

## Stormy Weather: Misreading the Postcolonial *Tempest*

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“Stormy Weather” is dedicated to the memory of Francis Barker (1952-1999), close friend and colleague. I would have enjoyed our arguments about it.

1. This essay was written and submitted to *Early Modern Culture* before Alan Sinfield’s “Selective Quotation” appeared, with the reponse by David Siar, and the response to them both by Richard Levin, so the similarity of topic is a coincidence; but a nice one inasmuch as Sinfield and Levin both feature here, though not centrally.<sup>1</sup> Although written separately, and focussing exclusively on *The Tempest*, “Stormy Weather” now appears as the fourth contribution to a debate about quotation, paraphrase, and misreading.<sup>2</sup> The final paragraphs relate my essay to this larger debate.

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2. One Friday morning, late in 1983, Francis Barker and I had travelled down to London to take part in one of a series of meetings that Methuen had organised for discussion of the *Alternative Shakespeares* volume which John Drakakis was editing, and to which we were contributing an essay on *The Tempest*, which I’ll refer to here simply as “Nymphs and Reapers” (Barker and Hulme 1985). Over coffee before the meeting started, Kate Belsey was muttering to herself about a book called *Reconstructing Literature*, reviewed that day in *The Times Literary Supplement*, which contained an essay by John Holloway (1983) deeply critical of her 1980 book *Critical Practice*. She had some sympathy, she said, for Holloway’s criticism of her maladroit prose. At lunchtime, in order to quell a nagging suspicion, she looked up several of Holloway’s quotations from *Critical Practice*. They weren’t in the book. What had apparently happened was that Holloway had taken extensive notes, and had then written his essay from the notes without reference back to Belsey’s book. An easy mistake to make, after all; and one for which we would nowadays give our students a zero and allow them to write another essay. Unfortunately, it’s not quite so easy to give published essays a second chance; but then nobody, in any case, took much notice of *Reconstructing Literature*.<sup>3</sup>

3. This anecdote has always remained inseparable from “Nymphs and reapers” for me. It offers a rather frightening limit case of what we all now ‘know’ as one of the accepted truths about language but find difficult to come to terms with: that, once published, once in the public domain, words are open to all kinds of (mis)interpretations over which we have very little control. What happened to *Critical Practice* in Holloway’s essay was a misreading in one of the clearest possible senses of the word: no defence was offered because none could be adequate. To point out that ham-fisted paraphrase had been offered as quotation was enough to remove all credibility from the essay. Would that it were always so easy. Quotations are not usually fictitious, just out of context or cobbled together from different paragraphs; paraphrases of our words are often – for us – tendentious, often miss the nub of our meaning. If we had wanted to use so few words to convey the complexity of our thought, we would have done so; but we needed them all. It’s something of a paradox that literary criticism should have gained enormously in the sophistication of its readings over the last 25 years, and yet at the same time writers such as Derrida should spend so much time quoting their own words in order to try to demonstrate that they were not saying what they have been read as saying. Given the enormously increased volume of critical writing, the assistance which we can now get through online searches, and the fashion for comprehensive reviews of everything ever written on a particular subject, we are all now more likely than ever to find academic summaries of our own words boomeranging back to us. At the end of his piece Alan Sinfield adopts a slightly world-weary tone about all this: “If Shakespeare has to put up with it, why should lesser mortals complain?” – although he has of course just written his piece precisely in order to complain. I wrote this essay because I think we need to complain, not just to put the record straight, but also to further intellectual conversations which are worth having.
4. The Greenblatts and Bhabhas of the academic world have probably had little option but to develop a thick skin: in any case they could hardly keep up with tendentious accounts of their work. Those of us who have only ever written a couple of pieces which anybody seems to have read no doubt find it easier to check on how we are quoted and summarised. Fifteen years on, “Nymphs and Reapers” (along with the associated chapter, “Prospero and Caliban”, from my 1986 book *Colonial Encounters*, and the earlier essay, “Hurricanes in the Caribbees” (1981)) have been quite frequently cited in the extraordinary explosion of writing about *The Tempest*, usually read as exemplary of the ‘New Historicist’ or ‘Cultural Materialist’ or ‘revisionist’ or ‘political’ or ‘colonialist’ or ‘postcolonial’ approaches to the play. This essay takes the opportunity to read the readings and to try to reflect on some of the issues that they raise. Constantly to complain about

misleading paraphrases and quotations out of context would be tedious. I look at some examples here only because this whole question relates intimately to the reading of *The Tempest* itself.

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5. A couple of months after *Alternative Shakespeares* had appeared, Howard Felperin came to Essex to give a departmental seminar. He began by announcing that he was going to talk about New Historicism, and that Essex was an appropriate place for such a talk since the Literature department was home to two New Historicists, Francis and myself. We looked at each other in some puzzlement since neither of us had heard this strange phrase before. Felperin's labelling was at the time a mystifying but in no sense hostile or mischievous categorisation.
6. The question of categorisation, always problematic, is clearly unavoidable if a wide range of material is being discussed in a restricted compass. One has to recognise that some distance is necessary in order to make any groupings feasible; and at the same time recognise that such groupings have an inevitable degree of mystification and arbitrariness about them. The problem usually comes when the label is read *instead* of analysing the contents of the bottle. I'm not going to spend time contesting the current labels. Felperin's own writings (1990a, 1990b) distinguished between New Historicism as a U.S. phenomenon and Cultural Materialism as its British equivalent – but with differences. There are proper histories to be written of both, but it should at least be understood that Cultural Materialism is a programme launched with the volume *Political Shakespeare*, including a manifesto written by the editors, and an afterword by the perceived progenitor of the cultural materialist approach, Raymond Williams.<sup>4</sup> From across the Atlantic, the positions of Hawkes-Belsey, Sinfield-Dollimore, or Drakakis-Holderness – to coin some double-barrelled critics to set alongside the Barker-Hulme invented by Edward Pechter (1991: 83) – might seem broadly similar: they've all clearly read too much post-structuralist theory, and bring politics into everything. At home the differences within and between all those doubles can often seem more important than the common ground they share, especially when they're sitting across the table from each other.<sup>5</sup> Where that matters for my purposes is that critics often read what they *expect* to see argued rather than what the words on the page actually say, and I assume that they do this because having labelled, say, Drakakis as a Cultural Materialist, and having read a cogent defence of a particular position put forward by, say, Sinfield, arch-Cultural Materialist, they conclude that Drakakis *qua* Cultural Materialist must hold Sinfield's position – and proceed to discover it in his words. Richard Levin actually offers a text-book case of this misreading when he quotes phrases such as

“actual diversity” and “in fact the key to the play” as examples of what he calls “Leaking Relativism”,<sup>6</sup> while merely assuming – but failing to find evidence – of an actual relativism from which these remarks are supposed to ‘leak’.

