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Carefully Constructed Pictures of Nobodies: Shakespeare's and Cesaire's Ariels

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CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED PICTURES OF NOBODIES: SHAKESPEARE'S
AND CÉSAIRE'S ARIELS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
English

by
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Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

Critical scholarship of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Aimé Césaire's adaptation *Une Tempête* frequently neglects to examine Ariel's place within colonialist discourse. Ariel's ambiguity in both texts undoubtedly contributes to this unjust marginalization. An understanding of the function of Ariel within the texts is critical in understanding the placement of both plays in colonialist discourse. This thesis proposes a reading of the Ariels that reestablishes their place within the dialogue.

Shakespeare's Ariel problematizes views of the colonized as content to live under the domination of the colonizer. Using subversive tactics—principally his invisibility—Ariel disguises himself as unimportant and attains his freedom. Caliban, on the other hand, spends much of the text resisting Prospero's authority, but ultimately convinces himself of the wisdom of his own servitude.

In moving from Shakespeare to Césaire, it is necessary to examine the place of other discourses in the creation of Césaire's adaptation. Just as his mulatto Ariel represents the physical interconnectedness of races, Césaire's negritude represents the intermingling of black liberation discourses. Césaire's Ariel complicates the idea of an embracement of negritude as the best method by which to gain freedom. Although Césaire's portrayal of Caliban illustrates his dissatisfaction with Shakespeare's portrayal of the colonized, Césaire's portrayal of Ariel highlights the implications inherent in the original text. My reading of Ariel ultimately suggests that he, by virtue of his ambiguity, is similar to *The Tempest*—open to any number of readings.

DEDICATION

To Mom and Dad.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In their *Case Study in Critical Controversy: The Tempest*, editors Gerald Graff and James Phelan question “whether Césaire’s *A Tempest* represents a reversal of the play’s original intention or simply draws out implications that are latent, but not fully developed in the original” (204). My thesis argues that *Une Tempête*’s (1969) adaptation of Ariel highlights the implications surrounding his place in *The Tempest*’s (1611) colonialist discourse. It is easier to place Césaire’s Ariel than Shakespeare’s within this discourse because of his candid statements to his fellow slave; however, a close reading of Shakespeare’s Ariel illustrates that he, too, is not a passive bystander in the dialogue. My argument about Ariel ultimately asserts that in his ambiguity he leaves Shakespeare’s text open to interpretation. While Shakespeare’s Ariel articulates Shakespeare’s latent discomfort with his play’s overall comments on and propagation of colonialism,¹ Césaire’s Ariel illustrates Césaire’s own discomfort with Caliban as the sole voice of the colonized.

Despite his opposition to Prospero, Shakespeare’s Caliban fails in disrupting views of the colonized. In the guise of a “postcolonialist professor,” Graff and Phelan use Caliban’s accusation that Prospero “by his cunning hath/ Cheated me of the island” (3.2.43-4) to assert Shakespeare’s unease with the colonialist dialogue. For Graff and Phelan, Caliban’s statement indicates,

¹ I will use Meredith Anne Skura’s definition for colonialism as “the Europeans’ exploitative and self-justifying treatment of the New World and its inhabitants” (290).

that Shakespeare, despite having Caliban accept his punishment at the end of the play, finds some legitimacy in Caliban's defiance of Prospero. As Greenblatt puts it, Caliban's claim against Prospero—in which he 'bitterly challenges the European's right to sovereignty'— 'is not upheld in *The Tempest*, but neither is it simply dismissed' (p.114). Similarly, it is this undercurrent in the play to which Aimé Césaire is responding when he rewrites *The Tempest* as *A Tempest* and shows Caliban successfully rebelling against Prospero (p. 246). (93)

There is a distinct alignment between Shakespeare's and Césaire's Calibans, but it is important to note that neither achieves freedom within the text. In addition, the ending Césaire assigns Caliban is a reversal of Shakespeare. While Shakespeare's character eventually seeks grace, Césaire's Caliban promises to fight until the end. If we leave Ariel out of the equation, Shakespeare's *Tempest* seems to make the point that the colonized should come to accept the rule of the colonizer.

Criticism of *The Tempest* has artificially constructed the centrality of Caliban, and for many, he has become the symbol of New World resistance to British expansion. Meredith Anne Skura, however, maintains, "any attempt to cast Prospero and Caliban as actors in the typical colonial narrative...is complicated by two other characters, Sycorax and Ariel" (297). Because of Ariel's unclear history it is impossible to tell when he arrived on the island; therefore, Sycorax is possibly the first colonizer. Just as Prospero dismisses Caliban's claim to the island because he is "the other," Caliban similarly dismisses Ariel's claim. In asserting ownership through his mother's power, Caliban can

neglect those she overpowered in her conquest. My reading of Ariel argues that he also complicates Prospero and Caliban's "typical colonial narrative" by submitting verbally while privately working for his freedom.

Critics place *The Tempest* amid an "ambivalent" colonialist discourse with distinct historical and geographical markings. Paul Brown's "This Thing of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine" examines *The Tempest* as "not simply a reflection of colonialist practices but an intervention in an ambivalent and even contradictory discourse" (205). Brown expands on the idea of *The Tempest* as commentary and places it in conversation with real-life events, using such chronological markings as John Rolfe's 1614 proposal for² and marriage to Pocahontas. Brown also sets a limit on the colonialist discourse geographically, confining *The Tempest* to a discussion involving "the English-Welsh mainland," Ireland, and the New World (209). Césaire in his *Discourse on Colonialism* widens the parameters of this geographic confinement to encapsulate all colonized peoples, including the "Arabs of Algeria, the 'coolies' of India, and the 'niggers' of Africa" (36). However, as with *The Tempest*, criticism of *Une Tempête*'s Caliban remains the focus of critical discussion. By highlighting Ariel's place in the dialogue, my goal is to illustrate the ambivalence of the statement that *The Tempest* makes in the ongoing ambivalent discourse.

Recent scholarship of *The Tempest* concentrates predominately on the colonialist implications of the master-slave relationship and less on the connection between the

² Rolfe wrote a letter to the Governor in which he sought his blessing to marry Pocahontas. He explained that he sought the marriage "for the glory of God, for my own salvation, and for the converting to the true knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, an unbelieving creature, namely Pokahuntas" (as qtd in Brown 206). Prospero, too, makes the claim that his own actions—the assumption of the isle and imprisonment of Caliban—originate from a desire of the greater good.

slaves. While some critics do recognize the similarity of Caliban's and Ariel's conditions, the two are just as often represented in diametric opposition to one another—as if Ariel does not represent the colonized as well. The study of the master-slave relationship generally takes as its subject Prospero and Caliban and frequently neglects Ariel's position as a member of the slave class. In a world divided heavily along racial and class lines, Ariel's presence disrupts the assumed order. Belonging neither to the master's race, nor to that of Caliban's, Ariel is arguably the most problematic figure in *The Tempest*.

In discussing Shakespeare's Caliban, critics Bryan Reynolds and Ayanna Thompson assert that he is featured more in scholarship because he has “so many determined aspects,” in contrast to Ariel who exists as an ambiguous figure in the text (191). Rather than make sense of his ambiguity, it is easier to dismiss Ariel's presence as Trinculo's “picture of nobody” (3.2.127). However, far from having a lack of personality, Ariel has too many personalities. This multiplicity results in the ambiguity characteristic of his nature. As a spirit, Ariel is literally as well as figuratively difficult to fit into a single mold. A reading of Ariel's ambiguity, however, is essential in that it illustrates Shakespeare's unease with Prospero's colonialism. Caliban is unsuited to illustrate this point because he is either fully one way or another, whereas Ariel embodies conflicting identities at once. In addition, despite spending much of the play resisting Prospero's commands, Caliban ultimately ends by asking Prospero's forgiveness for his resistance and cursing himself for worshipping Stephano (5.1.295-8).

Ariel, on the other hand, never mentions any god and certainly does not take Stephano or even Prospero for one. Stephen Greenblatt argues the place of atheism within colonialist discourse, noting: “No one who actually loved and feared God would allow himself to rebel against an anointed ruler” (25). One could certainly make a case for Ariel’s atheism in that he shows no reverence for Prospero’s gods or Caliban’s Setebos. Although Ariel does not rebel against Prospero’s authority, he does not submit to him through a love or fear of God. As Prospero’s helper and the mechanism by which Prospero carries through many of his plots, he recognizes not only that Prospero is not a god but also that one does not aid him. No earthly or heavenly god created the tempest but instead Ariel himself. For Ariel, the fear of Prospero is enough. Ariel expresses behavior contradictory to images of the colonized in rejecting as god the colonizer and refusing to believe in the colonizer’s god-given aid. Nevertheless, Ariel is often dismissed because of his apparent willingness to comply with his master’s wishes.

Despite sharing a common condition as Prospero’s servants, his more convivial relationship with their master as well as Ariel’s own actions place him in opposition to Caliban. Prospero’s words about Antonio might be used to portray the relationship of the two servants: “mark his condition, and th’ event, then tell me if this might be a brother” (1.2.116-7). Ariel’s behavior is indeed quite unlike that of a brother. Not only is he the vehicle of Prospero’s machinations, but also of his own accord he refuses to enter into dialogue with Caliban and reveals Caliban’s plot to Prospero. Shakespeare’s ending maintains a status quo in which social lines—even between servants—remain uncrossed.

Chapter two of this thesis examines Shakespearean Ariel's role in the colonialist discourse. I argue that he uses his ambiguity and invisibility to overthrow Prospero's domination of him. As a spirit and shape shifter donning disguises per Prospero's will, Ariel becomes androgynous—further solidifying images of ambiguity. I also examine closely the relationship between Ariel and his master, paying particular attention to Ariel's role in upholding the god-like authority that Prospero assumes. Although Ariel aids in maintaining colonialist thinking, he does not fall victim to it himself. Ariel alternates between a professed willingness to be the right hand of Prospero and a Caliban-like persistence in requesting his freedom. In his unwavering desire for freedom, Ariel provides colonialist discourse with a critical alternative to Caliban's submission.

That Shakespeare is uncomfortable with the interaction between Prospero and Caliban is shown in Ariel's success with his subterranean tactics. Prospero is a master of controlling verbal exchanges, and act 1 scene 2 illustrates the necessity of Ariel creating an alternate approach to obtaining his freedom from Prospero. Many of the scenes in which Ariel appears—(2.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, and 5.1)—depict his single-minded obsession with that goal. His power primarily lies in his ability to dismiss himself as a threat, and he does so through invisibility. Although Césaire's Ariel is more forthright in his resistance to Prospero, neither Ariel places himself in direct opposition to Prospero's will.

