

# The Ramifications of Language and the Incompleteness of a Social Self in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*

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## ABSTRACT

By applying sociological theories – specifically George Herbert Mead's *Genesis of Self* and Charles Horton Cooley's *Looking-Glass Self* – to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, readers will find that the characters of Caliban and Miranda are socially incomplete. This essay argues that if removed from the island they reside on with Prospero (Miranda's father and Caliban's master), neither character would be able to effectively function in society, due to the lack of human interaction they've had. Also discussed are the roles language and dialogue plays, as well as the implications of applying sociological theories to Shakespeare's literature and the benefits for both disciplines.

## INTRODUCTION

Despite his death nearly four hundred years ago, William Shakespeare remains a prominent figure in English literary studies, so much so that he is regarded by many to be the most prolific writer ever to work with the English language, as well as the apex by which all other theatrical dramas are compared. Within his brief career, Shakespeare penned a substantial amount of plays and sonnets that have survived due in large part to the efforts of his peers, actors who worked with him under the production company the King's Men. To be precise, Shakespeare's First Folio was published in 1623 by two of his fellow actors, John Heminges and Henry Condell. Of all the plays within the First Folio, the first that appears, *The Tempest* (the focus of this essay), is thought to be the last original work primarily coordinated by Shakespeare.

That being said, *The Tempest* makes for an interesting text to study using a sociological imagination – a way of understanding human behavior as the product of social forces – for several reasons. Though this approach could be taken and applied to Shakespeare's other works, *The Tempest* is unique in that Shakespeare investigates relationships and interaction that, as Peter Holland describes, “seeks to examine human behavior in a world that proves, with increasingly dizzying paradoxicality, to be both real and unreal, actual and artifice” (Shakespeare 1999:xxvii). The mysticism that drifts throughout the small island in the Mediterranean on which the play is set may prove difficult to separate from the behavior that is socially arranged. This is so because a sociological analysis of anything requires the observer to remain objective, to not account what they see to anything beyond human interpersonal interaction.<sup>1</sup> This interlocking of both phenomena and noumena must be untwisted so that these relationships become more lucid, specifically those involving Prospero, Caliban, and to a lesser extent Miranda.

Thus, the primary thesis for this critique pertains to the relationships between these characters that are most familiar to the primary setting of the play. Isolated on an island in the Mediterranean Sea, Prospero (the lord of the island who attained his island status through his mastery of sorcery), his daughter Miranda, and their servant/slave Caliban create a unique group that can be further analyzed so as to reveal the extent and actuality of their relationships, as well as the individual characters themselves. More specifically, the lingual interaction between Europeans and Caliban evidences certain potential outcomes when civilization collides with the natural world and whether or not the two can coexist. As an understanding of the contact between Caliban and Prospero is revealed from a sociological perspective, I will argue whether Caliban and in some part Miranda can be thought of as complete characters (again, from a sociological perspective). Vital to this process is an examination of Charles Horton Cooley's *Looking-Glass Self*, as well as George Herbert Mead's *Genesis of Self*, two prominent theories in sociology that serve as the bedrock from which all other theories of social self development build off (it should be noted here that despite their presence in the field of classical social theory, each stem from the William James'

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this essay, I am consciously using “they/them /their” as personal pronouns to replace the third-person singular personal pronouns “he/him/his” and “she/her/hers,” so as to not discriminate against either sex. Though some grammarians believe this to be incorrect regarding singular-plural agreement, I believe it to be socially detrimental when referring to a third-person singular gender-neutral object with the use of a masculine pronoun.

initial notions of “self” first introduced during the American Industrial Revolution) (Zollweg 2010). Whereas a proper social environment is evident for the development of Miranda and Caliban (they have multiple “others” to interact with), the human interaction necessary for them to be considered functional members of society is not present on the island, which inhibits them from a complete process of human socialization.

Essential to the discussion of Mead’s theory is the concept of what he termed the “generalized other.” Simply defined, the generalized other is the consequence of an individual having an internal conversation with themselves pertaining to “generalized social attitudes” (Holdsworth and Morgan 2007:403), critical for the finality of a social self. Holdsworth and Morgan claim that despite the vast effect Mead’s theory has had on the entire field of sociology, the notion of the generalized other “has received relatively little scrutiny and even less use in recent sociological enquiry” (2007:402). Hence, it would prove useful to reexamine this idea and apply it to Shakespearean “enquiry,” so that the notion itself can exhibit its usefulness in not only the field of sociology, but in a different, literary context.

Using the theories of Cooley and Mead, several of the sixteenth and seventeenth century European configurations discussed in *The Tempest* – namely the early stages of European colonization – can be revealed that will better accompany an understanding of specific character relationships and the manifest and latent functions of their behavior. Keeping all of this in mind, let us now move to *The Tempest* itself where we may better comprehend the social stimuli that collectively generated the text and are reflected primarily through the characters of Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban.

