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The figuration of Caliban in the constellation of postcolonial theory

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**THE FIGURATION OF CALIBAN
IN THE CONSTELLATION OF POSTCOLONIAL THEORY**

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
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in

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by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
SHAKESPEARE'S CALIBAN AND THE DISCOURSE ON COLONIALISM.....	10
CESAIRE'S CALIBAN AND THE DISCOURSE ON POSTCOLONIALISM.....	24
CONCLUSION.....	47
WORKS CITED.....	50
VITA.....	52

ABSTRACT

The surrogation of Caliban from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to Césaire's *A Tempest* has always been related to colonialism. In Shakespeare's time, Caliban, depicted as half animal, served to represent the Other in an emerging colonial discourse. As opposed to Shakespeare's character, Césaire's Caliban is blatantly black and racially oppressed. Césaire indicates that *A Tempest* is an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* for black theater. As an adaptation, the play reinterprets the figure of Caliban to express postcolonial attitudes of the time. This thesis addresses the questions of how the figure of Caliban in Shakespeare's play fits into the discourse of colonialism and how the figure of the black Caliban in Césaire's play reinterprets Caliban in a postcolonial context. To answer the questions, this thesis employs postcolonial theory as advanced by, among others, Aimé Césaire, Leopold Senghor, Frantz Fanon and Homi Bhabha. The discussion indicates that each figuration of Caliban, both on stage and in critical theory, always functions as a surrogate for another reinterpretation of the figure within a given political context. Césaire's Caliban, as a refiguring of Shakespeare's Caliban, however, also invites another surrogation, one that relates to the later wave of postcolonial theory emphasizing hybridity, which views Caliban as one who blends borders and identities in a hybrid formation.

INTRODUCTION

Caliban, generally viewed as an almost archetypal representation of the Third World colonized subject, originates in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Despite the character's minor role in the play, Caliban has gained critics' interest due to his subsequent re-contextualization within postcolonial contexts. Initially, the figure of Caliban was read as the symbol of primitive humanity, a degenerated character exhibiting greed, lawlessness and lust. In his development up to the mid 20th century, Caliban symbolized the Third World as imagined by Europe to justify colonialism. Conversely, in Third World countries, this character has developed into a positive symbol of the Third World, a view that highlights the implacable spirit of Caliban against Prospero's subjugation. The reiterations of Caliban as a symbol of the Third World can be found not only in a dramatic work, such as in Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest*, but also in psychological and political treatises, such as those written by Octavio Mannoni and Fernando Retamar. This development shows that, although originally a dramatic persona, Caliban has gained recognition beyond theatrical performance and literary criticism and has inhabited other realms of discourse such as that of politics, psychology and ethnography.

The study conducted by Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan indicates that, due to the vague description of Caliban's characterization in Shakespeare's play, there have been many different portrayals of the character in the play's production history, a range that pictures Caliban from a half-animal figure to a Third World inhabitant (172-198). The different manifestations of Caliban in dramatic

productions, criticism and political discourse across different periods basically reflect the European attitudes toward the Other that are heavily colored by the political and cultural contexts of the time. When England was so excited with the discovery of the New World, for example, the country saw an explosion of travel books describing bizarre appearances of the natives of the New World. Accordingly, most of Caliban's stage representations followed this euphoria and obsession by dressing him as bizarrely as possible.

The different portrayals of Caliban have been made possible not only because of Shakespeare's vague description of his character but because the figure of Caliban, as a performative type, involves "cultural stories, traditions, and political contestations that comprise our sense of history" (Diamond 1). As a figure that draws together cultural stories, traditions, and political contestations, Caliban has been transformed into a cultural and political vehicle by which writers keep reinterpreting Caliban to serve their own goals. This process of reinterpreting and rewriting, which Joseph Roach calls "cultural surrogation" (2), holds that any one performance functions as a surrogate for other performances, which means that any writings on Caliban are potential surrogates for other writings with different cultural and political agendas. A performance, both textual and non-textual, always reproduces and recreates itself because a performance embodies cultural and political contestations in which certain cultural or political views are more privileged than others. The subordinated view, however, is not obliterated but even stimulates the recreation of another performance that challenges the previous view. In this way, a performance becomes a surrogate for another performance. Surrogation slightly differs from intertextuality, in the sense that surrogation involves

both textual and non-textual performance; if intertextuality emphasizes “a text’s dependence on prior words, concepts, connotations, codes, conventions, unconscious practices, and text” (Leitch 21), surrogation emphasizes the capability of a performance to generate new performances that might either challenge or support the previous performance.

The various versions of Caliban reflect the ideology and the spirit of various times. Caliban’s involvement with cultural and political contexts reminds me of Edward Said, who questions why literary critics are willing to accept influences such as conventions, predecessors and rhetorical styles, which may limit the poet’s creativity in writing his works, while at the same time they are reluctant to allow that political, institutional, and ideological constraints act in the same manner on the individual author (*Orientalism* 13). For such critics, this unwillingness to accept the political and ideological constraints reflects an idea of knowledge production that claims to be non-political and impartial. This conviction, that true knowledge is fundamentally non-political and that political writings are unable to reveal the truth, has according to Edward Said obscured “the highly organized political circumstances existing when knowledge is produced” (*Orientalism* 10). Inattention to such constraints, for Said, is complicitous, enabling hegemonic systems of colonialism to remain durable and persistent. Indeed, according to Said, all academic knowledge about Third World countries is “somehow tinged and impressed with, violated by the gross political fact” (*Orientalism* 11) that those Third World countries are European colonies. In short, a study of Caliban and his various manifestations cannot help but confront ideological and political fields.

An examination of Caliban and his stage history thus invites several approaches and tactics. One approach involves uncovering the author's intention by situating the original text within the historical context of its productions, as Francis Barker and Peter Hulme explain:

The text is designated as the legitimate object of literary criticism, *over against* its contexts, whether they be arrived at through the literary-historical account of the development of particular traditions and genres or, as more frequently happens with Shakespeare's plays, the study of sources. (Barker and Hulme 192)

Even with this scholarly focus, disagreements have arisen concerning the possible sources of the Caliban figure, and historical studies tracing the origin of Caliban have been more suggestive than certain. It has been suggested, for instance, that Caliban is the anagram for "cannibal," "Calibia" – a town on a nearby African coast that might have inspired Shakespeare to invent the Algerian witch, "*kalebon*" – an Arabic word for "vile dog" and "*cauliban*" – meaning "black" (Vaughan and Vaughan 23-36). However, most critics are certain in one thing: that Shakespeare's Caliban must have been created out of Shakespeare's reading of the 16th and early 17th century documents relating to Europe's discovery of the Western Hemisphere. This observation suggests "connections between *The Tempest* and the unfolding drama of England's overseas empire" (Vaughan and Vaughan 37). It also situates Shakespeare and his outlook within the dominant ethnocentrism of the European tradition.

Another profitable approach to understanding Caliban and his various incarnations involves freeing the figure from the limitation of his originating moment of production and the intentionality of the author. In this light various representations of

Caliban may be read as a series of cultural surrogations, that is, a process in which culture “reproduces and re-creates itself” (Roach 2). The probable reason why Caliban, as a cultural surrogation, always recreates himself is due to the very nature of performance. As a cultural surrogation, performances “carry within them the memory of otherwise forgotten substitutions” (Roach 5). Caliban as a performance also carries with him the memory of otherwise forgotten substitutions. Shakespeare’s Caliban, for instance, embodies the character of the Other as imagined by Shakespeare. Shakespeare himself appeared to base his reading on travel books depicting the inhabitants of the New World. The figure of Caliban then becomes the substitution of the inhabitants of the New World from a European perspective. Thus, by staging Caliban, the inhabitants of the New World become a seen and comprehensible Other. However, since the performance of Shakespeare’s Caliban is biased with European ethnocentrism, the figure invites writers of the Third World to refashion what Shakespeare has given in his representation and to recreate Caliban in a way that brings new meanings and new political possibilities.

This approach makes it possible to see Caliban as a series of rewritings or reformations. The prefix “re” in “rewriting,” “refashioning,” and “reformation” is significant, because etymologically it calls for the acknowledgement of the existing Caliban and asserts what Diamond explains as “the possibility of materializing something that exceeds our knowledge, that alters the shape of sites and imagines other as yet unsuspected modes of being” (2). In this way, Caliban is viewed as the site of endless surrogation, one that allows for postcolonial resistance to intervene.

