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What Next Miranda?: Marina Warner's Indigo

Abstract

Each century seems to have its own interpellative dream-text: *The Tempest* for the 17th century; *Robinson Crusoe* for the 18th century; *Jane Eyre* for the 19th century; *Heart of Darkness* for the turn of this century. Such texts serve as pre-texts to others; they underwrite them. Yet, in its nearly four centuries of existence, *The Tempest* has washed ashore more alluvial debris than any other text: parodies, rewritings and adaptations of all kinds. Incessantly, we keep revisiting the stage of Shakespeare's island and we continue to dredge up new meanings from its sea-bed.

CHANTAL ZABUS

What Next Miranda?: Marina Warner's *Indigo*¹

'What next I wonder?'

Iris Murdoch, *The Sea, the Sea*

Each century seems to have its own interpellative dream-text: *The Tempest* for the 17th century; *Robinson Crusoe* for the 18th century; *Jane Eyre* for the 19th century; *Heart of Darkness* for the turn of this century. Such texts serve as pre-texts to others; they underwrite them. Yet, in its nearly four centuries of existence, *The Tempest* has washed ashore more alluvial debris than any other text: parodies, rewritings and adaptations of all kinds. Incessantly, we keep revisiting the stage of Shakespeare's island and we continue to dredge up new meanings from its sea-bed.

The true *anagnorisis* for Alonso, the King of Naples, but not for us in Prospero's play, which is not to be confused with *The Tempest*, was the discovery of Miranda and Ferdinand playing chess behind a curtain. Since then, the curtain has been lifted again and again, revealing different chess-players. What pawns can still be moved across this *fin-de-siècle* chessboard, when all strategic moves have seemingly been exhausted. 'What next I wonder?' could then be the question the blasé post-deconstructionist critic is bound to ask at the end of this millennium. 'What next I wonder?' is also the question that the Prospero-like Charles Arrowby asks at the end of *The Sea, the Sea*, after realizing that he has been 'reading (his) own dream-text'.² If one recalls the Latin etymology of the name Miranda, 'to be wondered at', this question could playfully be reread as 'What next Miranda?' The Bardscript has indeed been rewritten from Caliban's and Prospero's perspective in various postcolonial and postmodern texts.³ It is now high time to decode the message in the bottle, which Miranda may have hurriedly scribbled while her paranoid father Prospero was busy with more important conspiracies. In its feminist import, Marina Warner's *Indigo* (1992) provides the Daughter's plot and thus forces a reconsideration of the doubly colonized subject – woman.⁴

Admittedly, in Shakespeare's text, with the exception of Miranda, possibly the harpy and the deities presiding over the fertility masque, women are conspicuously absent from the play.⁵ Claribel is married off to

the ruler of Tunis (II.1.99-100; H.D. will rehabilitate Claribel in 1949); Ferdinand is motherless; Miranda has no siblings and the Dryden-Davenant question in *The Enchanted Island* (1667) – ‘Miranda, Where is your sister?’ – is therefore somewhat pointless. Nautical metaphors, starting with Gonzalo’s reference to the sinking vessel as a ‘leaky ... unstanched wench’ (I.i.7), further contribute to the quasi-mysogynistic tone of the play.

To top it all, Miranda’s mother, though ‘a piece of virtue’ (I.2.56), is absent from all memories; so is inevitably Prospero’s wife who, with the fading crossbar of the ‘f’ in the earliest copies of the folio, has become ‘wise’.⁶ Although Sycorax is the absent Other in many ways (she conveniently dies, leaving behind her son Caliban and her servant Ariel), this fellow-outcast is insistently on Prospero’s mind. *Indigo* thus retrieves Prospero’s female memory as Sycorax as well as provides the ‘great unwritten story’, by which Adrienne Rich meant ‘the cathexis between mother and daughter’, so absent in Shakespeare.⁷ It is also somewhat logical that the companion-piece to Warner’s *The Lost Father* (1988) should be a quest for the lost mother of infancy. In *Indigo*, womanhood is split into a matriarchal unholy Trinity: Ariel-Sycorax-Miranda.

