Shylock dreams of “money-bags” and, according to Solanio, laments the loss of “two sealed bags of ducats, / Of double ducats, stolen from [him] by [his] daughter” (II.v.18, II.viii.18-19). As well, Daborne’s Benwash places the loss of his money “bags” over his concern for “his wife” when his house catches fire (11.4). As will be seen below, Iago’s focus on Roderigo’s moneybag, which Shakespeare calls his “purse,” is the motivation behind Iago’s evil deeds in *Othello*.

Although each of Katherine’s suitors woos her with a song, only Mamon’s lyric features the moneybag icon associated with Avarice. Because his voice is “rude,” Mamon has his servant Flawne sing:

Chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, his bagges do ring
A merry note with chuncks to sing
Those that are farre make yong and wittie,

Are wide from singing such a Dittie
 As Chunck, chunck, chunck,
 Theres Chunck that makes the Lawyer prate,
 Theres Chunck that make a foole of Fate;
 Theres Chunck that if you will be his,
 Shall make you liue in all hearts blis.
 With Chunck, chunck, chunck. (C4v)

In this scene, the moneybag is present both visually and aurally, due to the repeated chorus of “chunck, chunck, chunck.” Marston is clearly creating a distinction between the pure motives of love versus the materialistic motive of avarice, for despite the moneybag shaking repeatedly to entice Katherine to marry Mamon the wealthy merchant, she is not moved. She merely tells Mamon “hence with your gold” (C4v) and shuts her casement window. Mamon initially accepts this rejection. However, when Mamon later learns that Pasquil is his rival, the merchant resorts to a more desperate measure to prevent the match between the two. This measure, poison, further associates Mamon with medieval stereotypes surrounding Jews.

After the lovers discover that Mamon had attempted to kill Pasquil and thereby “poisoned” as Pasquil puts it, “all the sweets of [his and Katherine’s] content” (F2r), Mamon decides that if he “cannot get [Katherine], none shall ioy / Which he could not enjoy” (F3v). Leaving murder behind, Mamon instead concocts a poison “venomde with this oyle of Toades” which he applies to Katherine’s face in order to “blur” her beauty since the substance eats into her skin (F3v). Due in larger part to medieval accounts of Jews being adept poisoners, early modern English audiences were likely to associate poison with Jews. As Shapiro observes, “One explanation for the association of Jews with poison is that Jews, celebrated as expert physicians, were suspected of abusing these healing powers” (98). Thus, “by the sixteenth century the idea that Jews tried to poison Christians was proverbial” (Shapiro 96).

It is unsurprising, then, to see poisoning references in plays featuring Jews. In Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, for example, Barabas claims to "go about and poison wells" (2.3.177). More tellingly, when Barabas hands Ithamore the letter that sets the stage for Matthias and Lodowick to kill one another, Ithamore assumes, perhaps as would many in the audience, that the Jew has poisoned it. Ithamore therefore asks, "'Tis poisoned, is it not?" and Barabas replies, "No, no; and yet it might be done that way" (2.3.374-375). In the mid-seventeenth century, English lawyer William Prynne (1600-1669) opposes Jewish readmission by reminding his readers that medieval Jews had been accused of both physically and doctrinally poisoning Englishmen. He writes how "Sedechias the lewish Physician (s) poisoned the Emperor Charles the Bald his body, as well as other Christians souls" (*Short Demurrer* 98). Prynne also mentions an event more contemporary to the minds of his readers, namely, how "Dr. Lopez a lew, would have poysoned Queen Elizabeth" (98).¹¹⁵ Having Mamon as an avaricious usurer as well as a poisoner allows Marston to enhance the idea that, although Christian, Mamon's actions are as unethical as are the actions of those Jews who reject Christ.

In addition to the larger plot points (avarice and poisoning) that rely on Judaization to vilify Mamon, there are other, smaller, applications of Jewish stereotypes. Mamon is the target of many nose jokes, including one he makes about himself. There is some reason to believe that

¹¹⁵ Here, Prynne is most certainly taking Dr. Lopez's Jewishness out of context, since Lopez was, at least ostensibly, a practicing Christian. In early modern accounts of the Dr. Lopez case, Lopez's Jewishness is rarely discussed. According to Peter Berek when writers do mention Lopez's Jewishness, "The context is clearly one in which writers are likely to seek any way possible of denigrating Lopez" (151). In Francis Bacon's account of the event, Lopez's Jewishness "is treated simply as an identifying fact, and is not presented as being associated with his treasonous behavior" (Berek 151). Moreover, of the "few documents where Lopez's Jewishness figures as more than identifying ascription, Jewishness becomes assimilated to Roman Catholicism as a figure of otherness and enmity" (Berek 151). Since Berek's interpretation of English reaction to Lopez's Jewishness is consistent with other similar analyses in this chapter, and as Lopez's trial and subsequent execution do not cause the Elizabethan government to banish all Christianized Jews from England, I am inclined to concur with Berek's interpretation of the Lopez case.

false noses may have been an early modern costuming device used as “eye-prooffe” (Rowley 11) to mark out Jewish features.¹¹⁶ In *A Search for Money* (1609), William Rowley Judaizes the “visage” of his fictional character, Mounsieur Money, by giving his satirically described Christian usurer “the artificiall Jewe of Maltaes nose” (12). As Peter Berek observes, for Rowley “Marlowe’s Jew become[s] a figure for the vice of usury, and also... Barabas’s ‘artificiall’ stage nose is the sign of an outcast state”(148). Mamon’s “Jew of Maltaes nose” is mentioned often in Marston’s play. In the cast list, Mamon is described as a “Vsurer, with a great nose” (I4v). In addition, Camelia, one of Sir Edward’s daughters, tells Mamon, “Sir you need not take pepper in the nose, Your nose is firie enough” (B2r) and Jack Drum wants to use Mamon’s nose as “lanthorn & candlelight” (B3v).

Mamon’s own references to his nose are of greater interest, since they accompany statements that underscore Mamon’s lack of Christian morality. When Mamon finds that his riches have “sunke” along with his ship on its return “from Barbary,” he blames those he associates with that venue, shouting, “Villaines, Rogues, Iewes, Turkes, Infidels, my nose will rot off in grieve” (F3r). That Mamon doesn’t see himself as any of these five groups suggests he identifies himself as an English Christian; in turn, his Christian self-identification prevents him from seeing his own actions as evil. Thus, Mamon’s allusion to the physical “reality” of his

¹¹⁶ For an extended list of descriptions of stage Jews being racially costumed with large noses, see note 96 on page 240 of James Shapiro’s *Shakespeare and the Jews* (Columbia UP, 1996). Although this list includes Ithamore’s description of Barabas as a “bottle-nosed knave,” Shapiro warns that “[a] better case needs to be made that [large, artificial noses on stage Jews] was the standard practice, or even the occasional practice, of companies using Henslowe’s stage properties” (n.96, 240). However, the idea of Jews’ noses being distinctive is found across the centuries. In a 19th century book called *The Laws of Health in Relation to the Human Form* (1870) the authors (D.G. Brinton, M.D. and G. H. Napheys, M.D.) write, “We all know the thick, prominent, curved, Jewish nose, and do not admire it very much” (100). So although it is true that we cannot be sure of the usage of false noses in relationship to early modern Jewish and Judaized stage characters, the image nevertheless does seem to crop up in relation to them often enough to suggest the nose can be seen as a racial identifier for Jews.

“Jewish” nose while simultaneously distancing himself from non-Christian “Infidels” such as “lewes” and “Turkes,” seems designed to elicit ironic groans from audience members. In other words, the physical and verbal presence of Mamon’s “Jew of Maltaes nose” underscores for early modern playgoers the non-Christian villainous nature of this moneybag shaking usurer, attempted murderer, and poisoner.

Mamon’s next “nose” speech, which is also his last speech, makes clear that the usurer at last understands he is not one of the elect, but a reprobate Englishman headed for hell:

I defie heauen, earth and hell, renounce my nose, plague, pestilence, confusion, famine, sworde and fire, deuoure all, deuoure me, deuoure Flawne, deuoure all: bondes, house, and ship, ship, house, and bondes, Dispaire, Damnation, Hell, I come, I come, so roome for Mamon, roome for Vsury, roome for thirtie in the hundred. I come, I come, I come. (F4v)

Here Mamon associates his nose with his crimes of avarice and usury. His renunciation of his nose might be a sign that he regrets any resemblance he bears to reprobate Jews. His description of the calamity that has befallen him suggests he understands his behavior as unethical and deserving of hell. As becomes clear after this speech, Mamon’s reference to “hell” comes to mean banishment to Bedlam; for Mamon’s servant Flawne decides to “laie [Mamon] vp in Bedlame” and to “commit him to ... the sting of a Vsurers Conscience for euer” (F4v). In this passage we witness Mamon, who has worshipped the false “master” wealth, losing all and rejecting any possible redemption by the true God. Like the “stubborn” Jew who has rejected Christ as messiah despite what is, for Christians, overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Mamon’s greed has cut himself off from God and banished him to the hell that is Bedlam.

However, it is Jack Drum, who acts as a musician / chorus throughout Marston's play, who most clearly Judaizes Mamon through a rather cruel pun: "M. Mamon is in a Citie of Iurye, called Bethlem, Alias plaine Bedlame: the price of whips is mightily risen since his braine was pitifully ouertumbled, they are so fast vpon his shoulders" (11r). Mamon has entered the insane asylum, Bedlam, but Jack has punned on the name in order to demonstrate how Judaized behavior leads to a Judaized fate—banishment. Beginning with the Garden of Eden, Jews had often been banished by God for their sins: Cain for killing Abel, Moses from the "promised land" of Canaan for striking the rock, and the Israelites sent to Babylon for idolatry. Also prominent in early modern English minds, was the Jews' banishment from Jerusalem and Palestine in 70 CE. In more recent history, early modern Englishmen recognized Jews as a people who had been expelled from many European regions, including England in 1290. Like Cain and England's own Jews, Mamon is banished from English society and forced to live any place that will accept him. As I showed in the last chapter, the Jews had "bec[o]me a traueiling Nation..., traueiling now aboue 1500. yeeres" (Purchas 67) for having accepted responsibility¹¹⁷ for Christ's death. To early modern playgoers, then, Mamon has been banished from English Protestant society in a modernized version of this biblical tradition. Moreover, Marston drives home the justness of Mamon's banishment by having Pasquil, who has nearly been murdered at Mamon's behest and has seen his love disfigured with Mamon's poison, exclaim, "Oh sacred heauens, how iust is thy reuenge" (11r). In *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, Marston relies on medieval Jewish stereotype as well as characteristics of Jews laid down by prior playwrights such as Shakespeare and

¹¹⁷ Matthew 27.25

Marlowe, to aid him in creating a Christian villain whose Judaical behavior might lead even a Christian Englishman to suffer a “Jewish” fate.

