

UDK 821.111.09 Shakespeare W.
Izvorni naučni rad
Original scientific paper

Alen Avdić

"GABBLING LIKE A THING MOST BRUTISH": LANGUAGE IN THE SERVICE OF COLONIALISM IN *THE TEMPEST*

The portrayal of Caliban from *The Tempest* is a prototypical example of representing the *other* in Shakespeare. He is described as a savage and deformed slave who is also a monster, a strange fish whose smell is awful and a commodity that could earn his owners a lot of money when exhibited as a freak back home in England. The language employed by colonial discourse in *The Tempest* portrays Caliban as inhuman and this makes his unjust treatment justified by the colonizer. He is repeatedly described using metaphors of earth (as Ariel is given metaphors of air). Thus Caliban is portrayed as earthy – coarse, heavy and crass. However here is depth to his character. He is aware of the history of the island and that his mother held it first, making him its true heir. He is also resentful that Prospero and Miranda have tried to impose their language and culture onto him as well as sexually uninhibited in that he had tried to rape Miranda. His resentfulness of the burden that Prospero lays on him is so big that he ultimately rebels against him. As such Caliban is the quintessential *other*, and as such destined to be subjugated by his colonizer by the use of the colonizer's language. He attempts to undermine Prospero's authority and challenge the colonial rule over his island.

Key words: postcolonial literary theory, the *other*, Shakespeare, Caliban, Prospero, colonialism

The Tempest is a prime example of postcolonial literary theory where one can observe the manner in which the identity of the *other* is constructed. This is best seen in the depiction of Caliban through the language of the colonizers. The allegorical reference of this play has been incorporated in the history of Shakespearean criticism primarily in the light of postcolonial literary theory (Hart 2003:130). This paper will analyze the manner in which language serves as a means of subjugation of the colonized by signifying them as *other*, base and subhuman beings that are used and exploited as seen fit.

This is best observed in how Prospero and Miranda treat Caliban. The language they employ in describing Caliban echoes the sentiments of the colonizer towards the *other*. The colonizer perceives Caliban as a lesser being¹. This notion is further amplified by Prospero's portrayal of Caliban as a brute who attempted to rape his daughter. By using language as a tool of colonial domination we will gain insight into the machinations Prospero uses to construct an image of Caliban as a creature with base needs and desires. He then attempts to devoid Caliban of any humanity thus trying to make the process of his exploitation justified as he treats his servant as a subhuman entity devoid of any reason. The other characters in the play as well follow this pattern mainly by showing their supremacy over the island's native either by imposing their language onto him or by envisioning profit in displaying the exotic *other* as a sideshow attraction in England. Either way, the will to rule over the *other* rests on the power of language to signify the *other* as uncivilized and brutish hence making the process of civilization justified in the course of their narrative.

A brief overview of political allegory displayed in *The Tempest* will be necessary before analyzing the interplay between language and colonialism:

Between about ninety and a hundred and twenty years ago, a shift seems to have happened in interpretations of *The Tempest*. Whereas in 1873 Daniel Wilson thought that *The Tempest* was a social Darwinist work, in 1904 W. T. Stead objected to the imperialism and sided with indigenous cultures. In the twentieth century a central debate over the use of canons as a means of promoting tradition and empire has occurred in English-speaking countries. Shakespeare has been at the heart of that debate as in those countries he occupies the center of literature and education in the humanities. In traditional criticism, Prospero's art and power were sometimes identified with

¹ In his *Life of William Shakespeare* (1901) Sir Sidney Lee, perhaps for the first time, stresses the colonial aspect of *The Tempest* wherein he touches on the portrayal of Caliban as a subhuman being that is equated with Native Americans. Although this notion today does not reflect the full sentiments that a postcolonial reading would provide it is interesting to note in Lee's writing that from the very inception of the play there have been criticism directed towards *The Tempest* even in the time when postcolonial literary studies were non-existent.

Shakespeare's and Europe's while Caliban was sometimes associated with the physical, moral and political dependency of non-European peoples. As an understandable reaction to this European position, some writers in Africa and the Caribbean set out to use *The Tempest* for their own literary and political purposes. Between 1957 and 1973, most African and large Caribbean colonies won their independence. Dissenting intellectuals and writers from these regions decided to appropriate *The Tempest* as a means of supporting decolonization and creating an alternative literary tradition.² In *The Tempest* African and Caribbean writers saw hints of pre-European traditions and European colonization. (Hart 2003:130)

From the very beginning of the play we can see that *The Tempest* is a complex play from a cultural point of view and as such it is opened to many theoretical renderings. However, the most provoking one is the one regarding a postcolonial reading of the play, especially when the focus is set on Prospero's dark, earthy slave Caliban and the manner his identity is construed within *The Tempest*.

