À TOI, CALIBAN: A HISTORY OF *THE TEMPEST* IN FRANCE AND THE FRANCOPHONE WORLD

by

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Abstract

This thesis offers a history of Shakespeare's *Tempest* in France and the Francophone world. After a brief overview of Shakespeare – and more specifically *The Tempest* – on the French stage up until the late nineteenth century, there is a focus on four main responses, written in French, which have themselves shaped the afterlife of the play around the world: Ernest Renan's 1878 sequel, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête*, Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban parle* (1928), Octave Mannoni's *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950), and Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête* (1969). These adaptations and responses were all composed after, and shaped by, significant events in the history of France and the Francophone world: they are part of the play's post-Revolution, post-WW1, post-colonial journey.

Renan's sequel translates Prospero, Caliban and Ariel to a new, urban, post-Enlightenment locale, disrupting the Prospero-Caliban power dynamic. Renan describes his sequel as attempt to show a development for the character beyond anything that Shakespeare might have imagined; I argue that his sequel is significant in its recognition of Caliban's revolutionary potential, and that this was shaped by the revolutionary events in France. Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban parle* (1928) is a response to Renan's sequel as much as it is to Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Guéhenno's conceit in this work – essentially an extended monologue – is that he will embody the character of Caliban and speak *as* him. With this text, Guéhenno enters into the dialogue instigated by Renan about Caliban's role in society. In his sequel, Renan establishes Caliban as a working-class man symbolic of 'the people'; Guéhenno continues this identification and attempts to create a background for the character as well as forging a new future for him.

Renan and Guéhenno both focussed on Caliban's class status; the next text I consider is Mannoni's, which adds a racial specificity to the character. Mannoni's response, which offers a literary approach to a psychoanalytical treatise, was created against the backdrop of the 1947

uprising in Madagascar. I demonstrate that Mannoni's work, highly contentious, proved profoundly influential in the trajectory of the play – significant postcolonial figures (such as Fanon, Césaire and Memmi) reacted against this work, which Jonathan Bate describes as 'pioneering' in its consideration of the play in relation to colonialism. Mannoni's influence was not limited to theory: Jonathan Miller cites Mannoni as a source for his seminal 1970 production, which made the play explicitly postcolonial. I argue that Mannoni's reading of the Caliban-Prospero power dynamic undermines Caliban's legitimacy as a revolutionary.

The final response I consider re-imagines Caliban through a Francophone postcolonial lens – Caliban is given back his legitimacy, his revolutionary power, and his voice, which he uses to diminish Prospero: this diminishing of the mage, which began with Renan's sequel, comes to fruition with Césaire.

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And, finally, to Colin, *mon beau, pour tout.*

A note on texts and translations

Quotations from the four main works I cite will be from the following editions:

Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest: based on Shakespeare's The Tempest, adaptation for a black theatre,* trans. by Philip Crispin (London: Oberon Books, 2000).

Jean Guéhenno, *Caliban parle* (Paris: Grasset, 1928).

Octave Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization,* trans. by Pamela Powesland, with a New Foreword by Maurice Bloch, 2nd edn (Ann Arbour: Michigan University Press, 1990).

Ernest Renan, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête* ed. by Colin Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1954).

Unless a translator is credited, all French sources quoted in English are my own translations.

Contents

Introduction pp. 1 – 36

Now his charms are all o'erthrown: Prospero's demise in Ernest Renan's sequel to *The Tempest* pp. 37 – 94

Caliban's Books: Education and emancipation in Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban Speaks* pp. 95 – 153

You do keep from me | The rest o' th' island: The colonial situation in Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* pp. 154 – 201

Noises, sounds and sweet airs: Songs of emancipation in Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête* pp. 202 – 267

Conclusion: 'something rich and strange' pp. 268 – 275

À toi, Caliban: a history of *The Tempest* in France and the Francophone world

Introduction

The Tempest opens with a storm; a group of Europeans travelling home from foreign climes are thrown into disorder, their hierarchies temporarily disrupted and suspended. *The Tempest* itself, like its characters, has been on a journey, and landed on foreign soils. One of the locales where the play has historically been most contested is in France and the Francophone world. The Europeans in Shakespeare's play are travelling back from Tunis, and on the island, they encounter Caliban, whose mother was brought there from Algiers (two cities which would prove critical to later French colonial expansion, and would have been highly suggestive to French authors considering the symbolic meaning of Caliban). In this French history, the hierarchies within the play are challenged and overturned: the Prospero-Caliban power dynamic undergoes a tectonic shift. Prospero's journey takes him from Renaissance mage to Positivist chemist; he is then framed as a distanced intellectual disengaged from the world; we next see him as a colonial ruler transformed by the very system which upholds his power; finally, power is totally stripped from him, and he is left a despotic ruler unable to leave Caliban's island. My thesis considers four main responses, written in French, which have themselves shaped the afterlife of the play around the world: Ernest Renan's 1878 sequel, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête*,[1] Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban parle* (1928),[2] Octave Mannoni's *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950),[3] and Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête* (1969).[4] These adaptations and responses were all composed after, and shaped by, significant

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[1] Ernest Renan, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête, Drame philosophique* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1878). All subsequent references from Renan will be from *Caliban, suite de la Tempête* ed. by Colin Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1954).

[2] Jean Guéhenno, *Caliban parle* (Paris: Grasset, 1928).

[3] Octave Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation* (Paris: Seuil, 1950). All subsequent references from Mannoni's work will be from *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization,* trans. by Pamela Powesland, with a New Foreword by Maurice Bloch*,* 2nd edn (Ann Arbour: Michigan University Press, 1990).

[4] Aimé Césaire, *Une tempête (d'après "La Tempête" de Shakespeare (adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre)* (Paris: Seuil, 1969). All subsequent references to Césaire's work will be from *A Tempest: based on Shakespeare's The Tempest, adaptation for a black theatre,* trans. by Philip Crispin (London: Oberon Books, 2000).

events in the history of France and the Francophone world: they are part of the play's post-Revolution, post-WW1, post-colonial journey.

The shift of power away from Prospero entails the beginning of the ascendancy of Caliban. My title, *à toi, Caliban* – over to you, Caliban – is suggestive of how, in these responses, Caliban has been re-visioned, re-imagined, reclaimed. In each, he is given a new voice – that of a revolutionary leader rising from 'the crowd'; an overlooked and disenfranchised working-class man; a revolutionary fighting for freedom from French colonial control; and a former colonial subject whose reconnection with his native land frees him from the yoke of the *métropole*. But, while there is a definite focus on Caliban in these responses, I will also consider how these authors portray Prospero and Ariel, and what the interaction between these three characters can reveal about their respective authors, and about France and the Francophone world more generally.

A great deal has been written on *The Tempest* and its afterlife around the globe. Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan, in their comprehensive account of the evolution and cultural capital of Caliban, *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History*, demonstrate how the character's reception uniquely reflects changing societal attitudes: the interpretation of the character reflects each era as he progresses from 'savage' to 'deformed', and then 'slave'.[5] Chantal Zabus, in *Tempests after Shakespeare* offers a richly detailed account of the global afterlife of the play, and of how authors, critics and directors have re-imagined not only Caliban but Prospero, Ariel, Miranda and Sycorax.[6] Both of these studies are foundational to our understanding of the global afterlife of the play. My thesis further builds on this critical edifice by offering a detailed

[5] Alden T. Vaughan and Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Shakespeare's Caliban: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
[6] Chantal Zabus, *Tempests after Shakespeare* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

historical, cultural, and textual analysis of my four primary texts, illuminating how the respective experiences of each author led them to re-imagine *The Tempest* and to reinscribe its central characters to speak to their own lives.

While Vaughan and Vaughan and Zabus consider the global afterlife of *The Tempest*, my thesis offers a new approach in its sustained focus on this unique French trajectory of *The Tempest.* It also builds on, extends and adds greater depth to studies that have been conducted on Shakespeare in France. Madeleine Horn-Monval's *Les Traductions Françaises de Shakespeare* is an exceptionally detailed survey of translations, reworkings and adaptations of the entire Shakespearean canon in French, and offers an overview of the stages by which Shakespeare became such an important cultural edifice in France;[7] my introduction also offers a broad overview of Shakespeare's reception in France, touching on how important cultural and social events, and significant French thinkers, shaped this evolving reception. I then move on to a more specific focus on *The Tempest.* A comparative analysis of *The Tempest* – or, rather, adaptations of it – on the English and the French stage during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries illuminates the evolving signification of Caliban and Prospero, in particular, on both sides of the Channel. I argue that the respective political events of both countries significantly shape the portrayal and reception of Prospero, and especially Caliban. This exploration of the shifting societal responses to the very concept of Shakespeare is informed by Richard Wilson's work on Shakespeare and French Theory;[8] my thesis teases out the threads of this tapestry of ideas with a sharp focus on what Caliban and Prospero come to mean for these French authors, and how their significations are indicative of the shifting reception of Shakespeare and his cultural currency in France.

[7] Madeleine Horn-Monval, *Les Traductions Françaises De Shakespeare : à L'occasion Du Quatrième Centenaire De Sa Naissance 1564-1964* (Paris: Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique, 1963).
[8] Richard Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory: King of Shadows* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

My thesis opens a new line of inquiry by focussing on the specificity and broader implications of the French afterlife of the play; I illuminate how Caliban has become a key figure in the emergence of postcolonial thinking and theory in France. No one study has yet brought together what I consider to be the four main texts from this particularly French journey of the play, or offered such detailed analysis of their respective historical and social contexts. While I touch on all of the adaptations and rewritings cited by Horn-Monval, my methodological approach is to consider the four most significant responses in turn, exploring how the social and cultural contexts of each shaped the authors' approaches to reshaping the play.

Renan's sequel is important because he is the first author – in any country – who considers Caliban's revolutionary and subversive potential to be more than a comedic misstep; Renan, who was fascinated by revolution and whose opinion of 'the masses' was ambivalent, regarded Caliban as being representative of the latent potential in the people. In his translation of the Prospero-Caliban power dynamic to a post-Enlightenment, urban locale, Renan explores broader questions which shaped French society at the time – the role of the intellectual, the influence of Positivism and the tension and interplay between faith and organised religion. Renan, as one of the foremost French thinkers of the nineteenth century, has been studied in great depth.[9] His sequel, *Caliban*, has been considered by Vaughan and Vaughan, Zabus and Koenraad Geldof,[10] but remains one of his lesser-known works. I draw on Henri Gouhier's analysis of Renan's dramatic art,[11] and consider the evolution of Renan's own drama alongside what Renan regarded as the evolution of Caliban as a cultural symbol. My thesis enhances the existing scholarship by marrying a detailed historical study of Renan's life, and his France, with close comparative textual analysis of how his sequel plays with ideas, questions and imagery that run through Shakespeare's

[9] See Richard Chadbourne, *Renan* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968); Keith Gore, *L'idée de progrès dans la pensée de Renan* (Paris: Edition A. G. Nizet, 1970); David Lee, *Ernest Renan: In the Shadow of Faith* (London: Duckworth, 1996).
[10] Koenraad Geldof, 'Look Who's Talking: Caliban in Shakespeare, Renan and Guéhenno', in *Constellation Caliban: Figurations of a Character*, ed. by Nadia Lie and Theo D'haen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), pp. 81-112.
[11] Henri Gouhier, *Renan, auteur dramatique* (Paris: Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1972).

Tempest. Renan explores the imagery of entrapment and freedom, subjugation and dominance, as well as exploring the thorny question of Caliban's language and reimagining Prospero's masque scene to shed light on contemporary scientific developments and an anxiety about industrialisation.

Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban parle* (1928) is a response to Renan's sequel as much as it is to Shakespeare's *Tempest*, and so its significance is partly the intertextual, cumulative nature of the response. His work, though, is also important in its own right. Guéhenno's conceit in this work – essentially an extended monologue – is that he will embody the character of Caliban and speak *as* him. As such, Guéhenno enters into the dialogue instigated by Renan about the respective and evolving societal roles of Caliban-the-Everyman, and Prospero-the-intellectual. This chapter opens a new avenue of inquiry into the significance of Caliban's symbolism in post-WW1 France and under the Occupation. I demonstrate how Guéhenno's reimagining of Caliban – and his attempt to give the character a new voice – built on the dialogue that Renan instigated, and itself led to important ongoing debate among intellectuals in France and Algeria. For Guéhenno, this exploration of Caliban and Prospero was deeply personal; my thesis takes into account the whole of Guéhenno's oeuvre, and illuminates how his reimagining of these characters changed over the course of his life. I also shed light on Guéhenno's influence: although largely limited to French intellectuals (in contrast to Renan's sequel, which I demonstrate had important reverberations in Latin America), Guéhenno's rewriting represents a significant contribution to the cultural currency of Shakespeare and especially Caliban.

My first two chapters, then, explore in much greater detail than any previous study the epochal shift of hermeneutic focus and cultural power, from Prospero to Caliban, effected by modern French takes on Shakespeare's island. The second half of the thesis is more focussed on the postcolonial aspect of *The Tempest*'s French journey. Caliban has come to occupy a significant

position in the global understanding of postcolonial theory and literature (that of Frantz Fanon, Maryse Condé, and Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, for example).[12] My thesis demonstrates the crucial nature of these French responses in this postcolonial trajectory of the play. Mannoni's work is recognised as highly significant in the play's postcolonial journey – Jonathan Bate describes the work as 'pioneering'[13] – and his treatise is as often researched in field of psychology as in literary studies.[14] My chapter on Mannoni offers a reassessment of the work – detailed primary research illustrates how biographical and historical events coalesce and how these led to the creation of this seminal psychological treatise. Mannoni is considered as an author who, again, gave Caliban a new voice; I explore this and argue that his development of the 'Prospero-complex' is equally important in the French – and the global – reassessment of Prospero-as-coloniser.

Aimé Césaire's reimagining of *The Tempest* is the most widely studied of the main texts that I consider in the thesis.[15] Roger Toumson, in *Trois Calibans*, undertakes a detailed comparison of the signification of Caliban in Renan's *Caliban* and Césaire's *Une tempête*.[16] My work builds on this by drawing out the influence of Mannoni's work on Césaire's, and drawing parallels between the class focus explored by Guéhenno – I demonstrate, through close textual study, how Césaire's rewriting is intertextual in its focus on both class and race. I offer a mapping-out of the intricate intertextuality between the four main authors in ways that have not been considered previously: the direct citation of material from Renan, and how Césaire reframes the language of the Inquisition from a specifically postcolonial angle. A biographical and historical approach allows

[12] See Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952); Maryse Condé, *L'Héritage de Caliban* (Point-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe: Editions Jasor, 1992); Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *A Grain of Wheat* (London: Heinemann, 1967).
[13] Jonathan Bate, 'Caliban and Ariel write back', *Shakespeare Survey*, 48 (1995), 155-163 (p. 165).
[14] See Christopher Lane, 'Psychoanalysis and Colonialism Redux: Why Mannoni's "Prospero Complex" Still Haunts Us', *Journal of Modern Literature,* 25.3 (2002), 127-150; François Vatin, 'Octave Mannoni (1899-1989) et sa *Psychologie de la colonisation*. Contextualisation et décontextualisation', *Revue du MAUSS,* 37.1 (2011), 137-178.
[15] See Gregson Davis, *Aimé Césaire* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997); James A. Arnold, *Modernism and Negritude: The Poetry and Poetics of Aimé Césaire* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1981); Roger Toumson and Simonne Henry-Valmore, *Aimé Césaire, le nègre inconsolé* (Paris: Syros, 1993).
[16] Roger Toumson, *Trois Calibans* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1981).

me to demonstrate how the text evolved with respect to current events – Césaire's reworking of Caliban in light of the Black Power movement – as well as how his conception of Caliban and Ariel was shaped by his own intimate relationship with poetry.

This work represents a broadening of Anglo-French understanding of this important but little-known French journey that shaped the afterlife globally. My research opens new avenues of investigation and opens the field to scholars who aren't able to access material in French – much of the secondary critical and historical material I refer to has not been translated into English, and I have translated two of the central texts myself: the only English translation of Renan was by Eleanor Grant Vickery in 1896,[17] while Guéhenno's *Caliban speaks* has not yet been translated into English. Each chapter is built upon extensive biographical research, drawing on each author's entire oeuvre as well as their personal correspondence and diaries. My mapping-out of intertextual complexities offers a new lens through which critics already familiar with these responses may re-envision the texts, and my close comparative textual analysis of each text illuminates how these authors, in turbulent times, draw on the revolutionary undertones that are already in Shakespeare's play.

Peter Hulme, in his extensive study of the historical and literary contexts of Shakespeare's *Tempest,* describes the play as a 'textual palimpsest'.[18] James Andreas Sr argues that 'Shakespeare himself, in his tapestry of folk, literary, and dramatic snippets that constitute *The Tempest,* may be signifying [rearranging words and verbal patterns to configure new meanings and identities] on the texts of Montaigne, accounts of recent exploratory ventures in the New World, and emerging

[17] Ernest Renan, *Caliban: a philosophical drama continuing "The Tempest" of William Shakespeare*, trans. by Eleanor Grant Vickery (New York: The Shakespeare Press, 1896).
[18] Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 108.

views of Native and African "others"'.[19] Shakespeare himself drew on multiple sources and ideas to create *The Tempest*, and ever since, the play has become what Jonathan Bate describes as 'a vehicle through which later cultures can reflect on pressing contemporary concerns'.[20] As Vaughan and Vaughan note: 'From the Restoration to the present, Shakespeare's *Tempest* has inspired dramatists, poets, and critics'. Indeed, such is the volume of responses, they call it a 'literary avalanche'.[21] They note that 'as a liminal figure imprisoned in the borders of everyday reality, Caliban has appealed to various ages and cultures in dramatically different ways'.[22]

Julie Sanders notes that what is 'often inescapable is the fact that a political or ethical commitment shapes a writer's, director's or performer's decision to reinterpret a source text'.[23] Glenn Jellenik argues that 'adaptation, as inaugurated in the early Romantic period, reactivates the text in new contexts and so functions not as a polemical but as a dialectical intervention'.[24] Timothy Corrigan, similarly, describes 'adaptive migrations across these cultural differences'.[25] The authors I consider all touch on, or make far more explicit, the connotations of colonial expansion in Shakespeare's *Tempest*,[26] but they also draw out the class implications inherent in Caliban's position as a subject. They recognise what Russell West describes as 'the historicity, the

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[19] James R. Andreas Sr., 'Signifyin' on *The Tempest* in Gloria Naylor's Mama day', in *Shakespeare and appropriation,* ed. by Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 103-118 (p. 108).
[20] Jonathan Bate, 'Caliban and Ariel write back', *Shakespeare Survey*, 48 (1995), 155-163 (p. 162).
[21] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 89.
[22] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 85.
[23] Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation* (London: Routledge, 2006), p. 3.
[24] Glenn Jellenik, 'On the Origins of Adaptation, as Such: The Birth of a Simple Abstraction', in *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 36-52 (p. 50).
[25] Timothy Corrigan, 'Defining Adaptation', in *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 23-35 (p. 27).
[26] The play has long been read, by numerous critics, as an intervention in a colonialist dialogue, and this colonialist reading has profoundly shaped its afterlife. As Helen C. Scott notes: 'not only does the play foreground global locations and intra- and interclass conflict, but it also draws attention to various 'other' identities. The play's association with alterity is so pronounced and wide-ranging that it has today become metonymic for colonization, and Ariel, Caliban, Miranda, and Sycorax have all variously been taken up as symbols of both oppression and liberation.' Helen C. Scott, *Shakespeare's Tempest and Capitalism: The Storm of History* (London: Routledge, 2020), p. 26. For an analysis and overview of how 'a multiple historical interpretation can unpack the condensed layers of colonialist ideology', see Barbara Fuchs, 'Conquering Islands: Contextualizing *The Tempest', Shakespeare Quarterly*, 48.1 (1997), 45-62 (p. 45).

instability, and productive possibilities of the Shakespearean text',[27] making it speak to French and Francophone concerns.

My thesis considers some of the most influential layers of the 'textual palimpsest' which have been added to the afterlife of this play. I offer a detailed reading of French and Francophone responses to *The Tempest*, which have not yet been brought together in one study. My thesis provides a 'missing link', to borrow Daniel Wilson's analogy,[28] in the intertextual afterlife of the play by carefully mapping this trajectory, which itself shaped the global afterlife of the play. These authors draw out threads from Shakespeare's *Tempest* – to borrow Andreas' term, these texts 'signify' on the many thematic concerns which shape *The Tempest* and explore them in the light of their own lives and social contexts. I consider what their interaction with *The Tempest* suggests about History and historiography (the question of who is allowed to tell their story); language – its intimate association with racial and cultural identity and its use in the French 'civilising mission';[29] the power of education (both to emancipate and to subjugate);[30] the role of the intellectual in society; how, or indeed whether, the literary can be deployed to voice the disenfranchised; and the concept of monstrosity.[31]

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[27] Russell West, 'Césaire's Bard: Shakespeare and the Performance of Change in Césaire's *Une tempête*', *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, 4.3. (2007), 1-16 (p. 4).
[28] Daniel Wilson, *The Missing Link* (London: Macmillan, 1873).
[29] The question of Caliban's language is a crucial aspect of the play's critical history. In his study of race and rhetoric in the Renaissance, Ian Smith stresses the importance of the association of language with inferiority, or barbarism, an idea which could be traced well before the Early Modern period: 'In the ancient world barbarians did not belong to the civilized master race; to be barbarous was to be a linguistic outlaw, to be exiled to the very margins of culture'. Ian Smith, *Race and Rhetoric in the Renaissance: barbarian errors* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 4. Caliban's act of defiance in not simply following orders – 'you taught me language, and my profit on't | Is, I know how to curse' has become an important focus of postcolonial interpretations of the play. See George Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile* (London: Allison & Busby, 1960), and Bill Ashcroft, *Caliban's voice: the transformation of English in post-colonial literatures* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2009).
[30] Education is a significant concern in *The Tempest*. Indeed, Jonathan Bate argues that Humanist education is the main concern of the play. Jonathan Bate, 'The Humanist Tempest', in *Shakespeare, La Tempête, études critiques*, ed. by Claude Peltrault (Besançon: Actes du Colloque de Besançon, 1993), pp. 5-20 (p. 5). Robin Kirkpatrick also argues that the play examines the 'Renaissance cult of the magisterial book'. Robin Kirkpatrick, 'The Italy of *The Tempest',* in '*The Tempest' and its travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 78-96 (p. 92).
[31] For a succinct history of the concept of Caliban's monstrosity, see Jeffrey R. Wilson, 'Savage and Deformed: Stigma as Drama in *The Tempest*', *Medieval & Renaissance Drama in England*, 31 (2018), 146-177.

Each of these authors is drawn, above all, to the bringing together of personalities and exploration of relationships in Shakespeare's play. Roland Greene argues that *The Tempest* can best be described as a 'play of encounters', and one that employs an 'island logic' (a world apart, where new perspectives can be gained); he argues that '"encounters" have a palpable interest in alterity because the first sense of the term, going back to its vernacular roots in Old French, is adversarial: at its most basic level an encounter happens between a subject and an Other who are, and go, against one another "in contra"'.[32] This is a play about encounters; and the idea of encounters with alterity, in the context of early modern exploration, is quite a French concept – one we see in the writings of Michel de Montaigne, for example, which directly influenced Shakespeare.[33]

While the idea of encounters with New World alterity (or, perhaps, 'the noble savage') may have been a concept explored in early modern French travel narratives, these French authors turned to Shakespeare to explore and explode the Prospero-Caliban dialectic.[34] His play of encounters offered a lens through which to examine concepts of power and the confrontation of difference. Renan's work offered a reading which disrupted the power dynamic between Prospero and his slave, and instigated an ongoing dialogue about both characters' roles in society. Zabus regards Renan's work as one which 'marks the emergence of a *Calibanic genealogy* in foregrounding the Prospero-Caliban encounter'.[35] I will consider why the first stage of this genealogy might have happened in France, and how it then shaped the perception of Prospero and Caliban – in France and the Francophone world, and globally.

[32] Roland Greene, *Island Logic*, in '*The Tempest' and its travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 138-148 (p. 139).
[33] See, for example, John Gillies, 'The Figure of the New World', in *The Tempest',* in '*The Tempest' and its travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 180-201.
[34] These writers did not turn to Montaigne, or Jean de Léry (one of Montaigne's sources for *Des Cannibales*), or to Bernadin de St Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*.
[35] Zabus, p. 11.

Shakespeare in France

Before turning more specifically to *The Tempest*, we will briefly look at Shakespeare in France – on the page and the stage. Jean Jacquot notes that Shakespeare didn't come to France until quite some time after his death: 'In the Siècle des Lumières, France progressively discovered Shakespeare, a writer who le Grand Siècle had pretty much ignored'.[36] Victor Hugo, in his 1869 tome *William Shakespeare*, makes the widely shared observation that Shakespeare first came to the attention of the French thanks to Voltaire.[37] During his exile in England (1726-1728), Voltaire had become acquainted with (some of) Shakespeare's works (John Pemble argues that, in, fact, Voltaire knew very few of Shakespeare's plays when he made his judgements!).[38] In his letter 'On Tragedy', part of his collection *Letters on England*, Voltaire wrote briefly about Shakespeare ('the English Corneille'), and summed up the Bard's art in a characterisation which profoundly shaped France's subsequent reaction to all of Shakespeare's work: 'He had a strong and fertile genius, full of naturalness and sublimity, without the slightest spark of good taste or the least knowledge of the rules'.[39] This pronouncement, widely quoted since, instigated a dialogue about Shakespeare, which continues to this day; indeed, Pemble argues that, in the French relationship with Shakespeare, Voltaire had the first word and as yet has the last.[40]

The first translation of Shakespeare's complete works into French was undertaken by Antoine de La Place, and published in London from 1745-6. As Madeleine Horn-Monval observes,

[36] Jean Jacquot, *Shakespeare en France, mises en scène d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Le Temps, 1964), p. 26.
[37] C. M. Haines notes that the very first recorded observation on Shakespeare in France 'seems to be a note appended by Nicholas Clément, the librarian, to a copy of the Second Folio, which was in the Royal Library, not later than 1675'. C. M. Haines, *Shakespeare in France: criticism, Voltaire to Victor Hugo* (London: Published for the Shakespeare Association by H. Milford, OUP, 1925), p. 5. Nonetheless, while it may be technically inaccurate to say that Voltaire was the very first to mention Shakespeare, it is incontestable that his appraisal of Shakespeare's works was the most influential of all French responses.
[38] John Pemble, *Shakespeare goes to Paris: How the Bard conquered France* (London: Hambledon, 2005).
[39] Voltaire, *Letters on England*, trans. by Leonard Tancock (London: Penguin, 1980), p. 92. It is an oft-cited view that Voltaire was less than effusive about Shakespeare – his writings on Shakespeare can be described as ambivalent at best, although Pemble argues that Voltaire's criticism of Shakespeare has itself been mythologised (actually, he also saw much beauty in Shakespeare's work).
[40] Pemble, pp. 206-7.

Shakespeare was translated into French later than some of his contemporaries[41] (Dryden's *All for Love*, for example, had been translated by L'Abbé Prévost in 1735).[42] Horn-Monval argues that La Place's translation was the first step towards the adoption of Shakespeare in France. The second was Garrick's visit to Paris in 1751. Garrick was invited to Paris by Monnet, director of l'Opéra-Comique who visited London with a troupe of his actors in 1749. In Paris, Garrick performed extracts from Shakespeare's works. He didn't manage to achieve his goal of establishing a collaboration between Drury Lane and the Comédie Française, but Horn-Monval regards Garrick's visit as the 'second stage of the consecration of Shakespeare; the second door opened, after the revelation of La Place'.[43] That said, she notes that these two revelations, which made Shakespeare far more well-known among intellectuals, had not yet touched the wider public.[44] In 1769, Ducis put *Hamlet* on the French stage for the first time (with François Joseph Talma in the main role),[45] and his production garnered rave reviews – after this success, translations abounded.[46]

In 1776, Le Tourneur completed his translation of Shakespeare into French (updating the translation of La Place). In his preface to this translation, Le Tourneur asserted that Shakespeare should now be considered alongside Corneille, Racine and Molière (Jacquot notes that this greatly irritated Voltaire!).[47] He asserted that he planned to 'take up again the old theme of the poet, born into a still-barbarous century, who knew how to make men speak the language of nature.'[48] As Jacquot observes, Le Tourneur praises Shakespeare more expressly for having depicted all conditions, from the kings to labourers.[49] This late-eighteenth century assessment of Shakespeare as universal and demotic was perhaps influenced by Voltaire's initial views, though was itself far

[41] Horn-Monval, p. 5.
[42] Horn-Monval, p. 7.
[43] Horn-Monval, p. 8.
[44] Horn-Monval, pp. 8-9.
[45] Francois Joseph Talma was an actor and theatrical company manager, known for his productions of classical French drama and translations of Shakespeare.
[46] Horn-Monval, p. 9.
[47] Jacquot, p. 26.
[48] Cited in Jacquot, p. 26.
[49] Jacquot, p. 26.

more laudatory than his. As we move towards the greatest upheaval in the power balance between laborers and kings, Shakespeare's position in France shifts.

Richard Wilson argues that 'The Terror reversed the way Shakespeare's work was interpreted on both sides of the Channel'.[50] Shakespeare's ability to speak of labourers as easily as kings made him seem like the "'Monster in the Latin Quarter" for the *lumières* of the Age of Reason because his carnivalesque gigantism, irrationality, and disorder loomed not only as menacing shadows of neo-classical clarity, logic, and decorum, but as uncanny prefigurations of the unpoliced revolutionary mob'.[51] The Revolution, and then the Terror that followed, Wilson argues, shed a new light on the visceral, revolutionary narratives and imagery throughout Shakespeare's oeuvre:

> in the decades before 1789 the graveyard scene in Hamlet – with its workers gloating over the skulls of the great – came to symbolise the popular justice that the savants of the salons thought had been suppressed in France. But after the Terror, this 'Gothic Shakespeare', with his theatre of animality and blood, haunted the imagination of nineteenth-century Paris as the 'Man of the Crowd', and a forecast of the return of repressed revolutionary.[52]

Wilson suggests that, in France, Shakespeare came to signify something very different to the establishment figure he often represented across the Channel: 'Shakespeare occupies an

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[50] Richard Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory: King of Shadows* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 39.
[51] Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory*, p. 5. Coleridge noted this portrayal of Shakespeare, and was deeply unimpressed. In his lecture on *The Tempest* on Monday 16 December 1811, he suggests that Shakespeare's plays have been subjected to 'the greatest violence' by the French: 'We are told by these creatures that Shakespeare is some wonderful monster, in which many heterogenous components were thrown together, producing a discordant mass of genius and irregularity of gigantic proportions', Coleridge, 'Lecture 9 – Monday 16 December 1811 (The Tempest)', in *Coleridge: Lectures on Shakespeare (1811-1819)*, ed. by A. Roberts (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), pp. 99-116 (p. 103).
[52] Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory*, p. 5.

oppositional place as *the man of the mob*, in contrast to his establishment as a *man of the monarchy* in the Anglo-Saxon world.'[53]

In the wake of the seismic shift of the Revolution, Shakespeare's position, too, shifted across both sides of La Manche. The power of 'the people' or 'the mob' had been emphatically proven, and thus Shakespeare's position as a man who spoke of commoners as much as kings came to mean something different. For many French thinkers, as Wilson argues, his works were haunting; for others, they were a celebration of the common man. By the Romantic era, Shakespeare's supposedly unruly and untutored genius, so sneeringly described by Voltaire, had come to symbolise Shakespeare's greatest strength. As Jean Adrien Jusserand notes, Voltaire's analogy of Shakespeare as an unruly tree could have been written by any one of the Romantic bardolators, though with entirely more positive connotations:

> a phrase of which the romantic enthusiasts of the 1830s themselves would not have altered a word: "The poetic genius of the English is, up to now, like a bushy tree planted by Nature, throwing out a thousand branches and growing unsymmetrically with strength. It dies if you try to force its nature and to clip it like one of the trees in the Marly gardens".[54]

Indeed, Jacquot argues that the 1820s offered Shakespeare a kind of liberation in the French theatre.[55] There were beginning to be more translations, more critical treatises, and more performances. In 1821, François Guizot revised Le Tourneur's translation. Jacquot characterises Guizot as 'the first in France to clearly formulate that the poet's art mustn't be judged according to rules which were different to his own time and place, but instead according to the structure of

[53] Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory*, p. 4.
[54] Jean Adrien A. J. Jusserand, *Shakespeare in France under the ancient regime* (London: T. F. Unwin, 1899), p. 209.
[55] Jacquot, p. 30.

his works; the internal logic by which the whole thing was organised and played out'.[56] In 1823, Stendhal wrote *Racine et Shakespeare*, which Horn-Monval describes as a manifesto that 'shook the faith of those loyal to the old classicism.'[57] In this work, Stendhal claims that France in 1823 is in the same situation as England was in 1590 ('we also have factions, tortures, conspiracies'),[58] and that Shakespeare was impressively capable of using rhetoric to communicate his drama 'to a coarse public who had more courage than finesse.'[59] In this essay, Stendhal associates Shakespeare with visceral and earthy, rather than empyrean, realms; he describes Shakespeare as the Earth and the globe (p. 66); as 'sap and blood' (p. 67). In contradistinction to the Prospero-as-Shakespeare thread in English criticism, it appears here that Shakespeare, to the French, is in some sense more of a Caliban.

By the 1820s, the identification of Shakespeare with 'the people' was popular among people of letters, but it hadn't yet translated into a popular interest in the Bard. Horn-Monval notes that the second highly significant visit to Paris by a troupe of English actors was in 1827 (the visiting actors included Kemble, Mrs Smithson, Kean, Macready and Terry). A bilingual programme was offered to the audience, sold in the theatre by the editor Mme Verge, and the audience were able to follow along, watching the plays in English while reading the text in French. The audience was comprised of Hugo, Goutier, Delacroix, Berlioz, Dumas, and Stendhal.[60] This had an immediate effect on many writers – and artists (Delacroix soon produced a series of lithographs inspired by *Hamlet*). Wilson observes that the 'composer Hector Berlioz recalled how exposure to Hamlet on

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[56] Jacquot, p. 29.
[57] Horn-Monval, p. 9.
[58] As David A. Montgomery notes: 'On Dec. 14, 1821, France's Ultra-royalists took control of France's government for the first time during the Bourbon restoration, with the appointment of a ministry led by the Comte de Villèle. Almost immediately after this right-wing government took over, government officials began claiming to have uncovered liberal conspiracies in towns across the country, which necessitated the arrest of hostile members of the French army and implicated some of the most prominent opposition deputies in parliament'. David A. Montgomery, *The Siècle: France 1814-1914* (published November 30 2020), <http://thesiecle.com/episode23/> [accessed 27 September 2021].
[59] Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare* (1823), ed. by L. Vincent (Paris: Librairie A. Hatier, 1927), p. 27.
[60] Horn-Monval, p. 10.

11 September 1827 rated as "the greatest event of his life"' and argues that this enthusiasm of Berlioz's 'reveals how Shakespeare came to occupy, for this post-1789 generation, the place of Revolutionary activism.'[61] The effects of these actors' visit were so profound that Horn-Monval describes it as the next stage in Shakespeare's journey to near-universal recognition in France: 'after the revelation of La Place and Le Tourneur, and the consecration by Garrick and Ducis, this visit by the English actors represented the adoption by the French general public of Shakespeare, who was recognised as a universal dramatic genius.'[62] Jusserand, too, notes the significance of this visit: 'from that moment Shakespeare is admitted into the Pantheon of the literary gods; French painters, poets and musicians are of one mind. […] His influence becomes more marked as the Romantic movement grows wider. It can be traced in the works of all the literary men of the period from Victor Hugo to Flaubert, from Dumas to Musset.'[63] This visit also led to the desire for versions and productions of Shakespeare which hadn't been 'modified, truncated, or augmented'; the public wanted 'the pure text, without additions, or cuts, as had not been performed until then'; erudite people then set themselves the task of publishing translations which were as faithful as possible to Shakespeare's'.[64] By now, it seems, it would not do for the unruly tree to be too clipped by French shears.

Perhaps the most significant manifesto during the nineteenth century was Victor Hugo's *William Shakespeare* (1869). Hugo was 'initiated' into the beauty of Shakespeare when he was invited to Charles Nodier's readings of his translation 'Pensées extraites des œuvres de Shakespeare' (1801).[65] He was also in the audience of the 1827 performances by the visiting English troupe. Hugo's work is an expression of the Romantic height of bardolatry, or rather

[61] Wilson, *Shakespeare in French Theory,* p. 41.
[62] Horn-Monval, p. 10.
[63] Jusserand, p. 459.
[64] Horn-Monval, p. 10.
[65] Horn-Monval, p. 9

shakespearemanie. Although his assessment of Shakespeare's work was far more laudatory than Voltaire's (it's fairly rhapsodic praise; Pemble describes him as the 'hierophant'),[66] Hugo's conception of Shakespeare, as a poet who wrote of the people as much as about Kings, and who spoke in the 'language of nature', seems to have been inflected by the initial Voltairean assessment. Shakespeare was the demotic genius, and he was equally at home voicing the common man as the King. This concept of Shakespeare's intimate link with the *demos* appears to have been inflected by apocryphal biographical details which are encapsulated here by Hugo: Shakespeare 'remained for a long time on the threshold of the theatre, outside, in the street. Finally, he entered. He went through the door and arrived in the corridor. He succeeded in becoming the call-boy, or less elegantly, the usher'.[67] Hugo considered Shakespeare himself a revolutionary, and a singular genius of the theatre. Shakespeare's works, for Hugo, were capable of re-shaping the world: Shakespeare, the usher by the door of the theatre, closed the door of a phase of human history, by ushering in the next phase: 'Homer and Shakespeare closed the two first doors of barbary: the ancient and the gothic'.[68] He also emphasises, and praises, Shakespeare's intimate connection with the people: 'Shakespeare has emotion, instinct, the true voice, the right accent, all of humanity is expressed in his stories. His poetry is him, but at the same time, it is you'.[69]

The Tempest on the English stage

On the English stage, as Michael Dobson notes, *The Tempest* was 'not performed since its author's lifetime and would not be revived in anything like its original form until 1748'.[70] From 1667, the Dryden-Davenant adaptation, *The Enchanted Island,* was the dominant stage version:

[66] Pemble, p. 10.
[67] Victor Hugo, *William Shakespeare,* 5th edn (Paris: Librairie Internationale, 1869), p. 68.
[68] The third 'door of barbary' was closed not by a poet but an event: Hugo describes the French Revolution as the third 'great crisis of humanity', which closed 'the third enormous door of barbary – the monarchical door', Hugo, p. 68.
[69] Hugo, p. 68.
[70] Michael Dobson, 'Remember | First to possess his books: The Appropriation of *The Tempest*, 1700-1800', *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1990), 99-108 (p. 99).

subsequent productions were adaptations of the Dryden-Davenant play (Stanley Wells observes that Thomas Duffett's 1674 play, *The Mock Tempest Or The Enchanted Castle*, which resituates the play in a London brothel, burlesqued not Shakespeare's play but the Dryden-Davenant adaptation).[71] In *The Enchanted Island*, Prospero is on an island with his two daughters and Hippolito, a man who has never seen womenkind, since Prospero keeps them apart. As Dobson argues, Caliban's role is very much diminished: 'so thorough-going is *The Enchanted Island* in its emphasis on gender that it virtually occludes Caliban altogether'.[72]

Another adaptation which dramatizes patriarchal power and gender is Francis Godolphin Waldron's *The Virgin Queen* (1797),[73] a sequel which takes place after the action of *The Tempest.* Ariel, summoning the spirits of the island, asks them to attend to Prospero until he leaves the island, in their 'last, duteous homage' (p. 5). Prospero, described by Trinculo as 'a kind of Friar Bacon, or Doctor Faustus' (p. 7), sinks his necromancy book to the bottom of the sea, which creates a tempest. Because he has drowned his book, there will be no more spirits on the island – Caliban will be left alone (more alone than Ariel when he was trapped in the pine). Caliban, fearing loneliness above all, begs to be allowed to join Prospero: 'I'll lick thy feet, | And ever be obedient to control' (p. 12). Miranda asks that her father take pity on Caliban; she sees him as much reformed – 'he hourly humanizes' (p. 12), she insists, and if he were to be left on the island alone, would become a savage again. To demonstrate his new-found status and attitude, Caliban is given new clothes – 'wherefore this fine change | From a rough skin to an embroider'd silk?' (p. 13), Gonzalo wonders. As they are leaving, Ariel warns Prospero that the spirit of Sycorax

[71] Stanley Wells, 'Shakespearian Burlesques', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 16.1 (1965), 49-61 (p. 50).
[72] Dobson, p. 101.
[73] The title, *The Virgin Queen,* refers to Claribel: in this adaptation, she remains a virgin queen despite her recent marriage. On 28 Jan 1796, Waldron wrote a letter in which he claims that *The Virgin Queen* was discovered in a manuscript and was actually written by Shakespeare – he wrote it in order to make up for his 'faux pas' of marrying Claribel to a Turk. Francis Godolphin Waldron, *The Virgin Queen*: *A drama in five acts, attempted as a sequel to Shakespeare's Tempest* (London: printed for the author, 1797), p. 57.

will soon be loosed. On the ship, Caliban confesses to Trinculo (while they get drunk together) that his repentance was feigned; indeed, he intends to kidnap Miranda before they reach Milan. But his plotting is overheard. Prospero, told of this intended plot, reflects that Caliban can never be transformed: 'Nor kindness nor severity avail, | To root out native evil from this beast!' (p. 37). Caliban is captured – Trinculo and Stephano plan to tie him to the mast. But then Sycorax descends (come back to life to avenge her son's mistreatment), and Caliban takes control of all the sustenance on the ship. The power dynamic has been reversed: 'Now Caliban, more strong, is Prosper's lord; | And thou must him obey, as he did thee' (p. 59). His attempt is short-lived, and ultimately fails – Ariel and the spirits vanquish Caliban and Sycorax. This sequel implies that Caliban, whatever his outward trappings, can never be truly reformed – he may be dressed in silk garments, but they do not sit featly on him, since the savage can never really be tamed.

While there is an emphasis on patriarchal control, the portrayals of Caliban as a savage who cannot be civilised are necessarily political in their implications about the relationship between colonial countries and their indigenous subjects. David Francis Taylor argues that 'throughout the long eighteenth century, *The Tempest* was understood to be political theater',[74] and describes Dryden-Davenant *The Enchanted Island* as 'the beginnings of this hermeneutic'. Dryden and Davenant 'took up Shakespeare's play as a performative laboratory for their post-Restoration exploration of patriarchal power […] and Caliban and company as parodic, stridently plebeian figurations of 1640s parliamentarians.'[75] Caliban is a comic character, but he does symbolise the working class, and is a figure of revolution. As noted, Wilson argues that the French Revolution changed how Shakespeare was seen on both sides of the channel. As the Revolution was brewing, the reading of Caliban and Prospero changed too. Taylor notes that this 'political hermeneutic' was not limited to the stage; he counts 9 'caricatural appropriations' of characters

[74] David Francis Taylor 'The Disenchanted Island: A Political History of *The Tempest,* 1760-1830', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 63.4 (2012), 487-517 (p. 487).
[75] Taylor, p. 487.

from *The Tempest* from 1760 to 1830.[76] In these cartoons, Caliban was employed as a symbol of a dangerous revolutionary, especially with reference to the French Revolution. Taylor argues that, particularly in Cruikshank's caricatures, Caliban is depicted as 'savage, rapacious masculinity' and that, as a symbol, this character in particular 'operates as a hieroglyph of plebian radicalism, of an all-too-corporeal politics', and that Edmund Burke referred to Caliban as a signifier of 'the swinish multitude of the French Revolution'. But, Taylor observes, this symbolic deployment of the Caliban figure was not inaugurated by Cruikshank:

> Nor was Cruikshank the first to use Caliban as a symbol of the aberrance of revolutionary enthusiasm. In 1792, William Cusack Smith, a friend of Burke's denounced the "anarchy and desolation" of "Cannibals (I should say Calibans) of France", while another commentator compared the French people, "grown drunk with the fumes of their National Assembly, to the inebriated Caliban's worship of Trinculo. In 1795, John Whitaker even described republicanism as "that Caliban of Man's own creation.[77]

One adaptation which makes explicit allusions to the French Revolution is *The Enchanted Isle, or Raising the Wind*, by the Brough Brothers, first performed in November 1848 (itself a year of revolutions).[78] The play opens with the claim that it is absurd, rather than a legitimate comment on politics. Nonetheless, it is replete with allusions to the contemporary social unrest. When Ariel tells the fairies that their first task is to 'raise the wind', the first fairy asks 'How shall we do it? Add an eighteen-penny rate | Unto the taxes?' (p. 6). Indeed, the fairies in this version are not mere spirits: 'in consequence of the disturbed state of the times, it has been found necessary to swear [them] in as Special Constables' (p. 3) – one, though, declares himself a member of the

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[76] Taylor, p. 490.
[77] Taylor, p. 507.
[78] Brough, Robert Barnabas, *The Enchanted Isle; Or, "Raising the Wind" on the Most Approved Principles: A Drama…in Which Will Be Found Much That Is Unaccountably Coincident with Shakspere's "Tempest", By the Brothers Brough* (England: National Acting Drama Office, 1848).

‘Peace Society’ (p. 5). Miranda is portrayed as a member of the ruling class, uncaring about the plight of the poor: ‘The clouds have washed themselves completely out, | And, like poor folks, have nothing left to spout’ (p. 9). When Prospero asks Ariel if the shipwrecked party are safe, his reply is a clear allusion to the contemporary political turbulence: ‘Safe as Kings can be | In these queer times of hot Democracy’ (p. 11).

In this adaptation, Caliban is explicitly framed as a revolutionary: described in the stage directions as a ‘smart, active lad, wanted [by Prospero] to make himself generally useful, but by no means inclined to do so – an Hereditary Bondsman, who, in his determination to be free, takes the most fearful liberties’ (p. 3). Later, the stage directions describe a poster on Caliban’s cell door which alludes to the French Revolution: ‘Blaze of Triumph!! Positively the last week of Sig. Prospero, the celebrated Wizard of the Isle!! who is about to Break his Staff and Drown his Book!’ (p. 14).[79] The dialect of Caliban’s first line seems also to align him with slaves in the US: ‘Slave! Come, drop that sort of bother; | Just let me ax, “Ain’t I a man and a brother?”’ (p. 14). The phrase ‘Hereditary Bondsman’ is also perhaps an allusion to an address to the slaves of America, in 1843, by Henry Highland Garnet: ‘Brethren, the time has come when you must act for yourselves. It is an old and true saying, that “if hereditary bondmen would be free, they must themselves strike the blow.”’[80] Eventually, Caliban stops polishing Prospero’s boots, and refuses to do any more work (a refusal that Prospero describes, aside, as ‘democratic, and by no means moral!’). Caliban is then seized by ‘the love of liberty’: ‘My bosom’s filled with freedom’s pure emotions, | And on the “Rights of Labour” I’ve strong notions’ (p. 15).

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[79] The phrase ‘blaze of triumph’ is likely an allusion to Thomas Carlyle’s account of the horrors of the French Revolution and the subsequent Terror: ‘Denunciation, vengeance; blaze of triumph on a dark ground of terror: all outward, all inward things fallen into one general wreck of madness!’ Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution: A History*, 2nd edn (London: Chapman and Hall, 1842), Vol 1: The Bastille, p. 242.

[80] Henry Highland Garnet, ‘An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America’ (1848), p. 6. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=etas>, [accessed 27 September 2021]. This phrase in itself is an allusion to Byron’s poem Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage: ‘Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not |Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?’. Byron, *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (1812–18)*, canto 2, st. 76. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/5131/5131-h/5131-h.htm> [accessed 27 September 2021].

Later we see Caliban in a 'wild part of the Island'; the music and stage directions make his alignment with French Revolutionaries explicit:

> *Music, "The Marseillaise Hymn."*
> *Enter Caliban, marching to music, with a Cap of Liberty on his head, a red flag in one hand, a small bundle of firewood in the other.*
> Caliban: Yes, I'm resolved – I'll have a revolution –
> Proclaim my rights – demand a constitution (p. 19).

When Caliban sees Smuttifacio coming, he sees the potential for fellow revolutionaries: 'foreign alliances in them I smell'. He offers them the chance to join his cause: 'Come, let's fraternize', and Easa di Baccastoppa proclaims: 'Vive La République' (p. 21). The revolutionary potential of Caliban is never fulfilled, though; indeed, the very act of revolution now seems rather passé, as Ferdinand suggests, seeing Ariel with the other fairies and the banquet: 'The time's gone by for ghostly retributions | Folks heed ghosts now no more than revolutions' (p. 25). At the end of the play, the same revolutionary music is played, and we see that Caliban will never succeed:

> *Music, "Marseillaise", very slowly. Re-enter fairies guarding Caliban, Easa di Baccastoppa and Smuttifacio, loaded with chains.*
> Caliban: Of Liberty
> It's plain the cap won't fit,
> Therefore we'd better quietly submit (p. 28).

The trappings of revolution do not suit Caliban and his attempt fails. At the end, he is left wondering what will become of him; his question to Prospero is suggestive of his symbolic association with the populace, or perhaps the mob: 'if you're all leaving thus, | "What's to be done for the people", meaning us?' (p. 31).

The Tempest on the French stage

On the stage, and the page, in England, *The Tempest* was a play used to explore contemporary politics, and after the French Revolution (and the revolutions of 1848), Caliban came to be more

closely associated with plebeians, the people, and 'the mob'. In France, however, although Shakespeare was figured as the demotic genius, curiously, this play which stages revolution was not re-framed in explicitly political terms until much later than it had been in England. When eventually it was re-visioned through this lens, though, Caliban's revolutionary potential was taken far more seriously.

On the French stage, *The Tempest* was of interest for being both neoclassical in its adherence to the unities (and thus usefully assimilable in the French theatre), and its wild romantic violations of normal probability and incorporation of the supernatural (and hence its interest to French writers interested in levering open the conventions of French drama). The first recorded adaptation of *The Tempest* on the French stage was a performance of scenes by the playwright Philippe Néricault Destouches. Monaco observes that Destouches spent 6 years in London on a diplomatic posting, and spent much of that time studying English drama. On his return to Paris in 1723, he composed *Scènes angloises*, which included, among others, sections 'drawn from the comedy entitled *The Tempest*'. Monaco argues that Destouches was particularly interested in the magical elements of the play: 'Destouches notes the French taste for "nature" and "the true". But he also regrets that "magic" cannot be used in French comedy and thus implies why *The Tempest* attracted him.'[81] Abbé Prévost, who was in London from 1727 to 1733, was similarly drawn to the magic of this play: 'the glimmer of interest in the dramatic quality of "magic" also illustrates a regard for horizons other than those which underlie French classical assumptions.'[82]

The first French adaptation of the play is *Hilas et Silvie, pastorale,* written by Marc-Antoine-Jacques Rochon de Chabannes, and performed at the Comédie Française on 10th December 1769.[83]

[81] Marion Monaco, *Shakespeare on the French Stage in the Eighteenth Century* (Paris: Didier, 1974), p. 5.
[82] Monaco, p. 6.
[83] Marc-Antoine-Jacques Rochon de Chabannes, *Hilas et Silvie: pastorale en un acte, avec des divertissemens* (Paris: Chez la Veuve Duchesn, 1769).

Monaco describes Chabannes as a playwright with 'a general propensity for theatrical freedom in several realms, especially in the use of spectacle'.[84] Chabannes wrote in the preface about his indebtedness to Shakespeare: 'I owe to Shakespeare the idea of my monster'. He then goes on to summarise 'Shakespeare's' play: 'This celebrated Englishman, in his tragedy *The Tempest*, introduces the episode of a certain Prospero who, disgusted by the company of men, retires to a forest with two girls and a boy, whom he keeps separated and who develop a reciprocal aversion to each other.'[85] It is clear, then, that Chabannes is describing the plot of the Dryden-Davenant adaptation, though he describes it as a response to Shakespeare.

Chabannes' adaptation was, of course, written before the Revolution, but even after, the play did not take on revolutionary significance for some time: it was a play of fairies and magic, and seems to have been considered particularly suitable for balletic or operatic adaptations. *La Tempête, ou L'ile des génies*,[86] a ballet by the composer Adolphe Nourrit, was performed at the Théâtre de l'académie royale de musique on 15 September 1834, and, like Chabannes' adaptation, it bears scant resemblance to Shakespeare's play. Prospero is replaced by Oberon. A city in the 'middle ages' is sacked by the Turkish army. A heroine, Imogène, falls to her knees to beg for clemency and hides her daughter, Lea, under her shawl. Oberon arrives and orders the spirit Ariel to take Lea back with them to their 'Ile des génies', which is populated by spirits of the air, and by Caliban, a 'gnome' who is under Oberon's power. The action of the play mostly involves Oberon using his art to encourage Fernando (a young Spanish man) to fall in love with Lea (Ariel induces a storm and a shipwreck in order to bring new people on to the island when Oberon realises that Lea has now come of age and needs to find a husband). Caliban attempts to

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[84] Monaco, p. 55.

[85] Rochon de Chabannes, *Hilas et Silvie*, préface, p. iv.

[86] Adolphe Nourrit, *La Tempête ou L'ile des génies, ballet-féerie en deux actes, précédé d'une introduction par M. Coraly, musique de M. Schneitzhoeffer*, 1834 <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433015009586&view=1up&seq=1&skin=2021> [accessed 27 September 2021].

prevent this love match, and uses his own spells in an attempt to part the lovers (he covers the forest with thick fog so that they won't be able to see each other, and then creates the illusion of an enchanted palace to tempt Fernando away from Lea). His attempts fail, and the young lovers are united, and set sail on a ship after bidding farewell to their benefactors, Oberon and Ariel. This adaptation bears little resemblance to Shakespeare's play. It touches on politics – the incursion of the Ottoman Empire – but, like many adaptations at this time, the main focus is the chastity of the daughter. Caliban's role is merely to act as a brooding, lustful presence: he has no revolutionary drive, and makes no claims of ownership of the island.

The next French adaptation was written at the request of one of the foremost London theatrical producers. Eugène Scribe's *La Tempête, opéra (imité de Shakespeare)* was performed on 8th June 1850 in London, at Her Majesty's Theatre, and again in February 1851, in Paris at the Théâtre-Italien.[87] Scribe wrote to Benjamin Lumley, director of Her Majesty's Theatre: 'here's the poem that you asked me to write in response to Shakespeare's *Tempest*'. This is perhaps suggestive of the popularity of the play on the English stage at that time. Scribe's, unlike the Brough Brothers', is not composed as a burlesque, but instead as an operatic adaptation of the play (it is written to be entertaining, but not absurd). Scribe tells Lumley that, in writing this piece, he came to understand *The Tempest* as a play admirably suited to operatic adaptation: 'I respected your immortal author as much as I could, and the musical situations created are only the development of his first ideas. And I must say, since the honour goes to Shakespeare, that I have encountered few subjects so admirably disposed to music'.[88]

[87] Eugène Scribe, *La Tempête, opéra (imité de Shakespeare), 3 acte opéra, précédé d'un prologue; musique de F. Halévy*, in *Œuvres Complètes De Eugène Scribe, 3me Série, Opéras, Ballets* (Paris: Dentu, 1876).
[88] Eugène Scribe, 'Lettre à Monsieur Lumley, directeur du Théâtre de la Reine, à Londres, Paris, 24 Déc. 1846', in *Œuvres complets de Eugène Scribe, 3me séries. Opéras, ballets* (Paris: Dentu, 1876), p. 85.

In the opening scene, a choir of spirits sing about the storm they have created at Prospero's behest, and warn Alonzo and Antonio that they are being justly punished for their misdeeds. In Prospero's grotto, we see dancing nymphs singing about Miranda – an angel, a flower. Miranda asks Prospero to allay the fears of those in the shipwreck, but he reminds her that they are her enemies (she asks how she can feel hatred for people she has never met). Prospero then calls for Caliban, who is described as having 'nothing human in him' (p. 91); Prospero reminds Miranda that, in order to secure their peace on the island, he enclosed Sycorax within the earth, something which Caliban bitterly laments: 'if only my mother could break out from the rock where she is enclosed and take your daughter' (p. 93). Ariel (who in this version is mute, and only able to communicate through dance and gesture), is enjoined by Prospero to unite Ferdinand and Miranda in love (Prospero's magic books, which are the source of his power, have taught him that, should this union be achieved, then he will be rewarded with the power he originally had in Milan). We then see Caliban, carrying wood and cursing his oppression – he laments that his mother, such a powerful witch, has been buried alive by Prospero and so cannot help her son (p. 103). This seems to summon the spirit of Sycorax – we hear her voice: 'it's your mother, powerless for herself, but powerful for you' (p. 103). She instructs Caliban to seize Miranda, and promises that this will lead to the diminishing of Prospero's magic; to this end, Sycorax instructs her son to take three magic flowers from a nearby rock. Caliban is enthused: 'o talisman! Love shall be mine; empire shall be mine. I sense an unknown flame invading me, drowning me, consuming my heart. Thirst for vengeance, envy, hatred, jealousy' (p. 104). He is seized by so many passions that he is unsure which to follow.

It transpires that he follows his lust – he captures Miranda, and traps Ariel (her protectress) in a tree, and then, ignoring his mother's pleas for a release from her captivity, concentrates his full power on his conquest of Miranda. Caliban uses the magic flowers to put Miranda asleep when she tries to resist, and carries her to his grotto. On the way, he meets Trinculo and Stephano.

Caliban, aside, reveals that he would like to drown Trinculo and Stephano, but knows that the magic flowers only had the power to grant him one wish; instead, with a promise to show them where the best fruit grows (the qualities o' th' isle), he attempts to lure them to somewhere he can capture and keep them as slaves. On the way, he is tempted to drink their alcohol, and falls instantly in love with it: they sing a Bacchanale as Caliban gets more inebriated. Miranda makes several attempts to escape, and then finally manages to seize the magic flowers, immobilise the men, and run away.

Meanwhile, Prospero appears before Antonio and Alonzo to tell them of their crimes. He calls for Ariel, and eventually finds her trapped in the tree. He frees her, she dances the story of what has befallen Miranda, and they go to find her. Miranda is alone and confused; she feels more desire to see Ferdinand than to see her father, and she doesn't understand this. The voice of Sycorax is heard again; she claims to be a spirit come from Prospero to warn Miranda that Ferdinand is in fact a devil spirit in human form, and must be killed in order to save her father's life. Miranda finds Ferdinand asleep, and, wielding the magic flowers above his head, cannot bring herself to kill him – he is too beautiful. Ferdinand wakes and they fall in love. Caliban enters, seeking revenge; he picks up the flowers that Miranda has dropped, but realises that their magic has now worn off. Ariel arrives, waves her wand, and summons a 'resplendent aerian palace' (p. 121). We see Prospero on a throne, flanked by Antonio and Alonzo in sumptuous gowns, and witness the union of Miranda and Ferdinand. Caliban is punished by being banished from their company; he will have to stay on the island by himself. This doesn't seem much of a punishment; Caliban says he is pleased to be the ruler of the island, even if he is his only subject. They all sail away. In his letter to Lumley, Scribe suggested that he found *The Tempest* most suitable for operatic adaptation, but the plot of his production, with the reappearance of Sycorax who comes to avenge her son, is in some ways closer to Waldron's 1797 *The Virgin Queen* than to *The Tempest*. It also occludes politics almost entirely.

Scribe's opera was performed in London and in Paris, and for the Paris production, the ending was changed. In the Parisian variant, Miranda immobilises Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano, and then finds the incarcerated Ariel and frees her from the tree using the magic flower. Ariel then reunites Miranda with Ferdinand, they fall in love, and Ariel invites Prospero to see that she has accomplished his task. We then see the ending tableau – Prospero on a throne, making a gesture of peace to Alonzo and Antonio, with Caliban kneeling on the other side. Prospero gestures to Caliban to advance, and guided by Ariel, the slave approaches Ferdinand and Miranda to silently witness their union. In this version, edited for the French stage, Caliban's ending is changed; he is not left as the ruler of the island, but is rendered mute and utterly powerless.

Scribe, in 1850s Paris at least, does not give Caliban much of an ending: he is left in front of Prospero, kneeling for grace. English dramatists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries portray Caliban as a revolutionary, but this is undermined by his status as a comedic figure who invariably fails. Towards the close of the nineteenth century, a French scientist-philosopher, who was inspired by the magic of theatre and by the spectacle of revolution, takes up the story of Caliban and Prospero in order to give Caliban an ending – and this entails giving him a future.

Ernest Renan's Caliban: suite de La Tempête, drame philosophique

The first of my chapters considers Ernest Renan's two-part sequel to *The Tempest*: *Caliban: suite de La Tempête, drame philosophique* (1878), and *L'Eau de Jouvence* (1881). Renan translates Prospero, Caliban and Ariel to a new, urban, post-Enlightenment locale, disrupting the Prospero-Caliban power dynamic. Indeed, Zabus describes Renan's work as the 'inaugural gesture' in the deprivileging of Prospero.[89] Renan's conception of Shakespeare was partly shaped by Hugo's

[89] Zabus, p. 11.

views. His reframing of the main characters is also influenced by French thinkers such as Voltaire, Rousseau and Comte, and his translation of Caliban is inflected by the work of the historian Jules Michelet. The sequel is shaped by revolution (which Renan often described as a fascinating dramatic spectacle), and by the tension between faith, philosophy, and religion. Renan described his sequel as a 'philosophical drama' – he came to this genre from the 'philosophical dialogue', which he regarded as the best vehicle for exploring conflicting ideas. In creating his 'philosophical drama', Renan turned to Shakespeare – he thought Shakespeare's work was masterful in its portrayal of 'absolute psychology', and of universal relationships which transcend specific historical contexts. That said, Renan claims that he adopted these three characters to explore 'the ideas of his own time'. The play is philosophical in nature because Renan regarded philosophical entertainment as the 'ideal theatre'; it is perhaps partly written as a reaction against the work of Eugène Scribe, whose adaptation was written solely to entertain. Renan *did* write this for the stage – there are specific references to the intended production, especially in terms of music – but his sequel was never performed. Shakespeare's *Tempest* was partly a demonstration of the theatrical developments of a new theatre space;[90] Renan, too, wanted to instigate a new kind of theatre – philosophical, yes, but a spectacle nonetheless – but the staging of this work was frustrated by both the limitations of the French stage and the commercial interests of the contemporary playhouses.