Before entering into a discussion of Césaire's colonialist commentary, chapter three examines the discourses—negritude, Black Power and the Harlem Renaissance—that contributed to that commentary. I discuss the blending of these discourses in Césaire. In examining the changes Césaire makes in his adaptation of Ariel, I also

examine the climate in which Césaire coins the term “negritude,” a word that encompasses the idea of black pride and the movement from which *Une Tempête* arose. In addition, I examine the context in which Césaire wrote his text, a play that like negritude is influenced heavily by the thinking and works of his American brethren. I also examine Césaire’s theatrical device that allows each member of the cast—with the exceptions of the tempest and the captain—to choose their own character or persona. From this arbitrary assignment of personhood emerges a cast strictly bound by ideas of the social stratum.

Chapter four discusses how in retelling *The Tempest* in his *Une Tempête*, Aimé Césaire rewrites the character of Ariel, removes the distinction between him and Caliban as servants, and foregrounds their common bond. Caliban remains unapologetic about his quest for freedom, and Ariel—despite a difference in principles—is sympathetic and understanding of his brother’s plight. By writing *The Tempest* from the position of the colonized, Césaire emphasizes the importance of giving voice to the voiceless, thus allowing the colonized the opportunity to speak for themselves—and to each other. Césaire’s Caliban will not express Shakespeare’s Caliban’s words of repentance or request for pardon, but instead assures Prospero that his presence is not wanted or needed for his own survival. Similarly, Césaire’s Ariel ponders freedom embodied in a tree while sober and when intoxicated assures the audience that independence is paramount to his happiness. While the Shakespearean Ariel deliberately suppresses his voice, Césaire’s Ariel gives expression to his displeasure, but must work hard to distinguish himself from Caliban’s voice of discontent. In examining Césaire’s Ariel, my goal is to

illustrate the multiplicity of his being and reveal the voice often unheard by critics who, in not recognizing his presence, marginalize and preclude him from having any controlling interest in the power dynamic. In allowing the voice of Ariel to speak, I intend to show that his voice is just as powerful and important as those of his louder counterparts.

In my focus on Ariel's role in Césaire, I examine the relationship between Caliban and Ariel and the necessity of both their approaches in combating colonialist thought. Missing the obsequiousness that brands his Shakespearean counterpart Caliban's enemy, Césaire's Ariel refers to himself as Caliban's "brother"—a word that works on two levels, branding Ariel as both a fellow slave and man. Césaire's text calls for Ariel's portrayal as a "mulatto slave." Despite this absence of a specified gender, Ariel's portrayal throughout the text is distinctly masculine, with references to his ideological affinity to Martin Luther King, Jr., his setup as a foil for Caliban, and his possible manifestation of the hyper-masculine character of the demon-god Eshu. With his desire for universal brotherhood, Ariel is as radical as Caliban in the face of Prospero's ideology.

In Césaire's reorganization of the structure of *The Tempest*, Prospero is now the villain, Caliban the hero of the tale, and Ariel once again marginalized. Ariel does have a position in colonialist discourse, but that position also includes an awareness of his "brother." Although Césaire's Ariel is frequently passed over for Caliban's militant figure—and is often absent when he is present—he is in fact a distinctly revolutionary

character that, unlike his Shakespearean counterpart, is professedly concerned with the well-being of all.

In demonstrating the contribution that Ariel makes to colonialist discourse, Césaire shows the solidarity of the colonized and illustrates the power that lies in subversive language. Césaire's Ariel's subversive language is his new invisibility. In his understanding of the power of language, Prospero fails to understand that there is as much power in *how* language is expressed as in the language itself. Even as Césaire's Prospero listens to Ariel's speech, he misses the cues depicting Ariel's resistance to his authority. Only in his brief uncontained joy does Ariel provide Prospero with an "unsettling agenda" (59). Both Ariel and Caliban are necessary in Césaire's discourse on colonialism, and though he favors Caliban's point of view in his own *Discourse* (1955), *Une Tempête* shows that he understands Ariel's pacifist approach is just as necessary as Caliban's militant stance.³

In concluding, I will discuss the significance of the title of Césaire's play and the importance of its remaining in dialogue with the primary text and not attempting to supplant it as the only possible version of the tale. Césaire in essence does not close off the possibility of postcolonial interpretations for future generations, but, on the contrary, illustrates that one construction—particularly one as problematic in terms of its arbitrary demonization of the colonized—can no longer be tolerated. Like *The Tempest* itself, Ariel remains open to interpretation.

³ Although Shakespeare does not highlight the common position of Ariel and Caliban as the colonized, his recognition that such a connection exists is indicated by the indirect comparison of their positions with Ferdinand's. Ferdinand is distinctly a servant as opposed to slave because his condition is temporary, and perhaps more importantly, he has the ability to marry within his master's family.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PICTURE OF NOBODY: SHAKESPEARE'S ARIEL

Recent discussions of *The Tempest* primarily focus on its inherent imperialist thought and foreground the struggle between Prospero and Caliban.⁴ While previous critiques of *The Tempest* firmly grounded Prospero as the hero and Caliban as the villainous other,⁵ postcolonial criticism demonizes Prospero and casts Caliban as the voice of the colonized. Both groups, however, often marginalize the importance of Ariel as a central figure in the tale. Critic Maurice Hunt, for example, makes Ariel's phrase "still-vex'd Bermoothes" (1.2.229-30) the essence of his argument. He explains that the phrase exemplifies the oxymora of *The Tempest* and is symbolic of the play itself (299). He neglects to examine, however, the figure of Ariel or the importance of his uttering the phrase. In this chapter, I would like to do a reading of Ariel that suggests he is not the passive figure in the discourse on colonialism that critics and his own fellow characters depict. Instead, Ariel functions to problematize the play's overall propagation of colonialism.

⁴ See for example Francis Barker and Peter Hulme's "Nymphs and Reapers Heavily Vanish: The Discursive Con-texts of *The Tempest*." Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest: A Case Study in Critical Controversy*. Ed. Gerald Graff and James Phelan. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000. 229-243, Paul Brown's "This of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine": *The Tempest* and the Discourse on Colonialism" 205-229 of the same text, and Meredith Anne Skura's "Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*" 286-324. Skura's article is especially interesting because she does a reading of the body of recent scholarship on colonialist discourse within *The Tempest*. According to Skura "revisionists"—such as Brown, Barker, and Hulme—have highlighted the fact that *The Tempest* is "a political act" (290). In addition, there is a greater emphasis on power. However, for Skura, *The Tempest*'s discourse on colonialism is one that interacts with other discourses, and in chapter 2 of this thesis, I will explore how Césaire's adaptation interacts with other discourses as well.

⁵ According to Frank Kermode for example, "Caliban is basically the *homo salvaticus*, the savage man, of tradition," "the wild man by whom civility is estimated" (Kermode 176, 178).

No doubt the fact that Ariel speaks less in comparison to other characters contributes to his invisibility within the play and within critical scholarship. Linguistically, Prospero and Caliban—particularly Prospero—dominate the less outspoken Ariel. According to Alden T. and Virginia Mason Vaughan, “The exact proportions [of dialogue], meticulously measured by Marvin Spevack, are Prospero 29.309%, Caliban 8.393%, Stephano 8.137% and Ariel 7.888%; each of the other characters has less than 7.5% of the text’s words” (7). Prospero illustrates his understanding that “‘language is the perfect instrument of empire’” (Antonio de Nebrija as qtd in Barker and Hulme 236) in his domination of the textual discourse.

In act 1, scene 2 Shakespeare illustrates Prospero’s verbal overpowering of Ariel by significantly reducing his lines in comparison with Prospero’s. Ariel begs for his freedom, with his lines becoming shorter as he replies to Prospero’s familiar questions. Ariel still wants his immediate freedom, but Prospero’s diatribe about his ungratefulness silences him and illustrates that a direct attack is not the best method by which to gain his objective. That these short responses should not be dismissed as typical of Ariel is seen in the flood of language that Ariel delivers at his entrance into the scene at line 189 where in answer to Prospero’s question of “Hast thou, spirit, / Performed to point the tempest that I bade thee?” (193), Ariel spends twelve lines going into detail about exactly how well he accomplished his master’s mission. However, in reminding Prospero about his promise, he finds his ability to express his desire for freedom stifled by Prospero’s mastery of language, so that from line 250 where Prospero asks, “Dost thou forget/ From what a torment I did free thee?” until Ariel’s brief exit from the scene at line 303, he speaks a

total of twelve lines. In allowing himself to be dominated verbally, Ariel is outmatched figuratively as well as literally by Prospero's language.⁶ Ariel understands that, because Prospero is the master of language, engaging him in dialogue is the least effective method by which to ensure his release.

The unfortunate result of Prospero's linguistic mastery is a complete surrender to the will of the master, and despite the fact that Ariel may still want his immediate freedom, he finds himself asking forgiveness for his "transgression": "Pardon master/I will be correspondent to command/ And do my spiriting gently" (296-8). Essentially, he not only concedes to accept Prospero's further extension of his promise of freedom, but he also agrees to no longer question or place himself in opposition to Prospero's will. However, Prospero's insistence that he has to "once in a month recount what thou hast been" (262), illustrates that he has not only long delayed Ariel's freedom, but that Ariel has showed obstinacy in continuing to beg for that freedom despite many conversations similar to this one. Prospero's threat of violence to Ariel is perhaps the only slight alteration to an old theme. Prospero's "If thou more murmur'st, I will rend an oak/ And peg thee in his knotty entrails till/ Thou hast howl'd away twelve winters" (293-5) is a clever reminder of his ability to master Ariel physically if his language fails to do so.

Although Stephano and Trinculo say little as well, 8.137% and less than 7.5%, respectively, their place within colonialist discourse is easily identifiable. Their

⁶ While Ariel capitulates to Prospero's demands before he voices his threat to house Ariel in another tree, Caliban (in 1.2.330-41) bursts into a flood of language using fifteen lines to express his defiance *after* Prospero's promise to torment him tonight, illustrating the necessity of physical power—if only implied—to sustain verbal domination.

assumptions, though comic,⁷ are a reflection of the earnest statements that Prospero and Gonzalo make on colonialism. They individually seize on the possibility that “this monster [would] make a man” (2.2.30)—referring to Caliban’s potential to make them wealthy and hinting at his potential to incorporate their notions of civilization. Despite Shakespeare’s being economical in the frequency of their remarks, even within their comic delivery, he gives substance to their statements when they explicitly state the implications of the text.