One primary reformation of the Caliban figure appears in the work of Aimé Césaire. Césaire's Caliban represents the "yet unsuspected modes of being" (Roach 2) that materialized as a form of challenge to preceding Calibans. The characters that appear in Césaire's *A Tempest* are the same as those in Shakespeare's play, with two alterations, namely, that Ariel is a Mulatto slave [esclave mulâtre] and Caliban is a black slave [esclave nègre]. Césaire also adds an additional character called Eshu, a black devil-god [dieu-diable nègre]. The plot also slightly changes in the resolution when Prospero decides to stay in the island instead of returning to Italy. In sum, as a rewriting, *A Tempest* reformulates and answers back to what *The Tempest* asserts in matters dealing with race and global politics. In other words, as a surrogation, *A Tempest* fills in the space Shakespeare suppressed so that those forgotten may arise and speak.

It is interesting to situate the process of Caliban's surrogation within the realm of postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory has raised some problematical definitions and articulations due to the ambiguities of the term itself. Taken literally, the term may mean theory after colonialism, which misleadingly implies that colonialism is over when in fact most of the nations involved are still culturally and economically subordinated to the rich industrial states through various forms of neo-colonialism. Secondly, if postcolonial theory is understood as theory written after colonialism, it contradicts the fact that many postcolonial works were written during the colonial period. Bill Ashcroft defines postcolonial theory as "that dynamic of opposition, the discourse of resistance to colonialism which begins from the first moment of colonization. I most definitely do not mean after colonialism because that would be to suppose an end to the imperial

process” (163). Ashcroft’s definition of postcolonial theory anticipates the above reductive meaning and is generally accepted since it denotes that colonialism is still at work and that postcolonial theory has been written in resistance to colonialism from the time when colonialism began.

One also notes shifts in various forms of postcolonial theory and attitude. As a discourse of resistance against colonialism this theoretical movement has its own tradition and its own debates. One key postcolonial issue concerns the matter of identity. Various concepts of identity have been advanced, from the negritude advocated by Césaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor to the national identity of Frantz Fanon, and to recent propositions on hybridity by writers such as Homi Bhabha. These various concepts of identity indicate that, like the Caliban figure, the formulation of identity in postcolonial theory cannot escape from the process of surrogation.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how the figure of Caliban has been used as a vehicle of both colonial and postcolonial perspectives. My analysis will focus on two elements: (1) the complicity of Shakespeare’s Caliban in the discourse of colonialism and (2) the resistance of Césaire’s Caliban and the discourse of postcolonialism. The hypothesis holds that the figuration of Shakespeare’s Caliban embodies a colonial discourse, while Césaire’s Caliban represents an opposition to colonialism and the struggle to find a postcolonial identity.

The primary texts of the study are William Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* (from the 1623 first folio) and Aimé Césaire’s *A Tempest* (the English translation by Richard Miller of Césaire’s *Une Tempête*; each English translation quoted in this thesis is followed by its original French). Secondary materials include books on performance

studies and postcolonial studies. Joseph Roach's introduction to *The Cities of the Dead* and Elin Diamond's *Performance and Cultural Politics* have been especially useful in helping to understand that various manifestations of Caliban have evidenced the results of cultural surrogation involving cultural and political contestations. Edward Said's *Orientalism* has aided in heightening this focus on the political aspect of Caliban, because *Orientalism* provides a way to expose how a figure like Caliban may have been constructed and manipulated to justify colonialism. When discussion touches on Césaire's Caliban, the works of postcolonial theorists such as Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Mask* and *The Wretched of the Earth*, and Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* have provided a fundamental theoretical base. These works, moreover, provoke speculations on the kind of identity that may be envisioned in a postcolonial Caliban.

This study examines the complicity of Shakespeare's Caliban in the discourse of colonialism and the resistance of Césaire's Caliban in relation to the discourse of postcolonialism. The first part of this thesis analyzes Caliban in *The Tempest* to see how he fits into the discourse of colonialism. The second part of the thesis discusses Caliban in *A Tempest* as a recreation that embodies an essentialist postcolonial view. Further discussion critiques this early postcolonial attitude and suggests its inadequacy. Attention then moves to the later development of postcolonial theory and its emphasis on hybridity and the untenability of essentialist discourses of identity, recent outlooks that invite new possibilities for the imaging of Caliban.

This study claims significance in showing how various representations of Caliban are loaded with cultural and political contestations. Understanding the cultural and political contestation embedded in the figure of Caliban may clarify how the

manipulation of his figure has been conveyed for certain cultural and political agendas. This research indicates, for instance, that the earlier use of Shakespeare's Caliban, both in theatrical productions and critical theories, is closely connected with European colonialism. Shakespeare's Caliban has also given rise to anti-colonial discourses, and his Third World adoption reveals the subjectivity of the character and his resistant outlook. By studying the political dimensions of the initial use of Caliban and his later use by the Third World writers, we learn that the figure of Caliban keeps offering surrogations for adaption that keep him contemporary with today's Third World circumstances. The analysis in this thesis helps to illuminate the political dimension of various Calibans and may stimulate further interpretations for his future stage productions.

SHAKESPEARE'S CALIBAN AND THE DISCOURSE ON COLONIALISM

The following analysis elaborates the surrogation of Shakespeare's Caliban across disciplines, such as dramatic performance, literary criticism, politics and psychology. By examining the various figurations of Caliban, in texts written both by First World writers and Third World writers, one recognizes the profound cultural background and ideological dynamics at work in the figure of Caliban.

That Caliban has generated such varied stage manifestations is understandable given the ambiguities in Shakespeare's text itself. In Shakespeare's play, Prospero addresses Caliban for the first time as a tortoise: "Come, thou tortoise" (I.ii.379). Prospero also calls Caliban a "mis-shapen knave" (V.i.268). On several occasions, the play refers to Caliban's appearance and his fish-like features. Trinculo initially identifies him as a fish-like monster who is "legged like a man; and his fins like arms" (II.ii.25-35), although he finally concludes that Caliban must be an islander who has been deformed by a thunderbolt. Stephano's impression of Caliban is also animal-like: "This is some monster of the isle with four legs, who hath got, as I take it, an ague" (II.ii.66-67). Caliban's parentage complicates further the effort to identify his nature and portray his appearance. Prospero mentions that his mother, Sycorax, is a witch while his father is a devil. This lineage invokes the image of Caliban as a creature that is half-human and half-devil. In sum, analysis of textual descriptions can paint an ambiguous image of Caliban, and Vaughan and Vaughan aptly conclude that "the confusion of epithets that abounds in *The Tempest* encourages artists, actors, and readers to see Caliban however they wish" (15).

The vagueness of Shakespeare's description of Caliban's deformities has invited various interpretations of what Caliban must look like. Various production documentations describe his many stage portrayals. A report from 1667 mentions that Caliban was represented as a monster, while a production in 1874 presented Caliban as half man and half beast; another document mentions that in a 1895 production Caliban was staged as "half monkey, half coco-nut" (Vaughan and Vaughan 172-185). Presumably, most of Caliban's stage representations from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century were animal-like, as suggested by Malone:

The dress worn by this character, which doubtless was originally prescribed by the poet himself, and has been continued, I believe, since his time, is a large bearskin, or the skin of some other animal; and he is usually represented with long shaggy hair. (qtd. in Vaughan 391)

The stage interpretation of Caliban as half human and half animal may have something to do with the travel books of the period that described the New World inhabitants and their strange customs and dress. Such stagings of Caliban already evidenced seeds of colonialism, because the description of the Other as sub-human assumed that the native inhabitants needed England tutelage for their betterment as human beings. The half-animal Caliban shows that Shakespeare and subsequent performers viewed the inhabitants of the New World through a European, ethnocentric lens.

The stage history of Caliban suggests that the process of surrogation occurred throughout the centuries, often reflecting a marked shift in cultural attitude. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Caliban's role was not considered a prominent one.

His portrayal was still bestial but his humanity was evident (Vaughan and Vaughan 181). Despite his deformed representations, he later in the century became a noble savage who expressed a strong resistance to tyranny. This image of Caliban, as the victim of oppression, offered his portrayal as a noble savage, one that reflected the Romanticism of the time, though it did not necessarily indicate England's sympathy for any anti colonial movement.

