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# Shakespeare's *Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism

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Recent historicist critics of Shakespeare have been energetically producing a body of work on state power and cultural forms. Such critics often seek to distance themselves from an older, "monological" historicism that assumed literature passively reflected its social or political context. Yet despite their commitment to a more complex theory of cultural production, some of these critics reproduce the very reductiveness they want to avoid. Literature, instead of passively reflecting society or power relations, now too often passively repeats a single, all-consuming discourse.

I would like to focus my complaint by examining a recent essay on *The Tempest* by Paul Brown.[1] According to Brown, this play may be seen as Shakespeare's "intervention in an ambivalent and even contradictory [colonialist] discourse" (p. 48). This discourse operates in part by "producing" a threatening "other" that can be used to confirm colonial power. In *The Tempest*, otherness is embodied by the "masterless" men, Stephano and Trinculo, by the sexuality of Miranda and Ferdinand, and especially by Caliban. The threatening "other" is used by colonial power to display its own godliness, to insure aristocratic class solidarity, to justify the colonial project morally, and to "further its workings" through the reorientation of desire. But by representing the "other" in terms that suggest its disruptive potential, colonial discourse also indicates the inherent instability of the colonial project. Masterlessness, savagism, and illicit sexuality retain qualities alluring to "civil" man, and in the process of representing otherness as a threat, colonial discourse inevitably reveals "internal contradictions which strain its ostensible project" (p. 59). Colonial dis-

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course, according to Brown, cannot rest; it is always being impelled to further action in order to contain the threatening "other" upon which it depends.

Brown's discussion of connections between *The Tempest* and colonial discourse is often powerful as a gloss on Prospero's view of the characters he seeks to bring under his control. Yet in other ways his essay is more troubling. In the course of his argument, Shakespeare's play becomes almost wholly engulfed by colonial discourse, retaining little separate identity of its own.[2] Though Brown speaks at first of the play as an "intervention," thereby suggesting an act of aggressive, masterful penetration, he soon follows this with suggestions of the play's dissolution; as his argument unfolds, the play vanishes almost completely into the "domain" of colonial discourse. Both *The Tempest* and other products of colonial discourse share "the intention to produce colonialist stereotypicality" but both end inevitably in "beleaguerement." Both use a threatening "other" to assert the superiority of the colonizer, but in so doing reveal the "other" as a site of potential disruption. Shakespeare has done little more than repeat ambivalences already present in the materials he is working with, ambivalences which, in Brown's view, arise inevitably from the nature of the colonial project itself.

Furthermore, Brown's account implies an author whose most powerful effects are those which have eluded his control. Shakespeare's intervention in colonial discourse, Brown writes,

> takes the form of a powerful and pleasurable narrative which seeks at once to harmonise disjunction, to transcend irreconcilable contradictions and to mystify the political conditions which demand colonialist discourse. Yet the narrative ultimately fails to deliver that containment and instead may be seen to foreground precisely those problems which it works to efface or overcome. The result is a radically ambivalent text.[3]

Here, Shakespeare's play "seeks" to harmonize disjunction, transcend, and mystify, but it "ultimately fails" to do so, offering instead "radical ambivalence." Later, Brown states that the play is "fully implicated" in the "euphemisation of power" characteristic of forms such as the Jacobean masque, yet at the same time is irresistably drawn to expose the coercive methods upon which that power depends. Brown would have us think of *The Tempest* as a kind of masque manqué; apparently, Shakespeare wants to endorse

unequivocally the colonial enterprise, but, like a helpless giant, he is unable to do so, forced by the very nature of his project into revealing its inadequacy.

By representing the play's "ambivalences" as unintended by-products of an attempt to endorse colonialism unequivocally, Brown makes it difficult to see the more qualified endorsement the play is really making; he also makes it difficult to distinguish the play from other texts that *do* deliver such endorsements. His argument, it seems to me, reproduces an error that has haunted criticism of *The Tempest*—that is, the conflation of Prospero with Shakespeare. Though Prospero dominates this play in a way few Shakespearean characters do in others, the play cannot be said to endorse fully Prospero's most blatant expressions of colonial ideology. It invites us to look at Prospero from other angles, Caliban's especially, and draws our attention to questionable aspects of Prospero's conduct and beliefs in ways that seem to be a function of the play's design. While Prospero clearly views Caliban as a threatening "other," the audience does not; the play invites us to sympathize with and to laugh at Caliban, but not to perceive him as a real threat. No necessity compels Shakespeare to give Caliban a speech giving him a persuasive claim to legitimate ownership of the island, or to undermine Prospero's claim that Caliban is ineducable by having Caliban state his intention to "seek for grace" in the play's final scene (V.i.295). He might have easily displayed Prospero's mastery by means of a much cruder, less engaging character. Shakespeare clearly wants us to feel Caliban's claim on us and to sense Prospero's limitations.