It is Trinculo, in fact, who comes closest to an explanation for the figure of Ariel when he remarks in wonder about the music, “This is the tune of our catch, play’d by the picture of Nobody” (3.2.126-7), and such a comment epitomizes the marginalized place that Ariel occupies within the play. In his invisibility, Ariel literally has no body, and because of this corporeal condition, critics and characters use such a depiction to describe his personality as well.⁸ He is someone who is nobody—of no significance. It is important to note, however, that Ariel is the *picture* of nobody and that the image of his unimportance is merely another façade.

Despite Ariel’s position as an agent for Prospero’s plots, he still manages to exercise his own agency within the play. While all of his actions appear designed to gain Prospero’s approbation, Ariel’s words at times display dissatisfaction with Prospero as his master. Although the methods by which Ariel attains his freedom are more subtle

⁷ Instead of comic, H.R. Coursen asserts that, “Shakespeare exposes colonialism at its worst in Trinculo and Stephano’s exploitative and imperialist assumptions” (121).

⁸ In terms of critical views of Ariel, Coursen asserts, “he has no identity that we would understand apart from his manifestation as Prospero’s agent” except in encouraging Prospero to forgive his transgressors (115). Octave Mannoni explains the colonialist dismissal of Ariel, Miranda, and Daniel Defoe’s Friday, asking, “what sorts of personalities” they have, concluding “None at all, so long as they remain submissive” (108). I argue that Ariel is submissive in form, but not in fact.

than Caliban's aggressive resistance, he, too, resists Prospero's ownership. Ariel works from within Prospero's colonialist system to undermine that system's domination of him. Shakespeare illustrates Ariel's wisdom in applying subversive tactics, when in spite of the fierce combativeness that Caliban employs for much of the play, his eventual surrender ultimately renders him powerless. By contrast, Ariel—by never placing his power in direct opposition to his master—effects his own release and regains self-control. The dichotomy between Ariel's words and deeds exemplifies the principal ruse by which Ariel retains a place within the power dynamic of *The Tempest*. As Prospero and Caliban lock in a battle for supremacy, Ariel resides outside the line of direct attack. As long as the two remain in competition with one another, neither is a permanent threat to Ariel's objectives. Just as his physical invisibility allows him to gain ascendancy over his adversaries, Ariel's figurative ability to absent himself affords him a similar power.

Without a permanent distinguishable form, the character of Ariel escapes definite labeling—his nature remains difficult to explain because of the transience of his being. The figure of Ariel is problematic because his nature is host to so many contradictions. Although capable of tormenting Caliban per Prospero's wishes, Ariel's being also encompasses a gentle nature that plays many of the islands "sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not" (3.2.136). In addition, Ariel's creation and execution of the tempest incorporate both contradictory elements—of physical power and gentleness—at once. While it creates such forceful winds that "all but mariners/ Plung'd in the foaming brine, and quit the vessel" (1.2.210-1), "not a hair perish'd;/ On their sustaining garments not a blemish,/ But fresher than before" (1.2.217-9). Ariel's fierce power to punish

allows him to give the appearance of cruelty without applying its substance. Just as the sounds that frighten Trinculo are in fact harmless spirits, the tempest itself is a display of power without being a manifestation of ill will. His presentations as a sea nymph (1.2), harpy (3.3), and Ceres (4.1) ground him further in amorphous androgyny. In viewing Ariel it is easy to mistake him for an obedient servant who merely does his master's bidding because of his devotedness, but in recognizing Ariel as a representation of the play, it is possible to view him as a more complicated figure—not a nobody, but rather a carefully constructed picture of nobody.

The text, in fact, attempts to mold both servants into distinct, ill-constructed categories. In creating these categories, the play principally uses Ariel as a foil for Caliban, so that as gross and inhuman as Caliban is, Ariel must embody every quality that will elevate him above recognizable humanity.⁹ The necessary bodily functions to which Caliban must succumb do not appear necessary for Ariel. In coming to answer Prospero's call, Caliban exclaims—somewhat irrelevantly—in answer to his master's threats of nightly torments, “I must eat my dinner” (1.2.330), a corporeal consideration with which Ariel appears unconcerned. Ariel cannot embody human characteristics because that could possibly put him on a footing equal with his master's race. Ariel in his servitude fails to reach Prospero's god-like authority, as in colonialist discourse, the colonized must exist inhumanly below the colonizer or un-humanly above. Both versions of the colonized embody figures of mythic proportions and characteristics, and neither servant fits within the categories that Prospero attempts to mark out for him. Miranda

⁹ Frank Kermode allows for Ariel's “mixture,” but concludes that in his assumption of both “daemon” and “fairy”-like characteristics, he “has nothing of humanity” (143).

remarks that Caliban's education places him far above savagery, while Ariel's motives for servitude, as depicted by Caliban, give him the human motivation that tests the emotionless boundaries with which the text attempts to constrict him.

Using Ariel and Caliban, Shakespeare illustrates the necessity of the colonized in aiding the illusions of the colonizer. If Prospero's presence is that of a god on the island, then Ariel's is that of a divine angel waiting to do his bidding.¹⁰ Ariel shares a personal relationship with Prospero from which they exclude all others, and while Prospero allows and even awakens Miranda to accompany him on his visit to Caliban, he ensures she is fast asleep before calling Ariel to enter into his presence. However, the fact that Ariel unwillingly serves his master illustrates that Prospero's role on the island is an assumed one. Ariel's obedience allows Prospero to assign to himself godlike powers and mete out vengeance and grace to his transgressors. Ariel's position on the island is paramount because he allows Prospero to perpetuate his dangerous lie. Prospero uses Ariel's abilities to create an impression of an all-hearing, all-seeing god. With these abilities, he can pretend to be everywhere on the island at once, but if a god, it is important to note that Prospero is a very limited one whose influence cannot extend beyond well-defined borders. Although he aids Prospero in upholding his godhood, Ariel does not accept Prospero's lie because he is very conscious of his own position in perpetuating it. While Caliban spends much of the play voicing his unwillingness, he still takes part in Prospero's illusion. Despite the fact that Ariel appears a willing participant, he is hesitant

¹⁰ Kermode notes, "The Ebrew word Ariel signifieth the Lyon of God," but explains that Richmond Noble is "clearly right" in surmising that the name is not from the Biblical source (142).

to commit himself permanently to Prospero's schemes, preferring instead his own independence.

Prospero's interrogation of Ariel in act 1, scene 2 becomes especially problematic when viewed through the lens of Prospero's pretensions as a god figure.¹¹ His reminder of his benevolence in saving Ariel from his punishment expresses Prospero's desire for Ariel's worship, not just his gratitude. Despite or perhaps because of Ariel's close relationship with Prospero, he does not worship but instead merely serves his master. Ariel indicates his denial of worship in his continued desire for freedom. This denial of worship is important because it places Ariel as a key figure in the struggle for colonialist independence. While Ariel asks for his master's "pardon" (1.2.296), Caliban seeks for god-like "grace" (5.1.296).

That Shakespeare is uncomfortable with Caliban's imagery of Prospero as a god is indicated in Ariel's refusal to view him as such. Because of his close association, Ariel understands the extent of and limits to Prospero's powers. His understanding of his master leads Ariel to recognize that subtle resistance and surface acquiescence are his best option for freedom. The obsequiousness characterizing Ariel's first words marks a pattern of behavior that he consistently embodies until Prospero grants him his liberty. Ariel illustrates his understanding of Prospero's nature in reporting Caliban's plot, intuiting not only that Prospero would be interested, but also that he would not already know. Ariel's report illustrates that Prospero—for all his pretensions—is not omniscient.

¹¹ If Prospero cannot be a god himself, he convinces himself that one aids him. Because he cannot enact his plans of revenge until the king and his entourage pass close to the island, he looks upon such an event as divine intervention.

Unlike Caliban, who comes to accept his servitude as he finds himself unable to exact revenge, Ariel remains steadfast in his hopes for independence.

Ariel's ability to absent himself physically provides him with his most powerful weapon in his quest for freedom. His invisibility—or absence within presence—is symptomatic of his position as the picture of nobody. Ariel's invisibility to other characters is problematic because the lack of Ariel's visible presence often is taken as conclusive proof of his absence, and that absence is then extended into critical scholarship. However, Shakespeare illustrates the power of Ariel's presence even in invisibility when, despite his physical absence, he controls the scene between Caliban and his confederates. The music that Ariel plays not only forces all listeners to adjust themselves to his chosen melody, but also shows an intimate knowledge of his listeners. In playing the tune that Stephano and Trinculo sing incorrectly, Ariel shows a knowledge that appears at odds with a being whose only knowledge must issue from his master. To know the tune of the tale implies that Ariel has a previous familiarity with the song or a surprising familiarity with the men that extends beyond what they enact onstage.

In the manner of Prospero, Ariel uses what power he has to ensure that Caliban is unable to engage him in a dialogue and, in doing so, illustrates the strength of his invisibility. The only words spoken between Shakespeare's Ariel and Caliban are those spoken by the former in act 3, scene 2 in which he repeatedly tells Caliban, in lines forty-five, sixty-two, and seventy-five, "thou liest." While Prospero uses his power literally and verbally to curse Caliban, Ariel uses his power for invisibility to divert Caliban from his objective. Unable to confront his actual accuser, Caliban begins squabbling with

Trinculo and forgets momentarily that his goal is to remove Prospero from his seat of power.

To assert that Ariel's words serve as a diversionary tactic alone, however, reduces his presence on the island to that of a nobody—a tool by which Prospero carries through his plots. The alternative is that he acts in accordance with his desire for freedom and his discontent with colonialism. The audience should note that in the interchange Ariel also uses his accusations to Caliban to indicate the complexity of his own connection to the island:

CALIBAN. As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant,

A sorcerer, that by his cunning hath

Cheated me of the island.