Another shift in Caliban imaging took place with the prevailing influence of Darwin's theory of evolution. Daniel Wilson associated Caliban's deformity with Darwin's notion of the missing link. In this new scientific attitude, Caliban was described as half fish and half human (Vaughan and Vaughan 184). Wilson noted that Caliban's fish-like appearance was related to Darwin's view that humanity evolved from some species of aquatic animal. And gradually Caliban the ape-man evolved on the stage. In his preparation for the Caliban role in a 1892 production of *The Tempest*, F.R. Benson "spent many hours watching monkeys and baboons in the zoo, in order to get the movements and postures in keeping with his 'make up'" (Vaughan and Vaughan 185).

While it is now common to view Caliban as a figure in a colonial context, the first production to emphasize the history of England's colonial experience was carried out by Jonathan Miller in 1970 (Vaughan and Vaughan 190). Based on his reading of Octavio Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (1956), Miller portrayed Caliban as an uneducated black in the context of colonization. Caliban in this production was represented as "a detribalised, broken-down, shuffling, disinherited native" (Vaughan and Vaughan 191).

That Mannoni referred to Caliban in theorizing a psychological complex indicates that the surrogation of the Caliban figure occurred beyond theatrical productions. Octavio Mannoni in *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* theorized that the relation between the colonizer and the colonized was characterized by two complexes, namely a Prospero complex and a Caliban complex. Borrowing the terms from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Mannoni concluded that the colonized suffered from a Caliban complex characterized by dependency on the colonizer (Zabus 16). Based on his observation on the colonized attitudes, Mannoni concluded that

wherever Europeans have founded colonies of the type we are considering, it can safely be said that their coming was unconsciously expected-even desired-by the future subject peoples. Everywhere there existed legends foretelling the arrival of strangers from the sea, bearing wondrous gifts with them. (qtd. in Fanon's *Black Mask* 98-99)

Rather than reading the natives' warm welcome as a sign of hospitality, Mannoni viewed it as evidence of their desire for subjugation and their dependency complex. Mannoni noted a parallel between the colonized attitude toward the arrival of strangers and Caliban's attitude toward the arrival of Prospero. The lines Mannoni emphasized are articulated by Caliban:

This island's mine by Sycorax, my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,
Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me
Water with berries in 't, and teach me how
To name the bigger light and how the less,

That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee,
And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
The fresh springs, brine pits, baren place and fertile.
Cursed be I that did so! All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you,
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' th' island.

(I.ii.396-411)

Mannoni interpreted the above speech in terms of abandonment and dependency (Zabus 17). The logic behind colonialism in *The Tempest*, according to Mannoni, could be summarized as follows: “you taught me to be dependent, and I was happy; then you betrayed me and plunged me into inferiority” (qtd. in Zabus17). Mannoni held that the master/slave relationship between the colonizer and the colonized was bound by certain psychological dispositions inherent in the race of the colonizer as well as in that of the colonized. The colonizer suffered from “a domination complex” and the colonized from “a dependency complex.” Colonization occurred because of the complicity of the colonized. Independence did not suit the psychological dispositions of the colonized peoples, and they thus needed European tutelage for their betterment. In Mannoni’s explication, Shakespeare’s Caliban, as a dramatic persona, becomes a surrogate for the Caliban Complex, a cipher in psychological theory. In other words, Caliban moved from dramatic character to a psychological construct. A new element is introduced:

Shakespeare's Caliban does not explicitly refer to the colonized peoples; Mannoni's Caliban blatantly refers to the colonized subjects incapable of independence.

The surrogation of Caliban in forming the colonial discourse does not only involve dramatic texts, psychological texts, and dramatic presentations but also other forms of criticism focusing on the bestiality of Caliban on the one hand and the universal human grandeur of Prospero on the other. As Anne Meredith Skura mentions, idealist readings of *The Tempest* for many years presented Prospero as an exemplar of timeless human values (221). Such criticism emphasizes the powers of Prospero, whose learning enables him

to re-educate the shipwrecked Italians, to heal their civil war-and even more important, to triumph over his own vengefulness by forgiving his enemies; they [traditional critics] emphasized the way he achieves a harmoniously reconciled new world. (Skura 221)

The fact that Caliban's surrogation is carried out across disciplines, such as drama, psychology and literary criticism, and that together they work both to reflect and constitute the discourse of colonialism, may be illuminated by the thought of Said and his analysis of Orientalist texts. Said's model may help to clarify why the earlier surrogations of Caliban are heavily inflected with the ideology of colonialism.

Orientalism, as Edward Said defines it, is not merely an idea without corresponding reality. The Orient really exists geographically, culturally and historically. It is not merely an elaboration of a geographical distinction either, but an elaboration of a series of interests which is created and maintained by scholarly discovery and philological reconstruction. Orientalism is also "a will to understand, in some cases to control,

manipulate even to incorporate the Other” (Said, *Orientalism* 5), and the way Said approaches Orientalism is by seeing it as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient.

What Said identifies as Orientalist texts are those found in, among other areas, literature, sociology, history, ethnography and philology. Said argues that those texts, despite their pretense of being scientific, are biased due to the internal constraints of the ideology of imperialism. The Orientalists do not innocently describe the Orient but also create and maintain the Orient. By scrutinizing style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, Said hopes to uncover how the Orientalist texts manipulate evidence within the constraints of imperialism. He may believe that some Orientalist texts contain some truth in their relation to the reality of the Orient, but that is none of his concern in *Orientalism*, and he refuses to acknowledge that the knowledge contained in the Orientalist texts is objective and impartial. The knowledge is not disinterested but has been tinged with European interests.

As a discourse analysis, Said’s method does not consider that any text holds a monopoly on truth but only offers different ways of knowing. His analysis seeks to uncover the power relations behind texts. The object of his analysis is therefore not the Orient itself but the texts about the Orient – the representation that the Orientalists convey about the object. As representations, such texts have been engineered (in Said’s words, modulated and worked over) through the filters of European politics and ideology. They “make the Orient speak, describe the Orient, render its mysteries plain for the West” (Said, *Orientalism* 20-21). In making the Orient speak, the Orient is not the

real interlocutor but the kind of interlocutor who would speak and act within the European paradigm of the Other.

Although the Orient as such might not have existed when *The Tempest* was written, Caliban does give indications of how Europe sees the Other. His deformed figure may have signified Shakespeare's and his contemporaries' outlook toward the inhabitants of the New World. Caliban's deformities embody the seeds of a colonial attitude because the following surrogations of Caliban – as seen in Mannoni's text and those of many traditional critics – reinterprets these deformities in terms of European superiority. Like the Orientalists who make the Orient their interlocutor, Shakespeare makes Caliban speak and rebel; yet his rebellion is shown as futile and Caliban himself in the end repents.

Baker and Hulme in their "Nymphs and Reapers Heavily Vanish" tried to show a potential anticolonial discourse in the play by pointing out that Prospero's excessive anger toward Caliban's rebellion indicates Prospero's anxiety concerning the grounding of his legitimacy in ruling the island. If Prospero believed in his legitimate position, he would not need to be excessively angry because Caliban is, in fact, easily subdued. In other words, Caliban's rebellion is a satire of Prospero's own usurpation of the island. In line with this view, speculation has risen that Prospero deliberately initiates Caliban's rebellion in order to reinforce the need of Prospero's authority in ruling the island. In this way, the play can be seen as exposing an anticolonial discourse by disclosing the problematical justification and the power game of colonialism. However, as Baker and Hulme finally admitted, Caliban's clownish conspiracy and repentance cannot help but reinforce a colonial discourse. Besides, there is no evidence in the play indicating that

Prospero deliberately incites Caliban's rebellion. Caliban's sensibility, appearance and actions inevitably work within the limits of a European ethnocentric paradigm of the Other.

One particular scene in the play reflecting a colonial image of Caliban as the Other, who has to speak within a colonial paradigm, concerns Caliban's confinement. In *The Tempest*, Prospero gives a reason for confining Caliban, namely that Caliban attempted to rape Miranda. This perceived threat highlights the image of the native as a rapist. Faced with this accusation Caliban appears to admit his guilt, remarking:

O ho, O ho! Would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me. I had peopled else
This isle with Calibans
(I.ii.419-421)

This acknowledgment justifies his confinement for the sake of his own education, and if the play is read with colonialism as its background, the same justification can be made for subjugating any colonized peoples. This scene thus reveals that the figure of Caliban is created out of a paradigm that potentially justifies colonialism. As a representation of the Other, Shakespeare's Caliban actually does not speak for the Other but for Europe.