Miranda is the great-granddaughter to Sir ‘Ant’ Everard, who is the ancestor to ‘Kit’ Everard who first landed on Liamuiga in 1618, the Caribbean island where Sycorax used to rule as a renowned sorceress and an indigo dyer. The plot oscillates between ‘then’ in Liamuiga in 1600 and ‘now’, with Miranda and her parents, Kit and Astrid Everard, ‘storm-tossed’ and ‘marooned’ in the London tube in the 1960s, where a Caliban-esque guard takes them to his underground lair on a foggy night.

With its double temporal perspective (20th-century and Elizabethan), *Indigo* conjures up Virginia Woolf’s *Voyage Out* (1915), which relates a young woman’s (Rachel Vinrace’s) journey to South America on her father’s ship, which remains grammatically feminine throughout. Woolf’s ‘figurehead to some Elizabethan barque’ (deleted in the final draft⁸) prefigures that Miranda will be at the helm some day. It also intimates that the Ur-Tempest was a female text. The structure of Woolf’s novel shows, however, that ‘little progress in the condition of women had been made in the three hundred years which separated the early twentieth-century from the Elizabethan age’ (Fox, 84). Of Warner’s three ‘islanded’ women, Miranda alone will safely lay up her barque and embrace the ‘brave new world’ of marriage and its proffered independence. By contrast, her ‘sister-aunt’, Xanthe, a sort of Barbie doll version of Miranda, will drown in her only ‘voyage out’ in the mapped waters of the Caribbean basin.

Concomitant with ‘mapping the waters’ (which provides the subtitle to *Indigo*) are the twin notions of conquest and virginity, already present in accounts, compended by Hakluyt at the end of the 16th century, of Raleigh’s quest for El Dorado and Drake’s circumnavigation of the globe.

From then on, the *terra incognita* became a woman, a passive, ovula-like island to be assaulted, raped by sem-inal invaders.⁹ As the rape motif in the now famous passage from *The Tempest* (I.2.331-351) connects Miranda's 'honour' and Caliban's island, Miranda's lot seems to be linked to that of 'the freckled whelp'. Warner will see to it that the 'two victims of Prosperity', as Donaldson aptly calls them (68), somehow meet at the end in an unprecedented fashion.

Marina Warner has variously dipped into her 'bowls of colours' (the phrase is from Czeslaw Milosz in the epigraph to *The Lost Father*); the book is therefore divided into six parts along colour lines from 'Lilac/Pink' (with the birth of Xanthe's Miranda) to 'Maroon/Black' (with the birth of Miranda's daughter) and moves through various voices and hues. It is rewarding to read *Indigo* across the colour-spectrum and look for a chronological, chromatopic reading, the kind Julio Cortazar had deemed passive and hence female in *Rayuela* (1963; trans. *Hopscotch*) – a reading that somehow rainbow-hazes in this new light.

The book also wavers between two geographical sites: London and Liamuiga. Columbus had earlier on called Liamuiga and its twin-island Oualie St Thomas because of the gashes in their sides that recalled 'the five wounds of the saviour';¹⁰ Liamuiga will then become Everhope under Kit Everard's governorship; then *Enfant-Béate* (Blessed Child) under French rule, to recover its former name with Independence in the early 1970s. Behind Warner's map lies, in palimpsestic fashion, Shakespeare's Elizabethan map of voyaging that spread from the European Continent to a mythical Caribbean island, which was a stone's throw 'from the still-vexed Bermoothes' (I.2.229) where the spirit Ariel fetches his precious dew.

Sycorax takes us back to that day in 1600 when, instead of a 'brave vessel' dashing to pieces at Prospero's command (I.2.6-8), a slave-ship throws overboard the battered bodies of some twenty failing slaves during the Middle Passage. Among them is a drowned woman whose brine-filled womb is ballooning out with a baby which Sycorax delivers with an oyster-shell knife. This 'orphan from the sea' (96) is Dulé, an African survivor of Igbo origin, who under Sycorax's tutelage, soon gets acquainted with 'the qualities o' th' isle' (I.2.337; 104). Dulé's name is a botched anagram of the French *deuil*¹¹ that signals his people's bereavement. This sense of loss and mourning will send him on a quest for his roots (a skyward quest, as it turns out, symbolized by his ascending a ladder, standing on the last rung, free of any support). However, his quest for freedom from the British usurpers ends tragically, as his hamstrings are severed and he thus meets the fate of many a run-away slave or 'maroon', after the mountaintops (Sp: *cimarrón*) or jungle enclaves where they sought refuge.