In *Othello* (1603), Shakespeare’s Iago is another character who, though not described as Jewish, is nevertheless Judaized in much the same way as was Marston’s Mamon—through the Jewish stereotypes of avarice and poison.¹¹⁸ Avarice is central to Shakespeare’s *Othello*; indeed, the play opens with a fraught argument between Iago and Roderigo over the very prop associated with the morality play character Avarice, a moneybag in the contemporary form of Roderigo’s purse. In the opening lines of *Othello*, Roderigo admonishes Iago, stating, “Tush! never tell me; I take it much unkindly / That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse / As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this” (I.1.1-3). As the action unfolds, it becomes clear that Roderigo has been paying Iago to bring him together with Desdemona and Roderigo has just learned that his lady love has eloped with Othello. It is equally clear that Iago has been pocketing the money without ever making the slightest attempt to bring Desdemona and Roderigo together. The crisis of Act I, Scene I is derived from the problem that because Iago is in danger of losing access to Roderigo’s purse, Iago promises Roderigo that he will yet bring him together with Desdemona. Because Avarice’s purse—really, his moneybag—is the prime focus of Iago and main motivation throughout *Othello*, this is one way Iago is Judaized.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ For in depth and interesting discussions of Othello in terms of racial and Muslim stereotypes see Daniel J. Vitkus (Chapter 4: Othello Turns Turk” in *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570-1630* [2003]), Julia Reinhard Lupton (“Chapter 4: Othello Circumcised” in *Citizen-Saints: Shakespeare and Political Theology* [2005]), and Ania Loomba (“Chapter 4: Othello and the Racial Question” in *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* [2002]). As my purpose is to focus on Jewish stereotypes, I confine my discussion to the character who embodies them, Iago.

¹¹⁹ As the owner of the purse it could be argued that Roderigo is also a Judaized character. Not only is the moneybag his but he is, like Mamon, using it to win Desdemona. Nevertheless Roderigo is unlike Mamon in every other way. Unlike Mamon, Roderigo does not try to tempt Desdemona with money. Instead, he pays Iago in the hope that Iago will set up an opportunity for Roderigo to woo her. Unlike Mamon, Roderigo is not willing to poison or kill anyone. It is true that he agrees to the swordfight Iago arranges between himself and Cassio and that his

Thus, understanding Roderigo's purse in *Othello* as the iconic symbol of avarice and as a Judaized trait enables us to get a stronger sense of why Iago would be repugnant to early modern audiences.¹²⁰ Long speeches in which Iago focuses on Roderigo's purse, for example, become symbolic of Iago's greed and foreshadow the desperate and horrific methods he employs to keep hold of Roderigo's purse strings. When Roderigo threatens to drown himself (and thereby deprive Iago of the moneybag), Iago's speeches are designed to convince Roderigo to continue on in pursuit of Desdemona. Tellingly, these speeches emphasize that avarice is Iago's motive by implementing the word "purse" eight times and the word "money" eleven times, in the space of forty-eight lines:

Put money in thy purse, follow thou the wars, defeat thy favor with an usurped beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor—put money in thy purse—nor his to her. ... put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills—fill thy purse with money... [W]hen she is sated with his body she will find the error of her choice:... Therefore, put money in thy purse. If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning—make all the money thou canst. ...[T]hou shalt enjoy her—therefore make money. (1.3.340-362)

intent is to kill Cassio. Nevertheless, the plan is Iago's; Roderigo expresses reluctance saying, "I have no great devotion to the deed" (V.i.8). Further, Roderigo is neither usurer nor miser; on the contrary, he will give all his money away in order to get a chance to woo Desdemona. Iago is the avaricious one in the play; he wants all the contents of Roderigo's purse and does not care whose death he arranges in order to attain them.

¹²⁰ Throughout the centuries critics have been divided on the motive behind Iago's actions. For late seventeenth-century critic Thomas Rymer (c.1643-1713), who, perhaps, had never witnessed a morality play, Iago's sudden desire to destroy Othello by feeding the latter's insecurities and jealousy was simply seen as "most intolerable" and "against common sense, and Nature" (134-35). As well, many *Othello* critics have relied on Samuel Taylor Coleridge's early nineteenth century catchphrase of "motiveless malignity" (315) to describe Iago's actions against his general, a man who has elevated him in service and made him his confidante. However, the idea that Iago had no motive and was simply evil is not supported by the play. In 1956, Robert B. Heilman named jealousy of Cassio and Othello as Iago's motive, while in 1997 Janet Adelman applied Kleinian psychology to diagnose Iago's evil plotting as the result of envy. I agree that Iago is jealous of Cassio's book-learning and promotion and envious of Othello's rise to fame. I nevertheless argue that there is yet another layer; Iago's "Judaical" avaricious extortion of Roderigo. If envy and jealousy alone were the main motives behind Iago's actions, he could have acted against Othello and Cassio without Roderigo in tow. As it is in the play, Roderigo's desire to have Desdemona is the reason Iago attacks Othello in the first place.

When Roderigo expresses doubt that Iago will “be fast to [his] hopes” if Roderigo will invest money in Iago’s project, Iago continues with his emphasis on Roderigo’s purse and money. Claiming that he hates Othello as much as does Roderigo, Iago says, “Thou art sure of me—go, make money.... go, provide thy money” (1.3.365-372). However, once Roderigo exits, Iago reveals his true motive in helping Roderigo to Desdemona, by soliloquizing, “Go to, farewell, put money enough in your purse. Thus do I ever make my fool my purse” (1.3.381-382). As can be seen by the verbal presence of Avarice’s moneybag in the form of Roderigo’s purse, Act 1 of Shakespeare’s *Othello* does much to emphasize Iago’s motive as avarice.

As did Marston, Shakespeare combines avarice with poison, which gives his non-Jewish villain, Iago, a definite Jewish “taint.” As was seen on stage in plays such as Greene’s *Selimus* and Marlowe’s *Jew of Malta*,¹²¹ the Jew’s weapon of choice, poison, was normally represented physically in such props as goblets, cauldrons, vials, and flowers. Shakespeare’s Iago, however, opts to attack Othello with verbal poison. He spells out his intention to poison in his soliloquies, even using phrases designed to raise a visual image of poison from a previous play. When the idea to poison Othello’s thoughts first occurs to Iago, Shakespeare places a phrase in his mouth that would forcibly raise, in the minds of those familiar with it, the vivid image of the dumb show in *Hamlet* performed to “catch” a King. Iago, planning to raise suspicions about Desdemona’s fidelity, claims he will “pour this pestilence into [Othello’s] ear” (2.3.351). After Iago plants these seeds of jealousy in Othello’s mind, he triumphantly soliloquizes, “The Moor already changes with my poison: / Dangerous conceits are in their natures poison” (3.3.327-328). Although Iago’s “poison” is the jealousy with which he injects Othello and is therefore not

¹²¹ As discussed in Chapter 3.

physical, it nevertheless effectively destroys its target, who murders his innocent wife as a result of it.

Although it is Iago's verbal poison that destroys many of the play's main characters, physical poison is also mentioned in conjunction with Shakespeare's villainous ensign. At the climax of the temptation scene, Othello, determined to kill Desdemona, turns to his "Ancient" and says, "Get me some poison, Iago" (4.1.201). Such a request was a typical early modern stage device connected to Jewish characters. As Shapiro points out, "when a character in a play is asked, 'Canst thou impoison?' he readily replies, 'Excellently, no Jew, apothecary, or politician better'" (96).¹²² Othello's reliance on Iago for the poison also echoes Robert Greene's 1594 *Selimus* play and the history text used in creating it, Paolo Giovio's *A Short Treatise on the Turkes Chronicles* (translated into English in 1546 by Peter Ashton). As I discussed in detail last chapter, in both Giovio's history as well as Greene's play, Selimus, emperor of the Turks, asks a Jew to poison his deposed father Bajazet. Although Iago avoids being directly implicated in Desdemona's death by steering Othello in another direction, the association of poison with Iago suggests an attempt on Shakespeare's part to depict Iago as a non-Christian force leading Christians to destruction. After all, Iago's avaricious pursuit of Roderigo's purse brings the Christian forces of a small island to their knees.

Moreover, Iago is linked to Marlowe's Barabas in several significant ways. Iago stages a Barabas-like swordfight designed to kill off both participants. In Act 5, Iago perceives that he has, in his own words, "rubbed this young quat almost to the sense" so that Roderigo "grows angry" (5.1.11-12). At this point in the play, Iago begins to fear that Roderigo will "call [Iago] to

¹²² Shapiro here quotes from John Marston's play, *The Malcontent* (1604).

a restitution large / Of gold and jewels that [Iago] bobb'd from him, / As gifts to Desdemona" (5.1.15-17). Iago therefore plots to have Roderigo and Cassio kill each other in a swordfight that is not unlike the plot Barabas uses to rid himself of Matthias and Lodowick in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*.¹²³

There are verbal connections between Barabas and Iago as well. As mentioned above, Jews were thought to be skilled with potions in general due to their fame as "expert physicians"; as a result they were often suspected "of abusing powers... for sinister purposes" (Shapiro 98). In the late sixteenth century, there were several Jewish physicians in London; Hector Nunez (who is mentioned by Marlowe's Barabas as "Nones of Portugal"[1.1.123] in *Jew of Malta*), a Doctor Arnande who visited patients by cart (Shapiro 70), and Elizabeth I's Dr. Lopez (as mentioned above). In Act 5 Scene 1, Barabas is depicted as skilled enough in potion making to prepare a draught for himself that will allow him to feign death. Awakening outside Malta's city walls, Barabas announces to the audience, "I drank of poppy and cold mandrake juice, / And, being asleep, belike they thought me dead" (lines 77-78). Iago echoes this line in Act 3, Scene 3 of *Othello*, when he congratulates himself on having fully convinced Othello of Desdemona's infidelity: "Not poppy nor mandragora / Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world / Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep / Which thou owedst yesterday" (3.3.333-36).