The English colonial project seems to have been on Shakespeare's mind as he seems also to have drawn on Montaigne's essay *Of the Cannibals* which was translated into English in 1603 (Hart 2003: 137) when he wrote *The Tempest*. In this connection, the name of Prospero's servant, Caliban, seems to be an anagram or derivative of "cannibal". To paraphrase Egan (2007: 218), critics who read *The Tempest* in relation to colonialism tend to bring it into the connotations derived from postcolonial theory. The key figure in the postcolonial analysis of the play is Caliban, the island native who regards himself as the rightful owner of it, now forced against his will to serve Prospero and Miranda and he constantly proclaims his unwillingness to do so:

Initially, Prospero extends to Caliban his European hospitality, teaches him language, and, in return, is shown all the natural resources of the island by Caliban, in an act of love. But Caliban refuses to live by Prospero's rules, tries to rape Miranda (he still wants to), and their relationship changes to one of master and slave. The gift of language, Caliban now says, is good only because it enables him to curse. Prospero may control Caliban (with painful torments), but he has not vanquished his resistance. (ibid.)

The language in *The Tempest* is essential in understanding the manner in which the play is interpolated with colonialism. Whether written or spoken, the need for human beings to communicate is pivotal to our social development and so in the colonial discourse language will be the first thing to be passed on from colonizer to the colonized: "In this play, it's not the case that the Europeans forced Caliban to

forget his language and learn theirs. Before they came Caliban had no language at all" (ibid.) Miranda obviously believes it to be a great honor and reminds Caliban how she "took pains to make thee speak" and describes Caliban's previous way of speaking as "gabble" (ibid.). However Caliban himself obviously takes a very different view towards his master:

Caliban is [...] enslaved to his master. [...] This *other*, the offspring of a witch and a devil, the wild man and savage, the emblem of morphological ambivalence [...] was even without language before the arrival of the exiles. It was Miranda, the civil virgin, who, out of pity, taught Caliban to "know thine own meaning" (I, 2). Yet, the gift of language also inscribes a power relation as the other is hailed and recognizes himself as a linguistic subject of the master language. Caliban's refusal marks him as obdurate yet he must voice this in a curse in the language of civility. (Dollimore, J.&Sinfield, A. 1994:61)

The language is "a tool of colonial domination and as a means of constructing identity" (Orkin, M. & Loomba, A. 2004: 22). There is, however, obviously much more here one might point to as an allegory on European colonial or capitalist practices:

One might well argue that the presentation of Caliban is itself a very European perception of alien New World cultures, and thus Prospero's moral authority rests on a complete inability to see the natives as fully cultured human beings, in other words, on his European mind set, which automatically labels those different from Europeans as ugly, uncivilized, and threatening "others." (Johnston 1999)

Thus in a quote that is often cited by anti-colonialist critics Caliban famously cries: "You taught me language; and my profit on't is I know how to curse" (*The Tempest* 1.2.517-518) and he goes on further to wish "the red plague rid you for teaching me your language!" (ibid.518-519) and thereby clearly not sharing Miranda's view that she has done him a great service:

Caliban however does recognize the importance of education, citing Prospero's books as the source of all of his magical power and when Stephano and Trinculo fail to see the importance of the books and are more interested in the fine clothes they find, Caliban is incredibly scathing of them. (Smith 1916)

Unlike most of Shakespeare's plays the origins of *The Tempest* could not be claimed with certainty. Amongst the most probable sources for the play are the essay *Of The Cannibals* (1580) by Michel de Montaigne and *The Bermuda Pamphlets*,

records of a miraculous survival of the passengers of the ship "Sea Venture" on one of the Bermuda isles in 1609 (Hulme 1986: 91). Drawing to this source *The Tempest* itself begins with a shipwreck near a seemingly uninhabited island:

Ariel: Safely in harbour

Is the king's ship; in the deep nook, where once

Thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew

From the still-vex'd *Bermoothes*, there she's hid. (*The Tempest* 1.2.226-229)

Despite the first impressions of the shipwrecked crew the island is not uninhabited – Miranda and her father Prospero, the former Duke of Milan rule the island. They are not native to the island and their slave Caliban conveys the account of how they seized the power over the island:

This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,

Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,

Thou strok'st me and made much of me; wouldst give me

Water with berries in't; and teach me how

To name the bigger light, and how the less,

That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee,

And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,

The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place, and fertile.

Curs'd be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!

For I am all the subjects that you have,

Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me

In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me

The rest o' th' island. (*The Tempest* 1.2.331-344)

Caliban's recapitulation of past events here in its core is his narrative of the creation of the colonial *Other*. The play is "imbued with an unequivocal colonial context" (Mooneeram 2009:156). By claiming the island from its original ruler and wanting to make it 'civilized' Prospero seizes the control over the island and assumes the role of the master. He calls Caliban the worst names he is able to think of such as "poisonous slave" (1.2.468), "thou earth" (1.2.455), "hag seed" (1.2.520), "whelp" (1.2.405), "poor credulous monster" (2.2.1231), "demi-devil" (5.1.2341). Prospero also keeps him in a cave, away from himself and his daughter Miranda clearly showing Caliban's role as subordinate.

