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“The island has two sides”: Female Subjectivity in Postcolonial Adaptation

By

Teah Goldberg

Claremont Graduate University

2020

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Approval of the Dissertation Committee

This dissertation has been duly read, reviewed, and critiqued by the Committee listed below, which hereby approves the manuscript of Teah Goldberg as fulfilling the scope and quality requirements for meriting the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.

David Luis-Brown, Ph.D.

Claremont Graduate University

Associate Professor of Cultural Studies and English

Lori Anne Ferrell, Ph.D.

Claremont Graduate University

John D. and Lillian Maguire Distinguished Professor in Humanities

Myriam J.A. Chancy, Ph.D.

Scripps College

Hartley Burr Alexander Chair in the Humanities

Abstract

“The island has two sides”: Female Subjectivity in Postcolonial Adaptation

By

Teah B. Goldberg

Claremont Graduate University: 2020

My dissertation is entitled: “The Island has two sides: Female Subjectivity in Postcolonial Adaptation.” In it I will argue that many postcolonial narratives either consciously or unconsciously adapt Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* in an effort to resurrect repressed female narratives of resistance. Through an examination of Elizabeth Nunez’s *Prospero’s Daughter* (2006), J.M. Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986), Maryse Condé’s *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1988), and Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), this dissertation will contribute to the fields of feminist and postcolonial studies by arguing that the kinds of female critical voices that we find embedded within these postcolonial texts, either through fictional characters or through an author’s narration, call for us to reassess our understanding of the female characters, both present and absent, in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*.

I will begin by establishing Sycorax, Miranda, and Claribel from *The Tempest* as *prismatic* figures. When I use the terms *prismatic* and *prismatism*, I am referring to women’s ability to transform or reflect the singular, limited gender role/identity imposed upon her into a vast female spectrum, one which is both varied and unified. In my estimation, thinking of these characters as prismatic allows us to imagine the 20th century postcolonial novels above as providing a feminist lens that can teach us how to read arguably some of the most understudied and misunderstood female characters in early modern literature.

Thus, this study asks for us to reassess the kinds of complex and problematic female characters represented by Miranda, Sycorax, and Claribel, not only in the early modern period, but in the present day. Further, I argue that these seemingly disparate characters and tropes should be read in terms of their gendered similarities rather than judged on the basis of their perceived differences. I suggest that we may interpret their re-emergence in different forms in postcolonial novels of the 20th century as having recovered the repressed female narratives of these renaissance era women. In the end, by showing the ways in which Rhys, Condé, Coetzee, and Nunez have adapted some of Shakespeare's early modern women for a modern audience, I argue that these figures revive and illuminate the complicated position of early modern female characters to postcolonial feminist rebellion

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"…I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (Coetzee 131).

"The island has two sides": Female Subjectivity in Postcolonial Adaptation

Teah Goldberg, Claremont Graduate University

In "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed," Peter Stallybrass points out that early modern "women's bodies were assumed to be '*naturally* grotesque'" (Rackin 43).[1] Indeed, the belief that women's material and emotional selves were inherently peculiar, and even aberrant in nature, shaped every aspect of their lives. Thanks to their "grotesqueness," British society thought it both appropriate and necessary for every woman to be "subject to constant surveillance" because her body "is 'unfinished, outgrows itself, [and] transgresses its own limits'" (Rackin 43). To the British mind, women's bodies existed in a continuous state of flux, and their feminine identities and characteristics were seen as unfixed. A woman was perpetually in a state of "becoming:" coming into being while simultaneously coming undone. Early modern women were not seen as whole autonomous beings but as entities which embodied multiple versions of themselves, within themselves, each of which was transitory in nature. By extension, they were recognized as unstable on an individual level and as a destabilizing force in their communities.

[1] Peter Stallybrass is quoted in Phyllis Rackin's "Misogyny is Everywhere." *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*. Dympna Callaghan, ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp. 42-58. See also Peter Stallybrass, "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed." Edited by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers, *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, pp. 123-42. Original emphasis.

Women's constitutional multiplicity and mutability imbued them with an "elemental" quality. According to Monique Alleweart, "elemental" refers to the body's ability to transition between the human and nonhuman. In other words, the human body is capable of merging with natural elements such as vegetation, animals, and even the air and microbes through which diseases are transmitted. Because they contain plural and conflicting identities, Alleweart suggests that female bodies are "vectors for subaltern resistance" (8).[2] Applied to women in this discussion, elemental refers to the female capacity to possess the potential to occupy more than one role or identity.

Female multiplicity, or what I term *prismatism*, was thus an ever-present threat to the established social order.[3] Stallybrass contends that women constitute a "geographic region" which is both open and enclosed (135). Stallybrass, however, focuses exclusively on the "body geography" of women as being a threshold for subversive deviance. Borrowing from Stallybrass my argument takes a step forward to focus on female *identity* as multiple as opposed to her body being multiple. In so doing I contend that the multiplicity of female identity poses a greater threat to hegemonic masculinity in that it is hidden from public view. Similarly, Valerie Traub asserts that women were only allowed to occupy one of two roles during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: virgin or whore (126).[4] She likewise says that there was a perceived "split within each woman between 'seeming' and 'being'" (126). This meant that women were dangerous because they could *seem* like virgins—even when they were actually "whores" (Traub

[2] Alleweart, Monique, *Ariel's Ecology: Plantations, Personhood, and Colonialism in the American Tropics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013.

[3] The terms "prismatism" and "prismatic" will be discussed at length in Chapter II. These terms refer to a woman's ability to transform or reflect the singular, limited gender role/identity imposed upon her into a vast female spectrum, one which is both varied and unified.

[4] Traub, Valerie. "Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays." *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*, Edited by Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995, pp. 120-141.

126). Traub thus interprets the reductive and divisive imposition of the virgin/whore dichotomy upon all women as an attempt to assuage the patriarchy's fear that "underneath the [virgin] *is* the whore [original emphasis]" (123). Therefore, the disaggregation of women's identities was one means by which said patriarchy tried to control problematic aspects of femaleness, like mutability, fickleness, and unpredictability. In doing so, however, they extricated from women's cultural roles almost everything that made them human (Traub 125).[5]

One implication of this reality was that the early modern woman's identity and social value was inextricable from her sexuality. A woman was required to be pure, virtuous, obedient, and—above all—silent. To this end, Anthony Fletcher explains that, "women not only had to be chaste but had to be seen as chaste," for "silence, humility and modesty were the signifiers that she was so" (Rackin 43).[6] A woman, especially if she was unmarried, left to her own devices, and/or otherwise outside of her father's watchful eye, risked developing the "wrong" qualities or attributes. Consequently, it was feared that female idleness—which occurred when a young girl or woman strayed from the path which her society and her parents had carved out for her—led inexorably to accusations that she was or was becoming a whore.[7]

Conduct manuals from the period, such as Thomas Becon's *Cathechism*, emphasized the necessity that women understand the idealized role which they were destined to occupy within

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[5] See Peter Stallybrass, "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed," pg. 138.

[6] Anthony Fletcher is also quoted in Phyllis Rackin's article, "Misogyny is Everywhere." See also Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England* 1500-1800. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 120-122.

[7] For example, in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Kay Stanton points out the term "whore" is used by Antonio in response to Gonzalo's vision of a utopian society that would have "all men idle, all / And women too, but innocent and pure" (II.i, 157-8). Antonio responds with, "all idle—whores and knaves" (II.i. 169). Stanton interprets this exchange to mean that "female whores . . . [are] offered as the inevitable product of idleness." Further, Stanton asserts the "word 'whore' functions . . . to keep troubling individuals grouped in their marginalized place and to insist that the place is a vulgar, degraded one from which they can never escape." See Kay Stanton's "'Made to write 'whore' upon?': Male and Female Use of the Word 'Whore' in Shakespeare's Canon." *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*. Edited by Dympna Callaghan. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp. 80-102.

polite and public society, and underscored the importance of their conformance with this ideal.[8] A woman whose multiplicity was uncontrolled, and who therefore transgressed from the limited role made available to her by society, was viewed as a destabilizing force who threatened not only the family unit, but also the state. Thus, women were required to stifle any urge toward agency or subjectivity in order to stay within the idealistic, narrow confines of chastity and submissiveness.

But the idealized female identity was not the only role available to women: it was purely the publicly acceptable and encouraged role which British culture said that women "should" occupy. Over the course of this text, I contend that women had access to more than the public identities of either virgin or whore: in fact, they could assume the label virgin, whore, or commodity, although the moral valence of these identities was decidedly unequal. Moreover, a woman could publicly inhabit only one of these identities at a time, because each one was viewed as fixed, immutable, and all-consuming in nature. Nevertheless, while acknowledging the existence of three categories of public identity more accurately captures the social dynamics of femaleness, it glosses over the internal implications of the belief that women were "grotesque" and "unfinished." As such, I also argue that female mutability functioned in direct opposition to the chaste obedience required of women. Women's ability to occupy multiple identities simultaneously, when combined with the threat that they could be corrupted by either their innately fallen states, or the influences of the patriarchal world in which they lived, served as constant reminders that female identity was dynamic. A woman could not simply be assigned a

[8] Thomas Becon's *Catechism* teaches that daughters "must obey their parents, they should avoid idleness, 'they be not full of tongue, and of much babbling [sic]' and finally, when they marry, they should 'presume not to take in hand so grave, waighty, and earnest a matter, nor entangle themselves with the love of anye parson, before they have made their parents . . . privy of their extent, yea and also require their both councel [sic] and consent.'" *Worckes*, London 1564. Becon is quoted in Marie H. Sturgiss's, "Shakespeare's Miranda." *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin*, *Vol. 10, No. 1 Annual Bibliography of Shakesperiana for 1934* (January 1935), pp. 36-44.

politically or socially advantageous identity; she was not merely a virgin, commodity, or whore. Rather, women could always and everywhere inhabit all three roles: they were concurrently virgins, commodities, and whores. In fact, the forcible separation and fragmentation of these three identities caused psychic and emotional schism to women. Thus, to become autonomous agents (then as now), women had to unify their fractured and disaggregated identities. Only in this way could they become whole selves, as opposed to parts or elements of personhood. The division of women into controllable categorizes or identities allowed society the power to elevate, commodify, or destroy women who fell outside the "acceptable" limitations which their culture imposed on them.

As society became increasingly anxious about the dangers associated with uncontrolled and uncontrollable women, literature and art emerged as useful tools with which to reinforce socio-cultural ideals, especially those connected to gender.[9] Entertaining and popular, these works subtly underscored for their audiences, both male and female, the singular function or identity a woman *should* perform. Thus, creative texts served both a pleasurable and an educational function for the public. This is well-demonstrated by the works of William Shakespeare, particularly in later plays such as *The Tempest* (1611). Caliban's relationship with Prospero has long been the center of contemporary *Tempest* scholarship and criticism. However, since the 1970s, feminist scholars have shifted their attention to the female characters in the text, whether present or absent from the action. This new emphasis on female characters has

[9] See Jonathan Goldberg's "Fatherly Authority: The Politics of Stuart Family Images," in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe.* Edited by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986. pp. 3-33. See also Coppélia Kahn's "The Absent Mother in King Lear" and Stephen Orgel's "Prospero's Wife" from the same text.

challenged traditional, male-centered, readings of *The Tempest*, which have historically utilized the play as a standard against which to measure women's idealized or debased public identities.

Public perception and outside influence are important factors in female identity, both historically and literarily. Rarely, if ever, did early modern women have the privilege of self-fashioning.[10] Women were instead viewed as objects upon whom patriarchal, social, political, and/or cultural desires and anxieties could be inscribed. Women also became the living embodiments of male angst which only female submission and obsequiousness could curb (or so it was thought). Throughout the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, women were hence "defined primarily . . . in terms of their gendered relationships to men" (Kemp 30).[11] They were largely without agency, and thereby without the ability to choose a public persona or identity. According to Lawrence Stone in *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*, during the period "between 1450-1630, 'both Church and state provided . . . support for [the] reinforcement of the despotic authority of the husband and father—that is to say the patriarchy.'"[12] It was men's duty to enforce submissiveness in their children, which all women were considered to be, regardless of age (Ferguson, et.al. xviii). In this way, women were compelled to inhabit one of the three aforementioned female roles.

Yet women rarely accepted the limited identities into which they were publicly forced to assimilate. Many early modern women rebelled in both subtle and overt ways against a society and/or family which saw them as a pre-lapsarian Eve ("innocent artless, and sweet"), a piece of moveable property to be bought and sold as necessary, or a problem to be rectified (Sturgiss 37).

[10] Stephen Greenblatt coined the term "renaissance self-fashioning" to refer to the construction of an individual's public persona based on social norms. See *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

[11] Kemp, Theresa D. *Women in the Age of Shakespeare*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010.

[12] Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1983. Stone is quoted in Ferguson, Quilligan, and Vickers' *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourse of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*.

Rebellion against either of the two socially acceptable female roles, virgin or commodity, and/or accusations or suspicions that a woman was a whore, had far-reaching consequences. Not only could they doom the individual woman in question, they could also condemn her entire family to public shame and practically ensure its loss of fortune or prestige.

For both women and their families, obstructions to learning were especially insidious. Women, viewed as the property of her father or husband—and thus as objects rather than subjects—often struggled against the one-dimensional personas with which they were mantled, and the restrictions placed upon them to ensure that they had limited access to public life. Education become one aspect of public life from which women were largely excluded. Prevented from pursuing advanced education, and barred from property rights, women were effectively stripped of their potential for self-sufficient independence. Theresa D. Kemp demonstrates that, with the exception of some aristocratic noblewomen, members of the female gender were prevented from learning anything save the skills of "housewifery" and relational qualities like "being careful of the household goods and capable of instructing young children and servants in Christian piety, thought necessary to be a suitable companion for her husband" (46-47). Unsurprisingly, given this cultural context, few fathers saw any value in educating their daughters in the humanities (grammar, logic, rhetoric, etc.). Even men such as Thomas Becon and Juan Luis Vives, who advocated for women's education and literacy, believed that girls should end their formal education at age nine (Kemp 45).[13] Education for women was necessary

[13] According to A.G. Newell, Thomas Becon (1511-1567) was "one of the most popular and influential Protestant propagandists" of the sixteenth century (94). Newell asserts that Becon was quite concerned that children be educated, and specifically that "the children of believers" receive a "Christian education" (94). Becon is significant here because he did not limit the necessity for education to male children only. Rather, he "advocated for publicly-supported [education] for 'women-children,' staffed by 'honest, sage, wise, discreet, sober, graved and learned matrons'" (99). While Becon advocated for the education of women-children, this was directly tied to Christianity and was thus seen as unnecessary past the age of nine; in Becon's view, young girls' spiritual education was sufficient once they had learned to pray and read the Bible. Too much education was viewed as more detrimental than a lack of education, as the former was thought to lead to licentiousness and impropriety. See A.G.

only inasmuch as it taught women to be chaste and reinforced the limited roles they could inhabit. Vives claimed that the primary purpose for women's education was "the study of wisdom, which doth instruct their manners and inform their living, and teacheth them the way of good and holy life" (169).[14] The majority of education for women thus revolved around religion and bolstered the virgin/whore binary.

In contrast, education was viewed as an absolute necessity for aristocratic men. This is because they were expected to one day exercise power and be leaders—very different challenges than those which would be put upon women, whose primary role was to serve men. Hence, most women were excluded from the world of politics, decision-making, and cultural advancement. Although anomalies existed—including the Tudor queens Mary and Elizabeth, and the daughters of scholar-statesman Thomas More—these women were the exceptions which proved the rule of systematic female disempowerment, not role models whom other women were encouraged to emulate (Kemp 46). While sons were hoped for and praised, daughters were begrudgingly and temporarily accepted, until such time as they could be married off to men. According to Marianne Novy, fathers typically "consider[ed] daughters as only a drain on their money," who had to be cultivated, trained, and effectively sold off to acceptable husbands (69-70).[15]

Yet even as women were largely prevented from engaging with political and commercial realms of work or education, they were slowly being recognized as an active audience for artistic output. Kemp states that while "women were not necessarily encouraged to write their own texts, they were targeted as an important market for books and as patrons of the literary arts" (47).

Newell, "Thomas Becon and Literary Studies." *The Evangelical Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (May-June 1961): pp. 93-101. Newell quotes from Thomas Becon's *Catechism*. See *The Catechism of Thomas Becon*. Edited by J. Ayre for the Parker Society, Cambridge, 1844.

[14] Juan Luis Vives, *Instruction of a Christian Woman* (1523) is quoted in Kemp, pg. 46.

[15] Novy, Marianne. "Shakespeare and Emotional Distance in the Elizabeth Family." *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. Edited by Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995. pp. 65-74.

Consequently, as "literacy rates rose, books published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were increasingly addressed to female audiences" (Kemp 47). As printed works began to cater to a female readership, dramatic works produced for the stage followed suit.

To appeal to this widening audience of women, a greater number of female characters were included in printed texts from the late sixteenth century onwards. Examples include Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton's *The Roaring Girl*, Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerie Queene*, and Shakespeare's dramatic works. However, the increasing focus on women as subjects within the arts did little to disturb or challenge the patriarchal belief that women were capable of handling only a limited range of functions. True to form, then, *The Faerie Queen* (1590), and Shakespeare's early plays—including *Titus Andronicus* (1593-1594) and *The Taming of the Shrew* (1593-1594)—presented women as the physical and emotional embodiments of an accepted trinity of identities: virgin, commodity, or whore.[16] Entertaining and popular, these works subtlety reinforced the belief that each woman could inhabit only one role. While literary works were not purposefully composed to echo conduct manuals, the two genres functioned similarly: they both made visible the risks incurred by a woman, her family, and the state, if and when she failed to comply with her prescribed place in the patriarchal hierarchy. Female rebellion was portrayed as a subversive act which threatened to destabilize the British Empire. Women like Katherine in *The Taming of the Shrew* hence had to have their wills broken and brought into submission, while Tamora in *Titus Andronicus* and Duessa in *The Faerie Queene* had to be destroyed to save men and their nation from contamination and disgrace.

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[16] Spenser, Edmund. *The Faerie Queene, Books I-VI*. Edited by Carol V. Kaske. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2016. Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare. Fourth Edition*. Edited by David Bevington. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1992.

To illustrate the necessity of female compliance, female characters often appeared in pairs: one idealized, the other debased.[17] The seductively dissembling Duessa and Acrasia are compared to their idealized and virtuous counterparts Una and Britomart; the impulsive and independent Katherine is shown next to her younger, obedient sister Bianca; and the murderous Tamora is contrasted against the innocent and victimized Lavinia. In each case, it is clear which version of femininity or womanhood is being advocated for, and which is being warned against. The women viewed as transgressive are quickly dispatched to spare men and the world from the havoc their uncontrolled agency and sexuality creates. Female readers and audience members are thus given a vivid portrayal of what constitutes "appropriate" female identity. While Duessa and Tamora possess impressive powers of seduction, the narratives make clear that theirs is a dangerous path to chaos and destruction. Women, these texts argue, should seek to emulate Una and Britomart's chastity and fidelity while despising the wanton sexuality and duplicity of Duessa and Tamora. And they most certainly should learn, as Katherine eventually did, to hold their tongues.[18]

As alluded to above, no early modern author tapped into the public consciousness or anxiety surrounding women's multiplicity more effectively than did Shakespeare.[19] Shakespeare has been praised for his realistic portrayals of family relations; the inner political intrigues of the

[17] For a discussion of female duality, especially in connection with Duessa and Una in *The Faerie Queene* see Peter Stallybrass's "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed" pp. 130-133. For a parallel discussion of male duality, see Joel Fineman, "Fratricide and Cuckoldry: Shakespeare's Doubles." *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*. Edited by Murry M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, pp. 70-110.

[18] Valerie Traub states that the masculine imposition of silence on women and female characters "is connected with a fear of chaos associated with the sexual act" (121). Duessa and Tamora are both characters intimately associated with debased and wanton sexuality.

[19] Sir Edmund Kerchever Chambers suggests that even though the chronologies of the composition of Shakespeare's plays, performances, and publication dates are generally contested, the first play shown to a public as opposed to a courtly audience was *Henry VI, Part 2* in 1591. See Chambers, E.K. *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930.

state; romances between young lovers; bloody political rivalries; historical dramas; and comedies which mirrored the life of the court, the gentry, and the middling class. In their introduction to *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*, Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps argue that both early modern and contemporary readers and critics have turned to Shakespeare "[in] order to produce a public record of what women 'thought' and 'felt' (or what they 'ought' to think and feel)" (4).[20]

This is especially the case with one of his final plays, *The Tempest* (1611), which has for centuries commanded the consistent attention of audiences and critics.[21] In the four hundred years since it was first composed and performed, responses to *The Tempest* have been varied and at times contentious. Characters within the play have been used to elevate and disparage entire genders, races, and classes of people. Shakespeare has been praised for his depictions of Prospero as the quintessential artist and idealized father who orchestrates a literal tempest to ensure the happy companionate marriage of his only daughter, Miranda. Yet his text has also been interpreted "as a representation of Shakespeare himself bidding farewell to his art—as Shakespeare's legacy" (Orgel 4).[22] To this end, Prospero has been conflated with an aging Shakespeare, in the twilight of his artistic powers and preparing to exit the playhouse, taking stock of his life and legacy.[23] But not all interpreters have been so sympathetic: particularly over

[20] Barker, Deborah E. and Ivo Kamps, editors. *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. London: Verso, 1995.

[21] It is believed that Shakespeare wrote a minimum of 38 plays.

[22] Orgel, Stephen. "Prospero's Wife." *Representations*, No. 8 (Autumn, 1984), pp. 1-13.

[23] Critics in the eighteenth century, including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, were the first to suggest that *The Tempest* contained autobiographical elements. This enabled them to explicitly link Shakespeare (the man) to Prospero (the character). While I believe that this is one possible reading of both Shakespeare and his play, I certainly do not think it is the only appropriate—or even the most likely—interpretation. This is primarily because there is little biographical information which would suggest that Shakespeare endured an extended and self-conscious period of declining health. Shakespeare outlived the first performance of *The Tempest* by five years and had largely retired to Stratford by 1608 (and was thus spared from the bubonic plague which ravaged London in 1609). Moreover, sources indicate that, one month prior to his death, Shakespeare listed himself in documents as being in "perfect health." So, while it is possible that Shakespeare saw that his life was rapidly coming to a close, and was thus in a good psychological place to contemplate the mortality of himself and his work, it is also entirely possible that *The Tempest* was the work of an author intent on capitalizing on the contemporary popularity of travel narratives. See David Sundelson, "So Rare a Wonder'd Father: Prospero's Tempest." *Representing Shakespeare:*

the last seventy years, some critics have seized upon the hostile and often violent relationship between Prospero and Caliban to argue that Shakespeare advocated for colonialism and justified the enslavement of native and indigenous peoples.

While he has been a figure of intrigue since *The Tempest* was first performed in 1611, and entered into the Stationers' Register in November of 1623, Caliban was not always a focus of disagreement and critical contention. In fact, Shakespeare was initially praised for his portrayal of Caliban—a creation whom John Dryden referred to as "a species of himself, begotten by an incubus on a witch."[24] Caliban was the most striking example of Shakespeare's creativity, an invented character and creature never before seen by audiences, leading Samuel Taylor Coleridge to call *The Tempest* "a birth of imagination."[25] Thus, original criticism of the play focused not on Caliban as an individual character or representative of the innate savagery of those deemed as "other," but as a site for Shakespeare to display his own creative art and ingenuity. This led Coleridge to assert, perhaps for the first time, that there might be a connection between the fictional character of Prospero and Shakespeare himself. Coleridge calls Prospero, "the very Shakespeare himself, as it were, of the tempest" (122). Regardless, for critics in the early nineteenth century, the focus of *The Tempest* was most assuredly Prospero and not Caliban. The female characters were ignored.

Prospero's "art" was seen as benevolent by early critics. Thus, it was Prospero who emerged from the text, in the words of Fanny Kemble, as "the representative of wise and

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New Psychoanaltic Essays. Edited by Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1980. pp. 33-53.

[24] From the Preface to "Troilus and Cressida, or, Truth found too late" (1679), in *Dryden: The Dramatic* Works, ed. Montague Summers (London: Nonesuch Press, 1932). V:21-22. Quoted in William Shakespeare's, *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman.

[25] From *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, collected and ed. Henry Nelson Coleridge (London: W. Pickering, 1836), 2: 92-102. Quoted in Hulme and Sherman, p. 121.

virtuous manhood."[26] Prospero became an idealized father and generative force. Kemble, in fact, not only saw her own father in Prospero—an indication of the adoration heaped on such a venerated character—but extended the domestic drama beyond the stage into the cosmos. Kemble likened Shakespeare's characters in the drama to representations of the various links on the Great Chain of Being, placing Prospero as "the middle link. [Prospero]—the wise and good man—is the ruling power, to whom the whole series is subject" (128). [27] Prospero's power over the island and its inhabitants was as a shepherd to his wayward flock, or a king to his subjects; loving, protective, and, if need be, firm. As Jessica Slights points out, "critics emphasized Prospero's dignity and intellect, discovering in Shakespeare's princely necromancer a model of patriarchal wisdom and refined authority" (359). [28] The magic derived from his books makes him singularly capable of governing his small island empire and its few subjects.

The unassailable morality and virtuousness of Prospero, and by extension Shakespeare, persisted for nearly 350 years. However, in the middle of the twentieth century, the critical view of *The Tempest* and its characters shifted. Since 1950, Caliban has been the nexus of *Tempest* criticism and analysis: a cultural and literary touchstone for those seemingly aligned with the master narrative of Prospero, as well as the counter or "other" narrative of Caliban's

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[26] From *Notes upon some of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Richard Bentley & Sons, 1882). Quoted in Hulme and Sherman, p. 128.

[27] According to E. M. W. Tillyard and A.O. Lovejoy's, 1936 work *The Great Chain of Being: The History of an Idea*, the "Great Chain of Being" was a worldview inherited by Medieval and Renaissance cultures grounded in "the idea of a hierarchical universe ordained by God…[and described] as an interconnected web of greater and lesser links. Each link in the chain was an individual species of being, creature, or object. Those links higher on the Chain possessed greater intellect, mobility, and capability than those lower on the Chain." Traditionally, God was placed at the top of the "Chain" followed by Angels, Humans, Animals, Vegetables, and finally Minerals. In Fanny Kemble's interpretation, Ariel represents the "most ethereal" link, with Prospero in the middle Human link, and Caliban as the lowest and "densest" link represented on the Chain (Hulme and Sherman 128). Similar to other early critics, Kemble also sees only benevolence and idealized paternity in the figure of Prospero, and in Prospero's treatment of both Miranda and Caliban. For this reason, Kemble makes much of the similarities she sees between Prospero and her own father.

[28] Slights, Jessica. "Rape and Romanticization of Shakespeare's Miranda." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol. 41, No. 2, Tudor and Stuart Drama (Spring, 2001), pp. 357-379. Slights also quotes Kemble's reference to Prospero as the "middle link" (360).

experience.[29] Postcolonial authors and critics such as Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, George Lamming, Albert Memmi, and Roberto Fernández Retamar have devoted countless pages of text to dissecting and understanding Caliban. Particular attention has been focused on Caliban's relationship with Prospero (Mannoni), his rightful ownership of the island colonized by Prospero (Memmi), and his subsequent enslavement at the hands of a merciless master (Lamming).

Perhaps the biggest point of investigation and contention concerning Caliban is that Prospero imposed his own language on the slave.[30] Rob Nixon asserts that, "as long as Caliban is still bound to his former master's language, he is still partly condemned to live the life of a servant" (568). Caliban's loss of his native language exemplified the forced assimilation to a new master language which many colonized people experienced. The imposition of a new master language erased and marginalized the native voice both literally and figuratively. In short, language became the ultimate weapon of colonization because it severed the bond between a native person and his culture and history.

Caliban thus became an extension of the experiences of many (predominantly) male postcolonial authors, who saw their lives reflected in Shakespeare's much maligned and vilified character. In *The Pleasures of Exile*, George Lamming states that it was the postcolonial (West Indian) author's "job" to make Caliban be heard, asserting that language can be both a tool of

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[29] French psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni's study *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* was first published in 1950. Rob Nixon cites this work as being the first real postcolonial response to *The Tempest*. In his text, Mannoni examines the psychological relationship between Prospero and Caliban, and asserts that their contentious relationship can be explained by the "Prospero (or inferiority) complex and the Caliban (or dependence) complex." See Rob Nixon's, "Caribbean and African Appropriations of *The Tempest*." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 3, Politics and Poetic Value (Spring, 1987), pp. 557-578. p. 563. Mannoni, Octave. *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1950 [2001].

[30] Most critics, especially postcolonial critics, have used Prospero's imposition of his language on Caliban as a reason to condemn Prospero; however, the text clearly states that it was Miranda and not Prospero who taught Caliban to speak. Nevertheless, Miranda has escaped most of the blame and ire placed upon the colonial aspects of the text. I will discuss this at greater length below.

oppression, and a tool with which to fight oppression. Lamming, almost ventriloquizing Caliban's voice, asserts, now that "Caliban [Lamming and the male postcolonial author] had got hold of Prospero's weapons [he] decided he would never again seek his master's permission . . . The time is ripe . . . when masters must learn to read the meaning contained in the signatures of their former slaves . . . Caliban is here to stay" (63).[31] Identification with Caliban soon gave rise to a new genre of art and literature, in which Shakespeare's original text was adapted, rewritten, and appropriated to reflect the postcolonial male experience of colonialism and oppression.[32] The master narratives—of both the play and critical analyses of the play—were rewritten to reflect a newfound focus on Caliban and his legacy within the literary canon, as well as his political and cultural history. For example, Lamming utilized "*The Tempest* as a way of presenting a certain state of feeling which is the heritage of the exiled and colonial writer" (9). Many male postcolonial authors viewed and still view themselves as descendants of Caliban, carrying the symbolic weight of his oppression and marginalization. This, in turn, has thrust upon them the responsibility, or "job," of accurately representing and voicing Caliban's experience. By decolonizing and restoring Caliban's relevance, native language, and right to power, male postcolonial authors have begun to restore—on both an individual and collective level—the identities and histories which colonialism has stolen from them.

As a result of male postcolonial critics' sustained focus on Caliban, other characters in *The Tempest* have been relegated to the margins of scholarly discourse. While countless books have been written about the relationship between Prospero and Caliban, and about Caliban as an

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[31] Lamming, George. *The Pleasures of Exile*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

[32] See George Lamming's *The Pleasures of Exile*, O. Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, and Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1965. The act of appropriating or revising a "minor character" such as Caliban has been termed by Jeremy Rosen "minor-character elaboration." See *Minor Characters Have their Day: Genre and the Contemporary Literary Marketplace.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2016.

individual, they are not my focus here. The study of Prospero and Caliban is important, however, because it has had the curious effect of convincing readers that investigation of *The Tempest* should stop with Prospero and Caliban: that the other characters are, if not useless, at least of lesser theatrical and critical importance. On this note, Melissa E. Sanchez suggests in her article, "Seduction and Service in *The Tempest*":

> While postcolonial criticism of *The Tempest* has offered an important corrective to the naïve politics of mythic readings [of Caliban and Prospero], it has often shared with early criticism the tendency to consign female characters to the status of passive objects within the play's politics, rather than [acknowledging them as] the active participants [which] they in fact are. (51-52)[33]

In fact, many critics state that—save for Miranda, Prospero's idealized and obedient daughter—the text is entirely devoid of female presence and influence.[34] For these interpreters, Claribel and Sycorax do not exist. Indeed, even Miranda is written off and ignored as a flat, one-dimensional character: a trope of idealized femininity, rather than a "flesh and blood" subject. Kemble, for instance, refers to Miranda as "*simply* angelic [emphasis mine]" and acknowledges her only as a plot device, wholly devoid of agency (130). Similarly, Slights suggests that "when she is mentioned at all, Miranda appears either as an archetype of pliant womanliness or as an allegorical, sentimentalized figure for the tender and fecund aspects of untamed nature" (360). Miranda is, in essence, blazoned into her essential function or part.

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[33] Sanchez, Melissa E. "Seduction and Service in *The Tempest*." *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (Winter, 2008), pp. 50-82.

[34] Quoting G. Wilson Knight, David Sundelson "concludes that 'except for Prospero, Ariel and Caliban, the people scarcely exist in their own right'" (34). Likewise, Coppélia Kahn asserts that "Miranda [is an] accessory to [her] father's development as [a character] rather than [a character] developed for [her] own sake." See Kahn's essay, "The Providential Tempest and the Shakespearian Family" in *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*. pp. 217-243.

The use of the Petrarchan convention of the blazon—the cataloguing of feminine attributes—reduces Miranda, and all women, to the status of non-people, so as to master them (Traub 131). This tactic of controlling or destroying women by blazoning them out of humanity has been replicated by Shakespeare's original viewing public, by later eighteenth and nineteenth century revisions of the play, and also by the contemporary male authors who (re)appropriate *The Tempest* to praise Prospero and/or restore Caliban.[35] Further, Christine Arkinstall asserts the blazon is a decidedly male strategy, meant to disenfranchise and subjugate women: a "masculine construction and proclamation of an ideal femininity, symbolic of the other . . . only made possible by a dismemberment of the same" (424).[36] Miranda has consequently been viewed primarily (or possibly exclusively) as a symbolic figure—as an essentialized element of femininity or womanliness—rather than as an autonomous subject. Even into the twenty-first century, Miranda endures as a ghost, a shadow figure who haunts the text, serving a minimal literary function and otherwise being silent. Miranda exists, in the words of Irene Lara, as a "present absence," while the other ignored and marginalized female characters in *The Tempest*—namely Claribel and Sycorax—become "absent presence[s]" (18).[37]

The lack of feminist scholarship and criticism focusing on the women in Shakespeare's play has been, in the minds of many male authors, understandable. Women occupied a liminal and inferior role in early modern England, and their situation had only marginally improved by

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[35] Blazoning Miranda, so as to only recognize her idealized qualities, accomplishes several things for predominantly male authors and critics. Firstly, it allows them to contend with and neutralize her innate and transgressive female qualities, those connected to sexuality and agency. Secondly, it allows them to ignore the fact that Miranda's innate and transgressive qualities are exactly those exemplified by Claribel and Sycorax.

[36] Arkinstall, Christine. "Refiguring the Blazon: The Politics of Empire Building in Cristina Perri Rossi's 'Descripción de un naufragio.'" *Revisita Hispánica Moderna*, Año 51, No. 2 (Dec., 1998), pp. 423-440.

[37] Lara, Irene. "Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax." *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 9 No. 1, November 2001, pp. 80-98. Stephen Orgel also uses the term "absent presence" in his introduction to *The Tempest* in 1987, although he only uses the term to refer to Miranda's mother. See Stephen Orgel's "Introduction" to *The Tempest*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

the twentieth century. Early modern and male postcolonial scholars have hence asserted that the heart of Shakespeare's text is Prospero and Caliban—not the shadow character Miranda, much less the absent Claribel and Sycorax. Until the late 1970s, then, almost all criticism of *The Tempest* was written by male authors, about predominantly male characters. Nixon explains:

> Given that Caliban is without a female counterpart in his oppression and rebellion, and given the largely autobiographical cast of African and Caribbean appropriations of the play, it follows that all the writers who quarried from *The Tempest* an expression of their lot should have been men. (577)

In other words, Nixon claims that because the main characters in *The Tempest* are male, it is only reasonable that the scholars who identify and work with it are also male. Because of these dynamics, *The Tempest* has taken on the aura of a distinctly male text, and women's access to it has been limited.

Even into the late twentieth century, feminist critics who sought to challenge the Caliban/Prospero-centered approach of *Tempest* criticism had to operate on the fringes of a privileged domain of male scholarship. Shakespearean texts, and the cultural conversations surrounding them, were "site(s) of enormous cultural power;" hence, feminist critics have had to overcome powerful male resistance to the critical status quo in the form of "indifference" to feminist readings of Shakespeare in particular, as well as to female authors and characters in general (Barker and Kamps 1-2). This new crop of female scholars and critics were intrigued by the silencing of female characters in the text. Moreover, that silencing extended to their own experience of marginalization and oppression as women in general, and postcolonial women in particular. Sofia Munoz Valdivieso suggests that Miranda has been "doubly erased," both from *The Tempest* and from political readings of the text which have centered on the "issue of

colonialism. Thus critics have seen Caliban as a symbol of the exploited native, but have often underplayed or ignored the specific repression of Miranda," and by extension the erasure of the female agent and narrative (299).[38] To critics such as Munoz Valdivieso, then, it is clear that a feminist reading of the text—one that not only contends with the play's anticolonial elements, but also takes into account "gender issues"—remains indispensable (299).

Feminist critics saw the necessity of expanding *Tempest* scholarship to include all the play's characters—both male and female, whether present or absent—for a more complete understanding of Shakespeare's frame narrative and its contemporary implications. Placing Caliban, and thereby the male postcolonial experience of oppression and colonization, at the center of *The Tempest* served the (un)intended consequence of doubly marginalizing the female characters: those both physically present and those whose names and legacies merely haunt the text. Jennifer Sparrow states that, "in positing Caliban as *the only* victim of Prospero's will-to-power, obscured the ways in which both daughter and slave are subject to Prospero's authority [original emphasis]."[39] As will be explained more fully in the chapters that follow, these relational dynamics have contributed to women and female characters being seen as fragmented and disaggregated beings. This disunity has been capitalized upon (albeit largely unintentionally) by male postcolonial authors and critics as a means by which to continuously silence and erase female narratives and experiences.

This study will treat the following texts: William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953),

[38] Valdivieso, Sofia Munoz. "Double Erasure in *The Tempest*: Miranda in Postmodern Critical Discourse." *Sederi*, 9 (1998), pp. 299-304.

[39] Sparrow, Jennifer. "From *Prospero's Daughter* to Caliban's Woman": Elizabeth Nunez Reimagines *The Tempest*." *MaComère* 10 (2008): 80-95. pp. 80-81.

Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986), and Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter* (2006). The collection of works discussed, on the surface, may seem disconnected and randomly selected. However, the features they all share—the project of restoring problematic or erased female narratives, and the goal of redefining female identity and gender roles—shows their indebtedness to Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Together, they represent both direct adaptations of *The Tempest* (*Prospero's Daughter*) and works more obliquely inspired by Shakespeare's original characters and established hierarchy on the island of exile. Authors have been drawn to the frame narrative of marriage as a means through which to achieve redemption or reconciliation (*Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*), and the threat posed to hegemonic masculinity by highly sexualized and powerful women (*The Crucible* and *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*). Texts inspired by *The Tempest* have even revealed the failures of chauvinistic male authors who attempt to speak for women by reinserting the expunged female experience into the homosocial world of conquest and colonization (*Robinson Crusoe* and *Foe*).

When one looks at the extant, predominantly male revisions and appropriations of *The Tempest*, a troubling pattern begins to emerge, especially within those texts which almost myopically focus on Caliban and Prospero. The women that haunt Shakespeare's stage, and the minds of his audience and critics, are viewed as inconsequential. They are thus relegated to the shadows, to live as ghost characters: in this capacity, they perform a singular function and are then rapidly exiled from the stage and, by extension, the world. This dismissal and, often, vilification of the multiplicity of the female voice, identity, and experience as expressed in the play by Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax, leaves *Tempest* scholarship incomplete; worse, it replicates and perpetuates the blazoning of its original female characters on its readers, whether male or female. By bringing these works into conversation with each other in a way which has

never before been done, female authors are empowered to redress the errors and omissions committed by both early modern and contemporary authors and critics of *The Tempest*. Moreover, it establishes the foundation necessary for subsequent feminist readings of Shakespeare, as well as many other male-authored literary works.

As previously stated, beginning in the 1970s—when feminist authors and critics first began to question a literary tradition which excluded the female perspective—female characters, both absent and present from *The Tempest* have begun to garner some critical attention. However, an interesting thing also happened; the newfound feminist focus on *The Tempest* also redirected male critical attention to the female characters. Several male authors, like Stephen Orgel, began to ask questions regarding what has become of the women they believe *should* populate the text; this includes, for example Miranda's mother/Prospero's wife. Orgel has also questioned why Miranda was not granted a sister, and why the mythological "widow Dido" became a focus of discussion for Gonzalo, Sebastian, Adrian, and Antonio (Act 2, Scene I, lines 65-100). Even Sylvia Wynter, in "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman'" has suggested that the most significant absence in *The Tempest* is "Caliban's Woman…, Caliban's physiognomically complementary mate" (360).[40] It is telling that the figures who have sparked investigation and consideration are largely theoretical characters; Miranda's mother and the widow Dido are mentioned in passing, but there are no references to Miranda having a sister or Caliban having a more appropriate mate. The women around whom most anxiety has historically swirled—Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax—have been largely excluded from such discussions. Perhaps male authors demurred from speaking for

[40] Wynter, Sylvia. "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman.'" *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Edited by Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido. New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1990. pp. 355-37.

a female “other” out of concern that they would misrepresent or misinterpret the female voice or experience, preferring instead to focus on the characters and narratives more closely related to their own experiences of benevolent, artistic ingenuity (Prospero) or postcolonial alterity (Caliban). For those who attempted to treat female characters at all, perhaps it seemed more reasonable to address them individually, and examine their interactions with the overwhelmingly male cast of characters. However, even those efforts have tended to privilege the male gaze and perspective—how Caliban, Ferdinand, and Prospero look at Miranda, or how Ariel remembers and talks about Sycorax.

Regardless, the female experience—both inside *The Tempest*’s text and outside of it—has traditionally been filtered through a male lens and has consisted solely of male interpretations of female desires and motivations (or more accurately, has revealed the projection of male desires onto female activities). This attitude has largely persisted unquestioned and unchallenged. After all, none of the women mentioned in the play encounter each other, and are far too dissimilar in character and function to be viewed as a collective. Yet it is exactly this tendency to view women as elemental and singular, and to dismiss feminine dynamism and interconnection, which I seek to address here. In fact, through this study, the female authors I treat succeed in dismantling these oppressive patriarchal constructs.

With this in mind, I will argue that it is fundamentally necessary to approach female characters and narratives as unified and multivalent wholes, as opposed to disaggregated and easily controlled singular identities. To accomplish this, I will not merely focus on *The Tempest* and its characters but will utilize Shakespeare’s drama as a method and theory of reading female narrative and experience in the larger field of literary appropriations. Often the very urge that compels authors to revisit, rewrite, and restore canonical texts lies in the perceived limitations or

failures of the original work, author, or time period. Shakespeare's work is not immune from these restrictions nor is he the originator of these failures. Even so, it is significant that countless scholars have chosen to revise Shakespeare, specifically: their efforts comprise a critique of both his writings and his place in the English literary canon (they also illuminate the enthymematic quality of his work). But as I will show, *The Tempest* itself offers up a method which scholars can utilize to expose and resuscitate expunged female narratives and bring them from the margins of literary discourse to the center of both their respective texts and the attention of critics.

The female authors discussed in these pages—specifically Rhys, Condé, and Nunez—succeed in creating female characters and female-centered stories which exceed the limitations placed upon them by a suffocatingly (white), male literary tradition. [41] Not only are their woman characters exposed as sites of feminine resistance to hegemonic masculinity, the power of these characters' dynamism—their "prismatism"—extends to female readers as well. To further and more clearly illuminate the successes of female-centered literary theories and creative approaches, I contrast such female-authored works and characters against J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*. Coetzee's re-appropriation and reworking of *Robinson Crusoe* exemplifies the difficulties experienced by male authors who appear to want to restore erased female narratives, yet only succeed in caricaturizing feminism, feminist approaches, and ventriloquizing the female voice.

To my knowledge, the texts in the following chapters have never been discussed as part of the same study. With the exception of *Prospero's Daughter*, which to date has attracted little critical attention, the literary works in this study have had a long and storied critical life. For

[41] These successes are not exclusively female. Many postcolonial male authors, including those mentioned earlier (i.e. Lamming and Césaire), have had great success in appropriating male characters from canonical texts and restoring them to literary primacy.

example, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have utilized the "madwoman in the attic" trope—created by Brontë and appropriated by Rhys—as the focus of their groundbreaking work.[42] Condé's work is likewise well-known within the realms of Francophone and postcolonial fiction, where it has often become a site of feminist exploration. Even Coetzee, the lone male author discussed here, is no stranger to fierce literary debates and critical inquiry, especially with regard to his female characters. But my study is the first time that they will all be treated together (and, dare I say, the last time they will ever be viewed as *not* commenting and building on each other). Thus, my analysis contributes to the fields of feminist and postcolonial literary analysis by tracing the patterns and replications within each work, and by explaining the literary legacy which they all owe to Shakespeare's enthymematic and enigmatic female characters.

The patterns and similarities I highlight were always there, as were the myriad examples of female narratives and experiences which have been willfully omitted from the historical and literary record. I seek to reveal and begin the work of dismantling the ways in which female agency and sexuality have been (re)inscribed as monstrous, how female liminality and prismatism has been fragmented. Myriam Chancy asserts the "necessity of taking up the struggle to reclaim an identity of fragmentation – a fragmentation caused by imperialism and colonialism" and in reclaiming it transforming it into female empowerment (137).[43] And yet, even the female authors who strive to give voice to the silenced female multitudes in literary works have failed to see how the marginalization experienced by one character bleeds over and into others. Rhys feels a kinship with Antoinette/Claribel, Condé with Tituba/Tituba, and Nunez with Virginia/Miranda—but no contemporary critics have seen the web that connects them all.

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[42] Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, 2000.

[43] Chancy, Myriam. *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Writers in Exile*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997.

By excavating and reclaiming sites of literary connection between these characters, I expose the barriers imposed upon women for the purposes of disaggregating their identities. Such divisions are perpetuated regardless of race or class, and function as artificial strategies to further silence and oppress women. Only by recognizing and celebrating the similarities that unite female experiences can the barriers be forever destroyed and female prismatism actualized.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: The Male Lens and the Failed Female Narrative

In Chapter 1, I will discuss J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) and Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). There, I will argue that Coetzee's rewriting of Defoe's classic travel narrative from a woman's perspective brings into focus the literary practice of textually silencing both female characters and female experience. By reinserting Susan Barton's lost narrative, and restoring Shakespeare's expunged triad of Prospero, Caliban, and Miranda on Crusoe's island, Coetzee echoes Sylvia Wynter and calls into question why female narratives have historically been suppressed, omitted, or written out of the historical record.[44] While Coetzee seeks to locate what the function of silencing female characters is, he remains unable to negotiate feminine absence, much less to collapse the divisions between male and female experiences and narratives. Coetzee—a white, colonial, misogynistic author—will never be able to truly express or write the female experience, in no small part because Susan is not the true subject he wants to explore. Rather Susan serves only as a lens through which to more closely consider Friday and homosociality. However, by placing Susan Barton on the island with Robinson Crusoe, and shifting Defoe's original narrative from a male to a female voice, Coetzee (perhaps

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[44] Wynter, Sylvia. "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman.'" *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Edited by Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido's. Trenton: Africa World Press, 1990. pp. 355-373, p. 365.

unintentionally) helps to bring attention to the tradition of erasing female narratives. In his hands, Susan becomes a failed Miranda figure, a caricature of feminism. Through Susan, Coetzee illuminates but fails to dismantle the systems which silence female characters; instead, he exposes himself as a defender and replicator of gendered colonial violence. Nevertheless, he succeeds in forcing readers to question a literary tradition of male authors who ventriloquize women and their experiences while failing to accurately represent them. Despite the fact that Susan exposes only the author's own misogyny, my analysis of her illustrates the power of female-created appropriations of Shakespearean women like Antoinette, Tituba, and Virginia. By extension, it builds the foundation necessary to critically unsilence women: unifying their identities and restoring lost female narratives. Rather than merely "recuperating the past," contemporary (female) postcolonial authors look to the future and create characters which lay claim to what is rightfully theirs (Scarboro 192).[45]

Chapter 2: The Politics of Sacrifice

In Chapter 2, I discuss how women are regarded, both textually and socially, by a Renaissance audience as property; profitable commodities to be bought and sold for the purposes of increasing male power or honor. Utilizing Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), I trace the ways female characters have come to see their own value, reclaim control of their identities and subjectivity, and, by extension, re-instate their own narratives. By creating a life and a history for Brontë's madwoman in the attic, Rhys contributes to the restoration of other lost female narratives. While Rhys does not explicitly adapt *The Tempest*, her treatment of Antoinette, as a problem to be dealt with, connects her to Shakespeare's Claribel. Both Claribel and Antoinette are commodified by their male family

[45] Scarboro, Ann Armstrong, Afterword to Maryse Condé's , *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*.

members to forge an alliance with a powerful foe, are married off to foreign men, and are sent overseas, seemingly never to be heard from again. In essence, each character is traded as a form of "sexual barter."[46] Though Claribel objects to her union with the King of Tunis, Antoinette understands her position as property, and the value she has in a hegemonically male society; thus, Antoinette exclaims of her pre-arranged marriage to the unnamed Rochester, "[t]his must happen" (Rhys 43).[47] With these examples in mind, I explain how giving voice to the ignored or silenced narratives of female characters traded through marriage begins the work of restoring Claribel's lost narrative, and intimately connects her to Shakespeare's other female characters, namely Sycorax and Miranda. Moreover, I note how this literary action helps to liberate all those female characters who have suffered similar fates.

Chapter 3: A Sisterhood of Witchcraft

Chapter 3 will discuss Sycorax and her legacy in postcolonial writing. Powerful female characters, like Sycorax and other accused or confessed witches, inspire fear and are believed to pose a danger to their patriarchal societies. Focusing on Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986) and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953), I trace the Protean figure of Sycorax from her Renaissance origins to Condé's Tituba. In telling her own story, Tituba restores her "intentionally ignored" historical narrative to wholeness, and thereby transforms this one-dimensional historical figure to fluid and fleshy vibrancy.[48] I further argue that, through Tituba, Sycorax (the much maligned and feared "blue eyed hag" from Shakespeare's nightmare of

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[46] Emery, Mary Lou. *Jean Rhys at "World's End": Novels of Colonial and Sexual Exile*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990, pp. 7-20. Cited in Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Edited by Judith L. Raiskin. New York: W.W. Norton & Company 1999, p. 163

[47] Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Ed. Judith L. Raiskin. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999.

[48] Davis, Angela Y. Foreword pg. ix, in Condé, Maryse, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Ballantine Books, 1986. See also, Marni Gauthier's, "Historical Figures Transformed: Free Enterprise and *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*" in *Beyond Adaptation: Essays on Radical Transformations of Original Works.* Edited by Phyllis Frus and Christy Williams. Jefferson: McFarland, 2010. pp, 42-56.

femininity and power) finally exacts her textual revenge by exposing how witchcraft accusations were historically utilized by the patriarchy to fragment and destroy women viewed as unruly and transgressive. Through Tituba, then, Condé does more than remind contemporary female authors, readers, and critics of the power of the individual and collective female perspective: she also makes it clear that, by omitting such from the historical or cultural record, we damage our collective consciousness and literary tradition.

Chapter 4: (Wo)Men in the Caribbean

Chapter 4 will focus on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611) and Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter* (2006). In this chapter, I will argue that Miranda—who has traditionally been treated as a flat character without agency, viewed as the idealized virginal woman, and/or just ignored by critics and scholars—is a site of female rebellion and reunification. From her first appearance in *The Tempest*, Miranda subverts the limited role to which she has been relegated: that of the obedient, dutiful, virginal and idealized woman.[49] Consequently, Miranda rebels against her father and his order that she "Obey [him] and be attentive."[50] Miranda's implicit and natural resistance to paternal authority in Shakespeare's original text is explored more deeply and overtly in Nunez's adaptation, *Prospero's Daughter*. Tracing Miranda through Shakespeare's original text to Nunez, I will argue that Miranda is a complex and multidimensional character who—far from being a passive figure upon whose body male desires and ambitions are inscribed—is an agent who subtly controls her own narrative and sexuality. Nunez's text, and her treatment of Miranda through the character of Virginia, is thus corrective

[49] Miranda first appears in Act I, Scene ii

[50] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. (Act I, Scene ii 38), pp. 8.

because it envisions the heretofore fragmented and disjointed figure of Miranda as a unified and subversive whole.

These chapters ultimately make clear how each female-authored text highlights male writers' misogyny, chauvinism, and bias. Even men who approach their women characters with the best of intentions are ill-equipped to understand the complexities and nuances of the female experience. Shakespeare's original play contained all three versions of womanhood—virgin, commodity, and whore—who must be viewed as facets of the same woman who has been disaggregated. Readers must also see the disparate texts that treat each character separately as similarly connected. To ultimately restore the triumvirate of female roles as established by Shakespeare to multiplicity and prismatism, one must bring the various texts that explore them into conversation and unification. That is exactly what I have done.

Methodology/Research Contribution

Inspired by Allewaert's theory of "elemental" characters, the new conception of "prismatic" figures presented here contributes to the fields of postcolonial and feminist studies by recovering and restoring to wholeness a series of lost, omitted, or otherwise ignored female narratives. In so doing, it unifies the disaggregated female body, and reinvigorates a research area which has yet to be fully explored. These limited explorations have tended to privilege one character over another. For example, while Miranda and Sycorax have been the focus of multiple prior studies, Claribel has only recently been viewed as a subject worthy of academic investigation.[51] Moreover, critical attention has largely been focused on analyzing each character

[51] For explorations of Sycorax see: Abena P.A. Busia's "Silencing Sycorax: On African Colonial Discourse and the Unvoiced Female." *Cultural Critique,* No. 14. The Construction on Gender Modes of Social Division II (Winter, 1989-1990), pp. 81-104; Caroline Cakebread's *Sycorax Speaks: Marina Warner's Indigo and The Tempest*. na, 1999; Tanya L. Shields' "Signs of Sycorax." *Bodies and Bones: Feminist Rehearsal and Imagining Caribbean Belonging*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014, pp. 114-144; and May Joseph's "The Scream of Sycorax" *Nomadic Identities: The Performance of Citizenship*. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1999. For a

as an independent figure, with little or no connection to any of the other women in Shakespeare's original text. At best, these characters have been contrasted and measured against their limited essential characteristics. For example, Miranda is understood as the idealized and obedient symbol of unthreatening femininity and womanhood *because* she is everything that Sycorax is not; readers are hence encouraged to measure Miranda's purity against Sycorax's presumed baseness. In this way, scholars' tendency to treat each figure independently has reinforced, rather than collapsed, the limited roles into which Renaissance society struggled to fit women. In deliberate opposition to this approach, I conceive of Miranda, Sycorax, and Claribel as interconnected elements within a larger female personality/personhood. As a result, I am able to articulate the value and necessity of their interconnectedness.

Within the field of postcolonial literature, and specifically of postcolonial adaptation, there are a multitude of texts which could be of potential assistance to my areas of inquiry. Yet in the process of focusing my argument, Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), Maryse Condé's, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986), Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter* (2006), and J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) emerged as my most useful textual tools. Thanks to their explorations of Shakespeare's voiceless and expunged female characters, I have found that they prompt especially meaningful thought about the consequences of living as a fragmented and disjointed gendered (or sexed) being. At the center of each text is a disaggregated female character and feminized body, as well as her concomitant drive to reestablish corporeal harmony and so achieve agency. Each female character investigated in this project (Claribel, Miranda, Sycorax, Antoinette, Virginia, Tituba, and Susan) shares traits, impulses, and plural identities. Myriam

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discussion of Claribel, see Jerry Brotton's "'This Sir was Carthage': Contesting Colonialism in The Tempest" in *Post-Colonial Shakespeares* Ed. Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin. London: Routledge, 1998. pp. 23-43.

Chancy stresses the “necessity of inserting Afro-Caribbean [and all] women’s stories of resistance to fragmentation and exploitation in history” (143). Through the created community of womanhood, the female characters addressed here assert the importance of restoring lost and suppressed female narratives. And by subverting a centuries-long tendency to categorize and compartmentalize female characters into their essential or elemental parts, these texts compel readers and critics to question the blatant omission of the female literary voice and experience. Only through a process of critical questioning, analyzing, and re-building of the self can reconciliation between the many parts of womanhood (and womankind) finally occur.

Chapter I

Cast Away: The male lens and the failed female narrative

When it was first performed in 1611, William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* joined a long literary tradition of shipwreck narratives. Such stories and travelogues were popular because they allowed characters to be transformed, take on new identities, and/or be elevated or degenerated through contact with native "others." Even with the genre's increasing visibility and acclaim, early modern audiences, and Shakespeare himself, could not have anticipated the impact *The Tempest* would have on both the literary world and popular culture. Its influence was generated, in part, by its ability to inspire a tremendous number of recasts, re-appropriations, and even full-scale re-writes (one of which was set in outer space). The first of these appeared in 1667, when John Dryden and William D'Avenant published *The Tempest; or The Enchanted Island*. Since then, Shakespeare's original text has been frequently recast as a means of social critique—interpreted as being about class, gender, race, socioeconomics, authorship, family, and mortality. Texts as wide-ranging as "Swift's *Gulliver's Travels;* Voltaire's *Candide*; Poe's 'A Descent into the Maelstrom'; Tennyson's 'Enoch Arden'; [and] Robert Browning's 'Caliban upon Setebos,'" all owe thanks to *The Tempest* and the characters originally established by Shakespeare which inspired their own literary homages (Morrison 7).[52] Authors have gravitated to the figures of Prospero, Caliban, and Miranda in the hopes of duplicating and problematizing their interactions, motivations, and narratives. Others have been drawn to the absent presences of Claribel and Sycorax and have sought to uncover their missing narratives. In the four hundred years since it

[52] See James V. Morrison. *Shipwrecked: Disaster and Transformation in Homer, Shakespeare, Defoe, and the Modern World.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014.

was first performed *The Tempest* has become a tool of investigation, a lens through which other literary works could be grappled with and analyzed.

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) belongs to the literary tradition solidified by Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.[53] However, Defoe adapts the triumvirate of Prospero, Caliban, and Miranda by eliminating the female figure. Without a female presence on the island, the male castaways can create an idealized homosocial society free from transgressive and disruptive female influence.[54] Defoe's text implicitly identifies Miranda as the epicenter of discord and suggests that an island inhabited solely by Prospero and Caliban can establish the social hierarchy necessary to bring order and harmony to the uncivilized world. The tension and conflict created by the female presence, around which Shakespeare's text revolves, is resolved in Defoe's adaptation by Miranda's elimination.

However, the erasure of Miranda becomes itself problematic. What are readers and critics to make of a world that not only lacks a tangible female presence, but thrives as a result of that lack? J.M. Coetzee's 1986 adaptation of the canonical *Robinson Crusoe*, *Foe*, investigates what happens to an Edenic homosocial society when Shakespeare's originally created triumvirate is restored by reinserting the expunged Miranda/Susan onto Prospero/Crusoe and Caliban/Friday's island. Coetzee's reinterpretation of Miranda and the restoration of the triumvirate ultimately fails, however, because—as a chauvinist author—Coetzee is unable to accurately represent the

[53] Robinson O. Murphy suggests that Friday is Caliban's "literary ancestor," and Robinson Crusoe "is one of the canonical empire fantasies Coetzee targets in his *Foe*" (183). See "Black Friday, Queer Atlantic." *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 49, No. 2 (Summer 2018), pp. 182-198.

[54] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick suggests that homosociality, or what she describes as "homosocial desire" is connected to "emerging pattern[s] of male friendship, mentorship, entitlement, [and] rivalry…; and that no element of this pattern can be understood outside of its relation to women and the gender system as a whole" (3). In essence, Sedgwick claims that even without a corporeal female presence in a literary homosocial Eden such as that created by Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*, the female presence asserts itself through its apparent omission. See Sedgwick's *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

female experience. Instead, what emerges from the text is not the restored female narrative of Susan, and by extension Miranda, but the ventriloquized voice of Coetzee himself. Elizabeth D. Harvey suggests that "ventriloquism" or the "appropriation of the feminine voice" in literary works becomes problematic in that "it reflects and contributes to a larger cultural silencing of women" (12).[55] Thus, Susan and her tale become a caricature of feminism; how Coetzee conceives of womanhood and female narratives, but one that continues to fall victim to male appropriation and an androcentric (at best) and a misogynistic (at worst) agenda. Susan fails to give voice to Miranda because Coetzee is unable to write an authentic female character. Rather, the readers perspective in *Foe* becomes "masculinized" which "effectively eras[es] the female perspective" (Harvey 26). In Coetzee's hands, Miranda is both limited and limiting: Coetzee struggles, but is unable to find a place for Miranda, and the place of the female creative voice in the literary canon. At the heart of *Foe's* failure is the reality that Coetzee's own creative urge and obsession were not focused on the missing female experience of Miranda, as made visible in Susan Barton; they were centered instead on the irrevocably silent Caliban/Friday. Socially, culturally, and racially restricted from appropriating Caliban, Coetzee settles for Miranda. However, Miranda/Susan is a subject of interest to Coetzee not because of the possibility erased female narrative holds, but for the ways in which she can be utilized as an alternative lens through which to view and interpret Caliban/Friday.

Foe opens, not with a shipwreck, but with an exile. Susan, Coetzee's female narrator, washes ashore on Crusoe's island. After being found by Friday, she begins to recite her narrative,

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[55] Harvey, Elizabeth D. *Ventriloquized Voices: Feminist Theory and English Renaissance Texts*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992. In the article "A Feminist Critique of '*Voice*' and the '*Other*' in J.M. Coetzee's Post-Colonial Novel *Foe*" Nushrat Azam asserts that "Coetzee develops the theme of appropriation through language" in *Foe* (166). Further, she claims that Susan "acts as a ventriloquist" for Friday (166). *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature,* Vol. 7, Iss. 7, (Dec. 2018), pp.164-170.

and in doing so attempts to give voice to the experience of women and female characters throughout literature and history by announcing: "I am cast away" (5).[56] Readers familiar with Defoe's novel *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* may recognize the name Susan, but her appearance in *Robinson Crusoe* is incongruous.[57] There were no female characters in *Robinson Crusoe*, besides brief mentions of a mother or wife, and there certainly were not any female castaways on Crusoe's island. So, who is Susan Barton? Why is she dropped into a classic tale of masculine self-reliance and human economy? Are readers to believe, as Coetzee would have them, that a female presence *had* existed on Crusoe's island? If so, what has become of her in the hundreds of years since *Robinson Crusoe* was first published? The answer is found in Susan's narration: women were, historically, cast away. As Lubomír Doležel points out, J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* is a novel obsessed with authorship and authority.[58] *Foe* is concerned with who gets to speak and who is silenced. By focusing on the historically marginalized figures of a woman and an African slave—Susan and Friday—*Foe* exposes the ways in which history is controlled and represented by white patriarchy. [59] Such coercion is exerted here by both Coetzee and Defoe, who together "cast away" problematic and destabilizing narratives and alternative histories.

[56] Coetzee, J.M. *Foe*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986. It should be noted that Coetzee changes the spelling of Defoe's eponymous protagonist from Crusoe to Cruso. When referring to Coetzee's text I will use his spelling (Cruso), when referencing Defoe's I will use his (Crusoe).

[57] Defoe, Daniel. *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress; or, a History of the Life and Vast Variety of Fortunes of Mademoiselle de Beleau, afterwards called the Countess de Wintselsheim in Germany Being the Person known by the Name of the Lady Roxana in the time of Charles II*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964. This text will be referred to as *Roxana*. And Defoe, Daniel. *The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe of York, Mariner*. Edited by Michael Shinagel. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. Second Edition 1994. In *Roxana*, the largely unnamed narrator only once refers to herself by her true name, Susan (205). For the first 176 pages of the text, the female narrator remains unnamed. On page 176, she is christened "Roxana" after performing a costumed dance. Coetzee gives Defoe's Susan/Roxana the surname "Barton."

[58] See Lubomír Doležel's *Heterocosmica: Fiction and Possible Worlds*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998, as quoted in Marco Caracciolo's "J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* and the Embodiment of Meaning." *Journal of Modern Literature*, Vol. 36, No. 1, (Fall 2012), pp. 90-103, p. 91.

[59] I use the term "patriarchy" here to refer to the cultural and social hierarchy which privileges and empowers white men over white women, white men over people of color (both male and female), and whiteness—as represented by Coetzee, Defoe, Foe, Cruso/Crusoe, Prospero, Shakespeare, Miranda and Susan—over the blackness or "otherness" represented by Caliban and Friday.

Utilizing a close reading and textual analysis of the shipwreck narrative established by William Shakespeare in *The Tempest*, this chapter will explore Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*. I will argue that by rewriting Defoe's classic travel narrative from Miranda's erased female perspective, Coetzee re-performs the unfortunate literary and historical tendency to textually silence gendered and racialized characters and experiences. By eliminating Crusoe and (re)inserting Miranda/Susan's lost narrative, Coetzee echoes Sylvia Wynter by calling into question why female narratives have historically been suppressed, omitted, or written out of the historical record (365).[60] By asking why female characters and characters of color are silenced, Coetzee attempts to negotiate this absence. While he is unable to fully collapse the divisions between male and female experiences and narratives, Coetzee succeeds in uncovering (perhaps accidentally) the expulsion of the female and native voices from the historical record and exposes the necessity of restoring those erased stories; a project that will be taken up by, and eventually achieved by postcolonial female authors. Yet Coetzee, as a white, male author, is ultimately unable to truly express or write the gendered or racialized experience. By placing Susan on the island with Robinson Crusoe, and having her account stand as the lone surviving narrative, Coetzee exposes the ways in which history can be used to keep people, especially women and people of color, hidden in the shadows.[61]

Coetzee's project fails, however, in that he is unable to keep his text focused on Susan, *Foe's* apparent subject; rather he recreates and reenacts the centuries of violence committed against female characters, authors, and agents. While he attempts to expose the omitted female

[60] Wynter asks readers to question "Miranda's mean" and ask "What is the systemic function of her silencing?" (365). Wynter, Sylvia. "Beyond Miranda's Meanings: Un/silencing the 'Demonic Ground' of Caliban's 'Woman'" in Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido's, *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature.* Trenton: Africa World Press, 1990.

[61] For a further discussion of Coetzee's "feign[ed] women's writing," see Benita Parry's "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J.M. Coetzee." *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995*. Edited by Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998. pp. 149-165.

narrative, he seemingly does so at the expense of further silencing and marginalizing Friday. Benita Parry suggests that Coetzee's fiction succeeds only in illuminating the "impossibility of representation," as *Foe* is neither able to represent Susan or Friday (149). Rather Susan becomes a stand-in for Coetzee himself and argues for the legitimacy of erasing Susan and all female narratives and relegating them to more gender-specific texts like *Roxana*. In an act of literary misdirection, Coetzee thus begins to illuminate Susan, only to abandon her for his true focus: Friday. Susan, and by extension the female narrative and history, is a means to an end. Susan's story is important to Coetzee only inasmuch as its exposure and subsuming brings Friday out from the story's margins and into its center. Ultimately, she is expendable.

Yet Coetzee falters in this respect as well, as his split focus on gender and race is insufficient to destabilize the systems of marginalization of which he himself is a part. Literary and patriarchal history becomes the "Foe" of the title, the enemy to be overcome. Through Susan, Coetzee exposes but neglects to dismantle the system which silences female characters. Further, rather than empowering Miranda to speak through Susan and reclaim her place in the Prospero-Caliban-Miranda triumvirate, Coetzee succeeds in using her as a tool of the colonial project. To give Miranda/Susan a voice, Caliban/Friday must lose his tongue. However, Coetzee's failure with Susan forces readers to question a literary tradition which founders in its representation of women and people of color. This exposure points to the necessity, and in different hands, the ability, to effectively un-silence historical and literary women. Rather than merely "recuperating the past," contemporary Caribbean and postcolonial authors must look to the future and create characters who lay claim to what is rightfully theirs without sacrificing the experiences of women and native peoples;[62] both Miranda and Caliban can speak, allowing

[62] Scarboro, Ann Armstrong, Afterword to Maryse Condé's, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, pp. 192.

"[them to] come . . . reclaim the islands men have stolen from them" (Coetzee 86). Coetzee, unfortunately, is not the author that will achieve this goal.

While an indirect adaptation, *Foe* draws on the tradition of *The Tempest.* Shakespeare's drama centers around a storm that shipwrecks a boat carrying King Alonso of Italy and his royal retinue, including his son and heir to the throne, Ferdinand, and the usurping Duke of Milan, Antonio, on a seemingly uninhabited island. The island however is home to three castaways; Prospero, the true Duke of Milan, Miranda, his daughter, and Caliban, a native inhabitant of the island, who has been enslaved by Prospero. The triad of Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban have lived on the island for twelve years before being joined by Alonso and his attendants. Prospero displayed his power on the island in a number of ways: orchestrating the tempest that shipwrecked his enemies on his shores and manipulating Miranda and Ferdinand to encourage their coupling. As a result of the union and reconciliation, Prospero, it is implied, will eventually return to Italy and regain his rightful place in the Italian hierarchy. *Foe*, thus, builds on *The Tempest's* "narrative pattern of separation, displacement, and resubstantiation," with Cruso as Prospero (I would argue this role is later taken over by Foe himself), Friday as Caliban, and Susan as Miranda (Seidel 37).[63] However, *Foe* is only momentarily focused on the castaway's lives on the island. Coetzee's text picks up, largely, where Shakespeare's story stopped: what happens when the trio of exiled misfits finally leaves the island. In *The Tempest* Prospero's plan succeeds because he is able to manipulate the action by retaining full narrative control. However, in Coetzee's retelling Prospero's power is challenged by not only Daniel Foe, but Susan, and even Friday. Coetzee's text emerges not only as part of the Robinsonade, but also participates in the postcolonial tradition of appropriating *The Tempest*. As a result, *Foe* becomes a gendered and

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[63] Seidel, Michael. *"Robinson Crusoe": Island Myths and the Novel*. Boston: Twayne, 1991.

racialized tug-of-war for narrative supremacy, between two marginalized and silenced voices—that of the African and the female (Caliban/Friday, Miranda/Susan)—who are both struggling against the (white) patriarchy (Prospero/Cruso/Foe/Coetzee).