Another instance in which Shakespeare makes use of Barabas's speech in characterizing Iago as a villain occurs in Act 1, Scene 1, when Iago wakes Brabantio to tell him his daughter has eloped with Othello. Popularized by Barabas, variations on this line seem to have been

¹²³ In Marlowe's play as well as in Shakespeare's, these swordfights are instigated by means of letters containing false information. Marlowe's letter has been discussed above; in *Othello*, letters are found in Roderigo's pockets, the first of which "imports / The death of Cassio, to be undertook / By Roderigo" (5.2.307-309), and conveniently proving that Iago was behind all the villainy committed on Cyprus.

conventionally associated with Jewish characters, for in addition to Barabas, two other stage Jews use it: Shakespeare's iconic Jew Shylock (as reported by Solanio) in *The Merchant of Venice* and Benwash in Daborne's *A Christian Turn'd Turk*. The line, designed to emphasize the conflict between the speaker's love of gold and love for a human being, is shown below as uttered by the three Jewish characters:

Barabas: O girl, O gold, O beauty, O my bliss! (Marlowe 2.1.54)

Solanio (reporting Shylock's reaction to his daughter's elopement): 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!' (Shakespeare II.viii.15)

Benwash (upon learning about the loss of his goods): My bags, my obligations, my wife! (Daborne 11.4)

To emphasize the "Judaical" way their non-Christian characters are similarly confused between gold and humanity, both Marston and Shakespeare reuse the line for Mamon and Iago respectively:

Mamon (upon learning about the loss of his goods): Alas my Obligations, my Bonds, my Obligations, my Bonds. (Marston E3r)

Iago: Look to your house, your daughter and your bags! (1.1.79)

In each situation, an avaricious character creates a tension between love of one's moneybags and love for one's wife or daughter (except Mamon, who is indeed avaricious, but does not mention or imply Katherine in his lament). Of the characters uttering variants of this line, three are Jews and two are Christians (including Iago). Seeing as this exclamation was made resonant by Marlowe's Jew Barabas and Shakespeare's Jew Shylock, it can be seen as another device that Judaizes the avaricious nature of the Christian villains Mamon and Iago. Playwrights, then, borrowed lines from famous stage Jews as a sort of template which emphasized just how far their villain had departed from his Christian faith.

It is interesting to note that several critics have associated Iago with Jewish traits and / or characters. In 1972, Leslie A. Fiedler, taking up the idea of the threatening Jew, proposes that “Shakespeare seems to have felt the need in [Iago’s] case for an implicit comparison with strangers even more remote and menacing” (191). Fiedler writes:

[Shakespeare] has Iago twice refer to his “tribe”: identified the first time as “all the tribe of Hell,” but left unspecified the second, when he says, “Good Heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend...” And in the phrase, we hear the very accents of the archetypal Jew, as is appropriate after all, to one whose name is the Italian equivalent of Jacob, later called “Israel,” the “supplanter” who became the “contender with God.” (191-192)

Although according to Protestant / Calvinist Christian doctrine it would make more sense for Shakespeare to ally Iago with the reprobates Ishmael or Esau, rather than the elect Jacob, and the word “tribe” is not a direct connection to Jewishness, nevertheless it is worth noting that even without conducting a close reading, Fiedler sensed there was a Judaizing element to Iago’s character.

More recently in 2002, Grace Tiffany has also found Judaizing elements in Shakespeare’s villain, Iago. Tiffany observes that Shakespeare “offers hints that Iago is Marrano” (102), that is, an Iberian-born, Jewish convert to Christianity. Tiffany also feels that “Shakespeare is exploiting the English fear of the hidden Jew to enhance his audience’s sense of Iago as a diabolical player, a fiendish improviser, a malevolent masker of his inward villainy” (102). It is true that this project does not subscribe to Tiffany’s suggestion that English Protestants feared the presence of hidden Jews, since it has demonstrated that Englishmen were far more concerned with the impact of wayward “Jewish-acting” Christians on English nationhood. Nevertheless, her observation that Shakespeare uses Judaization to enhance the nature of Iago’s villainy rings true. Iago’s connection to Jewish stereotypes such as poison and avarice

lends an air of suspense to the play. For early modern audiences, until the end of the play it was possible that due to his non-Christian, Judaized ways, Iago might destroy the entire Christian presence on an island with whom Christian forces were vying with Muslim Turks to control. In *Othello*, an unethical Christian is a more potent enemy than the Turks, since he attacks his Christian comrades from within. Non-Christians such as Turks (and Jews) can be kept on the periphery through war and banishment, but the unethical Christian is insidious and can strike from anywhere within Christendom.

In 1997, Julia Lupton noticed Iago's relationship to both Shylock and Barabas. Lupton notes how "Iago... has his own strange links to the world of *Merchant*" ("*Othello Circumcised*" 77). As well, in her 2005 book *Citizen-Saints* (in which a revised version of "*Othello Circumcised*" appears), Lupton also demonstrates how Iago's actions place him "in the long line of Vices and Machiavels [which was] crystallized for Shakespeare's generation by Marlowe's grotesque portrait of Barabas" (109). Lupton's sense of a connection between Iago and the stage Jews made famous by Marlowe and Shakespeare seems even more tangible when one can place Judaization of Christian characters in the context of Protestant religious doctrine. Judaized Christian characters in early modern plays warned English Protestants away from making the same mistakes as those Jews who, by rejecting Christ, had brought destruction to their country and, as a result, became nationless wanderers.

Although Shakespeare's Judaization of Iago is much subtler than Marston's Judaization of Mammon, it has nevertheless been noted in scholarly criticism. My intervention in this chapter is to show that these Judaizations of Christian characters, instead of raising any anxiety about the presence of Jews in early modern playgoers, fulfilled the same purpose as did the Jewish

characters discussed in previous chapters. Jewish villains and Judaized Christian villains served to reveal and underscore the erosion of English Christianity by linking Christian characters to unbelieving Jews. Judaizing Christian characters especially worked because of the early modern conviction that Jews were stubborn deniers of Christ who had, according to Matthew 27.25, accepted blame for his death. Jews therefore deserved the dual punishments of having no “Mansion, [nor] any peculiar Countrey” for their home (Purchas 119), as well as facing banishment wherever they go. Thus, Marston’s Judaized Christian villain, Mamon, is banished from society and placed in Bedlam, while Shakespeare’s Judaized Christian villain, Iago, is banished from a small isle (Cyprus), as well as the free society of Venice, to face prison and torture in Venice.

Subtler even than Shakespeare, the Judaized Christian villain in Thomas Heywood’s *A woman Kilde with kindnesse* (1607) is the “stranger” in their house, Wendoll. Heywood’s tragedy focuses on two women whose fates are determined by foolish economic arrangements the men in their lives make with strangers to their community. Anne Frankford is seduced into adultery by a friend of short acquaintance, her husband John’s protégé, Wendoll. Susan, sister of Sir Charles Mountford, is nearly bartered to a man she loathes so that her brother can pay his debt to the vicious usurer, Shafton. In an interesting move, Heywood does not Judaize Shafton who, thanks to Jewish stereotypes associated with usury, would be the most obvious choice.¹²⁴ Instead, Heywood Judaizes the stranger in the Frankfords’ midst, Wendoll, whom

¹²⁴ Like the usurer described by Lodge in *An Alarum against Usurers* (1584), Shafton acquires estates formerly belonging to the landed gentry through usurious lending. Shafton therefore loans money to Mountford in the hope he will be unable to pay it, thereby enabling Shafton to annex Mountford’s estate to one the usurer had previously acquired. However, in an interesting shift away from medieval stereotype, Heywood strips the avaricious Shafton of all verbal and physical cues that could Judaize the character, thereby creating a fully Christian usurer free of Judaical stereotype. Perhaps Heywood considered the word

Frankford describes as a man of “small means” yet “a gentleman / Of a good house, somewhat pressed by want” (IV. 32-33).

Heywood’s Judaization of Wendoll is Calvinistic and his message is overtly doctrinal; hence he does not rely on medieval Jewish stereotype, but closely connects Wendoll to reprobate biblical Jews. Heywood achieves this biblical “Jewish” connection in two ways: first, while Heywood does introduce a purse for purposes of Judaization, it is not the purse of the morality character Avarice; instead, Heywood directly links the purse Wendoll receives from Frankford to the bag of silver the Jew Judas accepted for betraying Christ. Like Judas, Wendoll’s sin in receiving the money is not of avarice, but one of betrayal of an innocent man’s trust. Second, unlike Marston and Shakespeare, Heywood directly connects Wendoll’s eventual banishment directly to the biblical banishment of Cain, a direct ancestor of the people who later became known as Jews. In making these moves, Heywood emphasizes the reprobate nature of Wendoll’s destructive non-elect behavior. For although both Cain and Judas are connected to the holy root of Judaism, their actions have cut them off from God.

In Heywood, Wendoll (like Mammon and Iago) is connected to a purse because Frankford has given Wendoll access to his “table” and his “purse” (IV.65) (much as Roderigo gave Iago the same privilege). But unlike Marston and Shakespeare who had associated the purse mainly with the morality play character Avarice, Heywood connects the purse directly to Jewish behavior by linking it to the bag of silver which, in paintings, is an icon associated with the ultimate Jewish traitor, Judas. In many early modern paintings portraying the last supper, Judas is depicted as clutching a bag containing (presumably) the thirty pieces of silver he accepted in return for

“usurer” to be a powerful enough symbol of villainy, given the great number of usury pamphlets written about Christian usurers.

betraying Christ to the authorities.¹²⁵ Relying on this biblical image of Judaization rather than an icon associated with a morality play character, emphasizes the religious nature of his betrayal of Anne and Frankford. Moreover, Frankford makes Wendoll's connection to Judas manifest by describing him as "that Judas that hath borne my purse, / And sold me for a sin" (VIII.107-108). Later, after chasing Wendoll from his wife's room and being prevented, by a maid, from running Wendoll through with his sword, Frankford decides to let the rogue find shelter elsewhere, saying, "Go, to thy friend / A Judas. Pray, pray, lest I live to see / Thee, Judas-like, hanged on an elder tree" (XIII.72-73). It is worth noting that this line also aligns Frankford with Christ, a critical piece of foreshadowing for the play's later message about redemption.

