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COLONIAL DISCOURSE OF PROSPERO MOLDS HIS MANNER OF TREATMENT OF ALL THE CHARACTERS IN *THE TEMPEST*, HIS EXPECTATION(S) FROM THEM AND THE WAY HE SATISFIES HIS EXPECTATION(S)

Throughout William Shakespeare's play, *The Tempest*, Prospero as a master of the colonial prison of his island, makes use of his colonial discourse and magical books, namely the symbols of knowledge so as to take all classes of the society, from aristocrats to commoners under his control, as one critic points out.[1] So, we can observe how the colonial discourse of Prospero decivilizes, brutalizes and degrades all the characters in a different way. In order to establish his dominion over them all, he speaks to the characters each regarding the hierarchy they respectively have in his mind-set. At this point, I suppose, Louis Althusser's term, interpellation is worth considering. The term, interpellation is used by Louis Althusser in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" to explain how ideas get into individuals' minds and deeply effects the lives in such a subtle way that the individuals suppose the ideas, that are offered to them and then they –unconsciously or unintentionally- accept, are their own ideas. So, interpellation is a process in which a particular culture's values are presented to the individuals for them to accept and internalize them without questioning. And, once they accept and internalize any given ideas, the individuals, as Althusser advocates, are turned into subjects and they eventually lose their individualities. In other words, when someone is interpellated in a whole way, (s)he is a subject to the given idea(s) or cultural values and hence he has unquestionably gotten them all. In this sense, language holds a very crucial role for interpellation. By means of language, the ideology interpellates the individuals as subjects and they are given certain shapes by governing ideology in a particular society so that they become functional citizens and act in a way, which is useful for the dominant, prevailing

[1] Zolfagharkhani, Moslem, and Zahra Heshmatifar. "Pedagogical and Colonial Power Discourses in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" Web. <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/download/j.ccc.1923670020120802.1345/2477>

ideology.[2] In the same manner, Prospero interpellates all the characters in the play through his language, namely discourse. And thus he is able to turn them all into his subjects, namely his own slaves who have respectively distinct hierarchy in his mind-set.

Caliban's position in the hierarchy of slaves is above Ariel, Miranda and Ferdinand. Prospero wants him to serve for him and his daughter, Miranda faithfully and obediently as a slave. To achieve his goal, he usurped the island of Caliban's mother, Sycorax. If we regard what Caliban says below, we can see the consequence of Prospero's colonial power and discourse:

"This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,
Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give me
(...) and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,
That burn by day and night. And then I loved thee
(...)
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."

"You taught me language; and my profit on't
Is, I know how to curse: the red-plague rid you
For learning me your language!"

In the light of these quotations, it can be pointed out that teaching language comes to the fore as a tool for cultural assimilation done by Prospero's colonial discourse, for assimilation starts with language teaching. And here as we see, through education, he is, on the one hand, turning him a kind of civilized savage, as if Caliban is got out of his corrupted, vicious roots inherited by his native ancestors; but on the other hand, he is subtly making him nothing but a

[2] "Interpellation (philosophy)." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation. Web. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interpellation_(philosophy)>.

mere slave, subject or a tool whose only function is to carry out his mighty master's orders. And that is the reason why Prospero states his need for Caliban's workforce:

> "(...) We cannot miss him: he does make our fire, /Fetch our wood, and serve in offices
> That profit us."

Therefore, we can say that Prospero and Miranda cannot live without his service, since the colonized and the colonizer are the components of one another. Besides, as one critic argues, body punishment holds a crucial role in the colonial discourse in *The Tempest*, for in response to Caliban's cursing, Prospero administers "cramp" and "pinches" and he keeps him in a cave. At his point, his colonial pedagogy resituates his first rank subject, namely Caliban in a reinforced social order, as one critic asserts.[3] And it is quite obvious that through the colonial discourse, Prospero insults, brutalizes, decivilizes and womanizes him. For instance, he accuses him of being the son of a witch (Sycorax): "hag-seed", "thou poisonous slave/ got by the devil himself upon the wicked dam"; he describes him as a "beast", "filth", "thou tortoise" and "the son she (Sycorax) did litter here, that not honored with a human shape." With regard to his manner of treatment of Caliban, Prospero unquestionably transforms him into a beast-like creature, and an inferior, pitiable other. In this sense, he has nothing to do but unwillingly fulfill the sovereign master Prospero's orders. However, towards the end of the play, his colonial discourse is a little bit resolved:

> "**Prospero:** As you look to have my pardon, trim it handsomely.
> **Caliban:** Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter
> And seek for grace. (...)"

[3] Zolfagharkhani, Moslem, and Zahra Heshmatifar. "Pedagogical and Colonial Power Discourses in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" Web.
<http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/download/j.ccc.1923670020120802.1345/2477>

In this sense, he gives him a hope of at least his pardon[4] if Caliban, as a number one slave, follows his master's orders with all his loyalty and obedience, which can indicate how Prospero womanizes Caliban.