Caliban, however, refuses to be subordinated. His narrative of the past and present state of affairs undermines Prospero's narrative of 'civilizing' the island. Very much like Prospero, Caliban too wishes to become a colonial historian (Hulme 1986: 125) but the subaltern voice of the *other* does not manage to contradict the official narrative of history voiced by Prospero. Until the latter half of the twentieth century critics have been listing Prospero's virtues and qualities, especially his ability to forgive his brother's misdeeds². They have not been as detailed in observing Prospero's manipulative and scheming ways. He is the one who is controlling the events throughout the play through magic and manipulation. Prospero's retelling of past events to Miranda and Ariel in act one does much more than merely filling the audience in on the story lying at hand. His story also illustrates how Prospero maintains his power, through sorcery and, most notably through language:

Language, for Prospero and Miranda, is a means to knowing oneself, and Caliban has in their view shown nothing but scorn for this precious gift of language. Self-knowledge for Caliban, however, is not empowering. It is only a constant reminder of how he is different from Miranda and Prospero and how they have changed him from what he once was. Caliban's only hope for an identity separate from those who have invaded his home is to use what they have given him against them. (ibid.)

The introduction of Caliban at the beginning of the play gives Prospero another chance to repeat the history that he had told Ariel just a few moments ago. The reader discovers during Caliban and Prospero's confrontation that Prospero initially "made much of" Caliban (*The Tempest*, 2.2.336), that Caliban showed him around the island and that Prospero later imprisoned Caliban after he had taken all he could take from him. We hear of the island's former ruler, the witch Sycorax and how Prospero took control over her island and over her son Caliban, as well.

Only in recent few decades Prospero's flaws seem to have come out into the foreground and he and Caliban are being viewed "as archetypes of the colonizer and the colonized" (Hulme 1986: 125):

Thou most lying slave,
Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have used thee,
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodged thee
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate. (*The Tempest* 1.2.496-499)

⁶ See essay by Amanda Mabillard: „Forgiveness and Reconciliation in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*“, also by Lindsay Nemelka “The Pseudo-Forgiveness of Prospero in *The Tempest*.”

In order to justify inhumane treatment of Caliban, Prospero uses the clichéd attitude towards the sexually insatiable *other*. This cliché was deconstructed by Fanon claiming that "unconscious neurotic tendencies" are at work here (Fanon 2008: 80) by means of projecting one's own forbidden desires to the *other*. The presence of the colonized subjects in the vicinity of daughters, wives and mothers makes the colonizer afraid and angry as they think that the colonized subjects "are just waiting for the chance to jump on white women" (ibid.). Assigning sexual deviance to the colonized will become a frequent practice in labeling the *other*. Shakespeare was among the first writers to notice this practice of the colonizer and Fanon named it "The Prospero Complex" (ibid.). Whether Caliban actually tried to rape Miranda is not easy to discern. His reply to the charges brought forth by Prospero:

O ho, O ho! would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else
This isle with Calibans. (*The Tempest* 1.1.501-503)

This can be interpreted as spiting the colonizer because Caliban is not as base as he is depicted to be. He rebels against Prospero in every turn. He does everything he can to enrage his conqueror. In accordance to this interpretation one can also note Caliban's seemingly honest praise of Miranda when he talks to Stephano:

The beauty of his daughter; he himself
Calls her a nonpareil: I never saw a woman,
But only Sycorax my dam and she;
But she as far surpasseth Sycorax
As great'st does least.
[...]
Ay, lord; she will become thy bed, I warrant.
And bring thee forth brave brood. (*The Tempest* 3.2.1495-1501)

This "brood" is where the Prospero's essential problem with Caliban lies. Caliban's and Miranda's children would be hybrids whose existence would erase the difference between master and slave, the colonizer and the colonized and it is something that would bring into question the authority the colonizer holds over the colonized:

"Hybridity [...] becomes a third term which can never in fact be third because, as a monstrous inversion, a miscreated perversion of its progenitors, it exhausts the differences between them" (Young 1995: 22).

Erasing the differences between himself and Caliban terrifies Prospero as that would mean that the positions of power would change. If his role as a colonizer is not a *natural* one he will not be able to insist on being dominant. Caliban, on the other hand, aspires to become as close to the white master as possible. A relationship with a white woman would make this possible, metaphorically. This mechanism is described by Fanon:

"By loving me she proves that I am worthy of white love. I am loved like a white man.

I am a white man. [...] When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine." (Fanon 2008: 45)

Caliban's attempt to be with Miranda, either being by attempted rape or by a legitimate courtship³, was very likely inspired by his desire to regain his status as the ruler of the island. This he attempts by erasing the difference between himself and Prospero. It was precisely Caliban's attempt to rape Miranda, it will be recalled, which lost him Prospero's original affection (Nevo 1987:140) and thus:

Caliban, "the poisonous slave got by the devil himself"; "hagseed"; "freckled help"; "filth"; "earth", once the recipient of Prospero's affection [...] now becomes the object of his unmitigated hatred and contempt (ibid.)