Yet Coetzee's project is doomed because the Miranda he creates in Susan Barton, instead of exerting agency and finding her voice, only succeeds in reinforcing the colonial agenda, as she remains a colonial subject. Instead of breaking free from the suffocating hierarchy established on the island by Cruso, one based on race as well as on gender and perceived class distinctions, back in England Susan clings to it, supplanting Cruso as the representation of "hegemonic masculinity" (Hammarén and Johansson 3).[64] Susan becomes a failed Miranda, in that Coetzee is only able to perceive of the female narrative and experience through a male lens. Coetzee can only conceive of Miranda as desirous of Prospero's power and creative abilities, as perhaps the author himself is desirous of Shakespeare's or Defoe's creative powers. Consequently, Susan struggles to assert herself as an author and authority in Cruso's absence. In fact, Susan effectively becomes Cruso and, I would argue, the ventriloquized voice of Coetzee. By extension, Miranda becomes the true heir and perpetuator of her father Prospero's abuse and enslavement of Caliban, is in fact more culpable.

Rather than empowering Miranda to speak and control her female narrative and experience, Coetzee's limited male view revises her motivations, and forces her to tell a story which ultimately silences and disaggregates her. In Coetzee's hands Miranda/Susan is simultaneously a threat to the patriarchy and its most ardent adherent. While appearing to give

[64] Hammarén, Nils, and Thomas Johansson. "Homosociality: In Between Power and Intimacy," *SAGE Open*, January-March 2014: pp. 1-11. Further, Hammarén and Johansson assert that hegemonic masculinity and homosociality are often utilized as concepts to "analyze how men, through their relationships and social bonds with other men, construct power blocs to protect male territory and privilege" (2). In light of this definition, Coetzee can be understood as inserting Susan into the male dominated narrative of *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe* not to destabilize hegemonic masculinity, but to strengthen it as both Cruso and Friday are indifferent to Susan. Her presence on the island ultimately reinforces a male homosocial agenda and high lights female inaccessibility to structures of power.

voice to Miranda and the wide range of female experience; Susan actually restricts it, limiting Miranda and identifying her not as an empowered female agent, but as a figure who reinforces Coetzee's fear that an authentic female voice seeks to usurp male dominance. Susan is not a feminist character, she is "a phallic woman," a man masquerading in women's clothing (Harvey 25). The true story Coetzee wants to tell is Friday's, but he cannot. As a white postcolonial author, he cannot give voice to the native experience of Caliban/Friday, so he turns his attention instead to Miranda/Susan. Finally freeing Shakespeare's characters from the island where they had been cast away, Susan's/Miranda's caricaturized feminism becomes Coetzee's failure; and a narrative he leaves adrift.

Analyzing the texts by Shakespeare, Defoe, and Coetzee thus requires a feminist perspective which sees literature and history as immersive and all-encompassing (Eckstein 58).[65] It is impossible to view Susan as separate from the male author who created her, and who, in fact, speaks through her—or for whom she speaks. We must instead see Miranda and Susan as representatives of Coetzee's own misogynist agenda to caricaturize feminism and ventriloquize female experience. Ultimately *Foe* asserts, not the relevance of restoring the erased female narrative, but the necessity and primacy of the male voice as represented by Friday and Caliban. However, ironically, it is Coetzee's inability to accurately represent the female voice and experience which implores readers and critics to continue the work of feminist critics and writers, such as Sylvia Wynter, and investigate the historical and literary "systemic function" of the continual silencing of the authentic female voice (Wynter 365). In order to begin to understand Coetzee's positioning of Susan as a failed Miranda and her place in the restoration of

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[65] Eckstein, Barbara. "Iconicity, Immersion, and Otherness: The Hegelian 'Dive' of J.M. Coetzee and Adrienne Rich." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1996), pp. 57-77.

Shakespeare's original triumvirate in *The Tempest*, we must first look to the text he more obviously adapts: *Robinson Crusoe*.

1.1 Exploring Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

Daniel Defoe's 1719 travel narrative, *The Life and Strange Surprizing [sic] Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, is simultaneously a history and a fiction.[66] Following in the tradition of both historical and literary travel narratives, such as those written by Montaigne, Shakespeare, and Purchas, Defoe capitalized on the popularity of the genre by using the account of Alexander Selkirk—a Scottish sailor who was "put ashore on the island of San Juan Fernandez in 1704 and survived a solitary life for four years and four months until his rescue in 1709"—as the basis for his text (Shinagel vii).[67] Defoe's tale creates a fictitious narrator, Robinson Crusoe, and attributes the adventures that inhabit the pages to that man alone, in a story "written by himself" (Defoe 3). Defoe as an author is absent.

In fact, Defoe's absence from the text creates a false reality, or an imagined history, for his readers. The story he narrates is simultaneously true and false: true in that it echoes and recreates so many previous travel narratives, but false in that this one story—while based in history—is not itself a history. Robinson Crusoe, the man, never existed. His tale of surviving twenty-eight years on a remote and (mostly) uninhabited island therefore becomes a "shadow history," which exists beside history, and thus occupies a secondary role.

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[66] This text will be referred to as *Robinson Crusoe*. Passages quoted from the narrative text will be attributed to Defoe; passages which were written by the editor, Michael Shinagel will be marked as such. Subsequent citations to the text refer to this edition.

[67] For more on Alexander Selkirk see Maximillian E. Novak's "Edenic Desires: *Robinson Crusoe*, the Robinsonade, and Utopias." *Historical Boundaries, Narrative Forms: Essays on British Literature in the Long Eighteenth Century in Honor of Everett Zimmerman*. Edited by Lorna Clymer and Robert Mayer. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 2007, pp. 19-37.

Much like his best-known character, who changed his name from Robinson Kreutznaer to Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe himself is a created man (4). Born Daniel Foe, the son of a tallow chandler and butcher, in 1660, Defoe altered his "ungentrified patronymic Foe" to the more gentlemanly sounding Defoe (Newman 1).[68] Defoe thus participated in a form of self-fashioning.[69] By creating a new public identity and persona, Defoe also created a new personal history, while simultaneously denying his former identity and family name. Newly christened and re-named, Defoe's former life (as Daniel Foe) became a personal shadow history. In short, Defoe was a conscious actor and character in his own life, one who would later become a true character in Coetzee's reimagining of *Robinson Crusoe*. Over time, Defoe took on many different personas and careers. For example, he was a merchant who sold goods such as wine and wool; later, he turned to insuring merchant ships. He shifted positions again after William and Mary jointly ascended the throne in 1688, becoming a spy for his close friend and ally King William III. Never free from debt, however, Defoe "went on the run from creditors more than once and spent time in prison and the pillory" (Morrison 131).[70] Defoe eventually filed for bankruptcy in 1692, decided to leave business for good in 1703, and turned full-time to writing.

After composing many political pamphlets, a well-received political poem ("The True-Born Englishman"), and many other tracts, essays, and stories, Defoe began to produce longer

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[68] Newman, Judie. "Desperately Seeking Susan: J.M. Coetzee, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Roxana*." *Current Writing: Text and Reception in South Africa*, 6:1, 1994, pp. 1-12.

[69] Stephen Greenblatt coined the term "Renaissance self-fashioning" to refer to an individual's process of creating an identity or public persona for themselves in accordance with societal and cultural standards. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

[70] In his article "The Noise of Freedom: J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*," *Critique*, Spring 1989, pp. 143-154, Robert M. Post asserts that Defoe was jailed for "committing words to paper that challenged and disturbed" (144). In this assertion, Post suggests a kinship between Defoe and Coetzee. He argues that both men were controversial writers in their time, who spoke out publicly against injustice within the government, and should thereby be considered "liberal and open-minded" (144). Thus, Post sees Coetzee and Defoe as figures who were simultaneously rebellious and subversive.

works. His most famous classic, *Robinson Crusoe*, is considered by many to be the first true novel ever written in English, and it helped to popularize the genre.[71] In *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe created a hybrid literary genre, which combined the popular, and "factual," travel narrative with extended fictional prose. In establishing a hybrid literary form, Defoe's text blurred the line between reality and fiction.

Due to the close association between *Robinson Crusoe* and the incredibly popular travel narratives upon which it was based—both of which were billed as records of personal experience—the text was often construed as historical truth, rather than fiction. Indeed, increasingly literate eighteenth century readers were not always sure exactly which elements of it had been fictionalized. This confusion was further compounded by the fact that Defoe's name was not included in the first edition of the text, whose Preface stated: "The Editor believes the thing to be a just *History of Fact*; neither is there any Appearance of Fiction" (Defoe 3). [72] Taken together, this was enough for many to believe that *Robinson Crusoe* was, indeed, a first-hand, non-fiction account and thus a history.

As a travel narrative, or travelogue, *Robinson Crusoe* is endowed with an authority unavailable to other literary genres, which elevates it from a mere fiction to a "History of Fact." And as a record of fact, the text illuminates not only one man's reactions to his maroonage and struggle for survival on an uninhabited island, but also provides insight into the eighteenth century world in which Crusoe, and by extension Defoe, was living. The text is reflective of the political and religious climate in Britain at the time of its composition, therefore, in many ways,

[71] For more on whether (or not) Defoe helped create or popularize the novel as a genre, see Homer Brown. "The Institution of the English Novel: Defoe's Contribution." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 29 No. 3 (Spring, 1996), pp. 299-318. See also Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.

[72] Emphasis mine.

it functions as both a record and literary reinforcement of the colonial agenda. In the text *Shipwrecked: Disaster and Transformation in Homer, Shakespeare, Defoe, and the Modern World,* James V. Morrison points out that, "in terms of politics, Defoe advised monarchs on foreign policy; he also advocated the British colonization of South America, including the Orinoco River area—near Crusoe's island. Indeed, the novel promotes a successful vision of colonization of the America's—with the figure Friday suggesting a compliant native population" (132). To this end, Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe* complicates the distinction between fiction and the global, British, political agenda. Crusoe must thus be viewed as both a created fictional character and as a stand-in for Defoe, or any typical eighteenth century man supportive of colonization.[73] Defoe recreates and reinforces the colonial agenda in the relationship between Crusoe and Friday when he suggests that native people welcomed and were thankful for the "civilizing" influence of their colonizers. The text becomes so ubiquitous and connected to British imperialism, that nearly two hundred years after its first appearance, James Joyce said that *Robinson Crusoe* is "the true symbol of the British conquest . . . He is the true prototype of the British colonist, as Friday (the trusty savage who arrives on an unlucky day) is the symbol of the subjected races."[74] Further, Robinson O. Murphy claims that to Defoe's original audience, "*Robinson Crusoe* established a thought model for imperial coercion, normalized and excused European conquest abroad, and spoke to something that would shape the very fabric of the emerging capitalist

[73] Coetzee emulates Defoe in this respect as well in *Foe* where the characters of Susan, Foe, and Friday will all become stand-ins for Coetzee. G. Scott Bishop suggests "Susan, Friday, and *Foe* are a culmination of Coetzee's attempt at tell a story without asserting himself in the novel" (56). An attempt he fails at spectacularly. See Bishop, G. Scott. "J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*: The Culmination and a Solution to a Problem of White Identity." *World Literature Today*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Winter 1990), pp. 54-57.

[74] Quoted in the Norton Critical Edition *Robinson Crusoe*. Ed. Michael Shinagel, pg. 323. Originally published as: Joyce, James. "Daniel Defoe," *Buffalo Studies* 1. 1 (1964): 7, pp. 11-13, pp. 22-25.

world" (187). However, a distinction should made between "conquest" and "colonialism."[75] While the tale itself may be one of colonialism, it is clear that the urge for conquest and expansion drove Crusoe and, perhaps, Defoe.

As a work supportive of the colonial agenda, it is significant that scholars and critics frequently marginalize one specific element of *Robinson Crusoe*: the event which precipitates Crusoe becoming shipwrecked upon his desert island for twenty-eight years. It cannot be forgotten that Crusoe's maroonage is the result of his decision to join a voyage to Africa and try his hand at the slave trade. Race is thus a central and inescapable component in Defoe's narrative and worldview, as made visible in his text. The decision to become a slaver comes after Crusoe himself had been captured by pirates near the Canary Islands and is enslaved by a Moor (Defoe 15). Crusoe is held in captivity as a slave for two years before he is able to escape in a small boat with another slave, a young "Maresco" boy (or Spanish Moor) named Xury (19).[76] During their escape, Crusoe demands that Xury pledge allegiance to him, threatening to "throw [him] into the sea" should he not declare he will be "faithful" to Crusoe (19). Crusoe thus usurps the Moor's role as master by establishing his, and by extension Britain's, sovereignty and right to rule. Xury is further described as a subject fit to serve rather than rule, a notion which undergirded the

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[75] The term "colonialism" is used here to denote the "mutually beneficial" elements of empire-building. By contrast, the term "conquest" is employed to highlight the forced exploitation, submission, and "defeat" of indigenous peoples, for the sole benefit of the conquering nation.

[76] Roxann Wheeler identifies Xury, who is referred to as a "Maresco," in *Robinson Crusoe* as a "Spanish Moor" (829). For more on the relationship between Robinson Crusoe and Xury see Wheeler's "'My Savage,' 'My Man': Racial Multiplicity in *Robinson Crusoe*." *ELH*, Vol. 62, No. 4, (Winter 1995), pp. 821-861.

It is further suggested by Hans Turley that the relationship between Crusoe and his Turkish Moor enslaver borders on the homoerotic, or as "Minaz Jooma points out…Defoe's language is implicitly sodomitical" (7). This relationship will be repeated with Crusoe and Xury as well as between Crusoe and Friday. See Hans Turley's, "The Sublimation of Desire to Apocalyptic Passion in Defoe's Crusoe Trilogy", in *Imperial Desire: Dissident Colonial Sexualities in Colonial Literature*. Eds. Philip Holden and Richard J. Ruppel. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. Turley quotes from Minaz Jooma's "Robinson Crusoe Inc(orporates): Domestic Economy, Incest and the Trope of Cannibalism." *Lit; Literature Interpretation Theory,* 8, no. 1 (June 1997); pp. 61-81.

colonial belief that some people were naturally born inferior and would necessarily exist in barbarism without the civilizing hand of outside colonizers. This episode exhibits that Crusoe learned nothing from his own ordeal as a slave, and further emphasizes what little value the English placed on native peoples whom they viewed as inferior: upon being rescued by a passing Portuguese ship, Crusoe sells Xury back into slavery (26).

The decision to sell Xury into bondage, despite his honest and obedient service to Crusoe, was one of many ill-advised choices to have devastating consequences. Throughout the text, Defoe dances around the idea that Crusoe himself is to blame for the fate that befalls him. But of all the decisions Crusoe makes—leaving his family home in England (which leads to his own shipwreck, enslavement and rescue), and becoming a planter and plantation owner in Brazil—it is the decision to fully embrace a colonial agenda of conquest and dominance, and by extension to engage in the business of slavery (by stealing people from the coast of Guinea), which finally dooms him.[77]

Crusoe's complicity in the enterprise of the slave trade is an element of the text which is often overlooked. The project of empire-building and colonization had been so normalized in eighteenth century England that neither Defoe nor his contemporary readers likely saw a connection between Crusoe's fate and his support of imperialism, by way of the slave trade.[78] Rather, Crusoe sees his maroonage as punishment for defying his father, who had cautioned him against becoming a sailor. Specifically, the elder Kreutznaer warned, "that if [Crusoe] did take

[77] See also Peter Hulme. *Colonial Encounter: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*. London and New York: Methuen, 1986.

[78] As an early eighteenth century English author, Defoe lived in a world dominated by pro-slavery sentiments. The anti-slavery movement did not begin in England in earnest until 1783, and slavery was not abolished there until 1833. Colonies in the possession of the East India Company were not forced to free their slaves until 1843. It was only after the abolition of slavery and the slave trade that critics began to focus on those elements within the text. See Roxann Wheeler's "'My Savage,' 'My Man': Racial Multiplicity in *Robinson Crusoe*," *ELH*, Vol. 62, No. 4, (Winter 1995), pp. 821-861.

[the] foolish Step [to go to sea], God would not bless [him], and [he] would have Leisure hereafter to reflect upon having neglected his Counsel when there might be none to assist [his] recovery" (6). In other words, Crusoe's "original Sin" is the sin of disobedience to the "Father" (141).[79] The moral consequences of his other decisions—the realization or belief that his maroonage was punishment for his support of and engagement in the slave trade—are lost on Crusoe.

Having failed to heed his father's prophetic warning, and en route to the Guinea coast to enslave natives, the ship Crusoe is on runs aground. Abandoning ship, eleven men take to a smaller vessel in an attempt to reach land.[80] When their small boat capsizes in rough water, Crusoe alone makes it to shore (Defoe 34). Crusoe is left the sole survivor of the shipwrecked would-be slave ship, and thus fulfills his father's prediction. Immediately upon reaching dry land, Crusoe proceeds to "colonize" his uninhabited island, and so reinforces the British colonial agenda of expansion and empire-building. What modern audiences potentially read as punishment for Crusoe's pro-slavery stance, and willing participation in the slave trade, Defoe's original readers would have seen as a necessary part of imperialism at home and abroad.[81] In his article "Expanding Empires, Expanding Selves: Colonialism, The Novel, and *Robinson Crusoe*," Brett McInelly suggests, Crusoe's story is not of "conquest but of colonialism, of the advantages

[79] "Father" here should be interpreted to mean both Crusoe's biological father, and God.

[80] Biblical scholars suggest that the number eleven has significance claiming that eleven can mean "disorder, chaos and judgment…Coming after 10 (which represents law and responsibility, the number eleven (11) represents the opposite, which is the irresponsibility of breaking the law."

[81] Most of Defoe's contemporary authors and critics—from Alexander Pope to Jean-Jacques Rousseau—praised Defoe for his ingenuity, excellence in writing, and the fitness of the text as an instruction manual for children. Few reviewers or critics mention his endorsement colonialism and slavery, or the existence of the character Friday. In 1810, for instance, John Ballantyne praised *Robinson Crusoe* text and eponymous character, whose "obstinate determination" made him a "specimen of the True-Born Englishman." *Robinson Crusoe* in *The Novels of Daniel De Foe*. Edited by Walter Scott. Edinburgh, 1810. Also cited in Shinagel, pp. 266-267.

of exploiting foreign lands" (13).[82] *Robinson Crusoe* can hence be seen as a created fiction of colonization, an accurate historical record of the empire-building project for both the author and his intended audience, and an endorsement of both.

Further, McInelly points out that Daniel Defoe drew *Robinson Crusoe* out of "the play of his imagination from information from travel narratives, trade, geographies, etc." (3). This was done out of necessity, given that Defoe himself "had no direct experience with plantations, South American Coastal peoples, oceanic voyages, the slave trade, or a colonial economy" (3). In writing *Robinson Crusoe*, then, Defoe grounded his tale in stories and histories that his readers already accepted, using as source material those genres and realities which would ring "true" to his readers such as *The Tempest*. By doing so, Defoe not only invented a character, and a genre of literature, he legitimized the "shadow history" of colonialism.

In a state of exile on his deserted island Crusoe enacts the master narrative of colonialism. His first instinct is to tame and bring civilization to the natural environment around him by domesticating animals, teaching a parrot to speak English, and creating a fortified "castle" from which he can rule and defend his realm. The language Crusoe uses is that of colonization.[83] Paying homage to the England he fled in search of adventure, Crusoe recreates monarchy on the island. Through language, Crusoe civilizes the land, bringing British order to the natural chaos of the environment. Crusoe surveys the island, "with a secret Kind of Pleasure . . . to think that all this was [his] own, that [he] was King and Lord of all this Country indefeasibly, and had a Right of Possession" (Defoe 73). Echoing the Old Testament God, who speaks the world into being and orders the newly created universe, Crusoe uses language to

[82] McInelly, Brett. "Expanding Empires, Expanding Selves: Colonialism, The Novel, and *Robinson Crusoe*." *Studies in the Novel*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 1-21.
[83] Jager, Eric. "The Parrot's Voice: Language and the Self in Robinson Crusoe." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Spring, 1988); pp. 316-333.

establish a terrestrial hierarchy on his island—with himself at the top of the Great Chain of Being. The island is his kingdom, and he is its king. Through action and language, Crusoe creates order; by extension, he dominates, and civilizes the savage "other."

Over almost eighteen years, and 120 pages of text, Crusoe is the sole human inhabitant of his island kingdom. He roams it freely, imposing limits and civilization on all which he encounters, and learning useful skills—like farming, animal husbandry, the domestication of plants, architecture, boat building, sharp shooting, carpentry, and tailoring— along the way. A refigured Prospero, Crusoe is established as the island's resident genius. As such, Crusoe's narrative is one concerned with the perseverance of man, with man's superiority over nature, and with the ability to bring the natural world into submission. In this way, nature is represented as a passive force, as a place which would inevitably languish without the presence of a man like Crusoe to tame and make use of it. Of course, this reinforces the notion that colonialism is both advantageous and desired by the colonized.

After experiencing years of missteps and suffering—which were ostensibly the result of opposing his father's dictum to remain in England—Crusoe, alone in his island kingdom, finds a form of isolated redemption. As the sole survivor of a devastating shipwreck, Crusoe questions why he alone was saved while his companions all perished at sea.[84] Crusoe sees providence in his salvation, and in the proximity of his grounded ship to the island. Due to this stroke of fate, Crusoe has the ability to get aboard the ship to retrieve supplies, provisions, and even a few luxuries to sustain him. Further, when a second wrecked ship appears a short distance from the shores of the island (without a living human soul on board), Crusoe interprets it as a sign of

[84] A condition that mirrors the grief of Alonso in *The Tempest* when he washes ashore on Prospero's island and laments the apparent loss of his son, and of Ferdinand when he believes himself to be the only survivor of the shipwreck.

God's will and blessing (Defoe 62).[85] Stripping the ships bare, Crusoe is able to furnish his island home with all the comforts of Europe. In other words, Crusoe literally brings English civilization and colonialism ashore (40-48). Of special importance to Crusoe is the discovery, on board the second faltered ship, of paper and ink. These enable him to chronicle his days, thoughts, and actions (48). Crusoe, through Defoe, can now record his narrative: thus, he emerges as an author and artist, and transforms his text from a fiction to a history.

As previously mentioned, Crusoe lives in relatively peaceful exile on "his" island for nearly eighteen years before his sense of safety and complete sovereignty is threatened. Finding "the Print of a Man's naked Foot on the Shore," leaves Crusoe "Thunderstruck" (Defoe 112). For years, Crusoe ponders the footprint, which invokes his racialized fear of savage, cannibal intruders; finally, he decides that it must have been his own footprint, as no other human appears for many more years. The discovery of the footprint nevertheless changes Crusoe's life on the island and serves to foreshadow the eventual arrival of others. After this ominous discovery, Crusoe finds himself on the flip side of British colonization: he is the native, whose land is invaded by threatening outsiders, he is transformed from Prospero to Caliban. Understanding the history and reality of colonialism, Crusoe retreats to his castle fortress and prepares for battle. He will not lay down his arms, nor surrender his island kingdom to colonizers: he will not suffer the fate which so many indigenous peoples have suffered in the name of imperial expansion—a fate to which he himself consigned Xury. He will resist.

While not my true focus here, it is impossible to discuss *Robinson Crusoe* without exploring the appearance of Friday, and the relationship between Crusoe and Friday—who was perhaps the creator of that mysterious footprint. Taking a cue from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*,

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[85] Crusoe also sees providence in the appearance of a dog on the second ship run aground (Defoe 48).

Defoe recreates the relationship between Prospero and Caliban in Crusoe and Friday. Only Defoe, through Crusoe, seems to correct Shakespeare's failed paternal/colonial experiment.[86] Where Caliban resists Prospero's civilizing hand and succumbs to barbarism (as exemplified by his attempted rape of Miranda), Friday yields to Crusoe: he defers to him, worships him and, in time, is seen as Crusoe's heir apparent. For Defoe's project to succeed, and for readers to accept the colonial propaganda which Crusoe is offering them, Friday must not only acquiesce, but must also actively pursue the civilization Crusoe represents and offers.

In the years before Friday's arrival, Crusoe "plays" king: he gets to try on the role of a colonial ruler or governor.[87] However, once he rescues Friday from the cannibals who would kill and eat him, Crusoe finally acquires a subject to "lord over." His shadow colony is thus transformed from a fiction into a reality. In rescuing, naming, and subjugating Friday, Crusoe's text takes another step towards becoming a history aligned with the colonial agenda of expansion and conquest.[88]

One consequence of this is that readers of *Robinson Crusoe* witness how history is created and reinforced. In conjunction with his well-kept journal, which chronicles his island adventures and misadventures (at least until his ink runs out, forcing him to rely on his memory instead), Crusoe's recorded history becomes a master narrative. Having proven himself to be

[86] Coetzee will attempt this type of corrective revision as well in *Foe* by reinserting the expunged female narrative from Shakespeare's triumvirate, only Coetzee will fail.

[87] See Frank Donoghue, "Inevitable Politics: Rulership and Identity in Robinson Crusoe." *Studies in the Novel,* Vol. 29, No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 1-11.

[88] An additional element which connects Crusoe to colonialism and specifically the slave trade is that he "names" Friday. Re-naming slaves was an insidious part of the colonial project of disconnecting indigenous peoples from their cultural identities in an attempt to break their wills and stamp out any impulse to resist. Maria Christina Fumagalli, quoting Gayatri Spivak suggests that the act of renaming or naming someone attempts to "deprive [them] of [their] identity" and asserts that "so intimate a thing as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism" (Fumagalli 126; Spivak 250). Fumagalli, Maria Christina. "Names Matter." *Journal of Caribbean Literature*, Vol. 3, No. 3 Jean Rhys (Summer 2003), pp. 123-132. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 1, "'Race' Writing and Difference" (Autumn 1985), pp. 243-261. pgs. 247-248.

superior to his natural environment, Crusoe asserts himself as the rightful and natural governor over foreign or native peoples, and thus affirms the British colonial agenda.[89] More specifically, *Robinson Crusoe* reinforces an imperialist agenda which on the surface supports "a good relationship between colonizer and indigenous population[s]" (McInelly 13). However, this relationship is predicated on the compliance and subordination of those viewed as inferior, predestined to be subjects. Those doomed to servitude must also recognize and freely comply with their roles in the hierarchy of fiction/history. Caliban must acknowledge Prospero's superiority and his own subordination. Shakespeare's text errs, Defoe suggests, because Caliban forgets his place, and dares to position himself as the rightful heir to the island, instead of accepting his natural subservience.

Crusoe's relationship with Friday reenacts the idealized relationship between the colonizer and colonized, in that it reinforces the narrative that native peoples need and even welcome their colonizer's "civilizing" influence. Having been rescued from the cannibals who sought to sacrifice and consume him, Friday becomes a happy and obedient servant. Friday shows his total and natural submission to Crusoe, a role to which Caliban had failed to conform.[90] After liberating Friday from his pursuers, Crusoe recalls, "he kneel'd down . . . kiss'd the Ground, and laid his Head upon the Ground, and taking me by the foot, set my Foot upon his

[89] Robyn Wiegman asserts, "Crusoe's lengthy tenure on the island and his domestication of it reflect a narrative design that renders white European colonization a 'natural' occurrence and not, as it historically was, the imposition of white cultural authority over technologically and racially 'different' native inhabitants" (44). White patriarchy thus becomes the dominate and natural master narrative, justifying and redefining Crusoe's version of colonialism. See Wiegman, Robyn. "Economies of the Body: The Gendered Sites in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*." *Criticism*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Winter, 1989), pp. 33-51.

[90] Using *The Tempest* as a frame narrative, Defoe corrects the failed relationships between Prospero and Caliban, as well as Ariel, neither of whom showed any gratitude for the liberation or gifts Prospero as a white savior gave them. Friday, in Defoe's text, understands the deference an inferior rescued subject should show their masters. It should be noted, too, that Caliban did offer to "kiss [Trinculo's] foot and "swear" himself his subject in exchange for the liquor he has (Scene II, act ii, lines 149-154). This offer was not made to Prospero another moment Defoe corrects.

Head; this it seems was in token of swearing to be my Slave for ever" (Defoe 147).[91] The fact that Friday submits to Crusoe of his own accord, and not by force, exemplifies the colonizers believed superiority which they utilized to legitimize white patriarchal rule. The colonial agenda, reinforced by *Robinson Crusoe*, relied on the idea that natives are naturally born inferior and uncivilized, thus desiring a European intervention and its corresponding system of dependency.

Crusoe and Fridays' relationship is so painfully and simplistically idealized that they almost become stock characters in well-known colonial propaganda. Crusoe is the embodiment of the benevolent ruler, who reenacts the hallmarks of slave ownership on the conquered and "other" Friday, while Friday is the submissive and grateful savage redeemed from inhumanity and barbarism through Crusoe's civilizing influence. After liberating Friday from the cannibals, Crusoe immediately asserts his power on the island by conscribing Friday to a new form of bondage: the "happy" bondage of voluntary servitude.

Further, Crusoe establishes himself as the author of the history of the island and its inhabitants by naming the characters on it.[92] Crusoe reaffirms his status as both a historian and storyteller, and by extension his right to purvey British imperialism, by imposing a new name on himself and his one subject: Master, and Friday. By naming Friday, Crusoe pulls him from the margins of colonialism and history and roots him firmly in the colonial agenda. Not only does Defoe eliminate the sexualized and destabilizing body of Miranda from his island paradise, Crusoe also reinforces a purely masculine colonial agenda. He corrects Shakespeare by

[91] Caliban in *The Tempest* had initially had an idealized relationship with Prospero commenting, "When thou cam'st first / Thou strok'st me and made much of me / . . . And then I loved thee / And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle" (Act I, Scene ii, lines 332-337). The introduction of Miranda and female sexuality is what ultimately alters Caliban and Prospero's relationship—an obstacle Defoe eliminates from his text.

[92] For a discussion of naming in *Robinson Crusoe* see Maximillian E. Novak's "Friday: or the Power of Naming." *Augustan Subjects: Essays in Honor of Martin C. Battestin.* Edited by Albert J. Rivero. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 1997, pp. 110-123.

expunging Caliban's problematic mother, the witch Sycorax, and instead provides two fathers for Friday: a biological and an adoptive one.[93] Frank Donoghue asserts, "Once the titles and hierarchy are established, Crusoe proceeds to reshape much of Friday's identity," a process that begins with the civilizing power of Christianity and baptism (7). Crusoe rechristens Friday, a common tactic used by slave owners to disconnect them from their community and native identity, and extends his patronym to his newly enslaved subject and son. In short, Crusoe creates for Friday what Defoe creates for his readers: a new colonial expansion and history based on mutual dependence and choice.

1.2 Defoe's Homosocial Eden

As nuanced and complicated as the master/servant dynamic in this text is, my interest in *Robinson Crusoe* is not in how Crusoe survived on the island for twenty-eight years; his interactions with cannibals, mutineers, or other Englishmen; the meticulous notes he keeps; or the colonizer/colonized relationship between Crusoe and his "man Friday." What is striking about Defoe's shadow history is not what Crusoe finds, but what he lacks and never seems to miss: women. If Crusoe is a Prospero figure, and Friday is a stand-in for an idealized Caliban, then where is Miranda, or the absent presences of Claribel and Sycorax? This is not to say that women are completely absent from Defoe's text. It is to underscore, however, the reality that women exist only in the margins of his text, almost as bookends to Crusoe's adventures. In "Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's *Foe* Reading Defoe's Crusoe/Roxana," Gayatri Spivak points out that the only women who appear in *Robinson Crusoe* are the "typecast mother," the "benevolent widow," the "nameless wife," and later (and tellingly) the "seven women" whom Crusoe sends back to his island at the novel's end, musing "such [women] that [were] found

[93] For an in-depth discussion of Sycorax please see Chapter Three, "Tituba: A Sisterhood of Witchcraft."

proper for *service*, or for wives to such as would take them" (7).[94] Women in *Robinson Crusoe* are mentioned in the same breath as "five cows, some of them big with Calf, some Sheep, and some Hogs" (Defoe 220). Women are perceived as incidental to the narrative, "as conveniences for men," rather than people "whose work was valuable and thus worthy of . . . dignity;" hence, they are lumped in with, and thus equated to, beasts of burden.[95]

By sending women to his former island home—a home over which he still exerts control—Crusoe asserts himself and his relationship to the island as a colonizer, or as a father tending to his wayward children. Crusoe recognizes that the rescued Spaniards and English mutineers left behind on the island may want women to do them "service," yet Crusoe himself never expresses any need for women. As a text which extends and re-envisions the shipwreck narrative popularized by Shakespeare's *The Tempest* over a hundred years before, it is striking that the romantic elements established in the frame narrative of reconciliation through marriage—and the female presence and necessity to the plot—is cast away to create a male homosocial Eden.

Nowhere in Defoe's text does Crusoe record or even momentarily pause on any desire for female companionship, or for sex.[96] In fact, when Crusoe finally returns to England he briefly remarks (in a mere seven lines) that he took a wife, had three children, and was widowed. His wife's death is only notable in that it allows him to go to sea again (Defoe 219). Women have no

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[94] Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's *Foe* Reading Defoe's Crusoe/Roxana." *English in Africa*. Vol. 17, No. 2 (Oct. 1990), pp. 1-23. p. 7. Emphasis mine.

[95] For a discussion of the lack of women on Crusoe's island, and the negligible value placed on women in the project of colonialism, see Trevor G. Brunard and Ann M. Little's, "Where the Girls Aren't: Women as Reluctant Migrants but Rational Actors in Early America." *The Practice of U.S. Women's History: Narratives, Intersections and Dialogues*. Edited by S. Jay Kleinberg, Eileen Boris, and Vicki L. Ruiz. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2007, pp. 12-29.

[96] Pearlman, E. "Robinson Crusoe and the Cannibals." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*. Vol. 10. No. 1 Literature and Ideas (Fall 1976), pp. 39-55.

real place in Defoe's vision of colonialism. The only function women serve in the text is based on the service they could perform for men: either to maintain the home in the male sailor/adventurer's absence, or to procreate with the mutineers and Spaniards left behind on the island to increase the colonial population (if any would take them). Outside of these limited roles, women are seen as impediments to (male) progress and the project of empire building (Brunard and Little 12). Therefore, women have no role in Defoe and Crusoe's world, and indeed appear to have no place in colonial history either.

It is not, in and of itself, strange that Crusoe was not joined in his exile by a woman. Readers are told that he was the sole survivor of a shipwreck, and women were infrequent passengers on merchant ships, or ships headed to Africa as slavers. What is baffling, though, is that in twenty-eight years in exile, his only thoughts are for his father (whom he feels he has betrayed), God (with whom he is forging a fledgling relationship), and the desire for a servant to submit to him and help him in his labors. Nowhere does Crusoe express that the servant he seeks or longs for is female; rather, the companion he seeks is male. There is thus not only an absence of women on the island, but a total absence of women in Crusoe's vision of the world. Crusoe, and by extension Defoe's, universe is entirely male.

As a travel narrative, it is natural that Crusoe should find himself alone on his island, and that the natives and sailors he encounters towards the end of his exile would be male. However, *Robinson Crusoe* is a work of fiction written in the style of Homer's *Odyssey* or Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, both of which contained not only female characters but an almost myopic obsession with female sexuality and virtue. As such, the absence of physical or imagined women in Defoe's text cannot be ignored. In the article "Robinson Crusoe and the Cannibals," E. Pearlman asserts that *Robinson Crusoe* is "a novel entirely without love, one in which energy is

directed toward the very primitive urges to dominate, accumulate, eat, and kill" (52). In a word, the text is a created history, which reproduces the colonial agenda of survival and expansion no matter the cost. Only here, colonialism is equivalent to hegemonic masculinity; thus, what is truly sacrificed and seen as inconsequential is the female experience and existence, which is fragmented and erased.

Defoe, however, does not appear to have been completely averse to women or female characters. Two of his later works, *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* and *Moll Flanders*, place women and the female experience at the center of the texts.[97] By removing women, as well as all notions of love and sex from *Robinson Crusoe,* Defoe succeeds in creating a world characterized by a sexual divide. Men are associated with a natural superiority and right to rule, while women are fallen and connected to fleshy and sexual debasement. The roles which women are allowed to occupy in Defoe's literary pantheon are one-dimensional and stereotypical of the views of women in eighteenth century British society. For example, Susan, who is rechristened Roxana, is a once prosperous woman who is abandoned by her husband. Left penniless she is forced to become a mistress to wealthy men and, to avoid having her "whoring" exposed, does nothing to stop the murder of her own daughter. Moll Flanders is the daughter of an imprisoned female convict who, after being widowed, uses her feminine wiles to con wealthy men into marrying her and providing her with financial security. As Defoe writes them, both *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* are claimed autobiographies and thus historical narratives. In his handling, they are made to exemplify the dangers associated with women: they are duplicitous, wanton, murderous, and a threat to male homosociality. To mitigate the dangers associated with women and female

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[97] Defoe, Daniel. *Moll Flanders*. Edited by Albert J. Rivero. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003; *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress*. Edited John Mullan. London: Oxford World's Classics, 2008. *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* will herein be referred to as *Roxana*.

sexuality—specifically the influence they have on men—Defoe eliminates the threat connected with the female presence in *Robinson Crusoe* entirely.

Alone in his (masculine) wilderness kingdom, Crusoe can reflect on the world and his place in it. The lack of any real female presence, rather than being a source of consternation for Crusoe, is a welcome relief. Crusoe sees himself as "remov'd from all the Wickedness of the World," having neither "*Lust of the Flesh, [or] the Lust of the Eye*" (Defoe 94).[98] As a destabilizing and transgressive force that steers men away from the true path of God and patriarchal rule, Defoe exiles women from his isolated male utopian island; he effectively casts them away. In the article "Economies of the Body: Gendered Sites in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*," Robyn Wiegman suggests that "such gendering . . . consigns women and men (both readers and characters) to particular positions within the narrative scene often reiterating the ideology of patriarchal culture by defining male and female as . . . [either] 'male-hero-human on the side of subject; [or] female-obstacle-boundary-space, on the other'" (33).[99] Because it lacks a corporeal female presence in Defoe's history, as an obstacle-boundary, Crusoe's island itself becomes a feminized space, which must be conquered. The island, like all potential colonies, and women, must be tamed, civilized, and brought into submission by the stabilizing power of masculinity.

In the symbolic geography of Crusoe's island, as well as his master/servant, father/son relationship with Friday, Defoe reenacts colonialism as a reproductive or regenerative act. Wiegman claims that Crusoe, "penetrates his environment, erects his dominance, spreads his seed, and in an astounding colonization of the female body gives birth to art, culture, and

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[98] Emphasis theirs.

[99] Wiegman, Robyn. "Economies of the Body: Gendered Sites in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*." *Criticism.* Vol. 31, No. 1 (Winter, 1989), pp. 33-51.

progeny" (34). Crusoe does not need a physical woman on his island, the wilderness of which "is seen as the metaphoric virgin;" thus, his procreative urge can be sublimated on the land, in his journal, and through the (re)birth of an unnamed savage whom he christens Friday (43). In this light, Crusoe's project of "penetrating" and cultivating the earth, planting "seeds" in the fertile, yielding ground that offers up its bounty to him, can be read as single sex reproduction (Defoe 57-58). In this view, not only is the land itself feminized, but so too is Friday.[100] As the native non-white male, Friday is infantilized and recast as a subject dependent upon white male creation and conquest (Wiegman 34). Crusoe becomes both the king of his island, and its progenitor. Literally, and literarily, he "fathers" his world and its inhabitants (Wiegman 43).

By "fathering" Friday, Crusoe establishes a newly created identity for him, one which transforms him from one of the savage and foreign cannibals to a multiracial descendent of Europeans. Caliban is similarly multiracial but is described by his father/master Prospero as a "freckled whelp, hag-born . . . a poisonous slave, got by the devil himself" as an indication of his debasement. [101] However, after saving/birthing Friday, Crusoe watches him while he sleeps and notes his features and physique. Viewing Friday in this way is reminiscent of the male prerogative to "blazon" women, to catalogue them as a collection of fragmented parts which could be appreciated aesthetically and controlled. Thus, in blazoning Friday, Crusoe feminizes him.[102] Crusoe notes Friday is:

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[100] In the article, "Black Friday, Queer Atlantic," Robinson O. Murphy claims that Friday challenges "white heteropatriarchy…by espousing a politics of castration" (182).

[101] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2004. Act 1, Scene ii, Lines 281-320, pp. 17- 18.

[102] Anne McClintock suggests that some travel narratives belong to the genre she calls "'pornotropics' that draws on 'a long tradition of male travel as an erotics of ravishment'" (Donaldson 43). Applied to *Robinson Crusoe*, Crusoe does not desire a female companion because he is able to sublimate those heterosexual desires onto a feminized Friday and the feminized island environment itself. See Laura E. Donaldson's "The Breasts of Columbus: A Political Anatomy of Postcolonialism and Feminist Religious Discourse." *Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Religious Discourse*. Edited by Laura E. Donaldson and Kwok Pui-lan. New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 41-63.

> a comely handsome Fellow, perfectly well made . . . tall and well shap'd . . . He had a good Countenance, not a fierce and surly Aspect; but seem'd to have something very manly in his Face, and yet he had all the Sweetness and Softness of an *European* . . . especially when he smil'd. His Hair was long and black, not curl'd like Wool . . . and a great Vivacity and sparkling Sharpness in his Eyes. The Colour of his Skin was not quite black, but very tawny, and yet not of an ugly yellow nauseous tawny, as the *Brasilians*, and *Virginians* . . . but a kind of bright kind of dun olive Colour, that had in it something very agreeable . . . His Face was round, and plump; his Nose small, not flat like the Negroes, a very good Mouth, thin Lips, and his fine Teeth well set, and white as Ivory (Defoe 148-149).

Hans Turley suggests that the language Crusoe uses to describe Friday "anatomizes and feminizes" him (9). Further Turley claims Crusoe sees Friday, his son, in strictly European terms, as exemplifying an "idealized European beauty" (8). In fact, Crusoe extends his own European features to his offspring, seeing himself in Friday. In doing so, Crusoe legitimizes his place in the island hierarchy and establishes primogeniture on the island.[103] Further, Crusoe extends white patriarchal privilege to encompass his blazoned, feminized, multiethnic offspring. Crusoe thus retains sole procreative power, and by asserting his masculine dominance, he also feminizes all those who come into contact with him and his island.

Just as English monarchs like Elizabeth I invoked the Body Politic to declare themselves both the father and mother of their people, so too does Defoe become the generative force behind his newly birthed masculine hero. But expelling women from the act of creation and procreation

[103] The familial relationship between Friday and Crusoe will be reinforced later with the appearance of Friday's biological father. Notably, Friday reasserts his commitment of loyalty to Crusoe over his own father. Friday chooses to leave the island with Crusoe rather than return to his previous life with his biological father (Defoe 172-196).

has had a curious effect. Rather than removing women farther and farther into the margins, critics and scholars have taken note of the absence of women and have begun to question a worldview which sees no place for women within it. Pearlman suggests that if Defoe had "not written *Roxana* and *Moll Flanders* we could perhaps justify the narrative absence of sexuality as evidence of the repressive morality of the Puritan ethic" (43). However, in *Robinson Crusoe* the absence of women cannot be excused, instead the text demands interpretation and accountability for their erasure.

For a text written in the early eighteenth century—a time when women occupied an inferior role in society—critics and readers paid little attention to the absence of women, or the exclusively homosocial world of Defoe's island. [104] In contrast, contemporary readers and critics, including Spivak and Pearlman, have taken notice of a narrative in which women and sexuality are not only missing, but are all but expelled from the world evoked in the text. In particular, feminist and postcolonial critics have begun to interrogate a male literary tradition which fails to account for women and their roles in both literature and history. Another interesting thing has happened, too: the lack of women, sex, and sexuality in *Robinson Crusoe* has not only caught the attention of female scholars and critics, but also male ones. Many of the numerous works which are classed within the "Robinsonade," including Johann David Wyss's *The Swiss Family Robinson* (1812), and David De Vere Stacpoole's *The Blue Lagoon* (1908), introduce women back onto Crusoe's island. However, few highlight the absence of women more than J.M. Coetzee's 1986 novel *Foe*.[105]

[104] Hammarén and Johansson suggest that homosociality, or the social bonds created by member of the same sex, in part help "maintain hegemonic masculinity" (1).

[105] Wyss, Johann David. *The Swiss Family Robinson*. Translated by William Goodwin. New York: Signet, 2004; De Vere Stacpoole, David. *The Blue Lagoon*. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1908. Michel Tournier's *Friday* brings sex and sexuality back to Crusoe's island. Tournier's Crusoe is marked by his sexuality and his sexual conquest of the island and, later, Friday. See *Friday*. Translated by Norman Denny. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1969.

1.3 Coetzee's Miranda on Cruso(e)'s island

In Coetzee's hands, Crusoe's island is transformed from a male-dominated, bucolic, fertile, paradise to a feminized, unwelcoming, barren wasteland. Unlike Defoe's homosocial Edenic utopia, which boasts the benefits of a strictly male human economy, Coetzee's island (re)introduces a physical female element to the colonial experiment and experience.[106] Homosociality, as utilized by Defoe, thus must be read as a conscious choice to sublimate heterosexual desire onto a less problematic "homosexual" body, one that removes "lust" from desire (Sedgwick 1; Defoe 94). Coetzee, however, illustrates the dystopian outcome when male homosociality is interrupted by a corporeal female presence. Defoe approached the island, Friday, and Crusoe as a "blank space awaiting" inscription, so too does Coetzee seize his own opportunity for invention and reclamation in the blank (female) space left by Defoe (McInelly 13). Coetzee restores the expunged Miranda to the narrative, and in doing so, exposes the tradition of erasing women and the female experience from literature and history. Not only does Coetzee take on the project of (re)inserting the omitted female perspective, but the woman he chooses as a vehicle to do so is herself steeped in literary history: Susan Barton. By evoking the name and story of Susan, to whom Coetzee gives the surname Barton, Coetzee not only reinterprets two texts written by Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress*, but also comments on the roles which women, when they appeared in history or literature, were forced to inhabit. Women in Defoe's world needed only to be silent and peripheral—or known "whores," who could be vilified or erased for their failure to comply with gendered, cultural, and political norms.

[106] For a discussion of the "human economy" in *Robinson Crusoe*, see Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.

Much as Defoe had relied on the popular genre of the travel narrative in creating his fictional world and shadow history, so too does Coetzee adapt the hybridized fictional/historical model solidified by his predecessor. Stepping into the role from which Defoe barred Miranda, Susan's story in *Foe* is a female travel narrative, which happens to find her thrust into a familiar story: one contemporary readers recognize as being devoid of women. In revisiting *Robinson Crusoe*, Coetzee also reaches further back to *The Tempest*; thus, Susan becomes an attempted reclamation of the erased Miranda. In *Foe*, readers witness the act of revising history, a contemporary palimpsest, which erases and omits the voices and experiences of those deemed unimportant by and to society: women and people of color. In Coetzee's pages, *Robinson Crusoe* is retold, his idyllic island existence is exposed as a fake history, hostile to alternative narratives, and Defoe himself is called out as a thief and a liar (literary fighting words if there ever were any such thing).

Coetzee, a white South African male living and writing *Foe* in the time of apartheid, is in many ways an unlikely figure to renegotiate the exclusion of women from the literary and historical tradition; indeed, this is doubtless a reason that he ultimately fails in his attempts at renegotiation. Coetzee's re-envisioning of Defoe's text restores Defoe's patronymic, "Foe," while simultaneously destabilizing Crusoe's identity by renaming him "Cruso" (Coetzee's spelling) and establishing him as an antisocial hermit. Further, Coetzee's *Foe* makes visible the violent and oppressive reality of colonialism and those who were left out of the wealth and power it promised to white European men.

Susan, a castaway from a ship of mutinied sailors, is set adrift in a boat with the body of the murdered ship's captain. In Coetzee's estimation, she has her narrative and experience stolen and appropriated by the duplicitous Foe. However, Susan is not only a victim of the sailors and a

castaway: she is also "cast away" by Coetzee himself. Susan is eventually replaced as the focus of the narrative, usurped by the intrigue and possibility represented by Friday. Unlike Defoe, who could neither envision *Robinson Crusoe* as a travel narrative inclusive of women, nor correct Shakespeare's text by removing Miranda, Coetzee appears to struggle with the reality of what (re)inserting a female presence signifies. Further he lacks the ability to accurately represent the female experience or voice and as a result Susan is reduced to a mouthpiece for the author's own attitudes towards women. Thus, in a stroke of literary misdirection, Coetzee establishes Susan as his narrator and protagonist, only to have her fade into the margins in favor of the crisis to which he is more drawn: the absence of Friday's voice and narrative. Susan, and the female presence, is ultimately erased from Defoe's history of the island by male authorship, here represented by Coetzee's Foe, and Coetzee himself. Susan foreshadows the historical and literary excision of the female experience by desperately asserting ownership of her narrative and position as an author/authority. Susan becomes a composite figure of a woman, and as such, her "importance in literature is inversely correlated to her insignificance in life" (Harvey 22). Foe is thus a mirror for Coetzee; Foe uses Susan to search out Friday's story and then abandons her, and so too does Coetzee.

Friday, Defoe's trusted and obedient servant, is mutilated and irreversibly silenced in Coetzee's adaptation. Therefore, Susan must navigate not only her own effaced narrative, but also serve as a medium through which to interpret Friday (Coetzee 22). Gone are the happy days of Crusoe teaching Friday to speak, instructing him in Christianity, and sharing a strong homosocial, familial bond. Defoe's phallocentric world is replaced with a feminized island characterized by a gapping, cavernous, tongue-less (castrated) mouth, which literally and literarily denies Friday and Susan agency, voice, and a place in the narrative history.

Friday and Susan embody two forms of silencing: silence realized in muteness, and silence experienced as erasure. Both, Coetzee's text suggests, are appropriate sites for exploitation and marginalization. Confronted with a choice to (re)create Miranda and her gendered silence, or Caliban and the racial and classist interpretation of him in Defoe's text, Coetzee chooses the path of least resistance: Miranda/Susan.[107] In *Robinson Crusoe*, Brett McInelly suggests, Crusoe takes "possession of Friday," erasing his personal identity and history, and turning him into a "carbon copy of his white savior" (17). This colonial assimilation is an imposed identity from which Coetzee, himself a white colonizer, cannot extricate Friday (17). However, he can extend narrative power to Susan, and thus restore Shakespeare's original triumvirate. Christopher Peterson, quoting Derek Attridge, states, "all canons rest on exclusion; the voice they give to some can be heard by virtue of the silence they impose on others" (860).[108] Friday is forever silent and lost to Coetzee, but Susan/Miranda does not have to be. Yet, in making this choice, Coetzee illuminates a frustrating reality, which suggests that, traditionally, men must be involved in the reclamation of female agency and implementation of a female literary and historical tradition.[109] It is in this point where Coetzee falters. Coetzee's decision to reintroduce a Miranda figure onto Crusoe/Cruso's island, rather than contending with the colonial, racial, and class implications of Friday, ignores the fact that white, male postcolonial

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[107] Mira Muhammad Zubair Baig suggests that Coetzee "creates a crisis of representability" in *Foe* (239). While Friday is the figure Coetzee wants to represent, he is painfully aware of his own limitations to represent a racialized other, this crisis leads him ultimately to create Susan. "His/Her Man ~~Friday~~: Re-righting/writing of an inaccessible *cannibal* in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *Kashmir Journal of Language Research*, Vol. 19, No. 2016, pp. 239-251.

[108] Peterson, Christopher. "The Home of Friday: Coetzee's *Foe*." *Textual Practice*, Vol. 30, No. 5, pp. 857-877.

[109] Brian Macaskill and Jeanne Colleran suggest that Susan's problem in *Foe* is not a lack of voice, but a lack of representation. Susan needs Foe to have her story told: she needs a male mediator to lend his name, and thus his privilege, to her narrative, and thus render it a confessional history (444). See, "Reading History, Writing Heresy: The Resistance of Representation and the Representation of Resistance in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *Contemporary Literature*, Vo. 33, No. 3 (Autumn, 1992), pp. 432-457.

authors are incapable of (re)creating female experience, much less restoring erased female narratives. Instead, what emerges in *Foe* is a caricature of the female voice through which Coetzee seems to argue "that feminism is more palatable and interesting when it comes from a man" (Harvey 26). If Coetzee had wanted to rewrite *Robinson Crusoe*, he should have stuck to Crusoe.

A question must then be asked as to why Coetzee chose to represent the female experience of marginalization, rather than account for Friday, leaving Friday on the periphery and in the obscure blankness of silence. Jo Alyson Parker suggests that, "with regard to Friday's past, Coetzee himself must remain silent. For if he told Friday's tale, he would replicate the crime of Foe, presuming to speak for an/the other" (37).[110] Coetzee's text suggests that the white female experience is somehow closer to Coetzee, as they are both implicated in matters of colonialism and race, as well as the class privileges they bring. Addressing Susan and the missing female element is a less politically or culturally daunting task than the appropriation of Friday's voice and personal narrative. Thus, by textually removing Friday's tongue and ability to communicate his own narrative and backstory, Coetzee appropriates a ventriloquized Susan from Defoe's *Roxana* as a means to decipher Friday.

Despite his manipulation of Friday, Susan, and her narrative, Coetzee succeeds (quite accidentally I'm sure) in forcing his readers to consider the countless nameless and faceless victims of colonialism who were similarly silenced, and the great historical and cultural loss suffered as a result. And yet, the widening mystery of Friday, and the loss of his narrative, threaten to overshadow and eclipse the presence of Susan. This continues until she is finally abandoned and relegated to a more gender appropriate site: *Roxana*. Yet even with the

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[110] Parker, Jo Alyson. "*Crusoe's* Foe, *Foe's* Cruso, and the Origins and Future of the Novel." *KronoScope* 11: 1-2 (2011), pp. 17-40.

emergence and eventual dismissal of Susan, I would suggest that by (re)inserting Susan into *Robinson Crusoe*'s quintessential male fantasy of conquest and domination, Coetzee compels readers to question the place of women in the history of colonialism. Coetzee reinforces the reality that women were often cast as bystanders to history, rather than agents; a reality in which Coetzee participates.

The woman Coetzee appropriates from Defoe's *Roxana* and places on Cruso's island is not an idealized figure, extolling the virtues of eighteenth century femininity. Defoe borrows more directly from *The Tempest* for Crusoe/Prospero and Friday/Caliban, but Susan is an imperfect and highly problematic Miranda figure. Shakespeare's Miranda, many critics argue, is the ideal woman: beautiful, chaste, obedient, and nearly silent.[111] Coetzee's Susan, however, embodies not idealized femininity as established by Shakespeare with Miranda, but Coetzee's own misogynistic views about women. Colin Bower claims that Coetzee populates his texts with "the same kinds of people," an assertion that I would alter to claim that Coetzee creates and recreates the same kind of women: "alienated, anaemic, frightened…at odds with both society and community of any kind, deracinated, desiccated, [and] sexually dysfunctional" (3).[112] Thus Susan's asserted sexuality (it is suggested that before she was cast away with the murdered ship's captain she had been found in his bed), is held up not only as the counter to Miranda's chastity, but also as a representation of Coetzee's attitude towards women in general. Susan embodies the qualities that are considered dangerous to the relative stability of the patriarchy: she is a sexualized and assertive creative/generative force. Susan as Coetzee creates her is more

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[111] For an in-depth discussion of Miranda, see Chapter 4: "Shakespeare's (Wo)men in the Caribbean" as well as Fanny Kemble. From *Notes upon some of Shakespeare's Plays.* London: Richard Bentley & Sons, 1882. Quoted in Hulme and Sherman, p. 128.

[112] Bower, Colin. "JM Coetzee: Literary Con Artist and Poseur." *Scrutiny 2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa*, Vol. 8, Iss. 2, 2008, pp. 3-23.

closely aligned with Shakespeare's Sycorax than she is with Miranda. As such, Susan, and womanhood, is positioned as a potential usurper of male power.[113]

In *Foe*, Susan is a woman seen in the midst of identity formation, of establishing herself as an author and an agent. Yet, in Coetzee's hands she will never achieve any semblance of real personhood. Thus, while Susan is fiercely committed to her own narration of the true account of her and Cruso's experience, as well as Friday's on the island—to the extent that she is able to comprehend and communicate Friday's experience—she is also hampered by her creators limited view of women. Coetzee creates her as woefully dependent on Cruso, as well as Foe's name and patriarchal protection.[114] In this way, Susan's attempts to move from capitalizing on her body, and her socially imposed identity of "whore," to capitalizing on her strength as a storyteller and participant in, and creator of, history, firmly establishes her as a caricature of femininity and feminism. Her assertions of sexual liberation, independence, and control of her own story are undermined by Coetzee's inability to see women as anything more than obstacles to be overcome. Yet, it is this struggle—the necessity of the female experience, which emerges from the shadow history of problematic and transgressive womanhood, and the presentation of a gendered, though unstable, counter narrative—which make Susan so compelling. However, Susan still fails, because she does more than assert ownership of a gendered narrative: she also attempts to represent and speak for the silenced Friday. Coetzee oversteps his own narrative bounds by (re)inserting the missing Miranda figure as a red herring, as his true intended subject

[113] Susan/Roxana in Defoe's text consciously chooses to live as a mistress/whore to wealthy and powerful men rather than accepting any of the numerous marriage proposals she receives until she is nearly 50 years old. In so doing, Susan chooses agency and freedom rather than lose her continually increasing wealth and becoming a subject of a husband. Coverture, a system still very much in place in Defoe's time, dictated that a woman, and any material or monetary wealth she may accumulate, becomes the property of her husband upon marriage. Susan's resistance to this gender role positions her as a villain in her own narrative.

[114] See Jihan Zakarriya's "Sexual Identity and Disturbed Intellectual Female Terrain in J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's *The Ship*: An Ecofeminist Reading." *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 January 2017. pp 219-232.

is not the erased female presence, but the racialized and marginalized figure of Caliban/Friday. Coetzee himself cannot reach Friday/Caliban without recreating and reinforcing Prospero's colonial violence. He can, however, shift the blame from himself/Prospero to Miranda/Susan. Coetzee does not give voice to the expunged female voice, he vilifies it, and by extension exposes himself as a chauvinist.

1.4 Coetzee's Female Dystopia

After being cast away, Susan Barton arrives on the desolate island to find Cruso and Friday having been in (perhaps self-imposed) exile for approximately fifteen years. Cruso has not kept records, a journal, or even a series of notches on a tree trunk or bedpost to catalogue the days and years of his maroonage (Coetzee 16). Coetzee has expunged from Defoe's tale/history the lush landscapes, abundance of birds, goats, grapes, and fertile land. They are replaced with the waste and wild of screeching monkeys, the relentless moaning winds, guano, and the impotence of boredom. Coetzee's Cruso has grown nothing, cultivated nothing, and created nothing other than a series of terraces which hold nothing, and evoke the futility and compulsion of Sisyphus. Cruso has not built a boat to try to escape his island prison, and has not participated in the human economy of Crusoe; instead, he seems quite happy in his exilic state. *Foe* is not the story of one man's perseverance in the face of great odds; redemption for transgressions against his God and father; dominance over his own baser instincts and nature; or propaganda about the benefits of colonization. Rather, *Foe* in its "explor[ation of] the nature of storytelling, truth, and the ownership of tales," reveals the futility of (wo)man in controlling their own identities and history (Morrison 157).

Coetzee remakes Defoe's utopia into Foe's dystopia. The latter is characterized by silence, apathy, and the ever-looming specter of death and annihilation. Cruso does not seek to

procreate and multiply, or to progress in any way; he seeks only to survive in the manner to which he has become accustomed. Like Defoe's, Coetzee's island is starkly free from passion and emotion. However, unlike Defoe, the homosocial environment created by Coetzee is sterile, it does not seek or desire to generate, only to sublimate that energy into futile labors. The introduction of a woman onto Cruso's island, a figure onto whom desire could find a socially acceptable home, does little to challenge the island wasteland. Only once in the year that Susan shared Cruso's island did she also share his bed, but even that is dismissed as the result of Cruso's fever induced delirium—not a conscious sexual urge (Coetzee 30). Feeling a hand grope her body in the night, Susan at first pushes the hand away, but eventually gives in to Cruso, thinking, "he has not known a woman for fifteen years, why should he not have his desire?" (Coetzee 30). Coetzee, Nushrat Azam claims, presents Susan as someone "who wants to be a feminist, wants to be independent"—which for Coetzee is synonymous with feigned sexual liberation—but will eventually, and continually, submit to "male domination" (166). Coetzee is commenting on women who seek to gain power over men by capitalizing on their bodies, masquerading as feminists, and Susan becomes the embodiment of this anxiety (she had used her sexuality with the murdered ship's captain, and now again with a weakened Cruso). Susan, however, refrains from being the sexual aggressor with Cruso, and yet she easily yields to his (unconscious) sexual advances. It is this element, female sexual passivity, that Coetzee caricaturizes. *Foe* suggests Miranda was only obedient and chaste because she was kept from sexual partners she would naturally acquiesce to, as all women do.[115] Miranda's idealization was thus due to her lack of a viable sexual companion, as neither her father nor Caliban would do.

[115] In fact, Miranda becomes the (sexual) aggressor with Ferdinand, vowing to be his maid should he refuse her as a wife and disobeying her father who forbade her from speaking with him. Coetzee, through Susan, highlights Miranda's natural impulses to pursue a (sexual) partner.

However, Cruso does not again pursue Susan sexually or attempt to procreate with her. She is instead thwarted in her attempt to attain power by utilizing her feminized body and sexuality, and creating a diversion which Susan believes would have brought much joy to her exile: a child.[116] Rather than create a family dynamic, or the possibility of a husband and wife relationship, Susan's arrival disrupts and destabilizes Cruso's homosocial island world. Thus, Susan is a Miranda figure, but she never steps fully into Miranda's role of wife or daughter to Cruso's Prospero. Even on the island, Susan is removed and nearly exiled from the two-man community which Friday and Cruso have established. If a family dynamic exists on the island it is comprised of a homosocial/homosexual bond between Cruso and Friday, a relationship in which Susan has no place. Hence, the text investigates more than just the arrival of an additional person on the island; it is engrossed in the appearance of a *woman* on the island, and the ways in which her gendered presence troubles its homosocial hierarchy. The feminized island environment of lush, fertile abundance of *Robinson Crusoe* is recast and refocused onto a present corporeal female body in *Foe*. In *Foe*, Coetzee suggests that land must be arid and untenable to compensate for Susan's female sexuality and procreative power. One type of fertility must be sacrificed for another.

The text that emerges from Coetzee is not the publication of a castaway memoir or travelogue, but the complicated testimony of a survivor who has been willfully expunged from her own story to emphasize the literary ingenuity and primacy of male perspective and rhetorical power. Susan becomes a puppet through whom Coetzee can speak and exert control over unruly and transgressive femininity. Not only does Coetzee seek to civilize the island environment, he seeks to nullify the female voice. Male intervention into female narratives of survival and

[116] And perhaps a nod to the stereotypical fear that women will try to "trap" men through pregnancy.

perseverance has its own long literary history. Captivity narratives, such as that of Mary Rowlandson and the (slave) narrative of Mary Prince, were similarly prefaced by and edited by men, Cotton Mather and Thomas Pringle respectively.[117] Mather and Pringle capitalized on the occasion of the female narrative to advance their own religious and/or political agendas. This is the trap into which Coetzee falls. He treats Susan as an opportunity, but her story is relatively expendable, as she is ultimately nothing but a potential pathway to Friday—a key to unlock the mystery he holds. Strikingly, Coetzee makes this struggle visible in his text, by presenting her as grappling with a fictionalized Daniel (De)Foe to retain authorship and authority of her narrative and place in history. Susan tries to wrest her narrative from the shadows and establish it as the master narrative—not purely a female or gender-specific master narrative, but a legitimized human narrative of survival, free from male influence or intervention. Yet ultimately, Susan, and by extension Coetzee, fails. It was always Friday/Caliban's story which needed to be told. The idea that a white, female mouthpiece could be used to give voice to white, male, postcolonial frustration, allowing it to speak for or represent the "other," was always a losing proposition. Coetzee saw his own limitations—and he chose to ignore them.

Unlike Crusoe's castaway narrative, which dominates over three-quarters of Defoe's text, Susan's yearlong maroonage on the island with Cruso and Friday accounts for only one short section, out of four total sections—a mere 40 pages. It is not only the time spent on the island that is significant to Susan or Coetzee, but the aftermath of that experience, and the ways in which Susan's history and memory is slowly stripped from her and appropriated by (De)Foe which is my focus here. Here Coetzee draws on the traditional shipwreck narrative popularized by Shakespeare and combines the confessional and epistolary styles of writing—both more

[117] *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* was first published in 1682. *The History of Mary Prince, West Indian Slave, Related by Herself* was first published in 1831.

stereotypically feminine literary styles. In a series of letters addressed to Foe, Susan recounts her time on the island, and the nomadic life on the margins she and Friday are thrust into upon their return to England.[118] Cruso, her letters state, had died in route to England. Without him, Susan begins to see herself as the keeper of both her own and Friday's narratives.[119] Miranda had taken pains to make Caliban speak, had "endowed [his] purposes / with words that made them known," but Coetzee's Susan begins to supplant Cruso as Friday's master, to ventriloquize his voice with her own (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii 352-357; Azam 166).

Jo Alyson Parker asserts that Susan consistently recounts in her letters to Foe—as well as in later face-to-face narratives—the elements which the island, Cruso, and Friday "lack" (25). By extension, she implicitly asks him to fill in the blanks in her story (Coetzee 40). But Susan is unable to see, and Coetzee does not acknowledge, that the hole that cannot be filled is the loss of Friday's tongue/voice. Thus, Susan implores Foe to "return to [her] the substance she has lost,"[120] and yet is still adamant that she "will not have any lies told . . . [she] would rather be the author of [her] own story than have lies told about [her] (Coetzee 51, 40). In so doing, Susan and the subsumed female narrative—not Friday—is positioned as the paramount element missing from Defoe's original history. It is a metanarrative, which exposes its fictionality while

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[118] For a discussion of the epistolary technique Coetzee employs, please see Michael Marais. "Interpretive Authoritarianism: Reading/Colonizing Coetzee's *Foe*." *English in Africa*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (May, 1989), pp. 9-16.

[119] It is suggested Cruso died of a broken heart, having been ripped from the island he loved (Coetzee 43).

[120] The implication is that women lack the ability to become narrating subjects and must rely on men to "return" the substance they have lost. Further, Susan entreats Foe to restore the "substance of truth" to her story: "for though my story gives the truth, it does not give the substance of the truth…To tell the truth in all its substance you must have quiet, and a comfortable chair away from all distraction, and a window to stare through" (51-52). The echoes of Virginia Woolf's "A Room of One's Own" are deafening. Coetzee uses Susan as a means to parody the legacy of feminism and feminist writing. In Chapter 3 of "A Room of One's Own" Woolf explores the appearance of women in history and asserts that while women certainly existed in literature, they did not seem to exist outside of that in Elizabethan society. Instead, women appear to exist only in limited and transitory ways, in a handful of letters, perhaps, as few kept diaries, and fewer wrote their own lives or experience. By suggesting that Susan cannot write and control her narrative because she lacks, essentially, a room of one's own, Coetzee indicts her specifically, and women writers in general, as frauds who explain their lack of literary output as being the result of male intervention and prevention.

simultaneously obscuring female participation and experience. *Foe*, as Parker claims, calls the veracity of history into question by "highlight[ing] competing versions of the past," exposing and interrogating both master narratives and alternative histories (26).

Foe suggests that there are appropriate subjects for female and male narratives—and appropriate men and women capable of narrating subjects, as opposed to being the objects of narration. Susan's narrative falters in that she attempts to speak but is dependent on male perspective and intervention to give meaning to her experience (a dependency reinforced by the fact that Susan is created by a male author through whom she must "speak"). Susan is tied to Foe, and thus she continuously defers to the male authorities around her—first Cruso, then Friday, and finally Foe. Susan here more closely resembles the idealized and obedient Miranda, a woman viewed as completely dependent on the men she attaches herself to for definition and identity. Miranda had allowed her father to narrate her existence for her, to give her a past, and exert control over her future.[121] Struggling against a similar fate, Susan tries to resist Foe's attempts to transform her shipwreck narrative of survival into a feminized domestic drama. She is not interested in focusing on her life as a mother, her missing daughter, or a quest to reunite her family (Coetzee 117). That is not the story Susan wants to tell, it is the story Foe/Coetzee thinks is appropriate for a woman to tell. Coetzee positions Susan as a usurping female figure that wants to transplant Cruso as the hero of the island, who wants to shift the focus from male impotence and apathy to female resilience. The danger women pose to hegemonic masculinity, and as caricaturized by Coetzee, is that women want to supplant men: Susan wants to be Prospero, not Miranda.

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[121] In Chapter 4 "Shakespeare's (Wo)Men in the Caribbean: *The Tempest* and *Prospero's Daughter*" I challenge the traditional view of Miranda as being demure, innocent, and obedient.

As a reaction to the female urge to overstep their gendered bounds and take on the male creative/generative role, Coetzee purposefully fails to situate Susan's female narrative in a literary realm controlled by men and male influence. Her tale even becomes disjointed from linear and narrative time. Defoe's Crusoe was obsessed with time-keeping: he recorded his twenty-eight years in exile to a degree that was almost irritatingly chronological in nature. But for Coetzee's Susan, time is elastic, contradictory, and elusive, especially while on the island. Crusoe catalogues growing cycles and seasonal atmospheric phenomena; Cruso has no concept of time, nor does his existence depend on it—a reality that confounds Susan.[122] In telling her story, and attempting to piece together both Cruso's and Friday's narratives as well, Susan is unmoored in time. Through her compulsion to repeat her narrative of trauma and survival to any and every listener, Susan attempts to gain ownership of her story and control its use. Susan is aware that for a story to become a history, it must be situated in time. Without the stabilizing and differentiating force of time, history blurs into fiction.