7. I have to risk my own simplifications in categorising recent readings of *The Tempest*. For my purposes here, the distinctions between New Historicism and Cultural Materialism – however those terms are used – are not significant; and neither is the related question of differences between U.S. and British approaches. Anachronistically, I’ll use the term “postcolonial” as a shorthand to refer to readings that have emphasised the importance of colonial questions to *The Tempest*. (In the 1980s these readings were sometimes simply called “revisionist” (Skura 1989: 43)).
8. There would obviously be many different ways of categorising the responses to postcolonial readings of *The Tempest*. What strikes me as significant are two tendencies (which sometimes overlap). The first sees the introduction of colonial questions as constituting part of an unwanted politicisation of Shakespeare. Despite the implications of “Shakespeare Left and Right”, the misleading title given to a series of papers growing out of a session on Shakespeare and ideology at the MLA in 1989, the arguments here are not in any simple sense between ‘left’ and ‘right’ (Kamps 1991). With the single exception of George Will’s outburst (1991), those who have objected to the ‘politicisation’ of Shakespeare have been situated – where their politics have been offered or obvious – on the left, either liberal or socialist (not allowing here for U.S. / British differences). Let me make it clear that I am keen to concede this ground. There may be connections to be made between, on the one hand, ‘radical’ theory and ‘radical’ (left) politics, and on the other ‘traditional’ approaches to the literary text and conservative (right) politics – though my punctuation no doubt suggests some uncertainty with respect to these shorthand terms. However, those putative links don’t interest me here. I’m happy to concede that the traditional defences of Shakespeare, and the more nuanced critiques of postcolonial readings which I’ll address below, are situated in some general sense ‘on the left’. I concede this because I want the discussion to take place on the grounds of reading and scholarship chosen by those who have opposed the postcolonial approach to *The Tempest*: this is a tactical raid rather than the usual elaborate building of defences around one of two entrenched positions.<sup>7</sup>
9. In Britain there is certainly a long tradition of left opposition to ‘Theory’ (which seems to run alongside a predisposition towards reifying what it opposes through use of the upper case). E.P. Thompson’s attack on Althusser and his influence is obviously the standard reference point, but

Nicholas Tredell (against Belsey in *PN Review* and elsewhere), James Wood (against Terence Hawkes in the *London Review of Books* and *The Guardian* [ad nauseam]), and John MacKenzie (against CDT – Colonial Discourse Theory) on Edward Said belong to this tradition.<sup>8</sup>

10. Brian Vickers' *Appropriating Shakespeare* (1993) joins this trend by defending the playwright against what he calls "Current Literary Theory" (CLT). Vickers constructs CLT, a mite simplistically, as basically structuralist and post-structuralist, which allows him to attack Saussure, Derrida, and Foucault, often through invoking the criticisms made of these theorists by the like of, say, Perry Anderson and Peter Dews, and openly aligning himself at the end of his book with Edward Said (1993: 439). He can therefore present himself as (roughly) a left humanist opposed to the pseudo-science of theoretical Marxism (Althusser and Macherey) and of linguistico-psychoanalytic mumbo jumbo (Derrida and Lacan and their weak-kneed English acolytes). The last pages of this very long book are targetted at "Nymphs and Reapers" and also offer a brief defence of the traditional reading of *The Tempest*.
11. *Appropriating Shakespeare* is an indicative title for those who see recent revisionary approaches to Shakespeare's work as involving an unacceptable politicisation of the literary realm. Not even 'misappropriation', because that would presumably leave open the possibility that Shakespeare could be 'correctly' appropriated: the implication has to be that Shakespeare simply *is* and should properly be left *to be*. As readers and audiences and critics we either submit ourselves to the plays or we are guilty of bringing our own contemporary interests to bear, thereby 'appropriating' the plays, taking them from their 'proper' place. Their 'proper' place is the period in which they were written, and Vickers can quite properly call his argument 'historicist', in one of the meanings of that multivalent word.<sup>9</sup>
12. Vickers' reading of *The Tempest* attempts to be historicist in the sense of restoring what he sees as the proper set of historical meanings to the play (what Shakespeare thought he was saying, the language and categories that he had access to) rather than the supposedly *imposed* meanings foisted onto the play by CLT: "Attacks on the dominant ideology... use the plays for modern political purposes, and distort them in order to fulfil their own ideological agenda" (415). So when Vickers defends Kermode's introduction to the Arden edition by asserting that "the dichotomy of art and nature was important in Renaissance thought and in Shakespeare" (416), this is offered as the statement of a simple truth rather than as a politicised interpretation which divests the play of its evident engagement within contemporary ideological discourses.<sup>10</sup>

13. According to Vickers, postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* are guilty of reducing the play to “an allegory about colonialism” with Prospero seen as “an exploitative protocapitalist” and Caliban “an innocent savage, deprived of his legitimate heritage” (242). The postcolonial revisionists have leftist pretensions and therefore tend to see capitalists or protocapitalists in any figure that wields authority, and they are incurably romantic about the Third World and will therefore sentimentalize all natives. The reading of literature has become, for these critics, according to Vickers, a kind of show-trial in which works of literature, amongst them *The Tempest*, are judged in the balance and found guilty of endorsing colonialism and its evils.
14. Vickers tackles the postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* by offering his own version of the traditional reading through the suggestion that the play is offering an implied critique of the humanist equation of *ratio* and *oratio* by its invention of a character, Caliban, who is anomalous within the Great Chain of Being, capable of language but incapable of reason, above the animals but below humanity, a “curious mixture, part-human, part-animal” (244). This is a curious description which Vickers ‘supports’ from the text: “Caliban was the child that Sycorax ‘did litter here, / A freckled whelp hag-born -- not honour’d with / A human shape’ (1.2.283ff)” (244). This won’t be the last we see of these lines. On one level Vickers’ quotation illustrates the simple point that even somebody openly eschewing ‘appropriations’ of the play is perfectly capable of constructing his own meaning by misquotation: the full sentence makes it clear that Prospero was, reluctantly perhaps, including Caliban in the category of those “honour’d with a human shape”:

Then was this island --  
 Save for the son that she did litter here,  
 A freckled whelp, hag-born -- not honoured with  
 A human shape. (1.2.281-4)<sup>11</sup>

