CHAPTER 3

Blackspeak

Acoustic Blackness and the Accents of Race

(I'm just going to say this right now so we can get it over with:
I don't know what a real slave sounded like. And neither do you.)
Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, *An Octoroon*, 2014

In *Fragoa d'amor*, a tragicomedy written by Gil Vicente in 1525 to celebrate the wedding of João III of Portugal and the Spanish infanta Catherine of Austria, Cupid and Mercury decide to celebrate the arrival of the new queen by giving the Portuguese people the opportunity to be recast, remade, and hammered to perfection in their titular "Forge of Love." The first to seize upon the gods' offer is Fernando, an enslaved Afro-Portuguese man, who asks to be turned "white like a chicken egg" (branco como ovo de gallinha), with a "very thin nose" (fazer nariz mui delgada) and "thin lips" (faze me beiça delgada).[1] Disappointment ensues:

The Negro exits from the forge, looking like a white gentleman.
Yet they could not hammer blackspeak out of him.
Negro Now my hand *is white,
And my leg *is white too
But . . . I still *talk black!
If I still *talk black,
What is the point of *looking white?
If I still *speak in blackspeak
And not in Portuguese,
What was all the *hammering for?

Mercury That's all we could do.
You got what you asked for.[2]

Here, Gil Vicente, the prolific bilingual playwright who popularized *fala de preto* in Portuguese theatre and *habla de negros* in Spanish theatre—both of which I translate as *blackspeak*—draws attention to the efficacy of a performance technique that sonically marks Fernando, or "Furunando" as he calls himself, as irremediably black for spectators, even once black-up has been removed. That technique codifies the sound of Afro-descendants' speech forms for stage purposes. Eminently risible and thus specific to the genre of comedy widely defined, blackspeak relies on grammatical mistakes (incorrect conjugation, numbering, or gendering), foreign lexical imports (from various early modern African languages), and exaggerated phonetic distortions—three elements that coalesce to form a standardized, recognizable, and replicable black accent. To wash an Ethiop white, visuals are not enough, Vicente suggests, for, as Fernando discovers, what spectators hear can be as important as what they see. Vicente illustrates the idea that sound is, to quote Jennifer Lynn Stoever, "a critical modality through which subjects (re)produce, apprehend, and resist imposed racial identities and structures of racist violence. . . . [Sound is] a set of social relations and a compelling medium for racial discourse."[3]

To get a sense of the importance of sound and accent as a medium for racial discourse in early modern Europe, let us take a walk in the streets of Seville during Holy Week 1604, and let us listen. Dozens of Catholic confraternities solemnly carry superb floats laden with religious sculptures and wind through the city arteries, following the traditional procession itinerary that leads them all to the cathedral. Music everywhere the floats go. Yet, around El Salvador Church, there is a brawl, a commotion, and laughter—getting louder and louder. That year, the powerful confraternity of Nuestra Señora de la Antigua y Siete Dolores would lodge a complaint against the less affluent confraternity formed by Afro-Sevillians, both free and unfree, the Hermandad de los Negritos. They would accuse the Black confraternity of violently breaking protocol and decorum by attacking them in order to enter the Church of El Salvador out of turn. That accusation speaks to thinly veiled fears in the face of the pride, assertiveness, and social mobility championed by the Hermandad de los Negritos: fears that the slavery-based racial and social order might be disrupted by willful Afro-Spaniards who refuse to know their place and wait their turn. The confraternity of Nuestra Señora issued a grievance with the archbishop, asking that the Hermandad de los Negritos be dissolved, or at least forbidden to participate

in the same processions as white confraternities (in other words, be segregated) in the future—under threat of excommunication.

In the memo preserved today in the archives of the archdiocese, Francisco de Acosta mentions that "every year their confraternity [los Negritos] takes part in the procession of the Holy Week, they have quarrels either with the respectable people of the other confraternities who march at the same time, or quarrels with people who mock them."[4] The memo includes several testimonies, one of which, delivered by presbyter Juan de Santiago, gives us more information about the specific "mockeries" that regularly infuriated the Black brothers: "Many people jeered and directed offending sounds at the *negros*, talking to them in blackspeak (guineo), and embarrassing them, with great disrespect for the procession and the representation of our Savior's Passion. And so the *negros* would disband and respond, swear, and insult those who were jeering at them, which made the whole thing more like a jest or an interlude (cosa de risa y entremés) than a Holy Week Procession."[5] This testimony signals that the injurious dimension of blackspeak (guineo) was obvious to all parties involved, since some Sevillians purposefully used blackspeak in combination with whistles and "offending sounds" (probably scatological and animalistic, like the sounds that we heard courtiers hurling at Juan and his servant in the king's antechamber in *El valiente negro en Flandés* in Chapter 1) to insult the members of the Hermandad de los Negritos. That 1604 altercation between white Spaniards speaking blackspeak (guineo) and Afro-Spaniards using authentic Afro-Spanish speech forms voiced linguistic differences that vividly exposed the artificiality and strategic nature of theatrical blackspeak. For a hot minute, the whiteness of blackspeak must have been deafening.

But this vignette also reveals, just as importantly, the triumph of self-aware artifice, the counterintuitive and yet undeniable power of a performative technique to condition auditors' perception of reality. Indeed, Juan de Santiago's final sentence eerily merges blackspeak and Afro-Spaniards' responses, despite the differences exposed during the altercation, by reading both linguistic entities as part of the same comedic entremés and aesthetic universe (the whole thing sounded "like a jest or an interlude"). The dynamics of street processions, which enable a theatricalization of the world, facilitated this merger. While the very altercation he witnessed exposed the artificiality of theatrical blackspeak to the naked ear, the witness could not help but hear the scene through the ideologically inflated filter of early modern stagecraft. This anecdote speaks to the central object of this book: what I call racecraft, that is, the ability of theatrical and performative stagecraft to foster habits of mind, to transform spectators'

reading of the world offstage, and thereby participate in early modern racial formations.

I seek to radically expand our understanding of the scope, effect, and significance of blackspeak in early modern Europe. Iberian Blackspeak has been studied in depth by scholars such as Frida Weber de Kurlat, Edmond de Chasca, Paul Teyssier, and Nicholas R. Jones—a study facilitated by the abundance of scripted blackspeak in the extant archives of Iberian print culture.[6] However, the extant European archive of printed blackspeak located primarily in Iberia is only the tip of an iceberg of performative practices rendered largely invisible by the technical limitations of the scripting process itself. For instance, an unusual grouping or ungrouping of words can disrupt the flow of a sentence and betray the speaker as nonnative. Alain Fleischer notes that, "in some cases, an accent might have more to do with rhythm than with phonetic pronunciation."[7] Fleischer's observation is based on his experience as a French speaker, but for native speakers of a stress-based language—such as English or Spanish—detecting a nonnative speaker is even easier: nothing gives away a proficient ESL speaker like stressing the wrong syllable in a polysyllabic word. Similarly, the accent of an early modern Afro-European whose native language was tonal—as is the case of most Bantu languages—was likely to contain exotic-sounding variations in pitch, and actors familiar with them could easily caricature them in their version of blackspeak. But codifying such rhythm-based, stress-based, or tone-based accents would have required scripting systems that early modern European performance culture neither had nor developed for that purpose. Thus, printed scripts could neither dictate nor render the full sonic impact of blackspeak in performance. Scripts are suggestive, not prescriptive, in that respect. To repurpose Jennifer Linhart Wood's turn of phrase, in "the sonic laboratory of the early modern theatre," actors could increase the intensity of scripted blackspeak by using rhythm, stress, and tonal modulations according to their own skills and taste, and any insightful study of blackspeak must reckon with their agency.[8]

Under the umbrella of blackspeak, I include speech forms in which a black accent was applied to European vernaculars, but also speech forms in which a black accent was applied to various imaginary African languages that I generically refer to as "Africanese."[9] In this version of blackspeak, which early modern plays labeled "jargon" or "gibberish," sonic difference came across not through distortion but through novelty effects created, for instance, by variations in pitch and phonemes unheard of in the auditors' vernacular, by the use of voice inflections evoking emotions inappropriate for that specific dialogic situation

in the auditors' vernacular, and by deliberately crafted imbalances whereby "jargons" express in two words what European languages express in two periodic sentences. Reading texts that script Africanese through a performative lens, we must keep in mind that actors did not pronounce those lines with the standard accent of their own vernacular but, most likely, with what they imagined to be a thick black accent, as did the actors who delivered black-accented European vernacular. In both versions of blackspeak, actors—cued or not—could connect pronunciation to visual caricature and to black-up by using the demands blackspeak placed upon their elocution as an opportunity to grimace: they could use their mouth, jaws, and lips in keeping with the perennial fixation of racial caricatures on the fuller lips of Afro-descendants, regardless of whether the words they uttered existed or not in European vernaculars.

The two versions of blackspeak, Africanese gibberish and black-accented European vernacular, could be combined in performance. They were combined, for instance, in the musical genre of Neapolitan *moresche* and, by extension, in the moresche routines of the influential commedia dell'arte repertoire that circulated throughout Europe. Indeed, in Orlando di Lasso's mid-sixteenth-century moresche titled "Alla pia calia," the lyrics mix black-accented Neapolitan vernacular with Africanese gibberish (Figure 4).

The irruption of gibberish ("cian cian, ni ni gua, gua") is palpable on the music sheet, when tablature interrupts itself and musical notation disappears to be replaced with a black-accented sentence, the meaning of which can be approximated as "What language have we down here! Bless the clamor, Gurgh!"[10] That metalinguistic comment ends on a nugget of guttural gibberish (gurgh!), which introduces a nonsensical sentence as musical notation resumes ("he he he he ha ha ha ho ho ho ho").[11] That sequence is an invitation: the interruption of tablature on the music sheet suggests that, in performance, singers were at liberty to improvise, pause, and expand on that moment of gibberish before returning to singing in accented Neapolitan. In sum, early modern blackspeak was a highly modular racializing device, and, here again, rare extant scripts such as Di Lasso's moresche must be regarded as the waterline of an iceberg of potential vocal modulations.

I coin the term *blackspeak* to emphasize the fact that, just like Orwell's Newspeak, this aesthetic code is an artificial language with real-life consequences, a limiting language that ultimately contains and controls the thoughts and aspirations of its fictional speakers on stage.[12] Its development was implemented, however, not in a top-down power structure such as the one imagined by Orwell but in a structure of distributed power requiring the active and

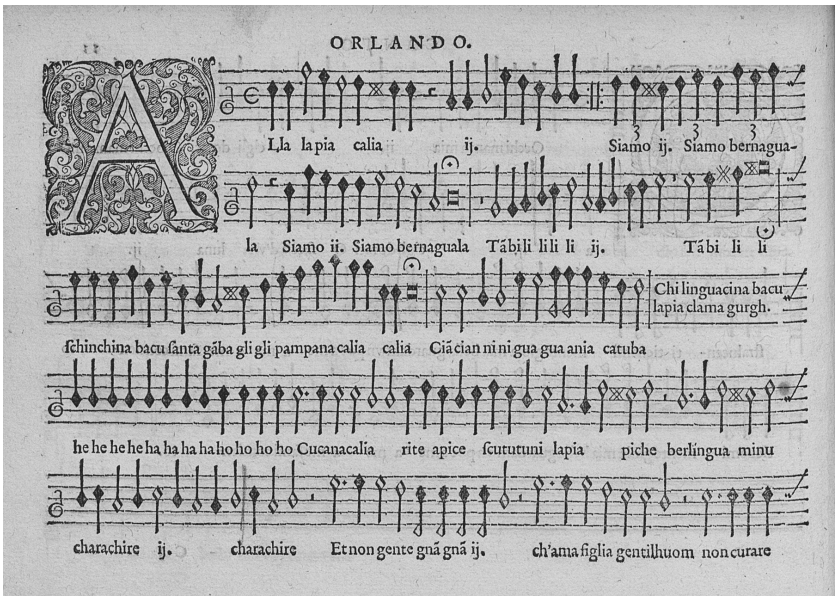

Figure 4. *Libro de villanelle, moresche, i altre canzoni*. Orlando Di Lasso. Print. 1582. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, 4 Mus.pr. 60, fol.11v. urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00084745-7.

enthusiastic participation of various agents: playwrights, actors, and audience members. Just as important, I call it *blackspeak*, rather than habla de negros, *media lengua*, or *língua de preto*, the terms used by scholars of Iberian theatre, because I seek to show that, although blackspeak was primarily an Iberian device, it came to operate across and beyond the borders of the Iberian Peninsula, throughout Western Europe. Attentiveness to the various forms of blackspeak—black-accented European vernaculars, Africanese gibberish, and modulations of those two formulas—dramatically widens the scope of blackspeak studies, to Italy, England, France, and probably other European traditions. By adopting a transnational approach, I seek, as always, to break away from the Anglocentrism that has long characterized the field of early modern critical race studies, but I also wish to counter the assumption, common among race scholars in Hispanic studies, that there was a gap between the Iberian Peninsula, which produced literary representations of Afro-diasporic people based on real observation, and the rest of Western Europe, which, allegedly, produced literary representations of Africans based on "purely literary notions from antiquity

and the Middle-Ages" disconnected from the social and historical realities of the moment.[13] Across early modern Europe, blackspeak was a major performative technique of racialization essentializing difference in the service of power to locate Afro-descendants at the bottom of social orders. Blackspeak contributed to establishing within an early modern trans-European framework what Stoever theorizes in the context of post–Civil War America as "the sonic color line," that is, "the process of racializing sound—how and why certain bodies are expected to produce, desire, and live among particular sounds—and its product, the hierarchical division between 'whiteness' and 'blackness.'"[14]

In the process of racializing sound, artifice, far from being an impediment, was the key dimension that enabled blackspeak to do its work. Indeed, all early modern performances of blackspeak were artificial and heavily highlighted their own artificiality. One Spanish interlude, *Entremés cantado de las dueñas*, written by Luis Quiñones de Benavente and performed in the royal palatial compound of Buen Retiro in 1645, is one of the rare documented performances that featured an authentic Afro-Spanish performer: an unnamed enslaved man who belonged to theatre company manager Andrés de la Vega.[15] In the playtext, the performer's lines are scripted in perfectly unaccented Castilian, suggesting that habla de negros worked best for theatrical purposes when performed by a white actor. Such dynamics are even more pregnant in English and French plays, where blackspeak is systematically performed not just by white actors but by white actors playing white characters who, in turn, pretend to be Afro-diasporic. That frequent mise en abyme of blackspeak's whiteness emphasizes—revels in—the core artificiality of blackspeak. In this chapter, I unfold the implications of such reveling by sounding the affordances of blackspeak's artifice and their ideological ramifications in the early modern racial struggle.