Sycorax's rescue-operation as well as her *sangai* or 'preternatural insight and power' (97) trigger off her repudiation by her husband and her self-

exile in another part of the island; Shakespeare's Sycorax also 'from Argier ... was banished' (I.2.266). There she practises her magic arts and the dyeing of indigo. Between blue and indigo ('Blue/Indigo' is the title of Part II), between blue and the colour purple, the bluish hue that used to signal pregnancy in Shakespeare's time is now pregnant with other meanings. Indigo was one of the plantations' three staples along with tobacco (incidentally an Arawak name) and rice before they were enlarged to cotton and sugar. Significantly, Sycorax, Shakespeare's 'blue-eyed hag' (I.2.269), brews indigo in huge vats and, as a manipulator of colours (local colour included), is closer to the visual artist. Her artistic talents will be resurrected in the contemporary Miranda who uses crayons to paint from *vérité* photographs.¹²

Sycorax and Dulé are soon joined by a five-year-old Arawak girl, Ariel. Ariel, the delicate spirit and enchanting singer originally enclosed in the 'cloven-pine' by Sycorax (I.2.279) and then conditionally released by Prospero, becomes Sycorax's helper and heir in the art of dyeing and healing. Ariel's legendary androgyny (given a homosexual tinge in the late Derek Jarman's filmic adaptation, 1980) is here tossed to the winds. Ariel grows to be a tall, robust woman, flanked by her gentle and tame caveys, a welcome improvement on the pack of hounds conjured up by Prospero to chase the conspirators and transformed into the theroid hunting dogs trained to mount a human sex in Barbadian George Lamming's *Water with Berries* (1973).

Ariel and Caliban/Dulé in Warner's novel embody the original Arawak and African 'forced' labour 'needed by the mutation in the land/labour ratio' which followed 'as a result of western Europe's first-phase expansion into the Americas' (Wynter 361). Warner's choice of making Ariel into an Arawak instead of a Carib, for instance, may be explained indirectly by the fact that historians from Du Tertre to Edwards found the Caribs, more than the Arawaks, a highly indomitable and unknowable race.¹³ Moreover, the Caribs had literally leapt to their death by hurling themselves over what is now known as 'le Morne des sauteurs', in 'one scream of bounding lace', as Walcott puts it in 'Another life' (1973). Ariel as an Arawak is therefore a more plausible figure. In Ariel, Warner restores the Native North American subject, who only makes a fleeting appearance, mostly in Canadian texts. The Métis singer in Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners* (1974) is an Ariel-figure who has an affair with the white Canadian Morag Gunn, a Miranda-figure and a woman-artist, the author of a novel-within-the novel duly entitled *Prospero's Child*.

Warner's text also probes into this other 'great unwritten story', that of Sycorax and her dealings with Caliban and Ariel before Prospero and Miranda '[h]ere in this island ... arrived' (I.2.171). Sycorax's being 'hither brought with child' (I.2.269) from her original birthplace in Argier (Algiers) also makes her retrospectively the first colonizer of the island. In *Indigo*, she rules over all of the island's fauna and flora and, after Dulé has

left for richer crabbing grounds, her only human subject is Ariel who, overstuffed with her mother's nurturing will flee from 'the motherland'.¹⁴ When Ariel is about Miranda's age (twelve) in *The Tempest*, she leaves Sycorax's saman tree and elects the coconut grove as her new dwelling place. Rather symbolically, it is after a bitter altercation between (foster-) mother and daughter that Kit, the 'red man' (139) and unlawful usurper, steps in and sets fire to the tree of their discreet genealogy. In the process, he burns Sycorax, who survives the incident; her burnt carcass will act as a constant reminder to Kit of his brutal landing and his primitive bluntness. This baleful insensitivity is also reflected in the indestructible metal the British introduced along with their hefty cannons among a people who had thus far only used conch shell tools.¹⁵