### CALIBAN’S NATURALNESS

Caliban is frequently represented as possessing or having “natural” qualities, often depicted as being “natural” in some way, be it his physical appearance, the way he speaks, or his interaction with other characters. The first mentioning of Caliban, in fact, asserts he is Prospero’s slave, his existence necessary only for the reason of fetching firewood for Prospero and Miranda. This act is used metaphorically as well as literally throughout the play, in that it helps to illustrate Caliban’s naturalness. His tangible connection to such an earthly product is an example of this, as is the purpose for the wood itself. Along with water, air, earth, and in some cultures what is referred to as “void,” fire serves as the fourth/fifth classical element, which is commonly fueled by wood. Immediately, readers notice Caliban’s connection to nature as is demonstrated by his fetching of firewood. This act is also imposed on him, serving as a punishment for his incivility. Yet Prospero reassures Miranda of Caliban’s essentiality, saying:

*“But as ’tis,  
We cannot miss him: he does make our fire,  
Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices  
That profit us...”* (I.ii.310-13)

These lines provide insight into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries regarding European perspectives of slavery. To consider a person or a society necessary for the survival of another person or society on behalf of the former’s ability to provide manual labor is critical for a comprehensive understanding of Caliban and Prospero’s relationship. Caliban is representative of such forced labor, based on the vast colonization and discovery of new peoples and lands taking place during the time in which *The Tempest* was written and performed. Though Prospero possesses powers that enable him to generate violent storms, enchant and spellbind other characters, he refuses to use them for simple tasks such as those designated to Caliban. This point certainly attests to European beliefs during the centuries of heavy and expansive colonization, that it is necessary for society to dominate nature, so that civilization can continue to exist. Therefore, in this instance, nature and society can seemingly coexist – but only when one is subjugated to the other.

Unable to foresee the extent of English colonialism, Hiewon Shin believes Shakespeare poses a question to readers and spectators of the play, and interprets it in the following way: “...would [the New World] become a land of brutally oppressed servants or a land of hopeful youngsters empowered by radical parenting?” (2008:390). Whereas the issue of parenting is not of concern as of yet, the eradication of Native Americans from nearly all corners of the North American continent certainly evidences the initial consequences of English colonization on the Americas. These actions were both philosophically justified and legally warranted, in such instances as the nineteenth century general notion of Manifest Destiny as well as Andrew Jackson’s Indian Removal Act of 1830. For as skilled as Shakespeare was with language, he may have been as equally wise concerning the political and social implications of English colonialism, reflected in the characters of Prospero and Caliban.

## LINGUAL AND DIALOGIC RAMIFICATIONS

Language use is also an intriguing concept to consider when evaluating Prospero and Caliban's relationship. However, what should be kept in mind throughout this specific evaluation is that Caliban was not familiar with the English language until it was introduced to him by Prospero and predominantly taught to him by Miranda. Therefore, his use of language should resemble that of his instructors', given his lack of contact with other humans familiar with verbal communication. Caliban's language use would not only reflect that of Prospero and Miranda's – he could initially communicate solely on the basis of a word's denotation. That is to say, he would not be able to assign more than one meaning to a word or "gesture," indicative of the element defined as "sign" in Mead's theory of symbolic interaction. For example, if Miranda or Prospero were to teach Caliban the word "earth," he would understand it's meaning only as the sphere on which they reside (if this was their primary intent). He could not manipulate it to mean a derogatory term in the way Prospero uses it towards Caliban in Act I, Scene ii (illustrated shortly hereafter). With time and increased language use, Caliban could integrate into his lingual repertoire "symbol," the second type of gesture used in symbolic interaction in which an infinite number of meanings can be attached to words or body language (Zollweg 2010). As was formerly mentioned, Prospero took it upon himself to rear Caliban in a way consistent with European principles and is demonstrated through Caliban's ascertaining of the English language.

Caliban must have had some familiarity with culture through personal interaction with his mother Sycorax who is referenced several times throughout the play (she was exiled from the island shortly after Prospero's arrival). Prior to Prospero and Miranda's landing, Sycorax presumably taught Caliban "how to survive, to recognize his world, to identify its parts, to make it his own" (Strehler 2002:10), beginning a separate but nevertheless equally important socialization process. Upon Prospero's entrance, this learning was interrupted and replaced with an acquisition of European culture using language and science. Though Caliban may have been saddened by the sudden absence of his mother, Prospero was able to reassure Caliban of his kind intentions. The initial meeting and early stages of Prospero and Caliban's relationship resembled that of a father and adopted son: Prospero "loved Caliban, cherished him, nourished him physically and mentally" (Shin 2008:374). Caliban verbalizes Prospero's initial generosity in the following lines:

*"...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..." (I.ii.332-36)*

Upon a closer reading of these lines, the intimacy between Caliban and Prospero becomes more apparent. Prospero's physical contact with Caliban is a crucial gesture necessary for the formation of any loving relationship, be it of animal or human quality. This idea was confirmed in controversial studies conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the 1960's under the direction of Harry Harlow, in which infant rhesus monkeys were used in experiments testing the effects of social isolation. When left alone, these monkeys developed severe emotional abnormalities, to the point that they exhibited patterns of frequent pacing around their cage, rocking back and forth, and chiding directed towards other monkeys when finally introduced to them. In the cases where infant monkeys were provided physical connection to a maternal figure, none of the behavior demonstrated by the isolated monkeys was observed. Prospero's act of flavoring water with berries and his efforts to teach Caliban the sciences seem to suggest his desire to socialize Caliban in a way that is consistent with human society. Mixing delicacies and supplying them to Caliban would only increase the emotional bond between the two, as would the time spent together during Caliban's schooling.

Caliban reciprocated this benevolence, as he was still dependent on a parent figure to successfully rear him, representative of Peter Blau's social exchange theory. Prospero was not required to treat Caliban in this manner, but possibly did so in an effort to create a power differential that would force Caliban into a position of subservience. Caliban was dependent on Prospero for love as well as education, coming to realize the benefits attached to both. Prospero's power over Caliban remained intact due to Caliban's inability to coerce Prospero, find equally good alternatives, and go without that which Prospero offered (Zollweg 2010). Again, Caliban expresses the kindness he exchanged with Prospero: "...and then I loved thee / And showed thee all the qualities o' th' isle, / The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place and fertile" (I.ii.336-38). At a glance, this relationship does in fact approximate to that of a father and adopted son, one that carries the potential of genuine love, though such a bond was never completed.

Shortly after Prospero's initial reference to Caliban in the play, the first occurrence of dialogue between the two takes place. From its conception, the verbal exchange between these characters is harsh and coarse, full of negativity and resent for one another. Prospero's first request of Caliban's presence and subsequent duties reads,

“What ho, slave! Caliban, / Thou earth, thou: speak!” (I.ii.313-14), continuing with more belittling remarks, such as “Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself / Upon thy wicked dam; come forth” (I.ii.319-20). Initially, the audience is unaware as to why Prospero treats Caliban so rudely and what the reasons are for him to cease his humane treatment of Caliban. The audience comes to realize the motives for such demeaning treatment of Caliban, as is supported by Prospero:

“...I have used thee  
(Filth as thou art) with humane care and lodged thee  
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate  
The honour of my child” (I.ii.345-48)

Here, Prospero references Caliban’s attempted rape of Miranda, which he believes justifies his enslavement of Caliban. Even so, if Caliban did in fact attempt to rape Miranda, cannot Prospero be blamed to an extent? He claims responsibility for the process of civilizing Caliban, but without civilization, can the concept of rape exist? Perhaps Caliban was not aware of such a concept at the time it was committed; he may have thought that by impregnating Miranda, he would continue his legacy and consequently jeopardize Prospero’s “political stability” (Shin 2008:376). Or, he may have been physically attracted to Miranda, a fault that Shin argues may consequently lie on Prospero.

Calling on Renaissance principles regarding educational strategies of males and females to support her claim, Shin attests Renaissance humanists believed males and females must be taught separately, a belief that seemingly stems from the distractions the opposite sex can produce for students in the classroom. These distractions may intensify during the adolescent years, a time of rapid physical and hormonal maturation. Prospero allowed the two to share common living and sleeping areas, strengthening the bond between them. Additionally, the strength of this bond only increased due to Prospero permitting Miranda to teach Caliban language. Shin points to this as a possible mishap on the behalf of Prospero, based on additional Renaissance humanist beliefs of the development of an “intimate pedagogical relationship” between a tutor and their student (2008:377). From this perspective, Caliban is not entirely to blame for his attraction to Miranda. This attraction was inevitable, and without the proper means of controlling or addressing his sexual desires – which became tangible with education– he was destined to act on his primal urges.

With this, more questions arise as to whether language is simply a way of communication, its uses restricted solely for those purposes. Or, Shakespeare may have meant for language to represent civility itself. If this is so, a great deal can be learned from the remark Caliban directs towards Miranda after she describes the pangs she endured while attempting to provide Caliban with language: “You taught me language, and my profit on’t / Is I know how to curse” (I.ii.364-65). This single sentence is pivotal in demonstrating the potential consequences capable of commencing when civilization and nature intertwine. Though the initial intentions of sixteenth and seventeenth century colonization may have been to civilize the “baseness” of humanity, it was done so without the consent of those being colonized. Instead, they were forcefully educated and imprisoned through slavery, undoubtedly causing hostility to generate amongst those represented by Caliban. Much like the Europeans thought of the Native Americans upon first arriving to the Americas, Caliban is not a “personification of the abstraction [Nature],” but instead “symbolizes the natural state” (Bourgy 1993:36).