ARIEL. Thou liest. (42-5)

In saying to Caliban “thou liest,” it is possible that Ariel is doing more than expressing the words of his master or encouraging dissension among Caliban's confederates. Caliban's statement that “I am subject to a tyrant/ A sorcerer” (42-3) cannot be the cause of Ariel's rejection of his statement because it is well established by the text that Caliban is indeed subject to Prospero's mastery, a mastery allowed Prospero primarily as the result of his ability to use sorcery as a method of control. In addition, that Ariel cannot take exception to Caliban's use of the word “tyrant” is indicated by his own earlier protestations at his treatment by Prospero. Although Ariel does not refer to Prospero as a tyrant, he implies that he views his behavior in such a light when he questions him if “there is more toil” (1.2.242) and, taking exception to Prospero's demand for further

labor, reminds him of the services he has already performed. Ariel's insistence that Caliban lies therefore is triggered by the second half of Caliban's statement to his confederates when he insists that Prospero "by his cunning hath/ Cheated me of the island" (3.2.43-4). The cunning with which Caliban accuses Prospero is reminiscent of the claim that Ariel voices in act 1, scene 2 when he charges Prospero of failing to keep his promise and forcing him to do further labors. Ariel's insistence on his own faithful service contrasts sharply with his fellow servant's unwillingness to perform his tasks, and highlights the unfair treatment that Ariel feels he is receiving at his master's hands. If such hands were ready to mistreat his obedient servant, how much more willing must they be to mistreat or cheat a slave who possesses an active dislike for him? Therefore, Ariel can only take exception to Caliban's assertion of prior ownership of the island. In essence, it is not that Ariel believes Prospero incapable of cheating Caliban but rather that he could not cheat Caliban of what he never possessed.

As if to foreshadow Ariel's later protestations of Caliban's ownership, Prospero insists in 1.2 that Ariel answer where Sycorax was born, as if to remind him that his own claim of ownership should not upset Ariel, who has endured a worse master in the form of the previous colonizer. Ariel explicitly dismisses Caliban's matrilineal inheritance of the island, just as he earlier chafes at Prospero's paternalistic claim over him. Sycorax, like Prospero, is not native to the isle, and while the text does not distinguish Ariel as a native of the island, he alone among the island's principal dwellers has others who are like himself, which implies a longstanding—if ambiguous connection to the island. Ariel's statement also foregrounds the presence of his silent co-spirits, whom the text

does not give the opportunity to speak for themselves. “Thou liest” is perhaps Ariel’s attempt to give expression for him and “all his quality.” In exclaiming to Caliban “thou liest,” he is quite possibly not claiming fairly acquired ownership for Prospero but rather asserting his own prior entitlement. Such a proposal removes Ariel from the position of nobody—one that affords him unquestioned power—and asserts his presence within the text.

To view Ariel in light of his own statements, however, does not provide an adequate picture of all “his quality,” as in his invisibility he shows little sign of self-awareness or perception. He does not share his feelings with the audience, so the audience must look elsewhere for an explanation of his behavior. H. R. Coursen maintains, “we think we see him, but we don’t” (115). Caliban makes a powerful claim that complicates Ariel’s behavior further. In speaking to Stephano, he asserts that Prospero’s power lies in his books and that if they confiscate those books, Prospero will be left powerless with “not/One spirit to command: they all do hate him as rootedly as I” (3.2.94-5). If the audience accepts the words of one who previously professes, “I do not lie” (3.2.48), then that statement confirms that Ariel serves his master faithfully not because he feels duty bound to Prospero for his rescue but because of his understanding of the consequences of angering him.¹² Ariel possibly feels the same powerful, “rooted” hatred that his fellow servant expresses for their master, but as a master of deceit, is better

¹² Vaughan and Vaughan’s conclusion that “there clearly is affection between [Ariel and Prospero]” (16) is certainly confusing in light of Prospero’s domination and threats of violence. The Vaughans appear to sum up his person based upon his own obsequious compliments (i.e. his opening “All hail, great master” [1.2.189] and his revealing of Caliban’s plot), which are offered more in fear than friendship. On the other hand, Caliban’s observation that the island’s inhabitants hate Prospero as much as he does is grounded no doubt in his own bias. Ariel’s feelings for his master might not extend to hatred, but “affection” might be equally far-fetched.

able to conceal his feelings. Fear is the only feeling that Prospero allows and even cultivates in Ariel, silencing him with threats of his wrath for attempting to engage him in dialogue.

While Prospero's actions derive from a wish for revenge, the only emotion that Ariel places into his actions are a desire for freedom. In fact, of the characters who profess their love, hatred, greed and ambition, Ariel alone avoids expressing anything but a wish for independence. In explaining to Prospero that his sympathies should be aroused in seeing his now chastened-enemies, he declares, "mine would, sir, were I human" (5.1.20). Ariel's self-professed, emotion-less state describes a being that is both greater and less than humanity. Without emotions, he cannot suffer the hatred that Caliban claims for him, but he will also never feel the love that Miranda and Ferdinand feel for one another or the passionate attachment that Caliban feels for "his" island. If one concludes that Ariel indeed is a being with no feelings, then his bid for freedom originates from a cold rational need for what is best for him.

Ariel, in fact, is single-mindedly obsessed with the quest for freedom and is particularly duplicitous when he not only aids the colonizer but also turns against his fellow servant. In doing so, he ensures his own release while also ensuring that Caliban remains enslaved. Prospero chooses to view this obsession as careful attention to his orders, and in gloating over Ariel's denouncement of his enemies, Prospero declares, "Of my instruction hast thou nothing bated/ In what thou hadst to say" (3.3.85-6). Prospero paints Ariel as content to subdue his own voice and read from his master's script. The danger of such a characterization is that it not only says that Ariel does not speak for

himself but it also implies that he has no desire to do so. As an emotion-less being, Ariel would feel no need to express the dissatisfaction of the colonized. Ariel does not appear to feel any connection to Caliban, but he certainly feels a bond with the rest of “his quality.” That Caliban is not of Ariel’s quality is well established by the text as well as it is that Sycorax’s subjection of Ariel led to his present imprisonment by Prospero. Ariel has good reason not to recognize Caliban as a brother, and although he may feel unacknowledged—or even acknowledged—hatred for Prospero’s subjection of him, it does not mean that he will feel a commonality with the child of his former master. Rather than aid Caliban in overthrowing Prospero, Ariel is the picture of single-minded obsession. Stephano and Trinculo, in act 4, scene 1, lines 196 and 211, question Caliban’s depiction of Ariel as a “harmless fairy,” and Ariel explains to his master that he “charmed their ears/ That calf-like they my lowing follow’d through/ Tooth’d brier, sharp furzes, pricking goss, and thorns (4.1.178-80). Caliban’s inaccuracy does not appear to be deliberate lies, but rather a naïve innocence that aligns him with Miranda. He honestly believes that the sounds will not injure him, but Ariel’s seductive music allows him to induce the men to travel through physical dangers. Caliban illustrates a naivety that contrasts with Prospero’s perception of him as a brutish beast, and Ariel illustrates that despite his gentle nature, he is capable of doing whatever he feels is necessary to secure his own freedom.

Ariel in his invisibility and ambiguity is not a passive figure within the text. In fact, his ambiguity and multiplicity invite audiences to revisit and rethink the play as a whole. If one character is capable of such complexity, then *The Tempest* itself is also

capable of a multitude of readings, the surfaces of which critics have only scratched. Ariel's rejection of Prospero as a permanent master and refusal to compromise with his freedom foreshadow later postcolonial thought. Ariel himself epitomizes the oxymoron that Hunt finds in his "still-vex'd Bermoothes," and a close examination of him illustrates that a play that first seemed as though it ties up all loose ends is in fact frazzled on all sides. Ariel is "still" in that his patience lulls both Prospero and Caliban into believing in his harmlessness, but his being is also "vex'd" in that he can never allow himself to rest until he first secures his freedom. Ariel is not the picture of nobody, but instead the one being that appears to embody all. Using Ariel's ambiguity, Shakespeare illustrates his own discomfort in a reduction of the New World inhabitants to Calibans—wild men who can be tamed into servitude. Ariel's character illustrates the basic desire for all to be free. In the following chapters, I discuss Aimé Césaire's creation and appropriation of *The Tempest* and Ariel and how he uses the text and character in dialogue with historical movements and the traditional literary canon. I also examine how Ariel's contradictions manifest themselves within Césaire's text and evaluate Ariel's place within the postcolonial power dynamic.

CHAPTER THREE

COMING TO CONSCIOUSNESS: FROM SHAKESPEARE TO CÉSAIRE

Intertextuality is a key term in understanding how texts relate to one another, but in examining Césaire's appropriation of *The Tempest*, it is also important to note how political and cultural movements relate to one another and to his revised text. In applying the concept of intertextuality to movements, *Une Tempête*, like Césaire's mulatto Ariel, becomes a mixture of distinct bodies, in this case an amalgam of the Harlem Renaissance, Black Power and negritude. In understanding Césaire's portrayal of Ariel, it becomes necessary to view the character in light of the discourses from which *Une Tempête* derives. Although Césaire asserted that the American movements had no influence on negritude, Ariel is undoubtedly a comprehensive product of black liberation discourse and embodies their interconnectedness.

Negritude, which Robin D. G. Kelley describes as “the first diasporic ‘black pride’ movement” (Césaire, *A Tempest* vii), accepts a previously negative term—*nègre*—and transfigures its meaning to renegotiate notions of race and encapsulate the ideas of the colonized *by* the colonized. Although Césaire is credited with the coinage of the word, he shares credit for founding the movement with Léopold Senghor and Léon-Gontran Damas. Black Power, on the other hand, was a “‘program destined to rescue Black people from destruction by the forces of a racist society which is bent upon denying them freedom, equality and dignity’” (Ogbar 62). Despite the suggestiveness of its name, in its rejection of white supremacy, it refrained from promoting black

dominance (64). As with negritude, Black Power embraced the word “black,” a term previously considered as derogatory by African Americans.

While Césaire admits knowledge of the writers of the Harlem Renaissance and the similarity between that movement and the reclamation of blackness that characterized negritude, in a 1967 interview with René Depestre, he proposed that the movements existed simultaneously, without any mutual influence. While both the Harlem Renaissance and Black Power were distinctly American movements, negritude was a Caribbean movement whose birth Césaire places in Haiti. All three embrace an ideology of acceptance of self in the face of racism, and negritude and Black Power in particular were very much political movements that emphasized race as a central concrete concept in definition and determination of self.

Far from being a passive figure in the colonialism discourse, Ariel exemplifies Langston Hughes’s vision of a world that includes him without excluding anyone else. By creating characters who through their brotherhood defy the classifications that the wider society—including other members of the colonized—might place on them, Césaire pushes his Ariel and Caliban toward a literary consciousness that recognizes the commonality of blacks regardless of origin. Césaire’s characters and the definitiveness with which they break from molds of strict Western conformity are reminiscent of “Langston Hughes and Claude McKay, two revolutionary black poets, [who] have brought us, marinated in red alcohol, the African love of life, the African joy of love, the African dream of death” (Fabre 155). Like Hughes and McKay, both Ariel and Caliban reach earnestly into the past in an effort to regain a sense of the connectedness to a lost

reality that can potentially remove them from the inferior positions they now inhabit.