In his sequel, Renan set out to develop and hone the character of Caliban – to dramatize an evolution beyond what Shakespeare ever imagined. His portrayal betrays racist undertones and is clearly influenced by the 'civilising mission' which was central to French colonial policy. Renan establishes language as a crucial stage in the development of Caliban's reasoning (unlike Daniel Wilson in *The Missing Link*, Renan does not see Caliban as beast who wants for discourse), and

[90] Andrew Gurr, '*The Tempest's* Tempest at Blackfriars', *Shakespeare Survey*, 41 (1989), 91-102 (p. 92).

employs his own understanding of philology to come to a linguistically bound theory of race. Caliban is initially associated with a colonial 'native', but his linguistic education comes to negate his race. As a French man, Caliban's power comes from his status as one of the 'people'. Having developed the ability to reason, he comes to conclusions that are shaped by Rousseau's philosophy, and his rise to power (on the shoulders of the people) seems to be a nod to Michelet's view that history is made by 'the people'. This time, Caliban's revolution succeeds (unlike the comedic attempts portrayed on the English stage), but the portrayal does reflect Renan's own ambivalence towards the general populace. The transformation of Caliban comes with a caveat – that once installed in power, Caliban distances himself from the general populace. He becomes a moderate leader that Renan would find more palatable.

The Prospero-figure is toppled, but not entirely diminished – he is a lone sage, striving to understand the world, and his detachment is framed as a laudable dedication to the bettering of his mind. In this post-Enlightenment space, Prospero the Renaissance mage is transmuted into a chemist. Magic becomes Science. We see Prospero's powers overthrown, and this is framed as the triumph of Positivism. Renan's reframing of Prospero reflects his own concerns about religion and faith – Prospero is aiming to get closer to God through better understanding science, but is persecuted by the Catholic Church for his endeavours. It is ultimately Caliban who comes to be his protector. Ariel is figured as a symbol of idealism, at odds with Caliban. Renan set out to continue the stories of Prospero, Caliban and Ariel, but was ultimately unsatisfied with his conclusion; in order to finish this new trajectory, he wrote a second instalment to this sequel: Caliban and Ariel must be reconciled. Renan's work influenced other authors – in France and beyond – even if some did not realise, or acknowledge, this influence.

Jean Guéhenno's Caliban parle

Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban parle* (1928) is a response to Renan's sequel as much as it is to Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Guéhenno's conceit in this work – essentially an extended monologue – is that he will embody the character of Caliban and speak *as* him. With it, he enters into the dialogue instigated by Renan about Caliban's role in society. In his sequel, Renan establishes Caliban as a working-class man symbolic of 'the people'; Guéhenno continues this identification and attempts to create a background for the character as well as forging a new future for him. Prospero and Caliban permeate Guéhenno's entire oeuvre – he returns to these characters throughout his life, and as he evolves, so does his conception of them. *Caliban parle* is a highly autobiographical work, influenced by Guéhenno's poverty-stricken childhood, his commitment to education and his experiences as a soldier in WWI.

Guéhenno's work responds directly to Renan's – the speaker, Caliban, dedicates the work to Renan, and thanks him for his recognition of Caliban's importance to History. He then says that he wants to redress the portrait of him created by Renan. *This* Caliban suggests that Renan might well have recognised the revolutionary power of 'the people', but that he was determined to distance himself from them. Renan (rather than Shakespeare) is thus framed as the detached intellectual – the 'Prospero' figure. Guéhenno recognises the autobiographical nature of this work, as well as the tension between the *real* and the *literary*; he also problematises the enlisting of a canonical work in order to voice the concerns of the common man. Guéhenno explores the notion of History in this piece: who gets to write history, and how? It is named *Caliban speaks* (rather than *Caliban writes*) to stress the orality of the work: he sets out to give the disenfranchised a *voice*, through this maligned and outcast character. History is related to origins (which is a concern in Shakespeare's *Tempest*). Guéhenno's Caliban is told that he should be ashamed of his origins. The question of how History should be told, and of whom it should speak, is inflected by the work of Michelet (the subject of Guéhenno's very first publication).

Guéhenno's Caliban is framed as a resolutely working-class man, and in this sense, he is similar to Trinculo and Stephano – they are all described as 'impossible men' who might take part in revolutions, but never get to achieve real power. Indeed, these men terrify and disgust the ruling classes. The concept of monstrosity with relation to Caliban is re-examined through the lens of crushing poverty and the horrific injuries inflicted on soldiers in WWI. Guéhenno's Caliban is a figure crushed under the yoke of poverty and inequality, but he still has higher aspirations. He redresses Renan's claims that Caliban would burn Prospero's books – the imagery of burning is refigured as a Promethean desire for advancement through education. But as he advances, Caliban moves ever further from his mother. This distancing from origins brings up the question of how *this* Caliban should speak, if he claims to be speaking for the masses. Whereas Renan might be distanced from the masses, Shakespeare is held up by Guéhenno as an 'Everyman', intimately connected to 'the people'. The role of the intellectual in society is explored in Guéhenno's work; this seems to be a particularly French concern, and is an intervention in this debate ongoing in France since the beginning of the twentieth century. The very role of the intellectual is problematised by Guéhenno's own status as an intellectual: from a 'Caliban', he becomes a 'Prospero'. He returns to this question throughout his life, pondering the question: if a 'Caliban' knows that he is a 'Caliban', is he Caliban anymore?

Octave Mannoni's Psychologie de la colonisation

Renan and Guéhenno both focussed on Caliban's class status; the next text I consider is Mannoni's, which adds a racial specificity to the character. Mannoni's response, a psychoanalytical treatise, was created against the backdrop of the 1947 uprising in Madagascar. At this time, there were ongoing discussions in France about how best to manage the colonies, and a burgeoning independence movement in Madagascar. When the troubles began, Mannoni

had lived in Madagascar for many years, and had just returned from a stay in Paris (where he had begun psychoanalysis under Jacques Lacan). Mannoni's theory is a personal exploration and an attempt to explain the 'contrasting personalities' involved in any colonial encounter.

Mannoni's is a literary approach to psychoanalysis. When he wrote this text, Mannoni had just bought a copy of Shakespeare's complete works (in English), and was using it to explore psychoanalysis (usually through the character of Hamlet). He then decided to turn his attention to *The Tempest* as a way of exploring the subject of 'the temptation of a world without men'. He uses *The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe* as 'evidence' for his theories, establishing Prospero and Caliban as archetypes of the two contrasting personalities in the colonial situation – the encounter between these two personalities leads to the development of 'complexes'. The 'native' personality (Caliban) moves from dependency to inferiority, which then leads to resentment and violence. In Mannoni's reading, Caliban welcomes Prospero, and then joins Trinculo and Stephano in an attempt to overthrow him, because he needs a leader: Mannoni strips Caliban of any real revolutionary drive and undermines the legitimacy of his claims to ownership of the isle.

Caliban is (perhaps unintendedly) diminished by Mannoni, then, but it is in fact Prospero that is Mannoni's main focus for this study. Mannoni disambiguates the 'coloniser' (who seeks out lands to colonise for material gain) from the 'colonial' (who finds himself in a 'colonial situation' and seeks more psychological rewards from the relationship). Prospero is Mannoni's archetypal 'colonial', and is transformed by the relationship – he is pathological in his need to dominate others, and Mannoni terms this the 'Prospero complex'. Prospero projects his own incestuous desires onto Caliban (in this, he is influenced by Abenheimer's 1946 reading of the play). The 'Prospero complex' is partly defined by the inability to form respectful, equal relationships with others; in this, Prospero, too, is diminished – indeed, even his magic is framed by Mannoni as a kind of regression driven by his inability to engage with others on equal terms. Mannoni equates

Prospero with Shakespeare (probably influenced by his reading of St John Ervine's editorial introduction), and argues that *The Tempest* demonstrates Shakespeare's own 'infantile' desires: Prospero and Gonzalo are expressions of Shakespeare's unconscious; the discourse of Gonzalo (the 'Utopist') is infantile since it betrays a desire to flee the 'world of men' to an uninhabited space. In this reading, he disrupts the very idea of Shakespeare. Mannoni's work, highly contentious, proved profoundly influential in the trajectory of the play – significant postcolonial figures (such as Fanon, Césaire and Memmi) reacted against this work, which Jonathan Bate describes as 'pioneering' in its consideration of the play in relation to colonialism.[91] Mannoni's influence was not limited to theory: Jonathan Miller cites Mannoni as a source for his seminal 1970 production, which made the play explicitly postcolonial.[92]

Aimé Césaire <u>*Une tempête, d'après "La Tempête" de Shakespeare*</u>

The final response that I consider is *A Tempest* (1969), a postcolonial reappropriation by the Martinican author Aimé Césaire. His re-imagining of the play is the most richly intertextual of all the responses I consider; it is a response to Renan, and Mannoni, as well as to Shakespeare. Césaire's play is shaped by his upbringing in Martinique, by his education there and in Paris, and by his work with thinkers such as the Senegalese poet Léopold Sédar Senghor, with whom Césaire developed the *Négritude* movement. This movement, and this play, explores the power of language to 'decolonise the consciousness'. Two aspects of this decolonising process were theatre and poetry (Césaire saw Surrealism, especially, as a means of exploding the French language and creating a more Antillean consciousness): *A Tempest* represents a coalescence of these two means of expression.

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[91] Bate, 'Caliban and Ariel write back', p. 165.
[92] Philip Dodd, 'Landmarks: The Tempest', *Shakespeare Unlocked* (BBC Radio 3, 3rd May 2012, 22:00) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b01gvtwq> [accessed 27 September 2021].

In 1968, Césaire was thinking of writing about the events of the US Civil Rights Movement when Jean Marie Serreau (the most significant proponent of the 'New Theatre' wave in France) asked him to write an adaptation of *The Tempest*. These two influences shaped Césaire's appropriation of Shakespeare. The play is partly an expression of Césaire's framing of the colonial system as a kind of poison which damages everyone involved. The colonial implications, and Prospero's desperate need for power, that Césaire saw in Shakespeare's play are made much more explicit – the characters set out to colonise new lands, and are clear in their intentions to exploit the new land, and indigenous people. Prospero in this reimagining was not usurped because he dedicated himself to bettering his mind – indeed, he is no longer an intellectual at all. Prospero's power and prestige is stripped away, and it is clear that there is no future for him away from the island and outside of the Prospero-Caliban dialectic. Césaire also uses the character of Gonzalo to satirise the (particularly French) concept of the 'noble savage', and the use of religion in the colonial project. Césaire takes a religious character from Renan's sequel and reframes this interaction with a more Césaireian topos of colonial exploitation.

Césaire's Caliban is the most intersectional of all of the Calibans so far in this story; he is defined by his class *and* his race. Like Guéhenno, Césaire emphasises the working-class status of both Trinculo and Stephano, but uses this to strengthen his argument about the damage that the colonial system inflicts. Caliban joins forces with Trinculo and Stephano, but their chance of overthrowing the very system which subjugates them is undermined by their racist attitudes – this is suggestive of Césaire's own relationship with – and famous renouncement of – the French Communist Party. Caliban's revolutionary power, though, is not diminished in any way – he is a freedom fighter, and given a more distinct identity; as the play itself evolved in rewritings, Caliban's character became more explicitly inflected by the events of the Civil Rights Movement. Caliban's identity is illustrative of the power of the *Négritude* movement – African Gods are introduced to disrupt existing power dynamics, and Caliban's language is used as a weapon in the

reassertion of his identity as part of the African Diaspora. Whereas Renan's sequel moved the characters to mainland Europe, Césaire's play must be set again on an island – Césaire reconnects with the elemental quality of Shakespeare's setting: he reanimates the island and its inherent magic. Guéhenno's Ariel promised his Caliban that one day a poet would come to help him tell his story – Césaire's Ariel is a redemptive presence in the island, and the bringing together of him and Caliban celebrates the power of theatre and poetry to reshape the world.

In the wake of the French Revolution and the upheavals of 1848 and 1871, and in light of the French identification of Shakespeare with 'the people', these writers turn to Shakespeare to explore, and to expand, the revolutionary potential of Caliban – not a comedic, thwarted plebeian who ultimately gets put back in his place, but a genuine revolutionary. In the late nineteenth century, Caliban becomes a signifier for the revolutionary potential of the masses, and Prospero is figured as a chemist striving for Enlightenment ideals despite the challenges posed by the rise of Positivism. After the First World War, Caliban is offered a new voice which expresses the pain of his lived experience as a working-class man, ignored by detached elites (such as Prospero); during the Occupation, both characters are enlisted in a personal interrogation of what it means to be an intellectual in France. With France on the cusp of revolutions which forced it to face its colonial legacies, Mannoni establishes Prospero as the archetypal expression of the pathology of the colonial master. Caliban is portrayed as a revolutionary once again, but his legitimacy is somewhat undermined by Mannoni's reading. The postcolonial Caliban is given back his legitimacy, his revolutionary power, and his voice, which he uses to diminish Prospero: this diminishing of the mage, which began with Renan's sequel, comes to fruition with Césaire.

Now his charms are all o'erthrown

Prospero's demise in Ernest Renan's sequel to *The Tempest*

Here in Milan, I feel myself more and more elevated to the dignity of a citizen.

Caliban. *Caliban, suite de la Tempête*[1]

What cares these roarers for the name of king?

Boatswain. *The Tempest* (1.1.16-17)[2]

The people come! Their flowing tide

Is rising endlessly with the waxing moon.

Victor Hugo[3]

France is the first locale in which Caliban becomes a successful revolutionary (in England, his attempts are comedic and invariably thwarted). The first stage in this re-framing of Caliban as a successful revolutionary is Ernest Renan's 1878 sequel, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête.* This sequel inaugurated an intertextual dialogue – in France and beyond – which disrupts the Prospero-Caliban relationship; it is the first step in an evolution where Caliban's ascendancy begins, and Prospero's dominance ends.

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[1] Ernest Renan, *Caliban, suite de la Tempête,* ed. by Colin Smith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1954), p, 58. Henceforth, I'll refer to this text as *Caliban.*
[2] All subsequent references will be from *The Tempest*, ed. by Stephen Orgel (Oxford: OUP, 1987).
[3] Cited in Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 12.

Renan composed his sequel in the late nineteenth century, after the height of Romanticism, and while there are Romantic preoccupations (his concern about industrialisation, for example), in his approach, he seems to be more a man of the *Siècle des Lumières*, after the fact. Renan's sequel was shaped by many thinkers, discourses and events which had also shaped French society since the composition of *The Tempest*: Diderot and his insistence on the superiority of the French language; Voltaire's stinging critique of dogmatic Catholicism; Rousseau's theories about natural societal inequality; Cartesian logic as a threat to religious thinking; and the *shakespearemanie* of Victor Hugo. Renan's re-imagining of Prospero is shaped by Auguste Comte's theory of Positivism, as well as the chemistry of Marcellin Berthelot, and further inflected by Renan's own ambivalent view of religion. Of course, it is also a response shaped by the French Revolution itself, as well as subsequent periods of unrest in France (1830, 1848, 1871). I will argue that this re-shaping of Caliban was itself partly a product of the approach to history and historiography expounded by the seminal French historian Jules Michelet: Caliban is transformed by Renan into a symbol of the latent power of the ordinary man.

Renan's politics and faith

Robert D. Priest characterises Renan's historiographical approach as the kind of 'cultural history that tried to situate ideas and individuals in their formative contexts'.[4] In this chapter, I will adopt a similar approach: before turning to Renan's sequel, we will first situate Renan and his ideas in their formative contexts, since these so profoundly shaped his response to Shakespeare's play. Ernest Renan was one of France's most influential thinkers, a controversial theorist, and a politically engaged philosopher. Critics and biographers stress the importance of Renan's oeuvre in the history – and development – of French political thought. Renan is

[4] Robert D. Priest, '"The Great Doctrine of Transcendent Disdain": History, Politics and the Self in Renan's Life of Jesus', *History of European Ideas,* 40.6 (2014), 761-776 (p. 762).

described by Richard Grant as 'the great historian',[5] and by Carol Singley as one of the 'most highly esteemed historians and philosophers of his age',[6] while Alan Pitt cites Renan's oeuvre as critical 'in the intellectual history of France'.[7] Throughout his career, Renan wrote extensively on religion and on the nature of faith; his ground-breaking work *Vie de Jésus* (1863)[8] proved controversial and influential, within and beyond the borders of France.[9] Carol Singley argues that this work helped Edith Wharton to 'grapple with a monumental issue in the nineteenth century: the balance between faith and reason; or, in the case of Renan, between faith and history.'[10] Geoffrey Nash describes Renan's work on religion as 'a strand of thinking which became influential for nineteenth century European thought'.[11]

Renan wrote so extensively on religion because it was a fundamental part of his own life. Singley notes that the balance between historical accuracy and religious faith was a 'monumental issue'[12] for Renan. And this concern was a deeply personal one. Raised a Catholic, Renan entered the seminary of Saint-Sulpice in 1841. There, he was tutored in religion and philosophy. He found that there was no easy synthesis between these two disciplines. William Barry notes that Renan's study of logical philosophy planted seeds of doubt which would soon take root: 'No sooner did he grasp the import of logic, with its immediate application to problems that he had never before dreamt of, than his whole being underwent a crisis.'[13] His study of Cartesian logic

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[5] Richard B. Grant, 'Edmond de Goncourt and the Paris Commune', *The Massachusetts Review,* 12.3 (1971), 521-27 (p. 523).
[6] Carol J. Singley, 'Race, Culture, Nation: Edith Wharton and Ernest Renan', *Twentieth Century Literature,* 49.1 (2003), 32-45 (p. 32).
[7] Alan Pitt, 'The Cultural Impact of Science in France: Ernest Renan and the *Vie de Jésus*', *Historical Journal*, 43.1 (2000), 79-101 (p. 79).
[8] Ernest Renan, *Vie de Jésus*, 2e edn (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1863).
[9] In this text, as Priest notes, Renan: 'sought to treat the New Testament as if it were any other historical source and to "banish" the supernatural from historical writing. Jesus was not God and did not perform miracles; he was rather the human architect of a "moral revolution", whose ideas and personality had shaped the course of world history', Priest, p. 762.
[10] Singley, p. 33.
[11] Geoffrey Nash, 'Aryan and Semite in Ernest Renan's and Matthew Arnold's Quest for the Religion of Modernity', *Religion & Literature*, 46.1 (2014), 25-50 (p. 26).
[12] Singley, p. 33.
[13] William Barry, *Ernest Renan* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1905), p. 31.

meant that he could no longer believe in fundamental tenets of the Church for which he was being trained. Benjamin Rountree argues that it was, ironically, a Catholic Priest's (Malebranche's)[14] application of Cartesian logic which finally led the young Renan away from the Church; Malebranche's philosophy led Renan to 'seek the divine in the laws of reason and the beauties of nature, to take, ironically, the road leading to pantheism.'[15] Renan was also greatly influenced by the philosophy of Victor Comte, the father of the Positivist school of philosophy (which I will address in more detail later). By the 1840s, Renan was left with a feeling of interior conflict and contradiction, which is reflected throughout his writing. Richard Chadbourne notes that 'dualities, if not dichotomies' are a defining feature of Renan's works.[16]

In 1845, then, at the age of 23, Renan decided to leave behind his religious training and break away from the seminary. His decision would affect the rest of his life, shape his writing, and somewhat mar his reputation; indeed, David Lee suggests that, for some, the removal of these religious robes 'came to constitute the dubious hallmark of his being'.[17] It affected the reception of writings much later in life: 'an anonymous commentator […] scribbled the words 'séminariste défroqué'– unfrocked seminarian – against his name in the Bibliothèque Nationale copy of one his early reviews.'[18] Having distanced himself from the Catholic Church, Renan found solace in another kind of religion: Science. Although Barry describes Renan's view as a kind of 'scientific

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[14] Malebranche was a Cartesian philosopher who likened ethical to geometrical principles.
Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden stress how influential Malebranche's work was on the intersection between religious faith and epistemology: 'It was Malebranche, rather than Descartes, who convinced generations of philosophers, particularly Berkeley and Hume, both of whom were deeply indebted to Malebranche, that sceptical arguments formed the core of epistemology, and it was from Malebranche, not from Descartes, that eighteenth century readers learned their Cartesianism'; 'unable to unify the distinct spheres of Cartesian substance, mind and matter, Malebranche was happy to ground this unity in God himself', *French Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, ed. by Stephen Gaukroger and Knox Peden (Oxford: OUP, 2020), p. 22; p. 49.

[15] Benjamin Rountree, 'The role of Malebranche in Ernest Renan's Philosophical Development', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 6.1 (1968), 47-55 (p. 55).

[16] Richard Chadbourne, *Renan* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), p. 33.

[17] Lee, p. 55.

[18] Lee, p. 55.

Atheism',[19] it is clear that Renan *did* maintain his faith in God. Rather, Science became, in Renan's mind, the only way to understand and interpret the world, and to understand the will and the genius of God: 'My religion, it's still the progress of Reason, that is to say Science.'[20] Barry observes that, while at university, Renan concluded that Cartesian logic, as well as a Positivist approach to knowledge (especially scientific), was the only way to make sense of the world: 'Science, he felt, was the only certain truth; everything else an hypothesis or a dream. By pure physical induction, founded on experience, the world might be interpreted and subdued, or else not at all'.[21] Renan's new-found devotion to scientific endeavour was fuelled by his blossoming friendship with the scientist Marcellin Berthelot. The two men met as undergraduates, and quickly became fast friends. Berthelot was a chemistry student with an interest in the study of social and political structures. During their undergraduate years, the friends saw the build up to, and the events of, the 1848 Revolution unfolding before them in the streets of Paris.

Student protest has long been a powerful force for change in France. Student protests were staged in December 1847 when Jules Michelet – the historian who first attempted to write a history of 'the people' rather than the aristocracy ('I lived but to tell your story', he wrote) [22] – was dismissed by the government from the Collège de France for his 'inflammatory' lectures on the 1789 Revolution.[23] The student demonstrators, who proclaimed him their hero, contributed to a climate of anti-government fervour which culminated in the 1848 Revolution. On 25th

[19] Barry, p. 41.
[20] Ernest Renan, *L'Avenir de la science, pensées de 1848*, 2nd edn (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1890), p. 9.
[21] Barry, p. 40.
[22] Michelet, *Histoire de la Révolution française* (Paris: Marpon & Flammarion, 1879), p. 203.
[23] William Fortescue, *France and 1848: the end of monarchy* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 67. See also Arthur Mitzman and Douglas Johnson, who stress the importance of Michelet's novel historiographical approach to French history. Arthur Mitzman, *Michelet, Historian: Rebirth and Romanticism in Nineteenth Century France* (London: Yale University Press, 1990); Douglas Johnson, *Michelet and the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

February 1848, Renan was on his way to a lecture on Hebrew when protests broke out in the streets. He was briefly tempted to join, but instead decided to pursue his studies:

> I recall […] that day where, having crossed the barricades to get to the College of France, we found our modest classroom transformed into a 'corps de garde', where we were at first received as suspects. That day, I asked myself more seriously if there was anything more important to do than to devote myself to studies, and to thought, every moment of my life, and having consulted my conscience and, my belief in the human spirit having been reaffirmed, I answered myself very resolutely: no![24]

Renan did have sympathy for the protestors, and shared some of their concerns; he wrote to his sister about the crippling lack of social mobility he saw in France, and how the lowest in society were trapped in a pit of 'debauchery et disorder'.[25] Though he did feel sympathy for 'the people', he was concerned, throughout his life, at what might happen should enough of the 'masses' continue to exert influence.

Renan watched the events unfold as if witnessing a performance; in his letters to Henriette and his mother during 1848, he repeatedly describes Paris as a 'theatre' of revolution, where spectacle and drama (both comedy and tragedy) might be observed. This imagery is recurrent in letters Renan wrote to his mother and sister during 1848.[26] In the bloody denouement. which came to be known as the 'Days of June', Renan witnessed – at fairly close proximity – the slaughter of men (largely working-class men) in the streets of Paris. In a letter to Henriette, Renan poetically described the horror of the scene, expressing his preoccupation with the origins of man: 'it was a

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[24] Renan, *L'Avenir de la science*, p. 16.
[25] *Ernest Renan: Correspondance générale*: *Tome II*, ed. by Anne-Marie de Brem and Jean Balcou (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998), p. 563.
[26] Brem and Balcou, pp. 503; 508; 557; 559.

sight of sublime originality, naked man, face to face with his fellow, nothing left but his primitive instincts.'[27] Renan does express some misgivings about describing such horrific events in this way, and asks that he might be forgiven for using his 'artistic sentiment'[28] to recall the bloody outcome. Such instincts, he reflected, came to the surface in the time of revolution. These desperate men fascinated, but also terrified, the impressionable Renan. His attitude towards both the working class and the 'bourgeois' was ambivalent; he shares with Henriette his view that the Left, with whom his sympathies had initially rested, were conducting themselves with an 'egoism and narrow mindedness which can only be witnessed in similarly ill-educated people'.[29]

Revolutions held a lifelong fascination for Renan – he wrote to Jules Michelet on 12 June 1848, expressing his desire to discuss the roots of revolution, and what a post-revolutionary society might look like.[30] Renan shared Hugo's view that the French Revolution was 'such an extraordinary event that it must serve as the starting-point for any systematic consideration of the affairs of our own times'.[31] Renan saw himself, and all of his generation, as a product of the French Revolution, part of the legacy of which, in David Lee's view, was the 'self-division' which developed in modern consciousness.[32] Henri Gouhier observes that Renan regarded the nineteenth century one in which France should expiate the French Revolution.[33] While he was fascinated in the latent power of the 'people', and how they could overthrow the established order, Renan was deeply concerned about the intellectual future of a France led by the revolutionaries, and lamented their lack of education – how, he wondered, could they ever *understand* the sort of freedom which might only be discovered through proper scientific

[27] Brem and Balcou, p. 504.
[28] Brem and Balcou, pp. 546.
[29] Brem and Balcou, pp. 546-7.
[30] Brem and Balcou, p. 549.
[31] Ernest Renan, *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1869), cited in William Fortescue, *France and 1848: The End of Monarchy* (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), p. 4.
[32] Lee, p. 15.
[33] Gouhier, p. 132.

endeavour. For Renan, science and social philosophy were inextricably linked; in a dedicatory letter to Berthelot in his 1871 *Dialogues philosophiques* he describes their thoughts and philosophical endeavours as 'entrelacées' [intertwined]: 'Sometimes the embryo of the idea is from you, and the development is mine; sometimes the germ came from me, and you fertilised it'.[34] His experience of the 1848 Revolution led him to write *L'Avenir de la science, pensées de 1848* | *The Future of Science, thoughts on 1848*,[35] in which he expresses his sincere belief that science is the only real vehicle of progress, and that while he has sympathy for 'the people', he fears what might become of France under universal suffrage.

Twenty-three years later, Renan witnessed another brief but remarkably violent revolution in his city, and was greatly affected by it. For a brief time in 1871, working men seized control of Paris. Workers' unions marched into the city. They felt betrayed. Napoleon III had been captured, victim of his own aggressive foreign policy against Bismarck. The new government, declared the Third Republic by Gambetta, had refused to cede to Prussian demands, which had led to a siege on Paris. On 28 Jan 1871, an armistice was negotiated, and a new government created, led by Adolphe Thiers. The legislation passed did nothing to alleviate the intense poverty felt by the Parisian poor, and the (predominantly young) men of the Commune Council clashed with the national government. When the Versailles-based government refused to recognise the elections of 26 March 1871, the Commune Council decided to seize Paris. Roger Gould describes the proclamation of the Commune as the start of 'a two-month experiment in democratic socialism'.[36] The historiography of the Commune is fraught and complex. W. H. C. Smith notes

[34] Ernest Renan, *Dialogues philosophiques* (1871), ed. by Laudyce Retat (Paris: éditions CRNS, 1992), p. 71.
[35] Ernest Renan, *L'Avenir de la science*, *pensées de 1848*, 2nd edn (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1890).
[36] Roger V. Gould, 'Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871', *American Sociological Review*, 56.6 (1991), 716-729 (p. 718). Gerard Fischer suggests that the Paris Commune, this brief period in French history, is remarkable in its divisive legacy: 'To its enemies, the Paris Commune was and is […] a period of debauchery and anarchistic immorality, the government of drunkards, thieves and pimps. To its adherents and friends, the Commune means the advent of the first workers' state, a short reign of liberty, social justice and equality.' Gerard Fischer, *The Paris Commune on the Stage: Vallés, Grieg, Brecht, Adamov* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1981), p. 11. See also Dominica Chang, '"Un Nouveau '93": Discourses of Mimicry and Terror in the Paris Commune of 1871' *French*

that 'the Commune itself has, as a historical episode, become so overlaid with myths originating on the left and the right of the political spectrum that it is difficult to entangle fact from fiction.'[37] While there is much – and ongoing[38] – debate about the demographics, motivations and aims of the Communards, they did pass new laws in an attempt to share wealth and give more power to unions. The Commune lasted from March to May 1871, when it was brutally put down by the superior military might of the government led by Thiers.[39]

Renan described the events of the Paris Commune as 'la terrible secousse' | 'the great jolt'.[40] He was in Paris during some of this period, and his feelings – characteristically – were conflicted. In the foreword to the *Philosophical dialogues*, he writes that he left Paris for Versailles at the end of April 1871; he was appalled by the violence that he had witnessed there, and was certain that this was no place where reason could prevail. He did not approve of Thiers' cruel treatment of the Communards,[41] but he did fear the erosion of cultural and intellectual standards which he felt would result from the rule of the working classes. He writes to Berthelot, from Paris, on 26 February 1871, that, 'in effect, this is a fatal blow to the soul of the old France'.[42] Renan did not believe in universal suffrage – in his view, the masses were simply not educated enough to be given the vote. In *The Future of Science,* Renan expresses a great deal of ambivalence towards the general populace: the ruling elite ignores them at their peril; judgement and government might

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Historical Studies 36.4 (2013), 629-48 and W. H. C. Smith, *Second Empire and Commune: France 1848-1871* (London: Longman, 1985).

[37] Smith, p. 59. For a detailed overview of the historiography of the Paris Commune, see David A. Shafer, *The Paris Commune: French Politics, Culture and Society at the Crossroads of Revolutionary Tradition and Revolutionary Socialism* (Hampshire, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

[38] The Oxford SWP (Socialist Workers' Party) recently invited members to a Zoom discussion about the legacy of the Paris Commune. Email to author, 6th April 2021.

[39] Robert Tombs observes that the suppression of the Communards by the Versailles-based government was so repressive that 'no one was convinced that the laws of the land were being followed', and the government felt compelled to publicly apologise for the summary executions. Robert Tombs, *The War Against Paris, 1871* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 163.

[40] D. Parodi, 'Ernest Renan et la philosophie contemporaine', *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale,* 26.1 (1919), 41-66 (p. 62).

[41] H. Wardman, *Ernest Renan: A Critical Biography* (London: Athlone Press, 1964), p. 142.

[42] Ernest Renan and Marcellin Berthelot, *Correspondance: 1847-1892* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1898), p. 395.

inevitably be transferred to the masses, but they are 'uncouth, and weighed down by their own most superficial interests'.[43] Priest describes Renan as 'antidemocratic, anti-egalitarian and anticlerical'; views which were 'typical of many in France's liberal cultural elite'.[44] Gouhier, though, argues that Renan regarded himself as a 'liberalist', and that, for him, liberalism and reason went hand-in-hand.[45]

As much as he found revolutions fascinating, Renan was also deeply troubled by them, particularly by the events of 1871. But despite his fears for the future of French society, he saw salvation in Art and in science. Keith Gore has written about Renan's responses to the Paris Expositions of 1855 and 1878. Having visited the latter, Renan reflected that Art might create a separation, a kind of bulwark, against the 'barbarism and ferocity' he had witnessed in recent years.[46] In this, he was inspired by Saint Simon, who 'particularly stressed the role that scientists, artists, engineers and industrialists could play in improving the lot of humanity.'[47] Gore goes on to note that Renan and Baudelaire, who had visited the same exhibition, shared the idea that the 'torch of human activity passes from one hand to the next through time and space'. For Baudelaire, though, this flame was more artistic, whereas for Renan, it was scientific enquiry that should carry the torch. Renan, Gore notes, was actually relatively ignorant of the artistic movements of his own time.[48]

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43 Renan, *L'Avenir de la science*, p. 370.
44 Priest, 'Disdain', p. 768.
45 Gouhier, p. 122.
46 Keith Gore, 'Ernest Renan et l'art: autour des Expositions de 1855 et 1878 à Paris', *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France,* 81.3 (1981), 391-492 (p. 391).
47 Fortescue, p. 77.
48 Gore, p. 399.

Philosophie, 'à la façon de Shakespeare'

As Gouhier notes, Renan hardly ever went to the theatre – his diaries suggest that he mainly came to know the theatre through the writings of Victor Hugo.[49] Renan makes some brief references to Shakespeare in his diaries,[50] but it's unclear how many of his plays Renan knew. Jean Pommier observes that Renan and Hugo were on very good terms when Hugo wrote *William Shakespeare*, but that it remains unclear whether Renan read this particular work.[51] For Renan, Shakespeare was less a dramatist than a *dramatic philosopher*.

In his *Dialogues philosophiques* (1876), Renan reflects on what the genre of philosophical dialogue could offer him: it 'permits me to successively present the diverse angles of the problem, without being obliged to come to any conclusions'.[52] In this, he was partly influenced by Malebranche (whose philosophy was dialogic). Having composed some philosophical dialogues, Renan then became convinced that he should move on to philosophical *dramas*. In the preface to his *Drames philosophiques* (1888), Renan avowed that 'the dramatic form is by far the most beautiful form of literature.' He also explained his move from philosophical *dialogue* to philosophical *drama*: 'I found that dialogue didn't suffice; that I needed action.'[53] Chadbourne argues that Renan turned to drama to remind us 'that ideas, historically, are bound up with flesh and blood human beings, and that 'ideological' conflicts are seldom purely ideological'.[54] As well as exploring ideas, then, he was also interested in exploring people, and how philosophical ideas inflect their lives and behaviour. In his study of Renan's dramatic art, Henri Gouhier notes that drama afforded Renan

[49] Gouhier, p. 31.
[50] At one point, he cites a knowledge of Shakespeare as an example of someone being well-versed in foreign languages, and less mainstream literature. Renan, *Nouveaux cahiers de jeunesse, 1846* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1907), p. 50. He also offers a critique of the denouement of Hamlet: 'the exchange of swords – it's too fortuitous, too arbitrary. Johnson preferred poison, but it's all one', Ernest Renan and Henriette Psichari, *Œuvres complètes de Ernest Renan* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1947), p. 293.
[51] Jean Pommier, *Renan, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Perrin, 1923), pp. 270-71.
[52] Renan *Dialogues philosophiques*, p. 6.
[53] Renan, *Drames philosophiques* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1888), p. II.
[54] Chadbourne, p.114.

an opportunity to explore philosophical questions through what might be described as lived experience: 'philosophical communication is then done by mediation of characters engaged in dramatic action where their opinions are lived as well as offered.'[55]

This move towards drama, rather than just dialogue, was also motivated by Renan's conception of the ideal theatre: 'we can conceive, in an aristocratic humanity, where the public would be comprised of intelligent people, of a philosophical theatre, which would be one of the most powerful vehicles for ideas and "high culture"'.[56] His hope was that theatre could be more than a means for the bourgeois public to pass an agreeable evening; it was fine for theatre to be entertaining, but it should also communicate and explore important philosophical ideas. Actually, Renan considered opera to be one of the most ideal of all theatrical forms; often, music and *mise en scène* could express ideas which mere words could not. However, his adaptation of *The Tempest* is perhaps partly a reaction against Eugène Scribe's operatic adaptation. Scribe was committed to the concept of theatre as entertainment; it did not need to be edifying. Scribe's version of *The Tempest* (as summarised in my introduction) is diverting, but the occlusion of any political implications is striking. Unlike Scribe's adaptation (performed in both Paris and London), Renan's sequel was never performed. It was *not*, though, written simply as a closet drama. Renan's stage directions indicate that he intended for the musical accompaniment to be composed by Gounod[57] (who had composed the music for an 1859 production of *Faust* at the Théâtre Lyrique),[58] but his stage directions generally are very elaborate. Gouhier suggests that this intended elaborate staging, and Renan's lack of standing as a playwright, meant that commercial theatres simply were not interested in staging Renan's sequel.[59]

[55] Gouhier, p. 25.
[56] Renan, *Drames philosophiques,* p. II.
[57] Renan, *Caliban*, p. 46.
[58] Gouhier, p. 30.
[59] Gouhier, pp. 33-44.

In the preface to the first edition of *Caliban*, Renan refers to Shakespeare as the 'historian of all time. He portrays no particular country or century. Human history is his sole perspective.'[60] He adds to this in the preface to the 1888 edition of the plays: 'I have found that dialogue won't suffice, that I need action: that free drama without local colour, *à la façon de Shakespeare*, permits me to create finer nuances'. He cites *Coriolanus* and *Julius Caesar* as exemplary of Shakespeare's approach; these plays might dramatise historical events, but they have a certain universality in their exploration of the human condition: 'not depictions of Roman customs; these are studies of pure psychology'.[61] Renan establishes Shakespeare's drama as universal in its approach to psychology, but he also notes that his own response to *The Tempest* will consider Prospero, Caliban and Ariel through the lens of his own era: '[I wish to] engage [these characters] as active types of individuality in combinations especially *adapted to the idea of our own time*.'[62]

Caliban

Educating Caliban: the 'civilising mission'

In the 1878 preface to his sequel, Renan describes Caliban as 'a shapeless creature, barely carved, in the process of becoming a man'.[63] This description suggests that, for Renan, Caliban is the character who needs most honing. Taken from the island and transported to mainland Europe, Renan's Caliban undergoes a transformation; he is shaped by his acquisition of (Prospero's) language, and by his transferral from an isolated island to the crucible of 'civilisation'.

[60] Ernest Renan, *Caliban,* 'Au lecteur', p. 39.
[61] Ernest Renan, *Drames philosophiques,* p. II.
[62] Renan, *Caliban,* 'Au lecteur', p. 39 (my emphasis).
[63] Renan, *Caliban,* 'Au lecteur', p. 39

Renan's portrayal of Caliban is shaped by France's approach to colonisation and imperialism. By 1870, Napoleon III had already doubled the size of the French empire. This was also a period associated with what has been described as the '*mission civilisatrice*' | 'civilising mission'.[64] The imposition of the French language was closely bound up with their expansionist project. Matthew Burrows argues that, while the *mission* was less important for French colonialists than France 'regaining her rank as a first-rate world power', it was still a significant aspect of French colonial policy. He argues that one of the central features of the *mission* was the emphasis on the French language:

> Both theorists and active movers among French colonialists spoke of the spiritual qualities of the French language. More than any other language, French was somehow expressive of an innate logic or rationality which made French as a language superior to all others. Whoever learned French had in his possession the key to French culture.[65]

This concept of a superiority of the French language was hardly a new idea. Diderot, in his 1751 work, *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets*, expounds the various virtues of different languages, explaining what each is best for: 'French is made to instruct, clarify and convince; Greek, Latin, Italian and English to persuade, move, deceive; speak Greek, Latin, Italian to the People, but

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[64] Pernille Røge and Marion Leclair argue that this was a pervasive idea that had long been associated with French colonisation, though not officially described in such terms. They observe that there is no official definition of this 'mission'; they turn instead to Alice Conklin, who argues that the 'quest for mastery of nature was the backbone of the mission civilisatrice […] because France considered itself to have learnt, more than any other nation, how to master the maladies, the instincts, the ignorance and despotism, she believed that she could help those who were still fighting for this mastery', Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize – The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 6, cited in Pernille Røge and Marion Leclair, 'L'économie politique en France et les origines intellectuelles de 'La Mission Civilisatrice' en Afrique', *Dix-huitième siècle,* 44.1 (2012) 117-130 (p. 118).

[65] Matthew Burrows, '"Mission Civilisatrice": French Cultural Policy in the Middle East, 1860-1914', *The Historical Journal,* 29.1 (1986), 109-135 (p. 127).

speak French to a sage'.[66] Janet Horne observes that, as well as the language of Reason, French was also 'a language of empire […] language, education, and culture were the most valuable long-term means of establishing France's imperial power'.[67] France had long associated the imposition of the French language with their role in 'civilising' people from other cultures.

For Renan, the study of languages was a lifelong passion. Priest argues that Renan's study of linguistics led him to develop a linguistics-bound conception of race: 'To the Renan of 1855, linguistic families engendered discrete races. He had read Johann Gottfried von Herder as a young man and was captivated by his argument that language structured thought.'[68] Renan was particularly interested in the field of philology – considered to be more of a scientific approach to the study of languages – and devoted much time to studying comparative grammar. Philology combined his main intellectual interests (languages, history and science). As Priest observes, Renan was 'entranced by the power of this new scientific approach to the history of language'.[69] This intellectual endeavour profoundly shaped Renan's re-imagining of *The Tempest.* Renan shared the view that the imposition of the colonial language could be used as a means to 'improve' the indigenous peoples. The (re-)abolition of slavery in the colonies in 1848[70] did please Renan (he found no moral justification for the enslavement of other humans),[71] but he did express misgivings about how emancipated slaves could 'cope' with their new freedom. Robert Priest notes that, by the 1870s, Renan 'resorted to the patriarchal language of the European civilizing mission; it argued that liberty could not be extended to "savage races" like

[66] Denis Diderot, *Lettre sur les Sourds et Muets* (1751), *Œuvres Complètes de Diderot*, vol. 1, ed. by J. Assézat (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1875), p. 372. As Noam Chomsky notes: 'Diderot concludes that French is unique among languages in the degree to which the order of words corresponds to the natural order of thoughts and ideas', *The Essential Noam Chomsky*, ed. by Anthony Arnove (London: New Press, 2008), p. 36.
[67] Janet Horne, '"To extend the French language is to extend the patrie": the colonial mission of the alliance française', *French Historical Studies,* 40.1 (2017) 95-127 (p. 99).
[68] Robert D. Priest, 'Ernest Renan's Race Problem', *The Historical Journal*, 58.1 (2015), 309-330 (p. 312).
[69] Priest, 'Disdain', p. 765.
[70] Slavery was abolished; then established again, then re-abolished in 1848.
[71] Renan, *Dialogues philosophiques*, p. 78.

black Africans without first educating them'.[72]

Education – most importantly, linguistic education – is a crucial aspect of Renan's re-imagining of these characters and their relationship. Indeed, the sequel opens with a discussion between Ariel and Caliban on this very subject. Ariel suggests that Prospero educated Caliban out of a sense of moral obligation towards his slave: 'is it not the duty of those who are most enlightened to seek the *elevation* of others less fortunate?' (p. 18, my emphasis). Ariel's suggestion here is that the teaching of the language of the coloniser is not merely a linguistic education; it actually *improves* the colonial subject.

Ariel employs Caliban's previous inability to speak (to Prospero) as a means of questioning his very right of ownership of the island on which he was born: 'You repeat incessantly that the island belonged to you. In truth, it did belong to you, just as the desert belongs to the gazelle, the jungle to the tiger, and no more […] You knew the name of nothing there' (p. 17). This argument, that naming confers ownership, had been a pervasive concept throughout colonialism. As Daniel Day argues, 'when Christopher Columbus chanced upon the "New World", he tried to interpret the islands of the Caribbean for his Spanish sovereigns in ways that they would find meaningful'. This process of naming had the effect of making these lands 'more securely Spanish'. The act of naming conveys a sense of ownership and is a means of dispossessing the legitimate owners through a process of linguistic occlusion: 'By ignoring the native names for the islands, the claim by Columbus to have a God-given and royally sanctioned right to assert

[72] Priest, 'Ernest Renan's Race Problem', p. 312.

Spanish ownership was thereby strengthened'.[73] Ariel's argument in the opening scene of Renan's sequel is along similar lines; Caliban's claim of ownership of the island is undermined by his inability to name his island in the language of the coloniser.

Transformations

Ariel's argument seems to have been shaped by the rhetoric of the 'civilising mission'. She (the part is specifically designated as female) insists that Caliban should be grateful to Prospero for teaching him language at all. Caliban responds that he used the language against his master: 'How did not Prospero see that the language he gave me, I would use to curse him?' (p. 43) – clearly an allusion to 'You taught me language and my profit on't | Is I know how to curse' (I. 2. 366-7). The acquisition of this new ('superior') language means that Caliban can begin a transformation. Renan claimed that these characters offered him the opportunity to explore differing perspectives. In this scene, though, Ariel's views seem closer to Renan's own: for Renan, reasoning is a natural corollary to language. Ariel claims that, through the acquisition of language, Caliban's thought processes have become increasingly more sophisticated: 'With that divine language, the sum of reason which is inseparable from it entered into you' (p. 43). The conceit is that, once the seeds of this linguistic education have been planted, Caliban's mind cannot but be honed. Ariel asks Caliban to remember why he is so in his master's debt: 'You forget that it is thanks to Prospero that you are a man; that you exist' (p. 42). In Renan's re-imagining, as we shall see later, Ariel is brought into existence by Prospero. Caliban exists *in human form* thanks to Prospero's teaching; he transforms, and evolves, thanks to Prospero's education.

[73] David Day, *Conquest: how societies overwhelm others* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 49. See also Camilla Boisen, 'The Changing Moral Justification of Empire: From the Right to Colonise to the Obligation to Civilize', *History of European Ideas*, 39.3 (2013), 335-353.

Concurrently, critical and theatrical responses to *The Tempest* were being shaped by scientific endeavour. Vaughan and Vaughan note the profound impact of Darwin's work on the reception of *The Tempest*: 'the powerful influence of Darwinian evolutionism turned Caliban into the missing link'.[74] In Britain in 1873, Daniel Wilson drew on Darwin's work to inform *Caliban: The Missing Link*.[75] Portraying Shakespeare's Caliban as a fish-like creature (rather than a human), Wilson argues that Caliban can be read as Shakespeare's 'pre-Darwinian realisation of the intermediate link between brute and man'. Wilson regards Shakespeare's Caliban as the embodiment of a crucial evolutionary stage: the 'highest development of the 'beast that wants for discourse of reason."[76] Wilson's reading admits no improvement of Caliban – not even the potentiality: even when he has been taught how to speak, his development can progress no further: 'He has attained to all the maturity his nature admits of, and so is perfect as the study of a living creature distinct from, yet next in order below the level of humanity'.[77] It seems that the aspect which holds back any further progress is Caliban's lack of reason.

In contrast, Renan's reimagining of Caliban, written 5 years later, charts the character's progress as he develops the ability to employ reason – indeed, we see this development unfold over the course of the play. In the opening, the stage directions describe Caliban as an uncouth, drunken man: 'Caliban, drunk, splayed out on the floor, writhing around in a pool of wine which is pouring from a casket he has prised open and has forgotten to close' (p. 41). He seems only to want to drink wine. Ariel even asks why Caliban wants freedom; he needs nothing more than a casket of wine. It seems, at this stage, that Caliban is incapable of being a productive citizen when left to his own devices, and without Prospero's government. And yet, he is undergoing a transformation of the mind (thanks to his acquisition of the language of his master). Ariel

[74] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 279.
[75] Daniel Wilson, *Caliban*: *The Missing Link* (London: Macmillan, 1873).
[76] Wilson, p. 78.
[77] Wilson, p. 78.

reminds Caliban that this transformation has been ongoing, and that he has recently reached a new stage in his development: 'Little by little, thanks to language and reason, your deformed traits took on some harmony; your webbed fingers have separated themselves one from the other, and from a fetid fish, you have become a man' (p. 43).

Caliban, for Renan, isn't a missing link in the evolution of amphibian to human: we witness his evolution (and this first stage, becoming a man, is the start of his evolution *as* a man). The acquisition of the coloniser's language was the first stage in this evolution. For Renan, by teaching Caliban how to speak (French), Prospero endowed him with the ability to reason. He planted the seeds, and they have taken root in the Caliban we encounter at the start of Renan's play. But the fruits of Prospero's labour could never have been observed in the setting of Shakespeare's play. Caliban is initially at a loss as to what to do in the city (except drinking): 'I became useless; here there was no more need to search for sources at the foot of rocks, to pick berries from the trees, to find young birds' (p. 41), but he feels that his mind is developing: 'I used to have no thoughts; but in this plain of Lombardy my ideas are well-developed' (p. 41). Caliban is surprised at his own development, and with the lucidity which has come with the ability to speak (and thus to think). In his preface, Renan describes Caliban as 'a misshapen creature, *almost* incapable of refinement, yet gradually *developing* into manhood' (p. 39). This suggests that he conceived of *his* Caliban as evolutionarily beyond Shakespeare's; he wrote a sequel in order to demonstrate the development that he had imagined for Caliban. Indeed, Smith notes that Renan wrote in the first version: 'one wanted to show here that which Shakespeare didn't admit; that Caliban is likely to make progress', suggesting that this reframing of Caliban also reflected a development in Renan's own developing views about the role of 'the people' in society: 'not only Shakespeare, but Renan himself a few years earlier would have thought this

impossible'.[78] Gouhier notes that Renan wrote in the margins of the first manuscript: 'if you want to applaud someone, applaud Shakespeare, who created Caliban, Ariel and Prospero.' He didn't wish to take credit for the creation of these characters, but he did want to emphasise that his sequel offers Caliban a more fitting ending than the one that Shakespeare had given him; the title written on the manuscript of the first edition was 'the rehabilitation of Caliban'.[79]

Even in the first scene, we observe Caliban's developing sophistication. Through his new powers of reasoning, Caliban reflects on his current position in the social hierarchy, which he is coming to consider unjust: 'I have a right to it, to this liberty! (p. 41). He wonders how he allowed himself to be subjugated by Prospero in a way that so directly contradicts the inalienable rights of man: 'how did Prospero allow himself to stop me from belonging to myself? (p. 41). He reflects that 'no mortal has the right to *subalternise* another' (p. 42; my emphasis). Here, Renan uses the verb 'subalterniser', a fairly uncommon word in French at that time (indeed, his usage is cited by *cnrtl* as one of the first). The first documented usage of the word was in 1846 by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the socialist author whose first work declared that 'property is theft' and inspired Karl Marx. In his essay *The System of Economic Contradictions, or The Philosophy of Poverty,* Proudhon wrote about how division of labour leads to 'no progress, no wealth, no equality, [and] *subalternises* the worker'.[80]

Caliban then goes on to reflect that his 'pride of being' urges him to resist his imposed servitude' (p. 41), and that 'revolt is a most righteous duty' (p. 42). There appears to be an implicit suggestion here that, once a person is able to use Reason, they will come to the

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[78] Smith, 'Introduction', p. 20n.
[79] Gouhier, p. 125.
[80] Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, *Système Des Contradictions Économiques, Ou, Philosophie De La Misère* (France: Guillaumin Et Cie, 1846), p. 107.

Rousseauian conclusion that liberty – in the sense of belonging to oneself – is a right of humanity. As Rousseau stated, in *The Social Contract*: 'to renounce one's liberty is to renounce one's quality as a human being, the rights of humanity, and even its duties'.[81] In this reading, the French language is, as Diderot claimed, the language of Reason, but also the language of Enlightenment. Through French, one can learn about revolution, and the right to be free. As Janet Horne argues:

> The language of aspiring elites, the centralizing state, and the law, French was also a critical language of the Enlightenment, the *Encyclopédie*, and the French Revolution, carrying well beyond the borders of France a subversive message of reason, individual freedoms, and the will to end arbitrary forms of oppression.[82]

The next stage in Caliban's development, as imagined by Renan, takes place when he is with others, outside of Prospero's wine cellar. Keith Gore observes that, for Renan, it is impossible for man to progress alone; it can only happen *within* a society.[83] In Renan's reimagining, Caliban's journey from the island of Shakespeare's play is an important stage in his evolution as a man: it is only once he is in mainland Europe that Caliban really develops a sense of what he is entitled to as a man: 'Here in Milan, I find myself more and more elevated to the dignity of a citizen' (p. 58). Caliban, now he has been endowed with the ability to reason, comes to the realisation that he has been deprived of one of the most fundamental of all human rights: 'I have a right to it: to this liberty! Formerly, I would never have thought of it; but, in this plain of Lombardy, my ideas have really developed!' (p. 41). For Renan, the first step in Caliban's evolution – and subsequent emancipation – is his linguistic education. Then, armed with this ability to reason, Caliban

[81] *The Essential Writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, ed. by Leo Damrosch and trans. by Peter Constantine (London: Vintage, 2013), p. 98.
[82] Horne, p. 99.
[83] Gore, *L'idée de progrès*, p. 192.

observes other men enjoying the privileges which are denied to him. At a gathering of nobles, one of the nobles, Ruggiero, warns the others that they can no longer regard Caliban as a 'monster' now he has left 'the island of magic'; 'the great school of the popular rabble, which calls itself Milan, has quite reformed him' (p. 25). This observation is dripping with disdain. Ruggiero is scathing about Caliban's transformation; he has been 'civilised' by association with the drunk, uncouth rabble: 'they civilize the monsters upon right good methods nowadays' (p. 25). In Milan, albeit in Prospero's wine cellar, Caliban has started to ruminate on the nature of human rights, but it is also through observation (of Ruggiero and the other nobles) that he concludes that he has a right to be free.

He is still an outsider, but, hidden behind a thicket, Caliban watches the nobles mingling at the fete, and reflects that he would rather not attend: 'Were I in their place, I would prefer to pass the time lying stretched out in a fresh cellar near an open wine cask' (p. 35). But does it occur to him that deciding whether or not to attend should be his choice: 'Is it just, however, that I am not among them? All men have the same rights and since it is a privilege it must also be an advantage' (p. 35). Renan wrote extensively on the origins and development of language, studying 'primitive' languages as 'embryonic' stages of his own in *De l'origine du langage* (1864) | *The Origin of Language*.[84] Caliban's claims of his right to freedom become progressively more analytical: it isn't simply an emotional response, but instead, a logical conclusion which he arrives at through a process of reasoning. As Renan argues in *The Origin of Language*, 'the march of language towards analysis corresponds to the march of the human spirit towards a clearer and clearer reflection'.[85] This is reflected in his conception of Caliban's linguistic 'evolution'. In their conversation at the start of the play, Ariel derides Caliban's mother tongue: 'your inarticulate

[84] Ernest Renan, *De l'origine du langage* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1864).
[85] Ernest Renan, *De l'origine du langage*, p. 11.

babbling seemed like the bleating of a bad-tempered camel. The sounds strangled themselves in your throat; were like an aborted effort to vomit' (p. 43). This recalls the way that Shakespeare's Miranda's describes Caliban's language when they first met him – 'wouldst gabble like |A thing most brutish' (I. 2. 355-6). It also reflects Renan's belief that, in acquiring the European language of the colonisers, Caliban has evolved, both linguistically and mentally. For Renan, the 'superior' grammatical structures of the Aryan language allowed for clearer analytical expression, and so conferred a natural superiority on those who spoke it. Renan was undoubtedly familiar with the work of Arthur de Gobineau, whose most famous work 'Essay on the inequality of human races' (1855) was an attempt at biological classification.[86] Critics such as George Mosse and Léon Poliakov argue that Renan, 'while disavowing Gobineau's biological ethnography, practised a kind of 'cultural-linguistic determinism' which must feature in any historiography of European racism.'[87] Tzvetan Todorov notes that Renan regarded the 'Aryan' language as 'highly superior' and a 'marvellous instrument'; he describes the Arabs as an inferior race since 'even today, [they] are still struggling against the linguistic error committed by their ancestors ten or fifteen thousand years ago'.[88]

As Paul Lawrence Rose observes, since Renan's brand of determinism was linguistic and cultural, rather than specifically biological, this meant that his notions of nationhood encompassed all races:

[86] Arthur comte de Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Paris : Librairie de Firmin Didot, 1855).
[87] Priest, 'Renan's Race Problem', p. 313. Priest cites George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1978) and Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A history of racist and nationalist ideas in Europe* trans. by Edmund Howard (London: Chatto and Windus; Heinemann, for Sussex University Press, 1974).
[88] Cited by Tzvetan Todorov, *On Human Diversity: Nationalism, Racism and Exoticism in French thought*, trans. by Catherine Porter (London: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 147.

> A universal integrationist vision of 'race' underpinned his celebrated lecture of 1882, *What is a Nation?* in which Renan insisted that his cultural, historical, linguistic definition of race negated any biological definition. The culture of the 'French race' was open to all those who participate willingly in it, regardless of whatever biological race they may be.[89]

For Renan, Caliban's acquisition of Prospero's language comes to negate his race. While he may have conceived of Caliban initially as an emancipated slave, Renan sees his sequel as taking Caliban on a journey to becoming a French man, above all else. Race, for Renan, is not an important aspect of *his* version of Caliban; once he has learnt the language, he therefore becomes a French man, whose race is no longer a determining factor. Through Prospero's language, Caliban is transformed from an indigenous slave into a French man, who then becomes a leader of revolutionaries.

In his sequel, Renan portrays Caliban as becoming progressively more 'civilised'. By the end of the play, he is no longer merely a drunkard who lolls around and curses; he is an eloquent man who understands and celebrates the power and beauty of the Arts. Earlier in the play, another of the nobles, Bonnacorso, warns against the sort of views espoused by some of the ruling elite – that the 'masses' can never be 'improved'. He observes: 'you should never say "this creature was ugly and so will always be ugly"' (p. 78). In the original manuscript, the chorus also add: 'well combed, well washed […] Caliban will become very presentable'.[90] During the fete attended by all the nobility of Milan, there is a long description of the transformation which a caterpillar undergoes:

[89] Paul Lawrence Rose, 'Renan versus Gobineau: Semitism and Antisemitism, Ancient Races and Modern Liberal Nations', *History of European Ideas*, 39.4 (2013), 528-540 (p. 535).
[90] Smith, p. 90.

> A creature little gifted in appearance, hardly rich in life and in conscience, condemned, you would say, to represent in nature only the pale and ugly existence, to procreate and to fill one of the spaces on the infinite ladder, awakens all of a sudden. The heavy and crawling insect becomes winged, ideal; his life is aerian. Being of the earth, petri dish of gross humours, he becomes host of the sky and son of the day (p. 51).

I suggest that, in Renan's view, Caliban is the caterpillar; the once-ugly creature who transforms into something more beautiful: 'He blossoms in his own time, rejecting his heavy robe of mud' (p. 51). Mud is a recurring image throughout Renan's sequel. It symbolises the mire in which many of the common people live. The nobles discuss their fear of the sort of social changes that might be on the way: '[we will see] creatures such as have never been seen before coming from the mud' (p. 49). It is directly after this fete that Caliban (initially seen as a monster by the nobles) rises and develops into something which is – at least in Renan's conception – more beautiful and noble.

Governance, electioneering and revolutions

In his sequel, Renan charts Caliban's transformation: from creature, to reasoning man, to man of the people, to revolutionary leader. The sequel picks up on one of the most important threads in Shakespeare's text: when faced with a potentially new space – an 'uninhabited' island (or, for Renan, a city in the throes of a class revolution) – characters wonder: how best to rule? At the fete, the nobles and bourgeoisie of Milan discuss how a country should be ruled. Certain nobles believe that social inequality – the sort of undeniable inequality which Renan often wrote about in his own diaries and letters – will eventually lead the people to want to rise up against the ruling classes. Others suggest that the likes of Prospero – a noble and an intellectual – should continue

to rule with no thought for those less well off: 'The Duke is a savant, a philosopher; those people should remain there in their hell-hole' (p. 48). There is some concern that, if rulers such as Prospero should take the time to impart their wisdom to the masses, the masses will inevitably show ingratitude and still rise up against their educators. To avoid this, some nobles maintain that the role of politics – and the job of politicians – is to divide the people between themselves; to stop them from gathering together. The best way to do this is to deprive a significant section of the population of education: 'the only way to govern is to maintain a huge reservoir of ignorance and stupidity' (p. 54).

All the while they are mingling at the fete, and discussing how best to maintain their rule, the nobles of Milan are uneasy. They sense that a storm is brewing. One noble, Orlando, shares his fears: 'I fear that we will see *la révolution du mépris*' (p. 48). In his edition, Colin Smith notes that these words are a direct allusion to the 1848 uprising: the same words 'were used by Lamartine, at a "Reform" banquet at Macon, when speaking of the coming revolution of 1848.'[91] Trinculo, a figure consigned to the margins of the fete, calls it the 'soirée of the end of the world!' (p. 36). Trinculo is not aware that Caliban is at the fete – hiding behind the bushes – but Caliban is certainly on Trinculo's mind. Trinculo muses that, in this shifting political climate, even the former slave from the island might transform into something unrecognisable: 'From the trend of everything here to-night I believe that Caliban himself would be a philosopher' (p. 36).

In fact, the audience (or, rather, the reader) has already seen Caliban's development into a philosopher; he has been reflecting on the rights of man, and his exclusion from the privilege he witnesses at the fete. And it is ultimately Trinculo's treatment of Caliban which finally pushes

[91] Smith, p 101.

him to fight against the entrenched inequality he has become aware of. Caliban has been observing the nobles at the fete, but is discovered hiding by Trinculo. His treatment of Caliban is a direct allusion to *The Tempest.* When he first encounters Caliban on the island, Shakespeare's Trinculo reflects that he could make a profit from parading him: 'Were I in England now, as once I was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver.' (II. 2. 27-29). Renan's Trinculo actually does this: 'Eh! My friend the bear, now is the time to show yourself to the assembled company' (p. 59). Throwing a cord around Caliban's neck, he forces him to parade around in front of the company while being hit with the clown's rattle: 'Here, gentlemen, see the beast, look' (p. 59). This amuses some of the nobles; others are concerned. Bevilacqua, who had previously talked of the transformation made by caterpillars into butterflies, warns Trinculo against such actions: 'That's not prudent. Nowadays, Caliban might have a future' (p. 59). Bevilacqua's words suggest that, previously, someone like Caliban would have no real future to speak of. But now, society has moved on, and continues to change.