The West's increased awareness of Caliban's status, as a colonized figure who has been treated unfairly, was evidenced in 1988 when the Folger Institute sponsored a seminar on Shakespeare and Colonialism, where the so-called revisionists criticized the traditional view and called "for a move to counteract some deeply ahistorical readings of *The Tempest*" (Skura 221). At this point scholars began to assail prior versions of Caliban and the imperial attitude embedded in his figuration. They started to see *The*

Tempest not merely as a universal embodiment of human greatness but rather as “a cultural phenomenon that has its origin in and effect on ‘historical’ events, specifically in English colonialism” (Skura 221). Further, Skura notes that, according to the revisionists, when the English considered Caliban, they did not just innocently apply stereotypes or project their own fears: they did so to a particular effect, whether wittingly or unwittingly. The defective Caliban and his dialogues were discursive strategies that served the political purpose of making the New World fit into a schema justifying colonialism.

One of the points that the revisionists scrutinize is how colonial discourse is at work in *The Tempest*. In relation to the figure of Caliban, this colonial discourse is revealed by the euphemization of Prospero’s oppression. In its depiction of the half-animal Caliban’s conspiracy with Stephano and Trinculo, who are themselves low and clownish characters, the play conveys Caliban and his rebellion in ridiculous and unsympathetic terms. Consequently, Caliban’s ridiculous rebellion functions to justify his enslavement. His failed rebellion suggests that Caliban is confined for the sake of his betterment as a creature.

In this revisionist approach, Caliban’s surrogation is manifested in a new form: Caliban’s deformity and rebellion are seen sympathetically. This new approach suggests that the re-inscription of Caliban from Shakespeare’s time up to the 1980s has led to two different modes of surrogation. The first mode of surrogation, such as found in Mannoni’s writing, traditional criticism and traditional productions, strengthens a colonial discourse, while the second mode of surrogation, advocated by revisionists, criticizes the colonial discourse within the play.

Opposed to Western consideration of the character, we can identify one of the early examples of Caliban's Third World surrogation in 1971. In his article "Caliban," published in 1971, Roberto Fernandez Retamar, a professor of philology at the University of Havana, claimed that he was the first to apply the symbol of Caliban to the former colonies of Spain: Cuba, and the other countries in the Caribbean and South America. Using Caliban to symbolize the Latin Americans, Retamar revised the view of Jose Enrique Rodo, who identified Caliban as a brutal and degenerated symbol, opposed to Ariel, who represents the nobility of human spirit - a symbol that South Americans should adopt. Obviously Rodo's reading of Caliban was influenced by the common view of the time that had little sympathy for the brute Caliban, and he even states his preference of Ariel over Caliban in emphatic terms:

He [Ariel] represents the superiority of reason and feeling over the base impulses of irrationality. He is generous enthusiasm, elevated and unselfish motivation in all actions, spirituality in culture, vivacity and grace in intelligence. Ariel is the ideal toward which human selection ascends, the force that wields life's eternal chisel, effacing from aspiring mankind the clinging vestiges of Caliban, the play's symbol of brutal sensuality. (Rodo 31)

Although in his text Rodo advocates the desire of South Americans for freedom and progress, the surrogation of Caliban in his text reveals the strong influence of a colonial discourse that foregrounds the deformed Caliban.

Rodo's preference of Ariel over Caliban is understandable because, in fact, his essay was actually written in response to Renan's figuration of Caliban. Renan wrote *Caliban, Suite de "La Tempête"* in 1878. In his play, Caliban succeeds in his rebellion

and he reigns as a duke of Milan; but Caliban is described as a manipulative character. Some critics believed Renan's figuration of Caliban was too cynical (Zabus 13, and Vaughan and Vaughan 149).

As opposed to Rodo's distaste for Caliban, Retamar argues that Caliban has much in common with the Latin Americans, in the sense that they speak the language of the colonizers, are formerly subjugated, and are uncertain of their identity due to the different mixed ethnic groups (called "*mestizo*" inhabitants) composing their nation. Retamar introduces what he calls the dialectic of Caliban in which the negative symbol is taken for pride. In this case the derogatory remarks such as "*mambi*" and "*independetista*" are taken proudly because the Latin Americans are the descendants of "the rebel, runaway, *independentista* black – never descendants of the slave holders" (Retamar 16). In Retamar's text, Caliban's surrogation reveals a logic that takes the negative symbol for pride. Even more than that, Retamar also shows that the colonized do not need to be ashamed of all derogatory remarks because those remarks are merely verbal fabrications; and even if the colonizers' remarks about backwardness are true, it is the colonizers who are to blame for it.

However, as noted by Vaughan and Vaughan, the Third World's adoption of Caliban is ironic because Caliban originally was a European construct, with all of the embedded prejudice of the West. Certainly in Shakespeare's play, Caliban does not seek true freedom. First of all, in fighting for his own freedom he falls into another trap of enslavement by voluntarily choosing to serve Stephano as his new master. Caliban declares: "I'll show thee every fertile inch o' th' island,/And I will kiss thy foot. I prithee, be my god" (II.ii.154-155). Instead of positing a counteract against colonialist discourse,

Caliban in Shakespeare's text shows the dependency complex that has been used by Mannoni to illustrate the Third World dependency. Moreover, when his rebellion fails, Caliban suddenly repents by saying:

Ay, that I will, and I'll be wise hereafter
And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass
Was I to take this drunkard for a god,
And worship this dull fool!

(V.i.351-354)

This closing speech of Caliban indicates that Shakespeare's Caliban, as a vehicle of Third World resistance, poses some limitations, since Caliban is created within a European ethnocentric paradigm. Of course, one could still highlight Caliban's resistance against Prospero, as a symbol against oppression, but Caliban's closing speech is not liberatory at all and will always sound disturbing.

Despite Retamar's merits in subverting the symbol of degeneration, transforming it into a figure to be proud of, even capable of criticizing the ideology that created him, Caliban's submissive closing speech casts a shadow on the figure: "Ay, that I will, and I'll be wise hereafter/And seek for grace" (V.i.351-352). If Shakespeare's Caliban is considered in his entirety, the Third World use of Caliban as a resistant figure may unconsciously prove complicit with the colonial discourse for European domination, and it may carry with it an erasure of the Third World inhabitants' capacity of independence. Caliban's closing turn reinforces the misreading of dependency advocated by Mannoni.

These limitations have led a Third World poet, Aimé Césaire to reinvent Caliban as a Third World surrogation. Césaire's Caliban becomes the first Third World Caliban

surrogation in a dramatic persona, who overturns the logic and world view of Shakespeare's play.

CÉSAIRE'S CALIBAN AND THE DISCOURSE ON POSTCOLONIALISM

When Césaire wrote the character Caliban in *A Tempest* [*Une Tempête*] in 1969, Caliban had in preceding years been through various surrogations on stage and in critical theory. On stage, he had metamorphosed from a monster into a black slave, whereas in critical discourse he was beginning to evolve from a figure that justified colonialism to a figure resisting colonialism. One central shift, however, occurs with Césaire's Caliban because Césaire went directly to the ultimate source of the surrogations, namely Shakespeare's text of *The Tempest*, and adapted the play for a black theater. If Retamar's surrogation of Caliban - with the emphasis on Caliban's resistance against colonialism - may be open to the criticism of complicity with colonial discourse (since Shakespeare's Caliban repents in the end), Césaire's Caliban serves to rectify this pitfall and to provide a new basis, a firmer foundation, on which the surrogation of Caliban may be carried out, that is, a Third World perspective. Césaire's surrogation of Caliban also marks the shift of perspective from a colonial Caliban to a postcolonial Caliban. If Shakespeare's Caliban was written to speak for Europe, Césaire's Caliban was written to speak from the perspective of the colonized and for the colonized. In other words, since Europe is biased in representing the Other in the figuration of Caliban, Césaire's Caliban represents the colonized by the colonized.

Postcolonial theory fundamentally concerns the issue of representation. Many hold that, since the West is biased in its colonial desire and attitude in representing the Other, the Other has to represent itself. The awareness that the West cannot fairly represent the Other dates back to Aime Césaire's *Discours sur le Colonialisme*

(Discourse on Colonialism), first published in 1955. Since then, the discourse has been developed by writers as diverse as Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe, Anthony Appiah, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha and still many others.

Césaire, one of the first to explore and practice a type of representation that challenged Western presuppositions, reset Caliban as black. Born as a black Martinican in 1913, Césaire certainly knew what it meant to be black, as he revealed in an interview with René Depestre: "The atmosphere in which we lived, an atmosphere of assimilation in which Negro people were ashamed of themselves-has great importance. We lived in an atmosphere of rejection, and we developed an inferiority complex" (Depestre 91). He refers to a period when racism was considered no more unnatural than the division of labor: that white is the master, while the yellow, the red, and the black serve as his employees. This order was not injustice for the colonizer, of course. It was more viewed as in Plato's *Republic* where each citizen (read: every race) had its own job description, and the more each person developed his own faculties the better all would be.