But if the play does not uncritically submit to colonial discourse, what is the play's relation to it?[4] Brown's understanding of colonialism is shaped in part by categories he borrows from Immanuel Wallerstein.[5] To Wallerstein, the colonial enterprise may be seen to operate in three domains, the "core," "semi-periphery," and "periphery." The colonialism of the core involves the reinforcement and expansion of royal hegemony within England itself; that of the semiperiphery involves its expansion into areas (such as Ireland) only partially under English control; that of the periphery, into the New World. The "production of the other" takes place in all three domains, and Brown finds all three relevant to *The Tempest*. Brown uses Wallerstein's categories to explore a "general analogy between text and context" and to draw suggestive parallels between the play's subplots. Yet he does so in ways that obscure important distinctions. Prospero's colonial project is, for Brown, embodied not only in his "regime" on the

island (periphery and semiperiphery) but also in his dukedom in Milan (core); when Brown comes to make general statements about the play's treatment of colonial relations, he is presumably referring to all three domains. Because Prospero's "colonial project" can include not only his "regime" on the island but also his dukedom in Milan, Brown's general statements about the play's treatment of colonial relations can be confusing: does he mean one, two, or all three domains? We may wish to think of colonialism in Wallerstein's terms, yet, in applying them to *The Tempest,* we should not let them prevent us from seeing that Shakespeare's treatment of the "colonialism of the core" is not identical to his treatment of the "colonialism of the periphery."[6] Shakespeare, in fact, to a large extent plays core *against* periphery: *The Tempest* registers tensions between Prospero's role as colonist-magician and his role as duke; it self-consciously explores problematic aspects of Prospero's rule on the island; and it raises questions about his view of Caliban. At the same time, the play declares Prospero's restoration of Milanese political order to be unequivocally legitimate. Prospero works to restore order by gaining back his dukedom, bringing Antonio under his control, engineering Alonso's repentance, and marrying Miranda to the son of his old enemy. The play strongly suggests these goals have the blessing of heaven; and at no time does it bring into question the legitimacy of Prospero's rule as duke, his right to reclaim and expand his dukedom, or his right to arrange a marriage for Miranda.

Thus, *The Tempest* celebrates what Wallerstein calls the "colonialism of the core" while rendering the "colonialism of the periphery" in more problematic terms. Rather than a failed attempt to endorse a vaguely defined colonialism unequivocally, the play should be understood as an extremely successful endorsement of the core's political order. At the same time, the play registers anxiety about the legitimacy of peripheral colonial ventures and their ability to further core interests. Brown, then, is right when he suggests that the play shares with many masques the intention to celebrate an ideal ruler. He is also right to suggest that the play's celebration of an ideal ruler depends, in part at least, upon the disclosure of a threatening "other." Yet, as I will argue below, the play's true threatening "other" is not Caliban, but Antonio. Furthermore, though the play may be said to help create a context in which a colonial venture might be condoned, it is more significantly engaged in arousing the desire for, and displaying the power of, a ruler at the core who can contain a tendency toward oligarchy and division. The colonial venture is

subordinate to this larger aim and is given up when it has served its purpose.

**Antonio as "other"**

Oddly, Brown scarcely refers to Antonio or to Prospero's attitude toward him. Yet it is Antonio whom Prospero first invests with the qualities of a threatening "other." Prospero's narration to Miranda of their history reveals that he discerns in Antonio's betrayal an "evil nature" at work:

> I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
> To closeness and the bettering of my mind
> With that which, but by being so retir'd,
> O'er-priz'd all popular rate, in my false brother
> Awak'd an evil nature; and my trust,
> Like a good parent, did beget of him
> A falsehood in its contrary, as great
> As my trust was; which had indeed no limit,
> A confidence sans bound.
>
> (I.ii.89-97)[7]

Here, Prospero turns himself and his brother into stark opposites; Antonio's falseness is "in its contrary, as great" as Prospero's large-hearted "trust." Prospero is a blameless "good parent," whereas, in subsequent lines, Antonio demonstrates his evil nature by his deceit and violent seizure of Prospero's dukedom; his overreaching aggression is simultaneously an act of rebellion against the state and a betrayal of family bonds.