To combat against the transitory nature of time, Susan meticulously documents the date of each letter she posts to Foe, sent from an address on "Clock Lane" (Coetzee 47).[123] Colonialism and the colonial project relied on order, mastery and dominance, not only of native lands and people, but also of time. Imposing calendars, dictating birthdays, and mandating days of observance helped to eradicate native cultures and systems of belief.[124] Colonialism, for many people, changed their very experience of time. The control of time, and the power of situating

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[122] Later, upon her return to England, Susan will attempt to remedy this oversight by obsessively chronicling her days and activities in the series of letters which she sends to Foe. The dates of Susan's letters attempt to give structure to her narrative and her life. However, this framework will eventually be stripped from her in *Robinson Crusoe*, and reassigned to him when she is expunged from the text.

[123] Spivak also comments on Susan's meticulous record of time keeping and address on Clock Lane in "Theory in the Margin: Coetzee's *Foe* reading Defoe's '*Crusoe/Roxana*'" (10).

[124] For the necessity of colonizer's to "domesticate" indigenous peoples, specifically in reference to Friday see Wheeler pp. 826.

events and people in a chronological matrix, was the work of (predominantly white) men. Cruso's is an island that time forgot, and Susan's feminine struggle to reestablish order through her narrative ultimately fails.[125] Miranda was also subject to her father's narrative control over their collective history of exile, which included situating their experience in time. Susan is similarly unable to negotiate a generative conception of time. Susan's narrative repetition compulsion becomes a failure of colonialism in that time and progress are feminized and thus, in Coetzee's world, are stagnant and meaningless.[126]

As an exposure of the failures of colonialism, and specifically of the erased female experience, Susan's narrative is relegated to the shadows; she, as well as her "truth" become ghosts.[127] Defoe's *Tempest* adaptation left Miranda unrepresented which helped cement her as an unfit subject of contemporary literary investigation and reclamation. The neglect and illegitimacy of Miranda as a narrating subject has bled over into other female characters including Susan. Coetzee reinforces the removal of Miranda and the female narrative and experience through the fate he creates for Susan. To this end, Susan comments to Foe, "Better had there been only Cruso and Friday . . . better without the woman" (Coetzee 71-72). This can also be read, of course as an indication of Coetzee's misogyny and true feelings towards his female subject Susan, female characters, and women in general: better they be cast away. In short, the irresolvable problem of

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[125] For more on the temporal space of *Foe* and *Robinson Crusoe* see Jo Alyson Parker.

[126] Freud's "repetition compulsion" suggests that people repeat traumatic events as a way to gain mastery and control of them, that repetition can help repair trauma. Susan repeats her shipwreck narrative compulsively as a way to exert control over it and attempt to keep Foe from appropriating it from her. Freud, Sigmund. "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through (Further recommendations on the technique of psycho-analysis II)." Edited and Translated by J. Strachy. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 12. London: Hogarth Press, 1958.

[127] For a discussion of ghosts in *Foe* see Mirza Muhammad Zubair Baig's, "The Question of Reclaiming 'Ghost' Lives in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12 (11), Dec. 2013, pp. 20-38; and María López's "Foe: A Ghost Story." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol. 45, No. 2, pp. 295-310.

colonialism is exposed to be the concurrent reliance on a female presence for procreative progress, and the patriarchal urge to eliminate the destabilizing threat of womankind.

However, Susan's first encounter with Cruso and a distinctly African (rather than Caribbean/European) Friday, makes the necessity of the female narrative apparent. Susan's first instinct is to take her rightful place as a storyteller: "Let me tell you my story . . . for I am sure you are wondering who I am and how I come to be here" (Coetzee 10). But neither Cruso or Coetzee are interested in the story Susan tells, of how her name changed from Berton to Barton (similar to the change from Foe to Defoe, Kreutznaer to Crusoe, or Susan to Roxana); her abducted daughter; the murdered ship captain; or the fact that she frequented said captain's bed. Cruso is indifferent to Susan, her sexuality, and her plight. In Cruso/Coetzee's created homosocial island world there is no place for Susan or her intrusive, destabilizing female narrative. When she next attempts to relate to Foe, through a series of letters her experience with Cruso and his story, as she had learned it from him, she is unable to untangle fact from fiction, and in turn unable to locate Cruso or herself in time. Perhaps due to the inconsistency of memory, and the problems of narration, Susan continually retells her story. It is almost as though she is both trying to remember it and also to convince herself, and others, that the story is hers.

Susan's inability to firmly situate herself as the owner of her narration is due to the discursive framework in which Coetzee has placed her, namely, the intertextuality between *Robinson Crusoe* and *The Tempest*. In Shakespeare's frame narrative, Prospero's storytelling and power of narration is conflated with his magical abilities as a conjurer. The story he tells Miranda is spoken into being; it is a kind of spell. Thus, she finds herself a character in a fictive drama over which she is allowed little agency. Miranda, like Susan, is a means to an end. Through the marriage of Miranda to Ferdinand, Prospero can achieve reconciliation and regain

his lost throne. Similarly, through Susan, Coetzee believes he can reach his true subject, Friday. Coetzee's text reveals the inability of a male author to satisfactorily envision a world where Miranda speaks and controls her own story. Susan is hence trapped between telling and listening. Her liminality manifests as a compulsion to tell and re-tell her story, as if repetition will allow both her and Miranda to regain their lost narrative.

After over a year on the island, the three misfit castaways are finally rescued by a passing merchant ship, the *John Hobart* (Coetzee 38). An ailing, feverish Cruso is lifted from his sick bed and brought aboard the ship. It should be mentioned that Cruso was taken from his island against his will. Susan states that Cruso "[coming] to himself [on the ship] . . . fought so hard to be free that it took strong men to master him and covey him below" (39).[128] Susan was so determined to be rescued that neither the weakened Cruso, nor the silent Friday were given a choice in the matter: they would be "rescued" whether or not they consented to it. In this way, Susan appropriates the colonial male privilege of bending people to her will. She becomes the slaver Defoe had intended Crusoe to be, which symbolically takes her one step closer to Prospero, and one step further away from Miranda.

Amidst these troubles, Friday remains a consistent Caliban figure, resisting enslavement at the hands of Susan, his soon-to be new master. When the *John Hobart* appears, Friday took up his fishing spear and "dashed off towards the crags where the apes were" (Coetzee 39). Friday appears to carry on with his daily chores; however, it is more likely that he is trying to hide from the sailors, as he certainly makes no attempt to alert Susan or Cruso of their presence. This suggests that Friday does not see the ship as a savior from exile. If we are to assume that Friday

[128] For a further discussion of Cruso and Friday's reluctance to be "rescued" (90). See Chris Prentice's, "Foe." *A Companion to the Works of J.M. Coetzee*. Edited by Tim Mehigan. Suffolk, UK: Boydell & Brewer, Camden House, 2011, pp. 90-112.

purposefully evades the ship's attention, and intentionally fails to alert others to its presence, we must also question if it is the first ship ever to drop anchor at Cruso's island. If it is not, one must wonder how many other ships had been turned away or hidden from notice? Yet despite Friday's best efforts to elude it, the ship "rescues" all three of them. And this provides Susan, prisoner to her own desire for self-definition, an opportunity to once again recount her story—this time to the captain of the *John Hobart*, Captain Smith. In the narrative web Susan weaves, the spell she speaks into being, and the true danger the female narrative holds for hegemonic masculinity, she yearns to replace Prospero as the narrating subject, and recast Cruso as a feminized dependent Miranda figure, and an object of narration.

1.5 Female Fictionality, or; a woman, without her man, is nothing.

Unlike *Robinson Crusoe*, which was billed as a *History of Fact*, the Susan whom Defoe describes in *Roxana* is unquestioningly a fictional character. She is, however, a fiction which exemplifies the danger of unchecked female sexuality and agency. In a manner similar to *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe asserts in the Preface, "the Work is not a Story, but a History" (*Roxana* 1).[129] However, the substance of *Roxana*; the exploits Susan engages in, the villainy, wickedness, and whoring, leans towards the genre of Romance despite the authors assertion of historicity. *Roxana's* claim of being a history hence serves only to highlight its fictionality. By placing Susan in Cruso(e)'s reality, Coetzee emphasizes that Defoe's island is a fictional, not a historical, creation. By extension, Coetzee calls attention to the unrealities of history and literature. Readers familiar with Defoe's work most likely recognize Susan's name and self-narrated backstory;

[129] Defoe's *Roxana* is established as a work of creative non-fiction. Defoe states in the Preface, "the Scene is laid so near the Place where the Main Part of it was transacted, that it was necessary to conceal Names and Persons" (1). *Roxana* is thus distanced from *Robinson Crusoe* by the fact that it is simultaneously portrayed as both a history and a fiction, whereas Robinson Crusoe is solely and explicitly framed as a "history of fact."

what is new is her quest to find her abducted daughter in Bahia (Coetzee 7).[130] In other words, Coetzee's placement of Susan on Cruso(e)'s island exposes the fiction which is *Robinson Crusoe*, and also lends an air of historical credibility to *Roxana*—a text often dismissed as representative of the dangers and vices of womanhood. To wit, *Foe* unmasks the multiple fictions that exist in both works that have been transformed into fact.

By dropping a female (literary) character into a decidedly male history/fiction, Coetzee further exposes not only an individual case of female experience being omitted and erased, but also the willful and collective silencing of all women from literature and history. Echoing the words of Napoleon and Emerson, Coetzee claimed in "The Novel Today," that "history is nothing but a certain kind of story that people agree to tell each other" (4).[131] *Foe* explores the story we choose to tell, and retell—which happens to be almost stiflingly male. Lewis MacLeod points out, "what matters, it seems, is who gets to tell the story and who ends up listening to (and living inside) it" (3). [132] Susan, for instance, struggles to tell her story free from the confines of literary fictionalization; yet she is trapped by Coetzee, who makes her a participant—instead of an agent—in her own, or Foe's, shadow history.

As Susan strives to retain control over her narrative and "truth," so too does Coetzee labor to create a reliable female narrator, worthy of a place in history and the male literary

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[130] In *Roxana*, Susan inquires after many years as to the whereabouts of her abandoned children. Nevertheless, she eventually does everything in her power to avoid her daughter (also named Susan), by denying that she is the young girl's mother. The younger Susan is eventually murdered by Roxana/Susan's trusted maid and companion Amy. The purpose of this crime was to protect Roxana and her whoring from exposure and, ultimately, from public shame and ruin.

[131] Coetzee, J.M. "The Novel Today." *Upstream*, 6 (1988), pp. 2-5. This source was also quoted in Lewis MacLeod's "'Do we of necessity become puppets in a story?' or Narrating the World: On Speech, Silence and Discourse in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 1-18. Emerson had once asked, "what is history for a fabled agreed upon?" Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "History." *Essays: First Series* (1841). This quote was originally attributed to Napoleon but was popularized by Emerson.

[132] Lewis MacLeod's "'Do we of necessity become puppets in a story?' or Narrating the World: On Speech, Silence and Discourse in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 52, No. 1, Spring 2006, pp. 1-18.

tradition. Rather than cast her away, as Defoe had, Coetzee thinks he is redeeming Miranda through Susan, replacing the former's seeming passivity and obedience with the latter's energy and agency. Yet as he tries to make Miranda's existence on the island meaningful, he succeeds only in exposing her as a rival for Prospero's creative impulses and abilities. Thus Susan, rather than Cruso, is portrayed as an innovator during her time on the island: she is the one who suggests diving to the wreck of Crusoe's ship to salvage tools or boards to build a boat, and she "generates ideas for . . . a lamp to allow for activity at night" (Morrison 165). All of her contributions are disregarded by Cruso. Yet in an ironically unfair twist, her ideas will later be utilized by (De)Foe—while being attributed to Cruso(e). Indeed, (De)Foe's version of Susan's story removes all traces of her existence. The line between Coetzee's (feigned) empowerment of Susan, and his participation in the appropriation of her narrative, hence, reflects how easily the line between fiction and history is blurred.

The language Coetzee uses to describe Susan, and her continual quest to locate and deliver her own story to the illusive Foe is compulsive, almost pathological, in nature—bordering on "hysterical." Susan obsessively hunts for Foe, seeing him as her one chance to have her story truthfully told. Here too does Coetzee expose his own chauvinism as he reiterates Susan's unfitness as a narrator; she tells Captain Smith, "A liveliness is lost in the writing down [of a story] which must be supplied by art, and I have no art" (Coetzee 40). This serves as Coetzee's indictment of female authors and agents whom, he believes, lack creative abilities and thus must rely on men to provide "substance" to their stories. Thus, Susan relies on Foe to fill in the gaps and blanks in her personal narrative; she tries to turn her history into "art," while still being a truthful storyteller. Susan has even titled her tale for Foe: "The Female Castaway. Being a True Account of a Year Spent on a Desert Island. With Many Strange Circumstances Never

Hitherto Related" (67). Yet in seeking Foe, and her narrative voice, Susan calls the very nature of "truth" into question. In her catalogue of "strange circumstances," she wonders how long it will be before she begins to invent "new and stranger circumstances: the salvage of tools . . . the building of a boat . . . a landing by cannibals . . . many bloody deaths" (67). Tragically, Susan provides the blueprint for her own erasure: these cast-off embellishments, and ruminations about the creation of stories (and thus the creation of history), will be taken up by (De)Foe and transformed into *Robinson Crusoe,* "without the woman" (71-72).

Susan and her story are transformed in similar ways by her quest to discover the truth of Friday's lost tongue, her attempts to hunt for Foe, and her search for authorial agency. Illustrating her liminality in the text, and her own narrative history, Susan is forced upon her return to England to inhabit a series of alternative identities. She first rechristens herself "Mrs. Cruso," and thereby situates herself as the heir and executrix of Cruso's narrative, and later as Foe's housekeeper (Eckstein 61). Each of these personas highlight Susan's dependency on men. Coetzee seems to suggest that the only way women are granted any attention, respect or authority is through their connections to men either as wives or servants. This societal norm is so ingrained in women, or at least in the male author creating a female character, that Susan instinctively knows to conceal her independent identity and assert her submissiveness to the men around her. At other times, without a man to define herself against, the guises Susan assumes are "gender-crossing" and androgynous (Eckstein 65).[133] In addition to her feigned identities, Susan dons many disguises on her hunt to find Foe, traveling around England with Friday as "gipsies,"

[133] Susan's multiple identities are reminiscent of the careers and personas which Daniel Defoe created for himself. Yet the majority of the roles that Susan performs are masculine, or otherwise connected to a man. Susan is granted certain protections—both on the *John Hobart* and upon her return to England—because of her association with English patriarchy. For example, both her assertion that she is Cruso's widow, and her attempt to disguise herself as a man, suggest that there is nothing more threatened, or threatening to society, than a free and independent woman. Interestingly, Susan also assumes many aliases to hide herself and her true past in *Roxana*.

dressing as a man, and excusing her disheveled appearance and poverty by claiming to have been robbed on her way to visit her brother (Coetzee 108).[134] Yet, again, each of Susan's assumed personas share one similar characteristic: a reliance on male presence, and perhaps on male protection. For this reason, Susan's identity and history becomes transitory and unmoored from both time and reality when divorced from male influence.

Coetzee himself appears unsure of what kind of story he wants to tell in *Foe*, indeed what kind of story he is capable of telling. The text vacillates between genres: between the heroic, masculinized travelogue/shipwreck tale Coetzee wants to restore to Friday, and the femininized, domestic, sentimental drama he as an author is more able to voice through Susan; between *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*. Coetzee's limitations are embodied by Susan herself. She is alternatingly independent—finding an (uneasy) existence for herself and Friday by supplanting Cruso as the keeper of the island's narrative—and completely dependent on the male figures around her for survival and relevance (first Cruso and Friday on the island, and then Friday and Foe in England). Susan is presented to readers, as Eckstein suggests, as "gender-crossing;" not only in her assumed personas and disguises, but in her alternatingly masculine narrative independence and feminine subservience. Coetzee's chauvinism manifests itself to readers through (De)Foe's division of his characters into their two eponymous texts, *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*. Coetzee's text, after combining the tales of *Robinson Crusoe* and *Roxana*, sees Foe attempt the project of unraveling these intertwined stories—to create a distinctly male story of survival and perseverance, as well as a separate "lesser" female story of debasement, "whoring," and murder.

[134] For a discussion on the importance of names and naming in *Foe* see Manuel Almagro Jiménez's "'Father to my story': Writing *Foe*, De-Authorizing (De)Foe." *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 18 (2005): pp. 7-24, pp. 9.

Newly (re)created and authorially destabilizing, Coetzee is unsure of what to do with Susan. In this way, Susan is reminiscent of Shakespeare's Miranda; she is herself a Miranda figure. In *The Tempest*, Miranda was simultaneously an essential piece of the project Shakespeare wanted to achieve—male reconciliation—while remaining inessential as an active agent or participant in and of herself. In other words, Miranda was valued for what she represented, but was all but barred from representing herself. Her seeming frailty and obedience allowed her to achieve her most important function in *The Tempest*: as the shipwrecked woman, she could "summon male heroism" (Miskolcze 28).[135] Miranda, like Susan, was hence a liminal character and presence, necessary in theory, but disposable in practice. Miranda became—to flip Irene Lara's description of Sycorax in *The Tempest* as an "absent presence" —a present absence (Lara 80).[136] Miranda and Susan are significant not for their feminine perspectives or actions, but for how they direct attention to the men around them. Similarly, Coetzee is torn between the necessity of making Miranda/Susan present—by reinserting her into the male literary and historical landscape of colonization—and of engaging in the act of expunging her and her experience. This confusion is manifest in Susan and her fears that, if her and Friday's experiences on the island, and with Cruso, go untold, they will become obscured by time and lost to history. As a woman, Susan sees no choice but to impart her story to Foe; after all, as Captain Smith had stated, "It is a story which you should set down in writing and offer to booksellers . . . There has never before, to my knowledge, been a female castaway of our nation. It will cause a great stir" (Coetzee 40). [137] Susan thus recognizes the danger of having her narrative stolen, and

[135] Miskolcze, Robin. *Women and Children First: Nineteenth-Century Sea Narratives and American Identity.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007.

[136] Lara, Irene. "Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax." *Journal of International Women's Studies,* Vol. 9, Iss. 1 (2007), pp. 80-98.

[137] Emphasis mine. Female shipwreck narratives do exist; the earliest was Sarah Allen's *A narrative of the shipwreck and unparalleled sufferings of Mrs. Sarah Allen,* which appeared as a series of pamphlets in 1816 and 1817. Allen's narrative was written in epistolary form, although its veracity has been questioned since its first

continuously avows that it is hers alone. By obsessively writing to Foe, she asserts ownership of her narrative; similarly, by seeking him out during his self-imposed exile, Susan hopes to add her narrative to the historical record (Coetzee 168).[138] Susan's fears, unfortunately, are not unwarranted and foreshadow Coetzee's true intentions for her and *Foe*: despite Susan's best efforts, her narrative will be stripped from her and repositioned in *Roxana*, not *Robinson Crusoe*.

As previously mentioned, in an attempt to gain control and authority over her story, Susan transforms her identity. And many of her briefly-occupied identities purposely obscure her sexuality and femininity. They represent a calculated step to protect herself as a single woman while travelling abroad, accompanied only by a mute and passive black slave. Susan must distance herself from the life she previously lived in Bahia, where "A woman who goes abroad freely is thought a whore. I was thought a whore . . . or as I prefer to call them, free women" (Coetzee 115). In England, Susan is not free *because* she is a woman; she must, therefore, borrow alternative identities. Being disguised as a transient male enables Susan to test the boundary between genders and reinforces Coetzee's misogynistic suspicion that women seek to supplant men as literary and historical agents. Susan, like the author who created her, hence inhabits a liminal space: simultaneously male and female, subject and object. To this end, James V. Morrison explains that the experience of being shipwrecked and castaway was itself transformative; it necessarily created a "profound change" in survivors, both on and off the island, blurring boundaries even of gender (2). Susan, upon her return to England, is likewise transformed into socially acceptable or necessary alter egos, both female and male. As such,

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appearance. It is possible that Coetzee was familiar with Allen's narrative and its questionable history, as both seem to inform *Foe*. For more on Sarah Allen, see Robin Miskolcze's, *Women and Children First: Nineteenth-Century Sea Narratives and American Identity.*

[138] According to Michael Quilter, Daniel Defoe also went into exile in an attempt to escape his creditors. Coetzee's Foe is very much based on the historical Daniel Defoe, which complicates the boundary between works of fiction, historical fiction, and biography. See Michael Quilter's "Daniel Defoe: Bankrupt and Bankruptcy Reformer." *Journal of Legal History*, Vol. 25, Iss. 1, (April 2004), pp. 53-73.

Susan's mutable identity is deeply transgressive: she eschews the traditionally female functions of mother and wife in favor of occupying culturally male roles of storyteller, historian, adventurer, and survivor.

Yet Robinson Crusoe, as a character and recorder of history, remains relatively stagnant in terms of his identity. He is a man alone in a starkly homogeneous masculine world. Nevertheless, this does not indicate that Crusoe's world was completely devoid of femininity. Crusoe, to sublimate the absence of women on the island, and the necessity of corporeal women in the world at large, transforms his environment into a feminized space: a space which was fecund and yielding to the male desire for mastery, and endowed by Crusoe with procreative power.[139] In this way, Crusoe can be read as an extension and reimagining of Prospero, who himself occupied a gender-crossing space, serving as both father and mother to Miranda, acknowledged Caliban as "mine"—both a sibling to Miranda and a son to himself — and thus usurping the place of Sycorax. Prospero is himself reborn on the island of his exile (Shakespeare Act 5, Scene I, 275-276).[140] While the feminization of Crusoe's island brings forth a son in the form of Friday, it remains largely sterile: without a woman, his procreative power is limited and symbolic. Even while attempting to redefine himself as both father and mother of the island and its inhabitants, Crusoe's identity is singular.

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[139] Michel Tournier's novel, *Friday*, brings the feminization of Crusoe's island into stark focus. Tournier's Robinson Crusoe christens his island "Speranza," and sees in her natural landscape the curves and genitals of a woman. Robinson's relationship with Speranza is distinctly sexual, in that he engages in sex acts with both a fallen and moss-covered tree, as well as the ground, resulting in the appearance of mysterious and alien small flowers, which he refers to as his "daughters" (47-129).

[140] Critics often cite Prospero and Miranda's shipwreck—which Prospero describes as a groaning under his burden, "which raised in me / An undergoing stomach, to bear up /Against what should ensue"—as a type of birth/rebirth, in which Prospero is feminized and recast as a mother figure (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii, 155-158). For an in-depth discussion of Prospero's "maternity" and Miranda's rebirth see Natali Boğosyan, *Postfeminist Discourse in Shakespeare's The Tempest and Warner's Indigo: Ambivalence, Liminality, and Plurality*. "*The Tempest*: A Dialogic Medium of the Patriarchal Text and Matriarchal Texts." Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. pp. 39-90.

Crusoe's singularity is contrasted with Susan's apparent multiplicity. Prior to her quest for her daughter, and during her time in Bahia—where she survived, Coetzee implies, by trading her sexuality as a commodity—Susan is aligned with the most threatening elements of femininity, namely, unchecked and wanton sexuality. However, as the novel progresses, Susan undergoes a sea-change: she is slowly "unsexed," or masculinized. Back in England, while trying to piece together her identity and an alternative narrative, Susan is transformed from a sexualized woman to the "father" of her own story (Coetzee 123).[141] Consequently, Susan and Cruso exchange positions in Coetzee's text. She is elevated to the position of father and narrator, while Cruso is debased through his reduction to mother and narrated. If storytelling, history, and colonization are decidedly male projects, Coetzee suggests that Susan must be unsexed to reemerge as a masculine, or asexual, generative force. Susan, again, becomes a representation of Coetzee's own anti-feminist stance wherein women, even female characters, do not seek to be independent, equal agents. Instead they desire to usurp male narrative power and primacy.

While recasting herself as the "father" of her story, to lend her narrative historical authority, Susan also stacks the deck with literary authority. Susan asks:

> Do you know the story of the Muse, Mr. Foe? The Muse is a woman, a goddess, who visits poets in the night and begets stories upon them . . . When I wrote my memoir for you, and saw how like the island it was, under my pen, dull and vacant and without life, I wished that there were such a being as a man-Muse, a youthful god who visited authoresses in the night and made their pens flow. But now I know better. The Muse is both goddess and begetter. I was intended not to

[141] Almagro Jiménez also states that Susan will enter into a symbolic marital relationship with Foe, "in which again the roles will be reversed so that Foe will not only be the 'intended' (126) but much more: 'I think of you as a mistress, or even, if I dare speak the word, as a wife' (152)" (Jiménez 9).

> be the mother of my story, but to beget it. (Coetzee 126)

Susan refashions herself as the spirit and Muse of the island, the generative force behind authorship, the one who "begets" stories on others. Susan, taking on the propagative mantle of "father" and "Muse," feminizes Foe as the recipient of her story, as Cruso(e) had feminized the island. Coetzee thus creates, as Manuel Almagro Jiménez asserts, a sexual reversal between Susan and Foe (9). A reversal which neither Coetzee nor Foe seem comfortable with. Becoming sexually intimate for the first time Susan assumes the dominant male position by "straddling" Foe, "which he did not seem easy with, in a woman" (Coetzee 139). Following their sexual liaison, Susan reasserts her power of male procreation, stating the Muse "must do whatever lies in her power to father her offspring" (Coetzee 140). While Crusoe had "seeded" and "peopled" his island with agriculture and symbolic offspring, the language utilized by Coetzee in relation to Susan is procreative, for she impregnates Foe with ideas. But although Susan assumes the role of dominant creator of history, she is still not credited with its creation.

Foe, however, is not content to merely be the repository for, and ghost writer of, Susan's history. Recognizing that Foe is on the verge of appropriating her narrative, and expunging her from the official record, Susan reasserts her agency, and ownership of her voice and experience: "I am not a story, Mr. Foe. I may impress you as a story because I began my account of myself without preamble, slipping overboard into the water and striking out for the shore. But my life did not begin in the waves" (Coetzee 131). There are parts of her story that Susan does not choose to tell, "because to no one, not even to [Foe does she] owe proof that [she] is a substantial being with a substantial history in the world" (131). Finally, Susan proclaims, "I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (131). Unfortunately, the more Susan claims the narrative and historical primacy of her story, the more

compelled Foe is to expunge her from it, and to relocate her to the feminized text of *Roxana*. The destructive force which causes the eventual loss of her narrative is representative of the loss of historical female experience within the colonial period and beyond. No matter how fiercely Susan fights against historical erasure and omission, and no matter how hard she tries to retain ownership of her story—to have it told on her terms—the more Coetzee exposes, and participates in, female expulsion and marginalization from male literary history.

1.6 Susan and Friday, or; The Deepening Mystery of Friday

While Susan is locked in a gender-crossing battle of wills with Foe, for narrative supremacy and historical relevancy, Friday remains silent. Early in *Foe*, Susan asks Cruso how many words Friday knows, and whether his time on the island might be more pleasant if he taught Friday English, so that they could converse (Coetzee 22). Cruso responds with the revelation that Friday is unable to speak because "he has no tongue" (22). Peering into the dark abyss of Friday's mouth, Susan is horrified at the brutality of the loss of Friday's tongue and his subsequent inability to define himself linguistically. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Caliban had the master language of Prospero and Miranda imposed on him and was thus able to curse those who abused and enslaved him.[142] Coetzee's Friday, however, is denied access to language, and thereby the ability to curse his master and enslaver. The loss of Friday's tongue and, by extension, of narrative authority, disturbs Susan, as it intimately connects her with her own ability to recount and author her experiences. Unlike Friday, Coetzee grants her the ability to speak—but her voice is ventriloquized. Thus Susan speaks, but fails to be heard. The profound loss of Friday's literal and symbolic voice conjures up anxieties in Susan as she questions whether she, too, will be relegated to the margins of her own story/history. Lost along with

[142] Shakespeare, Act 1, Scene ii, lines 362-3. pp. 19.

Friday's tongue, is complete access to the truth. This realization compels Susan to cling all the more desperately to her own story, and yet her voice and narrative will be similarly silenced.

At issue here are the gendered implications of an assertive female narrative, and the racial dimension of Friday's silencing, in which Susan is implicated. By claiming herself the guardian of both Cruso and Friday's island existence, Susan participates in the silencing of both men—a move typical of a misogynist narrative. Coetzee is incapable, and has no intention, of establishing Susan as the keeper and narrator of the characters history. She is not the hero of the island; she is the villain. Readers are reminded of the moment Coetzee made his chauvinistic intentions known, when Susan was exposed as a failed Miranda for attempting to usurp masculine authority; the moment on the rescuing ship the *John Hobart* where Susan seizes authority by claiming she is Cruso's widow, and thus the heir and executrix of his and Friday's narratives. Both acts are presented as manifestations of colonial violence against Cruso and Friday and by extension reveal Coetzee's chauvinism (Eckstein 61). Positioning Susan in this way not only legitimizes Coetzee's abandonment of her and her feigned feminism (and appropriated masculinity) but makes it a necessity.

Escaping the island of their exile frees Susan, but not Friday, from individualized experiences of enslavement—a feat Coetzee is unable to perform. On the island, Susan (like Miranda before her with Prospero), is a dependent of Cruso and the colony he has established. She is his gendered subject. Whereas shipwreck narratives, such as *The Tempest*, often offer an opportunity for figures to shed "baggage" or "level the playing field," the island (re)creates a gendered and racialized colonial hierarchy (Morrison 59-62). Prospero had mused, as he prepared to return to Milan, that his every third thought would be the grave; Cruso brings this thought to fruition (Act V, Scene i, 311). If *Foe* is a record of a (partially) restored female

narrative, it is also a continuation and indication of what happens when Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban leave the island. Coetzee posits that Prospero never truly leaves the island, and never regains his usurped throne by enacting a just revenge on his enemies. Instead, through death, Cruso is released from his role in Friday's subjugation. This void, however, is filled by Susan/Miranda, who usurps Cruso/Prospero as the colonizing figure, as she participates in the silencing of Friday/Caliban. Coetzee seems to imply that Caliban must be irrevocably silenced to make Miranda visible and heard. This is achieved by removing Friday's tongue, and thus Susan's narrative competition. *Foe* argues that Susan, and women's, true crime is that they are unable to see that their narratives are, and will always be, lesser.

Most of the criticism of *Foe*, including that of Barbara Eckstein and Robert M. Post, have taken Cruso and Susan's acknowledgement of Friday's missing tongue, as a textual fact in Coetzee's novel. They have even speculated as to how the tongue was lost: perhaps it was removed by slavers or cut out by Cruso himself. However, several critics have called Friday's disfigurement into question. For example, Lewis MacLeod does not believe that Friday was mutilated, boldly stating: "I challenge any reader to produce any proof that Friday has no tongue" (7).[143] MacLeod further claims that Friday's silence is an act of resistance, stating that Friday has the "capacity, just not the inclination, for speech" (7). MacLeod thus interprets Friday's silence as a conscious choice to avoid manipulation, and to evade becoming what Edward Said termed a "native informant" (MacLeod 6, Said 324).[144] To support his theory that Friday is only figuratively unable to speak, MacLeod uses Susan's words against her. When Cruso bids Friday to open his mouth for Susan to inspect the space where Friday's tongue should

[143] The theory that the loss of Friday's tongue is an unsubstantiated claim is also explored by Christopher Peterson's "The Home of Friday: Coetzee's Foe." *Textual Practice*, Vol. 30, No. 5, pp. 857-877.

[144] Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage 1979.

be—asking “do you see?”—Susan, looking away, responds, “it’s too dark” (Coetzee 22). MacLeod argues that Susan’s failure to verify the absence of Friday’s tongue is evidence that because Cruso said Friday had no tongue, Susan simply believed him (8).

Yet while MacLeod makes much of the “dubious” claims that Friday has no tongue, his reasons for doubting this point are similarly dubious (8). MacLeod’s challenge to “prove” that Friday does not have a tongue—and, by extension, that Friday displays agency by choosing to remain silent out of his own free will—is impossible to accomplish. MacLeod is employing judicious rhetoric to establish reasonable doubt as to whether Friday is capable of oral communication. This suggestion serves as a red herring to distract readers from Coetzee’s larger project of inserting ventriloquized female narratives into masculine homosocial fantasies (in part, it appears, to point out the disposability of female voices). Coetzee, a white postcolonial figure, demurs to speak for Friday (and thus avoids appropriating the colonial experience of marginalization which he is unequipped to voice). MacLeod, however, also a white postcolonial, sees himself as an appropriate cryptographer for Caliban and his descendants. In other words, MacLeod is determined to make Friday’s silence “mean” something.

MacLeod’s attempt to read Friday’s silence as an act of resistance against white manipulation, however, ultimately disintegrates. There is no textual evidence to support Friday’s silence as a choice or resistive act. MacLeod merely points to Cruso as an unreliable narrator, and to Susan’s refusal to investigate his claims about Friday’s missing tongue further. MacLeod further claims that the mere insinuation that Friday lacks a tongue creates “a discursive reality . . . not because it’s a fact, but because its tenuous status in the fictional framework . . . has rebounded across the border of legend to a discursive territory where it works as a dominant paradigm” (8). MacLeod attempts to destabilize the genesis of Friday’s silence by citing it as a

purposeful decision, or a false reality created by Cruso. When this fails, he shifts blame to Susan who refused to verify Cruso's account that Friday's tongue was in fact missing. MacLeod's hunt for a scapegoat, however, does a major disservice to Coetzee's already problematic text. Lost on MacLeod is the point *Foe* succeeds in making about the ugly history of colonization, and encounters with native people which so often resulted in their violent silencing and oppression, a history in which both Coetzee and MacLeod are implicated. Eventually unraveling his own argument, MacLeod contends that the existence or nonexistence of Friday's tongue is a moot point: regardless of whether it was really removed, its loss became essentially "true" in the world of Coetzee's text (9).

Whether it is truly missing, or it has just fallen into disuse, Friday's tongue becomes an obsession which begins to eclipse Susan and her narrative. Here, *Foe* suggests that Susan and Friday's narratives are unable to co-exist. For Susan to assert her gendered narrative, Friday's racialized experience is denied articulation. Caliban is sacrificed for Miranda—and yet Friday's loss threatens to efface Susan. She is aware of her diminishing presence in her own history, and the shift of Foe's, and Coetzee's, focus to Friday. In response, Susan compulsively recounts her own story, possessively reciting and retelling her story to Foe. After finally tracking down Foe, Susan realizes that, although she is casting Friday in the role of "shadow," it is she who is becoming a ghost in her own shadow history (Coetzee 115).

Mirroring Cruso's island attitude, Foe demonstrates only a marginal interest in Susan's story. Foe, like Coetzee, is far more drawn into the *possibilities* of Susan's story, than he is her personal perspective on it. He is attracted by the embellishments and emphases he might make in it, and the holes which he may be able to fill in; for him, the island adventure is but one small part of a much larger female narrative. Despite Susan's attempts at self-definition, Foe gravitates

towards Friday, and the story which Friday hides through his inability (anatomical or otherwise) to speak. Susan, too, sees the potential in Friday's story, but insists, "The story of Friday's tongue is unable to be told . . . the true story is buried within Friday, who is mute. The true story will not be heard till by art we have found a means of giving voice to Friday" (Coetzee 118). Yet Susan, Foe, and even Coetzee lack the "art" to imbue Friday with a voice. And here is the great tragedy of *Foe* and Coetzee; the text exemplifies a "voice in conflict with itself" (Bishop 54). *Foe* questions Coetzee's ability to tell a "story of oppression without pretending to speak for the oppressed" (Bishop 54). Just as Prospero relinquished his magic, his "art," in returning to Milan, so too are the characters in *Foe*, and the author himself, unable to recuperate that loss. Friday lacks the ability to communicate and to define himself; yet he simultaneously defies definition by those around him. Therefore, as Cruso's heir apparent (and like Miranda before her), Susan asserts her place as narrator, extending her authorial power and ownership to encompass Cruso and Friday. Still psychologically and emotionally trapped by the island, and its destabilizing effects, Susan hopes her voice and narrative will finally release them all.

1.7 The Power in Narration

Storytelling, which is arguably the true focus of Coetzee's novel, is revealed as a means by which those enslaved by history—or excluded from the official record and relegated to the shadowy world of alternative narratives—may be freed. And yet, Susan and Coetzee fail to see that no one, restored, narrative can un-silence the multitude of voices erased by history. They can only make visible the absences. Susan hence becomes a failed Miranda figure, in that Coetzee mistakenly assumes that feminized and racialized voices cannot co-exist: that Caliban must be sacrificed to hear Miranda. Susan believes she is fighting not only for the reestablishment of her own diminished voice, but for the devastatingly silent Friday. But Susan, in her compulsion to

repeat her story and unlock the mystery of Friday, and his missing tongue and identity, becomes blind where Friday is mute. Christopher Peterson asserts, "[f]iguring Friday as living in silence, Susan projects onto him *her experience* of his absent voice, her experience of his silence" (860, emphasis in original). Susan, and the colonial figure she usurps, is thus implicated in Friday's silencing.

Susan's continual quest for the "truth" exposes the extent to which she is not only an "unsuccessful author—worse authoress," but that *Foe* was never her story to tell (Macaskill and Colleran 434).[145] Coetzee's retelling of *Robinson Crusoe* has always been "Friday's narrative although others (both inside and outside the text) have tried to appropriate it or to dictate it, or to allegorize it along the way" (453). The "truth" that Susan both seeks and spurns is the reality that "getting to the truth carries a threat, namely the threat of ending the enterprise"; or ending the story, and her place within it (442).[146] Were she finally to succeed in giving voice to Friday—by learning his language or imbuing his gestures with meanings which can be read and accurately interpreted—Susan would erase herself. She would be rendered unnecessary and pushed back to the margins. Therefore, Friday must remain obscure, must be able to be "re-shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others . . . For as long as he is dumb we can tell ourselves his desires are dark to us, and continue to use him as we wish" (Coetzee 121, 148). In an effort to keep Friday in the shadows and refocus the narrative and attention on herself, Susan attempts to define Friday by what he "says" but cannot tell.

[145] Macaskill and Colleran quote a 1987 interview with J.M. Coetzee conducted by Tony Morphet, "Two Interviews with J.M. Coetzee, 1983 and 1987" which appeared in *From South Africa*. Edited by David Bunn and Jane Taylor. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987, pp. 454-64.

[146] Quoted in Macaskill and Colleran from J.M. Coetzee's "Truth in Autobiography." Cape Town: Cape Town University Press. [Inaugural Lecture, 3. October 1984].

While the world of spoken language is impossible for Friday, Susan begins to believe he communicates through nonverbal means. Unfortunately, she lacks the ability to interpret him. In an interview with David Attwell, Coetzee stated: "Friday is mute, but Friday does not disappear, because Friday is body" (Peterson 865). Denied verbal articulation, Susan attempts to read Friday as a physical text. And yet, by focusing on Friday's music and dance, Susan exoticizes him and imposes her own limited understanding on him; she sees his body as its own sign (Coetzee 157).[147] G. Scott Bishop suggests Susan believes "she should be able to communicate across the racial bar…Women naively believe that women can communicate with blacks more easily than white men can because blacks are more closely related to nature than white men" (55). However, the extreme focus on Friday's alterity and physicality succeeds in reducing him, as it did with slaves before and after him, to an animalistic category below that of "human." Fearing that silence and inscrutability will indicate disaggregation and erasure, Coetzee, through Susan, looks to Friday's corporeal gesticulations as a substitute for verbal articulation. Coetzee's hope is that, by doing so, he may discover a hidden native language previously inaccessible to him; all that is excavated, however, is a form of racial fetishism. David Marriott suggests that racial fetishism depends upon stereotypes which "is a fetish not because it masks an illusion . . . but because it keeps hidden, or veils, a lack" (223). [148] Friday's "lack"—his silence and his loss of a tongue—is what makes him, to Coetzee and ventriloquized through Susan, an appropriate site of appropriation and representation.

The tendency to exoticize and fetishize Friday does not exist solely in Coetzee and his Miranda figure, Susan. It also extends to critics of *Foe* who, in their efforts to make Friday "speak," try to interpret his corporality by attributing it to "Buddhist-like rituals," "dervish-like"

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[147] See Graham Huggan. "The Postcolonial Exotic." *Transition*, No. 64 (1994), pp. 22-29.

[148] Marriott, David. "On Racial Fetishism." *Qui Parle* Vol. 18, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2010), pp. 215-248.

rituals, "African Capoeira," "*cathartic*, Trinidadian calypso," and "Buddhist Circumbulation" (Foxcroft 346, emphasis in the original).[149] In his article, "The Power of Non-Verbal Communication in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*," Nigel Foxcroft asserts that Friday's dancing allows him to "shamanically . . . travel to another world . . . it provides Friday with a cathartic escape from a repressed existence, facilitating spiritual self-transcendence" (353). However, Foxcroft's interpretation and reduction of Friday to a "disarticulated body" succeeds in enacting "the discursive processes whereby the dominated are situated as objects of representations and meditations[,] which offer them no place from which to resist the modes that have constituted them as at the same time naked to the eye and occult" (Parry 154, 151).[150] Friday may be linguistically silent; however, the desire of those around him to make his voicelessness speak, threatens to turn Friday into nothing more than a racialized stereotype. In short, Friday becomes a text which Susan and Foe believe must be read and interpreted. But Susan—despite being so aware of what it is like to speak and yet go unheard—is unable to decipher Friday's language. Thus, she reenacts his marginalization.

In much the same way that Susan becomes the ventriloquized voice of Coetzee, so too does Friday's lack of voice draw attention to his physicality and actions, almost as a kind of pantomime: as a means of interpreting his history, as well as his obscure account of the island.[151] Early in the text, Susan inquires of Cruso how many words Friday knows; Cruso responds, "as

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[149] For further discussion of Friday's non-verbal communication, see Nigel Foxcroft, "The Power of Non-Verbal Communication in J.M. Coetzee's *Foe*." From the Inaugural European Conference on Arts and Humanities, Official Conference Proceedings, University of Brighton, UK, 2013. pp. 346-357. http://eprints.brighton.ac.uk/12627/1/ECAH2013_proceedings.pdf date accessed 7/12/2017; and María López, "*Foe*: A Ghost Story." *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, Vol. 45 No. 2 (2010), pp. 295-310.

[150] See Benita Parry, "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J.M. Coetzee." *Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy 1970-1995*. Edited by Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

[151] Derek Walcott explored this idea in the play *Pantomime* in *Postcolonial Plays: An Anthology*. Edited by Helen Gilbert. London: Routledge, 2001.

many as he needs" (21). Yet one of the few words Friday knows is "sing" (Coetzee 22). It is curious that included in the limited English vocabulary that Friday understands and can respond to is the word "sing" (21). Friday is also able to comprehend the word "firewood" although not "wood" on its own (22). Music must be of great significance to Friday and/or Cruso, since it is held at the same level as the life giving "firewood."

When Friday sings—or rather hums—he enters a trancelike state, and is, perhaps, transported back to the island and Cruso (Foxcroft 353). Turning "his face to the stars," Friday's low hum becomes the voice of the world, "the voice of man" (Coetzee 22). And yet the voice of the world is feminized. Friday's lack of a tongue, and thus his inability to speak himself into being, is not only reminiscent of an obediently silent and deferential Miranda, but also of a violently silenced and resistive Philomela. Graham Huggan has suggested, "Philomela's story has become a paradigm for the re-enactment of colonial encounter, for the articulation of a violent history of dispossession and deprivation which circumstances dictate must be told in another way" (155).[152] Unable to speak and be heard or understood, Friday signifies through alternative means; the way these means are interpreted varies according to the individual interpreter. Susan sees Friday as a muted and violated Philomela, who turns to music and dance to make the source of her present state known.[153] Thus, Susan again occupies the masculine position of interpreter, storyteller, and participant in Friday's mutilation. If he is an abused and

[152] Huggan, Graham. "Philomela's Retold Story: Silence, Music and the Postcolonial Text." *Interdisciplinary Measures: Literature and the Future of Postcolonial Studies*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008. See also Elleke Boehmer, "Transfiguring: Colonial Body into Postcolonial Narrative." *Stories of Women: Gender and Narrative in the Postcolonial Nation.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005, pp. 127-140.

[153] In the Attic myth, Philomela was raped by her sister, Procne's, husband Tereus. To keep Philomela from telling of her violation, Tereus cuts out her tongue. Huggan states, "Philomela still found a way of making herself understood, however, by embroidering a tapestry which constructed the story of her rape" (155). Realizing what has happened to her sister, Procne exacts her revenge by serving Tereus his own son for dinner. After being discovered, the sisters flee from a murderous Tereus and are turned into birds: Procne becomes a swallow while Philomela becomes a nightingale. See Huggan's "Philomela's Retold Story: Silence, Music and the Postcolonial Text."

silenced Philomela, Susan stands in as the abusive Tereus. The gender-crossing methods of communication, and gender role reversals, fails to fill an existing lack. Instead it further negates the possibility of truly restoring either Friday or Susan's erased narratives.

Friday's (feminized) flute—the sound of the world, the sound of the nightingale—which Susan first recalls him playing on the island while Cruso is ill, appears to hold significant, though unclear, meaning for Friday. Huggan asserts that Friday is able to transform silence into song, an act that allows him to "overcome the . . . legacy . . . of his colonial past" ("Philomela's" 155). In *The Tempest*, the music on the island emanates from supernatural sources: Ariel, the other captive entity/spirit besides Caliban present on the island, and Prospero who is able to conjure music from out of thin air. Music is thus connected with "art" and magic, which extends its power to Friday, but not to Susan; Susan can find only assonance.

Out of frustration with his continuous repetition "on his little reed flute a tune of six notes," and her inability to decipher the meaning of either Friday or the music—Susan "dashed" Friday's flute from his hands while on the island (Coetzee 28). Later in England, Susan begins to suspect that Friday's music is a type of language; in other words, she sees the missed opportunity to communicate with Friday. Huggan claims that, "Friday's expressive range of music, gesture and silence . . . constitutes an alternative language to Susan's . . . Deprived of speech, he directs his attention to subverting the language that has been imposed upon him" (160).[154] Finding a case of recorders in Foe's house, she leaves one out for Friday to find, thinking, "if there were any language accessible to Friday, it would be the language of music" (Coetzee 95-96). But Susan's attempts to harmonize with Friday's six note tune, to improvise and contribute her own musical voice, and to "speak his language," go unnoticed. Friday's musical trance is closed to

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[154] Huggan, too, notes the similarities between Friday and Caliban. He claims that, "Foe can be considered as much a postcolonial reworking of *The Tempest* as it is one of *Robinson Crusoe*" (164).

her: his spinning and dancing only recreates Cruso's singular masculine world: a world where there is no place for Susan.

Remarkably, Friday's obscure communications—through music, humming, dancing, and the scattering of petals—are still more visible and "heard" than any words spoken by Susan throughout *Foe*. In the article, "Excellent Dumb Discourse: The Limits of Language in *The Tempest*," J.W. Jewkes argues that the main concern of Shakespeare's play is "the failure of language as a vehicle for meaningful communication" (204).[155] Jewkes points to alternative communicative modes, such as the music utilized by Caliban, which fail in part because Caliban is thought to misuse language (204). This failure is replicated by Coetzee although now the failure is transferred from Caliban/Friday to Miranda/Susan who had been tasked with teaching the native to speak and communicate but is unable to translate his meaning. Susan continuously tries to speak, and thereby to assert her own historical significance and to affirm the significance of all women. Still, it is Friday and his ultimate, un-interpretable silence that takes primacy in the narrative. Susan laments to Foe, "in the beginning I thought I would tell you the story of the island and, being done with that, return to my former life. But now all my life grows to be story and there is nothing of my own left to me" (Coetzee 133). In the process of exposing the inability of a male author to give voice to the female experience, Susan begins to see herself and her narrative dissolve, as she is slowly transformed for a final time into a "phantom" (133).

In *Foe,* Coetzee argues that the male experience and narrative, even those unspoken, are far more historically and narratologically significant than the female. The smallest of Friday's acts, which Susan witnesses and reports to Foe, are dissected and interpreted. Friday becomes

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[155] Jewkes, J.W. "Excellent Dumb Discourse: The Limits of Language in *The Tempest*." *Essays on Shakespeare*. Edited by Gordon Ross Smith. Pennsylvania State University Press: 1965. This essay is also quoted in Elizabeth Nunez Harrell's "Caliban: A Positive Symbol for Third World Writers." *Obsidian* (1975-1982), Vol. 8, No. 2/3 (Summer/Winter 1982), pp. 42-56, p. 46.

more and more of a presence—more and more "real"—while Susan's experience is increasingly minimized and ultimately fictionalized. Susan is transformed into a shadow character: a gossamer Miranda who becomes a lens through which to view Caliban. Susan, too, cannot help but focus on Friday. Admittedly, he perhaps has the better story (as untold stories usually are). Yet Coetzee emphasizes Susan's limited and reductive view of Friday and the world and narrative he represents. In a letter to Foe, Susan describes Friday's life on the island, where he navigated a log out into the ocean and scattered petals on the water (Coetzee 31). At the time, Susan paid little attention to this act, much less what it (might have) represented to Friday, preferring instead to focus on herself. Indeed, she dismissed it as "an offering to the god of the waves . . . or . . . some other such superstitious observance" (31). Although Susan places little value or significance on this action, she begrudgingly claims that this was the first sign she had of Friday possessing a "spirit or soul" (32). Coetzee creates Susan as a caricature of feminism, incapable of critical analysis or reflection beyond her own limited frame of reference or interest. To reiterate Susan's, and women's, failures, Foe is able to more deeply interpret Friday's petals, to see them as a communicative act. Rousing Susan from post-coital sleep, Foe states:

> You say [Friday] was guiding his boat to the place where the ship [that shipwrecked them] went down, which we may surmise to have been a slave-ship,
> not a merchantman, as Cruso claimed. Well, then: picture the hundreds of his fellow-slaves—or their skeletons—still chained in the wreck . . . Picture Friday above, staring down upon them, casting buds and petals that float a brief while, then sink to settle among the bones of the dead (Coetzee 140-141).

Foe's interpretation, or revelation, of one potential truth about Friday and Cruso's relationship, imbues the former's ritual and memorial petal scattering with new and significant meaning. Foe

gives far more consideration to Friday's act than Susan gave, and offers a far more intriguing reading than what Susan has offered. Coetzee's version here rewrites *Robinson Crusoe* in another subtle and significant way. Cruso(e), in Coetzee's version of history, was not shipwrecked on his way to Africa to enslave natives. In fact, he was on his way back from Africa with a hold full of chained and mutilated slaves. This assertion—even if it is a fantasy created in Foe's mind, to enhance Friday's history, or even to fill in the blanks and holes of Susan's story—creates a reality (MacLeod 8). The interpretation of Friday's non-verbal private communications creates the reality that Cruso was a brutal slaver, and that Friday was an unwilling passenger on the ship where his tongue was cut out.

Implicit in Coetzee's reinterpretation of Cruso as a realized slaver, rather than an aspiring one, is the insinuation that one of Susan's masculine transformations was also to a slaver. Recounting her rescue from the island, Susan describes to Foe how, upon Cruso's realization that he had been removed from the island without his consent, and loaded into the *John Hobart*, Cruso "fought so hard to free himself that it took strong men to master him" (Coetzee 39). Friday had also "fled" at the first sight of the ship; he would have been left behind had Susan not persuaded the "ship's-master" to locate him and force him to board, warning, "it will cost great effort to take him" (39). In a sense, then, Susan assumes Defoe's colonizing agenda, stealing both Cruso and Friday from their indigenous island home and conscribing them to a life they do not want. Rather than empowering Miranda to speak, Coetzee transforms her (through Susan) into Prospero. The text's heroine and protagonist thus becomes more than a failed Miranda: she becomes vilified. Susan reenacts the colonial agenda, subjugating the native inhabitants of the "new world"—both Friday and Cruso—and consigning them to bondage. Her "freedom" is purchased with theirs.

Like so many enslaved people, who chose death below the waves over being delivered into slavery in the new world, Cruso does not survive the voyage to England.[156] The *John Hobart*, rather than being a rescue vessel, is a slave ship with a cargo of two. Luckily for Cruso, he dies, it is suggested, of a broken heart while en route back to England. Friday, however, does not escape the new form of enslavement to which Susan subjects him. Thinking herself Friday's liberator, she is unable to recognize the bondage that her concept of "freedom" imposes on Friday. Echoing Miranda, who had taught Caliban to speak, and "endowed [his] purposes / With words that made them known," Susan too believes Friday is indebted to her (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii, 355-57). Susan is unaware that the "gift" of language was used to subjugate Caliban, and that he used it to curse Miranda and Prospero. Susan is a failed Miranda because she is an unsympathetic character created by an author who uses her to caricaturize feminism: she embodies and makes visible the subversive and threatening elements of femininity, most especially when it usurps the masculine. On Prospero's island, Miranda is a passive victim of her father's ambition, Caliban's lust, the patriarchy's disempowerment of women, and the literary canon's erasure of the female experience and voice.[157] Susan is not a restored Miranda; she is a marker for the ways in which the colonial agenda persists into the twentieth century. She is a tool, and a scapegoat, used to try to make Friday's silence signify something. She is ignorantly complicit in the recreation of Cruso's island in England. By identifying Susan, and women, as complicit, Coetzee can absolve himself of the legacy of colonialism.

[156] For a first-hand account of the reality of life aboard a slave ship, see Olaudah Equiano's, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*. Edited by Angelo Costanzo. Peterborough, Canada: Broadview Press, 2001.

[157] Chapter 4 will challenge the commonly held notion that Miranda was entirely passive, an unwitting pawn in her father's plan.

Susan believes she has rescued Friday from debasement and obscurity, and thereby has "civilized" him. In fact, Friday is well aware that she is his enslaver. While Coetzee, and his male characters, see Susan's guilt and her ultimate dependence on men, the character herself fails to recognize that it is she who desperately needs Friday, rather than Friday who needs her. Unlike Defoe, who successfully rewrote *The Tempest* without Miranda, Coetzee's text does not work without Caliban. In *Foe*, Coetzee fails to convince readers (or himself) that Susan is necessary: that her voice *should* exist, and that she and the female experience have value. Without Friday as proof of her life on the island—the only artifact she brings back to England with her—Susan and her story have no substance.[158] Perhaps this is Coetzee's ultimate point. Without Friday, Susan will always be a shadow history.

In the final pages of Part Three, Susan finally and fully realizes that her narrative and history have only served as a means of deciphering Friday's biography. This relegates her permanently to the margins—where Coetzee always knew she belonged. Foe's only thoughts and interests myopically revolve around Friday, and the possibilities which his muteness represent. Foe, it appears, has another story in mind for Susan, the story that will become *Roxana*. Acknowledging her expulsion from the shadow history of Cruso's island, and finally realizing the true subject of his text, Coetzee has Susan join Foe in his obsession with Friday. Susan states, "it is for us to open Friday's mouth and hear what it holds: silence, perhaps, or a roar, like the roar of a seashell held to the ear" (Coetzee 142). In Friday resides the "voice of man"—while the voice of woman remains silent (22). Susan's insistence that she author and father her own story

[158] Susan, at one point, laments the fact that she had "brought back not a feather, not a thimbleful of sand, from Cruso's island" (Coetzee 51). Here again she fails to "see" her part in the continued dehumanization and subjugation of Friday and the native experience. Susan's understanding of Friday is as limited as the colonizers who came to conquer him. Susan later reaffirms her degradation and enslavement of Friday when, after their arrival at Foe's secret hide-out, she announces that she is "alone, with Friday" (113). See also Prentice, pp. 102.

has become another colonial shadow history. In Coetzee's text, the female experience is marginalized and erased in support of the male. The most obvious evidence of this is the fact that Friday will be recreated by (De)Foe in *Robinson Cruso(e)*, while Susan will not. Thus, it is Friday, rather than Foe or Cruso, who becomes a narrative rival for Susan (MacLeod 14).

Earlier, I raised the question of whether or not a white male author could accurately represent the historically erased female colonial experience. To this end, I noted Jo Alyson Parker's claim that Friday must remain silent so as to save Coetzee from the accusation that he appropriated the voice of the colonized native or "other." However, it becomes evident that Coetzee never truly intended for Friday to remain silent, instead imbuing his every breathe, movement, and sound with myriad meanings. To reach Friday, Coetzee's ventriloquized subject —Susan—is cast away. In the end, the story we read is not Susan's, the authorship to which she clings—like the lifeboat to which she clung before slipping overboard—it is Coetzee's. The failure of Miranda, *Foe* asserts, is the failure of women who seek to usurp male authorship and voice. And yet the hole in the tale remains: the blankness of silence that Coetzee, Foe, Defoe, and Susan cannot fill is the void that Friday represents. While Susan is inserted as the narrator and the author, the story Coetzee illuminates, and the loss which Susan makes visible (though not audible), is the loss of Friday's tongue and the silenced native narrative.

This preoccupation with Friday, and the loss of his narrative and history, take center stage in Coetzee's text. Consequently, the female experience is relegated to the margins of colonialism, literature, and history. Coetzee's representation of Susan is transitory; embodying Coetzee's own indecision as to which lost narrative is worth restoring. Thus, Susan's narrative becomes a means to an end. Through Susan, perhaps Coetzee and his readers can reach Friday. However, once the focus shifts to Friday—to his humming, dancing, flute playing, writing, and

eventual assumption of the authorial role via the donning of Foe's robes and wig—Susan begins to disappear. Ultimately, Coetzee argues that one historically erased shadow history must be sacrificed for the other to exist. Miranda may have taught Caliban to speak, but once that was accomplished, she was disposable. At the end of *Foe*, Susan attempts to teach Friday to speak, to communicate, and to write. She forgets that Caliban used language as a weapon against his oppressors, of which Miranda was one: "You taught me language, and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse" (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii 362-3). Indeed, Susan reenacts Miranda's failures, a continuation of her repetition compulsion. Susan must be silenced in *Foe* so that Friday can "speak," and yet she will find a voice (although not the voice she wants) in *Roxana*.

Susan is not, Coetzee asserts, the victim of an unscrupulous author, colonizer, or historical time. Susan is merely a woman with a vaguely interesting story, which is not nearly as compelling as Friday's story. Despite her transformations—her appropriations of masculinity and attempts to position herself as an executrix, Muse, and father—perhaps Susan/Coetzee was right: it is better without the woman. And yet the woman is necessary, for without her, the colonizer (Cruso) could not have been removed from the text and replaced by his silenced, native slave. In fact, Susan is complicit in Friday's continued victimization; she notes that without language, Friday can be "re-shaped day by day in conformity to the desires of others," including herself (Coetzee 121; Jiménez 18). Friday is the narrative "puzzle" which Coetzee hopes to solve (Coetzee121; Jiménez 20). Susan, on the other hand, is the cipher with which he hopes to accomplish that task. Like so many authors, critics, and historians before him, Coetzee uses Susan (a stand-in for all womankind) as a tool; they comprise an avenue which must be travelled down to get to the "real" story. In the end, the truth that *Foe* uncovers is the contradictory role of women in both master and alternative narratives: a truth that Coetzee, a white South African man

is unable to reconcile. Can the female experience of marginalization and exile be adequately addressed and resolved by a male author? Coetzee's text says "No."

1.8 In the End, All is Silence

Foe ends in uncertainty. Susan, a narrator who has struggled to orient herself in space and time, to piece together her disjointed narrative, sees her role as author usurped by Friday. Coetzee asserts that the true heir of the island and its story—of Cruso/Prospero—is Friday/Caliban, not Susan/Miranda. Identity and authorship, *Foe* argues, is passed down through patrilineal lines. Miranda will be married off to Ferdinand, denouncing Prospero as her "master" and assuming her husband's name, becoming a part of him. Caliban alone remains the "thing of darkness" which Prospero will "acknowledge mine."[159] Caliban is the inscrutable story; Caliban, and thus Friday, must speak.

Inspired by Friday's muteness, Foe instructs Susan to teach Friday to write, to replace the loss of his tongue with a new kind of language. Finding Friday hunched over Foe's desk, scribbling "rows and rows of the letter *o* tightly packed together," Foe asserts, "It is a beginning . . . Tomorrow you must teach him *a*" (Coetzee 152). Friday, rather than Susan, affirms his place as the author of the story Foe wants to tell, and readers want to read: the story of the enslaved, the victims of colonization and the shadow histories it creates. This moment marks the beginning of Susan's final and complete erasure from *Robinson Crusoe* and her own shadow history. Michael Marais suggests, "instead of imposing an interpretation on and therefore resolving the problem of Friday's silence, the novel's ending perpetuates and endorses the enigma" (14).[160] In other words, Section Four ends in annihilation for all the characters save Friday, who hovers

[159] Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act 5, Scene I, lines 290-291.
[160] Marais, Michael. "Interpretive Authoritarianism: Reading/Colonizing Coetzee's *Foe*." *English in Africa*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (May, 1989), pp. 9-16.

eternally between life and death: a literary, colonial, and historical ghost whose story remains untold.

Friday has been an absence, made visible. The final section of the text dissolves Friday and Susan's erased narratives in disaggregation. Susan becomes lost; she is pushed to the margins and is expelled from *Robinson Crusoe* and its triumphant tale of white, male, homosociality and imperial supremacy. Coetzee hence fails to successfully reinsert the missing Miranda, or to adequately represent the expunged female experience. Instead he offers only a caricature of feminism and feminist discourse. Friday, however, suffers a more visceral form of fragmentation. Friday becomes an element devoid of humanity, merging with the natural world, a world in which "bodies are their own signs" (Coetzee 157). And yet, what Friday signifies is dependent upon who interprets him and pieces together his silenced narrative. As Susan comments to Foe:

> Friday has . . . no defense against being re-shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others. I say he is a cannibal and he becomes a cannibal . . . What is the truth of Friday? . . . he is a substantial body, he is himself, Friday is Friday. But that is not so. No matter what he is to himself . . . what he is to the world is what I make of him.
>
> Therefore[,] the silence of Friday is a helpless silence. He is the child of his silence. (121)

Coetzee here attempts another act of narrative misdirection by displacing his authorial power onto Susan. It is Susan and the subversive female narrator, not Coetzee, who is the true villain in *Foe*, Susan who creates and recreates Friday as she sees fit. He is malleable, and yet he also defies all attempts to define him. He is Caliban learning to curse; Philomela weaving the story of her violation; he is authoring himself. At the end of *Foe*, Susan recognizes that Friday has displaced her as an author and interpreter of his own history. Whereas Susan seemingly

endeavored to make Friday speak—to make his silences mean something, to discover the mystery of his missing tongue and the truths that it hid—she is the one who truly subjugated and enslaved him. Susan is the embodiment of the "white savior," one who does not see their own privilege or complicity in the racist, misogynistic, paternalistic system they hope to dismantle.[161] Coetzee projects his own complicity with the larger system of disenfranchisement onto Susan. Or, perhaps more accurately, this happens quite unbeknownst to Coetzee; while Susan is constructed as an anti-feminist mouthpiece of Coetzee's own attitudes towards women, he may be unaware of just how much of himself he wrote into his failed heroine. Because Coetzee himself cannot directly focus on, or speak for, Friday he creates Susan to do the dirty work for him. Susan is thus asserted as the one who would emancipate poor mute Friday, seeing him as a child dependent upon her for protection and survival. Regardless, as Coetzee's text concludes, it becomes clear that it is Susan who needed Friday; she needed him to prove that her life on the island was real; she needed him to intrigue Foe into writing her story; she needed him not to disappear from her own life. Friday's continued fragmentation makes Susan, and Coetzee, whole.

Foe's appropriation of Susan's shadow history, Cruso's limited and faulty memory, Susan's strict adherence to telling her "truth," and even Coetzee's attempts to destabilize the colonial agenda of erasing the problematic and transgressive narratives of women and people of color, are swallowed and expelled in Friday's final act of non-verbal communication. In the final five pages of the text, an unnamed narrator distinguished only by the enigmatic "I" enters Foe's

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[161] See Teju Cole, "The White Savior Industrial Complex." *The Atlantic*, March 21, 2012. https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/ Accessed 8/18/2018

house to discover the body of a young woman dead on the stairs.[162] Readers are led to believe that this is the body of Susan's eponymous daughter. Entering a room, the narrator stumbles upon the bodies of a man and woman lying in bed, "the skin, dry as paper. Is stretched tight over their bones" (Coetzee 153). The couple, whose skin resembles parchment stretched and pulled over a frame to dry, thus rendering it useful for writing, is perhaps Foe and Susan. In death, they have become vessels that receive and transmit a story or history, but they are not the story itself. That role is left to Friday. Friday, the only character identified by name in the final section of the novel, is discovered "stretched at full length" in the corner: stretched not to receive a story upon his flesh, but to finally become the author of his own history (Coetzee 154). Friday is the key to finding "the thing [we] came for: / the wreck and not the story of the wreck / the thing itself and not the myth" (Rich 22). In the end, it is Friday alone who is discovered, alive, lying with clenched teeth. Stirring:

> His teeth part. I press closer, and with an ear to his mouth lie waiting. At first there is nothing. Then . . . I begin to hear the faintest faraway roar . . . the roar of waves in a seashell; and over that, as if once or twice a violin-string were touched, the whine of the wind and the cry of a bird . . . From this mouth, without a breath, issue the sounds of the island. (Coetzee 154)

From Friday issues the voice of the world, of nature, and of the elements which Cruso, Susan, and Foe sought futilely to interpret and impose meaning on. In the end, it is not Susan or Foe, but Friday who holds the story which cannot be told: the story which must be experienced to be understood, the shadow history of colonialism and alterity. Friday is Caliban, reclaiming his stolen island.

[162] Christopher Peterson suggests that the "I" of the final section of the text is an "interior monologue," although he is unclear as to whose interior monologue is being represented Coetzee's or the readers (865).

This final scene of annihilation and redemption is then replayed, as indicated by two spaced asterisks—but it is replayed with a difference. Again, an unnamed narrator enters a house and discovers the deceased remains of three people: the restored triumvirate of Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban, now "light as straw"—an indication of their temporality and the ways in which they can be manipulated (155). The repeated scene transitions from fiction to reality in that now "*Daniel Defoe, Author*" is indicated as the owner, or previous occupant, of the house.[163] Again, the narrator finds a couple, in an intimate position, dead. Again, Friday is discovered in an alcove alive—only now with "a scar like a necklace, left by a rope or chain" (155). Neither Coetzee nor the narrator indicate where this previously unnoticed scar came from. The immediate thought is that this scar is proof that Friday was previously a slave, or on his way to be sold into slavery, when he and Cruso were shipwrecked. It is unclear if this scar existed previous to this dreamlike moment. Had Susan been so disgusted by Friday and his alterity and mutilation that she failed to investigate the subject of all her musings, preferring instead the story she created for him?

More troubling, however, is the argument that the scar on Friday's neck was created as a result of the rope and pouch containing manumission papers that Susan placed on him. That her insistence that Friday was free, or that she was going to aid him in becoming free, actually enslaved Friday more. Coetzee is finally explicit in his assertion that Susan is complicit in the subjugation of Friday, and by extension all other colonized peoples. In this moment, Susan is exposed as the real slaver who holds Friday in bondage for her own selfish emotional reasons: to make her life and rescue from the island meaningful, rather than to exploit his physical labor.

[163] Emphasis in the original.

In the next moment, the narrator discovers Susan's letters and a manuscript written to Foe. Repeating the first words of the novel, "at last I could row no further," the narrator and reader are transported back to the island, slipping below the waves, "diving into the wreck" (Coetzee 1, 155; Rich 21). It is somehow appropriate that *Foe* ends at the bottom of the sea, in the bowels of the wreckage. If we, as readers, are looking for the true history, the true unrecoverable past, we are looking in the wrong places. We will not find Friday or Susan in the literature. The literature has done everything to erase them, to silence and marginalize them into insignificance, to re-shape them according to its own desires. If we want to hear Friday's story, we must go to Friday's home: the sea.[164] That is where he lies, for that is where his language, his ritual, his tradition, his monuments, and his history lie. But if we, too, want to open Friday's mouth, to hear the silenced world pour forth, we must first hear Susan, and by extension, Miranda. Female readers, authors, and characters must challenge Coetzee's misogyny, his caricature of feminism, and dive into the wreckage to uncover the past.

This is a challenge that has been accepted by numerous postcolonial female authors; those who celebrate rather than vilify the female experience. Jean Rhys, Maryse Condé, and Elizabeth Nunez have seen the urgent necessity of restoring erased female narratives and have succeeded where Coetzee has failed. In the hands of male authors, like Coetzee, female characters will always symbolize the dangers of unchecked sexuality, of the threat women pose to male created and maintained structures of power. Female characters will continue to be disaggregated in an effort to limit and control them, or worse, continue to silence them. What is needed instead, and achieved by Rhys, Condé, and Nunez, is not the recreation of the Prospero/Caliban/Miranda triad, but the restoration of the female triumvirate of

[164] See also Derek Walcott's poem, "The Sea is History," in *The Paris Review*, Issue 74, Fall-Winter 1978.

Claribel/Sycorax/Miranda. The dive into the wreckage must exhume the authentic female voice. There, we will find Susan and Miranda, and we will find the true narrative history.