Any privilege that Caliban might have had before are now diminished and he is left to the mercy of Stephano and Trinculo, a butler and a jester respectively, who continue the dehumanization of the rightful owner of the island by stripping Caliban of his privileges as a native of the very island that they wish to conquer. In order to cement his hegemonic position Prospero presents his narrative which describes him as being an educator tasked with civilizing Caliban:

Abhorred slave,
Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
Being capable of all ill! I pitied thee,
Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour
One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,
Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
A thing most brutish, I endow'd thy purposes
With words that made them known. But thy vile race,
Though thou didst learn, had that in't which
good natures

Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
Deservedly confined into this rock,
Who hadst deserved more than a prison. (*The Tempest* 1.2.504-516)

Miranda's speech displays how the aforementioned mission of "civilizing" is being done. It is based on mimicking. According to Bhabha *mimicking* is a means of turning a colonized being into a civilized one. It is a desire for a "reformed, recognizable *Other* as a subject of one difference that is almost the same but not completely" (Bhabha 2004: 161). The addition of "not completely" is the key here for understanding the mission of civilizing – Caliban can never become Prospero. The difference between them is impossible to overcome.

Teaching the colonized language of the colonizer is an integral part of imperialism. Caliban denounces the imposed language because on a subconscious level he realizes that he is enslaved through language. Language of the colonized makes him think within the frame of the same conceptual categories as the colonizer. To Caliban English will always be an imposed language, the tongue of the usurper. Therefore Caliban uses his master's language to curse and swear – for he will not be a slave to "your tongue" (*The Tempest* 1.2.462). Interestingly, Caliban's cursing makes Prospero reciprocate in the same fashion thereby "reducing the eloquent master of civil language to the raucous registers of the other" (Brown 1994: 61). The play abounds in examples of this notion. For example, when Caliban swears "The red plague rid you For learning me your language!" Prospero replies with threats:

Prospero: Hag-seed, hence!
[...]
If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly
What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar
That beasts shall tremble at thy din. (*The Tempest* 1.2.520-526.)

Such an exchange of insults reveals that on the level of language there is no real difference between Caliban and Prospero and by the same analogy between the colonizer and the colonized.

³ See Hulme 1986

The next step Prospero undertakes to create the image of the *other* is to present Caliban as subhuman. Negating Caliban's humanity is done explicitly by employing the language of zoology: Caliban is a "whelp" (*The Tempest* 1.2.417), a "tortoise" (*The Tempest* 1.2.462), a "beast" (*The Tempest* 1.2.527), but this notion is also implied between the lines. This implication is interesting as Miranda says in act two scene one that Ferdinand is the third man she saw in her life (after Prospero and Caliban) while in act three talking to Ferdinand again, she excludes Caliban from belonging to humanity:

Miranda: Nor have I seen
More that I may call me than you, good friend,
And my dear father. (*The Tempest* 3.1.1338-1340)

Portraying the colonized subject as "a non-human *Other*" (Spivak 1999: 180) is very characteristic of the imperialistic discourse. According to Spivak the animal/human border is deliberately left unclear so as to justify the mission of civilizing *the other*. Kant's categorical imperative, to act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end, imperialism brings down to "turn the wild man into a human so he can be treated as his own purpose" (Spivak 1999: 182). However, before the process of civilizing the *other* he can be used as a *thing*. Prospero explains why he tolerates Caliban:

We cannot miss him: he does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood and serves in offices
That profit us. (*The Tempest* 1.2.456-458)

Caliban is represented as an inhumane *other* that can be used and abused as desired. This manner of representation ensures that the colonizer can exploit him. The portrayal of Caliban as half man half animal is almost mythical:

Trinculo: (seeing Caliban)
What have we here? a man or a fish? Dead or
Alive? A fish: he smells like a fish; a very ancient and
Fish-like smell; kind of not-of-the-newest Poor-John. A
Strange fish! Were I in England now, as once I was, and
Had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but
Would give a piece of silver. There would this monster
Make a man; any strange beast there makes a man; when
They will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they

Will lay out ten to see a dead Indian. Legg'd like a
Man, and his fins like arms! Warm, o' my troth! I do now
Let loose my opinion; hold it no longer: this is no
Fish, but an islander, that hath lately suffered by
Thunderbolt. (*The Tempest* 2.2.1109-1121)

From Trinculo's description of Caliban, it would seem that the actor who was playing the part of Caliban was costumed like a composite being, part man and part fish (Egan, 2007: 205). This idea of composite identity of Caliban is taken even further when Trinculo joins Caliban under the gabardine and the two of them together are mistaken for a strange looking native by the drunken Stephano (2.2.1148-1156):

STEPHANO: What's the matter? Have we devils here? Do you
Put tricks upon 's with savages and men of Ind? Ha! I
Have not scap'd drowning to be afeard now of your four
Legs [...]
This is some monster of the isle with four legs,
Who hath got, as I take it, an ague