Ariel, like Hughes, also idealizes the future, however. Chidi Ikonné's *Links and Bridges:*

A Comparative Study of the Writings of the New Negro and Negritude Movements

attempts to draw similarities between the American Renaissance and the Caribbean

negritude. In examining Langston Hughes in relation to poet Damas, Ikonné describes

Hughes in terms that are close to Césaire's depiction of Ariel:

Langston Hughes recognizes his present (condition or place in America) as the product of his relationship with that past. He does not hate the past; yet he looks into the future and sees himself as part of the present (America) that rejects him. Witness the sentiments expressed in 'I, Too'. Under Hughes's celebration of blackness is a yearning for assimilation into the mainstream of American society. (Ikonné 206)

Césaire's Ariel possesses a vision that, like Hughes's, is inclusive of all; he celebrates his connection to Caliban but simultaneously strives for a connection between the oppressed and the colonizer, explaining that "I'm not fighting just for *my* freedom, for *our* freedom, but for Prospero too, so that Prospero can acquire a conscience" (Césaire, *A Tempest* 22).

Rather than viewing himself through the lens of his master, as does Caliban, Ariel views himself as well as Prospero from the vantage point of an individual secure in his knowledge of his presence in the play, echoing Hughes's defining hope that he will be able to live together in harmony with his oppressors:

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America.

Hughes's goal is not to redefine America in terms of his blackness but rather to redefine America so that it will include his blackness. Similarly, Ariel's goal is to encourage Prospero to reevaluate the position he holds on the island and the position that he forces Ariel and Caliban to inhabit. Unlike Caliban, Ariel does not want to overthrow Prospero's dictatorship of the isle in order to impose his own. Rather, he alone possesses the understanding that a redefinition of the colonized hinges on the colonizer successfully redefining himself as an equal rather than as a superior. With his words, Ariel displays a consciousness of himself as well as a consciousness of his master.

Like Hughes, Ariel also recognizes his place on the island in reference to his past. He lengthily reminisces on his release from the tree in which Sycorax imprisoned him:

Sometimes I almost regret it...After all, I might have turned into a real tree in the end...Tree: that's a word that really gives me a thrill! It often springs to mind: palm tree—springing into the sky like a fountain ending in nonchalant, squid-like elegance. The baobab—twisted like the soft entrails of some monster. Ask the calao bird that lives a cloistered season in its branches. Or the Ceiba tree—spread out beneath the proud sun. O bird, o green mansions set in the living earth! (10)

Césaire reclaims the voice that Ariel sacrifices in *The Tempest* by allowing him to speak his mind. Far from the Ariel of Shakespeare who suppresses his desire for freedom with “No” (1.2.252) and “No, sir” (258) replies, Césaire’s Ariel tests language on his tongue. Unlike the previous Ariel, this Ariel not only has something to say, but he enjoys saying it. The ellipsis that Césaire uses before the word “tree” indicates the time that Ariel takes to contemplate the word before he speaks. The signifier itself delights him before the image of what it signifies even arises in his mind. While Césaire’s Ariel does not seek to antagonize his master, he also does not seek to especially please him as does Shakespeare’s, and while neither can compete with Prospero in a war of words, Césaire’s Ariel copes with his failure to match Prospero verbally by retreating to an internal world of musings. In his musings, Ariel exhibits an acceptance of his past despite its harshness and, like Hughes, looks forward to the creation of a new world with Prospero and Caliban.

According to Frantz Fanon, “There is a zone of nonbeing, an extraordinary sterile and arid region, an utterly naked declivity where an authentic upheaval can be born (10). Caliban in his resistance to the idea of peaceful coexistence with Prospero is fundamentally the “zone of nonbeing” from which an “authentic upheaval” becomes necessary, but Ariel is the means by which that upheaval becomes possible. Missing the weapons by which to overcome Prospero physically, Caliban will settle for a complete destruction of everyone and everything that surrounds them. His reconciliation to this desperate act is reminiscent of McKay’s determination in his sonnet “If We Must Die”:

...for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!

What though before us lies the open grave?

Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,

Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back! (11-14)

In this decision to fight at all costs, Caliban reaches a point of nonbeing in that his actions are purely reactionary. He no longer *is* but rather becomes a *response to*. In refusing to allow Prospero to dictate his own behavior, Ariel lifts himself from the mire that promises to swallow his fellow slave and confines his actions to those based solely on his own desires. Césaire creates in Ariel a figure that in his ambiguous complexity and understanding of language embodies a coming to consciousness that recognizes the importance of redefining images not only of the colonized but of the colonizer as well.

Une Tempête principally uses Caliban in redefining images of the colonized, but even as he reasserts his worth, he must affirm that worth to Prospero. Frantz Fanon—a student of Césaire—discusses in his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) the importance of “the liberation of the man of color from himself” (10). Such a liberation requires the man of color to dismiss the colonizer’s depictions of him and his own depictions of the colonized as the standard by which to live. Césaire’s Caliban is bound largely by his images of the colonizer’s representations of him, and his only goal is to remove the debilitating stigmas that confine him. The physical imprisonment to which Shakespeare’s Caliban is subjected by Prospero is analogous to the mental confines that Césaire’s Prospero places on Caliban’s understanding of himself. That Caliban’s

understanding is informed by Prospero's representations of him is indicated in their violent verbal confrontation, which prefigures the impasse that ultimately ends the play:

And you lied to me so much,
about the world, about myself,
that you ended up by imposing on me
an image of myself:
underdeveloped, in your words, undercompetent
that's how you made me see myself!
And I hate that image...and it's false!
But now I know you, you old cancer,
And I also know myself! (64)

As a black slave, Caliban is at pains to renegotiate his position within the power dynamic but is largely prevented by Prospero's deliberate misrepresentations of his person. Caliban fails to understand, however, that in his rejection of the images thrust upon him he attempts to thrust a new image upon Prospero that Prospero in his arrogance will never accept. Because he at one time accepts Prospero's view of him, Caliban's distorted images become a nod to Jean-Paul Sartre's conclusion that "it is the anti-Semite who *makes the Jew*" and Fanon's own more general conclusion that "*it is the racist who creates his inferior*" (emphasis Fanon's 93). Césaire highlights the power of language in relation to the power of the colonizer in that, while Caliban's curses fail to disturb a Prospero secure in his own mastery and authority, Prospero's repeated "lies" succeed in

undermining and distorting Caliban's worldview as well as his sense of self-understanding and respect.

In recognizing the invalidity of Prospero's depiction of him, Caliban comes to a realization that eludes him for the entirety of Shakespeare's play: the understanding that the image that Prospero projects of him is not an image that he is required to accept. Césaire replaces the Shakespearean Caliban's unquestioning acceptance of himself as a monster—who would have unrepentantly raped Miranda until he “had peopled” his island with carbon copies of Prospero's representation of a distorted image—with someone who rejects Prospero's portrayal of him and, in doing so, recognizes the danger that Prospero's “cancer” presents to the colonized. However, Caliban's ability to respond to Prospero's verbal sparring is more than “competent,” and in affirming that he knows himself, Caliban reconstructs his being into an image that he can respect. The respect that Caliban creates for himself at the cost of Prospero's contributes to the stalemate with Prospero that only an acceptance of the person and teachings of Ariel can remove.

Fanon describes a split consciousness where the colonized create two selves, one for interaction with whites and another for interaction among their fellow people. Meanwhile, Caliban details the self created by Prospero, and the one that he creates himself. Fanon appears to be building upon W.E.B. Du Bois's idea of double-consciousness. According to Fanon, “There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect” (12). For Césaire's Prospero and Caliban, Fanon's ideas prove correct—Prospero for much of the

play is unquestioning in his dominance of the island, and Caliban is unrelenting in his desire to prove to Prospero his own capabilities, assuring Prospero not only that the island belongs to him but also that he is capable of controlling it without Prospero's aid. The colonizer has largely authored the creation of meanings and definitions for the colonized. Because one race is defined in reference to its "opposite," good in one implies the ill nature of the other. In redefining the position of African peoples of the Antilles, Fanon, a defender of negritude, must also examine the place and role of the colonizer in relation to them.

Ariel's image of self is particularly apt for Fanon's concept of a split consciousness in that he is literally a combination of two selves between which Fanon is anxious to draw a distinction—black and white. Established at the juxtaposition of the two races, Ariel is the chiaroscuro of the play—the meeting point at which the races collide. Although he is mulatto, he does not consider himself superior to Caliban but instead greets him as a "brother," an equal. Contrarily, he does not view himself as inherently inferior to Prospero in that he recognizes Prospero's need to move beyond his colonialist ideology into his own more-complete understanding of equality. In addition, Ariel does not set out to prove his equality to Prospero, and the fierce desire that distinguishes his speech with Caliban is noticeably absent in Ariel's discussions with his master. Ariel essentially represents the interconnectedness of the discourses of black liberation as they operate within *Une Tempête*. Just as it is impossible for him to separate his whiteness from his blackness, it becomes just as impractical to separate the cultural and political movements from one another.

Despite Césaire's claim that the negritude movement did not find influences in the Harlem Renaissance, *Une Tempête* is undeniably influenced by his younger American brethren with its "focusing on the Black Power Movement of the late sixties" (Arnold 111) and its direct parallels to African American political figures. Césaire's text draws the connection between the American civil rights movement and colonial struggles for independence. In Caliban's first entrance, he essentially separates himself from Prospero and aligns himself with the wider African diaspora in his announcement to Prospero that he will no longer answer to a false identity. Caliban reclaims his name in a scene analogous to the racial conflicts played out in America only a few years before Césaire published his play (Smith and Hudson 394). Names are signifiers for more than the person; they become constant reminders of the namer's unlawful ownership. With his insistence to Prospero in act 1, scene 2 to "call me X" (15), Caliban disputes the claim that Prospero makes over his being, a claim that aligns him with one of the most prominent icons of 1960's America. In detailing his own decision to replace his last name with X, Malcolm X explains that his choice was simultaneously grounded in religious significance and self-affirmation,

The Muslim's "X" symbolized the true African family name that he never could know. For me, my "X" replaced the white slave-master name of "Little" which some blue-eyed devil named Little had imposed upon my paternal forebears. The receipt of my "X" meant that forever after in the nation of Islam, I would be known as Malcolm X. Mr. Muhammad taught

that we would keep this “X” until God Himself returned and gave us a Holy Name from His own mouth. (Haley 199)

The name that Prospero gives to Caliban using his god-like authority is distinctly unholy, and by rejecting his name, Caliban rejects the connotations inherent in the word “cannibal” and asserts that a forgotten history is better than a misnamed present. In rejecting Prospero’s ownership, Caliban affirms that he will not submit himself to the assumptions and presumptions of others.