So ingrained was the inferiority complex of blacks that they tried to adopt the taste, style, and even identity of the white outlook. It was very saddening for Césaire to see, for instance, how a black poet, proud of winning a poetry competition, had to disguise himself as a white poet. For Césaire this black winner's pride evidenced what he called "a crushing condemnation" (Depestre 89). In abiding by white taste, style and way of thinking, blacks lost any nurturing sense of identity and experienced what Césaire called assimilation. Assimilation as a colonial strategy strove to impose white values and culture on the blacks. Césaire realized the irony of assimilation, that it would

never be completed successfully; after all, although blacks adopted white culture and value system, they remained second-class citizens, which was not because of their incompetence but because of their being black.

Césaire reinvented Caliban as the vehicle to deliver his criticism against the politics of assimilation and the justification of colonialism often proposed by colonial intellectuals, such as Octavio Mannoni and Ernest Renan. As seen from the above explication, Mannoni in his *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* posited the naturalness of Third World dependency as a psychological complex. Since it was natural for the colonized to be dependent, colonialism was not something imposed on them but something that was desired by them. In line with Mannoni, Césaire saw that Renan theorized the naturalness of colonization as Renan strongly argued:

Nature has made a race of workers, the Chinese race, who have wonderful manual dexterity and almost no sense of honor; govern them with justice, levying from them, in return for the blessing of such a government, an ample allowance for the conquering race and they will be satisfied; a race of tillers of the soil, the Negro; treat him with kindness and humanity, and all will be as it should; a race of masters and soldiers, the European race. Reduce this noble race to working in the *ergastulum* like Negroes and Chinese, and they rebel. (qtd. in Césaire 38)

This view is also seen in Renan's figuration of Caliban. As mentioned earlier, although Renan's Caliban succeeds in his rebellion, Caliban's figuration is far from sympathetic. Caliban's reign is used to signify that, in Renan's own words,

Inferior races, like the emancipated negro, at first show a monstrous ingratitude toward those who have civilized them. And when they succeed in shaking off

their yoke, these races treat their former superiors as tyrants, exploiters, and imposters. (qtd. in Pallister 88)

Although critics are uncertain whether Césaire had read Renan's play when writing *A Tempest*, this sort of argument is exactly what Césaire wanted to counterattack through the figure of Caliban.

Different from Shakespeare's Caliban and most of the figure's stage representations from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, Césaire's Caliban is blatantly black and racially oppressed. Césaire's notes, which state that the play is an adaptation of *The Tempest* for black theater, underline the context of the colonizer/colonized relationship. While the characters are chiefly the same as in Shakespeare's play, Césaire makes two alterations, namely, Ariel becomes a Mulatto slave (esclave mulâtre) and Caliban becomes a black slave (esclave nègre). Césaire also brings in an additional character called Eshu, a black devil-god (dieu-diable nègre). The plot also slightly changes the original play's resolution when Prospero decides to stay on the island instead of returning to Italy. These additions and changes expressly situate the play within the colonial situation involving a black slave and a mulatto as the colonized. In Césaire's play, Ariel, who is hostile toward Caliban in Shakespeare's play, considers Caliban as his brother in his suffering, slavery and hopes (26). These additions and changes also shift the context of Caliban's struggle. If in Shakespeare's play, Caliban's confinement in a cave is caused by Caliban's character, which is lustful and bestial, the use of a black Caliban and mulatto Ariel in Césaire's play signifies that their enslavement is caused by their race.

Despite using the name “Caliban” that Shakespeare gave the character, Césaire reinvents Caliban in several different ways. Caliban in *A Tempest* reveals a deeper understanding of freedom and a greater awareness of the role of language in the processes of alienation and oppression. Caliban is also involved in a more complex master/slave relationship with his oppressor, as signified by Prospero’s decision to stay on the island. Caliban’s new characteristics and the play’s different ending are the points of departure for Césaire to deliver his argument and its anti-colonial intent.

The matter of Caliban’s desire for subjugation is one of central issues of the play’s adaption. If in Shakespeare’s play, Caliban does not seek true freedom but only a new oppressor, a different state of servitude, then Césaire seems to anticipate this problematic aspect of the character. It is true that, like Caliban in *The Tempest*, Caliban in *A Tempest* also asks for Stephano and Trinculo to be his new masters: “Well, you see, this island used to belong to me, except that a man named Prospero cheated me of it. I’m perfectly willing to give you my right to it, but the only thing is, you’ll have to fight Prospero for it” (44) [Eh bien, il y a que cette île m’appartenait, mais qu’un me l’a prise. Je t’abandonne volontiers tous mes droits. Seulement, il faudra livrer bataille à Prospero]. However, a significant difference appears in Césaire’s version: Caliban experiences enlightenment when the three of them actually come face to face with Prospero. In that scene, Caliban realizes that Stephano and Trinculo are not dependable and that he has to stand on his own feet. Contradictory to Caliban in *The Tempest*, Césaire’s Caliban does not yield and resign himself but faces Prospero and shouts, “It’s you and me, Prospero! (*Weapon in hand, he advances on Prospero, who has just appeared*)” (55) [*Prospero, à nous deux! (il se précipite, une arme à la main,*

sur Prospero qui vient d'apparaître]). Interestingly, Caliban raises his arm to strike but he suddenly holds back the blow: "Defend yourself! I'm not a murderer," (55) [*Alors, défends-toi! Je ne suis pas un assassin*].

Shakespeare's Caliban, to the contrary, repents of his attempted rebellion. He prostrates himself before Prospero and confesses:

Ay, that I will, and I'll be wise hereafter
And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass
Was I to take this drunkard for a god
And worship this dull fool!

(V.i.351-354)

Shakespeare's Caliban does not preserve his fierce and implacable spirit. Caliban's words may imply repentance and understanding, but in their utterance and meaning one recognizes the strong colonial discourse at work in Shakespeare's play. Caliban in *A Tempest*, on the other hand, retains his rebellious nature and declares: "My only regrets that I've failed" (60) [*je n'ai qu'un regret, celui d'avoir échoué*].

In Césaire's play, Caliban's elaborate apology contains two critical attacks on the politics of assimilation and its justifications of colonialism. One of the ways in which the politics of assimilation is carried out involves replacing the native language with colonial language. Language here does not simply mean verbal language but also the colonizer's values that the natives try to adopt when they are made to think that their own language and values are inferior. This point becomes clear when Caliban protests:

And you lied to me so much,
about the world, about myself

that you ended up by imposing on me
an image of myself:
underdeveloped, in your words, undercompetent
that's how you made me see myself!
And I hate that image ... and it's false!

(62)

[Et tu m'as tellement menti,
menti sur le monde, menti sur moi-même,
que tu as fini par m'imposer
une image de moi-même:
Un sous-développé, comme tu dis,
Un sous-capable,
Violà comment tu m'as obligé à me voir,
Et cette image, je la hais! Et elle est fausse!]

Caliban's refusal of the identity that Prospero prescribes as underdeveloped and incompetent satirizes the colonial politics of assimilation by which natives accept humiliating images of themselves. The politics of assimilation is a colonial strategy to impose colonial language and culture on the natives. Césaire certainly had first hand experience of how the politics of assimilation had created an inferiority complex among blacks; in colonial culture's paradigm the natives' culture, language and even race are inferior. In his interview with René Depestre, Césaire mentioned that "the atmosphere in which we lived, an atmosphere of assimilation in which Negro people were ashamed of

themselves has great importance” (Depestre 91). In sum, for Césaire, the politics of assimilation has been responsible for blacks’ inferiority complex.

The second critical attack is directed against another aspect of colonial discourse, its humanistic mission in colonizing the Third World, as advocated by Renan. Césaire’s criticism is revealed in the speech of his Caliban, compared to that in Shakespeare’s play. If Prospero in *The Tempest* gets the credit for civilizing Caliban, as indicated by Caliban’s confession of guilt that he “will be wise hereafter/And seek for grace” (V.i. 351-352), then in *A Tempest* Prospero is laughed at by Caliban. For Caliban, Prospero’s mission and vocation on the island is not as noble as Prospero assumes:

You can go back to Europe.

But the hell you will!

I’m sure you won’t leave.

You make me laugh with your “mission”!

Your “vocation”!