15. However, on another level, the words introducing the misquotation are of more significance than the misquotation itself. “Caliban was”, followed by Prospero’s words, indicates Vickers’ assent to precisely the kind of unthinking equation of Prospero’s view with the playwright’s that “Nymphs and Reapers” was trying to contest. The irony here is that Vickers, trapped in the self-reflecting mirrors of that equation, must accept what he is told (could he but read the lines correctly). Were he not blinded by the visor he wears as self-appointed protector of Shakespeare’s plays from the muddled-headed neo-Althusserian Cultural Materialists, he might take the points that Prospero’s views about Caliban and his origins are not necessarily

authoritative, that the interchanges with Ariel and Caliban need to be read in context and with careful attention to the development of Prospero's character, and that the evidence of what happened before the play started comes from more than one source and therefore needs considered assessment. These kinds of arguments – there in “Nymphs and Reapers” and “Prospero and Caliban” – would have opened up a space in which *his* reading of Caliban, not a reading with which I would agree, but nonetheless a tenable reading, could have contributed to the intricate discussion of that character which has flourished over the last twenty years. But, given Vickers' assumptions, if Prospero calls Caliban human, then human he must be; and any suggestion otherwise, such as the one that Vickers makes, must be a dreaded ‘appropriation’ and therefore anathema.

16. At least Vickers is offering some kind of engagement with the arguments he wants to counter. Jonathan Bate has offered a series of off-hand remarks about postcolonial readings of *The Tempest*. In his *Shakespeare and Ovid* (1993) he refers to Greenblatt's “Learning to Curse”, briefly discusses the American materials in the play, and notes that the fact that Shakespeare read Montaigne's essay “Of the Caniballes” is “the most compelling piece of evidence in support of the view that the play is a troubled exploration of imperial and colonial strategies”; only to conclude that “Montaigne and Shakespeare have thus come to the assistance of post-colonial critics who for good reasons need to work through their own guilt about these matters” (243). No references, no trial, just announced guilt. One wonders how this remark might apply to the postcolonial reading offered by, say, Abena Busia, who begins her discussion of the play by saying that she wishes “to write my female African black self back into the text” (1989-90: 82). Not much postcolonial guilt on show there.

17. Two years later, Bate repeats the substance of his point, but in even stronger terms: “Fashionable criticism is interested in assuaging the guilt of empire by making the author of *The Tempest* a scapegoat” (1995: 155). No argument or support is offered for this unusual claim, which I suppose must pass as a psychoanalytical interpretation of postcolonial critics; and Bate moves quickly on to brandish his recent discovery of the “remarkable creative work” done around *The Tempest* in the 1950s and 1960s by the “self-proclaimed Calibans” – Caribbean writers such as George Lamming, Edward Kamau Brathwaite, Aimé Césaire, and Roberto Fernández Retamar. Bate freely admits to his own “shame” at not knowing about this work earlier (what is this obsession with guilt and shame all about?), but assuages such feelings by pointing out that his ignorance has been shared by revisionist writers such as Stephen Greenblatt, Stephen Orgel, and Eric

Cheyfitz (155). Only “a handful of articles by less well-known critics” (156) had begun to break this silence before Bate took up the torch. Ouch! That’s definitely a classy move: if you haven’t read the relevant scholarship, call the critics who wrote it “less well-known” and make sure not to reference them in order to avoid the danger of them becoming better known.<sup>12</sup>

18. Bate’s best-selling *The Genius of Shakespeare* (1997) proved to be really “fashionable criticism”. Fortunately Bate did not transfer that damning term to his book along with the several paragraphs he borrowed from his 1995 essay, but the notion of guilt still has a prominent place: it becomes “the task of literary theory... to assuage the guilt of empire by making the author of *The Tempest* a scapegoat” (241). In addition he has “the new critical radicalism” claiming that the traditional readings of *The Tempest* as Shakespeare’s “summation of his art and his reflections on art” are simply an illusion. Instead: “the ugly truth which late twentieth-century criticism could exclusively reveal was that the play is in fact a text reeking of the discourse of colonialism. *The Tempest* must bear the blame for the Atlantic slave trade” (240). The reading of the play “in these terms” began with Greenblatt’s “Learning to Curse” (1976), so he must bear the main brunt of this astounding statement (which even Dinesh D’Souza might judge a trifle over the top), although all the postcolonial readings are implicitly tarred with same brush.
19. But then a strange thing happens. Bate picks up his brief remarks about Lamming, Césaire, and Fernández Retamar from his 1995 essay and expands them in his chapter on *The Tempest*, so that readers approach the play via his discussion of postcolonial readings and rewritings, all here dealt with sympathetically.<sup>13</sup> One of the things these writers were doing, Bate says, by way of introduction, was “reacting against a long critical orthodoxy which failed to appreciate the critique of Prospero that is built into the play” (241) – an interesting move on Bate’s part, which grants one of the major planks of the postcolonial reading. And indeed, when he comes to his own exposition of the play, Bate talks about “Prospero’s version” of events, implicitly accepting that there are other stories and that Shakespeare’s version might not be identical to Prospero’s (244).
20. Not unexpectedly this turns out to be a containing move – in two senses of that word. The genius of Bate’s Shakespeare lies in the capaciousness of his work, which evolves and mutates in order to cope with changing cultural environments (316). Having had a dominant “Prosperian” reading of the play for many years, the 1950s saw the ‘liberation’ of “the ‘Caliban-esque’ reading that has always been latent in the play” (248). So, “Perhaps the most astonishing thing about Shakespeare’s achievement is that it contained

enough for him to become not just an icon of various European nationhoods but a voice of what we now call multiculturalism” (248). In classically liberal fashion, Bate wants to have the best of both worlds – to give weight to the powerful readings and rewritings offered of *The Tempest*, and yet at the same time to argue that all these readings have somehow been locked up in the play waiting for Frantz Fanon to come along and liberate them. The juggling of linguistic registers suggests unease on Bate’s part, although the philosophical difficulties about the relationship between a text and its readings are real enough, and his general approach to them perfectly reasonable within its own terms. My disagreement is that such an approach ‘contains’ the revisionary nature of the the Caribbean work he’s discussing by refusing to allow it to critique earlier readings of the play. Instead, by calling the revisionary readings “Calibanesque”, he suggests they are equally as partial and limited as the earlier “Prosperian” readings. The latter certainly lose their previously authoritative status, but they survive to become witnesses to Shakespearean capaciousness, partners in some enforced and unconvincing version of multicultural harmony.