Soon after he makes his landfall in 1618, the concupiscent Kit starts coveting both the island and Ariel's body. In typical colonial fashion but also abiding by the tenets of the Renaissance neo-Platonic doctrine, he echoes Amerigo Vespucci who 'noted with surprise that the women of the New World were often beautiful despite their natural (i.e. libidinous) ways, he suspected this moral ugliness to be reflected in their physical features'.¹⁶ He then masturbates to the rhythm of religious incantations (like Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*, he has an Intended at home) until he surrenders to his loins and impregnates the grown Ariel. Kit's masturbation, which finds a muffled echo in the Onan episodes in the Québécois Pierre Seguin's *Caliban* (1977), builds on Ferdinand's submerged fantasies of rape in *The Tempest*. Unlike Ferdinand, however, Kit's 'honour' will definitely 'melt/ ... into lust' and he will inexorably break her 'virgin-knot' (IV.i.27). Their progeny – Roukoubé (Red Bear Cub) – is a hybrid, the result of a transgressive choice that will be resurrected in Sir Anthony Everard's first marriage in the 1920s to the Creole Estelle Desjours, which then explains the fact that our contemporary Miranda has 'a touch of the tar brush' from her grandmother's Creole blood (39). The book is full of such rehearsals and resurrections that link the generations beyond blood ti(d)es, across time and space.

Ariel's 'collaboration' with the white man reminds us of the obsequious bootlicking and Uncle Tom-like patience of the Ariel of Césaire's play, *Une tempête* (1969). But it is here rendered with feminist compassion for the woman caught between the (s)mothering of Sycorax and the new-found sexual power she holds over the white man. She is indeed 'split in two', as Warner puts it (152), enacting the Elizabethan fairies and sprites' capacity to be 'split in twain' before getting whole again. Ariel was often held as the third, intermediate figure mediating, negotiating between the polarities of Master and Slave. In Warner's text, Ariel moves between two sources of power – Kit and Sycorax, both exacting rulers enthralled to their passion for her, and prefers free-floating, as she does in the sulfuric waters at the Hot Springs (134). She later regrets such lack of commitment

and when she makes the move to join Dulé in the struggle against the British, it is too late and she is made captive again.

Kit's passion for Ariel, made 'cross' by her magic herbs and condiments, recalls similar liaisons in other climes. Like Warner's Ariel, John Gabriel Stedman's mulatto maid Joanna, nurtured him in sickness and bore him a son; her charms and virtues run through Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Suriname* (1796) which, according to George Lang, set many of the terms for the exotic nineteenth-century image of the Creole woman.¹⁷ Unlike this literate soldier who justified the propriety of his love for Joanna by quoting Horace's poem to Phocius – 'let not my Phocius think it shame/For a fair slave to own his flame', Kit does not find Horace much of a comfort, for neither his God – a most demanding Judeo-Christian deity – nor his King, James I, would allow such justification.

Warner also recounts in an interview the story of 'Thomas Warner, who was the first settler of the island of St. Kitts in 1623, was made Governor of the West Indies by the King of England, and was married to a local woman'.¹⁸ But a more likely source for the Kit-Ariel relationship is to be found in the story of Pocahontas, to which Peter Hulme devotes a whole chapter in his *Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492-1797*, which Marina Warner acknowledges as a source for *Indigo*.¹⁹ Pocahontas is the daughter of the Algonquian Chief Powhatan, who ruled over what was to be called Virginia. Pocahontas married an Englishman and took a Christian name, Rebecca, which is the name Marina Warner gives to both Kit's ship and his English Intended, Rebecca Clovelly, the daughter to the Lord who sponsors his colonizing venture. Hulme comments that 'Rebecca will give birth to two nations, a red and a white, and the red will despise his birth-right and sell it for a mess of pottage' (Hulme, 145-146). The story of Ariel's baby Roukoubé, which is to Warner 'the kernel of *Indigo*', best embodies the suppressed history of miscegenation, 'of the intermarriage of the early colonists (which) is never told' (Interview).

From what we do know, however, Indian women were used by American, but most notoriously, by Canadian *voyageurs* as sexual receptacles and/or factotums, as Lang argues, but they also provided these cultural renegades or Überlauffer with their immediate knowledge of Amerindian languages – 'these were the native women the earliest *coureur de bois* took as country wives, and quickly had as mothers'.²⁰ Ariel will indeed teach Kit how to tend indigo plants and will show him, as Caliban did with his guest Prospero, 'the qualities o' th' isle' but will learn English from him. Conversely, Kit will not learn the language of Sycorax's people, which is never identified. All in all, Warner's nuanced portrayal of Ariel is a far cry from the typical Indian woman of colonial narratives under the double yoke of colonial and sexual exploitation; Ariel and Kit's relationship is here wrought with ambiguity and interracial curiosity. The issue of language epitomized in Caliban's original curse – 'You taught me language,

and my profit on't/ Is, I know how to curse' (I.2.363-364) – is also given another twist, as the crippled Dulé picks up Sycorax's railing and ranting but acquires a 'dream language' when effortlessly swimming in the marine landscape where his troubled eyesight matches the blurriness of the deep.