Wendoll's association with Judas and Frankford's with Christ, allow Heywood to create a stronger sense of dramatic surprise. Like Judas to Jesus, Wendoll is at first a trusted friend whose betrayal is not expected. Yet like Judas to Jesus, Wendoll is propelled to betray Frankford by a force he does not fully understand. Three times in the play Wendoll reveals in soliloquies that he himself is unclear what drives him to betrayal. Each time, his answer to himself implies the Calvinist idea of predestination. In one such scene, after Wendoll asks why he plans to betray his friend Frankford by committing adultery with Anne, Wendoll soliloquizes, "Yet I must. Then, Wendoll be content; / Thus villains, when they would, cannot repent" (VI.51-52). According to the doctrine of predestination, God chooses who is reprobate and who is elect. Wendoll here recognizes that he is reprobate and thus destined to treachery.

¹²⁵ In many sixteenth- and seventeenth-century paintings and stained glass window depictions of the last supper, Judas is depicted clutching a money bag. See *Last Supper* by the Veneto-Cretan School, the *Last Supper* attributed to the Master of Pauw and Zaz, the *Last Supper* of Pieter Pourbus (1548), and the *Last Supper* by Jean Baptiste de Champagne (1638). The Detroit Institute of Arts exhibits an early sixteenth-century stained glass panel from a London church showing Judas clutching a moneybag.

By associating Wendoll with a treacherous Jew, Heywood presents an ordinary Englishman engaged in Judas-like treachery who unexpectedly destroys his friend, a Christ figure, as well as his wife. But Wendoll's treachery is as short lived as Judas's. Judas had attempted to destroy Christ permanently, making it impossible for his followers to enjoy redemption and salvation. However, Judas does not succeed and neither does Wendoll. Frankford is not destroyed and is therefore able to bestow redemption on the sinning Anne. Thus, Frankford goes to his dying wife, who begs in Calvinistic doctrinal terms for "gracious pardon"; and Frankford replies in a Christ-like manner: "As freely... / As my Redeemer hath forgiven His death, / I pardon thee" (XVII.93-96). By creating this Judas / Christ analogy, Heywood can imply that Anne, even though on her deathbed, can regain her salvation through Christ (Frankford). However, to make this scene resonate as powerfully as possible, Heywood must first make Wendoll a Judas figure by connecting him to Judas's moneybag. By doing so, Wendoll is directly linked to a Jew who betrayed Christ, an act that speaks to his lack of salvation.

Wendoll is connected to reprobate Jews in two other ways. Having heard that Anne has died as a result of his seduction and betrayal, Wendoll paraphrases Matthew 27.25, the verse wherein Christians believe Jews accepted the guilt for Christ's death: "Her life, her sins, and all upon my head" (XVI.130). As I note above, early modern Protestant Christians believed that the punishment Jews suffered for this guilt was banishment from their nation. Wendoll recognizes this doctrinal concept, stating, "And I must now go wander like a Cain / In foreign countries and remoted climes" (XVI.131-132). But Wendoll's self-banishment is not permanent; he needs only wait until his name is forgotten at which point he can return and begin his treachery again.

Here Heywood instills the fear in his audience that when Wendoll returns, he will deliberately infiltrate court itself with his reprobate proclivities: “At my return,” Wendoll warns, “I may in court be raised” (XVI.137-141). As was true of Shakespeare’s depiction of Iago, Heywood capitalizes on the fear that errant Christian behavior could destroy a Christian nation from within.

Pamphleteers, Judaization, and the Civil Wars

Similar to the ways in which Christian villains were Judaized in plays by Marston, Shakespeare, and Heywood, pamphleteers writing about events surrounding the English Civil Wars, Judaized religious and political opponents. During this time period, Protestant sectarianism was seen as potentially having the same effect on England as the Jews’ unbelief had had on the Jewish nation. In other words, the proliferation of a wide variety of biblical interpretations of Christian doctrine, some of which seemingly reverted to Catholicism and Judaism, raised the fear that God might punish England as he had the Jews. In particular, those pamphleteers who opposed Cromwell and his supporters were concerned that the Civil Wars and regicide presaged God’s wrath towards England for what was seen as non-Christian English behavior. As the Ottoman Empire and Spanish forces were an imminent threat to England, it is unsurprising that English Christians feared those nations might become the instruments of God’s wrath against England in the same way God had delivered his judgment upon Jerusalem and the Jews through the Roman Empire. Like the playwrights I have been reviewing, pamphleteers writing about events surrounding the English Civil Wars, Judaized their opponents by likening them (à la Heywood) to those Jews who, in the bible, most resonated as capable of causing national destruction.

In 1642, Roman Catholic convert¹²⁶ John Austin (1613-1669) uses Judaization to mock the vociferously anti-Roman Catholic Puritan minister Henry Burton (1578-1648) on the occasion of his imprisonment and ear-cropping.¹²⁷ During the reign of Charles I, Puritans had become increasingly concerned about their belief that Roman Catholicism was once again gaining the upper hand in England. Not only was Charles's queen Henrietta Maria (1609-1669) a practicing Roman Catholic, but Archbishop William Laud was seen as promoting practices connected to the Catholic Church such as surplice wearing.¹²⁸ Laud also opposed some Calvinist views, notably predestination. These events and others had revived Reformation-era arguments against the Roman Catholic Church. The perception of Catholicism was exacerbated by the King himself. For although Charles was inclined to be "soft on Catholics... because he saw them as a relatively small, loyal, and ultimately harmless minority," he was simultaneously "hard on Puritans" because he considered their "thought to be revolutionary and dangerous" (Bucholz and Key 239). As a result, during Charles's reign, Puritans were more likely to be punished for sedition than Catholics, which added to the Puritan notion that England was returning to its "papist" roots. Due in part to this unstable religious atmosphere, Burton was imprisoned in 1637 for preaching and publishing two sermons¹²⁹ in which he claimed the bishops had reverted to Catholicism to such an extent that these bishops were a threat to England as a Protestant state.

¹²⁶ Austin's conversion to Catholicism is assumed to have taken place ca. 1632.

¹²⁷ Ear-cropping was a way to visibly and permanently mark a person as having committed a serious crime.

¹²⁸ The surplice, a white vestment traditionally worn by pre-Reformation priests, became controversial first during the reign of Elizabeth I, but carried on into the seventeenth century. Puritans saw the garment as evidence of lingering popish sentiment within England's state church.

¹²⁹ *For God, and the King. The Svmme of Two Sermons Preached on the fifth of November last in St. Matthewes Friday-Streete.* 1636. STC 4142. EEBO.

Burton's published sermons against England's bishops as well as similar pamphlets he wrote after his release from prison in November 1640, exemplify the ways in which English religious factions accused one another of misreading and misinterpreting the bible. Correspondingly, factions finding themselves under attack needed to defend their religious views in order to survive. Thus the targets of accusatory pamphlets such as Burton was writing, often retaliated. It is unsurprising, then, that Burton's continuous published attacks on popish practice and the Roman Catholic Church drove John Austin,¹³⁰ the converted Catholic, to address Burton in a 1642 pamphlet. In writing his response, however, Austin was at a disadvantage; his religion, Catholicism, was, of course, traditionally seen as an enemy of Protestantism and was therefore maligned by a majority of English Protestant clerics. No doubt realizing that the majority of English Christians were against him, Austin utilized a potent rhetorical device long familiar to early modern English audiences: Judaization. Doing so enabled Austin to make Burton out to be a villain similar to Heywood's Wendoll; for by portraying the Puritan minister Burton as the Rabbi Not-rub, Austin implies that Burton has infected English Christianity with the "misguided" doctrine of Judaism, much as Wendoll had threatened to return to England in order to infect the English court with his reprobate behavior.

On the title page,¹³¹ Austin claims he is presenting a sermon "By a Jew, Whose Name is Not-Rvb" and advises readers that "It being a Hebrew Word, you must read his name backward," which, of course, makes the "Jew's" name Burton. Moreover, the first paragraph of

¹³⁰ It may seem curious, that a Catholic would dare publish a pamphlet mocking a Protestant in London in 1642. Indeed, John Austin's name appears prominently on the front cover (Note: the ESTC has William Birchley [Austin's pseudonym] as author, but the cover of the 1642 edition I used says Austin). Also, although the work claims to have been published in Amsterdam, ESTC assumes Amsterdam was a front for London. It seems to me that since the work satirizes a Puritan who had been sent to the Tower and maimed for his religious stance, there were many at Court who would have welcomed a chance to laugh at a satire on Burton.

¹³¹ *A Zealous Sermon, Preached at Amsterdam (1642)*

Austin's satire has Burton alluding to Romans 11.28, which exhorts Gentile Christians to hold Jews "enemies" as "concerning the Gospel." In parodying this verse, Austin has "Not-rub" claim that Burton and other "distempred and dismembred members" of the Puritan movement had suffered the loss of their ears "for the Gospels sake." In doing so, Austin invites readers to hold Puritans as enemies for their misinterpretation of scripture, the same reason Paul tells Christians to hold Jews responsible for misinterpreting prophecies warning of the advent of Christ.