The rest of the play faithfully endorses Prospero's production of his brother as a threatening "other." (Its success in doing so is partially indicated by the fact that, while Caliban has had numerous defenders in the critical tradition, no one, to my knowledge, has taken up Antonio's cause.) Antonio's incitement of Sebastian to usurpation and murder of Alonso suggests that he has a kind of pathological addiction to treason and fratricide; Antonio seems to be a permanent enemy of state and family order. But it is, perhaps, his seeming incapacity for bonding that makes him an especially sinister figure. In addition to attributing an "evil nature" to Antonio, Prospero also calls him "unnatural" (see V.i.75-79), suggesting that Antonio's evil is not only indicated by the active presence of an evil desire, but also by the absence of a bond that would lead him to contain it: Antonio feels none of the "natural" affection supposed to arise from their fraternal tie. His incapacity for bonding is further underscored by his arrogance, his

contempt for conscience, and his cold, cynical humor. It is perhaps these aspects of his character, even more than his silence in the final scene, that lead the audience to suspect Antonio has not repented, and probably cannot repent of his crimes. Prospero can induce repentance in Alonso by making use of Alonso's feeling for his son Ferdinand; we cannot imagine Antonio capable of feeling any tie intensely enough to make him responsive to such a maneuver.

The play does not fully endorse Prospero's construction of himself as Antonio's absolute opposite, however. As Brown notes in passing, Prospero's language in his narration of the past also makes visible his own abdication of authority. If Antonio possesses an "evil nature," is trust the appropriate strategy of the "good parent"? Such trust, we are told, "Awak'd" Antonio's evil and "did beget" his falsehood. By representing their relation in terms that suggest cause and effect, Prospero's own metaphors hint at a greater responsibility than he ever acknowledges openly. His actions later in the play do indicate he has assumed some responsibility, however. Antonio's temptation of Sebastian re-enacts the past in a way that makes it possible for Prospero to replace his earlier "trust" with a hidden surveillance that will bring Antonio under his control. Furthermore, Prospero "abjures" the magic that led him to neglect his office. And though at the end of the play Prospero does not seem much inclined to return to the active duties of a duke, he has made sure his dukedom will fall into the hands of people more trustworthy than Antonio.

Because Antonio functions so powerfully as a threatening "other," Shakespeare can display Prospero's imperfections without seriously jeopardizing Prospero's claim to be a "good master." That Prospero's representation of himself has an element of denial, that his neglect of office may have contributed to Antonio's fall—these offenses as well as others pale in comparison to those of Antonio. Antonio clearly would be a much worse "master" than Prospero, and the audience is encouraged to feel that a controlling authority is needed to contain his overreaching.

A good deal of what Brown has to say about "savagism" and "masterlessness," then, can easily be used to illuminate the play's characterization of Antonio. Antonio's apparently constitutional evil helps to confirm the moral legitimacy of Prospero's rule, much as the savage is used to confirm the "civilized" and "godly" character of colonial authority. And like the rebellion of the "masterless" man or lapsed civil subject, Antonio's occurs when the state's structures of supervision break down (i.e., when

Prospero neglects "worldly ends"). Moreover, Antonio remains a potential "site of disruption" even after Prospero has brought him back under his control. In the final scene, Antonio is the only character who refuses to participate in the general atmosphere of reconciliation. Many critics have noted Antonio's ominous silence here, as well as the grudging, incomplete quality of Prospero's "forgiveness." Perhaps Shakespeare is dramatizing the difficulty of exacting justice upon a once-beloved relative; in confronting the brother who betrayed him, Prospero seems understandably torn between retaliatory impulses and more merciful ones. Yet Prospero would also be in danger of self-contradiction by punishing Antonio more severely: if one mark of a "good nature" is to feel strong family bonds, Prospero would risk appearing "unnatural" were he to send Antonio to the executioner's block. Because Antonio's evil is conceived as an innate quality, or something close to it, he cannot be redeemed via repentance in the final scene; because Antonio is Prospero's once-beloved brother, his evil cannot be banished decisively by a retributive justice. The threat posed by Antonio is contained but not dissolved; as in Brown's analysis, the very terms Prospero uses to produce Antonio as "other" help to insure that he will remain a "site of disruption" in need of continued surveillance and control.