Caliban's rise to power in *Caliban* is a dramatisation of the power of the crowd (or, perhaps, the mob). In the opening scene of Renan's sequel, Caliban begins musing on the nature of societal inequality – 'isn't the first crime of princes to humiliate the people through their privileges?' (p. 41) – and seems to recognise what might be the outcome of such sustained deprivation and exploitation: 'Such an outrage will only wash itself in blood' (p. 42). There is already a revolutionary undertone to his thoughts. In the scene following the fete, and fresh from his humiliation in front of all the nobles, Caliban finds himself in another gathering; this time, 'a crowd'. They are brimming with resentment, describing their leaders as a class who 'fatten themselves with the people's sweat' (p. 62). Caliban, who has been reflecting on such inequalities since arriving in Milan, begins to emerge as a leader in this environment: 'it is sure we are being exploited' (p. 62), he observes, 'but whose fault is it?' (p. 63). Shakespeare's Caliban is a

revolutionary; he attempts to lead Trinculo and Stephano in an overthrow of Prospero. In Renan's sequel, Caliban becomes the leader of revolution on a much larger scale (the attempted revolution by Shakespeare's Caliban was short-lived and fruitless). In France, Shakespeare's status as a demotic genius was by now well-established. Renan's response to *The Tempest* highlights the disruptive potential of Caliban's revolutionary tendencies, as well as the power of 'the people', as witnessed in plays such as *Coriolanus* (which Renan cites in his 1888 preface to *Caliban* as another Shakespeare play that he most admires – for its exploration of universal psychology).[92]

This mobilisation makes clear the potential of the people to disrupt existing power dynamics; it also seems to be an allusion to the 1871 Commune. Once he has mobilised 'the people', they then march onto the stage arranged by profession: 'A long procession of a body of tradesmen [*corps de métiers*], preceded by their banners, each carrying a petition' (p. 44). Although, as I noted earlier, the historiography of the Paris Commune is complex, historians agree that one of the defining aspects of the movement was the mobilisation of people according to their profession: 'the militant workers were not the industrial proletariat, but artisanal workers forming unions', Gould notes.[93]

Caliban, this newly emerging man of the people, circulates around the crowd, who call for the overthrow of Prospero – le fainéant (the 'do-nothing') (p. 41).[94] The 'people' are at first slightly unsure about Caliban as a leader – 'He is ugly, but how well he reasons!' (p. 63) – and wonder where he has emerged from: 'what good sense this Caliban has! Where is he from? How clearly

[92] Renan, *Drames philosophiques*, p. II.
[93] Gould, p. 722.
[94] This is an allusion to *le roi fainéant* ('do-nothing' King), a nickname given to Louis V because of his ineffective rule.

he speaks! He loves the people' (p. 65). Once he has stoked their latent anger, and gained the attention of the crowd, Caliban begins his revolutionary speech. He warns the people not to underestimate Prospero because he has powerful spirits, 'as maleficent as him', in his service. Caliban portrays himself as the ideal revolutionary leader; as somebody who knows the corridors of power (he has actually lived in the palace), he is best placed to seize power. But more important than his knowledge of Prospero's lodgings, Caliban claims that he is most suited as the leader of the revolution since he is one of them: 'From you, we are of you, we are for you' (p. 67). Smith wonders if this might be Renan 'laughing at his own former electioneering': Renan's own manifesto of 1869 claims: 'from the popular class, I know their needs. I don't belong to any party; I only seek the progress of France and of the human spirit.'[95] This approach of Renan's – aligning himself with the 'popular class' to present himself as best placed to rule them – was common in the 1870s. E. S. Mason notes: 'at the end of March 1871, the Central Committee of the National Guard advocated on posters and its *Journal Officiel,* the choice of leaders from the working class, living the life and enduring the hardships of that class'.[96] Renan's Caliban has evolved *beyond* race by acquiring the language of the coloniser, and thus becoming entirely French; he is now defined by his class, and this becomes his power. Renan's positioning of the leader Caliban betrays his own internal tension between being 'of the people' and yet at the same time being distanced from them as an 'intellectual'.

Caliban promises to put the needs of the people above any other consideration: 'The sole preoccupation of the government will be the good of the people' (p. 67). The crowd discuss how they might organise their new society once they rid themselves of the leaders, raising many pertinent questions about the very nature of government. How will society be run? Should

[95] Smith, p. 101.
[96] Edward S. Mason, *The Paris Commune an Episode in the History of the Socialist Movement* (New York: Macmillan, 1930), p. 155.

everyone be equal? Does freedom naturally lead to equality for all? Who will look after those who are born with less? Who will look after the poor? If there are no taxes, then how will any kind of state support be funded? Who will rein in those who are naturally strong? They conclude that the new society will be led by: 'The people, under the name of fraternity'; another revolutionary declares: 'Fraternity, or death' (p. 66). Smith notes that the Jacobin Club of the first Revolution had proclaimed: 'Liberté, égalité, fraternité, ou la mort'.[97] Caliban's crowd decide that, since things aren't going well for them, and since the government is in charge of everything, then it is the government who is to blame, and the government who must be punished. Ultimately, they conclude that there should be no government. That said, it is clearly Caliban who emerges as the leader: 'Long live, Caliban! Caliban, leader of the people' (p. 63), they shout. 'Each revolution produces its great man. The great man of this one is Caliban, *le grand citoyen* Caliban' (p. 64).

And so, the former slave has now become a revolutionary leader. It falls to the trusted adviser, Gonzalo, to break the news to Prospero that his 'brute' has led a successful revolution: 'Monseigneur, your Milan is lost. Revolt is everywhere. Caliban is the leader of the people' (p. 70). In describing this newly formed revolutionary group – with Caliban at the helm – Gonzalo draws on the metaphor of the body politic: 'the city is presenting all the symptoms of an ill body. She has a fever. The *chefs du quartier* call the people to arms; we can hear most seditious words being spoken' (p. 61). Prospero, at first, seems unable to countenance such an event: 'Caliban! Ah! I had no idea that human affairs were already so base. I understand, Caliban succeeds me. O, Dukes of Milan, my ancestors, the farce is complete' (p. 70). Prospero comes to realise that he had gravely underestimated the potential of his former slave. Gonzalo is better able to explain what has happened: 'Caliban is the people' (p. 78). Since Renan was so influenced by the work of

[97] Smith, p. 101.

Jules Michelet and his re-framing of historiographical narratives – privileging the common folk rather than rulers – it seems fitting that, in this re-imagining of the play, Prospero's successor rises from the crowd; he has become a symbol of the people (and as Michelet said, 'genius is rooted in the people').[98]

Caliban: protector of property; patron of the Arts

Inspired by Michelet's ideas about history, and by his own belief in the superiority of the French language, Renan has transformed Caliban into a successful revolutionary leader who does not intend to murder Prospero, but simply to replace him. But the final stage in his transformation is that he, in fact, becomes a moderate leader. This trajectory of Caliban makes him more acceptable to Renan; Caliban's re-framing demonstrates Renan's own lifelong respect for, and mistrust of, the 'people'. Although he portrays himself in the revolution scene as a man of the people, it is striking how quickly Caliban becomes distanced from the masses once he is established in power. Having been carried to the palace on the revolutionary waves (he is literally carried there on the shoulders of the crowd), Caliban quickly implores the crowd to return home calmly, and without resorting to violence: 'crown your victory with moderation and respect for propriety. Long live Milan!' (p. 67). In the following scene, Caliban has literally usurped Prospero's space – the stage directions describe him lying in Prospero's bedroom. Caliban then reflects on the revolution he has just led. He hadn't realised that the revolution would be over so quickly, or that he would transform so quickly once in power: 'in the trip from the communal place to the palace, I've changed more than I have in my entire life' (p. 68). Only 10 hours ago, he had started the revolution, he muses, and was then carried to Prospero's palace by the people. It seems that his new vantage point gives him a different perspective on his former master; as

[98] Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple* (Paris: Hachette, 1846), p. 241.

soon as he is in Prospero's position, Caliban regards him not as an ousted master, but as a brother.

Once in Prospero's place, established in power, he begins to regard the crowd – those who brought him to the seat of power – as somewhat of a nuisance. He laments 'the inopportune impatience of the people' (p. 68), who ask for too much (by this point, they have presented him with their petitions and demands). He proclaims that, now established in power, he won't allow himself to be dragged down, by the people below him, into the abyss: 'A government must resist. I will resist' (p. 69). Smith argues that this is an allusion to the governance of Louis-Philippe and Guizot, who sought to follow the 'la politique de resistance' against popular demands.[99] Once established in Prospero's former palace, Caliban sees that he has common interests with 'established people'. He comes to the realisation that property is the anchor of society, and that property owners must be protected: 'Property is the ballast of society; I feel a great deal of sympathy for property owners' (p. 69). Perhaps this recalls his earlier allusion to the words of Proudhon – who declared that property is theft – and signals that Renan found it more palatable to transform Caliban into a leader who is moving away from dangerous Proudhonian proclivities.

Renan is here transforming Caliban into what he might consider to be the ideal leader. Caliban wants to protect Capital and related interests but, crucially, he also wants to protect the Arts. Before becoming the leader of the people, Caliban was insistent on the need to destroy Prospero's books – the instruments of his domination. He urges the crowd to seize the books,

[99] Smith, p. 101.

which he considers to be the instruments of Prospero's power. Renan's Caliban recognises the power of books – as well as language – and their potential:

> The most important thing is to get our hands first on his books. His hellish books! I hate them; they were the instrument of my slavery. We must seize them; burn them. Someone else could make use of them if we don't. War to books! They are the worst enemy of the people. Those who possess have power over their brothers. The man who knows Latin can command other men. Down with Latin! (p. 64)

This mistrust of books does not last. Even before the revolution, one of the nobles had already predicted that Caliban's vehement hatred of books would dissipate once he had access to them: 'He will forgo his hatred of books as soon as books are something he has vanquished. He will hardly think of them any more as soon as he no longer sees them in the hands of his masters as instruments of domination' (p. 78). In fact, once ensconced in Prospero's palace, Caliban the leader comes to the realisation that for a society to flourish as he wishes it to, he must protect the rights of artists: 'parties, beaux arts, palaces, courts – these are the ornaments of life. I will favour artists. I will give glory to men of letters, not neglect them' (p. 69). This move towards a Saint Simonian belief in the importance of the Arts, is the final stage in Renan's transformation of Caliban.

Prospero

Science, Reason and Religion

I have argued that Renan wrote a sequel in order to show the development of Caliban (to explore the potential which, he claims, Shakespeare never did), and that this transformation

could only have taken place away from the island and within 'civilised' society. The location of Prospero's palace is also symbolic. The opening stage directions describe the setting of the play: the Monastery of Pavia (also called the Certosa). Shakespeare's Prospero is usurped because he spent too much time shut away, pursuing his private intellectual passions, and ignoring the people he governed. Renan's Prospero is similarly isolated, even when he returns to Milan from the island. As Smith notes, 'The Certosa of Pavia was founded by Giangaleazzo, the most gifted of the Visconti […]. Giangaleazzo, like Prospero, lived for some time in seclusion, "dedicated to the closeness, and the bettering of his mind"'.[100] I suggest that Prospero's seclusion, for Renan, is not a sign that he is a poor ruler. Instead, his dedication to his studies is one of his most admirable qualities. Priest argues that many critics, and detractors, of Renan's *Life of Jesus* misunderstood his work as being anti-religious. Although Jesus is presented as a man (and not the son of God), he is a man who dedicated his life to embodying 'Gospel morality, chafing against humanity's limits to achieve a superior ideal.' Priest encapsulates this striving with the phrase 'Transcendent Disdain' – a turning away from the material world, and inward, towards a 'space of intellectual and spiritual freedom […]. In essence, it meant holding the material world in contempt and turning away from the petty questions of politics and statecraft'.[101] Renan's Prospero is something of an idealised figure – rather than simply neglecting his subjects, he is pursuing this 'Transcendent Disdain', and dedicates his life to the pursual of the ideal. While shut away from more worldly concerns in the Monastery of Pavia, Renan's Prospero dedicates his life to the pursuit of science. This solitary endeavour, while laudable, means that Prospero's magic remains unseen, and unknowable, by the people. This reflects Renan's belief that knowledge must be shared. Annie Petit argues that, for Renan, science could no longer be a solitary

[100] Smith, notes, p. 91.
[101] Priest, 'Transcendent Disdain', p. 771.

endeavour, done 'in salons or cabinets of curiosity'; he advocates a collective organisation and mobilisation of forces'.[102]

In Renan's portrayal, the stage directions describe Prospero in a laboratory, surrounded by alembics (a flask used in the distillation process, which fascinated Renan – he wrote a treatise on Arabic chemistry, in which he describes the marvel of distillation).[103] Shakespeare's island is populated by spirits, under the control of Prospero. In his sequel, Renan takes these spirits and makes them scientific: he reimagines the spirits of the island, transmuting them into spirits – or, rather, gasses – from the air. In his laboratory, Prospero declares that he wants to be the master of the spirits of nature, and to 'give them their own distinct personas' (p. 46). This process of distillation is how Ariel was called into being. She describes her fellow spirits as 'forces lost in nature; beings that we only see in their pure form if science extracts them' (p. 46).

In his portrayal of Ariel, Renan translates the imagery of entrapment to a more explicitly scientific context. Ariel regards the gasses (which she describes as 'nature's sublime creations' (p. 47)) trapped in Prospero's alembics as her brothers. The alembics are a kind of glass prison. Shakespeare's Ariel is also associated with confinement (in the pinecone). In Renan's portrayal of Ariel, the witch's magic is entirely occluded. Ariel was created – called into being – by Prospero's chimic art, as the scientist reminds her: 'You felt it yourself, before I extracted you from the great universal mixture in which you were lost; calling you, concentrating, massing into a diaphanous core all that you were before' (p. 46). From a diffuse cloud, Prospero massed Ariel into a gauzy, diaphanous kernel of being. Prospero refers to gasses as 'all that wishes to exist, but doesn't yet

[102] Annie Petit, 'Enseignement scientifique et culture selon Ernest Renan', *Revue d'histoire des sciences*, 44.1 (1991), 23-60 (p. 29).
[103] Renan, *Islamisme Et La Science, Conférence à la Sorbonne* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1883).

exist' (p. 47). This suggests that the gasses *desire* to be brought into a more substantial form of being. Prospero's distillation process is therefore a celebration of potentiality and the possibility of transformation. Prospero's work is celebrated by one of the nobles, Lionardo; he describes Prospero as a sage who 'aspires to possess the forces of nature'; as such, he is 'the greatest of us all' (p. 58).

Renan also translates Prospero's performative art in the context of ongoing scientific developments. Considering Prospero as a kind of 'scientist' is not a new concept. Donald Carlson suggests that Shakespeare may have considered this (though the definition of 'science' has transformed over time, and in the early seventeenth century, the distinction between magic and science was not as distinct). Carlson describes Prospero as a 'Renaissance Neo-Platonic Magus'.[104] He also notes the influence of John Dee (scientific advisor to Queen Elizabeth). Carlson argues that magic, or thaumaturgy (to borrow Dee's term) 'is the precursor and companion to the development of early science'.[105] Brian Woolley argues that practitioners such as Dee should not be considered as antithetical to science, but rather integral to the development of the discipline: 'Natural magic as practised by Dee did not forestall the coming scientific revolution, but enabled it'.[106] He argues that Dee's – and therefore Prospero's – natural magic is the ability to harness the power of technology:

> At the heart of Dee's science lay what has come to be called "natural" (as opposed to supernatural) magic. When God created the universe, in an act that Dee accepted to be beyond scientific understanding, He let loose a divine force that causes the planets to turn, the sun to rise, the Moon to wax and wane. The better our understanding of the

[104] Donald Carlson, '"Tis New to Thee": Power, Magic, and Early Science in Shakespeare's *The Tempest', Ben Jonson Journal,* 22.1 (2015), 1-22 (p. 8).
[105] Carlson, p. 5.
[106] Brian Woolley, *The Queen's Conjuror: The Science and Magic of Dr John Dee, Adviser to Queen Elizabeth I* (New York: Henry Holt, 2001), p. 295.

> way it drives the universe, the more powerful the magic becomes. In other words, magic is technology.[107]

The marrying of magic, nature and illusion is a central concern of *The Tempest*. Magic could be described as the harnessing of natural forces in order to create illusions, and this is one of the manifestations of Prospero's 'potent art' on the island; he boasts that he has 'bedimm'd | The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds, | And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault | Set roaring war' (V. 1. 41-44). Illusion is, of course, very much part of theatrical performance. In terms of the mechanics of theatre, *The Tempest* was a particularly technological play, written in part to demonstrate the new technological advances of the Blackfriars Theatre. As I observed earlier, Renan also intended for his sequel to explore the potential of theatre, but it was never staged. Carlson argues persuasively that magic is bound up with the technology of the theatrical display:

> the application of mathematical and mechanical arts realized in theatrical illusions and thus used to great effect in the public theatres put power into the hands of dramatists such as Shakespeare, the power to move audiences […] also placed in those hands the equally tangible power to influence the hearts and minds of audiences […] The attraction that this power exercises on impressionable human minds is strong. [108]

On the island, Prospero employs theatrical (magical) illusions in order to influence the minds of those on the island who bear witness to his Art.

[107] Woolley, pp. 50-51.
[108] Carlson, p. 7.

By the time that Renan writes his sequel to *The Tempest,* scientific advancement has created a clearer distinction between science and magic. In this more industrial age, Renan resituates the tale in an urban centre, industrialises its magic, and refigures Prospero not as a mage, but as a chemist. His new domain combines elements of science and the fantastic: his bedchambers are described as having a deep blue ceiling (perhaps an allusion to the 'azured vault' to which Shakespeare's Prospero refers), decorated with 'colossal signs of the zodiac', from which is suspended a lamp – 'the opaline shards of light from the lamp' illuminate the image of 'a battle between a griffon and a wyvern' (p. 68). Here, the symbols of astronomy are intermingled with fantastical creatures. Similarly, his masque fuses old gods with those of a new age of automation and steel. As Shakespeare's Prospero creates a masque to demonstrate the prowess of his magical art, so Renan's Prospero conjures a masque to demonstrate his power, and to warn of the potential dangers of his own scientific endeavours. Once all the nobles are gathered at the soirée, Prospero calls on Ariel to begin their display of power: 'And now, my Ariel, show what illusions of the eye I can present' (p. 59). Smith notes that, in the first manuscript version, Prospero asks Ariel to 'show them what illusions of the eye *you* can present'; in the second iteration, Renan evidently decided to give more power to Prospero.[109]

Prospero's guests are treated to a magnificent spectacle of a procession of gods; the stage directions describe 'a vast aurora borealis [that] leaves the zenith, followed by a prodigious heap of gods, genies, nymphs, demi-gods, who rise and descend through rays of light' (p. 59). First to arrive are 'the ancient gods, the entire nature of a luminous Olympus, the gods of flesh who think and feel as we do' (p. 59). These gods arrange themselves around a 'festin' [banquet]. We also see the 'innumerable heads of a crowd of mortals' (p. 60) who are watching this feast of the gods. Soon after the ancient gods begin their feast, the 'gods of the future' arrive; they are made

[109] Smith, p. 100.

of polished steel, and have joints which move thanks to 'powerful eccentric articulations. On each joint, a jar of oil which lubricates this articulation is arranged in such a way that it will never tip over' (p. 60). There seems to be an admiration of the new mechanical ingenuity here – the calculated placement of the oil jar – but there is clearly an underlying anxiety about these finely oiled machines. Cold steel has replaced flesh. These new gods are engineered in such a way that the metaphorical division between body and soul has become literal: 'Underneath the gods, an incandescent tube which is their soul' (p. 60). The soul, that intangible aspect of humanity which has long between metaphorically associated with light, has now been modernised; it has been transmuted into an electric light, a cold, industrial – albeit ingenious – replacement. These gods of polished steel begin to smash everything that they find on the table of the gods of flesh. The machines have no need of food; they do not feast with the human-like gods. They are alien in this sense, and they replace – literally overturn – the social *festin* of the past with metal and fire. While the ancient gods of flesh were often pictured feasting, these replacement gods are fuelled only by the materials of the industrial revolution: 'They seem to be eating coal' (p. 60).

Chaos then ensues: 'Terrible disorder. The nymphs, dryads, indeed all of enchanted nature, flee, lost' (p. 60). The crowd of mortals are still looking on; they hope that these gods of the future will prove to be benevolent rulers. But then the gods turn to fighting among themselves, and the harmonious music is replaced; now 'the world is full of a hideous crunching of metal' (p. 61). The feast ends in chaos: 'A great burst of laughter. A cold gust of wind. Shadows, chaos. Diasrymos (the personification of derision) armed with a discordant violin, is the only survivor and plays, while the apparition dissipates, a morceau of a grotesque rhythm' (p. 61) – perhaps an allusion to the discordant noise which irrupts into Prospero's masque in *The Tempest*, the moment he remembers that Caliban is still attempting his overthrow. The mortals are bitterly disappointed: 'We thought that science was peace, and that the day when heaven no longer had

any gods, nor the earth any kings, we would no longer fight' (p. 61). The mortals have placed their faith in the new gods (though, really, they had no choice; this regime change was not *chosen* by them – they are mere witnesses), but then come to realise that this post-religious world is still not harmonious. Renan's rewriting of Prospero's masque seems to stage an anxiety about industrialisation. Science, while marvellous and awesome in its possibilities, also has the potential to destroy all of the gods. In its staging of the diminishing of the power of the gods, this masque seems to have Nietzschean undertones. It is also a dramatisation of Renan's own ambivalence about the tension between scientific advancement and religious faith.

Positivism and the diminishing of Prospero's power

At the end of *The Tempest,* Prospero decides to renounce all of his magical power – his most potent art. He promises to break his staff and to drown his books (all of which are tangible instruments of his magic). Without these outward utensils of magic, his Art will lose its potency. In contrast, Renan's Prospero does not willingly relinquish his power – he simply loses the ability to move people with his Art. While his masque fascinates and enthrals the nobles at the party, Prospero comes to realise that his illusions no longer hold any sway over the multitudes.

Once Caliban has led a successful revolution, and is safely established in Prospero's chambers, the loyal and trusted advisor Gonzalo goes to break this news to Prospero. Prospero then attempts to regain control of the populace. He leaves his private chambers, 'once again wearing his magic robe' (p. 70), and summons Ariel once again; after all, Prospero and the spirits under his control did once command such authority on the enchanted island. Prospero sends Ariel to regain power from Caliban; he asks her to assemble all of the spirits, and enjoins them to fight: 'go, spirits; maintain my superiority over an imbecile people. Destroy the brute who abuses not

so much my goodness as my oversight' (p. 71). Although Prospero is, in some ways, an idealised figure for Renan (for his single-minded pursuit of scientific truth), there is also a suggestion here that ruling 'elites' must take heed not to dismiss the people quite so easily. Prospero still regards Caliban as a 'brute' (although we have seen him becoming a moderate and effective leader), and describes the people as 'imbecile' (even if he may regard them as ill-educated, he should not make assumptions about how easy they will be to control). Prospero sends the spirits off with an exclamation: 'brisez l'infame' (p. 71). As Smith notes: 'Renan ironically makes Prospero use the Voltairean war-cry as he sends his spirits to subdue the populace by exploiting, as he hopes, those very superstitious fears which Voltaire had associated with 'l'infame''.[110] Richard Holmes describes the phrase '*Ecrasez l'infame*', to which Prospero's shout alludes, as Voltaire's fighting motto: 'a vivid but almost untranslatable rallying cry to the liberal conscience everywhere. One version would be: 'Crush bigotry and superstition (the infamous thing)'. Another, more spirited version, might run: "Make war on the Fanatics"'.[111]

From the very opening scene, Renan has foreshadowed the fact that the illusions of Prospero might not be nearly as potent now they are away from the island. As Caliban recognises, this is a society on the cusp of a significant realisation. In the opening scene, he warns Ariel that the religious fears which have long been used to maintain control of the populace will not hold sway over them for much longer: 'When the people realise that the superior classes ruled [maintained their power] by superstition, you will see what will become of their former masters. This hell with which they scared us never existed' (pp. 44-45). Ariel refutes this claim. He believes that Prospero is striving, through his scientific endeavour, for the betterment of humanity: '[Prospero] is searching for ways that reason might be armed and might then reign effectively' (p.

[110] Smith, p. 102.
[111] Richard Holmes, 'Voltaire's Grin', in Voltaire, *Candide*, ed. by Nicholas Cronk, 3rd edn (London: Norton, 2016), pp. 89-106 (p. 102).

45). Ariel will follow Prospero forever, she says, because she sees her master as pursuing an ideal and she is (for Renan) a servant to idealism. Caliban, though, is far more cynical about their master's source of power: 'you are religious, submissive; you accept your place as providential. Prospero reigned over us with false images. He tricked us, and nothing is more humiliating than to be tricked' (p. 44).

Caliban's warning to Ariel, that the masses will no longer be reigned over by false images, proves to be true. Ariel soon returns, vanquished: '*like a bird, which had travelled oceans; she becomes less and less visible and is shown battered, lost, covered in dust'* (p. 74). Shakespeare's Ariel tells his master of the magic he performed to create the tempest, to amaze and terrify the shipwrecked party:

> I flamed amazement. Sometimes I'd divide
> And burn in many places; on the topmast,
> The yards and bowsprit would I flame distinctly,
> Then meet and join. Jove's lightning, the precursors
> O' th' dreadful thunder-claps, more momentary
> And sight-outrunning were not (I. 2. 198-203).

In an echo of this, Renan's Ariel tells his master of the magic he performed for the people: 'astride the clouds, I blazed, stirred up the flames hidden in everything' (p. 74). But this was 'in vain'; Ariel observes: 'nothing responded' (p. 74). In *The Tempest,* Ariel's music is also a fundamental aspect of his magic.[112] But, in this new setting, Renan's Ariel realises that even his music no longer holds any sway: 'And then, my music wasn't even heard. I sang, and nobody heard me. It was as if I was doing it in a vacuum' (p. 74). Defeated, Ariel comes to the realisation that her powers – and the magic that she and Prospero were once able to wield on the enchanted island – can no longer hold sway over the people: 'O, master, our art is vanquished; it is powerless against the people' (p. 74). In diminishing the power of Prospero and Ariel, Renan

[112] See, for example, Michael Neill, '"Noises, | Sounds, and Sweet Airs": The Burden of Shakespeare's "Tempest"', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59.1 (2008), 36-59.

stages the movement towards a more Positivist approach to knowledge, and to religion, which was one of the effects of the Enlightenment.

Ariel suggests that their magic was able to touch the 'audience' on the island because they were receptive to it:

> It's because Alonso and his party were accessible to our charms. They submitted themselves to it, they believed in it. When Alonso saw the tempest, he thought that the waves spoke, that the winds scolded, that the tempest murmured, that the thunder, that terrible and profound organ, reproached him in a low voice about the crime he had committed against you (pp. 74-75).

Alonso's guilt at his actions made him more susceptible to Prospero's magic. But here, back in Milan, the illusions created by Prospero are no longer able to touch the people – they are no longer accessible to his potent art:

> There is surely something mysterious and profound in the people. It disturbs all of the phantasmagories. With the people, no more prestiges; the spirits which were so powerful against the fleet of Alonso can do nothing against the people (p. 74).

Prospero concludes that the people are impervious to the magic of Prospero and Ariel because they have been so profoundly shaped by Positivism: 'To be susceptible to our terrors, they must believe in them. When did it happen that the people become positivist?' (p. 75). In the Milan of Renan's sequel, there has been a literal revolution – Caliban, as a representative of the masses, has successfully seized control and wrested power from his former master. But, in Prospero's

eyes, there has been an even more profound revolution – a transformation in the way that people think: 'The magic no longer serves for anything. The revolution is realism. All that is appearance for the eyes, all that is ideal, non-substantial, doesn't exist for the people. They admit nothing but the real' (p. 75).

Positivism was a philosophical tradition, which was codified by Auguste Comte in *The Course in Positive Philosophy* (1830). In this work, he sets out a teleological view of human evolution. This happens in three stages – the Theological, or fictitious; the Metaphysical, or abstract; and the Scientific, or positive:

> The first supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings. [...] In the metaphysical state, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities (that is, personified abstractions) inherent in all beings, and capable of producing all phenomena.

In the final stage of this development of human consciousness, 'reason and observation, duly combined, are the means of knowledge'.[113] He set out what he considered the correct method of scientific enquiry; this was at odds with the religious beliefs that were necessarily based on speculation, rather than evidence. As Robert Scharff notes: 'Given Comte's historical preoccupation with the mind's struggle to replace theologico-metaphysical speculations with the observation-based theories, it stands to reason that he would be most illuminating about "the

[113] *Auguste Comte and Positivism: The Essential Writings*, ed. by Gertrud Lenzer (London: Transaction Publishers, 1998), pp. 71-72.

right way of searching for knowledge.'"[114] Owen Chadwick describes this movement away from unwavering religious belief to a more positivist approach as the 'secularization of the European mind' which has been ongoing since the Reformation.[115]

There seems to be a tension between the drawing together of the power of Nature (and thus God) expressed in Prospero's distillation flasks, and the more traditional expression of God's power (Christianity). This, I think, reflects Renan's own ambivalent approach to religion, and also faith. Prospero, in his scientific endeavours, does not seek to *defeat* religion, but merely to find an expression of God which has grounding in observable phenomena. Renan's Prospero, in his attempts, through distillation, to allow Nature to better know herself, is a positivist scientist. As Scharff argues, there does not need to be such a sharp distinction – or conflict – between science and religion: 'According to Comte's law, science does not supplant theology and metaphysics but instead brings to fruition their basic aims. Human beings have always sought to explain and control nature, and prescientific efforts were necessary first steps in that direction.'[116] Prospero explains the primary aim of his scientific endeavour: 'it is He [God] who will be fully realized once science crowns the monarchical crown and reigns without rival. Then reason will restore the world to its lost beauty' (p. 47).

Ariel's description of the gasses distilled in Prospero's alembics as her brothers and sisters is perhaps an expression of the *equivalence* that was so fundamental to positivism. The spirits of Shakespeare's enchanted island are made real – contained in alembics so that they might be observed, and thus believed. Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent observes that French chemists in the

[114] Robert Scharff, 'Positivism, Philosophy of Science, and Self-Understanding in Comte and Mill', *American Philosophical Quarterly,* 26.4 (1989), 253-268 (p. 256).
[115] Owen Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).
[116] Scharff, pp. 262-3.

nineteenth century were more stridently anti-atomist than their European contemporaries; this attitude was greatly shaped by Berthelot (and, by extension, Renan; the two so often stated that the theories in their respective fields were so influenced by each other):

> An even more radical kind of positivism was developed by Marcellin Berthelot in the 1870s […] 'In stating that *all gases contain an equal number of molecules in equal volumes,* Avogadro and Ampère have formulated an hypothesis and not a law. In reality, we cannot see molecules and we cannot even count them…Who has ever seen, I insist, a gaseous molecule or an atom?' Berthelot thus reduced the realm of scientific laws to observable entities.[117]

Prospero, then, has been attempting to make the spirits of the island *observable* through distillation, but since these are trapped within the equipment in his private chambers, and cannot be *seen* by the people, his 'magic' no longer serves as an instrument of power. While Renan saw Prospero's detachment from the world as an admirable quality in some senses, his remoteness also serves to diminish his power. Shakespeare's Prospero is usurped because he neglects his worldly duties in order to devote himself to his studies; Renan's is usurped, and then cannot regain power, because he refuses to share the fruits of his studies with the people.

The figure of Prospero, his scientific endeavours, and his loss of potency in controlling the populace seems to be a dramatic expression of Renan's own exploration of the complex relationship between faith and reason. While Renan may have been anticlerical, he held fast to his faith. Priest notes that many who read *Life of Jesus* entered into lengthy correspondence with

[117] Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent, 'Atomism and Positivism: A Legend about French Chemistry', *Annals of Science,* 56.1 (1999), 81-94 (p. 90).

Renan; they 'often used their reading and writing practices to engage in a process of reconciliation between faith and reason.'[118] One man, in a private letter to Renan, summed up his own position thus: 'I am like you, sir, profoundly religious, without being reconcilable with any of the existing forms of religion or with the supernatural.'[119] Prospero's declining magic is ignored by the people because it is the sort of religious illusion that can no longer influence the hearts and minds of the populace. Such illusions – a tangible expression of the supernatural – would not work even for Renan. The Renaissance Mage has been transmuted into a post-Enlightenment positivist scientist. But he does not have the luxury of renouncing his Art – his power has been taken from him. Does Prospero even have a place in this positivist society?

In Renan's sequel, religion is also portrayed as an existential threat to Prospero's scientific progress, and this aspect of his play was shaped by the Church's reaction to some of his own works. While many of his readers saw Renan's work *Life of Jesus* as an opportunity to explore their own faith, the institutions of the Church did not take nearly as kindly to the work. Priest notes that the government 'was cautious not to jeopardize its position among devout Catholics and immediately suspended Renan from his [professorial] post [at the Sorbonne]'. The book was also placed on the Index of Prohibited Books by Pope Pius IX.[120] In Renan's sequel, Prospero is similarly attacked by the institution of the Church. At the end of the play, when Prospero has been defeated and Caliban is well established as the new leader, the Inquisition come to interrogate Prospero, accusing him of contravening the will of God through his scientific experiments. The dialogue in this scene is taken almost verbatim from the transcript of the

[118] Priest, 'Reading, Writing, and Religion in Nineteenth-Century France: The Popular Reception of Renan's *Life of Jesus*', *The Journal of Modern History*, 86.2 (2014), 258-294 (p. 262).
[119] Armand Heurtel to Ernest Renan, March 31, 1885, CSR, Ms24.107. Cited in Priest, p. 294.
[120] Priest, p. 268.

inquisition of Galileo. In his application of science to better understand the world, Prospero (like Galileo) is regarded by the Church as an existential threat.

The Inquisition is not a welcome presence, as Bonaccorso assures Prospero: 'The republic of Milan repels your infamous tribunal. It is these same men who burnt our mothers, our grandmothers. Sons of patarin, we hate you' (p. 80).[121] Perhaps surprisingly, it is Caliban who eventually comes to the defence of his former master. From inciting revolution in the crowded streets, Caliban has become a moderate leader who understands the need for public order and wants to protect the Arts. Caliban's relationship to organised religion is fairly ambivalent – Ariel suggests that Caliban's approach to religion was practical and self-serving (he imitated his master's faith in order to please him): 'He was never a Christian; he practised religious ceremonies like a monkey; at the core he remained forever a servant of Setebos' (p. 78). In the opening scene, Caliban confesses to Ariel that he never did believe in their Christian God, since his god was more demonstrably powerful: 'Nonsense! Setebos, my mother's god, is worth far more than this intangible God that you are always talking to me about' (p. 45). For Caliban, Setebos is far more tangible, and his power is viscerally evident: this is a god that can express the visible effects of his power; 'each morning, his cavern was full of freshly severed heads, cheeks pierced with a knife' (p. 45). By the time he becomes the leader of the revolution, however, Caliban makes no further reference to Setebos, or to any other god. At this stage in France, secularism became associated with the Revolutionaries and had almost become a new religion.

[121] Smith notes that the *Patarins* were 'twelfth-century Milanese heretics, probably of the Manichean persuasion', p. 106.

The nobles who remain loyal to Prospero try to convince him that his former slave, now the leader of the 'moderate party', has become the only one who can steady the ship: they counsel Prospero that 'men show their worth by their situation, not through themselves. Caliban is the man of the moment; he will save us' (p. 76). It is perhaps ironic that it is Caliban – whom Prospero derided as his 'brute' when he seized power – who emerges by the end of the play as the only one who can save Prospero from the persecution of the representatives of religion. As one of the nobles notes: 'Caliban is anticlerical' (p. 81). In the midst of the Inquisition, Caliban is carried on in a throne, to the sound of an organ which 'flares like a tempest' (p. 82), and swears to protect his former master from the priests of the inquisition. When asked by the Frere August de Ferrare to condemn Prospero, Caliban emphatically replies: 'I am the heir to the rights of Prospero; I must defend him. Prospero is my protégé. He must be able to work at ease, with his philosophers and his artists, under my patronage. His works will be all the glory of my reign. I'll have my part. I'll exploit it; that's how the world works' (p. 84). It seems, then, that the future does belong to Caliban, as one of the nobles at the party warned that it might. There is some ambivalence, as always with Renan's work – Caliban is explicit about his intention to exploit Prospero by taking credit for the scientific progress he makes. However, he does also promise to patronise, and to protect, his former master. He seems to be the only one who can protect Prospero and his scientific endeavours from religious fanaticism, and he does also keep 'the mob' at bay. Caliban, once a threat to Prospero, has become his saviour.[122]

[122] Smith argues that the play's denouement reflects Renan's own changing views about the role of 'the people' in French society: 'The earlier acts reflect the mood of 1871: hatred of the Commune and fear of insurrection, while the half-ironical reconciliation with Caliban triumphant shows us the less embittered and spiritually healthier Renan of 1878, who has seen the Republic of the monarchists, discredited several years of uncertainty and intrigue, giving way at last to the republicans' Republic', pp. 20-21.

Ariel

Living on as a symbol of Idealism

For Renan, Ariel is a symbol of idealism who happily serves Prospero: 'Day after day, I thought that he would let me go and, every day since, he calls me his little bird, his gentle Ariel and I remain, and I never remind him of his promise. He's doing such beautiful things here' (p. 44). This is a significant contrast to Shakespeare's Ariel, who is keen to be freed from Prospero's service.[123] Ariel describes her own support of Prospero as cult-like – she describes it as 'hyperdulic' (an adjective which refers to the cult of the Virgin Mary) (p. 45). Ariel follows Prospero with such devotion because she believes so profoundly in what he is striving to achieve in his laboratory. She assures Caliban that, now back in Milan, Prospero is working on grander projects than ever before: 'things far superior to that which he did on the island' (p. 44). As well as the process of distillation, Prospero is striving to find immortality – he has turned his scientists' eye toward saving mankind from the indignity of death. Shakespeare's Prospero does say that he will return to the mainland and his every third thought will be death. In Renan's sequel, Prospero turns this obsession into a quest to find a scientific method of removing (or at least lessening) death's power.

Ariel sees no possibility of reconciliation, or even an exchange of ideas, between her and Caliban. Caliban, for her, remains a mere animal because of his refusal to accept her version of idealism: 'remain a failed whale, like a porpoise empty of air. As for me, I'll return to the pure air, to await the orders of the genius who affords me the honour of accepting my servitude to execute his wishes' (p. 45). Ariel, as I noted, is sent out to regain power from the people who

[123] For an interesting discussion of different models of service in *The Tempest* see Andrew Gurr, 'Industrious Ariel and idle Caliban', in *Travel and Drama in Shakespeare's Time*, ed. by Jean-Pierre Maquerlot and Michèle Willems (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 193-208.

have been incited to revolution by Caliban. She fails. At the end of the play, Ariel gives a farewell speech in which she tells Prospero that she will return to the elements: 'I will be the blue of the sea, the life of the plant, the perfume of the flowers, the blue snow of glaciers' (p. 87). Then she expires.

In a sense, though, Renan's Ariel does not really die. In fact, the character goes on to have a vibrant afterlife in South America. In 1900, the Uruguayan writer José Enrique Rodó wrote an essay entitle *Ariel*, in which he reflects on Ariel and Caliban as conflicting aspects of human nature[124] and explores the future direction of his country. Rodó's essay profoundly shaped the trajectory of these characters in Latin America. And his portrayal of Ariel, especially, was greatly influenced by Renan's. Rodó references Renan throughout the work – he holds him up as one of the bastions of the classical western tradition to which Latin America should aspire:

> this French master believes that genuine concern for the ideals of the species lies in total opposition to a spirit of democracy. He believes that the concept of life in a society in which democracy prevails is progressively shaped toward the exclusive pursuit of material well-being in the guise of the greatest good for the greatest number. In his view, as democracy is the enthronement of Caliban, Ariel is necessarily vanquished in the triumph of the former. Many of Renan's opinions are substantiated in the writings of the leading contemporary philosophers, who also defend the aesthetic and the spiritual.[125]

[124] Holding up Ariel and Caliban as opposing elements, or contrasting aspects of humanity, was not a new idea. As Stephen Orgel notes: 'Caliban has generally been seen as a foil to Ariel – the airy spirit, the earthy monster', Orgel, 'Introduction', p. 26.

[125] José Enrique Rodó, *Ariel,* trans. and ed. by Margaret Sayers Peden (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), p. 58.

If Caliban and Ariel are symbolic of the dualistic aspects of human nature, Rodó sees Renan's work as a reminder that these aspects should unite: 'And Renan […] reminds us that the goal of man cannot be exclusively to learn, or feel, or imagine, but, rather, to be truly and wholly human.'[126] In order to become 'wholly human', Rodó argues, Caliban and Ariel must eventually combine and coalesce. As Vaughan and Vaughan note: 'Ariel and Caliban, in Rodó's eyes, were complementary; they were concurrent influences in a cultural dialectic that someday would produce an ideal civilization.'[127] Rodó's *Ariel*, as James Symington notes, is well known to students of Latin American literature and thought,[128] and still has resonance today; Carlos Fuentes describes Rodo (because of the influence of *Ariel*) as 'our Uruguayan uncle, sitting in a corner of our family portrait'.[129] However, there was a rejection of the framing of his dialectic by many Latin American writers in the 1920s and 1930s. As Vaughan and Vaughan observe, in the critical dialogue which was instigated by Renan's work, Caliban 'became the emblem of exploited Latin Americans, and Prospero took on the menacing visage of Uncle Sam. Ariel again silently disappeared.'[130]

In France, too, Renan's sequel instigated a dialogue, especially about the nature and the future of Caliban. The French poet, playwright and essayist Émile Bergerat wrote a number of works entitled and addressed to Caliban[131] – his conception of the character seems to be an intertextual fusion of Shakespeare's and Renan's. The preface of Bergerat's second work, *Le Livre de Caliban* (1887) [132] was written by Alexandre Dumas, who addresses Caliban directly:

[126] Rodó, p. 41.
[127] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 149.
[128] James W. Symington, 'Foreword', *Ariel,* trans. and ed. by Margaret Sayers Peden, p. ii.
[129] Carlos Fuentes, 'Prologue', *Ariel,* trans. and ed. by Margaret Sayers Peden, p. xxxi.
[130] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 154.
[131] Between 1886 to 1909, Bergerat produced 7 works with Caliban in the title.
[132] Émile Bergerat, *Le Livre de Caliban* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1887).

> Come on, Caliban, tell me the truth: where are you from? Who transformed you into the charming state that I now find you in […] Prospero had wanted to elevate you from the shadows into the Light […], to teach you what he knew, what he considered to be the truth.[133]

Caliban, Dumas claims, was left abandoned by Shakespeare: 'Shakespeare, tired (him too) from having tried in vain to teach men, disappeared into his retirement in Stratford-upon-Avon'.[134] But then Caliban's tale – his elevation, too – was taken up by Renan:

> you dethroned [Prospero]; you took his place […] you substituted the republic that you dreamed of for the monarchy that he exercised in the name of his fathers, that his father took from him, and that he reconquered by dint of science and energy. You destroyed what he knew with the help of what he taught you. Well played, Caliban![135]

And now, it is Bergerat who will continue Caliban's tale: 'Shakespeare left you free after the restoration of Prospero; Renan left you as head of the republic well before the death of the Duke of Milan'.[136] Earlier French authors adapted a 'Shakespeare's *Tempest* which was actually closer to adaptations by Dryden and Davenant, or Waldron;[137] here, there is a similar conflation of source text and adaptation, but now with Renan's sequel.

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133 Alexandre Dumas, préface, in Émile Bergerat, *Le Livre de Caliban* (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1887), pp. iv-v.
134 Dumas, p. vi.
135 Dumas, p. vii.
136 Dumas, p. vii.
137 See my introduction for an explanation of how Rochon de Chabannes and Scribe conflate Shakespeare's *Tempest* with Dryden-Davenant's and Waldron's adaptations respectively.

The subsequent intertextuality between Shakespeare and Renan remains clear even if it goes unstated by the author. Alexandre Cormier in the preface of his *Prospero, poème philosophique* (1907)[138] notes that 'I took the name of Prospero, Shakespeare's greatest hero'. He says that, without changing the character's physiognomy, he wanted to 'add certain nuances', to add a certain 'idealism and instinctive sensuality to Prospero's virility' (p. 12). This is a lengthy and fairly bizarre poem, including characters from Shakespeare, Marlowe and Ovid. He draws on many sources, but, while he doesn't cite Renan as an influence, Renan's Prospero inflects Cormier's conception of Caliban. Ariel notes that, while Duke of Milan, Prospero didn't pay much attention to public affairs; he is 'pierced by a dream of a profound and universal science' (p. 13) and dedicates himself to problems of pure speculation, working on chemistry – specifically, the distillation process (p. 171). He also describes Nature as 'my perfect and ideal friend' (p. 46), and, like Renan's Prospero, is pictured surrounded by the signs of the zodiac. Although he doesn't mention Renan as a source, it seems that Cormier wanted to redress the trajectory that Renan imagined for Caliban. Whereas Renan's Caliban becomes a successful leader whom Renan admires, Cormier's Caliban is a figure of ridicule. In Milan, Caliban is carried in on his ducal throne, and Prospero approaches him in disguise. Once he gets close enough, Prospero reveals his true identity, and announces what Caliban once was: 'This rascal was once in my service, and I treated him like a beast […] Today, admire the caprices of fortune […] here is the monster, vomited up by the sea, who usurped (with your stupid complicity), the ducal throne of Milan' (p. 139). Cormier's Prospero wrests power back from Caliban, stripping him of the trappings of power so he can 'return to animality' (p. 149). The newly reinstalled Prospero announces that he wants to elevate and teach the usurper: 'Caliban, leave behind the royal purple and take this green apron; you will be my laboratory assistant' (p. 150).

[138] Alexandre Cormier, *Prospero, poème philosophique* (Paris: Librairie E. Sansot et Cie, 1907).

The conceit here, that Bergerat and Cormier will continue Caliban's tale, is suggestive of the impact of Renan's sequel, and also of the establishment of Caliban as a contested site in France – a symbol who can be used to dethrone a canonical figure (Prospero, Shakespeare, Renan) and give voice to a different future.

The elixir of youth: an ending

Renan's sequel to *The Tempest* is, then, a crucial step in the genealogy of Prospero, Caliban and Ariel. As we will see in the following chapters, his worked shaped the responses of other writers – in exploring the play, they are responding to an intertextuality between Shakespeare's play and Renan's sequel. In 1881, Renan wrote a second part to his sequel: *L'Eau de Jouvence* | *The Water of Youth*. In the prefatory letter to his reader, Renan writes that, upon returning to his retreat in Ischia, he finds himself returning to the characters he wrote about a few years before: 'I found myself once again in the company of Shakespeare; I took to living again with Caliban, Prospero and Ariel. these dear images began to chat among themselves once again in my spirit.'[139] Renan, it seems, wanted to give each of the characters what he considered would be a fitting end to their stories.

In this second instalment to the sequel, Prospero has finally created an elixir of youth in his laboratory (essentially, this works by reminding older people of the dreams they held in youth, and thus invigorating them; they are then not as troubled by death, and thus the power of death is lessened). His supporters come to ask how they might overthrow the now established Caliban. In the preface, Renan reflects that he does not want a reinstatement of Prospero to his formal ducal throne: 'I like Prospero, but I hardly prefer those who would set Prospero back on his

[139] Renan, 'Au lecteur', *Caliban et L'Eau de Jouvence* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1923), pp. 115-119 (p. 116).

throne'.[140] Henri Gouhier suggests that this refusal of Renan's to place Prospero back on his ducal throne was influenced by the election of 1877. At that time, Renan wrote a Republic was the only possible government'.[141] In *Caliban,* Renan wrote of Prospero with great reverence. In his prefatory letter to *The Water of Youth*, Renan describes Prospero as 'superior reason, momentarily deprived of his authority by inferior sections of humanity'. The power he once had, the sway over the people, has effectively become obsolete: 'His magic and supernatural engines, formerly so powerful, are now rendered useless.' But now his magic has lost its potency, Prospero is not reinstated to his former position of power. Prospero tells his supporters that Caliban has become a wise and moderate leader, and no attempts should be made to overthrow him. In the prefatory letter, Renan explains why: 'Caliban, improved by power, pleases me much more'.[142]

In the second instalment to the sequel, there are many lengthy discussions about religion, and whether science should be considered a form of heresy. As in *Caliban,* Prospero (also referred to as Arnaud in this play) is a target of the Church's anger; the Pope and other Church officials accuse him of being a heretic. That said, when the Pope hears of Prospero's discovery – the water of youth – he then decides to support Prospero's scientific research, feeling that it will benefit him personally. Prospero later tells the Pope how much religion has hindered scientific progress. This play is essentially a lengthy meditation on the conflicts between Science and Religion – a conflict which was such a profoundly important debate for Renan in his own life. In the prefatory letter, Renan returns once again to his belief in the importance, and potential, of

[140] Renan, 'Au lecteur', p. 118.
[141] Gouhier, p. 126
[142] Renan, 'Au lecteur', p. 118.

scientific research: 'I still believe that reason, that is to say, science, will succeed once again in creating [la force], which is to say government, in humanity'.[143]

While *The Water of Youth* is primarily about Prospero – about finding a place for the mage who has lost his power – Renan did set out to give what he considered a proper ending to all three of the characters. As he notes in the preface, 'let's keep Caliban, let's endeavour to find a way of honourably burying Prospero, and to give Ariel a reason to live in such a way that he will not be tempted, for futile motives, to die constantly.'[144] Renan was very likely also influenced by the response to *Caliban* by one of his contemporaries, Alfred Fouillée: 'In Renan's philosophical drama, after the triumph of Caliban, who personifies the people, Ariel, this spirit of idealism, until then in the service of Prospero and the aristocracy, no longer wishes to participate in the world of men'.[145] Fouillée suggests that, instead of becoming just part of the ether, Ariel should become part of the people, and influence them to such an extent that Caliban eventually becomes like Ariel because he would inhabit Caliban's spirit (as Vaughan and Vaughan note, Rodó seems to have 'implicitly extended Fouillée's objection to Renan's pejorative dichotomy between refined aristocracy and utilitarian democracy').[146] While he may have addressed this suggestion in his continuation of the sequel, Renan does not conclude their journey by making Caliban and Ariel one. But it seems that, for a fitting ending, they at least have to come to a reconciliation.

143 Renan, 'Au lecteur', p. 119.
144 It seems that, in the time between writing the first and second instalments of his sequel, Ariel became male in Renan's mind. In *Caliban*, it is specified in the dramatis personae that Ariel is a female character. There is no obvious reason to make Ariel a male character now.
145 Alfred Fouillée, *L'idée moderne du droit*, 2nd edn (Paris: Hachette, 1883), pp. 378-9.
146 Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 149.

For Renan, if Ariel is idealism and Caliban is democracy – the latent power of the people – then these need to be reconciled in order for Prospero to have a dignified ending. Caliban returns to see Prospero as he is close to death, and Prospero asks Ariel and Caliban – once adversaries (who haven't interacted since the very opening scene of *Caliban*) to reconcile their differences. They agree to, and Prospero dies happily, his body sent out to sea: in trying to convince Ariel to make peace with Caliban, Prospero admits that he himself had many reservations about Caliban's rise to power. But he concedes that it was inevitable – 'without Caliban, there is no History'.[147]

[147] Renan, *Caliban et L'Eau de Jouvence* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1923), p. 270.

Caliban's Books

Education and emancipation in Jean Guéhenno's *Caliban Speaks*

'Remember | First to possess his books; for without them | He's but a sot, as I am'

The Tempest (III. 2. 89-91)

'Un livre est un outil de liberté' | 'A book is a tool of freedom'

Carnets du vieil écrivain[1]

In his sequel to *The Tempest*, Renan considers the role of language in shaping – even transforming – Caliban. Jean Guéhenno attempts to give Caliban an entirely new voice. In 1928, he published *Caliban parle* | *Caliban Speaks*, in which he attempts a narrative exposition of Caliban's philosophy. Guéhenno's conceit: that he will embody Caliban and allow the character to speak through him. Caliban has a story – one which has been hitherto overlooked, and which deserves to be told. Guéhenno writes in response to both Shakespeare and Renan: in a later memoir, he recalls why he wrote: 'it seemed necessary to make this testimony on behalf of an important character, a legendary hero, of this Caliban that I had met in Shakespeare and Renan'.[2]

Guéhenno responds to Renan's claim that his sequel offered Caliban a development beyond anything which Shakespeare could imagine for him. The book begins with a page of philosophical quotations from Diderot, Péguy, Barrès, and Nietzsche, but the opening quotation is from Renan's sequel. In the quoted scene, Trinculo, parading Caliban on a lead in front of the nobles at a party, is warned: 'This is not prudent. Nowadays, Caliban might have a future'.[3] Reflecting on *Caliban Speaks* in the 1962 preface, Guéhenno notes that, in composing the work,

[1] Jean Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain* (Paris: Grasset, 1971), p. 152. This phrase is inscribed on a commemorative plaque to Guéhenno in Paris.
[2] Jean Guéhenno, *Ce que je crois* (Paris: Grasset, 1964), p. 80.
[3] Jean Guéhenno, *Caliban parle*, p. 9. The original quotation is from Renan, *Caliban*, p. 59.

he had set out to follow up on Renan's 'prophecy' (that Caliban might have a future), but wanted to demonstrate that Caliban's future would turn out to be greater than Renan had ever imagined.[4] Renan's sequel portrays Caliban as a revolutionary leader who seizes power from Prospero – he recognises the revolutionary potential of Caliban. But once Caliban has taken Prospero's place, Renan transforms him into a moderate leader (he loses his revolutionary fervour, and comes to realise the importance of protecting property owners). As I argued in the previous chapter, this evolution from revolutionary figure to moderate ruler reflects Renan's own misgivings about 'the people'. Guéhenno, in response, continues this transformation of Caliban, but does not allow Caliban's revolutionary ideas to be diminished. In the aftermath of WWI, Guéhenno's appropriation of Caliban attempts to reconnect the character with his imagined roots, as a working-class man. In *Caliban Speaks,* one of his earliest publications, he set out to share what might be called the lived experiences of Caliban (as well as exploring how these experiences might be similar to his own). Caliban and Prospero permeate Guéhenno's entire oeuvre: he returns to them often throughout his life.

Caliban Speaks is an overlooked figuration of Caliban as an oppressed and angry young man. Renan's Caliban might rise from the masses, but once in power, he doesn't really continue to champion their cause. In contrast, Guéhenno's Caliban is *defined* by his status as a working-class man; indeed, it is Guéhenno himself who, in later works, reflects that he is becoming ever more distanced from his working-class roots. But the same can never be said of his Caliban. Guéhenno's response is also shaped by his understanding of Shakespeare's own life and genius (which, much like Hugo's, emphasises Shakespeare's status as one of 'the people').

[4] Jean Guéhenno, 'Préface', *Caliban parle; suivi de Conversion à l'humanisme* (Paris: Grasset, 1962), p. ii.

Guéhenno's books

To commemorate Guéhenno's admittance into the Académie Française in 1962, Jacques Chastenet gave a speech about Guéhenno's life and work. As Chastenet observed, Guéhenno's life experiences greatly shaped his work: 'Your oeuvre, Sir, is inseparable from your life'.[5] Since Guéhenno's responses to both Shakespeare and Renan are so deeply personal, we will first consider some of the early life experiences which certainly shaped the lens through which he re-visions *The Tempest* and Renan's *Caliban*.

Guéhenno was familiar with poverty. He was born in 1890 in Fougères, a newly industrialised town in Brittany. His father worked in a shoe factory, and his mother was a pieceworker who sewed leather. In his memoir, *Journal d'un homme de 40 ans* (1934), he recalls her spending her every waking hour huddled over a sewing machine, often in semi-darkness, like many poor women he knew: 'They pedalled, and *rrou*, and *rrou*, and the machine turned, and bread was earned'.[6] He later reflected that when she died, it was perhaps partly because of exhaustion: 'the poor woman wore out two machines, but the third outlived her'.[7] Guéhenno attended the local school, where children were not usually expected to go on to *lycée*; as David Ball notes, 'poor children just got the *Certificat d'études primaires*; he studied a little reading, writing, arithmetic and "a few fragments of history and science"'.[8] Guéhenno did well in his studies, but at the age of fourteen, his father fell ill and so young Guéhenno took over his father's job at the shoe factory. But Guéhenno was dissatisfied, and had no desire to work in the same milieu for the rest of his life. He turned to books. Determined to find a way to continue formal education, Guéhenno

[5] Jacques Chastenet, *Discours prononcés dans la séance publique tenue par l'Académie Française pour la réception de M. Jean Guéhenno* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1962), n.p.
[6] Jean Guéhenno*, Journal d'un homme de quarante ans* (Paris: Grasset, 1934), p. 20.
[7] Cited in Jean Guéhenno, *Diary of the dark years, 1940-1944: collaboration, resistance and daily life in occupied Paris*, ed. and trans. by David Ball (Oxford: OUP, 2014), p. xiv.
[8] Ball, p. xiv.

sourced second-hand texts and followed his studies at night, after work in the factory, to prepare for his exams. Through independent study, he passed the *Bac*, and was then accepted into *khâgne*, which were 'highly selective post-graduate secondary school classes'.[9] He won a scholarship and was eventually offered a place at the École Normale Supérieure.

As Ball observes, as a scholarship student, Guéhenno's elite education was paid for by the Republic.[10] This was an aspect of the French education system which Guéhenno staunchly defended throughout his life: 'above all, he never forgot his origins, the importance of education, and the necessity of strengthening the Republic that had provided it for him.'[11] He regarded education as an inalienable human right, and lack of access to education as the most severe kind of privation. Born into a house without books (except his mother's first communion Bible),[12] he later described them as 'a tool of liberty':[13] books could offer a better understanding of the world, and of the self. Nathan Bracher observes that when Vichy's ministry of education published a booklet stressing education as primarily a vocational training, Guéhenno responded by stressing that education had the potential to emancipate and broaden the mind: 'it must *form*[14] man for his entire life, and orient his dreams. It must also be then a principle of teaching to teach to each person that which in his *prison* of familial, professional, and national habits, he can know least'.[15]

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[9] Ball, p. xv.
[10] Ball, p. xv.
[11] Ball, p. xv.
[12] Jean Guéhenno, *Changer la vie: mon enfance et ma jeunesse* (Paris: Grasset, 1961), p. 183.
[13] Jean Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain* (Paris, Grasset, 1971), p. 152.
[14] In French, *former* carries the sense of forming (or moulding) but also *educating* (a teacher can be called a *professeur* or a *formateur*)
[15] Nathan Bracher, 'The Intellectual and 'La Nation' in Jean Guéhenno's *Journal des années noire*s', *French cultural studies*, 23.1 (2012), 64-78 (p. 76), my emphases.

Looking back on his own youth, Guéhenno recalls with great fondness the feeling of discovery that his studies gave him: 'What incredible happiness, the dream of freedom and study; to feel your mind opening and to form a thought which you know very well you could not have formed with your strength alone'.[16] Guéhenno often wrote of the transformative potential of his studies – a belief summarised by Chastenet as 'this divine knowledge which alone could change your life'.[17] For him, these books were a path to a new world: 'an enchanted world, where you suddenly discovered the universe of great classics, harmonious verse, high thoughts and also the universe of exact science […] Your ears opened to the harmony of the spheres […] and these revelations […] left you reeling'.[18] He recalled that, reading in his bedroom at night, he would imagine a figure emerging from his wall:

> This charming talker. I see him dressed like a jester. He talks; he sings. He does a thousand tricks with his words. He amuses himself with his own game. He never finishes and I never want him to finish. He has a composite face: he is Socrates, Montaigne, Shakespeare and Molière all at once. He is wise and he is mad.'[19]

Guéhenno's belief in the power of education was also reflected in his dedication to his career as a teacher. Throughout his diaries, he reflects frequently and at length about his job: during the Occupation, especially, he felt that it was his duty to use literature to remind his students of what it meant to be part of the *République des Lettres*.[20]

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[16] Guéhenno, *Changer la vie*, p. 126.
[17] Chastenet, n. p.
[18] Chastenet, n. p.
[19] Guéhenno, *Changer la vie*, p. 192.
[20] Guéhenno, *Dark Years*, pp. 94; 143; 184

Wars and peace

In 1927, in his first published book, *L'évangile éternel* | *The Eternal Gospel* (1928) (a study of the genius of Michelet), Guéhenno describes his experiences in WWI, in which he lost many friends: 'It was a great misery to see men die and suffer […] They did not sacrifice themselves; they were sacrificed. They only died because it was one of the rules of the game – a rule that they could not infringe without being put to death anyway'.[21] Guéhenno himself was seriously injured in Ypres on 15 March 1915. He never returned to fighting, but ran a hospital for war-blinded.[22] The trauma he underwent shaped his writing for the rest of his life; in his speech on the occasion of his acceptance into the Académie in 1962, he notes that, since the war he has 'never stopped since railing against such immeasurable and useless death'.[23] The common soldiers, in Guéhenno's view, were treated by the leaders as nothing more than pawns. As well as the sense of horror which pervades his writing about WWI, there is also a tenderness with which Guéhenno describes some of his experiences: specifically, the union which emerged between the soldiers, shoulder to shoulder, abandoned, and ruled by fear: 'a common misery made our union even more tender […] anguish recreates the communion of man'.[24] Maurice Rieuneau argues that Guéhenno's experience in WWI made him a life-long advocate of pacificism, as well as a critic of capitalism: 'The war made him understand that the masters of his poverty-stricken childhood were also those who sacrificed men to money. Thenceforth, to save men, he declared war on war and on the capitalist society which nourished it'.[25]

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[21] Jean Guéhenno, *L'évangile éternel: étude sur Michelet* (Paris: Grasset, 1927), p. 10.
[22] Florent Le Bot, 'Dans l'atelier du cordonnier. Guéhenno, Giono, Guilloux, artisans pacifistes', in *Jean Guéhenno: guerres et paix,* ed. by Jeanvyes Guérin, Jean-Kely Paulhan and Jean-Pierre Rioux (Villeneuve: Presses universitaires de Septentrion, 2009), 105-118 (p. 113) <https://books.openedition.org/septentrion/44031?lang=en> [accessed 27 September 2021].
[23] Jean Guéhenno, *Discours prononcés dans la séance publique tenue par l'Académie Française pour la réception de M. Jean Guéhenno* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1962), n. p. In one of his latter memoirs, he returned to this idea of 'carnage and massacres so clearly futile', *Carnets du vieil écrivain* (Paris: Éditions Bernard Grasset, 1971), p. 158.
[24] Guéhenno, *Caliban parle*, p. 94.
[25] Maurice Rieuneau, *Guerre et révolution dans le roman français de 1919 à 1939* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 2000), p. 253.