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21. A popular tactic in anti-postcolonial critique is to try to construct a third position, above or beyond the conflict. There are two versions of this move: the political version in which ‘left’ and ‘right’ are seen as mirror images of each other; and the literary version in which the postcolonial revisionists are seen as having added something important to readings of the play – but overstated their case. The first version is almost by definition apolitical, or coy about its politics. Edward Pechter (discussed here) and Howard Felperin (not), the key figures here, represent the ‘humanist’ and ‘deconstructive’ wings of this tendency. The most important reference point for the literary version of the argument is Meredith Skura’s essay, discussed below.
22. Pechter’s argument – directed against the concept of ideology – is that the supposed differences between ‘right’ (here Richard Levin) and ‘left’ (the usual suspects) mask similar self-contradictions: on the right the unattainable desire for transcendence of ideology, on the left the unattainable desire for the critique of ideology (“which turns out to be much the same thing” (1991: 83)). (Bate has a version of this argument where the “New Iconoclasts” confront the “Anti-PC Vigilantes”, both groups “playing into each other’s hands” and both foundering on the rock of “Shakespeare’s cross-cultural appeal” (1997: 318)).

23. Pechter begins his discussion of “Nymphs and Reapers” by noting (correctly) that we install struggle as a desideratum without explanation. He goes on (and I need to quote at length):

Perhaps, though, they provide an implicit answer in the main argument they make about alternative criticism, that it shouldn't invest too heavily in original meaning. The trouble with original meaning, they tell us, is that it's irretrievable with any certainty. As a consequence, any argument about it is likely to be “wholly dissolved into an indeterminate miscellany [and] the only option becomes the voluntaristic ascription to the text of meanings and articulations derived simply from one's own ideological preferences... a procedure only too vulnerable to pluralistic incorporation, a recipe for peaceful coexistence with the dominant readings, not for a contestation” (83, quoting “Nymphs and Reapers”, 193).

24. The second part of “Nymphs and Reapers”, from which Pechter is here quoting, contrasts the traditional approach to the autotelic text with an “alternative criticism” which has paid particular attention to the successive inscriptions of a text during the course of its history. Our view of this ‘alternative’ development is nuanced. We stress that it has produced important work, in particular demonstrating that texts can never be simply *encountered* “but are, on the contrary, repeatedly constructed under definite conditions” (192). On the other hand, in the course of a brief discussion of Tony Bennett's work, we express some reservations about the danger of dissolving the text into “an indeterminate miscellany of inscriptions” (193) because such a dissolution would remove the grounds for contestation: ‘alternative’ readings would become merely additional or supplementary because they would have removed from themselves the claim to contest readings of the ‘same’ text. This is very far from being the last word on the question of ‘the text in itself’, nor does it present itself as being so.<sup>14</sup> However, it is very obviously concerned to question the too rapid identification of the ‘radical’ reading with a lack of interest in the originating moment of production. Our reading, historical in approach (if not historicist), certainly wants to locate *The Tempest* with respect to its moment of production, even if that locating will look different, through its emphasis on the imperial project, and will have implications for a reading of the play, some of which we are concerned to pursue.

25. Paraphrase is a powerful weapon in argument. “The trouble with original meaning, they tell us, is that it's irretrievable with any certainty” is Pechter's paraphrase. Neither of those phrases, “the trouble with original

meaning” nor “irretrievable with any certainty” appears in “Nymphs and Reapers”, and nor does any statement that could possibly be construed as having such an import. Then, rather like Vickers’ misquotation from *The Tempest*, Pechter further misrepresents the argument of “Nymphs and Reapers” by quoting the second part of a sentence for which he provides his own subject. According to Pechter, we say that any argument about original meaning is likely to be wholly dissolved into an indeterminate miscellany. In fact, the relevant sentence in “Nymphs and Reapers” reads:

For if, as the logic of Bennett’s argument implies, ‘the text’ were wholly dissolved into an indeterminate miscellany of inscriptions, then how could any confrontation between different but contemporaneous inscriptions take place: what would be the ground of such a contestation? (193)

26. Pechter clearly associates ‘left’ criticism with a dismissal of the problem of original meaning. We are discussing the questions around the moment of textual production and subsequent inscriptions, and we are located on the left, *therefore* we must be saying that original meaning is irretrievable. The problem that we don’t say any such thing can be rectified by paraphrase which comes close to complete invention, and doctored quotation which totally misrepresents the original meaning.<sup>15</sup> I use that last phrase to emphasise the dimensions of this discussion. Unlike some others on the left, I do think that ‘meaning’ needs to be argued over, as long as it is clear that ‘meaning’ is not reducible to ‘intention’. The lines quoted earlier from *The Tempest* and the paragraph quoted from “Nymphs and Reapers” *mean* through the conventions of the language, not because their respective authors *intended* to say something or other. Let me emphasise again the restricted nature of this argument. The ability to read what is on the page is fundamental to all forms of criticism. The postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* are not better just because they tend to be more interesting (though they do – but that opinion may be subjective); they are also better because, as “Nymphs and Reapers” argues, they both read the play better, and read the misreadings of others. ‘Reading’ is the ground on which the traditionalists stand: all you really need to be able to do is to *read* Shakespeare. This argument is usually severely weakened by the impoverished notion of reading which underpins it, but it is devastated when its supporters demonstrate that they can’t read even in the least complex sense of that word.

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27. Most critiques of *Tempest* revisionism claim to be conciliatory. Yes, they say, there’s something in all this colonial stuff (even though it’s hardly

new), and Prospero is perhaps to be looked at more sceptically (though some traditionalists said that too), and there's nothing wrong with introducing some political and contextual dimensions to the play (as long as we remember to read the verse). But, they continue, it's much too one-sided as a reading. So we'll let it in as one dimension of the play; and, after all, the more dimensions each play has, the greater Shakespeare appears. Bate offers one, albeit idiosyncratic, version of this critique. I'll now look more closely at two other versions, both broadly positive in tone, both appreciative of the insights of the postcolonial readings, if ultimately critical of some of their implications.