Chapter II

Commodifying the Body: The Politics of Sacrifice in Jane Eyre and Wide Sargasso Sea

Over two hundred years after *The Tempest* is first written and performed, and years before J.M. Coetzee would fail in his attempts to restore Miranda's ignored narrative, borrowing from Shakespeare's framework for understanding gender, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* gives us Bertha Rochester. Bertha takes over the part of the fragmented woman relegated to one of the three elemental roles: those represented by Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax. But the breadth and depth of Bertha Rochester's personality would not be fully realized for another century. Jean Rhys's (re)portrayal of Bertha in *Wide Sargasso Sea* will succeed where (postcolonial) male authors like Coetzee falter. Further, postcolonial women writers such as Rhys, Maryse Condé, and Elizabeth Nunez will redress the disaggregation of female characters and demonstrate their natural, subversive rebelliousness. Rhys, in particular, shows Bertha to be a *prismatic* character—one who reconciles past, fragmented ideas of womanhood within herself. A prism is an object containing multiple refracting surfaces, each of which separates white light into a spectrum of colors. When I use the terms "prismatic" and "prismatism," I am referring to women's ability to transform or reflect the singular, limited gender role/identity imposed upon her into a vast female spectrum, one which is both varied and unified.

William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-11), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), and Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) present the ways in which women resist the male imperative to control and deny their prismatism. Women in these texts, rather than submit to the commodification of their bodies and narratives, transform from politicized objects of exchange to prismatic subjects. The female rebellion against fragmentation, from Shakespeare through

Brontë to Rhys, shows that women were willing to sacrifice their own physical and emotional safety rather than have their identities subsumed and defined by their husbands. While female agency and autonomy, especially the ability to self-fashion, is a commonplace in the twenty-first century world, this was a luxury not always available to all women. The compulsion women felt to subvert their husbands or male family members will to power, the public and private defiance of obedience embodied in characters such as Claribel, Bertha, and especially Antoinette, exemplified the risks women were willing to take to assert their prismatic identities and personhood. The pursuit of prismatism, as we shall see in the chapter that follows, would result in the banishment of some women, and the annihilation of others. With this in mind, Antoinette Cosway Mason Rochester is worth considering in greater depth, as she unifies the three elemental social identities available to women, and in turn emerges as an autonomous, multifaceted agent.

In order to contextualize and situate Rhys's postcolonial text, and specifically Antoinette's place within it, it is important to explore *The Tempest* and the framework it creates for understanding gender, which begins in the colonial period. The project of colonization was exceedingly costly, both economically and ideologically. The continued expansion of the British Empire depended on people using the raw materials and commodities at their disposal—and there was no resource more abundant or sought after than women. In order to increase the profitability of trading women, usually into marriage, the law of "coverture" became common in England. Coverture was a legal system in which a woman was denied a legal existence or identity separate from her husband; in other words, her "legal identity was subsumed (literally 'covered') under that of her husband's. Restricted by coverture, a woman's land and property fell

under her husband's control" (Kemp 21).[165] Within this legal system, women were not accorded full individual rights. They were instead referred to as "feme coverts" or "covered women," terms which inherently linked their rights to the existence and even approval of men. Much like children or slaves, married women could neither own property nor control money because of their status as legal dependents. Upon marriage, a woman was stripped of any independence and identity she may have had, regardless of her social status or aristocratic lineage, and was thereby reduced to a nonperson. Marriage thus functioned to commodify women in much the same way that colonization transformed the identity and autonomy of indigenous peoples and entire nations. As the colonial agenda steadily increased, geopolitical regions felt the tightening restrictions, subjugated economies, and exploited resources. Women too, even those who had experienced a degree of independence while single, underwent a "retrenchment" that "enforced an increasingly rigid gender hierarchy" (Anthony 21; 9).[166] In essence women and their position within society shifted, they moved from subjects into objects.[167]

For this reason, marriage allowed men to gain mastery over wealthy and/or aristocratic women, as well as to subdue women who were viewed as unruly or transgressive. The relation of a man to a woman, or a husband to his wife, thus constituted a kind of "social colonization"

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[165] Kemp, Theresa. *Women in the Age of Shakespeare*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010. For more on the legal history of coverture, see Tapping Reeve, *The Law of Baron and Femme: of Parent and Child, Guardian and Ward, Master and Servant*. Burlington: Chauncey Goodrich, 1846, which explores coverture as, "The right which the husband acquires to the personal property of the wife in possession, and to her choses in action" (2).

[166] While the language of colonialism was not frequently applied to the rules that governed and subordinated women, Anthony points out "multiple economic and political developments appear to have jointly contributed to the constriction [of women], including feudalism, the English common law, capitalism, colonialism and imperialism, and the development of the nation-state and its attendant concept of citizenship" (9). Anthony, Deborah. "Analyzing the Disappearance of Women's Surnames and the Retrenchment of their Political-Legal Status in Early Modern England." *Hastings Women's Law Journal*, Vol. 29, Iss. 1, (Winter 2018), pp. 7-25.

[167] Anthony suggests that colonialism, and the "rule of colonial difference" or "the notion that, as part of the justification for and legalization of their domination, the colonized cultures, races, and religions are constructed as different, other, and inferior….is often credited with the invention of race" (22). Further, the new consciousness associated with race was also extended to the "representation of gender" thus linking colonialism and the role of women (22).

(Anthony 22). Women's perceived value on the "open market" was closely connected to their age; if not, it was linked to her sexual experience. Of the three potential identities or roles a woman could occupy in Elizabethan England, only two were viewed as beneficial. Young women and adolescents were most often assumed to be "virgins," and thereby innocent and pure. A woman of marriageable age would trade in her identity as a virgin so that she could be considered a "commodity." But older women, especially widows or unmarried women of advanced age, possessed an independence from men which caused them to be seen as a destabilizing force. In turn, they were labeled either "witches" or "whores;" either allowed them to be exiled from polite society.[168] Each role was viewed as separate, and a woman was forbidden from occupying more than one identity at a time: she was viewed singularly *either* a virgin, *or* a commodity, *or* a witch/whore.

Women who did not easily conform to one of the three limited identities available to them, and/or those who actively resisted such categorization, were viewed as a threat to social stability. Yet many women actively rejected the singular vision imposed on them by the patriarchy and asserted themselves as multifaceted agents who acted independent from their fathers, families, and monarchs. The effect of the limited roles available to women was that of self-fragmentation. However, the true danger a woman posed to society and the patriarchy was her ability to transcend their attempted disaggregation of her identity and hence to become a complex and multivalent individual. In other words, female "prismatism," the capacity to appear singular but reflect a multitude of identities, renders women a subversive threat.

[168] Justyna Sempruch points out, at a certain point the terms "witch" and "whore" becomes synonymous. See *Fantasies of Gender and the Witch in Feminist Theory and Literature.* West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2008, pp. 126.

Unmarried women were a destabilizing force within Elizabethan and colonial society because they occupied a liminal space between identities. They existed in a space between subject and object, and their lives were at turns both autonomous and dependent. Thus, for the sake of the British Empire's advancement and continued sovereignty, it was imperative that women be fully situated in their "rightful" role as objects of exchange, which (so the theory went) would negate any urge they may have towards actualization and identity. To reach this goal, coverture effectively dehumanized women by placing them "outside the legitimizing context of property ownership or family identity," which rendered them "non-persons."[169]

Late sixteenth and early seventeenth century drama, particularly the works of William Shakespeare, is concerned both with the importance of using marriage to create and sustain political and social alliances, and with the dire consequences posed by a daughter or a woman who fail to fulfill that "duty." The anxiety that surrounded the business of marriage and female personhood persisted throughout the Renaissance, extending into and beyond the postcolonial Caribbean. Marriage, Mariachristina Natalia Bertoli suggests:

> …grants [a man] full mastery of his own life thanks to the wealth he lays hands on through marrying... he also gains mastery over [his bride] who… loses *de facto* any right to manage her own life…. The exchange of marriage is thus characterized chiefly by inequality…. In consequence, marriage turns out to be less of an exchange *inter pares* (first among equals) than of a hierarchical structure where the husband is empowered by

[169] *Women, Enterprise and Society*. "Women and the Law." *Harvard Business School*. N.P., N.A. 2010.

an active role while the wife is reduced to passivity to the point of turning into a mere commodity. (66-67)[170]

While alliances established through marriage were an integral part of empire building, apprehension persisted. At stake was not only an individual man or family's wealth or power, but a disobedient daughter or a failed marital allegiance could reduce public and political support. James Daybell states "the early modern household was seen as a microcosm of the hierarchy of the state; patriarchal theories of the family were used to symbolize submission to the crown and its officers" (49).[171] A man who could not effectively control and maneuver a daughter was not fit to govern a nation. Further a child that refused to submit to the will of her father bespoke future danger. Daybell suggests that "deference learned in the early stages of upbringing formed the basis of obedience in later life" (53). Thus, to begin unraveling the role of women in the present, we must first look back to Shakespeare and investigate how the frame narrative he established has dictated how femininity has been portrayed since. While Shakespeare's texts were certainly not conceived as conduct manuals, the elemental qualities which first appeared in his works were read and emulated by authors after him. By extension, they have continued to shape and limit the ways in which women are viewed both on and off the page.

Each identity represented by Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax is, on its own, emblematic of the limited spaces which women were legally and culturally forced to inhabit. However, when

[170] Bertoli, Mariachristina Natalia. "The Taming of the Creole: The (Little) Death of Otherness in *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Women's Identities and Bodies in Colonial and Postcolonial History and Literature*. Edited by Maria Isabel Romero Ruiz. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2012, pp. 61-78.

[171] Daybell, James. "Gender, Obedience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Women's Letters." *Sixteenth Century Journal*, XLI/1 (2010), pp. 49-67. For more on the family hierarchy in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries in England see Susan Amussen's *An Ordered Society: Family and Village in England, 1560*-1725. Oxford: Blackwell, 1980.

these parts are combined, they create an autonomous whole. Shakespeare's text reinforces the three limited female roles and identities; each is "deprived of any possibility of human freedom, growth or thought" (Leininger 291).[172] They need only to be an emblem of the virtue, value, or depravity for the play to move forward. The sale of Claribel into marriage, and the exile and eventual death of Sycorax, guarantee that female disaggregation cannot be mended in the play. *The Tempest*, as well as the British Empire and society, depends on female fragmentation for male reconciliation to take place. In fact, it has been left to the nineteenth and twentieth century female authors to attempt to resolve the violent Shakespearean division of female identity into three separate and limited roles. This project of restoring women and female characters to prismatism is finally achieved by Jean Rhys through her character Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

The Tempest, and the characters created by Shakespeare in it, has become the epicenter of postcolonial studies and criticism. The relationship between Prospero, the deposed and exiled Duke of Milan, and Caliban, the native born and enslaved "savage," has been used as a stand-in for the evils of colonization and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The unequal dynamic between Prospero and his servant Caliban has been analyzed, rewritten, and adapted by postcolonial male writers including C.L.R. James, George Lamming, Aimé Césaire, O. Mannoni, and Franz Fanon—often with the author placing himself and his community members in the Caliban role. [173] Only recently has postcolonial criticism of *The Tempest* widened

[172] Leininger, Lorie Jerrell. "The Miranda Trap: Sexism and Racism in Shakespeare's *Tempest*." *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*. Edited by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Green, and Carol Thomas Neely. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1980, pp. 285-294.

[173] See C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 1938; George Lamming. *The Pleasures of Exile*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960. Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*. Trans. Richard Miller. New York: TCG Translations, 2002; O. Mannoni. *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990; Franz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Grove Press, 2008.

its scope beyond Caliban to include the female characters within the text. In these instances, the focus has largely been on Sycorax, Caliban's exiled witch mother who exists in the play as both a memory and threat.

Feminist critics of *The Tempest* have decried the lack of attention paid to the absent or "flat" female characters in the play by male critics. This lack can be considered a continuation of the historical and literary cycle of violence towards, and fragmentation of, women's identities. Rather than connecting Prospero and Caliban to the modern postcolonial experience of "otherness," which has often been reserved by and appropriated for the postcolonial male experience, feminist postcolonial writers forged a connection between themselves and the plays long ignored, disaggregated, and erased female characters. To rescue and restore Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax to personhood, as had been done with Caliban, these three women must be viewed as part of a fragmented whole. Their reduction to a singular function is replicated and reinforced not only through scholarly criticism of Shakespeare's original text, but also by many postcolonial adaptations of *The Tempest*. The feminist/postcolonial project of restoring lost female narratives and experiences thus begins with the reclamation of the female narratives lost or erased within this text.

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare creates multiple views of the same woman: Claribel, Sycorax, and Miranda each represent one of three identities into which a single woman has been divided. Post-Shakespeare, feminist and female postcolonial authors have begun to see the connections between seemingly divergent female experiences and tried to put these fragmented pieces back together. In so doing, feminist critics have begun the work of uplifting female characters from their status as non-persons and restoring them to unified wholeness. Just as Shakespeare used three separate female characters to portray one whole female identity, early

modern society perpetually insisted that all women publicly perform one-third of their inner selves. Allowed to exist only as objects, women were denied their inherent right to subjectivity. When society capitalized on women's sexuality, and assigned them a quantifiable marriage price, it stripped them of personhood. This, in turn, made them easier to control and coerced them into acquiescing to patriarchal demands. Society enforced as a necessity the protection of females' virtue and reputation, so their "tradability" could be exploited and their families or nations' names, fortunes, and powers could be retained or restored. If they were not publicly recognized as "virgins," this transformative process of commodification could not take place.

Nevertheless, even women who "agreed" to arranged marriages—insofar as it is possible for individuals denied subjectivity to consent to major life decisions—did not necessarily go on to demonstrate unwavering obedience to their husband and families. Indeed, many women actively worked to subvert the patriarchy and establish identities independent of their fathers or husbands (current or future). Women were publicly and legally denied power or representation, and any attempt at self-definition was met with a high price to pay (Gilbert and Gubar 35).[174] Unable to thwart male dominance over them within the confines of marriage, women pushed back against the legal and social structures which limited and oppressed them. In this way, they exerted agency, struggled to wrest back control of their bodies and identities, and asserted their personhood. Of course, men resisted women's fight for prismatism. In an effort to contain and protect women's perceived value, they strode to limit and control their behavior, sexual and otherwise.

[174] Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. Second Edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

As long as women were viewed as avenues through which men could travel to achieve or restore power and wealth, a distinction had to be made between their three potential public identities: as “virgins,” whose innocence and purity reflected the idealized status of their nations and families; as “whores,” whose bodies were used to satisfy the myriad desires of their nations and men; and as “commodities,” whose value was dependent on the continued objectification of women, whose selves could be traded to seal promises of allegiance and partnership. By forcing her to inhabit one role—for instance, woman-as-commodity—the patriarchy could deny a woman her other prismatic qualities and facets, and thus maintain her socioeconomic potency while simultaneously rendering her a silent non-person. For families with aristocratic lineage but little wealth, or men (especially younger sons) with wealth and economic potential but “no claim of lineage,” finding a suitable female match was more than a desirable outcome: it was an utter social necessity (Gilbert and Gubar 19). Hence, to help their male associates build empires, establish foreign trade routes and allies, and solidify flagging political and economic power, as well as to fulfill their socially imposed “elemental” functions and otherwise be perceived as valuable, women had to function as politicized objects of exchange.

The dichotomy between a woman’s inherent capacity for multiplicity, and the urgent socio-political need for her to occupy only a fragment of herself, led to escalating anxiety in men and their respective nations. A woman suspected of “impurity,” whose chastity or lineage was presumed “soiled” or “wanton,” was of little or no value on the open market. To be of worth, a woman must be devoid of the “whore” identity, and fully embody the “virgin” persona. She must move through each socially acceptable identity while simultaneously denying specific aspects thought to corrupt and vilify femininity. To enter the marriage market, a young girl’s father had to be able to advertise her as an uncorrupted and pristine object. Juliet Dusinberre suggests that,

"…the relation of father and daughter is feudal…A daughter is a man's best investment…and her assets are realized when she is bought by the consumer, her suitor" (123).[175] Protecting a daughter's, or on occasion a sister's, reputation was thus of constant concern to men. Women had to be viewed as simultaneously sexually desirable and chaste, attractive to men and yet not attracted to men, charming and available, yet virginal and aloof. In other words, women were compelled to seem like they were embodying one identity, while simultaneously denying the consequences of that identity: they had to be both singular and multiple all at the same time.

Potential suitors demanded access to the object they might purchase, while fathers or other family members struggled to ensure that the women in question were displayed in the most flattering light—often concealing any "flaws" or "defects" in their "product."[176] To this end, women's true identities and characters were carefully controlled and suppressed. They were instead viewed one dimensionally with the purpose of drawing attention to their individual parts. By focusing on one element of a woman, most frequently her beauty, her prismatism and subjectivity could be denied by those around her.

Despite these efforts, female beauty and attractiveness became increasingly problematic for, and threatening to, society. Beauty was viewed as both an outside marker of grace and innate goodness (Leininger 286); yet it could also serve to indicate post-lapsarian lasciviousness should a woman's lips be too pink, her cheek too rosy, or her hair too dark, wild, or untamed.[177] Beauty was at once proof of a woman's sin and of her salvation; her ability to damn or save a man or a

[175] Dusinberre, Juliet. *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996.

[176] "Perceived flaws or defects" may be understood to mean any qualities denoting potential female identities aside from the one being marketed. For instance, women outwardly connected to the witch/whore identity via unwanted judgements about her sexuality or potential for madness, were worthless commodities on a marriage market obsessed with virginity.

[177] Take for example Shakespeare's Sonnet 106 where he champions "the blazon of sweet beauty's best, / Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow."

nation. Therefore, women had to be disaggregated to protect their names and bodies from outside influences: from those who would lead her astray and hence damage her perceived value. A woman had to be reduced to one thing, and one thing only: she must be proven to be a virgin before she could be viewed as a valuable commodity. Women's bodies were thus at the center of intricate negotiations between men, in which masculine desires for "power and possession" played out with feminine personhood at stake (Dusinberre 121).

In the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, unmarried or widowed women, those not neutralized by coverture, saw their limited authority and power to control their own money or estates increasingly attacked as new laws and cultural customs sprang up to subjugate them.[178] Without a man, either father or husband, to control and contain them, women were viewed as threatening to a society in which they had little value outside of the price they could bring in a marriage alliance, and the heirs which they would produce as a result of this union.[179] Theresa Kemp points out that by the end of the sixteenth century, unmarried or widowed women suffered increasing "hostility from [men] and legal measures aimed at excluding them from various…occupations" or opportunities (Kemp 34). No woman could escape the total reduction of their selves to a commodity, aside from the few unmarried or widowed women who—because of their wealth and political power—were exempted from the pressure to wed. The most famous of these was Queen Elizabeth I, who managed to subversively avoid becoming a "commodity"

[178] According to the law of Coverture, an unmarried adult woman was granted by the state some legal representation and power; this made her a potentially destabilizing force in society. This incentivized the patriarchy to try and control single women by convincing them to marry, which would allow their power to be absorbed into their husbands' estates (and he was a more appropriate ruler, if for no other reason than his gender). See Claudia Zaher's, "When a Woman's Marital Status Determined Her Legal Status: A Research Guide on the Common Law Practice of Coverture." *Law Library Journal*. Vol 94: 3, pp. 459-486.

[179] No matter how completely a woman was fragmented and disaggregated by the patriarchy, maintaining her female virtue and chastity allowed her to retain unparalleled power in two areas: the legitimacy of succession, and the (believed) health of the nation.

while also avoiding accusations of being a "whore." She did so by making the politically-charged choice to embrace the identity of "virgin," and thereby "married" her country: "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman," she stated, "but I have the heart and stomach of a king."[180] In this way, Elizabeth defended her right to rule and protected her absolute authority by focusing not on her naturally frail feminine body—which needed to be protected and controlled—but "on the masculinity of her body politic" (Kemp 15). By fashioning herself into the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth I subverted the anxiety and danger surrounding female sexuality and chastity. Yet even this move, which allowed her to assume total power, did not allow her to escape the fragmentation and reduction of personhood inevitable for any woman consigned to a single, reductive identity. The queen had *two* bodies, the virgin and the untraded commodity. This allowed for limited un-unified subjectivity, because it denied her third identity: the witch/whore.

Whereas the Queen was endowed with two bodies, Elizabethan women were not publicly granted the same partial unification and/or autonomy. Perhaps privately, sixteenth century women were viewed as multiple, having both a public and a private identity, but women with titles or estates were regarded largely for their sociopolitical value, for the one essential function they could perform, that of a commodity. While "most fathers were inclined to consider their children's affections" when arranging marriages, in families with wealth or nobility an emphasis was placed not on love matches, but on a merger that would enable both "social and economic mobility" (Kemp 20). The goal for fathers, or perhaps brothers or uncles, was to acquire or retain

[180] For an in depth analysis of Queen Elizabeth I and the "body politic" see Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I*. London: Routledge, 1996.

power. Alliances formed through marriage, willingly entered into or not, helped accomplish that aim.

The sale of a daughter into marriage was often an economic or sociopolitical necessity in Elizabethan England. However, this does not suggest that marriage contracts were always viewed favorably by other family members, trusted counselors and advisors, or the daughters themselves. As owners of a highly sought-after good, however, the fate of daughters (especially aristocratic ones) was ultimately determined by fathers. Women were, as Deborah Anthony suggests, "chattel" (13). Thus daughters were at high risk of becoming collateral damage or even an acceptable loss in their fathers' bids to solidify power or alliances. But although marriages were frequently arranged and regarded merely as a transfer of property for profit, seventeenth century England was beginning to look critically on matches not created between willing partners. For a marriage to accomplish its "three primary purposes: companionship, legitimate procreation, and the avoidance of fornication," the union must be freely and willingly entered into by both parties (Kemp 40). In order for this to happen, a woman's less desirable potential qualities must be squashed, so that her fragmentation could be total and irreversible. Contracts negotiated against a daughter's will or entered into under false pretenses—which would be the case if either "defects" or multifaceted identities were discovered after the marriage ceremony—often ended disastrously, not just for the married couple, but the family and nation.

2.1 Reconsidering Claribel

To illustrate the importance of selling daughters into companionate marriage contracts based on love, or at the very least on voluntary consent, authors began dramatizing the dire consequences of ignoring females' romantic desires. William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*

places marriage at the center of the drama. The text appears to focus on the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand, whose nuptials will bring reconciliation to the players. However, there is also a primary marriage that sets off the action of the play: the contested, unfavorable, and forced marriage of the Duke of Naples' daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis.[181] Claribel exemplifies the dangers associated with contractual, as opposed to love, marriages. For Shakespeare's plot to function, Claribel must be fragmented and restricted to one potential identity. In other words, she must be reduced to a "commodity," as a means to an end for her father.

While the text of *The Tempest* gives little indication as to why Alonso decides to trade his only daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis, critics like Richard Wilson suggest that the match may have been part of an effort to establish a secure trading route between Italy and Africa. Further, Wilson asserts that Alonso—most likely the owner of several trade ships due to his status as Duke of Naples—may have agreed to the union after having his ships attacked by African pirates, and/or having his other property and investments lost.[182] Being sold into marriage to the King of Tunis fragments Claribel's selfhood. However, because Claribel is Alonso's only remaining piece of valuable property, he is left with little choice but to sell her into marriage if he wants to regain his lost fortune and restore his (now much diminished) power. While Wilson's theory is interesting, it should be pointed out that his view is severely limited by the fact that he, too, reduces Claribel to one "elemental" function. Claribel, in Wilson's estimation, is a valued commodity—but one that is less valuable than the profit her father stands

[181] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

[182] See Richard Wilson, "Voyage to Tunis: New History and the Old World of *The Tempest*." *ELH* Vol. 64. No. 2 (Summer, 1997), pp. 333-357. Wilson suggests that while arranged marriages (such as the one negotiated between Alonso and the King of Tunis for Claribel's hand) were often opposed or begrudgingly entered into in Jacobean England, they were often a necessity for merchants who had been plundered; under such circumstances, it seems Wilson accepts non- or barely-consensual marriage as the only "remedy," and an acceptable one at that (346-7).

to gain from her sale. The true worth of Claribel, which Wilson ignores, is not in the capital which will come from her commodification, but in the power that will extend to her brother Ferdinand as a result of her fragmentation and exile-through-marriage.

In trading Claribel to the King of Tunis—which, in essence, condemns Claribel to African banishment—Alonso solves two problems. First, he establishes familial ties with the Tunisian government. This allows him to secure safe trade and passage routes for Italian vessels. Second and more importantly, by installing Claribel as the Queen of Tunis, Alonso clears the way for his son Ferdinand to inherit the throne of Naples. Had Claribel remained in Italy this title could have potentially been inherited by her.[183] Even if this had not happened, Claribel might have wed a member of the European nobility; should they have had children, a rivalry over the line of succession may have formed between Alonso's heirs (those produced by any union Ferdinand may make), and the heirs of Claribel and her husband. Under the law, Claribel would have become her husband's property, thereby ending Alonso's line.[184]

In Elizabethan and Jacobean England, the laws of primogeniture ensured the eldest son inherited a majority of the rights and responsibilities for his father's estate. For Shakespeare and his character Alonso, then, the role of the firstborn could only be fulfilled by Ferdinand, not

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[183] In this light, the resistance displayed by Sebastian during contract negotiations for Claribel's hand assumes a more political, rather than personal, air. Selling Claribel to Tunis safeguards Ferdinand's succession rights and thus puts King Alonso's brother Sebastian at a distinct disadvantage by placing him lower on the line of succession. Consequently, Claribel's marriage is a contributing factor to Sebastian's plot (in Act 2 Scene i) to murder Alonso and usurp his throne.

[184] It can further be argued that by selling Claribel to the King of Tunis, Shakespeare repairs the mistakes of prior English counselors and advisors who had suggested that the same thing be done to Elizabeth. In essence, Shakespeare's play restores the patriarchy by fragmenting the autonomous and unified Queen, dividing her into his three female characters and potential identities. Had Elizabeth been married off to a foreign prince, she would have returned the English throne to a male ruler sooner than the newly installed James I. According to Marilyn L. Williamson, "[for] James genealogy was destiny. His contribution to political theory 'lay in identifying his prerogative with the production of a legitimate male successor. Unlike his Tudor predecessor, James located power in a royal line that proceeded from him,'" and was cemented with a specifically male heir (159). See, Marilyn L. Williamson *The Patriarchy of Shakespeare's Comedies*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986.

Claribel. To ensure the longevity of his male line, Alonso had to guarantee a continuity of rule, which could only be protected and perpetuated through Ferdinand, not Claribel. Therefore, Alonso had no choice but to commodify and sell Claribel into a marriage with a husband both distant and "other" enough to sever all her possible ties and claims to the Italian throne. This happy trade negotiation ensured that Ferdinand would be installed as the heir apparent, thus eliminating the threat of female usurpation of the throne.

Although Shakespeare succeeds here in legitimizing male rule by banishing Claribel, he also reveals patriarchy's agenda to strip women of agency and prismatism. Within Shakespeare's text, it is significant that it is not the loss or remoteness of Claribel that Alonso mourns, nor the fact that he himself is shipwrecked. Rather, he mourns the loss of Ferdinand, who had stood to inherit both Milan and Naples. Alonso arrives on Prospero's island believing that Ferdinand had drowned, and thus lost his opportunity to enjoy a gilded future as monarch. This imagined loss stirs an intensity of grief in Alonso which Claribel's pleas to not be married off or exiled to Tunis do not. Part of why Alonso does not mourn the trade of Claribel is that she was already fragmented and rendered a non-person; this identity was solidified by her marriage to the King of Tunis, but it did not introduce this state of affairs. Not only is Claribel removed from Alonso's sight, she is also erased from the realm of humanity. As Alonso castigates himself—not for the decision to sell Claribel to Tunis, but for the presumed death of his son Ferdinand—Sebastian upbraids him stating:

> SEBASTIAN: Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,
>
> That would not bless our Europe with your daughter,
>
> But rather lose her to an African,

> Where she, at least, is banished from your eye,
>
> Who hath cause to set grief on't….
>
> You were kneeled to and importuned otherwise
>
> By all of us; and the fair soul herself
>
> Weighed, between loathness and obedience, at
>
> Which en o' th' beam should bow…
>
> The fault's/Your own. (Act 2, Scene I, lines 119-131)

Alonso is thrown into despair by the immensity of the loss of Ferdinand, which renders futile Alonso's intricate plans to ensure that his male heir extends their royal lineage. Claribel was a problem to be dealt with; commodifying and selling her to the highest and most distant bidder was a smart sociopolitical move for Alonso as a ruler, albeit unimaginably callous of him as a father.

Claribel's fragmentation into a commodity is indicative of the larger distrust and anxiety which surrounded women and female autonomy during this period. *The Tempest* is not just devoid of unified and prismatic mothers and women; it is also fearful of their potential to become monstrous by occupying the limited role of "witch/whore," a possibility evidenced by Sycorax. From this perspective, it is even more essential for Shakespeare to establish and protect the patriarchal line embodied in Ferdinand. By selling Claribel to Tunis, a country not far from Algiers—from which the witch and evil specter Sycorax was banished—Shakespeare creates a clear parallel between Claribel and Sycorax.[185] In this way, Shakespeare labels Claribel an unfit

[185] As Harry Berger states, "Africa has lost a Sycorax and gained a Claribel" (267). "Miraculous Harp: A Reading of Shakespeare's *Tempest*," *Shakespeare Studies* 5 (1969), as quoted in Melissa E. Sanchez's "Seduction and Service in *The Tempest*," *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (Winter, 2008), pp. 50-82, p. 70.

heir, and thus reinforces the necessity of her disaggregation. Claribel is hence degraded by her union with Tunis, which reduces her value and removes her absolutely from the line of succession and renders her a non-being.

Shakespeare consequently supports and endorses the decision to sell Claribel, or any other woman, into marriage. It is, after all, the return voyage to Italy after the wedding of Claribel and Tunis which puts the company in close proximity with Prospero's island, allowing them to become victims of his created tempest. Scattered and stranded on the island, they can play their parts in the larger scheme concocted by Prospero to regain his lost title and power. To achieve this aim Prospero must sell his daughter Miranda, here the embodiment of the idealized female role of the "virgin," to Alonso's son and heir Ferdinand. One father's loss of a daughter to Tunis opens the door for another father to install his own daughter—powerless despite her noble title—on Italy's throne. In many ways, *The Tempest's* narrative arc is based on the successful commodification of Claribel and her sale to the King of Tunis, without which neither the Italian King nor the displaced and usurped Duke would have had a throne to dispute and/or fill. The island becomes a place where transformation can take place, where lives and identities can be rescued and restored. However, this reunion and reunification is limited to the male characters (Morrison 3).[186] The redemption and rebirth illustrated in *The Tempest* comes with a price: that price is the disaggregation, negotiation, and sale of Claribel, and the absolute fragmentation of women in general.

Shakespeare's text was not the first to dramatize the practice of selling and trading women. However, the entirety of the action in *The Tempest* hinges on the successful sale and

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[186] Morrison, James V. *Shipwrecked: Disaster and Transformation in Homer, Shakespeare, Defoe, and the Modern World*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014.

exile-through-marriage of Claribel. Without this act, reconciliation for the male characters would be impossible. It is this fact, the centrality of the commodification of Claribel, which has begun to attract the attention of critics and female authors. The fragmentation of Claribel's identity, the loss of her throne, and the disaggregation of her narrative—all of which advance her father's desire for power—have come under scrutiny as the practice of selling women into marriage is increasingly seen as a form of oppression and marginalization. The fact that Claribel has largely been silenced, and only appears in Shakespeare's text through the memories and recollections of the men who arranged and facilitated her sale, is seen by many as a wrong which must be rectified. John Kunat asserts that as a "frame device" Claribel's marriage to Tunis has "generally been ignored because it does not seem essential to the action…. However, Claribel's betrothal is crucial" (311).[187] Unfortunately, as Ann Thompson points out, "Claribel had to wait until 1949 for the female poet H.D. to make her visible and give her a voice" (168).[188] H.D., Martha Nell Smith suggests, was not so much interested in what Shakespeare said in his poems and plays, but "with what he didn't say" (250).[189] The poet finally asks:

> why did I choose
>
> the invisible, voice Claribel
>
> She never had a word to say,
>
> An emblem, a mere marriage token. (H.D.; Smith 251)

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[187] Kunat, John. "'Play me false': Race, Rape, and Conquest in *The Tempest*." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 3, Fall 2014. pp. 307-327.

[188] Thompson, Ann, "'Miranda, Where's Your Sister?': Reading Shakespeare's The Tempest," in *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. Edited by Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995. pp. 168-177. See also Natali Boğosyan, *Postfeminist Discourse in Shakespeare's The Tempest and Warner's Indigo: Ambivalence, Liminality and Plurality*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

[189] Smith, Martha Nell, "H.D.'s *The Tempest*," in *The Tempest and Its Travels*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000, pp. 250-257. See also H.D.'s *By Avon River*. Edited by Lara Elizabeth Vetter. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014. pp. 51-56.

For H.D., as well as others, Claribel was the embodiment of marginalization, a woman named but who is not imagined uttering a word (Smith 251). Claribel is a throw away character, existing in name only, who served a purpose in Shakespeare's plot (and the larger Renaissance world) but is otherwise disposable.

Treating women, as well as female characters, as expendable is precisely the problem modern feminist authors and scholars struggle with. Smith asserts, in focusing on Claribel, "H.D. does not plot to destroy books and literary conventions, but to overwrite them, and their plots which so often only glance at the lives of women" (251). H.D. chose Claribel because, Smith claims, the poet identified with her and her dismissal as a mere "token." Thus, the plight of Claribel becomes representative of a larger system of devaluing and objectifying women who are used and discarded by men to further the patriarchal drive for wealth and power. Claribel was relegated to the shadows for centuries, forced to endure exile unrepresented. However, silenced female authors and characters do not have to be. H.D. is not alone in her exploration and revitalization of a marginalized and erased female character. While not a direct effort to rescue Claribel from her banishment and reduction to an elemental or essential identity as an object of exchange, female authors have pushed back against the dismissal of female characters and rescued them from obscurity and erasure. Both nineteenth and twentieth century authors, such as Charlotte Brontë and Jean Rhys, have created female characters who challenge and subvert the commodification of women, and the denial of personhood through their reduction to property and sale into marriage.

For men of marriageable age—especially the younger sons of wealthy or titled families, who stood to inherit a name but not an estate—being joined in marriage to an heiress (regardless

of her country of origin) was crucial for political and economic survival (Porter 543).[190] Even men of questionable reputation or wealth stood to capitalize on women's commodification. In almost all cases, men stood to gain from favorable marital unions; in contrast, the volatile intricacies of marriage negotiations meant that women were often on the losing side of these bargains. A woman on the open marriage market was required to move between identities. She must be marketed as a "virgin," while her sale was predicated on her being a "commodity," whose purity and idealization increased her value. A virgin was a desirable potential wife. However, the act of purchasing a woman altered her identity, transitioning her from her prior existence to a new role. As the property of her husband, in fact, as part of him, commodified wives could be treated however a husband deemed fit.[191] Her idealized prior existence which had to be protected from male sexual desire was now the appropriate site for empire building and marital congress. Marriage was thus a business deal negotiated and contracted between men with women as the stakes. This deal denied women personhood, because through the act of marriage, they were finally and absolutely condemned to non-existence, as exemplified by Claribel. Thanks to the rules of primogeniture, the negotiation of profitable marriage contracts was an urgent necessity both to bolster men's prestige and definitively fragment women's identities. This process has been portrayed in literary works such as *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*, a postcolonial adaptation of the former piece.

[190] Porter, Dennis. "Of Heroines and Victims: Jean Rhys and *Jane Eyre*." *The Massachusetts Review*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Autumn 1976), pp. 540-552.

[191] Deborah Anthony states that in marriage, "a woman's rights, obligations, and legal existence were entirely subsumed by the husband, who became entitled to her services, labor, company, and sexual activity at his whims" (17).

2.2 Brontë's Claribel: Bertha Rochester

Charlotte Brontë's 1847 text, *Jane Eyre*, details the life of its title heroine by narrating her complicated relationship with her employer, Edward Rochester, and their momentarily thwarted marriage. A majority of feminist scholarship on *Jane Eyre* has focused on exploring the eponymous heroine as the "'sole site of [female] revolution, independence, and parity' without acknowledging Bertha Mason as another potential site of ideological dislocation" (Pollack 253).[192] Jane is celebrated as a symbol of nineteenth century proto-feminism. Yet the traditional view of Edward Rochester's first wife, Bertha, as "monstrous" is reinforced in much of this writing, which leaves Bertha "condemned to remain forever the 'madwoman in the attic'" (Pollack 253).[193] Myriad critics either forget or ignore that, prior to meeting Jane, Rochester was a younger son in a very wealthy family. Thus disinherited, he was endowed with a title and appropriate lineage but no real wealth. These circumstances forced him to find and enter into a "wealthy marriage" (Brontë 260).[194] A match was consequently made between Rochester and the beautiful but foreign-born "other," Bertha Mason, who had vast wealth but no social standing as a white Creole from postcolonial Jamaica.[195] Rochester purchased Bertha Mason for her fortune,

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[192] Pollock, Lori. "(An)Other Politics of Reading *Jane Eyre*." *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Fall 1996), pp. 249-273. Pollock does, in this article, make a distinction between the (white) feminist critics of *Jane Eyre* and postcolonial scholarship on the text. She specifically calls out Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, as well as other white feminist critics who focus solely on Jane, at Bertha's expense. See Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*.

[193] Edward Rochester will be referred to as "Rochester" for both the discussion of *Jane Eyre* as well as to refer to the unnamed husband in *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

[194] Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001.

[195] Sue Thomas points out that, prior to 1850, the term "Creole" was used in Britain to mean several different things. Specifically, one could refer to "white Creoles, coloured Creoles, or black Creoles" (2). The label also connoted beliefs about human character, including the notion that "the vigour of their [Creoles'] minds is so entirely broken, that a great part of them waste their life in luxurious indulgencies, mingled with an illiberal superstition still more debasing" (2). Further, it was believed that prolonged exposure to tropic climates like Jamaica would lead to a form of "degeneration" which threatened to transgress physical and geographic boundaries and contaminate the human and ecological environment. See Thomas, Sue. "The Tropical Extravagance of Bertha Mason." *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (1999); pp 1-17.

while her family stood to profit from the British Rochester's "good race" (Brontë 260). Unbeknownst to Rochester, Bertha belonged to a planter class in Jamaica which was experiencing increasingly violent, retaliatory attacks from the island's recently-emancipated slaves. Bertha thus existed between worlds and classes, in the liminal space reserved for women in transition, moving from one culturally imposed identity to another: from the virgin to the whore, or from purity to debasement. In order to prevent her from becoming a "whore," it was imperative Bertha's identity as a commodity be solidified. To accomplish this goal, Bertha's step-father and step-brother had to secure a husband for her. Marriage would, as it had done for Claribel before her, eliminate any possibility that Bertha might exercise agency and personhood, instead guaranteeing—via the law of coverture—that she would exist only as an extension of her soon-to-be husband.

For his part, Rochester is dazzled by the element of Bertha that he is shown: the "virgin" identity, through which Bertha's beauty and youth are solely displayed. In Bertha, Rochester sees the promise of being able to restore his name and fortune to esteem. He is intoxicated by his limited interactions with the intriguing and charming white Creole woman, unaware that Bertha's multiplicity was being carefully controlled and contained, and therefore ignorant of the fact that he is purchasing a bride with a family history of insanity. In fact, Rochester appears to be the only character not to understand the terms of the deal he is being sold—or sold into. Later, after the marriage has taken place, and Bertha's identity has been subsumed into his name and public face, Rochester becomes painfully aware of his limited power in the system of primogeniture. He comments that his "father and…brother Rowland knew [of Bertha's mother's madness]; but they thought only of the thirty thousand pounds" which would result from their marriage, and thus moved swiftly to secure the pairing (Brontë 260). Rochester, like Bertha and

women in general, was a problem that needed to be remedied.[196] Sending Rochester to Jamaica to find a bride with wealth greater than his own, even if she was of questionable lineage, effectively banished him; in turn, it solved the problem a younger son caused for his father.

In this way, Rochester is almost feminized by his close association with Claribel: both are problematic children who must be dispatched to clear the way for their fathers' heir apparent. And just as Shakespeare's Claribel is sold to the King of Tunis to solve her family's economic and political issues, the sale of Bertha to Rochester addresses two of the major challenges facing the families involved. First, Rochester avoids the harsh realities of primogeniture which, as the younger son, would leave him essentially disinherited. Second, Richard Mason—for the low price of £30,000—simultaneously rids himself of the burden posed by his beautiful but potentially unstable sister, and strengthens the Masons' fading family power by allying it with the Rochester's prestige and good name.[197] Should Bertha in fact turn out to be mad, she will no longer be Richard Mason's problem. Under the law of coverture, the Bertha they knew ceases to exist; as Rochester's wife, she is transformed into an extension of her husband and thus a non-entity.

However, enmity grew between the couple over the subsequent four years in which they lived together in Jamaica as man and wife. Rochester comes to believe that he had been tricked into purchasing—or being purchased by—a bride ridden with vices, including a tendency

[196] Edward Said, in *Culture and Imperialism*, states that specifically "oriental" or "other" women, "are not seen as self-constituting subjects but as 'problems to be solved or confined…or taken over'" (207). New York: Vintage, 1993.

[197] It should be noted that Charlotte Brontë's character Bertha was in no way crafted as a means of restoring female prismatism. Bertha Mason Rochester, much like the female characters in *The Tempest*, was emblematic and a reinforcement of the limited elemental female roles available to women. It was Brontë's inability to recognize Bertha's multiplicity, and the perpetuation of the cycle of violence against women viewed as somehow transgressive explored in *Jane Eyre* that Jean Rhys succeeded in reconciling in Antoinette Cosway Mason Rochester in *Wide Sargasso Sea* (a discussion of whom will follow).

towards cruelty, a "violent and unreasonable temper," and a "pigmy intellect;" nevertheless, he could do little to divest himself of such damaged goods (Brontë 261). In turn, he starts to recognize that marriage did little or nothing to quash Bertha's desire for personhood, or for the opportunities to reassemble her fragmented identity and establish female unification. In Jamaica, Rochester and Bertha find themselves locked in a battle of wills, a struggle for whose identity would absorb the other's. This battle is cut short by the deaths of Rochester's father and brother, which leave him the sole heir to his family's name and fortune. Gifted with absolute independence from his father and brother, Rochester can shed his limited identity as the disinherited younger brother, and is thus, himself, transformed. Through this ascension, Rochester gains ultimate power over Bertha. This allows him to re-inscribe her identity and transform her from a commodity whom he must protect, to a "witch/whore" whom he must destroy to rescue himself and his good name from contamination. Bertha—who was once a virginal Miranda and was sold as a commodified Claribel—is henceforth identified as monstrous and is subsequently destroyed like Sycorax.

Bound to a wife, "the true daughter of an infamous mother…a wife at once intemperate and unchaste…called by the law and by society a part of [him]," Rochester, now both moneyed and titled, decided to do with his rightful property what any fussy child would do with a toy which no longer brought pleasure or distraction (Brontë 367). In other words, he flings Bertha aside, exiling her from his affections and reduces her to a singular identity. Eventually, Rochester has Bertha shut away and imprisoned in the attic of Thornfield Hall. This legal yet inhumane act will severely restrict Bertha's existence within the marriage, denying her existence to the world outside her attic prison.

Rochester justifies his imprisonment and (mis)treatment of Bertha by pointing to two elements: her status as his property, and her burgeoning insanity, which he attributes to genetic predisposition. To further damn Bertha and exonerate Rochester for his cruelty to his bride, Richard J. Dunn, editor of the Norton Critical Edition of *Jane Eyre*, attributes Bertha's growing insanity and instability to the "possibility she had contracted syphilis" (261). [198] The implication is that, because she is an unchaste and wanton woman, who occupies the limited "whore" identity and a potential transmitter of venereal disease, any treatment of Bertha by her owner-husband is not only justified, but necessary to curb her lascivious and uncontrollable appetites, and save her husband from public shame. Unable to divorce a wife whose disaggregated identity has been forcibly shifted from "commodity" to "witch/whore," who has been diagnosed as "insane" and is thus wholly dependent on her husband for maintenance and guardianship, Rochester cannot legally rid himself of his problematic and unruly bride.

Rochester's concern is not for his dearly purchased bride, who is spiraling—or being pushed—into madness. It is instead for the potential damage such a poorly chosen business arrangement might inflict on his reputation and name. Because she is inextricably linked to his own identity, Bertha's fragmentation into madness reflects Rochester's own failings in contract negotiations, as well as his inability to control female agency and prismatism. In Brontë's text, Rochester fears not only for his own sense of "self-respect," but for the "grimy dishonour [sic]" and "contamination" that society may impose on him for his connection to Bertha and her "mental defects" (Brontë 262). Sue Thomas asserts that, "Rochester represents his contact with Bertha's depravity as a contamination of his being, the more begriming because Bertha is 'called

[198]See Dunn's Footnote 6, pp. 261. Further, according to Laura Ciolkowski, Bertha is seen as contaminating Rochester, infecting him with her "bad blood" (347). "Navigating the Wide Sargasso Sea: Colonial History, English Fiction, and British Empire." *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (Autumn, 1997), pp. 339-359.

by the law and by society a part' of him, and carries her contagion inside him" (8).[199] Still living in his bride's native Jamaica, Rochester determines to return to England, where his marriage contract is yet unknown, which means that his own public identity remains singular and unsoiled. Later recalling his decision to lock away his intemperate wife to a rapt Jane Eyre, Rochester attributes the inspiration to return to England to a kind of divine intervention:

> "Go," said Hope, "and live again in Europe: there it is not known what a sullied name you bear, not what a filthy burden is bound to you. You may take the maniac with you to England; and confine her with due attendance and precautions at Thornfield: then travel yourself to what clime you will, and form what new tie you like. That woman, who has so abused your long-suffering—so sullied your name; so outraged your honour; so blighted your youth—is not your wife; nor are you her husband . . . Let her identity, her connection with yourself, be buried in oblivion: you are bound to impart them to no living being . . . shelter her degradation with secrecy, and leave her." (Brontë 263)

Rochester, seeing himself as the victim of an unscrupulous businessman, Richard Mason, and also conned by his own brother and father, devises a way to shirk his matrimonial vows. Treated like a piece of property and stripped of her humanity, Bertha is powerless against Rochester's machinations to erase her. Rochester can exercise his power over Bertha and her attempts at agency by returning to England, where his marriage to the "mad" woman is yet unknown. There, he can quietly imprison his wife undetected, and embrace a new life of wealth and freedom. As the sole heir to his family's fortune, and Bertha's £30,000 dowry, Rochester can reinvent himself

[199] Thomas quotes *Jane Eyre*, Chapter 27, pp. 334.

as a wealthy bachelor, seek new arrangements, and pursue alternative commodities. In other words, Rochester can create a new identity for himself while simultaneously denying Bertha any identity or existence of her own, not even the limited identity of "witch/whore" which he has imposed upon her. Instead of admitting his role as an active participant in the disaggregation of Bertha's identity and, by extension, a contributing factor in the onset of her subsequent madness, Rochester portrays himself as an innocent and naïve victim of Bertha's unscrupulous family, a passive dupe of her concealed madness. This allows him to further justify his confinement of, and cruelty to, his dearly purchased property. After all, it is she who has heaped abuses on him, caused his suffering, and sullied his name; her punishment and treatment for his discovery of her apparent defection is not only warranted, but demanded.

Despite Rochester's attempts to fully erase and exile his "mad" and uncontrollable bride by imprisoning her in the attic of Thornfield Hall, she refuses to be silenced and fragmented. The marriage contract transformed women like Bertha into property, who were transferred from their families' custodianship to their husbands' ownership. Thus abused and trapped, Bertha rebels and seeks a means of escape, a way to exact revenge on a husband and a patriarchal system which has devalued her, sold and purchased her, and then attempted to deny her existence. By shutting her up in the attic of Thornfield Hall and resuming his life as a bachelor, Rochester metaphorically kills Bertha and transforms her into a ghost who haunts not only his home, but also his consciousness.[200] Bertha is altered by her oppression and confinement. She becomes a zombie: a thing simultaneously alive and dead, a being and a nonbeing. Rochester's denial of her personhood, however, endows Bertha with the ability to transcend her limited role as a

[200] For a discussion of the role played by ghosts and zombies in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* see Romita Choudhury. "'Is there a ghost, a zombie there?': Postcolonial Intertextuality in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Textual Practice*, 10:2 (1996): pp. 315-327.

commodity. In fact, Bertha begins moving between all three female identities available to her: she morphs from an object back to a subject. Over the course of her transition from an idealized virgin, to a valued object of exchange, to an active subject struggling against her husband's cruelty and denial, Bertha undergoes a final prismatic transformation, from commodity to monster (witch/whore).

Freed from the restrictions of a singular identity, and having her value as a commodity forever compromised, Bertha becomes a thing inhuman; a witch, monster, ghost, or zombie. [201] As a non-person, Bertha, though held captive by her husband, exerts her will and existence. Despite Rochester's attempts to annihilate her, Bertha asserts her agency by haunting Thornfield Hall. Regardless of all efforts to expunge her from his memory, life or home, Rochester is unable to escape his Creole wife and the pervasive nature of his hasty business deal. Bertha asserts her prismatic existence and refuses to be marginalized into obscurity. Imprisoned and guarded by Grace Poole by Rochester's decree, Bertha takes "advantage of her guardian's temporary lapses; once to secrete a knife with which she stabbed her brother, and twice to possess herself of the key to her cell, and issue therefrom in the nighttime," and her presence in the home dictates every move and choice Rochester makes (Brontë 264). His every waking thought is to not be discovered, to escape his "lunatic" bride, to conceal Bertha at all costs. So it is Rochester who pays the ultimate price and is doomed by the marriage to Bertha; it is his good name and reputation that is traded. Bertha may be degraded by the union, fragmented and reduced from a thing of great worth to something monstrous, but Rochester is a victim of his own cruelty, of

[201] Edna Aizenberg asserts, "through the zombie woman, the Caribbean…becomes a screen onto which [men] can project their fantasies and insecurities, the id forces of the libidinous, irrational, violent, dangerous, and, yes, miscengenated, intermingled, or hybrid" (462). Due to this association and perceived threat, Rochester, or any man is justified in his attempts (or successes) in destroying a woman transformed into a zombie. See, "'I Walked with a Zombie': The Pleasures and Perils of Postcolonial Hybridity." *World Literature Today*, Vol. 73, No. 3 (Summer 1999), pp. 461-466.

self-inflicted emotional and psychological anguish, and ultimately of disfigurement. Bertha, though held captive for ten years in the attic at Thornfield Hall, and relegated to an elemental role and function, is in some ways freer than Rochester, who must live a life of deception and fear, and whose exposure costs him (albeit temporarily) everything (Brontë 264).

Ironically, the existence of Rochester's wife, and the discovery of her lengthy imprisonment in Thornfield Hall, serves only to expose Rochester's monstrosity rather than heap blame on and condemn Bertha. Rochester's character and identity throughout *Jane Eyre* hence devolves, transforming him into something "devious" by the end (Brontë 264).[202] Rochester's true identity is exposed by his endeavoring to erase Bertha and replace her with a more suitable match, all while striving to conceal his status as a married man and in turn to commit bigamy. For ten years, Rochester travels the world seeking an object to replace Bertha, a commodity that would fulfill the proper marriage contract he originally negotiated and entered into. Yet Rochester is unable to find a woman of worth: one which possesses the appropriate social identity required by his name and wealth, who is obedient to her father's behests, and is also willing to be bought.

Unable to acquire a suitable "commodity," Rochester is eventually reduced to publicly accepting the "whore," the same female identity he had punished Bertha for supposedly becoming. He comments, "[h]iring a mistress is the next worse thing to buying a slave: both are often by nature, and always by position, inferior: and to live familiarly with inferiors is degrading" (Brontë 266). Prior to meeting Jane, Rochester degrades himself with mistresses, women who occupy only one identity, whom he can easily purchase and discard, for whom he

[202] In fact, Rochester deployed several deceptions and disguises throughout *Jane Eyre* including appearing dressed as a "gipsy" woman and telling fortunes which shows the depths of his fall. In some ways he becomes a stand in for the locked away Bertha (Brontë 163-175).

trades his once good name and family reputation. Bertha's exposure and redemption condemns Rochester to ignominy and opens up the possibility of female unification.

It is Rochester's proposal to Jane that serves as the final insult to Bertha and prompts her most aggressive retaliation against disaggregation and erasure. After failed attempts at burning Rochester in his bed as he slept, and the destruction of Jane's bridal clothes, Bertha asserts her existence and place as Rochester's wife, and rejects her status as an element subsumed by him: she sets fire to Thornfield Hall, leaping from the roof to her own death (Brontë 365). Through this dramatic display of deadly power, Bertha exposes Rochester's cruelty and gains absolute agency. By taking her own life, Bertha reclaims her identity and transforms herself completely from an object of exchange to an autonomous subject. Bertha, formerly fragmented, confined, and abused, hence exerts control over her husband, her brother, Jane, and the text itself. In death, Bertha exacts the ultimate revenge on the patriarchy and society which would commodify her and see her as nothing more than an object, a means to an end. In death, Bertha becomes prismatic.

Sadly, while Bertha in life maintains a tentative connection to Rochester and the text through his obsession with controlling her and her elemental role, she is quickly forgotten after her death. Yet in death, Bertha releases not only herself from bondage and inhumanity, but also achieves personhood; simultaneously, she extends her transformative power and redeems Rochester. Finally recognizing his own villainy and abusive treatment of Bertha, Rochester heroically attempts to rescue his wife/property from the burning Thornfield Hall. In his attempt to save Bertha, Rochester sustains multiple injuries, which leave him blind and with an amputated hand. Through the injuries and anguish Rochester experiences trying to rescue Bertha, he is able to reconnect psychically to Jane, whom Brontë asserts could hear and sense the

destruction at Thornfield and the pain and urgency of her former employer/would-be owner, although he is hundreds of miles away (Brontë 357). Jane thus usurps Bertha's elemental role and identity as Rochester's commodity/wife/feme covert, releasing Bertha and allowing her to finally achieve autonomy and agency.

Unsurprisingly, Bertha's triumphant unification is quickly forgotten by Brontë and her characters. As Jane rushes to be by Rochester's side after he is heroically injured, Bertha is again relegated to the role of non-person, of just another object which was lost in the fire, a piece of property soon to be replaced. And replaced she is. Bertha once again becomes a ghost, a means to an end, an obstacle and fragmented identity to be overcome and refuted so that Rochester and Jane can finally negotiate a viable marriage contract, so that Rochester can purchase Jane into happy bondage. Bertha, sacrificed like Claribel, lost her value once she was done serving her limited purpose. Like most women, she—as a singular and elemental figure—is relegated to the margins both of the narrative and of history.

2.3 Rescuing Bertha Rochester and Restoring her Prismatism

Jean Rhys, dissatisfied with Brontë's dismissive treatment of Bertha Mason Rochester in *Jane Eyre*, and many of Brontë's readers and critics, composed a novel in response. Brontë's Bertha represents female agency and identity as disaggregated, reduced to inferiority, and absorbed by the patriarchy. In contrast, Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* exposes the limited and disconnected female roles which women have historically and literarily been forced to inhabit—virgin, commodity, and whore—and which have been perpetuated by both Shakespeare and Brontë. Rhys's text is thus a novel of resistance, in which she succeeds in restoring female characters to personhood. To illuminate the injustice suffered by Bertha at Rochester's hands,

and to restore her to the center of the text, the working title of Rhys's novel was "The First Mrs. Rochester."[203] In correspondence with Francis Wyndham and Selma Vaz Dias, Rhys explained what attracted her to Brontë's mad Creole, and why it was "that particular mad Creole . . . [and] not any of the other mad Creoles," that she wanted to focus on (Rhys 136). Rhys stated that she was intrigued by Bertha's necessity to the plot of *Jane Eyre*, but that Bertha:

> . . . always shrieks, howls, laughs horribly, attacks all and sundry—*off stage* . . . she must be right *on stage*. She must be at least plausible with a past, the *reason* why Mr. Rochester treats her so abominably and feels justified, the *reason* why he thinks she is mad and why of course she goes mad, even the *reason* why she tries to set everything on fire, and eventually succeeds [original emphasis]. (Rhys 136-137)

Bertha, as well as female identity in Brontë's text, was fragmented into non-personhood, a violent act that must be exposed to restore her to prismatism. Brontë's Bertha, like Claribel before her, was an essential catalyst for the story she wanted to tell about Jane and Rochester, but she was never anything more than an instrument, a symbol, and an emblem of the ways in which female debasement can corrupt an otherwise good, albeit somewhat lost, man. The Bertha in *Jane Eyre* is little more than a caricature, an absent presence, an amplification of all the monstrous and dangerous qualities of femininity, and a justification for female subjugation and erasure. As such, she was easily and defensibly relegated "off stage" to the margins, as a voiceless, savage animal. Charlotte Brontë's Bertha, once a commodity sold into marriage to Rochester, quickly sheds her Claribel identity and is transformed into Sycorax, the witch/whore.

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[203] Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Edited by Judith Raiskin. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999. Pg. 135. From *The Letters of Jean Rhys*, selected and edited by Francis Wyndham and Diana Melly. New York: Viking, 1984.

In undergoing this morphological change, Bertha becomes an unnatural thing, a non-person who deserves the ill treatment she receives at the hands of her husband/owner. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys elevates and restores Bertha through the character of Antoinette; by extension, she elevates womanhood to wholeness. Rhys celebrates rather than condemns women for their ability to occupy all three roles available to them simultaneously, to be and to deny their singular identities as virgin, commodity, or whore.

Wide Sargasso Sea, written oven a 20 year span and published in 1966, restores to unity, wholeness, and agency not only the disaggregated singular woman, Antoinette Cosway Mason—later re-christened "Bertha" by Rochester—but also all women, regardless of race, class, or age (Adjarian 202).[204] Rhys's text provides a history and backstory to the madwoman locked in Rochester's attic prison.[205] *Wide Sargasso Sea* opens on Coulibri, the quickly fading plantation home which belongs to the once prominent Cosway's in the years following the Emancipation Act of 1833 (Rhys 9).[206] The reader is offered a glimpse into the life of a young Antoinette, and witnesses her family's descent from power and privilege to dependence and poverty. Whereas Brontë's Bertha is singular and isolated, Rhys's Antoinette is immediately multiple: she sees her older self and her fate in her mother Annette, and she also sees herself reflected in her childhood friend Tia. These female relationships repeat as she gets older. Eventually Antoinette finds a

[204] Adjarian, M.M. "Between and Beyond Boundaries in *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *College Literature*, Vol. 22. No. 1: Third World Women's Inscriptions (Feb. 1995), pp. 202-209. Rhys first mentions *Wide Sargasso Sea*, or the working title, *The First Mrs. Rochester*, in letters dating to 1958. However, Rhys scholars cite records which show that Rhys was working on the manuscript for *Wide Sargasso Sea* for as many as 20 years before its publication date. See *The Letters of Jean Rhys*, selected and edited by Francis Wyndham and Diana Melly. New York: Viking, 1984.

[205] In an August 8, 1968 interview with *The Guardian*, Rhys stated of Antoinette, "She seemed such a poor ghost, I thought I'd like to write her life." See Michael Thorpe, "'The Other Side': *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Jane Eyre*." *ARIEL* July 1977, pp. 99.

[206] Lee Ervin states that the Emancipation Act of 1833, "decreed the eventual freedom of the slaves in all of the British colonies and the racial conflicts and social and economic turmoil that surrounded it" (143). "'Like in a Looking-Glass': History and Narrative in *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Winter 1989), pp. 143-158.

double for her mother in Christophine and for herself in Amélie. Throughout *Wide Sargasso Sea*, readers are confronted with a female *bildungsroman*: a coming into being, moving through the stages of adolescence into adulthood, from innocence to experience. Unlike Claribel, whose limited female role as a commodity saw her traded and banished into marriage, or Miranda, whose virginal obedience trapped her into silent subjugation, or Sycorax, whose feminine monstrosity and uncontained sexuality earned her demonization and exile, Antoinette succeeds in unifying the disconnected pieces of her identity and creates an autonomous whole.

Through her struggles for unification and self-definition, Antoinette is forced to confront and dismantle the elemental roles to which women have historically and literarily been relegated and challenge the patriarchal justifications for such gendered violence. By restoring the narrative and history which Brontë denied to Antoinette/Bertha, Rhys further exposes the brutalities suffered by Antoinette and other female characters at the hands of men; these women haunt both Brontë's texts and society at large. Rhys's focus on women's limited roles in literature and the world shines a light which leaps from the page and onto readers. This act implicates both the reader and the character in the violence of female disaggregation and the act of recovery. In this way, Rhys not only creates a prismatic female character in Antoinette, but simultaneously extends that multiplicity to her readers. As readers, we are invited to see ourselves in Antoinette: to assess our own struggles, and thereby to become fully realized and unified whole selves, rather than fragmented collections of parts and elements.

In the process of achieving prismatism, Antoinette, as well as other Rhys heroines/victims, often appears dichotomous. Rhys's female characters are at once filled with what M.M. Adjarian terms "oppositions" (202), while Judith Moore sees them as "subversive

juxtapositionings" (21).[207] Moore points out that these "oppositions" or "juxtapositionings" often center on gender (typically male vs. female), race (white vs. black), or even age (young vs. old). However, Moore fails to recognize these juxtapostionings as the limited elements of Antoinette (Bertha) Mason Rochester or, for that matter, of all women. Women, as previously stated, have historically, culturally, and literarily been divided and categorized for the purposes of oppression and marginalization. By fragmenting and dividing women into individual parts, they could more easily be controlled or destroyed should they prove too transgressive or unruly. So, rather than seeing the women who occupy *Wide Sargasso Sea* as a series of juxtapositionings, as Moore suggests, I argue that the female characters within Rhys's text are representative of the elements or ways in which women are fragmented. Each female character—from Christophine and Tia, to Annette, Amelie, and Grace Poole—embodies elements of womanhood divided, who are more easily manipulated and controlled as a result of these divisions. However, through the character of Antoinette (Bertha) Cosway Mason Rochester, the disparate elemental parts of disaggregated femininity find unification. Antoinette's struggle through the text is not only to self-define, but also to recombine and merge women's patriarchal fragmentation. As Antoinette succeeds in emerging as the embodiment of the multiplicity and prismatism of womanhood, she moves through all three elemental female identities of the virgin, commodity, and whore throughout the text, often occupying all three roles simultaneously.

The female multiplicity contained in *Wide Sargasso Sea* has led some critics to dismiss Antoinette. They see her transitional identity—her prismatism—as a sign of weakness or mental illness. It is easier to interpret Antoinette as a mad or "alien" figure, rather than to understand her

[207] Moore is quoted in Adjarian's article. See Judith Moore. "Sanity and Strength in Jean Rhys's West Indian Heroines." *Rocky Mountain Review*, Vol. 41, Nos. 1-2, 1987, pp. 21-31.

actions as a sign of female agency and transformation. Perhaps these critics prefer to perpetuate the traditional and familiar elemental roles to which women have been relegated, rather than explore the messy and confusing "becoming" of female personhood. In fact, scholars ranging from Judith Moore to Elizabeth Abel have seen in Antoinette the hallmarks of an identity or psyche in crisis. Abel dismisses Antoinette, and all of Rhys's heroines, as "schizophrenic," and this perhaps is true to an extent.[208] Yet Abel's attempt to make sense of these heroine's actions and reactions by characterizing them as schizophrenic, and in turn as "perversely self-destructive," is a reading which repeats the cycle of violence and disaggregation which women and female characters have long been subjected to (156). Rhys's characters may have schizophrenic tendencies, but these tendencies may also serve as a coping mechanism and path through which women can resist the patriarchal and societal urge to reduce them to one controllable characteristic.[209] By labeling Antoinette, specifically, as schizophrenic—and thus imprisoning her in one of the potential roles available for women to inhabit—serves only to further deny her personhood and agency.

[208] Further, Abel argues "Rhys's heroines experience the world as a hostile environment and lead lives of isolation, detached from family and friends, unable to establish real contact with others" (156). However, Abel fails to see that if Rhys's heroines behave in these ways, or exhibit schizophrenic tendencies, it is in reaction to the circumstances they are put in, largely at the hands of the men around them. Madness, or schizophrenic tendencies, can thus be read not as a defect, but as acts of resistance. See Elizabeth Abel. "Women and Schizophrenia: The Fiction of Jean Rhys." *Contemporary Literature*, Vol, 20. No. 2 (Spring, 1979), pp. 155-177. See also Evelyn O'Callaghan's "Interior Schisms Dramatised: The Treatment of the 'Mad' Woman in the Work of Some Female Caribbean Novelists." *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Edited by Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido. Trenton: African World Press, 1990. pp. 89-109.

[209] Abel asserts that Rhys's female characters share common traits which signal schizophrenia: "impoverished affect, apathy, obsessive thought and behavior coupled with the inability to take real initiative, a sense of the unreality of both the world and self, and a feeling of detachment from the body" (156). However, I argue that if a woman has always been viewed as singular, when she "suddenly" displays a variety of traits or characteristics, showing her prismatism, this is often coded as schizophrenia or madness and works to devalue and pathologize any attempt at agency or self-definition.

What Abel interprets as mental "degeneration" in Rhys's female characters, I see as regeneration and unification, as an assertion of their multiple prismatic, and ultimately whole, identities (Abel 156). If, as Abel suggests, Rhys's female heroines are driven to schizophrenia, this should be read as an attempt to further fragment them; it should be interpreted as a manifestation of the urgent desire for female unification and personhood (157). Antoinette refuses to merely be cast as Claribel, as a commodity possessing a limited and imposed value; she also rejects the identity of Sycorax, the witch/whore who must be destroyed to ensure the purity of the male line. Rather, Antoinette will emerge as the reunification of Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax. She will therefore inhabit the full range of femininity and thus establish herself as an independent subject.

Abel seeks to explain away the emotions and experiences of female characters, and/or the "recurrent themes of madness, defeat, and passivity" explored by female authors, as examples of the schizophrenic state that exists in some "mild approximation" in all women (169). However, this attempt to minimize female acts of resistance does a significant disserve to the marginalized and repressed roles which women have traditionally been forced to inhabit. In ascribing a psychological or pathological justification to the fragmented state of female experience, critics like Abel merely aid in their continued subjugation and division into non-people.[210] Neither Rhys nor her female characters are schizophrenic. Rather, they occupy a liminal space between rigidly

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[210] Abel asserts, "that most women's experience can open almost imperceptibly into the pathological" (170). I strongly disagree with Abel on the grounds that, by connecting female experiences—especially female experiences of marginalization and demands for obedience—to mental illness, she delegitimizes women and justifies their continued infantilization at the hands of the patriarchy. Here, Abel sees women as appropriate subjects of coverture being always on the brink of, or in the midst of, a schizophrenic state. Interestingly, at the end of her article, Abel does mention that Rhys's later novels (including *Wide Sargasso Sea*) signal that female unification is possible, although she also says it is not explicitly claimed by Rhys (177). This assessment does not go far enough in that Abel suggests that unity can only be achieved in connection to other woman, rather than being accomplished by each individual woman.

defined identities. Rhys's female characters, especially Antoinette, are seen in the process of becoming: becoming unified, harmonious, independent women, autonomous subjects who act and act upon others, not feme coverts.[211] In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, through the character of Antoinette Cosway Mason Rochester, Rhys creates a prismatic female subject, one who resists the male pressure to fragment. Via Antoinette, Rhys reunifies Miranda, Claribel and Sycorax from monstrous singularity, and moves them into a fully human state.

As *Wide Sargasso Sea* shows the plurality of *Jane Eyre*, so too does Rhys display the multiplicity of female identity in Antoinette. Yet the realization and achievement of her own prismatism is arduous, and Antoinette's path to self-definition and subjectivity throughout *Wide Sargasso Sea* is continuously assailed and violently opposed by those around her. Antoinette is unceasingly subject to the objectifying categorizations of those around her: those who attempt to define her and thus to limit her to one elemental quality.

But Antoinette's struggles are not just related to her gender and class: Rhys also insists that race is an important aspect of female identity (Porter 546). In this manner, Rhys makes explicit not only the connection between Antoinette and Claribel as both are marketed and sold, but the parallel between Antoinette and Sycorax, the sexualized, monstrous non-white and foreign "other." However, Rhys's heroine is not *either* Claribel or Sycorax: she is simultaneously *both* Claribel *and* Sycorax. She is a commodity and a disruptive foreign presence; she is powerfully independent and a feme covert; she is multiple and therefore she is dangerous. As a white Creole, Antoinette straddles the line between classifications—both native and "other." She

[211] See Mona Fayed. "Unquiet Ghosts: The Struggle for Representation in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, Fall 1988, pp. 437-452. Fayed asserts, "*Wide Sargasso Sea*, then, is a story of the 'struggle to come into being' of Antoinette Cosway, the thwarting of that process, and her stubborn insistence on 'speaking herself' no matter what the cost may be" (438).

is identified by those around her by what she is not, by her difference.[212] Thus, for each population she comes into contact with—whether it be ex-slaves, native inhabitants of Jamaica, the English Rochester's, and her two diametrically opposed half-brothers Richard Mason and Daniel Cosway, or even the nuns and pupils at her convent school—Antoinette is always viewed as an outsider, as an "other." Unlike the additional characters that populate Rhys's text, Antoinette defies classification, just as she defies every attempt to pin her down and label her. Likewise, she rejects the elemental roles used to dominate and marginalize women. Nevertheless, this rejection leaves Antoinette unmoored, marooned, and isolated; ungrounded by the ballast which categorical labels provide—good, bad, or indifferent—she must search herself out amongst the images and identities of those around her. To illustrate Antoinette's search for herself, Rhys invokes the device of a "looking-glass" (27). In this glass, Antoinette sees not only herself and her own wild and unruly reflection, but many other potential identities and alternative female roles including her mother, and her childhood friend and racialized "other" self, Tia. Antoinette comes to understand that each reflected image is a facet of her own multiple and prismatic self. Antoinette is both a combination and a denial of each elemental female identity as represented by her mother (the commodity), Tia (the witch/whore), and herself (the virgin).