Once Trinculo and Stephano are separated from their group, they assume mastery over Caliban, whom they five times call 'moon calf' (*The Tempest*, 2.2.1194, 2.2.2000, 2.2.1222; and *The Tempest*, 3.2.1416, 3.2.1417). One may wonder what should Caliban look like; whether he is a man or a monster? Caliban is referred to as a 'monster' forty four times throughout the play (Egan 2007: 206). He is best observed physically when opposed to the airy spirit Ariel:

The one is a Mayblossom suspended in the azure; the other is half man and half brute, condensed and gross in feeling, he has the dawning of understanding without reason or the moral sense, he shows the approach of the brutes to the mental powers of man. He is malicious and cowardly and false; yet different from Shakespeare's merely vulgar knaves. He is rude but not vulgar; he always speaks in verse. He has a vocabulary of his own. [...]

Caliban is one of the dramatist's masterpieces. He has attracted attention from the first thinkers of every age. He is wild, deformed, irregular, neither man nor brute, the essence of grossness without vulgarity. He comes from the dark soil, of the earth [...] Here is a savage with a child's simplicity. What a curious mixture of devil and man and beast! Evil he desires for its piquancy. He thinks gross injustice has been done him and believes himself a slave. [...]

He is laughably horrible, a specimen to be examined more than a creature to be execrated; at times he shows great prudence, and again he roars with hate. Yet Shakespeare grants him some

instincts of goodness, we meet him when full grown and a victim of heredity. Miranda taught him, and Prospero stroked him when young. He is a land-fish, a dullard, service to him is slavery; his fins are like arms, some have thought him the missing link between man and brute [...]. He is the natural man, uneducated and untrained, the creature in the rough, the material for evolution, allied to the ape, and ages will be required to lift him to his proper height. Prospero sends pains on him, and cramps, and side-stitches. He has memory, for he recalls how he was taught to name the bigger light, and how the less; he knew all the springs and brine-pits of the mystic isle. Language was taught him but he uses it only to curse. (Smith 1916)

One of the reasons why critics have questioned Caliban's humanity is his brutishness. He conspires against Prospero and is very content when contemplating on the bloodshed that he hopes will ensue

Caliban: Having first seized his books, or with a log
Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake,
Or cut his wezand with thy knife. Remember
First to possess his books; for without them
He's but a sot, as I am, (*The Tempest* 3.2.1484-1488)

Caliban is full of anger and resentment but these feelings are not without reason because Prospero had proven equally violent. For example the punishment he imparts to his enemies is, in his opinion, equal to the gravity of the crime they had committed:

Prospero: Go charge my goblins that they grind their joints
With dry convulsions, shorten up their sinews
With aged cramps, and more pinch-spotted make them
Than pard or cat o' mountain. (*The Tempest* 4.1.2002-2005)

Prospero's cruelty is not directed just against Caliban but also towards obedient and loyal servants such as Ariel. Unlike Caliban, Ariel obediently serves Prospero and addresses him humbly as "great master" (*The Tempest*, 1.2.108) and "grave sir" (*The Tempest*, 1.2.307). Just in one scene in act one Ariel addresses Prospero as "sir" nine times. Despite this even to the smallest hint of insubordination, for example when Ariel asks for the freedom he was promised, Prospero will use swear words very much like Caliban. The insults he showers Ariel with are perhaps a shade smaller than the ones he imparts to Caliban: "thou malignant thing" (*The Tempest* 1.2.391), "moody" (*The Tempest* 1.2.373), "my slave" (*The Tempest* 1.2.451), "dull thing" (*The Tempest* 1.2.422), but his threats towards Ariel have the same gravity:

Prospero: 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. (*The Tempest* 1.2.432-434)

Essentially Prospero threatens to imprison Caliban in the same way as Caliban's mother Sycorax did, who is Prospero's despised Other, "the foul witch" (*The Tempest*, 1.2.392) and "the blue-eyed hag" (*The Tempest*, 1.2.405). Ironically Prospero insists on her being cruel without realizing that he is very similar to her. Herself being an exile, she took the island to herself much earlier than Prospero did and in doing so she became its first colonizer (Skura 2004: 822). She was the one who imprisoned Ariel and Prospero threatens to do the same to the smallest hint of disobedience. Ariel used to serve Sycorax and now he is in the service of Prospero, both of them being magicians but while we have no clear insight into the kind of magic Sycorax used, Prospero's magic becomes tainted by the end of act four when he charges his spirits morphed into hunting dogs to torment Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo. This scene alludes to the Spaniards who used hunting dogs to torture Indians, which was considered extremely cruel in Shakespeare's time (Hulme 1986: 133-134).