28. William Hamlin's "Men of Inde: Renaissance Ethnography and *The Tempest*" (1994) offers a reasonable summary of recent work on *The Tempest* which attempts "to locate the play explicitly within the complicated network of ideas, preconceptions, goals, schemes, rhetoric, and propaganda that constitutes colonial discourse" (17), and praises the "valuable contributions" this criticism has made to an understanding of the play's dramatic construction (18). However, there are the usual complaints about "moral and sociopolitical agendas" which "predetermine their conclusions" (20) – though no evidence of these sins is actually offered or discussed; and about "the near-dogmatism that seems endemic to colonialist readings" (21). This latter point is supported by reference to "Nymphs and Reapers":

‘The ensemble of fictional and lived practices, which for convenience we will simply refer to here as “English colonialism”, provides *The Tempest*'s dominant discursive con-texts'... Rather than positing colonialism as a useful and illuminating discursive framework for the play, critics in this vein imply that *The Tempest* remains in many important respects unintelligible without the particular historical imbrication which they bring to it. (20; quoting "Nymphs and Reapers" 198)

29. Hamlin's argument usefully clarifies an important point: "Nymphs and Reapers" is not just positing colonialism as one 'useful' discursive framework among many other possible frameworks, it is arguing that *The Tempest* does remain in important respects unintelligible without the historical imbrication which that colonial framework clarifies. "Dominant", though, not exclusive: the Formalist word remains crucial to the argument (see Jakobson 1971). (I return to this issue below in #53.)
30. In best pluralist fashion, Hamlin does not want to *displace* the contextual ground of colonialism, he wants to supplement it with the discourse of Renaissance ethnography. The immediate problem with this move, which Hamlin seems to recognise but not address, is the relationship between

colonial discourse and ethnography. He claims that ethnography is a “distinct contextual ground... valuable precisely because of its lack of strict connection to political ends” (22); though this is followed by an immediate admission of the very close implication of such ‘ethnographic’ writers as Pané, Las Casas, Motolinía, Durán, Sahagún, Barlowe, and Harriot in colonial projects. Nonetheless, according to Hamlin, Renaissance ethnography is “primarily a descriptive rather than a manipulative or hegemonic discourse” (22), “*legitimately* ethnographic”, emblemizing “a *genuine* European curiosity about alien cultures” (22), and “a *genuine* uncertainty regarding the human status of cultural aliens” (23). The emphasised words (emphasised by me) indicate some understandable anxiety here. That Renaissance texts can have ethnographic content is not at issue (see, for example, Whitehead 1995): the problem comes with the work that the words ‘strict’ and ‘political’ have to do in affirming Renaissance ethnography’s “lack of strict connection to political ends”. ‘Strict connection’ presumably implies the gathering of ethnographic information solely for the ends of a colonial administration, something that did undoubtedly happen in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, most ethnographic work – especially in the earlier colonial period – does not have such a ‘strict’ connection to political ends; which should be a far cry from implying that it has no connections at all, connections to which an extensive literature now testifies. The same point can also be made from the other direction: the discourses of colonialism are far from monolithic themselves and just as capable “of registering curiosity, ambivalence, confusion, and even self-condemnation in representing and attempting to understand the cultural other” (22). Hamlin’s founding distinction between colonial discourse and Renaissance ethnography falls at the first hurdle.

31. Interestingly, the crux of Hamlin’s account of the play is the same as Vickers’ – Prospero’s first parenthetical reference to Caliban (1.2.281-84). Their arguments are significantly different, but both wrong. For Vickers, Caliban is put on the stage by Shakespeare as a creature who is half-animal, half-man, a dramatic exploration of the problem of what constitutes a human being. The lines which Vickers misreads he takes as an authorial statement of Caliban’s status (no nonsense here about distinctions between Prospero and the author). Hamlin reads the lines as revealing Prospero’s own deep confusion about Caliban’s status, which allows him to argue that the play moves toward an affirmation of Caliban’s humanity, an affirmation Prospero is allowed to share. *The Tempest* can be then read as a commentary on the pervasive motif of uncertainty about the human status of cultural aliens which is found within Renaissance ethnography; and that ethnography, elucidated by Hamlin, presented as providing an important

context for reading the play. Hamlin's commentary on Prospero's sentence runs as follows:

Although Peter Hulme cites these lines as proof of Prospero's "grudging admittance of Caliban's humanity" and rails against those who seize upon the last six words as "evidence of Caliban's lack of human shape." I think rather that a sense of uncertainty is exquisitely balanced here, that "litter," "whelp," "hag-born" and the parenthetical exception play off against "son" and the main clause in such a way as to reveal Prospero's own deep confusion about Caliban's status. (23; quoting "Prospero and Caliban", 114)

32. This is subtler than Vickers' argument because it depends on some psychological analysis (Prospero's own "confusion") and some dramatic development (the play's eventual affirmation of Caliban's human status). However, the lines won't bear the reading Hamlin wants to make of them. For a start, and to be literal, there is no 'exquisite balance' in the sentence: there is a statement which includes a single exception. Only by misreading could this sentence be taken as implying that Prospero thinks that Caliban is not human, or that the latter's 'humanity' and 'inhumanity' are exquisitely balanced: the two negatives, "not" and "save", give Caliban, for Prospero, "a human shape". Hamlin's argument is not even consistent within its own terms, since he wants *three* of the parenthetical terms ("litter", "whelp" and "hag-born") to balance the main clause *and* the word "son", which he thereby tellingly admits is a humanising term positively applied to Caliban, but unaccountably to be found inside the same parenthesis which supplies the supposedly dehumanising terms. None of this is meant to imply that Prospero's words are not open to all kinds of analysis. Mine, for what it was worth, suggested that – as with European experience of American Indians – there was no doubt that Caliban was a human being: the virulence of the language that Prospero uses is the mark of the reluctance with which he accepts that identification; but accept it he does. The language of bestiality only gains its power when the reference is to human subjects.
33. In Hamlin's own sentence "balanced" gains its rhetorical force through the contrast with "rails", so it's worth quoting the sentences from which his quoted phrases come:

The otherwise inevitable concession of Miranda to Caliban is therefore contested discursively: Caliban is 'got by the devil himself' (I.ii.321). 'a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick' (IV.i.188-9), strenuously distanced from the social world into the satanic and the bestial, despite the grudging admittance of Caliban's humanity in that eminently misreadable

double negative: [quotes I.ii.281-4]. A statement whose last six words are still quoted on their own as ‘evidence’ of Caliban’s lack of human shape. (“Prospero and Caliban” 114)

To rail = to utter abusive language (OED). I know we English are supposedly subtle in our use of language, but I reread those sentences with little comprehension as to how they could be seen as “railing” against anybody.

34. In this context – and since tone is often an issue in these exchanges – let me throw in Russ McDonald’s complaint that recent readers of the play have become “increasingly single-minded and reductive, often adopting a censorious and shrill tone”, and that such readings have now “tyrannized conferences and journals with a new orthodoxy as one-sided as that which it has sought to replace” (17). The British Cultural Materialists are described as more “virulent” than their U.S. cousins, a word the OED defines as “violently bitter, spiteful, or malignant; full of acrimony or enmity”. McDonald sees his aim as “the reconciliation of text and context, the aesthetic and the political” (15). We should obviously be grateful that he didn’t set out to be antagonistic.