Then suddenly we are in the U.K. in 1960, the year of independence for most African nation-states. The grown *Miranda* meets on a film set in London a Black actor, George Felix, whose 'stagey rage' (255) is somewhat abated during their one-time affair. Her life in London (with a brief episode in Paris at the hotel Davenant, after the co-author of *The Enchanted Island*) is interrupted in 1969 by Xanthe a.k.a. Goldie, who wishes to go to *Enfant-Béate* for the 350th Anniversary of the historical landing. Xanthe thereby hopes to escape the tutelage of her 'Poppa', Sir 'Ant' Everard, an autocratic father who dreams of having her 'under lock and key ... for ever' (314) and who, as a former Flinders champion, embodies the absolute interrelatedness between cricket, Englishness and colonialism.

Xanthe (in Greek, the gilded one) marries Sy, 'the first (man) that ev'r (she) sighed for' (I.2.447-48). This 'fat knight' (327), whose 'very small, albino mouse pink genitals' (286) are in inverse ratio to his huge, neo-colonial mapping plans, aims to prove V.S. Naipaul wrong, whom he quotes as having once said (in *The Middle Passage* in 1962): 'History's built around achievement, and nothing was ever achieved in the Caribbean' (291). Sy's maritime empire is the very opposite of Gonzalo's (and, by the same token, Montaigne's) 'Commonwealth' which would do away with 'Contract, succession,/ Bourn, bound of land, tilth...' (II.1.156-157). Xanthe will drown before her liberal knight maps the waters and through death, she becomes 'vulnerable to love' (353).

Xanthe's 'voyage out' and death by drowning connect her not only to Ant's first, Creole wife Estelle but also to Rachel Vinrace's 'difficult expedition' and to countless other women like Edna Pontellier who, at the end of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899), leaves 'the shore ... far behind her'.²¹ Deep down at the sea-bottom, Xanthe's body is enshrined in the 'walled chamber' of an oyster-like molusc and is 'mantled in pearl, layer upon layer spun about her foreign body until, mummified at the mineral heart of a pale rainbow, she became forever smooth and sheeny and hard' (355). Xanthe's pearly sea-change (an ocean-deep version of her earthly Midas-like golden touch) echoes that in Ariel's song in *The Tempest*:

Full fathom five thy father lies,
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange. (I.2.397-402)

Kit, Miranda's father, subtly paraphrases Ariel when he pictures his mother, Estelle, 'under the sea ... (with) a comb of polished oystershell and a mirror of mother-of-pearl mounted on a coral branch' (67). Miranda also smells 'of the sea, like oyster, fresh and salty' (249). The oyster is symbolic of androgynous and hybrid wholeness; it is therefore no wonder that the post-independent female Prime Minister, Atala Seacole, endeavours to revive Liamuiga's economy and restore the island's psychic wholeness through the oyster-trade.

Some twenty years later in the 1980s, Miranda stumbles into George Felix again when he is playing Caliban on stage, just when she was just congratulating herself for being 'not merely chaste or non-sexual – but post-sexual' (369) in keeping with the 'post-modern condition' (371). In his search for the 'lost Fatherland', George has discarded his 'whitey's name' and is called Shaka, after the great Zulu leader; yet he will end up 'with no name ... the Unnameable' (373). Both partaking of the 'maroon' condition, Miranda and Shaka run away together and have a child called Serafine, after the nanny who came with the Everards from the Caribbean. The English isle is thus likely to be peopled by little Feenys rather than little 'Calibans' (I.2.351).