What was the purchase of systematically putting blackspeak in the mouths of white actors when gifted Afro-Europeans, free and unfree, would presumably have welcomed the opportunities of the acting profession? What did the actors' whiteness enable? Beyond the obvious pleasure of impersonation shared by actor and spectators, a large part of the answer is control. Artifice enabled theatre makers to control the final acoustic product: to develop blackspeak forms whose calculated sounds could infantilize and animalize Afro-Europeans at will. Yet control is only part of the answer. Indeed, white performers using blackspeak, simply by virtue of their own whiteness, could conjure up older traditions of stage accents and thereby connect Afro-Europeans symbolically and politically to other racialized groups with a distinct history of theatrical impersonation. What the performers' whiteness enabled was the activation of acoustic

racecraft's memory. Thus, it is blackspeak's very artificiality that gave it its racializing affordances via what I call *the script of ethnic conjuration*, an associative script that connects blackness with other paradigms or subparadigms in the racial matrix. The ideological implications of such associations are varied, and in that sense, the effects of the script of ethnic conjuration are open-ended. The hitherto unexplored connective dimension of blackspeak highlights what David Theo Goldberg calls the "relational" nature of racial formations across space and time, and the need for early modern race scholars to study racial formations as mutually implicated.[16] By highlighting the interconnected lives of tropes and paradigms within the racial matrix, I heed Goldberg's call.

My account of blackspeak departs significantly from the path-opening scholarship written on early modern linguistic blackness over the last ten years, primarily by Ian Smith, Robert Hornback, and Nicholas R. Jones. In *Race and Rhetoric in the Renaissance: Barbarian Errors*, Ian Smith powerfully argues that barbarism, the ancient mark of profound difference that had been understood as linguistic incapability—sometimes manifesting in ancient Greek theatre through "stuttering, mumbling, malapropisms, grammatical errors"—was reaffixed to Afro-descendants in Renaissance England, as the inhabitants of North African Barbary became conveniently associated with barbarity.[17] Methodologically, Smith's study aligns with the concluding section that Bruce Smith dedicates to Shakespearean plays in *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor*, where he limits "aural marks of African identity" to the domains of rhetoric and poetics.[18] The Shakespearean examples Ian Smith uses to exemplify this process are only partially convincing, to the extent that Aaron, Caliban, and Othello, if temporarily afflicted by barbarity (in the form of silence, "gabbling," or collapse), perform more linguistic and poetic capability than incapability overall. By using a wider array of plays and resisting Shakespearecentrism, I hope to reveal the full power of Smith's core argument in early modern theatre, not only in England, but across Europe.

A comparative and transnational ambition similar to mine informs Robert Hornback's *Racism and Early Blackface Comic Traditions: From the Old World to the New*, which bridges the gap between Iberia and England, studying in groundbreaking ways the use of "black dialects in derisive depictions of blackness." Hornback traces the recurrence of black "broken, ungrammatical, mispronounced baby talk" that foreshadows the techniques of nineteenth-century minstrelsy.[19] Hornback, however, grounds his study of early modern English blackspeak in sixteenth-century morality plays, whose blacked-up protagonists are constructed as allegorically, not racially, black. I take a different route by us-

ing a narrower and, I believe, stronger definition of what counts as acoustic early modern blackspeak.

My third and last central interlocutor is Nicholas R. Jones, who argues in *Staging Habla de Negros: Radical Performances of the African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain* that a number of representations of Afro-descendants authored by early modern white writers are not racist but, rather, "render legible the voices and experiences of black Africans in ways that demand our attention." For Jones, habla de negros "embodies a dialectical and performative masked truth that has the potential to disavow antiblack racism and stereotyping." Embarking on a self-avowed revisionist project, Jones does "not believe that the Renaissance Iberian composers, musicians, and playwrights caricaturized or denigrated Africanized speech forms conclusively."[20] Jones is committed to reading blackspeak as a medium that affords possibilities of resistance for Afro-Iberians and, consequently, finds subversion in the texts where he seeks to reclaim Black agency. I share Jones's project to understand performances of blackspeak within the social realities of early modern Spain, but I find that the dynamics of racial impersonation that are central to blackspeak foreclose most avenues for Black resistance.

In this chapter, I reconstruct some of the scripts of blackness that blackspeak offered to auditors grouped in acoustic communities whose "identity is maintained not only by what its members say in common but what they hear in common," to quote Bruce Smith.[21] Each of the chapter's two halves focuses on a version of blackspeak (black-accented European vernaculars or Africanese gibberish), moves comparatively or transnationally, and follows a chronological arc. In the first half of the chapter, which is focused on black-accented European vernaculars on stage, I trace the development of blackspeak in early modern Spain to reconstruct a very popular script of black infantilization. I use historical records to highlight blackspeak's circulation between real and theatrical settings, with Spanish theatre at the center of a nexus of urban performance spaces including churches, private houses, and procession streets through which blackspeak moved multidirectionally and disseminated its ideological contents. I analyze the comic mechanisms of blackspeak, and I show how, in interludes by Tirso de Molina, Quiñones de Benavente, and many others, blackspeak could make auditors perceive Afro-diasporic characters as childish, excessively physical, and intellectually deficient, thereby lending ideological support to the slavery-based social status quo.

Turning to the only extant English play mobilizing this version of blackspeak, Richard Brome's *The English Moor, or The Mock-Marriage* (1637), I explore

other popular acoustic scripts of blackness: scripts of animalization or degeneration, and scripts hinging on the conjuration of other racialized groups. Indeed, I posit that London playgoers may have heard the novelty of blackspeak through the filter of older traditions of stage accents such as continental and Irish accents, the latter signaling the appearance of Afro-diasporic people on the same colonial horizon whence the racialized Irish stage accent had risen. That colonial horizon was saturated with ideas of degeneration that would soon be linguistically associated with all English colonial subjects.

In the second half of this chapter, I focus on Africanese gibberish, to show that acoustic scripts of animalization and ethnic conjuration obtained across the Channel, in early modern France. French acoustic racecraft differed from its English counterpart, however, in its strategic concealment of the colonial modes of thinking in which blackspeak was embedded. The use of Africanese "*jargon*" in Nicolas Du Perche's neoclassical comedy *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique* (1666), inscribes Afro-descendants in an ongoing history of national formation, and in an ongoing history of Orientalist representations that used Turkish jargon on stage. Du Perche's play activates the conjuration mechanisms of blackspeak in ways that Orientalize its African characters. This Orientalization of blackness by acoustic means happened at the very time when the number of enslaved Afro-diasporic French speakers boomed in the Caribbean, and I read it as a manifestation of mechanisms of denial, displacement, and erasure triggered by deep metropolitan anxieties about the fate of the Freedom Principle. Ultimately, I turn to Sir Francis Fane's little-known Restoration comedy *Love in the Dark* (1675), not only to point out the long shelf life of the acoustic scripts of blackness previously discussed, but also to explore the complementary interactions of blackspeak and its cosmetic counterpart, black-up.

Part 1. Vernacular Blackspeak

"Sew My Mouth from Side to Side, and My Tongue Too": habla de negros

In Spain, blackspeak developed, thrived, and survived in urban settings where theatre makers and consumers lived and worked within earshot of Afro-Spaniards. Blackspeak appears in Spanish theatre roughly a decade after it appears in Portuguese literary culture, in the early 1530s. It flourished immediately, in the works of playwrights who had all lived in the vicinity of Afro-Iberians: playwrights from Portugal (the bilingual Gil Vicente); Andalusia (Lope de Rueda

was from Seville; Feliciano de Silva lived in Seville; Francisco Delicado hailed from Jaén); Extremadura, a commercially and culturally porous region between Spain and Portugal (Sánchez de Badajoz); and cities using an enslaved workforce (Gaspar Gomez de Toledo). Blackspeak as a theatrical technique boomed in the first decade of the seventeenth century. This boom coincided with the permanent return of the royal court from Valladolid to Madrid in 1607. Together with its thirst for entertainment, the court brought back an estimated fifty-five thousand persons to the city: aristocrats, administrators, servants—so many potential patrons for the *corrales* of Madrid. The return of the court to Madrid fixed the city's dire demographic situation, ensured its ascendency over its Castilian neighbors, and boosted its economy, including its entertainment economy. Doing so, it "increased the proportion of servants, menials, and marginals" in the city, among whom one would find enslaved Afro-descendants, a status symbol cherished by Iberian aristocrats.[22]

Toponymy attests to their presence in the soundscape of early modern Madrid. For instance calle de los Negros (black men's street), which corresponds to the upper segment of today's calle Tetuán, just above Puerta del Sol, was called so because there lived the people enslaved by the president of the Council of the Indies (who, given his charge and the symbolism attached to it, was likely to own one of the largest enslaved retinues in the city).[23] Not only does toponymy attest to the connection between aristocrats and high officials with the enslaved and to the presence of Afro-Spaniards in some of the most central streets of Madrid; it also reveals a contact zone between theatre makers and Afro-diasporic *madrileños*. Indeed, an examination of the legal documentation on theatre makers collected by Teresa Ferrer-Valls reveals that calle de los Negros was an important street for the theatre community in Madrid: between 1601 and 1630, many costume makers, sellers, renters, musicians, choreographers, and actor families lived and worked there, conducting their trade within earshot of Afro-Spaniards.[24] Moreover, as Mimma de Salvo notes, many documents show that successful actors and actresses owned enslaved people; that was the case for Micaela de Luján, for example, whose household—in which Lope de Vega spent many years—included an enslaved *negra* and her children.[25]

The drop in the Afro-diasporic population in Madrid and Seville in the 1640s correlated with a decrease of black characters in comedias on the public stage.[26] Black characters and blackspeak did not disappear; they were, in part, relocated and became a recurrent fixture of entremeses, a genre particularly popular at court, especially after the completion of the Coliseo theatre in the Buen Retiro compound built for Philip IV.[27] Performance culture was intense

at Buen Retiro: as previously mentioned, this is where *Entremés cantado de las dueñas*, starring the man enslaved by Andrés de la Vega, was performed in 1645. This anecdote highlights the status of Buen Retiro as a place where aristocrats kept consuming enslaved Afro-Spaniards, interludes, and enslaved Afro-Spaniards in interludes after 1640.[28] It is in that little bubble that blackspeak survived in the second half of the century, and the conditions of its survival confirm that proximity to Afro-Spaniards was a key feature of blackspeak's ecosystem.

But this situation does not lead me to read blackspeak as an attempt to reproduce authentic Afro-Spanish speech forms.[29] Rather, it leads me to argue, based on the anecdote of the 1604 Holy Week altercation between Nuestra Señora de la Antigua y Siete Dolores and the Hermandad de los Negritos, that artificial blackspeak thrived in diverse urban soundscapes where its juxtaposition with authentic Afro-Spanish speech forms enabled it to do its ideological work. Blackspeak thrived in sites where audiences were conditioned to pick up its parodic dimension—sites where proximity to authentic Afro-Spanish speech forms highlighted its whiteness and artificiality, thereby alerting auditors to the intentionality of its acoustic effects. Indeed, it is a natural response, when we listen to someone speaking our language with an accent, to focus on the semantic content of their speech despite the accent; our minds work hard to grasp what the speaker means and to ignore the obstacle to comprehension that is the accent. Our cognitive response to authentic accents, in sum, is to try to unhear them. By contrast, virtuosic artificial accents like blackspeak demand our attention: their effects are impressed upon us and our imagination because of their self-avowed artificiality, not in spite of it.