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35. Meredith Anne Skura’s “Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*” (1989) has rapidly become the standard reference point for those seeking to acknowledge something of the revisionary arguments, yet contain them in a higher synthesis through combining their insights with the best of the traditional criticism. Such an approach offers itself as scholarly and judicious, broad-minded and tolerant. Most of the time it just misses the point.
36. Skura’s article is indeed scholarly and well-researched. She is able to contextualise postcolonial (revisionist) criticism and show its differences from earlier ‘historical’ and ‘American’ readings, differences which are in part a matter of emphasis: “Revisionists claim that the New World material is not just present but is right at the centre of the play, and that it demands far more attention than critics have been willing to grant it” (44). That attention, Skura rightly suggests, has tended to be given to the power relations of colonial practices, in marked distinction from the ‘Americanist’ emphases of earlier critics: “The revisionists look not at the New World material in the play but to the play’s effect on power relations in the New World” (44). However, her formulation soon becomes problematical:

If Caliban is the center of the play, it is not because of his role in the play’s self-contained structure, and not even because of what

he reveals about man's timeless tendency to demonize "strangers," but because Europeans were at that time exploiting the real Calibans of the world, and *The Tempest* was part of the process. (44-5)

37. Well, yes but... "Part of the process" in the sense that the postcolonial reading certainly rejects the traditional removal of the play from anything so political as a historical context which includes the establishment of colonial relationships. But the phrase "part of the process" flattens the difficult question of relationship which "Nymphs and Reapers" marks with the usefully portentous word "imbrication"; which may fall short of specifying a relationship, but at least suggests more complexity than the dully subordinate "part of".

38. "Revisionists argue," Skura continues:

that when the English talked about these New World inhabitants, they did not just innocently apply stereotypes or project their own fears: they did so to a particular effect, whether wittingly or unwittingly. The various distortions were discursive strategies that served the political purpose of making the New World fit into a schema justifying colonialism. Revisionists therefore emphasize the discursive strategies that the play shares with all colonial discourse, and the ways in which *The Tempest* itself not only displays prejudice but fosters and even "enacts" colonialism by mystifying or justifying Prospero's power over Caliban. (45)

The last sentence offers another good illustration of the mystificatory power of paraphrase. All of the statements in that sentence could probably match some pronouncement from within the revisionary corpus – although if "enacts" is a quotation, it goes unreferenced. Yet the grain of the sentence works towards a further flattening of the very relationship which revisionists are trying to explore. "Not only displays prejudice but" introduces a language of morality which most postcolonial criticism has been scrupulous in avoiding; with the "not only... but" construction suggesting that *The Tempest* has been judged and found guilty of even more serious crimes than the display of prejudice. It's not clear what 'fostering colonialism' might mean, but it can't be a good thing. 'Enact' also has a quasi-legalistic ring to it, as if a play could somehow put colonialism into action. If all this is intended to refer to "Nymphs and Reapers"'s brief discussion of what happens when the distinctive moves and figures of colonialist discourse are 'staged' (204), then the paraphrase is inadequate

(but in the absence of any reference it's not easy to decide just what is actually being paraphrased).

39. The second shift in revisionary criticism noted by Skura is what she calls the “less explicit but extremely important move away from the psychological interpretation that had previously seemed appropriate for the play” (45). In this case it all depends on what you understand by ‘psychological interpretation’. It does not seem clear to me that psychological approaches to the play, however defined, have ever been that important in the critical tradition – but let that pass for the moment. The supposed move away from psychological criticism is illustrated by a quotation which suggests that attention to the play’s moment of production shouldn’t be “hamstrung by specious speculations concerning ‘Shakespeare’s mind’” (45, quoting “Prospero and Caliban” 93). Now if speculations concerning Shakespeare’s mind provide us with Skura’s definition of psychological criticism, then we can perhaps assent to her claim of its earlier importance. I was merely affirming an equally ancient argument, though one often honoured in the breach, which suggests the circularity of producing a psychology for Shakespeare from a reading of his plays, a psychology which is then deployed as a tool for interpreting the plays. But this is a long way from suggesting that all forms of psychological criticism are rejected by revisionists. As Skura herself notes, Jameson’s metaphor of the political unconscious, with its roots in Althusser’s reading of Lacan, lies behind much revisionary work (46). Octave Mannoni’s brief but essential remarks about the play in his 1950 *Psychologie de la colonisation* (1990) – one of the founding gestures of postcolonial criticism of *The Tempest* – are imbued with his wide if eclectic reading in psychoanalytic theory, as are George Lamming’s (1960). And, following Mannoni’s lead, revisionary analysis of Prospero has drawn deeply on a psychological vocabulary in trying to delineate his character. To identify psychological criticism with hypotheses about the mind and intentions of the author is an unjustifiable narrowing of its potential purchase.

40. The last move of Skura’s introductory section is fully indicative of the overall rhetorical strategy I’m analysing here. She begins by praising the “salutary” impulse of postcolonial criticism in correcting earlier blindness to questions of history and ideology, and she singles out studies of the play’s reproduction, where it has been drafted into the service of colonialist politics. However, rather like Ariel with the disappearing banquet, what is proffered with one hand is immediately taken away with the the other:

But here, as critics have been suggesting about new historicism in general, it is now in danger of fostering blindness of its own.

Granted that something was wrong with a commentary that focused on *The Tempest* as a self-contained project of a self-contained individual and that ignored the political situation in 1611. But something seems wrong now also... The recent criticism not only flattens the text into the mold of colonialist discourse and eliminates what is characteristically “Shakespearean” in order to foreground what is “colonialist,” but it is also – paradoxically – in danger of taking the play further from the particular historical situation in England in 1611 even as it brings it closer to what we mean by “colonialism” today. (46-7)