Guéhenno spent the inter-war years writing about how the Great War had profoundly changed the world. But he is most well-known for his writings during the Occupation. Guéhenno refused to publish anything under the Vichy regime; for him, this would have been a signal that life was still normal. He was under surveillance for much of this period because of his association with members of the Resistance. He kept diaries, which were later published as *Journal des années noires | Journal of the Dark Years*. These provide detailed, moving, and blunt accounts of the fear, the boredom, the atrocities he lived through while in Paris under Nazi occupation. The traumatic events that Guéhenno lived through profoundly shaped his reading of Prospero, Caliban and Ariel – figures he returned to throughout his life.

Guéhenno's experiences early in life meant that *The Tempest* (and Renan's sequel) had particular resonance for him. He was, I suggest, drawn to the play mainly because of the relationship between Prospero and Caliban, and the power dynamic between them: the highly educated mage and his illiterate subject. For a young man who regarded books as a path to emancipation, Prospero's books (the locus of so much of his power), and Caliban's lack of access to them, meant a great deal to Guéhenno. He was particularly interested in the status of 'Caliban' as a marginalised figure who doesn't get to tell his own story. Guéhenno's experiences in WWI meant that he witnessed how crucial the working-class soldiers were, but how very little they received for their sacrifices. As a witness to horrific injuries and disfigurement, he also turned to the character of Caliban to explore the concept of the monstrous. Guéhenno's own poverty-stricken childhood led him to reflect on the figure of the mother, Sycorax, also a marginalised figure who cannot tell her own tale. For Guéhenno, Caliban is symbolic of the mistreated and disenfranchised young man, and he takes issue with the portrayal of Caliban by Renan. Caliban is not merely a slave, or a figure of discord, but a maligned outcast whose potential has been squandered by his oppression.

In the section ‘Prospero’s Betrayal’, Guéhenno’s Caliban expresses the view that, while he had some sympathy for the kind of distanced intellectual figure represented by Prospero in Shakespeare and Renan – one ‘dedicated | To closeness and the bettering of [his] mind’ (I. 2. 90) – the modern ‘Prosperos’ of his time have betrayed the ‘Calibans’ in ignoring the plight of the masses. In his view, the role of intellectuals should also be to recognise, if not improve, the lot of those who are marginalised. The War had served to further highlight inequalities, and ignoring these could only be a conscious decision; the figure of an intellectual in his study, striving for the idealistic perfection of a concept and ‘neglecting worldly ends’, should no longer really exist. Guéhenno, like Renan, is interested in whether there can be a reconciliation between Prospero and Caliban. This is particularly important for Guéhenno personally because, as he ages, becoming more of an academic and more distanced from his humble origins, he sees himself as becoming progressively less like Caliban and more like Prospero. His *Caliban Speaks* is the first stage in an ongoing, personal readdressing of this relationship.

Responding to Renan

In *Caliban Speaks*, Guéhenno adopts the voice of Caliban. He uses the character as a spokesman for his own experiences, and seeks to give him a new voice. For Guéhenno, this new Caliban is at once a composite, a rewriting, and a continuation of the literary creations of both Shakespeare and Renan. One of the main contentions of Guéhenno’s work is that Renan’s sequel could not offer a true portrayal of the character of Caliban: Renan’s own mistrust and fear of the working classes led him to lessen Caliban’s revolutionary fervour once in power. The speaker, Caliban, dedicates *Caliban Speaks* to Renan, on the 100th anniversary of his birth: ‘You deigned, master, during the days of your mortal life, to grant me some thoughts’ (p. 13). The word ‘deigned’ is not meant sarcastically, but implies that Renan’s choice to allow Caliban a voice in his sequel was quite unusual: ‘we are not that simple that we ignore the price of your

meditations, and we are grateful to you. Thank you for including us' (p. 13). Caliban declares that he is not just speaking for himself, but for the common man: 'May I think and speak as Caliban. That is to say to think and speak for a fairly large part of humanity' (pp. 102-3). And Caliban suggests that he – and those for whom he speaks – have hitherto been ignored or overlooked by most authors, with the notable exception of Renan: 'But you [Renan] have never had such disdain for us' (p. 13). That said, while this Caliban does concede that Renan acknowledged his crucial role in history, Renan's portrayal of him was inaccurate: 'you mistreated me without doubt' (p. 14); 'you got my character wrong, and that led you to make false deductions' (p. 19).

One of these 'false deductions' is the effect of Caliban's status as a slave on his sense of self-worth: 'He painted me as a squatting slave, defiled by slavery itself' (p. 26).[26] But, he continues, 'if slavery degrades, must he be reminded that it sometimes lights celestial ardour' (p. 26). Guéhenno establishes his own re-imagining of Caliban in direct comparison to Renan's. He directly challenges Renan's claims that he had provided an *evolution* for the character; rather, Renan greatly underestimated Caliban's potential for growth: 'you thought I'd perhaps have a future. But admit that you didn't expect it to be this noble or this beautiful' (p. 19). In 1962, the year of his admittance into the Académie Française, Guéhenno added a preface to *Caliban speaks*, which underscored Caliban's development:

> "Caliban might have a future," these words, this prophecy of Renan's that I could already recall in 1945, are all the more evident today. […] Yes, Caliban has a future. He speaks and demands now in every corner of the world […] He grunted, he growled, for

[26] This is likely an allusion to the opening stage directions in Renan's sequel, which describe Caliban writhing around by an open casket of wine.

centuries. I often heard him complaining in my youth. And so, the idea came to me, in 1928, to put in order his complaints and his hopes.[27]

The word grognements (which I have translated as 'growls'), is in itself an allusion to Renan's work: in *L'Eau de Jouvence*, Prospero reflects that 'the growls [les grognements] of Caliban, the bitter hatred that leads him to overthrow his master, is the principle movement in humanity'.[28]

Guéhenno's Caliban claims that although Renan did re-imagine him as symbolic of 'the masses', rather than having genuine empathy for 'the people', Renan only likes them 'when they're kneeling and pleading' (p. 14). In fact, coming face to face with 'the people' scared Renan: 'You didn't, it's true, like the people […], the sort you saw in your youth, the 'reds', the people of the streets; in the end, Caliban always scared you a little' (p. 14). This Caliban claims that Renan could never hope to fully empathise with him because he did not share the same experiences: 'you were never caught up in my adventures, never suffered and hoped with me' (p. 14). Caliban alludes to Renan's choice to attend his lectures at the Sorbonne instead of joining the groups of students mobilising in the streets in 1848: 'little bishop […] you were too well brought up to ever follow a popular crowd and to feel the nobility of our revolt' (p. 14). In the opening of *Caliban Speaks,* then, Renan is established as the detached academic.

This conflation of Renan with Prospero mirrors the conflation between Shakespeare and Prospero which had long been commonplace in criticism. But Guéhenno does not, at least when he wrote *Caliban Speaks,* associate himself-as-author with Prospero-as-mage. Guéhenno's conceit

[27] Guéhenno, *Caliban parle*, 1962 Préface, p. ii.
[28] Renan, *L'Eau de Jouvence*, pp. 270-1.

here is that *he* can offer a more truthful, more empathetic, portrayal of Caliban-as-speaker because he experienced some of the marginalisation that Caliban faced as a poor young man. He later recalls a memory from school: 'I knew very well, from a young age, how he grumbles and what it feels like to have contempt weighing on you. I see myself, one day, cornered in on the playground, a barking riot of little bourgeois all around me'.[29] Guéhenno considers himself closer to Caliban, and thus better positioned to speak as him. This introduces an aspect of the autobiographical in Guéhenno's work which remained an anxiety throughout the composition of this work. In correspondence with his editor, Jean Paulhan, Guéhenno shares his concern that, although he might claim to speak as Caliban, he speaks largely as himself: 'I knew there remained, and there still remain whatever I might do, too much of myself in Caliban.'[30]

Having addressed his preface to Renan, who got his portrayal wrong, Guéhenno's Caliban sets out to tell his own tale. He begins with an address to the reader: 'I'd often been tempted to correct the portrait that it pleased Mr Renan to make of me' (p. 25). And yet, he is well aware that the words of an established author will outweigh his own: 'Whatever I might say, you will believe him […] the creations of philosophers and poets are more true than reality' (p. 25). The concern seems to be that Renan's false o'erweighs his true; the speaker, Caliban, is a mere common man, and so his words will have less weight, even though they are more shaped by the lived reality of a life on the margins.

Guéhenno's appropriation of Caliban dramatises a tension between the canonical nature of the source text(s) and the author's claim to be voicing the marginalised. The dichotomy between *reality* and *the literary* seems to have been a matter of some concern for Guéhenno in the process

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[29] Changer la vie, p. 128.
[30] *Correspondance: Jean Paulhan - Jean Guéhenno, 1926-1968*, ed. by Jean-Kely Paulhan (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), p. 32.

of composing *Caliban Speaks*. He shared this concern with Paulhan: 'I have been thinking from the start about whether or not to weigh myself down with dramatic characters'.[31] While the character of Caliban affords Guéhenno a means of self-exploration and expression, he fears that his very appropriation of this creation of Shakespeare's (and then Renan) might in some way blunt his social critique: to use these characters in his polemic 'entails literature'. And Paulhan seems to share this concern: 'Caliban, Prospero and the rest: must you weigh yourself down, to begin with, with so much literature?'.[32] Another of Guéhenno's contemporaries, Romain Rolland – who founded the magazine *Europe*[33] – was also disappointed with *Caliban Speaks* because he found it too literary. Guéhenno acknowledges this difficulty: 'Positioning myself after Renan and his fiction, I obliged myself to play a very difficult game, and I lacked courage perhaps, by giving the poor modern man whose miseries and hopes I wanted to express a theatrical mask, this mask of Caliban'.[34] Perhaps the mask provides a freedom of expression; Guéhenno 'lacked courage' to voice these critiques *as himself*. But, as I explore later in this chapter, he was attacked for this choice of literary mask for quite other reasons: critics maligned him for a dangerous alchemy – voicing the concerns of the common man in the refined accents of an *académicien*.

Orality and written history

Guéhenno's appropriation of Caliban explores the distinction between the real and the literary. It also interrogates the intersection between history and fiction. In the opening pages, Caliban excuses himself, apologising for his lack of eloquence: 'If he seems to stammer sometimes,

[31] *Correspondence*: *Paulhan - Guéhenno*, p. 32.
[32] *Correspondence*: *Paulhan - Guéhenno*, p. 31.
[33] *Europe* is a monthly revue established in 1923 by Rolland and other writers. In the first edition, in February 1923, René Arcos wrote that they had established the magazine 'in the hope of helping to dispel the tragic misunderstandings that currently divide men', <https://www.europe-revue.net/a-propos/> [accessed 27 September 2021]. Guéhenno was editor-in-chief from 1929-1936, and said that he approached this work with the same spirit that led him to write *Caliban parle*, *Carnets du vieil écrivain*, p. 158.
[34] Letter to Rolland from Guéhenno, 2 August 1928, *L'indépendance de l'esprit: correspondance entre Jean Guéhenno et Romain Rolland, 1919-1944* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1975), p. 19.

pardon it is as his inexperience. It's an exercise in grand thought, and it's not been that long that Caliban has been thinking' (p. 22). His use of the third person here is a humbling gesture, but it is still Caliban who speaks. Stammering is necessarily a feature of oral exposition: a writer cannot stammer. Guéhenno stresses the importance of orality when constructing Caliban's narrative. The spoken word is a source of power in *The Tempest*. Once Prospero decides that Miranda should know about her real heritage, he conveys a sense of immediacy in the need for her to *hear* his story: 'the very minute bids thee ope' thine ear' (I. 2. 37). He enjoins her to listen closely: 'I pray thee mark me' (I. 2. 67). The tale he shares is remarkable; despite his concern that she is not paying sufficient heed – 'Does thou attend me?' (I .2. 78) – Prospero's words have commanded his daughter's attention: 'Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.' (I. 2. 106) Prospero's continued insistence that she listen – and the powerful effect of his words – establishes speech as a way of shaping a character's position and sense of reality.

When he is first summoned by Prospero, Caliban is given a clear injunction: 'What, ho, slave! Caliban! | Thou earth, thou, speak.' (I. 2. 313-4). Caliban is not permitted silence; but neither is his speech really a mode of self-expression: Prospero demands that he speak merely to show his presence. He is commanded to speak to make sure that he is ready to listen. Later in the narrative, Caliban's voice – more specifically his use of the language of his master – startles Stephano: 'Where the devil | should he learn our language?' (II. 2. 64-5). Stephano, a European, is surprised to find a native of this remote island who speaks his language – he wonders where this islander might have learnt this. Caliban was taught their language by Prospero and Miranda – as Miranda is keen to remind him: 'I pitied thee, | Took pains to make thee speak' (I. 2. 352-3). Although there has been much conjecture,[35] Miranda's motivations for teaching Caliban how to

[35] Stephen Orgel notes that the attribution of this speech has long been contended: 'the passive Miranda was felt by commentators from Dryden and Theobald to the Cambridge editors and Kittredge to require an emended text: 'Abhorréd slave…' was regularly, until well into this century, given to Prospero in editions of *The Tempest*; and even

speak in a way that is intelligible to her remain unclear. What can be asserted is that, in the timespan of the play, Prospero only requires Caliban's speech as a signal of his readiness to obey orders: Caliban's understanding of language in this sense is simply a means of subjugation.

Renan's reading of the play establishes language as a gift. He supports the claim made by Shakespeare's Miranda that, by teaching Caliban her language, she gave him the gift of being able to express his own ideas: 'I endowed thy purposes | With thoughts that made them known.' (I. 2. 356-7). In Renan's sequel, Ariel reminds Caliban of his debt to Prospero: thanks to the (altruistically motivated) education offered by the master, Caliban's mind has developed, since language is a corollary to reasoning. Since his is a response to Renan's sequel, Guéhenno positions *his* Caliban as at an even later stage of linguistic development: 'Such language, coming from me, amazes you without doubt' (p. 19). This development, though, was because of his own reading: 'I studied passionately, read many books' (p. 19). Guéhenno establishes his response as creating a new *voice* for Caliban, and allowing him to speak in a way that he has never been allowed to before. For Guéhenno, Caliban is now in a position where he is ready to tell his own tale. This re-framing of Caliban's tale seems congruent with the kind of historiographical reappraisal that, as Defne Ersin Tutan argues, was a common feature of post-WW1 history: 'we have histories in the plural; we frequently speak of alternative histories battling against History with a capital H'. Tutan notes that Carl Becker, in his 1931 address at the American Historical Association, introduced Mr Everyman as 'a regular citizen, who serves as his own historian'.[36]

in modern productions, in an age when complexity and ambiguity are common measures of artistic values, the speech is often, still, not Miranda's but Prospero's', 'Introduction', p. 17. Renan occludes Miranda entirely from his sequel, and ascribes an altruistic motive to Prospero for teaching Caliban, which is in line with the French colonial project and the 'mission civilisatrice'. Mannoni, too, makes it explicit that he sees their education of Caliban as evidence of Prospero and Miranda's view of themselves as colonial masters 'improving' their subject.

[36] Defne Ersin Tutan, 'Adaptation and History', in *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*, ed. by Thomas Leitch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 576-586 (pp. 576-7). See also Frederic Jameson: '[History] is inaccessible to us except in textual or narrative form, or, in other words, that we approach it only by way of some prior textualization or narrative (re)construction', Frederic Jameson, 'Marxism and Historicism', *New Literary History,*

The tales we tell of ourselves usually look back to origins. And Guéhenno's Caliban portrays himself as a man whose ancestors have been ignored or forgotten: 'man without history, I tell myself my history, that of my ancestors' (p. 35). He suggests that the history of the Calibans of the world has never been told because they have never been in a position of power. When History does, occasionally, tell of the Calibans, it is never in a positive light: 'History, such as it serves their interests, never reports anything other than our stupidity and our crimes. That's how our revolts are considered, from Spartacus to Lenin. If you were to believe them, all of human order would have been founded despite us, against us' (p. 86).

Origins are also an important aspect of identity in Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Prospero tells Miranda her history; the implication is that, without knowledge of her origins, her sense of self is incomplete: 'my daughter, who | Art ignorant of what thou art' (I. 2. 17-18). Prospero then tells his daughter who she is; where she is from. But, in *The Tempest,* we are only told very little about Caliban's origins. He asserts rightful ownership of the island, and refers to his heritage to assert that right to the land: 'This island's mine by Sycorax my mother, | Which thou tak'st from me' (I. 2. 331-2). Other than this, we hear very little from Caliban about his mother. In fact, much of what we are told about Sycorax comes from Prospero's re-telling. Of course, Sycorax can hardly tell her own tale: she died in the *before time* of the play. Yet her physical absence, for some critics, does not mean that she is not present in the narrative. Marina Warner argues that 'her mysterious, indeterminate story and character suffuses *The Tempest*',[37] whereas Abena Busias claims that Sycorax 'is invoked only to be spoken of as absent, recalled as a reminder of her dispossession, and not permitted her version of the story'.[38] The fragments of her story that we

11.1 (1979), 41-73 (p. 42); see also Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst, *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), pp. 309-11.
[37] Marina Warner, '"The foul witch" and Her "freckled whelp": Circean Mutations in the New World', in '*The Tempest' and its travels*, ed. by Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 97-113 (p. 97).
[38] Abena P. A. Busia, 'Silencing Sycorax: On African Colonial Discourse and the Unvoiced Female', *Cultural Critique* (1989), 81-104 (p. 86).

do know are told by Prospero: we hear that she was banished from Argiers, for crimes unstated: 'mischiefs manifold, and sorceries terrible | To enter human hearing' (I. 2. 263-4). She is, in Prospero's retelling, a 'foul witch' (I. 2. 258), who used her 'potent ministers' (I. 2. 275) to act her 'earthy and abhorred commands' (I. 2. 273). Prospero's telling of Sycorax's story shapes our understanding of her; from Caliban, we hear very little about his mother. As a counterpoint to this, Guéhenno's Caliban claims to speak for himself, and for his ancestors. Although we don't hear from Sycorax, we hear more of her story from her son's perspective.

I suggest that Guéhenno's Caliban entitled his work *Caliban Speaks*, rather than *Caliban Writes,* because the *orality* of his story is so important; it is a crucial part of the stories of those who he claims to speak for. Guéhenno's Caliban is aware that there are those who would try to de-valorise his tale because of his humble origins, and the reputation of his mother: 'My ancestors! Prospero would laugh' (p. 35). Yet he establishes himself as the mouthpiece for not just his direct ancestor (Sycorax), but for all those who have so far lacked a voice: 'At the slab of the mass grave where the forgotten dead sleep, those who part without leaving papers, and whom ungrateful history never talks of, I *listen*, and it seems that this old humanity, worn but not weary, not vanquished, indefatigable, is reborn in me' (p. 35; my emphasis).

History does not speak of people like Caliban, he claims. As well as listening to the tales of the forgotten dead, Caliban also says that he will make them a 'funeral oration' (p. 35). *He* will, because not many before him have bothered. Guéhenno returns to this question of whose stories are told in History throughout his oeuvre – in his 1937 essay *Journal d'une révolution*, Guéhenno observed that many authors had never taken the time to write about the full experiences of those from the working-class: 'Men of nothing don't have history […] Nobody took the care to note their joys or their pains. Caliban never spoke of himself. And his masters

neglected him'.[39] As well as oral testament, History is of course also constructed through the written word. It does not speak of these people because they died without papers, and thus unaccounted for. These people are undocumented; they're not part of recorded History, and so there is no evidence that they ever really existed. After the publication of *Caliban Speaks*, one of Guéhenno's contemporaries, Louis Guilloux, wrote to him to thank him for offering a voice to the disenfranchised. Guéhenno's account of men dying without trace reminded Guilloux of his grandfather: a shoemaker, a man of great spirit and humour, who 'left no oeuvre, besides a little carnet which my father still possesses to this day – his carnet de paye'.[40]

Both Renan and Guéhenno were greatly influenced by Jules Michelet, seminal historian of the French Revolution, who insisted that genius was rooted in 'le peuple'.[41] Guéhenno's first published book, *L'évangile éternel*, was a study of Michelet, but also, as Ball argues, 'a plea for educating the common people in scientific and philosophical thought'.[42] In this work, Guéhenno observes that, in Michelet's view, History should keep the spirit of those who lived through it alive: it should not just be pile of stones under which the spirit lies 'suffocated and crushed'.[43] In *Caliban Speaks,* Guéhenno seeks to keep Caliban – and those he speaks for – alive. Rather than the isolated figure left alone on the enchanted island at the end of *The Tempest,* this Caliban re-imagined by Guéhenno speaks for a mass of people: 'We are a world; the most numerous species in humanity' (p. 177). For both Renan and Guéhenno, there is a latent power in the masses. While this is a somewhat threatening prospect for Renan, Guéhenno describes their potential

[39] Jean Guéhenno, *Journal d'une révolution* (Paris: Grasset, 1939), p. 61.
[40] Le Bot, p. 113.
[41] As noted in my chapter on Renan, the suppression of Michelet's lectures (on the role of the common man in the French Revolution) by the Sorbonne was one of the catalysts for the 1848 Revolution in France.
[42] Ball, p. xv.
[43] Jean Guéhenno, *L'évangile éternel: étude sur Michelet* (Paris: Grasset, 1927), p. 14.

ascendency in exultant language: 'we are the innumerable *voice* that can hit the sky' (p. 41; my emphasis).

Caliban and the working classes: a monstrous threat

Caliban claims that it is crucial – even a duty – that people like him, from humble backgrounds, should raise their voices in dissent, and rise up against the ruling classes: 'Revolt is the nobility of the poor' (p. 58). This revolt has the power to transform the world: 'our revolt after our servitude is the movement of the world' (p. 40). For Guéhenno, Trinculo and Stephano are also disenfranchised in the same way as Caliban. They may attempt to seize power, but these men, it seems, can never succeed in taking power from those who hold up the established order. Thomas Moisan considers how comedy is used to undercut the attempt at rebellion by the lower-class characters in *The Tempest*: it can't ever hope to succeed; it's just for comic effect.[44] Although the isolated island gives the Europeans the opportunity to re-imagine their societal and hierarchical structures (most notably, Gonzalo's musings on the re-creation of a 'Golden Age'), they simply cannot conceive of one in which there is nobody who rules over others. Even when describing his Utopian society with 'no governance', Gonzalo will be king. Someone, it seems, must be in charge. But, for it to be men such as Trinculo, Stephano – even Caliban – to assume this role seems just a ridiculous suggestion. Caliban, as re-imagined by Renan and Guéhenno, rises from the masses – in the crowd scene – and then does become a leader.[45] For Renan, this is a somewhat terrifying prospect; for Guéhenno, though, this is an ardent desire.

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[44] Thomas Moisan, '"Knock me here soundly": Comic Misprision and Class Consciousness in Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 42.3 (1991), 276-290.

[45] As I noted in the introduction, Caliban was being used by satirical cartoonists in England to express their fear of the potential of the poor masses rising against their masters. A difference with Renan's sequel is that this threat is by no means regarded as a comical attempt at rebellion – it is very serious, and it succeeds.

In Renan's sequel, Caliban does lead a successful revolution. In *Caliban Speaks,* though, there is an implication that even if they foment revolution, men like Caliban can never really attain the heights of power. They are 'impossible' men. Caliban describes his role in revolutions: 'I unpaved the streets, mounted the barricades […] climbed up public monuments, like a mason proud of his work' (p. 27). But, though instrumental in the revolutions, he never gains access to real power: 'The revolution done, I always find myself at the door of the palace, like a dismissed servant […] they will shake my hand, wax lyrical about my virtues and with a thousand recommendations and to strains of the national anthem, I'm told to return home sensibly' (p. 27). Caliban goes home, he says, and cries with pride at what he has been involved with. But he remains an 'impossible man' – he never gets to accede to power himself. This is likely also an allusion to Renan's sequel, and a critique of his portrayal of Caliban. Renan's Caliban is (literally) carried to power on the arms of the people. Once in power, though, Caliban almost immediately begins to find the masses to be an irritation – he had promised to work only for them, but then quickly becomes a leader who vows to protect property and to maintain the privileges of the ruling classes. Renan could admit the possibility of Caliban being transformed, and becoming a leader, but he could not bring himself to portray a working-class man (someone like Guéhenno) as in a position of power. And so, when Caliban describes himself as an 'impossible man', he is referring to the fact that he never achieves power in any meaningful sense (without essentially becoming Prospero).

Paulhan wrote to Guéhenno after the publication of *Caliban Speaks,* describing it as 'an impassioned defence of the people, against Renan, who wanted to give them wise leaders but refused them the right to speak'.[46] Guéhenno's Caliban recognises that, in giving the masses a voice, and in encouraging them to band together, there is the potential for a genuine shift in

[46] *Correspondance: Jean Paulhan- Jean Guéhenno*, p. 238.

power: 'one poor man alone is no danger, but poor men together are no longer just poor men, but the "reds"' (p. 180). In *The Tempest*, Caliban is an isolated figure, but becomes more dangerous when he joins Trinculo and Stephano in their plan to overthrow Prospero and (re-) claim the island. Three men can hardly be described as a mass of revolutionaries, but there is power in numbers. Guéhenno's Caliban claims that the working masses seem a frightening prospect to the ruling classes; they regard 'the people' as monsters, because the innumerable faces remind them of the injustice that most of the population have for so long endured: 'when you, poor man, demand justice, they seem to see a monster, an immense face which grimaces. In this sense, they are haunted by the image of their victim' (p. 180). Caliban is considered a monster simply because he reminds the ruling classes of the reality of the life of those who live in squalor. They are disgusted partly by their own guilt. Like the harpy Ariel which rises and grimaces over the usurpers, to remind them of their misdemeanours, so this monster – with an immense face comprised of so many nameless people – disgusts and frightens the ruling class. However monstrous this mass might seem, though, they do have a latent power, and their cries for equality might one day be answered: 'but we are a world, the most numerous species of humanity, and it can't be that they oblige us to remain forever in this indignity' (p. 177).

Caliban's face: dismembering and remembering

Shakespeare's Caliban is referred to, or addressed, as a 'monster' 38 times in the play (by Trinculo and Stephano). Faced with this figure of alterity, these two seem fascinated by Caliban's strangeness. In *Caliban et Prospero* (1969), an essay in which he revisits these characters, Guéhenno recalls that he was initially quite horrified reading Shakespeare's description of the character in his dramatis personae:

> "Caliban, brutal (sic) and deformed slave". I was born among Calibans and I have many memories. They had never seemed that ugly to me. In the world where I grew up, it really wasn't easy to get anywhere. And the effort itself made us grimace.[47]

The Calibans he grew up with were not inherently ugly – the grimaces that might have been seen on their faces were caused by the continuing struggle they had to endure in life. These were the kind of struggles that the wealthier classes never had to face.

Guéhenno interrogates the idea of Caliban's monstrosity in the light of the monstrous events of the twentieth century. There are two depictions of Caliban's face – one, a poster plastered on all the walls of the city by the 'masters'; the other, a more intimate portrait, hung on the wall of Caliban's dwelling. Caliban is a living reminder to the ruling classes that they cannot simply ignore him, and those silenced masses that he symbolises: 'They can no longer neglect me […] I was a living reproach. The indignity in which I'd been kept denounced that of society as a whole' (p. 84). Guéhenno's re-imagining of Caliban is similar to Renan's in that his race seems to be of secondary importance; he is defined, and limited, more by his class. Caliban the speaker describes a portrait – a painting of him through the eyes of his masters (the ruling elites) – which is stuck up on walls all over 'the walls of Western cities' (p. 180). The masters who put up this portrait hoped that it would remind Caliban of his own ugliness: 'they hoped that, finding myself when I woke, face to face with my own image, I would finally be ashamed of my bad thoughts. They put it everywhere. I confronted it everywhere. They wanted it to follow me, like criminal records' (p. 181). This desire for Caliban to be reminded of his misdemeanours is perhaps an allusion to the end of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, where he is sent back to his hovel to do chores in the hope of a

[47] Jean Guéhenno, *Caliban et Prospero, suivi d'autres essais* (Éditions Gallimard, 1969), p. 8. It is unclear why Guéhenno writes 'esclave, *brutal* et difforme' instead of 'sauvage', which is the usual French translation of the original.

pardon – rather than being offered any forgiveness by Prospero, he remains a slave and is sent away to feel ashamed of his attempts to take back the island.

Caliban's face in these posters on the walls, his 'final portrait', is a composite one: 'Imagine a white Chinese man (a little rearranged); I have the turned-up eyes of an Asian, but in the look, the decisive air of a Parisian factory worker, the bullets of a Kalmouk,[48] but the nose of a Jew and the lips of a negro' (pp. 181-2). This composite portrait of Caliban is comprised of various features of the subjugated, the mistreated; outcasts who would not have been entitled to the same freedoms as the 'masters'. The white man – the Parisian factory worker – is not characterised by a particular physical feature, but a look (a decisive air). Although there might be some exoticisation in this composite, I do not consider this a racist portrayal; rather than Othering, the composite face is intended to suggest that all races have been disenfranchised by the same exploitative political systems. This portrait was designed by the masters to portray Caliban as a threatening figure; to 'the masters', the decisive air of a Parisian worker who seems intent on joining a Union, or demanding fairer pay, is just as threatening as the bullets of the Kalmouk warrior. Indeed, Guéhenno later reflected that: 'the greatest novelty of the first years of the new century was undoubtedly this need and this pretension that Caliban had to speak. He began by growling a little everywhere, in unions, in assemblies. He would no longer accept someone speaking in his place and that everything would be settled without him'.[49] The figure depicted on the posters is a monstrous figure to those in power because it threatens to break the status quo.

[48] The Kalmyks are a Mongolian ethnic in Russia.
[49] Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain*, p. 8.

This Caliban depicted in the poster also holds a knife between his teeth – perhaps an allusion to a real poster used in the 1920s to warn of the perils of Communism. Delia Dumitrescu, in her study of French electoral posters, observes that, from around 1870s onwards, 'visuals took a more prominent role'. In the 1920s, to warn the French against voting for Bolshevism, a poster was made very prominent in public spaces: 'a savage man depicted as a Bolshevik […] a drawing of a brightly red-faced man, sporting an unkempt haircut and big white, unfocused eyes, akin to a madman's. More shockingly, the man has a bloody knife clenched between his teeth.'[50] This propaganda poster was designed as an instrument of class control; a demonisation of the underclass in a depiction that makes them look monstrous. This painting of Caliban's face is placed on the walls of all of the towns in the Occident by those in power. It was put there to remind the working-class man of his own ugliness, but it is a depiction inspired by fear: 'My last portrait […] represented the fear they have of humanity' (p. 182). The ruling classes, claims Caliban, deprive the masses from access to the same privileges they enjoy because of their fear that equality might lead to an erosion of their own superiority: 'they deny me so as not to fear me' (p. 34). Their fear and mistrust transform the working men – one homogenous mass – into 'a monster, behind which there is a crowd, a multitude' (p. 180).

Guéhenno, throughout his oeuvre, often returns to his argument that the ruling classes have long tried to deny the existence of the 'Calibans'. However, much as Shakespeare's Prospero is obliged to remember Caliban's existence – the masque is interrupted by a '*strange, hollow, and confused noise*' as the thought of his rebellious slave irrupts into his mind – Guéhenno's Caliban argues that Prospero cannot deny him for long: 'but, fear is stronger, and obliges them to remember my existence' (p. 34). In Guéhenno's conception, Caliban is seen as ugly (and

[50] Delia Dumitrescu, 'French Electoral Poster Campaigns in the Twenty-First Century', in *Election Posters Around the Globe: Political Campaigning in the Public Space*, ed. by Christina Holtz-Bacha and Bengt Johansson (Cham, Switzerland: Ebook Central, 2017), pp. 139-157 (p. 147) <https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-32498-2_8> [accessed 27 September 2021].

monstrous) by Prospero – who represents the ruling classes – *because* he reminds him of the potential power of working men.

In his monologue, Caliban does concede that there may be a grotesque aspect to his face. But this is not because he is a deformed monster. Rather, he has been made – or rather, left – deformed by the sacrifices that he has made at the behest of the ruling classes: he, a simple working-class man, was sent to war and left disfigured. As well as the portrait of Caliban on the city walls, Caliban has a portrait – of a 'ruin of a man' (p. 123) – hanging on the wall of his dwelling: 'nothing but a photo; a human face in plain light, with hardly any shadows…a face of childish innocence, the mouth half open' (p. 122). It is, he notes, the face of a 'young man from the fields'. He asks 'who, then, ravaged this simplicity, without destroying it fully?' (p. 122). The face has been almost destroyed: 'the eyebrows burnt; instead of eyes, nothing but two black holes; a mouth sewn up; the nose reattached; skin tattooed with black stains' (p. 123). He describes an unmade and remade face – and underneath, an inscription: 'a sample of facial prosthetics' (p. 123). The face of this broken man is a stark contrast to the threatening face in the poster. This is an important reflection on the concept of the monstrous in relation to Caliban. He was not a monster, but he has been left a 'monster' by injuries and subsequent facial prosthetics. He has been rendered monstrous by the harsh conditions imposed on him as a result of the circumstances of his birth. In fact, many scientific advancements served only to make Caliban's life more difficult. In his sequel to *The Tempest*, Renan's Prospero warned of 'indisputable machines' which could keep the masses in submission. He would later reflect again on how technology changed the face of warfare: 'The dream of M. Renan was coming true. He had dreamed of a royalty of intellectuals: "A theory, he said, where there would emerge terrible machines that could tame and subjugate everything, proving its indisputable truth"'.[51] Of course,

[51] Guéhenno, *Conversion à l'humaine*, p. 86.

machinery shaped the course of WWI: Caliban mentions the '75' and the '405' (p. 121), both guns used in WWI, as an example of technological advancements. Even when faced with such terrible machines, Guéhenno later reflected, he – and countless common soldiers like him – did not allow the War to make them monsters:

> I belong to those, innumerable, who lived the war furtively, fearfully, humanly. It's for those people I write. They know that there is no need to become monsters because of having suffered, and we could recount stories to each other of how, renouncing being heros, we put a great deal of effort into remaining men.[52]

The disembodied face of the Calibans – the composite face plastered on walls, and the disfigured portrait in the cave and face of the Calibans – act as a kind of synecdoche. Guéhenno *dismembers* Caliban in order to *remember* those like him who have lived for so long without a face, without an identity. Imagery of bodily fragmentation runs through *Caliban Speaks* as a whole. Calibans are described as the stomach of society, and he summarises the whole history of political struggle as a stomach-ache. Even hunger itself is politicised: 'people denounce the infamous gluttony of the modern world in me' (p. 43); such critics characterise revolutions as being caused by 'gross jealousy of those people who have more food […] but, can those with full stomachs really accuse me of greed?' (p. 43). In the portraits, Caliban is himself fragmented – he is not a whole. In a sense he is a kind of Frankenstein. In the crucible of his extreme deprivation, a new being is formed. This is not the same kind of perspective that Renan takes – in his sequel, he describes the evolution of Caliban, from beast to man. Guéhenno's Caliban already existed as a man. But perhaps, in this evolving society where his picture is on every wall, the *idea* of the man of the working classes is being forged. Such a man, previously forgotten and ignored by

[52] Guéhenno, *Journal d'un homme de 40 ans,* p. 159.

History, now cannot be ignored by the ruling classes – they must face him directly. Caliban notes that his face – though it may be considered 'monstrous' – is a relatively new sight; the 'Calibans' have lived for years as men without a face: 'our ugliness, 100 years ago, was unseen' (p. 179.) In his preface to *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* Oscar Wilde observes that a 'Caliban' can become enraged by seeing his lived truth exposed (in realist literature) and also by its obfuscation (in romanticism): 'The nineteenth century dislike of realism is the rage of Caliban seeing his own face in a glass. The nineteenth century dislike of romanticism is the rage of Caliban not seeing his own face in a glass'.[53] In Guéhenno's reframing of the Caliban-face, the rage (having to face the reality of Caliban's subjugation) is Prospero's.

Caliban's Books

Guéhenno reinscribes Caliban, then, as a man who can no longer be ignored. Caliban tells his own story, and also gives a voice to those who have been silenced for so long. What problematises this for Guéhenno somewhat is that this education distances Caliban ever more from his origins. Education and learning are central themes of *The Tempest.* Prospero is fortunate enough to be set adrift with his books – they symbolise all of the learning which has led him to be able to wield the forces of magic. Prospero proudly reminds Miranda that the education he provided her with on the remote island is no lesser than the education of princes. We can safely assume, then, that he taught her to read. It seems, though, that Caliban was not taught to read; he was taught Prospero's language so that he could better understand and follow the orders given to him by his masters. As I argued previously, the orality of Caliban's tale is significant – but the primacy of orality is perhaps most important for people who have never been given the tools to write down their stories. Of course, in *The Tempest,* there is no real reason for Caliban to be able to read and write. But adaptation and appropriation are about allowing a text to speak to

[53] Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, ed. by Joseph Bristow (Oxford: OUP, 2006), p. 3.

a new era, and if Caliban, for Guéhenno, is symbolic of the working classes, then his lack of access to a full education is of primary importance.

In Guéhenno's reading, Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano are three characters ostracised because they are from the lower echelons of society: they are of the lower classes, and thus have been disenfranchised because of their lack of access to education. In Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Caliban joins forces with Trinculo and Stephano and attempts to lead a revolution to overthrow Prospero. Caliban insists that in order for this overthrow to be successful, they must seize – and then destroy – Prospero's books; he recognises that these books are instruments of Prospero's power on the island:

> Remember
> First to possess his books; for without them
> He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
> One spirit to command – they all do hate him
> As rootedly as I (III. 2. 89-93).

The implication here is that Prospero's knowledge is rooted in his books; his (bookish) knowledge is his power: using his knowledge of magic, Prospero can command the spirits of the island.

In his response to Shakespeare and Renan, Guéhenno refigures Caliban's relationship with books. In *Caliban Speaks*, Caliban takes issue with the suggestion that he would ever want to burn Prospero's books. This is a refutation of words attributed to him by Renan in his sequel: 'war to books!' (p. 70).[54] Guéhenno's Caliban asserts that he wants to redress this portrayal of him: he insists that he would never burn books – indeed, he respects them: 'I don't know what vision haunts them of a red night where we will burn their books and pillory their treasures' (p. 71). He

[54] Renan, *Caliban,* p. 70

does concede that for a 'Caliban,' the books of a 'Prospero' might seem threatening: 'In our confused and anxious life, there are moments when in effect all books seem suspicious' (p. 72). Books can be instruments of power, he claims, and a means by which a Prospero maintains the servitude of the Calibans: 'how could we not but be suspicious of books? For each one that helps to remove us from suffering, a thousand more only prolong our misery and servitude' (p. 73). When used as an instrument of oppression, books might seem like suitable targets for destruction. This, for Guéhenno, is not a desire inherent in the Calibans of society; it is a reaction (against books) conditioned by the imposition of servitude and forced ignorance: 'we can no longer distinguish between the libraries and the barracks of our masters. Both incite the same anger within us' (p. 72). Caliban explains that books, as well as centres of learning, can be seen as exclusionary, and thus, have sometimes incited hatred: 'Do we know where they are forged, these instruments of our humiliation? All of these ivory towers [hautes maisons] seem to harbour the same disdainful power' (p. 72). This is an allusion to a recurring theme in Guéhenno's oeuvre: that culture can become exclusionary: culture in itself is not intrinsically disdainful, but can (and has) been *used* to exclude. Caliban finds that there is still much hope and beauty to be discovered in culture: 'The truth of science, the beauty of works of art, justifies all of a sudden the credit that I instinctively gave to men' (p. 75). This Caliban regards the books, and their cultural caché, as an expression of the beautiful things which mankind can create. Far from hating books, and wanting to burn them, he sees them as aspirational. He wants access to Prospero's world.

Guéhenno reflects on his Caliban's relationship with books in a later essay, *Conversion à l'humaine* (1931):

> We know those words that Renan leant to Caliban, that is to say the people, in his philosophical drama: 'Down with books!' […] Such words are, in my opinion, nothing but a great blasphemy, and misunderstood this fervent need of light which is at the bottom of the popular soul.[55]

In *Caliban Speaks,* the anger that Caliban had initially felt towards the books of Prospero comes from deprivation: 'Is it possible to love what is banned from us?' (p. 74), he muses, and concludes that this deprivation itself draws him towards the books he previously couldn't read: 'once we are allowed access to books, nobody would have a more ardent love of them than those of us for whom the ban has been lifted' (p. 74). *This* Caliban has come to understand that the books which surround him are not enemies: 'I am amused by their invitations and contradictions' (p. 101). He steals Prospero's books, surrounds himself with them: 'and henceforth, there is nowhere I am more myself than among this heap of books that is my hovel' (p. 76).

The imagery of burning books is refigured by Guéhenno here: Caliban is pictured sitting in a hovel, surrounded by books, and making a fire. This fire gives him light to read, and also acts as a metaphor for his ardent desire for the knowledge that he acquires through Prospero's books: 'I read, spoke, commented, I brandished them like torches' (p. 76). In his miserable dwelling, Caliban is set alight by what he reads – 'I ignite' (p. 76) – his consciousness kindled by books: 'it was only necessary to light within me this little gleam of consciousness. This became a fire which can no longer be extinguished' (p. 76). Throughout his oeuvre, Guéhenno refers to this desire for education (the same desire which motivates Caliban to steal Prospero's books) as

[55] Jean Guéhenno, *Conversion à l'humaine* (Paris, Grasset, 1931), pp. 89-90.

'Promethean'.[56] It is not just books which set Caliban on fire: he also refers to Renan's Prospero figure – the chemist who seeks to allow nature to know herself, and to extract elements from the ether – as a figure of inspiration. Although Prospero never seemed to notice, when he was washing up the alembics (distillation flasks), Caliban's eyes would marvel at his master's work. Caliban describes Prospero's lament that his science will never reach the people as a 'magnificent naivety': 'he paid no attention to the upheavals and ravages that his intelligent sorcery created in my heart' (p. 77). The ruling classes may have predicted that Caliban 'would be the anti-culture; eternal barbarism' (p. 71), but the idea of Caliban burning and declaring war on books is, for Guéhenno, a manifestation of the respective authors' fear of 'Caliban(s)'. Actually, Caliban is so inspired by his desire for learning, that he wants to spread this fire to all of the Calibans in the world: 'I want to set fire to the planet' (p. 76).

Leaving the cave: loss of the self

One of the most important dialectics of *The Tempest* is the earth-air contrast (or Caliban and Ariel respectively). Guéhenno employs this dialectic to contrast the airy realm of Ariel and Prospero, and the earthy world of Sycorax and Caliban. Guéhenno re-figures Caliban as sitting somewhere on the island, in a sordid dwelling, but comforting himself by reading the books he has stolen from Prospero. This very education, though, is slightly problematic in terms of the establishment of Caliban's identity. In Guéhenno's view, Caliban moves further from his origins the more he reads – each book, metaphorically, helps to form a path out of his cave of ignorance: 'My barbaric forces were declining. Books had poisoned me' (p. 85). This trajectory, for Guéhenno, moves Caliban ever-further from his mother. Caliban contrasts the two worlds that he witnesses: the 'empyrean' (p. 112) world of Ariel and Prospero, which he visits in order

[56] For example, he reflects in a later memoir: 'I hope I've never lost the Promethean sense of knowledge', *Changer la vie*, p. 218.

to steal – and then devour – Prospero's books, and the 'earth' to which he returns to find his mother (p. 80). In Guéhenno's re-imagining, as Caliban begins to educate himself, he moves further from his mother – his gaze turns elsewhere: 'At the horizon of my thoughts I glimpsed the truth, like those stars which I used to watch in the early hours of the morning to treat myself' (p. 81). Guéhenno imagines a life for Caliban's mother, and uses her as a means of exploring Caliban's distancing from his origins: 'O, my mother, poor vanquished old woman, Sycorax, timid in front of the destiny that you hoped to charm with your prayers and incantations, in vain I told you all there was surrounding us were the phantoms of our fear, nothing but the shadow in the cavern' (p. 49).

Guéhenno inscribes Caliban in order to speak for all those who have been disenfranchised, but his work is somewhat problematic in its gendered approach. Sycorax, the mother, is diminished and defeated in this portrayal – her magic is reduced by Caliban to mere 'incantations', and it is powerless to fight against her 'destiny'. In this portrayal, she is destined to be less than others – but only because she could not see past the shadows in the cavern. The potent ministers of Prospero are reduced in this retelling to mere 'phantoms' of the fear of Sycorax and her son. The fear, perhaps, is the belief that she can never become anything more than what she is. Caliban's desire to educate himself is framed as a kind of betrayal of his mother: 'I almost betrayed […] and became afraid of my own' (p. 70). In confessing this betrayal, Caliban speaks directly to Sycorax, and to all of 'his people': 'the poor, and even you, poorest of the poor, Sycorax, my mother. I was tempted to find you all ugly, coarse and stupid, and tried to be grateful for these delicate feelings' (p. 70). This portrayal of Sycorax somewhat problematises and undermines his claim to speak for the disenfranchised. In *The Tempest*, Sycorax is established as a potent magician. But in this occlusion of her magical powers, and by portraying her as a poor woman

cowed by poverty, this retelling disenfranchises Sycorax even more, however sympathetic Guéhenno may be to her plight.

Caliban's relationship with his mother becomes increasingly strained as he educates himself; between them, Caliban claims, there is a 'mute and sombre struggle' (p. 80). Sycorax accuses her son of being proud, and of using books to distance himself from her, their name, their whole existence (p. 81). If she ever found the books in Caliban's possession, she would burn or hide them – she would admonish Caliban for having changed. Sycorax has become so inextricably linked to their poverty that it has become a part of her (p. 49). Haunted by the shadows that surround them in the cavern, her fear comes to shape her horizon of expectation. Caliban claims that the only way he found to escape these shadow phantoms was to educate himself, which is figured as a kind of rupture from his origins. He can only grow, he says, by tearing away his roots: 'what then was this shadow in which I lived, that I could only escape by a kind of *uprooting*?' (p. 81; my emphasis). This portrayal of Sycorax, and her relationship with Caliban, was perhaps shaped by Guéhenno's relationship with his own mother. In his memoir *Changer la vie* (1961), he notes that his mother was often anxious about his love of solitude: 'he's never more content than when alone; only books please him', he remembers her saying. She was a little proud of him, but she also 'feared this eccentricity as if she had guessed that this would be the principle of my treason'.[57]

As he becomes more educated, his dream is to become 'embourgeoisé' (p. 33). This Caliban attests that he never had any interest in Miranda; it was only when he begins to aspire to another kind of life that his gaze turned to her: 'Around this time, I raised my eyes towards the daughter

[57] Jean Guéhenno, *Changer la vie* (Paris: Grasset, 1959), p. 127.

of our master, Miranda, and found her beautiful' (p. 83). More than her corporeal beauty, he began to admire her clothing and jewels: 'the wealth that enveloped her […] I loved her for everything I lacked, especially an easy charm which came from her having security' (p. 84). Caliban soon becomes disillusioned with Miranda, though, and no longer admires her: 'it wasn't until much later that I perceived that, with all that, she was nothing but a petite bourgeoise' (p. 84). It is when he becomes disillusioned with the bourgeoisie, that he turns to the idea of revolution – he comes to see the ridiculous nature of those who have held him back: 'the revolution burst out like a great laugh of anger and disgust' (p. 127).

Caliban throws off the linguistic oppression used by Prospero and his ilk: 'you can, henceforth, assure me that I am stupid, grotesque, stupid, criminal. I will believe it no longer' (p. 64).[58] Caliban will no longer accept Prospero's portrayal of him as a lesser creature, and this is a crucial stage in his emancipation. It is useful for an oppressor if the oppressed subject is in a position where they are unable to reflect upon the modes of oppression – if they are consigned to a state of relative ignorance, it is much harder to question their subjugation. Caliban notes that, before he began stealing Prospero's books, he was in a position where he was not encouraged to think at all (p. 65). The established order, he observes, is largely based on ignorance and 'unconsciousness' (p. 65). Caliban recognises the crucial role of language, culture and education; through them, 'the shadows of my cave were as if dispersed. I had always had big dreams, but I never dared believe them and I lacked the audacity' (p. 65).

Throughout his description of this emancipation from the darkness of ignorance, there is an underlying note of conflict and anxiety; the more educated he becomes, the further he moves

[58] I have translated 'bête' as 'stupid', but this word can also have animalistic undertones – beastly.

from his origins: 'My barbarous forces declined. Books had poisoned me' (p. 85). P. N. Broadbent and J. E. Flower, in their study of the role of intellectuals in inter-war France, observe that the sort of anxiety expressed by Caliban was prevalent in France: 'intellectuals betrayed – often unconsciously or in spite of themselves – through the very form, style or inspiration the sociocultural tradition to which they belonged.'[59] Guéhenno's Caliban suggests that, in the books which have been kept from people like him, there can be found a disdain for those in society who haven't traditionally been afforded access to such culture: 'There is, for us, the Calibans, if we aren't careful, in the culture of our masters, a poison. It's the principle of disdain, exclusion and pride that they claim is necessary for all culture and, in reality, they put there, to protect themselves' (p. 85).

Caliban seems to suggest that those who have been born into lives of privilege cannot hold the same ardent dreams that once sustained him: 'Happiness kills imagination, and happy people can't understand the power of a dream that only poverty can nourish' (p. 160). There seems to be a pervasive anxiety underlying the piece about the role of 'culture' and the role it has in civilisation: '"Civilisation" and "culture" are the "catchwords" of our time' (p. 169). Caliban asks a crucial question – 'what is civilisation' – and is answered by a 'chorus' of civilised people: 'Civilisation is order, Caliban', they reply, 'it is when some command and some obey' (p. 170). Order is, according to the ruling elites, only possible if certain sections of the population are denied equal access to education: '"Order", they told you, "is never more stable than when it is founded on ignorance and unconsciousness. Let's arrange things so that Caliban thinks very little"' (pp. 64-5). Guéhenno's conceit is that, as Caliban moves further from his origins, he is likely to become more like Prospero. In a later essay, Guéhenno suggests that Renan (who was

[59] P. N. Broadbent and J. E. Flower, 'The Intellectual and his Role in France between the Wars', *Journal of European Studies*, 8.4. (1978), 246-257 (p. 254).

not born into a wealthy family himself) had himself undergone this transformation: 'wasn't Monsieur Renan himself a Caliban in his youth? […] This prince of the spirit too soon forgot the young Cimmerian[60] barbarian that he had been […] And I don't know what pride insinuated into him; or what shame, either, of "his own". He wanted them to be more delicate, more distinguished'.[61] In the end, Guéhenno suggests, Renan became so distanced from 'the Calibans' he came from that he no longer understood them: 'They don't speak the same language'.[62]

This attitude of Renan's, a kind of betrayal of origins, is in contrast to Michelet's approach. In an essay on Michelet's Humanism published in *Europe*, Guéhenno argued that Michelet's own humble background not only helped to keep him grounded, but gave a certain strength to his philosophy: 'The humanism of Michelet has its source in his humble origins. He knew, not through hearsay, but through experience, what poverty was'. He describes Michelet's poverty as an experience which 'nourished and strengthened his thoughts'.[63] Guéhenno likens his own childhood – a poor child studying in his bedroom – to that of Michelet; Michelet was lit up by 'the miracle of the Renaissance'. In this essay, Guéhenno argues that many of the great thinkers have come from 'the people', but then they become distanced from them: 'poverty seems vulgar to him and the people are no longer of his world'.[64] The connection to the people should not be forgotten or neglected, he says, in what he describes as 'this century of the worker', which advances thanks to the people and 'is nourished by popular sap'. Despite their efforts, they are rarely rewarded: 'And yet, the people, in generality, advance little'.[65]

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[60] The word Cimmerian is an allusion to Renan's 'Prayer on the Acropolis': 'I am born, O goddess of the blue eyes, of barbarian parents, among the good and virtuous Cimmerians who dwell by the shore of a melancholy sea, bristling with rocks ever lashed by the storm', <https://www.lexilogos.com/document/renan/acropolis.htm> [accessed 27 September 2021].
[61] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, pp. 90-91.
[62] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, p. 91.
[63] Guéhenno, 'Humanisme Romantique: La jeunesse de Michelet', *Europe*, 56 (1927), 490-516 (p. 490).
[64] Guéhenno, 'Humanisme Romantique', p. 492.
[65] Guéhenno, 'Humanisme Romantique', p. 492.

This critique of Renan, too detached and distanced from the masses, is not extended to Shakespeare. Indeed, Guéhenno's conception of Shakespeare seems to have been shaped by the mythologisation of him as a natural genius, a conduit of the common soul, which began with Voltaire, and continued throughout much of the French critical reception of Shakespeare. Caliban (as well as Trinculo and Stephano) are 'impossible' men. As well as the inequality of opportunity they face, these men are also impossible because they have a more intimate understanding of the system which maintains their oppression: 'to be possible you mustn't have too much imagination' (p. 28). Those who truly understand the real situation of the Calibans of the world would be unable to access power, or at least to access the sort of power which maintains the status quo of mass disenfranchisement. Guéhenno doesn't regard Shakespeare as a writer who ignored 'impossible' men. In his work on Michelet, Guéhenno talks of a 'Tout-le-Monde' | 'An Everyman'. He cites Shakespeare as one author who paid attention to the Everyman:

> for experts and intellectuals, Everyman is a poor honest man who scarcely sees, who stumbles around, bumps into things, and mumbles; who doesn't really know what he is saying. Quick, a walking stick for this blind man, a guide, a support; someone who can speak for him. But simple sorts, who aren't intellectuals, like Dante, Shakespeare and Luther, see this good man altogether differently. They bow before him, invite him in, write down his words; they stand in front of him. It is to him that the young Shakespeare listened, while he guarded the horses at the door of the theatre.[66]

[66] Guéhenno, *L'évangile éternel,* p. 132.

This idea, of Shakespeare guarding the horses at the door of the theatre, and fraternising with the common folk who attended, is part of the mythologisation of Shakespeare in French criticism, and is similar to Hugo's assessment of the Bard. It seems that Guéhenno's re-imagining of who Caliban might be is partly shaped by his imagining of who Shakespeare was.

Prospero's betrayal

In Guéhenno's response to *The Tempest*, Prospero is complicit in the disenfranchisement of Calibans. This is described in a chapter entitled 'Prospero's betrayal'. Our speaker Caliban characterises Prospero – the distanced intellectual – as a man who lives only for his studies: 'I sometimes witnessed the conversations of these savants and artists who claim to live only for their Art or for their Science. It was delicious and inhumane. Listening to them, it's as if they live in an empyrean realm where they're given the spectacle of a marvellous opera' (pp. 112-113). Again, the empyrean world of Prospero is contrasted with Caliban's earthy existence. The kind of distanced intellectuals that he is maligning only see the suffering of their fellow humans as a sort of unfolding spectacle (rather like Renan writing to his sister of the theatrical events he witnessed during the events of 1848 and 1871). Not only do they take no action to improve the lot of Calibans, but these intellectuals also try to explain it away: 'the real treason is to follow the world as it is and to spend time justifying it' (p. 115). The scientific progress achieved by the Prosperos of society have done nothing to improve the material lives of the Calibans. In fact, many scientific advancements served only to make Caliban's life more difficult, including the machinery which undoubtedly transformed modern warfare.

These contemporary intellectuals – these 'Prosperos' – have changed even since Renan's time. Renan's Prospero, at least, was driven by a higher idealism. By contrast, Caliban suggests that

intellectuals of his time try on different ideas and personas – as if donning a series of theatrical masks – without committing to any:

> when I come to think of them, I imagine them in a round bedroom surrounded by mirrors: before his innumerable images, each of them mimes a pathetic drama, successively puts on the masks of the cynic, the epicurean, the stoic and, sometimes, declaims loquaciously. Boredom comes, and the play is interrupted; time to don new masks and images (p. 114).

Caliban suggests that this lack of commitment to any cause or idea – 'they try on ideas, lend themselves to all and give themselves to nothing' (p. 113) – is partly driven by the forces of capitalism and materialism which have so transformed the world since Renan's intervention in the Caliban-Prospero dialectic. Guéhenno's Caliban criticises what he calls the 'Taylorisation' of science (F. W. Taylor designed a scientific management which involved the reorganisation of jobs for efficiency and productivity). Caliban claims that, now, the power of Prospero has been 'dispersed' – 'we have innumerable intellectuals and no sage' (p. 117).

Guéhenno, speaking as Caliban, is not disparaging the existence of intellectuals – he would have described himself as one. The betrayal of Prospero, and the intellectual by extension, is an abdication of any involvement in the problems of society. The betrayal of the intellectual classes wasn't just committed by scientists, but was often committed in the Humanities. In his essay *Conversion*, Guéhenno is troubled by the exclusionary nature of this discipline: 'There is in the 'Humanities', or more, in what they have become, a principle of disdain, exclusion and pride irreconcilable with what people might call culture'.[67] In this essay, Guéhenno argued that culture had become an exclusionary means of disambiguating oneself from the masses: 'Culture became

[67] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, p. 93.

a manner of being. And we have come to the point where the prejudice of culture takes the place, for many people, of culture itself'. He described a 'collusion between wealth and culture'. Many highly educated people became so distanced from the masses that the inequality so evident in society no longer moved them: 'Their education developed in them a vanity which separates, an inhumane vanity'.[68]

Guéhenno did admire the Prospero-figure – he aspired to be like him, and in many ways admired the sage's dedication to his scientific pursuits. That said, he was profoundly troubled by the fact that there existed a class of intellectuals who seemed so indifferent to the suffering of people like Caliban. In this sense, he seems torn between two theories about the role of intellectuals in society which raged in French society at the time. In 1927, the philosopher Julien Benda wrote *La trahison des clercs | The treason of intellectuals*,[69] which argued that intellectuals should remain aloof from the troubles of the world in their pursuit of higher truths. On the other side of the argument were those who felt that it was necessary for intellectuals to be involved in these worldly concerns – a position summed up by Jean Paul Sartre's phrase 'littérature engagée'.[70] In *Conversion,* Guéhenno adds to this debate: 'Benda talked of a "treason of intellectuals". Perhaps he should have talked of a treason of culture itself, a treason of the "Humanities"'.[71]

The death of Prospero

Renan returned to his sequel several years later to enact a reconciliation between Caliban and Ariel and thus to offer Prospero a peaceful death. Guéhenno re-imagines this episode: towards the end of *Caliban Speaks,* Caliban describes a dream he had, in which he saw the death of

[68] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, pp. 97-98.
[69] Julien Benda, *La trahison des clercs* (Paris: Grasset, 1927).
[70] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature* (Paris : Éditions Gallimard, 1948), p. 10.
[71] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, p. 98.

Prospero. In the dream, he is summoned (by Ariel) to Prospero's side so that he might share some last thoughts with his former slave. Caliban insists that Prospero's final moments were not at all as they were described by Renan in his sequel: 'All that I saw was inconsistent with the story that Renan told us of the final moments of the prince of science' (pp. 182-3). Prospero, by this stage, is an isolated and distant figure: 'I found him in that strange house of cement and glass where he lived so long apart from men […] age and sorrow having slowly detached him from the world, he was leaving it resigned rather than happy' (p. 183). Prospero asks to die with Ariel and Caliban on either side of him: '"All is good now," he said, "this is how I want to die – with my little Ariel and the most humble of men"' (pp. 183-4). Prospero talks to Ariel of Caliban: 'he is brutal, but his heart is just, and as for his intelligence, time will form that' (p. 185). He even apologises to Caliban: 'I lacked tenderness and generosity towards you. Your vulgarity annoyed me […] your poverty annoyed me. I preferred not to see it' (p. 187). Prospero admits, then, that he did – like so many of the ruling classes who prefer not to see the face of the Calibans – turn his gaze from his slave, since he did not care to look. Prospero admits, in his dying words, that his own pursuit of scientific knowledge made him able to turn away from the injustice so ingrained in society: the limitation of intellectual endeavour is that it only allows you to observe the world from a 'petit canton' (p. 187). He admits that his science was a kind of indifference, and that science can distract from the world that it claims to want to understand: 'This makes us the most clairvoyant and the most blind of men […] each savant has a miniscule world which he observes passionately under a microscope; anything that is not in the study is as a grain of dust which obscures his vision' (p. 188).