Although Ariel’s views differ remarkably from Caliban’s—he for instance feels no need to question his own naming—Césaire highlights the solidarity of the colonized. This theatrical solidarity is akin to the historical solidarity that existed between King and Malcolm X in spite of the different methods they chose to attain freedom. In speaking of the marked distinction people often drew to distinguish his beliefs from those such as King’s, Malcolm X explains, “I’m not for separation and you’re not for integration. What you and I are for is freedom. Only you think that integration will get you freedom; I think separation will get me free. We’ve both got the same objective. We’ve just got different ways of getting at it” (Cone 247). Despite divergent ideologies, Ariel is at pains to connect with Caliban and warn him of Prospero’s plots. In his creation of a dialogue between Ariel and Caliban in act 2, scene 1, Césaire illustrates the exchange of opposing ideas and the brotherhood that exists despite their opposition. Their principles, rather than their persons, are in conflict, and Ariel lacks the intense spirit of competition that leads Shakespeare’s spirit to disclose Caliban’s plot to Prospero. In fact, Ariel enters into Caliban’s home to warn him of the punishment Prospero is preparing for him. Césaire

moves Caliban and Ariel's interaction from the public arena implied by a general location on Shakespeare's island into the private and intimate sphere of Caliban's home. In their dialogue, Césaire reclaims a relationship and acknowledgment of commonality that Shakespeare neglects in his *Tempest*. In emphasizing the fact that they are both in the position of the oppressed, and re-characterizing Ariel as a warner rather than a spy, Césaire expresses his dissatisfaction with Shakespeare's interpretation of events. Césaire asserts his right to modify perceptions of the colonized because *Une Tempête* is not only an adaptation in dialogue with Shakespeare's *Tempest*, but it is also a literary adaptation of his own *Discourse on Colonialism*. Robin D. G. Kelly declares that that text "places the colonial question front and center" (8). Césaire's negritude is the product of the intermeshing of black movements and discourses and is representative of Césaire's own awakening to consciousness.

Discourse and *Une Tempête* both highlight language in establishing their own place in the discourse. As a literary adaptation of his *Discourse*, Césaire rewrites *The Tempest* to engage the masters—Shakespeare and Prospero—in dialogue with himself and Caliban. Although "mastery of language affords remarkable power" (Fanon 18), the absence of language becomes equally powerful both historically and literarily. Césaire makes a scathing indictment of the "bourgeoisie" who he felt silently condoned oppression in the form of colonialism, insisting they are as culpable as those who actively participate in promulgating it:

they hide the truth from themselves, that it is barbarism, the supreme barbarism, the crowning barbarism that sums up all the daily barbarisms;

that it is Nazism, yes, but that before they were its victims, they were its accomplices; that they tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them, that they absolved it, shut their eyes to it, legitimized it, because, until then it had only been applied to non-European peoples; that they have cultivated that Nazism, that they are responsible for it....(*Discourse* 36)

As long as Nazism was deployed upon non-European peoples of color, then it was accepted. However, in its application to Europe itself, Nazism did not pass away, but instead passed onto it. Those who first watched the use of Nazism abroad became engulfed unwillingly in its application on their own shore. According to Césaire, the bourgeois' "humiliation" originates from the fact that Hitler "applied to Europe colonialist procedures which until then had been reserved" for non-Europeans of color (36).

While in Shakespeare's play, Ariel and Caliban's servitude appears natural, Shakespeare's Miranda immediately chafes at seeing Ferdinand in a similar position, adjuring her lover to "work not so hard" (2.2.16). In commanding Ferdinand to work for him, Prospero condemns him to an indignity that had been previously reserved for the colonized. Miranda in essence "legitimizes" slavery until her father makes Ferdinand one of his slaves. Although she is outspoken in her belief that Caliban merits the treatment he has received at Prospero's hands, exclaiming that he was "deservedly confin'd into this rock" (1.2.361), Miranda appears as a silent accomplice to Prospero's treatment of Ariel. She understands the power that her father wields on the island but

does not concern herself with the methods by which he accomplishes his domination. Thus, by employing his *Discourse* ideology in *Une Tempête*, Césaire illustrates the unconscious promulgation of colonialist thought.

With his specification of the play for “black theater,” Césaire implies that black cast members assume control and can redefine notions of both the colonizer as well as the colonized. Césaire employs a separatist approach in line with ideas of black nationalism and deliberately highlights the implications of the original text by consciously taking control of the play. Taking his cue from the writings of his former student, Césaire brings to life Fanon’s idea of *Black Skin, White Masks*, using a theatrical device that ostensibly allows the cast to choose their own characters. Despite the apparently haphazard selection of roles, Césaire specifically assigns the role of the tempest, and in doing so, seems to make the comment that the natural world is not as random as it first appears. In addition, by assigning the captain as a particular person, Césaire introduces an idea of nature as decider based on physical characteristics that the individual can control to some extent. The captain is not the captain because of his race but because his physical body indicates that that should be his profession. These assignments also call into question ideas of inherent human natures, as they require individuals to assume the being of their choice. The masks are indicative of an assumption of personality and Fanon’s idea that “the black man has two dimensions. One with his fellows, the other with the white man” (17). The donning of the masks emphasizes the split consciousness necessary to maintain shattered notions of self-hood. A black cast does not mean that all of the audience will be black, and the masks become crucial in perpetuating ideas of

deceit. In literally performing for an audience, the cast embodies ideas of double-consciousness and Fanon's two dimensions. Ariel's place in this assumption of identity suggests that even as individuals choose their own personae, the personae themselves can become confused.

This confusion or meshing of identities characterizes *Une Tempête*, with cultural and political movements intertwining within Césaire's text. From this conflagration of movements arises Ariel's nonviolent ideology, so that even as he looks to the past, he removes himself from it. Césaire's Ariel is just as complex as his Shakespearean counterpart, but more well-defined by the text. As a mulatto with no history, he literally embodies the ambiguity that Shakespeare's Ariel represents with his "airiness."

Although Césaire foregrounds Caliban's violent discourse with Prospero, Ariel has a distinct place in the dialogue. In chapter four I focus on the importance of Ariel's role in Césaire's play and the necessity of both his and Caliban's method of resisting colonialist oppression.

CHAPTER FOUR

MOVING BEYOND NEGRITUDE: CÉSAIRE'S ARIEL

In studying Césaire's *Une Tempête*, it is easy to fall into the same pattern of forgetfulness that causes many critics to neglect Shakespeare's Ariel in their scholarship. The battle between Caliban and Prospero for mastery is here again foregrounded, perhaps more so because Césaire deliberately exploits the colonialist implications at which Shakespeare merely hints. For this reason, without careful examination of his place within the text and his position in relation to his fellow slave, the figure of Ariel is once more in danger of becoming the picture of nobody.

Gonzalo's speech in act 3, scene 5 indicates the ease with which even a fellow cast member can dismiss his presence:

GONZALO. God be praised! We are delighted...delighted and overcome!

What a happy, what a memorable day! With one voyage Antonio has found a brother, his brother has found a dukedom, his daughter has found a husband. Alonso has regained a son and gained a daughter. And what else?...Anyway, I am the only one whose emotion prevents him from knowing what he's saying...

PROSPERO. The proof of that, my fine Gonzalo, is that you are forgetting someone: Ariel, my loyal servant. (57)

Gonzalo draws attention to how perfect the ending is for the colonizers. However, as an ambiguous and complex figure, Ariel's presence in the text often remains a loose end. Because it is difficult to explain his character and characterization, it is easier to pretend

as though he does not exist. Although Gonzalo blames his forgetfulness on overwhelming joy, critics also express the same forgetfulness. Ariel's presence is nevertheless crucial in understanding *Une Tempête*. Despite the fact that he is not as vocal in his rebellion as his fellow servant, he nevertheless possesses an ideology that rebels against Prospero's imperialist beliefs. Ariel is not a passive figure in the discourse on colonialism.

While Césaire's Caliban is a reversal of Shakespeare's Caliban, a close reading of Ariel offers insight into one of the methods by which Césaire draws out the colonialist implications inherent in the original. Although Ariel does not use the invisibility that empowered his Shakespearean counterpart, he nevertheless finds his own method of empowerment. He becomes a master in his manipulation of words, and language becomes the new invisibility. In allowing Ariel to speak more for—and to—himself, Césaire removes Ariel's focus on himself and "his quality" and extends Ariel's hope of freedom to his "brother" as well as to the colonizer. Although Caliban's negritude-based beliefs are essential in the awakening of consciousness, Ariel's inclusive ideals are the final goal.

By using both Ariel and Caliban in his assault on the thought that produces colonialist ideologies, Césaire suggests that both approaches to liberation are necessary in combating them. Caliban's approach consists of a self-created identity based on a reconnection to the past, while Ariel looks to the past, but creates a vision that exists separate from it. Both Caliban and Ariel have freedom as their goal, but that freedom for Ariel means living in harmony with the colonized, while for Caliban it can only be

achieved by Prospero's exit. Language becomes essential in attaining the goals of the colonized, and just as Césaire appropriates Shakespeare's tale and constructs a new identity for the play and its characters, Ariel and Caliban appropriate Prospero's language and invest it with their own meanings. Ariel's concept of the word "brother" differs extensively from the way in which Prospero employs the term. Mikhail Bakhtin brought out the point that language is central to understanding the dynamics of power:

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes one's own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (as qtd in Gates 1)

In Prospero's mouth, the word "brother" takes on an "un-brotherly" meaning and becomes burdened by the weight of Antonio's betrayal. He speaks of the "intrigues of my ambitious younger brother" and explains that, "my brother became the accomplice of my rival" (13). For Prospero, the word is indicative only of a blood relationship, with none of the fellowship that Ariel's use of the term implies. In speaking of his brother's duplicity in overthrowing his dukedom and banishing him from Milan, Prospero decries the self-promoting actions that would lead an individual to betray his own flesh and

blood. Ariel's explanation of the word, however, leaves out all reference to physical ties and highlights the common position that he and Caliban share as the colonized. They are "brothers in suffering and slavery, but brothers in hope as well" (26). In his adaptation and appropriation, Césaire redefines the meaning of brotherhood, broadening the term from indicative of a blood relationship to one that encapsulates the common position that Ariel and Caliban share as fellow slaves.