To take the full measure of blackspeak's social energy in Spain, we must think of the stage as the center of an urban nexus of acoustic performance spaces—including churches, private houses, and procession streets—through which blackspeak circulated multidirectionally. Blackspeak entered Spanish culture through music and poetry, and more specifically through Rodrigo de Reynosa's late fifteenth-century *coplas* (popular songs), published as *cordel* literature in Seville and meant to be sung to a famous local tune. The coplas imagine a call-and-response dialogue between two enslaved people: Jorge, whose ethnic origin is *Gelofe Mandinga* courts Comba from Guinea. Blackspeak would never lose the musical coloration of its first instantiations in Spain; associated with religious celebrations, such songs often embed their own performative premises. For instance, in the "Christmas Carols and chansonettes that were sung in the choir of the Cathedral of Seville to celebrate the coming of the Holy Kings to Bethlehem when Jesus Christ was a newborn" in 1644, we can hear:

Brother, we the *#*negros* *have come
To *pledge #allegiance to the #King,
For we *are *vassals to His law
Just like #white #courtiers are.
I *swear to #holy #God,
To #his beautiful Virgin Mary,
Who is more #beautiful than a #white #rose,
And to the sovereign Child.
Gungulum gua!
Singing and #dancing
We *have come to *adore Him!
Gungulum gun,
Gungulum gua![30]

Inside the cathedral, the very place, physical and spiritual, that was supposed to effect the integration of enslaved Afro-diasporic people into the Spanish body politic, during celebrations that included them symbolically and physically, the voice of Afro-diasporic Catholics was distorted into blackspeak, and white churchgoers were encouraged to join the choir. None of this comes as a surprise when one remembers that the staircases of that cathedral were the primary stage that slave merchants used to display their wares and conduct their trade in Seville.

This Christmas carol is one among many. *Villancico*s in blackspeak were performed for Christmas, the Epiphany, and Corpus Christi from the 1630s (if not earlier) to the middle of the eighteenth century, first and foremost in the Cathedral of Seville but also in other Andalusian cities with important Afro-Spanish populations (such as Córdoba and Granada), in the cathedral of Toledo, the basilica-cathedral of Zaragoza, and the Royal Chapel in Madrid. The tradition of blackspeak *villancicos* was so popular that it spread throughout the empire and was performed in the cathedrals of Lima, Cuzco, La Paz, Bogotá, Mexico City, Puebla, and Guatemala City.[31] Blackspeak villancicos were printed on broadsheets that were offered to the powerful members of the parish and sold on popular markets to the less powerful ones, ensuring that blackspeak, which must have been in high demand given the number of broadsheets preserved at the Biblioteca Nacional de España today, would keep circulating after the celebrations, entering people's private homes.[32] Those printed villancicos found perhaps an even easier access to private houses when they were written by celebrated poets such as Luis de Góngora and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[33] Printing religious and nonreligious villancicos lyrics on cheap broadsheets, combined

with the spectacular development of the dramatic publishing industry in the early seventeenth century, maximized the circulation of a technique born nearly a century earlier. Blackspeak cannot exist outside of performance: to understand what a passage in blackspeak means, the reader has to vocalize the lines. Seventeenth-century readers, living in a culture where reading was very often an out-loud group experience akin to a private performance, were likely to read the blackspeak texts they owned *en voz alta* (out loud). By reading or singing those texts aloud, private readers became consumers and producers of blackspeak who could be imitated in turn, furthering its circulation. Blackspeak thus involved both theatre goers and theatre readers as active agents in the racialization of Afro-Spaniards.

El negro, an entremés by Tirso de Molina published in 1635 and presumably performed at some point between 1617 and 1635 in Madrid by Juan Bautista Valenciano's acting company, exemplifies the theatrical deployment of blackspeak and some of the scripts of blackness attached to it.[34] In *El negro*, sound and meaning work in concert: black speech, saturated as it is with physicality, construes Afro-Spaniards as obsessed with bodily appetites at the semantic level, while, at the acoustic level, blackspeak helps reinforce the audience's perception of Afro-Spaniards as supra-physical and infra-intellectual, thereby infantilizing them. The plot goes thus: by a beautiful midsummer night in Madrid, on an idyllic patch of green, white friends are listening to musicians singing a *romance*, a narrative ballad, called "Sin color anda la niña" (The pale wandering maid). An enslaved Afro-Spaniard, Domingo, enters. He breaks the law in doing so, since the enslaved were forbidden to leave their house or their enslaver's house and walk the streets at night in early modern Madrid. They risked severe corporal punishment for doing so. But Domingo is fearlessly taking a stroll, and he enters the stage, drawn—as his theatrical peers often are—to the sound of guitar:

> A #Guitar! What lovely sound!
> I don't know what the #devil it is
> About this *instrument,
> But I sure love #it:
> It #moves my soul.
> And here I am, listening like a #fool,
> While the sun is rising on me.[35]

Rapidly, Domingo shows himself determined to prick the white friends' idyllic bubble. He likes the sound of guitar, but he disapproves of this "old" ballad: he

demands a more recent and danceable tune, and he criticizes its plot from a comically down-to-earth viewpoint. Indeed, for the heroine of the ballad, the "pale wandering maid" who, abandoned, pines away, pales away, and loses sleep over her lover's absence, Domingo—who has little patience for foolishness—has a prescription: a better diet and a better lover. Domingo interrupts the ballad six times and is ordered to be silent. After his sixth interruption, the white friends lose patience:

Argales
Will you be quiet?
Domingo
Yes #sir,
I'll be #quiet like a duegna,
Like a nun in the parlor,
Like an eighty-year-old mother-in law,
Like a child who gets butt-whipped,
Like a sore loser,
Like your blacksmith #neighbor,
Like cats and dogs squeezed together,
Like a woman in labor,
Like a plaintiff who's been played,
Like base characters getting mad
In a bad play.
I swear to #God and on my #conscience,
To be #quiet like those are.
Argales
Good Lord! If you don't
Shut up, may God smash your skull!
Domingo
#I wish I could, my good sir!
I #wish #to God a #shoemaker would
Sew my mouth, from side to side,
And my #tongue too!
But, given my #condition, I think that,
Even if they sewed it,
I *would have to speak #with my eyes,
My hands, my ears,
My feet, #with my #knees,

My #muscles, #with my legs,
#With my shoulders, and then again,
#With the one eye I have left.

Musician

Damned *negro*, shut up,
And we'll have a party for you right here.

Domingo

Fine, I'll be #quiet. With a #condition, though:
I want in.
See, I *know how to dance too![36]

Domingo compulsively interrupts the *romance* players out of his unwillingness or inability to empathize with the love it celebrates, a love whose truest manifestation consists in the abdication of all bodily pleasures and necessities (such as food, sex, and sleep—and, ultimately, life) on the "pale" maid's part. His discourse is fueled by what spectators would read as the stereotypical obsession of Afro-diasporic characters with the body, which prevents him from understanding more refined forms of love.[37] Domingo's enthusiasm for bodily appetites is self-evident when he recommends a healthier lifestyle to *la niña*:

To recover, #God *willing,
She should eat
#bacon, #beef, mutton,
#hen, #partridge, #rabbit,
#pigeon, #goose, #turkey,
#chicken and #cocks (but not coxcombs!)
#capon, #chorizo,
#sirloin, #gizzards,
#salami, #sausage,
And a whole pan of lard! . . .
You are losing sleep over one lover,
Yet, in every #street you could #find
A thousand kinds of lovers:
One with a red mustache,
One with a black #head of hair,
Another one with a big fat body
#And shapely legs,
Another one whose collar

Makes his Adam's #apple so #salient
That he could put #glasses on #it
As other do on their #noses;
Yet another lover who—[*They interrupt him.*][38]

Recommending a diet that consists exclusively of meat (with an emphasis on pork), punning that she should eat "cock but not coxcombs" before detailing the "salient" body parts of potential lovers, Domingo offers a solution based on a vision of the carnivalesque body as meat to be consumed in all ways—not surprisingly, that vision informed scopic constructions of the Afro-diasporic body itself on the Spanish stage, as we saw in Chapter 1. The idea he develops—that, should he be silenced, every part of his body will speak for him—reinforces the inextricable connection between speech and physicality: the black body is a speaking body, and black speech speaks only of the body. Domingo's victory over the *romance* partisans is marked by a merry dance, which consecrates the exulting triumph of the body.

This carnivalesque celebration of the body has a flipside: it is inseparable from a vision of tortured bodies. With some of the images that permeate the scene, whether it be the "butt-whipped" child, the woman giving birth, Argales's desire to see God smash Domingo's skull, or Domingo's own phantasmatic evocation of a shoemaker sewing his mouth from side to side, this interlude is suffused with a vision of the body in pain, the body whipped, beaten, cut, and torn open, as Domingo's enslaved body could be at any moment in this interlude, if an *alguazil* enters and discovers him roaming freely by night. That Domingo has only "one eye left" makes it impossible to ignore that such brutalization has already been perpetrated on his body, over and over and over again. (And it also helps us understand why Domingo's perception of the world so heavily leans on the acoustic mode.) In that sense, Tirso de Molina's comic interlude dramatizes the full range of early modern Spanish investments in Afro-diasporic bodiliness—and owns it. Such open acknowledgment of the brutality to which Afro-Spanish bodies were subjected aligns with larger aesthetic currents that scholars such as Carmen Fracchia have recently traced in Hapsburg visual culture.[39]

The cultural obsession with physicality that fuels Domingo's black speech at the semantic level is central to the comic mechanisms of blackspeak on the acoustic level, which I understand in a Freudian light. Laughter, Freud argues, arises when we deem that someone has taken "too much trouble" to perform a physical function, or "too little trouble" to perform a mental or intellectual

function: "A person appears comic to us if, in comparison with ourselves, he makes too great an expenditure on his bodily functions and too little on his mental ones; and it cannot be denied that in both these cases our laughter expresses a pleasurable sense of the superiority which we feel in relation to him."[40] Artificial phonetic distortions could easily be perceived by audience members as excessive expenditure, or effort, spent on a defective elocution. Indeed, it would have been hard not to notice the surplus of labor performed and deliberately exaggerated in ways that demanded attention by the blackspeakers' jaws, lips, and tongues. For any audience member sharing the opinion casually articulated by George Puttenham that one of the "fit instruments man hath by nature" to the purpose of speaking is "thin and movable lips," the fuller lips of Afro-Europeans must have appeared to be an obstacle to easy elocution.[41]

Bozal was the Spanish term used to refer to slaves who had recently arrived from Africa and had not yet perfectly mastered the Spanish language yet (by contrast with acculturated ladino slaves); etymologically derived from "muzzle," the term simultaneously animalized Afro-Spanish speakers and framed their speech forms as resulting from material obstacles to proper elocution. Nicholas R. Jones sees in that term a sign of "Spain's cultural and somatic fixation on big African lips."[42] This fixation informs theatrical representations of Afro-descendants' elocutionary challenges. It is likely that listeners laughed at how much work it took artificially blackened mouths to pronounce simple words. That cultural fixation on sub-Saharan lips certainly informed the presence of the built-in thick lips of the masks used during the previously mentioned 1525 danza de negros in Toledo, as well as Iago's decision to call Othello a "thick-lips" (1.1.66), or the nickname "morruda" (thick-lipped) given to the enslaved blackspeaking Margarita in Jaime de Huete's *Tesorina*.[43] Blackspeak thus derives some of its comic force from the clumsy surplus of physical labor that its production necessitates from the fictional Afro-diasporic character—to which the virtuosic labor produced by white performers draws attention.

Parallel to their excessive expenditure on physical elocutionary functions, blackspeakers also invited laughter with their insufficient expenditure on intellectual functions. The latter often makes an adult resemble a child, and Freud argues later on that we laugh most often when, at a preconscious level, we find the object of our laughter to remind us of a child.[44] The idea that laughter arises when we recognize an "infantile" element in someone illuminates the comic force of blackspeak: indeed, Paul Teyssier uses the phrase "childish syntax" to describe Portuguese blackspeak.[45] The infantile dimension of blackspeak manifests in various acts of simplification. In the previously cited scenes from Tirso

de Molina's *El negro*, simplification operates phonetically in Domingo's *yeismo* (delateralization), that is, his decision to ignore the distinction between *ll* and *y*. A drive toward simplification also manifests in the neologistic form *sabo* (I know), an invented regular form for the highly irregular verb *saber* (to know) that morphologically follows the logic of children and beginning language learners.[46] That Domingo's accent should affect and undermine the moment when he claims some kind of knowledge is no coincidence; rather, it miniaturizes the ideological work of blackspeak.

This acoustic construction of Domingo as excessively physical and intellectually deficient or childish via blackspeak complements his semantic construction as a character driven by bodily appetites. The association of *negros* with excessive physicality provided ideological support for the various forms of physical exploitations to which Afro-Spaniards were subjected, while their association with deficient intellect and childishness conveniently upheld the idea that white Spaniards had a moral mandate to educate them, to "force the black man out of the spiritual Africa in which he lives."[47] That "spiritual Africa" was a state of savagery, or spiritual and cultural misery, and could be corrected only by a Europeanization enforced through the practices of a slavery-based Catholic society. Via the script of black infantilization, blackspeak thus supported an ideology that positioned Afro-Spaniards at the bottom of the social order based on essentialized qualities.