Unlike Brontë's Jane, who is singular in her identity and perhaps purposefully unable to discover anyone quite like her, Antoinette is not alone in her otherness. Rhys creates mirror

[212] Rose Kamel asserts that white Creoles with dowries, such as Antoinette, did not usually fare well with English husbands who did not understand the realities of enmity between white Creoles (who often lost power and fortune as a result of the Emancipation Act), and blacks (newly emancipated but still largely disenfranchised). English husbands tended to stereotype "[Creoles] as primitive . . . i.e. lazy, prone to emotional instability, given to sexual excess—hence easy to commodify and dispose of" (5). For more on Antoinette's status as a white Creole in the post -emancipation Caribbean see Rose Kamel. "'Before I Was Set Free': The Creole Wife in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, Vol. 25, No. 1. (Winter 1995) pp. 1-22. See also Evelyn O'Callaghan, "'The Outsider's Voice': White Creole Women Novelists in the Caribbean Literary Tradition." *Journal of West Indian Literature*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (October 1986) pp. 74-88.

images, opposites, and a series of "others" or doubles not only for Antoinette, but also for the other characters who populate the text: Antoinette and Tia, Richard Mason and Daniel Cosway, Rochester and Sandi Cosway, Christophine and Annette. Antoinette is everywhere surrounded by an opposite reflection, an opposite "other" identity.[213] Rhys, it should be remembered, nearly entitled her novel "The First Mrs. Rochester;" this title could also be read as, "The *Other* Mrs. Rochester," or more precisely, Jane Eyre becomes the "other" Mrs. Rochester. This, too, is an alternative reading of Antoinette, who has often been viewed as an individual at the mercy of those around her, unable to protect herself against Rochester, much less the text's attempts to limit and disaggregate her. Therefore, Antoinette's otherness is used by Rochester as the basis for her fragmentation and reduction to an object.

Antoinette's multiplicity results in her rejection by the English as "not white enough," and by the ex-slaves as "too white." She consequentially exists in a liminal space between identities, a space characterized by "contamination" and "miscegenation" (Ervin 144). Not only does Antoinette defy easy categorization into one of the elemental roles to which women were subject, but she subverts racial classification as well. She is called a "white cockroach" and "white nigger" by the community; she is not of the same category as "*real* white people," for as Tia points out, "Old time white people nothing but white nigger now, and black nigger better than white nigger" (Rhys 14).[214] At the heart of this insult—which is hurled at Antoinette by her only friend and double—is a degrading insinuation about Antoinette's race, and a debasing question about Antoinette's authenticity: whether she is, in fact, "real." The inability by those

[213] Ellen G. Friedman explores the appearance of "others" or "oppositions", specifically of the Garden of Eden in *Wide Sargasso Sea* in her chapter, "Breaking the Master Narrative: Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Breaking the Sequence: Women's Experimental Fiction.* Edited by Ellen G. Friedman and Miriam Fuchs. Princeton University Press, 1989, pp 117-128, p. 121.

[214] Emphasis mine.

around her to accurately categorize Antoinette through the assignation of a racial designation calls attention to the transitory and liminal nature of existence. Not only is Antoinette without a stable and singular identity, but her humanity is also called into question.

Unlike the powerless but real Bertha in *Jane Eyre*, whose imposed identity as a mad, savage, animal causes Jane and readers to sympathize with Rochester for his misfortunate purchase of such a defective commodity, Rhys sees power and possibility in Antoinette's ever shifting multiplicity. Rhys's Antoinette is not oppressed by her "otherness:" she is empowered by it, although it takes her the length of the novel to discover her own, true, prismatic identity, and her inner strength. She transforms Rochester's condemnations of women as "lovely little creature[s] but sly, spiteful, malignant," and of her specifically as "alien," meant to oppress into a force of natural empowerment (Rhys 38-39). Rather than withering under Rochester's tyranny, Antoinette is able to call upon the combined power of womanhood, previously disaggregated, to find the power to resist the violence of patriarchy.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Brontë's Bertha is reclaimed and transformed from a marginalized and erased absent presence, into an autonomous agent. Antoinette is imbued with a life, an existence, a childhood, and a consciousness far removed from Rochester and his dismissals of her. Antoinette becomes flesh, becomes human. Readers witness her coming into being, as reflected in the frame narrative of the text. Structurally, *Wide Sargasso Sea* begins and ends with Antoinette and her narrative, but it gives the middle section to the unnamed Rochester. By denying Rochester a name and relying on the readers' knowledge of *Jane Eyre* to identify him, Rhys exerts control over not only her own text, but Brontë's original source material. Rhys sets in motion the events which will lead Rochester to *Jane Eyre*, taking ownership of his greed and cruelty to his first wife. For Rhys it is Rochester's failure as a husband and his cruelty towards

Bertha that will lead to his eventual disfigurement and redemption. By creating a backstory for Bertha/Antoinette/Marionette, Rhys does not merely validate the first Mrs. Rochester's existence, she also gives humanity and primacy to her over Rochester, Jane, and even Brontë. Although Rochester speaks, and his narrative dominates the second section of the text, he is stripped of his "good" family name and recognition. This renders him nameless and thus insignificant; he is insignificant and remains in the shadow of the powerful female characters who occupy the text. This nameless Rochester is no match for Christophine and her obeah, and only gains control of Antoinette after he exiles her to England—a place of questionable "reality."[215]

Throughout *Wide Sargasso Sea*, both Rhys and the reader are aware of the fate that awaits both Rochester and Antoinette. It is Rhys, however, who places the responsibility for fulfilling that destiny into Antoinette's hands; it is Antoinette who makes *Jane Eyre* "real." Through a series of prophetic dreams, Antoinette is confronted by the fate that awaits her. In these dreams, she is pursued by a faceless, nameless "someone," who hated her yet was always with her "out of sight" (Rhys 15). However much she struggles, though, she cannot escape. Later, as her narrative closes in Part One, Antoinette dreams again. Yet now she is not being pursued: it is she who is following a man. "I follow him, sick with fear," she says, "but I make no effort to save myself; if anyone were to try to save me, I would refuse. *This must happen*"

[215] In Part Three of *Wide Sargasso Sea*, after Rochester has taken Antoinette to England and imprisoned her in the attic of Thornfield Hall, she is able to escape her cage by stealing Grace Poole's keys while she sleeps and explore the home. Antoinette tells the reader that she able to "walk into their world. It is, as [she] always knew, made of cardboard. [She had] seen it before somewhere, this cardboard world where everything is coloured brown or dark red or yellow that has no light in it. As [she] walk[s] along the passage [she] wish[es] [she] could see what is behind the cardboard. They tell [her she] is in England but [she doesn't] believe them. We lost our way to England…. When [she] awoke it was a different sea. Colder. It was night, [she] think[s], that we changed course and lost our way to England. This cardboard house where [she] walk[s] at night is not England (Rhys 180-181).

(Rhys 36).[216] When she awakens, Antoinette tells Sister Marie Augustine, "I dreamed I was in Hell" (Rhys 36).[217]

In fact, Antoinette's true Hell is just beginning as she enters—and not without hesitation—into an arranged marriage with the unnamed Rochester. The narrative then shifts in Part Two to the inner monologue and experience of Rochester, Antoinette's purchaser. His new bride defies his attempts to categorize her and define her. She is unlike any woman he has ever encountered, which initially intrigues him.[218] At first Rochester sees beauty and mystery in Antoinette's "sad, dark alien eyes" (Rhys 39). But Antoinette refuses to submit, or to give rehearsed answers to Rochester's questions. She refuses to be forced into one elemental role, in essence, she refuses to be merely the feme covert. In an attempt to gain control over his new bride in Rhys's text, Rochester extends his mistreatment of his wife to the entire island of Jamaica, shattering it and breaking it down to its most essential qualities: "everything is too much . . . too much blue, too much purple, too much green. The flowers too red, the mountains too high, the hills too near. And the woman is a stranger. Her pleading expression annoys me. I have not bought her, she has bought me, or so she thinks" (Rhys 41). For Rochester, even the colors of his new surroundings are too overwhelming, too vibrant, and alive. They thus must be separated, disaggregated and oppressed. The environment is a reflection of Antoinette and her

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[216] Original emphasis.

[217] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak points out that in *Jane Eyre*, Rochester, too, saw his life and existence in the West Indies as "hell." Awoken one "fiery West Indian night" by his wife's yells, Rochester asserts that Antoinette/Bertha's cries come from the "bottomless pit" of hell. His belief that he is in hell with her serves as one of his many justifications for his treatment of his bride. Rochester exclaims, "I have a right to deliver myself from it if I can . . . Let me break away and go home to God." See Spivak's, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 12, No. 1, "'Race' Writing and Difference" (Autumn 1985), pp. 243-261. pp. 247-248.

[218] Rochester, it should be noted, was also attracted to Jane Eyre because she was unlike any woman he had ever known, which makes Jane another uncanny double of Antoinette.

existence in Jamaica, a wild and wanton place which must be contained and brought into submission before it contaminates and destroys him.

Rochester enters a battle of wills against Antoinette for narrative supremacy, a battle that will finally and absolutely relegate one of them to the status of a non-person. However, Rochester finds in his opponent more skill and multiplicity than he had anticipated. True, she is young and seemingly naïve and inexperienced, lingering between the multiple identities. Yet in Rhys's text, Antoinette is not a silent, passive victim. Rather than cower against Rochester's symbolic patriarchy, Antoinette engages him, challenges him, and for a time, out-maneuvers him in a contest which will award personhood and prismatism to only one of them.

Physically and sexually, Antoinette hovers between two possible identities: a doting and obedient Miranda, who embodies the kind of womanhood demanded by polite British society, and a Sycorax, who exemplifies the qualities required by Rochester in a bride. Much like during the initial marriage contract negotiations, Antoinette is imbued with two identities, public and private.[219] Publicly, and during the day, Antoinette lives as a young and innocent girl newly released from her convent school; she moves appropriately between the limited identities of virgin and sought-after commodity. But alone at night with Rochester in Granbois—their honeymoon home in Dominica—she is transformed into someone "different, even her voice was changed" (Rhys 54). At night, Antoinette morphs into Sycorax.

Rochester becomes consumed with his bride, sexually aroused at just the mere sight of one of her dresses on the floor, and comments, "Very soon she was as eager for what's called

[219] Elizabeth I was also imbued with two bodies: public and private. A multiplicity Rhys replicates in *Wide Sargasso Sea* but with a decidedly different outcome.

loving as I was—more lost and drowned afterwards" (55). Rochester yearns for her, is "thirsty" for her, and has the desire to dominate and control her. But these feelings are not love. In fact, the more he desires her, the less he sees her personhood. Antoinette becomes more and more of a "stranger" to him, "a stranger who did not think or feel as [he] did" (55). In Rochester's mind, Antoinette is divorced from the world of reality: her multiplicity, loveliness, and alien qualities; her connection to, and reflection of the natural world around her; and the secret that she seems to hide disconnects her from the world of reality. Antoinette is thus transformed from Miranda, to Claribel, and damningly, finally to Sycorax, whose wanton female sexuality must be destroyed, the whore who must be exiled.

Exactly when Rochester decides finally and absolutely to destroy Antoinette is debatable. Perhaps he knew all along that she would only be the "first Mrs. Rochester;" perhaps he always sensed that for him to truly be free, he had to rid himself of her and her resistance to submission. Indeed, Rochester's sexual attraction to Antoinette increases in tandem with an insatiable desire to possess and control her. As Rochester's competing feelings towards his new bride of revulsion and attraction grow so too does his obsession with her virtue both prior to their marriage, and after. The final straw for Rochester comes in the form of a letter from Daniel Cosway, who claims to be Antoinette's illegitimate half-brother. After the men's subsequent meeting, Rochester spurns Antoinette's affections, and puts into motion a plan to take Antoinette to England, where he will isolate her, and ultimately banish her to the attic of Thornfield Hall.

This episode is worth examining in greater depth. Specifically, Daniel Cosway insinuates in his letter to Rochester that, not only does insanity run in Antoinette's family—as exemplified by her mother Annette and infirm younger brother Pierre—but also that the genetic debasement of the family line is linked to uncontrolled and unchecked female sexuality. To this point, critics

including Lee Ervin, have speculated that Pierre's infirmary is due to syphilis contracted in utero. Ervin suggests that the "'taint' of the Cosway's, which has produced the idiot son Pierre, and which the text codes as 'alcoholism'…is plainly congenital syphilis" (149).[220] Rochester uncritically takes Daniel's "slanderous statements against Antoinette as the truth," and uses them as further justification for his mistreatment of her (Gruesser 99).[221] Unnerved by his deep sexual desire for Antoinette—and the power she has over his physical body—and led by Daniel to believe that Antoinette actively participated in the plot to trick him into an undesirable marriage, Rochester fails to question Daniel's accusations or motives for contacting him (Gruesser 105). He prefers this male-generated narrative about Antoinette because it endorses his fears about her identity: it "confirms" her status as a duplicitous and a threatening sexualized other. In other words, Rochester uses Daniel's written and verbal messages as proof positive of the dangers of female sexual agency. Rochester needed evidence to justify the total fragmentation of Antoinette into a non-person, and Daniel provided it with no questions asked. And as his (supposedly dearly purchased) property, Rochester can destroy his bride in any manner he sees fit (Gruesser 105).

However, Rochester will not be satisfied with the mere destruction of Antoinette alone. In fact, his silent battle against her drives him to destroy all the things which Antoinette loves, too. To fully control her, and reduce her to one elemental quality, Rochester must annihilate Antoinette psychologically and emotionally, as well as physically.[222] To accomplish this feat,

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[220] Laura Ciolkowski claims that Rochester "fixates on the transmission through marriage of a diseases historical legacy in which he… imagines himself to be the unsuspecting victim of a highly female carrier of disease—an impression that by midcentury was, perhaps, best illustrated by Victorian images of beautiful yet syphilitic women," of which Antoinette is implicated (346).

[221] Gruesser, John. "'Say Die and I Will Die': Betraying the Other, Controlling Female Desire, and Legally Destroying Women in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Othello*." *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, Vol. 3 No. 3 Jean Rhys (Summer 2003), pp. 99-109.

[222] For a discussion on the necessity of destroying Antoinette "physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, [and] even linguistically," see Gruesser, "Say Die and I will Die," pp. 105.

Rochester must also destroy the connection Antoinette feels to Coulibri and Granbois, and to safety and stability which the Caribbean in general represents to her. To sever her from her former life and any sense of security, Antoinette must truly be marooned and dependent on Rochester alone to define and protect her: she must be cemented as a feme covert. Therefore, Rochester must remove the possibility of personhood by disconnecting and disaggregating all three of her female identities, shattering her unified vision of the West Indies, and renaming and redefining Antoinette as a lunatic zombie.

2.4 S/He who controls the narrative, controls the world

Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert points out that in accounts of the zombification of women, the ultimate goal of which is the complete possession and control of the woman in question, there are always certain elements that are present,: "the coveting of a beautiful, light skinned or white upper-class girl… the intimations of necromantic sexuality with a girl who has lost her volition;… her ultimate madness and confinement in a convent or mental asylum" (40).[223] Rochester's treatment of Antoinette recreates this process, although with slight variations. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* "necromantic sexuality" is replaced with Antoinette's obsession with death and her desire to die should Rochester speak it into existence.[224] In Rhys's text, zombification happens through language, identity is determined by those with the power to define through rhetoric: who controls the narrative, controls the world.

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[223] See Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert's "Women Possessed: Eroticism and Exoticism in the Representation of Woman as Zombie." *Sacred Possessions: Vodou, Santería, Obeah, and the Caribbean.* Edited by Margarite Fernández and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2000. Pps. 37-58.

[224] Antoinette asks Rochester, "Why did you make me want to live? Why did you do that to me?... If I could die. Now, when I am happy. Would you do that? You wouldn't have to kill me. Say die and I will die...try, say die and watch me die" (Rhys 54-55). But Rochester and Antoinette disagree on what it means to die.

Through such zombification, Rochester will try to destroy Antoinette and her attempts at multiplicity and prismatism, simultaneously punishing all of womanhood. Antoinette and Rochester's battle for power and control over their identities and narratives comes to a head when Antoinette visits Christophine, her surrogate "other" mother and an obeah woman, whom she asks for a love potion which she hopes will reawaken Rochester's feelings of adoration. Antoinette sees magic—the complete embrace of her Sycorax persona—as her only defense against Rochester, and his plan to destroy her by turning her into a zombie.[225] Yet Christophine cautions her against using a love potion. "Even if I can make him come to your bed," she tells Antoinette, "I cannot make him love you. Afterward he hate you." To this, Antoinette responds, "And what do I care if he does? He hates me now. I hear him every night walking up and down the veranda . . . when he passes my door he says, 'Good-night, Bertha.' He never calls me Antoinette now" (Rhys 68). Christophine recognizes that Rochester's renaming Antoinette "Bertha" is a form of obeah.[226] Indeed, Rochester uses obeah to turn Antoinette into a zombie, and by extension to subject her to a fate similar to her mother's, who lived a "living death" at the mercy of "caregivers" who sexually abused and drugged her (Rhys 81). So, instead of employing counter-magic against Rochester (in the form of a love potion), Christophine recommends that Antoinette leave him. This would allow her to cut her losses, to assert herself and her right to her money and identity, and to "have spunks and do battle for [her]self" (Rhys 69).[227] Lucy Wilson states that Christophine's urging to Antoinette, "represents Jean Rhys's unequivocal assertion of

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[225] For discussion of zombies in *Wide Sargasso Sea* see Thomas Loe's, "Patterns of the Zombie in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea." World Literature Written in English* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1991, pp. 34-42.

[226] "Part of the ritual of creating a zombie is to baptize the victim with a new name. In traditional African societies, names are so important that a change of name is powerful enough to transform a person's life. Also significant here is Antoinette's changed surname, part of the ritual of Anglo-American marriage." Footnote 4, Rhys, pp. 88.

[227] See also Lucy Wilson's "'Women Must Have Spunks': Jean Rhys's West Indian Outcasts." *Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Fall 1986), pp. 439-448.

defiance in the face of injustice and coercion" (446). Unfortunately, Antoinette is unprepared for the psychic violence Rochester has in store for her and fails to follow Christophine's advice.

Rochester's first step in the destruction of his wife is to rename and re-christen Antoinette "Bertha," which is (not incidentally) the name of Edward Rochester's mad first wife in *Jane Eyre*. Maria Christina Fumagalli points out that, in addition to being the name Rhys "inherited" from Brontë, "*bertha* was the name of a wide, deep, cape like collar used to cover a low neckline" during the nineteenth century (126).[228] Thus, renaming Antoinette "Bertha" serves several functions. First, because the primary function of a *bertha* was to "control sexual desire," Rochester's choice of this name can be viewed as an attempt to remove the elemental quality of Antoinette which he first thirsted for—her body, beauty, and sexuality—in turn rendering her singular (Fumagalli 126). Second, his renaming of Antoinette shatters her self-identity, and fragments her inner self's prism of unification and agency. Ultimately, this act of renaming also serves to disconnect Antoinette from her mother—for whom she was named—and from her Creole Caribbean ancestry and home.

"Bertha Rochester" is unrecognizable and unknown to anyone in the West Indies. She is unreal: a creation, and extension, of her husband. Unlike her counterpart, Antoinette Cosway Mason, Bertha Rochester has no roots, no history, and no familial legacy. In other words, to succeed in his quest to disaggregate Antoinette, Rochester must erase her, and thereby destroy any vestige of her autonomy or sense that she has a life independent from his own. The act of naming, or renaming, thus gives Rochester power and control over Antoinette; yet by renaming her, he denies himself of the element of her identity which attracted him to her and exerted

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[228] Fumagalli, Maria Christina. "Names Matter." *Journal of Caribbean Literature*, Vol. 3, No. 3 Jean Rhys (Summer 2003), pp. 123-132.

power over him. Further, Rochester can deny her multiple female identities and recast her in the role he needs her to inhabit to justify his cruelty to her. By shifting Antoinette's identity from Claribel to Sycorax, however, Rochester unwittingly reinforces Antoinette's prismatism; she can be both Antoinette and Bertha, just as she is both Claribel and Sycorax.

While in Dominica Rochester is unable to gain complete control over Antoinette, she is too connected to the loveliness and secrets of the island. Rochester thinks: "It was a beautiful place—wild, untouched, above all untouched, with an alien, disturbing, secret loveliness. And it kept its secret . . . 'What I see is nothing—I want what it *hides*—that is not nothing'" (Rhys 51-52). While Rochester is directly commenting on his surroundings, Antoinette is part of the magic which frightens and intoxicates him. His inability to dominate his surroundings—the wild and untamed island, as well as his wild and untamed wife—drive him in his quest to finally fragment Antoinette and relegate her to the realm of the non-person, the simultaneously living and dead zombie. Having been "poisoned" by Christophine's love potion, and perhaps having thwarted Antoinette's attempts to turn him into a zombie, Rochester uses counter-magic to attack his wife. Ethnobiologist Wade Davis, in his "study of zombiism," suggests that the symptoms experienced by a person during the creation of a zombie include, "dizziness, respiratory difficulty, nausea, vomiting, lowered blood pressure, and paralysis."[229] After a night of drug-fueled lovemaking, Rochester experiences all of the symptoms of having been the victim of zombie poisoning. He awakens, "dreaming that [he] was buried alive, and when [he awakens] the feeling of suffocation persisted" (Rhys 82). He is unable to stand without falling, feels "deathly cold," weak and "sick and in pain" (Rhys 82). Finally able to vomit, Rochester flees the house and his wife's failed

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[229] Davis, Wade. *Passage of Darkness: The Ethnobiology of the Haitian Zombie.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988. As quoted by Judith Raiskin in footnote 9, pg. 82 of the Norton *Wide Sargasso Sea*.

attempt to regain his love, and thus gain mastery over him by turning him into a zombie (Rhys 83).

Whatever kindness or affection Rochester may have had for his bride has now been turned to hate, and he resigns himself to the total annihilation of his wife. Rochester revenges himself on Antoinette, and the sexual nature of their relationship, by engaging in a sexual tryst with Antoinette's mulatto "other," Amélie, while his wife sleeps in the next room (Rhys 88). To fragment his wife and reduce her to a singular identity that is easily controllable, Rochester must obliterate any connection he has to her: physical, sexual, psychic, or otherwise.

Replacing Antoinette as a sexual partner and supplanting her, momentarily, with her uncanny double Amélie, serves to further erase and distance Antoinette from Granbois and the West Indies. Rochester then continues his campaign to rename Antoinette, destroy her individual identity, and transform her into a zombie. Antoinette asserts, "Bertha is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another name. I know, that's obeah too . . . Do you know what you've done to me? . . . I loved this place and you have made it into a place I hate . . . I hate [Granbois] now like I hate you and before I die I will show you how much I hate you" (Rhys 88-89). The safety Antoinette once felt, the connection to her home and island, to the people living in her own house and the sense of identity they created for her, has been shattered.

Rochester succeeds in disconnecting Antoinette sexually and emotionally from herself and her personal history and identity, but he is not done yet. To fully control Antoinette, he must also annihilate her mentally and physically. To accomplish this, Rochester must break the bonds between his bride and her surrogate/other mother Christophine; he must remove the possibility of multiplicity, of personhood. It is essential to his plan to control and limit her that Antoinette is

isolated, and that examples of alternative female identities she might adopt be removed. Rochester needs her to see compliance with his will as her only means of survival—the only thing saving her from complete annihilation. Only then can she be easily removed from the Caribbean and brought to England as a caged woman, driven to madness. In breaking Antoinette's bonds to her island and the prismatic women around her, Rochester believes that he can break her will, and force her to submit to the singular identity which he and his patriarchal society have created for her.

Betrayed by her husband, abandoned by her few remaining family members and servants, sold into a loveless marriage, and with the island that she loves turned against her, Antoinette begins to lose her will to fight. Her identity is continually diminished and fragmented; Rochester's spoken obeah proves to be stronger than her obeah-created love potion. Antoinette's transformation into an inhumane thing, a zombie, has begun to take form, and culminates in her total embodiment of Sycorax. Antoinette physically attacks and bites Rochester, and "comprehensively" curses every part of his body (Rhys 89). She has been so transformed, in fact, that Rochester no longer recognizes her; he perceives her to be a "red-eyed wild-haired stranger . . . shouting obscenities" (Rhys 89). In this moment, Rochester begins to realize the nightmare his hasty marriage has become, the full gravity of what he has done, and the monster he has subsequently created (within himself and his wife). Even after this, though, his degradation of Antoinette is incomplete. To seal the fates of both him aFFnd his wife—and to allow for Brontë's text to exist—he must obliterate the one remaining connection Antoinette has to the Caribbean and her previous prismatic life: he must contend with and expel Christophine.

However, it becomes clear that Rochester's attempted zombification of Antoinette, rather than bringing her into submission, has turned both her and their surrounding environment against

him. His surroundings appear hostile and threatening, even "the shadows of the trees moving slowly over the floor menaced [him]. That green menace" (Rhys 90). Rochester can neither completely control Antoinette's identity, nor deny her prismatism in the Caribbean, because he cannot repress the wanton and exotic otherness of the environment which Antoinette represents. While Antoinette may have momentarily allowed Rochester to define and rename her, the environment and the women who surround her have not yet succumbed to Rochester's obeah. Rochester is no match for the vibrancy of the island, much less Christophine and her mastery of the obeah of language. After the violent clash between Rochester and Antoinette, Christophine enters the room and tries to comfort the broken and sobbing girl. Hearing Christophine's soft voice as she consoles the "doll" or "marionette" his wife has been transformed into, Rochester recognizes an obeah stronger than his. In a scene which replicates Antoinette's previous overhearing of his interlude with Amélie, Rochester listens as Christophine's voice induces a soothing—almost trancelike—state in both him and Antoinette. The echoing of the women's voices in his head seems sinister to Rochester, and he thinks that, "whatever they were . . . saying was dangerous. I must protect myself" (Rhys 90).

As it turns out, Rochester is right to be suspicious of Christophine and her prismatic use of language. Relying on Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of "Heteroglossia," Kenneth A. Russell II asserts that Christophine is "double-voiced:" not only is her language repetitive in structure, but her voice also has the ability to permeate listeners' minds. And as her words echo throughout their minds, they lose the ability to distinguish her voice from their own thoughts.[230] In fact,

[230] Russell, Kenneth A. "'Now Every Word She Said was Echoed, Echoed Loudly in My Head': Christophine's Language and Refractive Space in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*." *Journal of Narrative Theory*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Winter 2007), pp. 87-103. For more on Bakhtin and "Heteroglossia" please see, *The Dialogic Imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981. See specifically the chapter, "Discourse in the Novel."

Christophine employs the double-voice strategy against Rochester as she battles to rescue Antoinette from a form of debasement which is transforming her from a commodity (a state of being which is bad enough on its own) into to witch/zombie/doll. Further, Russell asserts, "Christophine's [language] underscores her ability to seamlessly flow between different cultural and lingual groups" (93). Through language, Christophine performs her multiplicity and prismatism. It appears Rochester will have to contend with not just one Sycorax, but two.

Unfortunately, Rochester's recognition of the power and sorcery omnipresent throughout female language only serves to reconfirm his commitment to banishing Christophine, and thereby to fracture and dissolve the empowering bond she shares with Antoinette. Christophine gives her strength: she moors Antoinette in her identity and connection to the West Indies and reaffirms her humanity and female multiplicity. It is for this reason that Rochester must expel Christophine from Antoinette's life and the text. After all, Christophine does not exist in Brontë's novel. Thus, her presence and obeah must be contained by Rhys. Yet like Sycorax, who is banished from Algiers in *The Tempest*, but is neither forgotten nor rendered powerless, Rhys does not merely dismiss Christophine and her heteroglossia from the text. Rather, Rhys transforms *Jane Eyre* into the result of Christophine's obeah curse against Rochester.

After a heated exchange between Rochester's British obeah and Christophine's Caribbean obeah, and with Antoinette's identity and fate at stake, Rochester appears to gain the upper hand by invoking the law. Specifically, he reminds her of his ability to have Christophine arrested by the Spanish Town magistrate. When Rochester stumbles, however, Christophine deals a prophetic final blow. After failing to convince him to leave the Caribbean without Antoinette, Rochester states:

> "And do you think I wanted all this? I would give my life to undo it. I would give my eyes never to have seen this abominable place."
>
> And she laughed. "And that's the first damn word of truth you speak. You choose what you give, eh? Then you choose. You meddle in something and perhaps you don't know what it is." She began to mutter to herself. Not in patois. [Rochester] knew the sound of patois now. (Rhys 96-97)

And just like that, Rochester's fate in Brontë's novel is sealed. He goes on to lose his eyesight in the fire at Thornfield Hall; he literally gives his "eyes." The blinding that Rochester suffers in *Jane Eyre* is transformed here into the result of a female obeah curse, one which fragments and controls Rochester. Thus having destined him to doom, Christophine exits the text "without looking back" (Rhys 97). However, she has not abandoned Antoinette or left her defenseless. Christophine leaves Antoinette with the memory of her example, of what it means to be a double-voiced and prismatic woman. In this way, Christophine demonstrates to Antoinette that women have the capability to define themselves, and to embody all the potential roles of womanhood.

Antoinette has learned from the women around her, has seen her life and experience played out and doubled for her as though in a looking glass—all of the identities she can choose or reject—all the multiple dimensions which concurrently exist within her. She has witnessed strength (Christophine), duplicitousness (Tia and Amélie), the power and marketability of beauty (Annette), and innocence (herself). She has seen and become a Miranda/idealized virgin, a Claribel/commodity, and a Sycorax/Witch. And, finally, she has learned the importance of

Christophine's declaration that "women must have spunks" and do battle for themselves. Yet Antoinette's battle for agency and personhood is only beginning.

After Christophine is exiled, Rochester believes that he is at last in control of his own fate, and that he possesses the power to impose his free will onto all his property—especially his wife. For this reason, Rochester begins to make arrangements to leave Granbois and return to Jamaica. However, Rochester will not bring any of the servants from Granbois with them, even though some beg to follow them back to Jamaica. Nor will they remain in Jamaica long. Rochester knows that in a familiar environment, amidst the stability of her childhood memories, Antoinette may find strength and regain her tendency to resist his will; in other words, she will have the opportunity to remember her prior self, the woman she was before she became a commodity. For these reasons, Rochester tries to dislocate Antoinette—and hence to further dissolve her self-identity and multiplicity—by renting a new house in a new area, and by engaging "discreet" and unfamiliar servants without loyalty to Antoinette, who he is confident will not lift a finger to help her. Whether Rochester had previously thought about what to do with Antoinette is unclear, but at this point, a definitive plan comes into his mind: "I drew a house surrounded by trees. A large house. I divided the third floor into rooms and in one room I drew a standing woman—a child's scribble, a dot for a head, a larger one for the body, a triangle skirt, slanting lines for arms and feet" (Rhys 98). Disconnected from his wife both psychologically and sexually, Rochester must now attend to Antoinette's literal physical fragmentation. Once that is accomplished, the destruction of his unwanted "property" will be complete—and completed legally.

Rhys positions Rochester as the victim of an unwise and hastily entered into business deal. Rochester ultimately discovers that *he*, rather than Antoinette, was the commodity for sale

instead of being the purchaser of valuable goods. As a result, he wishes to revenge himself, and he sees Antoinette as the embodiment and constant reminder of his folly. To redeem himself, he must embrace his hatred and disaggregate her:

> I hated the mountains and the hills, the rivers and the rain. I hated the sunsets of whatever colour, I hated its beauty and its magic and the secret I would never know. I hated its indifference and the cruelty which was part of its loveliness. Above all I hated her. For she belonged to the magic and the loveliness. She had left me thirsty and all my life would be thirst and longing for what I had lost before I found it . . . Very soon she'll join all the others who know the secret and will not tell it. Or cannot… They can be recognized. White faces, dazed eyes, aimless gestures, high-pitched laughter. Yes, they've got to be watched. For the time comes when they try to kill, then disappear…She's one of them. I too can wait – for the day when she is only a memory to be avoided, locked away, and like all memories a legend. Or a lie… (Rhys 103)

The greatest insult to Rochester's own sense of self-worth and carefully cultivated identity is that he had succumbed to the charms of his wife, had fallen for the tricks her family used to display her as a valuable commodity, had believed the lie he was literally sold, and that somehow Antoinette had been "in on it." What Rochester fails to realize, and what Rhys so clearly does, is that it was not Antoinette's otherness and prismatism which poses a threat to him, but rather his male inability to see women as anything more than one limited elemental characteristic. That is the secret Rochester will never discover: that women are magical and lovely, and *also* innocent, and *also* strong, and *also* a witch. Men's inability to accept the reality of female multiplicity, as

exemplified by Rochester and his deep desire to destroy his prismatic property, is the great failure of history, society, culture, and literature. And thus Rhys attempts, at least on a textual level, to remedy this male failure to uncover women's "secret" by unifying the fragmented Antoinette to harmonious prismatism. Simultaneously, Rhys also calls attention to the importance and necessity of female prismatism and personhood.

Yet bringing Antoinette to England, and imprisoning her there, does not have the effect on her which Rochester anticipates. Her new residence fails to bring Antoinette into submission or cause her to become perfectly passive. To this end, Fumagalli asserts that Rochester's plan, his "peculiar form of magic," does "not work on Antoinette" (127). Rather than becoming the docile marionette for whom he hopes, Antoinette doesn't lose her spirit: "She's still fierce" (Fumagalli 127). Paradoxically, it isn't until Antoinette is held captive in her attic prison that her full multiplicity is realized. Rather than succumb to the historical, societal, and narrative erasure that Rochester and Brontë had intended for Antoinette/Bertha, the mad white Creole, Rhys devotes the final part of her narrative to Antoinette's realization of her true value, prismatism, and personhood.

Now confined to the attic in Thornfield Hall, as Brontë had dictated and Rhys is bound, Antoinette recalls her life with Rochester and his attempts through obeah to limit her by relegating her to one potential female role: the zombie/witch/whore. Antoinette thinks, "Names matter, like when he wouldn't call me Antoinette, and I saw Antoinette drifting out of the window with her scents, her pretty clothes and her looking-glass" (Rhys 106-107). However, Rochester's renaming of Antoinette has not affected in her the lasting effect which he predicted it would. Instead of recreating and sealing her into *Jane Eyre's* suicidal fate, Antoinette is finally confronted by her newly expanded identity, a prismatic identity that has always existed but had

been subsumed in the original text by her limited value and role as a commodity. Antoinette remembers her looking-glass, and reminisces how every time she gazed into it, one of her multiple doubles was reflected back to her. "The girl I saw was myself," she says, "yet not quite myself:" she is and isn't Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax.

Dreaming her last of three dreams, each reinforcing the prophetic, "this must happen," Antoinette uncovers what she must do to fulfill the parameters of Christophine's curse/Brontë's fate, and thereby achieve personhood. To save herself, and to achieve prismatism, Antoinette must destroy the structures and representations which have so far limited her to inhabiting only one potential role.[231] Antoinette must revenge herself and the life into which she has been sold, she must resist erasure and assert herself, she "must have spunks." To achieve this, Antoinette attacks her brother Richard, who had served as the broker who saw her identity and body commodified and sacrificed, and who has come to visit her. Grace Poole recalls for Antoinette that, although she did not hear the entire conversation between her ward and Richard Mason, she did hear him say that, "I cannot legally interfere between yourself and your husband. It was when he said 'legally' that [Antoinette] flew at him" (Rhys 109).[232] Because she is a commodity—a piece of property owned and used by her husband, at his discretion or whim—a legal intervention by Richard Mason (or anyone else, for that matter) is impossible. Antoinette has no choice but to rely on her multiplicity to achieve agency.

[231] Antoinette's final act of setting fire to Thornfield Hall is itself a double. This is because it is the repetition of the firing and destruction of her childhood home, Coulibri.

[232] Spivak claims it is the "dissimulation that Bertha discerns in the word 'legally'–not an innate bestiality—that prompts her violent *re*action" (250). See Spivak's "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism."

Having thus injured her half-brother physically, she must also hurt Rochester, the architect of her continual fragmentation and degradation: she must burn the world down, so it can, like the cycles of nature and her island, regenerate and re-begin. Escaping her prison, and running through Thornfield's halls, Antoinette becomes a roaming ghost. And yet this is when she finally glues the fragmented pieces of her identity back together. Antoinette sees the powerful and influential women who shaped her, served as examples for her, and presented her with the full spectrum of femininity: Annette, Aunt Cora, Christophine, Tia, and the female Caribbean environment which nurtured her in its vibrant glory, flaming red, wild, and untamed. In turn, she thinks, "Now at last I knew why I was brought here and what I have to do" (Rhys 112). Rhys and her readers know, too.

By leaping to her prescribed death from the roof of a burning Thornfield Hall, by executing an overt act of agency and defiance, Antoinette leaps back into her true self, and finally becomes "real." Antoinette's suicide should "be interpreted in this novel as an assertion of will. . . or, in Gilbert and Gubar's terminology, 'an escape into wholeness'" (O'Callaghan 105).[233] Through Antoinette, Christophine, and the other female characters in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Rhys exposes what has to be done for women to finally break out of the prison of traditional gender roles, to dispense with the erasure and exile of their multiple identities: they must assert their personhood, and they must become Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax simultaneously. Furthermore, women must see that those three identities are just the proverbial "tip of the iceberg." Womanhood and female identity, as represented by Shakespeare, Brontë, and Rhys, are prismatic in nature. For this reason, feminist authors and critics must continue to awaken all

[233] O'Callaghan, Evelyn. "Interior Schisms Dramatised: The Treatment of the 'Mad' Woman in the Work of Some Female Caribbean Novelists." *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Edited by Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido. Trenton: African World Press, 1990. pp. 89-109.

women from the nightmare of fragmentation. This is the only way women may finally and absolutely be seen and treated as dynamic, autonomous, prismatic beings.

In exploring the limited and elemental roles publicly available to women—those created by Shakespeare and reinforced by Brontë before finally being exploded by Rhys—readers and scholars gain insight into the insidious nature of gender politics then as well as now. There is a danger to women in unquestioned obedience, passivity, and objectification. Shakespeare's text, rather than being a reinforcement of coverture and the legal and cultural systems which disempower and fragment women, serves as a warning of what women risk should they not rebel. Rhys asserts that there is hope, there is power where others only see female weakness. Brontë's text created a proto-feminist in Jane Eyre and yet Bertha, and the witch/whore she represents, was sacrificed for Jane to thrive. However, Rhys asserts that female prismatism is possible, and unlike Antoinette, achieving it does not (necessarily) require the death of the woman. Bertha does not have to die for Jane to live. They can co-exist, they are one and the same, they are both the first Mrs. Rochester. Antoinette's ultimate act of agency, her leap back into herself, into "wholeness," is dynamic and multivalent, and will be pursued and replicated by other postcolonial West Indian women writers like Maryse Condé and Elizabeth Nunez. Following in Rhys's footsteps, Condé's re-envisioning of Tituba/Sycorax and Nunez's reclamation of Miranda not only unify Shakespeare's three disparate and disaggregated female characters (Claribel, Sycorax and Miranda), but provides an example to readers that they too can follow to reclaim their own identities and embrace prismatism.

Chapter III

Tituba: A Sisterhood of Witchcraft

Modern historians and scholars almost universally denounce the harsh cultural judgments and persecutions to which seventeenth century witches were subjected. Indeed, their tendency has been to dismiss witches as figments of an overactive—and overly judgmental—Puritan imagination. Nevertheless, the culture of early modern Western Christianity perceived witches and demons to be a very real and dangerous ever-present threat—not only to the soul of the bewitched beings in question, but also to the community which surrounded them. In fact, the Western Christian world's terror and anxiety about witches existed for centuries before it manifested itself in the 1692 Salem witchcraft trials.[234] For Puritan separatists who fled England to avoid religious persecution and establish a home out of the wastes and wilds of colonial Massachusetts, absolute proof of witches and witchcraft was established by the Bible. Both Exodus and Leviticus make references to witchcraft, and insist that a "witch" or "a woman that hath a familiar spirit" should be put to death.[235] Because the Bible was unparalleled in authority to the inhabitants of Salem Village, any actions taken against an accused, confessed, or convicted witch were therefore not only morally just, but also ordained by God. Justified by such firm scriptural license, it is hardly surprising that Salem's literal "witch hunt" came to such a shockingly deadly conclusion.

While Salem's methods were brutal, they were not unique. For centuries, the Western Christian world had used accusations of witchcraft as a weapon to culturally silence women,

[234] Witchcraft and/or the belief in the supernatural has existed globally for thousands of years and has manifested itself across religions and cultures. This chapter will focus on witchcraft as conceived by people in the Western Christian world only, specifically in Western Europe and North America.

[235] Exodus 22:18, Leviticus 20:27.

especially women who were viewed as transgressive by the dominant power structures of their age. In *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*, Richard Godbeer asserts, "Women in seventeenth-century New England were much more vulnerable than men to accusations of witchcraft" (20).[236] Unfortunately, Godbeer has an abundance of evidence to back up his claim. Citing the work of fellow scholar Carol Karlsen he notes that "seventy-eight percent of the accused witches in early New England whose gender can be identified were women," and highlights the fact that New Englanders employed accusations of witchcraft "to attack women who violated gender-specific social norms" (20-21). Tanfer Emin Tunc similarly claims that the witchcraft accusations which occurred in Salem Village constitute a type of communal gynophobia.[237] Tracing the protean character of the figure of the witch through seventeenth and twentieth century historical documents, as well as works of fiction, demonstrates the ways in which witchcraft accusations were utilized to subjugate and marginalize women and their offspring. Across Elizabethan/Jacobean England, Puritan New England, and the modern United States, the figure of the witch has persisted as a dangerous symbol of female disorder and is held up as a communal threat which must be subdued or (preferably) destroyed.

The body of the witch—and specifically that of a female witch—has long existed as a contested territory. It exists literally and metaphorically as a battleground between the forces of good and evil, over which people struggle to exert control over the woman. Further, the specter of witchcraft extended beyond the individual woman and became an indication of the spiritual wellbeing of a community. The feminized and hyper sexualized body of the witch was believed

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[236] Godbeer, Richard. *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1992. It should be noted that Godbeer relies heavily on research by Carol Karlsen, among others, as evidence for his arguments about witchcraft. See also Carol Karlsen, *The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998

[237] Tunc, Tanfer Emin, "The Healer and the Witch: Sexuality and Power in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*." *The Explicator*, Vol. 71, No. 4, pp. 266-270, 2013.

to be comingled with the supernatural essence of demonic and/or Satanic beings. Therefore, the witch was understood to be neither human nor nonhuman; rather, she existed in a zone of liminality, somewhere "besides the human" (Karlsen 6). Therefore, by reducing women who violated societal norms to the status of accused or suspected "witches," religious or community leaders were able to imprison, exile, or execute them with impunity.

Utilizing close reading and new historicist methodology, this chapter will focus on the following texts: William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), and Maryse Conde's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986), with references to Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1953), and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850). I will argue that the character and figure of the witch and the act of witchcraft, as represented in these seemingly disparate texts, reveals an institutionalized culture of gendered violence, to which women were subjected in an effort to control their bodies, delimit their sexuality, and curb their agency. This was possible because the witch functioned as the visible and invisible symbol of all of the ills that plagued Salem Village specifically, and Christendom at large. As such, she had to be eliminated to save humanity from the pathology of female sexuality and sin.

By focusing on Shakespeare's most enigmatic literary witch, Sycorax, and the unjustly vilified and omitted historical witch Tituba, I show that the predominantly male master narrative relied on accusations of witchcraft to erase problematic female narratives across different literary works, cultural zones, and historical periods. My work hence exposes how this master narrative was expanded by way of what Karen Weingarten, borrowing from the disciplines of climatology and meteorology, names "atmospheric transmission."[238] The protean figure of the witch has thus

[238] Weingarten, Karen, Queens College, CUNY. Unpublished conference paper, "*The Scarlet Letter*, Pregnancy, and Disability Anxiety: Tracing a Genealogy of Abelism and Reproduction" presented at the 2018 American Literature Association Conference.

become a physical manifestation of communities' moral corruption, a monstrous birth born into and because of environments saturated with misogynistic attitudes. By extension, the witch exposes the ways that history and identity are socially constructed to privilege those who embody positions of power, particularly the patriarchy. Further, she reveals how women, particularly women of color, were systematically disenfranchised and marginalized.

Tituba was not the first (accused) witch to intrigue historians, authors, and audiences. Witches such as Circe, Medea, Morgan le Fay, and Shakespeare's Weird Sisters had haunted the imaginations of writers, readers and/or viewers long before Tituba.[239] Rather, Tituba became one incarnation of the much-maligned figure of the witch, a new addition in a line of mythology which had long demonized femininity. Through their resurrection of Tituba's intentionally ignored experiences, then, contemporary authors such as Maryse Condé simultaneously reinvigorate and reshape the legacy of witches, both historical and literary. In other words, by calling attention to one female experience of fragmentation, these authors expose the violence committed against all women and female characters who have been accused or suspected of witchcraft.

The loss of Tituba's narrative is not unique, nor is it surprising. All women, and especially women of color, have been victims of gendered silencing and historical erasure, and "witches" were subjected to such persecution to even greater degree than their "normal" sisters. Thus, their narratives have been systematically omitted, suppressed, and vilified. That Tituba has

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According to Humboldt State University, "atmospheric transmission" is "when electromagnetic energy is able to pass through the atmosphere and reach the Earth." I am using "atmospheric transmission" to refer to the pathogen of female sexuality and witchcraft as being seen as transmittable, a woman could infect those around her.

[239] Diane Purkiss asserts that Circe was feared and reviled for her "power to turn men into monstrosities. This recalls Medea's to transcend motherhood by literally exterminating the patriarchal line" (261). These same fears of monstrous and transgressive femininity will find a home in both Sycorax and Tituba. See Diane Purkiss. *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth Century Representations.* New York: Routledge, 1996.

been denied the right to speak has, in some ways, legitimized her continued marginality and omission—and she is not alone in this regard. Approximately eighty years prior to Salem's witch hunts, William Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest*, was performed for the first time. And of the female characters who inhabit it, only one arouses fear, anxiety, and hatred: Sycorax. More specifically, Shakespeare saw to it that Sycorax was banished from Algiers and exiled to the island that would eventually be the setting of the rest of his play.

Much like Tituba, Sycorax exists as a memory. She is a footnoted character, whose importance to the larger narrative became increasingly important to readers and critics only in modern times.[240] The sketch of Sycorax that emerges in Shakespeare's text—the "blue-eyed hag" believed to be pregnant with the Devil's child—reveals a woman possessed by qualities and characteristics that a Renaissance audience would inevitably interpret as threatening: she is foreign, sexualized, independent, and powerful (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii, line 269).[241] To protect the community from demonic contamination, Sycorax, once publicly identified as a "witch," must be exiled from the text. Even though Sycorax died years before Prospero and Miranda arrived on her island, and years before the events that unfold during the course of the play take place, her power must be suppressed, and her name and body must be vilified.

[240] Sycorax has emerged for female Caribbean/West Indian authors in much the same way that Caliban has for male West Indian authors. It is through the erased and silenced Sycorax that authors such as Edwidge Danticat, Michelle Cliff, Myriam Chancy, and Brinda Mehta find the representation of their own postcolonial experience of marginality. Consuelo López Springfield states "Caribbean women are 'daughters of Caliban'…we are daughters, reweaving our mothers' stories into our own as we challenge convention" (xi-xii). While the texts produced by these women writers are powerful and help restore Sycorax to prominence as a location of critical and creative analysis, my project is focused not on Sycorax as an individual character, but as being part of a larger prismatic perspective of femaleness and womanhood. See Edwidge Danticat's *Breath, Eyes, Memory*. New York: Vintage, 1994; Michelle Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven*. New York: Plume, 1996; Myriam Chancy's *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997; and Brinda J. *Mehta's Notions of Identity, Diaspora, and Gender in Caribbean Women's Writing*. London: Palgrave, 2009.

[241] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.

The dead body, memory, power, and legacy, what Irene Lara calls the "absent *presence* of Sycorax," becomes a major focus of *The Tempest* (80).[242] Like Tituba, we will never know more about Sycorax than the sketch provided by Shakespeare, because her story has been lost. What remains is an oral mythology which remembers her as emblematic; a history that transcribes on her and her legacy, the monstrous elements of femininity. The threatening power of the witch, Shakespeare's text asserts, is her ability to continuously wreak havoc on the community, even after her death or erasure. May Joseph asserts that Sycorax "is at once hidden from history and invisible and ever present" (218).[243] Sycorax's monstrosity, by way of maternal impressionism, is inherited by her son Caliban. In this way, she achieves atmospheric transmission in the memory of the afflicted Ariel. The postmortem continuity of demonic influence can therefore be seen on Prospero's island, as well as throughout seventeenth century New England and the contemporary world through Tituba as well as those who acknowledge themselves as the "daughters of Caliban" and thus the descendants of Sycorax (López Springfield xi).[244]

The already-present fear and spiritual anxiety around witchcraft, and the figure of the witch, likely informed Shakespeare's creation of Sycorax, and it was not contained to the page or the stage: it was carried over into the New World. In Puritan New England, witches were believed to subvert the natural "order of Creation," in that they "challeng[ed] the supremacy of

[242] For a discussion of the "absent *presence* of Sycorax" see Irene Lara's "Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax." *Journal of International Women's Studies*, Vol. 9 No. 1, November 2001, pp. 80-98. Emphasis original.

[243] Joseph, May. "Sycorax Mythology." *Black Theater: Ritual Performance in the African Diaspora*. Edited by Paul Carter Harrison, Victor Leo Walker II, and Gus Edwards. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002. pp. 209-227.

[244] I would here point to texts written by West Indian female authors such as Michelle Cliff who, inspired by *The Tempest*, created the character of Clare Savage in *No Telephone To Heaven* who at once embodies Sycorax, Caliban, and Miranda as well as Antoinette in Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* stating: "No, she could not be Jane. Small and pale. English. . .try Bertha. Wild-maned Bertha. . .Yes, Bertha was closer the mark. Captive. . .Confused. Jamaican. Caliban. Carib. Cannibal. Cimarron. All Bertha. All Clare" (116).

God and challeng[ed] . . . prescribed gender arrangements" (Karlsen 119). Increasingly, independent and/or disobedient women threatened to upset the patriarchal Puritan order, inside of Salem Village, but outside of it, too. This fear of women's destabilizing power lasted well into the twentieth century. By accusing women of practicing witchcraft, or of having acquired intimate knowledge of the demonic through possession or affliction, a male-driven society could more easily control and, if necessary, destroy those women whom it deemed unruly or transgressive. It gave the community license to inflict upon these women those punishments prescribed in the Bible and reiterated by Shakespeare's treatment of Sycorax: exile or execution. Failure to do so would enable the Devil to usurp the place of God and condemn the community to eternal damnation.

3.1 The Historical and Cultural Background of Witchcraft

To understand the use of witchcraft as a trope and tool to enforce feminine conformity, we must first sketch the world and culture which created it. To this end, I now turn to a discussion of the historical and cultural background against which accusations of witchcraft played out, breathing life into myriad negative connotations and stereotypes about "witchcraft," as well as the stigmatization of witches from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Only by tracing and analyzing witchcraft as a historical presence and instrument of female oppression through three centuries of the Western literary tradition can we begin to undo the damage of patriarchal violence and restore suppressed or ignored female narratives and experiences. The loss of women's narratives, including accused witches, those afflicted/possessed, or any woman labeled and vilified as subversive, leaves a hole in the historical record and reinforces the sexist notion that only the experiences of the majority—here, the white patriarchy—holds cultural, political, or historical significance. But this focus on the

portion of the narrative that supports an intolerant ideology, deprives us of the fullness of human experience. Women were not and cannot be made to be bystanders to history; their voices and narratives must be restored to gain a more accurate and representative view of human history. We can begin this work by focusing on two significant literary and historical witches: Sycorax and Tituba.

The Puritan's understanding of witchcraft was firmly situated in the Bible. Direct reference to witches and their "familiars"[245] is made in both Exodus and Leviticus, and witches are explicitly associated with the activities of Satan and fallen or evil angels throughout the scriptural record.[246] This biblical basis for witchcraft was solidified in the seventeenth century mind by the teachings of subsequent theologians including, but not limited to, St. Augustine in the fourth century, Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent VIII in the fifteenth century, and King James I in the early sixteenth century.[247] In fact, Christianity's concern with witches and witchcraft arose from religious figures heavily influenced by the theodicy tradition; in other words, they were occupied by the task of philosophically and theologically explaining the "problem of the source and nature of evil" (Kors and Peters 7). To absolve God from any moral blame associated with the presence of evil in the world, members of the clergy called on and called out the Devil as the "enemy of God and man" (Kors and Peters 7). Under these circumstances, so-called "witches" were easily slotted in as the Devil's handmaidens because, as

[245] Carol Karlsen asserts: "Animals were frequently the agents of malefic witchcraft. A witch was believed to have animal familiars, or imps, who nourished themselves on her body, performed evil acts at her command, and were themselves supernatural beings" (8).

[246] There are at least eighteen references to witches, witchcraft, and/or magic/spells in the King James Bible. See also Chronicles 33.6, Galatians 5.19-20, and Deuteronomy 18.10-14.

[247] For an in-depth discussion of the history of witchcraft in Europe, see Alan Charles Kors and Edward Peters, editors. *Witchcraft in Europe, 400-1700: A Documentary History*. 2nd Edition. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000. See also, Karen Jones and Michael Zell's, "'The Divells Speciall Instruments': Women and Witchcraft before the 'Great Witch Hunt.'" *Social History*, Vol. 30, No.1 (Feb. 2005), pp.45-63.

Carol Karlsen states, witchcraft was culturally understood to be a form of "rebellion against God;" in a feat of circular logic, it was therefore impossible to view witches as anything but the Devil's emissaries (121). Thus, the appearance of witches in Salem, as well as other parts of the Western Christian world prior to 1692, provided yet more proof of the Devil's existence.

Outside of the clergy, witches and witchcraft permeated sixteenth and seventeenth century popular culture as well. In 1597 King James I published *Daemonologie,* a treatise on witches, witchcraft, demons, and the state of demon possession; it also parsed the supposed existence of supernatural phenomena including werewolves and fairies.[248] In this text, James asserts that witches are intent on "either… the desire for revenge, or of worldly riches." Thus, their "practices are either to hurt men and their goods or what they possess, for satisfying of their cruel minds in the former, or else by the wrack . . . of any whom God will permit them to have power off, to satisfy their greedy desire."[249] James' text states that the aim of witches, who are minions of the Devil, is to hurt men and subvert God. To achieve this end, witches would target men's property, livelihoods, and families—especially their children—as well as their devotion to God. Further, James' text plainly argues in favor of the existence of witches, and the serious threat they posed to society. Ultimately, then, *Daemonologie* supports and endorses the practice of witch hunting.

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[248] *Daemonologie* preceded the publication of the King James Bible by fourteen years, the translation of which began in 1604 and completed/printed in 1611. Modern scholars have recently raised the issue of whether or not James I changed or mistranslated the biblical book of Exodus, replacing "poisoner" with "witch" and thus creating rather than perpetuating the fear of witches (Exodus 22:18). Elizabeth Sloane suggests "the original Hebrew word used in Exodus, translated as 'witch' is *mekhashepha*…the root of the word, *kashaph*, is translated as 'mutterings'" but can also be translated as "to cut" and has been connected to those who cut plants and herbs. This problem of translation has challenged James I's version of Exodus and raised the possibility that the original text referred to an "herbalist" rather than a demonic "witch." See Elizabeth Sloane's article "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live: A Murderous Translation?" *Haaretz*, August 17, 2017.

[249] King James I. *Daemonologie.* Second Book, Chapter II. England, 1597. Project Guttenberg. 9 June 2016. For the sake of clarity, I have here modernized the language and spelling of this text's terminology.

The fear of witches articled by *Daemonologie* invaded the lives and psyches of the masses, populating church sermons, popular literature, and drama alike. For example, Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606; first performed in 1611), deployed witches and their power to control the fates of men directly on stage. In addition to *Macbeth,* Shakespeare peopled his stage with fairies, witches, ghosts, or other supernatural figures in the plays *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1590-1597; first performed in 1605), *Hamlet* (1599-1602; first performed in 1609), and *The Tempest* (1610-1611; first performed in 1611). By the time the Puritans arrived in New England in 1630, the danger witchcraft and witches posed to individuals and communities was firmly rooted in the culture and society. England executed its last witch in 1682, but in Salem Village, the Devil was just getting started.

In both popular culture and the church, witches served as the "visible agents of demonic power" (Kors and Peters 8-9). Fear of the Devil, as well as his corporeal representatives on earth, increased between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. Popular fear of Satan and witches grew during this period, as did the perceived power exercised by these supernatural beings. Being themselves idolaters and apostates, it was believed witches had the ability to tempt the righteous to sin and damnation:

> [T]he witch . . . had succumbed of . . . her own will to Satan's temptation and had entered into a contract or pact with the Devil, one which usually was said to be sealed by an act of carnal intercourse with Satan or one of the demons and by Satan's placing of a mark on the body of his new servant . . . As a new agent of Satan, the witch was given the power to exceed all human capabilities in working harm upon—or illicitly influencing—the persons, families and servants, and

property of the faithful by occult ("hidden") and preternatural means. (Kors and Peters 10-11)

As agents of the Devil, witches wielded a kind of power which directly threatened that of the clergy's. Rather than focusing on, and trusting in, God and God's omnipotence, the Medieval, sixteenth, and seventeenth century Christian saw the Devil and witchcraft in every unexplained phenomenon, accident, and coincidence. Witches were believed to walk amongst the righteous, invade sacred places undetected, commune with nature and the natural world, and hide in plain sight to lure unsuspecting souls to their doom.

Witches did not act alone in their pursuit of suspect goals. Demons and evil angels were believed to have "the ability to unite themselves to bodies" (8). A witch's human form was thought to be imbued with, and corrupted by, a foreign entity which gave her the power of "morphological change" (Kors and Peters 8). Those accused of witchcraft were thought to have the power to transform their human bodies into those of animals, plants, and even inanimate objects. At a witch's behest, a chair might mysteriously move in the middle of the night to trip an unsuspecting woman; likewise, a broom might suddenly levitate, fly headlong out a window, and lodge itself in a tree.[250] Danger lurked in every darkened corner, every comfort became sinister, every thought suspect. Even a person's body was unsafe, as the demonic contagion could not only corrupt the individual from within, but also infect others through atmospheric transmission.

In Salem Village, no one was immune from the designs of the Devil or his agents, nor were they safe from accusations of witchcraft. Some community members, however, were viewed as more likely objects for the Devil's attention than others. Richard Godbeer points out

[250] Demos, John. *Entertaining Satan: Witchcraft and the Culture of Early New England*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982. p. 132

that while there "may have been a substantial number of male practitioners" of witchcraft, they "do not appear to have ended up in court as accused witches" (21). Godbeer attributes this to the idea that malevolent witchcraft was more frequently associated with women and was therefore seen as a "female crime" (21). Consequently, community members may have been less inclined to bring charges of witchcraft against men.[251]

This situation meant that the act of accusing a woman of witchcraft was a useful tool for men—particularly those men who were also religious leaders—to reinforce the gender norms established by the Bible, and to keep women submissive. Due to fear of "the unruly female tongue . . . growing misogyny . . . during the fifteenth century . . . and fear of possible disorder among women . . . men became more disposed to believe women guilty of malevolent witchcraft . . . [and] increasingly anxious to control . . . female misbehavior" (Jones and Zell 56-57). Religiously situated and thus unimpeachable, the wickedness of women was expounded upon in both Ecclesiasticus and Matthew: "What else is a woman but a foe to friendship, an unescapable [sic] punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic danger, a delectable detriment, an evil of nature, painted with fair colours!" (Kors and Peters 183).[252] Even the most devout women, and their bodies, were suspect: their piety was often seen as a mask which hid their true inner nature, characterized by untamed sexuality and myriad forms of moral disorder. This gender-specific array of ethical imperfections and flaws left women vulnerable to the Devil, and thus to accusations of witchcraft.

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[251] Further, Jones and Zell suggest that often male practitioners of magic, frequently referred to as "cunning folk" were more commonly viewed as utilizing benevolent magic to heal while female practitioners were seen as "*maleficium*, doing harm by magic… or *veneficium*…poisoning by natural or supernatural means" (50).

[252] Kors and Peters quote here from Heinrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger's *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487), translated by Montague Summers. London, 1928.

According to Christina Larner, witch-hunting was “to some degree a synonym for woman-hunting” (3).[253] A woman accused or suspected of witchcraft was no longer an autonomous, albeit vulnerable, entity. Witches’ bodies were no longer their own. Rather, they were mingled with, and almost impregnated by, the demonic. A woman’s hands or tongue could be under the control of a demon; her soul or specter could leave her body to torment an innocent in another village or used to suckle an imp or familiar; and her shadow could follow an unaccompanied traveler at night. Even worse, a woman’s innate monstrosity could be imprinted on her children or transmitted atmospherically to those closest to her. A woman accused of witchcraft was viewed as multiple and corporeally fragmented, as her true nature and identity were obscured. Bewitched women possessed the ability to appear publicly as devout, spiritually covenanted beings, while simultaneously being internally and privately an agent of the Devil, who could infect both her neighbors and her village with evil. The mere *accusation* of female demonic fragmentation, but not necessarily the *evidence*, was enough to imprison, torture, and execute a woman.[254]

Women, long considered weaker in faith and more prone to the temptations of carnal desire than men, were also viewed as more susceptible to the machinations of the Devil and his minions. According to James I in *Daemonologie*, women were “imperfect animals,” and these imperfections—inherited as a result of Eve’s Original Sin—left women vulnerable to the Devil’s advances. Believed to have sealed their pact with the Devil with a sex act, witches began to be

[253] Larner, Christina. *Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland*. Baltimore: Chatto and Windus, 1981.

[254] There are documented instances in both England and Salem Village where evidence presented in court proceedings that would exonerate an accused witch was disregarded by the judges and clergy presiding over the case—individuals who perhaps preferred bias confirmation to irrefutable proof. As early as 1655, Thomas Ady, in A *Candle in the Dark: shewing the divine cause of the distractions of the whole nation of England and of the Christian world*, questioned the existence of witches and suggested that if witches did in fact exist, they were very rare. Thomas Ady. *A Candle in the Dark*. London: printed for Robert Ibbitson, 1655.

associated not only with the inexplicable, but also with female sexuality.[255] It was commonly held that "witches' carnal appetites were both internally uncontrolled and externally uncontrollable" (Karlsen 137). Witches, and thus female sexuality, were not only viewed as deviant, they were an undeniably real and perpetual threat to the spiritual and physical wellbeing of a community: a threat that had to be discovered and, if not driven out, destroyed.

However, those accused or suspected of witchcraft were not the only women tainted by the demonic sin of female sexuality. Godbeer points out that, "[d]iabolical possession was one of the most dramatic and disturbing manifestations of the supernatural world to which . . . seventeenth-century New Englanders were exposed" (106). To accuse a woman of witchcraft, there must first be an afflicted party, a victim. In Salem Village the first victims of the 1692 witch hunt appeared in the home of Samuel Parris, the village's newest Puritan minister. More specifically, the Devil announced his arrival in Salem by possessing Parris' nine-year-old daughter, Elizabeth (also known as "Betty"), and his eleven-year-old niece, Abigail Williams. Godbeer asserts that "[p]ossession was the inhabiting of the human body by a devil, who then controls the victim's verbal and physical action" (106-107). Demons could possess a person on their own accord, but they could also be sent to torment and tempt the righteous at the command of a witch or even the Devil himself (Godbeer 107). It was clear to the inhabitants of Salem Village that Parris and Williams were the victims of witchcraft. Yet their spiritual status as possessed females had a curious effect on their cultural roles: rather than condemning them to

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[255] While men were also accused of witchcraft or sorcery in both Medieval Europe, as well as Salem Village, the overwhelming majority of those accused, convicted, and executed for witchcraft (with the exception of France) were women. See Kors and Peters, pp. 17-18. Further, Myriam Chancy points out that the danger associated with female sexuality is compounded in women of color; "the implications of the sexualization of Black women meant that they were held accountable for both their perceived wantonness and the perceived sexual aggressiveness of . . . men" (36).

public shame and ignominy, it imbued their words and actions with a kind of authority and power which young women had heretofore been banned from exercising.

Possession of the female body by a malevolent demon, at the ostensible behest of a witch, afforded these young girls a newfound freedom. No longer "constrained by their own moral values and those of their environment, [they were free] to express sinful desires without having to accept full responsibility for their behavior: the devils within them could act out forbidden fantasies on their behalf" (Godbeer 108). In fact, the vast majority of accusers and those afflicted during the Salem witch hunts were young single girls between the ages of eleven and twenty; girls that prior to their possession were largely ignored, silent, and powerless (Demos, "Underlying Themes" 1315).[256] Possessed, the young girls contorted, convulsed, appeared catatonic, suffered disturbing hallucinations, and screamed in fear and agony at the "specter" of witches sent to torment them (Demos, "Underlying Themes" 1319, Karlsen 11). The girls were plagued by unseen attackers; they were not even safe in the village church. Rather, the sounds of prayers and the name of God sent them into such extreme fits that the villagers often stood frozen in horror (Demos, "Underlying Themes" 1322).[257]

The fits experienced by the victims were often extremely physical in nature: with eyes bulged and bodies twisted, afflicted girls were known to crawl across the floor like animals, or fly across the room at great speed during attempts to fling themselves into fireplaces or out of windows. They were in a "motoric frenzy," and thus their "fits" can be read as a kind of

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[256] Demos, John. "Underlying Themes in the Witchcraft of Seventeenth-Century New England." *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 75, No. 5 (Jun 1970), pp. 1311-1326. According to Demos and Karlsen, the majority of women accused of witchcraft were over age forty. This created a generational gap between female accuser and accused.

[257] Karlsen points out that, during demonic attacks, the possessed were also "characterized by an inability to hear or speak the word of God, and by an intense, if intermittent, hostility to clergymen" (11).

"corporeal bomb, observed in the process of exploding" (Demos, *Entertaining Satan* 100). This explosion not only threatened the physical wellbeing of the victim, it also made the entire community vulnerable: in the process of witnessing bewitched paroxysms, the community gained an intimate glimpse into the Devil's machinations. Everyone became exposed to the fallout of the possessed corporeal bomb.

But the most potent danger posed by witchcraft to the afflicted accusers—and by extension, to the Puritan community at large—was neither libidinal nor physical, but spiritual. Martha Goodwin was only thirteen years old when she became possessed, and her fits were partially recorded by Cotton Mather: "[Martha] was in great distress of Mind, Crying out, That she was in the dark concerning her Souls estate, and that she had mispent [sic] her precious time" (Godbeer 109).[258] The women accused of witchcraft in Salem Village, it was believed, sought only to add numbers to the Devil's ranks, and they did so by attacking their victims, as well as the village's overall moral condition. In "Underlying Themes in the Witchcraft of Seventeenth-Century New England," John Demos points out that, "witches approached [the victims] again and again, mixing threats and bribes in an effort to break down their Christian loyalties" (1321). In addition to the suspect nature of female sexuality, women's susceptibility to sin and inherent moral weakness rendered them poorly prepared to stand firmly against spiritual enemies. Thus, the feminine was viewed as a force which opposed God, a force which threatened to damn the entire society (Karlsen 4). In the minds of Salem's citizens, the witch hunts could be interpreted as a true battle between good and evil, waged on the body of women. In order to win this holy

[258] For an in-depth investigation into the possession of the Goodwin children see Cotton Mather's, *Memorable Providences, Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions*. Boston: R.P., 1689.

war, the multiplicity of femininity had to be conquered, demons expelled from their (un)willing womanly hosts, and eternal souls saved from damnation.

But amidst the tumult of seventeenth century Puritan witch hunts, the line between victim and accused was often blurred. That a young girl had become possessed by the Devil, possibly at the directive of a witch, indicated that a level of "fundamental culpability" had already been present within her (Godbeer 113). Devils and witches, it was believed, chose victims who—at the very least—viewed themselves as morally deficient, and this made them "fit candidates for the Devil's service" (Godbeer 113). In fact, even the young girls who suffered the effects of bewitchment and possession were not free from suspicion, appearing "transformed," having "invited the Devil's attention in the first place" (Demos, *Entertaining Satan*, 97, 102). Those formerly possessed, such as Mary Warren, were often accused of becoming witches. Godbeer states, "under pressure from the court, Warren confessed to having signed a diabolical covenant" (113). Women in Salem Village were not free from implication and judgment from witchcraft as victims. The victims were also seen as multiple: as both self and devil, tempter and tempted (Godbeer 111-114).

When Parris and Williams first became afflicted with fits, the villagers understood that the Devil was present in Salem Village, and so set out to expose the witches responsible for his infiltration of their community. To this end, it was believed that, "the possessed were gifted with 'spectral sight,' the ability to identify their invisible adversaries" (Karlsen 13).[259] The community of Salem Village therefore pressed the young girls suffering from demonic torment or

[259] For more on "spectral evidence" and "spectral sight" see Cotton Mather, *The Wonders of the Invisible World: Being an Account of the Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New England*. London: John Russell Smith, 1862. Accessed through Project Gutenberg, date accessed 12/26/2018. See also, Sarah Kreutter, "The Devil's Specter: Spectral Evidence and the Salem Witchcraft Crisis." *The Spectrum: A Scholar's Day Journal,* Vol. 2, Article 8, 2013.

bewitchment to “name names.” Unfortunately, the victims of witchcraft were regarded with nearly as much suspicion as the supposed witches themselves. Hence, in an effort to deflect and divert negative attention, the afflicted often accused others of harboring malicious intent. For this reason, Parris and Williams—along with Ann Putnam, Sr., Ann Putnam, Jr., Mary Walcott, and Mercy Lewis—leveled accusations of witchcraft against Tituba, a slave living in the Parris’ household; Sarah Good, the wife of an impoverished laborer; and Sarah Osbourne.[260] All three women were labeled as witches, accused of practicing *maleficium* (doing harm by magic), and in turn presumed guilty of all charges against them.