Caliban's language suggests that he is an exemplification of Césaire's negritude. Although Caliban submits to Prospero's desire that he greet him with "hello," he adds, "But make that as froggy, waspish, pustular and a dung-filled 'hello' as possible" (17). Within the very act of his linguistic submission, he resists Prospero's control. Caliban's adoption and appropriation of the word "hello" convey a darker meaning than the greeting with which Prospero engenders it. In contrast to Ariel who redefines the word "brother" only in Caliban's presence, Caliban is openly defiant of his rejection of Prospero's "hello." Just as Césaire manages to portray the sympathies of the colonized within the colonizer's language, Ariel and Caliban manage to express their resistance to Prospero using the language that Prospero imposed on them. Similarly, the real-life adoption of the word "negritude" as descriptive of his movement allows Césaire to question openly and defiantly the colonized as the sole arbiters of language.

While negritude is helpful in resisting the colonizer's domination, Caliban illustrates that it is not the desired end. In describing the place of negritude for poets such as Césaire, Sartre explains, "they know that it serves to prepare the way for the synthesis or the realization of the human society without racism. Thus Negritude is dedicated to its

own destruction, it is passage and not objective, means and not the ultimate goal” (60). Caliban’s consciousness is firmly rooted in the past and this consciousness as well as Prospero’s “cancerous” presence is a cue for unending recriminations. Caliban explains to Prospero: “Every time you summon me it reminds me of a basic fact, the fact that you’ve stolen everything from me, even my identity! Uhuru!” (20). Just as he attempts to reclaim an unknown past with the assumption of an “X” in place of the name given to him by the colonizer, Caliban also reaches out historically to reclaim language with his appropriation of “Uhuru” in his demand for freedom. By attempting to reclaim a lost language, Caliban expresses the desire of Césaire and other Antillean poets who embraced negritude to reclaim Africa for themselves. The absence of the phrase in his discussion with Ariel indicates that the phrase is for him a symbol of resistance and as such is only necessary in conversations with his master. Although Caliban exclaims to Ariel, “Freedom Now!” (26), he contents himself to do so in the language of the colonizer. By using the phrase as a method of resistance alone, Caliban, consciously or unconsciously serves to support Sartre’s claim that negritude is the “means and not the ultimate goal.” Caliban’s adoption of a language that connects to a distant past is acceptable, but his constant resistance to peace with Prospero cannot survive in the society of which Ariel dreams.

While Caliban’s desires encourage him to reconnect to the past, specifically to regain the connection engendered by Prospero’s arrival and institutionalization of colonialism, Ariel’s desires are very much grounded in attempts to claim a future that is beneficial for both the colonized and the colonizer. By embracing the ideology of

negritude, Caliban in essence prepares the way for the accomplishment of Ariel's dreams. Ariel leaves the text because he is the only one who understands that open warfare is the least effective means to accomplish his objective. Because neither Caliban nor Prospero come to a common understanding, both of them must stay confined on the island and within the text. They remain locked in an argument long after Ariel frees himself from the physical confines of Prospero's patriarchy and the mental limits of Caliban's negritude.

On the interaction of Caliban and Prospero, James E. Robinson in his "Caribbean Caliban: Shifting the 'I' of the Storm" asserts that "the tone and temper of the initial exchange sets a direction for the emergence of Caliban as a figure in control of the dialogue and of the master-slave dialectic" (437). It is important, however, to note that this "dialogue" ends at an impasse, with Caliban unwilling to compromise with his principles and Prospero unable to see his own injustice. They each replace the verbal language that they should employ with threats to allow their violent actions to speak for them instead. While Prospero promises to speak the language of violence "loud and clear" (*A Tempest* 19), Caliban insists that

Anyhow, I'm going to have the last word. Unless nothingness has it. The day when I begin to feel that everything's lost, just let me get hold of a few barrels of your infernal powder and as you fly around up there in your blue skies you'll see this island, my inheritance, my work, all blown to smithereens...and I trust Prospero and me with it. I hope you'll like the fireworks display—it'll be signed Caliban. (23)

Unlike Ariel, Caliban seeks not equality but the dominance he lost with Prospero's arrival on the island. That he represents that dominance with language as the final authority is typical of Césaire's adaptation, where the goal is to regain a place in the dialogue. However, Caliban demonstrates the temporal nature of even his imagined dominance in his understanding that such a massive rebellion can only lead to utter destruction. In the same manner that Prospero expects his threats of violence to silence opposition, Caliban becomes intent on regaining his proper place as ruler of the island even if it means the sacrifice of his life and the sacrifice of all the surrounding lives.

That Caliban allows himself to become engaged in a battle of curses that are for him meaningless illustrates the principal ruse by which Prospero controls their conversations. Shakespeare's Caliban emphasizes to Miranda that "You taught me language, and my profit on't/ Is I know how to curse" (1.2.362-3) but does not comprehend the full implications of that statement. As long as he is merely cursing Prospero with worthless words, then he cannot engage him in a meaningful dialogue. Césaire's Caliban falls into a similar pattern with Prospero and begins to curse him soon after his own entrance: "May today hasten by a decade the day when all the birds of the sky and beasts of the earth will feast upon your corpse" (11). Césaire's Caliban does not have the power to cause time to pass any more quickly for Prospero than Shakespeare's Caliban has the power to send a southwest wind on his master. In wasting language expressing vain curses, he deliberately avoids the opportunity for dialogue of which Shakespeare's Caliban unwittingly deprives himself. In expressing his belief that "talk's

cheap!” (21), Césaire’s Caliban recognizes the worthlessness of engaging in a dialogue with someone who will not abide by anything but the curses he utters.

In the absence of other means that would secure his freedom, Caliban adopts a language of violence. Because the destruction of the island would be at his hands, then his actions would take the place of his silenced voice. Without moving the dialogue in a new direction—one that seeks not dominance but equality—the text will always remain at an impasse. While both Prospero and Caliban’s language signify the domination each seeks, Ariel’s language signifies his goal for commonality. The way Ariel employs his language signifies his understanding that open resistance is futile.

That Césaire feels he needs to reclaim Ariel’s voice is visible in his re-creation of Ariel’s entrance in act 1, scene 2. In the contrasting scenes of conversation between Shakespeare’s Ariel and Prospero and his own characters, Césaire gives emphasis to Shakespeare’s illustration of the overwhelming language dominance of the master. While Shakespeare’s Ariel bursts forth into a flood of language in answer to Prospero’s question about his success in implementing the tempest, Césaire’s Ariel merely answers, “mission accomplished” (15). His succinctness raises the question, “whose mission has Ariel accomplished?” Although he feels “disgust” in performing Prospero’s tasks, he does not give way to the unending recriminations that Caliban expresses. Ariel, however, allows himself free expression in detailing his feelings on his release from Sycorax’s imprisonment. He quietly resists Prospero’s authority and demand for gratitude in his ode to a tree. In his speech to Prospero recalling his incarceration in the pine, Ariel fantasizes about becoming one with the tree. Such musings elicit images of roots and uncover a

desire for a distinct connection to family and a disconnection from Prospero's patriarchal pretensions.

Instead of recognizing that Ariel privileges his former imprisonment—where he at least might have had the opportunity of becoming one with the enslaver—over his present position as Prospero's slave, Prospero looks no further than a literal interpretation, saying, "I don't like talking trees" (10). While Shakespeare's Prospero overcomes Ariel with a flood of language, Césaire's Prospero overpowers Ariel by refusing to enter into dialogue with him and simply instructing him to "Stuff it!" (16). Neither Shakespeare's nor Césaire's Ariels manage to engage Prospero in a discussion of freedom, as Shakespeare's Ariel voluntarily retreats to few words and Césaire's Ariel finds himself silenced. In addition to his unwillingness to allow Ariel to express himself, Prospero fails to understand the words Ariel has already spoken. That Ariel conceives the possibility of a connection with the tree foreshadows the ultimate dream that he explains to Caliban of becoming brothers with Prospero. While he is free to express himself with his "brother," Ariel couches his language to Prospero in words crafted to be inoffensive. Prospero, however, immediately dismisses the idea of equality by refusing to perceive the possibility of it as represented in Ariel's words. In reply to Prospero's wish that he "will not be bored" (58) by his freedom, Ariel unconsciously allows himself open expression of what the reality of that freedom means for him. Ariel's free expression here is the first time that he does not confine his speech in front of Prospero.

Ariel's intoxicated joy at his freedom is difficult to reconcile with his previous straightforward and sober behavior. An individual, who first enters upon the stage and

answers his master's query concisely before allowing his mind to muse on images of a tree, suddenly becomes unrecognizable in his unfettered joy at liberation. Fanon explains this psychological break in the colonized at freedom, asserting, "just as when one tells a much improved patient that in a few days he will be discharged from the hospital, he thereupon suffers a relapse, so the announcement of the liberation of the black slaves produced psychoses and sudden deaths" (220). Ariel's unexpected psychological break emphasizes the strict control that he holds over himself until that moment. In his joy, he exhibits a liberation from consciousness that shocks the audience as much as it disturbs Prospero. If he had allowed himself such open expression *before* Prospero released him, he would never have obtained his freedom. Ariel correctly surmised that his interactions with Prospero should not contain any open resistance to Prospero's commands or beliefs.

In *Discourse*, Césaire paints an unflattering portrait of the dynamics of the intercourse between colonized and colonizer, describing interactions where there is "No human contact, but relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a classroom monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production" (42). Ariel's missing mother—presumably the black parent—must therefore be the vehicle by which the master creates another individual to command. As the product of what can only be a loveless relationship, Ariel represents the extent to which the colonizer separates himself from his humanity and then forcibly separates the colonized. Moreover, Ariel's position as child does not grant him any privileges over other servants of his master. It is Ariel's physical proximity and not his ambiguous parentage that ultimately grants him a better

understanding of Prospero than Caliban possesses. Ariel understands Prospero's capabilities because, as he explains to Caliban, "I'm in a good position to know just what he's got in his arsenal" (26), implying that his favored position as Prospero's servant is not the result of delight in serving his master but rather a clever ploy to ascertain information that might be helpful in alleviating his or his fellow servant's conditions. Caliban, who accuses Prospero of forcibly removing him from his house and making him dwell in the "ghetto," does not possess the same easy access to Prospero's resources and therefore lacks the ability to make his liberation plans in reference to them. Within the text itself, Ariel also inhabits "a good position" as he manages to exist outside all of the conflicts and tempests brewing upon the isle. He refrains from becoming involved in the power struggle that Prospero and Caliban enact, employing an ideology that involves neither dependence upon his master nor a complete rejection of him. In his dialogue with Caliban he details "an inspiring, uplifting dream that one day Prospero, you, me, we would all three set out, like brothers, to build a wonderful world, each one contributing his own special thing: patience, vitality, love, willpower too, and rigor, not to mention the dreams without which mankind would perish" (27). Ariel's dreams are far more encompassing than the dreams of anyone else in the text as his are the only ones that encompass desires for more than his own well-being. Such dreams extend beyond ideas of negritude and signify its necessary deconstruction. Although he expresses a markedly different ideology from Caliban, the two enjoy an understanding that Shakespeare's pair, with their opposing beliefs, fail to reach. In contrast to the Shakespearean Ariel who

greet Caliban with the accusation “thou liest,” Césaire’s Ariel reaches out to his fellow servant with an assurance that despite their differences, “we *are* brothers” (26).