**Caliban**

Prospero invests Caliban with much the same qualities as Antonio. Caliban, we hear early on, will not take the "print of goodness"; his "vile race / . . . had that in't which good natures / Could not abide to be with" (I.ii.354, 360-62; most editors give Miranda these lines, but she is clearly speaking the views of her father). Or, as Prospero puts it later, Caliban is "a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (IV.i.188-89). Yet, while the play clearly endorses Prospero's construction of Antonio as threatening "other," it is by no means clear that it endorses Caliban as such. The play's early scenes, particularly in performance, work especially to Caliban's advantage. While we are at first led to see Prospero as a wonder-working and benevolent "god of power," his displays of bad temper, to Miranda and Ariel as well as to Caliban, raise doubts in subsequent scenes (I.ii.78, 87-88, 106; I.ii.246-98) and his censure of Caliban must be viewed in this light. In addition, Caliban has a child-like exuberance that is likely to soften our judgment of him, and his response to Prospero's reminder of his rape attempt is disarming: "O ho, O ho! would't had been done! / Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else / This

isle with Calibans" (I.ii.351-53). Caliban manages to make even Prospero's defense of Miranda's chastity sound sanctimonious.

More importantly, Prospero's enslavement of Caliban is undermined by his precarious claim to legitimate rule of the island. Caliban's speeches encourage the audience to sympathize with his suffering, and also make it apparent that the history of Prospero and Caliban reverses that of Prospero and Antonio in at least one important respect. To Caliban, Prospero is the usurper: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou tak'st from me . . . / I am all the subjects that you have, / Which first was mine own King" (I.ii.333-34, 343-44). Prospero makes no direct response to Caliban's accusation. His implicit claim to the island rests on Caliban's degenerate nature. In a sense, Prospero plays Bolingbroke to Caliban's Richard II: Caliban can claim the title of King of the island by inheritance; Prospero's claim rests solely on superior virtue and fitness for rule. Here, Prospero undercuts the basis of his own title, inconsistently assuming the position of Antonio, who argued that Prospero's withdrawal from office showed him to be "incapable" of rule and justified his takeover. Caliban's claim to legitimacy is at least as powerful as Prospero's own.[8]

The scene, then, draws us to criticize Prospero's actions: we also are led to criticize Prospero's assessment of Caliban's character. As many critics have pointed out, descriptions of Caliban in the text are varied and suggest that indeterminacy is an essential feature of his character. He crosses several boundaries: half-human, half-devil, or perhaps half-human, half-fish; abnormal mentally and physically; savage, "strange beast," and "moon-calf." As "wild man," he is also a composite, possessing qualities of the "noble savage" as well as the monster. He is capable of learning language, of forming warm attachments; he is sensitive to beauty and music; he speaks—like the aristocratic characters—in the rhythms of verse, in contrast to the prose of Stephano and Trinculo; he can follow a plan and reason; yet he is also physically deformed, "vile," credulous, and capable of rape and brutality.[9]

The audience's response to Caliban is likely to have a similarly composite character. Caliban's credulousness in the scenes with Stephano and Trinculo, for example, evokes both sympathy and derision. We are invited to laugh at Caliban for his conversion to Stephano and his drunkenness, and yet as the mean-spiritness of Stephano and Trinculo becomes more evident, Caliban's superiority becomes so as well. Moreover, in first encountering the spirits of the island, Gonzalo has raised the possibility that those who

appear monstrous may in fact possess civilized traits: though the "islanders" are "of monstrous shape" he urges the King's party to note that "Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of / Our human generation" (III.iii.29, 31-33). Prospero, overlooking the scene, comments "Honest lord, / Thou hast said well; for some of you there present / Are worse than devils" (lines 34-36). Prospero himself, then, implicitly ranks the evil of Antonio below that of Caliban, and in the final scene, he softens his earlier characterization of Caliban: Caliban is a "demi-devil" rather than a "devil" (V.i.272).