In addition to symbolizing the natural state, Victor Bourgy writes that Caliban “stands for Nature in the raw, not unable to learn, but incapable of deriving profit from Nurture” (38). He soon after asserts Caliban’s nature is essentially evil and with his newly acquired ability to speak, he verbalizes this evilness. However, it seems as though Bourgy is either missing or neglecting a significant reason for Caliban’s hostility: he was forced into his subservient position. Caliban owned the rights to the island, being the descendent of Sycorax. This would infer that Caliban and his mother had developed a form of civilization prior to the arrival of Prospero and Miranda, however primitive it may have been. With this influx then, a clash between civilizations occurs that ultimately results in the defeat of the primitive and the victory of the advanced. Soon after coming into contact with Prospero and Miranda, Caliban found himself at their disposal. Yes, he was educated and efforts were made to tame his wildness, yet one cannot help but think that these efforts may have been made to subjugate him further.

It seems as though Prospero has deemed Caliban too natural to be made apart of the social order, yet ironically he also believes Caliban must be tamed and civilized as a measure to enslave him. The pity the audience feels for Caliban is due to this enslavement, because it seems as though he has done nothing to deserve it; only after Prospero educated, civilized, and consequently placed him in a position of servitude did Caliban take on such a negative demeanor. And it seems as though Caliban cannot break free of Prospero’s rule due to the magical prowess Prospero possesses, possibly symbolizing the technological superiority had by Europeans that enabled them to enslave and overthrow numerous civilizations throughout the world. Many of these native peoples could not be incorporated into the European social hierarchy and, like Caliban, were therefore made slaves.

Regardless of his subservient position and his minor role in the play as compared to Prospero and other human characters, some – including Bourgy – still argue that Caliban is able to drive the action of the play due to his complexity as a character. Though he speaks callously towards Prospero, Caliban is not limited to this disposition when verbalizing. In fact, he may employ some of the most poetic and beautiful language of any character in *The Tempest*. In Act III, scene ii, Caliban describes his home island and the intimate connection he has developed with it:

“...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.” (III.ii.134–142)

Despite Prospero’s efforts to humiliate and degrade Caliban, his and Miranda’s attempts to educate him in the use of the English language are nonetheless positively displayed to their fullest potential in this excerpt. Readers feel sympathy for Caliban when he speaks with such grace and conviction regarding his home for the fact that he can no longer embrace the island he has matured on, but is now a slave to it and Prospero. The way in which he describes it suggests a natural harmony that was disrupted with the arrival of Prospero and Miranda. It is as if Caliban can be in connection with this harmony, yet only momentarily. He yearns to feel the energy pulsating from island, yet cannot due to European intrusion and disruption. Reading this, we cannot help but think of the Native Americans who felt a similar connection to the earth, which was nullified by European colonizers. Descriptions such as this also afford the audience with a brief insight into Caliban’s voice, and thus the restrictions that are placed on him. P.S. Sri acknowledges this very idea, saying “If Caliban is merely a part of nature, an ignoble unlettered savage, he will never be able to break out of the prison of language devised by Prospero; all his thought processes & cultural attainments will be only a pale reflection of Prospero’s achievements” (1986:Abstract). From this perspective then, Caliban’s manipulation of the English language into something with such lyrical quality is merely a representation of Prospero’s communication capabilities.

On the contrary, Silvano Arieti’s concept of magic synthesis would argue that Caliban’s use of language coincides quite well with conditions of his environment at that particular point in time. Originality by a small group of people or even at the individual level is possible, if thought of as a process of discovery. Arieti claims “the characteristics of certain people mesh with characteristics made available by their socioculture at a given time and place” (LeFevre 1987:36). The discovery or invention that is made is then placed within a cultural context that allows for further discoveries at appropriate times to occur. Therefore, Caliban’s language use may not be a meager representation of the aptitudes of Prospero; instead, his expressive communication is original and unique, an indicator of at least some level of individuality.

## THE INCOMPLETENESS OF A SOCIAL SELF

However, the individuality – and consequently the wholeness of a social self – displayed by Caliban as well as Miranda must be brought into question. The lack of contact these two characters have had with the outside world prior to meeting the members of the shipwrecked crew is minimal. Because of this, their perceptions of the world are skewed and controlled heavily by Prospero. One may attest this manipulation is the only commonality these two characters share. Aside from this, they are seemingly distinct and differ in many attributes. Caliban is often regarded as base and rude, as is demonstrated in his conversations with Prospero. Conversely, Miranda is typically seen as gentle and passive, submitting to the will and advice of her father in all but one scene of the play in which she proposes to Ferdinand, son of Alonso, the King of Naples (“I am your wife, if you will marry me; / If not, I’ll die your maid. To be your fellow / You may deny me; but I’ll be your servant, / Whether you will or no” [III.i.83-86]), an action that seriously violates the biddings of Prospero.