Through a twice-quoted bible verse, Austin implies that Burton and his fellow Puritans are like Jews—unable to understand the truth of God's word. On both the title page and the last page of his tract, Austin (rather crudely alluding to Burton's ear-cropping) quotes Christ's warning after he has told his disciples, who are all Jews, a story: "He that hathe eares to heare, let him heare" (Matthew 13.9). However, instead of following this advice, the disciples complain about Jesus's habit of imparting truths in the form of parables. Christ replies that he does so "Because it is giuen vnto you, to knowe the secrets of the kingdome of heauen, but to them it is not giuen. For whosoever hathe, to him shalbe giuen, ...but whosoever hathe not, from him shalbe taken away, euen that he hathe" (Matt. 13.11-12). In other words, Jesus claims that those who can hear the doctrinal truth through the parable will move beyond Jewish election and receive their salvation; those who cannot hear will not understand and thus lose even that which they once had, their elect status as Jews. By styling Burton a Jew, Austin combines the physical loss of Burton's ears with Jesus's warning in the bible. For Austin, just as a spiritual lack of ears can cause some of Jesus's Jewish listeners to be spiritually deaf to his revelations, Burton's ear-cropping is physical proof that this anti-Catholic Puritan minister

cannot, like the Jews who reject Christ, hear or understand the true meaning of scripture. As in the plays reviewed above, Austin uses the rhetoric of Judaization in order to criticize Burton's behavior.

English pamphleteers also used Judaization to critique Puritan policy during and after the English Civil Wars. Supporters of the King's trial for treason and subsequent execution were often likened to the Jews who, at Matthew 27.25¹³² had taken on responsibility for Christ's death. In 1649,¹³³ the same year of Charles's execution, a sorrowful pamphlet appeared entitled *The Life and Death of King Charles the Martyr Parallel'd with our Saviour in all his Sufferings*. In it, the anonymous author claims that "these Murderers," that is, those Englishmen responsible for Charles's death, "are worse then the Jews," who had refused to accept Christ as their king: "for [Englishmen had] confessed [Charles] to be their King, and yet most barbarously judge, condemn, and put him to death" (*Life and Death* 2). Further, the anonymous author calls Charles's detractors "a PharisaiCALL brood of Traitors" because they had called "His Sacred Majesty" "an Imposter, a Deceiver, a perverter of the people, a Blasphemer, a Samaritan, and one that had a Devil" as had the PharisaiCAL Jews who had taunted the "Saviour" (*Life and Death* 3). For this anonymous pamphlet writer, any governing group who turned on its own spiritual leader could be seen as making the same disastrous mistakes as the Jews who had turned Christ over to the Roman authorities. What better way to undermine the Puritans' cherished notion that they practiced the truest form of religion than to show their resemblance to the very Jews who had crucified Jesus Christ?

¹³² The Jews asked for Barabbas's (called "a notable prisoner" at Matt. 27.16) release instead of Christ's, crying out "His blood be on vs, and on our children."

¹³³ A hand-written notation on the title page indicates the publication was bought on August 20 of that year.

The anonymous author also uses Judaization to cast doubt on England's sanity in putting a group of murderers in charge of the nation. Referring to a moment in the gospels where Pontius Pilate offers the Jews a prisoner for release and they choose the known criminal Barabbas over Jesus Christ, the pamphlet's author analogizes that "as the Jews denied the Holy One, and the Just, and desired a Murderer [Barabbas] be granted them; so [Englishmen] denied their holy and righteous King and desired the Parliament might rule over them" (*Life and Death* 4). The pamphlet's author then continues his transformation of the King into a Christ-like figure; after claiming that "the same hour" Christ died was "the same hour [that] put a period to our Sovereigns life," the anonymous author warns that England was in danger of suffering the same fate as the Jews who lost Jerusalem due to their involvement in killing Christ: "As Christ wept over Jerusalem" he writes, King Charles also wept "over his three kingdoms; being more sorry for the miseries that are to come upon them, then for all that had hapned unto himself" (*Life and Death* 6). For the anonymous writer who is bewailing the loss of the King and the advent of the Commonwealth, England was about to learn, as had the Jews, what would become of a nation that had "brought the most Virtuous, Religious and Pious Prince in the Christian World" "from the Throne to the Block" (*Life and Death* 6).

After the Restoration in 1662, the semi-anonymous J.S. also Judaizes the perpetrators of Charles's execution in his prefatory epistle to a translation of Abraham ben David ha-Levi Ibn Daud's account of the fall of Jerusalem.¹³⁴ Addressing Sir John Robinson, the Tower's

¹³⁴ The text is entitled *The Wonderful, and most Deplorable History of the Later Times of the Jews*. According to the ESTC, this work is "[a] translation of Abraham ben David ha-Levi's abstract, in book 3 of his 'Sefer ha-Kabalah', of the anonymous 'Josippon' or 'Yosippon'. [It] has been misattributed to a Joseph ben Gorion, usually identified with Joseph ben Gorion ha-Kohen but occasionally with Flavius Josephus." This text was printed in 1652, 1662, 1669, 1671, 1673, 1678, 1684, 1688, and 1689. J.S.'s prefatory epistle does not appear until the 1662 edition, that is,

Lieutenant and an Alderman of the City of London, J.S. echoes the author of *The Life and Death of King Charles*, by again emphasizing that the “Murther” of King Charles was “beyond” that of the Jews against Christ because Jews “neither knew nor acknowledged Him to be King of the Jews” (A2r). This was an apt analogy for those Englishmen like J.S. who believed in the sovereign state of the monarchy. After all, Charles’s father, James I, had argued before Parliament in 1610 that “kings are not only God’s Lieutenants upon earth... but even by God himself they are called Gods.” Towards the end of his short letter, J.S. describes London at the time of Charles I’s execution as having been “led all along by a true Jewish Spirit” because “the manner of Murthering Charles the First, may be humbly said to bear a kind of Analogy, and resemblance with” “the Crucifixion of our Saviour” (A2r). It is clear that J.S. felt the same as the author of *The Life and Death of King Charles*: that the execution of England’s King should be considered an act that might lead to England’s destruction even as the Jews’ part in Christ’s death had led, as many English Christians believed, to Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 CE.

In John Austin’s pamphlet against Henry Burton as well as in the works opposing Charles’s execution, the sole use of Judaization is designed to criticize Puritans, not Jews. It is important to note that in using this approach, these authors demonstrate that Jewish “mistakes” are not confined to Jews alone. Indeed, these examples of Judaization acknowledge that Christians are as likely as Jews to commit egregious sins.¹³⁵ Although Judaization implies by its very nature that Christians should avoid acting like Jews, which in turn assumes being Jewish

after the restoration. As I observe in a previous footnote, Howel’s translation comes almost 100 years after Peter Morwen’s 1558 translation of the same book. See note chapter 3 for more on this work.

¹³⁵ It is to be remembered that this disturbing link between Christians and Jews was doctrinal since it had been identified by Paul at Romans 11.20-21: “through vnbelefe [Jews] are broken of, and thou [Gentiles] standest by faith: be not hie minded, but feare. For if God spared not the natural branches [the Jews], take hede, lest he also spare not thee.”

is bad, it should be understood that the kind of Jewishness being critiqued in these pamphlets is doctrinal, not racial or ethnic. Just as Protestants vilified Catholics for beliefs they considered as blasphemously counter to scriptural precept, Jews in these pamphlets are vilified because their refusal to believe in Christ ran counter to the very root of Christianity. This sort of Judaization, then, is not anti-Semitic, because it addresses religious belief rather than racial or ethnic identity.

Judaizing Protestants during the Readmission Debates

Thus far I have examined the ways in which playwrights and pamphleteers used medieval stereotype and scripturally based Judaization as a rhetorical strategy to suggest criminality in Christians. However, when Jews were once again part of English popular awareness due to the millenarian project to readmit Jews to England, medieval Jewish stereotype against actual Jews—as opposed to the use of those same stereotypes as a way of critiquing Christians—again proliferated. What had happened? Had closet English anti-Semites suddenly come out of the woodwork because they feared readmission would “contaminate” England with an influx of foreign Jews? The rest of this chapter argues against this easy presumption. I find that these anti-readmission pamphleteers were, in fact, tapping into the rhetorical pattern already made popular by the Reformation polemical tactics that have been described throughout this project. In other words, although it is undeniable that pamphleteers employed medieval Jewish stereotypes directly against Jews in their political polemic, they did so for the same reasons playwrights used medieval Jewish stereotypes in their works—less to make any new points about Jews, but instead to criticize Christians and Christianity. Pamphleteers who used medieval stereotypes against Jews did so as an expedient means of

melding together their religious and political arguments against Cromwell and the Commonwealth.

The opponents of Cromwell and his supporters often used the millenarian project to readmit Jews to England as an underlying framework for their larger arguments against the Commonwealth. Thus, while it is true that James Howel's dedicatory epistle to *The Wonderful, and Most Deplorable History of the Later Times of the Jews* (1652)¹³⁶ liberally avails itself of medieval Jewish stereotype, the letter as a whole can and should be read as a warning to English Protestants that, under the Cromwell regime, they were especially in danger of suffering the Jews' fate—loss of nationhood. As a historian and political writer, James Howel (1594?-1666) felt that the Civil Wars as a whole were destructive to the English nation. His dedicatory letter, which aptly precedes a translation of Abraham ben David, ha-Levi Ibn Daud's account of Jerusalem's fall to the Romans, is therefore addressed to "the Renowned City of London" in order to connect that city to the Jerusalem of 70 CE.

When separated from its context, Howel's letter, published in 1652, reads like an argument against admitting Jews to England. In 1652, the idea to readmit Jews was in its infancy and it is possible, therefore, that Howel's letter can be understood as an argument against Jews themselves. Howel's portrayal of Jews is certainly unsparing. Howel details how as a result of "crucifying ... the Lord of Life" (A4v), Jews had become repugnant "runnagates and Land-lopers" who "apply themselves to the most sordid and servile conditions" and serve as "Spies and Panders" for Turks (A4r). Howel claims Jews are "known to be the subtillest, and the most subdolous race of people upon the earth" (B1v). He cites such "notorious Crimes, as,

¹³⁶ This is the same work to which J.S.'s letter is appended. Beginning in 1652, this work was reprinted thirteen more times through 1722. Howel's letter is in the first edition; J.S.'s letter appears for the first time in 1662.

poysoning of Wells, counterfeiting of Coins, falsifying of Seals, and crucifying of Christian Children” as the reason for Jews having been expelled from so many regions (B2r). Howel even claims Jews can be recognized by a “rankish kind of scent no better indeed than a stinck” and expresses the hope “that England may not be troubled with that scent again” (B3v). Certainly this characterization of Jews had the power to make early modern English readers leery of any governmental plans to readmit Jews to England.