Prospero's control over Caliban rests on his ability to master him through the power of words, and the closer Caliban comes to outdoing Prospero in their feud, the closer he comes to achieving his freedom from Prospero:

You taught me language, and my profit on't
Is I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
For learning me your language! (*The Tempest* 1.2.517-519)

This speech, delivered by Caliban to Prospero and Miranda, makes clear in a very concise form the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer that lies at the heart of this play. The son of a witch, perhaps half-man and half-monster, his name a near-anagram of "cannibal," Caliban represents the archetypal "savage" figure in a play that is much concerned with colonization and the controlling of wild environments. Caliban and Prospero have different narratives to explain their current relationship. Caliban sees Prospero as purely oppressive while Prospero claims that he has cared for and educated Caliban, or did until Caliban tried to rape Miranda. Prospero's narrative is one in which Caliban remains ungrateful for the help and civilization he has received from the Milanese Duke.

We see once again here how important language is in *The Tempest*. Whether written or spoken, the need for human beings to communicate is pivotal to our social

development and so language is the first thing to be passed on from colonizer to the colonized:

The politics of language, [...], the acutely uneven relations of power highlighting the civilizing mission of Englishness when it encounters the 'Other', the lure of subversion, and an obsession with commotion which is overtly reflected in the very title – all combine to make of the rewriting of this play a compelling and resolute postcolonial endeavour (Mooneeram 2009: 143)

One can notice this in *The Tempest* as Caliban has been taught English by Prospero and Miranda and "he seems to speak it with a certain amount of fluency" (Smith 1916). *The Tempest* shows us how the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized can seem to be mutually beneficial but also details the descent of this relationship into hatred and betrayal. It is also a study that delves deep into the psychology of the colonized party.

The way in which Caliban meets Trinculo and Stephano in act three is also very important. This scene dramatizes the initial encounter between an almost completely isolated, "primitive" culture and a foreign, "civilized" one.

Throughout *The Tempest*, as almost every character, from the lord Gonzalo to the drunk Stephano, ponders on how he would rule the island on which the play is set if he were its king. (ibid.)

The reader can see these events in act two, scene two, with Trinculo and Stephano in the place of Prospero. Stephano calls Caliban a "brave monster" (*The Tempest*, 2.2.1275) as they set off singing around the island. In addition, Stephano and Trinculo give Caliban wine, which Caliban finds to be "celestial liquor" (*The Tempest* 2.2.1205). Moreover, Caliban initially mistakes Stephano and Trinculo for Prospero's spirits, but alcohol convinces him that Stephano is a "brave god" (ibid.) and decides unconditionally to "kneel to him" (*The Tempest* 2.2.1206). This scene shows the foreign, civilized culture as decadent and manipulative. Stephano and Trinculo can be seen a grotesque, parody version of Prospero upon his arrival to the island. In a similar manner Caliban sees them as godlike characters.

Caliban has his moment in act three where his striking and apparently heartfelt speech about the sounds of the island is to be heard. Reassuring the others not to worry about Ariel's piping, Caliban says:

The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices,

That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that, when I waked,
I cried to dream again. (*The Tempest* 3.2.1533-1541)

In his speech, we are reminded of Caliban's very close connection to the island. It is a connection we have seen previously only in his speeches about showing Prospero or Stephano which streams to drink from and which berries to pick (*The Tempest* 1.2.486 and 2.2.1246). After all, Caliban is not only a symbolic "native" in the colonial allegory of the play. He is also an *actual native* of the island, having been born there after his mother Sycorax came there. Throughout much of the play, Shakespeare seems to side with powerful figures such as Prospero against weaker figures such as Caliban, allowing us to think, with Prospero and Miranda, that Caliban is merely a monster. However, in this scene he takes an extraordinary step of briefly giving the monster a voice. Because of this short speech, Caliban becomes a more understandable character, and even, for the moment at least, a sympathetic one. Just when Caliban seems to have debased himself completely and to have become a purely ridiculous figure, Shakespeare gives him this speech and reminds the audience that Caliban has something within himself that Prospero, Stephano, Trinculo, and the audience itself generally cannot see or refuse to see. Caliban's speech is most remarkable and compelling largely because of how different it is from anything he has said before. This poetic speech changes our perception of Caliban. It reveals a deeply tragic side of him; suddenly we see that his curses and his drunkenness make tragic sense: since the arrival of Prospero, the island's beauty is no longer Caliban's. *The Tempest* shows us how the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is sustained through the use of language. By describing Caliban's love of nature which redeems the character to some extent in the eyes of the audience, Shakespeare refuses to paint the picture of *the other* as completely dark. Caliban has become one with his island and this become irrefutable after he speaks to Stephano in act two:

I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
And I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts;
Show thee a jay's nest and instruct thee how
To snare the nimble marmoset; I'll bring thee
To clustering filberts and sometimes I'll get thee
Young scamels from the rock. (*The Tempest* 2.2.1253-1258)

