

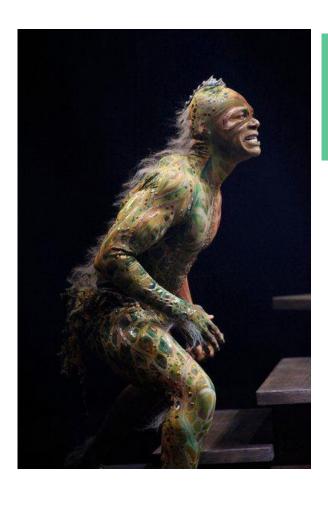


... through the eyes of Caliban

Who is he?

- Shakespeare portrays Caliban as the savage in one of his most notorious plays, The Tempest.
- Caliban is the son of a witch and the only real native of the Island, Prospero, to appear in this play.
- Throughout many live performances, he appears deformed and grotesque.
- He juxtaposes certain characters such as Ariel, Prospero's other servant. As well as Ferdinand, another who is attempting to win the heart of Miranda.





What and How does Caliban symbolise injustice?

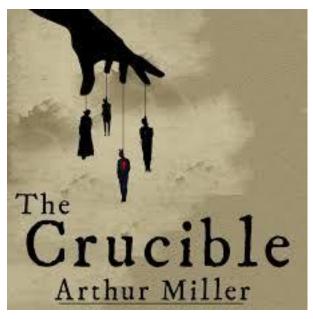
- In his first speech to Prospero, Caliban insists that Prospero stole the island from him.
 - "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, Which thou tak'st from me. For I am all the subjects that you have, Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me The rest o' th' island."
 - This exact imagery resembles the way White Colonisers stole and intruded territories in Africa as well as Native Americans for their own empire. However, there is not as much focus as Caliban is portrayed and written to be a monster, a slave, a savage.
- He, like everyone else, has a nobler and kinder persona yet Prospero and Miranda cease to acknowledge. As an audience we are reminded that Caliban really did occupy the island before Prospero came. He was in charge of this island yet was stripped from that and forced to serve Prospero.
- Critic: "The Tempest embodies imperialist doctrines; the occupier Prospero is noble and upright, while Caliban is stubborn and belligerent, refusing to thank his master for all he has done. The average Victorian expected a newly 'civilised' native to be grateful and more subservient; not resentful and implacable like Caliban. No doubt they rejoiced when, at the end of the play, Caliban gratefully returned to his previous servitude."

Even More Racism

In an 1851 edition of the New Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal, Dr Samuel Cartwright explicitly affirmed the association of blackness and madness by specifying a list of fabricated psychopathologies which allegedly affected blacks alone. For example, Cartwright claimed that the illness "Drapetomania" caused slaves to "run away". Thus the black's rejection of slavery was deemed as symptomatic of insanity. The British anthropologist James Hunt reaffirmed these racist views by arguing that there were a number of significant analogies between apes and black humans. These analogies included the "disgusting odour, the uncleanliness, the making of grimaces whilst speaking, the clear shrill tone of the voice, and the apelike character".

Although the Slavery Abolition Act 1833 forbade slavery throughout the British Empire, racism was deeply rooted in white bourgeois Victorian society. There existed a number of racist, rudimentary stereotypes of black people that were recycled and disseminated throughout Victorian-era media, dehumanizing black people further. Sambo; the comic slave, was one such stereotype. The image of Sambo originated in the southern states and was a product of large plantation agriculture where a high proportion of the slaves were unskilled and illiterate. Sir John Tenniel's cartoon *Scene from the American "Tempest." Caliban (Sambo)*, published in Punch magazine on January 24, 1863 comprises a vivid example of the Sambo stereotype.

Texts to think and link with The Tempest



What was it about?

- Written By Arthur Miller, this novel is a partially fictional story of the Salem Witch Trials that occurred in the Massachusetts Bay Colony during the late 17th Century.
- A story that tells of a group of Salem women who falsely accuse other villagers of witchcraft.

How do they link?

 Religion was a powerful ethical force both in and out of the courtroom, and characters in the play invoke it for personal gain. Religion became a

dominion to the degree that it was a force that could cover and excuse all crimes.

- The Salemites chose easy targets, and within the novel, the most vulnerable characters were accused. This clearly indicates the prejudice and racism of the times.
- Critic: "The play suggests that when we make baseless accusations against our most vulnerable citizens, we are in danger of extrapolating the injustice to all members of society. In this way, a society based on class and race differences is on trial in the play."
- "Of the convicted, 19 were hanged, 1 was pressed to death under a plank overlaid with heavy stones, and 4 died in prison waiting to be sentenced. The catalyst for the panic in Massachusetts Bay Colony was Tituba Indian, a slave woman."
- In actual events, Tituba was Salem's first witness and confessor. However, her testimony of 'night rides on a pole to and from Boston to participate in satanic ceremonies' was interpreted as proof that their community had been invaded with a demonic presence. Subsequently, Tituba was banished and unacknowledged by the Puritan authorities.
- I leave you on this quote, "They avoided Tituba because she embodied their racialized religious fear. God's condemnation was visible in the colour of her skin. Unlike other accused (White) witches, who upon confession could be regenerated and reintegrated into the community, Tituba wore the dark skin of reprobation. For her, reintegration into the community was unthinkable."