Prospero concedes that, while he taught Caliban to read, he forbade his slave access from any further means of education, by not granting him access to books: 'I taught you to read […] that was my best action. I left you at the door of our mysteries. If you come to understand them, all

credit to you' (p. 188). He ends by saying that now, finally, he sees the beauty in Caliban: 'And thus we have seen Calibans becoming the princes of the Spirit' (p. 101). Just before his death, Prospero bequeaths his science ('all of his kingdom') to Caliban, in the hope that his perspective will add new life, a new humaneness, to the intellectual endeavours of Prospero and intellectuals like him. This will be Caliban's new oeuvre. Scientists, and more generally intellectuals, Prospero says, 'have more need of lead than of wings. Men of your sort have no lack of anchoring to the world' (p. 190). Guéhenno here offers a sort of reconciliation between the earthy world of Caliban and the empyrean realm of Ariel and Prospero.

The mask slips

In the epilogue to *Caliban Speaks,* Guéhenno no longer speaks as Caliban, but as himself. As Koenraad Geldof argues, Guéhenno's 'enunciative position' changes at this point'.[72] Guéhenno addresses the epilogue *to* Caliban, and begins with an apology: 'The moment I give these apocryphal notebooks to the printer, I want, Caliban, to ask your pardon' (p. 213). He wonders what Caliban – or the working-class man he represents – will make of the monologue: 'what will you think of this game I played […] What good is this chatter?' (p. 213). There is an anxiety that Caliban will see the work as a kind of betrayal: 'you'll burst out again in a terrible laughter, which causes me despair, which reveals such bitterness and disgust. And then didn't I betray you in turn?' (p. 213). In later writings, when reflecting on *Caliban Speaks,* Guéhenno oscillates between two kinds of criticisms which were levelled at the work – that he had too much of himself in Caliban's voice, and that he lacked the courage to speak for, and as, himself, without adopting a literary mask: 'I barely dared to speak as myself. I adopted a mask. I gave to the people a name of the theatre: Caliban.'[73] Guéhenno later recalls his conversations with the historian Daniel M.

[72] Koenraad Geldof, 'Look Who's Talking: Caliban in Shakespeare, Renan and Guéhenno', in *Constellation Caliban: Figurations of a Character*, ed. by Nadia Lie and Theo D'haen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), pp. 81-112 (p. 105).
[73] Jean Guéhenno, *La foi difficile* (Paris: Grasset, 1957), p. 54.

Halévy (to whom *Caliban Speaks* was dedicated), who was instrumental in its publication, and also responsible for the title:

> I dreamt of being as lucid as Renan […] but I never conceived it as a possibility that, born as I was, I could ever talk like him. I believe it was Daniel Halévy who, mocking my contradictions and the strangeness of my words one day, said 'Caliban speaks'. Yes, the singularity and the novelty of my undertaking had to be that I would give voice to this character who, in the history of thought, had never spoken: Caliban, the despised – and to do it the best I could; even better than the best of those aristocrats, those aristoi, that Renan had taught me to admire.[74]

Guéhenno notes that he himself would never have had the audacity to give it such a title – since it was only him speaking: 'although there was perhaps a lot of pride in presenting my grievances as those of Caliban and of the masses themselves; more than there would have been to speak only for myself'.[75] Halévy was fascinated, in particular, by the contradictions in a highly educated writer claiming to speak for the masses: 'My brutality, even my naivety, strangely dressed up by the ENS, I think, greatly interested him […] He was amused by the curious equivocation of seeing how Caliban would stand in the *République des Lettres*, and in his own house where all the glories of the century were paraded'.[76] The phrase 'dressed up by the ENS' suggests that Guéhenno's elite education had allowed him to wear the garments of the intellectual elite – but whether these garments sat well on him, and whether they should dress the words of Caliban, was a question to which Guéhenno would often return.

[74] Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain*, p. 158.
[75] Guéhenno, *Ce que je crois* (Paris: Grasset, 1964), p. 80.
[76] Guéhenno, *La foi difficile*, pp. 92-93.

In the epilogue, Guéhenno attests that he did set out to tell the story of those who had been disenfranchised, and silenced, by history: 'we are known only by what others have said about us. And the others who speak of us are nearly always our masters. The masses cannot have witnesses' (p. 214). He had set out to be the witness to these unspoken stories. However, he also wonders what right he has to speak for these silenced masses: 'Caliban speaks! What boasting! (p. 213); 'what right do I have myself to testify for this vast silent world? What can this testimony be worth?' (p. 214).

Guéhenno is acutely aware of this contradiction: he observes, in this epilogue, that acquiring the means of expressing the experiences of this 'silent world' for whom he is attempting to speak, is 'in a certain manner to cease being part of it; to become unsuitable to be a witness for the masses' (p. 214). Through his education, Guéhenno feels that he has grown ever further removed from the people he might speak for, like Caliban moving further away from the cave, and from Sycorax: 'I maintain my character so badly! How can you recognise in these pages the accent of your voice? You are much simpler and more eloquent. It's true that Prospero and his magic perverted me' (p. 213). Guéhenno refers the reader to the writing of Lucien Bourgeois (especially *L'ascension*)[77] as a far more truthful testimony of the experience of Caliban: 'there you'll find better than in these notebooks (without doubt) the soul of Caliban and the tragic story of his efforts towards the light' (p. 214n).

Guéhenno takes one consolation from his disappointment in telling Caliban's story so ineffectively: 'if something must console me for having so badly told your dreams and your life,

[77] Lucien Bourgeois, *L'ascension* (Paris: Éditions Rieder, 1925). Guéhenno refers to this work 'as an admirable little book'. The work is featured on a list of literature about workers, or 'livres ouvrières', l'Association pour La Promotion de La Littérature Ouvrière, 'A propos de Lucien Bourgeois', <www.litteratureouvriere.fr/index.php/documents/divers/10-a-propos-de-lucien-bourgeois> [accessed 27 September 2021].

Caliban, it's that our masters will not be grateful to me. This sole thought reassures me. They don't like to be reminded of your existence' (p. 218). These masters, who would rather ignore Caliban, suggest that some are unequal because they simply don't want to break free: 'They'll say to us, and sometimes with a voice of good faith and with a sort of tenderness: "why remain in this prison? Won't you accept being free, and take part in our games? Are you forbidden from looking up at the sky?"' (pp. 218-9). Geldof argues that Guéhenno's claim to speak for Caliban is somewhat disingenuous because of his education: 'just like Renan-Prospero, he enlists the *Other* – the one who is situated well below discourse, culture and politics – in an intellectual project for intellectuals: he *inscribes* the Other.'[78] I think that, to Guéhenno, Caliban was never an 'Other': just because someone might become distanced from their heritage, this does not mean that they become a stranger to it. Looking back on the work as an older man, Guéhenno reflected 'I was young and lacked moderation'.[79] Nonetheless, he also recalls that he really did earnestly want to give Caliban a voice: 'I was in absolute sincerity, and I hope that Caliban continued to speak and to be in everything I wrote'.[80] Despite his misgivings, and the ongoing question of how Caliban's story should be told, I see Guéhenno's work as a genuine and passionate attempt to give a voice to those he grew up with, who had undoubtedly been silenced by history.

The reception of Caliban Speaks

The responses to *Caliban Speaks* demonstrate that this work had spoken to many pressing concerns which were being debated in France at that time. Guéhenno writes to Rolland, in December 1928, that he has received many letters 'which prove to me that the book moved many people, and different kinds of people. I felt that there was truly a communion of true

[78] Geldof, p. 109.
[79] Guéhenno, *Sur le chemin des hommes,* p. 18.
[80] Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain*, p. 8.

spirits, and this consoled me.'[81] Guéhenno also received many letters from – and entered into lengthy correspondence about *Caliban Speaks* – with a number of contemporary authors. Having read the book, Guéhenno and the author Jean Giono entered into what André-Alain Morello describes as a '40-year epistolary friendship'.[82] Giono wrote to Guéhenno in November 1928, thanking him for *Caliban Speaks.* For Giono, Caliban was a voice for those men who died without leaving much of a historical trace: 'My dear friend, what I'm going to tell you will seem extraordinary to you: it reminded me of my father […] My father was one of those people. He was this 'Caliban', and I remember that, many times, we spoke the phrases of your Caliban'.[83] Guéhenno notes in a later memoir that he received many letters from workers – young and old – who felt that the character of Caliban resonated with them.

Following the publication of *Caliban speaks,* Guéhenno also entered into correspondence with the influential writer Romain Rolland.[84] Rolland praised Guéhenno for his enunciation on behalf of those who might not have had the opportunity to speak: 'but you were right – and it is a good thing – to speak for the brothers who didn't really know (or thought that they didn't know) how to speak. Speak out!'.[85] One of Rolland's criticisms of the work was that Guéhenno had kept the name 'Caliban'; this name had connotations which, Rolland felt, undermined the message: 'what I don't like much in him is his name: because it presupposes – in Shakespeare – a servitude of nature, base and cruel'.[86] Guéhenno replies that he understands Rolland's issue with the name, while also stressing that it must be kept for some time: 'it's a name of war, and he must make war, the war for his own […] he fervently hopes that it is soon recognised that, in fighting for his

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[81] Letter to Rolland from Guéhenno, 16 Dec 1928, *L'indépendance de l'esprit*, p. 39.
[82] André-Alain Morello, 'Guéhenno et Giono: une amitié, deux pacifismes, deux journaux de guerre', in *Jean Guéhenno: guerres et paix,* ed. by Jeanvyes Guérin, Jean-Kely Paulhan and Jean-Pierre Rioux (Villeneuve: Presses universitaires de Septentrion, 2009), pp. 91-103 (p. 94).
[83] Morello, p. 94.
[84] Rolland is described by Maurice Rieuneau as 'one of the patriarchs of socialist European pacifism […] so influential that other writers were described as "rollandian"', Rieuneau, p. 250.
[85] Letter from Rolland to Guéhenno, 22 Dec 1928, *L'indépendance de l'esprit*, p. 41.
[86] Letter from Guéhenno to Rolland, 22 Dec 1928, *L'indépendance de l'esprit,* p. 40.

own, he believes himself to be fighting for all men'.[87] Although he doesn't agree with the choice of name, Rolland assures Guéhenno that he still sympathises with *his* version of 'Caliban'. Rolland encourages Guéhenno to continue writing as the mouthpiece of these silenced working classes: 'Do the soliloquies of Caliban! Be Caliban, and see with his eyes the men and the works of our time'.[88] It is important for Caliban to speak up now, Rolland says, because liberty is dying in France in front of their eyes. 'When she [liberty] is dead, we will write the speeches. The dead will bury the dead. Caliban, speak, or die!'[89]

As Guéhenno recalls in *Conversion*, other readers of *Caliban Speaks* were less encouraging of the project: his Caliban made uncomfortable reading; his testimony made some have to face certain truths, certain social injustices which they would really rather ignore:

> The words of Caliban were not hateful. His voice was not even menacing. But this man that some wanted to humiliate seemed to have retained his pride and audacity. 'Here is what you want me to be, he said to his masters, and here is what I am', and he naively recounted his life, confessed his troubles, his pain, his faith […] They wanted sincerity from him. Many people would have preferred that he never spoke. […] Social miseries make them dizzy. They don't like it when they are forced to face them.[90]

One of the other criticisms of the piece that Guéhenno later recalls was not that Caliban had been granted a voice, but that he had spoken in the wrong accent. In his later reflections on the work, Guéhenno distances himself from what Geldof called the 'enunciative position' he adopted – he had merely been a conduit through which Caliban could speak: 'I gave a voice to

[87] Letter from Guéhenno to Roland, 1 Jan 1929, *L'indépendance de l'esprit*, p. 42.
[88] Letter from Rolland to Guéhenno, 3 Jan 1929 *L'indépendance de l'esprit*, p. 44.
[89] Letter from Rolland to Guéhenno, 16 May 1929, *L'indépendance de l'esprit*, pp. 60-61.
[90] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, pp. 10-11.

the most humble of men, Caliban, and it is very true that it was he who spoke. As for me, I held only the writing equipment'.[91] But, as Daniel Halévy had been amused, and fascinated, by the concept of the highly educated Guéhenno speaking on behalf of – as – the masses, so some critics regarded his Caliban as being too eloquent, too principled: 'This man had too many virtues: this could not be Caliban […] They accused him of being a charlatan.'[92] These critics would prefer that, if Caliban were to speak, he would speak not quite as eloquently: 'The pride or the finesse he showed, they would prefer to think that he stole them. Those things were not his tools: "Speak", they told him, but speak like a *goujat* [pleb]. Otherwise, we won't recognise you'.[93]

The very conceit that Caliban should only speak like a pleb, and not with eloquence or poetry, is undermined by Shakespeare's own Caliban, who – maligned and mistreated as he is – voices some of the most beautiful poetry in the play:

> Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,
> That if I then had waked after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again, and then in dreaming
> The clouds methought would open and show riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked
> I cried to dream again (III. 2. 133-141).

The island is a hostile environment for Caliban – many things do hurt him at Prospero's behest – and yet he speaks poetically of the beauty he hears, and the ardent desires that he can only dream of while Prospero is still his master. The beauty of Caliban's words might unsettle those who would rather ignore and subjugate him. But for Guéhenno, who himself dreamed of new worlds while in his room at night reading, and who envisioned Shakespeare and the other great masters

[91] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, pp. 9-10.
[92] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, p. 12.
[93] Guéhenno, *Conversion*, pp. 11-12.

of literature and philosophy coming through his wall and speaking to him, Caliban's voice could *only* be poetic and eloquent. As Shakespeare voiced the disenfranchised, so too would Guéhenno, but always through the language of high art.

Guéhenno's *Caliban Speaks* inspired other writers to adopt the signification or the voice that he created for Caliban. Joseph Folliet, in *À toi, Caliban: le peuple et la culture* (1956) writes about the role that 'culture' has to play in the France of the 1950s: the tension and dichotomy between urban and rural workers, between industrial and white-collar workers, and how these might be reconciled – he hopes that, ultimately, 'culture will give a voice to the people'.[94] In the preface to the second edition, Folliet cites two Calibans: 'Caliban I: son of Shakespeare' and 'Caliban II: baptised by Jean Guéhenno, that workhorse who aspires to the clarity of intelligence'.[95] He dedicates his book to the latter: 'It is to you, Caliban, my brother, that I dedicate my words – my words of liberation and beauty, from man to man, in the joy and honour of human culture. Open this amicable book with friendship'.[96]

In 1947, a group of writers led by Daniel Jean established a literary and political journal that they named *Caliban*. Most of the writers involved lived in Algeria – they were part of the *pieds noirs* community – and, after a few editions, the journal was discovered, and then supported and funded by Camus. The journal was initially named 'Le Français dans la clandestinité' when it was originally established in August 1940,[97] but by 1947, they felt it was more fitting to name the journal after Caliban. In the opening words, the writers explain their choice of name: 'The brute begotten by Shakespeare evolved into having an ownership of himself and of his thoughts, until

[94] Joseph Folliet, *À toi Caliban: le peuple et la culture*, 2nd edn (Paris: Éditions du Centurion, 1965), p. 91.
[95] Folliet, p. 13.
[96] Folliet, p. 14.
[97] Corinne Renou, '*Caliban*, une revue de vulgarisation intellectuelle?' *Vingtième Siècle, revue d'histoire*, 40 (1993), 75-85 (p. 75).

he became what he is today: the people; a man of flesh and free-will, whether in his person or among the masses, the very foundation of a civilisation of which he has made himself the centre, the preoccupation and the end'.[98] Corinne Renou makes explicit the influence of both Renan and Guéhenno on the founders of the journal: 'rough-hewn by Ernest Renan, Caliban expressed himself under the pen of Jean Guéhenno. The cause of Caliban becomes the cause of man.'[99]

Journal of the Dark Years

Throughout his life, Guéhenno repeatedly returned to the characters of Caliban and Prospero; often in the private diaries he kept during the Occupation, later published as *Journal of the Dark Years*. In this self-imposed solitude, Guéhenno found refuge in writing.[100] In one of the earliest diary entries (28 June 1940), Guéhenno observes that he still identifies with Caliban. Guéhenno reflects, though, that by this stage in his life, he has emancipated himself from his initial state of ignorance: '[I am] an independent man who owes his independence to himself alone, to his effort, to his profession; a Caliban set free'.[101] As a young man, and perhaps even without knowing it, he paid no heed to the established power structures, and defied the convention that someone from his milieu should not become free: 'a barbarian who shook up important people, a scholarship-student with no respect for the heirs of the earth, a free man with no reasons for being free since he is not rich' (p. 7). This self-definition was perhaps shaped partly by his treatment at the hands of some of his contemporary intellectuals. As David A. Bell notes:

[98] The introductory preamble to the very first edition of the *Caliban* journal, cited in Renou, p. 75.
[99] Renou, p. 75.
[100] The only way he can find any sense of hope is through his own writing, and through his books. An entry dated June 1941 ends with one word: 'Literature' – it is a light for him; a method of resistance. The following entry begins 'Still in the same darkness', *Journal of the Dark Years*, p. 91. Jacques Debu-Bridel suggests that, in this period, Guéhenno feels that the act of *writing* is inherent to him; that his writing is what keeps his (resistance) spirit alive: 'you understand well that a writer can't altogether be quiet, and certainly can't prevent himself from writing', Jacques Debu-Bridel, *La Résistance Intellectuelle* (Paris: Julliard, 1970), p. 28.
[101] Guéhenno, *Journal of the Dark Years*, trans. by Ball, p. 7.

'During the interwar years, bourgeois intellectuals and politicians, especially on the reactionary right, could display very high degrees of condescension and scorn to men like Guéhenno.'[102]

In these diaries, Guéhenno returns frequently to 'the problems of Caliban' (p. 95). But as Caliban, in *Caliban Speaks,* felt himself moving further away from his origins – and his mother – the more educated he became, Guéhenno suggests that he now feels himself unable to fit comfortably in the world of Caliban. Or, indeed, the world of Prospero: 'But once I return to my solitude, I find it desolate and I can't stand it. The world of Caliban was not solitary: it was the world of the heart. I am no longer simple enough to be happy in it and I was born too stupid ever to be at ease among brilliant minds' (p. 96). Although he seems to feel ill at ease in what he sees as the respective worlds of both characters, Guéhenno muses that there has developed – within him – aspects of both Prospero and Caliban: he might have begun life as Caliban, but as he has grown, and become more educated, he has become increasingly like Prospero. By July 1941, Guéhenno concedes that, within him, there are aspects of both characters – and that these aspects of himself are often at odds: 'Caliban and Prospero have remained more or less out of harmony inside me' (p. 98). Indeed, this inner conflict seems to impinge on his entire intellectual endeavour: 'And that adds some confusion to almost everything I say or write. As long as I have succeeded in bringing them into agreement, it would doubtless be better for me to try to speak and write like Caliban or like Prospero, letting each have his voice and his accent' (p. 99).[103] For him, the hybrid has no worth, no value; he must allow both Prospero *and* Caliban to have, in

[102] David A. Bell, 'This extraordinary diary reminds us why books matter', *New Republic,* September 27, 2014, <https://newrepublic.com/article/119591/diary-dark-years-review-reminds-us-why-books-matter> [accessed 27 September 2021].

[103] He also refers to this internal conflict in one of his later memoirs: 'I really spent my life between these two characters, trying to reconcile them. I hoped that Caliban would develop a passion for the noble knowledge of Prospero and that he, in return, would no longer have concerns about sharing it with Caliban', Guéhenno, *Carnets du vieil écrivain*, p. 71.

turn, their respective voices within him. In his youth, then, he gave a voice to Caliban, but at this stage in his life, he feels equally compelled to speak with the voice of Prospero.[104]

In June 1942, Guéhenno admits that, in his attempt to make sense of his own identity, he has found himself at a loss: 'I would like to find simplicity again. Twenty or thirty years ago, I knew who I was and what I had to do in this world' (p. 160). Giving a voice to Caliban, in his youth, had given him a distinct purpose: 'I cried out the revolt and hope of Caliban, and that came from the deepest part of my self, from my childhood. (Although books had already perverted me and taught me how to put too much order in my cries)' (p. 160). Again, here we see some of his ambivalence towards of the canonical literary texts to which he turned in order to shape Caliban's voice: 'I lost myself in books' (p. 160). He feels that, through the process of education, through transforming himself into an intellectual, he has distanced himself ever-further from his origins. And through this process, he fears that he might have lost some of his authentic self. He eventually concludes that, though he had once afforded a voice to Caliban, he can no longer speak for – speak as – him, because he has been so transformed by his education, and his age: 'Now Caliban needs to talk like a new man' (p. 160).

Guéhenno reflects that his desire to write authentically as himself had become something of a prison. He had once tried to express the *universality* of Caliban, but now, on reflection, finds his earlier work too concerned with the specific experience of his individual circumstances:

[104] The transformation from a 'Caliban' to a 'Prospero' would be seen as one of the defining features of Guéhenno's life and work. Paul Phocas entitled his study of Guéhenno's contribution to educational literature and policy *Prospéro chez les jeunes Calibans ou Jean Guéhenno dans les œuvres didactiques: 1935-1990* (Nantes: Quest Éds., 2001).

> But the fear of betraying my idea locked me inside myself as in a prison. I brought everything back to my little rule, to my little problems. A stronger heart, less mistrustful of itself, would have shone forth far more. Perhaps I have been more faithful to myself alone, not to Caliban (p. 174).

He had claimed, in *Caliban Speaks*, to speak – and think – as Caliban, but this diluted the truth of his message: 'Truth must be served as truth, that is, as the common good, and not as one's own truth – that is, as a possession of one person' (p. 174). Perhaps Guéhenno felt that he could no longer speak for Caliban because he was now too far removed from that crucible of poverty which so formed his character. In the dawn of his life, born into poverty, he developed a 'fever for justice' (p. 194). But he reflects that, in these later years, his fever has subsided somewhat: '[the] passion has died down despite myself' (p. 194). The ardent fires of his youth are now mere embers. Guéhenno reflects that, initially, he had been planning to write a sequel to *Caliban Speaks*; in 1944, he describes the notes he made in preparation for this undertaking. But he finds it quite impossible: 'I can't manage to do it. Caliban himself does not grow older. His anger is renewed with the generations' (p. 263). He does concede that Caliban still has much freedom to gain: 'I still feel inequality as a deep offense […] I know that the great mass of people still cannot really live' (p. 264). At this point in his life, though, there is no possibility of speaking for Caliban any longer: 'I re-read my little book of twenty years ago. There is a tone in it I am not capable of reproducing today. Have I become used to the misery of others?' (p. 264) – the spirit of Caliban, at least within him, has been weakened. This weakening is in spite of his recognition that Caliban has even more reason for anger than ever before:

> And yet Caliban's appeal could be so strong, if only I had the heart for it, if I could make him speak today not only from my own meagre experience (and the youth of my heart,

> as I did twenty years ago), but truly from his own and according to his spirit. The dubious battle in which he has been engaged for thirty years – sometimes fighting and sometimes submitting – in which he is sometimes duped, led astray by the lies of his latest tyrants and struggling against himself, his mistakes, his servitude, his degradation, his defeats (p. 264).

He talks of how Caliban was affected by the war – sacrificing his freedom even more for the benefit of the few: '[we might] also speak of his martyrdom, his victory and that light which grows invincibly within him in the very midst of combat, the certitude of being right, hope and dignity for all – what matter for mediation. And all that the ordeal itself has taught him: freedom is everyone's cause and you lose it if you claim you're saving it only for yourself' (p. 264). Inequality, for Guéhenno, is not an inevitable fact of society; it should be tackled: 'The common soul must be strong and rich enough to feed those who are most in need, those whom the injustice of nature has deprived the most, so that they may regain confidence and hope nonetheless' (p. 264).[105]

After WWII, and for the rest of his life, Guéhenno continued to reflect on Prospero and Caliban. In 1962, on the date of his reception into the Académie, Guéhenno gives a speech in which he refers to *Caliban Speaks*:

[105] In his final memoir, Guéhenno did write that the situation of the worker had improved more than he ever could have hoped for when he first wrote as Caliban: 'Everything turned out a little differently than I expected in my youth. I was revolted by the poverty around me. I hated the sad and grey life of all of my people. Union and worker victories, at least in the West, have happily changed all that, and so profoundly that a worker today can no longer even imagine what the life of his grandfather was like', Guéhenno, *Dernières Lumières, Derniers Plaisirs* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1977), p. 13.

> In my youth, a little arrogantly perhaps, I […] claimed to voice a fairly important character, Caliban, and there's no doubt that I was very loyal to his hopes and dreams. It might seem to be impertinent indeed, after that, my desire to enter into one of the palaces of Prospero.[106]

The Académie, a renowned seat of learning, is still framed by Guéhenno as 'Prospero's palace' – a locale dedicated entirely to the advancement of knowledge. Indeed, Guéhenno feels that he owes an explanation – both to the members of the Académie, and to the 'sons of Caliban to whom he tried to give a voice' and with whom he feels such fraternity – as to why he would want to enter this palace of learning. He then suggests that his induction into this establishment is a sign that 'according to Michelet's hope, scholarly thought and instinctive wisdom can be reconciled'.[107] If Prospero is learnéd knowledge, then Caliban is a figure of instinctive wisdom – if they could only be reconciled then this would lead to great progress for humanity.

In 1969, Guéhenno revisited these characters in an essay: *Caliban et Prospero*. He recalls that in his youth, he ardently believed that, if Prospero's light – education, and culture – were passed on to Caliban, then Caliban might be free: 'I held passionately the conviction that the lights of Prospero would become the lights of Caliban and would ultimately change his life, if the world had to find order. […] I was concerned that 'culture' would die if it didn't renew itself with living sources, if it didn't form alliance with the people' (p. 31). He again returns to his wish to re-define Humanism as a 'faith; a faith in humanity' (p. 33).[108] This desire of Guéhenno's, to 'renew

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[106] *Discours pour la réception de M. Jean Guéhenno*, 6 Dec 1962, n. p.
[107] *Discours pour la réception de M. Jean Guéhenno*, 6 Dec 1962, n. p.
[108] Guéhenno had long held these concerns about what 'culture' had become. In an essay published in the journal *NRF* (*La Nouvelle Revue Française*) in November 1928, he cites an essay by Alexandra Blok, in which she wrote of 'the people and intellectuals as 'two camps, secretly enemies'. But Guéhenno goes on to argue: 'we live, we intellectuals, with an old idea which is now perhaps no more than an illusion.' Intellectuals, and writers more generally, of the 19th century, 'participated in the revolutionary spirit', but he argues that writers today have lost the 'allures of the mage'

culture with living sources' and make the Humanities less disdainful and exclusionary, was evident throughout his career. In this sense, he is more aligned with Sartre's ideas on 'engaged literature', rather than simply an aloof and detached intellectual. In 1945, Guéhenno was appointed as leader of the section of the Ministry of Education devoted to youth movements, popular education and sport.[109] Brian Rigby cites a speech given by Guéhenno in March 1945 at the Palais de Chaillot. In it, Guéhenno shares his vision of a schoolhouse in every village where people – adults as well as school students – are welcome to go and read. He describes this as a 'maison de culture', where they will learn to read, and to think, but will then 'find joy and knowledge, every means to think even better and live better'. These schoolhouses – these 'beacons' – will allow the people of France to rebuild their country: 'And this country will begin to sing again, as it used to sing, as gaily, as solemnly, according to its rhythm, according to its style, according to its faith. And culture and the people will finally be reconciled.'[110]

Later in life, Guéhenno did concede that there were dangers inherent in the rise of the 'Calibans' and populist movements that might be consequent to this – he even describes Hitler as 'a sort of Caliban, one of his avatars […] a Caliban gone astray'.[111] Geldof also notes that Guéhenno was concerned about events in Moscow, the rise of Right-Wing Populist movements and rampant materialism – 'does the pursuit of happiness for all make the revolutionary ideal banal?'.[112] However, despite his concerns, Guéhenno did write *Caliban Speaks* with utter sincerity, and reflected in one of his final works that his beliefs had not changed much since: 'deep down

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that Saint Simon and his disciples gave. The word 'mage' here is suggestive; it ties thinkers like Saint Simon to Prospero. The mage has lost his power because intellectuals are no longer trusted by the people. There is a conflict between culture and men; humanity and the Humanities: 'the people don't trust culture'. Jean Guéhenno, 'L'Humanité et 'Les Humanités', *La Nouvelle Revue Française,* 182 (1928), 629-42 (p. 629.)

[109] Brian Rigby, 'The reconstruction of culture: Peuple et Culture and the popular education movement', *French Cultural Studies,* 29.4 (2018), 300-307 (p. 305).

[110] Rigby, p. 305.

[111] Guéhenno, *La foi difficile*, p. 189.

[112] Geldof, p 99; pp. 104-5.

within me, I think I haven't changed much, and I hope to finish my life as a writer as I began it: as Caliban'.[113]

Epilogue: Ariel's vision

Guéhenno's work is impassioned and earnest, but at times bleak and hard-going. It isn't without hope, though, and this hope is symbolised best through the character of Ariel. In the chapter 'Ariel told me' at the end of *Caliban Speaks*, Guéhenno adopts Ariel's voice and expresses his wishes for Caliban's future. Ariel tells Caliban that he has been there, unnoticed, while Caliban wrote: 'I witness your meditations. As you write, I read over your shoulder. I sometimes whisper to you' (p. 195). Through this observation, Ariel begins to understand Caliban: 'I'm happy to begin to know you; I know there is a lot of love in you' (p. 195). But, Ariel advises, Caliban must 'learn gaiety'; as he is now, he scares Ariel: 'I need all my courage to not flee from you when you return, and I see your snarling forehead and frowning eyebrows' (p. 195). He is not suggesting Caliban's ugliness here, but rather the effect that his hardships have had on his mien (an allusion to the 'grimaces' Caliban witnessed in the people he grew up alongside). Ariel observes that Caliban's face is a little grey, but that as he moves further from the cavern, he will brighten: 'it's the effect, perhaps, of the shadows of the cavern and I'm counting on the light to lighten you up and to brighten up your face' (pp. 195-6).

Ariel suggests that Caliban should share his story, but shouldn't dwell too much in the darkness: 'why do you only share your most trenchant ideas and why put so much bitterness in your critique?' (p. 195). He suggests that Caliban might be accused by some who read his musings of being too proud – of his own struggles: 'I'd like you not to care too much for your

[113] Guéhenno, *Ce que je crois,* p. 173.

name. Don't be too proud of your misery and your isolation' (p. 199). He advises Caliban that, eventually, moving away from his name will allow him to gain more support for his cause: 'your cause will be won when you lose your name. When it can no longer be read on your forehead like an outrage or a title of glory' (p. 199). Ariel dreams that one day, Caliban may shed the man he once was: 'there will be in his eyes such assurance, clarity, gaiety, that we no longer recognise in you […] the same man' (p. 200). This transformation that Ariel hopes for does not mean that Caliban must lose his sense of idealism: 'you can be at once the most realist and the most idealist of men […] a certain practical will, a certain sense of reality will never leave you. I'd like you to be the proudest utopian in the world' (p. 202). This utopia is not on an indeterminate island, but is a restructuring of society which leads to genuine equality. This dream might seem unattainable, but Caliban must never allow himself to be weighed down with too many realities: 'Your only duty is to think so liberally, so generously, so humanely that reality can never enchain and parody your dreams' (p. 203).

Having shared his aspirations for Caliban, Ariel then describes his own role in the transformation of society: 'When the round [the dance] becomes monotonous, it is I who break the chain of dancers in order to force them to form other groups, and take other paths. I don't want the world to sleep' (p. 203). Ariel portrays himself as an idealist, a symbol of pure ideas, whose role is to reinvigorate humanity. He goes on to defend intellectuals against the accusations levelled at them by Caliban: 'Prospero and his *pareils* did not betray as much as you think. I know something about it myself. I'm the animator; I'm in all the places in the world where a man struggles to think' (p. 205). He argues that contrary to Caliban's claims, many intellectuals have not renounced wisdom, but are simply making a virtue of necessity, striving to make sense of the 'glorious crash' of the modern world. But in their search for knowledge, they still have the 'Promethean spirit' within them. Ariel contests that 'the spirit' belongs to nobody; it is not

owned and cannot be claimed by any class of people: 'Masters, servants, proletariat, bourgeois – those words mean nothing to the spirit; it ignores these distinctions' (p. 207). So, there is a truth, an intellectual truth, which transcends all societal and political striation. Much as Caliban might seek the truth, it shouldn't be taken from Prospero simply to be smothered in Caliban's hovel: 'I accept that it suffocates in the palaces of Prospero. But why would you want to shut it in your *galetas*? It would suffocate there too' (p. 207). Instead, Ariel suggests, Caliban should 'ask it [the spirit] to show you the world – I promise you an edifying walk' (p. 207). On this walk, Caliban might observe that most people – from all walks of society – have been shaped (perverted, even) by the forces of materialism: 'never have you all been more demanding, more intransigent, more unsatisfied' (p. 208).

And yet, Ariel leaves Caliban with a fervent hope: 'Won't a poet come? Poets, Caliban, are very necessary […] Only they can reveal to us the harmonies of the world in which we live' (p. 208). The function of poets, he says, has been the same since the beginning of time – the alloying or transmutation of the chaotic elements of life: 'bird song, the murmuring of trees, the secret heart of man and the confused soul of things. Only poets know how to reduce all cacophony to a song' (p. 208). Ariel promises Caliban that his cause will be won as soon as his story is told through poetry: 'So, a poet will come […] he'll take part in your combats, mingle with your crowd, until the day when his suddenly dominating voice will speak the rhythm and rules of your torment' (p. 209). When this day comes, the effect of this poetry will be transformational: 'Then all your pacified, and justified, desires will appear to be order itself, and it will be recognised that what you were looking for, poor man, was only a new art of living' (p. 209).

Ariel's vision is that Caliban's lived experience – its chaos and pain and beauty – will be one day expressed by a poet. *Expression* is key to his pacification, and thus his emancipation, but only

the voice of a poet will let the chaos be truly heard, or listened to. In this work, Guéhenno's conceit is perhaps that he (a writer who used highly poetic, literary language even when writing private diaries) is this poet, and so, Ariel's vision has already come true. As his Caliban might say: 'you gave me language and my profit on it is that I know how to sing'.

You do keep from me | The rest o' th' island

The colonial situation in Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*

'The typical colonial is compelled to live out Prospero's drama'.

Octave Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*[1]

Renan and Guéhenno both re-figured Caliban as symbolic of the working classes, and recognised his revolutionary potential. For both of these authors, Caliban's race was secondary to his class status – for Renan, his acquisition of French made him a French man, and for Guéhenno, he is a symbol of all those, wherever they may be from, who have been oppressed and ignored. The next significant stage in this French journey is Octave Mannoni's *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950). In this psychological treatise, Mannoni emphasises Caliban's race as a defining feature – the character becomes a representative for *the colonial subject*. This work is fairly well-known, especially for its influence on colonial and postcolonial theory, but is worth revisiting to understand its importance in shaping the narrative of Caliban – and of Prospero. Mannoni's work shaped the discourse surrounding *The Tempest* in various fields: psychoanalysis, literary criticism and theatrical practice. Caliban is, of course, a crucial part of Mannoni's reading, but his appraisal of the Prospero figure is equally important. Renan turned to Shakespeare's *Tempest* because he regarded it as a masterful exploration of 'absolute psychology' that transcended time and place. Mannoni, too, turns to the play to explore and theorise upon psychology, but specifically that of what he terms *the colonial situation*.

[1] Octave Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization,* trans. by Pamela Powesland, with a New Foreword by Maurice Bloch*,* 2nd edn (Ann Arbour: Michigan University Press, 1990), p. 108. Mannoni's work was first published in 1950, and the first English translation was published in 1956.

The historical backdrop: French colonial policy and its consequences in Madagascar

Octave Mannoni was born in Sologne in 1899. He lived and taught in La Réunion, Martinique and Madagascar. Mannoni had already lived in Madagascar for twenty years when he decided to return to Paris in 1945. After 6 months in Paris, Mannoni decided to return to Madagascar, where he briefly took up an administrative post in the colonial office.[2] For most of his career, though, he was a teacher. So, like both Renan and Guéhenno, Mannoni's interest in education partly shapes his reading of the Prospero-Caliban relationship. Before examining Mannoni's *Psychology of Colonization*, it is important to understand the historical backdrop of the creation of this text. In the first chapter, Mannoni makes a rather oblique reference to 'a certain moment in history' (p. 34). Indeed, this was a crucial moment in the history of France and its colonies: the troubles in Madagascar in 1947.

By the mid-1940s, France was reassessing its approach to its colonies. As James I. Lewis notes, 'The Brazzaville Conference of 31 January-7 February 1944 on the future of French black Africa is acknowledged as the catalyst to the post-Second World War discussions about the French Empire'. Lewis argues that 'contrary to the declarations and tone of the conference's participants from General de Gaulle on down, the major impetus for this reform-minded initiative was not the gratitude and largesse of France towards its dependencies for their support during the war.' The War had forced France to face the colonial situation and to reassess their approach to representation for those who lived in the colonies: 'the changed realities of the colonial situation itself, of French power and of the emerging post-war world were forcing an adaptation of imperial rule from the bottom up'.[3]

[2] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons. C'est là ma route* (Paris: Denoël, 1990), p. 303.
[3] James I. Lewis, 'The French Colonial Service and the Issues of Reform, 1944-8', *Contemporary European History*, 4.2 (1995), 153-188 (p. 156).

Lewis observes that, by 1946, the French colonial powers in Madagascar were facing increasing pressure. Jules de Coppet, High Commissioner to Madagascar, warned the French government that tensions were rising. De Coppet was unhappy with the fact that the Ministry of Overseas France had delayed the appointment of more minorities to European colonial councils, and feared 'a resort to violence by elements of the indigenous population frustrated in their attempts to achieve substantial change through parliamentary means'.[4] He was right to be concerned. Since 1945, the MDRM (*Mouvement démocratique de la rénovation malgache*) had led efforts to achieve independence for Madagascar. Their objective was not achieved, and so, by 1947, Madagascan nationalists led a revolt against the French colonial powers.

Maurice Bloch describes the suppression of this revolt by the French army as 'one of the bloodiest episodes of colonial repression on the African continent'.[5] Jacques Tronchon, in his study of the troubles – cited by Bloch as the most authoritative review of existing historical accounts – suggests that the number of victims may never be known:

> at the end of the hostilities, the French Chief of Defence Staff recognised, privately, the figure of 89,000 victims of military repression, all the while denying […] those who died because of psychological trauma. […] The High Commissioner of Chevigné announced during a press conference, in January 1949, the figure of 'more than 100,000 deaths' […] The 1950-52 inquest proved that the French authorities definitively stuck to a minimalist estimation of the victims of repression.[6]

[4] Lewis, p. 164.
[5] Maurice Bloch, New Foreword to *Prospero and Caliban*, p. v.
[6] Jacques Tronchon, *L'insurrection malgache de 1947: essai d'interprétation historique* (Paris: Maspero, 1974), p. 72.

The history of this event recalls Guéhenno's image of the 'mass grave where the forgotten dead sleep, those who part without leaving papers, and whom ungrateful history never talks of'.[7] An Avignon Festival art exhibition in 2009, entitled simply '47',[8] spoke of this forgetting of people: Giséle Rabesahala, founder of the *Fifanampiana malagasy, for the defense of the rebels of 1947*, spoke in Antananarivo about the need for Madagascar to remember, and for France to come to terms with, this part of their shared history:

> 47, which I care about, is part of our history; it's a heroic page that the young generations mustn't forget. Above all, the courage of these people who dared to revolt, who had nothing! They had nothing but their ten fingers. These people were colonised by France; France must take responsibility for this colonial past.[9]

Mannoni, too, recognised the need to account for, and address, France's colonial past (and, more pressingly, its present), describing it, in the introduction to *Psychology of Colonization*, as 'one of the most urgent of problems confronting the world today – and France in particular' (p. 17).

Mannoni had recently moved back to Madagascar when the troubles began: on 4th April 1947, he wrote in his diary of 'the present period of "troubles" – which began […] in Moramanga and Manakara.'[10] By July 1947, he observes that 'the situation was much more serious than we could have first thought […] the army, the suréte [civil police force], and the administration seems to have avoided immediate danger. The future is compromised in the long-term, I fear'.[11] Like

[7] Guéhenno, *Caliban parle*, p. 35.
[8] The fact this the event was named just '47' suggests the cultural significance of this event in the history of France; the 1968 student revolutions are now known as just '68' and those involved are referred to as '68ers'.
[9] *Portraits d'insurgés: Madagascar 1947,* ed. by Pierrot Men and Raharimanana (Avignon: Vents d'ailleurs, 2011), p. 16.
[10] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 362.
[11] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 363.

Renan in 1848, Mannoni witnessed the violence first-hand. Indeed, Mannoni was directly implicated in the troubles: he notes in a journal entry on 13th April 1947 that he has discovered that his name is 5th on a black-list targeted by the MDRM.[12]

Mannoni's personal diaries, in which he wrote of the troubles in Madagascar, were published posthumously, and provide crucial insights into how he came to write his most famous work. In these diaries, he wrote at some length about his experience with the field of psychoanalysis. He had wanted to try psychoanalysis, and followed a friend's recommendation to begin treatment with Jacques Lacan when he briefly returned to live in Paris in 1945.[13] Mannoni's diary entries at this time reflect an ambivalent attitude towards the sessions with Lacan: 'personally, I would have liked a more authoritative attitude',[14] he writes in his journal after the first few sessions. His later recollections of Lacan's approach were not a great deal more positive – 'he remained silent, but occasionally made some good interventions […] I had the impression that he was playing at being an analyst'.[15] In December 1945, Lacan told Mannoni to begin keeping a dream diary, and while he claims that he didn't enjoy doing it,[16] he continued to note his dreams for as long as he wrote his journals.

Towards the end of his life, Mannoni reflected that his dealings with psychoanalysis had been fundamental: '[by 1952] I had cured myself of an obsessional neurosis'.[17] Elisabeth Roudinesco argues that Mannoni's neurosis was his relationship with the native peoples of Madagascar, and that he saw his return there from France as a sort of 'dislocation' which might help him to better

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[12] Vatin, p. 151.
[13] Vatin, p. 138.
[14] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 302.
[15] Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan & Co: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985,* trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 234.
[16] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 303.
[17] Roudinesco, p. 234. Roudinesco doesn't note the source for this quotation.

understand himself, a little like Rimbaud's inner journey of exploration in *Rapport sur l'Ogadine*: 'I understood, moreover, why Rimbaud had cured himself in the desert. Dislocation can do the job of analysis. Being a white man among the blacks is like being an analyst among the whites.'[18] Mannoni maintained that he had cured himself of his neurosis by a process of 'countertransference' – the emotional reaction of the analyst to the subject's contribution – with the black natives.[19] Ranjana Khanna argues that the very positioning of himself as analyst to the unwitting Malagasy analysands indicates that Mannoni is operating within a framework of racial assumptions which position him as innately superior:

> the black man among the whites was rarely the ethnological investigator; and, because of structural positioning, in the company of whites the black man would probably not find a psychanalytical substitute; in fact, his difference would be pathologized, as would his behaviour in response to the injustice of the colonial endeavour.[20]

Mannoni's attitude towards the natives of Madagascar – at least, the way he describes this in *Psychology of Colonisation* – is profoundly problematic in its infantilising of the natives and implication that they were colonised because they wanted to be. But his pathologizing of difference, as Khanna puts it, was not driven by a *hatred* of other races: he respected the culture of the Malagasy people. Mannoni says that he wanted to return to Madagascar mainly in order to better immerse himself in the culture, and to better integrate with the native peoples. In 1947,

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[18] Cited in Roudinesco, p. 234. This is a reference to Rimbaud's *Rapport sur l'Ogadine*. R. A. Peters considers the 'optic' of Rimbaud's *Rapport sur l'Ogadine* for what it shows about 'the way France and the French see home and elsewhere, self and other in this period.' He argues that Rimbaud's writing works as an 'act of resistance' to that simple categorization [of writer as 'colonial'], even as they seem to participate in the colonial tradition. R. A. Peters, 'Mapping the desert: Arthur Rimbaud, Charles de Foucauld, and Société de Géographie, 1884-5', *Journal of Historical Geography,* 35 (2009), 104-127 (p. 106).

[19] Roudinesco, p. 234.

[20] Ranjana Khanna, *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysts and Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 147.

Mannoni notes why he felt compelled to return to Madagascar: 'I must learn the Malagasy language […] create a genuine Franco-Malagasy life.'[21]

And so, Mannoni wrote his *Psychology of Colonization* at a time when he had returned to Madagascar to better understand it, and while going through the process of psychoanalysis to better understand *himself*. As he notes in the introduction: 'this was how my study of social relationships coincided with research into my own personal problems' (p. 34).[22] Moreover, this study also happened to coincide with a certain moment in history, which he describes as 'a crisis in the evolution of politics, when many things that had been hidden were brought into the light of day' (p. 34). Since then, however, his reasons for writing *Psychology* have sometimes been misrepresented.

Bloch, in the introduction to the most widely known (English) edition of this work (1990), claims that Mannoni wrote it in an attempt to account for the events of 1947– both the act of revolution and the violence of its suppression. Bloch attests that explaining this revolt was Mannoni's initial aim for the work, although it evolved into a 'vast theoretical enterprise'[23] – a wider-reaching exploration of the colonial situation, and of the 'personalities' involved in any colonial process. François Vatin takes issue with Bloch's foreword; he argues that Bloch's explanation of Mannoni's motives for writing the work are inaccurate: 'Here too, the historical reality is exactly the inverse: inspired by his psychoanalysis with Lacan, Mannoni had begun a reflection on psychological colonial relations in the Madagascan context when the revolution broke out, which he then sought to interpret with his model'.[24] Mannoni decided to return to

[21] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 313.
[22] He was going through a divorce at this time.
[23] Bloch, 'Foreword', p. v.
[24] Vatin, p. 172.

Madagascar in 1945 to consider the 'obscure and imprecise problem of colonial relations';[25] his journals also show that he was formulating the idea for this work over the course of 1947. Bloch's explanation of Mannoni's motivations, then, is overly simplistic; Vatin's assessment is more accurate: 'the work takes into account all at the same time, and in a way which is inextricably linked, his discovery of psychoanalysis, his personal situation, social colonial relations and his rupture with these, and the collective political history of Madagascar and France, which was playing out in front of his eyes'.[26] Mannoni himself, in the introduction to *Psychology,* states that this work was an attempt to explore 'the human significance of colonial situations' (p. 17), rather than solely a study of the events surrounding the uprising in Madagascar. Mannoni doesn't only set out to explore the psychology of the natives of Madagascar, but, as Bloch notes, he attempts to develop more of a 'universal theory of individual psychological development'.[27] Vatin also notes this vacillation inherent in the work: 'throughout […], we see him hesitating between a sociology of the Malagasy population and a desire to make generalisations about 'non-civilised' people'.[28]

Literature and psychoanalysis

The broad and sociological psychoanalytical framework which Mannoni maps out in *Psychology*, therefore, was also intensely personal. It is also a highly literary approach to psychoanalysis. Throughout Mannoni's personal diaries, there are many allusions to literature – he often either transcribes or composes poetry, and refers to various literary works throughout. In 1946, he describes himself as having 'turned uniquely towards questions of art, literature or philosophy'.[29] Mannoni, though most well-known for his work in psychoanalysis, also published literary articles

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[25] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 313.
[26] Vatin, pp. 142-3.
[27] Bloch, p. v.
[28] Vatin, p. 170.
[29] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 116

in *La pensée française. Libre organe de propagation nationale et d'expansion française | French thought. Free publication for national propagation and French expansion.* As Vatin notes, Mannoni's 'ongoing interest in literature meant that he would develop a very literary conception of psychoanalysis around the notion of the 'imaginary'.[30] Psychoanalysis, though, as Khanna argues, should rather be seen as a form of literary exploration by its very nature: 'psychoanalysis itself is a hermeneutic built of such mythological ground, and is thus a form of the literary itself'.[31]

Mannoni's approach to psychoanalysis was profoundly influenced by his literary studies. His reading of Shakespeare, in English, was one of the sources of inspiration for *Psychology of Colonization.* In December 1944, Mannoni notes: 'Read – or rather, leafed through – Victor Hugo's *William Shakespeare*, which I had never opened. What a bore. Hugo is insupportable'.[32] It appears that, not much moved by Hugo's assessment of the Bard, Mannoni decided to buy a copy in English to read Shakespeare for himself. On 12 December 1945, he writes 'Bought a Shakespeare (156 francs). The cover reads: 'The greatest omnibus volume in the world'. He also notes that he is pleased because 'it's not an American edition'.[33] The edition he is referring to is entitled: 'Everything Shakespeare Ever Wrote: The Greatest Omnibus Volume in the World', published by Collins Clear-Type Press, London & Glasgow. The dust cover describes this edition as 'a superb low-price edition […] clearly printed on super-fine toned Bible paper.' The introductory matter includes a reproduction of the original preliminary matter to the First Folio Edition, and is printed in the order of the First Folio – so *The Tempest* comes first. The edition Mannoni bought also includes an Introduction, dated June 1923, by St John Ervine.[34]

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[30] Vatin, p. 145.
[31] Khanna, p. 158.
[32] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 208.
[33] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons,* p. 285. The edition he is referring to is *Everything Shakespeare Ever Wrote: The Greatest Omnibus Volume in the World* (London: Collins, [n.d.]); the introduction by St John Ervine is dated 1923.
[34] St John Ervine (who adopted the prefix St to 'better fit his ambitions'), was a critic and playwright.

The following day, Mannoni copies into his journal the following passage:

> *Macbeth: The Witches, "fair is foul and foul is fair"*
>
> *L. Macbe: … thy nature; it is too full of the milk of human kindness*
>
> *Macb.: Lunst* (sic.) *then not minister to a mind diseas'd*
>
> *Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow*
>
> *Raze out the written troubles of the brain?*
>
> *Doc:… therein the patient*
>
> *Must minister to himself.* [35]

It seems that he is interested in the psychology of Shakespeare's characters, as well as how they relate to his own (he had been reflecting on how he should attend to his own psychological needs, rather than simply relying on therapy). From then on, he turns several times to *Hamlet* for material for his psychoanalytical readings:

> The case of Ophelia is remarkable: insignificant in the eyes of Hamlet (who despises every woman as a whore – because of his mother), she took, in the eyes of the spectators, the figure of a pure and inaccessible woman that one puts 'on a plinth'. The reaction of the commentators conceals something very important.[36]

As much as he was inspired by *Hamlet,* Mannoni was also clearly influenced by his reading of *The Tempest.* He writes on 17 July 1947: 'Subject: the temptation of a world without men. Prospero and Crusoe'.[37] He wrote this several hours after describing his dream of the night

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[35] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 285.

[36] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 309. He also writes a critique of Laforgue's *Hamlet*, and how it explores ideas of self-consciousness and artistic production. p. 316. See Richard Wilson for an analysis of Laforgue's *Hamlet*, *King of Shadows,* pp. 48-50.

[37] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 371.

before: facing rival men who were much taller than him. In October 1947, he writes: 'I'm beginning to see the subject of my next work: psychoanalysis of adventure, with the voyager as the centre', going on to list many authors[38] – though, notably, neither Shakespeare nor Defoe, who were ultimately the subject of the study – who deal with 'fleeing and quests. Flight away from others, away from the known'. For this project, Mannoni took to applying the precepts of psychoanalysis to literary characters who sought, or found themselves in, solitude, and who heeded 'the call to archetypes and projection'.[39]

Mannoni's argument

Two personalities

One of the fundamental arguments that Mannoni makes in *Psychology of Colonization* is that what he terms the 'colonial situation' can best be explained as 'the meeting of two entirely different types of personality and their reactions to each other, in consequence of which the native becomes "colonized" and the European becomes a colonial' (p. 17). It is in the colonial context where two distinct personalities are forced into close proximity: 'in a colonial situation, the difference between two types of personality brought face to face is greater, probably, than any other' (p. 27). Mannoni does concede that there are many other factors – economic, political and social – involved in act of colonization. But he claims that his approach is unique in its focus on the encounter and interaction between two *personalities*: '"Civilization" is necessarily an abstraction. Contact is made, not between abstractions, but between real, live human beings' (p. 23).

[38] The full quotation: 'R. L. Stevenson, Trelawney, De For, Baudelaire, Descartes, the heroes of tales from the Middle Ages, Marco Polo, Columbus, Livingstone and Stanley, Gide, Simbad, Ulysses', *Nous nous quittons*, p. 374.
[39] Mannoni, *Nous nous quittons*, p. 374.

In his description of the two distinct personalities, Mannoni defines his own terms in a way that even he finds unsatisfactory. He uses the word primitive, while attempting to distance himself from it; the word can only be used between inverted commas, he says, 'as if to show that we no longer really believe in it' (p. 21). The idea of '*primitivism'*, he notes, has now been discarded as a theory (p. 21), and the "'primitive mentality" is an expression which is "now out of date"' (p. 18). But, neither does he find any of the synonyms suitable: 'the alternatives, such as 'isolated', 'un-evolved', 'archaic', 'stationary' and 'backward' are in fact no better; the idea of primitivism is still there, though veiled and hidden, and this concealment simply increases the chances of error' (p. 22). In his understanding of the concept of primitivism, Mannoni was directly influenced by the philosopher anthropologist Lévy-Brul; he cites one of Lévy-Brul's lectures, delivered in Oxford in 1931, on what he termed the 'primitive mentality': 'in the mind of every human being, no matter what degree of intellectual development he had attained, there subsists an irreducible core of primitive mentality'.[40]

Mannoni claims that the personality of the Malagasy people is at an earlier stage of development than that of the Europeans. His main 'evidence' for this claim is their practice of ancestor worship: 'The most important factor in Malagasy family life is a body of customs or beliefs; coherent, form, and deep-rooted, generally known by the name of ancestor-worship, or the cult of the dead' (p. 49). According to Mannoni, this 'cult' takes on various forms throughout Madagascar (he mentions that there are many tribes, each at different stages of 'development'), but the essential belief is: 'the dead are the sole and inexhaustible source of all good things [...] the dead are the invisible root of their race, and the living are only its temporary offshoots' (p.

[40] Lucien Lévy-Bruhl wrote extensively on what he described as the 'primitive mentality'; this, as disambiguated from the more logical 'Western mentality'. He observed what he clearly considered a teleological evolutionary process, as evident from the title of his first work, *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* | *Mental functions in inferior societies* (1910), whose first English title was the slightly less incendiary *How Natives Think* (1926). Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *La Mentalité Primitive* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1931), p. 20.

50). This ancestor-worship of the dead 'cannot be dismissed as a mere ethnographic curiosity' (p. 55); it shapes the personality of the Malagasy in profound ways: 'It would be no exaggeration to say that the dead and their images form the highest moral authority in the mind of the "dependent" Malagasy, and that for him they play the part filled for the European by the moral conscience, reason, God, King, or party' (pp. 55-6). He argues that this affects the Malagasy's view of himself. Instead of protesting his own virility, the Malagasy man reduces all men to children: 'the word for "child" appears frequently in the names of Malagasy tribes, and ultimately it is only the dead who are to the Malagasy what adults are to European children' (p. 60). Mannoni claims that this dependence is also evidenced by the familial and social structures of the Malagasy tribes; he uses the example of Merina tribe, 'the more highly developed of the Malagasies' whose 'attachments are primarily vertical; horizontal ties are negligible' (p. 68). This need for dependence, he claims, is manifested in the natives' relationship with the colonising forces – this idea leads Mannoni to make perhaps the most problematic statement of the work: 'Not all peoples can be colonized: only those who experience this need [...] Whenever Europeans have founded colonies of the type we are considering, it can safely be said that their coming was unconsciously expected – even desired – by the future subject peoples' (pp. 85-86).

This personality, one which relies so heavily on bonds of dependence, is contrasted with the personality of the Europeans (or, generally, anyone in 'the West'). Theirs, Mannoni claims, has been more profoundly shaped by what might be described as the ideas, or the forces, of Modernity. Mannoni cites the French Revolution, Cartesian philosophy, and the writings of Rousseau as influences which have, over time, led to the development of a more 'independent' kind of personality. Cartesian ideas would be 'quite incomprehensible to a completely different mentality; it would become meaningful only after the personality had undergone a total transformation' (p. 146). Mannoni contends that, when these two personalities find themselves

thrown together, as in a colonial setting, 'the gap between the dependent personality of the native and the independent personality of the European' affords certain complexes 'an opportunity of becoming manifest' (p. 105).

Mannoni then goes on to argue that the meeting of these two personalities creates the kind of psychological tension which can lead to the development of 'complexes', based on how the European interacts with the native. Europeans can be divided into two distinct groups, based on how they attempt to disambiguate their own culture from that of other countries:

> [some Europeans] draw a hard-and-fast demarcation line between the civilized and the non-civilized, and on the basis of some vague notion of racial inequality they conclude that the non-civilized are non-civilizable. The others, on the other hand, assume that all men are equally endowed with reason […] This attitude is undoubtedly more liberal at the outset, but it leads to an equal, if not greater misunderstanding in the end, for when at length these people come up against the real differences, they see them as offences against reason and feel an indignant urge to correct them in the name of common sense (p. 19).[41]

So while the initial approaches may differ, the attitude of both groups eventually converge when faced with the colonial situation: Europeans, whatever their initial assumptions about a native population, will come to 'the belief that the mentality of the native is incomprehensible, that there is therefore no point in wasting any time on it, and that since our way of thinking is the only right one we should impose it on the rest of the world in the interests of reason and

[41] For Mannoni, Miranda perhaps belongs to that branch of Europeans who regard native peoples as 'non-civilisable': despite her efforts to educate him, she could do nothing to re-mould Caliban into a civilised man: 'But thy vile race – | Though thou didst learn – had that in't which good natures | Could not abide to be with' (1.2.357-59).

morality' (p. 20). He claims that this kind of mentality was partly what drove the initial act of colonisation: 'Fully convinced of 'the superiority of the civilization they represented', the colonizers of what he terms the 'heroic age' set out to educate the natives, offering 'their own ideals, something greater than they' (p. 32).

From dependency to inferiority

Having delineated the two distinct, contrasting personalities involved in any colonial situation, Mannoni then describes the 'complexes' which arise when these personalities are brought face to face. His reading of *The Tempest* informs his development of these theoretical approaches to the colonial problem. One of the significant themes for Mannoni, much as for Renan and Guéhenno, is the education of Caliban. In *The Tempest*, Prospero and Miranda insist that their attempts to educate Caliban – thus making him more 'European', in Mannoni's reading – have failed. The colonizing mission, which was so intimately linked to French colonial policy, aimed to achieve assimilation of the native peoples into French culture and society. For Mannoni, though, true assimilation is extremely difficult to achieve; a 'native' man will either be transformed and, therefore, uprooted, or, if the process of assimilation is incomplete, he will become resentful:

> If such an intellectual becomes wholly assimilated to our culture, he is lost to his own people and can no longer get on with them, while if his assimilation is not quite complete, he will suffer painful psychological conflicts and will become subject to feelings of hostility which, paradoxically but understandably enough, will be vented upon the Europeans (p. 24).

His use of the word *paradoxical* suggests that he believes that the 'native' man should instead be grateful to his colonial masters for endowing him with the gift of French culture; a hostility only arises when he realises that he can never be fully assimilated (or if the process of assimilation is interrupted). It is then, Mannoni claims, that the native feels compelled to revolt: 'It is worthy of note that disturbances broke out at the very time when a number of Europeanized Malagasies were returning to Madagascar. […] Others, whose assimilation had been incomplete, fomented and led the revolts, for they are the people most likely to develop hatred of Europeans' (p. 76). This is historically inaccurate; most of those who led the MDRM had never left Madagascar. In the author's note to the second English edition, Mannoni concedes that there are historical inaccuracies, but that this accuracy is less important than the arguments he was trying to make about the psychological realities of colonialism: 'the reader makes a kind of voyage of psychological exploration, and it does not matter very much if the maps are not absolutely accurate' (p. 6).

To account for what he believed to be a revolt led mainly by 'poorly assimilated' Madagascan natives, Mannoni develops what he calls the 'dependency complex'. Christopher Lane notes the influence of the psychologist Alfred Adler on Mannoni's theories: 'Mannoni's claims about dependency and superiority […] stem directly from Adler, who broke with Freud in 1911 to advance […] the inferiority complex'.[42] In his article 'Individual Psychology', Adler attests that all children are born with a natural and normal feeling of inferiority, owing to their inevitable dependency, but this usually gives an incentive for development; they will normally grow out of it, learning to become more assimilated into the *culture* of their society. An exaggerated feeling of inferiority may develop in children faced with physiological or cultural barriers.[43] Mannoni takes

[42] Lane, pp. 140-141.
[43] Alfred Adler, 'Individual Psychology', *The journal of abnormal and social psychology,* 22.2 (1927), 116-122.

these Adlerian concepts of dependency and inferiority and applies them to the colonial situation. He considered the natives of Madagascar as adults faced with 'cultural barriers'. He uses this concept to make some sense of the revolt against the French, which he doesn't regard as rational, because, as he (inaccurately) claims, it followed a *liberalization* of French policy that made things better, politically and economically, for the Malagasy (Bloch argues that Mannoni's assertion about the liberalization of French policy is 'at best, a gross oversimplification, and, at worst, a self-serving dissimulation of the situation, one much encouraged by the French at the time').[44] And so, because he won't accept that there were *rational*, political reasons for the Malagasy to revolt against their colonial masters, he turns to *unconscious* reasons, inspired by Adler's theories.