Certainly, people did not go to the theatre driven by a desire to defend the institution of slavery: they went for pleasure, as we do. And yet, laughter theorists assure us, it matters little whether auditors consciously or deliberately participate in such exercises of power. They do not need to be aware for the comic accent to perform its ideological work. On the contrary, Henri Bergson explains, laughter pursues its goals "unconsciously, and even immorally in many individual instances."[48] Freud refines this idea when he argues that the cognitive processes conducive to the emission of laughter must remain "automatic":

> The comic process will not bear being hypercathected by attention; it must be able to take its course quite unobserved. . . . It would, however, contradict the nomenclature of the "processes of consciousness" of which I made use, with good reason, in my *Interpretation of Dreams*, if one sought to speak of the comic process as a necessarily unconscious one. It forms part, rather, of the pre-conscious; and such processes, which run their course in the preconscious but lack the cathexis of attention with which consciousness is linked, may aptly be given the

> name of "automatic." The process of comparing expenditures must remain automatic if it is to produce comic pleasure.[49]

In other words, the less aware audience members are of their own cognitive processes and of the racializing dynamics at play, the louder they laugh. In that sense, blackspeak operates "unobserved." Acoustic racecraft thus relied on a subtle formula of attention and inattention: the white artificiality of blackspeak directed auditors' attention to its sonic texture, but blackspeak remained risible only as long as auditors did not reflect too much on what made the texture of "funny talk" funny. That formula of attention and inattention caught auditors in its web. The acoustic scene of ideological production was one of distributed agency between playwrights, performers, and audiences, but also one that was very hard for auditors to opt out of.

The strength of blackspeak as an ideological tool operating at the "preconscious level" to protect the economic foundations of Spanish society helps make sense of a curious paradox. Indeed, one intriguing dimension of blackspeak is that while it relies primarily on corrective responses and impulses, the correction, it seems, cannot—even must not—ever be fully carried out. Indeed, if blackspeak were to disappear—that is, if Afro-diasporic characters were to speak in unaccented Castilian (as must have been the case for many seventeenth-century Afro-Spaniards), the stage would lose one of its finest racializing ideological tools. We get a glimpse of the importance of the persistence of blackspeak on stage, uncorrected and unamended, in *El negro*, when Domingo emphatically delivers the final line of the interlude: "I cannot shut up, I swear #to God, as hard as I try!"[50] He repeats several times that he desperately wants to remain quiet but is unable to do so: he describes his own talkativeness as a medical "condition," and this condition is a form of violence—yet another one—visited on him by the comic dramaturgy of blackness. This dimension must have struck Luis Quiñones de Benavente, the master of seventeenth-century entremeses, who rewrote and expanded on Tirso de Molina's skit in the early 1660s.[51] In Quiñones de Benavente's version, Domingo speaks even more, his accent is even thicker, and he receives a fitting nickname: "el negrito hablador" (the chatty little *negro*). In cases such as this one, it is tempting to read the persistence of artificial black voices through a reparative lens, as a statement of Black resilience. But not all speech is free. I suspect that blackspeak persisted because it fulfilled more than it resisted the needs of the proslavery ideology in which it participated. This ideology needed talkative little Domingos to keep talking in

order to racialize themselves without end: Afro-Spaniards had to remain perpetually in need of sonic correction, education, and exploitation.

This mechanism is particularly audible in an anonymous late seventeenth-century interlude called *La negra lectora* (The Black Woman Who Would Fain Read), in which three young clerks decide to play a cruel trick on Dominguilla, an Afro-Spanish cook famous for her tripe stew, who dares take evening classes to learn how to read and improve her pronunciation.[52] Such an initiative should be praised in a society that values linguistic mastery and *ladino* identity over *bozal* identity among the enslaved, yet the clerks seek to punish Dominguilla for her ambition:

> Who is prompting *#negras*
> To become so learned?
> Cookbooks: that is all
> They should study![53]

They describe Dominguilla's crime and punishment in the following terms:

> I heard that this little *morena*
> Is learning how to read and write
> From schoolmaster
> Manuel Perez Botijon:
> After class, when children leave,
> He teaches that *negra*
> The alphabet book.
> Now, since she is a *bozal*,
> With our wits, we'll trick her
> Effortlessly—
> Willy-nilly.
> First, we'll bring the teacher
> Who is indoctrinating her
> So he might start the lesson
> And teach her our language.
> Once she is distracted
> We'll steal the bitch's tripe stew!
> And then, the three of us will
> Seize our guitars

And treat her with proverbs:
We'll joke about our prank
And tell her commonplaces
That she can neither say
Nor pronounce correctly![54]

The three lads perceive Dominguilla's desire to lose her accent and learn how to read and write Castilian as an uppity transgression. Because her transgression has to do with linguistic mastery, so does her punishment: aiming commonplaces and proverbs at her, they weaponize the parts of language in which national culture is most sedimented, to show that the cultural community to which those sayings are "common" does not include her. The denouement replaces this fantasized scene of punishment with a scene of sonic humiliation, in which the schoolmaster and the three clerks mock her pronunciation. The pleasure they take in her phonetic failures is only equal to their displeasure when she succeeds:

Teacher H.
Negra Ache.
Teacher H.
Negra (Making a big effort to pronounce the letter correctly) H.
At this point, the three lads sneeze loudly, saying "Achoo! instead of "H," with much noise and mirth. The teacher does the same, behind his spectacles.
Francisco Gee! See what a #fine reader
The #strumpet Mandingo #sister is![55]

Dominguilla pronounces a sound correctly, but the figures of white philological authority bring her back to blackspeak. It is their real-life counterparts who hurled blackspeak at the members of the Hermandad de los Negritos during the Sevillian processions of Holy Week 1604.

Like the Afro-Spanish brothers whom Juan de Santiago could not help but acoustically conflate with interlude characters as he witnessed the altercation, Dominguilla cannot win this fight, for she inhabits an acoustic space where she must keep making the mistakes that justify her oppression. She must inhabit the space of childishness, excessive physicality, and deficient intellect that blackspeak sonically constructs. She must play out the scripts. Dominguilla's scene of humiliation impels us to resist the temptation to read the sonic mode automati-

cally as a conduit for resistance in racializing regimes of performance. To do justice to the sonic, to give it its due, and to push against the hegemony of the scopic regime in Western epistemologies and in premodern critical race studies, we must resist the urge, common in sound studies, to place it in an oppositional relation to the oppressive scripts that cosmetic blackness delivered on early modern stages.[56] We must, instead, apprehend the ideological work that blackspeak and its acoustic scripts of blackness did on their own terms, violence and all.

"Broken English": Black Sonics in Jacobean and Caroline England

A fascination with acoustic blackness starts manifesting in Jacobean England as early as *The Tempest* (1611), in which, prior to his encounter with Europeans, Caliban, son to a Moorish witch and a dark devil, "would gabble like / A thing most brutish."[57] This gabbling might be what the satirical poet John Taylor aimed for when he composed in 1614 "certain verses written in Barbarian tongue, dropt out of a Negroes' pocket in honor of tobacco," or when he wrote in 1613 a gibberish "Epitaph in the Barmooda tongue, which must be pronounced with the accent of the grunting of a hogge."[58] The grunting epitaph is followed by its translation into the gibberish of "the Utopian tongue," followed by "the same in English, translated by Caleb Quishquash, an Utopian borne and principal Secretary to the great Adelantado of Barmoodoes," whose name is reminiscent of Caliban's.[59] Taylor's imaginary Afro-diasporic idioms, squarely located in a transatlantic space, ignore grammatical rules and complete the roots of English words with either Latinate or animalistic suffixes, breaking the English language in the process. As Hornback points out, Taylor's poetic experiment never became a literary convention, despite its cheeky conclusion that "if there bee any Gentlemen, or others that are desirous to be practitioners in the Barmoodo and Vtopian tongues: the Professor (being the Author hereof) dwelleth at the olde Swanne neere London Bridge, who wil teach them (that are willing) to learne, with agilitie and facility."[60] Nevertheless, Taylor's experiment outlined the conceptual map of blackspeak and its scripts of blackness in early modern England. On that map, we find topoi such as animalization and degeneration (the grunting of a hog), the conjuration of other people and other cultures destabilizing the identity and integrity of the English language (Latin suffixes), and new colonial spaces (Barmooda) peopled with "Calebs" and "Negroes."

The desire for sonic impersonation surfaces in Webster's *The White Devil* (1612), in which the Blackamoor maid Zanche, declares, as she first sees Mulinassar:

"That is my Country-man, a goodly person; / When hee's at leisure Ile discourse with him / In our owne language."[61] A decade later, in Philip Massinger's *The Parliament of Love* (1624), when the unfaithful Clarindor is caught red-handed making advances to a blacked-up maid believed to be Moorish, he pleads:

> I desired
> To hear her speak in the Morisco tongue;
> Troth, 'tis a pretty language.[62]

In each of these plays, the Afro-diasporic speech act is either already past or postponed to a future that never materializes. Such dynamics of deferral suck spectators into a shared economy of desire for sonic blackness left untouched by the imperfections that its actual deployment on stage would inevitably contain. That desire was first to be fulfilled by Richard Brome, a Caroline playwright known to resort to regional, social, and foreign accents. One of those playwrights with what Bruce Smith calls a particularly wide "speech network," Brome "intended the background of [early modern London] heteroglossia to be heard on stage."[63] Brome's city comedy *The English Moor, or The Mock-Marriage* was performed at Salisbury Court by Queen Henrietta's Men in 1637, and published some twenty years later. This is the only extant play to use black-accented vernacular blackspeak in early modern England.[64]

Brome's experiment with blackspeak may have been fueled by his firsthand observation of the Afro-British presence in the city. As Cristina Paravano notes, he did not travel extensively, nor did he study languages; his heteroglot dramaturgy of accents is, rather, the result of "a remarkable perceptiveness to the linguistic stimuli around him, by walking around London and in the playhouses."[65] This does not mean that Brome sought to put authentic Afro-British accents on stage, but rather that, like its Spanish counterpart, English blackspeak blossomed in a space where it was juxtaposed with authentic Afro-British accents—spaces where its whiteness and artificiality were particularly audible, enabling it to do its ideological work. Matthew Steggle connects the name of the imaginary Blackamoor maid in Brome's play, Catelina, to Imtiaz Habib's finding that several Afro-diasporic women living in Britain were called Catelina.[66] Additionally, the play's dedicatee-reader, William Seymour, had Afro-Britons in his household and probably had an illegitimate mixed-race granddaughter himself.[67] Could Brome have found himself within earshot of those Afro-Britons during one of the visits he paid to his patron? Quite possibly. Steggle also connects the fact that Quicksands lives in Market Lane to Imtiaz Habib's finding

that this street was popular with successful merchants, the very class that had Afro-Britons in its service in early modern London.[68] The Afro-diasporic population amounted to 0.5 percent of London's population in the 1590s and kept growing in the first half of the seventeenth century, owing mostly to the acceleration of Anglo-African trade and to the end of the Anglo-Spanish War in 1604, which facilitated Anglo-Spanish trade, including the trade of enslaved people.[69] If, as Jean E. Howard argues, in city comedies, "through their place-based dramatic narratives, playwrights helped representationally to construct the practices associated with specific urban spaces," *The English Moor* uses Market Lane to negotiate the social tensions attached to the fantasized "urban problem" of the Afro-British presence in Caroline London.[70]

In England just as in Spain, artifice enabled blackspeak to do its ideological work: *The English Moor* revels in the artificiality and whiteness of blackspeak. Catelina is an Afro-diasporic role played by a white female character played in turn by a white boy actress. When Catelina speaks, she is linguistically contrasted with African characters who, unlike her, are constructed within the world of the play as authentically Moorish: Moors "hir'd to dance and to speak speeches" during Quicksands's private masque (4.1.883). Like the authentic Afro-Spanish performer in the *Entremés cantado de las dueñas* at *Buen Retiro* in 1645, those "authentic" Moors deliver their lines in perfectly unaccented English. Brome's Moorish performers sound like the Afro-British London stable boy who speaks fluently and without any accent in William Stepney's 1591 *The Spanishe Schoolmaster*.[71] A close reading of *The English Moor* brings to light the key affordances of blackspeak's artifice, namely, the ability to associate Catelina with degeneration and to conjure up older stage accents and their ideological resonances.[72]

The English Moor focuses on the marriage of Quicksands, a Shylock-inspired old Jewish usurer who does commerce with Barbary and lived in the multiracial city of Venice at some point in his life, to Millicent, a young, smart, and beautiful Christian woman, who successfully avoids her husband's bed and, ultimately, exits the marriage. Quicksands is concerned, rightly so, that all the young men he has ruined in London might seek to avenge their wrongs by making him a cuckold. To avoid this, he disguises Millicent as a Blackamoor maid called Catelina, assuming that no Englishman could possibly be drawn to a dark-skinned woman. His assumptions fall flat before notorious wencher and fetish holder Nathaniel Banelass:

Nathaniel It is the handsom'st Rogue
I have ere seen yet of a deed of darkness;

Tawney and russet faces I have dealt with,
But never came so deep in blackness yet. . . .
He keeps this rye-loaf for his own white tooth
With confidence none will cheat him of a bit;
Ile have a sliver though I loose my whittle. . . .
Hist, Negro, hist.
Millicent No see, O no, I darea notta.
Nathaniel Why, why—pish—pox I love thee,
Millicent O no de fine white Zentilmanna
Cannot a love a the black a thing a.
Nathaniel Cadzooks the best of all wench.
Millicent O take—a heed—a my mastra see—a.
Nathaniel When we are alone, then wilt thou.
Millicent Then I shall speak a more a.
Nathaniel And Ile not lose the Moor-a for more then I
Will speak-a. (4.1.717–31)

A month later, to celebrate his imagined victory over the young men who would cuckold him and who now believe that Millicent is dead, Quicksands organizes a private masque to which he invites his enemies. The masque is to reveal who the Blackamoor maid really was all along.[73] Quicksands does not know that Millicent has traded places with her own white maid, Phillis, who was once undone by Banelass. Neither does Banelass when he uses the masque revels to make advances at Catelina now played by Phillis:

Nathaniel Musick, play a Galliard,
You know what you promised me, Bullis.
Phillis But howa can ita be donea.
Nathaniel How I am taken with the elevation of her nostrils.
Play a little quicker—Heark you—if I lead you
A dance to a couch or a bed side, will you follow me?
Phillis I will doa my besta. (4.1.808–11)

Banelass and Catelina/Phillis are caught, and a trial ensues, during which true identities are revealed. Quicksands is tricked into divorcing Millicent; Banelass is tricked into marrying Phillis.