Miranda and Caliban have been, since *The Tempest*, connected through the threat of rape, a theme which postcolonial and postmodern texts savagely built on. For instance, in one scene from Lamming's *Water with Berries*, Miranda (Myra) is the victim of a collective rape by inebriated Calibans; in John Fowles's *The Collector* (1963), Miranda is incarcerated by a Ferdinand/Caliban character and, although she is only symbolically 'raped' by the 'deadweight Calibanity of England', he takes pornographic shots of her after chloroforming her as he does with the butterflies he entraps for his collection.

By bringing Miranda and Caliban together, Warner substitutes a healthy union based on the recognition of mutual enslavement. Although Césaire in *Une tempête* had addressed the absence of Caliban's legitimate father, Sylvia Wynter has pointed to 'the most significant absence of all, that of Caliban's woman' and its corollary, the absence of Caliban's 'endogenous desire for her' or 'for the procreation of his own kind' (Wynter 361). Although Warner does not envisage a Black mate for Caliban, it remains that in *Indigo*, Miranda becomes Caliban's woman. In other words, in other worlds, Cathy Earnshaw of *Wuthering Heights* marries Heathcliff; Bertha Mason a.k.a. Antoinette Cosway in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) ousts Jane Eyre and lives happily ever after with Rochester; Kurtz repudiates his Intended and marries the Bangala bride. Exogamy and miscegenation – repressed in the untold story of Roukoubé – are possible in late 20th-century England in a Europe which remembers its feminine origins from its rape by Zeus.

From her burial place in Liamuiga in the 1980s, Sycorax hears the cries of women who drowned in the amniotic waters and she takes into her

earthly womb all their sorrows past and present, locked up in the barnacled caskets of the deep. Like Prospero abjuring his rough magic, Sycorax wished she had known that her power was 'of little weight'; 'she would have abjured her art, left off cursing, left off binding fast and loose with spells' (208). By foregrounding Sycorax, the maternal *Imago*, Warner weaves a tapestry that had been bleaching women of colour into asocial invisibility. Like Gloria Naylor in *Mama Day* (1988) who weaves together feminist and black concerns through the story of the Southern conjure woman Miranda Day,²² Warner restores the 'native' female subject. Through Serafine, Miranda's nurse, Sycorax provides the Epilogue that used to be Prospero's.

Serafine's daisy wreath (26) and her 'tree of life' link her to Sycorax whereas her name 'Killebree', after 'the tiniest bird in the Lord's creation' (25) endows her with the property of the bird-like singer, Ariel. Yet, she is less a singer than a story-teller. Serafine, like the Queen of Sheba and the Mother Goose figure, two of Warner's favourite fairy-tale figures, is 'a wise queen, an anonymous outside figure' who 'holds the secret of the story (and) knows the riddles' (Interview). Serafine opens and closes the book with her fairy tales, which function as Fowlesian 'maggots', i.e. sub-texts in a larval stage, or Renaissance masques which conjure up to the child Miranda the island of her ancestors.

One such tale involves the tusky sea-monster, Manjiku (presumbaly from the French *mange-cul*). Indeed, in his deep desire to procreate, 'to be a woman' (216), Manjiku swallows anything female that comes his way, especially pregnant or menstruating women. Warner reminds us that the sea-monster, along with the mermaid, the amazon and the cannibal, appears on early Western maps, marking out the dangerous places of terra incognita.²³ If the Unknown, the unsaid is feminine, then perhaps this is why Prospero in Shakespeare's play speaks the lines of Medea, Ovid's witch. Warner has combined in Manjiku both the traits of the 'salvage and deformed slave' and of the European invader, for he is also white and devouring: his desire to be a woman 'arises from the thirst for the Other - to elide difference by becoming one, by incorporating' (Letter). The Manjiku story is also a variant on 'The Beauty and the Beast', for Manjiku becomes Prince Charming (219) once he swallows Amadé, a young woman who drowns out of true love for Amadou who, for his part, was in love with a beautiful mermaid who ultimately dies. The death of the 'tiny silver woman' (217) foretells Xanthe's death whereas Amadé's rebirth as the bride to a new Manjiku 'gives the happy ending to Miranda' (Letter).