Nevertheless, it is clear both from other sections of Howel’s letter as well as the later letter written by J.S. and appended to the 1662 edition of the translation, that Howel intended these horrible depictions of Jews to be analogous to Cromwell and his supporters. J.S., whose letter precedes Howel’s in the 1662 edition, confirms for readers that Howel wrote “out of an express Design to awaken, and warn [London] of her desperate Condition at that Time” that is, as it was in 1652 (A2v). J.S. claims Howel felt “that the same Crimes and Crying Sins, which reigned in Jerusalem before her last and utter Destruction were very rife then in London” (A2v). Ten years after Howel wrote his dedicatory letter to the translation of Ibn Daud’s work, and two years after the Restoration, it is notable that J.S. still considers London to be in need of the warning he claims Howel is iterating: namely, that London must guard against bringing about its own destruction through its sinful actions.

In his dedicatory letter, Howel himself confirms that correcting London’s dismal behavior is his intent. After first identifying cities bearing “a resemblance and a kind of affinity” to one another, such as “Carthagena in Spain” and “Carthage in Africk,” Howel describes London’s affinity to two cities which suffered destruction by means of its people’s sins: Troy and Jerusalem (A3r). Later in his letter, after describing the “deplorable” suffering of Jews due

to their role in Christ's death, Howel states the moral he wishes to impart to English Christians: that "these sad calamities which fell down in such cataracts upon the Jews" should "serve for cautions to all people not to provoke the High Majesty of Heaven by such kind of sedition and profaneness" (B3v). Howel then references Romans 11.21, saying, "For if the natural branches were not spared, how can the wild Olive think to escape the fire of [God's] displeasure?" (B3v). It is clear that Howel's descriptions of "Jewish" crimes and attributes are not meant to breed a fear in English Christians of living, breathing Jews. Instead, these stereotypes help Howel paint a horrifying picture of what might become of English Protestants should they be cut off from their nation and their God as a result of misguided religious and political policies.

Like James Howel's letter, William Prynne's pamphlets arguing against readmitting Jews to England, although extremely anti-Jewish in nature, targeted problems Prynne had, not with actual Jews, but with the Protestant Commonwealth. Indeed, railing against the readmission project was an excellent way for Prynne to continue his angry tirades against the Commonwealth without fear of exile or prosecution. Prynne (1600-1669)¹³⁷ was a lawyer whose pamphlets took abrasive stances against forms of Protestantism he considered heretical or borderline Roman Catholic, such as innovations made by Archbishop William Laud, episcopacy and Quakerism.¹³⁸ His pamphlets also made legal arguments against various Parliamentary policies. Prynne's polemics often landed him in prison. In 1634, he was sent to the tower and later exiled for sedition against the King; in 1650 he was returned to the tower for opposing the Commonwealth ("Biographical Fragment" xix, xxx). D.L., author of *Israel's*

¹³⁷ Prynne is a Puritan. However, as his work shows, he did not side with all causes purporting to be Puritan.

¹³⁸ In 1654, Prynne wrote the pamphlet entitled *The Quakers unmasked, and clearly detected to be but the spawn of Romish frogs, Jesuites, and Franciscan fryers; sent from Rome to seduce the intoxicated giddy-headed English nation*. Wing P4046.

Condition and Cause pleaded; or some Arguments for the Jews Admission into England (1656), describes the ever-volatile Prynne as “a pragmatical Lawyer, whose tongue and pen are against every one, Princes, Priests, Magistrates, Souldiers not excepted” (5). It is unsurprising, then, that Prynne had negative opinions about the Commonwealth’s plan to readmit Jews to England. As will be demonstrated, however, Prynne’s arguments against this plan had more to do with his opposition to other policies the Commonwealth had planned, rather than a general disapprobation he may have had toward Jews.

In 1656,¹³⁹ Prynne wrote two pamphlets against readmitting Jews to England: *A Short Demurrer To the Jewes Long Discontinued remitter into England* and *The Second Part of a Short Demvrrer to the Jewes Long discontinued Remitter into England*. Since each pamphlet contains painstakingly documented instances of medieval English Jews poisoning wells and monarchs, crucifying children, and dealing usuriously with English citizens, it is undeniable that Prynne is no friend to Jews. However, when Prynne’s Jewish readmission pamphlets are placed within the context of his life’s events, it seems probable they served a larger purpose; namely, these pamphlets enabled him to argue several of his pet political and religious views with little fear of reprisal. During the reign of Charles I as well as during the Interregnum, Prynne had suffered much for publishing pamphlets which severely criticized English policy. During his first incarceration (1634-1640), Prynne’s ears had first been clipped and later removed entirely. His nose had been slit and the initials S. L. (for “seditious libeller”) had been burned into each cheek (Rossingham 25; “Proceedings” 76). From 1650-53, Prynne was imprisoned by the Commonwealth for seditious pamphlet writing. Wishing to avoid further severe punishment at

¹³⁹ The copies I am using have the 1656 date scratched out and 1655 hand-written in.

the government's hand, upon his release from prison in 1653, Prynne began to write pamphlets that ostensibly were about non-seditious topics such as Quakers and Jews.

At least one of Prynne's detractors, the semi-anonymous author D.L., believed that Prynne had been cloaking his more extreme criticisms against the Commonwealth in pamphlets about less prosecutable subjects. In 1656, D.L. published *Israel's Condition and Cause pleaded; or some Arguments for the Jews Admission into England* (1656), a pamphlet which in part contains a strong criticism of Prynne. In the section entitled "Four Objections against the Jews coming in answered," D.L. suggests Prynne's attitude towards Jews is a cover for a more personal agenda:

Surely the party who writ so furiously against the Jews coming in, was afraid his chamber in Lincolns-Inn should have been for their habitation, or else his Mannour...; what, does he now want imployment to plead at the Bar, or the Bench against Christians, and so pleads (being set on) so violently against the Jews? what, will he leave no stone unmoved? (70)

Here D.L. accuses Prynne of hiding behind the Jewish readmission debate in order to avoid losing his livelihood to incoming Jews should Prynne be exiled for past or future attacks against Parliament.

In another section of D.L.'s pamphlet,¹⁴⁰ the author again asserts that Prynne makes "far-fetch'd and unprofitable quotations against the Jews," this time because Prynne is unable to attack England's Parliament more directly: "[Prynne] shews you what he would do, if his power was proportionable to his will: and because he cannot bite he doth injuriously and unjustly bark at those whom otherways he cannot reach or hurt" (91). D.L.'s criticism rings true. In 1656, Prynne had virtually no place within Parliament; as D.L. puts it, "the Common-wealth

¹⁴⁰ The section is titled, "A just vindication of Mr. Peters [sic] from the virulent and unjust accusations of Mr. William Prynne [sic],"

[had] no need of him for further imploiment” (91). Moreover, looking through a list of Prynne’s publications reveals that after his release from prison in 1653, Prynne did not return to penning pamphlets which directly criticized the government. From 1653 and throughout the rest of the Interregnum, Prynne confined himself to denouncing Christian “heresies” (e.g. Quakers, Anabaptists), arguing for the preservation of English historical records,¹⁴¹ explaining the legal rights of vicars and freemen, and revisiting English histories that suggested the failure of “new moddles, acts, and ordinances.”¹⁴² Prynne also expressed his views about taxes on hops and celebrating the Sabbath, among other non-seditious topics.

From D.L.’s assessment and Prynne’s own actions, it can be deduced that Prynne, ever desirous of voicing his disapprobation of the Commonwealth, found it more expedient during the Interregnum to criticize it indirectly through topics that were unlikely to land him in prison for sedition.¹⁴³ Because Jews had been used to criticize Christian policies in plays and pamphlets, it is possible that Prynne viewed the Jewish readmission debate as containing inherent rhetorical devices that would enable him safely to express his many negative opinions of the Cromwell regime.

¹⁴¹ Prynne’s second *Demurrer* uses the Jewish readmission issue as a blind for his fury against Hugh Peter, who had written in *Good Work for a Magistrate* (1651) that “Wills and Testaments may bee acknowledged by the next two Justices, before whom they may bee proved without anie charge; and then entred into the former Register of the Parish, or a Book kept in everie Parish to that purpose. 7. This being don, it is verie advisable to burn all the old Records; yea, even those in the Tower, the Monuments of tyrannie” (33). Prynne uses the historical records of Jewish “crimes” to show that if such records are ignored and / or destroyed, future generations will create disastrous policies such as the current readmission proposal. Prynne was later rewarded for this stance during the Restoration, when Charles II made him keeper of the records which were housed, perhaps ironically, in the Tower of London.

¹⁴² From the title page of Prynne’s *An old parliamentary prognostication made at Westminster* (1654), Wing number P4024.

¹⁴³ In this, Prynne may have adopted a polemical tool common to sixteenth-century humanists. Margaret Meserve has noted that “Renaissance humanist history writing was a political act,” claiming that “[h]umanist polemicists... used history to assail the legitimacy and status of rival rulers and institutions, sometimes to devastating effect” (7). In his first and second *Demurrers*, Prynne uses a similar method. Even though the bulk of both pamphlets reconstructs the history of the Jews in England, significant sections of each work make strong claims against English policy in 1655/6.

Jews were certainly of use to Prynne as a way to demonstrate that Cromwell's supposedly Christian Commonwealth, instead of practicing Christian mercy, abused its native English Protestant populace. For Prynne, the King's execution as well as the maiming and imprisonment of English Protestants (such as himself) who protested against national religious ideas they felt were doctrinally wrong, pointed to a disturbing lack of Christianity in Cromwell and his followers. The government-supported millenarian idea to readmit Jews to England was therefore an excellent topic for Prynne to exploit. Several of its key ideas enabled him to demonstrate how Parliamentarians loved and respected non-Christian Jews more than they did their fellow English Protestants. This attitude in turn, Prynne claimed, damaged the Commonwealth's reputation among other Protestant nations.