41. Having used paraphrase to simplify the key relationship which the revisionists are trying to explore, Skura then judges their work through the prism of her own misrepresentation and unsurprisingly finds that it “flattens” the text. But it is the other two charges which reveal the real drift of her critique. The ‘colonialist’ is foregrounded by eliminating the “characteristically ‘Shakespearean’”: an extraordinary opposition. And the attempt to produce a historical form of criticism is seen as merely political (“what we mean by ‘colonialism’ today”) rather than properly historical (“the particular situation in England in 1611”). What is needed to counteract these weaknesses – she then argues – is some connection between recent cultural criticism “and the traditional insights about the text, its immediate sources, its individual author – and his individual psychology” (47). Since the revisionists have paid extensive attention to *The Tempest*’s immediate sources, this amounts to stating that we need to pay more attention to Shakespeare’s psychology. The problem is that attempting to connect the insights of cultural criticism to speculations about Shakespeare’s psychology is a bit like arranging a match between a cricket team and a baseball team – they don’t even share a language.
42. In order to prise *The Tempest* away from the dead hand of colonial discourse, Skura goes to work on the character of Caliban, to which the revisionists have paid a good deal of attention. The resemblances between Caliban and Native Americans are not denied; rather the revisionists are said to assume that these similarities matter, whereas the differences do not (49): “Thus Caliban is taken to ‘be’ a Native American despite the fact that a multitude of details differentiate Caliban from the Indian as he appeared in the travelers’ reports from the New World” (48). That “be” is worryingly similar to the earlier “enact”: it suggests a quotation, and yet the footnote reference, which refers to “Hurricanes”, doesn’t lead to any such quotation. It’s obviously useful to have a revisionist take Caliban to “be” a Native American, but none appears to have been rash enough to make the identification that Skura has little difficulty refuting.<sup>16</sup>

43. However little of this one might gather from Skura's essay, criticism on Caliban has worked hard at complicating the character. She chooses to refer at this stage almost exclusively to my early essay "Hurricanes" (1981):

Hulme, while noting Caliban's "anomalous nature," sees the anomaly as yet another colonialist strategy: "In ideological terms [Caliban is] a compromise formation and one achieved, like all such formations, only at the expense of distortion elsewhere"... This begs the question: Caliban can only be a "distortion" if he is intended to represent someone. (48, quoting "Hurricanes" 71, 72)

44. My jejeune attempts at producing a Machereyan analysis of *The Tempest's* production of the character of Caliban obviously fell pretty flat, at least for this reader. Once again, arguments flow more smoothly if quoted words are made out to say something other than their actual import. "[A]t the expense of distortion elsewhere" does not suggest that Caliban "is" a distortion, and so there is no imputed intention that he represent someone. Any such imputation would imply a distinctly impoverished notion of the relationship between the literary text and the historical world. Indeed, to call Caliban a "compromise formation" was precisely an attempt to think otherwise about the question of representation. The arguments that he *is* an American Indian, or *is* a medieval wild man failed to register (I suggested) that his 'monstrosity' consisted of his excess of characteristics, many of them registered by those who perceive him and comment on him.<sup>17</sup> The phrase "compromise formation" suggests two discourses, which are identified as 'Mediterranean' and 'Atlantic', each with their respective vocabularies. One might have thought that such a formulation gave some weight to the non-Native American features of Caliban, but the heavy hand of Skura's paraphrase rescues the day by seeing in the phrase 'anomalous nature' "yet another colonialist strategy". The word 'strategy' appears nowhere in my discussion of the play, and its suggestion of conscious control runs counter to the language of textual production (drawing on Macherey's reading of Freud) employed throughout that piece.

45. The last part of Skura's essay focusses on the interrupted masque, the scene which she rightly identifies as key to many postcolonial arguments. What's odd about Skura's general approach here is that her psychological analysis is often very close to, sometimes identical with, postcolonial positions, even as she offers it as an alternative. For example:

Caliban's function as a walking screen for projection may help explain why Caliban's sin does not consist in cannibalism, to which one assumes, Prospero was never tempted, but rather in Prospero's own repressed fantasies of omnipotence and lust. Of

course Prospero is also angry that Caliban is now threatening both his authority on the island and his justification of that authority; but the extraordinary intensity of Prospero's rage suggests a conjunction of psychological as well as political passion. (60-61)

46. There is nothing wrong with this as an analysis of Prospero's repressed fantasies except for the weird assumption that the political needs to be an "also" to the psychological, leading to a "conjunction" of two separate dimensions. The very foundation of postcolonial readings of the play – in Mannoni and Lamming – has been the identity of the political and psychological dimensions.
47. Since I've found a great deal to criticise in other people's paraphrases of my arguments, let me emphasise that there is much of value in Skura's essay. She goes through the 'New World' evidence with great thoroughness, and adds significantly to the psychological analysis of the character of Prospero. However, her strategy of combining the postcolonial with the traditional readings is vitiated by deep misunderstandings of the kinds of complexities to which that postcolonial criticism has drawn attention, and by misreadings of the passages to which she refers, even if these misreadings are rarely as egregious as those discussed earlier.
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48. For better or worse, what I've been discussing as the postcolonial reading of *The Tempest* is now the 'orthodox' approach (Dawson 1988: 68). The achievement in establishing that new orthodoxy should not be underestimated. Since it has hardly been welcomed by elements of the Shakespearean establishment, it must obviously owe its position to the force of its arguments.
49. The postcolonial reading of *The Tempest* separates the 'colonial' reading of the play from a mere identification of 'American' or 'New World' elements: these have often been identified over the years, but there is nothing necessarily revisionist in the readings of the plays associated with them (see Vaughan 1998). Although I've tended to approach *The Tempest* from my prior interest in the Caribbean, the suggestion in "Hurricanes in the Caribbees" was that the play combined Atlantic and Mediterranean discourses and that Caliban was the key link connecting them. Over the last ten years, the most interesting postcolonial readings have been those which have illuminated *The Tempest*'s 'Mediterranean' discourse, enriching our sense of the play's contemporary contexts and deepening our understanding of the complexities of sixteenth-century colonial and cross-cultural relationships.<sup>18</sup>