3.2 The Devil Comes to Salem

According to the official historical record, on February 29th, 1692, an arrest warrant was issued for “titibe [sic] an Indian Woman servant, of mr. Sam'l parris of [Salem] . . . for Suspition [sic] of Witchcraft.”[261] Tituba was brought before authorities on March 1, 1692 where she was “examined” and questioned about her involvement with the Devil, and her part in “tormenting” the young girls claiming affliction (Demos, “Underlying Themes,” 1316).[262] In the minds of her examiners, the town magistrates, and the general population of Salem, the accusation of witchcraft alone was sufficient to imprison, interrogate, and torture Tituba, Good, and Osbourne. Karlsen reports that, “most of the questions put to [the accused] concerned their reasons for [the]

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[260] The spelling of Sarah Osbourne’s name is not consistent. She is alternately referred to in official Salem Court documents as “Osbourne,” “Osborne,” “Osburne,” and “Osborn.” I have opted to use the “Osbourne” spelling.

[261] Salem Witch Papers, (*Warrant vs. Tituba and Sarah Osborne*). The spelling of Tituba’s name in official court records is inconsistent. Modern critics and historians have largely settled on “Tituba,” but in official Salem Court documents she is also referred to as “Titibe,” and “Tattuba.” Historians assume that regardless of the various spellings, all refer to Samuel Parris’s slave Tituba. See the *Salem Witchcraft Papers*.

[262] The Salem Witch Papers describe the questioning of Tituba as an “examination.” Scholars have suggested, however, that it was more of an interrogation and coercion. Elaine Breslaw asserts that, during Tituba’s examination, she “denied being a witch. Subsequently she was either beaten by [Samuel] Parris, or severely pressured to confess, and to avoid further punishment, she finally did” (540). See Elaine Breslaw. “Tituba’s Confession: The Multicultural Dimensions of the 1692 Salem Witch-Hunt.” *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Summer, 1997), pp. 535-556.

attacks and their association with Satan" (36). In fact, the accusation of witchcraft held so much weight that the women were essentially convicted even before they had been tried. The questions posed to them were "why"—not "if"—they afflicted the young girls in question.

Within Salem's cultural and religious context, the first women accused of witchcraft were, in many ways, logical suspects. The village's inhabitants had long been subjected to a gendered and "racialized caste system of social ranking," which placed them in the demonic crosshairs (Manzor-Coats 740).[263] Tituba was a slave and a woman of color; in the colonists' eyes, her visible and cultural differences marked her as being of the Devil's party long before witchcraft arose in Salem Village. Sarah Good was a thirty-eight-year-old beggar, "sullen, combative, unkempt. [She was] the first to be interrogated" (Schiff xi).[264] Fifty-year-old Sarah Osbourne was the most seemingly incongruous of the first accused witches, as she came from one of Salem's wealthier families. However, Osbourne had been "embroiled in [a] long-standing dispute with her Putnam in-laws" (Schiff xii). Next to Parris and Williams, the Putnam women and their female household servants comprised the majority of the possessed; this put the quarrelsome Osbourne in the crosshairs of a heated family feud. Both Good and Osbourne vehemently denied any involvement with the Devil or witchcraft. Osbourne responded to questioning by stating that she "was more like to be bewitched than that she was a witch" (Karlsen 37). Only Tituba, Samuel Parris' slave, confessed.

Good and Osbourne were thus well-known throughout the village before being accused of witchcraft but were characterized by qualities—a reputation for vagrancy and begging in the

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[263] Manzor-Coats, Lillian. "Of Witches and Other Things: Maryse Condé's Challenges to Feminist Discourse." *World Literature Today*, Vol. 64, No. 4, Focus on Maryse Condé (Autumn 1993), pp. 737-744.

[264] Schiff, Stacy. *The Witches: Salem, 1692*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015.

former's case, and a high social standing in the latter's—which fell outside of Salem's societal and gendered norms. In contrast, prior to her arrest and "examination," there is "every indication that Tituba lived an unremarkable life until that last week of February 1692" (Breslaw 539). Outside of some details concerning her arrest, interrogation, and confession of witchcraft, little is known about the historical Tituba. Records indicate that she and another slave named John Indian, whom scholars believe was her husband, were purchased by Samuel Parris in Barbados and brought to Massachusetts (Breslaw 537).[265] It is unknown if either John Indian or Tituba were born in Barbados. Regardless, Tituba's genetic heritage is shrouded in mystery. As Elaine Breslaw points out in her article, "Tituba's Confession: The Multicultural Dimensions of the 1692 Salem Witch-Hunt," it is possible that Tituba originally came from South America: the "most probable place of origin for Indian slaves in Barbados was the northeastern coast of South America, where settlements of Dutch-allied Arawaks were likely prey for England's slave traders" (537).[266] Other evidence supports the possibility that Tituba was of either Native American or Caribbean Indian descent.[267] Regardless, Tituba's racial and ethnic identity started to morph the moment she was accused of witchcraft. During her imprisonment some referred to her as a "hag;"[268] for his part, Cotton Mather made the inhumane claim that she underwent a "metamorphosis . . . from African to Indian, just like the Devil."[269] In other portrayals, she has

[265] While there is no official documentation confirming that Tituba and John Indian were in fact married, many scholars believe Tituba and John Indian were in fact husband and wife. See Bernard Rosenthal. "Tituba's Story." *The New England Quarterly*, Vo. 71, No. 2 (Jun., 1998), pp. 190-203.

[266] See also Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, *Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987, p. 6, for discussion of the use of the term "Indian" in early Renaissance England.

[267] Both Breslaw and Chadwick Hansen assert that in all legal documents from the time Tituba is described as an "Indian woman" whereas those accused of witchcraft of African origins are referred to as "Negro," specifically Mary Black owned by Benjamin Putnam, and Candy, "Margaret Hawkes's servant from Barbados" (Breslaw 537). Chadwick Hansen. "The Metamorphosis of Tituba, or Why American Intellectuals Can't Tell and Indian Witch from a Negro." *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 1, (March, 1974), pp. 3-12.

[268] Hansen 7. Hansen quotes John Fiske, *New France and New England* (Boston 1902) p. 159.

[269] Smith Tucker, Veta. "Purloined Identity: The Racial Metamorphosis of Tituba of Salem Village." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 30 No. 4, March 2000, pp. 624-634.

gone from being Indian, to being half-Indian and half-African, to being African, and then finally to being half-African and half-English.[270]

Regardless of Tituba's true ethnicity, her fluid ability to simultaneously occupy several identities, combined with her status as a female racial outsider in Puritan Salem Village, marked her as suspicious long before Parris and Williams accusations. Indeed, the accusation of witchcraft itself, and Tituba's subsequent confession—most likely obtained under duress—were the means through which the Salem community chose to silence a woman they viewed as transgressive and dangerous, due to her multiple identities as "slave," "woman," and socio-cultural "other." By labeling her a witch, Tituba's identity could be controlled and made singular: Tituba could become something "besides the human." This was the case despite the fact that, prior to February 25, 1692, Tituba's character—at least as portrayed in extant documentation—had never been outwardly viewed as suspect. In fact, Tituba was only accused of witchcraft after the "witchcake" she was implored to bake by Mary Sibley became known to Samuel Parris.[271] On this note, Breslaw claims that, "Parris turned to Tituba, a credible devil

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[270] For Breslaw and Hanson, Tituba is undeniably Indian. Breslaw points out that Tituba's identity as half-Indian, half-African, was the invention of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow in his 1868 "verse drama *Giles Corey of the Salem Farms*" (536). Following Longfellow, William Carlos Williams, in *Tituba's Children* (written and performed in 1950 but not published until 1961), and Arthur Miller, in *The Crucible* (1953), depict Tituba as purely African. Finally, Maryse Condé identifies Tituba as having been born to an African slave after being raped by a White sailor in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (3). See also, William Carlos Williams. *Many Loves and Other Plays: The Complete Plays of William Carlos Williams*. Boston: New Directions paperbacks, 1961. Miller, Arthur. *The Crucible*. New York: Penguin Books, 1952 (1995).

In many ways, the ethnic and racial transformation of Tituba aligns with society's attitude towards minority populations. Contemporary authors, historians, and readers tend to see Tituba as African or Black, and therefore read her experience as evidence of an America long divided by race, and a precursor to the Civil Rights Movement. Those that see her as Native American ("Indian," as her purportedly married name would suggest) see her as emblematic of the ways indigenous populations and cultures are subject to historical and colonial erasure.

[271]According to Elaine Breslaw, on February 25, 1692 a neighbor of the Parris's, Mary Sibley, convinced Tituba and John Indian to bake a "witchcake," consisting of rye bread mixed with urine from the afflicted girls which was then baked and was fed to a dog to try to divine what/who was inflicting pain on Betty Parris and the Rev. Parris's niece Abigail Williams. Only after Samuel Parris was made aware of the "witchcake" did Tituba become a suspect. Breslaw also points out that the origins of the "witchcake" were distinctly English rather than African or Caribbean. Tituba had to be taught how to make a witchcake by Mary Sibley (539-540).

worshiper only by virtue of her ethnicity, for evidence of a diabolical plot" (540). Breslaw further asserts that Tituba confessed to the charges against her either to save her own life, or as the result of being beaten and coerced by town officials. Regardless, by "convincing the Salem authorities that the devil had invaded their society . . . Tituba supplied the evidence of a satanic presence legally necessary to launch a witch hunt. Had she remained silent, the trials may not have occurred" (536). But once the door was open to witchcraft, Tituba walked through and never looked back. In her confession, Tituba implicated others;[272] told fantastical and elaborate tales of witch's familiars, in which they told her to "serve" them; spun yarns in which she rode through the air on a pole or stick with other accused witches; and signed her name in blood in the Devil's book.[273] At least rhetorically, Tituba became the witch Puritan Salem already believed her to be.

However, even in her confession, Tituba subverted seventeenth century connotations of witchcraft. Tituba implicated and described herself as a witch connected to the natural world, one who could communicate with the Devil, who had assumed the shape of rats, cats, dogs, birds, and other livestock. Hence, while Tituba maintained that she could commune with the Devil and his emissaries, she also asserted that the origin of her magical power was terrestrial and environmental: it was not satanically derived. Despite the fact that her attunement to the natural elements allowed her to be what contemporary audiences might refer to as "just" an herbalist/naturalist/homeopath, Tituba the seventeenth century witch was dangerous precisely because she had the capacity to assume so many natural shapes. She was simultaneously the

[272] It is on this aspect of the historical Tituba that Arthur Miller focuses. By conjuring the Devil in Tituba, Miller used *The Crucible* as a means of commenting on the House Un-American Activities Committee and Joseph McCarthy's "witch hunt" for Communists. That Tituba "named names" to save herself from being sentenced to death resonated with Miller. As a result, Miller's Tituba is vilified, and she is seen as complicit rather than as a victim coerced into giving false testimony.

[273] See Tituba's confession in the *Salem Witch Papers*.

slave woman who tended the children and the witch who threatened the very fabric of society. Tituba's power, then and now, was thus in her ability to be more than the color of her skin or her origin. She moved between multiple identities—that of the dutiful and obedient servant, the object of exchange/sacrifice, and the powerful instrument of vengeance.

Through her ability to (figuratively) shape shift, Tituba seized power from those who distrusted and vilified her based on her identity as "other." In giving the Salem authorities the confession they most feared, Tituba—and the young girls she was originally accused of tormenting and bewitching—became the most powerful people in a society which discounted and devalued women, especially slaves and children. Consequently, Tituba harnessed her role as a "witch" to subvert a lengthy literary and cultural tradition which insisted that manifestations of female sexuality and authority were pathological—and thus punishable—whenever and wherever they occurred. Perhaps the most intriguing piece of the mythology surrounding Tituba is the supposed fact that she walked away from the Salem witch trials and was neither heard from nor seen ever again. As Veta Smith Tucker notes in her article, "Purloined Identity: The Racial Metamorphosis of Tituba of Salem Village," Salem's "[a]uthorities needed to banish Tituba from their community, but they were unable to erase Tituba from history" (625). While silenced in Salem, she was ultimately never destroyed.

Tituba was for many years considered a footnote in both history and legend, rather than a critical catalyst or a revolutionary figure. Yet precisely because she resides in this liminal position between history and fiction, the figure of Tituba can shed much light on the gendered and racialized aspects of punishment when drawn into comparison with other witches, including Shakespeare's Sycorax. Tituba's identity as a mutable or transitory woman connects her with the protean figure of the witch, as explored in texts ranging from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to

Condé's twentieth century work, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*.[274] This is because witches, and specifically Tituba, have long had the capacity to inhabit multiple roles, regardless of whether that role was played out in Salem's seventeenth century society, or as a powerful symbol in the contemporary canon of cultural memory.[275] Witches' shifting and destabilizing ability to concurrently inhabit multiple roles and identities has understandably caught the attention and imagination of both literary authors and historians.

As part of a larger process of re-evaluating and analyzing the ever-changing figure of the witch in different historical moments, ranging from the Elizabethan/Jacobean period to Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1850s and Arthur Miller's 1950s, contemporary scholars have started to wonder what happened to Tituba. How had someone so powerful, if only briefly, had her narrative almost wholly omitted from the cultural record? Her legacy manipulated? Her false confession turned into proof positive of her "practicing hoodoo"? (Smith Tucker 624).[276] How had her true narrative become so completely lost and replaced with myriad anxieties, both Puritan and contemporary, concerning femininity and powerful women? All these questions remain open for debate. Regardless of how they are answered, though, it is clear that, as a result of these inquiries, Tituba has been pulled in from the periphery and firmly relocated at the center of the Salem witch hunts.

By relying on the faint surviving record of the historical Tituba, Condé's *I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem,* (re)creates Tituba's life, both prior to her to arrival in Salem, and in the

[274] Diane Purkiss suggests the "Protean fluidity" of the witch "was frightening because it meant that there was perpetual uncertainty about the witch's 'true' identity" (*The Witch in History* 125).

[275] López Springfield asserts there is a "multiplicity of Caribbean women's roles" exemplified by Sycorax and by extension Tituba, Clare Savage, and Sycorax from Marina Warner's *Indigo* (xi).

[276] Further, Smith Tucker points out, "Hoodoo is a vernacular term for the maleficent practice of voodoo" (627).

aftermath of her bewitched ordeal.[277] Condé's text attempts to restore to historical and cultural significance Tituba's narrative and personal power. Through Condé's text, Tituba achieves revenge on her accusers and oppressors by restoring her lost voice and reclaiming her legacy. Re-envisioning Tituba is significant, in that in order to exonerate literary and historical witches of the crimes of which they have been accused, Tituba's role in the colonial executions of nineteen men and women, as well as the continued invocation of her name and the figure of the witch to justify gynocide, must be revisited and reevaluated. The label of "witch," then as now, had little if anything to do with the Devil or demonic possession. Fear of witches and witchcraft, as embodied in Tituba and Sycorax before her, stemmed from gynophobia and the disordering contagion which women were believed to possess and spread. Witchcraft was an invisible crime which, when attributed to a woman, left her defenseless and at the mercy of the covenanted men around her. Denying a charge of witchcraft in 1692 was a death sentence, and while a false confession would save the accused's life, it would also damn her soul. Either way, the accused was judiciously destroyed.[278]

For modern audiences, Tituba exists in the margins of history. Information pertaining to her true origins, her ethnicity, her experiences in jail, and her life after her eventual release have all been lost. Even if they were not purposefully suppressed, they were at least viewed as insignificant and thus ignored. What is known, or what is often assumed, is that the panic and chaos that overtook Salem in February 1692, and the months that followed, was largely a reaction to Tituba's confession. Tituba's power, which emerged as a response to the specter of

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[277] Condé, Maryse. *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*. Translated by Richard Philcox. New York: Ballantine Books, 1992. This text will be referred to as *I, Tituba.*

[278] Many women, including Rebecca Nurse, Martha Corey, Sarah Good, and Martha Carrier maintained their innocence and were hanged. Only two confessed to witchcraft, Tituba and Mary Lacey, Sr., and while they were found guilty, they were eventually released.

the Devil and the fantasy of witchcraft conjured by Puritan Salem Village, was rhetorical. Through her mastery and manipulation of language, Tituba transformed the witch trials and history. However, despite her centrality to the witchcraft trials, Tituba has largely been culturally expunged or recharacterized as the true villain of the Salem hysteria. Smith Tucker points out that the "glaring absence" of Tituba and her narrative from the official record has had a "curious effect. Rather than extinguishing Tituba from history [her repression has] given her a permanent though tarnished historical presence that has survived for three centuries" (Smith Tucker 626). Few remember the names of the accusers, nor the accused, but Tituba and her influence persist.

3.3 The Creation of a (Literary) Witch

For nearly two hundred years after the events in Salem Village, the historical Tituba was all but forgotten. Despite this reality, a literary version of Tituba began to take form in 1868, starting with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's play, *Giles Corey of the Salem Farms*. In his "Introductory Note," Longfellow describes Tituba as "a half Indian, half negro servant of Mr. Parris, who had been brought from Barbados, and who was quite enough of a savage to have the belief of her race in the reality of witchcraft" (vi).[279] Longfellow introduces Tituba as not only the ring leader of the young girls who become afflicted, but creates a character who can utilize "the Evil Eye and Evil Hand" to seek "vengeance on [her] enemies" (4). When approached by a dramatized Cotton Mather, who calls her a "monstrous apparition, exceeding fierce," Tituba declares, "I am a woman, but I am not good. I am a witch!" (Longfellow 5). It is Longfellow's incarnation of Tituba, the practitioner of "black magic" who threatens the spiritual and physical wellbeing of the community, that Arthur Miller relies on in his recreation of her in his 1953 play

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[279] Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. *Giles Corey of the Salem Farms*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1902. Longfellow also creates an association between Tituba and "Obi," or Obeah, by having Tituba claim that her father was an "Obi man" who "taught [her] magic" (11).

The Crucible. Neither Longfellow nor Miller seem to have paid much heed to the "real" Tituba that exists in historical documents. For both Longfellow and Miller, it seems, Tituba's confession in 1692 was sufficient proof of her connection to the demonic; thus, a highly sexualized, literary villain was born.[280] Miller could not have imagined the long-lasting impact his fictionalization of Tituba would have on the historical figure's reputation, or the cultural consciousness of twentieth century America. Specifically, Miller could not have anticipated that *The Crucible* would in many ways rewrite history, by removing Tituba from her central role in the witch hunt and replacing her with a hyper-sexualized, Puritan version of seventeen-year-old Abigail Williams, as well as the unsuspecting object of Williams obsessive and murderous affection, John Proctor.

The destructive power of female sexuality and its connection to witchcraft is at the center of *I, Tituba*, *The Tempest*, and Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. Unlike Condé's very human and fallible Tituba, who uses her arts to be a benevolent healer for her community both in Barbados and Salem Village, the Tituba (re)created by Miller is more closely aligned with a demonic entity who practices maleficium. Tituba intends to do harm in *The Crucible*, and hence encourages the young girls to drink blood, dance naked around a cauldron, and perform animal sacrifices (42-44). In this way, Miller's Tituba aligns with the negative connotations which surround Shakespeare's Sycorax.[281] Indeed, Miller's Tituba, like Sycorax before her, is an evil presence who must be expelled from the community before its biblically-ordained patriarchal order may be restored. In other words, Tituba's banishment—from both the play and the historical record—

[280] Miller also borrows heavily from Marion L. Starkey's *The Devil in Massachusetts: A Modern Inquiry into the Salem Witch Trials.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949.

[281] Both Sycorax and Tituba are credible Devil worshippers, as evidenced by the power they possess, which can be assumed to have been endowed upon them as the result of a pact made with the Devil and sealed with a sex act.

is portrayed as a prerequisite if young white girls are to be saved from the black Devil which has invaded their community, not to mention the rest of the world.[282]

Yet, with all the power and control Miller attributes to Tituba as a true agent of the Devil, she is only a minor character to him whose primary purpose is to bookend the action of his drama.[283] Further, Miller does not identify Tituba as a "witch;" rather, she is a practitioner of "voodoo," a religion originating in Africa and brought to the Caribbean, and a crime Miller concludes was *absolutely* committed, and Tituba was *absolutely* guilty of. Miller states: "I have no doubt that people were communing with and even worshipping the Devil in Salem . . . One certain evidence of this is the confession of Tituba . . . another is the behavior of the children who were known to have indulged in sorceries with her" (Miller 33). What is clearly problematic with this assertion is that there was categorically no evidence that the historical Tituba ever indulged in "sorceries," witchcraft, or voodoo of any kind. Moreover, Miller's indictment of Tituba as a practitioner of voodoo relies on racialized stereotypes which have existed since the eighteenth century, and which are demonstrably rooted in fear of the "other."[284] In short, Miller makes the common mistake of conflating all Caribbean islands and peoples, erasing their religious and cultural differences.

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[282] Miller, D. Quentin, "The Signifying Poppet: Unseen Voodoo and Arthur Miller's Tituba." *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 2007, pp. 438-454. It is no coincidence that both Tituba and Sycorax are identified as women of color and thus vessels upon whom the Devil can beget monstrous offspring and infect the world.

[283] Tituba appears at the beginning of Act I to claim responsibility for instigating and inviting the Devil to Salem Village, and at the end of the play, in the beginning of Act IV, where she is expelled from the action when she appeals to the devil to take her home. By acknowledging her association with the Devil, and calling on him, Miller solidifies her guilt in his audiences, and his own, mind.

[284] For an in-depth exploration of the various religious and cultural practices of the Caribbean, African and Afro-American peoples see Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984.

For Miller, the only available explanation of Tituba's involvement with and/or subsequent confession to witchcraft overlooks the fact that a confession—even a false or coerced confession—would often enable an accused person's life to be spared. In Miller's retelling, other accused persons in Salem Village are given the benefit of the doubt as to their innocence and victimization at the hands of the community; Tituba alone is singled out by him as the only rightly accused practitioner of "black magic," or voodoo. The only evidence Miller invokes to establish Tituba's facility with voodoo concerns her historical place of origin, namely, that she was brought into the service of the Parris family in Barbados prior to arriving in Boston. This is a risky assumption on Miller's part, given that it has not been definitively established that Tituba originated from Barbados. While the slave trade from Western Africa into Barbados and the Caribbean steadily increased throughout the late seventeenth century, this only suggests that Tituba may have been aware of traditional Yoruba and/or Ifá religious and cultural practices; by no means does it prove that she practiced them herself.[285] The only known evidence linking the historical Tituba to the supernatural in any way is her false and coerced confession, her involvement with the "witchcake" incident, and the fact that, as a slave and a foreign, "otherized" woman of color, she was assumed to have been morally inferior, perhaps even wicked or evil. Voodoo thus becomes a red herring for Miller, which he may use to vilify and condemn Tituba.

By transforming her from a wrongfully accused witch to an unquestioned practitioner of voodoo, Miller succeeds in exploiting both the historical and literary versions of Tituba, as well

[285] For a personal narrative and discussion of the history of slavery in Barbados see Andrea Stuart's *Sugar in the Blood: A Family's Story of Slavery and Empire*. New York: Knopf, 2013. For a discussion of how the sugar trade impacted the slave trade in Barbados see Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972; David W. Galenson, "The Atlantic Slave Trade and the Barbados Market: 1673-1723." *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Sept. 1982), pp. 491-511.

as the fears his audience would have commonly associated with witchcraft. Miller's Tituba conjures in the minds of his audience "satanic rituals, secret ceremonies, mysterious deaths . . . bloody sacrifices, [and] cannibalism" (Ferère 37).[286] Utilizing the connotations associated with voodoo, specifically its association with subversion and rebellion against Christianity and God, Miller creates a figure worthy of vilification, a figure which was necessarily expelled from the text and history. Miller's Tituba is a character who embodies every Medieval, Renaissance, and contemporary fear regarding women's power and sexuality. One need not look far to see the damage inflicted by Miller's misinformed representation of the historical Tituba. In his introduction to the 1995 edition of *The Crucible*, Christopher Bigsby perpetuates the incorrect but popular mythology regarding Tituba and her involvement in the Salem witch trials. According to him, "a number of young girls were discovered" in 1692 "with a West Indian slave called Tituba, dancing and playing at conjuring. To deflect punishment from themselves they accused others . . ." (Bigsby vii).[287] As previously stated, however, there is no historical evidence to support that Tituba participated in any form of witchcraft, alleged or actualized. Bigsby's vilification of Tituba simply reinforces a false narrative of monstrous femininity and witchcraft, and extends the danger embodied in one uncontrolled woman and spreads it to all women.

In contrast to Condé, who (re)creates a Tituba capable of subverting and challenging common (mis)conceptions about witches, witchcraft, and women perceived as transgressive, Miller and Bigsby reinforce and make loathsome those same (mis)conceptions. Miller succeeds in crafting a new identity for Tituba, but it is clear that the accuracy of this identity was not only irrelevant to him, but unimportant to his view of history and the literary tradition to which he was

[286] Ferère, Gérard, A. "Haitian Voodoo: Its True Face." *Caribbean Quarterly*. Vol 23. No 3/4, Religion & Spirits (Sept.-Dec. 1978), pp. 37-47.

[287] Bigsby, Christopher. Introduction to *The Crucible*.

contributing. For his part, Bigsby insists—on the basis of nothing—that "while witches manifestly did not exist . . . Tituba [was] in all probability practicing voodoo on that night in 1692" (Bigsby x).[288] Tituba was merely a trope for Miller and Bigsby, a black slave woman who confesses to bewitching young girls, feeding them chicken blood, and instructing them in voodoo (Miller 41).[289] Miller's Tituba is guilty of all charges, and thus her exploitation and emblemization as dangerously disordered and disordering, which enables the expulsion of the real Tituba from the text and historical record, for him, is justified. For Miller, and many authors and historians before and after him, Tituba's narrative is not lost, but immaterial.

For Miller, the heart and center of the Salem witch trials, and *The Crucible*, was not Tituba—whose otherness and initial accusation set off the events which would lead to nineteen men and women's execution—but John Proctor, a white man.[290] This was a conscious choice. According to the notebooks Miller kept while composing *The Crucible* he believed, "It has got to be basically Proctor's story" (Bigsby xiii). Even to Miller, Tituba was viewed as a footnote to history, an intriguing figure for her assumed connection to voodoo, but certainly not a figure a text should revolve around; that role belonged, unsurprisingly, to a white man. Lloyd W. Brown asserts:

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[288] In "The Metamorphosis of Tituba, or Why American Intellectuals Can't Tell an Indian Witch from a Negro," Chadwick Hansen takes Miller to task for his "blackening" of Tituba and dramatizing her as a "voodoo priestess," one he claims reveals Miller's "unfortunate penchant for melodrama" (10). *The New England Quarterly*. Vol. 47, No. 1 (Mar.,1974), pp. 3-12.

[289] Miller's *The Crucible* reinvented the Salem witch trials as a means of commenting on the "witch hunt" for Communists in 1950s America. It is my contention that Tituba is recast in this drama as the sole confessed "Communist," whose confession sparks the McCarthy Hearings.

[290] Giles Corey was also a victim of the witch trials, raising the death toll to twenty. However, Giles Corey did not meet his fate at the end of the hangman's noose. Rather, he was subject to "peine forte et dure." In other words, he was pressed to death. Due to the nature of Corey's death, he is often excluded from the number of Salem's victims which is reported as nineteen. Technically Corey died during torture designed to extract his confession, rather than being executed as a witch/warlock.

> Tituba, the exotic black, represents a pagan innocence . . . [she is, in Miller's text] obviously a mere "comic darky," a racial stereotype that raises serious moral questions which Miller leaves unanswered. The stereotype is merely used, instead, as a convenient antithesis to the other, more significant, kind of innocence in the play—the heroic innocence of John Proctor. (121-22)[291]

The tragedy of the Salem witch trials, according to Miller, was not the racialized and/or gendered violence it instigated against countless innocent women, but the ways in which it unjustly impacted a few white men. Miller places blame for the witch hunts squarely on Tituba's shoulders, although there is no evidence whatsoever to support the assertion that Tituba practiced voodoo or maleficium. What exists, but is not supported by the historical record, is his assumption that Tituba was "a witch originating from the West Indies," who was "*probably* practicing hoodoo" (Smith Tucker 627, emphasis mine).

Miller's construction of Tituba, and women more generally, recreates and reinforces the suspicion and anxiety that surrounded women and femininity in Renaissance England and Puritan New England, which has continued until this present day. This is well exemplified by Miller's vilification of Abigail Williams, whom he casts as John Proctor's vengeful, scorned lover. Miller's text views all women as suspect. Consequently, it is not enough for him to cast aspersions on the character of the accused witch Tituba; he must also negatively implicate the possessed and afflicted victims of witchcraft as well. Women are not the victims in *The Crucible* or *The Tempest*; they are not the unwilling vessels through which the Devil beguiles and hunts his prey. Rather, women are the agents and originators of evil in Salem Village, Sycorax and

[291] Brown, Lloyd. W. "Tituba of Barbados and the American Conscious: Historical Perspectives in Arthur Miller and Ann Petry." *Caribbean Studies*. Vol. 13, No. 4 (Jan., 1974), pp. 118-126.

Prospero's island, and presumably in 1950s America as well. The true intended victim in Miller's reconstruction is the patriarchy.

Abigail Williams, in Miller's text, is described as "a strikingly beautiful girl, an orphan, with the endless capacity for dissembling" (Miller 8).[292] She embodies the demonic woman/witch warned of in *Malleus Maleficarum*, *Daemonologie*, and the Bible. Abigail is aligned with Tituba in her sin of femininity; both are damned by their shared gender and presumed sexual and moral insatiability. Even John Proctor's suffering wife Elizabeth, who also finds herself accused of witchcraft by Abigail Williams, is not free from blame. Elizabeth Proctor, who is held up as the zenith of female obedience and pinnacle of Christian faith and purity, lies under oath to save her husband. As her husband is sent to the gallows, himself accused of witchcraft, it is Elizabeth that the audience and reader blames (Miller 102-106).[293] Here, Miller equates female sexuality (Abigail), witchcraft (Tituba), and perjury/dishonesty (Elizabeth Proctor) as sins all deserving of the same punishment. On this note, Carol Karlsen adds, "all witches were presumed to lie;" indeed, "their alliance with the 'Prince of Liars'" provided "sufficient evidence of the fact" (147).[294] Thus, in Miller's vision of the past, Elizabeth Proctor is as much to blame for the devastating outcome of the Salem witch hunts and trials as Abigail and Tituba, as manifested in the hanging death of her husband John, the play's tragic hero. Miller's adaptation and fictionalization of history does not merely re-inscribe Tituba and

[292] The historical Abigail Williams was only 11 years old in 1692 when she became "possessed" and suffered from fits. Literarily, Miller's Abigail is orphaned when her parents are murdered during King Phillips' war; she is described as a 17-year-old temptress who vows revenge after her sexual affair with John Proctor ends (Miller 5, 19).

[293] In *The Crucible*, after both he and his wife are accused of witchcraft by Abigail Williams, John Proctor confesses to the affair he had with Abigail in an attempt to expose the root cause of her enmity towards him and his wife, Elizabeth. Elizabeth knows about the affair but does not know that John has confessed to it. Hence, she lies under oath so as to spare her husband's name. It is this lie that ultimately condemns them both (Miller 102-106).

[294] In fact, Karlsen continues, accused "witches were called liars simply for denying their worship of the Devil or for disclaiming malice, theft, or other sins of associated with witchcraft. Confessions of witchcraft made by a woman after initial denials were cited as proof that witches never told the truth" (147).

the color of her skin as monstrous, but all women. Rather than succeeding in putting witchcraft on trial, *The Crucible* manages to convict women of crimes committed against men.

In an interview with Ann Scarboro Armstrong, Maryse Condé claims that her ultimate aim in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* was not to right the wrongs unnecessarily committed against Tituba by Arthur Miller in *The Crucible* (Condé 202).[295] However, it is difficult to read any appropriation or literary reimagining of Tituba without acknowledging the ubiquitous reach of Miller's American classic. In many ways, Condé's Tituba offers a counternarrative to Miller's monstrous voodoo practitioner. She does not threaten the stability of her community by wielding a demonically derived power. Instead, she derives her power and strength from the natural world, a world of infinite possibility, unity, and female atmospheric transmission. Condé's Tituba is, therefore, largely an innocent victim, doomed by the color of her skin rather than the intentions of her heart. Condé does not merely avenge Tituba's misrepresentation by the likes of Arthur Miller. Rather, she reaches far back into the past to connect the disaggregated female experience of witchcraft accusations. By challenging the way these were previously represented by white male authors, Condé unsilences a long line of historically and literary silenced women.

3.4 Tituba and Sycorax: The Legacy of Monstrous Femininity

In many ways, the Tituba Condé (re)creates is also a reimagining, and iteration, of Shakespeare's Sycorax. In the article, "Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax," Irene Lara asserts, "[i]n spite of being physically absent in the play, Sycorax persists as a powerful memory, a witchy specter very much alive in the consciousness of Prospero and Caliban" (83). Similarly, despite being largely absent from both the historical

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[295] The interview Ann Scarboro Armstrong conducts with Condé appears at the end of the version of *I, Tituba* I am utilizing in this chapter.

record and cultural memory, Tituba's power plagued Puritan consciousness, and in this way her legacy has persisted into the twenty-first century. For contemporary audiences, the patriarchal obsession with silencing the witch, and by extension silencing women, which disaggregates her into passivity, has become a mirror for the way's women have historically been treated in western society.

The witch's culturally constructed identity becomes a reflection of the fears and hidden desires of those around them. Unable to speak for herself, Sycorax is defined by and against her community and interpreters. May Joseph, quoting Michelle Cliff, states, Sycorax embodies the "woman who is defined from the outside, who according to that foreign definition cannot be whole, whose dark blood is a source of her betrayal and a constant danger" (218). What is known about Sycorax—her past, her banishment, and her power—is told to Prospero by the captive spirit Ariel, or her demonic offspring Caliban. Within the text, a corporeal Sycorax does not exist. Yet Sycorax and her influence haunt the text and its characters, as well as contemporary scholars, critics and authors such as Myriam Chancy, Brinda J. Mehta, Marina Warner, and Michelle Cliff.[296] Her presence is seen and felt in the natural world of the island and maternal impressionism in the physical figure of her son, Caliban. Incapable of articulating her own narrative and experience of marginalization, Sycorax has been reduced to a story, a warning used by Prospero to threaten his slaves (Ariel, Caliban and, in a sense, Miranda, too) to keep them submissive. However, the narrative which exists about Sycorax is not her own; rather, it belongs

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[296] Within the last thirty years, Sycorax has become a site of feminist and postcolonial investigation as well as the subject of multiple creative works. See Myriam Chancy's *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writers in Exile*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997; Brinda J. *Mehta's Notions of Identity, Diaspora, and Gender in Caribbean Women's Writing*. London: Palgrave, 2009; Marina Warner's *Indigo, Or Mapping the Waters*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992; and Michelle Cliff's *No Telephone to Heaven*. New York: Plume, 1997.

to a long tradition of historically and literarily erased or demonized witches: it reveals the prevailing attitudes and anxieties of the day regarding women's roles in society.

Much like Shakespeare's Sycorax, Tituba is silenced, her story appropriated, and her language lost. Elisabeth Mudimbé-Boyi asserts in "Giving a Voice to Tituba: The Death of the Author?" that, "by virtue of her race, her geographic origin, and her social status, Tituba embodies marginality and is perceived only as a voiceless 'exotic other,' an object to be talked about" (751).[297] However, authors such as Condé—by creating an origin story, bildungsroman, and account of the final days of silenced or oppressed female characters such as Tituba, and by extension Sycorax—pull these figures in from the margins and relocate them as the nexus of the narrative. By placing Tituba at the center of not only her story, but a significant moment in American history, women begin to be restored from invisibility and fragmentation to unified wholes.

In *I, Tituba*, the voice that is finally heard is not Condé's, but Tituba's. As a fictional "autobiography," Condé disappears from the text, "leaving Tituba to take preeminence and become simultaneously the narrator and the narrated" (Mudimbe-Boyi 752). In reclaiming and authoring her own story, Tituba is transformed from an object to be talked about and vilified into a "narrating subject" who controls her identity and her history (Mudimbe-Boyi 755). Unlike the Salem witches, however, who had false accusations of witchcraft leveled at them in an attempt to subdue or punish them for their transgressions, Condé's Tituba is not a falsely accused witch. Rather, because she was initiated into a sisterhood of witchcraft by Mama Yaya, Tituba is able to commune with the spirit world and utilize the natural magic of healing plants and animal sacrifice to aid herself and those around her. Instead of attempting to distance herself from the

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[297] Mudimbé-Boyi, Elisabeth. "Giving a Voice to Tituba: The Death of the Author?" *World Literature Today*, Vol. 67, No. 4, Focus on Maryse Condé (Autumn 1993), pp. 751-756.

accusations of witchcraft, or asserting her innocence, Tituba embraces the association and redefines "witch" and "witchcraft."[298]

Condé's Tituba is everything the Puritans in Salem Village feared; everything they believed about witchcraft manifest in a feminized body. Yet, Condé destabilizes the identity of the witch by casting Tituba as the victim of overzealous religious intolerance and xenophobia rather than as a practitioner of maleficium. Further, Zubeda Jalalzai asserts that while the Tituba presented in *I, Tituba* was, in many ways, meant to be read as a "fantasy," Condé "takes quite seriously her depiction of the Puritans that makes a reclamation of Tituba an urgent artistic and political choice" (413).[299] The true villains in the hysteria that overwhelmed Salem Village in 1692 are not the accused witches, Condé's text argues, but those who used them as a means of legitimizing "*actual* mutilation . . . and exile" (Dukats 745).[300] In Condé's hands, the historical and literary Tituba is more than an accused or confessed witch, whose identity and legacy has been put on trial to decide her value: she is able to reveal and convict the society that not only condemns her for her disaggregated and gendered "otherness," but creates and perpetuates it.

Condé also subverts seventeenth century assumptions about witchcraft by expunging its connection to the demonic. The true demons in *I, Tituba*, and in historical Salem Village itself, were not the accused women, but their overzealous Puritan neighbors. Condé makes clear that Tituba's magic is not the result of a pact with the Devil, but is rather a healing art which allows her to raise the combined powers of her female ancestors, call those multiple spirits together to

[298] The name "Mama Yaya" is similar to "Yemayá" the New World name for the Yoruban goddess Yemoja. This further connects Mama Yaya and Tituba's healing arts to benevolent rather than malevolent purposes. See Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African & Afro-American Art & Philosophy*. New York: Vintage Books, 1984. p. 17.

[299] Jalalzai, Zubeda. "Historical Fiction and Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba Black Witch of Salem*." *African American Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2/3 (Summer/Fall 2009), pp. 413-425.

[300] Dukats, Mara, L. "The Hybrid Terrain of Literary Imagination: Maryse Condé's Black Witch of Salem, Nathaniel Hawthorne's Hester Prynne, and Aimé Césaire's Heroic Poetic Voice." *College Literature*. Vol. 22, No. 1, Third World Women's Inscriptions (Feb. 1995), pp. 51-61. Emphasis Dukats'.

create a sisterhood of witchcraft, and find unification for them and herself even in death. Tituba's legacy, a continuation and expansion of Sycorax, exposes the violence connected to accusations of witchcraft, and the ways in which the "witch" label was utilized to silence and suppress unruly or transgressive women. In other words, Tituba's legacy is redefined and celebrated.

Yet while Tituba's initiation into the world of witchcraft and magic is rooted in the healing arts, she responds to her mistreatment, imprisonment, and vilification by transforming her abilities into an instrument of revenge. Through Tituba, silenced and erased women and their narratives can therefore find power. In finding her own voice and strength, Tituba restores the voice and strength of Sycorax, and of all accused and confessed witches. A connection is established through Tituba, one which links female experiences of marginalization, and begins to restore them to prominence and legitimacy.

In *I, Tituba*, Condé does not merely resurrect the lost narrative of a slave accused of witchcraft. Rather, her text is interested in the larger project of reinserting the historically silenced narratives of women back into the cultural and literary landscape. The real Tituba, the historical figure, and her story have been irrevocably lost. The witchcraft accusations leveled against her have been used to justify her historical erasure, just as they have been used to historically subjugate a host of similarly transgressive or threatening women. Hence, as Condé invents Tituba, she succeeds in "writ[ing]-into-being . . . [a] historically effaced woman" (Dukats 52). Condé's Tituba transcends the limits imposed on her by both Puritan society and the historical record. She exposes the violence of the slave trade, the intolerance of Puritanism and, most damningly, the repression and marginalization of the female experience of all women—even those who were never victimized through accusations of witchcraft.

Women in *I, Tituba*—slave and master, witch and possessed—find kinship through shared female experience. While *I, Tituba* is set historically in a seventeenth century America divided along racial and religious lines, the divisions and fragmentation Condé repairs are distinctly those related to gender. In *I, Tituba*, Condé is explicit in her assertion that "[l]ife is too kind to men, whatever their color" (100). To illustrate this point, *I, Tituba* begins with violence committed against women, specifically the rape of Tituba's mother, Abena, by a white English sailor aboard a slave ship in the Middle Passage.[301] Condé points out that the act of sexual violence and aggression committed against Abena is an all too common occurrence for women, regardless of their race, ethnicity, economic background, and real or accused relationship to witchcraft. However, her text narrows the distance between various women and female experiences by establishing kinship and reclaiming female sexuality; in this way, she transforms women from victims to active agents.

That Tituba is "born from [an] act of hatred and contempt," is illustrative of the ways in which women are broken down and fragmented by a patriarchal society (Condé 3). In order to punish or marginalize women who were viewed as suspect and mistrusted due to their perceived weakness, otherness, and moral inferiority, they were often reduced to a collection to wayward and threatening parts. This is most notable in society's focus on their genitalia and larger reproductive system—the apparent center of their destructive power. Sexual violence against women, including the rape and eventual murder of Abena, is used to dissuade female resistance and agency. To deal with women, but not to be contaminated by their debasement or have them infect the society around them, women were disaggregated. To limit and control them, women in

[301] Tituba will also become the victim of sexual assault in Condé's *I, Tituba*. At the time she is initially accused of witchcraft, she is also sexually assaulted by Samuel Parris and three other hooded men, who use sexual violence to compel Tituba to confess to witchcraft (Condé 89-92).

I, Tituba, like Sycorax in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, are blazoned, or perhaps more accurately, contreblazoned.[302] A literary blazon, in theory, allows viewers and authors to create order where is there is only disorder and chaos. However, individually cataloguing each physical attribute of a woman does not create order or stability in the female subject; it removes her from the realm of humanity and personhood.

An early example of literary contreblazoning as a means to reduce, erase, and/or destroy women is the figure of Sycorax, who is described by Ariel as a fragmented collection of parts, including most notably her blue eyes, her body grown into a hoop, and her womb (Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii, lines 272-277). The danger that Sycorax poses to those around her is very much connected to her monstrous sexuality, as indicated by the belief that she became impregnated by the Devil, and that maternal impressionism will render her offspring similarly monstrous and infectious. To limit the fallout from her sexual deviance, Sycorax has been reduced to individual parts that can easily be contended with and suppressed. As a result, her voice has been silenced, and her language lost.[303] Through the silencing of Sycorax, and the narratives of other women accused of witchcraft or possession, all women can be denied personhood. Condé's text, in many ways, combats the violence committed against women. By restoring Tituba's voice and narrative, she also opens the door to restoring the lost language and experience of Sycorax.

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[302] The Oxford English Dictionary uses the following definition of "blazon" (trans. Verb): "2. describe fitly or vividly; depict; celebrate." However, "a literary blazon catalogues the physical attributes of a subject, usually physical . . . [while] a *Contreblazon* inverts the convention, describing 'wrong' parts of the female body or negating them completely . . .". See Poetryfoundation.org

[303] Myriam Chancy points out, "invisibility appears to define many Afro-Caribbean women's lives" of which Sycorax and Tituba are a part; "By extension, silence is a recurring motif in the literature by Afro-Caribbean women who bring themselves into visibility by speaking out on issues that are normally taboo subjects in Western societies generally—issues such as racial discrimination, abuse of the elderly, sexual abuse and incest" (33). I would argue that these issues, as laid bare by Chancy, find resonance in each of the female characters and texts written by postcolonial female authors explored in this larger project and exemplified by Sycorax and Tituba.

Women like Tituba and Sycorax threatened the stability of the socially stratified, political and cultural systems in which they existed, which maintained patriarchal authority by subjugating and disempowering women. As a result of the dangers associated with them, transgressive women, often embodied by the culturally created and imposed identity of "witch," had to be brought into submission or destroyed. For example, in *I, Tituba*, Abena fights back against her owner Darnell Davis when he threatens her with sexual violence. As a result of her resistance, Abena is hanged in front of a gathering of slaves, including her seven-year-old daughter Tituba, herself the living representation and maternal imprint of her own mother's rape (Condé 9). Davis designed Abena's murder in a way he hoped would eternally fragment her; however, the opposite is achieved. Abena's death does not result in an end of female influence or disaggregation into oblivion. Rather, it becomes a catalyst for transformation, an instance of female morphological change. Through death, Abena finally achieves unity, she is released from suffering, and restored to personhood. In viewing her, Tituba sees, "not [a] disjointed, tormented puppet swinging round and round among the leaves, but decked out in the colors of . . . love" (Condé 9). Yet while Abena finds unification through death, Tituba's family unit is shattered, and her former identity lost. Like her mother, though, Tituba is eventually transformed through a kind of rebirth. Specifically, Tituba is reborn as a witch: an identity which will empower and embed her in the cultural and literary record, if only fleetingly.

Seven years old, newly orphaned, and powerless, Tituba is taken in by the Nago Obeah woman Mama Yaya, who has "the ability to communicate with the invisible world," and teaches her about herbs, the sea, the mountains, and the winds (Condé 9).[304] Mama Yaya initiates Tituba

[304] The Nago were a Yoruba people originating in Benin and brought, typically as slaves, to the West Indies, largely St. Domingue, later renamed Haiti. The Nago were known practitioners of voodoo/vodou/vodoun. Obeah is more closely associated with the Ashanti, who were enslaved in what is modern-day Ghana and brought to Jamaica, Barbados, and Antigua. Maya Yaya is presented as embodying both the voodoo and obeah traditions.

into the world of benevolent witchcraft, "the upper spheres of knowledge," and cultivates in her the ability to commune with the dead, instructing Tituba: "the dead only die if they die in our hearts" (Condé 10). Mama Yaya opens up a new world to Tituba, one that exposes an interconnected web of womanhood from which Tituba can, and will, gain strength in her own individual power and the collective sisterhood of witchcraft. It is not the singular figure of "witch" which spread fear through the hearts of men, but the ability of women to come together, find community in, and freedom from, gendered suffering. Through the establishment of interior and exterior female unity, women are able to rise above the subjugation inflicted upon them by society since biblical times. Tituba's early knowledge and introduction to female empowerment, presented to her by Mama Yaya and reinforced throughout the text, is what led to Tituba eventually being accused of witchcraft, and eventually expelled from history. Witchcraft was not the true threat: autonomous femininity was.

As previously mentioned, the historical Tituba that Condé appropriates for her adaptation exists only in a few scant documents that record her interrogation and confession.[305] Nevertheless, the details Tituba provided in those records are extraordinary. Not only did she give graphic and detailed descriptions of her dealings with the Devil and his familiars, she also confessed to being part of a larger demonic, and (mostly) female, conspiracy. Tituba was not merely a lone agent of the Devil, a singular foreign outsider and witch that could be easily dispatched: she had allies and confidantes whose power could be called together against the village to decimate it.

[305] Tituba also exists in the testimonies, indictments and depositions of both the accused and afflicted in Salem but has no documented existence outside the Salem Witchcraft Trials conducted in 1692 and 1693. See *Salem Witch Papers (SWP 125.1-11).*

In her creation of the "black witch of Salem" who straddles the line between fiction and history, Condé draws on the original court documents and records. In 1692, Tituba testified to seeing:

> [a yellow bird] . . suck [Sarah] Good between the fore finger & Long finger upon the Right hand . . . I saw Good have a Catt beside the yellow bird w'ch was with hir… [with Goody Osburne] . . . [a thing] hath wings & two Leggs & a head like a woeman [and] a thing all over hairy, all the face hayry & a long nose & I don't know how to tell how the face looks w'th two Leggs, itt goeth upright & is about two or three foot high & goeth upright like a man & last night itt stood before the fire In mr parris's hall.[306]

Tituba's testimony is very much inspired by the natural world, a world which Tituba manipulates to suggest that the other accused witches were seen with their familiars: a cat and yellow bird, in the case of Sarah Good, and a hybrid animal—with wings, hair, and a woman's face, which walks upright, like a man—in the case of Sarah Osbourne.[307] In fact, in their hybridization of the natural and the demonic world, Tituba's spectral visions combine images and beliefs already associated with witchcraft. According to Karlsen, "a witch was believed to have animal familiars, or imps, who nourished themselves on her body, performed evil acts at her command, and were themselves supernatural being[s]" (8). In order for Tituba's coerced confession to be believed—and thus save her from being hanged—she had to incorporate Puritan stereotypes about witches; without them, her statement would not have seemed believable to her audience. By extension, Tituba's repeated references to animal familiars confirmed the Puritan's pre-

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[306] See *Salem Witch Papers (SWP 125.5)*.

[307] The creature Tituba describes having seen with Sarah Osbourne is similar to the mythological Harpies or Sirens—monstrous creatures most closely associated with revenge against men—or Imps from Germanic folklore, typically described as "lesser goblins." See Mark Morford, Robert J. Lenardon, and Michael Sham's *Classical Mythology*. London: Oxford University Press, 2013, and William Godwin's *Lives of Necromancers: or, An Account of the most eminent persons in successive ages, who have claimed for themselves, or to whom has been imputed to others, the exercise of magical powers*. London: F.J. Mason, 1834.

existing fears about witchcraft: that the Devil had arrived in Salem Village, and was afflicting and possessing the innocent, as well as also corrupting the weak.

Tituba was not the only accused witch whose connections to the natural world were exploited and weaponized to reinforce female oppression. Although physically missing from the action of *The Tempest*, Sycorax's agency and power is expressed in Shakespeare's text as continued control over the natural world through her son Caliban. Caliban, in cursing Prospero and Ariel, describes the type of power Sycorax had by stating:

CALIBAN: As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed

With raven's feather from unwholesome fen

Drop on you both! A southwest blow on ye

And blister you all o'r!

. . . All the charms

Of Sycorax – toads, beetles, bats—light on you!

(Shakespeare Act I, Scene ii, lines 319-340).

Her ability to tap into the natural world, to call on animals as familiars to do her bidding, and to imprison the powerful Ariel in a tree, establishes a kinship, or sisterhood, between Sycorax, Tituba, and all women. Yet the connection between women/witches and the natural world signaled to audiences and early critics a correlation between, and reinforcement of, the belief that women were demonic agents, whose inner selves were comingled with Satan.

Echoing Caliban's recollections of his mother and her naturally derived powers, Tituba's official recorded testimony, parts of which are included in *I, Tituba*, appear to have been inspired by her initiation into the natural world of witchcraft. Condé's Tituba asserts:

> Mama Yaya taught me the prayers, the rites, and the propitiatory gestures. She taught me how to change myself into a bird on a branch, into an insect in the dry grass or a frog croaking in the mud of the River Ormond whenever I was tired of the shape I had been given at birth. And then she taught me the sacrifices. (10)

Rather than signifying the demonic, Condé re-inscribes the ability to shape-shift and control the natural world into an instrument of good. Tituba can hence reaffirm Shakespeare's Sycorax, who also held sway over the natural world of wind, birds, and insects. But this power—once exploited to condemn and exile Sycorax, and the women determined to fall outside the bounds of female gender norms—is re-appropriated and reclassified as the benevolent art of healing, and an agent of positive change. Thus, Sycorax's maleficium and dangerously transgressive identity is problematized. Rather than further condemning and marginalizing Sycorax, she is exonerated of her supposed crimes which, when viewed in relation to Tituba, are seen as acts of resistance. Mama Yaya teaches Tituba, "that everything lives, has a soul, breathes. That everything must be respected. That man is not the master . . ." (Condé 9). Tituba learns that her abilities must be used for good, otherwise, she will have "perverted her own heart . . . [and] become like [the slave owners] only knowing how to kill and destroy" (Condé 30). In short, by restoring Tituba's lost history, Condé redefines witchcraft.

Tituba's exploration of and connection with the natural and spiritual world is deepened after Mama Yaya's death. Left to fend for herself at the age of fourteen, Tituba is confronted by a triumvirate of spirits: those of her dead mother, Abena; adopted father, Yao; and Mama Yaya, who continues to counsel and guide her from beyond the grave.[308] Under their tutelage, Tituba grafts and cross-breeds plants, in effect creating new hybrids which will aid her in her restorative

[308] While Yao appears to Tituba, it is Abena and Mama Yaya who counsel and guide her. Yao, the male presence, is relatively silent.

and comforting arts, by enabling her to "devise drugs and potions whose powers [she] strengthens with incantations" (Condé 11). More importantly, Tituba herself is transformed through this process. The knowledge passed down to Tituba by her guiding spirits reinforces the necessity of female unification, and of self-hybridization. Tituba's evolving identity bears the mark of the women who came before her: just as they are imprinted on her, she will also become imprinted on the women around her. Tituba's capacity to be more than just herself—to be the combination of multiple femininities—is exemplified in her newly acquired and ever-increasing abilities, which allow her to exist in the liminal space between the human and nonhuman world.

Existing on the margins of island society, when Tituba initially encounters young slaves, they hide from her, afraid of her and her power. They fear her new reputation and identity as a witch. However, "witch" is a term with which Tituba does not initially identify. When she is called a witch by John Indian—the man who eventually becomes her lover and husband, the love for whom will finally condemn her to a life of slavery, which in turn leads to her being accused of witchcraft—Tituba questions:

> What is a witch? . . . when he said the word, it was marked with disapproval. Why should that be? Why? Isn't the ability to communicate with the invisible world, to keep constant links with the dead, to care for others and heal, a superior gift of nature that inspires respect, admiration and gratitude? Consequently, shouldn't the witch (if that's what the person who has this gift is to be called) be cherished rather than feared? (Condé 17)

The historical and literary connotations associated with witchcraft, which Condé's text fights against and redefines, connect the practice of witchcraft to "*maleficium*, that is, to cause harm to others by supernatural means" (Karlsen 6). For New England Puritans, a benevolent witch did not exist. By her very nature, a witch was believed to be mixed with the demonic, and was thus

only capable of causing pain, illness, and/or death (physical or spiritual) to victims. In (re)creating Tituba, Condé succeeds in inventing the birth of a witch, crafting not only an origin story for the historical figure, but also an alternative definition of witchcraft.

In the article, "Demythifying the Witch's Identity as Social Critique in Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*," Lisa Bernstein suggests, "*I, Tituba*, reveals the cultural construction of the 'witch' identity, demonstrating how its meaning changes according to different contexts" (84).[309] Tituba's identity as "witch" shifts depending on her viewing and interpretive community. These opposing views of witchcraft are held in comparison by Condé, whose text compels readers to question why women who are accused of, or associated with, witchcraft are often vilified and condemned. *I, Tituba* concludes that the threat lay in an assumption and fear that witches were practicing malevolence.

3.5 The Witch and Sexual Disorder

Carol Karlsen asserts that witches in New England were not thought to "commune" with the natural world, but to interfere with it. Women, it was feared, could interfere with and sabotage the natural world in several ways: through maternal impressionism, during which they would transmit maleficium to their offspring; or by "obstructing reproductive processes, either by preventing conceptions or causing miscarriages . . . [to this end, they were] sometimes suspected of having 'used means to destroy the fruit of . . . [their own] body'" (Karlsen 7). These alternatingly negative views of women and their procreative power come from patriarchal fear of loss of control. The female body was the one area to which male power could not fully extend. The assumption of female sabotage suggests that no woman in the service of God would ever

[309] Bernstein, Lisa. "Demythifying the Witch's Identity as Social Critique in Maryse Condé's *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem." Social Identities*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, February 1997. pp. 77-90.

wish to prevent conception, end an unwanted or unplanned pregnancy, or want to aid others who sought to do the same. The urge to end a pregnancy served as a clear indication that a woman was in league with the Devil. Seventeenth century Puritans believed that "the procreative, nurturing, and nursing roles of women were *perverted* by witches, who gave birth to and suckled demons instead of children" (Karlsen 145).[310] A woman seeking or desiring to terminate a planned or unplanned pregnancy posed a major threat to the community and the patriarchy by usurping male authority and divine power. Even those women who carried children to term were not above suspicion, because woman's moral inferiority and susceptibility to demonic influence was a heritable trait which could infect her descendants.[311]

Condé's Tituba expresses the urgency and fear that some women feel, especially enslaved women of color, who choose to end a pregnancy: "There is no happiness in motherhood for a slave. It is little more than the expulsion of an innocent baby, who will have no chance to change its fate, into a world of slavery and abjection" (50). For Tituba and countless women before and after her, terminating a pregnancy is not a crime against God and man, but a necessity—a preferable fate to the harsh reality of colonial life.[312] Yet pregnancies that ended in miscarriage, still birth, or forced abortion left women vulnerable. Intentionally ending a pregnancy was punishable by death, because it was believed that "a woman guilty of these crimes took it upon herself who should live and who should die, the prerogative of God alone" (Karlsen 141). Thus, in a society on high alert for suspicious occurrences, and the proof that the Devil or his minions were at work, women whose pregnancies ended prematurely, or ended in

[310] Emphasis Karlsen's

[311] In short, it was believed that all witches were Sycorax's who would necessarily give birth to Caliban's.

[312] Myriam Chancy, quoting Paula Giddings, states: "Some slave women, perhaps a significant number, did not bear offspring for the [slavery] system at all. They used contraceptives and abortives in an attempt to resist the system. And to gain control over their bodies. . . . When contraception failed, slave women took more extreme measures" (35).

still birth, would on occasion seek to protect themselves by decrying the malevolent actions of witches and witchcraft as the cause of their loss.

Due to the association between female reproductive functions and demonic interference, Puritan New Englanders saw a strong connection between witchcraft, female sexuality, and female agency. Boris Vejdovsky asserts, "[t]he uncanny effects of witchcraft appear as sexual disorder and confusion caused by the devil who sexually possesses" (57).[313] As previously stated, many women were accused of practicing, or being the victims of, witchcraft after a child was stillborn, or a woman miscarried. Devastatingly high infant mortality rates, it was believed, were due to demonic or female interference, rather than limited medical knowledge or inhospitable conditions (Karlsen 16-17). As such, pregnancy was potentially a morally troubling phenomenon for seventeenth century New Englanders. Puritans were told by God through the Bible to procreate and increase their numbers. However, they also believed the Devil was running rampant in Salem Village, and that he would sexually possess women, because they offered a "fleshy sensuality through which he could literally inseminate the world with evil" (Glover 187).[314] Within this context, the focus becomes the ways in which the female witch is transformed into a vessel which attracts, contains, and transmits evil. The female witch is in part viewed as dangerous and suspect because of her ability to procreate, and to become the mother of demonic offspring. Women are left in an impossible position by this cultural logic: failure to procreate was viewed as suspect, yet surviving offspring were also viewed suspiciously, because

[313] Vejdovsky, Boris. "'Remember Me:' *The Wonders of an Invisible World* – Sex, Patriarchy, and Paranoia in Early America." *The Puritan Origins of American Sex: Religion, Sexuality, and National Identity in American Literature.* Edited by Tracy Fessenden, Nicolas F. Radel, and Magdalena J. Zaborowska. New York: Routledge, 2001. Quoted in Kaiama Glover's "Confronting the Communal: Maryse Condé's Challenge to New World Orders in *Moi, Tituba*." *French Forum*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (Fall 2012), pp. 181-199.

[314] Garraway, Doris. *The Libertine Colony: Creolization in the Early French Caribbean*. Charlotte, NC: Duke University Press, 2005, Quoted in Kaiama Glover's "Confronting the Communal."

they were potential sites for demonic possession. The Puritan woman hence had a "problematic maternal body," which must be controlled and regulated (Purkiss 2).[315] To ensure that accused witches did not create monstrous progeny, all women's sexuality had to be subdued, and their transgressive natures brought into submission.

In seventeenth century Salem Village, the children of women accused or suspected of witchcraft were seen as corrupted or morally weak. After Sarah Good was accused of witchcraft, her four-year-old daughter Dorothy (nicknamed Dorcas) was also accused of, and imprisoned for, practicing witchcraft (Karlsen 37).[316] Reinforcing Karen Weingarten's theory of maternal impressionism, it was believed in Puritan New England that "witchcraft tended to run in families, along matrilineal lines" (Schiff 61). Suspected witches were therefore often forced into untenable situations: attempt to abort their own fetuses, aid other women in similar acts to spare the child from potential accusations of witchcraft, or leave themselves open to further recriminations should they miscarry or have a still birth. Either way, by virtue of their gender and biological function, all women were at risk of being accused of witchcraft.

Prefiguring Tituba, Shakespeare's Sycorax was condemned to exile for witchcraft, though her life was spared because she was pregnant. The child she gives birth to, Caliban, is described throughout *The Tempest* as a "poisonous slave, got by the devil himself . . . a malignant thing," "a freckled whelp, hag born not honored with human shape" (Shakespeare Act

[315] Purkiss, Diane. "Witchcraft in Early Modern Literature." *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*. Edited by Brian P. Levack. Oxford Handbooks Online. Oxford University Press, 2015. pp.1-22. Date accessed 5/31/2016

[316] Dorothy (Dorcas) Good would spend nine months in prison, heavily shackled the entire time. Some records indicate that Dorcas Good was four years old at the time she was accused of witchcraft, while others suggest she was five (Schiff 93).

1 Scene 2, lines 258-320).[317] Caliban's perceived deformity of shape and character are intimately connected to his mother's identity as a witch. It is understood both by Shakespeare's characters and his viewing audience that Caliban carries his mother's monstrosity within him, which is why he is referred to as a child of the Devil. The connection between mother and son legitimizes both Sycorax's banishment, and Caliban's continued enslavement and imprisonment.

Sycorax's sexuality, both prior to her banishment and after her arrival on the island, mark her as transgressive and a threat. Besides Sycorax's assumed sexual relationship with the Devil which resulted in the birth of Caliban, Shakespeare suggests that she viewed Ariel as a potential sexual partner. However, Ariel is "[an] spirit too delicate/ To act her earthy and abhorred commands,/ Refused her grand hests" and as a result of his refusal was imprisoned in a "cloven pine" (Act I, Scene ii, lines 272-277). Ariel refuses to discuss, and Prospero neglects to elucidate upon, the "earthy and abhorred commands" Sycorax made of Ariel, which resulted in imprisonment in a tree. Rachana Sachdev suggests that Sycorax's "abhorred commands" could "range in scope from religious to sexual…. Sycorax is seen in stereotypically witch-like form…associated with social and sexual deviance" (222-223).[318] The audience is left to contemplate the "grand hests" Ariel refused. The use of the word "earthy" indicates that the requests made of Ariel were "base," or sexual in nature.[319] Sycorax is thus described in terms the audience would recognize as intimately connected to the Devil and witchcraft, a pact assumed to have been sealed with the sex act which produced Caliban. Through her "grand hests," and

[317] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest.* Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. (Act 1 Scene 2, lines 258-320), pp.15-18. Cotton Mather also referred to Tituba as a "hag".

[318] Sachdev, Rachana. "Sycorax in Algiers: Cultural Politics and Gynecology in Early Modern England." *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*. Edited by Dympna Callaghan. Oxford; Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp. 208-225.

[319] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, "earthy" can mean, "Coarse, unrefined, crude; grossly material."

"abhorred commands," Sycorax is established as, if not a usurper of the Devil's power, then at least his agent on the island—which is why she seeks to corrupt and damn Ariel. Further, Sycorax's power continues to maintain a presence and threat on the island long after she is dead.[320] Her assumed maleficium exists physically in Caliban, and spiritually in Ariel, through atmospheric transmission. Thus, Shakespeare's text reflects the link forged between female sexuality and perceived threats to the community, which are used to justify and reinforce Sycorax's exile from Algiers, the text, and literary criticism.

As previously mentioned, the danger that pregnancy posed to women, especially those who fell outside society's restrictive gender norms, led to many abortion attempts (successful and otherwise). Rather than suffer a fate similar to Sycorax and cast the same suspicions on her child as were directed towards Caliban, Tituba chooses to terminate when she discovers she is carrying John Indian's child. While Tituba is haunted by this decision for the rest of the text, and seeks surrogates to replace her lost child, Condé casts abortion as the lone means of escape for condemned women (Condé 52).

While imprisoned following her confession of witchcraft, Tituba finds herself held in a cell with a very pregnant Hester Prynne, Nathaniel Hawthorne's long suffering heroine in *The Scarlet Letter (*Condé 95).[321] The Hester presented by Condé precedes Hawthorne's: a still-

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[320] Though Sycorax is dead in *The Tempest*, Michelle Cliff asserts that she permeates the Prospero's island and the landscapes of the Caribbean islands which are female (46). Further, quoting Aimé Césaire, Cliff problematizes whether or not Sycorax is actually dead as she lives through the memory of those on Prospero's island. Caliban states: "you only think [Sycorax] is dead because you think the earth itself is dead. . . . It's much simpler that way. Dead, you can walk on it, pollute it, and can tread upon it with the steps of a conqueror. I respect the earth because I know that it is alive, and I know that Sycorax is alive. Sycorax. Mother" (46). See Michelle Cliff's "Caliban's Daughter: The Tempest and the Teapot." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1991), pp. 36-51.

[321] Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter.* In *The Portable Hawthorne*. Edited by Malcolm Cowley. New York: Penguin Books, 1976. The choice of inserting Hester Prynne, Hawthorne's perhaps most well-known character, into the historical moment of 1692 Salem Village is a very specific and pointed choice. Nathaniel Hawthorne was a descendant of John Hathorne, one of the presiding judges during the witchcraft trials. Judge

pregnant Hester who, after being accused of adultery—a crime as severe in Puritan New England as witchcraft—finds kinship with Tituba in the experience of female marginalization and oppression.[322] Yet while Tituba seeks a way to escape death (the ordained punishment for her crimes, had she not confessed), Hester seeks an escape for herself and her unborn child in death. Rather than await judgment issued by a society that views her actions and sexuality as monstrous, and connected to the demonic, and suffer a fate like Sycorax, Hester chooses to commit suicide (111). Given the ever-present threat of violence against women, aimed at curbing and containing female sexuality, suicide and abortion can be viewed as acts of female resistance.[323]

In *I, Tituba,* both Hester and Tituba choose to become the women society already believed them to be. The striking element here is that Hester and Tituba have a choice: they choose to act. They are not merely subject to the whims and ideologies of others; they are agents, and their agency finds them embracing and redefining their culturally imposed identities. Seeing

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Hathorne was a party to the many people sentenced to death by hanging in Salem and the nearby communities of Ipswich, and Andover. It is believed that Nathaniel changed the spelling of his last name from "Hathorne" to "Hawthorne" in an effort to distance himself from his family's role in the trials. As a result of this connection, it is no wonder that nearly sixty years after the trials, Hawthorne was still interested in and working through his feelings about Puritancore.

[322] A crime which aligns a pregnant Hester with Tituba as well as a pregnant Sycorax.

[323] By taking the lives of herself and he unborn child, Condé's Hester gains control over her own body and narrative, and extends her influence beyond *I, Tituba*. In this way, she "undoes" Hawthorne's text as well. A dead Hester cannot emerge from Hawthorne's prison in *The Scarlet Letter* with the newborn Pearl, under the hateful eyes of the villagers. She cannot be martyred or made into a heroine who suffers silently as the father of her illegitimate child, Arthur Dimmesdale, remains free from public shame and ignominy. Understanding the world that she will bring her daughter into, and the ways in which Hester's perceived transgressions will be believe to be inherited by Pearl through maternal impressionism—the sins of the mother made manifest—Hester resists in one of the only ways available to a woman: she controls her narrative by ending it. Condé unravels Hawthorne's text by recreating Hester as a feminist, who subverts the master narrative of both women's roles in society and literature (101). By committing suicide and infanticide, actions very much linked in the Puritan mind to witchcraft and the demonic, Condé establishes a connection between Hester, Tituba, and all vilified women.

For a discussion on the appearance of Hester Prynne in *I, Tituba* See Michelle Smith's, "Reading in Circles: Sexuality and/as History in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem." Callaloo*, No. 18, Vol. 3, Maryse Condé: A Special Issue (Summer, 1995), pp. 602-607. Specifically, Smith asserts that the "interchange" between Tituba and Hester "is improbable to the point of undermining the verisimilitude of the text…as well as mercilessly parodying the very (received) notion of feminist rewriting" (603).

opportunity rather than destruction in the accusation of witchcraft, Condé's Hester encourages Tituba to confess to practicing witchcraft, and urges:

> Make them scared, Tituba! Give them their money's worth! Describe [Satan] as a billy goat with an eagle's beak for a nose, a body covered in long black hair . . . Let them tremble, let them quake and swoon. Let them dance to the sound of his flute in the distance. Tell them about the witches meetings, where they all arrive on broomstick their jaws dripping with anticipation at the thought of a feast of fetus and newly born babies served with many a mug of fresh blood . . . Give names, give names! . . . they believe it . . . Describe it! (99-100)

Condé's Tituba does just that. She takes Hester's advice and weaves a fantastic fiction, much like the created fiction of witchcraft. In this, Condé creates a metanarrative, asserting its artificiality by exposing the historical basis for female persecution. Establishing her power and challenging the misogynistic agenda of those who have subjugated and vilified her and all women, Tituba confesses. As part of her defense, Tituba extends her circle of influence; thus, she declares "four women and one man" compelled her to hurt the children and serve Satan, offering her material possessions, and forcing her to inflict pinches and pains on other women in Salem Village (Condé 104-5). In many ways, the advice Hester gives Tituba is sound. Tituba muses, "Trust a Minster's daughter to know a thing or two about Satan! Hadn't [Hester] eaten at his table since childhood? Hadn't he sprawled on her eiderdown in her cheerless bedchamber, staring at her with his yellowish eyes?" (Condé 99). Hester understands Salem and its inhabitants: she understands that, without a confession, Tituba will be executed. Nevertheless, the confession must be plausible—it must be dramatic, and it must play into the society's long-held and reinforced belief system.