Serafine's true heiress is Miranda who, from an early age, learns to read Serafine's script, which is a modern version of 'Sycorax's script' (129) made of scrawled markers and signs the white 'tallow men' could not decipher. *Serafine's palms read like maps; they are indeed 'mapped with darker lines as if she had steeped them in ink to bring out the pattern, the lines*

crisscrossed and wandered, and Miranda would have liked to be able to puzzle out the script, for she was beginning to read. Feeny's palms were dry and hard like the paper in a story book, and when they handled Miranda she felt safe' (4). Serafine has thus written the granddaughter's plot, as well.

Serafine unscrambles the 'noises' (89; 356) of the island and turns them into stories 'that give delight and hurt not' (III.2.136-137); she emerges as the prototypical female keeper and transmitter. She is like the sea, replete with 'parodies of birth: birth from the mouth rather than from the uterus' (Thompson 50) and she also 'speaks in the noises that fall from the mouth of the wind' (89). She is connected with fecundity, emollience and lubrication. Serafine thus fuses within her what Trinh Min-ha has termed 'the interrelation of woman, water and word (which) pervades African (i.e. Dogon) cosmogonies', themselves connected with spinning and weaving.²⁴ But Serafine not only weaves stories and spins yarns; she dyes them, as Warner does, after dipping them in the waters of the womb or in the bowls of colours which give the book its colour-spectrum.

Yet, Serafine, as a colonized subject, will 'tell the story of Ariel as she has been told it' (Interview). She is the ironic transmitter of the official story of Ariel's alleged betrayal rather than of the apocryphal rendering, in which Ariel only inadvertently 'warns' Kit of Dulé's attack. The true story is buried in Ariel's silence, as she grows into an ancient Indian hag who Père Labat reports to be the last living person to remember Sycorax's language. The treachery assigned to Ariel is germane with the myth of the treacherous native, which Peter Hulme has exposed as a projection of the colonizers: 'the claims of the colonists about the natives were a systematic projection of European behaviour onto the Native Americans ... it was the Europeans whose duplicity and cunning kept their colonies alive by manipulating the trust of their hosts; and eventually by betraying it' (Hulme 167). Sycorax's brother, Tiguary (the fictionalized homonym to Hulme's Tegreman) thus says of the 'shellfish people': 'they have double faces and double tongues and never keep their promises' (99-100). What is retained is an imperial history laundered of its embarrassing reminders, like Ariel's true story. The laundering process continues up to the present day, for the bubbly buoyancy of Gillian, Ant's second wife, ensures that the 'secret' of Ant's first marriage to a Creole is safely kept in the wreckage down below. The Epilogue is an infant's cry, that of Miranda and Shaka's baby girl, whose story, it is to be hoped, will not be yet another purloined letter of History.

Marina Warner's response to *The Tempest* is neither post-colonial nor completely post-modern; it is Indigo/Blue; lilac/pink; orange/red; gold/white; green/khaki; maroon/black. This neither/nor structure is paradigmatic of the Miranda condition, for Miranda early in the text is described as a 'slash' (36) rather than the 'hyphen' that should unite the parting halves of the Everard couple. The colours are like the limits of language, like thresholds; they dissolve the 'black-and-white' print-accounts of 'male-

diction' into Feeny's oral tales scripted from orature. What prevails in this fin de siècle and at the end of the millenium is a scrambled chessboard where the pawns are no longer conveniently black or white; where Miranda is 'blurred' (43) because 'she was shifting when the photograph was taken'.