50. Looking back at what is now nearly twenty years of responses to postcolonial readings, two fundamental misunderstandings still puzzle me. Although those readings have been deeply interested in questions of power and violence and land (and have therefore been ‘political’), they have also – at least the ones I’ve been responsible for – been deeply formalist in their approach to the play, basing themselves, for example, on arguments about the relationship of the main plot to the sub-plot or on what might constitute the articulatory principle of different elements of the play’s language. The political and the formalist seem to me inextricable, no doubt because they are found together in the three works of theory that were my formative influences: Pierre Macherey’s *A Theory of Literary Production*, Louis Althusser’s *Reading Capital*, and P.N. Medvedev’s *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*. Why then does anti-postcolonial criticism so often assume, in Russ McDonald’s words, that postcolonial criticism addresses the play “solely in terms of social and political contexts” to the detriment of concern with textual details and formal properties” (1991: 15)?
51. The other aspect of anti-postcolonial criticism that puzzles me is its felt need to ‘defend’ Shakespeare from what it sees as ‘attack’ by his ‘enemies’. There are genuine and important differences in emphasis concerning the degree of authorial consciousness which might be identified in *The Tempest*. David Norbrook correctly points out that most revisionist criticism sees the contradictions and complexities of the play – ignored by traditional readings – as unconscious effects of discourse, present before and despite the authorial closure with its reassertion of the social order (1992: 22). In contrast, Norbrook has a knowledgeable Shakespeare, perfectly capable of a dramatic reflection on the complexities of the new colonial relationship between old world and new (39). But none of the postcolonial readings I’ve been discussing show the least interest in ‘attacking’ Shakespeare: nothing in their language suggests such an intention, unless the interest in bringing Shakespearean texts into dialogue with other discourses is taken as tantamount to ‘attack’. As Sinfield notes: “It is as if any attempt to bring Shakespeare into contact with a wider political reality is so threatening that it must be positioned instantly as both crass and malign” (2001: 1). Postcolonial criticism is simply uninterested in either attacking or celebrating Shakespeare: its aim is to understand the relationship between *The Tempest* and the incipient discourses of colonialism.

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52. The previous 51 paragraphs will have suggested that I’m less relaxed than Alan Sinfield about misquotation, misreading, and misleading paraphrase. Richard Levin is right to point out that all quotation is by definition

selective, but he himself accepts that there are standards in this matter and he has the grace to admit that he has not always maintained the highest. 'Standards' and 'scholarship' tend to be words that are associated with the more traditional (newly non-orthodox) readings of the plays, with the self-appointed 'defenders' of Shakespeare, and with those who take a 'balanced' view of disagreements they see as unfortunately political. My survey of the literature – admittedly self-centred – would suggest that those standards are rather often not adhered to. In fact, when it comes to responses to the postcolonial criticism on *The Tempest* over the last twenty years, the record seems to me pretty lamentable.

53. However, in overall terms, I have a less pessimistic view of the possibilities for intellectual debate than either Levin or Sinfield, which is why, in this essay, I've been trying to edge the grounds of the debate in a slightly different direction. I'll end by drawing out these larger implications. There are three stages to the argument. First, that there is more heterogeneity than often recognised within what tend to be seen as entrenched positions (and Richard Levin has probably done more than anyone else to attempt to establish the singularity of the 'new left' position). However, second, that the recognition of heterogeneity is not the same as the acceptance of pluralism. Here Levin is quite right to point out that any fully-fledged relativism will struggle to justify its own readings on any other grounds than as a form of voluntarism (1992: 53). So, for example, the postcolonial claim that the discourse of colonialism is the "articulatory principle of *The Tempest's* diversity" is genuinely incompatible with many other claims about the play. It contests other readings. But, finally, the refusal of pluralism, the refusal to say that all approaches are equal and all opinions valid, does not in itself imply that the intellectual debate is over and that truth has been revealed. We make the best arguments we can, but the available knowledge changes, new readings emerge. We may not in practice succeed in persuading our intellectual opponents of their errors, and we may have firm views about why they so obstinately refuse to see the truths that are so apparent to us, but we need to believe that the grounds for such persuasion do exist. However, for the discussions to be fruitful we must read and quote and paraphrase the words of others with due care and, if we don't, we deserve to have our readings of literary texts taken with less seriousness.

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<sup>1</sup> Sinfield 2001, Siar 2001, Levin 2001. Sinfield and Dollimore's essay on *Henry V*, discussed in his "Selective Quotation", appeared in *Alternative Shakespeares*: Sinfield and Dollimore were at the meeting referred to in the next paragraph of my essay.

<sup>2</sup> See also two relevant earlier pieces in *The Renaissance Forum*: Coyle (1996) and Levin (1996). Coyle's criticisms of Levin's misuse of quotation are interestingly similar to those made by Sinfield.

<sup>3</sup> See Belsey's letter (1983); and Saluszynsky's rather sharp review of *Reconstructing Literature* (1983).

<sup>4</sup> Dollimore and Sinfield 1985. Cf. Wilson 1995 and Brannigan 1998.

<sup>5</sup> In this context I should make clear that I speak for myself in this essay, even when discussing "Nymphs and Reapers".

<sup>6</sup> Levin 1988: 268, quoting Barker and Hulme 1995: 198 and Hulme 1971: 71.

<sup>7</sup> I also now register some unease with these military metaphors, though "Nymphs and Reapers" uses them extensively.

<sup>8</sup> See Thompson 1978, Tredell 1984, McKenzie 1994. See #22 below for Jonathan Bate's contribution to capitalist reification; Harold Bloom's is the "School of Resentment" (1992: 2).

<sup>9</sup> On the complexities of the notion of appropriation, see Dobson 1991, Marsden, ed. 1991, Marsden 1995, Walsh 1998, and Hulme 2000.

<sup>10</sup> As evidenced for example, to choose non-postcolonial examples, in the readings offered by David Norbrook 1992 and David Kastan 1997.

<sup>11</sup> In the Introduction to her new Shakespeare in Production edition of *The Tempest*, Christine Dymkowski says about these lines: "Prospero clearly describes the character as human... However, careless reading of the paranthetical description of Caliban's origins... have often led to the assumption that... Caliban himself does not have a human shape" (2000: 49).

<sup>12</sup> Lamming, Fernández Retamar, and Césaire get passing mentions in "Prospero and Caliban" and "Nymphs and Reapers". Lamming's pioneering essay on *The Tempest* and Césaire's play was discussed in a 1991 essay; Retamar's work reviewed in 1992; Lamming's *Tempest*-based novel, *Water with Berries* discussed in a 1993 essay.

<sup>13</sup> Ironically, it is Lamming who associates *The Tempest* with the Atlantic slave trade (1984: 13), though he is far from blaming Shakespeare for its existence.

<sup>14</sup> See, more recently, Holderness et al. 1995.

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<sup>15</sup> Felperin, although also offering a critique of “Nymphs and Reapers”, has no difficulty in understanding and paraphrasing our argument (1990: 122-4; 1995: 47-51).

<sup>16</sup> The critics who have closest to such an identification belong to different generations entirely: Sidney Lee (1898: 257) and G. Wilson Knight (1980).

<sup>17</sup> An argument developed, with more elegance than I could ever muster, in Hawkes's “Swisser-Swatter” (1985).

<sup>18</sup> See Fuchs 1997; Wilson 1997; Brotton 1998; Hulme and Sherman (2000), part II.