In confessing her "guilt," Tituba saves herself, performing her outwardly prescribed role so well that Samuel Parris remarks, "well spoken, Tituba. You understood what we expected of you" (Condé 106).[324] Tituba was expected to confirm that society's deepest fears about women were true and, by extension, legitimize the centuries of violence and abuse suffered by women. In their acts of subversion, Tituba and Hester exposed the condition of women in seventeenth century New England. Through Tituba and Hester, Condé gives voice to the maligned and accused women who have endured and struggled under the oppressive weight of the patriarchy. By doing so, she reveals the ways in which women have been coerced into implicating themselves to satisfy those who viewed them as suspect, especially in connection to their sexuality or reproductive capabilities.

Female sexuality was viewed not only as a marker of women's transgressions, and crimes committed against the community, but also of a compact made between them and the Devil. Yet unlike Sycorax in *The Tempest,* Tituba subverts the common associations between female sexuality and the demonic, manifested as witchcraft. While Condé's Tituba is highly sexualized, her sexuality does not pose a threat to anyone except herself. In many ways, Condé's text supports not a vilification of female sexuality, but a warning against women choosing men, and male sexual partners, instead of finding strength and power in their own feminine experience and community. Thus, Condé exposes the ways in which women participate in their own marginalization, by implicitly and explicitly contributing to the patriarchy seeking to destroy them.

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[324] Mara L. Dukats suggests that "forced to deny her self and to affirm her subjugation to a masculine power, Tituba assumed an identity that her oppressors had designed (747). "A Narrative of Violated Maternity: Moi, Tituba, sorcière …Noire de Salem." *World Literature Today*, Vol. 76, No. 4 Focus on Maryse Condé (Autumn 1993), pp. 745-750.

Prior to her arrival in Salem Village, Tituba was a strong independent woman, connected to the natural world of spirits and healing. She voluntarily chooses slavery and subjugation in order to maintain a largely sexual relationship with John Indian. To be with him, Tituba—a free woman after the murder of her mother, and the death of Mama Yaya—willingly enters into the service of Barbados plantation and slave owner Susanna Endicott. As soon as she does so, she starts to transform from a subject to an object.[325] Upon entering a room occupied by Endicott and several of her female friends, Tituba muses:

> You would think I wasn't standing there at the threshold of the room. They were talking about me and yet ignoring me. They were striking me off the map of human beings. I was a nonbeing. Invisible . . . Tituba only existed insofar as these women let her exist. It was atrocious. Tituba became ugly, coarse, and inferior because they willed her so. (Condé 24)

In this moment, Tituba moves from first to third person, from agency to passivity. Under the oppressive colonial gaze of Endicott and her guests, Tituba begins to fade from history and the page as a person and starts to become an emblem. She transforms from "I" to "she," from autonomy to slavery, from subject to object. In that moment, Tituba becomes invisible to those around her and to history, while simultaneously asserting the necessity of her narrative, experience, and sexualized physical body.

3.6 A Sisterhood of Witchcraft

Women who embraced their sexuality—in the eyes of Puritan Salem Village, Renaissance England, and twentieth century America—were viewed as rebelling against the

[325] Susana Endicott would eventually sell John Indian to Samuel Parris. To stay with her lover, Tituba voluntarily enters Samuel Parris' employment, essentially choosing slavery. See Condé, *I, Tituba*, pp. 34-36.

socially stratified patriarchal order. Cotton Mather wrote that witches refused to obey the rule of God, as enforced by the clergy, so insisted that "rebellion is a sin of witchcraft" (Karlsen 149). In fact, it was believed that at the heart of witchcraft was sexuality. It was argued in *Malleus Maleficarum*, "all witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is insatiable" (Karlsen 156). But Tituba's sexuality does not endanger the community, and it does not invite the demonic. Though seventeenth and twentieth century critics and authors often equate female sexuality and subjectivity with demonic threats to communal wellbeing, Tituba's quest for love and human connection—as expressed through her sexualized body—condemns Tituba alone, and dooms her to literary inaccuracy and historical effacement.

Perhaps Shakespeare's Sycorax was also condemned for love, for a human familial connection, and for an assumption that her sphere of influence would extend beyond herself and her immediate offspring to the surrounding community. Sycorax exists in as few details as Tituba, but what readers of *The Tempest* do know is that she was pregnant, and that her life is spared as a result. Similarly, Hester Prynne's crime of adultery becomes known when her pregnancy is discovered, but despite her inability to control her carnal desire, her delicate state keeps her from the gallows. Further, Arthur Miller's duplicitous vixen Abigail Williams is driven to revenge against Elizabeth Proctor, and all of Salem, for her failed affair with John Proctor. Though Abigail is not pregnant, her crime is aligned with the misdeeds of Sycorax and Hester, for she has succumbed to lust, and thereby to the pact made through sex—not with her sexual partner, but with the Devil. Thus, she has sealed her fate. Sycorax, Tituba, Hester, and Abigail all share one monstrous trait: they are highly sexualized and feminized beings. As a result, they and all women must be taught a lesson.

However, while Condé seems to have found inspiration—or at least opportunity for the expansion of female agency in Shakespeare, Hawthorne, and the historical record—it is Miller who she actively distances herself from. The liberties Miller takes with both Tituba and Abigail advance a nakedly patriarchal agenda of male victimization and female vilification, and in turn require revision and correction. As purely literary figures, Sycorax and Hester are in a state of perpetual investigation and evolution; they live in the minds of readers, but do not exist off the page.[326] However, as a historical figure about whom little is known, Tituba, and to a lesser extent Abigail, fall again into a liminal space of fictional reality: a present absence. Because Miller's *The Crucible* crafted in myriad ways the modern conceptions of Salem's leading figures, it is Miller that Condé takes to task.

When asked in an interview by Ann Armstrong Scarboro if she had used *The Crucible* as a source when (re)creating Tituba Condé replied: "I saw an adaptation of the play . . . while I was a student. It did not impress me . . . I knew that Miller as a white male writer would not pay attention to a black woman" (202).[327] Condé was both right and wrong in this assertion. Miller simultaneously ignored and exposed Tituba, as he did the other historical female participants in the Salem witch trials, to scrutiny and vilification. He used their gender, possession, and/or accusation of witchcraft as a tool to further legitimize the continued marginalization and subjugation of women. After all, Miller contends, it was really Proctor's story, and by extension

[326] Due to the work of postcolonial and Afro-Caribbean scholarship and creative reimagining's by women writers and critics this is beginning to change. As stated in the Introduction, numerous female authors have identified with and sought to reclaim Sycorax. Further, Myriam Chancy asserts: [West Indian and Afro-Caribbean female authors] reclaim 'Sycorax' and abandon the myth of Caliban, for Afro-Caribbean women's search for freedom and dignity is focused on the reclamation of self, spirit, and body in light of a buried history rather than appealing to oppressive powers for a recognition and affirmation that will never, in truth, be freely granted" (168)

[327] Scarboro, Ann Armstrong. Afterword to *I, Tituba*, p. 202

it is always the male narrative and perspective that has primacy. Miller could not advance his patriarchal agenda without necessarily sacrificing mistreated and ignored women.

Perhaps this is too simplistic reading. Saying that women were merely collateral damage in the battle between good and evil which raged in the seventeenth—and the twentieth—centuries, would suggest that women were an afterthought, or (like Tituba) a footnote pointing to the threats posed to white male society. Rather, in this chapter, I have argued that women were the original target. Women during Shakespeare, Hawthorne, and Miller's times were moving towards more individual freedom and agency. Women were serving as midwives, local healers, and tavern operators.[328] They were also inheriting sizable lands and fortunes. All of this brought them a new-found freedom and independence. In an effort to buttress the patriarchy from this threat, women's bodies, sexuality, identities, and narratives had to be suppressed, vilified, and ultimately erased from history, culture, and the page. By focusing on the protean character of the figure of the witch, and naming any deviation from cultural gender norms as evidence of practicing witchcraft or being in league with the Devil, the continued marginalization and oppression of women was not only legitimate but a prerogative. In essence, any attempt at female agency or independence should be necessarily suppressed and warned against.

Historically there is no one singular explanation as to why a woman was accused of witchcraft. If a woman muttered under her breath, as Sarah Good did, she was thought to be voicing a curse. If a woman showed anger, or asserted herself, if she seemed discontent with her lot in life, or overly content, if she was foreign, or black, or a Native American, or in any way

[328] Diane Purkiss claims that the *Malleus Malificarum* "specifically singles out midwives for attack" (*The Witch in History* 21).

viewed as "other," she and her behavior became suspect.[329] If a woman suffered a miscarriage, or a still birth, if her pregnancy resulted in a "monstrous birth," or even if a surviving child was deemed "willful," it could be construed as a mark of her allegiance to the Devil. Any conscious or unconscious refusal to submit or uphold the gender norms of the time marked a woman as a witch. If a woman appeared in the dreams of a villager, she was thought to have sent her specter to torment her victim. Virtually any word, thought, dream, or action—either committed, or merely believed to have been committed by a woman—left her vulnerable to persecution. Therefore, in many ways, the hunt for witches—whether in Renaissance England, seventeenth century New England, Hawthorne's nineteenth century New England, or Miller's 1950s America—was fueled by the fear and anxiety that surrounded female difference.

The 1486 German text *Malleus Maleficarum*, by Henrich Institoris and Jakob Sprenger, and Fray Martin de Castanega of Spain's 1529 work, *Tratado de las Supersticiones y Hechicerías*[330] asserted that women were the natural targets of witchcraft investigations and executions. They did so by citing women's inherent moral deficiencies, when compared to men. Women, by their very natures, were viewed as:

> . . . more evil than men . . . created intellectually, morally, and physically weaker than men . . . women were susceptible to deeper affections and passions, harbored more uncontrollable appetites, and were more susceptible to deception. Unwilling to accept their deficiencies and unable to satisfy their inordinate desires, they more readily turned to Satan to fulfill their needs and to provide them with the power to avenge themselves . .

[329] For example, Ann Glover was executed in 1688 after having bewitched the Goodwin children. The most damning evidence against her was her inability to recite the Lord's Prayer in English. As an Irish Catholic, she was only able to recite the Lord's Prayer in Gaelic. See Schiff p. 67 and Mather, *Memorable Providences*.

[330] *Tratado de las Supersticiones y Hechicerías* translates to *Treatise on Superstitions and Sorceresses*. *Malleus Maleficarum* translates to *Hammer of Witches*.

. In sum[,] women became witches because they were born female, not male. (Karlsen 155-56)

However, I have argued that women were transformed into witches by men to punish them and control their "femaleness," or the sin of being born "wrong." By tracing the historical and literary figure of Tituba, and the ways in which her identity as a supposed "witch" has been shifted and manipulated racially, ethnically, and ethically from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries and beyond, I expose one of the many tools utilized in the ongoing process of discrediting and erasing problematic or transgressive women and female narratives. Condé, in restoring and giving voice to Tituba's silenced and ignored experiences, not only uncovers the violence committed against women and female characters, but also subverts the traditional stereotypes surrounding the figure of the witch. In so doing, *I, Tituba* compels readers and critics to reconsider all the women who have ever been accused of witchcraft, or have had witchcraft used as weapon against them.

In reexamining Tituba, we must also revisit and analyze Sycorax, Medea, Circe, Morgan le Fey, and countless other maligned women including Shakespeare's other ignored female characters like Claribel and even the idealized but misunderstood Miranda.[331] Myriam Chancy asserts, "it is by resurrecting not Sycorax the character, but what she stands for – the lost heritage of Black women – by returning her spirit to the living so that it may assume new life" that we can begin to redress the wrongs committed against women and especially the destabilizing body

[331] Sachdev asserts, "*The Tempest* presents Sycorax as the deviant, powerful, 'monster-like' female and Miranda as her opposite, a chaste obedient, and dutiful daughter (224). Traditionally Miranda is viewed in purely idealized terms, the "men she meets on the island refer to her as a 'godess'" (224). However, Sachdev, citing Eric Cheyfitz, notes that based on "etymological derivates" of the name Miranda, the character is "at least potentially defined as errant and monstrous" (224). Further Cheyfitz argues that contained in the name Miranda is both "monster" and "marvelous" (224). See Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from "The Tempest" to "Tarzan*." New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

of the witch (27). As readers and critics, we must ask if we have only been exposed to one version of these female characters. We must consider whether these protean figures have been unreasonably condemned and vilified, and if so, for what purpose. We must question if the "I" in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* refers to me, or you, or to every woman? Condé, in (re)creating Tituba, creates a sisterhood of witches and witchcraft. Within this sisterhood, the female slave and the female slave owner, the accused and the possessed, the tempted and the tempter, the subject and the object, find their experiences reflected and their silenced narratives restored. Revisiting implicated and accused women thus exposes the female ability to embody the multiple definitions and identifications of "witch" and, by extension, "woman." In so doing, Tituba, and all women accused of witchcraft, are humanized, for their experiences are rendered universal rather than individual. [332] When all women tainted by the stain of witchcraft are humanized, all women are restored to personhood.

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[332] Bernstein suggests: "The text humanises [sic]the witch figure as it exposes the ways in which dominant discourses construct and manipulate the epithet of 'witch' to dominate and contain individuals and groups who are different from and defiant of the social order" (84).

Chapter IV

Shakespeare's (Wo)Men in the Caribbean: The Tempest and Prospero's Daughter

Shakespeare's women in *The Tempest* have traditionally drawn only sporadic attention from scholars and critics. It was not until the 1940s with H.D.'s poetic address to Claribel and the subversive act of making her visible and giving her a voice that a female figure was even addressed. Jean Rhys, in the 1960s, began her own exploration of erased female narratives by providing a life and motivation for Brontë's Claribel figure in Antoinette. In the 1980s Maryse Condé focused her attention on the maligned figure of the witch by creating a connection between Sycorax and the historical figure of Tituba. For decades feminist scholars have actively pursued the silenced and elemental female identities represented by Claribel and Sycorax as sites of reclamation and rebellion. However, of the female triad established by Shakespeare in *The Tempest* the figure most often ignored or purposefully omitted is Miranda. Unfortunately for Miranda, while she would be duplicated, caricatured, and ventriloquized by numerous authors including J.M. Coetzee, she would not be fully realized as a dynamic and multidimensional agent until the early 2000s when Elizabeth Nunez made her the focus of her novel *Prospero's Daughter*.[333] Without Miranda, and the identity she represents, female unification and prismatism is impossible. Thus, to fully restore womanhood, Miranda must also be viewed as an integral part of the triad, and one that deserves the same attention Claribel and Sycorax have received which she has previously been excluded from.

Continuing the feminist line of research established in the 1970s, which brought Claribel and Sycorax to the forefront of feminist and postcolonial Shakespearian criticism, I focus this

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[333] Nunez, Elizabeth. *Prospero's Daughter*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006.

chapter on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611) and Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter* (2006). My close reading is methodologically shaped by both feminist theory and new historicism, and it enables me to argue that Miranda is both a character and a trope in these texts. In doing so, I challenge the traditional academic tendency to dismiss Miranda as either a flat character who lacks agency, or as merely an idealized virginal woman. Moreover, I recover the persona of Miranda as a potential site of female rebellion and unification—a possibility heretofore ignored by postcolonial critics and scholars. Perhaps responding to the marginalization of Miranda as Prospero's complicit and dutiful partner in cruelty to Caliban, female authors have recovered her in ways that scholars have overlooked, seeing subversiveness and agency in all her interactions with her father and the other men with whom she comes into contact.

That Miranda has been overlooked as a model of female literary empowerment by critics is surprising. From her first appearance in Act I Scene ii of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Miranda subverts the elemental role to which she has been relegated: that of the obedient, dutiful, virginal, idealized woman. More specifically, Miranda rebels against this elemental categorization of her "self," by challenging her father's order to "Obey and be attentive."[334] Miranda's struggle to embody the female reality as a multiple and progressive self is illustrated by the pressures placed upon her to simultaneously conform to her father's demand that she marry for political reasons (as had the commodified Claribel), as well as her own desire for autonomy—which might perhaps lead her to be "promiscuous" like Sycorax (Sanchez 69).[335] This suggests that scholars

[334] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. (Act I, Scene ii 38), pp. 8. Subsequent references to *The Tempest* will refer to this edition unless otherwise noted.

[335] Sanchez, Melissa E. "Seduction and Service in *The Tempest*," *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 105, No. 1 (Winter, 2008), pp. 50-82.

would do better to view Miranda, Claribel, and Sycorax on the basis of their similarities, rather than fixating on how they are defined and controlled by their differences. It also highlights the fact that Miranda is not merely an idealized, virginal, obedient daughter: she is also and concurrently a commodity to be traded in an advantageous alliance through marriage. Further, her innate, post-lapsarian sexuality marks her as a (potential) whore who must be controlled and brought into submission. Viewing Miranda through the lens of female multiplicity empowers her to speak and exert more agency in her own role in *The Tempest* as a well as future revisions and appropriations.

Miranda has been pitted against the other female characters, both absent and present in *The Tempest*, to amplify her innate goodness against their more problematic or transgressive features. However, Miranda exhibits a natural resistance to her father and his authority in Shakespeare's original text. This disobedience is amplified in *Prospero's Daughter*, Nunez's recent adaptation of Shakespeare's play, and creates important possibilities for feminist literary interpretation. At the end of her article, "'Miranda, Where's Your Sister?': Reading Shakespeare's *The Tempest*," Ann Thompson poses several open-ended questions regarding the future of feminist criticism of *The Tempest*. Poignantly, she asks, "What kind of pleasure can a woman and a feminist take in this text beyond the rather grim one of mapping its various patterns of exploitation? Must a feminist reading [of *The Tempest*] necessarily be a negative one?" (177).[336] In fact, thanks to my reading of Nunez, I can confidently respond to Thompson's question by saying: No, readings of *The Tempest* do not need to be "grim." *Prospero's Daughter* reveals through Virginia, the Miranda stand-in, that an empowered feminist reading of *The*

[336] Thompson, Ann. "Miranda, Where's Your Sister?': Reading Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. Edited by Deborah Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995. pp. 168-177.

Tempest has been hidden in the shadows all along—not unlike its female characters. This is because Virginia embodies all three female identities which had previously been used to fragment and vilify women. By virtue of the fact that Virginia is both resistant and subversive, she un-silences Miranda and moves her to the center from her margins.

Tracing the arc of Miranda's character in these two texts makes clear that feminist critics of *The Tempest* have erred in their tendency to treat the three prominent female characters in this narrative separately. In other words, much is lost when scholars focus their interpretive attentions exclusively on Miranda *or* Claribel *or* Sycorax. Miranda does not merely inhabit one of the potential identities that women were forced by their society and its patriarchy to assume; rather, Miranda bridges the divide between Claribel and Sycorax. However, an investigation of Miranda and the subversive role she plays both as a mediator and agitator of female identities, female characters, female authors, audience members, and critics is an important and omitted contribution of *Tempest* scholarship.

In order to comprehend Miranda's multiplicity and the ways in which her "unsilencing" subverts her cultural and gender norms, one must consider both the world in which Shakespeare constructed her and her literary legacy. Nunez's decision to focus on and restore Miranda through her character Virginia hinges on Miranda's ability to reconcile and unify the patriarchal attempt to erase her. Thus, to analyze Nunez's text, we must first look back to the work in which Miranda was created and Shakespeare's original audience who would view her as either an idealized version of limited femininity, or a place of female resistance. Nunez's text serves to counter the postcolonial literary tradition which assert's Miranda's disposability.

4.1 Miranda: Subtly Subversive

For decades the female characters from the play have been ignored in favor of a more obvious focus: Caliban. While Claribel and Sycorax have garnered some literary and scholarly attention for the ways in which they have been vilified or exiled by the men around them, Miranda has been viewed as insignificant. Miranda is depicted as a passive observer at best, or an obedient participant in her father's will to power. However, contrary to many (predominantly male authored) postcolonial literary appropriations and criticism of *The Tempest*, Caliban is not the only victim of Prospero's scheme to regain his throne and enact revenge against his usurping brother.[337] Miranda becomes an unwitting pawn in her father's plan, a role that attempts to fragment her identity and control her. In Miranda, competing female identities—those represented by Claribel and Sycorax—merge and do battle. Miranda, as the only woman physically present on the island, stands at the crossroads of femininity and the three potential roles available to women: virgin, commodity, or whore/witch. As such, Miranda can either conform to her father and society's desires for her to become a commodity, or she can rebel and embrace the patriarchy's greatest fears about women: that they are whores, easily seduced by their natural proclivities. However, postcolonial and feminist critics have failed to recognize the extent to which Miranda embodies both the socioeconomic value of Claribel, and the wanton sexuality of Sycorax. She is always, and never, multiple.

So Miranda, it appears, must choose a female identity with which to align herself. She can emulate Claribel, whose sole act of agency was to appeal to her father against his order that she marry the King of Tunis, but who—nevertheless—eventually acquiesced to a match she did not support, and in turn suffered virtual banishment to Africa. Or Miranda can become like

[337] Of course, Ariel is also victimized by Prospero and forced to inhabit the role of an indentured servant. Ariel however is not my focus here.

Sycorax, who through her embodiment of sexual power—as an accused witch ostensibly impregnated by the devil—displayed more agency than any early modern audience would find acceptable. Thus, between these two women, Miranda occupies a contested space between obedience and destruction. Her ultimate social and political fate is in limbo. And she has, her father believes, the ability to be swayed to either side. However, this limited and limiting view of Miranda ultimately fails in that it does not account for the true nature of women to be, what Peter Stallybrass defined as, "grotesque."[338] What I am arguing is that Miranda is not being pulled between roles, but that she is *already* both Claribel and Sycorax. This reading removes Prospero's power over Miranda, the power to control her identity and pressure her to conform to the conception of femininity he endorses.

Miranda is the physical body upon which both Prospero's political and ideological ambition and Caliban's libidinal desire are inscribed. Thus, if she is pulled between any two opposites or extremes they are created and controlled by the patriarchy rather than her own self-conception or an intrinsic female weakness. She struggles against being defined by the men around her and being forced to occupy the female role that best suits their ends. Therefore, Miranda is simultaneously both a colonizer and a victim of colonization—a condition which Laura E. Donaldson refers to as "The Miranda Complex" (68).[339] To this end, Jennifer Bess states that Miranda "is…at once the sole heiress of Prospero's magical powers and the joint

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[338] Stallybrass claims that "women's bodies were assumed to be '*naturally* grotesque'… the grotesque body is 'unfinished, outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits'" (124). In comparison, man is viewed as "finished, completed" (124). See Peter Stallybrass, "Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed." *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*. Edited by Margaret W. Ferguson; Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J Vickers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986, pp. 123-42. Original Emphasis.

[339] Donaldson, Laura E. "The Miranda Complex: Colonialism and the Question of Feminist Reading *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Imagination* by Sandra M. Gilbert; Susan Gubar; *Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism* by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak" *Diacritics*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 65-77. See also Josette Feral, "The Powers of Difference." *The Future of Difference*. Edited by Hester Eisenstein and Alice Jardine. Boston: Hall/Barnard College Women's Center, 1980. pp. 89.

victim of his tyranny after she suffers with the sailors being tossed by the tempest and the two surviving natives to the island" (78).[340] In this way, Miranda lives between two worlds: the world in which she is the daughter of the Duke of Milan—and thus a highly prized commodity to be traded in marriage—and the world in which she is a native inhabitant of a remote and isolated island: a noble savage, but a savage nonetheless.[341]

Denied the privilege of self-definition and pulled between competing impulses, Miranda both participates in the forced enslavement of Caliban, and is herself a focus of her father's project of colonization and conquest. Miranda consequently benefits from the social stratification her father has imposed on the island and the subjugation of its lone inhabitant, Caliban; by abusing him verbally and physically (by increasing his labors), she implicates herself in his suffering. Yet she is also a victim of her father's colonizing project, in that Prospero attempts to position her as both a subject and an object, a pawn and a beneficiary in his revenge plot. Even so, Miranda—and the audience which views and reads about her—is not wholly without agency. Namely, she has a choice to make: she can yield to her father's desires (as did Claribel), or she can embrace her own, seemingly defying her father's decree to choose her own mate and future and be politically and socially destroyed (as was Sycorax). The critical uneasiness that has surrounded Miranda up until now doubtless bears some responsibility for the lack of scholarship about her. Unlike Prospero and Caliban whose roles within the text, especially if read through a

[340] Bess, Jennifer. "Imploding the Miranda Complex in Julia Alvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*." *College Literature*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (Winter, 2007), pp. 78-105.

[341] Miranda, although born into the nobility of Milan, would have been viewed in the sixteenth century as "natural" or "savage", her "civility" washed away by her banishment and childhood spent on the island. So while Miranda is idealized and pure, untouched and/or uncorrupted by city life, her removal from that realm means she has not been subject to the civilizing influence of patriarchy. Therefore, if Caliban has a double, it is Miranda. This makes her just as threatening and destabilizing as him.

postcolonial lens, fit snuggly into the colonizer/colonized binary, to put it bluntly, critics have not seemed to know what to do with Miranda.

In much the same way that Caliban was originally perceived as an exercise of Shakespeare's creative power and ingenuity, Anna Jameson suggests that Miranda "resembles nothing on earth" (Thompson 170).[342] Yet this description should not be taken as praise. Rather Miranda is representative of an unattainable female ideal, created by a male author, and reinforced by male scholarship. Due to readers and audience members' inability to identify with Miranda, investigation into her as both a character and a trope has been limited and flimsy at best. Perhaps dissuading critical investigation into Miranda Jameson further suggests that, in Prospero's daughter, Shakespeare has created a text in which "the feminine character appears resolved into its very elementary principles—as modesty, grace, and tenderness" (Thompson 170).[343] Not only does Miranda not resemble anything on earth, she is merely a collection of qualities rather than a person, an "element" but not a whole. Miranda is something to be admired and wondered at rather than a representation of a flesh and blood woman.

Similarly, Ann Thompson suggests that, when treated at all, Miranda's perceived perfection as the living embodiment of innocence means that she has become "much more popular with male than with female readers" (170). The male view of Miranda sees her, again, through an idealized lens. Miranda's is an "admirable chastity" which all women should emulate

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[342] The name "Miranda" was originally coined by Shakespeare and takes its origins from the Latin mīrandus: which is to be wondered or marveled at.

[343] Anna Jameson is quoted in Ann Thompson's chapter, "Miranda, Where's Your Sister?': Reading Shakespeare's *The Tempest*." *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. Edited by Deborah Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995, pp. 168-177.

(Frey 133).[344] Women, viewing Miranda as a passive contributor to her father's plot to revenge himself on his brother, Antonio, and Caliban have distanced themselves from her and choose not to self-identify with her. Therefore, for 350 years Miranda was largely ignored by both male and female critics. Yet it is Miranda whom Shakespeare offers as the location of audience identification. Sanchez points out that viewers of the play, both male and female, "[share] Miranda's perception of the storm and thus occupy her role as spectator to be both manipulated and pleased, the congruent analogies of audience and woman as political subjects merge in the figure of Prospero's nubile daughter" (53). Miranda is again denied definition and stability becoming both a participant and a spectator, she is central to the plot and the lens through which the audience enters the action on stage.

In much the same way that Miranda straddles and contains multiple identities, *The Tempest*, Stephen Orgel suggests, is a play which transcends the limitations and boundaries of genre, and is "as much concerned with tragic as with comic themes: the nature of authority and power; the conflicting claims of vengeance and forgiveness, of justice and mercy; the realities of reconciliation and the possibility of regeneration"(5).[345] The characters within Shakespeare's text share an uneasiness of classification and definition, a certain freedom of self-fashioning not always available in either the early modern or the twenty-first century worlds.

The blurring of borders is amplified by the exilic island environment in which *The Tempest* it set, providing for each figure an opportunity for transformation and transition. The liminal space of Prospero's isle supports the opportunity for the characters to (re)define

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[344] Frey, Charles. "Shakespeare's Imperiled and Chastening Daughters of Romance." *South Atlantic Bulletin*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 50th Anniversary Issue (Nov., 1978), pp. 125-140.

[345] See Stephen Orgel's "Introduction" to *The Tempest*.

themselves. For example, Prospero sets his sights on reclaiming his usurped Dukedom and taking revenge on those whom he feels have wronged him. Caliban works to restore his right to rule the island, which was stolen from him by Prospero. The capacity for transformation manifests in the male characters in terms of political power; with Sebastian and Antonio dreaming of usurping the thrones of Naples and Milan, and Gonzalo desiring the creation of a Utopia.[346] The ability to transmute does not necessarily indicate a positive change, however, there is also the possibility of a negative transformation or moral and emotional devolution. Even as an idealized space of seeming infinite possibility, characters on the island are afforded the possibility of action and choice. In this way, transformation is not limited to the male characters.

Miranda is also afforded the opportunity to undergo a metamorphosis. However, Miranda, seen as weaker due to her gender, is considered more likely to be corrupted in her alteration and therefore must be more closely monitored to discourage moral and physical degradation. Miranda's positioning on the island, and the mutability extended to her in this locale, suggests that the embodiment of one identity does not negate other alternative identities. Her father must rein in her natural tendency towards agency in order to prevent her from becoming a Sycorax. In an effort to thwart Miranda's burgeoning curiosity and enforce obedience, Prospero resorts to using his magical arts on her to keep her docile. In Act I, scene ii, when Miranda seeks to know too much, Prospero entreats her:

PROSPERO: Here cease more questions.

Thou art inclined to sleep. 'Tis a good dullness,

[346] *The Tempest*, Act II, Scene i, lines 143-205

And give it way. I know thou canst not choose.

[MIRANDA *sleeps.*] (lines 184-186)

With a growing awareness that his daughter has the ability to choose her own path and self-fashion, Prospero takes pains to not only control the information and experiences she is exposed to but can and does render her unconscious when it will be beneficial to him. Induced sleep becomes a means through which Prospero retains power on his island and limits its inhabitant's agency. By utilizing his power over Miranda, Prospero seems to concede that Miranda is in danger of embodying the wrong kind of femininity, one connected with knowledge acquisition. Thus, in a state of transformative flux, Miranda is afforded multiplicity. Much to her father's chagrin, and against all his attempts, Miranda early in the drama begins to exhibit signs of rebellion. Yet, Prospero is doomed in his attempts to control her identity. Miranda does not have to choose one of the gendered identities her father believes is available to her, rather, all three identities already exist simultaneously within her. Miranda refuses singularity and instead displays a multiplicity her father struggles to contain.

The power of transformation extends beyond the borders of the island to the seas that swirl around it, blurring the distinctions between sea and sky (Morrison 4). *The Tempest* opens, as the title suggests, with a chaotic scene. King Alonso of Naples' fleet is returning to Italy after having delivered the King's only daughter Claribel in marriage to the King of Tunis.[347] The storm is raised by Prospero, with the help of his airy servant Ariel, to bring the ship's occupants to his island. Marooned, Prospero can force both retribution and reconciliation with his usurping brother Antonio, who is aboard the ship, and orchestrate a union between Miranda and Alonso's

[347] Claribel is the focus of Chapter 2: "Commodifying the Body: The Politics of Sacrifice in *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*."

son and heir, Ferdinand. Miranda watches the fleet's destruction from the shores of the island in horror. Groomed to be obedient, she is the instrument through which Prospero intends to achieve his revenge. However, Miranda is not as easily controlled as Prospero would wish.

Early in Shakespeare's text, Miranda exhibits both naïve innocence and resistance to being defined by and against her father, Caliban, and the shipwrecked men who come ashore. Speaking the first lines in Act I scene ii, she initially questions the nature and source of the shipwreck she has just witnessed:

> MIRANDA. *If* by your art, my dearest father, you have
>
> Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them (lines 1-2).[348]

Miranda cannot be certain that her father is the source of the powerful storm which brings apparent death and destruction. In this moment, she questions the extent of Prospero's powers over the natural world; she also implores this seemingly violent and wrathful man to assert his goodness by distancing himself from such destructive wickedness. Giving her father the opportunity to disavow any responsibility for his inhumane act suggests that Miranda does not want to believe her father is capable of such violence. However, questioning her father also forces Prospero to defend himself against any accusations of cruelty and allows Miranda to issue a directive to her father to "allay them." Here Miranda attempts to bend her father to her will, almost chastising him as she would a child, in a role reversal.

Miranda then goes a step farther, critiquing her father's choice to raise the tempest, stating:

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[348] Emphasis mine.

MIRANDA. Had I been any god of power, I would

Have sunk the sea within the earth, or ere

It should the good ship so have swallowed, and

The fraughting souls within her. (lines 10-13)

If she had power, Miranda indicates, she would never use it as terribly as had her father. Miranda passes judgment on her father and in both these and the following lines very clearly delineates the kind of person she wants to be by distancing herself from her father and his actions. He responds by calming her and the audience's fears about the true nature of the tempest, stating:

PROSPERO: Be collected.

No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart

There's no harm done. (lines 13-15)

The tempest is part of Prospero's art, magic he creates to help him control both nature and all those around him. However, Miranda, kept in the dark as to her father's true intentions in raising the tempest, or his larger colonial project, begins to push against Prospero's art, questioning him, the world around her, and her place within it.

Raising the tempest is not the only art Prospero displays. Miranda is as much a creation of her father as is the storm. To this end, Prospero continues to explain to Miranda—and through her to the audience—her backstory, his exile from Milan, their arrival on the island, and his reason for creating the tempest. Prospero's exposition doubles as an attempt to define Miranda by assigning her an identity: a passive cipher he can maneuver to fulfill his project of

reconciliation.[349] Prospero sees Miranda as a blank slate he can mold and manipulate forcing sleep on her when she seeks to know too much, or act in a way he does not directly control. Miranda struggles against her father's belief that it is his paternal duty to establish who and what she is, impose an identity on her and, by doing so, render her a non-entity, defined only by the men around her and their need to capitalize on her body. To this end, Prospero tells Miranda that she is "ignorant of what thou art" (I, ii, line 18). Prospero's idealization of Miranda is driven by his belief that he can impose upon her the gender identity of his choice.

Yet Miranda's response to her father is not obedience and immediate deference. Her language is both ambiguous and subversive. Ignorant though she may be of "what" she is, she claims:

> MIRANDA. More to know
>
> Did never meddle with my thoughts. (I, ii, lines 21-22)

Miranda's reaction of indifference and even boredom to finally being told her origin story—a story which has been denied to her for her entire life—can be read several ways. Most critics see Miranda's lack of curiosity as a sign of her perfect innocence and her willingness to let her father choose the correct time to explain things to her, as he sees fit. In this reading, Miranda is positioned as deferential, naïve, and limited in her scope of knowledge and understanding. However, this line can also be read quite differently: as a sign of Miranda's resistance to being defined by her father. Her statement that she never once thought about her backstory doubles as

[349] Jessica Slights also critiques the reduction of Miranda to a "cipher, a figure important only for her unwitting role in helping to realize her father's political aspirations" (361).

an assertion that she did and does not want to be told who she is—she wants to discover her own identity and exert her own agency.

Over the next 40 lines of text, as Prospero unwinds his tale, Miranda repeatedly challenges his role as a storyteller and, by extension, as the creator of her history and identity. He has to chastise his daughter seven times to pay attention to him, stating (in sequential order):

> PROSPERO. Obey, and be attentive . . . (I, ii, line 38);
>
> I pray thee mark me . . . (line 67);
>
> Dost thou attend me? . . . (line 78);
>
> Thou attend'st not? . . . (line 87);
>
> I pray thee, mark me . . . (line 88);
>
> Dost thou hear? . . . (line 106),
>
> . . . sit still . . . (line 170)

Instead of being enthralled by her father's speech, Miranda is impatient, even bored. She even insults Prospero by telling him that his tale would "cure deafness" (line 106). The stereotyped Miranda is nowhere to be found in this exchange: she is anything but an idealized, naïve, and one-dimensional cipher. Rather, she is willful and frustratingly independent.

Citing the etymology of the name "Miranda"—the root of which (like the word "monster") signifies "something 'marvelous'"—Rachana Sachdev asserts that Miranda is "at least potentially defined [by Shakespeare] as errant and monstrous . . . This potential for

deviance needs to be curtailed" (224).[350] Far from exhibiting her complicity with her father and his colonizing project during this exchange, Miranda questions Prospero to the point of calling into question her own paternity:

> PROSPERO: …Thy father was the Duke of Milan and
>
> A prince of power.
>
> MIRANDA: Sir, are not you my father?
>
> PROSPERO: Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and
>
> She said thou wast my daughter, and thy father
>
> Was Duke of Milan, and his only heir,
>
> And princess, no worse issued. (Act I, scene ii lines 54-59)

This exchange between Miranda and her father points to the text's obsession with the dangers unchecked female sexuality holds for both society and individuals. According to Stephen Cohen, "cuckoldry represented a danger not just to the sanctity of marriage but, given the possibility of pregnancy, to the security of paternity…cuckoldry was a threat to social status and even masculinity: to be cuckolded…was to be emasculated or effeminized" (6).[351] Therefore,

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[350] Sachdev, Rachana. "Sycorax in Algiers: Cultural Politics and Gynecology in Early Modern England," in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*. Edited by Dympna Callaghan. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp. 208-225.

[351] Cohen, Stephen. "'No assembly but Horn-Beast': The Politics of Cuckoldry in Shakespeare's Romantic Comedies." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (Fall-Winter, 2004), pp. 5-34. See also Coppélia Kahn, "'The Savage Yoke': Cuckoldry and Marriage." *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981. pp. 119-150.

Miranda's inquiry about her lineage calls into question not only her mother's virtue, but her father's as well.

The brief exchange between Miranda and Prospero introduces the specter of marital infidelity and "patrilineal inheritance" onto the island (Cohen 6). While nineteenth and early twentieth century interpretations of *The Tempest* paint Prospero's control of the play's "events and characters as entirely benign," later critics have favored a more sinister interpretation, "suggesting that Prospero's concern with his daughter's sexuality might indicate an incestuous desire for her" (Thompson 173-174). Miranda's virginity, and thus her ability to inhabit the idealized female identity with which she has become aligned, must be protected not just from potential suitors, but from masculinity in general—even that associated with her father. In fact, Miranda's words indicate subtle resistance if they are understood as a response to inappropriately sexual and even incestuous attention. It also raises the possibility that Prospero's obsession with Miranda's purity—and his insistence that she stay away from Ferdinand (lest his lust for her become too strong to control)—is a form of psychological projection. Prospero assumes that both Caliban and Ferdinand will be as attracted to Miranda as he is. In fact, Prospero legitimizes his (mis)treatment of Caliban by accusing him in Act I, Scene ii of attempting to rape Miranda: "thou didst seek to violate / The honour of my child" (lines 347-48). Thus, in chastising them, he is also chastising himself for his impure thoughts and urges. Miranda's budding sexuality and desirability must be controlled, oppressed, and infantilized: not only to safeguard her from whoredom, and thereby to preserve her potential to serve as a commodified bride, but also to help the men around her resist their own base desires. Because Miranda's presence in the drama "introduce[s] the possibilit[y] of marriage, courtship, and sexual desire," her character must be read as more than a mere trope of idealized womanhood (Sanchez 52). She is also the

embodiment of men's ongoing fear that women will tempt them to "fall." Therefore, to protect men, women had to be desexualized or even destroyed.

4.2 Within Miranda, a Multiplicity

Miranda exists in an unstable and destabilizing position due to her ability to have her identity manipulated and defined by those around her. On the island, Miranda is without female companionship or influence, which means that the entirety of the male gaze falls on her. By extension, Miranda becomes a multi-dimensional cipher, a stand-in for all three female identities depending on who is viewing her. Caliban sees her procreatively, as a vessel through which he can "peopl[e]…this isle with Calibans," Ferdinand views her as a goddess, a wife, a prize to win.[352] And Prospero values her as a blank slate—one which must be kept spotless until a suitable marriage contract is arranged. In this way the capacity for women to occupy numerous identities becomes clear, although the men viewing her only recognize the singular role they desire Miranda, and all women, to occupy to support their own ends. Thus, rather than being a flat, one dimensional character as she has often been accused, Miranda exhibits the female capability of vacillating between identities, all of which she already contains. Caliban, Ferdinand, and Prospero mistakenly believe they can fashion Miranda into the female role they desire her to inhabit. However, they fail to realize that they are not imposing an identity on her, she is exhibiting one facet of the dynamism of womanhood. She, and all women, are simultaneously the virgin, commodity, and whore.

In her efforts to self-fashion, Miranda looks to her environment and her limited community for guidance. Motherless and deprived of female influence and counsel, the only

[352] Shakespeare Act I scene ii lines 349-50, pp. 19.

woman to whom Miranda may compare herself, or learn from, is Caliban's mother Sycorax—a witch described as a "blue-eyed hag."[353] Miranda consequently learns what it means to be a woman through a process of negation, by identifying what she should not be. She should not, for instance, be a witch—a term (eventually) synonymous with that of "whore."[354] However, Miranda should also not, and cannot, be like her father or Caliban—her only two physically present, albeit male, role models.

Prospero believes that Miranda's lack of a stable female authority makes her pliable and easy to manipulate. The fact that he has tried to be both father and mother to her has an unintended consequence: just as he has sought to manifest both masculine and feminine qualities while raising her, so does she display them now. Thus, Miranda does not grow into an obedient, chaste, virgin: she becomes a young woman who embodies traits from each gender. Further, women innately possess multi-gendered traits such as sexual desire, associated here with Sycorax, which could also be described as masculine qualities, or if not specifically masculine, at least more appropriately associated with men. Although Miranda had a biological mother, she has no memory of her, remembering only that she had "four or five women once that attended [her]" (I, ii, 47). This primary maternal birth is replaced by a secondary paternal birth, or a rebirth. When Miranda and Prospero arrive on the island Miranda is reborn, and her mother's generative privilege is usurped by her father, thus recreating Miranda as father-born.[355] Prospero

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[353] Shakespeare, Act I, Scene ii 269, pp. 16. Further, while Ariel often takes on various female guises—as nymphs, harpies, and goddesses, there is no indication that Miranda either sees him or is even aware of his presence. When Ariel first appears in Act I, Scene ii line 189, Prospero has just induced Miranda to sleep. If Miranda ever does see Ariel he is disguised per her father's bidding.

[354] For an in-depth discussion of witchcraft and female sexuality see Chapter 3: Tituba: A Sisterhood of Witchcraft. See also Justyna Sempruch's *Fantasies of Gender and the Witch in Feminist Theory and Literature.* West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2008, p. 126.

[355] For an in-depth discussion of Prospero's "maternity" and Miranda's rebirth see Natali Boğosyan, *Postfeminist Discourse in Shakespeare's The Tempest and Warner's Indigo: Ambivalence, Liminality, and Plurality*. "*The Tempest*: A Dialogic Medium of the Patriarchal Text and Matriarchal Texts." Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012. pp. 39-90.

describes to Miranda how they were exiled from Milan and arrived on the island in a decrepit boat:

PROSPERO: O, a cherubin

Thou wast that didst preserve me. Thou didst smile,

Infusèd with fortitude from heaven,

When I have decked the sea with drops full salt,

Under my burden groaned; which raised in me

An undergoing stomach, to bear up

Against what should ensue. (Act I, Scene ii, lines 152-158)

The language Prospero uses here has often been described as a symbolic birth or a "rebirth" for both Prospero and Miranda. A "birth metaphor" that not only extends the possibility for redemption and reconciliation to Prospero, but feminizes him as the mother/father that births Miranda (Norton 397).[356] This liminality of heredity creates an additional multiplicity in Miranda beyond the triumvirate of identities she possesses naturally by virtue of her femininity. This multi-gendered multiplicity engenders in Miranda a natural resistance to submission and

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Not only does Miranda undergo a secondary paternal birth or rebirth, Diane Purkiss suggests that Ariel is also reborn through Prospero's power to free him from his cloven pine prison: "Ariel's space of enclosed imprisonment is highly feminized: he is enwombed, enclosed, and must be reborn in order to live. Ariel in the cloven pine recalls Caliban, locked in the body of his mother…. Ariel has forgotten his release by father-Prospero, just as a baby forgets birth" (269). See Diane Purkiss. *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth Century Representations.* New York: Routledge, 1996.

[356] Norton, John J., "Prospero Humiliated: Protestant Theology in *The Tempest*." *Shakespeare*, Vol. 5, No. 4, December 2009, pp. 394-406.

obedience, qualities which women are supposed to display in order to be "marketable" to potential suitors.

Her mediating position between gendered roles and impulses makes Miranda more threatening to the patriarchy than Sycorax. In death, Sycorax's memory can be degraded: she can be rebuked and railed against without defense. However, Miranda's identity is still in formation. She has been heavily influenced by her father and taught how a proper young lady of rank should behave, yet she has learned from stories that she and Sycorax have similar histories: both having been exiled to a remote island. Therefore, it is conceivable that Miranda may in some ways identify with Sycorax. Worse yet, from her father's perspective, is the possibility that she may identify with Caliban: both are the children of powerful sorcerers banished out of existence. As a result of Prospero's repeated condemnations of Sycorax, Miranda has learned that some women are neither dutiful nor chaste—and also that such brazen women are sometimes powerful, which earns them the ire of men. Miranda hence learns that while female rebellion and subversion of gender roles is possible, it is inevitably punished by the patriarchy.

As one might expect, given her masculine upbringing, Miranda demonstrates her capacity to exercise agency during her first exchange with Caliban. Immediately after Prospero accuses Caliban of attempting to rape Miranda—to which Caliban vengefully responds that he wishes the act had been accomplished—Miranda speaks on her own behalf. She exclaims venomously to Caliban:

MIRANDA: Abhorrèd slave,

Which any print of goodness wilt not take,

Being capable of all ill. I pitied thee,

> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
>
> One thing or other. When thou didst not (savage)
>
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
>
> A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes
>
> With words that made them known. But thy vile race,
>
> Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures
>
> Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
>
> Deservedly confined into this rock,
>
> Who hadst deserved more than a prison. (I, ii, lines 350-361)

Miranda does not cower before Caliban's threats or the possibility of future sexual assault, "O ho, O ho, would't had been done!" he states (I, ii, 349, Slights 372). Neither does she defer to her father to step in and protect her, rather Miranda assertively rebukes Caliban.[357] In this exchange Miranda steps into her father's role as a colonist, judging the colonized as irredeemable and as a member of a "vile race."

However, Miranda's outburst has been problematic for critics of Shakespeare's play, theatrical directors, and actors who have viewed her as incapable of self-defense, even in terms

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[357] James Dougal Fleming suggests that Miranda's outburst against Caliban hinges on his response to Prospero's accusation of attempted sexual assault, "thou didst prevent me;" specifically the word "prevent" (456). Fleming claims the word "prevent often has in the Renaissance and the early seventeenth century: the etymological sense, from *praevenire*, 'to come before'" (456). Fleming continues to claim that Caliban is insinuating not that Prospero "prevented" as in stopped an assault against Miranda, but that Prospero "got there first. The line would accuse Prospero of incest" (459). In this reading, Miranda's uncharacteristic outburst against Caliban, and Prospero's silence, takes on a new, and dark connotation. See Fleming's "Prevent is not Prevent: Rape and Rhetoric in *The Tempest*," *Exemplaria: Medieval, Early Modern, Theory*, 15:2, 2003, pp. 451-472.

of “appropriate anger” (Slights 372). Reinforcing the limited view that Miranda’s function in the play is merely as an idealized cipher, these lines have often been re-assigned to Prospero. Hence, rather than consider Miranda capable of self-confidence and forceful language or investigate what might cause a young girl to react so strongly, it has been easier for scholars to assume that a mistake has been made in identifying the speaker of the lines. Lemuel Johnson claims that Miranda’s verbal attack on Caliban is often attributed to Prospero simply because “it is inappropriate for Miranda” to speak this way (57).[358] Sanchez likewise asserts that, “Miranda’s outburst contradicts the innocence and passivity imagined not only by the men who surround her, but many editors as well” (65). Early modern critics, authors, and editors—including John Dryden, Lewis Theobald, and George Lynn Kittredge—all attribute these lines to Prospero, in part to preserve the innocence imposed on Miranda, but perhaps also to avoid the difficult discussion about what it means for Miranda to assert herself against Caliban (Sanchez 26; Orgel 17).[359]

In twelve short lines, then, Miranda proves that she is not an idealized version of womanhood but is instead a young woman capable of asserting agency and defending herself.[360] Miranda exhibits that she is linguistically adept at outmaneuvering an opponent or sparring partner, as both Caliban and Ferdinand become. Moreover, Miranda can and will stand up for herself against any real or perceived assaults, not only on her chastity and body, but also to her sense of self and self-worth. Her character is a far cry from the passive, dutiful daughter many

[358] Johnson, Lemuel. “Shakespearean Imports: Whatever Happened to Caliban’s Mother? Or, The Problem with Othello’s.” *Research in African Literatures*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (Spring, 1996), pp. 19-63.

[359] In fact, as recently as 2017 critics have attributed these lines to Prospero rather than Miranda, see Rhone Fraser, “Confronting Prospero: Elizabeth Nunez’s Expose and Critique of Hegemony and its Industries in *Beyond the Limbo Silence* and *Boundarie*,” *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 8, September 2017, pp. 89-105.

[360] Miranda is also positioned as a character important for postcolonial critics, one who contributes to the analysis of the problematics of race and colonization.

critics have accused her of being, much less the creature whom Thompson's students found "an extremely feeble heroine and scorn[ed] to identify with" (Slights 361).

Significantly, it is Prospero and not Miranda who first refers to Caliban's alleged attempted rape of her. Prospero uses the intended violation of Miranda to rationalize abusing Caliban and forcing him into servitude. Miranda, again, is relegated to a tool of, and for, patriarchal oppression. However, Prospero, a man obsessed with his daughter's virginity and purity, does not rail against Caliban because his thwarted sexual assault would have subjected his daughter to a traumatic and violent experience; he rages against this alleged would-be offender because of the threat he posed to her—and by extension Prospero's— "honour" (I, ii, line 348). In this, Caliban acknowledges his desires to alter Miranda's identity from what her father would have her be, a virgin, to what he would prefer, a whore. Thus, over the course of the play, Caliban's attempted assault (like so many other occurrences on the island) becomes a red herring, one which seemingly plays perfectly into Prospero's plans and the ways in which Miranda is a pawn in those machinations. Without this threat to Miranda's honor, Prospero would have no legitimate reason for enslaving, torturing, and exploiting Caliban. The attempted rape—real, imagined, hallucinated, or hypothetical—is irrelevant; the outcome is the thing Prospero cares about.[361] And Miranda is again marginalized to a non-person.

However, Miranda's outburst challenges Prospero's assertion that he is the figure most severely wronged by Caliban. Miranda, in refusing to remain silent and have her father speak on her behalf, and thus define her, exercises agency. Not only does Miranda deny her father the

[361] In *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, Mannoni suggests that the rape that Caliban is accused of (attempting) to commit is "imaginary," and by extension that "the sexual aspect of racialism plays in large part in the unconscious…[theatrical episodes like this] are [therefore] pure projections of the unconscious" (110). Mannoni, Octave. *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1950 [2001].

lines so many critics have attempted to rend from her, but she repositions herself as the center of the action. It is Miranda, and not her father, Caliban sought to violate, her idealized virginity he attempted to re-inscribe and redefine as monstrous. In her diatribe against Caliban, Miranda resists the male prerogative to fragment her and reduce her to merely a site of male sexual attention and violence.

Once alluded to, Prospero does not refer again to the thwarted sexual assault of his virgin daughter. But for Miranda, the mere mention of this attempted violation prompts harsh words of scorn. In this exchange, Miranda is forced to realize that her existence, her identity, is boiled down to a basic function for the men around her to protect, profit from, and/or abuse. Prospero appears to fear for the marketability of his child, his ability to trade her into marriage to help him regain his usurped throne. Yet more sinisterly, perhaps Prospero fears Caliban would accomplish a feat he himself was unable to, taking Miranda as a sexual partner and populating his colony. Through her outburst, Miranda confronts her place on the island as an object of desire, of profit, and of solely sexual value. In response to this forced objectification and marginalization, Miranda rebels. In a brief but overtly significant moment, Miranda reveals that she is prone to passion and capable of self-defense. This is a different, and perhaps truer, side of her character than the audience has seen up to this point.

Throughout the remainder of *The Tempest*, Miranda hovers between identities, never fully embodying or aligning herself with one. Miranda is an active participant in the courtship between herself and Ferdinand. She is the romantic aggressor, even to the point of extending a marriage proposal to him and vowing to live as his maid should he refuse her (Act 3, Scene ii, lines 83-86). Slights asserts that, “Miranda proves to be strong-willed and independent minded in her dealings with both Prospero and Ferdinand” (365). While these acts of rebellion are

approved, and even put into motion by her father, Miranda still believes that she disobeys Prospero by undertaking them (Sanchez 66). For Prospero's plan to regain his throne to work, Miranda must wed Ferdinand, and nothing makes a young girl's, exerting her identity and agency, heart grow fonder than destabilizing her overbearing father's directive to keep her distance from the object of her affection. Sanchez points out, "we in the audience may be privy to Prospero's real intentions" that his "restoration hinges on her marriage" and unwitting compliance with his plan, but "Miranda takes his orders [to stay away from Ferdinand] at face value and disobeys anyway" (66). Even Prospero is unprepared for Miranda's "deliberate disobedience" when dealing with Ferdinand, and how quickly she has transferred affection from her father to a potential mate, so much so that she is willing to defy her father to spend time with Ferdinand (Slights 367). Sensing his daughter's potential and materialized rebellion Prospero states:

> PROSPERO: They are both in either's powers. But this swift
>
> business
>
> I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
>
> Make the prize light (Act I, Scene ii, lines 448-450)

Unaware that she, too, is playing a part in her father's revenge plot, Miranda fully embraces a subversive freedom which (she thinks) she has created for herself. There is, of course, a paradox

here. Miranda is both a pawn and a dissident: her obedience to her father is dependent upon her believed rebellion against him.[362]

As alluded to previously, Miranda's ambiguous dual role as co-conspirator with and rebel against Prospero, and as the simultaneous victim of Prospero and victimizer of Caliban are the focus of Nunez's 2006 novel, *Prospero's Daughter*.[363] Nunez does not necessarily set out to redeem Miranda from undue neglect and omission. Instead, she offers an alternative reading of Miranda, Ariel, Caliban, and Prospero which problematize and challenge all earlier interpretations of them, revealing their hidden heroism or secret debasement. In *The Tempest*, Miranda is defined by those around her, and against the women not present. But in *Prospero's Daughter*, Miranda—now renamed Virginia—speaks, acts, and transforms the subtle moments of subversion undertaken by the Shakespearean Miranda into a vision of outright female revolt.

4.3 A Twenty-First Century Miranda

In *Prospero's Daughter,* Nunez's female characters refuse to be silent, and by extension to be controlled by the masculine prerogative to "construct and dismember [women] part by body part" (Traub 131).[364] The women in Nunez's text hence resist the patriarchy, and attempts to disaggregate them, by finding strength and unity in each other. Discovering a common enemy, in the form of Dr. Gardner/Prospero, bonds Ariana/Ariel and Virginia/Miranda together. Sharing the identity and experience of being victims of Gardner's sexual and psychological abuse empowers the two young women to find their voices and reclaim their power. Through both

[362] Jessica Slights suggests that "Prospero certainly engineers and closely supervises the initial encounter between his daughter and the man he hopes she will marry, but Miranda quickly takes the matter of falling in love and becoming betrothed into her own capable hands" (371).

[363] Nunez, Elizabeth. *Prospero's Daughter*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2006.

[364] Traub, Valerie. "Jewels, Statues, and Corpses: Containment of Female Erotic Power in Shakespeare's Plays." *Shakespeare and Gender: A History*. Edited by Deborah E. Barker and Ivo Kamps. London: Verso, 1995, pp. 120-141.

written and oral acts of resistance, Virginia and Ariana confront rather than retreat from those who would seek to fragment and splinter them.[365] Yet by recognizing the interconnectedness of the female experience, and despite their seeming differences in race, class, and sociopolitical status, Nunez's women—especially Miranda/Virginia—achieve multiplicity.

Echoing Gayatri Spivak, Emilia Ippolito proposes that a large aim of female postcolonial literature is to "analyze the history of the excluded, of the voiceless, the 'unspeakable' and the 'unspoken' of a colonial and patriarchal society in which women are represented and spoken for, [and] are always the subject of a passive sentence or action" (31).[366] As the title of her novel suggests, the main focus of Nunez's text is Miranda. However, it is significant that Nunez named the novel *Prospero's Daughter* rather than "Prospero's Daughter Miranda" or simply "Miranda" in that the young woman is referred to by traditional means, she is a passive daughter with no real identity of her own outside of her father and the patronymic. Yet, Nunez will subvert this limited view of Miranda. By focusing on Miranda and the ways in which she is perceived, manipulated, and abused by men, Nunez continues the work which Spivak exhorts artists, critics, and scholars to undertake: she unsilences the female experience and represents a dynamic and multi-dimensional female subject.

Unlike most previous criticism of and scholarship on this tale, Nunez's text explores the relationship between Miranda/Virginia and Caliban/Carlos, as opposed to the dynamics between Prospero and Caliban. Rather than rehashing the postcolonial debates surrounding these two

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[365] These elements will be discussed at length below.

[366] Ippolito, Emilia. *Caribbean Women Writers: Identity and Gender*. New York: Camden House, 2000. See also, Gayatri Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak? Speculations on Widow Sacrifice." *Marxist Interpretation of Culture*. Edited by Grossberg and Nelson. London: Macmillan, 1988, pp. 271-313; and "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 12 No. 1 (Autumn 1985); pp. 243-61. While Spivak focuses her attention on the "unspoken" and "unspeakable" experiences of subaltern women, I assert that the silencing effect which she observes extends to all women living in patriarchal societies.

characters, Nunez places Caliban's alleged, attempted rape of Miranda at the center of her text. In focusing on Miranda's alleged rape, and by extension placing Miranda as the fulcrum of her text, Nunez makes visible the normalization of sexual violence against women in both early modern England and the postcolonial world. This view is then extended to encompass Ariana and the cultural encoding of sexual violence and exploitation against indigenous women, especially domestic servants. In an interview with Alison Donnell, Elizabeth Nunez states: "[Ariana] pays a huge price… [Englishmen in Trinidad] seemed to feel that the local women were available to them" (Donnell 54).[367] *Prospero's Daughter* explores female sexuality as simultaneously being abused by, and a constant threat to the stability of, the patriarchy. Further, Nunez points to the fact that sexual violence can and is often used against women as a means of dissuading them from exercising agency. Finding community in suffering and a common foe in Gardner will unsilence Virginia and Ariana. By doing what is unthinkable to most *Tempest* critics—allowing Miranda's voice to be heard—Nunez restores the female narratives erased in *The Tempest*, exonerates Caliban by exposing his role as a scapegoat, and condemns Prospero for his exploitation and abuse of Miranda, Caliban, and Ariel.[368]

Prospero's Daughter transports *The Tempest* to the former leper colony of Chacachacare off the coast of Trinidad in 1961, a British colony in the final, collapsing days of English imperialism.[369] The setting—a tiny island between the coasts of Trinidad and Venezuela—is a

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[367] Donnell, Alison. *Interview with Elizabeth Nunez*. *MaComère* 10 (2008): pp. 43-64.

[368] In the New York Times review of *Prospero's Daughter*, entitled "The Isle is Full of Noises," reviewer Elizabeth Schmidt suggests that Nunez's text gives a voice to Miranda for the sole purpose of exonerating Caliban of the accused crime of attempted rape. I disagree with this reading and the continued reduction of Miranda/Virginia to little more than a pawn in a male-dominated drama. Rather, I argue that Nunez empowers Miranda by making Carlos/Caliban's alleged, attempted rape of her the text's defining moment. That he is exonerated by this turn of events is a happy side-effect of the main, feminized storyline. Schmidt, Elizabeth. "The Isle is Full of Noises," New York Times Book Review, Sunday Review, February 26, 2006.

[369] In the article, "Chacachacare: Once Upon an Island," David Tindall discusses the central role which Chacachacare played in the revolution which "finally ended Spanish control of South America" (1). Notably,

liminal space, "both [a] sanctuary and a place of danger" (Donnell 48).[370] The widowed British physician Peter Gardner, and his three year old daughter Virginia, find refuge on the tiny island after fleeing England; they are trying to escape both his "envious" brother and a medical malpractice criminal case which has caused Gardner to be charged with murder. Gardner functions in Nunez's text as an updated version of Prospero, and he is a far cry from the benevolent but usurped Duke of Milan: a man who preferred his books and art to running his kingdom. Indeed, it quickly becomes clear that Gardner is an unscrupulous doctor, more interested in necromancy and human hybridization than the Hippocratic Oath.

Gardner's magic is expressed on the island through his science experiments, as well as his powerful manipulation of plants and people. Shakespeare's characters also undergo transformations on Chacachacare.[371] Ariel becomes Ariana, a young female servant of African ancestry who works in the Gardner's home (Ariana will refer to Gardner as Prospero throughout the text), and Caliban is recast as Carlos, the mixed-race inheritor and rightful owner of the home which Gardner stole from him when he was a six-year-old child. In Gardner, Prospero's magic takes on a sinister and demonic tone, but he is not to be read as a masculine Sycorax. In fact, Sycorax remains on the island much as she had in *The Tempest*: in the form of memories, specifically memories of Carlos's deceased mother, Sylvia. However, Sylvia is not an accused or acknowledged witch; she is a white woman who fell in love with Carlos's black father, also named Carlos (Nunez 119). It is this interracial union between Sylvia and Carlos, Sr.—not

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Trinidad gained its independence from Britain in 1962—the year after *Prospero's Daughter* takes place. For more on the history of Chacachacare island, see Tindall's article in *Caribbean Beat*, Issue 43 (May/June 2000).

[370] See "*Prospero's Daughter*: Recovering Caribbean Wo/Men: Alison Donnell in conversation with Elizabeth Nunez." *MaComère* 10 (2008): pp. 43-64.

[371] For more on the choice of Chacachacare as a setting for Nunez's text see Sandra Pouchet Paquet's, "'The Isle is Full of Noises': Mythical Space and Place in Elizabeth Nunez's *Prospero's Daughter*." *MaComère* 10 (2008): pp. 65-79.

magical ability—that prompts Gardner to refer to Sylvia in terms reminiscent of Prospero and Sycorax.

The "taint" of miscegenation leads Gardner to posthumously shame and vilify Sylvia, calling her, borrowing Shakespeare's description of Sycorax, a "Whore! Slut! Witch! Blue-eyed hag!" (118). The "witch" Sylvia's greatest crime—and what intimately connects her with the demonic in Gardner's eyes—is her sexual relationship with a black man. According to Gardner, the comingling of white and black blood results in the birth of a "misshapen bastard" and "freckled" "whelp" son (Nunez 54). Carlos, Jr., is thus denied humanity solely on the basis of his parentage. In this way, Nunez exposes Gardner, and by extension Prospero, as racist colonizers.

As Nunez's text opens, a white Englishman, Inspector John Mumsford, is informed of the attempted rape of the English-born, white, Virginia Gardner, now aged fifteen, by the household servant Carlos, Jr.[372] A British subject, Mumsford saw the advantages of colonialism and took a position in Trinidad to help raise his station in life. As such he is very much indoctrinated into the colonial mindset which sees all white women as potential victims of native sexual deviation. Jennifer Vanderbes suggests that Mumsford fears "Trinidad's independence-minded natives, so when he learns that a biracial servant has assaulted a white girl, he resolves to carry out justice."[373] The only evidence Mumsford is presented with that a crime has been attempted is that, Carlos, like Caliban, had expressed a desire to "people the island with little Carloses;" specifically, Gardner claims that Carlos "said he wanted to people the island with Calibans" (Nunez 58). Similar to Caliban, Carlos does not immediately deny the charges against him.

[372] The younger Carlos, or Carlos Jr., will be heretofore referred to as Carlos.

[373] Vanderbes, Jennifer. "This Thing of Darkness" review of *Prospero's Daughter*. Washington Post, March 19, 2006.

However, Nunez makes it clear that—despite the disbelief of Mumsford and Gardner—no violation or attempt at violation ever took place.

Through her letter to the Commissioner of Trinidad, Ariana introduces a new complication to the story. Reaching back to *The Tempest*, she asks the question: What if no attempted violation happened, because the relationship between Miranda/Virginia and Caliban/Carlos was consensual?[374] Ariana's letter states:

> [Gardner] tell a lie if he say those two don't love one another. I know them from when they was children. They do anything for one another. I know. I see them. I watch them. I tell you he love she and she love him back. They love one another. Bad. He never rape she. Mr. Prospero lie.
>
> Signed Ariana, Cook for Mr. Prospero, doctor. (Nunez 3)[375]

Mumsford simply cannot believe that mutual respect, friendship, or attraction—much less love—might blossom between a young, exiled, English girl and an interracial, orphaned, servant boy. And herein lays the crux of Nunez's adaptation of Shakespeare: *The Tempest* is a love story—a love story which Shakespeare got wrong. The drama's love and passion lies not between

[374] According to Mannoni, in *The Tempest*, Caliban is made to believe he has attempted to violate Miranda, yet no attempt was actually made. Rather, the attempted rape existed in Prospero's mind only as a manifestation of Caliban's assumed savagery and sexual deviance, which he managed to convince Miranda, Caliban, and perhaps even himself was real. Nunez's text agrees with Mannoni in that Prospero/Gardner's accusation against Caliban/Carlos is a projection of his own incestuous, unconscious impulses; however, she makes it clear that Carlos's only crime is in voicing his intentions to marry Virginia and eventually produce legitimate offspring with her, which Gardner interprets as a violation of Virginia's chastity.

[375] Kristin M.S. Bezio suggests that Mumsford "does not recognize – or understand – the reference to Prospero" and "corrects her: 'He was Dr. Peter Gardner – Gardner a proper English name – not Mr. Prospero'" (135). Bezio continues to assert that Ariana redefines "who Gardner is based on a narrative identity – using (as Nunez is) the imperial text in order to rewrite the narrative of oppression into one of rebellion" (135). "Bringing Down the Island: Rebellion, Colonial Hierarchy, and Individualized Leadership in Nunez's Novel *Prospero's Daughter*." *Journal of Leadership, Accountability, and Ethics*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (2014); pp. 126-140.

Miranda and Ferdinand, but Miranda and Caliban.[376] The latter relationship, now recast as a connection between Virginia and Carlos, is the element which Nunez seeks to revive, revise, and set aright. Carlos/Caliban should no longer be viewed as the vilified and racialized "other," nor should Virginia/Miranda be seen as an idealized and willing pawn in her father's revenge fantasy. Instead, one must understand that both are victims of Gardner/Prospero. Together, they mine strength and love out of their mutual subjugation and desire to rebel against a tyrant.

Carlos, however, is not the only man drawn to Virginia. While previous critics and scholars, including Ann Thompson, have subtly insinuated or hinted at the idea that there was more to Miranda and Prospero's relationship—perhaps something which bordered on the dark or incestuous side—Nunez makes these allegations both visible and viscerally real.[377] Prospero's fixation on Miranda's chastity and purity therefore takes an ominous and abusive turn towards the Oedipal.[378] Similarly, the affection showed by Prospero to his male servant, Ariel, is transformed into the sexually abusive and domineering statutory relationship between Gardner and Ariana.

Yet Nunez does not equate the domination and subjugation of the women in her text with the role of colonialism in Trinidad.[379] Rather than lambasting the practice of colonization, and

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[376] For a discussion of love in the works of Elizabeth Nunez see Leah Creque-Harris, "Charting Territories of Love in the Works of Elizabeth Nunez." *Africology: The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 8, September 2017.

[377] Esiaba Irobi's play *Sycorax* also implicates Prospero as having sexually assaulted Miranda numerous times. Prospero, in Irobi's version of *The Tempest* only ceases his incestuous, non-consensual, relationship with his daughter when Sycorax intervenes to stop him "from breastfeeding [his] motherless daughter with [his] third breast" (76). *Sycorax*. Enugu: ABIC, 2011. See also, Isidore Diala's, "(De)Stabilising the European Classic: *Sycorax*, Esiaba Irobi's *The Tempest*," *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*, Vol. 24, 2012, pp. 25-43.

[378] For a discussion of the Oedipal Complex, see Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, ed. A.A. Brill. New York: Macmillan Company, 1913. For a discussion of incest in Shakespeare's plays, specifically between fathers and daughters, see Mark Taylor. *Shakespeare's Darker Purpose: A Question of Incest*. (AMS Studies in the Renaissance, 7) New York: AMS Press, 1982.

[379] I asserted earlier that Shakespeare's frame narrative was concerned with colonization and conquest and said that Miranda was implicated in the violence inherent to those activities. Nunez subverts this dynamic so that

the unwitting victims of its unscrupulous practices and agendas, Nunez singles out one individual—Prospero—and provides an alternative perspective on his ostensible paternal and political "benevolence". While it is true that Ariana and Carlos are cast as the oppressed native inhabitants of the island they are made to share with their colonizers, the text takes care to expose the extent to which Virginia is also victimized.