Blackspeak is passed on from Millicent to Phillis like cosmetic blackness: as a disguise component that masks identity and makes the two women inter-

changeable as they work together. Blackspeak here entails inconsistent grammatical distortions (Catelina's failure to conjugate, when she says "no see" instead of "I will not see," does not carry over) and consistent phonetic distortions including the repetition of epenthetic [a] and the transformation of [ð] (an English sound notoriously hard to pronounce for nonnative speakers) into [z], of [dʒ] into [z], and of "master" into "mastra," which is evocative of future "massa" developments. To a Caroline English ear, Catelina's accent could have recalled various traditional stage accents: it was probably replete with what Wood calls "the sonic uncanny—the odd experience that something is alien and yet strangely familiar."[74] Her Spanish name suggests that, like most Afro-Britons at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the imaginary maid Catelina either was born in Iberia or had spent time in Iberian cultures prior to coming to England. Logically, we would expect Catelina's blackspeak to smack of Spanish (the way Spanish blackspeak often smacked of Portuguese). There lies the rub: while strong traditions of scripted French, Italian, and Dutch accents exist in early modern English drama, there is no equivalent for Iberian accents. Iberian accents may have been (and probably were) used by individual actors, but they are not scripted in extant playtexts as evidence of standard practice.[75]

Having no standard model of Spanish stage accent to imitate, Brome seems to have borrowed some features from the French and Dutch stage accents: Catelina pronounces the definite article "the" as "de," a feature also used by the French *The Damoiselle*, and by the Dutch in William Haughton's *Englishmen for My Money* and Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*.[76] Catelina's accent also draws on West Country regional English accents: "zentilmanna," for instance, is reminiscent of the "z" words used by Edgar in *King Lear* when he counterfeits a West Country peasant accent. However, Catelina's epenthetic "a," which immediately strikes Banelass, is Brome's own invention; for that reason, it may have read as carte blanche to the boy actress in charge of those lines. To script blackspeak, Brome used something foreign, something British, something new. This motley of connections is meaningful. By conjuring the French and Dutch accents, Brome's blackspeak connects Catelina to Europeans who were involved in the Atlantic slave trade (in addition to the Iberians who christened her). Conjuring a rustic regional English accent also connects her to the lower class within a traditional English social geography. Understood in relation to foreign European stage accents, blackspeak gives Catalina a double set of coordinates that positions her and the Afro-Britons she stands for as simultaneously outside and inside of the English nation.

The preexisting stage accent most likely to be conjured up by Catelina's blackspeak bits, however, was the Irish accent, which, together with other accents from the British Isles had been staged for over thirty years. Indeed, although scripted Celtic accents bear little resemblance to Catelina's, given the prominence in popular culture of a racial discourse that blackened Irish identity, audiences in the presence of the blackspeaking white boy actress likely connected blackspeak to the older tradition of Irishspeak. Unlike the conjuration of the French, Dutch, and West Country accents, the conjuration of Irishspeak hinged not on actual phonetic resemblances, but on a shared history of sonic impersonation on stage combined with a shared history of symbolical association in blackness. Just three years before Brome wrote *The English Moor*, Thomas Herbert had included in his *Relation of Some Yeares' Travaile* (1634) a short lexicon of the African language spoken by the "savage inhabitants" of the Cape of Good Hope with their "blubberd lips."[77] He had noted that "their words are sounded rather like that of apes than men, whereby it is very hard to sound their dialect, the antiquitie of it whether from Babell or no. . . . Their pronunciation is like the Irish."[78] Herbert's thought does not follow a logic of gradation moving toward the greater or lesser of three evils as much it follows a logic of deduction: this African language sounds animalistic and nonhuman (a pre-Babel origin points toward inchoate polygenetic thinking), ergo, it sounds like the Irish language. It is safe to assume that Irish Gaelic and the African language spoken at the Cape of Good Hope have little in common: Herbert found their pronunciation similar because Africans and Irishmen occupied a similar place in his perception of the world, and that place was defined by colonial interests. On stage, the mouth of the white boy actress voicing artificial blackspeak enabled the colonial linkage of the African and the Irish to materialize in the ears of Brome's auditors.

Celtic accents derived their *vis comica* from scripts very similar to scripts of blackness: it portrayed Celticspeakers as childish, intellectually deficient, and excessively physical in plays such as *The Famous History of the Life and Death of Captain Thomas Stukely* (1605), Shakespeare's *Henry V*, and Ben Jonson's *Irish Masque at Court* (1613). Unlike Continental accents, Gaelic stage accents constituted, as David J. Baker puts it, "ludicrous caricatures" that participated in "the colonizers' typology" and were informed by dynamics of conquest and racialization.[79] By integrating the new population group of Afro-Britons into that tradition, Brome recuperates its power dynamics, extends it to blackspeak, and comments indirectly on the place of Afro-Britons in the nation.

Early modern European political thinking consecrated the importance of linguistic unity for any nation with colonial aspirations.[80] In Britain, efforts to promote and impose the king's English as linguistic standard—in which writers and especially playwrights were instrumental—correlated with efforts to suppress Welsh, Scottish, and Irish languages from the political and legal spheres, as the gradual annexation of those territories unfolded. Paula Blank reads the appearance of Welsh, Scottish, and Irish accents on stage (distinct from regional English accents, which are older yet participate in the same hegemonic enterprise) around 1603 as directly connected to the growing linguistic and political imperialism of the English crown in those regions.[81] By directing this performance technique toward Afro-Britons, Brome underlines the role of Africa in "the rise in English travel and trade and the consequent emergence of England as a naval power" fit to serve imperial projects.[82] The fact, pointed out by Kim F. Hall, that the Anglo-African trade was characterized as early as the mid-sixteenth century by English attempts at breaking the Iberian monopoly on slave trafficking places Afro-diasporic bodies within the protocolonial sphere of English concerns.[83] Brome's redirecting of the imperialist linguistic dynamics of British accents toward Africans via blackspeak speaks to this positioning of their bodies and transfers to Afro-diasporic characters a relational mode predicated on fantasies of conquest. Indeed, in the two blackspeak scenes of *The English Moor*, the only character who listens and responds to Catelina's blackspeak, Banelass, aggressively and successfully seeks to conquer her black(ened) body. In those two scenes, sexual and colonial conquest overlap, and the gendering of the Afro-Briton enhances the political dimension of the new British accent that is blackspeak. English blackspeak proceeds from a colonial mode of listening—Banelass embodies that mode, and the audience is implicated in it.

Because of its colonial background, the theatrical technique of the Irish accent evoked specific fantasies of racial degeneration, which Brome recuperates quite heavy-handedly via the script of ethnic conjuration and redirects toward Afro-Britons. Indeed, sustained Anglicizing attempts at suppressing the use of Gaelic in Ireland, were, according to Paula Blank, fueled by anxieties not so much concerning Irish cultural resistance as concerning a possible "Gaelicization of the English" who lived in "Dublin and . . . two rural provinces, the baronies of Forth and Bargy in County Wexford, and to Fingall, a region north of Dublin." It is the accent of those Gaelicized Englishmen that was caricatured on stage as "Irish" by Ben Jonson and others. Spenser's *A View of the Present*

State of Ireland (1596) transparently reads questions of language politics in racial terms, as he articulates that "the notion that speaking Irish had adulterated the lifeblood of the English stock."[84] According to Spenser, for the English to intermarry with the Irish and let Gaelic-speaking wet nurses suckle their children entailed severe risks of "infection" that would make the English stock "degenerate" into wild Irishmen, or, for Sir John Davies in 1612, into beasts.[85] When they staged Anglo-Irishmen's accents, Blank explains, early seventeenth-century playwrights drew on this racial understanding of language in the British Isles: the accent functioned as auditory markers of the Anglo-Irish racial degeneration caused by physiological and linguistic mixture. Those anxieties about English racial degeneration, first coined in the Irish context, easily extended to Afro-Britons, given the common positioning of Afro-British women like Catelina—or the mother of William Seymour's mixed-race granddaughter—as sex workers, sexually assaulted maids, and wet nurses.

In *The English Moor*, the "degenerative" dimension of blackspeak is emphasized by the acoustic parallelism established between Catelina and Quicksands's intellectually disabled son, Timsy, an illegitimate child born long before Quicksands married Millicent. A "simple child" born from the interracial union of a Jewish man and a Christian Englishwoman, Timsy was entrusted by Quicksands to Matthew Hulverhead:

> for a certain sum
> Which I did pay, 'twas articled that I should ne'er be
> Troubled with it more. (4.1.853)

Some of Quicksands's young enemies convince Buzzard, a servant he unjustly dismissed, to disguise himself as Timsy so that they might crash Quicksands's masque. The operation is a success. Buzzard's Timsy disguise includes "long coats," a spinning "rock and a spindle" (spinning constitutes Timsy's main occupation in Norfolk), and a linguistic element: 90 percent of his lines consist in "Hey toodle loodle loodle loo," which, based on the definition of the word "toodle" (an onomatopoeia imitating the sound of a musical pipe), Steggle interprets as "an instruction to make noise rather than a set of words to be spoken."[86] Timsy's condition is thus largely constructed on the sonic mode, through his inability to speak English other than in broken bits and strange noises. When Buzzard and his crew crash Quicksands's masque, the disguised Buzzard's voice erupts a mere nine lines after Catelina's delivers her last line in blackspeak, dramaturgically reinforcing the bond between blackspeak and the

speech of a man whose disability is presented as a form of permanent infancy reminiscent of the acoustic script of infantilization.

Quicksands thinks of his son's condition in degenerative terms. Degeneration, the idea that the child is lesser than his parents, that the family's blood—one of the meanings of "race" in the early modern period—has been affected and that qualitative change is happening for the worse, is patent even in Timsy's nickname: the "Changeling." When Buzzard's crew threatens to leave "Timsy" in his father's care, Quicksands replies: "My grief and shame is endless" (5.3.1086). The question of degeneration is made even more urgent by Arnold's statement that he is bringing Timsy back to his father because

> we are not bound
> To keep your child, and your child's children too.
> . . . He has fetched up the bellies of sixteen
> Of his thrip-sisters. (4.1.857–60)

"Thrip" is a Norfolk term for "spin," a verb metaphorically coding sexual intercourse. The Changeling is fathering more changelings; degeneration is gaining traction. Not surprisingly, Timsy's comic force resembles that of the *negros* characters we encountered in the Spanish tradition. Timsy derives his raw comic effect from what Freud would identify as his (perpetual) childishness, his (clinically) deficient expenditure on intellectual matters, and his excessive expenditure on physical (sexual) matters. The parallel that is set up for the audience between Timsy's broken speech forms and Catelina's blackspeak reinforces the racializing dimension that blackspeak inherited from the stage Irish accent. Understood as connected to the Irish stage accent and to Timsy's speech forms, blackspeak constructs Catelina as a subject fit to be conquered, possessed, and racialized—but also as a subject likely to make the English body politic "degenerate" in that very process.