Nevertheless, Caliban and Miranda’s concept of reality has been uniquely constructed by Prospero, though not entirely in the same manner. It is this incomplete development of a social self that unites the two, and can be justified according to Charles Horton Cooley’s *Looking-Glass Self*, as well as the *Genesis of Self* theory developed by George Herbert Mead. During this assessment, it is important to keep in mind the aforementioned theories cannot account for the certain levels of mysticism and magic present in *The Tempest*. Mead himself was a naturalist, unconvinced that anything supernatural plays a part in individual and societal development. All that is known about human interaction and all actions that are a part of human behavior are simply the “emergence of mind and...so-

called mental phenomena” (Miller 1973:3). Therefore, the supernatural aspects of Prospero and the island in *The Tempest* should be considered and analyzed from the perspective of a realist. It is not impossible to apply Mead’s theories – or any sociological theories for that matter – to literature, but it may prove to be more difficult than previously assigned analytical and critical devices. While the magical aura of the island may present some difficulty during this analysis, it may be interesting to consider the symbolic possibilities of Prospero’s magic. His status as a magus allows him to dominate and manipulate other characters to the extent that he can subjugate some and make others fall in love, among a variety of other circumstances. These magical abilities that permit Prospero’s supremacy over others might symbolize his completed socialization process, as well as his civility. For now, this possibility can only be speculated, given the limited application of sociological theories to *The Tempest*. Even so, it is an interesting prospect to consider.

Given the isolated circumstances the island presents to all the characters that inhabit it, Miranda’s social self-development deserves attention as well. She, like Caliban, has spent the majority of her life secluded from human society, which has certainly affected her in a variety of ways (these will be explained shortly). Though she has not experienced the same restrictions and maltreatment Caliban has, her perspective of reality is due large in part to Prospero’s magical manipulation: his ability to put her into trances or states of sleep, as well as dictate her love for Ferdinand are two such examples. With her lack of contact with the human world, as well as the influenced reality generated by Prospero, Miranda cannot possess a complete social self.

The process of socialization is a dynamic one, a relationship that is engaged with multiple others throughout one’s life. One actively creates and participates in the development of their social self and is not merely a recipient of the process. Cooley recognized this, and applied it accordingly so that it was composed of three distinct, yet complex principals: our imagination of how we look to others, our interpretation of how others perceive us, and with these two tenets, a self-concept is developed based on our perception of how others interact with us. W.I. Thomas provides a perplexing yet accurate description of this process that reads, “I am not who I think I am, nor am I who you think I am, rather I am what I think you think I am” (Thornton 2009). Miranda and Caliban have most certainly participated in this reflective process, despite their isolated circumstances. Cooley would even argue this interaction with a relatively small primary group – described as “intimate face-to-face association and cooperation... fundamental in forming the social nature and ideals of individuals” (McIntyre 2006:146) – benefited the two. Within a smaller group, Caliban and Miranda did not face the difficulty of interpreting a large number of interactions they may have encountered in a larger setting; they began with what they believed each other thought of them (including Prospero’s interpretation), making it easier for them to form an initial sense of self.

However, this sense of self was limited because of their isolation. Cooley would argue that neither character is fully human (in the case of Caliban, readers are left unaware of whether he is biologically human to begin with, though his deficient socialization process denies him access to humanity even further), seeing as their sense of self was inhibited from growing due to their limited social interaction with others outside their primary group. Social experience dictates how one becomes human; therefore, if this is limited as it is in the situations of Caliban and Miranda, they cannot be considered entirely human. Cooley states that primary groups serve as the origins of human nature; however, he also claims, “Man does not have [human nature] at birth; he cannot acquire it through fellowship, and it decays in isolation” (McIntyre 148). The last segment of this excerpt is what provides the foundation for this argument. Caliban and Miranda may have begun the socialization process, but it was forever deferred due to absence of interaction that is necessary in order to function with others outside of their primary group.

Alice Hall Petry identifies this incomplete socialization process – or what she terms as “limited knowledge” – as detrimental to both characters, so much so that if they were removed from the island and immediately placed in a civilized European society, they would display extreme levels of frustration and hostility due to their inability to effectively interact with multiple others. Petry even claims Caliban’s acquisition of language is a “negative element” (1980-81:31). It can be deduced Caliban would have carried out a rather peaceful existence were it not for the arrival of Prospero and Miranda; his “natural” knowledge of the island would have allowed him to survive if not flourish were he left isolated. Caliban does not benefit whatsoever from contact with humans; in fact, Petry claims the “metathetical or anagrammatic rendering of the word ‘cannibal,’ suggests [Caliban’s] basic hostility towards the civilized, human world...” (1980-81:31).