The word “brother” also ostensibly grounds Ariel’s sexuality, and in a similar manner, Césaire is at pains to confirm Ariel’s humanity. While the text establishes Ariel’s gender and physicality, Ariel’s complexity remains difficult to grasp. In act two, scene three, a corporeal Ariel instructs the king as to the plot that Sebastian and Antonio plan during his slumber. His answer to Gonzalo’s desire to place the plot in the realm of his fantasy is, “No, you were not dreaming” (34). Ariel’s remark confirms and establishes his physical presence within the text whereas Shakespeare’s Ariel contributes to the fantasy and dream-like nature of the isle. By establishing the text in reality, Ariel emphasizes the position of the colonized as real and not “the stuff that dreams are made of.” While the Shakespearean Ariel is distinctly “airy” and ostensibly lacks the emotions that motivate the actions of his fellow characters, *Une Tempête*’s Ariel complains of his “disgust” and having “suffered too much for having made them suffer” (21). The care for human suffering that Ariel expresses after causing the tempest apparently disappears in act two, scene two as he watches Alonso and his entourage refuse to partake of Prospero’s banquet. In a statement that calls Ariel’s previously professed compassion into question, he addresses Prospero’s desire for his enemies to eat with, “Why should we go to any trouble for them? If they won’t eat, they can die of hunger” (31). Although Ariel illustrates human qualities, he also embodies a complexity—a duality—that he shares with the demon-god Eshu.

Despite the Master of Ceremonies assigning the parts separately—first Ariel and then later and almost as an afterthought, Eshu—the characters are similar enough to be assigned as double roles and indeed the part of Eshu would fit Ariel “like a glove” (7). While Prospero concludes that in Eshu’s appearance “Ariel must have made a mistake” (48), viewing Eshu’s appearance as deliberate instead covers Ariel’s already ambiguous figure with further ambiguity. If one grants that Ariel acts of his own accord in bringing discord, then even as he physically submits to his master’s orders, he remains outside the limits of his control.

According to folklorist Harold Courlander, Eshu represents “the force of randomness and whim that defies certainty and turns fate aside. When Eshu appears there is a flaw in the sequence of events, a disruption of heavenly intention that causes men to turn into unforeseen trails and trials” (Courlander 186). Similarly, as the medium for his master’s machinations, Ariel serves as the signifier for all the major happenings on the island, his presence in the text either presaging a great event or indicating that one has already taken place. For example, Ariel’s first appearance in the play announces that the tempest has successfully brought Alonso and his confederates to the island. While Ariel does succeed in creating a storm that shipwrecks Prospero’s enemies, his actions unleash a chain of events that garner a conclusion that is by no means certain. Prospero’s stated mission is to reestablish his place within Milanese society, but he ultimately refuses to take his part within that society. The audience also finds that there has been no accomplishment in terms of a progression between colonized and colonizer, and if anything, there appears to be a regression. Ariel’s assertion to Prospero of “mission

accomplished” becomes problematized if he is viewed as employing his own agency within the text and not solely acting as an agent for Prospero. In bringing discord to the island, Ariel brings about the conditions needed for him to emerge from the text. Ariel indicates his capability to act as agent for his own affairs in his act 2, scene 1 visit to Caliban. Ariel’s subversive resistance leads him to more-open rebellion as he challenges Prospero’s power. In response to Caliban’s query as to whether he is visiting him in accordance with Prospero’s orders, Ariel responds, “I’ve come on my own” (26). To limit Ariel’s agency to this one act, however, would limit the complexity of his figure and belittle his role within the power dynamic. Although he does not employ Caliban’s forthright method of resistance, in visiting his fellow slave in order to warn him, Ariel rebels against the idea of Prospero’s omniscient authority.

Prospero’s behavior toward Ariel and Caliban is not specific to the play but representative of the general attitude of whites toward blacks that Fanon depicts in his *Black Skin, White Masks*: “a white man addressing a Negro behaves exactly like an adult with a child and starts smirking, whispering, patronizing, cozening” (31). In their first conversation, Prospero asks Ariel, “what seems to be the matter? I gave you a compliment and you don’t seem pleased? Are you tired?”(15). He chooses to attribute Ariel’s lack of enthusiasm to physical weariness rather than to the possibility that Ariel’s employment in his service could be involuntary as well as distasteful. This attribution becomes more complex and problematic because it is not a deliberate mistake but instead one made because Prospero fails to—and indeed as the colonizer is not required to—consider the motivations of his servants. Prospero exhibits no recognition of the thoughts

and feelings that motivate Ariel's humanity, and, in failing to do so, he loses touch with his own. Even when faced with Ariel's explanation of his "disgust" in carrying out his master's orders, Prospero dismisses Ariel's dissatisfaction as a whim of "intellectuals" and as the result of unwarranted sullenness.

Ariel's decision to forget Prospero's transgressions is perhaps more surprising and politically radical than Caliban's natural acrimony. From Prospero's unjust and inhumane colonization sprang Caliban's inhuman fury, but the dream that Ariel possesses, of a future equality, should be—and is for Fanon at least—the ultimate goal of society: that of not looking toward the past for previous faults but of currently "demanding human behavior from the other" (229). Ariel points toward a future that can remember the past without condemning either the colonized or colonizer to relive it. Despite his privileging of Caliban's ideology in his *Discourse*, Césaire indicates his discomfort with negritude as the final goal by confining Caliban to servitude. Ariel, on the other hand, possesses the ingenuity to resist Prospero's mental domination and the fortitude to propagate utopian ideals to his "brother" and his master. Caliban's negritude questions Prospero's assumed dominance, but Ariel's role is to move the text beyond negritude into the radically progressive idea of equality.

CONCLUSION

Ariel's place within colonialist discourse is central to both an understanding of *The Tempest* and *Une Tempête*. Recognizing his place within the discourse on colonialism affords the reader a more complex view of both texts. Using Ariel, Shakespeare provides an alternative approach to the colonized instead of a dismissal of them as inherently inferior to the colonizer. My reading of the ambiguous and often invisible Ariel makes his function within the text visible. As the agent for his own affairs, he makes freedom his primary goal and complicates Shakespeare's depiction of the colonized as content with their servitude. Shakespeare's portrayal of Ariel, however, does not absolve him from his or Ariel's participation in the propagation of colonialist ideals. Césaire's *Une Tempête* represents the necessity for further clarification of images of the colonized in addition to the necessity to redefine their positions in relation to the colonizer and each other.

Although Césaire is one of the founders of negritude, that he does not represent negritude as the desired goal is indicated by the impasse that ultimately ends *Une Tempête*. Like his Shakespearean counterpart, Césaire's Ariel problematizes the overall statements that the text makes on colonialism and reveals Césaire's unease with Caliban as representative of all colonized peoples. Critics reduced this discomfort to dichotomy and polarized Ariel's and Caliban's portrayals without questioning how those portrayals worked in relation to each other. Césaire's *Une Tempête* is undoubtedly a synthesis of black liberation discourse, and Ariel, with his affinity to Langston Hughes and Martin

Luther King, Jr., is an amalgam of an African diasporic dialogue in conversation with colonialist discourse.

Césaire's text internalizes the idea that "mastery of language affords remarkable power" (Fanon 18) within the colonialism discourse. He illustrates that Prospero's position as the colonizer allows him to use his speech in order to change the colonized's position in the social hierarchy and more importantly the colonized's perception of self. Césaire's Ariel, on the other hand, illustrates that the power of language to determine condition belongs to the colonized as well, as he shows an understanding, a consciousness of himself that is quite at odds with Caliban's notions of inferiority and Prospero's attempts at domination. Just as Ariel's physical being is in dialogue with itself, Césaire's francophone Caribbean text is in dialogue with Shakespeare's play as well as texts of writers within the African diaspora. Both Shakespeare's and Césaire's Prospero reinforce their linguistic abilities with threats of physical power that aim to discourage the colonized from attempting to engage them in discussions. Although the plays' Calibans are vocally resistant to domination by their masters, both believe that in order to secure their freedom they must use the physical weapons of the colonizer. Even as Césaire's Caliban promises to silence Prospero by his own hands, in speaking to Ariel he realizes that in order to do so he must "get hold of a few barrels of your infernal powder" (23). Similarly, Shakespearean Caliban instructs Stephano of the necessity of seizing Prospero's books. Conversely, Shakespearean Ariel expresses his resistance with surface acquiescence and silent opposition while Césaire's Ariel uses language in his subversive resistance to Prospero's authority.

Césaire asserts his right to embellish the image that Shakespeare creates of the colonized and simultaneously asserts his own image of the colonized as fully developed thinkers and reasoners. Césaire, in fact, establishes his story as one of many, and although he challenges Shakespeare's claim of sole ownership and asserts his authority and right to represent his own struggle, he assigns his adaptation a name that does not insist on the removal of Shakespeare's version from the canon. The overarching point that Césaire makes is that this is a discourse in which he tries neither to supplant Shakespeare's text nor exist separate from it. The plays are in conversation with each other as well as colonialist's and postcolonialist's dialogues. Césaire's Ariel, in his ambiguity, confirms the place of *Une Tempête* as a text in dialogue with *The Tempest*. Caliban fails to illustrate this point, because with his final rejection of Prospero, he is a reversal of Shakespeare's original Caliban, and as such, attempts to supplant him. By highlighting Shakespeare's implications of Ariel as a resistant figure within colonialist discourse, Césaire avoids the impasse that a comparison of the plays' Calibans provokes.

Whether Shakespeare means the tempest responsible for shipwrecking the ship or the tempest occurring among the inhabitants and those stranded on the island, he refers to his tale as "*The*" *Tempest* as if it is the only—or most important—one of its kind. "*A*" *Tempest* is a conscious desire by Césaire to acknowledge that Caliban's and Ariel's struggle for independence is not the only struggle in existence and his own story is not the only version available. Césaire does not attempt to combat Shakespeare's claim on *The Tempest* by labeling his "the" as well but rather, in drawing his distinction, subverts

Shakespeare's account by explaining that his own is one of many—thereby encouraging readers to rethink their acceptance of Shakespeare's tale as truth.

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