This side of Caliban's personality was a basis for the critics to assume that his character was based on Montaigne's "cannibals". In his essay *On The Cannibals* this contemporary of Shakespeare is surprisingly affectionate towards the American Natives: "There is nothing barbarous and savage in that nation [...]" (Montaigne 1958: 152). They live in harmony with the nature, they are very braving, endurable and not prone to lying. It is the encounter with the white man that will corrupt them in the end. Indeed the play does not offer an insight into Caliban's character prior to Prospero's arrival to the island. Even his name being an anagram of cannibal, the product of a match between a witch and the devil, a character identified with earthiness. He seems to be ruled by his lower appetites (sexual and bodily needs), psychologically unable to connect with his soul (as in water) or rise spiritually (as with air) or emotionally (as with fire). This only leaves a connection with earth that stands in line with baseness, coarseness, and bestiality. Caliban is, however, no cannibal. He feeds on fruits, berries and fish and very much like Montaigne's "cannibals" he lives in harmony with nature. By signifying the other as cannibal Shakespeare undermines Prospero's stereotypical portrayal of the *other* as unscrupulous, backward and inhuman. Caliban is also deformed. He is unlike *others* in appearance and assumed to be defective. Thus we have his identification in postmodern productions with slaves in Prospero's colonial project. Shakespeare does not sympathize with him, yet he does give him enough intelligence to know that he's been robbed by Prospero's "colonial" enterprise, see that his hoped-for accomplices are indeed fools, and know when to ask for forgiveness for his rebellion.

By glorifying Caliban, very much like Montaigne, Shakespeare structures a critique of his contemporary English society in his play. The same equality and the freedom that is can be found anywhere in nature around us is nowhere to be found in the very inception of racism. Sebastian resents Alonso for marrying his daughter to an African:

Sir, you may thank yourself for this great loss,
That would not bless our Europe with your daughter,
But rather lose her to an African (*The Tempest*, 2.1.825-827).

Instead of marrying his daughter to "our Europe" (ibid.) Sebastian shows his condescending view of the *other*. Gonzalo, on the other hand is given as an antithesis to Sebastian with a different worldview. Apart from Ferdinand, Gonzalo is portrayed as a pure and at times one could assume that Shakespeare speaks through him. For example when he is painting the picture of his perfect society:

I' the commonwealth I would by contraries
Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
No occupation; all men idle, all;
And women too, but innocent and pure;
No sovereignty;--
[...]
All things in common nature should produce
Without sweat or endeavour: treason, felony,
Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
Would I not have; but nature should bring forth,
Of its own kind, all foison, all abundance,
To feed my innocent people. (*The Tempest*, 2.1.856-874).

One can notice here that Shakespeare glorifies the *natural state* as well as Montaigne did in his essay. Montaigne calls the natural state "happy" and it coincides with Gonzalo's imaginary state. Barbarians have "no science", "no contract", "no dividends", "no ownership", "no lies", "and no fraud" (Montaigne 1958: 13). Julia Kristeva claimed Montaigne to be "the first antiracist", and "the first ant-colonialist" (Kristeva 1991: 122). It seems as Shakespeare considered him such a regard as well and he even used the same words as him in Gonzalo's speech above. Both Shakespeare and Montaigne use words „traffic“, „letters“, „riches“, „poverty“, „use of service“, „contract“, „succession“, „the golden age“⁴. The key difference between the two authors is that the voice of the *other* not as loud in Montaigne as it is in Shakespeare. The subaltern *other* voices their narrative in *The Tempest* by undermining the colonizer's narrative and calling their reality in an ironic phrase "a brave new world" (*The Tempest* 5.1.2235) – which is a world of unequal opportunities, unfair power relations, a world of supremacy of one race over the other, a world of subjugation and exploitation.

⁴ It is almost impossible that this is a coincidence

For over a century, and particularly in the past twenty years, a number of interpreters have taken a very different approach to this play, seeing in it the exploration of some particularly relevant political issues:

The English critic, William Hazlitt, was the first to point out (in 1818) that Prospero had usurped Caliban from his rule of the island and was thus an agent of imperialism. Since then such an approach to the play (with various modifications) has remained more or less current, although only in recent decades has it become widespread in North America. (Smith 1916)

In taking charge of a place which is not his and in exerting his European authority over non-European creatures, Prospero is obviously a symbol for European colonial power, "with which England was growing increasingly familiar during Shakespeare's lifetime" (Johnston 1999). The relationship between the colonizer and the colonized remains ambivalent until the end of the play. Prospero's statement "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" (*The Tempest* V, I) can be interpreted in two ways. As Skura claims, he possibly reclaims Caliban as his own property (Skura 2004: 822). However, in the light of previous forgiveness and repentance that precede this statement one could observe these words, at least for one moment, as Prospero's attempt to sympathize with Caliban by recognizing he had projected his dark *other* onto Caliban. Prospero seems to have understood the unconscious mechanisms behind the creating of the *other*. This *other* is his reflection in the mirror, an unconscious carrier of his own dark desires and fears.