The audience must also reckon with Caliban's final conversion. At the end of the play, Caliban's reaction to the sight of Prospero in his duke's robes and to the other Milanese provokes a response that echoes Miranda's vision of a "brave new world": "O Setebos, these be brave spirits indeed! / How fine my master is!" (V.i.261-62). When Prospero directs Caliban to his cell, saying "as you look / To have my pardon, trim it handsomely" (V.i.292-93). Caliban responds dutifully:

> Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter,
> And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass
> Was I, to take this drunkard for a god,
> And worship this dull fool!
>
> (V.i.294-97)

While perhaps not a full conversion—Caliban seems more motivated by his dislike of appearing ridiculous than by remorse—his change of heart largely undermines Prospero's statement that "nurture can never stick" upon the "born devil." At the very least, it suggests that Prospero has applied the wrong strategies in his dealings with Caliban. Neither "humane education" nor punishment and enslavement have produced virtue in him; rather, his transformation is the product of events largely outside Prospero's control.

Brown passes over Caliban's conversion, which does not fit with his claim that the "other" must remain a continual "site of disruption." He uses this moment to argue that Caliban's function in the final act is to insure aristocratic class solidarity, and focuses instead on the laughter that accompanies Caliban's entrance:

> *Seb.* Ha, ha!
> What things are these, my lord Antonio?
> Will money buy 'em?

> *Ant.* Very like; one of them
> Is a plain fish, and no doubt, marketable.
>
> (V.i.263-66)

The moment, however, is more complex. We are probably drawn to laugh at Caliban—but uneasily. These remarks recall the cynical, sneering humor Sebastian and Antonio have displayed in earlier scenes, reaffirming their sinister character and setting them apart from the "good" aristocrats. The remarks also link Sebastian and Antonio with the language and exploitive attitudes of Trinculo and Stephano. Indeed, the general tendency of the final scene is to use this division within the aristocracy to produce a solidarity that cuts across class lines. Caliban, along with Stephano, Trinculo, and the blasphemous Boatswain, all take their place in a restored political order to which only Antonio refuses to be reconciled, an order confirmed primarily by disclosing the threat, not of masterlessness or savagism, but of aristocratic overreaching.

What then can we conclude about the play's relation to colonial discourse? As Brown says, a "sustained historical and theoretical analysis of the play's involvement in the colonialist project has yet to be undertaken."[10] Such an analysis will need to take into account the fact that Caliban is not, to the audience, an embodiment of threat. Instead, Caliban is by turns sympathetic and ridiculous; the play's racism inheres most clearly in its linking of Caliban's "vile race" to a "nature" that is conceived of as comically grotesque rather than demonic.[11] Ultimately, the play trivializes Caliban's plight. Caliban's conversion insures that the moral and logical problems attendant upon Prospero's seizure of the island are simply forgotten as the play shifts focus and celebrates the regeneration of the Milanese political order. Yet we may find ourselves wondering about Caliban's fate. What good can come to him if Prospero leaves him to his island, now that he has become a "servant-monster," a creature of civilization? What good can come to him if they take him to Milan? The play in its final moments focuses briefly on Ariel's coming freedom, which we know Ariel will enjoy; it is eloquent in its silence about Caliban.

An analysis of the play's involvement in the colonial project will also need to consider the role of the far more sinister figure of Antonio. Shakespeare fashions Antonio out of his culture's anxieties about factious and rebellious aristocrats, about the exclusion of younger brothers from power by primogeniture, and about aggression unmodulated by a sense of familial or communal bonds. He locates the origin of Prospero's colonial project in a

crisis that besets the political order of the "core," that is, in the failure of that order to contain the threats embodied by Antonio. As Prospero moves toward greater mastery of self and "others" (and toward the successful containment of these threats) he is forced by the emergency nature of his situation to use the "peripheral" space provided by the island—despite its risks, its moral dangers, its subversive magic. When the emergency is over, he must give the island up.

## NOTES

[1]Paul Brown, " 'This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine': *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism," in *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 48-71.

[2]In this regard, *Tempest* criticism has gone from one extreme to another—that is, from considering colonialism to be a non-issue to considering it to be the only issue. Geoffrey Bullough sums up the attitude of an earlier generation when, in his essay on the sources of this play, he states that "*The Tempest* is not a play about colonization." See *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), 8:241. Bullough, it should be noted, goes on to express some reservations about this claim.

[3]Brown, p. 48.