Like Caliban, Miranda has been disconnected from human society for the majority of her life. Unlike Caliban’s “natural” knowledge, however, she has gained a strong understanding of what Petry defines as “book” knowledge from Prospero. Similar to Caliban, this knowledge does not provide her with the proper social skills to effectively interact with humans. For instance, both react similarly when first observing the shipwrecked crew, referring to them as if they were kinds of deities. Upon meeting Ferdinand, Miranda exclaims: “What is’t? a spirit? / Lord, how it looks about! Believe me, sir, / It carries a brave form. But ’tis a spirit” (I.ii.410-412). She is convinced of

Ferdinand's presence being that of something celestial, continuing with "I might call him / A thing divine; for nothing natural / I ever saw so noble" (I.ii.418-420). Miranda's exposure to Naples and Milan was minimal prior to coming to the island, yet her inexperience with others outside her primary group may foreshadow her inability to be properly integrated into a society outside the island. Petry goes so far as to say Miranda may become a "verbally nasty, promiscuous monstrosity of Italian society...to the point where she might become a sort of Caliban herself" (1980-81:32). This may be so, but only if those around her treat her in a malevolent manner. As we will see, the maturation of her social self remains unfulfilled, yet with proper care, nurturing, and guidance, she may be effectively integrated into a human society.

When first encountering Stephano, Caliban reacts in much the same way Miranda does once meeting Ferdinand, referring to him as "a brave god" (II.ii.115). Caliban is so mesmerized by Stephano – and intoxicated by the wine that is given to him – that he vows to serve Stephano, represented in such lines as "I will kneel to him" (II.ii.116), "Hast thou dropped from heaven?" (II.ii.134), and "I'll kiss thy foot. I'll swear myself thy subject" (II.ii.149). These statements are eerily reflective of Caliban's attitudes towards Prospero, which evokes a certain level of sympathy from readers once again. Caliban demonstrates somewhat of a dependence on learned others in order to shape reality for him. After having been so badly mistreated by Prospero, the audience hopes Stephano does not take advantage of Caliban's drunken generosity and willingness to serve him. Caliban's naivety is on full display in this initial encounter, to the extent that he believes his time of servitude is over, that he is free after vowing allegiance to serve Stephano: "...Caliban / Has a new master: get a new man. / Freedom, high-day! high-day, freedom! freedom, high- / day, freedom" (II.ii.181-184). Irony resounds in this excerpt, illustrated in Caliban's exclamations of his "freedom" from Prospero's rule, all the while ignorant of Stephano's mockery and ridicule exemplified in numerous repetitions of such names as "monster" and "Mooncalf." Caliban's reliance on others suggests he still seeks a sense of individual unity, as well as a connection to socially functional others.

George Herbert Mead's *Genesis of Self* theory provides further support for the absence of individuality in Caliban as well as Miranda. Mead developed Cooley's ideas to the extent that he believed the social self was comprised of two components: the I and the Me. Whereas the I is specific to each individual – the active part of the self, the "doer" –, the Me is produced when a person role-takes another, or how an individual is perceived or acted upon by others. A sense of self stems from the persistent interaction between the I and the Me. Put differently, the I responds to the perceptions others may have that are understood by the Me (McIntyre 148-49). Much like the looking-glass self, the I and the Me are developed over time through various instances of social interaction, consisting of a three part series in childhood: imitation, play, and game.

The imitation stage begins at birth and lasts up until around the age of two. Children first begin to mimic gestures, sounds, and expressions, though their understanding of them is completely non-existent. Here, children have no frame of reference for language or behavior, despite their capacity to reiterate them. The inability to role-take is the principle inhibitor for children to comprehend the motives and meaning for all of human behavior. As a child develops a better understanding of these symbols and their meaning, the play stage commences between the ages of two and five. As the label implies, this stage consists of a large amount of playing, beginning with initial imitation that progresses to interaction with other children. Yet, a child can role-take only one individual at a time; they have yet to acquire the ability to role-take multiple others simultaneously. In the play stage, they begin to recognize different roles, as well as how they can be played, ultimately concluding with the game stage. This final phase completes the development of the I and Me, and takes place throughout the remainder of a person's life. Involvement in more organized and formal activities is a key aspect of this stage, with a clearer recognition and definition of roles accompanying them (Thornton 2009). Once a child successfully engages in the game stage and is able to role-take several individuals at the same time, they are then able to form what is known as a generalized other. David Miller defines the concept of the generalized other as an "organized set of attitudes, and their corresponding responses which are common to the group" (1973:49), arising "out of the capacity of the individual to take the role of the other, the attitude of the other toward the individual's behavior" (1973:50). In essence, the generalized other is a combination of attitudes, values, and all other necessary components of effective social functioning that an individual uses so as to suitably respond to instances of social interaction with others.