Although as D.L. had hinted in his pamphlet, Prynne did express the fear that readmitted Jews might deprive him of job and home, this was but a way for Prynne to claim that readmitting Jews would diminish England's reputation in Europe as a Protestant nation. Prynne quotes from *Orders of His Highness and Council for Securing the Peace of the Commonwealth* (1655), in order to reveal the Commonwealth's intent: "To banish and send into Foreign parts... all persons whatsoever that shall appear by their words or actions to adhere to the party of the late King or his Son, & to be dangerous Enemies to the peace of the Commonwealth" (88).¹⁴⁴ Because Prynne had been imprisoned from 1650-1653 for three pamphlets which argued against swearing allegiance to the Commonwealth, he certainly took this order very seriously indeed.

¹⁴⁴ These words are italicized in Prynne's pamphlet, indicating a direct quote from *Orders of His Highness and Council for Securing the Peace of the Commonwealth* (1655). Although I was unable to check this quote because the original document was unavailable, elsewhere in Prynne's pamphlets, italics indicate accurate quotes. For example, italics indicate direct quotes from the *Declaration* statement.

However, the section of Prynne's first *Demurrer To the Jewes*, which deals with his critique of this *Order*, is a marked departure from his general argument against the Jews' readmission. As such, this departure may affirm that Prynne was, as D.L. suggested, using the Jews as a blind for his real agenda. In this section, Prynne's chief concern is to protest against the government's threat to banish all those who, like him, disagree with the Commonwealth's agenda. To address this, Prynne combines the issue of Jewish readmission with his protest against the proposed banishment of Cromwell's detractors. By doing so, he can avoid being exiled by the Commonwealth for having made it. The Jewish readmission argument especially lends itself to Prynne's protest because, for Prynne, the Commonwealth's plan to welcome foreign, unconverted Jews and to banish its detractors (all of whom are Protestant citizens) symbolizes the Commonwealth's predilection for policy and practice that are hypocritical to their stated religious agenda.

To highlight this point, Prynne writes:

Now I shall earnestly intreat in the name and fear of God, all those whom it most concernes, to consider..., how unjust, unrighteous, unreasonable, unchristian it will seem to all Free-born English men, and conscientious Christians, both at home and abroad, and what great scandals it may bring, both upon our Nation, Government, and Religion it self,... to banish these Christian English Freemen out of their Native Country,... and at the self-same time to call in foraign, Infidel Jews, (greatest Enemies to Christ himself and Christians, and in that respect more dangerous to the peace and welfare of the Nation than those thus to be banished) to supply their places.... (88-89)

Prynne feels the Commonwealth's *Order* coupled with its plan to readmit Jews exposes England as the "unrighteous" and "unchristian" nation Prynne believes it has become. In addition, Prynne implies that if Jews are "to supply [the] places" of "conscientious Christians," England itself will become a nation harboring Jews (or Judaical thought) rather than a nation consisting

of “Christian English Freemen.” It can be argued then, that some of Prynne’s arguments against Jews were a way for him to get at his main argument, namely that Commonwealth laws such as the *Order* exposed the unchristian nature of Cromwell’s England.

Another facet of England’s position in Europe as a Protestant nation was its insistence that at Cromwell’s advent a true form of English Protestant theology had been achieved. Many Cromwell supporters believed that their victory had established England as a true and pure Christian state. To promote this image of England, Prynne was aware that pro-reinstatement pamphleteers were using the proposed return of the Jews as a way to present England as a premier Protestant nation. For example, in *Israel’s Condition and Cause pleaded* (1656), D.L. imagines what Jews would say of England should the readmission act pass:

God lent us a shelter, even England;... England, who holds up Gods glory and fights the Lords battels; England which is so famous for Piety, where we have received faith to believe and imbrace the Son of God: Oh blessed be God, who ... hath... brought us out of thick darkness... by the power of the Gospel... [as it is] so plentifully, and so powerfully preached in England! (34)

Such rhetoric was certainly wishful thinking on the part of Cromwell supporters such as D.L. As Prynne and many others realized, the rise of “religious diversity” due to the Commonwealth’s combination of “a free press and religious toleration” was becoming “the ruling elite’s worst nightmare” (Bucholz and Key 267). Religious “chaos” played a key role in causing the dissolution of the Rump parliament in 1653, the division of England into twelve military districts, and the decision to purge England of dissidents not loyal to the regime (Bucholz and Key 272-273). As an eye-witness to these consequences of widespread religious unrest, an unrest he himself had warned about in prior pamphlets, Prynne seems unable to have resisted his desire to argue

vociferously against the notion that Cromwell's regime had brought in religious stability when all signs pointed to the opposite being true.

Unlike the position taken by Cromwell's supporters, Prynne's work faces the reality that England's Commonwealth was far from reaching the Protestant ideal of practicing Christianity in its truest form. Thus, much of his prefatory letter to his *Demurrer* takes up this argument; he also returns to it at the end of the pamphlet. These moves further indicate that the Commonwealth, rather than a potential influx of Jews, is the actual target at which Prynne's central arguments take aim. In his letter, Prynne angrily quotes from the *Declaration... to a Day of Solemn Fasting and Humiliation* (issued 21 November 1655) that England must fast and humble itself to God in hopes of reversing the rapid increase in religious sectarianism. This claim particularly irks Prynne because, instead of blaming its own policy of religious toleration for the proliferation of sects, the *Declaration* claims the "Tares of Division... have been sown by the envious one" (i.e. Satan), as well as those "bearing evil will" to the Commonwealth's "hopes and endeavours." The *Declaration's* further claim, that as a result of Satan and the Commonwealth's detractors England is experiencing "abominable blasphemies[,]"" the "spread..." of "Apostacy[,]"" and "the abuse of Liberty by, many professing Religion," is too large a hypocrisy for Prynne to leave unnoticed.

When Prynne returns to his argument against the November *Declaration* at the end of his pamphlet, he combines it with his argument against Jewish readmission. Prynne observes that readmitting Jews would be counterintuitive to the Commonwealth's *Declaration*, since, according to Prynne, Jews "are the greatest venters, spreaders of abominable Blasphemies against our Saviour and the Gospel; the greatest Apostates from God and abusers of Liberty of

any professing religion” (83). Here Prynne reuses the language of the *Declaration* in order to emphasize how it would be pure hypocrisy for England to readmit Jews to a Commonwealth currently observing a day of humiliation and fasting because it has been unable to end apostasy and blasphemies in its own Protestant countrymen.

In addition, after describing contemporary England (1655-6) as “this giddy, unsettled, apostatizing age,” Prynne uses the Jews and their proposed readmission to make a scathing prognostication; that England is “likelier to gain a thousand English Proselytes to their Judaisme, than [England] one Jewish convert” (91). Similar to the ways in which playwrights used Jews and Jewishness to indicate the concern that England was falling away from true practices of Christianity, Prynne uses the stereotype of the proselytizing Jew to emphasize the weakened state of English Protestantism due to the increase in England’s vying sects. For Prynne, the policy of Jewish readmission was a convenient, non-seditious way to voice his concern that England’s Protestantism was in a deplorable state. Thus it was both Prynne’s anti-Jewish mentality as well as his desire to find a way safely to undermine Cromwell’s policies that fueled Prynne’s entrance into the Jewish readmission debates.

Jews, Real and False

As I have shown, some writers who revived medieval Jewish stereotypes did so in order to mask their true agenda, which was to argue against the chaotic state of England’s Protestantism. Interestingly, just as these fictional, biblical, historical, and hypothetical Jews were used rhetorically to criticize Christian behavior, an actual person passing himself off as a Jew became the polemical center of an argument designed to discredit a dubious Christian sect. In 1653, Seventh Day Baptist minister Thomas Tillam (d. in or around 1674) used a Jewish

convert to Christianity in order to gain position and authority for himself and his small congregation in Hexham. In response, a small group of Independent and Presbyterian ministers, Thomas Weld (c.1595-1661, Independent), Samuel Hammond (d. 1665, unclear affiliation), Cuthbert Sydenham (1622-1654, Presbyterian), and William Durant (1621-1681, Independent), used the same Jew, whom they had discovered to be a Roman Catholic spy, to discredit Tillam and the Baptist movement as a whole.

In 1653, a man who purported to be a Jew-turned-Christian, Joseph ben Israel, was introduced to Thomas Tillam as seeking to be baptized into a Christian sect who had a “spiritual way of worship, without humane Traditions” (3). This phrase highlights the seemingly natural way the “Jew” eschews Catholicism in favor of non-Calvinist Protestant ideals. In his “Confession in the Church of Christ,”¹⁴⁵ Joseph claims to have sought long and hard for a church professing the true Gospel. He complains that in Hamburg he met with nothing but “Idols of their own inventions,” and in Hessen, “where all are Calvinists” their “wicked lives turned [his] heart away from them” (qtd. in Weld, et al. 3). It was not until he “came into England and while [he] was thus seeking Christ without, in the way and order of his holy Gospel, [that he] found him also within, to the exceeding joy of [his] soule” (qtd. in Weld, et al. 3). Thomas Tillam, who hears this “Jew’s” confession, was flattered by the Jew’s claim that the congregation at Hexham had outshone those in Hamburg and Hessen. Moreover, Tillam was vulnerable to this flattery; he had converted from Catholicism to the sabbatarian Baptist religion, a relatively small Protestant sect in need of doctrinal validation and converts.

¹⁴⁵ As recorded in Weld’s expose pamphlet of the incident, *The false Jew* (1653).

Indeed Tillam vigorously set about making the most of this Jew who had chosen his, Tillam's, little congregation after an arduous international search. In his critical comments appended to the Jew's confession,¹⁴⁶ Tillam describes how Joseph ben Israel's poignant declaration of faith had caused Tillam's "very soul [to] cleav[e] to" the Jew. In agreeing to baptize Joseph, Tillam quotes the exact words Ananias spoke¹⁴⁷ to Saul (who became Paul) after he had been called by Christ on the Damascus road: "Now why tarest thou? arise & be baptized, & wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (qtd. in Weld, et al. 9). It is clear from the use of this conceit that Tillam is using the baptism of this Jew, Joseph ben Israel, as an attempt to endorse himself as a revered minister and to bring fame to his Baptist congregation.