Mannoni describes the native peoples of Madagascar as in a permanent state of dependence: they remain in this state (which, for Adler, is usually associated with childhood), by establishing what Mannoni terms a 'cult of the dead' (p. 49) – worship of ancestors, who are given the role of parents. The term 'cult of the dead' is deeply pejorative; indeed, the Madagascan poet Raharimanana laments the loss, through colonialism and the events of 1947, of 'the island of splendour, […] this world where the living could still speak to their ancestors'.[45] Mannoni claims that the native peoples are culturally conditioned to seek dependent relationships; that only those with the 'need for dependence' can be colonized at all (p. 85).[46] When the coloniser first appears, there is no hostility on the part of the native peoples: 'it is not as an enemy but as a stranger, as a guest. In Madagascar he is called *vazaha,* an expression which means as nearly as possible, 'honourable stranger' (p. 86). The coloniser, however, will soon become more than an

[44] Bloch, p. viii.
[45] In Pierrot Men and Jean-Luc Raharimanana, p 12.
[46] While he also takes issue with the seeming marginalisation of economic and politics factors, the influential Senegalese writer Alioune Diop find this particular claim the most troubling aspect of Mannoni's work: 'The grave misunderstanding that this book risks creating is […] the belief that if the Malagasy is colonised, it is his fault', Alioune Diop, 'review of *Psychologie de la colonisation*', *Esprit* (1950), 584-6 (p. 586).

honourable stranger; they will become the object of dependence. In his section on 'dependent behaviour', Mannoni describes an interaction between him and his tennis coach (of Merina heritage). The coach had come down with malaria, and Mannoni had given him quinine, which he sees a crucial turning point in their relationship: the coach then asked for new tennis shoes, and cigarette papers because he then saw Mannoni as his protector: 'It was the relationship, ultimately, which took away his fever: he was cured, not so much because quinine is an excellent remedy for malaria, as because a Malagasy who has a protector he can count on need fear no danger' (p. 43). Bloch regards this example as evidence of the author's lack of understanding of Merina culture: 'The demands of the coach for such things as old tennis shoes and cigarette paper is interpreted by Mannoni as an example of dependent hierarchical culture; in fact, it is the typical way in which Merina friends and relatives, standing in an egalitarian relationship, behave toward each other. […] This behaviour […] has an element of joking, but the most important aspect is that it is, and should be, *reciprocal*'.[47]

Mannoni believed that the native had become dependent on him, and also felt it then his *right* to be protected by him. He also cites Lévy-Bruhl, who wrote of a similar exchange between a Congolese native and a French man who had once saved him from drowning, explaining the native's view as follows: 'Henceforward you (white man) are my refuge and my support, and I have the right to reckon you to compensate me for what your intervention has cost me with the mystic powers upon whom my social group depends, and upon whom I myself have depended till now' (p. 46).[48] Mannoni claims that 'psychoanalysis helps us to discover what has happened' (p. 46).

[47] Bloch, 'Foreword', p. xvii.
[48] Philip Mason, who wrote the introduction to the first English edition in 1956, also gives an example for this dependent behaviour in the colonies, and quotes others; it's quite a common claim, Philip Mason, Foreword to 1st edn, *Prospero and Caliban*, pp. 9-15.

For further 'evidence' of dependent behaviour, Mannoni turns to *The Tempest*, citing the deterioration of the Prospero-Caliban relationship: when he first arrived on the island, Prospero treated Caliban with kindness: 'When thou camest first, Thou strok'dst me, and mad'st much of me' (p. 106).[49] Prospero acts as a pseudo-parent figure; Caliban, treated with kindness, and given 'water with berries in it' (p. 106), then becomes dependent on Prospero. Notably, Mannoni omits the line which suggests that it was instead Prospero who was dependent on Caliban in order to find sustenance on the island when he first arrived: 'and then I loved thee, | And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle, | The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile' (1.2.336-8). Mannoni's theory, then, depends on selective quotation from the play: adding the rest of this line would somewhat undermine his argument about Caliban's dependency complex.

Mannoni claims that at this stage in the relationship – when the colonial has recently arrived, and has been welcomed by the native man – the native has no sense of inferiority, as long as he remains unaware of the differences between cultures: 'the really typical Malagasy takes an interest in the white man, and even unconsciously identifies himself with him, without actually making any comparison between himself and the other, or feeling inferior' (p. 80). It is when, through *comparison*, the native comes to discover that he is from a different culture that the potential for inferiority emerges: 'the Malagasy can bear not being a white man; what hurts him cruelly is to have discovered first (by identification) that he is a man and, *later,* that men are divided into blacks and whites' (p. 84). All the while the dependent relationship between the native and the colonial is maintained, there is no danger: 'the Malagasy […] feels inferior only when the bonds of dependence are in some way threatened' (p. 40). Mannoni then claims that the 'liberalization' of the French policy caused the (natural) feeling of dependence to become a feeling of

[49] I'm giving references from Mannoni's work here, rather than from Shakespeare, to show the sections that Mannoni directly cites.

inferiority: 'feelings of hostility, conscious or otherwise, are liable to arise when the bonds of dependence have snapped – when, that is, the Malagasy feels he has been abandoned' (p. 44).

For Mannoni, the relationship between Caliban and Prospero – and by extension the colonial subject and the colonial master – is similar to the relationship between parent and child, and is driven by the native's need for dependence: 'Dependence […] is not the same thing as inferiority, for even when the Malagasy knows or feels that he is inferior he does not compensate in the way a European does, by claiming equality or superiority. On the contrary, he tries to rectify the situation by establishing a dependence relationship on the pattern of that the child with his parents' (p. 61). This relationship offers a degree of comfort to the colonial subject: 'living in an untroubled state of dependence would – and does, wherever the conditions occur – give the Malagasies a certain psychological comfort' (p. 66).

Hostility arises when the native man comes to realise that they are not – and never will be – *equal* to their colonial master. The loss of the bonds of *dependence* which made him happy leaves the native feeling inferior, and feeling that he has been abandoned. This abandonment, crucially, interrupts the process of assimilation, and Mannoni cites this as 'the origin of the fierce hatred sometimes shown by 'evolved' natives; in them the process of civilization has come to a halt and been left incomplete' (p. 77). Caliban was being taught language – and, by extension, culture – by his colonial masters (both Prospero and Miranda). At this stage in their relationship, Caliban was content. In return for their affection, and their instruction, Caliban shared his knowledge of the island. In Mannoni's reading, Caliban felt this was a fair exchange: 'Caliban does not complain of being exploited; he complains, rather, of being betrayed' (p. 106). What Caliban complains of is

abandonment. The whole development of their relationship – from dependence to abandonment and betrayal – is encapsulated in the following passage:

> [Caliban] says, explicitly,
>
> > …When thou camst first,
> > Thou strok'dst me, and mad'st much of me; wouldst give me
> > Water with berries in in't; and teach me how
> > To name the bigger light, and how the less,
> > That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee,
>
> but now
>
> > …you sty me
> > In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
> > The rest o' the island (p. 106)

Mannoni offers this exchange as an example of how *abandonment* leads the native subject from dependence to inferiority, and that this perceived betrayal causes feelings of resentment. Mannoni then rephrases Caliban's words: 'and then you abandoned me before I had the time to become your equal…in other words, you taught me to be dependent, and I was happy; then you betrayed me and plunged me into inferiority' (pp. 76-77). This feeling of betrayal has arisen since Prospero abandoned him at a crucial stage in his development, and now 'Caliban has fallen prey to the resentment which succeeds the breakdown of dependence' (p. 106).

One of the most significant arguments in the postcolonial journey of *The Tempest* is that Caliban has a legitimate claim to ownership of the island, since he was born there.[50] Mannoni's

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[50] Caliban was, we know, born on the island. But this claim to ownership is somewhat undermined by the fact that there were 'islanders' (Ariel, and the other spirits) there already. Nonetheless, Caliban does have a more legitimate claim than Prospero, since he was already there when Prospero arrived.

work, which itself significantly shaped the play's postcolonial afterlife, actually undermines Caliban's claims of ownership: the implication is that Caliban claims ownership of the island only in retaliation for Prospero's 'abandonment'. Mannoni claims that 'if the 'abandoned' or 'betrayed' Malagasy continues his identification he becomes clamorous; he begins to demand *equality* in a way he had never before found necessary' (p. 84). However, in his struggle for equality, his dependence becomes inferiority:

> The equality he seeks would have been beneficial before he started asking for it, but afterwards it proves inadequate to remedy his ills – for every increase in equality makes the remaining differences seem the more intolerable, for they suddenly appear agonizingly irremovable. This is the road along which the Malagasy passes from psychological dependence to psychological inferiority (p. 84).

In *The Tempest*, Caliban joins with Trinculo and Stephano in an attempt to overthrow his master and reclaim the island for himself. Renan's sequel cements Caliban as a figure symbolic of revolutionary potential, while Guéhenno's response emphasises Caliban's revolutionary fervour. Mannoni's reading is highly significant in shaping postcolonial responses to the play, but paradoxically, it strips Caliban of his revolutionary power: he is not driven by a genuine desire to reclaim the land that he feels is rightly his. Mannoni contests that Caliban joins forces with Trinculo and Stephano because he resents Prospero, and because he still has a need for dependence in the form of a protector (to replace the ancestors who would have been worshipped before). Unlike both Renan and Guéhenno, whose responses framed Caliban as a revolutionary activist, Mannoni's Caliban is driven by a psychological need which stems from his dependent personality:

> Caliban, in this hopeless situation, begins plotting against Prospero – not to win his freedom, for he could not support freedom, but to have a new master whose 'foot-licker' he can become. He is delighted at the prospect. It would be hard to find a better example of the dependence complex in its pure state (pp. 106-7).

This 'evidence' from *The Tempest* is cited to explain why, psychologically, the Malagasy people might have felt compelled to revolt against the French colonial powers at this point in history: 'they felt abandoned because they could no longer be sure of authority […] Violence springs from guilt, and guilt from a feeling of abandonment' (pp. 136-7). Mannoni doesn't see this rebellion as motivated by a genuine desire for freedom, and thus robs Caliban (and, by extension, the indigenous people he represents) of any real sense of agency or legitimacy.

The colonial situation

As well as being specific to the situation in Madagascar, Mannoni intended this work to be an account of the encounter of personalities in colonial settings more generally. He sees the inherent contradictions in French attitudes to racial difference: 'France is unquestionably one of the least racialist-minded countries in the world; also colonial policy is officially anti-racialist' (p. 110), he declares, before conceding that 'the effects of the colonial situation inevitably make themselves felt, so that a marked racialist attitude appears side by side with the official attitude, and, indeed, in spite of it' (p. 110). He suggests that this is because so many aspects of what he terms the *colonial situation* are so closely linked with the psychology of racial difference.

Mannoni noted in his diary that he planned to write about what he describes as 'the call to solitude'. In the introduction to *Psychology of Colonization,* he notes that he chose to focus on *The Tempest* and *Robinson Crusoe* in order to 'throw some light on its psychological aspect [and] the human significance of colonial situations' (p. 17). The literary works he turns to are both set in what Mannoni describes as an archetypal 'colonial situation': both Prospero and Crusoe are colonials, while Caliban and Friday (and to some extent Ariel) are their colonial subjects. For Mannoni, Ariel is both an observable, and real, colonial subject, as well as being a projection or imaginary creation of Prospero's. He reads Prospero's relationship with Ariel as unreal, and characterises it as the 'substitution of depersonalized links for the original attachments […] still persons, but only just enough to enable us to form unreal relationships with them, like Prospero's with Ariel' (p. 207). Somewhat contradictorily, though, Mannoni also conflates Ariel with Malagasy women: 'the Malagasy woman corresponds fairly closely to an archetype of the collective unconscious, like Friday or Ariel' (p. 114). He claims that this is because, in the mind of the colonial, these women seem to show little of themselves and can thus act as a surface for projection: 'the personality of the Malagasy woman is so little externalized that it acts like a mirror and reflects back to the European his own projections on to it' (p. 114). This exacerbates the colonial's need for absolute authority – Ariel seems so unreal to Prospero that any desire for freedom and autonomy is seen as shocking: 'it would be considered outrageous if such a creature dared to disobey' (p. 102). Again, Mannoni's depiction of Ariel seems fairly confused; Ariel is a Malagasy woman, but is also a sexless figure, whose presence is suggestive of childhood (rather than adult) fantasies: 'The figure of Friday us no more fully portrayed than that of Ariel, nor, on the whole, is he more fully sexed. This repression of sexuality brings us back again to the world of childhood fantasies' (p. 102).

Both Shakespeare and Defoe created a world apart, and these literary creations were based on certain universal impulses; the sort of imaginary, isolationist, fiction which speaks to 'some need deep in the human psyche' (p. 104). Mannoni claims that the 'colonial' nature of Shakespeare's work is even more notable in Shakespeare's work because he never travelled abroad: 'The colonial situation is even more clearly portrayed in *The Tempest* than in *Robinson Crusoe*, which is more remarkable in that Shakespeare certainly thought less about it than did Defoe' (p. 105).[51] He uses this as a basis of his contention that the 'colonial situation' is more a state of mind than a physical situation.

Mannoni claims that there were no real sources for *The Tempest* or *Robinson Crusoe*. These works arose from *within* the authors and were, in a sense, an exploration of the self: 'Defoe himself, in a letter to Bishop Hoadley in 1725, said that the tale of Robinson was an allegory of his own life' (p. 98).[52] Mannoni then asserts: 'We can be sure that Shakespeare had no other model but himself for his creation of Prospero' (p. 99).[53] He argues that the island settings in both of these works might be imaginary, but still they are illustrative of the colonial situation, and also illuminate aspects of the authors' psyches: 'The material they drew directly from their own unconscious desires' (p. 98). And these desires were projected, through fictional creation, 'on to imaginary characters placed in situations which, though imaginary, are typically colonial' (p. 98).

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[51] Defoe was a trader, and travelled around Europe.

[52] Kevin Seidel writes about a letter from Hoadley regarding *Robinson Crusoe*: 'The September 1725 issue of the London Journal printed a letter, commonly attributed to Bishop Benjamin Hoadley, about how the scarcity of news at that time of year had been the occasion for an outpouring of stories about "extraordinary Occurrences and marvelous Events," in which "we cannot help discovering a sensible Pleasure, though at the same Time we are positively sure . . . they are entirely groundless, false, and fictitious." Hoadley singles out *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* as an example of such stories, saying that it "is a most palpable Lye from Beginning to End"', Kevin Seidel, '*Robinson Crusoe* as Defoe's Theory of Fiction, *Novel: a forum on fiction,* 44.2 (2011), 165-185 (p. 169). Mannoni seems to claim here that Defoe wrote back to Hoadley to explain that the novel was an allegory for his own life, but he does not cite his source for this.

[53] Dryden and Davenant were perhaps the first to write of 'Shakespeare's magic' and connect to that of Prospero, and this association was made by numerous subsequent critics in both England and France. Edward Dowden, for example, argued in 1875 that 'we identify Prospero in some measure with Shakespeare himself'. Dowden did read – indeed, he cites – the French critic Mezières, who wrote of this conflation between Prospero and Shakespeare in 1860. Edward Dowden, *Shakespere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art* (London: Henry S. King, 1875), p. 324.

Neither of these authors had themselves ever inhabited, nor even visited, such an island, yet their literary creations – and the interactions between their characters in this colonial situation – illustrate the personality complexes which unconsciously arise when any 'Prospero' or 'Crusoe' finds himself in such a setting. This, he claims, is 'proof enough that the complexes exist even before the colonial situation is experienced' (p. 98).

Both Renan and Guéhenno turned to *The Tempest* to interrogate and disrupt the relationship between Prospero and Caliban. This relationship is also fundamental to Mannoni's application of the play to a specifically colonial context. In defining a colonial situation, the precise *location* isn't nearly as important as the *relationships* involved. One of Mannoni's first contentions is that there is a sense of superiority which is intimately bound up in the concept of race. This superiority inflects our sense of self-perception: 'what I want the reader to realize is that a *colonial situation* is created, so to speak, the very instant a white man, even if he is alone, appears in the midst of a tribe […] so long as he derives from his position, even though only in his most secret self, a feeling of his own superiority' (p. 18). He claims that this belief is instinctive: 'the man-in-the-street will say instinctively and without experience that if the white man who goes among the negroes avoids being eaten, he will become King' (p. 18). Mannoni insists that these feelings of superiority are innate – perhaps a reflection of his own neurosis: 'However consciously watchful we are, we can never entirely eradicate this assumption of superiority from our unconscious, and it must be included among the data of the problem if we are to avoid all risk of error' (p. 18). Mannoni was genuinely surprised and dismayed at the reaction to this work. He believed that he had given a balanced view, and became quite depressed at the vehement criticisms of his theory; to address this, his widow, Maude, posthumously published an edition retitled *Le racisme revisité: Madagascar,* 1947.[54] Nevertheless, while he didn't intend the book to be racist, the assumption

[54] Vatin, p. 140.

that the Malagasy culture is naturally inferior, with 'cultural barriers' on which the whole dependency complex rests, suggests that he did find it impossible to erase his own feelings of superiority. Perhaps this was an aspect of the unnamed 'obsessional neurosis' which writing this text was intended to help him cure.

Colonizer or colonial?

Mannoni makes a distinction throughout his work between a 'colonizer' and a 'colonial': a 'colonizer' is 'almost of necessity a man of strong character, a creator rather than an accepter of relationships, at least at the outset' (p. 97). By contrast, he regards the typical 'colonial' as a man who does not *create*, but one who simply *exploits* a situation he finds himself in. The 'colonial' finds 'the relationship ready-made; he takes it up, adapts himself to it, and very often exploits it.' (p. 97) The colonial is defined by his relationship with the colonized subject, and the adoption of this relationship then profoundly shapes the colonial: 'whether he accepts it passively or seizes upon it greedily, the relationship changes him more than he it. It is precisely this transformation which sets a stamp on him, which makes him a colonial' (p. 97).

So, the 'colonizer' seeks to find – or to create – a 'colonial situation' in order to gain material profit. The 'colonial' doesn't create, or explicitly seek, a colonial situation, but when he finds one, he fits immediately into the colonial power dynamic and is transformed by it. The 'colonial' is not so much looking for profit; 'he is greedy for certain other – psychological – satisfactions, and that is much more dangerous' (p. 32). Since they are both castaways, rather than men who have set out to colonize another land, Crusoe and Prospero are Mannoni's archetypal 'colonials' (rather than 'colonisers'): they find themselves in a colonial setting (which they did not intentionally create), and their relationship with the colonised subject is more important than any

material profit that they might gain. What is perhaps most significant in Mannoni's contribution to the afterlife of *The Tempest* is this re-framing of Prospero as a 'colonial'. Jonathan Bate argues that *The Tempest* is primarily a play about Humanism, and disagrees that colonialism should be considered the 'dominant discursive context' of the play'.[55] The 'Prospero-as-coloniser' reading is somewhat undermined by the fact that Prospero did not set out to colonise a new land, and leaves at the end of the play. If we accept Mannoni's disambiguation between a 'colonizer' and a 'colonial' – a useful distinction – then we can't consider Prospero to be a colonizer since he could not have known that he would wash ashore on an island inhabited by a native. This is a suggestive distinction, and since Mannoni's description of a 'colonial' is someone who is *changed by a relationship*, it might be a more authentic paradigm for a critical analysis of the play.

Mannoni's reading of the play rests on his assertion that Prospero is shaped, and his actions are driven, by his relationship with others. In Mannoni's view, Prospero is most transformed by his relationship with Caliban: 'it is precisely this transformation which sets a stamp on him, which makes him a colonial' (p. 97). Mannoni argues that Prospero's relationship with Caliban is shaped by Prospero's own psyche: these character traits were already there, but are brought out by the *colonial experience*, which can be summarised as an encounter with a contrasting personality: 'the personality of the colonial is made up, not of characteristics acquired during and through experience of the colonies, but of traits, very often in the nature of a complex, already in existence in a latent and repressed form in the European's psyche, traits which the colonial experience has simply brought to the surface and made manifest' (p. 97). Not everyone becomes a 'colonial'; it is only those who have the character traits which make them more susceptible to such a transformation.

[55] Bate, 'The Humanist Tempest', p. 6.

The authors in this thesis each explore how they might fit into the Caliban-Prospero dialectic: Guéhenno recognises the tension inherent in his own quite autobiographical reframing of Caliban – he was concerned throughout his oeuvre with the question of whether he was more a 'Prospero' or a 'Caliban'. Guéhenno frames Renan as a 'Prospero' – the distanced intellectual who is unmoved by the hardships that Caliban faces. Mannoni frames Prospero as the 'archetypal' colonial, and as a counterpoint, makes sure to distance himself entirely from the character. He seems to cite himself as the kind of person who can live in a 'colonial situation' without becoming a colonial. Mannoni maintains that the word 'colonial' should be used as an adjective, and that its meaning has long been understood in colonial societies: 'the colonial peoples have long been aware of the meaning of this adjective. They draw a clear distinction between the European proper and the colonial European' (p. 33). As proof of his disambiguation from the *Prospero figure*, he shares an anecdote: at the start of the troubles, he went to a hotel restaurant in Antananarivo, where the 'boto' (a word used in Madagascar for a young boy who works in a hotel) 'took to calling me *Rangahy*, which is the word used to address a Malagasy as 'sir'. Surprised by this new form of address, I looked for an explanation; it was a way of telling me that they were not confusing me with the colonialists' (p. 86 fn.)

'The Prospero complex'

Mannoni's work has now become well-known for its description of what he terms the 'dependency complex' of Caliban. Yet, Caliban is of secondary importance; Mannoni is far more interested in exploring the complex neuroses of Prospero, a figure he considers to be the 'archetypal colonial'. The first edition of the work, published by Seuil in 1950, was entitled simply *Psychologie de la colonisation*. The title *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* was first used for Pamela Powesland's translation into English in 1956. Vatin notes Mannoni's intended title

for the original French edition: 'In fact, Mannoni already envisaged, in 1947, naming the French edition *Prospero*'.[56] This suggests how crucial the 'Prospero complex' was to Mannoni's reading. Again, since he did not set out to find new lands to conquer, Prospero is identified by Mannoni as a 'colonial' (and not a 'colonizer'). Prospero found himself on a deserted island because he was exiled: 'Prospero had neglected the duties of his office and had been betrayed by his brother in complicity with a king – psychoanalytically a king is a father-image' (p. 99). In Mannoni's reading, Prospero had neglected his duties not simply because of his commitment to studies, but because he could not form respectful mutual relationships: 'What the colonial in common with Prospero lacks, is awareness of the world of Others, a world in which Others have to be respected. This is the world from which the colonial has fled because he cannot accept men as they are' (p. 108). His turning away from this 'world of Others' is combined with 'an urge to dominate, an urge which is infantile in origin and which social adaptation has failed to discipline' (p. 108). Prospero, of course, dominates Caliban, but Mannoni argues that he also has an almost pathological need to subjugate all the characters: 'How reluctantly Prospero gives up his daughter to Ferdinand! And he cannot restore Ariel to liberty without asking him to perform yet one more task. He forgives his enemies, but only after he has avenged himself on them and thoroughly humiliated them' (p. 107).

Prospero's relationship with Caliban was mostly established and developed before the action of the play. When he first arrived on the island, Caliban reminds him, Prospero established an affectionate relationship with the only inhabitant; in this dependent relationship, Prospero acts as the father figure (thus displacing the ancestors on whom native peoples usually rely). On the island, in the context of this colonial situation, Prospero is aware of Caliban's need for

[56] Vatin, p. 139n.

dependence; colonials 'exploit it; they live by it' (p. 66). While he claims that a people can only be colonized if they hunger for dependence, Mannoni also insists that a man only becomes a true colonial when driven by the *need* to dominate. Prospero, in Mannoni's reading, did indeed make much of Caliban, was affectionate to him, and cultivated a sense of dependence. His desire for domination led him to 'instinctively adopting a paternalistic attitude, with too much affection and too much punishment' (p. 66). Yet, once their relationship breaks down, 'Caliban is the unruly and incorrigible son who is disowned' (p. 105). Mannoni uses the character of Prospero to develop a psychological profile of what he terms the 'Prospero complex'. This 'draws from the inside, as it were, a picture of the paternalist colonial, with his pride, his neurotic impatience, and his desire to dominate, [and] at the same time portrays the racialist whose daughter has suffered an attempted rape at the hands of an inferior being' (p. 110).

Incestuous desires, and projection

One of the fundamental claims of Mannoni's reading is that Prospero is driven to distraction by repressed sexual desires, but that he projects these desires onto Caliban and then frames him as a sexual threat. Nadine Ehlers, in her study of the history of colonial anti-miscegenation rhetoric, argues that the sexuality of the colonial subject was often employed against them. She considers the rhetoric against 'miscegenation' as a concept which can be traced through the history of colonies:

> During the early colonial era, sexuality was used or deployed within the mechanics of slavery to configure and maintain blackness and whiteness as antithetical absolutes – and

"ideal" sexuality as white – primarily through the production of black sexuality as "unnatural".[57]

Early Modern European travel narratives would often comment on the sexual behaviour of the natives they encountered. As Winthrop Jordan argues:

> ideas about Blacks being distinct sexual personages were formulated from the earliest days of English contact with Africa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries [...] the English understood the African to have not just a "less good", but a putatively different sexuality to Europeans.[58]

The same interest in the sexual behaviour of the natives can be traced through the equivalent French travel narratives. The French pastor and anthropologist Jean de Léry, whose *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre en Brasil* (1580) directly influenced Montaigne's 'Des Cannibales',[59] noted that the sexual appetites of the natives appeared to differ from those of the settlers, who took efforts to separate their women from the native men, having witnessed their sexual practices: 'having no fear of god, [they] lived in wantonness with the women and the girls.' As Jean de Léry observed in Brazil, the European settlers took pains to remove their daughters and wives from the grasp of the wanton native men. Mannoni argues that this sexual fear is one justification for the repression of the natives: 'The fear that white (colonial) daughters are being taken by the native men provides a justification for their repression, even if these fears are unfounded' (p. 108). The

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[57] Nadine Ehlers, 'Onerous Passions: Colonial Anti-miscegenation Rhetoric and the History of Sexuality', *Patterns of Prejudice* 45.4 (2011), 319-40 (p. 320).
[58] Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1968), cited in Ehlers, p. 325.
[59] The similarities between de Léry's and Montaigne's text are striking. Montaigne never went to Brazil, but de Léry lived there for several years. Montaigne cites his source for his knowledge of the Tupinamba tribe as an unnamed servant who had lived with the tribe in Brazil. Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre en Brasil* (La Rochelle, Genève: pour Antoine Chuppin, 1578).

fact that 'reports of rape were circulating in Madagascar' in 1947 partly explains, in Mannoni's analysis, the violence of the repression by the European colonial powers.

Kevin Pask argues that Shakespeare's presentation of Caliban's sexuality is so challenging because he 'seems to threaten the collapse of hierarchies, especially the hierarchies regulated by aristocratic marriage, giving Shakespeare the opportunity to return to the connections between aristocratic and plebeian sexuality'.[60] Caliban, although not of noble stock, might have a legitimate claim to ownership of the island, and his procreating with Miranda would further cement this claim. The threat, then, is more because of his social standing than his race. Mannoni offers a reading which figures Caliban's race – and the deployment of his sexuality as a threat – as far more troubling than his class. For Mannoni, Caliban's potential virulence (we never actually witness it; it is only alluded to by Prospero), is threatening because of his race. Crucially, though, it is more than fear which motivates Prospero's desire to punish Caliban for this attempted transgression: 'sexual guilt [is] at the root of colonial racism' (p. 106). This is not a question of sexual difference for Mannoni; it's about having the *same* desires, but then *projecting* those desires onto, and blaming the natives for, them.

Jock McCullough argues that even Frantz Fanon, one of Mannoni's harshest critics, agreed with this conclusion: 'One of the few areas in which Fanon is in accord with Mannoni is over the place of sexual guilt in the aetiology of racism'.[61] Prospero reminds Caliban why he ceased treating him with 'human kindness' and offering lodging in his cell: 'thou didst seek to violate |The honour of my child' (1.2.47-8). Mannoni regards this reaction, banishing Caliban to

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[60] Kevin Pask, 'Caliban's Masque', *English Literary History*, 70.3 (2003), 739-756 (p. 751).
[61] Jock McCullough, *Black Soul, White Artifact: Fanon's Clinical Psychology and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 216.

another part of the island as punishment for the alleged attempted rape, as part of Prospero's neurosis. Prospero seeks to justify himself, but is irrational:

> did Caliban not attempt to violate the honour of his child? After such an offence, what hope is there? There is no logic in this argument. Prospero could have removed Caliban to a safe distance or he could have tried to civilize and correct him. But the argument: you tried to violate Miranda, *therefore* you shall chop wood, belongs to a non-rational mode of thinking (106).

The banishment and consignment to servitude of Caliban is non-rational; it is emotional and motivated by Prospero's own sexual guilt: 'The 'inferior being' always serves as scapegoat; our own evil intentions can be projected on to him' (p. 106), Mannoni claims, and this 'applies especially to incestuous intentions: Miranda is the only woman on the island, and Prospero and Caliban the only men' (p. 106). Here, the native man is used as the scapegoat for feelings that the colonial man is seeking to repress:

> It is easy to see why it is always his daughter or his sister or his neighbour's wife (never his own) whom a man imagines to have been violated by a negro; he wants to rid himself of guilt by putting the blame for his bad thoughts on someone else (p. 106).

This reading of Prospero's incestuous desires towards Miranda was not originally Mannoni's: he cites K. M. Abenheimer's psychoanalytical review of the play as a source for his own work. In

this essay, Abenheimer argues that Miranda, 'as the only woman on the island, cannot have escaped some subconscious incestuous interest on Prospero's part'.[62]

Prospero reminds Caliban that their relationship broke down when he attempted to violate Miranda's honour. For Mannoni, it is more because Caliban reminds Prospero of himself. In his introductory chapter, he promises that 'the reader will discover later on how and why it is that the presence of a man whom our unconscious takes to be a 'savage' can cause confused and disquieting feelings to be roused in us' (p. 18). However, there is another aspect of Caliban which Prospero finds even more troubling: once their relationship has broken down and Caliban has been banished into his cell and demoted to the position of slave, Caliban begins to assert his right to freedom. This assertion of Caliban's deeply troubles Prospero, because it doesn't fit with the image of Caliban as merely a projection: 'In other words, we are perfectly happy if we can project the fantasies of our own unconscious on to the world outside, but if we suddenly find that these creatures are not pure projections but real beings with claims to liberty, we consider it outrageous, however modest their claims' (p. 117). In this reading, Caliban is not a figure of

[62] K. Abenheimer, 'Shakespeare's Tempest': A Psychological Analysis, *The Psychoanalytic Review*, 33 (1946), 399-415 (p. 404).
Prospero's desire for his own daughter has informed subsequent critical readings: writing in 1974 Charles Hofling agrees that the banishment – and abuse – of Caliban is symptomatic of Prospero's own neurosis: 'Prospero's abusive treatment of Caliban suggests that he still finds it necessary to project his own destructive and incestuous impulses onto the poor savage.' Hofling argues that the structure of the play illuminates Prospero's desire towards Miranda: 'an emotionally charged scene with Miranda is shortly followed by a scene in which Prospero is particularly abusive to Caliban or causes him to be attacked'. He mentions two instances: the scene when he tells Miranda they will return to Milan (and he'll lose her), followed by abuse of Caliban, and the interrupted masque: 'these sequences […] reinforce the idea of Prospero's fighting down his own unacceptable impulses by projecting them onto Caliban and then punishing Caliban'. Charles K. Hofling, 'Psychological Aspects of Shakespeare's *Tempest'*, *Psychoanalytical Review,* 61.3 (1974), 375-95 (pp. 386-7).
Michael Shakman, writing for the Freudian publication *American Imago* in 1986, argues that 'Caliban expresses the libidinal aspects of Prospero. His wish to ravish Miranda expresses a wish in Prospero. […] Prospero banishes Caliban from his cell and thereby splits off the libidinal force'. Michael L. Shakman, 'The Tempest', *American Imago,* 43 (1986), 81-97 (p. 88).
Similarly, Kevin Pask argues: Caliban is indeed an early modern precursor of the Freudian id, and his return in the midst of Prospero's masque is nothing if not timely. Caliban represents, at least partly, what the masque temporarily succeeded in eliding; he is aligned with the masque's evocation of "dusky Dis" (Pluto), who has carried Prosperine away with the connivance of Venus and Cupid'. Pask, p. 750.

hatred because he is monstrous; more, because he is so very human, and a typical colonial suffering with the 'Prospero complex' neuroses cannot make sense of this:

> What is resented in Caliban is not really his physical appearance, his bestiality, his 'evil' instincts – for after all it is a matter of pride to keep half-tamed apes or other wild animals in one's household – but that he should claim to be a person in his own right and from time-to-time show that he has a will of his own (p. 117).

Those Europeans who regard natives as an inferior race are unable to interpret the behaviour of these natives precisely because it leads them to question their own neuroses: they 'project upon the colonial peoples the obscurities of their own unconscious – obscurities they would rather not penetrate – and their interpretation of the natives' behaviour is repressed because it is associated with the dangers and temptations represented by the 'instincts'' (p. 19). At the end of *The Tempest*, when most of the Europeans first see Caliban, Prospero appears to take ownership of Caliban: 'This thing of darkness I | Acknowledge mine' (V. 1. 275-6). Caliban is both a son and (even more troubling for Prospero) he is the embodiment of aspects of his own personality which have been obscured by his unconscious. Here, Mannoni is influenced by Lévy-Bruhl's claims of the 'primitive core' which still resides in every civilized man: 'a blemish almost, a savage slumbering in every civilized person, dangerous if roused' (p. 20). It would appear that this core can be roused when a civilized man is placed in a colonial context. The colonial is threatened by the native man, his subject, because he recalls our deepest fears: 'What we project on to the colonial inhabitant, in fact, is […] not our 'mental derangement', but our most elementary and deeply-hidden fears and desires' (p. 198). Caliban is at once an adoptive son, a colonial subject, a projection of Prospero's unconscious desires, and 'the personification of Prospero's shadow' (p.

404). Prospero's relationship with Caliban, in this colonial situation, causes his neurosis – the inability to connect with the 'world of Others' – to become ever more pronounced:

> In *The Tempest,* when Miranda cries:
>
> > …O brave new world,
> > That has such people in it
>
> we realize […] that she has accomplished in one step that adjustment of the archetypes to reality which her neurotic father had so surely missed. His scornful reply, "Tis new to thee", proves that he is not yet cured (p. 102).

One reason that Mannoni's reading of the play is so important is because he emphasises the psychological weaknesses of Prospero: 'Man must learn to accept himself as he is and to accept others as they are, even if they happen to be Caliban. This is the only wise course, but the path towards wisdom is long and infinitely painful for Prospero' (p. 105). As well as changing how Caliban is read (a figure of colonial oppression), Mannoni's reading shaped subsequent readings of Prospero: not an admirable mage, but a neurotic despot.

Magic as regression

Part of the 'Prospero complex', then, is the inability to engage with, and to accept, others (including Calibans). Another crucial aspect is his use of magic: 'Shakespeare's theme is the drama of the renunciation of power and domination, which are symbolized by magic, a borrowed power which must be rendered up' (p. 105). Prospero's magic – his 'art' – means that he becomes an image of paternal power: 'There is no doubting the nature of Prospero's magical

power, for at his side we find his obedient daughter – and magic is the child's image of paternal omnipotence' (p. 105). However, when Prospero's power is threatened, he seems unable to cope with this: 'Whenever his absolute authority is threatened, and however slight the threat, Prospero – our aspirant to wisdom – always becomes impatient and almost neurotically touchy' (p. 105).

In his study of the psychological complexes involved in the colonial situation, Mannoni turns to Prospero and Crusoe as examples of the psychology of the colonial. He argues that these characters, while both archetypal colonials, are contrasting; they represent a kind of bifurcation in the mindset of Europeans. Crusoe is characterised by Mannoni as having a 'faith in technical skill' (p. 100); his personality is 'in line with the current of ideas flowing from Locke to the Encyclopaedists' (p. 100). On the other hand, Prospero is 'reminiscent rather of Bacon, who thought in terms of experiment but dreamed of magic' (p. 100). Prospero's magic makes him more infantile: 'Prospero is the least evolved of these literary figures, according to the criteria of psychoanalysis, for he is endowed with magical power, and so is not required to display those virile and adult qualities to which Ulysses and Crusoe owe their salvation' (p. 99). Prospero and Crusoe, for Mannoni, are two aspects of the Modern, European temper 'oscillating between the most audacious rationalism and the most infantile superstition' (p. 147). Mannoni's views on magic were likely influenced by Freud, who wrote in *Totem and Taboo* about the relationship between magician and the artist: the artist, as the magician, creates art to call forth effects to gratify his wishes.[63] In Mannoni's reading, the magic of artistic creation is what ties Prospero to Shakespeare: in his creation of Prospero, Caliban and Ariel, Shakespeare is the magician-artist.

[63] 'Only in one field has the omnipotence of thought been retained in our own civilization, namely in art. In art alone it still happens that man, consumed by his wishes, produces something similar to the gratification of these wishes, and this playing, thanks to artistic illusion, calls forth effects as if it were something real. We rightly speak of the magic of art and compare the artist with a magician. But this comparison is perhaps more important than it claims to be. Art, which certainly did not begin as art for art's sake, originally served tendencies which today have for the greater part ceased to exist. Among these we may suspect various magic intentions', Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo,* Freud, Sigmund, *Totem and Taboo* (1913). <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/41214/41214-h/41214-h.htm#FNanchor_119_119>, pp. 45-6.

Prospero-Shakespeare; Gonzalo-Shakespeare

Mannoni suggests that this need for dominance over others is not just a feature of Prospero's psychology, but of Shakespeare's: 'Surely the man who wrote this play must have harboured in his unconscious a strange and potent desire to possess power over men, if only by prestige, and this desire must in its way have been as powerful and as difficult to overcome as that of Defoe' (p. 108). He confidently asserts that we can read the play as evidence of Shakespeare's own neuroses: 'we can be sure that Shakespeare had no other model but himself for his creation of Prospero' (p. 99). It is likely that his conflation of Shakespeare with Prospero was influenced by Irvine, whose introduction to Mannoni's edition of Shakespeare makes this point explicitly: when Prospero says that he will drown his book, 'that is a noble farewell to the world he had so greatly enriched. He made *The Tempest* for a final gift to mankind, and then, peacefully and without complaint, broke his staff and died'.[64]

Many critics have conflated Prospero with Shakespeare.[65] A more interesting aspect of Mannoni's work is his suggestion that aspects of Shakespeare's unconscious can also be traced in the figure of Gonzalo. Although Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest* late in his career – what Mannoni describes as 'his old age' – this play reveals his most 'infantile' desires. The creation of an (almost) uninhabited island reflects a 'deep need in the human psyche' (p. 104); it is an act of imagination which is driven by the desire to reconnect with that prelapsarian world of our childhood. Mannoni cites Baudelaire's 'green paradise of childhood' as an example of this desire: 'Baudelaire felt, as we all do, that savage countries and savage peoples were the nearest imitation he could find in the real world of that of his childhood – of paradise' (p. 21).[66] These unexplored,

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[64] Ervine, Intro, p. xxxii.

[65] Kevin Pask argues that Dryden's prologue to *The Enchanted Island* is 'the first instance in which Prospero is conflated with his creator', Pask, p. 744.

[66] This is likely an allusion to a line from Baudelaire's 'Moesta et errabunda', 'le vert paradis des amours enfantines', | 'the green paradise of childhood loves', <https://fleursdumal.org/poem/154>.

'savage' countries appeal because, as the Europeans see them, the people there are free from the restrictions imposed by 'civilisation'. The natives of these lands are not seen by the colonials as humans (at least, not on an equal footing), and so the colonial has no need to engage with others. And because the society is arranged differently, there is no recognition that a society even exists; the idealised country is regarded as a land of plenty, with no organisation or toil.

Mannoni describes Gonzalo as 'the Utopist, [who] dreams of turning the island into a Land of Cockaigne' (p. 107).[67] Ben Parsons observes that 'Of the various imaginary spaces devised during the Middle Ages, one of the most persistent and fascinating is the Land of Cockaigne'.[68] This proto-Utopian space represented a land of super-abundance, where no toil was necessary. However, as Parsons argues, these images of abundance are also undercut: '*Cocaingne* also portrays worldly appetite as something that can never be fully satisfied, that demands impossible and unachievable levels of substance'.[69] Some of the later texts inspired by *Cocaingne* 'go further still, and stress that attempting to pursue such pleasure and ease on earth will only result in destruction of some form.'[70]

Early modern discourses of exploration were as much a reflection on the European societies of the writers as they were on what was discovered in the New World. Montaigne's *Des Cannibales* (long-established as a source for *The Tempest*) is a satirical dissection of contemporary French society as much as it is an exploration of the society of the Tupinamba tribe of Brazil. Mannoni makes no to reference Montaigne; instead, he refers to Jean de Léry's *Histoire d'un voyage faict en la*

[67] The reference to *Cocaigne* here is perhaps an allusion to Samuel Purchas' description of Bermuda: 'this Land of Cockaigne setting, far removed not only from England but from the hardships of Jamestown', cited in Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), p. 151.
[68] Ben Parsons, 'Fantasy and Fallacy in the Old French Cocaingne', *Viator*, 46 (2015), 173-193 (p. 173).
[69] Parsons, pp. 180-1.
[70] Parsons, p. 181.

terre en Brasil as an example of the early modern travel narrative which used its exploration of new worlds to reflect on the society of the traveller. Wes Williams describes Jean de Léry as 'a traveller-polemicist who formed part of the French attempt to set up a cross-confessional colony in Brazil in the late 1550s',[71] and a thinker who seems to have directly influenced Montaigne. Williams observes that Jean de Léry was struck by the corruption, and even cannibalism,[72] he witnessed in the streets of France upon his return from a voyage to study the Tupinamba tribe. While many in France would have described this tribe as comprised of 'savages', it struck De Léry that his own society was not necessarily superior, but corrupt and in need of censure. Williams argues that this notion of cultural relativity was a feature of early modern French travel narratives: 'the tales early modern French writers tell [did not] concern exclusively the curious wonders of some brave New World. Indeed […], they engage, rather, with the limits of the community and the extremes of human behaviour exemplified by their own fragile civilisation'.[73]

While de Léry notes that the native people live unclothed, 'in wantonness', and as being 'completely destitute' of any learning from books, he also suggests that, in many ways, their behaviour was far less corrupt: '[they] do not in any way drink of those murky, pestilent springs, from which flow so many streams of mistrust, avarice, litigation, and squabbles, of envy and ambition, which eat away our bones, suck our marrow, waste our bodies and consume our spirits'.[74] De Léry notes that these tribes also cohabit less destructively with nature; they did not even consider cutting down their native trees until the Europeans arrived (indeed, they remain shocked that a dead tree could be considered more valuable than a live one, and are required by

[71] Wes Williams, '"L'Humanité du tout perdue?" Early Modern Monsters, Cannibals and Human Souls', *History and anthropology,* 23.2 (2012), 235-256 (p. 236).
[72] Williams notes that "*Guerres intestines" | intestine wars* became a common collocation when referring to the French civil wars; a metaphor 'most graphically instantiated in the cannibalism practised amongst neighbours in the towns and streets of France'. Williams, p. 238.
[73] Williams, p. 252.
[74] De Léry, p. 57.

the Europeans to carry their timber). Mannoni does not appear to be very accepting of this satirical cultural relativity. In describing de Léry's work, Mannoni conjectures that he wrote about the savages simply in order to contrast them unfavourably with his own people: '[he] drew a picture of the savage precisely in order to contrast it with that of the Europeans of his time whose manners he felt compelled by some bitter anti-social urge to censure' (p. 104).

For Mannoni, the image of a Land of Cockaigne emerges 'like a more distant memory of childhood' (p. 107). This desire for a Utopian space is less driven by idealism (or exploration of the travellers' home) than a kind of infantile regression, and in this sense, Gonzalo is similar to Prospero: 'his attitude is in fact identical with Prospero's and shows the same infantile regression' (p. 107). The creation of these imaginary islands was motivated by a desire to forge a new space, full of fictional people: 'The desert islands of the imagination are, it is true, peopled with imaginary beings, but that is after all their raison d'être' (p. 101). He claims that those who seek solitude are motivated by a need to interact with imaginary creatures, rather than real people: 'The real attraction of solitude, however, is that if the world is emptied of human beings as they really are, it can be filled with the creatures of our own imagination: Calypso, Ariel, Friday' (p. 101). However, this desire to escape the real world leads to a regression in personality, which cannot be overcome until we accept the world as it really is: 'But if we are to achieve a complete and adult personality it is essential that we should make the images of the unconscious tally, more or less, with real people; flight into solitude shows that we have failed to do so' (pp. 101-2). These 'characteristics are traceable in the unconscious of Prospero-Shakespeare' (p. 102). The characters which Shakespeare created are read by Mannoni as projections of 'elementary and deeply-hidden fears and desires, the primal Good and Evil, not as a philosopher might see them, but rather as they might appear to a child in a dream, or as Shakespeare and Daniel Defoe saw them' (p. 198). Even the repressed incestuous desires of Prospero towards Miranda are indicative

of Shakespeare's own unconscious sexual desires: 'These rapes allegedly perpetrated by members of one race on those of another are pure projections of the unconscious. The fact that Shakespeare found them in his artistic imagination and had no need to go to the outside world for examples should be argument enough' (p. 110). For Mannoni, Prospero is a character modelled on Shakespeare himself – even if it is only on an unconscious level: 'colonial life is simply a substitute to those who are still obscurely drawn to a world without men – to those, that is, who have failed to make the effort necessary to adapt infantile images to adult reality' (p. 105).

In his psychoanalysis of Shakespeare, Mannoni returns to his theory of how the European mind has been shaped by Modernity. This can be summed up in two figures of philosophy: Descartes 'the man of abandonment who has renounced maternal protection' (p. 147), and Pascal 'the child lost in the forest who goes searching for his mother everywhere' (p. 147). Pascal searches for his mother in the forest because Nature is seen as symbolic of Maternal abundance: 'who provides for all without effort like the mother remembered from infancy' (p. 184). According to Mannoni, these bifurcations in the European psyche can explain Shakespeare's creation of both Prospero and Gonzalo: 'Now we see by what paths in the unconscious Shakespeare was led to include in *The Tempest*, alongside Prospero the paternalist, Gonzalo the 'utopist', dreaming of the Land of Cockaigne' (p. 184). Shakespeare is a kind of colonial figure himself because the unconscious desires which led him to create Prospero and Gonzalo are the same reasons why some people choose to live in a colonial setting:

> the same unconscious tendency has impelled thousands of Europeans to seek out oceanic islands inhabited only by Fridays or, alternatively, to go and entrench themselves in isolated outposts in hostile countries where they could repulse by force of arms those same terrifying creatures whose image was formed in their own unconscious (p. 104).

Mannoni claims that escaping into solitude means that the 'Prospero' figure's inability to deal with other people can never be properly resolved: the flight from people 'leads to a serious rupture of the image of these others or to a failure in the process of synthesis whereby that image is formed' (p. 104). The word 'synthesis' here suggests that the two contrasting aspects of the psyche – symbolised by Prospero and Caliban – which are projected by the colonial mind must be reconciled. This image is in two parts, which recede further apart, and don't coalesce: 'on the one hand there are pictures of monstrous and terrifying creatures, and on the other visions of gracious beings bereft of will and purpose – Caliban and the cannibals at one extreme (Caliban is surely a deliberate anagram); Ariel or Friday on the other' (p. 104). So, in this reading, Caliban and Ariel are both aspects of the same person, and they represent aspects of the personality of every man: 'But man is both Ariel and Caliban; we must recognize this if we are to grow up' (p. 104). He cites *Jekyll and Hyde* as a dramatization of this duality, describing R. L. Stevenson as another writer of travel narratives: 'In his story, Ariel and Caliban are called Jekyll and Hyde' (p. 99 fn.). This duality within the mind, or the personality, is a feature of childhood which Shakespeare didn't entirely grow out of: 'for a period of childhood we refuse to believe it, and it is the traces of this phase which remain in the unconscious that led Defoe and Shakespeare to write' (p. 104).

As well as stripping Caliban of his agency and revolutionary potential, and establishing Prospero as the archetypal colonial figure beset with neuroses that have been exacerbated by the 'colonial situation', Mannoni's reading disrupts the very position and concept of Shakespeare. As I argued in the introduction, Shakespeare was often regarded in France as 'unruly' or 'untutored', but his genius was noted (albeit sometimes begrudgingly). Mannoni's reading seems to suggest that Shakespeare was a writer who suffered from the kind of neuroses that led Prospero to act as

a despot; that the Bard (even in this latter stage of his writing career) was driven by 'infantile' desires, and created the island of *The Tempest* because of his need to escape the world of men.

Responses to Mannoni

Mannoni's work was a profoundly influential, and highly contentious, contribution to the trajectory of the play. Vaughan and Vaughan stress the significance of this text, especially in shaping subsequent interpretations of Caliban: '"Caliban-as-colonial-victim" dominated the interpretive paradigm […] inaugurated by Mannoni's revolutionary assessment'.[75] Philip Mason, in his foreword to the first English translation (in 1956), describes it as a work which 'set in order what had hovered unformulated on the fringe of unconsciousness' and as 'the opening speech of a debate'.[76] Mason, himself a man who had forged a career in the service of colonial France, notes that Mannoni's 'Prospero complex' made him far more aware, and questioning, of his own position: 'I, at least, since I first read Mannoni, have caught myself again and again. And there are of course plenty of Prosperos who never cross the sea'.[77] In his review of the book for *International Affairs,* Kenneth Robinson suggested that Mannoni's ideas outweighed some fundamental errors: 'any deficiencies there may be in this remarkable book are much less important than its original contribution to colonial studies of the many lines it suggests for research elsewhere'.[78] In the author's note to the second edition (1964), Mannoni contends that, while it may be inaccurate in some respects, his work at least brought more attention to the

[75] Vaughan and Vaughan, p. 280.
[76] Mason, 'Intro', p. 9
[77] Mason, p. 12
[78] Kenneth Robinson, review of Octave Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950) *International Affairs*, 27 (1951), 62 (p.62).

colonial situation: 'Ethnographers and sociologists wondered if they had not been wrong to regard colonial situations as bastardized and unworthy of their interest'.[79]

Mannoni's work attracted vehement criticisms from many thinkers, especially from those in the postcolonial field. While Mannoni claimed that it was a dependency complex that caused the Malagasy to seek out colonial rule, Fanon, for example, insisted that dependency emerged *from* the colonial relations and not vice versa. Another major figure of the Négritude movement, Albert Memmi, characterized Mannoni's position as representing '"the fundamental bias" in colonialist thinking'.[80] Rob Nixon argues that Mannoni's work did indeed shape many subsequent responses to *The Tempest,* even though these responses might have been to contend with many of Mannoni's arguments:

> However much Third World intellectuals have subsequently quarrelled with his manner of mobilizing the play, Mannoni's inaugural gesture helped to shape the trajectory of those associated appropriations which lay ahead and, concomitantly, to bring about the re-estimation of *The Tempest* in Africa, and the Caribbean.[81]

McCullough observes that, although Frantz Fanon became one of his fiercest critics, he offered postcolonial theories which had more in common with *Prospero and Caliban* than he would care to admit:

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[79] Octave Mannoni, 'author's note to the second edition', *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization,* trans. by Pamela Powesland, with a New Foreword by Maurice Bloch*,* 2nd edn (Ann Arbour: Michigan University Press, 1990), pp. 7-8. Mannoni also apologies for inaccuracies in the author's note to the first edition (1956), pp. 5-6.
[80] Khanna, p. 154.
[81] Rob Nixon, 'Caribbean and African Appropriations of *The Tempest*', *Critical Inquiry*, 13.3 (1987) 557-578 (p. 562).

> As an inferior species the colonised serves as a scapegoat on whom all evil intentions may be projected thereby safeguarding the colonialist from feelings of self-recrimination. Where Mannoni had written that all the felt sins of the European are projected on to the figure of the Negro and that 'the Negro is the white man's fear of himself', he was proposing an argument since associated with Fanon's *Masks*.[82]

Mannoni's work did not just shape the trajectory of critical responses of the play: it was a direct inspiration for one of most ground-breaking theatrical productions of *The Tempest.* In 1970, Jonathan Miller directed a production which made explicit the colonial context of the play. In her biography of Miller, Kate Bassett described the production, making the postcolonial discourse clear: 'Renaissance costumes were retained but the long-established depictions of Caliban and Ariel, as base monster and ethereal sprite, were jettisoned. Instead, Rudolph Walker and Norman Beaton (who would later star in *Desmond's)* played them as indigenous black islanders from two tribes, responding differently to the white paternalism of Prospero'.[83] Miller himself, in a discussion with Philip Dodd in 2012, cited Mannoni's work as a direct influence on his production:

> what attracted me to doing the play as I acquainted myself with it was the figure of the colonial island, and I decided very early on and then repeated it when I did it several years later […] I was intrigued by the book by Octave Mannoni called *Prospero et Caliban*, […] which is to say the fact that as happened in Madagascar, or so Mannoni thought, but certainly happened in the Congo, that the European occupiers of so many of these places

[82] McCullough, p. 216. *Peau noire, masques blancs* is one of Fanon's most influential works – and one of the most important works in the field of postcolonial theory.
[83] Kate Bassett, *In two minds: a biography of Jonathan Miller* (London: Oberon Books, 2012), p. 177.

> in Africa would favour one tribe over another, […] and that was what made me decide to have Caliban and Ariel played by these two black tribes.[84]

As Harry Levin observed in his review: 'Jonathan Miller directed a London production of *The Tempest* last year, in which both Caliban and Ariel were exploited Africans and Prospero was a colonial despot.'[85] Hilary Spurling also stressed the significance of Miller's interpretation: 'It will be hard, after Mr Miller's production, ever again to see *The Tempest* as the fairytale to which we are accustomed – or indeed to see it in any other terms than as Shakespeare's account, prosaic and prophetic, of the impact of the Old World on the New'.[86] Mannoni's work is problematic in many of its assertions, but it was foundational in the construction of the edifice of postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* which are still being hotly debated today.

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[84] Philip Dodd, 'Landmarks: The Tempest', *Shakespeare Unlocked* (BBC Radio 3, 3rd May 2012, 22:00) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b01gvtwq> [accessed 27 September 2021].
[85] Harry Levin, *Shakespeare and 'the revolution of the times': perspectives and commentaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 231.
[86] Hilary Spurling, review of The Tempest, dir. by Jonathan Miller, *The Spectator*, 224 (27 June 1970), p.855.

Noises, sounds and sweet airs

Songs of emancipation in Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête*

Ocean stream comes home…
Nothing is, all becomes.
[…]
Ocean stream comes home,
Bringing a sea-change.

Ariel, *Une tempête*[1]

Renan's sequel to *The Tempest* explores the revolutionary potential of Caliban; Guéhenno's response attempts to give him a more 'authentic' voice. For both, Caliban's race is a fairly minor concern; his class status is far more important. Mannoni's work, written on the cusp of the postcolonial era, is an examination of the psychological effects of colonisation, and is far more racially specific: Caliban is explicitly framed as a subject of colonial rule, and is linked to the rebels in the 1947 Madagascan uprising. Aimé Césaire's *Une tempête* is a postcolonial reframing of *The Tempest*,[2] which makes more explicit the colonial implications in Shakespeare's play. Of all the responses I consider, Césaire offers the most intersectional reframing of Caliban – he is shaped by both his class and his race, and this reflects Césaire's view of the intersection between capitalism and colonialism: he described Martinicans as 'doubly proletarianized and alienated: in the first place as workers, but also as black people'.[3] Césaire dramatises the psychological effects of the system of colonialism and interrogates whether, under this system, genuine revolution (which leads to societal change) is really possible.

[1] Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest: based on Shakespeare's The Tempest, adaptation for a black theatre,* trans. by Philip Crispin (London: Oberon Books, 2000), p. 26.

[2] Martinique was a French colony. In 1946, the French National Assembly unanimously voted to make the colony of Martinique into an Overseas Department of France (Département d'Outre-Mer, or DOM).

[3] Rene Depestre, 'Interview with Aimé Césaire at the 1967 Cultural Congress of Havana', in Aimé Césaire, *Poesías,* trans. by Maro Riofrancos (Cuba: Casa de las Americas, 1969 pp. 25-31, (p. 31) <https://politicaleducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Interview-with-Aime-Cesaire.pdf> [accessed 27 September 2021]

Although the furthest from Shakespeare chronologically, out of all the responses I consider, Césaire's is in some ways most closely aligned to Shakespeare's play. As Zabus argues, Renan's sequel inaugurated a 'deprivileging of Prospero'.[4] Renan attempted to offer the character of Caliban a development (an evolution), and this involved transporting him from the island to the city. As I argued in chapter 1, Renan's sequel could only have taken place *away* from the island. But Césaire's must take place on an island once again. Césaire reconnects with the elemental quality of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, reanimating the island itself, and the magic inherent within it. Guéhenno, in framing Sycorax as a woman crushed by the weight of poverty, unintentionally diminished her; Césaire gives Sycorax back her magic, while Prospero's power is diminished. Russell West argues that Césaire's reframing of the play demonstrates that he 'knows how to exploit the subversive potential of the Bard himself'.[5] For Joseph Khoury, Césaire's rewriting '[invites] us to re-read Shakespeare's text, to see that in fact it is not a straightforward play that neatly irons out the oppositions between nature and nurture, art and nature, or civilisation and savagery'.[6]

Césaire explores language, and poetry, as a weapon on both sides of the colonial debate, and employs a canonical text as a tool in the 'decolonisation of the consciousness' of both the author and the audience: this version deliberately returns the conversation about the Prospero-Caliban dynamic to the stage. In his adaptation, Césaire attempts to reclaim the power of the theatre to fulfil its promise, as Victor Hugo once envisioned, of acting as the 'crucible of civilisation' where the 'public soul is formed.'[7] His reframing of the play resituates Shakespeare's work in a postcolonial landscape: his island becomes a space in which to examine the potentiality of an

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[4] Zabus, p. 11.
[5] Russell West, 'Césaire's Bard: Shakespeare and the Performance of Change in Césaire's *Une tempête*', *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, 4.3. (2007), 1-16 (p. 2).
[6] Joseph Khoury, '*The Tempest* revisited in Martinique: Aimé Césaire's Shakespeare', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 6.2 (2006), 22-37 (p. 25).
[7] Hugo, *William Shakespeare,* p. 105.

African diaspora that proudly remembers its roots. When roots are established, then growth can occur. The tropes of return, transformation and renewal are fundamental to Césaire's oeuvre, and inform his re-imagining of *The Tempest.* As well as being a seminal contribution to the dialogue about Caliban's role in a postcolonial world, his play is a meditation on nature, identity, communication, and the transformative power of poetry. As West argues, 'Césaire shows how change can be performed so as to resist assimilation or recuperation […] how the process of change can generate a continuing process of cultural transformation'.[8]

Césaire's rewriting offers the potential for growth and renewal for Caliban, but also for Ariel. Both Caliban and Ariel are given new voices, and they sing of a new kind of transformative freedom. Césaire wrote in *Discours sur le colonialisme* (1955) that in the postcolonial era, it was crucial to move forward, and to re-invent society, rather than attempting to return to an idealised version of the past: 'the problem is not to make a Utopian and sterile attempt to repeat the past, but to go beyond. It is not a dead society that we want to revive. We leave that to those who go in for exoticism.'[9] One aspect of this moving forward, or reinvention, is an excavation and celebration of the past – finding a history that has been ignored or dismissed. I will demonstrate that, as this play itself evolved, Césaire gave progressively more history and culture to his Caliban, thus strengthening his identity. By diminishing the voices of the European characters – both those who want to create a sterile Utopia, and those who thrive on the despotic rule that colonialism affords – Césaire's response offers the possibility of a 'sea-change' which might represent an emancipation for both Caliban and Ariel (and even, perhaps, for Prospero).

[8] West, p. 2.
[9] Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, trans. by Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press), p. 52. The work was originally published in 1955 (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1955).

Aimé Césaire and the Negritude movement

Césaire was born in 1913, almost sixty years after the abolition of slavery in French colonies. Yet, the economic structure of Martinique had barely changed in that time: it relied almost entirely on the export of sugar cane, 'where a mass of black workers worked in *habitations* (the huge accommodation blocks provided for those who were employed to harvest the sugar cane) in the service of a dominant white caste – the *Békés*'.[10] Césaire's father had an administrative post in a *habitation*, so although none of his own family worked in the fields, Césaire was witness to the exploitation of many black people who hardly benefitted from their own toil. Huguette Bellemare observes that Césaire came from a family who espoused a tradition of 'social struggles, pride in their race and a love of education'. His father, Fernand, read French literature to his children every morning before work; he showed them the possibility of what Bellemare calls 'social climbing through intellectual effort and a mastery of French.'[11] In order to give his children access to the best possible education, Césaire's father sent the family to live in Fort-de-France (the capital, where they could access more respected schools), while he remained in his post in Basse-Pointe.

Like Guéhenno's, Césaire's childhood was one of poverty. Like Guéhenno, Césaire recalls watching his mother work a sewing machine for most of her waking hours: 'and I am even awakened at night by these tireless legs pedalling the night and by the Singer, bitterly biting into the soft flesh of the night as my mother pedals, pedals for our hunger every day, every night'.[12] And like Guéhenno (and indeed Renan) Césaire later recalled that, from a young age, he chose to dedicate himself to his education. Césaire worked assiduously at school, and frequently visited

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[10] Huguette Emmanuel Bellemare, *Aimé Césaire: Une tempête d'après la Tempête de Shakespeare adaptation pour un théâtre nègre* (Paris: Honoré-Champion, 2013), p. 10.
[11] Bellemare, p. 10.
[12] Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land*, trans. by Mireille Rosello (Northumberland: Bloodaxe, 1995), p. 83.

the Schœlcher[13] Library: Marijosé Alie (a journalist who interviewed Césaire more than any other) notes that Césaire spent all of his free time there, and that 'its baroque architecture appeared to him to be a magic place full of all knowledge, and so many books'. There, 'he devoured [. . .] the philosophers, the poets, the historians, the multiple variations of French thought which, he learned, glorified freedom, life-saving revolts, and the analysis of the past'.[14] Césaire fondly recalled the intellectual curiosity that drove him to study: 'I think that I was quite a good boy; I just had just one peculiarity: I liked school. – He smiles. – Learning! Everything, no matter what, a sort of fascination for knowledge and discovery, a compulsive curiosity!'.[15] And, like Guéhenno, this drive and passion for knowledge led Césaire to interrogate his own identity.