When these stages are applied to the characters of Caliban and Miranda, we find that they were unable to take part in a robust game stage, due to the absence of a variety of others on the island. We see both characters attempt to make up for their lack of social selves in different ways. With Miranda, she yearns for the affection of Ferdinand, hoping to find recognition and love outside of what Prospero can provide her. Caliban, however, wishes to isolate himself more because of the incomplete social self that Prospero has aided in forming. In essence, Miranda desires to complete her sense of self, whereas Caliban fears participating in such a process that has formerly caused him grief and suffering, placing him in a position of servitude. This fear is justified as a result of his generalized other reinforcing his slave self. The persistent belittling and abuse bestowed on him by Prospero has caused him to

internalize this label of slave, much like African Americans did during the years of slavery in America. During the years preceding the Civil War and even after it had ended, many were hesitant or did not want to leave their lives as forced laborers when offered the opportunity to be released from their positions of servitude. They were unable to identify themselves with anything outside of their slave lifestyles. Without a full sense of self, Caliban does not possess the wherewithal to resist his slave impulse. His narrow socialization has prohibited him from seeing himself in any other way other than a slave. His interaction has been restricted, which has consequently restricted his social self.

Neither character's individuality can be considered fully matured for several reasons. Though not totally isolated – a context, which prevents the development of self-awareness and individuality – neither character is dynamically involved in a larger society. The lack of role-taking opportunities and the restricted interaction between the I and the Me relative to the island would undoubtedly serve as obstacles if both characters were to be placed in a larger human society. It is critical for humans to be “deeply enmeshed in...society” (Hansen: 1976:34) throughout the socialization process in order for individuality to develop. It is imperative that humans participate in the social conventions of a society, while simultaneously developing the ability to challenge those conventions (Hansen 1976:34). If this is not accomplished, individuality can atrophy and disappear completely. What Mead does not address, however, is what happens to individuality if social conventions are forced upon an individual, as they are in the case of Caliban. Caliban is still active within the social regulations of the island put in place and monitored by Prospero, but has become resistant to them. Therefore, this begs the question: does Caliban ever truly participate in the island's society? His opposition to the non-material culture created by Prospero certainly qualifies as challenging social conventions, necessary for the developing self. Yet he does this throughout the play's entirety, and the audience can infer that these feelings of resentment have been present for quite some time and will not alter until Prospero relinquishes his power over Caliban. Consequently, Caliban's persistent resistance to the social conventions of the island indicates his refusal to participate in any of them, an equally important element of individuality.

Whereas individuality and self-awareness are unique components of human societies, the ability to view ourselves objectively also separates humans from all other living things. It is in our ability to examine ourselves as well as social situations in an unprejudiced manner that humanity arises, a feat accomplished using both verbal and non-verbal language known collectively as symbolic interaction. Defined as the “communication of ideas, meanings, and attitudes that are addressed both to ourselves and the receiver,” (Hansen 1976:27), symbolic interaction explains human role-taking, seeing ourselves from the perspective of another individual. It is when an individual realizes they are a social object to themselves, an objective realization of their place in the world and their behavior, as well as the meaning of their gestures and how those gestures affect others, can the concept of a self occur. This does not imply a mere alertness of one's physical place in the world; instead, it is primarily the awareness of one's behavior as “a part of the social process of adjustment” (Miller 1973:47). With this objective perspective, a social self emerges.

For Caliban, his socialization process began under the supervision of his mother Sycorax in their own form of communication, whatever that may have been. According to Miranda, Caliban “...wouldst gabble like / A thing most brutish” (I.ii.356-357) when she first attempted to teach him English, though this does not imply Caliban did not possess the ability to communicate; rather, he was unfamiliar with the methods of communication introduced to him by Miranda and Prospero. As he began to associate on a frequent basis with his European exiles, a separate socialization process commenced, which would have certainly proved difficult for Caliban to comprehend. The process itself ceases once Caliban is enslaved, due to the fact that he is isolated for the majority of his days, serving the needs of Miranda and Prospero. This isolation process deteriorates much – if not all – of the individuality he had developed while under the instruction of his European masters, indicating the absence of a fulfilled social self. For Miranda, her self-identity remains incomplete due to her lack of challenging the social conventions set forth by Prospero. Though she is more active in her interaction with her father than is Caliban, she remains docile throughout the majority of the play, unwilling to question her father's intentions for her and his reasoning for them.