Your vocation is to hassle me.

(62)

[Tu peux entrer en Europe.

Mais je t’en fous!

Je suis sûr que tu ne partiras pas!

Ça me fait rigoler ta “mission”

Ta “vocation”!

Ta vocation est de m’emmerder!]

Caliban even believes that, although Prospero is bored to death on the island, Prospero will not leave because he is “just like those guys who founded the colonies/and who now can’t live anywhere else” (62) [comme ces mecs qui ont fait les colonies/et qui ne peuvent plus vivre ailleurs].

Another important aspect of Caliban’s surrogation is his realization of the role of language in the process of assimilation. Although Caliban must acknowledge the hegemony of Prospero’s language, Caliban refuses to submit his consciousness to Prospero’s domination. He willfully resists total subjugation by Prospero. This defiant outlook enables him to subvert the oppressive language; he, in fact, turns Prospero’s words into a weapon to counterattack his domination, as Caliban relates: “I’ll impale you! And on a stake that you’ve sharpened yourself!/You’ll have impaled yourself” (61) [Empalé! Et au pieu que/tu auras toi-même aiguisé!/Empalé a toi-même!].

In this manner, Césaire advances a two-fold criticism towards colonialism. Colonialism simultaneously dominates those who are colonized yet offers them the means to ultimately rebel against their subjection. Within the play, Caliban becomes the most dangerous enemy for Prospero because, although Caliban speaks Prospero’s language, he refuses to be assimilated by Prospero’s subjugation. This resistant movement informs Césaire’s idea of negritude, which explains how a colonial subject can face assimilation.

In contrast to Shakespeare’s Caliban, who does not have a first language, Césaire’s Caliban, upon first appearing on stage speaks the word “Uhuru,” which in KiSwahili means “independence.” This expression signifies that he has a mother tongue. Prospero rebukes him for using his native language and orders Caliban to use

“hello” instead. Caliban insists on using his native language because Prospero’s language carries with it the dynamics of assimilation, alienation, and oppression. Learning Prospero’s language involves assimilating a world view and value system that potentially makes Caliban alienated from his own identity. Caliban explains this situation when he relates: “You didn’t teach me a thing! Except to jabber in your own language so that I could understand your orders: chop the wood, wash the dishes, fish for food, plant vegetables, all because you’re too lazy to do it yourself” (17) [Tu ne m’as rien appris du tout. Sauf, bien sûr à baragouiner ton langage pour comprendre tes orders: couper du bois, laver la vaisselle, pêcher le poisson, planter les légumes, parce que tu es bien trop fainéant pour le faire].

Caliban’s predicament reflects the condition of many formerly colonized countries where European languages are used by institutions and in official exchanges. This imposition generates a hierarchy of language that makes the native language less preferred in the scholarly disciplines, science, governmental communication, and literature. The natives feel that their own language is inferior, something even to be ashamed of. To take an African example in combating this situation, Ngugi wa Thiong’o stopped writing in English, and he has since been writing in Gikuyu because he wants to end English-language domination. He goes so far as to propose the abolition of the English department at the University of Nairobi (Ngugi 438).

Caliban even attributes his alleged attempted rape of Miranda to his learning Prospero’s language. He chides: “Rape! Rape! Listen, you old goat, you’re the one that put those dirty thoughts in my head” (19) [voiler! Voiler! Dis-donc, vieux bouc, tu me prêtes tes idées libidineuses]. While in Shakespeare’s play, Caliban tacitly admits his

attempt to rape Miranda, Césaire's Caliban discloses that the narrative of rape was fabricated by Prospero and projected onto Caliban. The adoption of Prospero's language for Caliban signifies his acceptance of Prospero's values, which unfortunately have been engineered to work for his subjugation. As well, this outlook justifies the subjugation as if it were the logical outcome of Caliban's own crime, that is, the imaginary attempted rape.

Caliban's intense feeling of alienation is also a consequence of his dominated subjectivity. This domination is emphasized by the fact that Prospero gave him the name Caliban. Caliban strives to regain his lost identity by proposing to change his name from Caliban to "X" (20). He prefers to be called "X" because, as he himself confirms, "That would be best. Like a man without a name. Or to be more precise, a man whose name has been stolen" (20) [Ça vaudra mieux. Comme qui dirait l'homme sans nom. Plus exactement, l'homme dont on a volé le nom.]

This powerful speech indicates the heart of the problem experienced by many formerly colonized subjects who were forced to adopt a new language and culture. Caliban's statement rings ironic and tragic at the same time because, although he longs to have his identity, he cannot understand what his identity really is. 'X' means an indefinite variable that, in this case, reflects an opposition against colonial subjugation and the desire to return to an identity that has yet to be understood.

This reading of Caliban's desire to return to his own identity raises many important issues and questions. Different postcolonial theorists have offered different accounts and remedies for Caliban's dilemma. The first is the discourse holding that the so-called original identity is tenable, as argued in the first wave of postcolonial theory,

while the second is the discourse suggesting the illusiveness of any form of originality, a view prominent in the second wave of postcolonial theory.

Much early writing in postcolonial discourse affirmed the tenability of original identity, holding that the formerly colonized peoples possessed a history that if studied would yield their original character as found before the colonial invasion. This attitude or gesture was to a great degree engendered by efforts to resist colonial assimilation. Césaire, for example, refuted any views proposing the naturalness of black inferiority, believing instead that race is a social construct, one that causes “black” to be understood within white values and therefore white domination. Césaire counterattacked the construct by proposing another construct that he called negritude. Striving to regain the great treasures of blacks who had been annihilated by racism and colonialism, Césaire proclaimed negritude as a counterbalancing movement. Negritude calls for the affirmation of what was originally black, valuing it as something to be proud of. For Césaire, to return to what was originally black meant a return to Africa, but, unfortunately, Césaire encountered in this matter a serious obstacle: he did not know much about Africa – the fountain of black origin. Finally he learned a lot about Africa from Senghor and his ethnographic studies. Indeed, his very lack of knowledge of Africa exhibited in a fundamental way the dynamics of negritude that Césaire identified.

Initially, Césaire attributed negritude to the solidarity among the peoples of the black diasporas living in Haiti, the Antilles, Martinique, and North America. Césaire seems to base his early concept of negritude on this common experience of displacement – of being forced to inhabit a foreign land whose inhabitants do not speak the language of their mother country. Geographically Martinique was not Césaire’s

actual homeland. His being a Martinican could not give him a sense of identity because his ancestors were Africans, brought to the Caribbean as slaves. The problem is complicated further by the fact that he was educated within a French educational system and had to assimilate everything (language, culture, taste) that was French.

As an illustration of how the decolonization of consciousness and the resistance to the politics of assimilation function, negritude strives to regain the identity lost within the assimilation process. The identity yet to be defined can be found by tracing the history of blacks, as Césaire reveals: “We are black and have a history, a history that contains certain cultural elements of great value; and that negroes were not, as you put it, born yesterday, because there have been beautiful and important black civilizations” (Césaire 91). Although Césaire states that negritude is universal in the sense that everyone experiences his own form of alienation (Depestre 91), he and Leopold Sedar Senghor emphasize the importance of Blacks returning to African culture, or as Senghor puts it “African personality” (27). For Senghor, Césaire’s colleague who studied with Césaire in France and who along with Césaire initiated the negritude movement, negritude is “the sum of the cultural values of the black world; that is, a certain active presence in the world, or better, in the universe” (28). Many conferences were subsequently held in Africa in order to formulate the so-called African culture. Senghor was often the keynote speaker in these events.

Negritude addresses Caliban’s dilemma concerning his identity anxiety by suggesting, as it were, that he trace the black cultural history of Africans. In this paradigm, the politics of assimilation would be counterattacked by his turning to black

culture or African personality. Senghor exemplifies what he called African personality when he explains the assessments of certain ethnologists:

Ethnologists have often praised the unity, the balance and the harmony of African civilization, of black society, which was based both on the *community* and on the *person*, and in which, because it was founded on dialogue and reciprocity, the group had priority over the individual without crushing him, but allowing him to blossom as a person. I would like to emphasize at this point how much these characteristics of negritude enable it to find its place in contemporary humanism, thereby permitting black Africa to make its contribution to the 'Civilization of the Universal'" (Senghor 32).

In sum, negritude offers the means of establishing an identity of blackness by basing it on African cultural values, which are possible to identify and define. In short, for Caliban to resist the colonial oppression of Prospero, he should seek out and claim his cultural roots and racial history.