While Créole was the *spoken* language of Martinique, Bellemare notes that French was 'the official language, the language of social mobility; the valorised language'.[16] As Frantz Fanon observes in *Peau noire, masques blancs | Black skin, white masks* (1952): 'historically, it must be understood that the Negro wants to speak French, because it is the most likely key to open doors which, fifty years before, were forbidden to him'.[17] Césaire was fascinated by what he later described as 'French culture' – he encountered the ideas of great philosophers who wrote about liberty and equality. But this led him to question whether such ideals were part of the lived reality for the people of Martinique: 'Of course, I have a passion for French culture. Yes, of course: it

[13] Fort de France's public library, founded in 1887 by the abolitionist politician Victor Schœlcher, Undersecretary of State for the Ministry of the Navy and Colonies, and Martinique's representative at the National Assembly. 'La Bibliothèque Schœlcher', <https://www.collectivitedemartinique.mq/la-bibliotheque-schoelcher/>. Césaire spoke glowingly of Schœlcher in the Introduction to Schœlcher's collected works: 'To evoke the name Schœlcher is not to invoke a vain ghost, but rather to recall his true function as a man whose every word was an explosive bullet [. . .] Schœlcher goes beyond abolitionism and joins the line of revolutionary men: he who resolutely situates himself in the real world and bends history towards his end [. . .] Victor Schœlcher, one of the rare breaths of pure air that breathed on a history of murder, pillage and abuses', Schoelcher, Victor*, Esclavage et colonisation*, ed. by Émile Tersen (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948).
[14] Marijosé Alie, *Entretiens avec Aimé Césaire* (Bordeaux: Éditions Hervé Chopin, 2021), p. 18.
[15] Alie, p. 17.
[16] Bellemare, p. 10.
[17] Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1952), p. 30.

gave words to the idea of liberty. But which liberty? Which liberty, and for whom?'.[18] Césaire later described Martinique as a country fundamentally shaped by slavery – so many people had been stolen from their homes. He also noted the tension, and implicit violence, inherent in the French policy of assimilation: 'That's where the drama is. When we want to assimilate, to integrate, you reject us, you push us away. When colonial populations want to liberate themselves, you gun them down!'[19] The question of identity – Martinican identity – underpins Césaire's oeuvre (both as a writer and a politician). It also shapes his deployment of Caliban.

In 1931, having been awarded a bursary for further study, Césaire moved to France to study at Lycée Louis-le-Grand (one of the most prestigious secondary schools) in preparation for the entrance examinations for l'École Normale Supérieure. There, he met Léopard Sédar Senghor, a Senegalese poet, on the first day – he recalls that they noticed each other standing in the queue for inscription, and approached each other immediately.[20] They would spend hours at the canteen in the Cité Universitaire,[21] discussing questions of identity, politics and their relationship with France. Bellemare notes that Césaire read *La Revue du Monde Noir,* a review created in 1931 by Paulette Nardal (from Martinique) and Doctor Sajous (from Haiti).[22] This publication printed poems by writers associated with the Black American Renaissance movement, as well as the work of Leo Frobenius, a German ethnologist who wrote a great deal about Africa following his extensive travels in the Sudan. Césaire was greatly inspired by the writings of Frobenius who, in contradistinction to the majority of European ethnologists at that time, wrote that Africans were

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[18] Alie, p. 18.
[19] Alie, p. 35.
[20] Alie, p. 21.
[21] The Cité Universitaire, in the 14th arrondissement, was (and is) the Parisian halls of residence designed for international students.
[22] Bellemare, p. 11. Bellemare also argues that Césaire was also profoundly influenced by the review *Légitime Défense,* established in 1932 by Etienne Léro, René Ménil and Jules Monnerot, which 'violently denounced the colonial situation in Martinique and the assimilation of the bourgeois elites of colour'. Their writing "'marked" Césaire, especially in its tone and its audacity', p. 12.

'Civilized to the marrow of their bones!', a line which Césaire cited in his *Discours* to argue that 'the idea of the barbaric Negro is a European invention'.[23]

Césaire's friendship with Léopold Sédar Senghor led to a profound re-shaping of the postcolonial intellectual landscape. Together, Senghor and Césaire came to develop the concept of 'Négritude'. In an interview with René Depestre – a Haitian poet and militant – Césaire recalls meeting Senghor as 'a plunge into the depths. It was a plunge into Africa for me'.[24] Césaire recalls: 'we found a violent affirmation in the words nègre and *Négritude*.'[25] For Césaire, Haiti was the land of the original black revolutions: 'Haiti is the country where Negro people stood up for the first time, affirming their determination to shape a new world, a free world [...] the first Negro epic of the New World was written by Haitians, people like Toussaint l'Ouverture, Henri Christophe, Jean-Jacques Dessalines.'[26] Inspired by the journals he had read, Césaire worked with Senghor on an influential student journal, *L'Étudiant noir*. It was Césaire who coined the title *L'Étudiant noir*; he renamed the existing publication, *L'Étudiant martiniquais*. This renaming revealed one of the most fundamental aims of the journal, as summarised by one of the founders, Léon-Gontran Damas: '*The Black Student*: journal of co-operation and of combat, had as its objective the end of tribalisation, of the clan system so prevalent in the Latin quarter. We ceased to be a Martinican student, a Guadeloupean, Guyanese, African or Malagasy student, to be just one and the same black student'.[27] In the 1935 edition of the publication, Césaire wrote:

[23] Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, p. 53.
[24] Interview with Depestre, p. 26. Césaire remained fascinated by Africa throughout his life, but many critics note that his Negritude was different from Senghor's – Césaire's was shaped by his Antillean heritage. Césaire tells Depestre how deeply he was influenced – and inspired – by Haiti: 'I love Martinique, but it is an alienated land, while Haiti represented for me the heroic Antilles, the African Antilles', Interview with Depestre, p. 29.
[25] Interview with Depestre, p. 29.
[26] Interview with Depestre, p. 29. The Haitian revolution, from 1791 to 1804, culminated in the abolition of slavery, and the sovereign nation of Haiti was established on 1 January 1804. The rebellion was led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, the first black general of the French Army. The next leader was Jean-Jacques Dessalines, and then Henri Christophe, the first king of Haiti.
[27] <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/aime-cesaire/etudiant_noir-photo.asp> [accessed 27 September 2021].

> Thus, before the Revolution and in order to make the Revolution – the truth – the destructive groundswell and not just the shaking of surfaces, one condition is essential: to break the mechanical identification of races, to destroy superficial values, seize within us the immediate negro, to plant our negritude like a beautiful tree until it bears the most authentic fruits.[28]

The Negritude movement, which Césaire is credited with naming,[29] was both a political and aesthetic movement. It sought to reclaim, and to celebrate, the derogatory terms which had been used to denigrate black citizens as second-class; it sought to create a voice for so many who had been silenced; it sought to re-discover the African culture and history that many European colonialists claimed had never existed. As Bellemare notes, in an interview with Susan Frukhtin, Césaire described the movement as a starting point: 'Negritude is a point of departure…. It is the affirmation that one is black and proud of it… that there is a solidarity between all blacks…that we are suspended together in space'.[30] For Césaire, black people were not so much connected by race, but by a shared history: 'My Negritude has a ground. It is a fact there is a black culture: it is historical, there is nothing biological about it'.[31] In one of his most important theoretical works, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, Césaire references Lévy-Bruhl (the ethnologist cited by Mannoni in his *Psychology of Colonization* as an expert on the 'primitive mentality') as the sort of writer that the Negritude movement was reacting against; they sought to explode his claim – the myth that 'the only history is white'.[32] Césaire tells René Depestre: 'Africa was not some sort of blank page in the history of humanity; in sum, we asserted that our Negro heritage was worthy of respect, and

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[28] Aimé Césaire, *L'Étudiant noir,* 1935. Cited in Raisa Rexer, 'Black and White and Re(a)d All Over: *L'Étudiant noir*, Communism, and the Birth of Négritude', *Research in African Literatures*, 44.4 (2013), 1-14 (p. 10).
[29] Arnold, p. 38.
[30] Bellemare, 2013, p. 15.
[31] Arnold, p. 37.
[32] Césaire also described this movement as a reaction against the French policy of assimilation: a resistance to the politics of assimilation: 'until that time, until my generation, the French and the English but especially the French – had followed the politics of assimilation unrestrainedly. We didn't know what Africa was. Europeans despised everything about Africa, and in France people spoke of a civilized world and a barbarian world. The barbarian world was Africa and the civilized world was Europe', Interview with Depestre, p. 26. James Arnold argues that 'history is Césaire's adhesive binding black experience, and the historical commonality most prominent in Césaire's vision is the disruption and corruption of colonialism', Arnold, p. 37.

that this heritage was not relegated to the past; that its values were values that could still make an important contribution to the world.'[33] Césaire later recalled that he had felt that the politics of 1950s France were inherently colonial – based on assimilation and alienation, and designed to create 'good little Frenchmen with black skin and nothing else'.[34] He described the 'metaphysical anguish' in problem of identity : 'Negritude was a response to this search for identity. If you ask me who I am, I respond that I'm a man, of course, but a man who is historically, geographically, ethnically situated.'[35]

Césaire embodied the political and aesthetic aspects of the Negritude movement throughout his life. Gregson Davis observes that Césaire's prominent role in politics meant that he was able to 'exert considerable influence on the political evolution of the French Caribbean islands'. His famous contribution in that sphere is 'his co-sponsorship of the law that created "departmental" status for the colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe after the Second World War.'[36] Césaire was a member of the Communist Party of France for some time – his resignation letter to Maurice Thorez is one of his most oft-cited works. Césaire left the party because he felt that it was not doing enough to combat the paternalistic attitude of France. In 1958, he founded the Martinican Progressive Party (PPM), whose goal was 'the political education and the dis-alienation of the people'.[37]

In his theoretical writings, Césaire explored the concepts of colonialism and its effects on all parties involved. He sought to rediscover African history. Through poetry, he sought to find a voice for himself, and for the Negritude movement. For Césaire, French was a tool in the fight

[33] Interview with Depestre, p. 30.
[34] Alie, p. 23.
[35] Alie, p. 24.
[36] Davis, p. 2.
[37] Bellemare, p. 15.

for freedom: 'for me, French was a tool that I wanted to use in developing a new means of expression. I wanted to create an Antillean French, a black French that, while still being French, had a black character.'[38] On his return to Martinique, Césaire composed his most celebrated poem, *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* | *Notebook of a Return to My Native Land* (1939). In this, he found his Antillean Surrealist voice. Césaire described his approach to poetry as a 'weapon that exploded the French language'.[39] It was André Breton, the father of French Surrealism, who brought Césaire's work to the attention of most French intellectuals. Michel Leiris notes that Breton, on a trip back from America, found himself in Fort-de-France, discovered the review *Tropiques* in a library, and in it, Césaire's poetry. [40] Césaire regarded his poetry as a tool in what he described as the 'decolonising of his consciousness'.[41] Césaire also felt compelled to help others to decolonize, and to emancipate, their consciousnesses. Along with poetry, Césaire regarded drama as an effective tool in this process. Césaire's *A Tempest* is a disruption of the colonial project, a weaponization of words, and an attempt to emancipate consciousness by drawing on the galvanizing force of the theatre.

A Tempest was the last in Césaire's series of plays which dramatize significant moments of black revolution, known as the 'tragedies of decolonisation'.[42] *La tragédie du roi Christophe* | *The Tragedy of King Christopher* (1964), follows the historical figure of Henri Christophe, a slave who rose to become a General in Toussaint L'Ouverture's army.[43] *Une saison au Congo* | *A Season in the Congo*

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[38] Interview with Depestre, p. 26.

[39] Interview with Depestre, p. 26. Ellen A. Adams observes that underpinning the Surrealist movement was a belief that it could lead to societal transformation: 'With the liberation of the mind, the Surrealists believed, naively perhaps, that society would undergo a similarly profound renewal', Ellen A. Adams, 'At the boundary of action and dream: Surrealism and the battle for post-Liberation France', *French cultural studies*, 27.4 (2016), 316-334 (p. 328).

[40] Michel Leiris, 'Introduction', Lilyan Kesteloot and Barthélémy Kotchy, *Aimé Césaire: L'homme Et L'œuvre* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1973), p. 8.

[41] Interview with Depestre, p. 26.

[42] Davis observes that in these plays, there are allusions to Shakespeare – the titles themselves are allusions to Shakespearean tragedies, Davis, pp. 30-31.

[43] Paul Breslin and Rachel Ney note that the play conveys the tragedy of Christophe, and his 'transformation from a charismatic leader sensitive to the oppression of his people to an oppressor himself', Aimé Césaire, *The Tragedy of King Christophe*, trans. by Paul Breslin and Rachel Ney (Northwestern University Press, 2015).

(1967), depicts Patrice Lumumba, Prime Minister of the Congo, after its independence from Belgium, and his struggles in creating a functioning independent country in the face of secession by the Katangese rebels (who were openly backed by the Belgian military). It is a dramatization of the effects of ongoing French imperialism. The director and producer of *Congo*, Jean-Marie Serreau, asked Césaire if he would write an adaptation of *The Tempest.* Césaire agreed, but only on the condition that he had full creative control over his adaptation.

Césaire later recalled that, at the time Serreau had asked him to write this adaptation of *The Tempest*, he had been closely following the Civil Rights Movement in America, and was very interested in the notion of Black Power, which he described as the 'awakening of black Americans […] This extraordinary movement, which makes hot summers, deserved to be treated theatrically…I envisaged a piece called *A hot summer*.[44] His interest in the Black Power movement and its implications for the reshaping of postcolonial (and post-slavery) societies coalesced with his reading of *The Tempest* as a dialectic of power between a master and his slave; *A hot summer* became *A tempest.*

Black theatre, white masks

The full title of Césaire's adaptation is *Une Tempête (d'après "La Tempête" de Shakespeare) (adaptation pour un théâtre nègre)*. Césaire stated that in this production, the cast must be comprised of actors of colour. He regarded the theatre as an important tool in the Negritude movement and the associated 'decolonisation of the consciousness', describing it as 'an art which is very well received by peoples of under-developed countries; it is for them an extremely direct language.

[44] Toumson, 'Aimé Césaire dramaturge', Le Théâtre comme nécessité, *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études françaises*, 46.1 (1994), 213-229 (p. 225).

There is a need, a hunger, for theatre in Africa.'[45] David Bradby observes that Césaire's director and long-time collaborator, Serreau, was also instrumental in developing Césaire's theatrical work: 'Serreau's role of developing a theater of black consciousness among African and West Indian writers, actors, designers, and directors was absolutely crucial and ended only with his death in 1973.'[46] Césaire and Serreau worked closely on all of Césaire's drama – 'the triumph of Césaire's theater in the 1960s, by the playwright's own admission, owed a great deal to Serreau'.[47] In response to a criticism that his concept of a 'black theatre' was exclusionary, Césaire responded: 'I write theatre for under-developed countries because I am originally from one […] That said, I am persuaded that the work of art is universal […] I persist in believing that all that happens in Africa should interest those living in Western countries'.[48]

Davis argues that Césaire's leaving the French Communist Party coincided with a generic shift in his writing: 'this rupture with the central metropolitan bureaucracy converged, in the sphere of his literary production, with a turn from lyric poetry to what might be called lyric drama.' Davis notes that Césaire himself often suggested in interviews that this shift to 'lyric drama' was 'motivated by the sincere desire on his part to narrow the gap in communication between avant-garde writer and provincial audience'.[49] As he told Alie: 'I am from a generation which really insisted on the necessity of engagement; I can't be the poet in his ivory tower, I live with and

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[45] François Beloux, 'Aimé Césaire: un poète politique', *Magazine Littéraire*, 34 (1969), <https://www.potomitan.info/cesaire/politique.php> [accessed on 27 September 2021].

[46] David Bradby, review of Elisabeth Auclaire-Tamaroff and Barthélémy, *Jean-Marie Serreau Découvreur De Theatres* (1986), *Theatre Journal,* 42.1 (1990), 128-130 (p. 128). Bradby notes that, in 1968, Serreau directed *Uhuru*, a play written by Aimé Césaire in collaboration with the Algerian writer Kateb Yacine. He also directed the production of *Béatrice au Congo* with the students of National Arts Institute at Abidjan during his trip to the Ivory Coast in 1971. Serreau was one of the major forces behind *T.E.C* (*Travail et Culture*) and *C.I.D* (*Culture par L'Initiation Dramatique*): 'For him, culture was an active concept: its function was to provide a means by which everyone could share in reshaping society.' He had come across Kateb Yacine's work, *Le Cadavre Encerclé,* in 1954, but couldn't produce the play on French soil because of the Algerian war: 'Through the work of this Algerian poet, Serreau found himself forced to view European civilization through new eyes – African eyes', Bradby, pp. 128-9.

[47] Bradby, p. 128.

[48] Roger Toumson, *Trois Calibans* (La Habana: Casa de las Américas, 1981), pp. 311-12.

[49] Davis, p. 126.

among my people'.[50] Césaire believed in the power of theatre as a catalyst for social change. In this, he was greatly influenced by Brecht, whose plays were first brought to the French stage by Serreau – as Bradby notes, this was consistent with Serreau's aims to create a new kind of theatre which might stand a chance of 'breaking with the established mode of prestige cultural products.'[51]

Césaire's play attempts to dramatizes the psychological effects of the system of colonialism. It is also partly about coming to terms with the colonial experience. In the opening scene, the stage directions detail an opening with the '*Ambiance of a psychodrama'.* Psychodrama, or 'action therapy' was a technique created by Jacob Levy Moreno during the 1930s; a technique which he came to develop from his work with the 'Theatre of Spontaneity'.[52] Such 'encounters' can lead to what Moreno calls 'catharsis and insight'. Césaire set out to portray the lived experiences of Ariel and Caliban, and to write for an audience who might share some of these characters' experiences.

Roger Toumson's work on the performance history of the play seems to suggest that audiences who had indeed lived under the yoke of colonial oppression responded more favourably to the play: three performances (in July 1969, at festival of Hammamet, Tunisia; in 1970, at the Festival de Baalbek in Lebanon; and in August 1972, at the first cultural festival of Fort-de-France) received excellent reviews from the public and critics alike. Performances at the Venice Festival and then Théâtre de l'Ouest Parisien, did not garner a favourable reception. According to Toumson: 'the critic reproached the author for having unduly modified *The Tempest.* Crime of

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[50] Marijosé Alie, p. 41.
[51] Bradby, p. 129.
[52] M. H. Davies, 'The origins and practice of psychodrama', *The British Journal of Psychiatry,* 129 (1976), 201-6 (pp. 201-2). Davies explains that this technique involves 'a group of individuals who assemble under the leadership of the therapist or director and enact events of emotional significance in order to achieve resolution of conflicts.' Some of Moreno's key concepts involved 'encounter', which Davies summarises as 'a direct and open meeting of two persons in which thoughts and feelings are mutually exchanged in depth and with full intensity'.

lèse-majesté! Césaire had betrayed Shakespeare.'[53] This observation is suggestive both of the cultural currency of Shakespeare in France (and Europe more generally) at that time – how dare he modify the Bard![54] – but the critical reception may also, perhaps, have been partly a reaction to the play's implicit criticism of French (or European) colonial history.

Prospero and the colonisers

The prison of power

Césaire's *A Tempest* was written for a company of black actors, but they don white masks as they enter the first scene: '*The actors follow each other on to the stage and each chooses a mask to his or her liking*' (15). This is perhaps a nod to *Les nègres. Clownerie | The Blacks: A Clown Show* (1958) by Jean Genet[55] (another playwright who collaborated with Serreau). In this play, specifically designed for black actors, some don white masks in order to re-enact the trial and ensuing murder of a white woman in front of a kangaroo court. J. P. Little argues that, in specifying that the intended public for the play is white, 'Genet, as it were, wrote a part for the audience';[56] he wanted to interrogate their assumptions about race. Genet established the audience as symbolic of the 'white gaze', whereas Césaire's intended audience was really more those who had lived experience of living under the (colonial) 'white gaze'.

[53] Roger Toumson, 'Aimé Césaire dramaturge' p. 227.
[54] Nicole Fayard observes that, by the 1960s, Shakespeare had been claimed 'as virtually France's 'other' national playwright'. She argues that 'Shakespeare's popularity with the theatre-going audience throughout France is a relatively recent event which dates back to the association of his name with the democratization and the decentralization of French theatre after the Second World War'. Nicole Fayard, 'France's "Other" National Playwright? The Performance of Shakespeare in France and the Shakespeare Myth', *Contemporary Theatre Review,* 19 (2009), 400-412 (pp. 401-2).
[55] Jean Genet, *Les Nègres: Clownerie* (Décines, Isère: L'Arbalète Gallimard, 1957).
[56] J. P. Little, *Genet, 'Les Nègres', Critical Guides to French Texts* (London: Grant & Cutler, 1990), p. 65. Derek Connon argues that Genet's aim was mostly to upset his (white) audience, rather than provoking any sort of social change, also citing Graham Dunstan Martin's observation that the play scares the white audience by stimulating their 'worst racial instincts'. Derek F. Connon, 'Confused? You will be? Genet's 'Les Nègres' and the Art of Upsetting the Audience', *French Studies,* 50.4 (1996), 425-439 (p. 426)

The actors select their masks with the help of the *meneur de jeu* | Master of Ceremonies; he allows each actor to choose, and has only one mask that he hands out: 'But there's one part that I must designate: and that's you! It's for the Tempest, you understand. I need a storm that will wreak destruction…So I need a strapping man to be the wind' (p. 15). This introduction of a *meneur de jeu* is a means of diminishing the Prospero-figure: it is the *meneur de jeu*, and not Prospero, who creates the tempest. From the opening of the play, before the story even begins, Prospero's power has been diminished. The actors, all people of colour, are empowered here; they reclaim the magic of the European colonial mage.

When the Master of Ceremonies hands out the Prospero mask, he says to the actor: 'You, Prospero? Why not? His is an unfathomable will to power' (p. 15). This conception of Prospero reflects Césaire's own impressions of the character upon first reading Shakespeare's *Tempest*: 'When I read the play, I was struck by the brutality of Prospero'.[57] The brutality that he saw in Shakespeare's Prospero seemed incompatible with the critical landscape that positioned Prospero as the forgiving sage: 'To me Prospero is the complete totalitarian. I am always surprised when others consider him the wise man who 'forgives'. What is most obvious, *even in Shakespeare's version*, is the man's absolute will to power'.[58] Khoury argues that, by incorporating Shakespeare's title in his own, Césaire affirms his 'belief that Shakespeare's play is an anti-colonialist text co-opted by the colonizers as a means by which to justify the exploitation of the other. Césaire's play becomes a kind of scrubbing cloth with which to clean up the layers of ideology imposed on *The Tempest*'.[59]

[57] Lilyan Kesteloot and Barthélémy Kotchy, *Aimé Césaire: L'homme Et L'œuvre* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1973), pp. 208-9.
[58] Cited in Khoury, p. 24.
[59] Khoury, p. 25.

I suggest that Césaire's play is partly a response to Mannoni's work on *The Tempest*. Césaire notes that Mannoni 'deserves to be taken very seriously', but describes his theories as 'little conjuring tricks'. Césaire recognised that Mannoni explicitly reframed Caliban as a colonised subject, but questioned the nature of his subjectivity: 'Away with racism! Away with colonialism! They smack too much of barbarism. M. Mannoni has something better: psychoanalysis. Embellished with existentialism, it gives astonishing results: the most down-at-heel cliches are re-soled for you and made good as new'. [60]

Mannoni argued that Shakespeare's Prospero is a man who finds himself in a 'colonial situation', and then profits from it (he is set adrift and finds himself on an island; he did not seek out this 'colonial situation' but is certainly transformed by it). Césaire deliberately disrupts Mannoni's reading; the European characters in Césaire's retelling are *explicitly* seeking new lands that they can conquer. Césaire gives Prospero a different aim from the beginning: the pursuit of colonial domination. He tells Miranda of the 'research and calculations' (p. 19) that had allowed him to discover 'the precise location of these lands that had been sought for centuries' (p. 19). Césaire recasts Prospero as a man who, from the start, was intent on colonising other lands. He laments to Miranda that, learning of these discoveries, his brother planned to steal his 'unborn empire' (p. 19). The marriage of Claribel, from which the party are returning when they are shipwrecked in *The Tempest*, is entirely absent in Césaire's version; the party are onboard ships in search of the new islands, as Prospero says he had predicted: 'My prophetic art had, moreover, informed me long hence that, not content with seizing my estates in Europe, their greed would prevail over their cowardice, and they would brave the ocean, setting out to claim these lands of which my genius had first had inkling' (p. 21). In this retelling, all of the European characters (except Miranda) are bent on colonial expansion.

[60] Césaire, *Discours*, p. 62.

Césaire also demonstrates that the system of colonialism proves as poisonous for Prospero as it is for his colonial subjects – while Césaire was a vehement critic of Mannoni, the idea that the colonial situation changes the coloniser was one of Mannoni's key contentions, and this reading seems to have informed Césaire's response. Césaire's Prospero relishes the power dynamic between him and Caliban. This power dynamic evolves over the course of the play, as Prospero slowly loses his grip on power. But he seems unable to escape his need to dominate, since he has been so changed by the colonial system. Shakespeare's Prospero asks for forgiveness and seeks freedom in the epilogue. For Césaire's Prospero, the constant hunger for power means that, by the end of the play, the island is transformed into a prison from which he can never escape. When Miranda learns about how her father was usurped, and how they ended up on the island, she asks her father 'is this island a prison or a refuge?' (p. 19). In Césaire's conception of the play, the island is at first a prison for Caliban and a refuge for Prospero; by the end of the play, however, it is a refuge for Caliban and a prison for Prospero.

Shakespeare's Prospero, as Césaire noted, is a character who regards all on the island (both spirits and humans alike) as his to command. He only relinquishes this power when he prepares to leave the island at the end of the play. Césaire's Prospero, too, is obsessed with the *idea* of power: he further emphasises this aspect of Prospero, and imagines an ending for Prospero where he is unable to let go of his position. When Ariel chides him for torturing the shipwrecked party with the disappearing feast, Prospero revels in his control, declaring: 'I am Power' (p. 34). He demands complete control over who speaks, and how they act; he will admit no criticism or advice. The whole functioning of the island – his colony – is geared for his own benefit: 'Silence! […] As for your freedom, you'll have it when it suits me' (p. 21). Prospero, despite this, insists that he is a fair and just master; he seems surprised – offended, even – that Ariel doesn't seem to appreciate his thanks for tasks: 'I pay you a compliment and you don't seem pleased. Tired?' (p.

21) Even after Caliban's eloquent speech, in which he enumerates the ways in which Prospero has exploited him, Prospero cannot comprehend his own corruption: 'It's funny. Try as you might, you won't manage to make me believe that I'm a tyrant!' (p. 58).

Césaire's Prospero is a dramatization of the effects of colonialism on the European that he outlined in his *Discours:* 'colonization, I repeat, dehumanizes even the most civilized man; [...] colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquests, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to *change him who undertakes it*'.[61] He maintains that being afforded such power over others in a colonial setting degrades and dehumanises the colonial master, making him by degrees less civilised: 'colonization works to decivilize the colonizer, to brutalize him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred and moral relativism'.[62] The colonial master is degraded and his very humanity is greatly diminished: 'the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform *himself* into an animal'. Césaire's Prospero describes Caliban as a 'foul monkey', which is an echo of what slaves were called in Martinique (Lafcadio Hearn notes that old slave-owner accounts would refer to their chattel as 'créole monkey').[63] Prospero also claims responsibility for having at least attempted to make Caliban less like an animal: 'A savage! A brute animal I educated, trained, dragged up from the bestiality that still festers all over him' (p. 22). This is also perhaps an allusion to Renan's sequel to *The Tempest*; Caliban literally becomes more human (he loses the webbing between his fingers) when he has been taught language by Prospero. Renan saw this as his allowing Caliban to evolve to a stage beyond anything which Shakespeare could have imagined for his character,

[61] Césaire, *Discours*, p. 41. My emphasis. Though Césaire was a vehement and vocal critic of Mannoni's work, Mannoni did theorise that the colonial situation changes the colonial master as much as the subject.
[62] Césaire, *Discours,* p. 35.
[63] Lafcadio Hearn, *Contes des Tropiques*, 5 edn, trans. by Marc Logé (Paris: Éditions Mercure de France, 1926), p. 61.

but his claim is undermined by the implication that it is only the education of the colonial master which is capable of rescuing the colonial subject from his brutish nature.

In response to the historic colonial rhetoric which brutalises – through violence and through making 'brutish' – the colonial subject, Césaire has his Caliban figure *Prospero* as an animal instead: 'With your hooked nose, you look like an old vulture. (*Laughing.*) An old vulture with a scrawny neck!' (p. 22). Now, the colonial master is the brute. Césaire's Prospero is a vulture, preying on less powerful beings to feed himself. He is not the civilised educator of the savage; he is a despotic leader, ultimately weak and terrified of losing his power. When he declares 'I am Power', he has reduced himself to merely a concept, no longer a man; this Prospero is perhaps Césaire's dramatization of his most widely cited claim in *Discours:* 'colonization = thing-ification'. By further drawing out the obsession with power that Shakespeare wrote into Prospero, Césaire makes explicit the process by which colonization makes people into things: his Prospero has transformed himself into a mere cipher – a symbol of power with no shred of humanity left.

Since power is so important to Prospero – indeed, it has become a fundamental tenet of his very being – Prospero is terrified at the thought of losing it. Before we see Caliban on stage, Prospero tells Ariel that he has had to keep a close eye on his slave: 'he's becoming a little too liberated' (p. 22). Prospero resorts to threats of violence in an attempt to prevent Caliban's emancipation: 'if you grumble, you will be thrashed. And if you drag your feet, or go on strike, or sabotage, you'll be thrashed. Thrashing is the only language you understand' (p. 24). This recalls the justification that Shakespeare's Prospero uses for his violent treatment of Caliban: 'Thou most lying slave, | Whom stripes may move, not kindness' (I. 2. 344-5). The claim here is that violent repression of Caliban is a necessity because it is the only language that the slave understands. Césaire makes this tendency towards, and justification of, violence even more

explicit in his re-telling. Consistently unable to recognise his own despotic tendencies, Césaire's Prospero later threatens to stop being so 'indulgent' with his slave: 'Well, boy, I shall spurn my indulgent nature | and, from now on, I will answer your violence | with violence' (p. 62). Prospero claims that violence is the only language which Caliban understands. In fact, colonial power is the only language that Prospero understands.

Towards the end of *A Tempest*, Prospero decides that he will forgive his usurpers, as 'they are men of my race, and of high rank' (p. 25). He reflects that it is time to move on from past transgressions: 'I must dream of building a future' (p. 25). But, by the end of the play, we see that he is unable to build any kind of future. He has been so shaped by, and obsessed with, his own colonial power that he cannot face a new life without it. When faced with the real possibility of Caliban's emancipation, Prospero makes a desperate attempt to prevent Caliban's rebellion:

> But, in spite of everything, I'm fond of you, Caliban. Come, let's make peace…We've lived together for ten years and worked side by side! You must admit, ten years count for something! We've ended up by becoming compatriots! (p. 58).

When this offer is rejected by Caliban – he wants freedom, not companionship, and it is rather for him to forgive Prospero – Prospero reverts to his habitual threats, unable to countenance the idea that his power might be diminished: 'Poor Caliban! […] you're rushing toward suicide! […] I will be the stronger, and stronger each time! I pity you!' (p. 60) He remains unable to see his own role as anything other than the magnanimous colonial master, warning Caliban: 'Beware! My generosity has limits' (p. 60). This confrontation is played out in front of the shipwrecked party. Prospero now has an audience, and feels that he must justify his behaviour to the observers:

> Understand me well.
> I am not, in the ordinary sense
> the master, as this savage thinks,

> but rather the conductor of a vast score:
> this isle.
> Teasing out voices, myself alone,
> and coupling them at my pleasure,
> arranging out of the confusion
> the sole intelligible line.
> Without me, this island is dumb.
> Here then, my duty.
> I will remain (p. 61)

In Prospero's conception of this colonial space, he is its benefactor; he is the benevolent master who was able to draw together the elements of chaos to create some sense of harmony which was not there before his arrival. Prospero is so convinced of his own importance that he is actually unable to leave the island. He has been so transformed by his unfettered power that he can't bear to relinquish it.

Rob Nixon argued that the task for postcolonial critics is to keep 'interrogating the possibility for new analogies with these new [postcolonial] circumstances wherein Prospero, having officially relinquished authority over the island, so often continues to manage it from afar.'[64] In Césaire's retelling, Prospero doesn't continue to manage the island from afar; ruined and stripped of all humanity by the very power which came to define him, he is unable to leave the island. It has become a prison for him. In this sense, Césaire's re-imagining of *The Tempest* could only take place on an island. There is an important contrast here to Renan's sequel: Renan's Prospero leaves the island only to witness Caliban seizing his power in Milan; for Renan, the development of the Prospero-Caliban relationship could only have taken place away from the island, and in mainland Europe. Césaire's Prospero declines to return with his family. He cannot conceive of a future away from the island, and Caliban knows this; he understands the extent to which Prospero has become addicted to power (even when it has become illusory):

[64] Rob Nixon, 'Caribbean and African Appropriations of "The Tempest", *Critical Inquiry*, 13.3 (1987) 557-578 (pp. 576-77).

> You can get the hell out.
> You can go back to Europe.
> But there's no hope of that!
> I'm sure you won't leave!
> That makes me laugh – your 'mission',
> your 'vocation'!
> Your vocation is to get on my wick!
> And that's why you'll stay,
> like those men who established the colonies
> and can no longer live elsewhere.
> An old addict, that's what you are' (pp. 59-60)

Caliban is right. Prospero insists that it is his 'duty' to remain on the island (though, the implication is that he could never walk away, even if he wanted to). Prospero recognises that there is nothing left on the island apart from his relationship with his former colonial subject: 'And now, Caliban, there's only us!' (p. 61). His identity has been so stripped down that he is now just the shell of a once-powerful colonialist. Still insistent on framing Caliban as an animal, he claims that his mission had always been to save him, and that Caliban's ingratitude rendered his 'civilising mission' a failure:

> I've tried to save you,
> above all from yourself.
> But you have always answered me with rage
> and venom, like
> the opossum that hoists itself up by its own tail
> to better bite the hand
> that pulls it from the darkness (p. 62)

Prospero's imagery here is inflected by the rhetoric of the 'civilising mission'; here, he paints Caliban as an animal who needs to be brought out of the darkness of savagery by the light of the civiliser; an opossum which stands on his tail to pretend to be human. But, for all this talk of his attempts to 'civilise' Caliban, Césaire's retelling suggests that Prospero is unable to save *himself* from the darkness of colonialism. At the end of the play, Prospero is left alone on the island, encroached upon by opossums on all sides.

Césaire's Prospero boasts of the power of his magic, and how he has been able to use it to influence the elements. Despite this great power, however, he shares what he regards as his great failing – his inability to elicit humanity in Caliban:

> I have uprooted the oak, roused the sea,
> shaken the mountain, and baring
> my breast against adversity,
> I have exchanged thunder with Jupiter, bolt for bolt.
> Better still! From the brute monster I made man!
> But oh!
> To have failed to find the path
> to the man's heart, if that really is where man
> is to be found (p. 61).

Here, Prospero paints himself as equal to a god – exchanging thunder bolt for bolt with Jupiter – but ultimately thwarted by a 'brute'. Again, his imagery is coloured by the claim that he is civilising the indigenous subject; Prospero casts Caliban's resistance to the 'light' as a hardening of the heart. The 'mage' claims to be able to rouse the sea (though this is undermined by the play's opening, where Prospero is not the one who creates the tempest), but cannot find the heart of his subject. What Prospero really wants is for Caliban to open his heart by submitting to the master's will with a 'thank you, Sir'. The barrier to this path is volitional; Caliban perfectly understands what Prospero wants, refuses to submit, and is therefore portrayed by Prospero as 'heartless'.

In Césaire's reframing of the character, Caliban refuses to play the role of the 'good slave'; he does not respect Prospero and has consistently rebelled against him. For all his power, Prospero could not stop Caliban from testing him: 'Well, I hate you as well! | For you are the one who |made me doubt myself | for the first time' (p. 61). Here, Prospero hints at how much Caliban's resistance had troubled him; perhaps not his conscience, but it has certainly troubled his sense of his own power. At the close of the play, we see what has become of Prospero on the island:

'Time passes by, symbolised by the curtain's being lowered halfway and then being taken up again. In semi-darkness, Prospero appears, aged and weary. His gestures are stiff and automatic, his speech weak and listless.' (p. 62). As Prospero's power, and with it his vitality, has faded, Caliban has begun to take back the island; Prospero talks of his space being encroached upon by opossums. He remains defiant; in spite of the advancing symbols of emancipation, he vows to protect his life's work: 'You'd swear the jungle wanted to invade the cave…But I'll defend myself…I will not let my work perish…*(Roaring).* I will defend civilisation! (*He fires in all directions)*' (p. 62). Roger Toumson and Henry-Valmore argue that the colonial power structure has ultimately created a Hegelian dialectic[65] which ties the master forever to his former slave:

> Prospero is the prisoner of oeuvre […] Caliban and him form an indissociable couple. No more than the Blacks and Whites cannot separate in America, Prospero cannot separate himself from Caliban, and this is the story. It is the indissoluble nature of this union which makes the drama.[66]

At the very end of the play, Prospero conflates himself with Caliban, who no longer has to heed his calls: 'Ah well, my old Caliban, we're the only two left on this island, just you and me. You and me! You-me! Me-you! But what the hell's he up to? (*Roaring).* Caliban!' (p. 62).

Prospero, the anti-intellectual

Césaire said, in numerous interviews about his play, that he set out to 'demythify' the character of Prospero. I suggest that he set out to demythify the Prosperos of both Shakespeare *and*

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[65] Césaire recalled, in an interview with Marijosé Alie, that he had discovered Hegel while at university: 'Hegel explains that it is not by negating the singular that [on] we move to the universal, but by deepening the singular that we move to the universal' Alie, p. 25. Hegel's master-slave dialectic was inspired by Haiti.
[66] Toumson and Henry-Valmore, p. 197.

Renan: in an intertextual complexity which has been somewhat overlooked, Césaire makes a direct allusion to *Renan's* Prospero. In the tale that he shares with Miranda – of how they came to arrive on the island – Césaire's Prospero recalls that, in order to depose and usurp him, his brother denounced him to the Inquisition. In a flashback, we see Le Fratre, 'lisant un rouleau de parchemin' ['reading from a role of parchment']. I cite in French here because this stage direction, and the few lines of text which follow, are directly borrowed from Renan's *Caliban*: 'La très Sainte Inquisition pour l'intégrité de la foi et la poursuite de la perversité hérétique, agissant par délégation spéciale du Saint-Siège apostolique, informé des erreurs que tu professes, insinues et publies contre Dieu et la Création'.[67]

These respective Prosperos (both scientists) are brought in front of the Inquisition for slightly different crimes. Renan's Prospero stands accused of undermining God through his research into resurrection and the search for eternal life. Césaire's is accused for his study 'concerning the shape of the Earth and the possibility of discovering other lands' (p. 20). Here, the Césaireian topos, of Europeans bent on the colonial usurpation of other lands, merges with Renan's reimagining of Prospero as a chemist seeking to understand God's beauty through scientific endeavour. Césaire's Prospero is denounced for his use of 'Arabic calculations, and necromancy in Hebrew' (p. 20); as I noted in chapter 1, Renan wrote extensively on Arabic chemistry and was a professor of Hebrew. Renan's re-visioning of Prospero dethroned and somewhat diminished the character (he is literally replaced by Caliban), but as I argued, Renan still lauds Prospero's intellectual endeavours and portrays him as a sage. In Césaire's rewriting of Renan's Prospero-chemist, the character – and perhaps its creator – is dethroned even from his status as an

[67] Césaire's *Une tempête*, p. 21; Renan *Caliban*, p. 79. Crispin's translation is as follows: 'The Most Holy Inquisition for the integrity of the Faith and the pursuit of heretical perversion, acting on the supreme authority of the Holy Apostolic See, acting on the supreme authority of the Holy Apostolic See, informed of the errors you profess, insinuate and publish against God…', p. 20. The verb 'publier' [publish] replaces the word 'semer' [disseminate] in Renan, but otherwise it is a word-for-word repetition.

intellectual. Césaire's Prospero is motivated solely by material profit – he seeks new lands, and new subjects – rather than by an intrinsic search for knowledge for its own sake. There is nothing intellectual or enlightened about this Prospero – indeed, while Shakespeare's Prospero boasts of the princely education he has given to Miranda, Césaire's Miranda describes herself as a 'sauvageonne'[68] who spends all of her time running around the island with no shoes on.

Marxism and colonialism

Césaire's Prospero is neither a mage, nor even a sage, and is ultimately destroyed by his own addiction to power. The system of colonialism itself is what gave him this addiction. For Césaire (and indeed for Mannoni) the project of colonialism corrupts everyone involved. This corruption in turn makes it less likely that genuine equality can ever be achieved. For Césaire, race is of course a fundamental aspect of this rewriting of *The Tempest*; but I suggest that class is also crucial, and this inflection ties Césaire's response more closely to Renan and Guéhenno's. In Shakespeare's play we see a series of attempted revolutions (the usurpation of Prospero; the aborted attempt to murder the sleeping Alonso; and the thwarted plan of Trinculo, Stephano and Caliban to overthrow Prospero and seize control of the island). Césaire takes these revolutionary attempts and re-works them. He uses the working-class figures to dramatize how the colonial project places real limitations on the sort of socialist revolution that he wanted to see. Only when the working class of all races unite will any meaningful change take place.

One of the issues with the system of colonialism is the way it divides people, and sets them against each other. Césaire was a member of the Communist Party of France, but left in 1956. In

[68] *Cntrl* lists this word as young person who has grown up without receiving an education: *Est-ce que cette sauvageonne finirait par devenir une jolie fille?* (Zola, *Bonh. dames*, 1883, p. 533).*Françoise-Louise de La Tour (...) avait grandi élevée par ses tantes, comme une sauvageonne, dans un vieux manoir (...) très tôt livrée, comme Jean-Jacques, à elle-même* (Guéhenno, *Jean-Jacques*, 1948, p. 44)' <https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/sauvageonne> [accessed 27 September 2021].

his letter to Maurice Thorez (the leader), dated 24 October 1956,[69] he renounced the paternalism of the European Communists. For the revolution to succeed, he argued, a new theory was needed: *universal* fraternity. The notion that all oppressed peoples must struggle together was, in theory, one of the ideals of Marxism.[70] For Césaire, however, this theoretical unity was not seen in practice. In *Discours* he wrote 'Marx is all right, but we need to complete Marx',[71] and theorised that two main problems in European civilisation were the main cause of this lack of unity: 'the problem of the proletariat and the colonial problem.'[72] He summarises colonialism as 'the baleful projected shadow of a form of civilization which, at a certain point in history, finds itself obliged, for internal reasons, to extend to a world scale the corruption of its antagonistic economies.'[73] The colonialist sees an opportunity to profit from the land they seize; previously, the land might have been *used*, but it didn't yield as much economic profit. The colonial will then tell the colonised subject that they should be pleased to have new services and infrastructure, all the while ignoring the effects of these 'antagonistic economies' on the land: 'do you not see the tremendous factory hysterically spitting out its cinders in the heart of our forests […] the gigantic rape of everything intimate, undamaged, undefiled'. In contrast, he describes the indigenous

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69 Thomas A. Hale and Kora Véron note that, in 'an increasingly stormy and ambiguous political environment, […] Césaire felt trapped by his membership in the PCF. After composing his letter of resignation prior to the Soviet invasion of Hungary on 24 October, Césaire handed the letter to the Président of the French National Assembly on 23 October and it was then delivered to Maurice Thorez the following day'. Hale and Véron suggest that Césaire 'did not consult before October 23 with any of the many French intellectuals who abandoned the party after the invasion', 'Aimé Césaire's Break from the Parti Communiste Français', *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 27.3 (2009), 47-62 (p. 52).

70 To quote Lenin: 'The proletariat must struggle against the enforced retention of oppressed nations within the bounds of the given state…the proletariat must demand freedom of political separation for the colonies and nations oppressed by 'their own' nation. Otherwise, the internationalism of the proletariat would be nothing but empty words; neither confidence nor class solidarity would be possible between the workers of the oppressed and the oppressed nations […] On the other hand, the socialists of the oppressed nation must, in particular, defend and implement the full and unconditional unity, including organizational unity, of the workers of the oppressed nation and those of the oppressor nation. Without this it is impossible to defend the independent policy of the proletariat and their class solidarity with the proletariat of other countries.' Lenin, *Marxism and Nationalism*, (Chippendale: Resistance Books, 2002), p. 137.

71 Interview with Depestre, p. 27.

72 Césaire*, Discours sur le colonialisme*, p. 31.

73 Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, p. 33.

people as belonging to 'societies that were not only ante-capitalist, as has been said, but also anti-capitalist […] they were cooperative societies, fraternal societies'.[74]

As I noted in my introduction, Shakespeare was often lauded in France for his portrayal of the ordinary man as much as the King. In *The Tempest*, Trinculo and Stephano are ordinary men. In Renan's sequel, they are largely absent from the narrative – Trinculo parades Caliban in front of the nobles but is otherwise occluded. In Guéhenno, these characters, like Caliban, symbolise 'impossible men' – the disenfranchised who will never gain access to real power. Césaire develops this association of these characters with the proletariat further, to draw out the contradictions inherent in the Marxist movement in France at the time. In *A Tempest*, Césaire portrays Trinculo and Stephano as members of the proletariat. Stephano, especially, is portrayed as a man fired by revolutionary fervour: he describes those who he thinks have been lost in the shipwreck as 'a load of cranks who've always kept the poor world on its knees' (p. 44), and criticises Trinculo for what he sees as complicity in his own oppression:

> But you loved them, didn't you, the kings, the dukes, all that nobility. To be sure, I served them. You've got to earn your drink somehow…But I could never, ever stomach them, do you hear. Trinculo, my friend, I am an old republican. Even my guts are republican. Down with tyrants! (p. 44)

[74] In *Discours,* Césaire offers a solution: 'the salvation of Europe is […] a matter of the Revolution – the one which, until such time as there is a classless society, will substitute for the narrow tyranny of a dehumanized bourgeoisie the preponderance of the only class that still has a universal mission, because it suffers in its flesh from all the wrongs of history, from all the universal wrongs: the proletariat', p. 78.

Caliban overhears their conversation about the possibility of ruling the island, and shouts (about Stephano) 'Long live the King!'. While Mannoni read Caliban's joining with Trinculo and Stephano as fulfilling his need for a new master, Césaire's Caliban does see the possibility of emancipation here. Revolutions are easier with more people. Stephano's response to Caliban's encouraging shouts is perhaps an allusion to Renan's sequel, where Caliban is symbolic of the masses: 'You see, dear Trinculo, the people have spoken! *Vox populi, vox Dei'* (p. 44). Césaire's *A Tempest* is a play that explores possibilities: at this point, there is a possibility of a united proletariat who might come together to end their oppression.

The Revolution becomes impossible. Trinculo and Stephano (like all of the Europeans in the play) are ultimately colonialists above all. Caliban comes to realise that he cannot succeed in his revolutionary aims as long as he is saddled with Trinculo and Stephano: 'How could I ever have imagined that these guzzle guts and ugly mugs could create the Revolution! So much the better. History won't blame me for not having been able to win freedom all by myself' (p. 53). He comes to realise that Trinculo and Stephano are driven not by the ideals of emancipation but, as with so many colonialists, by materialistic greed. Their greed also leads them to consider – as they do in Shakespeare's *Tempest* – how they might profit from Caliban. Stephano is very straightforward about his intentions: 'I'll try to civilise him. Oh…not too much. Just enough so as we can take advantage of him' (p. 43). Pouring alcohol into Caliban's mouth, he reprimands Trinculo for his reluctance to waste their expensive liquor: 'let me accomplish my civilising mission' (p. 44). Trinculo is more sceptical about the possibility of being able to make anything of Caliban: 'Civilise him! Good gracious! Does he even know how to talk?' (p. 43) – when he does respond, his ability to speak is described as 'miracle of science!' (p. 43). Trinculo's words reflect the sort of racist assumptions about a lack of indigenous culture that the Negritude movement sought to explode.

In *The Tempest*, Trinculo and Stephano share their plans for Caliban: 'Were I in England now, as once I was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday-fool there but would give a piece of silver' (II. 2. 27-8). In his deployment of the play to critique the colonial project, Césaire makes the colonial undertones of these characters' motivations much more explicit. Ultimately, the characters who *could* have worked together as revolutionaries fail to instigate their class revolution. Instead, they both agree to gain what they can from Caliban: 'Look, with his rough edges spruced up a bit, he'll give a good yield to both of us. Agreed? We'll exploit him together' (p. 44). Césaire portrays Trinculo and Stephano as characters whose racism undermines their ability to join together (with Caliban) to overthrow the system which maintains their own subjugation. Their own potential is squandered by their racist attitudes. And racism, argues Césaire in *Discours,* is the eventual outcome of antagonistic Capitalist economies; with no real belief that they can achieve equality, the European proletariat have turned on the perceived Other: '[racism] is a sign that the intrepid class which once stormed the bastilles is now hamstrung. A sign that it feels itself to be mortal. A sign that it feels itself to be a corpse.'[75]

What manner of savage is this?

In this retelling, then, each of the European characters has been shaped – and perverted – by the system of colonialism. Renan employs the character of Prospero and his role as a mage (or scientist) to shed light on the interplay and tension between the scientific endeavours of the *Lumières* and organised religion in France. Through the character of Gonzalo, Césaire explores another kind of colonial, and examines the role of religion in the colonial endeavour.[76] In *A Tempest,* Gonzalo attempts to 'civilise' Caliban using religion. When the shipwrecked party see

[75] Césaire, *Discours*, p. 49.
[76] As well as the kind of economic exploitation and material gain that seems to motivate Trinculo and Stephano, the other justification for colonialism that Césaire outlines in *Discourse* is religion: 'Christian pedantry […] laid down the dishonest equations: Christianity = civilization, paganism = savagery'. Césaire, *Discours,* p. 33.

Caliban, Alonso describes him as 'the strangest creature that I have ever seen!' Prospero agrees; 'And the most devilish, too!' Gonzalo is incredulous that a colonial subject could still be rebellious: 'What's that? Devilish! You've reprimanded him, lectured to him, enjoined and commanded, and you tell me he remains implacable!' (p. 57). He sees but one remedy:

> Well – forgive me, adviser, I advise – take it from my long experience, the only thing left is exorcism: 'Begone, unclean spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!' As simple as that! (p. 57).

It doesn't work, of course: '*Caliban bursts out laughing'*. Caliban merely laughs in the face of Gonzalo's ridiculous exorcism attempt. The audience, too, are encouraged to laugh at Gonzalo. The religion which was used to underpin and sustain the colonial project is made to seem powerless and ridiculous.

Césaire also uses the character of Gonzalo to disrupt the idea – arguably French in origin – of the 'noble savage'. Gonzalo wants to a create a kind of utopian idyll on this new island. But his vision is dependent on both the toil, and the exoticisation, of the native peoples of the newly discovered land. Gonzalo's plans for the island are ostensibly less mercenary than some other characters, but he still wants to gain a good yield from the island, and he is perhaps a parody of those thinkers who espoused the idea of the 'noble savage'. Césaire's Gonzalo expresses wonder at the abundant foison of the island: 'Bread hangs from the trees and the apricots are bigger than a woman's full breasts' (p. 31). He waxes lyrical about the island to the other, more sceptical characters who wonder if it is safe to eat any of the produce: 'if there were any poison here, an antidote would be nearby, for nature delights in harmony' (p. 31). He doesn't want to keep the

island as it is, though, or to simply live off of the abundance which it seems to naturally offer. Spotting a huge pile of guano, he delights in the fact that this might be used as fertiliser to develop cultivate fields – and is mocked by his companions for getting so excited about shit. It is this cultivation of virgin land that Gonzalo believes will make him a substantial profit: 'this island, wisely administered, will be richer than Egypt with its Nile' (p. 32). With some cultivation, then, this new land might bring forth 'all foison in abundance'. But fields don't cultivate themselves, as Sebastian reminds him: 'But we'll still need hands to cultivate it. Is this island even inhabited?' (p. 32). Gonzalo concedes that this cultivation requires a workforce ('Of course there's the rub' (p. 32)), but he is sure that he will be able to find enough natives to do the necessary work.

Philip Crispin notes that Antonio responds to Gonzalo's musings about the islanders with a quotation from Baudelaire's poem, 'Parfum Exotique': 'Men whose bodies are slender and strong | And women whose frank stares astound (p. 32)'.[77] This poem forms part of his cycle of poems about his lover Jeanne Duval. An exotic-smelling perfume inspires the speaker to begin to imagine an island – a place removed from the city which was the cause of so much ennui. It is described as 'une ile paresseuse' | 'a lazy island', because no work is required; 'nature provides singular trees and delicious fruits'. This makes it seem much like Gonzalo's Utopian vision of a land where nature simply provides her abundance for man. Beyond this, though, there is an erotic element to this exotic whimsy: the men and women who impress and astound the arriving seafarers with their slender bodies and frank stares. As Edward Ahearn notes, this is an island where – since it is at a remove from metropolitan France – 'bodily pleasure without guilt abounds'.[78]

[77] Charles Baudelaire, 'Parfum Exotique', *Les fleurs du mal* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1868). Cited by Philip Crispin, 'Introduction', *A Tempest.*
[78] Edward J. Ahearn, 'Black Woman, White Poet: Exile and Exploitation in Baudelaire's Jeanne Duval Poems', *The French Review,* 51.2 (1977), 212-220 (p. 218).

While Césaire's Antonio seems driven by the promise of finding exoticized sexual pleasure in a new land, Césaire's Gonzalo, like Shakespeare's, envisages a kind of utopia on the island. But it is a utopia for him only; he recognises the need to rely on labourers – or perhaps slaves, since he doesn't mention paying them – yet seems to suggest that they will be happy to do so, simple souls as they must be. This Utopia will bring him not only material profit; seeing the 'wonderful beings' at work will be a salve for his old soul: 'Something like a pool of eternal youth where we would come at intervals to revive our drooping spirits' (p. 33). Renan's Prospero returns to Milan to work on developing a source of eternal youth; here, Gonzalo thinks he has found his. But his Utopian ideal is, of course, sharply undermined by the fact that some people will clearly be exploited for the gain of others. Gonzalo's plans are a critique of the fact that, even in a 'Utopian' setting, someone will have to toil (it's hardly a utopia for the labourers!). It is perhaps also a critique of how Europeans can exoticize and romanticise these Antillean islands – they may seem prelapsarian, but resources (both human and natural) have so often been exploited.

Gonzalo *does* have concerns about colonizing the island: 'if we colonise it, as is my wish, then we must shy away, as if from the plague, from importing here our defaults, yes, what we call civilisation. They must stay as they are: savages, noble savages, free, without complex or complication' (p. 33). This seems to be a direct allusion to a long tradition of French writing which portrayed non-European peoples as simple, uncorrupted beings. In his work on *The Tempest*, Mannoni cites the writer Jean de Léry as part of this tradition. De Léry, who appears to have been one of the most important sources for Montaigne's *Des Cannibales*, shared his observations of the Tupinamba tribe of Brazil: 'they do not in any way drink of those murky, pestilential springs, from which flow so many streams of mistrust, avarice, litigation, and

squabbles, of envy and ambition, which eat away out bones, suck out our marrow, waste our bodies, and consume our spirits'.[79]

This idea of the 'noble savage', a simple soul without complication, was one of the main assumptions that the Negritude movement was reacting against, since 'complication' could also be read as 'culture'. Césaire's Gonzalo seems to offer a parody of such ideas. Gonzalo doesn't want to import European defaults – or, otherwise expressed, 'civilisation' – and yet his proposal for the cultivation of land on the island use is a structure precisely taken from the European model of colonialism. His praise of the islanders is merely theoretical; when he actually meets an inhabitant of the island (Caliban), he does not regard or treat him as a 'wonderful being'.

Whereas Gonzalo has just landed on the island, Miranda has grown up there. She sees the island as her home, telling her father that she is 'queen of the flowers, the trails and the running waters, always running barefoot through thorn and flower, spared by one, and caressed by the other' (p. 19). Miranda offers to show Ferdinand the island, which she regards as an idyllic landscape: 'The island is so lovely. I will show you the beaches and the forests. I will tell you the names of the fruits and the flowers. I will reveal to you a world of insects, of lizards of every colour, of birds…Oh if you knew! The birds! (p. 27). This seems to be an echo of Shakespeare's Caliban offer to show Trinculo and Stephano the qualities of the isle. Césaire's Ferdinand, when discussing their journey back to Europe, expresses concern that Miranda will be shocked by the new society in which she will find herself: 'soon you will be passing from your innocent kingdom of flowers into my less innocent kingdom of men' (p. 54). Of course, hers isn't really an

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[79] Jean de Léry*, Histoire d'un voyage faict en la terre du Brésil*, 1578. Montaigne, writing about the same tribe, compares the people to wild fruits who could only be seen as 'savage' if we do not value the *natural* state of things: 'Those 'savages' are only wild in the sense that we call fruits wild, when they are produced by Nature in her ordinary course: whereas, it is fruit which we have artificially diverted and mislead from the common order which we ought to call savage. It is in the first kind that we find their true, vigorous, living, most natural and most useful properties and virtues, which we have bastardized in the other kind by merely adapting them to our corrupt tastes', Michel de Montaigne, 'On the Cannibals', in *Montaigne: The Complete* Essays, trans. by M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Classics, 1991), pp. 228-241 (pp. 231-2).

'innocent kingdom of flowers'; while I don't think she can be described as a coloniser – she was brought to the island as a young child and so, like Caliban, has some claim to calling it her home – she has also been witness to the unwavering exploitation of slaves by her father. She has never had to work on the island, since Caliban does the labour, and she is by no means kind to him: 'that foul Caliban who stalks me and howls my name in his idiot dreams!' (p. 40). So, although she is not *responsible* for the exploitation of Caliban, I suggest that Césaire wants us to question Ferdinand's assumption that hers is merely an 'innocent kingdom of flowers'. Martinique is referred to as *Madinina* 'land of flowers' by the indigenous people; this reference underlines Miranda's naïve, or uncaring, failure to recognise the exploitation of the native man that affords her such a carefree existence.

Mannoni theorised that all ideas about utopias were by nature infantile. In Césaire's play, the conceptions of a utopian island are undercut by the stark knowledge that, for the masters to live in luxury, somebody will be exploited. The attitudes of both Gonzalo and Miranda towards the island are inherently naïve, and rely on the assumption that the innocent peoples of the new land will work, uncomplainingly, and relish their role as noble primitives, a salve for the jaded Europeans who will exist off their labour.

The colonised: Caliban and Ariel

Caliban's island

The character with a genuine connection to the island is Caliban. His island is reframed as a locale symbolic of the whole African diaspora. Césaire's most famous poem, *Notebook of a Return to my Native Land,* is about his return to Martinique having spent time in France, and once he had begun to think about the concept of Negritude. Césaire wanted to reconnect with Martinique as a crucial aspect of his identity. Guéhenno's Caliban is consistently concerned with the nature of

heritage and how that shapes his identity; Césaire's re-telling also interrogates the notion of identity and what that might mean for Caliban. Prospero tells Caliban that certain heritages are a source of shame; he should not boast about – or indeed even mention – his dead mother: 'It's better to keep quiet about certain family backgrounds. A hag!' (p. 23). Unlike the Caliban in Guéhenno's *Caliban speaks,* who feels more distanced from his uneducated mother the more he reads and learns, Césaire's Caliban will not renounce his heritage or distance himself from his mother: 'Dead or alive, she is my mother, and I won't deny her' (p. 23). In fact, this Caliban does not see his mother as deceased; she is such an integral part of the island that she can never die:

> you only think she's dead because you think the earth itself is dead…It's so much more convenient! Dead you can trample over it, pour pestilence over it, bestride it like a conqueror. I respect the earth because I know that it is alive, and I know that Sycorax is alive (p. 23).

Césaire reanimates Sycorax, and reinstates and re-values her magic. In *A Tempest*, Sycorax is inextricably tied to the earth – she is the earth itself. She speaks to Caliban in his dreams, and warns him when he might be in danger. Caliban's language is at its most poetic when he talks – or, rather, sings – of his mother:

> Sycorax my mother!
> Serpent! Rain Lightning!
> And I find you everywhere!
> In the eye of the pond which stares at me, unblinking,
> through the rushes.
> In the gesture of the twisted root with coiled spring.
> In the blinded all-seeing night,
> the nostril-less all-smelling night! (p. 23)

Sycorax is the serpent, the lightning, the water, and the trees of the island. And this is why Caliban feels so at home. Caliban reminds Prospero of his own ingratitude; without him,

Prospero could never have survived on the island: 'What would you have done without me in this strange land? Ungrateful! I taught you the trees, the fruits, the birds, the seasons' (p. 24).

Caliban is reconnected with his island in Césaire's reframing; at the same time, the Europeans are explicitly portrayed and distanced and alienated from the land. The shipwrecked characters are frightened by the island; they do not understand the place. Stephano describes the sound of the ocean as 'like the roaring of a beast at bay'. Caliban also recognises the ocean's power 'not at bay – more like on the prowl' (p. 51), but comforts Stephano with the assurance that the beast will not trouble them: 'Don't worry, she's a friend of mine' (p. 51). To Césaire's Caliban, the sea is a friend; he recognises her awesome power – 'it's that swelling, far from patient, brooding entity, which suddenly rears up in a godlike thunder and smacks you in the face, that which – hurling from the very depths of the abyss its hysterical spray – strikes you in fury!' (p. 52) – but he also finds comfort in the ocean, and he would never try to control her: 'she helps me breathe. That's why I call her a friend. Sometimes, she sneezes, and a drop falls on my forehead and cools me with its salt, or blesses me' (p. 51). Similarly, Caliban sees the wind, which could of course unleash a tempest, as an old man whose sighs are song: 'best of all is still the wind and his melodies: his dirty sigh when he rustles through the bushes, or his clamorous exaltation when he passes by, breaking trees, fragments of their groans caught in his beard' (p. 52).