Historically and literarily relegated by Shakespeare to the limited role of a chaste and obedient daughter, whose virginity must be protected, it is her own father—not Carlos, or another dangerous "other"—who threatens Virginia's purity. Nunez thus reverses the male roles in her novel. Nunez transforms Prospero from "an exemplar of timeless human values" into a sexual predator who sublimates his lust for his daughter on Ariana's servile body (Skura 60).[380] By doing so, she challenges the cultural stereotype that Carlos is the figure who should be associated with deviant sexuality, due to the perceived "monstrosity" of his biracialism; he is, after all, the "reviled offspring of a witch and the Devil" (Leininger 287).[381] Yet, in Nunez's hands, Carlos becomes Virginia's valiant protector, one who risks his own safety and endures torture and imprisonment to defend her.

Consequently, Nunez begins the work of untying the "Miranda Knot": the outcome of the "Miranda Complex," which places Miranda in the dual roles of victim and victimizer (Bess 78-79; Donaldson 17). Firmly ensconced in her position at the center of the "Miranda Complex",

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Miranda/Virginia embodies that which is about to be colonized and conquered as well as benefiting from it. Thus, she exemplifies Leininger's "Miranda Trap."

[380] See Meredith Anne Skura's "Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*," in Critical Essays on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Edited by Virginia Mason Vaughn and Alden T. Vaughn. New York: G.K. Hall & Co, 1998, pp. 60-90.

[381] See Lorie Jerrell Leininger, "The Miranda Trap: Sexism and Racism in Shakespeare's *Tempest*." *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*. Edited by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Green, and Carol Thomas Neely. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1980, pp. 285-294.

Miranda/Virginia is revealed to be one of the victims of Prospero and colonialism, similar to Ariana and Carlos, and yet she will also serve the dual role of a weapon against that same oppression and abuse. In many ways, Gardner's depravity causes more suffering to Virginia than it does even to Carlos. Gardner makes no efforts to disguise his contempt either for Carlos or, for that matter, the rest of Trinidad's native population. In contrast, Virginia is secretly shamed and forced to live in fear of being "found out" as her father's abuses grow more debased. In Nunez's hands, then, Prospero is vilified, Caliban is heroic, and Miranda is finally unsilenced.

While in *The Tempest* Caliban's punishment largely takes place off-stage, it is made painfully visible in *Prospero's Daughter*.[382] Arriving in Chacachacare to investigate the sexual assault allegation leveled against Carlos, Mumsford finds the accused imprisoned in a pigsty: his body is chained, smeared with feces, and covered in hundreds of mosquito bites (Nunez 61). Lodged there by Gardner because of his proclaimed love for Virginia, and intention to marry her, it is clear that the "savagery" attributed to the character of Carlos/Caliban is only an imposed identity—one that has persisted for centuries. This too reveals the false mask of benevolence Prospero has long been claimed to wear. By extension, Nunez illuminates the inequity of the created social world of *The Tempest* and the ways in which it has been used to codify and reinforce racist and sexist cultural norms.[383]

By recovering Caliban and Miranda's lost narratives, Nunez also recovers their marginalized identities and draws attention to their mutual victimization. However, unlike

[382] *The Tempest* Act 1, Scene ii, line 360.

[383] Leininger suggests that Caliban is cast as the "lustful-Vice-Figure" against Prospero's "God-figure," with Miranda as a "pawn to counterbalance Caliban's lust" (291). Caliban becomes the emblem of sexual aggression and depravity so that Prospero may be viewed as the savior and protector of white female chastity. Nunez flips this paradigm. Rather than having white men protect white women from sexual exploitation, it is the racialized other, a black man, who saves a white woman from a white man.

Shakespeare's characters, Carlos and Virginia are recreated to emphasize their capacity for heroism and ultimate triumph. Virginia transcends the limited role which Shakespeare originally penned for her, as the lone female present on the island; instead, Nunez provides Virginia with a multitude of female role models and alternate identities from which to draw strength. Unlike Miranda, whose identity in *The Tempest* was created through negation, Virginia is influenced by female multiplicity. As a three year old castaway and victim of her father's decision to flee England (rather than face the charges mounting against him), Virginia learns of and from the various female role models with whom she can align herself: not just Ariana, but also Lucinda (Ariana's mother and former servant to Carlos's family), Sylvia (via the stories told of her by Carlos), and even Mrs. Burton (an English resident of Trinidad who attempts to serve as Virginia's matchmaker).

By weaving direct quotes from *The Tempest* into her prose, most notably those spoken by Caliban and Prospero regarding Miranda, Nunez reestablishes Shakespeare's drama as a battle between the colonized and the colonizer over who will win the contested body of Virginia/Miranda. However, Nunez also makes it clear that the ultimate choice is Virginia's. Nunez asserts that Miranda does not belong to her father as an object or piece of property to be used and disposed of as he sees fit, but that she has the right to choose her own fate, husband, and identity. Virginia, victimized in the most horrific way by her father, sexually abused and terrorized, finds herself and her long suppressed inner strength and agency in her clandestine relationship with Carlos.

Jennifer Sparrow suggests that, "the novel offers Carlos and Virginia's love as a remedy to the monstrosity of sexual appetite and acts" (89). However, Virginia is not empowered to act and speak out against her father and the years of abuse she, Ariana, and Carlos have suffered at

his hands merely by the support which Carlos shows her. To suggest that Virginia needs or depends upon Carlos to give her strength is to suggest that Virginia on her own is incapable of agency, that their shared servitude became dependency.[384] Rather, Nunez makes it clear that there exists within Virginia not only the multiplicity of female identities, but that within Virginia power and fortitude always already existed. The focus on Virginia's inner strength becomes a revision that then works backwards to reach Miranda as well.

While Virginia finds her voice and gains confidence in using it throughout the novel, she in many ways models the behavior she sees Ariana exhibit. Ariana, the fleshy and female Ariel from *The Tempest*, who occupies the "whore" identity in Nunez's text against Virginia's "virgin," performs perhaps the greatest feat of selflessness and sacrifice: to protect Virginia from her lecherous father, Ariana enters a non-consensual sexual relationship with Gardner at the age of nine. By the age of twenty, she sees that her act of martyrdom has only delayed, rather than saved, Virginia from Gardner's abuse; she also becomes aware that Carlos, too, has suffered a brutal and savage punishment. Consequently, Ariana is compelled to expose Gardner for what he is: an incestuous pedophile.

In her admission to Mumsford about the abuse she has suffered at Gardner's hands, the inspector is surprised and confused by Ariana's seeming duplicitousness:

> "I hate him." That was the first of many things she said that shocked

[384] Mannoni discusses the "dependency complex" of colonizer and colonized as similar to the relationship which exists between parent and child, with the native as the child and the (typically) European colonial as the parent. This dependency complex, Mannoni argues, is at work between Prospero and Caliban. But I would argue that this complex does not accurately capture the dynamic between Prospero and Miranda as kinship often involves dependency. See *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, pp. 97-121.

> Mumsford that morning. Had he not seen her bat her eyes coyly at Gardner? Had he not heard them whisper like lovers? . . ."He take advantage of me." She was an adult, almost twenty years old. Her relationship with Gardner was her own private affair. Mumsford told her so. "I was nine. Is okay if I was nine years old?" (Nunez 94)

During his first trip to the island to meet the doctor, Mumsford was quick to suspect an intimate relationship between Ariana and Gardner, having caught a glimpse of a naked woman slipping out of a room and Gardner emerging from the house disheveled (Nunez 35). Initially, Mumsford had dismissed this indiscretion as not only consensual, but in part desired by Ariana: why wouldn't a native girl be enamored with an English doctor? It was Gardner whom Mumsford saw as degrading himself in any relationship with Ariana; the girl would merely be trying to raise her station in life, or would be drawn to the special attention such a relationship could bring her.[385] Mumsford could not conceive of a world in which a white English doctor could prey upon an innocent child.[386] As such, it was Ariana who must be morally suspect. Her destabilization of the white savior ideal represented by Gardner threatened more than just her own physical safety: it also endangered the entire colonial society and threatened it with collapse.

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[385] In an interview with Alison Donnell on the relationship between Ariana and Gardner, Nunez claims that Ariana in some ways relishes her role in Gardner's house; she enjoys being "ahead of Carlos. . . and she uses that power to some extent . . .[but] she reaches that point where she can't do so any longer. . ." (54). In this way, Nunez's text struggles with the dual role, formerly only attributed to Miranda (as expressed through the "Miranda Complex"). Nunez also implicates Ariel/Ariana in the sexual violence to which Virginia is subjected, as well as the violence which is directed towards herself. *MaComère* 10 (2008): pp. 43-64.

[386] Elizabeth Schmidt claims that "Mumsford was no match for Ariana's strength and cunning," which contributed to her "instigation of . . .Virginia's outrage." In this, Schmidt perpetuates the reduction of Virginia to the idealized, weak, and defenseless "virgin" identity, unable to act or speak if not in connection with a stronger "other." I disagree with Schmidt on the grounds that her use of the term "cunning" seems to imply something duplicitous about Ariana's own behavior and her influence on Virginia. Rather, I contend that Virginia models her own rebellion against Gardner on Ariana's incredibly brave and selfless acts to protect her (n.p.).

Ariana became a sexual substitute for Virginia. In abusing Ariana, Gardner was able, for a time, to sublimate his desires for his own daughter. In many ways, Ariana would be a natural sexual substitute for Gardner's predatory behavior. As a native woman of color, Ariana's role in society, as well as in the Gardner household, was to embody wanton female sexuality. Unsuitable to function as either a virgin or a marriageable commodity, Ariana, by virtue of her otherness, was viewed by Gardner as the witch/whore and was therefore a more "appropriate" object of lust than his chaste daughter. Ariana reports to Mumsford that she suffered sexual abuse and rape at the hands of Gardner, with increasing intensity, for over ten years; finally, she says, " . . .he start for real when Miss Virginia turn woman" (Nunez 96). Gardner had managed to buy Ariana's silence about the abuse she had suffered at his hands by blackmailing her. Prior to Gardner's arrival on Chacachacare Carlos's mother, Sylvia had discovered that Ariana had stolen/borrowed a pair of her diamond earrings. In an attempt to "frighten [Ariana] so [she] wouldn't touch her things again," Sylvia wrote a letter to the police describing the crime, saying "if [Sylvia caught Ariana] touching her earrings again, she [would] give the letter to the police" (Nunez 98). When Sylvia dies and Gardner takes possession of the home he finds the letter, which Sylvia never sent, and uses it to intimidate Ariana. She remarks to Mumsford and a female matron at the police station:

> In the night when everybody sleeping, he come on top of me with his thing. He say if I tell anybody he touch me, he show the police the letter. Even lunchtime he make me come in his room and Miss Virginia and Carlos think is message he giving me. And when my mother still living is true is message he giving me… Then my mother die. He bring me into his bed after that. (Nunez 98)

Gardner keeps Ariana in sexual, physical, and psychological bondage by claiming he will tear the letter up if she performs a series of tasks. There is, of course, no indication that Ariana will ever succeed in her endeavors.

Echoing Shakespeare, Gardner's Prospero promises to "free" Ariel/Ariana if she does his "bidding" for him—in other words, if she spies on Carlos and Virginia, and continues to let him into her bed (Nunez 99). When Ariana protests, Gardner reminds her of the hell from which he saved her, much as Prospero freed a trapped Ariel from the tree in which Sycorax had imprisoned him.[387] Gardner thus establishes himself as Ariana's savior, the one who holds the power to free or imprison her. "[B]ut he didn't save me," Ariana tells Mumsford—his continued presence in her life damns her to sexual slavery and oppression (Nunez 99). Indeed, Gardner has created a new prison for Ariana, one that exploits her limited status and power in a society which values whiteness and in turn overly-privileges Gardner and his narrative at her expense.

As the text slowly reveals, Ariana's self-sacrificial actions only delay the inevitable for Virginia. Tragically, they increase her father's desire for her, and, by extension, the abuse heaped upon Ariana. To Gardner, it is natural that Ariana should become a sex slave on top of her domestic duties as a servant and cook. In his mind, her natural inferiority (as a woman) and her tendency toward wanton sexuality (by virtue of her race) mark her as the "whore." For him, sacrificing Ariana is a lesser crime, if a crime at all, because by doing so he protects Virginia's chastity and marketability. Moreover, this chain of logic bears a remarkable similarity to that which he uses to justify his subjection of Virginia to forced oral copulation.

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[387] Shakespeare, Act 1 scene ii, lines 269-300.

Because Ariana is tasked with performing the duties of a servant and mother to Virginia—tending to her and teaching her the skills of housewifery—they soon begin to morph from distinct female roles into one shared identity. The sexual depravity sublimated onto Ariana's body soon becomes a source of mutual shame for the two women. Upon Carlos' return home from Trinidad, where Gardner sent him to retrieve potent drugs and poisons from the local pharmacist, Carlos hears Virginia "trying to dislodge something that was clogging her throat . . .Her eyes were red, the skin around her mouth a deep, dark purple, and long trails of spittle dribbled from her mouth" (Nunez 195-196). But when Carlos runs towards Virginia to save her from choking, she runs away from him and locks herself in her bedroom. What begins to become clear to readers eludes Carlos, who implores Ariana to help the obviously "sick" Virginia. In response, Ariana implies that there is more to Virginia's seeming illness than meets the eye: "'She's sick,' [Carlos] said . . .'She do like that all the time now,' [Ariana] said . . .'Ask her what in her throat'" (Nunez 197). Carlos does not yet comprehend the reality of the situation, which is becoming more clear to the emerging horror of the reader: that Gardner is sexually abusing both of the young women. Here the divide between Ariana and Virginia, each required to inhabit a specific gendered identity, begins to narrow. What is considered appropriate treatment—or mistreatment—at the hands of the patriarchy for the sexualized, native "other," now bleeds into the usage considered appropriate for an idealized, chaste daughter/commodity. Thus, Ariana and Virginia break out of their diametrically opposed, servant-served relationship. In turn, it is incumbent upon the reader to consider their multiple similarities when interpreting their connection.

After this "gagging" fit, Virginia informs Carlos that visitors are coming to the island with the sole purpose of deciding whether she is a commodity that they are willing to purchase.

What is left unsaid is that Virginia, now in the transition from virgin to commodity—from female object to be protected, to female seductress from whom men must be protected—is increasingly a threat to her father, as well as being under threat from her father, and must be banished into marriage if only to protect Gardner from his baser impulses. This is not to suggest that her father wishes to save her from his progressively uncontrollable desire for her; rather, it is to acknowledge that she must be sacrificed to save her marketability and her "virgin knot" from signaling her father's loss of honor.

But Nunez's Virginia, echoing and yet subverting Miranda before her, will not be forced into a union not of her choosing. Rather than falling in love with the rich white American—a man of her "own kind" like Alfred Haynes (or "Ferdie," as Carlos calls him, echoing Shakespeare's Ferdinand)—Virginia makes known whom she intends to marry (Nunez 202, 204). In *Prospero's Daughter*, Virginia chooses Carlos as her betrothed (Nunez 210). In *The Tempest*, Miranda's orchestrated act of obedient rebellion played perfectly into Prospero's hands. In *Prospero's Daughter* this act is recast as an overt exertion of agency which will precipitate her father's downfall rather than redemption.

4.4 The Voice of Miranda

Prospero's Daughter is broken into three sections, each narrated by a different character and offering a unique point of view. The first section, titled "The Englishman" presents Mumsford's outsider perspective on the alleged crime committed by Carlos against Virginia, the hidden crimes committed against her by Gardner and, in essence, all that Virginia is meant to embody: whiteness, civility, purity, and Englishness.[388] In the second section, titled "Carlos,"

[388] It had been suggested that the choice to break the novel into three sections was homage to Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*, about which Nunez has written extensively. The three sections also correspond to the three

Nunez finally allows Caliban to speak. But notably, while Carlos narrates his experience and defines himself against Prospero and the Shakespearean frame narrative, he focuses much of his section on Virginia/Miranda.

The three main male characters in the novel—Carlos, Mumsford, and Gardner—have a shared vision of Virginia, which they strive to protect regardless of the evidence presented to them, or her struggles against the limited identity which they impose upon her. Having all cast Virginia as the chaste virgin her name suggests, the men regard her as little more than a fragile doll who needs protection; however, none of them can agree on the individual or threat from whom she must be protected. For instance, during the two sections of the novel narrated by Mumsford and Carlos, Virginia is seen through an idealized lens. Carlos was six years old when Gardner and Virginia first arrived at the home the young boy shared with Lucinda and Ariana. Initially Carlos regarded Gardner as the devil. It was only "the sight of [Gardner's] daughter, whose eyes reminded [him] of [his] mother's" that prevented Carlos from expelling Gardner and Virginia from his yard (Nunez 106). To Carlos, the color of Virginia's eyes—blue like his mother's—prove to him that she is innately good.[389]

Despite Carlos' essentializing notion that similar eye colors indicate similar moral and emotional characters, Sylvia's character is multiple and dynamic while Virginia's is frustratingly singular. Nevertheless, by establishing a common link between Sylvia and Virginia, and Virginia

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potential female identities. Each section reveals a potential view of Virginia: Mumsford's view, Carlos's view and culminates in the final section narrated by Virginia herself. It is in the final section where all three identities are unified. See Jennifer Sparrow's article, "From *Prospero's Daughter* to Caliban's Woman": Elizabeth Nunez Reimagines *The Tempest*," and Alison Donnell's *Interview with Elizabeth Nunez. MaComère* 10 (2008): pp. 80-95 and pp. 43-64.

[389] Diane Purkiss addresses the controversy over the description of Sycorax as "blue-eyed" which has traditionally been interpreted as indicating Sycorax is pregnant. However, Purkiss suggests that "blue-eyed" may, more problematically, suggest a racial or ethnic component to Sycorax, asserting "it is we, and not Shakespeare, who are troubled by the idea of a hag from Algiers with blue eyes, anxious as we are…to classify ourselves and everyone else absolutely in racial groups by physiognomy" (265).

and Ariana, readers are invited to see Virginia in the same manner as Gardner intended Mumsford to view Sylvia and Ariana: as a witch or a whore. Consequently, Sylvia and Ariana must be viewed in much the same way as Virginia: as an innocent and pure virgin. Through their mutual subjugation and fragmentation, all three women are exposed as victims of Gardner and the oppressive colonialism and patriarchy he represents. Although they are the only two females present on the island, Ariana and Virginia are not crushed by the weight of masculinity and forced assimilation to an identity they disdain. Instead, they are empowered to resist, to rebel, and finally, to triumph over these forces.

This becomes clear once the narration of *Prospero's Daughter* turns to Virginia, through whom Miranda finally gets to speak. The final section of the novel takes place six years after Carlos was accused of attempting to rape Virginia. As a result of the "attempted violation" Gardner has sent Virginia away from the island to Trinidad to live with Mrs. Burton and be courted by the wealthy American, Alfred/Freddie/Ferdie. This movement marks the crisis of the final section: Gardner's plan to sell Virginia into marriage to rid himself of the constant incestuous temptation she represents to him. Virginia's narrative recounts, as never before, her side of these events. By extension, she reveals the liminal space she occupies and struggles against, both within Nunez's text and *The Tempest*. In Shakespeare's frame narrative, both Miranda and Ferdinand are immediately smitten, unsure if the visions they encounter are human or divine. Yet Virginia, while initially intrigued by Alfred/Freddie/Ferdie, reports:

> He startled me when I saw him. He seemed an apparition, a character in a novel that had suddenly come to life. . . .Carlos said I looked at him as if he had come

from another world. He *had* come from another world . . .a world I knew from books I had read, a make-believe world. (Nunez 228)[390]

To Virginia, the American is interesting because he is different, foreign, and "other." Nevertheless, she has no romantic feelings for him, does not declare herself his wife, or (as did Miranda) offer to serve as his maid should he not also desire marriage. She instead considers him a novelty or a character from a book she has read, like "*Darcy*" (228). In other words, she sees him as flimsy and unnatural—the antithesis of Carlos' flesh and blood presence.

Virginia also reports that Ferdie is similarly indifferent to her. Virginia is too connected with the wild wantonness of her island, and too much like Carlos and Ariana, for Ferdie to see her as a potential wife or, for that matter, as an object of any true value. Despite her English blood and her largely European appearance, Virginia is almost an imposter in the culture of whiteness. She is a hybrid, much like one of her father's creations, for she mixes colonizer with colonized: "[her] hair was blond and [her] eyes were blue, but [her] skin was the color of copper, brown as if that hue were native to [her] . . .unnatural" (Nunez 228). That Ferdie does not recognize Virginia as one of his own is made evident by the fact that he speaks to her "slowly . . .as if English were not [her native] language" (Nunez 228). In the American's eyes, Virginia is not—nor will she ever be—the idealized commodity her father has intended her to be. Virginia has instead become "creolized," and although she was not born *in* Trinidad she is *of* Trinidad. Thus, because her value as a commodity is dependent on her ability to embody true "Englishness," she is lost for her father's purposes (Sparrow 55). She has become a "*true Trini*," and as such she is no longer singular; which of her multiple identities she embodies depends, in

[390] Original emphasis.

fact, on who is viewing her (Nunez 311).[391] She remains an idealized virgin to her father, a "Miranda," in spite of his incestuous designs on her; she is an object of great value to Carlos, a "Claribel," one he would like to purchase so that they may co-exist in a happy companionate marriage; and she is a foreign, blue-eyed, "other" to Ferdie, a "Sycorax."

On the island of her exile, Virginia's identity is a mirror, an uncanny double of both Ariana and Sylvia before her.[392] Due to her similarities with women viewed as monstrously sexualized whores, Gardner is unable to fully disassociate his daughter with the gender role which Sylvia and Ariana inhabit in his mind or – in the case of Ariana – his bed. Echoing *The Tempest*, it is Gardner (rather than Virginia), who begins to question his child's paternity. He tells Mumsford, "She was a piece of virtue. . .My wife . . .There is no doubt Virginia . . . No doubt [Virginia is] my daughter. Her mother said she was my daughter . . .[and she was a] virgin when I married her . . .Never been touched. A piece of virtue" (Nunez 52-53). Yet even to Mumsford this declaration of assured paternity rings false, and makes it seem as though Gardner was desperately searching for a contradiction—something, anything—which he could use to justify his incestuous desire for his young daughter (53).

Nunez does not resolve the question of Miranda's, and thus Virginia's, paternity. Instead, she further complicates the father-daughter relationship by having Gardner continuously assert and then question his own biological relationship with her. After she enters puberty, Gardner insists that Virginia wear a brasserie and corset to control her budding and heretofore uncontrolled body. However, in the lush, humid climate of Chacachacare, the undergarments

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[391] Sparrow also quotes Nunez in referring to Virginia as a "true Trini." pp. 90. Original emphasis

[392] Freud, Sigmund. "The Uncanny." *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*. Translated by Alix Strachey. London: Hogarth Press, 1955, pp.217-256.

leave Virginia with a rash, prompting an episode of lurid touching from her father: "You're like your mother," Gardner says to Virginia while rubbing a balm on her thighs, "Her skin was sensitive. Your father's skin was tough" (Nunez 240).

At first, Virginia thinks herself mistaken; she thinks her father's attentions and affections are normal, even enviable. She believes her mind has been playing tricks on her: that the kiss he gave her on her twelfth birthday, when she took the first step away from being a child and towards becoming a "lady"—a kiss which lingered too long—must have been accidental (Nunez 233). Soon she begins to blame herself, thinking, "did I encourage him to embrace me so tightly? . . .Did I turn my head to the right for his kiss on my cheek while he was turning his? . . .the kiss intended for my cheek landed on my mouth" (Nunez 233). But self-blame quickly turns to horror when Virginia reveals, "Before I could wriggle free, his tongue, hard, wet, warm, probed my lips apart" (Nunez 233).

As Virginia's changing body and burgeoning sexuality are directly acknowledged, Nunez complicates Shakespeare's original text by subverting his reference to Miranda/Virginia's "jewel." In Act III, Scene i of *The Tempest*, Miranda visits Ferdinand and aids him in his labors against the wishes of her father. While with him, she swears on her modesty, "the jewel in my dower," that she would desire no other companion than he.[393] Miranda's assertive pledge of fidelity and love cements the idealized bond between the pair, and unknowingly plays perfectly into Prospero's scheme. But in Nunez's hands, the reference to Miranda's "jewel" takes on a more sinister and ominous tone:

[393] Shakespeare, Act III, Scene i, Lines 54-85.

> [my father] looked directly into my eyes. "You have a jewel." It was wishful thinking, absurd that I should have allowed myself to believe he was speaking of my mother's diamond engagement ring . . .so profound was my embarrassment at that moment that I reached for the slimmest straw. "I still have it father," I said. "I have not lost it" . . ."No one here would steal Mother's ring . . .I can show it to you. I can, Father" . . .Did I mirror the desire he managed to suppress? *I can show it to you*. At night, in bed, was this his dream? (239-240)

Uncomfortably aware of the innuendo-heavy conversation she is having with her father, and hoping that she is misinterpreting him, Virginia clings to the illusion that the "jewel" her father is talking about is literal rather than figurative. However, Gardner shatters this dream for his daughter:

> I'm not speaking of your mother's ring . . .Your biggest jewel. *That* is what I mean. Your virgin knot . . .The jewel in your dower. Your prize . . . Break your virgin knot and you will be just like them. No more than an animal that had no reason. *We* control our bodies. *We* do not let our bodies control us. *We* control our desires. Our desires do not control us . . .You will be just like Ariana if you lose your jewel . . .Guard it or you will have no value. (Nunez 240)[394]

Virginia's virginity and purity are meant to function as leverage with and/or a selling point for Alfred/Ferdie. However, Gardner's barely contained obsession with her chastity and sexuality begins to unravel. Unlike Shakespeare's Prospero, who warned Ferdinand in Act IV Scene i against breaking Miranda's "virgin-knot" before the wedding, Gardner aggressively warns

[394] Original emphasis.

Virginia—and perhaps himself—against giving in to sexual temptation, by encouraging her to guard her virginity and thus her value. Virginia muses, "How could I have guessed then that I would have to guard [my virginity] from him?" (Nunez 240). Both Prospero and Gardner share an obsession with their daughter's virginity and thereby betray some sort of desire for their daughters.

What critics of Shakespeare have only hinted at and wondered about in the feminist margins of Shakespeare scholarship of *The Tempest* is thus made viscerally real and undeniable in *Prospero's Daughter*. In a 2008 interview, Nunez cited Shakespeare's frame narrative as the reason why she decided to make the relationship between Virginia and Gardner overtly incestuous: "[T]hroughout the play [Prospero] makes a lot of sexual references. He has sex on his mind. He was constantly talking to and about his daughter in ways that emphasized her value from below her waist. Her value was there" (Donnell 54). Thus in Nunez's text, Virginia, and through her Miranda, is exposed as a victim of a sexually, physically, and emotionally abusive father. This realization further complicates Virginia's identity, and aligns her more closely with her native and exploited counterparts, Ariana and Carlos, than it does with the idealized virgin-figure which made seventeenth century audiences comfortable.

What emerges from Virginia's narrative is her struggle against her impulse to conform to what her father and polite society expected of her: that she be obedient, chaste, and pure. Yet no matter how hard she tried to be the dutiful daughter, to be Miranda, Virginia shows her multiplicity and her agency. One limited identity cannot contain her. Rather than obeying her father out of love and filial obligation, Virginia fears him. Rather than being his star pupil, Virginia feels nervous, unable to speak in his presence, uneducable, "an idiot" (Nunez 235). Lacking in self-confidence, and without an identity besides the one imposed on her by her father,

she credits Carlos for saving her: from her father's withering gazes and anger, from what he has done to her, and from what he has always intended for her to become. But in truth, it is Virginia who ultimately saves both herself and Carlos, by exposing her father's monstrosity and in turn asserting her true self.

As Virginia gains self-confidence and begins to see the kinship which exists between herself and Ariana, she starts to question her father: "Did [he] fear that he would cease to exist, that he would no longer be who he deceived himself to be if Ariana was not who he defined her to be?" (Nunez 253). The world created by Gardner on the island is exposed as a flimsy illusion, a story from a novel, in which each inhabitant has a part to play. It is also deeply selfish: to populate his island and cast his drama, Gardner has sacrificed the lives, existences, and childhoods of Carlos, Ariana, and Virginia.

For a while when Virginia was young, Gardner was able to fool her and make her believe in his fairytale: that all he did was in service of her, to preserve her, and thus to preserve himself. But now Virginia perceives the hypocrisy and falsity in her father's world, and wonders, "Was it so essential to this deception that I, his English rose, remain untouched, her jewel safe in her dower? Was Father's construction of his worth so dependent on his construction of the lack of worth of people whose skin color was darker than his?" (Nunez 253). Virginia refuses to buy into her father's lies any longer and refuses to accept the colonial agenda of dehumanizing native peoples, so as to justify their abuse and marginalization. Further, she rejects the identities which Gardner would like to impose on her, on Carlos, Ariana, even on himself.

It is in Trinidad, away from her father and his influence, that Virginia finds her voice and reclaims her narrative. A guest in Mrs. Burton's colonial estate for the public purpose of finding

a suitable mate, and the private purpose of not further tempting an unsuitable one (her father), Virginia defends Carlos against the accusations of attempted rape which Gardner has leveled at him. Despite Mrs. Burton's warning that Virginia's reputation will be damaged should anyone hear her call Carlos her "friend," Virginia ignores her, and reiterates: "He did not hurt me . . .He didn't do anything . . .Carlos did nothing to me . . .He's my friend . . .He was always kind to me . . .He's innocent" (Nunez 263-63). According to Octave Mannoni, "the 'inferior being' always serves as a scapegoat;" yet despite her insistence that Carlos is a "monster" and a "savage," Virginia will not be manipulated by Mrs. Burton and her colonial mindset into vilifying Carlos and exonerating her father (106).

In *The Tempest*, Miranda rebelled against her father in small ways: speaking to Ferdinand despite her father's prohibition against it, and vowing to become either Ferdinand's wife or maid despite her father's admonitions that she keep her distance from him. But in *Prospero's Daughter*, Virginia is faced with a much more crucial decision, which amounts to a test of loyalty: will she continue to defend Carlos and proclaim his innocence, or will she stand by her father and support the narrative which casts him as her protector and Carlos as a would-be rapist? For Virginia the choice is obvious.

Arriving at Mrs. Burton's house to question Virginia about the allegations made against Carlos by Gardner, Virginia tells Mumsford, "Father made it all up . . .What he told you about Carlos. He made it up . . .My father did not tell the truth" (Nunez 268-69). Like Mrs. Burton, Mumsford is hesitant to believe Virginia, because doing so would mean disbelieving an Englishman and thereby make real one of colonialism's deepest fears: that the beautiful, young, English girl could really fall in love with a "monstrous savage." That Miranda would choose Caliban over Ferdinand. Yet, that is exactly what Virginia does. To Mumsford's horror (and

echoing her predecessor Miranda's vow to wed Ferdinand,) Virginia asserts her love for, and allegiance to, Carlos with complete naturalness, innocence, and confidence. "Carlos and I love each other," she says, "It's not a crime for Carlos to love me . . .Or for me to love him" (Nunez 271).

And now that she is in a position to do so, Virginia does not only defend Carlos: she also protects Ariana. Shielded by her whiteness and Englishness, Virginia has a freedom of movement and voice unavailable to either individual.[395] While Mumsford may have his suspicions about Gardner's duplicitousness and villainy, in the end he would always defend him—a white Englishman—against any of Carlos or Ariana's accusations. Compared to them, Virginia enjoys a place of power, for when she speaks Mumsford will listen. Consequently, she can and does use this power to free her fellow victims of abuse.

Virginia corroborates Ariana's story, stating to the Inspector not only that what she said about Carlos in the letter she wrote to the Inspector was true, but that "whatever she said about my father is true" (Nunez 272). The carefully constructed world of English civility and superiority that Gardner had created for himself and his daughter in their exile crumbles. Yet while Virginia initially finds her voice and uses it to protect Carlos and Ariana, she is still not brave enough to expose herself as having been similarly abused at the hands of her father. Caught between the new multiple identity she is creating for herself and the former idealized role she had occupied in her father's house and heart, Virginia is unable to fully embrace her new

[395] For a discussion of the "white creole" in literature see Elizabeth Nunez- Harrell's "The Paradoxes of Belonging: The White West Indian Woman in Fiction." *Modern Fiction Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Summer 1985); pp. 281-293.

reality. She defends those she feels are more voiceless than she, while gathering the strength to finally, publicly condemn her father.

Returning to Chacachacare with Carlos and Mumsford to confront her father about his crimes, Virginia fears her resolve is waning. She thinks to herself, “I wanted to be brave . . .I was here to save Carlos, to make Father admit Carlos’s innocence” (Nunez 296). Although afraid of her father and his wrath, Virginia recognizes that she alone can save Carlos and free the trio from Gardner. She realizes that Gardner will never admit to the Inspector that he stole Carlos’s house, lied about the attempted rape of Virginia, and will never acknowledge his continued sexual abuse of Ariana. In any ensuing war of words between the Englishman and the native “savages,” the doctor would always be believed and protected over them. Only the word of a young English girl, spoken against her father and supposed protector, would sway the authorities’ opinions. To save them all, then, it is necessary for Virginia to absolutely shed the identity imposed upon her by her father, the Inspector, and even Carlos and Ariana: she must, finally, define herself. She must, once and for all, embrace and embody her multiplicity. It is for this reason that her potential “deviance” should be read as an act of self-actualization and empowerment.

In order for Nunez to completely extricate Virginia/Miranda from the limited and gendered role which has been imposed upon her, she must finally punish Prospero for the crimes he has committed in both *Prospero’s Daughter* and *The Tempest*. To release Prospero’s victims from continued fragmentation he must not be allowed to outrun his crimes, as he had previously by fleeing—willingly or unwillingly—to a new island. For Virginia/Miranda—and all women—to finally embrace their multiplicity, Nunez must contend with Shakespeare’s original ending which venerated Prospero and argued that all he had done, all the mistreatment and abuse suffered at his hands, was necessary and altruistic. Prospero must be exposed for what he is, the

true villain of the drama who selfishly sought to protect himself at the expense of his daughter and his servants—those who trusted and relied upon him the most—and brought to justice.

As *Prospero's Daughter* comes to a climatic and violent end, Nunez again subverts and revises Shakespeare's frame narrative. *The Tempest* ends in typical, Shakespearean Romantic, fashion—with a wedding and a promise of reconciliation. Old rivalries are resolved, rightful thrones restored, and the future for all players is secured. Only Prospero, and the ultimate fate of Caliban, remains something of a mystery. In the play's final act, Prospero references Caliban by saying, "this thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine" (V, i, 275-76). Prospero and Caliban are connected through a mutually destructive dependency. To this end, Paul Brown asserts, "Even as this powerfully designates the monster as [Prospero's] property, an object for his own utility, a darkness from which he may rescue self-knowledge, there is surely an ironic identification *with* the other here as both become interstitial" (67).[396] This is as close as Shakespeare gets to acknowledging the darkness which lurks within Prospero, or to indicating that he recognizes his own culpability in creating the monster he believes Caliban to be.

The play closes with an *Epilogue* spoken by Prospero, who is alone on-stage. Here, critics claim, not only does Prospero relinquish his magic with an air of "properly human compassion and mercy," but so too does Shakespeare, whom it is assumed Prospero represents (Sanchez 81). Prospero's staff and books are dispatched, Ariel is finally set free, Miranda is engaged to Ferdinand, and the usurped throne of Milan is restored. What happens to Caliban—whether he regains his stolen island and remains there or is brought by Prospero back to Italy—is of little or no consequence to Shakespeare. Caliban's fate at the closing of the drama is left

[396] See Brown, Paul. "'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine': *The Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism." *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*. Edited by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985, pp. 48-71.

ambiguous.[397] In Shakespeare's eyes, it is Prospero who is trapped and even colonized by the stage and the audience. Almost "breaking the fourth wall," Prospero needs the audience to free him with their applause, to imaginatively transform the happy ending he so desires into a reality. And, presumably, they do.[398]

While *The Tempest* leaves audiences with the promise of a new adventure instigated by the voyage home, a "brave new world," and the subsequent homecoming and marriage celebrations, *Prospero's Daughter* offers a different kind of resolution.[399] Confronted by Carlos and Mumsford, a defiant Gardner hurls insults and reasserts the charges he previously leveled against Carlos: "Filthy slave! . . .Ungrateful whelp! Send him away. Lock him up! . . .Bloody devil! Bastard! Lascivious slave! . . .Filth! Pervert!" (Nunez 298-9). His world crumbling around him as his sins are brought to light, Gardner initially holds firm to the false narrative he has created; he accuses both Carlos and Ariana of lying and conspiring against him. But when the confrontation between Gardner and Carlos turns physical, a hidden Virginia emerges, almost freezing time. Gardner is finally broken when he catches sight of Virginia and undergoes the shocking realization that his illusory world is dissolving. Virginia's rebellion against her father and all that he stands for has come to a head. It is she alone who holds the power to define herself, and those around her.

Begging for Virginia's forgiveness, Gardner:

> grabbed the hem of his cloak and twisted it around his body. A mummy …he threw himself forward down the steep drop to the sea . . .Magic. This time it failed

[397] Lamming, George. "A Monster, a Child, a Slave," in *The Pleasures of Exile*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1992.
[398] Shakespeare, Act V, Scene i, *Epilogue*, lines 1-20.
[399] Shakespeare, Act V, Scene i, line183

> him. His cape, buoyed by the warm air, ballooned behind him, but in seconds gravity pulled him downward. His body struck the sharp edges of the rocks and broke into pieces. (Nunez 303-4)

Thus, *Prospero's Daughter*, like *The Tempest* before it, ends with reconciliation, a voyage, and a marriage. But none of those elements would have been possible if Gardner/Prospero had lived. Nunez "kills him off, perhaps because Prospero, to borrow Gayatri Spivak's phrase, 'cannot be contained' by a narrative that rewrites *The Tempest* in the interest of restoring Caliban rather than Prospero" (Sparrow 92).[400] Gardner's "release," that which he begged audiences for at the end of Shakespeare's play, is transformed from an appeal for applause into a demonic form of apotheosis. His death by suicide frees Virginia, Carlos, and Ariana. His death is a direct reaction to his daughter and the fear of having to answer to, and be held accountable for, the perverse crimes which he has committed against her. By ending the text in this way, Nunez redefines Virginia, and Miranda, giving final power and control of the text to the previously silenced and discounted trope of idealized femininity.

Nunez's text ends in triumph, in an "injustice . . .righted" (305). Over four hundred years after *The Tempest* was first written and performed, Nunez corrected the error in Shakespeare's original drama: she restored the love story between Caliban and Miranda, and unsilenced the victims of Prospero's tyranny. This is a feat, I believe, that could only be performed by a female postcolonial author who saw the interconnectedness of the female characters, both present and absent, and hence the corresponding need to reunify their disaggregated identities. Nunez's text

[400] I disagree with Jennifer Sparrow's assertion that *Prospero's Daughter* is solely concerned with restoring Caliban and thus must kill off Prospero. By making such an argument, Sparrow is participating in the erasure of both Miranda and Ariel from the text and is also reinforcing the notion that Caliban is alone in his suffering—a prospect which feminist critics have resisted. Over and against Sparrow, I contend that Nunez's text restores the silenced female voices and asserts the female identity as multiple.

resolves Shakespeare's earlier ambiguity by triumphing in the marriage of Virginia and Carlos, who await the birth of their first child. And ultimately, the text ends with Virginia: her words, her memories, and her confession to Carlos of the abuse she suffered. No longer willing to be a victim, no longer capable of silence, Virginia tells Carlos, "Ariana was not the only one" (Nunez 313). It is thus Miranda who has the final word and, by extension, Claribel and Sycorax. By unifying the three disparate female identities, Virginia and Miranda become whole.

Shakespeare could never have imagined the legacy his work would have, the amount of ink spilled in attempts to parse out his meanings, how he truly intended his characters to be understood, how those figures were adapted and repurposed for sociopolitical, gendered, classist, or racist ends. More precisely perhaps, it is impossible to read *The Tempest* without also reading it in conjunction with *Prospero's Daughter*, *I*, *Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, and even *Foe*. Shakespeare's original frame narrative has informed countless early modern and contemporary adaptations and recasting's, but those works have also worked to alter Shakespeare. Reading *The Tempest* now, in light of the authors text's discussed here, opens the play up to new and wider audiences, and new interpretations. The attentive reader and theater goer are challenged to see the subversiveness in the ways Claribel and Sycroax are discussed, to see resistance in the memories of them that haunt the text. Miranda too, once viewed as "simply angelic" is irrevocably altered, her every word uttered with a wink rather than dutiful obedience.

The women in Shakespeare's drama—Claribel, Sycorax, and Miranda—must be viewed as a collective, rather than as individual "elements" or limited identities. In seeing them thusly, it becomes clear that each figure has the ability to exceed the reductive role imposed on her and exercise the multiplicity inherent in all women. Female prismatism has been vilified, punished, and violently opposed in attempts to curb female agency and eliminate the threat empowered and

actualized women posed to the family and nation. Shakespeare's play placed the danger of femininity center stage and in the seventeenth century this served to reinforce the system of coverture and the necessity of female disaggregation. However enduring that view was—it was perpetuated into the mid twentieth century by predominantly male authors and critics— today *The Tempest* has been reclaimed by female postcolonial writers, has been recast as a site of female subversion and rebellion. Claribel, Sycorax, and Miranda have been unsilenced, even their smallest gestures re-inscribed, and their limitations transcended. It is no longer necessary or important to know (if it ever was) what Shakespeare intended when he wrote his female triumvirate. Contemporary women writers and audiences have rescued them from the dark abysm of time, have redefined them against, and for, themselves, have restored the virgin, commodity, and witch/whore, and renamed her: Woman.

Conclusion

In a letter to her publisher, Charlotte Brontë once wrote:

> you should be very thankful that books cannot talk to each other as well as to the reader. . . . Still I like the notion of a mystic whispering amongst the lettered leaves, and perhaps at night, when London is asleep . . . . when all your clerks and men are away, and the warehouse is shut up, such a whispering may be heard—by those who have ears to hear. (Novy 32)[401]

The postcolonial women writers that this project has discussed, Rhys, Condé, and Nunez, have proven that books do talk to each other, that the whisperings of female characters trading stories, building community, and finding strength in their shared experience can be heard if we can only learn to listen. These authors have joined in the search for what the (male) master narrative—that which is exemplified by Shakespeare and *The Tempest* —has removed them from and has thus been lost to them, a "history sunk under the sea" (Cliff vii-viii).[402] In order to exhume authentic, prismatic, and uniquely female voices and experiences there has been, according to Michelle Cliff, the need to undermine the oppressor's language and co-opt, or corrupt, his style, and turn it to another purpose (ix).[403] There whispers must be transformed into roars. This is not to say of course, that Caribbean women authors view Shakespeare specifically as an oppressor. Rather, he is representative of a culture that has devalued and silenced women, an educational past which supplants native history for colonial, and privileges male over female. Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido assert "for the Caribbean woman writer, the reality of absence, of

[401] Novy, Marianne L. *Engaging with Shakespeare: Responses of George Eliot and Other Women Novelists*. University of Iowa Press, 1998.

[402] Cliff, Michelle. *If I Could Write This in Fire*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

[403] Cliff's original quote, which I cite here is: "It means…undermining the oppressor's language and co-opting, or corrupting his style, and turning it to our purpose" (ix).

voicelessness, of marginalization is linked to the necessity to find a form, a mode of expression" (4).[404] These authors have turned to familiar stories, familiar characters, and familiar forms and found in them the seeds of resistance, and avenues through which to give voice to their experiences, to be heard. The struggle to find unification while maintaining dynamic prismatism, as I have argued throughout this work, can and has finally been achieved in the works by Rhys, Condé, and Nunez (as well as countless others which unfortunately there is not the space to adequately address here). Caribbean women writers explode the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy by mimicking and replacing Shakespeare's language and frame narrative and creating amongst the lettered leaves their own, previously expunged, literary and historical tradition.

In an 1841 essay, Ralph Waldo Emerson asked, "What is history but a fable agreed upon?"[405] History, if it is to be viewed as one potential story in a multitude of stories—as a possibility rather than as truth—has the ability to become elevated or degraded based upon individual or collective perspectives. In accepting a single narrative about the past, early and contemporary scholars, historians, and citizens—whether knowingly or not—deny the existence of alternative versions of history. This "master narrative" has become so identified with truth that many in contemporary society fail to recognize that for every accepted history there are countless alternative or shadow histories which have been lost or omitted from the official record. According to Toni Morrison, this "master narrative" is "whatever ideological script has been

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[404] Davies, Carole Boyce, and Elaine Savory Fido, Editors. *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. New Jersey; Africa World Press, 1990.

[405] Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "History." *Essays: First Series* (1841). This quote was originally attributed to Napoleon but was popularized by Emerson. In her essay "Who's Sorry Now? Personal Stories, Public Apologies" Marina Warner attributes this quote to Voltaire, stating, "If history is an agreed fable, as Voltaire said…then any initiative to change things must begin with stories" (467). Warner, Marina. *Signs and Wonders: Essays on Literature and Culture*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2003, pp. 459-480. "Who's Sorry Now?" is also quoted in Lisa. G. Propst's "Unsettled Stories: Disruptive Narrative Strategies in Marina Warner's *Indigo* and *The Leto Bundle*." *Studies in the Novel*, Vol. 41, No. 3, (Fall 2009), pp. 330-347.

imposed by the people in authority on everybody else . . . It's white male life."[406] In time, the master narrative (the repeated story, the agreed upon fiction), begins to take on the appearance of reality. Acceptance of the master narrative, however, often denies the experiences of those deemed "other," transgressive, or savage; it renders them without history and/or asserts that they are unworthy of a history separate from that which has been imposed upon them by predominantly white male colonizers, or those in positions of power.

The most striking victims of the power of the master narrative are people of color and women, who have been forcibly removed from history and relegated to the margins, silent but still present in the shadows. This reality raises disturbing questions about whose stories are told, which stories are memorialized as "history," and why certain stories are deemed inferior, unnecessary, or even dangerous. Many people have purposefully turned a blind eye to alternative histories which they find uncomfortable or ugly: stories which reveal truths that they would rather not see. Women, especially women of color, have frequently borne the brunt of historical erasure and have been forced to resist the oppressive agendas of both the patriarchy and colonization. The protection of the master narrative at the expense of those silenced, and the continued suppression or denigration of alternative histories, has become a form of contemporary double colonization.[407] History thus becomes weaponized as a tool of oppression, and is used to create a specific narrative which vilifies those on the "losing," or alternative, side(s) of history.

In many ways, art, especially literature, has the ability to uncover hidden and forgotten truths or histories, and the populations silenced by them. By calling attention to what lurks in the

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[406] Toni Morrison interview with Bill Moyers March 11, 1990. http://billmoyers.com/content/toni-morrison-part-2/ Date accessed 6/14/2017

[407] For a discussion of "double colonization" see *A Double Colonization: Colonial and Post-Colonial Women's Writing.* Edited by Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford. Oxford: Dangaroo Press, 1986.

shadows, always present but just out of sight, literature can help to restore lost or erased histories, and highlight the necessity of uncovering them to bring them out of the shadows. From texts as early as Homer's *Odyssey*, to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and beyond, travel narratives, captivity narratives, early memoirs, and even works of fiction have captured the imaginations of readers, and opened their eyes to new realities and new cultures.[408] People have long been fascinated, and in turn threatened, by things foreign to their own experience. Readers have lived vicariously through the experiences of those who "lived to tell the tale" of strange and fantastic encounters on enchanted or isolated islands with savages, pirates, Amazons, and "men whose heads stood in their breasts."[409] These stories have also been used to warn or instruct readers of the dangers that exist outside their doors, villages, or realms of experience. Stories and published narratives blur the line between history and fiction.

Even when straddling the line between fact and fiction, literature has the ability to expose historical truths in ways unavailable to other mediums. Reaching new and diverse audiences, literature does not merely restore one lost narrative or alternative history: it brings to light the existence of multitudinous "shadow histories," histories which exist beside the agreed upon master narrative but are not part of the official historical record. However, this exposure is not without an often-violent re-envisioning or re-appropriation of the past. The establishment of an alternative history comes with the price of the destabilization or potential destruction of the master narrative. Shifting mindsets from one version of events, in order to acknowledge the possibility of an alternative version, can shatter a person or a population's sense of themselves.

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[408] See James V. Morrison. *Shipwrecked: Disaster and Transformation in Homer, Shakespeare, Defoe, and the Modern World.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014.

[409] Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Edited by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004. Act III, Scene iii, line 47.

Therefore, alternative or shadow histories are often fought against by those in positions of power, by those who had a hand in the creation of, and/or stand to profit from, the agreed upon record. Even fictions which announce themselves as fictions become sacred to a culture or society, and in time move from a fiction to a "truth."

The stories we are told, and the stories we tell, become part of us as a people, how we define ourselves, or what we define ourselves against. Exposing the instabilities or falsehoods in our tenuous histories can have devastating effects. However, failure to acknowledge alternative histories does even greater violence to those who have had their narratives and experiences marginalized, omitted, or erased. It must additionally be recognized that history is also dictated by prevailing socio-cultural ideologies concerning gender, race, and class. Analyzing the texts by William Shakespeare, Elizabeth Nunez, Charlotte Brontë, Jean Rhys, Arthur Miller, Maryse Condé, Daniel Defoe, and J.M. Coetzee thus requires a feminist perspective which sees history as immersive and all-encompassing (Eckstein 58).[410] As readers and critics we must continue the work of feminist critics and writers such as Adrienne Rich, so as to find "the wreck and not the story of the wreck / the thing itself and not the myth" (23).[411] Only by "diving into the wreck," to exhume forgotten or lost gendered and racialized narratives and experiences, can people truly say that they have a history, and a history based on truth rather than merely an agreed upon fable (Rich 22, Coetzee 142).

Adaptations and explorations of *The Tempest* began to pop up almost immediately following its original 1611 run. Over the following four centuries, an ocean of ink has been

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[410] Eckstein, Barbara. "Iconicity, Immersion, and Otherness: The Hegelian 'Dive' of J.M. Coetzee and Adrienne Rich." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* Vol. 29, No. 1 (March 1996), pp. 57-77.

[411] Rich, Adrienne. *Diving into the Wreck. Poems 1971-1972*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1973.

spilled by minds trying to unravel the secrets of this text. As the sheer volume of creative and critical interest in *The Tempest* makes clear, there is far more to say about its authors intentions, and its political and cultural implications, than any one project has the time or space to feature. As a result, I have had to make many difficult choices about which adaptations and re-castings of *The Tempest* and its characters to utilize and have thus focused on Rhys, Condé, Nunez, and Coetzee. Through these texts I argue that the female characters, both present and absent, should be viewed as part of a larger prismatic female collective rather than as individual tropes of idealized or debased femininity. Tropes, I assert, which are designed to subjugate, disempower, and silence women.

In the course of my research, I have found that contemporary *Tempest* adaptations and/or re-appropriations generally fall into one of two camps. The first is comprised of texts written by (largely postcolonial) male authors, who focus almost myopically on Caliban and/or the relationship between Prospero and Caliban. The second is made up of texts written by female authors intent on shifting the focus from Shakespeare's male characters to his female ones. Indeed, these writers will often begin with the express purpose of "unsilencing" the erased female experience and narrative from the play.[412] At the risk of overgeneralizing the gendered division of *Tempest*-inspired rewritings—and angering poststructuralists who collapse the male/female, reason/emotion binaries—I believe that the consequences of the Caliban-centric focus of many male-authored texts (such as those written my Aimé Césaire and George Lamming) cannot be overstated. In many ways, it is neither possible nor helpful to take a non-

[412] Chantal Zabus goes one step further by including a geographic component. Specifically, she states: "In Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Australia, and Quebec[,] Caliban becomes the inexhaustible symbol of the colonized insurgent. In Canada and the Caribbean (after the 'Calibanic' phase), Miranda revisits the Bardscript while, in African American texts, Sycorax embodies the threat of gynocracy" (2). *Tempests After Shakespeare*. New York: Palgrave, 2002. This is also quoted in Isidore Diala's, "(De)Stabilising the European Classic: *Sycorax*, Esiaba Irobi's *The Tempest*," *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*, Vol. 24, 2012, pp. 25-43.

binary, poststructuralist approach to these texts because their interest in Caliban is itself played out in a decidedly binary way.[413]

Tempest appropriations, or texts inspired by Shakespeare's frame narrative, written by women are more challenging to characterize. These too, tend to fall along traditionally colonial lines with those written by white European or North American writers and those penned by West Indian/Caribbean or postcolonial writers. Female authors like Constance Beresford-Howe and Sarah Murphy, both Canadian, tend to follow stereotypical feminine lines.[414] Retellings of *The Tempest* written by women often become domestic dramas and love stories—where the female protagonist (usually a weak Miranda type) must overcome adversity (usually a disapproving father) to win the man she loves (Ferdinand or some approximation). White female authors who attempt to represent Sycorax have fallen back on ethical parables in which Sycorax is transformed from a sexualized and dangerous witch into a misunderstood natural healer. Texts produced by West Indian women writers, like Marina Warner and Michelle Cliff, offer a more nuanced and often revolutionary portrait of, typically, Sycorax seeing in the maligned witch echoes of their own experience; joining with postcolonial male authors a shared inheritance of colonial marginalization and oppression.[415] Sadly, Claribel is all but exiled from these recasting

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[413] In these works, Caliban is most often portrayed as a masculine revolutionary or political figure; this inevitably shifts his character and motivations, and switches the play's genre from a Romance to a form of postcolonial propaganda. See Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest.* Translated by Richard Miller. New York: TCG Translations, 2002, and George Lamming, *Water with Berries*. Leeds, England: Peepal Tree, 1971. Also see Lammings', *The Pleasures of Exile.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004. Other contemporary male revisions/rewritings of *The Tempest* include: Dev Virahsawmy's *Toufann: A Mauritian Fantasy*, Enfield, England: Border Crossings, Ltd., 1999; Poul Anderson's *A Midsummer Tempest*, New York: Doubleday, 1974. See also the poems: "Caliban" by Edward Kamau Brathwaite in *Masks*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968; W.H. Auden's "The Sea and the Mirror." Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1944; and Robert Browning's "Caliban Upon Setebos," *Dramatis Personae*, 1864.

[414] See Constance Beresford-Howe. *Prospero's Daughter*. Toronto, Canada: Macmillan of Canada, 1988 and Sarah Murphy, *The Measure of Miranda*. Edmonton, Canada: NeWest Press, 1987. For other contemporary reworkings of *The Tempest* by Canadian and European female authors see: Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed*. London: Hogarth, 2016; and Jane Rogers' *Island*. Little, Brown & Co., 1999.

[415] See Marina Warner's *Indigo, or, Mapping the Waters*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1992. This text will be referred to as *Indigo.* See also, Michelle Cliff. *No Telephone to Heaven*. New York: Plume, 1987. Both Cliff's

and appropriations. However, despite largely sharing in the project of "unsilencing," few male and female authors can agree on which characters require restoration. One consequence of this reality is that any choice I make about which texts to include in my study inevitably compels me to privilege one voice over another. Given that there is no way to perfectly resolve these tensions, I have instead chosen to explain here the reasoning behind each of my textual decisions.

Perhaps the most striking omission from this project is Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest* (1969): one of the most well-known and analyzed re-envisioning of Shakespeare's frame narrative. I have omitted this text purposefully in part because, for contemporary postcolonial critics, it seems impossible to discuss *The Tempest* through a postcolonial lens without discussing Césaire. Yet I find that my interests are not shared by Césaire, for *A Tempest* reduces Miranda, Claribel and Sycorax to even more invisibility and silence than is the case in Shakespeare's original text. To a certain extent, this is unsurprising. In "Caribbean and African Appropriations of *The Tempest*," Rob Nixon notes that Césaire was very explicit about his motivations for re-writing *The Tempest*. To wit, Césaire wanted to "de-mythify the tale" that "Prospero is the complete totalitarian" and a "man of cold reason," on a "methodical conquest."[416] In contrast, Césaire recreates Caliban as a "rebel—the positive hero;" he can hardly be otherwise, because the "slave

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Clare Savage and Warner's Sycorax and Miranda embody the female postcolonial struggle to reclaim their native lands and restore indigenous languages and cultures. Some critics, such as Thomas Cartelli, assert that Clare Savage is a Miranda figure, I read her as more connected to Sycorax especially in he stated association with Caliban the "savage" from whom she inherits her name, and thus place *No Telephone to Heaven* among the postcolonial re-envisionings of Sycorax rather than Miranda. Unfortunately, in his insightful analysis of Cliff's text and *The Tempest*, Cartelli fails to mention Sycorax at all. See Thomas Cartelli's "After 'The Tempest:' Shakespeare, Postcoloniality, and Michelle Cliff's New, New World Miranda." *Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 82-102. See also Brinda J. Mehta's *Notions of Identity, Diaspora, and Gender in Caribbean Women's Writing*. London: Palgrave, 2009; Joseph, May. "Sycorax Mythology." *Black Theater: Ritual Performance in the Black Diaspora.* Edited by Paul Carter Harrison, Victor Leo Walker II, and Gus Edwards. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002. pp. 209-227.

[416] Nixon, Rob. "Caribbean and African Appropriations of The Tempest." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 13, No. 3, Politics and Poetic Value (Spring 1987), pp. 557-578. 571. Nixon quotes Césaire in S. Belhassen's "Aimé Césaire's *A Tempest*" in *Radical Perspectives in the Arts*, ed. Lee Baxandall (Harmondsworth 1972), p. 176.

is always more important than his master—for it is the slave who makes history" (571). But while Césaire's desire to critically engage with his male characters is understandable and important, it has come at the cost of giving female figures (whether present or absent) any substantive place in *A Tempest's* imagined history.

In Césaire's hands, Miranda, specifically, comes across as a flimsy, insubstantial bystander, one who is used to connect *A Tempest* to *The Tempest*, but is otherwise unnecessary. Laurence Porter suggests that Césaire "eliminates . . . the inquisitive, role-playing, sexually aware Miranda . . . so as to focus [on] the racist voice in Prospero" (364).[417] Miranda is instead rendered a "wild" creature, and relegated to the margins of the play:

> happy—like the queen of the wildflowers,
> of streams and paths, running barefoot through thorns
> and flowers, spared by one, caressed by the other. (Act I, Scene i, pg. 12)

Césaire's Miranda thus reinforces the inconsequential and secondary role of women in postcolonial fiction and criticism. And while Césaire emphasizes Caliban's "Africanness"—a nod to his mother Sycorax—he continues the unfortunate tradition of reducing Miranda to a trope of idealized (white) femininity. Césaire recalls Fanny Kemble's description of Miranda as "simply angelic." He also borrows from Daniel Wilson's 1873 exploration in *Caliban: Missing Link* which determines that Miranda is merely the realization of "what a pure guileless woman [could] become," claiming that, in her, Shakespeare "embodies all that is true and lovely in pure womanhood" (Wilson 56).[418] Over a century later, Nixon continues this line of analysis/dismissal

[417] Porter, Laurence M. "Aimé Césaire's Reworking of Shakespeare: Anticolonialist Discourse in 'Une Tempête'" *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1995), pp. 360-381.

[418] Kemble is quoted in Hulme and Sherman. Wilson, Daniel. *Caliban: Missing Link*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1873. Wilson's text devotes various chapters to Caliban including: "The Evolution of Caliban," "Caliban's Island," "The Monster Caliban," "Caliban, the Metaphysician," and "Caliban, the Theologian."

of Miranda when he asserts that *The Tempest* is ultimately a male text: if women exist within it at all, their value is based on what they contribute to the patriarchy, as opposed to any individual agency, creativity, or intellect (577).

Interestingly, Césaire, like other postcolonial male writers such as George Lamming, also fails to take advantage of the opportunities embedded in his text to explore Sycorax more deeply. It is through Sycorax, Caliban's deceased mother, that he claims ownership of the island, and the right to rule as "King of the Island" (Act I, Scene ii, pg. 17). Myriam Chancy points out; "In [Sycorax] and her memory resides a potential for…transformation" (25). In contrast to Miranda, who is afforded at least a few lines of exposition to move the story along, Sycorax and her witchy memory are all but banished: Caliban names Sycorax just twice in the first twenty pages of the text—and then she disappears altogether. Indeed, Césaire devotes more time and attention to the three goddesses (Juno, Ceres, and Iris) who perform a marriage masque for Miranda and Ferdinand than he does to Sycorax. In subordinating rather than celebrating Sycorax, Césaire "participates in maintaining the hegemonic status quo" (Chancy 25). Yet it is Sycorax's native language which Caliban must be conditioned to abandon. It is the legacy of her previous rule over the island and its limited inhabitants—primarily Ariel, whom Césaire recreates as a "mulatto slave"—which are subsequently pitted against Caliban, as the island's "black slave." So it is, in short, remarkable that Césaire passes over such opportunities to imbue the character of Sycorax with a new degree of emotional depth, in favor of an unbroken focus on Caliban.[419]

These omissions, including the complete eradication of Claribel, are informed decisions on Césaire's part, and reveal a hierarchy of narrative value in which female characters are disposable. It is this voicelessness—what Carole Boyce Davies and Elaine Savory Fido refer to

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[419] Ariel and Caliban are listed as "mulatto slave" and "black slave" respectively on the list of characters as two of the alterations that Césaire makes to Shakespeare's original text (Césaire n.p).

as female "double marginalization or dual colonization of the Third World woman"—which my project challenges and dismantles.[420] My ultimate purpose is to bring these female characters out from the shadows and reposition them as the unified center of both the creative text and of the feminist criticism which accompanies it. By extension, I hope to expose female prismatism and challenge the male postcolonial tendency to only privilege the male literary and historical master narrative.

As my argument surrounds largely female adaptations and revisions of *The Tempest* and the women who inhabit it, it may also seem strange that I did not include Marina Warner's *Indigo, or, Mapping the Waters* (1992) as a core text on which to focus.[421] Both Elizabeth Nunez and Warner transport their adaptations of *The Tempest* to islands which actually exist in the Caribbean, and move some or all of the action into the twentieth century.[422] Warner sets her story on Enfant-Béate ("happy child"), an Edenic paradise inhabited by Sycorax and her adopted children Dulé/Caliban and Ariel, as well as countless other indigenous peoples and later English colonists.[423] The naming and renaming of Warner's characters is linked to the constantly changing name of the island which serves as a foreshadowing of what will come: the destruction of political peace and the irreversible ravages introduced by English colonialism. In this way, Warner's text seeks to do more than just re-craft Shakespeare's characters; rather, it recreates the

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[420] Davies, Carole Boyce, and Elaine Savory Fido, editors. *Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature*. Treton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1990. p.1

[421] Warner, Marina. *Indigo, or, Mapping the Waters*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1992. This text will be referred to as *Indigo.* Warner's text is of course just one of many effective and affecting West Indian *Tempest* adaptation. I hope to revisit the ways in which *Indigo*, *No Telephone To Heaven*, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, and *The Tempest* are in conversation with each other in a separate text in the near future

[422] Nunez places her characters on Chacachacare, a former leper colony populated exclusively by her versions of Prospero, Caliban, Miranda and Ariel.

[423] The setting of Warner's novel changes names several times; at various points it is referred to by the indigenous names "Liamuiga" and "Oualie," only to be re-named "Everhope Island" by Warner's first colonial settler, Kit Everard. This is meaningful in that Everard turns out to be an ancestor of Miranda and Xanthe. The island's name will then be changed again to Enfant-Béate when the French take possession of the islands from the English colonists and will finally be renamed a final time as St. Kitts and Nevis, which they are called today.

entire pre-colonial, colonial, and (potential) postcolonial existence of Enfant-Béate and its multitudinous citizenry. Yet *Indigo's* greatest strength, the source of its moving and provocative voice—its vast range and scope—is also what makes it impossible for me to include it in this project. Quite simply, I lack the space here to fully do this text justice.

The heart of this issue lies, perhaps, in the autobiographical element of Warner's text. *Indigo* combines the historical and geographical landscapes of West Indian colonialism with Warner's own familial experience of colonialism in St. Kitt's, Trinidad, and Nevis (here renamed Liamuiga, or "fertile island" in Carib and Oualie) (Williams-Wanquet 269). Is has been suggested by Williams-Wanquet, and even Warner herself, that the fictional Kit Everard, the first settler to arrive to Liamuiga, was based on the author's ancestor Sir Thomas Warner, who settled on St. Kitts in 1622 (269-270).[424] Further, Judy Raymond states that the name "Warner" is well known in Trinidad because "much of the Belmont district of Port of Spain was once Warner lands . . . there are still streets named after the clan. They were an important family; Marina's great-grandfather Charles . . . was Attorney General of Trinidad." In a way, then, *Indigo* is about more than an exploration of colonialism or the restoration of erased female voices: it is also about expelling the sins of the father, as inherited by the author. As the descendent of prominent colonists, Warner is left to contend with a bloody and villainous family history. In an attempt to do so, Warner positions herself as the hybrid heir apparent of *both* the English colonizers *and* the native inhabitants. In Warner's eyes, she herself is a modern-day Miranda, both a natural part of the island and an agent of the island's subjugation. But as the "Miranda knot" personified, her focus is on her own redemption rather than on female prismatism.

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[424] In "The Silence of Sycorax" a talk Warner delivered at the Free University of Berlin in 1996 she mentions that *Indigo* was in part inspired by her father's family history in the West Indies. Warner, Marina. *Signs & Wonders: Essays on Literature & Culture*. London: Vintage, Random House, 2004. pp. 263-269.

Indigo consequently stumbles in much the same way that *Foe* does. In both texts, the white colonial/postcolonial authors are directly implicated in the history they hope to unravel and thereby challenge. As just noted, Warner uses her text as a way to acknowledge her family's involvement with a brand of British colonialism that "so resembles Prospero's theft" (Li 76).[425] Yet Warner is unduly "optimistic" about the reality that her imperial heritage necessarily prevents her (and all similar authors, for that matter) from writing her story alongside the stories of the silenced and/or wholly erased indigenous population (Li 84). On this note, Li points out that Warner believes her position as "an Anglophone writer" places her and other Anglophone authors "in a position to reach more people, so that out of the colonized position, he or she addresses a larger audience and then reinvents the experience that audience has received historically" (84). In doing so, Warner fails again to recognize the dangers inherent to artistic appropriation and revisionism. In (re)writing Miranda, Sycorax, Caliban, and the native experience of colonialism from a privileged white perspective, she effectively assumes the form of her character Xanthe—the voice of continued expansion and colonization—rather than Miranda, the hybrid Creole apologist.

Further, Warner's re-appropriation of Sycorax follows in the footsteps of Maryse Condé, who (re)creates the witch as a benevolent healer in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986). Unlike Tituba—who, in my argument, works to unify disparate female voices and experiences, and use them to challenge hegemonic masculinity—Warner's Sycorax seeks to empower her more direct relatives, including Atala Seacole and (more distantly) Serafine, both native women of color. This empowerment, however, is predicated on the expulsion of white/creole women and

[425] Li, Cao. "The Colours of Fiction: From Indigo/Blue to Maroon/Black (A Study of Miranda's Story in *Indigo*)." *ARIEL*, Vol. 36, Iss. 1 Jan.-April 2005, pp. 73-91.

power from Liamuiga and Oualie, that represented by Miranda and Xanthe.[426] In contrast to Warner, I argue that Condé and Nunez see shared power in the prismatic female figure and experience, whereas Warner is more interested in asserting the singular female voice of Sycorax above all others. Even with this female-centered approach, though, Warner is too focused on the rivalry between Miranda and her half-sister/aunt Xanthe—and too exoticizing of Sycorax and Ariel—for *Indigo* to find a place in this project which seeks to highlight the prismatism of all women regardless of race, class, or cultural divide.

Coming full circle, then, I omitted both *A Tempest* and *Indigo, or, Mapping the Waters* from this study—along with many other effective and affecting *Tempest* adaptations—to ensure that there was adequate space available to analyze my critically chosen texts. These were selected because they elevated and highlighted female voices, experiences and narratives, and represented women as multifaceted and dynamic (rather than singular and disposable) beings. In the end, perhaps it would have been more appropriate to substitute *Indigo* or *A Tempest* for *Jane Eyre*, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*, or *Foe*: there certainly is no shortage of direct *Tempest* adaptations from which to choose. But my interests do not merely lie in texts obviously inspired by *The Tempest*, per se. Nor are they exclusively concerned with works which seek to "correct" Shakespeare's creation, or to appropriate it for personal reasons. This project has always been more interested in exploring how the creative urge which originates with Shakespeare leads to a discursive process of re-appropriation and re-envisioning throughout a widely disparate cross-section of texts. I have sought, and succeeded in uncovering how Miranda, Sycorax, and Claribel are more than the limited role assigned to them, and how unifying those otherwise fragmented

[426] Atala Seacole, a name borrowed from the nurse Mary Seacole, is a twentieth century political agitator who seeks to limit the power and influence of the descendants of colonialism on the islands. Warner seems unsure if it is Miranda or Atala Seacole who is the true inheritor of Sycorax and Ariel's power and lineage.

and disaggregated pieces is a project all readers and scholars, female and male, must participate in.

To make female characters and women speak and be heard, female prismatism must be recognized and championed. The female voice and experience is an inescapable part of the larger human experience, and therefore must find equal footing, and equal representation, in literature, art, and criticism. The master narrative must be revised to include the multiplicity of gendered, racialized, and class-subverting alternatives, or shadow histories, so that we can finally discover "the wreck and not the story of the wreck / the thing itself and not the myth" (Rich 23). Without the unified, prismatic female voice, without recognizing that Miranda, Sycorax, and Claribel are all facets of a multi-dimensional woman, we are settling for the myth. I, for one, want the thing itself. Shouldn't we all?

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