A second answer to Caliban's dilemma comes from the later wave of postcolonial theorists. This discourse questions the tenability of original identity for the colonized and theorizes a hybrid culture. While several critics have advocated this position, its germinal formulation can be seen in the works of Frantz Fanon. Fanon criticizes the effort to return to African culture as escapism: because of their inability to face the brutal degradation of colonialism, the colonized look to the utopian glory of the past to find comfort and to serve as a justification for future national culture (*The Wretched* 210). Fanon explains further:

Perhaps this passionate research and this anger are kept up or at least directed by the secret hope of discovering beyond the misery of today, beyond self-contempt, resignation and abjuration, some very beautiful and splendid era whose existence rehabilitates us both in regard to ourselves and in regard to others. (*On National Culture* 37)

For Fanon, however, African culture is a utopian idea because the problems confronted by blacks in regions as diverse as France, Britain, the United States, and Caribbean are varied and complex. The African American effort to drive back racial discrimination, for instance, significantly differs in its principles and objectives from the Angolan struggle for independence from Portuguese colonialism (Fanon, *On National Culture* 40). The problems are similar in so far as they pertain to unfair treatment in Black/White relationships, but the objective problems of the Black Caribbean, for example, are different from those of the Black African. Opposing colonialism by returning to African culture misses the point, because, after the process of colonization, the colonized have evolved into a people whose conditions differ from those prior to colonization. Moreover, as Fanon writes, “No colonial system draws its justification from the fact that the territories it dominates are culturally non-existent. You will never make colonialism blush for shame by spreading out little-known cultural treasures under its eyes” (*On National Culture* 41).

Fanon’s warning applies not only to blacks but also to all Third World countries. Speaking of one’s glorious past tends to be a narcissistic discourse, emphasizing self-admiration without touching present realities. This outlook may lead, as Said points out, to religious or national fundamentalism (*Culture and Imperialism* xiii). Fanon shows the

irony of such a gesture by disclosing how Leopold Sedar Senghor, who was a member of the Society of African Culture and who had worked with other postcolonial thinkers on the question of African culture, supported France in its colonial efforts against Algeria (*On National Culture* 45). Opposing the politics of assimilation should not be carried out by returning to the past. Fanon states emphatically that he does not want to make himself the prisoner of the past and he does not want to exalt the past at the expense of his present and his future. For Fanon, the Third World Culture does not reside in those old monuments, songs, poems, folklore or the long gone achievements of the ancestors but in the real struggle of the colonized people with the contemporary problem of colonialism and its aftermath.

Instead of returning to such a utopian notion as African culture, Fanon suggests that the colonized should turn to a national culture, which he defines as “the whole body of efforts made by a people in the sphere of thought to describe, justify and praise the action through which that people has created itself and keeps itself in existence” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 151). Contained in this definition is the notion that national culture is dynamic. Such culture evolves from its encounter with colonialism, which, despite its effort to annihilate the national culture, is unable to obliterate it; rather colonial forces participated in bringing this national culture to its present state.

Although national culture is important, it nevertheless presents some pitfalls, namely, a xenophobic view of identity and the misappropriation by the national bourgeoisie. A xenophobic view of identity takes place when nation is subordinated to race, and the tribe is preferred to the state. Fanon argues that these “cracks in edifice of nation” (*The Pitfalls* 156) occur because of the colonial inheritance of *divide et impera*

politics as well as the native middle-class failure to properly replace the former governing, colonial middle class. The result is civil war among the tribes and a new form of colonialism by the mediocre native middle class, who are amazed by the possibility of getting rich. This wealth is achieved by abusing their newly gained power while the people are as poor and oppressed as before.

The sort of theorizing on identity one finds in Fanon is also developed by Homi Bhabha in his *The Location of Culture* (1994), a work that deploys categories such as hybridity, mimicry, and ambivalence to characterize identity. Opposing earlier essentialist views, this second wave of postcolonialism does not see the relation between the colonized and the colonizer in terms of binary oppositions of West/East, First World/Third World, and Black/White but in terms of the Third World's ability to evolve from its traditional social structure and to adopt a more global stance. This transformation comes by incorporating some elements of the Other. This view sees that the relation between the colonizer and the colonized is not one way in direction, in which oppression obliterates the oppressed or the colonizer totally silences the colonized. This view emphasizes the survival of the colonized culture under imperialism and its development from its original situation to a state that has allowed it to endure the brutality of the oppression. This condition informs the space of hybridity.

With the end of colonialism, the colonized subjects somehow emerge as different from their previous condition. Through their interactions with the colonizers, no matter how impaired these interactions might have been, the colonized have developed a new culture whose degree of contamination from the colonizers differs from area to area. The critical discourse on hybridity stresses the mutuality of the colonized/colonizer

relations without denying the painful oppressions under which hybridity emerged as a means of survival for the colonized. It sees that the future development of the formerly colonized peoples will be more fruitful if they assume an outlook that there are not any original natives, but natives who have been contaminated by colonialism and have therefore developed a hybrid culture. After all, most postcolonial writers are natives with a Western education, that is to say that to some degree their hybridized upbringing enabled them to understand and to articulate the problems of colonialism. Such insight does not mean that Western education is more advanced but that colonialism involves the West and the East/Africa/Latin America, and therefore these writers' acquaintance with Western education provides them, as outsiders, a window through which they can view the inside of the Western logic system in order to demystify its power (just as Caliban learns Prospero's language in order to subvert it). An example of such effort appears in how Césaire and Fanon's study critiques Mannoni and Renan's writings, a study aimed at demystifying the scientification of racial oppression in their books. Hybridity assumes the strategy of usurping colonial power. Caliban's withdrawal in attacking Prospero, despite the fact that he has the chance to strike him, signifies that the opposition against the existing power is not merely carried out physically but by studying its system, accommodating its beneficial elements in order to modify the monolithic power exercise, i.e., to transform the interaction based on oppression and exploitation against the East/Africa/Latin America into dialogic gestures.

Contrary to the nativist approach that seeks the essence of Black/East/Latin American culture, the discourse on hybridity asserts more realistically that, in Fanon's words, "to believe that it is possible to create a black culture is to forget that niggers are

disappearing, just as those people who brought them into being are seeing the breaking up of their economic and cultural supremacy” (*The Wretched* 44). There is no pure native and the power of colonialism is really diffused among many of the colonized subjects (for example, in their desire to be white in its widest sense). However, it is also worth noting that in the process, the native culture is not totally assimilated but has metamorphosed into a hybrid culture to accommodate new desires. In other words, the act of subjugation is never accomplished successfully. The opposition has already taken place in the formation of a hybrid culture which retains the native consciousness - the consciousness that they originate from certain cultures, no matter how vague, that significantly differ from that of the colonized.

The degree of complicity evident in hybrid culture is difficult to assess, because hybrid culture is the result of opposition to the politics of assimilation. A hybrid identity is certainly not the space of complicity yet not the space of total opposition either. As Bhabha puts it, “it is a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once that makes it impossible for the devalued to accept the colonizer’s invitation to identity” (44). In *Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences* Bhabha adds further that

It is only when we understand that all cultural statements and systems are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation that we begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures are untenable. (208)

Bhabha’s statement also underlines Fanon’s position, as opposed to Césaire’s and Senghor’s negritude that values the concept of a pure African culture.

While Fanon and Bhabha offer a rather hopeful view in their notion of hybridity, the second wave of postcolonial theory is not uniformly optimistic. Another postcolonial theorist of the second wave, Gayatri Spivak, on the other hand, goes so far as discounting the capability of the colonized to speak. For Spivak, colonialism has totally dismantled the colonized culture into irreducible fragments so that any attempt to reconstruct it will end in an essentialist formulation, one that works against the plural nature of the colonized culture (for example, the many layers of Indian social stratum). Moreover, the so-called native informant is actually not really native but has already been assimilated by the colonizer's culture. Often, the native informant belongs to the upper middle class, an order not in touch with the colonized subjects but who often collaborates with the colonizer to perpetuate imperialism.

While agreeing with Spivak on the difficulties and contradictions in constructing a speaking position for the subaltern, I also agree with Benita Parry who argues that Spivak has eliminated the subaltern voice even before she starts her analysis on postcolonial literature (40). Although it might be true that some postcolonial writing does not reflect the subaltern voice, this does not mean that it is impossible for the subaltern to speak. As Parry points out, Spivak's elimination of the subaltern voice in her analysis is clearly seen when she analyzes Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* in her *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (125-132). Spivak asserts that the figure of the subaltern is found in Antoinette, a white settler, instead of in Tia, a black Caribbean, a feature that signifies the inability of the real subaltern, namely the formerly colonized black Caribbean to speak. However, as Parry also points it out, the speaking subaltern is actually found in Christophine the black maid, whom Spivak overlooks due to her presupposition.