In order to reposition Prospero as the archetypal colonial usurper, pillaging the spoils of the land he has discovered, Césaire makes this character the most alienated from the island. His Prospero does attempt to control and wield the natural forces of the island, but in vain. Shakespeare's Caliban speaks of the power of Prospero's spirits, who punish him by mimicking creatures that torment him with sounds and attacks:

> Sometimes like apes that mow and chatter at me,
> And after bite me; then like hedgehogs, which
> Lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount
> Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
> All wound with adders, who with cloven tongues
> Do hiss me into madness (II. 1. 9-14).

Césaire's island is full of different noises – real animals that Prospero attempts to control: 'Caliban lives, he is plotting, he is mustering his rebel army and you, you say nothing. Well, deal with him. Vipers, scorpions, hedgehogs – all stinging, venomous beasts – spare him nothing. His must be an exemplary punishment' (p. 49). On this island, though, Prospero's charms are all o'erthrown.

This Caliban is intimately connected to the powers of nature. He simply asks nature not to attack him: 'Away, vipers, scorpions and hedgehogs! All stinging, biting, piercing beasts! Sting, fever, venom, away! Or if you insist upon licking me, do so with a kindly tongue, like the toad whose pure spittle soothes me, a good omen, with delightful dreams of the future' (p. 51). Prospero, as a colonial conqueror, tramples and pours pestilence on the land; Caliban simply has to remind them that they have a common enemy:

> it is for all of you, for all of us, that today I face the common enemy. Yes, hereditary and common. Look, a hedgehog! Sweet little thing…That any self-respecting, natural animal should go against me on the day I set out to challenge Prospero – dream on! […] And does our hedgehog bristle at that? No, it flattens its spines. That's Nature! She's kindness itself. You just have to know how to speak to her (p. 51).

Just before the dawn, there is a rollcall, and the spirits of the island begin to talk. Whereas the island spirits in Shakespeare's *Tempest* have no distinct voice – Alonso describes their show as an 'excellent dumb discourse' (III. 3. 39) – Césaire allows the natural elements of his island to speak:

In the wild; night is drawing to a close; the humming of the spirits of the tropical forest can be heard.

Voice one: Fly!
Voice: Here.
Voice one: Ant!
Voice: Here.
Voice one: Vulture!
Voice: Here.
Voice one: Soft-shelled crab, calao, crab, hummingbird!
Voice: Here. Here. Here.
Voice one: Cramp, crime, fang, opossum!
Voices: Krakrakra.
Voice one: Huge hedgehog, you will be our sun today. Thorny, taloned, stubborn. Let him burn! Moon, my fat spider, my corpulent cat-a-dreams, go to sleep my velvet one! (p. 50).

It is when the island invokes its spirits that the language is most clearly influenced by his own Antillean Surrealism. Here is Césaire's dramatisation of his own finding a new voice. Senghor characterised African surrealism as having created a distinct voice, which seems to be echoed in this invocation: 'African surrealism is different from European surrealism. European surrealism is empirical. African surrealism is mythical and metaphysical.'[80] The roll-call is also reminiscent of an invocation of the inhabitants and lifeforce of the island in *Notebook of A Return to my Native Land*:

May the hummingbird come
come the sparrow-hawk
come horizon-shatter
come the cynocephalus
come the lotus, bearer of the world
come from dolphins a pearl insurrection shattering the shell of the sea […]
come wolves grazing in the savage orifices of the body at the hour when at the ecliptic inn my moon meets your sun[81]

These are the island spirits that Prospero attempted to summon to torture Caliban. Once they are summoned, they begin to sing a chorus:

[80] Léopold Sédar Senghor, John Reed, and Clive Wake, *Prose and Poetry* (London: Oxford UP), 1965, p. 85.
[81] *Notebook,* p. 113.

Voices: (*Singing)*

Kingué
Kingué
Vonvon
Maloto
Vloom-voom! (p. 50)[82]

This is a snatch of a tune, in Créole, taken from a traditional Martinican folktale which was recorded in writing by Lafcadio Hearn, the anthropologist whose work Césaire greatly admired. The folktale tells of a witch (or a woman accounted by others to be a witch) who appears, flanked by snakes and ugly toads, to a young girl who has lost her way in a remote section of the island. Nature seems to surround the little girl, to entwine itself around her. She watches the witch and her guard sing this song.[83] Shakespeare's Caliban invokes the power of his mother in order to curse Prospero: 'All the charms | Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!' (I. 2. 339-40). Perhaps Sycorax made Césaire think of this Martinican witch who had such control over the natural world. His reframing of Caliban, unlike Renan and Guéhenno's, where magic has lost its sway, reconnects the character, and his mother, with the lost magic of the island.

Once the island has sung its song, the spirits of the forest disappear; they refuse to follow Prospero's orders to torture Caliban. Shakespeare's Prospero is a mage who can command Nature. In Césaire's reimagining, Prospero does not respect Nature but tries to control it; and Nature does not allow itself to be harnessed by him. By giving the island the voice of another witch, from his own culture, Césaire has again taken the power away from Prospero. He no longer commands Nature; it is aligned with Caliban, the son of the island, who is an animist. There is truth, then, in Caliban's battle-cry to the island: 'Prospero is the Anti-Nature. And I say: Down with the Anti-Nature!' (p. 51).

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82 Crispin translates Kingué as Kang-gay, but I want to use the original Créole.
83 Lafcadio Hearn, *Youma*, trans. by Marc Logé (Paris: Mercure de France), 1923, p. 65.

The masque of new possibilities

In Shakespeare's *Tempest,* Prospero notes Sycorax would call on the help of 'potent ministers' to help with her magic (I. 2. 275). He also calls on other gods to demonstrate his powers in the betrothal masque, and the pantheon is notably pre-Christian. Shakespeare's Prospero talks of Neptune, and Jove, and conjures visions of Ceres, Iris and Juno. While Prospero alludes to a canonical European pantheon, Shakespeare gives Caliban a different god: 'I must obey. His art is of such power, | It would control my dam's god Setebos | And make a vassal of him' (I. 2. 371-3). The name Setebos is taken from Richard Eden's account of a voyage to Patagonia: 'This great devil they call *Setebos'*.[84] This allusion to another culture suggests that Shakespeare *did* regard Caliban as having his own culture – and language, since how can a god be named without it – prior to Prospero's arrival. The Setebos of Shakespeare's Caliban's, however, can be subdued by the European mage.

Césaire's Caliban celebrates another god: the African war god Shango.[85] In his exchange with Ariel, Caliban warns his fellow slave of the folly of ignoring the great god; he is to be worshipped in daily life, and will not be ignored:

> May he who eats his corn without thinking of Shango
> be cursed! Shango will slip under his nails
> and into his every pore!
> Shango, Shango oh!
>
> Refuse him a seat! On your own head!
> He'll establish his tribunal right on your nose!
>
> No room under your roof! That's your look out!
> He'll grab the roof and stick it on his head!
> Whoever wants to try it on with Shango
> plays an ill-fated game!

[84] Richard Eden, *The History of Trauayle in the West and East Indies* (London: R. Iugge, 1577), p. 434v.
[85] Césaire mentions Shango sculptures as examples of art from the Sudanese empire. Césaire, *Discours*, p. 52.

Shango, Shango oh! (p. 29)

In singing of Shango, Caliban suggests that he is an ancient god, not implicated with the corrupt ways of the capitalist European societies which would impose their economic systems onto other peoples. In returning to the gods of Africa, they might defeat such tyranny:

Shango wields a staff.
He strikes and money dies!
He strikes and deceit dies!
He strikes and larceny dies!

Shango Shango oh!

As he, Trinculo and Stephano march towards their liberation, Caliban chants of Shango, a figure who can control and command the elements of nature (unlike the weakened Prospero):

Shango is gatherer of the rains.
He passes, well wrapped in his fiery cloak.
His horse's hooves strike lightning
on the pavements of the sky.
Shango is a great knight.

Shango Shango oh!

The roar of the sea can be heard (p. 51).

The introduction of Shango to the pantheon is a celebration of the sort of cultural symbol which had been overlooked by European colonialist oppression.

The fertility masque in *The Tempest* is an opportunity for Prospero to display his art to Ferdinand and Miranda (and to bless them in the hopes of an heir). At the same time, he reminds them, almost obsessively, about the need to not give in to any libidinal desires they might have: 'The strongest oaths are straw | To th' fire i' th' blood. Be more abstemious, | Or else good night your vow' (IV. 1. 52-54). The goddess Iris comforts Ceres; although Venus and Cupid did plan to attend – 'here thought they to have done | Some wanton charm upon this man and maid' (IV. 1. 94-5) – their attempt to disrupt the chaste ceremony ultimately failed:

Mars' hot minion is returned again;
Her waspish-headed son has broke his arrows,
Swears he will shoot no more, but play with sparrows,
And be a boy right out (IV. 1. 98-101)

Iris and all of the gods in the masque are under the control of the mage; the pageant is a vanity of his art. He can ensure that the gods associated with sexuality never arrive. It is only the thought that Caliban's conspiracy is still ongoing which disrupts his masque:

Prospero starts suddenly and speaks, after which, to a strange, hollow, and confused noise, they heavily vanish.

Prospero: I had forgot that foul conspiracy
Of the beast Caliban and his confederates
Against my life. The minute of their plot
Is almost come (IV. 1. 139-41).

In contrast, Césaire ensures that his Prospero's masque is thoroughly disrupted by a god associated with sexuality. Crucially, though, it is not a god from the European pantheon who interrupts the pageant. Just after Prospero welcomes the gods he has invited – 'Spirits whom my art has summoned from their confines to greet and bless you' (p. 47) – the god Eshu enters the scene. Eshu is a Yoruba god, widely worshipped in many different cultures across Africa and the Caribbean – in Voodoo, he would be known as Papa Legba. Like Shango, who refuses to be ignored, a sacrifice is made to Eshu in order that he doesn't become disruptive: 'Some prefer chickens, others goats. I'm not too keen on poultry, myself. But if you have a black dog, think of poor Eshu!' (p. 47), he jokes. Eshu can be a benevolent or a punishing god. His response to Miranda's concern and confusion demonstrates this:

Miranda: But who is this? He doesn't seem very benevolent! If I weren't afraid of blaspheming, I'd say there was more of the devil than the god in him.
Eshu: (*Laughing)* And you wouldn't be mistaken, my pretty miss. God to my friends, Devil to my enemies! And lots of fun for all!' (p. 47)

Prospero is immediately troubled by Eshu's arrival; after all, this god wasn't invited, and so this is a clear challenge to Prospero's power. Eshu, unlike Cupid and Venus in Shakespeare's masque, appears precisely because he wasn't invited:

> Prospero: (*softly)* Ariel must have made a mistake. Could there be something grating in my magic? *(Aloud)*. What is your business here? Who invited you? Such liberty-taking displeases me. Even from a God.
> Eshu: But that's just it. Nobody invited me. And that's not kind! Nobody spared a thought for poor Eshu! So poor Eshu, he's come along just the same. Hee!hee!hee! (p. 47)

This Prospero's art cannot repress the indigenous gods of the culture he has attempted to seize control of. After irrupting into the scene, Eshu begins to sing:

> Eshu is a trickster.
> Sacrifice to Eshu twenty dogs
> to escape his dirty tricks. […]
> Eshu plays a trick on the young bride.
> See her on her wedding day
> get into the wrong bed, finding herself
> lying beside a man who isn't the groom! (p. 48).

Eshu warns that he will not be ignored; if sacrifices are not made, he will play his dirty tricks on those who failed to show him his due respect. Unlike Cupid and Venus, whose libidinous tricks were averted by Shakespeare's Prospero, Eshu is a god who can make a young bride go to bed with another man, even on her wedding night. His virility and overt sexuality perhaps speak to the deep-rooted fear of the colonial man for the virtue of his wife and daughter. As discussed in the previous chapter, Mannoni wrote extensively on the colonial man's obsession with the perceived sexual threat of the colonised man. The irruption of Eshu into the chaste pageant that Prospero would have wanted dramatises this fixation of the white male gaze on the black male sexuality. In fact, Césaire's Caliban has no interest in Miranda – there is no mention of the attempted rape, and Caliban's response to the accusation is an allusion to Mannoni's

psychoanalytical reading: 'Rape! Rape! Listen, old goat, you've foisted your own lustful cravings on me' (p. 24). But while Caliban has no sexual interest in Miranda, Prospero's concerns seem embodied by this phallic god:

> Eshu is a feisty lad,
> and with his penis he smites,
> He smites
> He smites… (p. 48).

Eshu's wielding of his penis as a weapon make his presence intolerable to the Western gods that Prospero originally summoned:

> Ceres: 'well, Iris, don't you find this song obscene?'
> Juno: 'Disgusting! Intolerable…if he carries on, I'm leaving!
> Iris: He's Liber, or Priapus![86] (p. 48)

While he might remind Iris of Western classical gods who might have celebrated sexuality, it is crucial that the masque is interrupted by an African god. Crispin argues that Eshu's interruption, and this flaunting of his sexuality, signals the return of an African spirit:

> such festive flaunting of imperialist taboos (rampant black sexuality and miscegenation) amounts to a symbolic badge of insubordination and unbowed dissidence. Eshu stands for the supplanted spirit of Africa returning, superabundant and irrepressible.[87]

One of the criticisms of Césaire's work is the occlusion of the feminine; this irruption of phallic potency seems aggressively masculine (one of the criticisms levelled at the Black Power movement).[88]

[86] Liber and Priapus were both figures associated with fertility; Priapus in particular was a phallic god. For an analysis of Early Modern depictions of Priapus, see Chris Laoutaris, *Shakespearean Maternities: Crises of Conception in Early Modern England* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), pp. 37-9.
[87] Crispin, Introduction, p. 11.
[88] For example, Irene Lara argues: 'Instead of developing Sycorax as a complex character, Césaire focuses on Eshu whom he represents as a sexual spirit that torments Prospero, the other white males, Miranda, and their white goddesses by crashing the wedding ceremony. […] However, if this is a case of counter-hegemonic power it is a male sexual power that can be exerted against women of color, in addition to male and female colonizers. Whether

The celebration of sexuality in Prospero's pageant is certainly a dramatization of dissidence. I would add that there is another aspect of Eshu's dissidence which is more profoundly troubling for the European colonial. His mere presence is a direct challenge to the established order of European society:

> Eshu plays a trick on the Queen.
> Her Majesty loses her head, see her get up
> and go naked into the street (p. 48).

Eshu's potency is such that he can strip the Queen of her clothes – the trappings of power – and disrupt the power structures by making her walk naked through the streets. Prospero in particular is deeply troubled by the appearance of Eshu; the irruption is the beginning of the mental disintegration that we see for the rest of the play:

> There! He's gone. But alas, the harm is done. I am perplexed. My old brain is troubled. Power! Power! Alas, one day all this will pass away, like sea spume, like a cloud, like the great globe itself. And what is power, if I cannot subdue my anguish. But come! My power is cold (p. 49).

Davis argues that 'Eshu's anarchic subversion of Prospero's spectacle parallels, in some measure, the author's refashioning of the Shakespeare text. At the same time, the playwright seems to be confirming the insight that 'all "magic" is, at bottom, relative, despite the totalizing claims made by its practitioners.'[89] Eshu (like Shango) is a symbol of the power of the African cultures forgotten, or ignored, by the European colonials. In Eshu's defiance, there is a hope for a rediscovery, or a renewal, of these cultural symbols. Eshu is a liminal figure: a god of boundaries. His appearance has implications for the future of this throwing together of the

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or not the whipping-dick of the misogynist replaces the whip of the slave driver, women are subjected to violence in either configuration', 'Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax', *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 9.1, 80-98 (p. 88).

[89] Davis, p. 160.

colonial and the colonised which Césaire is interrogating here. Robert Pelton describes Eshu as 'the agent of cosmic transformation. […] Eshu unleashes the forces of destruction at the same time as he more sharply defines the boundaries of that life'.[90] Eshu is 'a mediator between gods and men'.[91] In one of the most re-told stories of Eshu, he causes an argument between two friends who swear they saw him wearing a different colour hat (he wears a hat which is black on one side and white on the other, so both are right, and wrong). As Pelton notes, 'as a two-sided figure, Eshu simultaneously dissolves and reshapes the world'.[92] Césaire's Eshu celebrates this dissolving and reshaping:

> Eshu! The stone he threw yesterday
> kills the bird today.
> From disorder he makes order, from order disorder!
> Ah! Eshu is a killing joke! (p. 48).

In *Discours,* Césaire outlines the devastating consequences of colonialism: he describes 'societies drained of their essence', 'religions smashed', 'extraordinary possibilities wiped out'. The appearance of Eshu, a god who symbolises possibilities, signals the transformative potential of what might happen when peoples who have been smashed by colonialism connect again with their roots and create new worlds. Eshu's disruption of Prospero's masque is more than an irreverent irruption into European cultural dominance; he is also a celebration of the potential to dissolve and reshape the postcolonial world.

Caliban's language

Language is one of the most profound tools for re-shaping the world. Renan's sequel establishes language as a gift which is bestowed upon Caliban by Prospero, and which leads to

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[90] Robert D. Pelton, *The Trickster in West Africa: A Study of Mythic Irony and Sacred Delight* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 139.
[91] Pelton, p. 128.
[92] Pelton, p. 149.

his further evolution as a man. Guéhenno's reworking contested this claim, and attempted to give Caliban his own voice – he steals Prospero's books and gradually becomes more like him. In contrast, in Césaire's play, Caliban does not need to ape Prospero, to learn his language or steal his books; he is creating his own language. In *A Tempest* Prospero's language deteriorates greatly by the end of the play: it is fragmented, and becoming non-sensical. Since his power was so intimately bound with language – he taught Caliban how to speak his language so that he can give orders and insult his slave – then its deterioration is symbolic of Prospero's eroding power. In contrast, Caliban's language becomes the greatest source of his power. Frantz Fanon observes that 'there is in the possession of language an extraordinary power'. Language is so powerful because it gives access to a world: 'a man who possesses language possesses by extension the world expressed and implied by that language'.[93] Caliban's language has been the subject of a great deal of critical writing on *The Tempest*, and, more broadly, the role of language in the colonial project.[94] Césaire makes this explicit in his adaptation. Prospero reminds Caliban that he should be grateful for the education he has received: 'you might at least give me your blessing for having taught you to speak at all!' (p. 22), and Caliban's response demonstrates that he understands the real reason he was taught to speak French: 'You haven't taught me anything at all! Except of course to jabber away in your language so as to understand your orders' (p. 23). Any linguistic education he did receive was to make him more useful as a slave.

Crispin translates the French 'baragouiner' as 'jabber away', but the connotations of the French word – almost impossible to translate – are worth mentioning here. Félix-Lambert Prudent notes that this verb is 'a word of Breton origin which dates from the 14th century to stigmatise people who mispronounced standard French. The term was applied in the 17th century to those who

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[93] Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs,* p. 14.

[94] See, for example, George Lamming, *The Pleasures of Exile* (London: Allison & Busby, 1960), and Bill Ashcroft, *Caliban's voice: the transformation of English in post-colonial literatures* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2009).

spoke Franco-Caribbean and Créole'.[95] It is not Prospero who applies this term to Caliban's use of French; it is Caliban himself. His use of this pejorative term implicitly references the colonial linguistic oppression he experiences. Caliban is fully aware of how a colonial would regard the French spoken by any colonial subject; he shows an awareness of the racist attitudes that his saying anything in French will elicit. Caliban doesn't see any reason to be grateful to his colonial master; he has taught Caliban nothing that isn't directly for his own benefit: 'As for your knowledge, did you ever impart any of that to me? You took care not to. You selfishly keep all your knowledge for yourself alone, sealed up in big books like those' (p. 23). In fact, Caliban does have a great deal of knowledge, but it is not bound up in books; his is an intimate knowledge of the island. In an echo of Shakespeare's Caliban's first greeting: 'A south-west blow on ye | And blister you all o'er' (I. 2. 323-4), Césaire's Caliban also takes the language he has been taught and uses it to curse his master, drawing on the natural elements which form so much of his knowledge: 'Oh, I forgot…Hello. But a hello crammed with wasps, toads, pox and dung' (p. 22).

The first word Césaire's Caliban says as he enters the stage, 'Uhuru' – which is also the last word he as he leaves this scene – is an utterance which both demonstrates that he did have his own language before he was taught French, and which immediately figures Caliban as a slave who does not accept his servitude. Crispin's translation glosses 'Uhuru' as 'the Swahili word for freedom'. Steve Almquist argues that this word has been somewhat overlooked by critics. He notes that it is a Kiswahili word (Swahili refers to the people of Kenya, whereas *Kiswahili* is the language that they speak), and that, 'in the context of the 1950s revolutionary fervour throughout

[95] Lambert-Félix Prudent, *Des baragouins à la langue antillaise: analyse historique et sociolinguistique du discours sur le créole* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1980), p. 181.

the African Diaspora, *Uhuru* threatened to demolish the common representation of the childlike, faithful and loyal African'.[96]

Césaire's Prospero is unaware of the meaning of 'Uhuru'. He sees it as a challenge only in that Caliban's first word is not a greeting – 'You could be polite at least' (p. 22), he complains. Yet Prospero fails to see the revolutionary potential of the utterance; he simply regards it as 'yet another return to your savage tongue' (p. 22). Caliban's tongue is not 'savage'. As Almquist argues, Caliban's utterance of 'Uhuru'

> interrupts the linguistic control Prospero thinks he has, and he can do little more than dismiss it as Caliban's "savage tongue". The play itself offers no gloss, no explanation of this word, but from the exclamatory exuberance with which Caliban announces it, we understand it must have some meaning beyond mere savagery.[97]

Throughout the play we see Caliban wielding words as weapons, singing war songs, and communicating with Nature herself. He demands his freedom in different languages – French, English (he shouts 'Freedom! Now!'), Kiswahili and Créole. He is able to use language for far more than simply to understand orders. Caliban's language does give him an extraordinary

[96] Steve Almquist, 'Not Quite the Gabbling of "A Thing Most Brutish": Caliban's Kiswahili in Aimé Césaire's "A Tempest"', *Callaloo*, 29.2 (2006), 587-607 (p. 587). Almquist cites Robert Ruark's 1962 novel *Uhuru* as reflective of the anxiety surrounding the word among established colonialists. The novel charts 'the disintegration of British colonial control over Kenya through the personal disintegration of Brian Dermott, a Hemingwayesque white hunter whose life of relative ease is threatened by the momentum of Kenya's pending independence, or, *Uhuru.'* As Almquist observes, 'in choosing the Kiswahili word *Uhuru* for his title, Ruark anticipates an emerging symbolic currency in both the word itself and the Kiswahili language in general'.
[97] Almquist, p. 598.

power; he comes to use it to possess the world which was once emphatically owned by his master.

Caliban's name and culture: becoming X

Even if 'Uhuru' has the most symbolic currency, the fact that Caliban uses snippets of various languages throughout the play is crucial to his importance as a symbol for the powerful revolutionary potential of the Negritude movement. His ethnic identity reinforces this symbolism. Shakespeare's Caliban is described as a 'savage and deformed slave'. Césaire removes any reference to Caliban's deformity, as well as the implications associated with savagery, to leave only one description: Caliban is 'a black slave'. A great deal of work has been done on the ambiguous ethnicity of Shakespeare's Caliban.[98] The ethnicity of Césaire's Caliban is also the subject of debate for the characters of the play. Stephano describes Caliban as a 'Zindien'. As Toumson notes, this is a Créole word which was used to describe Indians from India.[99] Caliban refers to his own lodgings as a 'ghetto' (p. 24), and Prospero mentions wanting more slaves for his 'hacienda' (p. 27).[100] This ambiguity might be an implicit criticism of the essentialising view of the 'white gaze'. It is also perhaps a deliberate essentialising, or rather a uniting, on the part of Césaire. Caliban is a symbol of the very concept of Negritude; he represents, and speaks for, all those who have been oppressed because of their race.

Césaire's play was published twice in close succession: first, in 1968, in the review *Presence Africaine*,[101] and again in 1969, in a book published by Éditions de Seuil. A close comparison of

[98] For the most authoritative survey of his multifaceted interpretations, see Vaughan and Vaughan.
[99] Toumson, *Trois Calibans*, p. 416.
[100] The term hacienda is an allusion to Spanish colonies.
[101] Aimé Césaire, *Une tempête, Éditions Présence Africaine,* 67 (1968), 3-32. For a history of *Présence Africaine*, see Ruth Bush, *Publishing Africa in French* (Liverpool: Liverpool UP, 2016).

these versions reveals how the text evolved over this short period, and this evolution is most striking in Césaire's development of Caliban's character. In his 1969 version, Caliban announces that he will no longer be known as Caliban – he asserts his right to name himself:

> Call me X. That's best. Like a man without a name. Or, more precisely, a man whose name was stolen. You speak of history. Well, that's history, known far and wide! Every time you call me that will remind me of the fundamental truth, that you stole everything from me, even my identity. Uhuru! (p. 25).

Since language is a locus of power, then naming – language in action – can be an *act* of power.[102] Césaire's Caliban declares that he will renounce the name given to him by Shakespeare; he will no longer accept a name which confers a European assumption – that he is a cannibal because he is from the Caribbean: 'I've decided I'll be Caliban no longer' (p. 24). This rejection of the name is likely a rejection of the power dynamics which give the coloniser the right to name the place, and the people, he has colonised: 'It's the nickname your hatred attached to me, whose every utterance is an insult' (p. 25).

This exchange did not appear in the 1968 version. Here, Césaire's portrayal of Caliban has clearly been inflected by the rhetoric of Malcolm X – Césaire later said that his reimagining of both Caliban and Ariel were shaped by ongoing events in the US at the time:

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[102] Vaughan and Vaughan summarise the critical debate regarding the naming of the character Caliban as follows. 'Since the late eighteenth century, the most popular explanation has been that "Caliban" is an intentional anagram of "can[n]ibal". The case, briefly stated, is that the consonants *l, n,* and *r* are virtually interchangeable in European transliterations of the unwritten Caribbean Indian languages; thus, "calib" is tantamount to "carib" or "canib", and the latter is the acknowledged linguistic source of "cannibal"', p. 26.

> My text became full of all the preoccupations I had at that moment, as I was thinking a lot of a piece of theatre about the US, inevitably my points of reference became American […]. Faced with Prospero's domination there are many ways to react: violent and non-violent attitudes. There is Martin Luther King and there's Malcom X and the Black Panthers.[103]

In the 1969 version of the play, Ariel and Caliban become, much more explicitly, symbolic of the respective views of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X: in the exchange between Caliban and Ariel,[104] Césaire uses these characters to explore different responses to the racist oppression that they face. While both characters ultimately want freedom, they have different ideas about how best to achieve it. Ariel summarises his philosophy and approach: 'Neither violence, nor submission' (p. 30). He hopes to achieve freedom – both for them and freedom for Prospero from the damaging structures of colonialism – by convincing their master that the power he wields is ultimately unjust: 'it's Prospero we must change. Trouble his calm until he finally acknowledges his own injustice and puts an end to it' (p. 30). Caliban regards this strategy as doomed to failure; Prospero has become so used to power, so corrupted by it, that persuading him to relinquish it would prove impossible. Caliban regards Prospero as 'an old bully who has no conscience' (p. 30). Ariel concedes that Prospero lacks conscience, but tries to convince Caliban that they should both help him to develop a sense of empathy: 'Exactly! We must strive to give him one. I'm not just fighting for my freedom, but for Prospero too, so that a conscience can well up inside him' (p. 30). Since the colonial system is a kind of prison for Prospero, Ariel hopes he can free him by appealing to his better nature.

[103] Toumson, 'Aimé Césaire dramaturge', p. 225.
[104] Césaire's play largely follows the structure of Shakespeare's, though one of the notable additions is a conversation between Ariel and Caliban – this may have been influenced by Renan's sequel, which also features a discussion between the two servants about the notions of servitude and freedom.

In Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Ariel inspires Prospero to develop a conscience. Towards the denouement of the play (after he has showcased his 'Art' by creating the fertility masque) Prospero asks Ariel what has become of the shipwrecked party. They are trapped 'in the line-grove which weather-fends [Prospero's] cell' (V. 1. 10); they are prisoners whom Ariel has left, at his master's behest, completely at Prospero's mercy: 'they cannot budge till your release' (V. 1. 11). Ariel shares what he has observed about the mental well-being of the party: 'The King, | His brother, and yours, abide all three distracted, | And the remainder mourning over them, | Brimful of sorrow and dismay' (V. 1. 11-14). Ariel, even despite his lack of 'human' emotions, shares his sympathy for the humans under Prospero's control: 'Your charm so strongly works 'em| That if you now beheld them, your affections | Would become tender' (V. 1. 17-19). Prospero *has* beheld them, and has witnessed their despair. Before his spirits bring in the banquet, Prospero enters the stage: '*Solemn and strange music, and [enter] Prospero on the top (invisible)'* (IV. 1). It is an expression of ultimate power to stand and watch, from a higher vantage point, the torture of an enemy; he simply stands by – indeed, above – while Ariel, as a harpy, torments the men (food is paraded, and then taken away from them). With the shipwrecked party left terrified, confused, and desperate, Prospero seems pleased with his efforts: 'My high charms work, | And these, mine enemies, are all knit up | In their distractions. They are now in my power; | And in these fits I leave them' (III. 3. 88-91). In response to Ariel's observations, Prospero doesn't immediately agree; it is only when Ariel reflects in the conditional, about what his reaction would be were he human, that Prospero appears to acknowledge that he might sympathise with them:

> Prospero: Dost thou think so, spirit?
> Ariel: Mine would, sir, were I human.
> Prospero: And mine shall (V. 1. 19-20)

It is at this point that Prospero begins to feel sympathy for those men who have been at his mercy; the slave who, supposedly, has no sense of human empathy, is the one who pricks Prospero's conscience:

> Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling
> Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,
> One of their kind, that relish all as sharply
> Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art? (V. 1. 21-24)

After this exchange, Shakespeare's Prospero does develop a sense of sympathy towards those in his power – all except Caliban, that is. In Césaire's adaptation, Prospero has no such redemption. Caliban regards Ariel's idealism, and the possibility of leading Prospero towards having a conscience, as impossible: 'You might as well wait for a stone to burst into bloom!' (p. 31). He expresses frustration with Ariel's 'patience of Uncle Tom',[105] and challenges his fellow slave about his beliefs: 'what do you believe in, then? In cowardice? In resignation? In crooking the knee?' (p. 30). For Caliban, the idea of waiting until Prospero can recognise the injustice inherent in the power dynamics on the island is simply not enough: 'tomorrow doesn't interest me. What I want is (*shouting*) 'Freedom now!' (p. 30).[106] Césaire's Caliban would rather die than continue to be a slave: 'better death than humiliation and injustice' (p. 31). Indeed, he warns Ariel that he would sacrifice himself, and destroy the island that he regards as his birth right, to free himself from servitude:

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[105] Joel Dinerstein gives an overview of how the figure of Uncle tom came to signify race betrayal in the US: 'it was less Stowe's Uncle Tom that incited these authors to literary attack than what I will call the *Uncle Tom-mask*. During the mid-1960s "[when] the term 'Uncle Tom' became synonymous with self-loathing" (xii) as Gates recalled its function as a metonym, "the black man all too eager to please the whites around him . . . [was] the embodiment of 'race betrayal' and an object of scorn, a scapegoat for all of our political self-doubts… We talked about him as *the* model to be avoided (xi)', Joel Dinerstein, '"Uncle Tom Is Dead!": Wright, Himes and Ellison Lay a Mask to Rest', *African American Review*, 43.1 (2009), 83-98 (p. 83).
[106] Caliban here shouts 'Freedom now!' in English; I see his use of multiple languages throughout the play is another indication of his symbolic importance to the idea of Negritude.

> the last word shall be unless it belongs to nothingness. The day I feel all's lost, just let me filch a few barrels of your infernal powder and – from high in the empyrean where you love to soar – you will see this isle, my inheritance, my work, all blown sky high, with, I hope, Prospero and me amongst the debris. I hope you'll enjoy the firework display; it will be signed Caliban (p. 31).

Caliban, like Malcolm X, is willing to die for his freedom. By the end of the play, Prospero, realising that his power has so diminished, offers Caliban a reconciliation:

> But, in spite of everything, I'm fond of you, Caliban. Come, let's make peace…We've lived together for ten years and worked side by side! You must admit, ten years count for something! We've ended up by becoming compatriots! (p. 58)

Prospero here offers no apologies for his mistreatment of Caliban, or Ariel. He seeks peace at this point because he realises that his domination will soon be at an end. While he offers a peace with Caliban, there is no mention of a release from servitude; merely a hope that he can continue to live on the island with no resistance from the slave. Caliban is not interested; he continues to demand his freedom: 'You know full well that I'm not interested in peace. I'm interested in being free. Free, do you hear?' (p. 58).

In *Discours,* Césaire warned that, each time violence is inflicted in colonies, 'a gangrene sets in, a center of infection begins to spread'. As Lansiné Kaba argues, 'the derogatory image associated with the African peoples originated in the need to legitimize morally an obnoxious trade system

created by and for European expanding economy'.[107] Césaire regarded such attitudes as an attack on the very nervous system of the European. Throughout the piece, he likens the colonial system to a kind of disease or poison, infecting those who dominate others: 'a poison has been instilled into the veins of Europe and, slowly but surely, the continent proceeds towards savagery'.[108] Here, the word 'savagery', which was often used to denigrate indigenous peoples, is applied to those who would seek to colonise their fellow man; in doing so, their own humanity is eroded. The metaphor of colonialism as a poison is echoed in Caliban's response to Prospero's offer of a peace on the island; Caliban outlines what he must do in order to free himself from the poisonous influence of colonialism: 'I'd rid myself of you, first of all…I'd vomit you up, all your pomp and designs! Your white poison!' (p. 58). This is an important step towards Caliban's emancipation, but it is a poison which has also infected Prospero. He remains too tied to his colonial project – it has become a prison which he cannot leave, and so, this Prospero cannot rid himself of the toxicity of his own thirst for power.

For Césaire, Caliban's ridding himself of Prospero – and the colonial system he so depends upon – is necessarily an intellectual exercise. While he may threaten violence, and is prepared to die or to blow up the very island which is his inheritance, the most potent weapon that Caliban wields in his emancipation is language. Caliban decolonises his own consciousness through words. In a powerful final speech, Caliban denounces the portrait that Prospero has created of him during his years in servitude:

> You must understand, Prospero:
> for years I bowed my head,
> for years I stomached it, stomached all of it: your insults, your ingratitude,
> and worst of all, more degrading than all the rest,
> your condescension (pp. 58-9)

[107] Lansiné Kaba, 'Historical Consciousness and Politics in Africa,' *Western Journal of Black Studies,* 3.1 (1979), 27-34 (p. 30).
[108] Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme*, p. 36.

Now he has come to realise that he does not need to be a slave, there is nothing left in Prospero's arsenal of repression: 'But I don't care two hoots about your power, | Or your dogs either, |your police, or your inventions!' (p. 59). This is an allusion to the methods of repression which were wielded in the struggle for American civil rights, and indeed any struggle for emancipation. Shakespeare's Prospero justifies his use of violence since it is, he claims, the only language that Caliban understands. But Césaire's Caliban won't be intimidated any longer; the dogs that Shakespeare's Prospero sends to punish Caliban and his co-conspirators can no longer deter him in his struggle for freedom. Indeed, for Césaire, it is Prospero who will ultimately be destroyed by his own insistence on violent oppression: 'You'll be impaled! And on a stake | you'll have sharpened yourself | You'll have impaled yourself!' (p. 59).

At the opening of *A Tempest,* the *Meneur de Jeu* creates the storm, thus stripping Prospero of his potent art. In Césaire's adaptation, Prospero is described as a 'great illusionist'. His illusion is not magic, but the creation of an *idea* – that Caliban is merely a worthless slave:

> And you lied to me so much,
> lied about the world, lied about yourself,
> that you ended up by imposing on me
> an image of myself:
> underdeveloped, in your words,
> incompetent,
> that's how you forced me to see myself,
> and I hate that image! And it is false!
> But now I know you, you old cancer,
> and I also know myself! (p. 59)

It is this knowing which ultimately allows Caliban to take the crucial step towards freedom – the 'emancipation of the consciousness', as Depestre put it. He rejects Prospero's words, and, using his master's language, denounces them as poisonous lies. As Caliban is symbolic of the African

diaspora, his final speech is an expression of the Negritude movement. The first step towards rediscovering, and then continuing to create, a black culture was to recognise that the portrait painted by the European colonial project – Africa as a 'blank page in history', and Africans as uncultured, and underdeveloped – functioned as a crucial aspect of the machinery of mental repression. Davis argues that this repudiation is a transposition of fundamental motifs of Césaire's earlier poetry into the medium of drama: 'we recognize the same urge to reconstruct the self, to salvage the self from the ruses of the other, that constituted the thematic backbone of "Journal of a Homecoming."'[109]

Caliban's final speech recalls the iconic symbol of the Black Power movement – the clenched fist: 'And I know that one day, | my bare fist, my bare fist alone, | will be enough to crush your world! | The old world is falling apart' (p. 59). But it is significant that Caliban commits no violence. Indeed, when offered the opportunity to kill Prospero, he cannot:

> Prospero: (*baring his chest to him).* Strike! Go on, strike! Your master! Your benefactor! You're not going to spare him are you!
>
> *Caliban raises his arm but hesitates.*
>
> Go on! You dare not! See, you're nothing but an animal. You don't know how to kill.
>
> Caliban: Defend yourself, then! I'm not a murderer.
>
> Prospero: (*Very calm*). Oh well, that's just too bad. You've lost your chance. Stupid as a slave! And now, the comedy's over! (p. 54).

For Césaire, who saw the transformative potential of what Sartre called 'engaged literature', [110] it is Caliban's *words* that ultimately defeat Prospero.

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[109] Davis, p. 162.
[110] For possible forms of 'engaged literature' in a Francophone postcolonial literary context, see Colin Clark, 'Resistant Literatures; Literatures of Resistance? The Politics and Poetics of Opacity in Kateb and Dib, *Research in African Literatures*, 47.3 (2016), 50-69.

At the end of *A Tempest*, Prospero doesn't grant Caliban any kind of freedom, but instead chooses to stay on the island to continue their struggle. It is, perhaps, important to Césaire's exploration of emancipation that freedom isn't granted by Prospero; that would presuppose that it is his to grant. Caliban does walk away from his master, and Prospero is left, at the end of the play, shouting desperately for Caliban, and shooting aimlessly in all directions, trying to fight off the encroaching island. It is Caliban who literally has the last word: '*In the distance, above the sound of the surf and the mewing of birds, snatches of Caliban's song can be heard.* LIBERTY, OH-AY! LIBERTY!' (p. 62). Caliban has the final word. Davis suggests that the 'unresolved, "open" ending points to a postcolonial limbo in which ex-master and ex-slave are living by mutually incompatible principles and aspirations.'[111] Césaire left the ending of the play somewhat ambiguous to reflect the ongoing struggle in the United States. In an interview with J. Leiner, Césaire admitted that he really didn't know what the outcome of the struggles would be 'I don't think anyone can say how the problem will resolve itself […] Even the Black Americans don't fully know where they are heading, they fight, they struggle, and that's all that can be said.'[112] In the production in Paris in January 1970, directed by Serreau, Caliban takes off his striped convict gown at the end. This costume, and the removal of it at the end, were important symbolic choices on the stage; the Civil Rights movement was fighting against the kind of arbitrary incarceration of black people. Caliban at the end takes off the convict gown. He is no longer owned by Prospero.

Ariel's Redemption Songs

Renan sought a reconciliation between Caliban and Ariel; Guéhenno spoke of the potential for poetry if Caliban can only learn the poetic soul of Ariel. Césaire's play seems to offer a possibility for reconciliation, and recognises the power not only of Caliban's affirmations, but of Ariel's poetry to offer renewal and freedom. As well as the addition of Eshu, Césaire also adds two

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[111] Davis, p. 161.
[112] Kesteloot and Kotchy, pp. 208-9.

further specifications to Shakespeare's dramatis personae: Ariel is a 'mulatto slave', whereas Caliban is a 'black slave'.[113] This difference in ethnicity might be a way of accounting for the contrast between how Prospero treats both of his slaves. Michel Leiris noted that, following the abolition of slavery in Martinique, the islands saw a 'diffusion of education and, as a result, the formation of an "intelligentsia of colour"'. This intelligentsia, he notes, reflected the racial hierarchies that were already evident before the abolition; it was 'initially composed exclusively of mulattos (this category being, in former times, already much more integrated into French culture than the black slaves were).'[114] Ariel's role as part of the intelligentsia is alluded to by Prospero in their first exchange:

> Prospero: I pay you a compliment and you don't seem pleased. Tired?
> Ariel: Not tired, disgusted
> Prospero: Ah, of course, your moral anguish! It's always the way with intellectuals! (p. 21)

This is an interesting reversal of roles, and a further diminishing of the Prospero-figure. Shakespeare's Prospero tells Miranda that he was exiled from his dukedom for being so invested in his studies – essentially, for being an intellectual. Renan reframed Prospero as a chemist in the Enlightenment tradition. Guéhenno repositions his Prospero as a distanced intellectual whose pursuit of academic advancement makes him indifferent to the sufferings of Caliban. Mannoni proposes that Prospero is defined almost entirely by his position as a colonial master. This is also true of Césaire's Prospero: stripped of his magic, and with no intellectual interests, he is driven solely by the pursuit of power.

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[113] Davis regards this racial specificity as a feature of Césaire's drama – in *Christophe*, the character of Pétion is a mulatto. Davis, p. 160.
[114] Michel Leiris, *Contacts de civilisations en Martinique et en Guadeloupe* (Paris: UNESCO-Gallimard, 1955), p. 27.

As well as being an 'intellectual', Césaire's Ariel is, like Caliban, intimately linked with the island. This Ariel regrets that Prospero freed him from the pine: 'perhaps I would have become a tree in the end…' (p. 22). The symbolism of the tree is an inspiration to Ariel: 'Tree: there's a word that fires me! […] A nonchalant bursting out on high, full of an elegant, octopus swaying. Baobab! Monsters' soft entrails. Ceiba! Unfurled under the proud sun, bird! Your talons fixed in the living earth' (p. 22). The ceiba is a tree native to the Caribbean which has a sacred significance in Voodoo mythology – a place where dead ancestors would reside;[115] the baobab is also considered a sacred tree in Africa. Jacqueline Leiner observes that Césaire, from a young age, was fascinated by the flora and fauna of the island – he would spend hours studying and dissecting plants, and learning the names of native species.[116] Césaire himself often returned to the tree (and the field) as a symbol of the Negritude movement; it could represent both rootedness and renewal at once: 'The field was not dried up: it could still bear fruit if we made the effort to irrigate it with our sweat and plant new seeds in it.'[117]

The ocean surrounding the island is also a fundamental aspect of the poetics of Césaire's Negritude. Caliban regards the sea as a friend. Ariel, too, sings an exaltation of the ocean – its restorative potential can salve wounds and bring people together:

> Chestnut sands,
> wave drenched.
> Breakers' resting place,
> pure languor.
> Where the wave subsides,
> all come here,
> join hands
> and dance.
>
> Golden sands,

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[115] René Hénane, Jacqueline Leiner, *Glossaire Des Termes Rares Dans L'œuvre D'Aimé Césaire* (Paris: Jean Michel Place, 2004), p. 37.
[116] Jacqueline Leiner, 'Un portrait: Aimé Césaire', *Europe*, 76 (1998), 8-15 (pp. 9-10).
[117] Interview with Depestre, p. 30.

torrid burn!
Languor of the waves,
pure resting place.
Here lips lick and lap
our wounds (p. 26)

Césaire gives Ariel songs which, like the ocean, have a certain restorative power. This aspect of his character is in tune with Shakespeare's Ariel, whose music is fundamental to the redemption in the play. Ariel's first song goes some way to assuaging Ferdinand's grief:

> Full fathom five thy father lies,
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes;
> Nothing of him that doth fade,
> But doth suffer a sea-change
> Into something rich and strange (I. 2. 307-402).

This song describes a kind of transfiguration: the body becomes part of the nature that caused it to perish. Although the father is no longer in human form, he is undergoing a transformation – a 'sea-change' – into something different, yet precious and beautiful. Ariel's song might offer some comfort to the grieving son; if he thinks of his father as becoming one with Nature, then he is not truly lost. Michael Neill argues that the very structure of Ariel's music is a source of comfort.[118] This emotional unburdening, this transfiguration, is echoed by Césaire's Ariel:

> Ocean stream comes home…
> Nothing is, all becomes.
> This close, strange season.
>
> Living eye is precious pear
> Heart is coral, bone joins atoll.
> Ocean stream comes home,

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[118] The stage direction 'burden, dispersedly' suggests that 'Ariel's intention is that his fellow spirits should take up the chorus, or 'burden' of his song, but in a context which allays the fury both of the wild waves and of Ferdinand's passionate grief for his father […] Although etymologically distinct, these two sense of 'burden' had long been assimilated: 'burden' in the musical sense (otherwise *bourdon* or *burdoun*) could still carry its original meaning as the bass or undersong accompanying the melody in a choral work. The task of Ariel's spirit chorus 'is to assist an emotional unburdening – so that, by some mysterious transfiguration, the bearing of one "burden" will assist in the lightening of the other'. Michael Neill, 'Noises, | Sounds, and Sweet Airs': The Burden of Shakespeare's "Tempest", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 59.1 (2008), 36-59 (p. 43).

Bringing a sea-change (p. 26).

Having spent time in Paris learning about Haiti from his good friend Senghor, it was when Césaire returned again to Martinique that he felt most connected to his home. Ariel's song is a call for return – a return of the consciousness as much as the body – to the homeland, like a stream joining an ocean. 'Nothing is – all becomes', sings Ariel, implying the transformative potential of such a return, which could transmute the heart into coral and bone into atoll. This transfiguration is not about death – for Ariel, the island is very much alive – but about becoming more connected with what Césaire called the native land. The 'sea change' for his Ariel is the kind of 'groundswell' which Césaire advocated – the 'decolonisation of consciousness' which was so part of the Negritude movement. Césaire did not simply read *The Tempest* as a colonial play which needed to be rewritten from a non-European perspective. His Ariel, much like Shakespeare's, is a figure whose empathy and music offer the potential for redemption and transformation. Ariel, then, embodies Césaire's belief in the power of words – here, specifically, poetry – to effect change.

Ariel's final song seems to convey Césaire's belief in the power of the kind of direct call to action that theatre (but also poetry) can enact. Shakespeare's Ariel, given his freedom, suggests that he will return to the world of nature, living happily under the flowers:

> Where the bee sucks, there suck I,
> In a cowslip's bell I lie;
> There I couch when owls do cry;
> On the bat's back I do fly
> After summer merrily.
> Merrily, merrily shall I live now,
> Under the blossom that hangs on the bough (V. 1. 88-94).

Césaire's Ariel has a similar final song, which celebrates the beauty of the natural world to which he is about to return:

> There, where the cecropia glove their impatient
> hands with silver,
> There, where the ferns free with a green cry
> the stubborn black stems from their etched bodies,
> There, where the intoxication berry ripens the
> shy woodpigeon's port of call,
> into the throat of that musical bird
> I shall drop
> one by one,
> and each one more ravishing,
> four notes so sweet that the last
> will kindle an ardour
> in the hearts of the most forgetful slaves
> yearning for freedom! (pp. 55-56)

The cecropia is a plant native to the American tropics. René Hénane and Jacqueline Leiner note that, in his oeuvre, Césaire employs this plant as a metaphor suggestive of 'black hands; dark with light palms'.[119] Here, this image implies that Ariel is a catalyst in the search for freedom, but a freedom that is already sought by the landscape – the reaching, impatient hands of the cecropia. The berries of the island are already intoxicating; with their potency, they intensify and ripen the shy woodpigeon's call. Ariel's song – his poetry – will further kindle this desire and awaken every last slave. He will amplify the Nature of the island. This celebration of the latent potential of the land, and the transformative power of uniting with it once again, is a fundamental tenet of *Return to my Native Land*.

Césaire takes Ariel a step further. He won't simply cohabit with nature, but will become a part of it. He promises to drop the notes of his songs – which have such emancipatory potential – into the throats of birds. Those birds will then sing in such a way as to inspire slaves to yearn again for freedom. Prospero, realising the power of Ariel's words, seems somewhat disturbed by his final song: 'Come on. Surely, you're not going to set my world on fire with your music!' (p. 56). This is indeed what Ariel intends to do. In the final stage of his transfiguration, he will

[119] Hénane and Leiner, p. 36.

become the bird; he will sing to the slaves in the fields, the power of his song such that it will cause the plants to raise the flag of freedom:

> (*As if drunk)*
> Or in the stony savannah
> I shall be the thrush
> perched on an agave stalk that hurls
> its mocking cry to the too-patient labourer:
> 'Black toiler! Black toiler!'
> and the lightened agave will
> straighten up after my flight
> a hoisted flag (p. 56)

Prospero finds the idea of this deeply disconcerting; he almost changes his mind about giving Ariel his freedom: 'What an unsettling agenda! Go! Fly! Before I change my mind!' (p. 56).
In *Caliban speaks*, Guéhenno's Ariel promises that, someday, a poet will come, to help Caliban to express his grief, and his most ardent desires. Césaire, through both Caliban and Ariel, uses poetry to express the lived experiences of those who have been subjugated by the system of colonisation (which, for him, was closely allied to the system of capitalism). He seeks to create a sea-change – celebrating the heritage, the potential and the power of Caliban and Ariel, so that they – and, indeed, even Prospero – might be freed.

Conclusion: 'something rich and strange'

Renan turned to Shakespeare to create a new kind 'philosophical drama' which explored the psychology of lived experiences; Guéhenno saw Shakespeare as one of those rare writers who truly listened to, and revered, the Everyman, and he inscribed the character of Caliban to give the common man a voice; Mannoni regarded Shakespeare as a writer who had created an 'archetypal colonial encounter' (borne of his own neuroses); Césaire saw the revolutionary power of Shakespeare and his Caliban, and translated that to an Antillean locale which also had ramifications for the global Negritude movement. They turned, more specifically, to *The Tempest* because it offered them a lens through which to examine aspects of French politics, but also to capture their own reflection. *The Tempest*, for these writers, was not a play of abstractions but of psychology; it dramatised the throwing together of two personalities (Prospero and Caliban), and the juxtaposition of vastly different lived experiences – both because of the colonial context and the inherent inequality of their power dynamic. Each of them found that *The Tempest* gave them a way of thinking about the relationship between master and slave; about the power of education, about the colonial situation; about the power of poetry, and the theatre, to challenge and subvert.

Earlier French adaptations – by Destouches, Chabannes, and Scribe – emphasised the fantastical nature and supernatural elements of *The Tempest*. It was described by Hugo as '*la fantaisie, l'arabesque*' (he defined 'arabesque' as that which 'grows […] blossoms, flowers, branches into dreams').[1] In his survey of French productions of *The Tempest*, Guy Boquet notes that there were hardly any before the mid-1950s. He suggests that this was partly because of the many, varied and contradictory readings and interpretations that the play invites, which made it a more daunting prospect for any director: 'this multiplicity of meanings might explain why Jean Jacquot

[1] Hugo, *William Shakespeare*, p. 168.

finds no trace of *The Tempest* in France before 1955.'[2] The first production he mentions is an adaptation by Yves Florenne in 1958, performed in Carcassone's Le Théâtre de la Cité, an open-air amphitheatre.[3] Bouquet argues that there was a definite shift in approach after the 1990s; a return to the fantastical rather than the political: 'we moved from often reductive ideological productions to a play about magic in the magic of the Theatre.'[4] *The Tempest* was not performed at the Comédie Française until 1998,[5] but Jean-Pierre Miquel, administrator of the Comédie at the time, seems enlivened by the 'polysemy' of possible readings and interpretations: 'fairytale, allegory, political play? Interpretations fuse, intersect, and confront each other without ever coming to an agreement'.[6]

Boquet's implication is that the political inscription of the play in France – essentially from Renan to Césaire – was something of an interlude, and that the play is now once again an exploration of the fantastical and the magic of theatre. But this is not the whole story. The responses I have considered in this thesis were not 'reductive ideological' adaptations, but together built a particularly French edifice on which much of the global afterlife of the play rests: Renan, Guéhenno, Mannoni and Césaire themselves influenced responses – political, theoretical, and theatrical – from Latin America to the Caribbean, to England. *The Tempest* is a play that has been enmeshed in the French cultural fabric for centuries, and these threads continue to be teased out by French and Francophone thinkers still using the play to speak to the political concerns of today.

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[2] Guy Boquet, 'Mises en scène: La Tempête en France (1955-1990), in *Shakespeare, La Tempête, études critiques*, ed. by Claude Peltrault (Besançon: Actes du Colloque de Besançon, 1993), pp. 153-160 (p. 153). Boquet offers a comprehensive overview of the productions since the 1950s on the French stage, but these are outside the scope of this thesis.
[3] Jacquot, p. 117.
[4] Guy Bouquet, p. 160.
[5] As the programme notes for the production state, this play is a fairly late edition to the theatre's repertoire: 'Out of 37 plays published in the 1623 Folio, 15 are today [1998] in the repertoire of the Comédie Française', Odile Failu, 'Shakespeare à la comédie française', *Shakespeare, La Tempête* programme (Comédie Française, 1998), pp. 27-30 (p. 30).
[6] Jean-Pierre Miquel, 'foreword', *Shakespeare, La Tempête* programme (Comédie Française, 1998), p. 4.

In 2011, the theatre company Motus devised an adaptation of *The Tempest* in the lead up to Marseille's year as the European Capital of Culture. The promotional material describes two characters, "A" and "C":

> after "The Tempest", suspended in a transitory non-place […] landed in this shelter after tormented events of actual and existential wrecks, great gestures and frustrated claims. They try to have a dialogue without speaking the same language, they try to tell their stories, mixing Italian, French, Arabic…[7]

This Ariel and Caliban are set adrift, left to navigate the new multicultural, multilingual space that they find themselves in. The setting may be a 'transitory non-place' metaphorically, but the mélange of tongues seems a nod to the city in which the production took place. Marseille itself is a melting-pot; a diverse and vibrant city near both Italy and (as the 'Porte de l'Afrique') North Africa. In terms of the colonial history of France, it proved a significant port city because of its geographical proximity to North Africa.[8] This admixture of Italian, French and Arabic, then, is both significative of Marseille and an acknowledgement that Caliban's mother tongue would have been Arabic.

This Motus production describes itself as one in which 'the Shakespearean relationship is flipped'. It appears, though, that (like Chabannes referencing Dryden-Davenant, and Scribe's

[7] https://www.motusonline.com/en/2011-2068-animale-politico-project/caliban-cannibal/

[8] As the travel writer Seth Sherwood observes: 'Marseille may be more deeply linked to Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria than any non-African city', Seth Sherwood, 'Marseille Sways to a Maghreb Rhythm, *New York Times*, July 24 2009 <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/26/travel/26next.html> [accessed 27 September 2021].

drawing on Waldron) their source text is more likely not just Shakespeare's *Tempest*, but his play as mediated through Césaire's appropriation:

> "A" could be Ariel after *The Tempest* […] in full confrontation with a freedom sought after in slogans, but fundamentally feared. […] "C" could be Caliban after the island's explosion, after the attack on Prospero. After the fireworks.

This reading of Ariel, as a fragile character who fears the very freedom that he/she seeks, is a reflection of Césaire's Ariel. The 'island's explosion' and 'the attack on Prospero' are also Césaireian images: 'you will see this isle, my inheritance, my work, all blown sky high, with, I hope, Prospero and me amongst the debris. I hope you'll enjoy the firework display, it will be signed Caliban'.[9] Césaire's Caliban doesn't destroy the island, but he does explode the Prospero-Caliban power dynamic. In this Motus production, too, Caliban is framed as a freedom fighter: we see him here 'after the Tunisian "Revolution"'. Now the island is blown up, there is nowhere to go: "A" and "C" are migrants, housed in an emergency tent, and wrapped in blankets provided by the company and donated by the audience (these blankets were donated to the city's migrant support associations after each performance). Sitting next to these migrants wrapped in blankets, there is a box of books, 'but *not* Prospero's books'[10] – not the canonical texts of the French schooling system, learned and memorised and underlined at school year after year. They are perhaps Caliban's books – Arab poets and anti-institutionalist thinkers such as Foucault. And yet, there is still an anxiety about these very books – an implication that they have been 'imposed' and 'cannibalised', in order to allay an anxiety about not knowing enough. They read in

[9] Césaire, *Une tempête*, p. 31.
[10] 'Caliban Cannibal', *Motus,* <https://www.motusonline.com/en/2011-2068-animale-politico-project/caliban-cannibal/> [accessed 27 September 2021]. My emphasis.

order to 'find new words'; they look to new words and ancient ones. We see here a consideration of what role Prospero-as-mage has to play (as in Renan), and the same anxiety about influence and canonicity which can be traced in Guéhenno's work.

A production in 2016 by the company Le Mystère Bouffe dramatised a tension between the influence of words ancient and new, of the Francophone world being caught between Shakespeare and Césaire. *Entre deux tempêtes*, adapted and directed by Nelly Quette, was performed in Paris, Marseille and Fort-de-France from 2016-17. The promotional material notes that the costumes were designed 'to evoke the era of colonial glory of the 1930s', and describes the play as an enactment of 'a troupe of actors rehearsing their show, finding themselves grappling with these two texts [*The Tempest* and *Une tempête*] and their contradictions'. The actors are practising their version of the play, and find themselves having to negotiate their own positions in relation to these texts (by this point, perhaps, Césaire's has become equally canonical in the Francophone world):

> In a world which has become an island, surrounded by the tempest of globalisation, this theatrical writing about theatre permits the public to identify with actors who are navigating between identities and characters.[11]

The actors navigate between characters, switching roles, but also navigate that space between Shakespearean and Césaireian tempests.

[11] 'Entre deux tempêtes, de William Shakespeare, Aimé Césaire, mis en scène par Nelly Quette', *Billetreduc*, <https://www.billetreduc.com/170380/evt.htm> [accessed 27 September 2021].

This production highlights the most well-known Francophone adaptation of *The Tempest*. But in fact, France has a rich cultural history of drawing out what is rich and strange from the play – a history which shaped the global afterlife of the play, and which is, as yet, unknown by the majority of Anglophone critics and theatre-goers. Shakespeare takes Europeans, and throws them into temporary chaos before they land in a new space. This new locale gives them the space to re-imagine what society might be, or to disrupt the established order. On the island, there is revolutionary potential, but it is also full of wonder and elemental magic. This isle full of spirits led Renan to transmute Prospero the Renaissance mage into a chemist, to translate the island's spirits into distilled gasses. It leads him to reflect on Prospero's place in a post-Enlightenment space where movements such as Positivism have profoundly changed what and how the people believe. Prospero's bucolic fertility masque becomes a dramatisation about the anxiety of industrialisation and how science might emancipate – or indeed further subjugate – the masses. The figure of Caliban – the slave educated by his master – is re-framed by Renan through the lens of Revolutions, where the masses did indeed disrupt the hierarchy. Following both Renan and Shakespeare, Guéhenno firmly establishes Caliban's symbolic status as one of 'the people' – those people that Shakespeare revered. This reading alludes to the concept of Shakespeare's demotic genius that really shaped his reputation in France. Guéhenno offers a new voice to Caliban and to the silenced masses. Guéhenno recognises the beauty of the language that Shakespeare gave to Caliban, but wants to give him the opportunity to tell his own story. Guéhenno 'steals' Shakespeare's book, and Renan's, to write Caliban's. Both of these adaptations created new Prospero-Caliban significations which were picked up by Émile Bergerat, Alexandre Dumas, Romain Rolland, Joseph Folliet, and a community of *pieds noirs* who adopted this Caliban's voice to create a literary and political journal which explored what it meant to be European in a post-WWI world.

The meeting, the bringing together, of Europeans and those who live in the New World is also a fundamental aspect of Shakespeare's *Tempest.* Mannoni, who spent his life working in French colonies, saw in the Prospero-Caliban dynamic a 'map' of French colonial relations, at a human level (the throwing together of personalities). He pathologises Prospero and his need to dominate others, and also offers a reading of the psychology of Shakespeare-as-artist. Mannoni's framing, problematic as it is, profoundly shaped subsequent readings of the play that made the postcolonial aspect explicit. Césaire also sees Prospero's need to dominate – he regards Shakespeare's *Tempest* as an intervention in a colonial discourse, one that was critical of Prospero-the-coloniser (although he recognised that the play has subsequently been used to legitimise colonisation). Césaire recognises the radical potential that Shakespeare wrote into Caliban and translates this to an Antillean context (like Shakespeare's island, the Antilles is a locale of intersection and throwing together). As well as reconnecting Caliban with his heritage, Césaire reconnects with the elemental magic in Shakespeare's island and offers a way of moving forward through a reconciliation of Caliban's affirmative action and Ariel's redemptive poetry. This postcolonial thread is not separate from the class-focussed re-framings of Renan and Guéhenno (indeed, Césaire borrows directly from Renan); Caliban's intersectional status as a black man and one of the proletariat allows Césaire to express his misgivings about the toxic influence of the intersection between the colonial project and the exploitative capitalist system that he believes underpins it. Césaire's is not just a political play; it is very much about the magic of theatre and the transformative power of poetry – that if African gods join the masque, and if Caliban can reconnect with his roots, then the magic written in to Shakespeare's island might find new meaning in France's former colonies. These authors saw the potential of Shakespeare (and particularly *The Tempest*) to challenge, to subvert and to disrupt. Having lived through – and taken part in – movements which rocked society, they recognised the genuine revolutionary potential of Shakespeare's Caliban, and enlisted him to speak to the concerns of their own times. Even

today in the Francophone world, it seems there is still the question of what it might mean to be a Caliban.

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