Certainly Thomas Weld, Samuel Hammond, Cuthbert Sydenham, and William Durant felt that Tillam's motive in baptizing the Jew was fueled by Tillam's sectarian self-interest. In their exposé of the false Jew (who was really Catholic convert Thomas Ramsay), Weld et al. accuse gullible ministers like Tillam as having "heads full of the fumes of popularity and vaine-glory" (A3v). Weld et al. also had concerns about Tillam's credibility as a minister. In their own response to Tillam's assessment of Joseph ben Israel (entitled "Considerations upon the Animadversions"), Weld et al. accuse Tillam of having "learned" false information "from this counterfeit Jew who told [them that] his design was to strengthen [Tillam] in his opinions by false quotations of the Rabbies" (10). Here Weld et al. use the Jew to expose the Judaical leanings of Tillam and the sabbatarian Baptists, whose very name indicates that they are Jew-

¹⁴⁶ Found in the section entitled "The Administrators Animadversions upon this Declaration and Confession, wherein the glorious Order and method of the highest shines forth" of Weld's pamphlet *The false Jew*.

¹⁴⁷ Acts 22.16

like because they celebrate Sabbath on Saturday. For Weld, Hammond, Sydenham, and Durant, Tillam's belief in and baptism of the false Jew enabled them to denounce Tillam's theology and hence his entire Seventh Day Baptist congregation.

Tillam also recognized the motive of Weld and his committee. After Tillam had come to accept that the Jew Joseph ben Israel was indeed the Catholic spy Thomas Ramsay (in *Banners of Love* [1654], Tillam refers to the now-exposed "Jew" as "Judas ben Belial" [1]); he accuses Weld's committee of writing their exposé in order to undermine his "Baptized church" (1). Tillam writes: "[F]our Newcastle Gent. publish this false Jew to the world, but drive on secretly his design to break the Church of Hexham, by reproaches, scandals, and very great untruths" (1). Clearly Tillam believed Weld's committee used the case of the counterfeit Jew to ensure that the Baptist sect would not gain authority in England. According to David S. Katz in his book *Sabbath and Sectarianism in Seventeenth-century England* (1987), the counterfeit Jew incident did indeed cast doubt on the Baptist movement "as a whole": moreover, two and a half years later, Tillam was replaced by Bohemian minister George Ritschel (1616-1683) for "doctrinal differences" (Katz 34).

In this remarkable instance, then, a living Jew (though an imposter) became a central device, similar to the rhetorical device used by playwrights and pamphleteers. Catholics in Rome created this Jewish imposter to gain intelligence for use against English Protestants; the minister of this Baptist church used the "Jew's" purported desire for baptism in an attempt to gain popularity and authority for his fledgling congregation; and a committee of Independent and Presbyterian ministers used the exposé of this "Jew" to denounce the leader of a Christian sect whose theology they disagreed with. In short, this false Jew became the living embodiment

of the rhetorical device popularized by the playwrights and pamphleteers this project has been reviewing.

The story of the false Jew has a further interesting implication; it suggests that early modern English Protestants were not afraid of Jews. If Joseph ben Israel had been a real Jew who could serve as an agent to coerce other Jews into the Christian fold, his minister, Thomas Tillam, would have been seen as a Christian hero. The desirability of converting Jews in English churches is acknowledged by William Prynne. Although Prynne fought vociferously against a general readmission of the Jews, he could not deny the doctrinal truth of Romans 11.23, which he quotes in his first *Demurrer*: that “IF they abide not still in unbelief, [Jews] shall be grafted in for God is able ... to graffe them in again.”¹⁴⁸ Thus Prynne, if reluctantly, acknowledges: “If any private lews out of meer conscience or sincere desire of being converted to the Christian faith, shall upon that account alone desire admission into England, to be instructed by our English Divines, I suppose no English Christians will oppose” (93-94). In other words, the importance of Jews in forming England as a premier Protestant nation bred some tolerance towards them as actual people, even in those who, like Prynne, had no real sympathy for them. Therefore when Londoner Antonio Rodrigues Robles’ property was confiscated due to an unofficial blockade to prevent Spanish goods from gaining passage to the West Indies (Katz *Philo-semitism* 235), he found it better to admit that he was illegally practicing Judaism than to be pegged as either Spanish or Portuguese.

After having been exposed as an enemy Spaniard by the scrivener Francis Knevet in March 1655-56, Robles had his merchant vessels and other property confiscated by the English

¹⁴⁸ Quoted on page 93 of Prynne’s *Demurrer*.

Commonwealth.¹⁴⁹ In an attempt to recover his ships and goods, Robles at first protested that he was not Spanish, but Portuguese. When this did not alleviate the actions taken against him, Robles confessed that he and several fellow merchants with Iberian last names were in fact Jews who had been secretly practicing their religion in London. Shortly after this confession (May 1656), Robles' "ships, goods, and other property which had been seized ... were restored to him" (Katz *Philo-semitism* 237-238). Although the Commonwealth was eager to attack any Spanish Christians among its citizens, it apparently had little interest in exploiting, banishing, exiling or prosecuting practicing Jews.

Moreover, when Robles's personal crisis managed to expose all of London's secretly practicing Jews, not only did this Jewish community not perceive any danger from this exposure, they took the opportunity to ask for some leniency in openly practicing their faith. Encouraged by the millenarian and religiously tolerant mindset of many in the Commonwealth, London's Jews put together, signed, and submitted to Cromwell a document entitled "The Humble Petition of The Hebrews at Present Residing in this city of London." This petition was also signed by the main promoter of the failed readmission bill,¹⁵⁰ a Portuguese Jew from Amsterdam, Menasseh ben Israel, who perhaps hoped to salvage some right for Jews to practice Judaism in England. The "rather more modest requests" of these Jews included the ability to practice Judaism within their own homes "without feere of Molestation" ("Petition" qtd. in Katz *Philo-semitism* 236), as well as "permission to establish a Jewish cemetery outside [London's] city limits" (Katz *Philo-semitism* 236). These requests were granted, though

¹⁴⁹ In 1655, Cromwell had decided to side with the French in the war between the French and Spanish Netherlands. To this end, England had formed an unofficial blockade against Spain (Katz *Philo-semitism* 235).

¹⁵⁰ According to Katz, although the lawyers had found no legal objection to admitting Jews to England, "opposition" had ultimately been "too strong to allow for any official declaration" (*Philo-semitism* 234).

privately. Possibly, the Commonwealth feared that the decision to extend to this small Jewish community the same religious tolerance that had been extended to England's Protestant sects would cause more sectarian strife. The immediate result was that London's Jews were allowed to practice Judaism in their homes and a plot of land was allowed for a cemetery. In December 1656, one member of the Jewish community, Antonio Carvajal, leased a building that in March 1657 became a synagogue. Although these were relatively small steps towards Jewish tolerance, and Jews would have to wait until the nineteenth century for full emancipation in England, "by Cromwell's death, the Jews were firmly established in England" (Katz *Philosemitism* 242).

This attempt at Jewish tolerance nevertheless made it easier for London's Jews to practice Judaism on English soil; they were, as they had requested, allowed to practice their faith unmolested. Early modern English Protestants, then, did not fully fear Jews despite England's long tradition of frightening medieval stereotypes associated with them. As my project has demonstrated, during the Reformation, Jews had come to bear a significant doctrinal importance to the establishment of reformed English Christianity. Therefore, Jews had to be given their proper scriptural place in a land keen to take up the mantle of premier Christian nation.

This project has been arguing that during the early modern period, Jewish villains in plays, references to medieval Jewish stereotypes, as well as villainous accusations against potential foreign Jews who might make their home in England, had very little to do with Jews as living, breathing individuals. Practicing Jews had been driven underground or out of England altogether in 1290; to all intents and purposes, then, practicing Jews did not exist in sixteenth-

century England. Moreover, increased contact (through vernacular bible reading) with biblical Jews, made it imperative for reformed English Christians to follow closely the actions of elect biblical Jews, while avoiding the actions of biblical Jews considered to be reprobate. Being able to claim a close adherence to scripturally based Jews gave credence and authority to reformed Christian sects that had broken away from the traditional, Catholic church.

In the seventeenth century, as England came to see itself as a premier Protestant nation, Jews served yet another purpose. Perceived as having been banished from England by “papists,” Jews became pawns of millenarians from reformed sects. These millenarians wanted to return Jews to England in order to position English Protestants as true followers of the bible including Paul’s precept that “all Israel shall be saved” once “the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” (Romans 11.25-26). For these reasons, I have been arguing that Jewish characters in plays and references to Jews both stereotypical and biblical had little to do with actual Jews; instead Jews and traits considered to be Jewish were used in texts ranging from plays to newsbooks to political pamphlets in order to help establish boundaries between reprobate and elect English Christians who were in turn struggling to establish religious stability in England.

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ABSTRACT**GRAFTING ONTO 'THE JEW': THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING JEW-ISH TO EARLY MODERN
ENGLISH CHRISTIAN IDENTITY**

by

JOAN BLACKWELL WEDES**August 2014****Advisor:** Dr. Simone Chess**Major:** English (Literature and Culture)**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

The dissertation examines how Jewish figures in early modern plays, prose, and poetry moved beyond the uncomplicated medieval image of murderous villain and towards a more reasoned consideration of the Jew's position in Christianity as well as in English life. While there has been significant scholarship on early modern representations of Jews, particularly in drama, these studies have not examined how Paul's Letter to the Romans, in forming much of Reformation doctrine, was also crucial in forming attitudes towards and representations of literary and living Jews. My project uniquely combines history, biblical studies, and literary analysis to reveal how early modern treatment of Jews and Judaism were inextricably tied to Reformation theology which was grounded in Romans. This new perspective shifts the discourse away from the question of whether or not there was early modern anti-Semitism, and toward a more nuanced reading of the ideologies and evidence that motivated these representations and behaviors. Inherently interdisciplinary, my dissertation is informed by the ways in which the humanities (history, religious studies, language, literature and the arts) converge to become the driving force behind human interactions.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Joan Blackwell Wedes has a Bachelor of Arts in German (University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1986) and a Master of Arts in English Language and Literature (Eastern Michigan University, 1995). Since 1996, she has taught numerous sections of freshman composition and sophomore literature in community colleges and four-year universities in Houston, TX and Detroit, MI.