Despite some differences, the second wave of postcolonial theory basically agrees that the search for the colonized identity should be directed toward the colonized present condition instead of an imaginary pure identity of the past. Fanon refutes the idea of the purity of identity, and he argues that identity should be formulated in terms of national consciousness overriding tribal identity. However, Bhabha seems to argue that it is not likely we can formulate a colonized identity without taking into account the contamination of colonial identity. Refusing the idea of purity, for Bhabha, involves an acknowledgment that the colonized identity has been contaminated by colonial culture. The fact is that, although the colonized refused “the invitation to accept the colonizer’s invitation to [colonizer] identity” (Bhabha’s *The Location* 44), the colonized had adopted some of colonizer’s identity, such as language and education system. To return to Caliban, although Caliban rightly argues, “Call me X” (20) [apelle-moi X] to deny his colonial name, he cannot escape the fact that “X” is already determined as a sign of a Western language and therefore a Western construct. His desire to be called “X” underscores Bhabha’s argument that all cultural statements and systems, including identity, “are constructed in this contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation” (Bhabha’s *Cultural* 208), so that any claims to the inherent originality or purity of cultures are untenable.

The view that the purity of identity is not tenable stands as one of the significant contributions of the second wave of postcolonial theory; this understanding of identity helps us interpret Caliban. As opposed to Shakespeare’s character, Caliban in *A Tempest* reveals a deeper understanding of freedom and a greater awareness of the role of language in the processes of alienation and oppression. However, one can

imagine a Caliban that even goes beyond Césaire's figure, a contemporary Caliban that embodies the insights of second wave postcolonial theory.

Such speculation reveals Caliban as a surrogate in a contemporary postcolonial context; this line of thinking, moreover, stirs inspiration for present-day stagings of Caliban. One can imagine new interpretations and directorial choices. For example, Caliban's desire to be called "X" should not derive from the fact that his native name has been "stolen" but because he has found a new identity - an identity evolving from his interaction with the colonizer. Another possible interpretation emphasizes how the master/slave relation of Prospero/Caliban has worked to contaminate colonized identity with colonial culture. This view suggests that we do not need to show the present-day Caliban wearing outfits quite different from Prospero's. Having native Caliban dressed in European style costume would function to suggest his hybrid identity. However, the impression that Caliban and Prospero come from two different races should be suggested clearly on stage, namely that Prospero is white; Caliban may be African or Asian. This outward racial difference is needed to give the play its colonial background.

This hybrid identity would be accentuated further by Caliban's bilingual capability. Césaire already indicates that Caliban is bilingual because he speaks in KiSwahili and French, whereas Prospero only speaks his own language. This interplay of different languages could be employed to highlight the use of language as a means to subvert Prospero's rule. If staged in a Third World country whose first language is not English, like Indonesia, for example, Caliban might make use of the Indonesian language that is so rich in *plesetan* (pun, word play); this is a favorite medium among Indonesian performers to deliver criticism in the guise of humor. Caliban could speak to Prospero in

English but in his asides or soliloquies he could address the audience in Indonesian. When Caliban addresses the audience in Indonesian he could use *plesetan* as a device to subvert the meaning that Prospero intends. Some dialogues that might potentially be developed further into Indonesian *plesetan* or word play are Caliban's refusal to acknowledge Prospero's accusation of the attempted rape, and his refusal to acknowledge Prospero's civilization mission. Since Prospero only speaks English, his confusion, when Caliban delivers his criticism in a language unknown to Prospero, could create a very humorous situation, producing laughter while simultaneously showing the audience the subversive power of words. Caliban, who speaks the same language as the audience, would have unlimited opportunities to make fun of Prospero's mission without Prospero's recognition. The kind of English that Caliban might speak would also indicate the subversion of the language, if it were localized English, such as Singaporean English. The interplay of dialogues in native language, local English and standard English for Caliban's speech might work to emphasize Caliban's hybrid upbringing and to highlight the role of language as an expression of resistance. Staged in a country whose first language is not English opens possibilities unimaginable in countries whose first language is English, and presents new ways of staging and imagining the postcolonial incarnation of Caliban.

CONCLUSION

The surrogation of Caliban from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to Césaire's *A Tempest* reveals a history influenced by the dynamics of colonialism. In Shakespeare's time, though colonialism had not emerged as a critical term, one notes imperialist operations at work, as seen in Caliban's representation as a half animal depicting the Other. Until the first half of the twentieth century, the bestiality of Caliban and the grandeur of Prospero informed the dominant view of Shakespeare's play. Caliban appeared not only on stage, but also in critical theory such as in a psychological treatise by Octavio Mannoni, where the figure of Caliban was interpreted as symbolic of Third World dependency and its inability to self govern. Only at end of the 20th century did critics start to realize that the traditional interpretation of Caliban had functioned to justify colonialism. Critics then found in the figure of Caliban an embodiment of an oppressed native subjugated by a European Prospero; only then did writers begin to talk of Caliban more favourably. A thinker from the Third World, Jose Fernando Retamar, even stated that the Third World should proudly adopt Caliban as their symbol, arguing that Caliban's degeneracy was merely a Western construct to discredit the Third World's resistance against colonialism.

Although Caliban has been read more sympathetically by critics, their use of Caliban as a symbol of the Third World is ironic. Caliban in Shakespeare's play is a Western construct created from the paradigm of ethnocentric Europe. In the play, Caliban finally repents for his rebellious attitude and promises to always follow Prospero's guidance. If the Third World adopts such a Caliban as a symbol, they cannot

just dismiss the submissive ending. If Shakespeare's play serves as the basis of the interpretation, the Third World adoption of Caliban will be trapped within the figuration of a submissive and dependent Caliban, a feature that Europe created to symbolize the Other.

Situated within this context, Césaire's play, *A Tempest*, is a new breakthrough for creating a representation of a Third World Caliban - a dramatic persona made by the Third World. Viewed in light of Shakespeare's Caliban, Césaire's play reveals a number of cultural surrogations. First of all, physically, Caliban is clearly a native of the Third World. Secondly, Caliban in Césaire's play never repents for his resistance against Prospero. Caliban also seems to have a deeper awareness of how language has worked in his assimilation. Another significant reinvention in Césaire's play is that Caliban faces a dilemma when he has to resist the politics of assimilation.

The dilemma of Caliban concerns his desire to have his own identity, while he cannot understand what his identity is. This dilemma makes Caliban a surrogate for two possible readings of a postcolonial Caliban. The first wave of postcolonial theory holds that Caliban's desire to find his identity can be satisfied by returning to his cultural heritage. By returning to his cultural heritage of the past, he would find his glorious culture that defies any colonial image of him. The second wave of postcolonial theory, on the other hand, holds that returning to cultural heritage of the past is escapism. This theory holds that what has gone is gone and the colonized should reinvent a new identity based on national consciousness. However, as Bhabha indicates, the colonized cannot establish an identity that is not contaminated by colonialism. It is therefore

important to realize that purity is untenable, not only purity of the traditional identity of the past but also the purity from contamination with colonialism.

This later postcolonial theory envisions a hybrid Caliban, that is, Caliban, who, out of his confusion concerning his identity, has realized that in fact he can not establish his identity without taking into account the influence of colonialism. The undeniable colonial influence involves his speaking a colonial language and therefore his adoption of a colonial world view. This new surrogation of Caliban opens up the possibility of creating a new Caliban on stage, one who is more in touch with the present condition. The fact that many colonized natives have adopted European language and culture may suggest that Caliban's stage representation does not need to be that different in appearance and costume from Prospero. Racial difference, however, should be indicated on stage to remind the audience of the colonial context. If staged in the Third World, the role of language could be exploited further by showing Caliban speaking in a colonial language with Prospero and speaking a native language in asides and soliloquies with the native audience. Since Prospero supposedly speaks colonial language only, Caliban could freely manipulate word play with the audience to subvert the meaning of language without Prospero's recognition. The localized English, such as Singaporean English, that Caliban speaks must make Prospero look bewildered, realizing that the language he teaches has developed beyond his control. An on stage surrogation of Caliban in a Third World country, whose first language is not English, opens new possibilities never seen before, and presents new ways of staging and imagining the postcolonial incarnation of Caliban.

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