NOTES

1. This paper was given at the EACLALS Conference in Graz, Austria in March 1993. It is also part of a book in progress.
2. Iris Murdoch, *The Sea, the Sea* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p. 499.
3. For a survey of such rewritings across a broad geographical spectrum, see my own recent article, 'Prospero's Progeny Curses Back: Postcolonial, Postmodern, and Postpatriarchal Rewritings of *The Tempest*', in Theo D'Haen & Hans Bertens, *Liminal Postmodernisms: the Postmodern, the Post(-)Colonial and the Post(-)Feminist*, in *Postmodern Studies*, 8 (Amsterdam & Atlanta: Rodopi, 1995), 115-138.
4. For an approach to Miranda's story from a feminist perspective, see e.g. Laura E. Donaldson, 'The Miranda Complex: Colonialism and the Question of Feminist Reading', *Diacritics*, 18:3 (1988), 65-77, rpt in somewhat different form in Laura E. Donaldson, *Decolonizing Feminisms* (London: Routledge, 1993), 13-32; Ann Thompson, "'Miranda, Where's Your Sister'": Reading Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in Susan Sellers, Linda Hutcheon, Paul Perron, eds. *Feminist Criticism: Theory and Practice* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 45-55; and Sylvia Wynter, 'Afterword: Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/Silencing the "Demonic Ground" of Caliban's "Woman"', in Carolyn Boyce Davies & Elaine Savory Fido, *Out of the Kumbia: Caribbean Women and Literature* (Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press, 1990), pp. 355-71. Further cited in the text and referred to as Donaldson, Thompson, Wynter.
5. William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Anne Righter (Barton) (Harmondsworth: New Penguin, 1968). All references are to this edition and are cited in the text.
6. Stephen Orgel, 'Prospero's Wife', *Representations*, 8 (Fall 1984), p. 63.
7. See Cathy N. Davidson and E.M. Brouer, *The Last Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1980). The phrase - 'the great unwritten story' - is from Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born: Motherhood and Experience and Institution* (New York: Bantam, 1976), pp. 226, 240.
8. Alice Fox, 'Virginia Woolf at Work: the Elizabethan *Voyage Out*', *Bulletin of Research for the Humanities*, 4:1 (Spring 1981), p. 77. Further cited in the text and referred to as Fox.
In *The Voyage Out*, Woolf also employs a lot of allusions to *The Tempest*. See, for instance, Ariel's song recited by Mr. Grice (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1948), p. 54.
9. The island, the only piece of land which is considered female, somewhat belies the feminist dictum that 'solid ground is masculine, the sea feminine', as Mary Ellman argues in *Thinking about Women* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), p. 74.
10. Marina Warner, *Indigo or Mapping the Waters* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), p. 111. All references are to this edition and are cited in the text.
11. This was suggested to me by the author in Antwerp on September 27, 1993.

12. References to (European) paintings run through e.g. *In a Dark Wood* (1977) and a recent collection of short stories, *Mermaids in the Basement* (1993).
13. I owe this comment to Joan Dayan in her article, 'History, Disavowal and Poetic Language in the Caribbean,' ms.; originally delivered at the Woodrow Wilson Center, Smithsonian, Washington D.C., March 5, 1987.
14. The phrase is from E. Ann Kaplan, *Motherhood and Representation: The Mother in Popular Culture and Melodrama* (London: Routledge, 1992). Likewise, Miranda in the early Canadian novel, G.D. Roberts' *The Heart of the Ancient Wood* (1900), leaves her Arcadia (both her mother Kirstie and the she-bear Kroof) to embrace 'patriarchal civilization'. See Lisa Laframboise, "'Maiden and Monster': the Female Caliban in Canadian Tempests', *World Literature Written in English*, 31:2 (1991), p. 39.
15. On Arawak tools, see Basil Reid, 'Arawak Archeology in Jamaica: New Approaches, New Perspectives', *Caribbean Quarterly*, 38:2 & 3 (September 1992), 15-19.
16. Frank Kermode, ed. *William Shakespeare: The Tempest in The Arden Shakespeare* (London: Routledge, 1954), p. iv.
17. See George Lang, 'In Every Clime: Literary Notes Around the Discovery of Sranan-Tongo Creole', *Dutch Crossing*, 44 (Summer 1991), 60-76.
18. Chantal Zabus, 'Spinning a Yarn with Marina Warner' in *Into the Nineties: Post-Colonial Women's Writing*, (London, Sydney: Dangaroo Press, 1994), pp. 519-529. Further cited in the text and referred to as Interview.
19. Peter Hulme, *Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492-1797* (London & New York: Routledge, 1986). Further cited in the text and referred to as Hulme.
20. George Lang, 'Voyageur Discourse and the Absence of a Fur Trade Pidgin', *Canadian Literature*, 131 (Winter 1991), p. 58.
21. Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899) (London: Women's Press, 1978), p. 190.
22. For a full discussion of the Miranda-figure in the African-American context, see Elaine Showalter, 'Miranda's Story' in *Sister's Choice: Tradition and Change in American Women's Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 22-41.
23. In Marina Warner's letter to Anna Rutherford on January 29, 1993, quoted here by courtesy of Anna Rutherford. Hereafter cited in the text and referred to as Letter.
24. Trinh Minh-ha, 'Grandma's Story' in *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1989), p. 127.