With blackspeak, *The English Moor* mobilizes a linguistic trope that would become central to English colonialism at large throughout the seventeenth century, namely, the trope of "broken English." While the phrase "broken English" was premiered by playwright Thomas Heywood in 1612 to convey the idea that English was historically constituted as a hybrid language, "part Dutch, part Irish, Saxon, Scotch, Welsh, and indeed a gallimaffry of many" Continental languages, it was quickly recuperated and ascribed to the subjects of English colonial rule.[87] Absent from early English chronicles depicting the New World and its inhabitants (Thomas Harriot, John Smith, and others), the phrase appears

in colonial writings starting in the early 1620s, at the moment when Anglo-Indian relations became strained, and when, in the wake of the 1622 Jamestown Massacre, colonists used Native American violence as a pretext to further advance the land-grab project.[88] In 1649, Edward Terry would mention that East Indians too spoke "broken English."[89] In collective imagination, the rapid and systematic ascription of "broken English" to colonial subjects—be they Irish, Native American, or from the Indian subcontinent—conferred to metropolitan English a reparative sense of integrity vulnerable to degeneration, like the race of its native speakers.[90]

In 1655, Edward Terry included in his *Voyage to East India* the story of Cooree, a young boy from the Cape of Good Hope who, forty-three years earlier, had been abducted by British sailors, "brought to London, and there kept, for the space of six months, in Sir Thomas Smith's house (then Governour of the East-India Company)."[91] There, "when he had learned a little of our Language . . . [Cooree] would daily lye upon the ground, and cry very often thus in broken English, *Cooree home goe, Souldania goe, home goe!*"[92] By including the African boy in the linguistic sphere of English colonialism as a speaker of "broken English," the mid-seventeenth-century writer was not reading a 1612 episode anachronistically. Rather, he merely stated in explicit terms what Brome had sensed and implicitly voiced via the script of ethnic conjuration produced by acoustic racecraft some twenty years earlier: that from the beginning of the seventeenth century onward, speaking "broken English" had been the sonic badge of all the racialized subjects who found themselves in the way of English colonialism.

Part 2. Africanese Blackspeak

Mind the Scratches: African Ambassadors, Jargon, and French Orientalism

Blackspeak was a two-headed monster whose mouths both spouted the same scripts of blackness. Indeed, Africanese blackspeak too deployed scripts of infantilization, animalization, degeneration, and ethnic conjuration. The stories it told early modern French audiences resembled those conveyed by Brome's vernacular blackspeak, with a major difference: French blackspeak did not disclose—it actually hid—the colonial horizon whence it arose.

On paper, French blackspeak seems to have developed late, but transnational routes winding through Italy suggest that French audiences may have

become familiar with blackspeak long before it entered French dramatic archives. Indeed, one major platform for the dissemination of blackspeak across Europe in the late sixteenth century was Naples, where the musical genre of the moresche was born, here again, within earshot of Afro-Neapolitans, since in Italy "by the seventeenth century, the two largest enslaved populations were found in Livorno on the Ligurian coast and in Naples."[93] The influence of the Iberian social model in Spain's outposts and the numerous cultural, literary, and theatrical exchanges that imperial circulation availed help account for the development of Neapolitan blackspeak.[94] Moresche was "an offshoot of a genre variously called *canzone villanesca*, *villotta*, *villanella* or *napolitana*, all of these describing a secular song in the Neapolitan dialect," a genre that was popularized in the 1530s, around the same time as Iberian blackspeak.[95] Moresche songs dramatize comic courtship scenes within the Afro-Neapolitan community: they unfurl profanity-laden dialogues between the stock characters of Giorgio and Catalina (or Lucia), who sing with a thick mock-African accent and pepper their Neapolitan vernacular with words lifted from Kanuri, a language spoken in the Bornu Empire (now northeastern Nigeria).

Moresche blackspeak spread throughout Europe via commedia dell'arte performers. Indeed, Eric Rice notes in hitherto unpublished research that, on the frontispiece of his well-known 1622 series titled *Balli di Sfessania*, which theatre historians use as a primer on the visual culture of commedia dell'arte, French engraver Jacques Callot associated lyrics lifted from Orlando di Lasso's famous moresche songs with commedia dell'arte's own stock characters (Figure 5).

"Lucia mia!" one grotesque-looking character lovingly exclaims, while Lucia peeps at him through the curtain; "Cucurucu!" another continues; "Bernoualla!" another responds while playing the tambourine. "Bernoualla": a distinctly French distortion of the Italian word "bernoguala," that is, "Bornu people," the same fictional people singing in the 1568 collection of moresche composed by Orlando di Lasso. During his years of training in Italy, Callot saw much theatre; since *Sfessania* is a Neapolitan term, it is fair to assume that the 1622 series was inspired by performances Callot saw in Naples, and the frontispiece shows that, in Naples, moresche songs from the mid-sixteenth century had found their way into commedia dell'arte routines. None of the *zanni* on Callot's frontispiece is represented as blacked-up, which suggests that blackspeak was autonomous in that repertoire. In other words, to Hornback's important finding that early modern commedia dell'arte performers disseminated Africanist stereotypes via the black-masked Harlequin character as they toured

Figure 5. Frontispiece of *Balli di Sfessania*. Jacques Callot. Etching and engraving. Circa 1622. The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY.

Europe, we should add that commedia actors also disseminated blackspeak through their moresche routines.[96] It is likely, then, if we believe Callot, that Italian actors introduced European audiences to blackspeak long before English or French playwrights scripted the technique in their own plays.

Moresche songs, modular as they were, combined the black-accented vernacular version of blackspeak and the Africanese version of blackspeak. In early modern France, it is the Africanese component that took hold first.[97] Africanese blackspeak quickly resorted to scripts of black animalization, as we can see in *Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* (1626). The ballet mobilizes acoustic racecraft: "Enters the African Narrator, his flat nose first, followed by a squad of *Basanés* who dance before the elephant on which the Great Cacique appears to his people. The Cacique babbles and warbles [ramage], and his subjects answer him in such excellent gibberish [excellent jargon] that the audience can understand none of them."[98] The libretto does not describe that "excellent jargon" in any way: with that stage direction, René Bordier delegated to performers (professional dancers and aristocratic amateurs) the responsibility of

crafting that gibberish, engaging their own racial imaginations in the process. That stage direction gave performers license to incorporate animalizing sounds, such as the cacique's "warbling" (ramage), into their sonic performance of blackness. Such "warbling" effect might have sought to convey the impression made by a tonal language onto the speaker of a nontonal one. The stage direction, nonprescriptive in its vagueness, also gave performers the freedom to extend that comic scene of linguistic chaos longer than we imagine when we read the libretto. The "excellent jargon" stage direction gave a sonic blank check to the energetic performers' ensemble.

At work in stage "jargon" were scripts of animalization, but also scripts of ethnic conjuration evoking other marginalized groups with a history of sonic impersonation. Indeed, jargon, like "broken English" in the Anglophone context, is a dense and deceptively transparent term that captures a long history of French language politics. Derived from the onomatopoeic root [garg-], which mimics garbling throat operations, the word referred to the singing of birds (like the cacique's "ramage") as early as the twelfth century, and to the secret language of the underworld, soon to be associated with Romani people under the "Gypsies" label, as early as the thirteenth century.[99] Because jargon refers to speech forms that sound human yet are not intelligible to the listener, Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel* (1690) records two additional meanings: *jargon* can refer to "ancient or foreign languages we cannot understand" or to "the vicious and corrupted language of the people and peasants that is extremely hard to understand" in the countryside.[100] Even though the State would not actively work to eradicate French regional dialects until the Revolution, the crown saw it as its political interest to promote the *langue d'oil* as the standard for administrative and literary purposes from the 1539 edict of Villers-Cotteret onward.[101] That slow yet steady process—facilitated by the advent of print culture and professional theatre—turned regional dialects into jargons.

French theatre had a long tradition of staging regional jargons through an ambivalent lens that simultaneously mocked and celebrated its object. That tradition was at least as old the *Farce de maître Pathelin et son jargon* (1485), in which the protagonist, pretending to be mad, comically performs scripted dialects from Brittany, Limousin, Normandy, and Picardie, among others.[102] The tradition climaxed in the 1660s, largely under the influence of playwrights such as Raymond Poisson, Nicolas du Perche, and Molière, who, in *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1673), staged regional jargons under the synonymous label of "baragoin."[103] *Baragouin*—a term that first appeared in the fourteenth century and might be etymologically connected to "barbarity"—refers, in the *Dictionnaire*

de l'Académie Française (1694) to "imperfect and corrupted French" as well as "foreign languages one does not understand."[104] Thus, both versions of blackspeak, black-accented vernacular and Africanese, could be labeled jargon or baragouin interchangeably.[105] I insist on the synonymy between jargon and baragouin not out of philological zeal but out of a keen awareness that on this very synonymy hinges a network of French *politique de la langue* as wide and capacious as the transatlantic colonial space. Suffice it for now to say that the use of the term *jargon* to refer to Africanese blackspeak in *Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut* (1626) inscribed African characters into an older performative tradition historically bound up with forceful politics of nation building.

Neoclassical drama would uphold that legacy. In 1666, little-known playwright Nicolas Du Perche wrote *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique*, a comedy heavily based on the first two acts of an equally little-known *comédie à l'espagnole* written four years earlier by Edmé Boursault, *Le mort Vivant*.[106] The plots of those two plays start similarly: a worthy young man (Fabrice/Lélie) loves a young woman (Stéphanie/Lucresse), and he must overcome the opposition of her father figure, the *senex*, who wishes to marry her off to the wrong suitor (in the earlier play, himself, or, alternatively, another young man who is ultimately revealed to be the young woman's natural brother; in the latter play, Ariste, an old professor suspected of being Jewish). The young man has a plan. He has his smart *zanni*-type servant (Gusman/Crispin) use black-up to disguise himself as the powerful "African ambassador" currently in town and claim Stéphanie/Lucresse's hand in order to scare his rival away. Unlike *Le mort vivant*, *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique* is set in 1666 Paris, and in Du Perche's play, Crispin uses blackspeak in addition to black-up to counterfeit the African ambassador.

To the jargon of Ariste—the learned Jewish suitor who cannot help but spout Latin (23–26)—and to the jargon of *L'Allemand*—the manservant who speaks French with a heavily scripted German accent (45–46)—Crispin, alias the African ambassador, opposes the jargon of Africanese blackspeak.[107] Crispin enters with a train of blacked-up Africans, whom the maid calls "little devils" (diablotins).[108] While he speaks to French characters in unaccented French, Crispin talks to his African retinue in jargon:

Crispin Tirbautes.
A servant in African habit Ben d'harleK.
Crispin Gooth dan kem cum vir,
Salkardy bucdemeK satir
Et voldrecam.

The professor (to Lélie) What is he singing now?
Lélie He says he is growing restless
To see Lucresse,
So he is sending for her. (37)[109]

Stage directions do not label the technique used by Crispin, yet the professor's choice of words ("what is he singing now?") evokes the avian dimension of jargon's original meaning. Crispin also breaks into Africanese jargon when he pretends to be angry:

Crispin Leave at once, or *Kamdem S Koreille*
Horleam scanem tourtoury
The Professor What is he saying?
Lélie He is upset you were so bold,
And he wants you out of here immediately. (31)[110]

Du Perche's creative use of capitalization for guttural sounds is an experimental attempt at sketching a scripting system for French Africanese blackspeak. These scenes, however, are the only moments of blackspeak in the play, and later rewritings of the play did not conserve them.

In *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique*, the ubiquitous acoustic script of ethnic conjuration connects the African ambassador to a learned Jew and to an immigrant worker (Germans formed the largest immigrant group in early modern France)—two figures marginalized in national imagination. The African ambassador's juxtaposition with them in the play's dramatic arc makes that connection particularly audible in the playhouse. Unlike in *The English Moor*, acoustic conjuration works here, I argue, to obfuscate the colonial context whence the desire for acoustic blackness came. That obfuscation results from the ambassador's acoustic association with domestic Others (Jews, German immigrants, Romani "Gypsies"), and it also results from his acoustic Orientalization. Indeed, the script of ethnic conjuration connects Du Perche's African ambassador to a tradition of sonic impersonation that was all the rage in neoclassical France: Turkish stage *jargon*.

The first occurrence of Turkish jargon on the French stage may have been in Jean Rotrou's comedy *La soeur* (1647), a play based on Giambattista della Porta's late sixteenth-century *La sorella*, which was popular enough to be reworked by Tristan Lhermitte in *Le parasite* (1654).[111] In the influential *La soeur*, a smart manservant, Ergaste, pretends to know Turkish in order to prevent

Horace—a Frenchman who grew up as a captive in Ottoman Turkey and thus knows Turkish but not French—from revealing truths that would hinder his master's matrimonial projects (71–75). Ergaste's mock-Turkish, "*Carigar camboco, ma io ossansando*?" (72), is exposed as "a fake jargon no one uses" (79) by the only character in the play who knows both French and Turkish (Horace's lines, directly lifted from Della Porta, are written in authentic Ottoman Turkish).[112]

Du Perche took his cue from the tradition of Turkish stage jargon when he rewrote Boursault's original *Le mort vivant* (1662), which did not feature blackspeak, into *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique* (1666). Dramaturgic similarities suggest that Du Perche drew specifically on Antoine de Montfleury's masterful Turkish jargon comedy, *L'école des jaloux ou le cocu volontaire* (1664).[113] In *L'école des jaloux*, a group of Spaniards puts together a stratagem to cure the overjealous Santillane of his condition, and this stratagem involves disguising themselves as Turks. The manservant, also called Gusman, plays the part of the Great Turk and lays claim to Santillane's wife in that capacity. Gusman, alias the Great Turk, speaks in jargon when he speaks to his own Turkish train, and he breaks into a Turkish jargon that particularly emphasizes guttural sounds when he plays angry. "How dare you jest in my presence? I will be avenged! *Biradam fourk dermak galera gourdini*!"[114] Du Perche's blacked-up Gusman spouting Africanese jargon was inspired by Montfleury's Oriental Gusman spouting Turkish jargon. That filiation was not lost on Molière who, in *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, just a few years later, lifted the marriage plot of Du Perche's play and turned the disguised ambassador back into a Turk, as he was in Montfleury's play.[115] We may have only two scenes of blackspeak in the extant archives of French neoclassical drama, but the technique was at the center of conversations between the key playwrights of the time, suggesting that scarce archival traces are the waterline of an iceberg of unrecorded performative practices and experiments.