Having in mind that language operates in *The Tempest* as a means of establishing colonial dominion we can observe the play as a reflection of England's colonial expansion. In such a rendering Shakespeare's island itself is a symbol of a colony. In this allegoric colony one could say that Caliban is merely a stereotype, reaffirming cultural ideas about black sexuality and the desire for colonization on the part of the colonized, but then we also see more to Caliban throughout the course of the play. Constructing the narrative of the other around Caliban makes him seem inferior. This justifies his subsequent exploitation by Prospero. His usage of language in creating his own narrative is pivotal in establishing the colonial history of the colonizer and signifying the *other* as lesser and subhuman. In *The Tempest* language is used as a weapon of subjugation of the colonized. However, Caliban uses the language that was imposed onto him to defy the colonizer and in doing so manages in the eyes of contemporary audiences to reaffirm his status as the islands true ruler.

REFERENCES:

1. Bhabha, Homi (2004), *The Location of Culture*, Routledge: London
2. Brown, Paul (1994), 'This Thing of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine': The Tempest and the discourse of colonialism. In: J. Dollimore and A. Sinfield (eds.). *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 48–71.
3. de Montaigne, Michel (1958), "The Complete Essays of Michel de Montaigne", translated by D. M. Frame. Stanford University Press. Stanford
4. Dollimore, Jonathan, Alan Sinfield (1994), *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*. Manchester University Press, Manchester
5. Egan, Gabriel (2007), *Shakespeare*, Edinburgh University Press Ltd. Edinburgh
6. Fanon, Frantz (2008), *Black Skin, White Masks*. Pluto Press. London
7. Hart, Jonathan (2003), *Columbus, Shakespeare and the Representation of the New World*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York
8. Hulme, Peter (1986), *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
9. Johnston, Ian (1999), "You Can Go Home Again, Can't You? An Introduction to *The Tempest*" *Johnstonia.com* [online] dostupno na <http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/eng366/lectures/tempest.htm> [pristupljeno 17.4.2017.]
10. Kristeva, Julia (1991), *Strangers to Ourselves*, translated by L. S. Roudiez. Columbia University Press. New York
11. Mooneeream, Roshni (2009), *From Creole to Standard: Shakespeare, Language and Literature in a Postcolonial Context*, Cross Cultures, Amsterdam - New York.
12. Nevo, Ruth (1987), *Shakespeare's Other Language*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
13. Orkin, Martin, Annia Loomba, (2004), *Postcolonial Shakespeares*, Routledge London – New York.
14. Shakespeare, William (1996), "The Tempest", in: *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, 1135-1159*, The Shakespeare Head Press, London
15. Skura, Meredith Anne (2004), "Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in The Tempest". In: R. McDonald (Ed.). *8 Shakespeare: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory, 1945-2000*, 817–844, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford

16. Smith, F. Hyatt (1916), "Shakespeare Studies: Papers Read Before the Literary Clinic" *Theatre History Online* [online] dostupno na <http://www.theatrehistory.com/british/caliban.html>[pristupljeno 15.4.2017.]
17. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty (1999), *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, Cambridge Harvard College Press,
18. Young, Robert (1995), *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge.

“MRMLJANJE K’O U DIVLJE ZVIJERI”: JEZIK U SLUŽBI KOLONIJALIZMA U ŠEKSPIROVOJ *OLUJI*

Prikaz Calibana iz *Oluje* je prototipičan primjer predstavljanja *drugoga* i *drugosti* u Shakespeareovim djelima. Caliban je opisan kao divljak i deformisani rob koji je također čudovište, čudnovata riba odvratnog mirisa kao i obična roba kojom bi se moglo zaraditi dosta novca kada bi ga pokazivali kao nakazu u Engleskoj. Jezik kojim se kolonijalni diskurs služi u *Oluji* prikazuje Calibana kao neljudsko biće i time se opravdava nehumani odnos prema njemu. Konstanto ga se opisuje u konotaciji sa metaforama za zemlju (dok se Ariel opisuje metaforama za zrak). Sukladno tome Caliban je prašnjav, hrapav, snažan i surov. No u liku Calibana se nazire dubina jer je on svjestan povijesti otoka i činjenice da je njegova majka vladala njime prije Prospera čime je on njen pravi nasljednik. Vrijedaju ga Prosperovi i Mirandini pokušaji da mu nametnu svoj jezik dok je u svojoj seksualnoj nesputanoati čak pokušao da siluje Mirandu. Štaviše, teret koji mu Prospero tovari postaje toliko težak da situacija konačno rezultira Calibanovom pobunom. Kao takav Caliban je sama suština *drugosti*. Iako mu je suđeno da bude podvrgnut željama svog tlačitelja on jezikom podriva Prosperov utjecaj i preispituje njegov autoritet kolonijalnog vladara nad otokom.

Ključne riječi: postkolonijalizam, *drugost*, Shakespeare, Caliban, Prospero, kolonijalizam

Adresa autora

Authors' address

Alen Avdić

Tuzla

avdic.alen@yahoo.com