[4]Other recent treatments of this question include Francis Barker and Peter Hulme, "Nymphs and reapers heavily vanish: the discursive con-texts of *The Tempest*," in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. John Drakakis (London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 191-205; Walter Cohen, *Drama of a Nation: Public Theater in Renaissance England and Spain* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 398-404; and Stephen Orgel, "Shakespeare and the Cannibals," in *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*, ed. Marjorie Garber, Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1985, n.s., no. 11 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 40-66. Though these critics take different approaches, all three assume, as I do, that Shakespeare in *The Tempest* is more self-consciously critical of the colonial enterprise than Brown represents him to be. Stephen Orgel also explores the interesting possibility that Europeans could view the New World natives not only as "other" but also as reflections of themselves and their ancestors. For earlier treatments of *The Tempest* and colonialist writings, see Charles Frey, "*The Tempest* and the New World," *SQ* 30 (1979): 29-41; Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century," in *First Images of America: The Impact of the New World on the Old*, 2 vols., ed. Fredi Chiappelli, et al. (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1976), 2:561-80; and Peter Hulme, "Hurricans in the Caribbees: the Constitution of the Discourse of English Colonialism," in *1642: Literature and Power*

*in the Seventeenth Century: Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature, July 1980,* ed. Francis Barker, et al. (Colchester: Univ. of Essex, 1981), pp. 55-83. Since this essay was written, several other studies that deal with *The Tempest*'s relation to colonialism have appeared, including Stephen Orgel's introduction to the Oxford edition of *The Tempest* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987); Thomas Cartelli, "Prospero in Africa: *The Tempest* as colonialist text and pretext" in *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology*, ed. Jean E. Howard, et al. (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 99-115; and Stephen Greenblatt, "Martial Law in the Land of Cockaigne" in *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1988), pp. 129-63.

[5]Brown, pp. 51-52.

[6]To avoid confusion I will use the terminology of colonialism only when I am referring to the "colonialism of the periphery."

[7]All quotations of the play are from the Arden edition of *The Tempest*, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Methuen, 1964).

[8]Stephen Orgel also discusses this point in "Shakespeare and the Cannibals," arguing that "Caliban does constitute a significant counterclaim to Prospero's authority" (p. 54). See also his comments in "Prospero's Wife," in *Representations* 8 (Fall 1984): 1-13 (esp. 7-9).

[9]On Caliban's composite character, see Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Learning to Curse." Greenblatt shows how Caliban's character is shaped by seemingly opposed attitudes toward native speech in New World writings. On Caliban and the "wild man," see Hayden White, "The Forms of Wildness: Archaeology of an Idea," in *The Wild Man Within; an Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism*, ed. Edward Dudley and Maximillian Novak (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Univ. Press, 1972), pp. 3-38; on Caliban's antecedents, see Richard Bernheimer, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages: A Study in Art, Sentiment and Demonology* (1952; rpt. New York: Octagon Press, 1970); on Caliban and pastoral, see Frank Kermode's introduction to the Arden edition of *The Tempest*. For a review of different ways Caliban has been imagined in performance, see Virginia M. Vaughan, "Something Rich and Strange': Caliban's Theatrical Metamorphoses" in *SQ* 36 (Spring 1985): 390-405.

[10]Brown, p. 48.

[11]Caliban, we should note, is still produced as "other"—but not in accordance with Brown's pattern, the pattern that he insists is the characteristic mechanism of colonial discourse. By the play's end, Caliban is neither a threat nor a continuing "site of disruption." But why should colonial discourse always speak the same way, according to the same set of rules? Brown adapts his pattern from Edward Said and others, who are analyzing the colonial discourse of a later period, a discourse which also focuses on a different culture. Why should this analysis necessarily apply to *The Tempest*, a text written at a time when the colonizing of the New World was still in its early stages, before its structures were fully in place? Brown's representation of otherness in colonialist discourse seems one-dimensional and, at times, ahistorical.

To be sure, Brown does, at the beginning of his essay, acknowledge the presence in colonialist writings of the "reformable" native as well as the irreducibly savage. But this discussion gives way quickly to his preoccupation with a "colonialist stereotype" that typically produces "a disruptive other in order to assert the superiority of the coloniser," who by definition is always

provoking the colonizer to further efforts at control (p. 58). Brown does not explain the relation of the "reformable" native to this stereotype. Both the reformable native and the irreformable "born devil" confirm the civilized and godly character of the colonialist, as Brown points out (p. 49); but the former, once converted, no longer is likely to function as a "site of disruption."