## CONCLUSION

*The Tempest* aims to illustrate that nature can be civilized, demonstrated in the relationship between Prospero and Caliban. However, what is also shown are the detrimental consequences that find those being forced into the sophistication process. Caliban is unable to free himself from the rule of Prospero, supported by social exchange theory and providing evidence for this argument. Whether or not Prospero initially desired Caliban's subservience is still perplexing, seeing as he treated Caliban with what appeared to be sincere generosity and compassion when first coming to the island. Perhaps this was done so as to establish a power differential and set up Caliban for a life of servitude, or it maybe it was done in response to Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda, warranting a variety of



negative sanctions. The complexity of this relationship and subsequent consequences of Caliban's behavior resembles that of actual human interaction. A deeper investigation of this is needed so as to make Prospero and Caliban's relationship more lucid.

*The Tempest* also illustrates the divergent ramifications of the incompleteness of a social self. Caliban's social self is incomplete due to his eventual isolation from Prospero, Miranda, and other humans. With this solitary state, Hiewon Shin argues the termination of his education has the most devastating effects on Caliban's socialization process and even Caliban acknowledges this, in that he understands the supreme potentialities the content of Prospero's books withhold and describes them to Stephano and Alonso: "Remember / First to possess his books, for without them / He's but a sot, as I am..." (III.ii.90-92). If Caliban were able to finish his education, he may complete his socialization process. Yet, Caliban's internalization of the labels such as "slave" and "Mooncalf" may have affected his self-identity in a way that he no longer desires to rid himself of them. In reality, he may be satisfied with his subordinate status.

Miranda is not necessarily isolated like Caliban, but the minimal socialization opportunities available to her constitute her incomplete self-awareness. The social environment needed for such an identity to grow is void, yet Miranda and Caliban address this issue differently as they find social interaction opportunities with the shipwrecked crew. Nevertheless, because Miranda has not internalized demeaning labels like Caliban has, she may stand a better chance of being incorporated to human society once returning to Naples. If treated with an empathetic understanding of her isolated state for the vast majority of her life, her complete socialization may come to fruition. At the play's end, however, it remains curtailed, which can only lead us to speculate what her future entails.

Aside from the sociological implications, *The Tempest* is also considered to be Shakespeare's farewell to the theatre, which becomes apparent in the character of Prospero. Prospero's magical prowess and ability to manipulate the weather and to some extent human behavior suggests a relationship between him as ruler of the island and Shakespeare as director of the theatre. The play's epilogue exemplifies this connection, in which Prospero directly addresses the audience and requests their applause, which can ultimately release him from the island, a metaphor for Shakespeare's release from the theatre:

*"But release me from my bands  
With the help of your good hands.  
Gentle breath of you're my sails  
Must fill, or else my project fails,  
Which was to please..."* (Epilogue 9-13)

Shakespeare's work may not have survived were it not for the efforts of his fellow actors and friends. What is more important, however, is the influence these men had on Shakespeare while he was formulating his plays. The true extent of this can never be known, though differences in the quartos and folios suggest revisions were constantly being made, even after Shakespeare's death. Using this perspective, we find that the common idea of Shakespeare – a singular author who devised multiple dramas that are still considered to be of the highest importance in English literature curriculum – is not entirely true. He drew inspiration from the world around him and subsequently transferred it to the medium of theatre. This analysis is not meant to deduct Shakespeare's accomplishments; rather, it is meant to illustrate how they came to be and explain the folklore that is frequently attached to him.

With all of this, why then is sociological investigation of Shakespeare worth undertaking? Peter Forster and Celia Kenefford argue that the application of sociology to literature is beneficial to both disciplines. If performed correctly, examining literature using a sociological imagination may reveal "the relationship of the ideological component in fiction works...to other ideologies current in any particular society" (1973:357). In other words, using a sociological discipline can connect present-day readers to the times in which a specific piece of literature was written, as well as the values, norms, and institutions of that particular era. The everyday situations presented in literature in addition to the language used in a text can also be better comprehended using sociology (1973:355-56).

Karen A. Hegtvedt talks of a "reciprocal" relationship between literature and society, comprised of two components: studying literature's effect on society as a whole (its reflection of, influence on, and control over [Albrecht 1954]) and to treat "literature as sociology" or "sociology as literature" (1991:2). Hegtvedt comments on the second of these two components, calling for the application of numerous literary criticisms to all varieties of texts. By doing so, she believes this process can disclose "multiple meanings inherent in texts that potentially make revelations about society" (1991:2). Applying sociology to literature, then, assists readers in a better understanding of how social contexts influence authors in what they write, as well as how their text is distributed to the public. Though the latter of these was neglected in this essay, we've seen just how heavily European colonization efforts affected Shakespeare when writing *The Tempest*, as did his retirement from the theatre. We must continue to

emphasize the application of sociology – including all methods of literary criticism – to literature so as to better understanding the implications of this dynamic, reciprocal interaction.

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