In Du Perche's play then, a script of conjuration Orientalized the African ambassador, and I see in that acoustic Orientalization of blackness the same mechanisms of displacement and erasure discussed in Chapter 2. Indeed, the Orientalization of blackspeak, and by extension of blackness, manifests what Madeleine Dobie sees as a large-scale repression of the ethical issues posed by the boom of color-based slavery in the French Caribbean starting precisely in the 1660s and the exculpatory displacement of slavery practices onto the despotic Oriental world that reigned supreme in eighteenth-century French culture.

In a costume sketch created by Daniel Rabel for *Grand bal de la douairière de Billebahaut*, the African king is called "Cacique, king of the Americans"

(Cachique, roy des Amériquains), but strikingly the word "Amériquains" was scratched out and replaced with "Affriquains" (see Plate 9). That scratch, which we may read as an impressive *acte manqué* or as the material mark of denial preserved in the archive, simultaneously reveals and silences the true cultural and political space to which the blackspeaking character belongs as early as 1626: a transatlantic American space already marked by a long history of color-based slavery. French denial runs deep; thus, in both *Billebahaut* and *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique*, blackspeaking Africans are only temporary visitors, passing delegates who do not originate from, belong to, or remain on French soil. The transient nature of blackspeakers in French drama bespeaks a conflict between the desire to experience and use sonic blackness, and the denial-fueled need to distance blackness from the French sphere. Baroque and neoclassical drama were adept at reconciling those incompatible racial desires, and blackspeak participated fully in that effort.

The denial that drives the Orientalization of blackspeak becomes deafening when heard in counterpoint to French colonial chronicles, which, precisely in the 1660s, start using the terms jargon and baragoin to refer to the French spoken by racialized subjects in the Caribbean: native "sauvages" but also, and even more often, "Nègres."[116] In other words, in neoclassical France, the notions of *jargon* and *baragoin*—the pillars of French politique de la langue, which had long been bound up with French forceful nation building—were explicitly extended in colonial writings to a transatlantic colonial space where Afrodescendants were becoming Francophone perforce. As a play like *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique* reveals, it is not true that colonialist desire and use for acoustic blackness did not register on the neoclassical stage. Rather, archives, incomplete and limited as they are (yet in a state of perpetual becoming), sketch a history of performative desire, denial, shame, and displacement that leaves the historian with evidence of erasure—with scratches to record. Techniques of racial impersonation tell the stories some need to hear, and, sometimes, they silence the stories some need to silence.

"So Many Black Moors and Frenchmen in the Nation": Restoration Soundscapes

Sir Francis Fane's *Love in the Dark* (1675), a Restoration comedy surprisingly neglected in early modern race scholarship, self-consciously rehearses the major tropes of blackness that had developed over time in the canon of early modern

English drama.[117] This play is a dense anamorphic reckoning with the legacy of artifice at the core of performative blackness on the English stage. Its use of Africanese gibberish signals that sound was perceived in seventeenth-century England as a more important medium for racial engagement than what extant dramatic archives might suggest. *Love in the Dark* alerts us to the long shelf life in England of the various transnational acoustic scripts of blackness previously discussed.

Set in Venice, the play features an Othello-type Milanese general, Sforza, who saves the island of Candia from the Turks on behalf of the Venetian senate and happily elopes in the middle of the night with the doge's daughter. The doge's daughter, inspired by Desdemona, is a smart, eloquent, virtuous, and self-possessed young woman who, using black vizards for her own purposes, is not afraid of symbolically blackening her own face. When the doge discovers their marriage, he "grieve[s] at the dishonor of his spotless race" (68). The play's subplot revolves around a libidinous senator and "old banker" (2) reminiscent of Quicksands in *The English Moor*: ominously named Cornanti, he always fears that one of the young men he has ruined might try to cuckold him and, as a result of his jealousy, lets a blacked-up character enter his claustrophobic household.

Cornanti's wife, Bellinganna, in an attempt to secure Trivultio as husband for her smitten cousin, desires to speak with him and invents a stratagem to that end: "my Husband fears no Devils but your White ones: therefore for the security of his Person, he has just now sent out his servant Jacomo to buy a Negro Slave: put yourself into that Colour and Habit, and find means to be sold to him, and you shall be assur'd of a kind Reception" (17). The device of embedded black-up, lifted from *The White Devil* (1612), had become ubiquitous in Caroline drama and had been resurrected in earlier Restoration comedies such as *The Marriage Broaker, or The Pander* (1662), and *Emilia* (1672).[118] Francis Fane took the artifice of that device one step further and created a black-up triple-decker: in his play, a white actor (John Lacy) performs a white character (Intrigo), who pretends to be yet another white character (Trivultio) who himself pretends to be a black character (the "Negro slave").

The play includes two scenes of blackspeak. Intrigo, described in the dramatis personae as "a curious formal coxcomb," intercepts a letter that Bellinganna intended for Trivultio, and, following her advice, he puts on black-up to gain access to her. When the manservant Jacomo introduces the new enslaved member of the household to his master, Cornanti, linguistic issues immediately arise:

Cornanti Where had you this Black?
Jacomo I bought him at the Porto Santo.
Cornanti Methinks he is a better favour'd Moor than ordinary.
Jacomo I, Sir, his Nose is not so flat as most of theirs, and he has not altogether such a black Mossy Pate.
Cornanti I like him never the better for his good Features: but speaks he not our Language?
Jacomo Not a word, Sir.
Cornanti Oh, then 'tis well enough. But, a pox, these strait-chin'd Moors will make plaguy signs to a Woman. Didst thou ever hear him speak?
Jacomo I, and understand him too. *Aside.*—My Master, I'm sure, speaks no Morisco; I'll pass for a Learned Man.
Cornanti How didst thou come to learn their Language?
Jacomo Oh, Sir, I was a Slave fourteen months at Algiers. I was taken in Cavalier Strozzi's Ship, about twenty years ago, and learn'd their Language so perfectly, that I was made Interpreter to the Ambassadors that came to the Governor: Oh, Sir, you shall hear. Have at you, Sir. *Andiboron hoblicon hu.*
Intrigo Aside pausing. Now for some hard words or I'm undone. *Tirenatum tenoch comti.*
Cornanti What's that now?
Jacomo Why, marry Sir, I told him, that you said he should be well us'd; and he made an answer, that shew'd a great deal of Respect, but little manners: in fine, 'tis a great compliment in their Countrey.
Cornanti Come, come, what is it?
Jacomo Why, Sir, the Sence of it is, He takes it to be an Honor to be employ'd in your most contemptible Offices.
Cornanti Come, you're a Rogue: this is no humane Language; but the Dialect of the Barbary Stallions. Say that over again.
Jacomo Dilloron losicon hu.
Cornanti You Rogue you, that's not the same.
Jacomo Aside scratching his Head. Pox o' this dull memory of mine. 'Tis very near the same, Sir. I confess I cannot now speak it so well; but never a man in Italy understands it better.
Cornanti You're a bold Knave, Sirrah. I'll go in, to my Wife, and bring her to see her new Servant. (28–29)

A white servant who needs to prevent the spread of sensitive information from a foreigner's mouth pretends to act as translator: he speaks gibberish to the foreigner and translates what he truly pleases to his own countrymen. He is at liberty to do so because the foreigner is unable to communicate in the local vernacular.

This scene makes liberal use of what I would call the "lost in translation" motif: the transnational theatregram that, first initiated in della Porta's previously mentioned comedy *La sorella*, found its way into various national dramatic canons, from Jean Rotrou's *La soeur* (1645) to Thomas Middleton's *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's* (1611?) some sixty years before Fane wrote *Love in the Dark*.[119] Marjorie Rubright has convincingly argued that in *No Wit*, by contrasting the authentic stage Dutch of the monolingual Dutch boy with the gibberish Dutch of the mock translator, Middleton prompted spectators to note the difference between the two and to recognize the proximity between correct Dutch and English, thereby encouraging cross-cultural conversations and complicating the notion that stage accents always marginalize foreigners.[120] And yet, *Love in the Dark* shows that this generous framework for understanding the ideological work effected by stage accents hardly applies to non-Northern Europeans—and certainly not to Africans. In Fane's Africanese blackspeak experiment, the linguistic control group that was Middleton's Dutch boy disappears, replaced by yet another pretender. We get gibberish against gibberish in a moment of complete imaginative unleashing, which, to Cornanti, sounds like the neighing "Dialect of the Barbary Stallions."

There is no reason not to take Cornanti at his word here, and in case we do not, the Blackamoor is explicitly animalized later in the play in ways that mobilize the specter of degeneration we encountered in *The English Moor*. Indeed, when the blacked-up Intrigo, now fitted with Venetian clothes, is asked to look into a mirror, he is compared to various beasts:

> *Jacomo* Your Negroship is rarely well adjusted.
> You want nothing but a white Peruig:
> Oh, 'twould set off your sweet Westphalian Hogs-face. (*Intrigo looks for his Face o'th backside of the Glass; and does many Apish things.*) Oh, do you want your scurvy Wainscot chops? I, there they are, my pretty sweet Baboon.
> *Intrigo* (*Intr. whispers to Jack.)* You might use some moderation in your abuse.

Jack You look like an ass and you don't want to be told on it.
Cornanti What's that he says? The poor fool's afraid I should understand his gibberish. (30–31)

Dressing enslaved Afro-descendants with European garments was all the rage in Restoration England. In the second half of the seventeenth century, as sugar culture soared in the English colonies and especially after the creation of the Royal Adventurers into Africa, soon to become the Royal African Company—which was dedicated to slave trading—colonials and travelers brought enslaved people to London with them, and "having a black slave or two in one's household soon became a craze for all who could afford it."[121] This phenomenon transpires in Pepys's *Diary*, in visual culture, where Afro-British pages feature in their enslavers' portraits, and in the ever-increasing number of hue-and-cry advertisements in metropolitan newspapers. Once dressed in the likeness of Europeans, Intrigo is explicitly likened to a "hog" and to a "baboon" doing "apish things." This gives a new meaning to the moment in act 5 when the servant Circumstancio seeks to utter the word "nigromancy," and his tongue slips and lands on ideas of black monstrosity: "I think your Worship's a Strologer, or a Negromonster, that can make two people of one" (86). Blackamoors are construed in the play as hominids whose subhumanity manifests through their chattering—their human-sounding yet unintelligible jargon. Picking up on Fane's clues, an actor who knew his trade—and John Lacy certainly did—could easily have included animalizing sounds in his performance of Africanese gibberish.

Africanese blackspeak here is informed by scripts of animalization, but also by scripts of ethnic conjuration. Indeed, once Cornanti exits, Intrigo and Jacomo discover their real identities to each other, and Intrigo temporarily buys Jacomo's silence. When Cornanti finds his enslaved servant, supposedly ignorant of the vernacular, courting his wife's *duegna*, Jacomo jumps ships:

Intrigo seeing Cornanti nods at Jacomo, who winks, and nods at him again.
Intrigo cries out in a lamentable Gibberish.
Intrigo Queki sini baski. Ahi puli tinderis.
Cornanti Did not I observe this Rascal talking to my Wife and Vigilia?
Intrigo Cajiski oli melan. Ahi poluki, Ahi.
Nodding and winking at Jacomo, who nods and winks again.

Jacomo Alas, good Signior Intrigo, this is worse than *A hone, Ahone.*
No, Sir, I scorn to betray my Master. To come a spy thus from
Taffaletta, Under the Rose, it was not welle.
Intrigo Aside. Oh the false knave!
Cornanti Bless me! Is this Intrigo?
Jacomo It must needs be he by his way of speaking. Never any man
was so deceiv'd by a Rogue. (45)

As this scene's opening stage direction signals, the operative term for tracking Africanese blackspeak in English theatre is "gibberish," a term that Cornanti himself uses to refer to Intrigo's blackspeak later on in the play, and one replete with older ethnic and racial connections (31). Indeed, in his 1611 dictionary, Cotgrave illuminatingly translates the English word "gibbridge" into the French "jargonnois, patois, bagois, jargon de galimatias."[122] Here, translation signals a set of fraught associations that goes beyond the laconic monolingual definition of the word given by John Wilkins in 1668 as "speech not intelligible." Translation gives us access to the racial implications of that word.[123] The word "gibberish" appears often in sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century lexicons as a synonym for "pedler's French, fustian, rogues' language," defined more explicitly as "the barbarous language used among those cheating and filching vagabonds, that call themselves Aegyptians, or Bohemians," better known as Romani "Gypsies."[124] Jacomo's statement that Intrigo is a "rogue" alludes to the deceitfulness of his course of action, but also to the sedimented association of gibberish with English Roma. "Rogue," applied to the blackspeaking Intrigo, activates the racial discourse pertaining to Romani people or, rather, conjures it.[125]

In *Love in the Dark*, acoustic ethnic conjuration accomplishes a lot of its racializing work via yet another route, that is, via the strong parallelism that the play establishes between Intrigo—a character whose disguise includes black sonics—and Visconti—a character whose disguise includes French sonics. Indeed, in order to gain access to his own lover, Melinda, Visconti disguises himself as a Frenchman with a heavily scripted accent; as he notes at the end of the play in a metadramatic moment, "I am not the first French-Master, that has run away with a Gentleman's Daughter" (82). The parallelism between French accent and blackspeak is established in dramatic terms (since Visconti and Intrigo use the same device for the same purpose), but also, quite possibly, in performative terms. Indeed, John Lacy, the actor who played Intrigo, was famous for performing and writing parts that used a heavy French accent—for instance in his

own evocatively titled play *Monsieur Raggou*.[126] There is a chance, then, that his French accent technique informed his black-accented African gibberish in performance.

The genealogy of the play, too, connects French accent and Africanese gibberish. Indeed, while English Africanese blackspeak was, as extant printed archives suggest, a novelty in 1675, the use of gibberish to represent exotic Others was not. Three years prior to *Love in the Dark*, Edward Ravenscroft had adapted Molière's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* for the English stage, and in appropriating and transforming Molière's Turkish *jargon* in *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* (1672), he had imported to England the stage tradition that was, as we saw, at the core of *L'ambassadeur d'Affrique*.[127] Unlike Molière, Ravenscroft had included some "Blacks" in the Turkish train of his play.[128] I record that the conjunction of black characters and Turkish gibberish orchestrated by Ravenscroft in *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* might have inspired Fane's experiment with Africanese blackspeak three year later. In that scenario, the fantasies of invasion that bind Frenchmen and Blackamoors in *Love in the Dark* ironically echo the potentially transnational genealogy of the play.

The acoustic parallelism between Frenchmen and Africans in Fane's play is explicitly articulated in xenophobic terms when Intrigo's servant, Circumstancio, boxes his own blacked-up master and smugly declares: "I need none of your teaching, Goodman Black, 'Twas never a good World, since there were so many Black moors and Frenchmen in the Nation" (35). Frenchmen and dark-skinned Afro-Europeans are perceived as invaders by the white servant who voices popular commonsense and class resentment. By virtue of the parallelism that the play works so hard to make obvious, the xenophobic vitriol spilled against the French is implicitly directed, at least in part, toward Blackamoors too.

The French presence in Venice is constructed as an invasion. When the doge finds the play's lovers—including Sforza and his own daughter—together at night in his own palace, masked, ready to elope, and armed (in breach of Venetian law), he reads the situation as a "Spanish plot," for Sforza and Trivultio are Milanese, and thus subjects of the king of Spain.

> The Case is plain, these strangers have design'd
> To whore our Daughters, cut our Throats, and put
> A Spanish Yoak upon this free-born State. (69)

Visconti manages to escape, but he is soon found again, and fantasies of invasion are immediately redirected from Spain to France:

Enter a Watchman, with many of the Rabble about him. Visconti passes by hastily in his French Habit: the Watchman comes up to him.
Watchman Stand; Whither so fast? Are not you one of the Conspirators?
Visconti Me be povré Estranger.
1 Man A Frenchman, a Frenchman.
2 Man A French Dog; all the Plots come from thence.
3 Man Knock him down.
4 Man Brain him. This is he that set my House o' fire. 'T could be no body but a Frenchman.
6 Man This is he that got my Daughter with Child. That was a French trick too.
Watchman Keep the Peace neighbors, and let us bring him before the Senate. He was in as much haste, as if he had been coming from Candia or Gygery.
All I, I, away with him, away with him. A Plot, a Plot: the French, the French.
1 Man They'll burn the City.
2 Man They'll worry our Wives and Children.
3 Man They'll let in the Sea, and drown us.
5 Man Twas they that brought the Plague into Venice.
7 Man I, and the Pox too, formerly.
Watchman What's your name?
Visconti Me be Metre de Language to Signior Grimani. Me be no Frenchman, me be Italieen.
1 Man No matter, you shall be hang'd for looking like one.
2 Man I, for clipping the true Language.
3 Man You shall be hang'd Al-a-mode de France.
Watchman Come, come away.
All Away with him, away with him.
Boys follow him crying: A Mounsire. A Mounser. A Munchir. A Mister Mownseer.
Exeunt all in a hurry, haling him away. (71–72)

The motif of invasion is here articulated as a destructive penetration: that of the city itself with seawater as French invaders open the dams, but, most obsessively, that of the Venetian body politic, as the French invaders threaten to impregnate

Venetian women and to contaminate them with diseases (pox and plague). French invasion is couched in sexual terms, as a form of predation whose specter was introduced earlier, when Trivultio had decreed that "Lying with another Man's Wife, is like invading an Enemies Countrey" (20), or when Grimaldi, hearing the mock-French Visconti say that he could "sing as well as de Eunuch Italien," had answered, "I would he were one too, then I might securely admit him into my Family" (28). The framework of invasion helps us understand why, when Cornanti deplores the cultural influence of France in Venice—understand: Restoration England—he complains that his customers are all "airy Bankrupt, gawdy Butterflies, / The Apes of chattering Frenchmen" (8). "Chattering" is the term Cotgrave uses to define the speech of birds, grasshoppers, and apes.[129] For Cornanti, Frenchmen, just like hominid Blackamoors, are apes, and by imitating them, Venetians (understand: Londoners) turn into simian creatures themselves. Invasion induces degeneration.

It is in that context that we must understand the deployment of a comedic French accent that might otherwise have seemed innocuous. The sexual invasion of the Venetian body politic is mirrored by the acoustic invasion that the French accent represents in the soundscape of the play. Thus, the distortions of the French word "Monsieur" by English speakers at the end the scene quoted above might sound playful, but they are actually retaliatory in an acoustic context where accents perpetrate symbolical violence. When Visconti denies being French with a mock Italian accent ("Me be no Frenchman, me be Italieen"), we face the absurdity of a Milanese faking an "Italian" accent for a Venetian crowd while he spoke in an unaccented manner right until this point, making the question of regional dialects moot. This absurd moment foregrounds the fact that the play's entire soundscape is built for English ears: the "true language" that is being "clipp'd" here—an alternative to "broken"—both by the French accent and by blackspeak is the English language. The metaphor of "clipping the true language" that the rabble uses uncannily connects, here again, the French accent and its twin, blackspeak, to older English racial formations. Indeed, coin clipping was a capital crime in medieval and early modern England: that crime was invoked to justify "the greatest massacre of Jews in English history" when, in 1278–79, "perhaps as many as half the country's adult Jewish males were executed" for alleged crimes such as coin clipping and counterfeiting.[130] Currency is the common value guaranteed by the king that founds all social transactions, and thus holds the body politic together—so is the English tongue. Clipping the country's currency or its tongue constitutes a debasing

attack on the body politic perpetrated by racializable Others: Jews, Romani "Gypsies," foreigners, and, from then on, Blackamoors.

Conclusion: Blackspeak and Black-Up

The black-accented vernacular version of blackspeak that was ubiquitous in early modern Iberia and its dependences gained popularity in France and in England in the late eighteenth century. In England, that strand of blackspeak boomed in the late 1760s, just when the abolitionist movement took flight, which supports David West Brown's point that plays resorting to blackspeak were often "produced at a time of roiling debates about race and empire."[131] Similarly, in France, blackspeak soared in the early 1790s, in the wake of the French Revolution, the Haitian Revolution, and the first abolition of slavery (1794).[132] I argue that the recurrent popularity of blackspeak in commercial drama at times when the legitimacy of slavery was hotly debated is due to the fact that blackspeak structurally enables race plays to perform ideological ambivalence; to enact self-contradictory impulses by balancing plotlines that can be sympathetic to Afro-diasporic characters with a sonic stagecraft that keeps those characters in their place. In that sense, the contexts in which blackspeak was mobilized in eighteenth-century France and England shed light retrospectively on its deployment in early modern Iberia.

To conclude, let us return one last time to *Love in the Dark*. Intrigo's itinerary as an enslaved Afro-diasporic man throughout the play asserts the centrality of sound to early modern racecraft. After being arrested, released, and then mistaken for a vizard-wearing lady, Intrigo, still in black-up and still desirous to "dive into the fresh intrigues and cabinet councils"—for he is the eponymous Man of Business of the play and loves nothing better than gossip—hides in the great "Trunk of Records" of the senate house (76). The door keeper did "get a hole made on purpose to put out [his] head and hands" (76), and Intrigo witnesses from there the happy resolution of the play, as lovers, throughout act 5, convince the authorities to let them marry one another. While Intrigo remains invisible to the characters on stage, spectators can see him peeping out and taking notes. When the senators decide to open the trunk to look for a precedent in the city's legal records, Intrigo rises, "his face as black as mummy" with a white peruke on top, and the assembly takes him for the ghost of Ordelafo, the twelfth-century doge who established the very law that the lovers broke (91). Yet as soon as he opens his mouth and starts using the ridiculous idiosyncratic turns

of phrase he has been using throughout the play, the assembly recognizes him. This final scene foregrounds the centrality of acoustic markers of identity. *Love in the Dark* plays with the materiality of prosthetic blackness and the various identities it could construe, as the blacked-up Intrigo is read at various points in the play as a Blackamoor, a vizarded lady, and a decaying corpse, or a ghost.[133] The playful hermeneutic instability of scopic blackness in that play draws attention to the efficacy of acoustic blackness, which often threatens to—and ultimately does—reveal identities that scopic impersonation obfuscates.

Love in the Dark thus impels us to grapple with the relation between cosmetic blackness and acoustic blackness in early modern performance. Fundamentally, acoustic blackness depends on the scopic regime. Indeed, what enabled blackspeak to do its ideological work was its artificiality: blackspeak could infantilize blackness, animalize it, and conjure up profound connections with other racialized groups in performance because it was performed by white actors—and for audiences to grasp the performers' whiteness, they had to see it. They had to see the greasy materiality of cosmetic blackness, or, more simply, they had to see the exposed white skin of the performers, as was the case in the Italian tradition of moresche. It would, however, be inaccurate to model the relation between blackspeak and black-up as asymmetrical or supplemental, for, as we saw in Chapters 1 and 2, the hermeneutic reception of black-up was conditioned by indexical poetic cues, which are necessarily voiced. There was a fundamental mutual dependency between the scopic and the acoustic regimes in early modern racecraft.

This does not, however, necessarily imply a mutual dependency between the specific techniques of blackspeak and black-up, which could and often did function on stage without each other. Moresche singers used blackspeak sans black-up, and in Gil Vicente's *Fragoa d'amor*, "Furunando" much laments the ability of blackspeak to convey performative blackness sans black-up. Reciprocally, until the late eighteenth century, English and French performance archives mostly attest to black-up's ability to operate on stage without blackspeak. The strength and popularity of those various performance traditions suggests that neither performance technique was in any way lacking: for the purposes of race making, blackspeak and black-up were autonomous, complete, and deadly effective techniques. When they operated in conjunction, most often, they complemented each other, reinforcing each other's scripts of blackness. For instance, in Spanish theatre, the elite black characters (saints, exceptional male scholars and soldiers, *mulatas*) around whom the luxury script of blackness is deployed all speak in unaccented Castilian—as opposed to the nonelite enslaved

black characters, around whom foodstuff and animalizing scripts of blackness are deployed, who usually speak in blackspeak. Scopic and acoustic stories of blackness could also deepen and heighten one another. For instance, still in Spain, the commodifying scripts of blackness operated as a shortcut form of racialization, getting spectators accustomed to thinking about Afro-descendants as commodities, but it did not explain why those *negro* characters deserved to be treated as commodities. By contrast, blackspeak framed those characters as childish, intellectually deficient, and excessively physical, three characteristics that made them particularly suited for slavery. The script of black infantilization delivered by acoustic means articulated a rationale for the script of black commodification delivered by scopic means.

For this complex web of entanglements—which comprises the dependency of blackspeak on the scopic regime, the dependency of black-up on the acoustic regime, blackspeak and black-up's independence from each other, and their exponential efficacy when they operated in conjunction—there can hardly be a better metaphor than dance, the love child of the scopic and the acoustic regimes. It is probably not a coincidence that the scenes of *The English Moor* where Catelina is performed in black-up and blackspeak at the same time involve intense kinetic and choreographic action. Ultimately, dance is not only a metaphor for our purposes: rather, it is the key to yet another regime of early modern racecraft, to which I will now turn.