When we look at Prospero's expectation from his second slave, Ariel, we might say that he functions as an agent who causes the storm and the other troubles that Italians suffer from. Ariel willingly and faithfully complies with his orders - unlike Prospero who curses constantly by means of the language that is taught by Prospero and Miranda. The reason why Ariel carries out the orders of his master is, I suppose, the fact that Prospero makes use of a polite, diplomatic language, which is, indeed, totally different from the insulting, womanizing and brutalizing language that he uses for Caliban.

"**Prospero:** (...) Thou best know'st
What torment I did find thee in. Thy groans
Of ever angry bears. It was a torment
Did make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts
To lay upon the damned, which Sycorax
Could not again undo. It was mine art,
When I arrived and heard thee, that made gape
The pine and let thee out."

With regard to this quotation, as a hero, he comes and rescues her from the torment of the witch. And hence, he is capable of keeping Ariel under his servitude, which can be seen as a compensation for her life debt. Probably, that is why he describes him as "quaint", "delicate", "dainty", and "tricksy", thus his colonial discourse is conveyed in a mild way. However, at the end of the play, he frees Ariel upon saying:

"Bravely, my diligence. Thou shalt be free."

[4] Caliban is motivated by revenge, rather than thought of gaining freedom, or his autonomy as a ruler of the island.

As for his manner of treatment of Miranda, he has a complete control over her through his magic and discourse. Unlike Caliban and Ariel, she does not have to enact forceful duties, since she is a princess. Nonetheless, it does not change her situation as a subject of his father.

"**Prospero:** I have done nothing but in care of thee,
Of thee, my dear one—thee my daughter, who
Art ignorant of what thou art, naught knowing
Of whence I am, nor that I am more better
Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell
And thy no greater father.
(...)
The hour's now come.
The very minute bids thee ope thine ear.
Obey and be attentive."(Emphasis added)

In a way, we see that he merely shares what he knows, on time. Neither before nor after the time does he not give information about his past to his daughter. So, his colonial discourse has a sort of power to withhold the knowledge. Just as Michel Foucault advocates, knowledge is an instrument of power and the aim of knowledge is to have power over something and govern it[5]. In this sense, by withholding and sharing the knowledge for his own benefit, he is able to keep Miranda under his control and hence subtly govern her through his colonial discourse. For the sake of his domination in future, he wants her to marry Ferdinand. Thanks to his subtle plot and magic, Miranda meets him. Until Miranda shows him her interest, Prospero's relationship with her is under his control. But, since he becomes a rival to Ferdinand, the prospective groom, he sees the danger and hence harshly behaves and speaks to him:

"One word more. I charge thee
That thou attend me. Thou dost here usurp
The name thou owest not, and hast put thyself

[5] Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power - JSTOR". Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343197>

Upon this island as a spy to win it
From me, the lord on 't.
(...)
Come,
I'll manacle thy neck and feet together.
Seawater shalt thou drink. Thy food shall be
The fresh-brook mussles, withered roots, and husks
Wherein the acorn cradled. Follow.
(...)
Come from thy ward,
For I can here disarm thee with this stick
And make thy weapon drop."(Emphasis added)

When we consider his way of talking to Ferdinand, we can say that he emasculates Ferdinand, as well. Through his colonial discourse, he makes him the inferior and weak one. For the reason that he, as quoted above, has "stick" and "weapon" standing for phallus, namely the symbol of male power, he is capable of making him bow down through making his weapon drop down. Thus, as he wishes, he and Miranda fall in love and marry in the end, under the influence of his magic and of course his colonial discourse. In a way, Prospero not only gives a shape to his daughter's fate, but also he designs her sexuality. If we remember that he keeps Caliban, who has attempted to rape Miranda, in a cave, Caliban is not the man to give his own daughter. Rather, he offers her to Ferdinand who is a prince, namely a noble man unlike Caliban, the beast. At this point we can remark that Prospero's role in controlling all his possessions on the island is armed with his supernatural power, as one critic asserts.[6] Therefore, it is the combination of his colonial discourse and magic that enables him to keep his control over them all.

[6]Zolfagharkhani, Moslem, and Zahra Heshmatifar. "Pedagogical and Colonial Power Discourses in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*". Web. <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/ccc/article/download/j.ccc.1923670020120802.1345/2477>

Prospero, at the very beginning of the play, speaks to Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, Antonio and the drunkards by means of Ariel and he says that the tempest was nature's way to take a revenge on Alonso by taking Ferdinand from him. And he continues that only a sincere repentance can save the men's own lives. In a sense, this threatening discourse enables Prospero to take his enemies under the control, for they are dismayed. Upon this warning, the drunkards (i.e. Stephano and Trinculo) conspire to kill Prospero, thanks to Caliban's help. That is why Prospero plays a psychological game- as one critic states- designed to humiliate his enemies and expose their greed and superficiality. Besides, he sends spirits of hunting dogs to give them pain and suffering. And it shows us the disciplining way of the colonial order: just like Prospero gives body punishment to Caliban, he makes them suffer, as well. However, his revengeful treatment and discourse are resolved at the end of the play, as he says: "The rare action is in virtue, than in vengeance." And here is what kind of discourse he uses for the Italians:

"(...)
O good Gonzalo,
My true preserver, and a loyal sir(75)
To him you follow'st! I will pay thy graces
Home both in word and deed. Most cruelly
Didst thou, Alonso, use me and my daughter.
Thy brother was a furtherer in the act—
Thou art pinched for't now, Sebastian.
[to Antonio] Flesh and blood,
You, brother mine, that entertained ambition,
Expelled remorse and nature; whom, with Sebastian—
Whose inward pinches therefore are most strong,—
Would here have killed your king; I do forgive thee."

In this respect, we can assert that Prospero takes the social position of the Italians into accounts. Although they are his enemies, this does not change the fact that they are noble men, and for this very reason, he makes use of a gentle discourse. As we see, he praises

Gonzalo, since he fears of Prospero's threatening, and he acts with his logic and loyalty, which is, indeed, very significant for Prospero, the representative of the colonizer. Gonzalo, without attempting to kill him to usurp the governance of the island, gains the praise of Prospero, who is afraid of the usurpation like many colonizers. For this reason, I assume, he says to Gonzalo:

"First, noble friend,
Let me embrace thine age, whose honor cannot
Be measured or confined."

Even though he scolds Alonso for exiling him and his daughter with his cruelty, he, then, says to him:

"(...) I embrace thy body,
and to thee and thy company I bid
A hearty welcome.
(...)
Sir, I invite your highness and your train
To my poor cell, where you shall take your rest(350)
For this one night; which, part of it"

Since he is aware of the fact that he is the king of Naples, he welcomes him warmly into his cell. As for his behavior towards Sebastian and Antonio, he condemns them for their treachery and greedy thoughts. In other words, the two have plotted against Alonso to attain his power. And when he is talking to Sebastian angrily, he says:

"For you, the most wicked sir, whom to call brother (...)"

When we consider his manner of treatment of the drunkards, namely Stephano and Trinculo, he in in a mocking mood:

"You'd be king o's the isle, sirrah?"

So, he has no respect for them, since they have failed to usurp Prospero's power. Therefore,

he does not behave them in a cruel or a harsh way, for he is aware of their position in the social hierarchy, though they are his enemies. Finally, he does forgive them all.

Caliban, as a beast-like creature and a complete other in the eyes of Prospero, never willingly fulfills his master's orders, he constantly curses his master and he wants to take his island back from his dominion& total control. As a reaction to his colonial discourse, he makes a plan with Sebastian and Trinculo and then enacts the plot to get rid of Prospero, rather than attaining his freedom or the whole control of the island. When his attempt fails, his attitude towards his master changes at the same time:

"Ay, that I will; and I'll be wise hereafter,
And seek for grace.(...)"

As for Ariel's reaction to his master, he faithfully and dutifully fulfills the orders of the master. And his general tone is like that:

"What would my powerful master like? Here I am."

However, towards the end of the play, we observe his need of love since he says:

"Do you love me, master? No?"

Thus, we can say that, as a reaction to his master's polite, political discourse, he expects love of the master as a compensation for his servitude for his master. Besides it seems that he is sick of his commands:

"I thought to have told thee of it, but I fear'd
Lest I might anger thee."

When we consider Miranda's reaction to her own father's attitude, she, only at the very beginning of the play, asks questions to his father about their past. Except for her initial interrogation, we observe her under the influence of her father's enchantment, or his control so to speak. Besides, as Ann Thompson highlights in her book, Miranda, in a manner typical of women in a colonial atmosphere, has completely internalized the patriarchal order of

things, thinking of herself as subordinate to her father[7]. And that is why we do not see her interrogation except for the beginning of the play. Furthermore, we can assert that she shares the same colonial, racist ideology with her father, since she says to Caliban:

> "But thy vile race,
> Though thou didst learn, had that in't which;
> good natures
> Could not abide to be with; therefore wast thou
> Deservedly confined into this rock,
> Who hadst deserved more than a prison."

Likewise, Ferdinand shows his reaction to Prospero's ungentle discourse through attempting to fight him at the beginning of the play:

> "I will resist such entertainment till
> Mine enemy has more power."

But when Prospero says: "Come on; obey: /Thy nerves are in their infancy again / And have no vigour in them," we can point out that Ferdinand, reveals a kind of interpellation to the order:

> "So they are;
> My spirits, as in a dream, are all bound up.
> My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,
> The wreck of all my friends, nor this man's threats,
> To whom I am subdued, (...)"

Then, under his magic, he loses all his autonomy and acts according to the sovereign Prospero's own wishes. Hence, he keeps loyal not only to Prospero but also Miranda to whom he is married. As for Italians, they are all shocked. Gonzalo, despite the shock, acts as a mediator figure that is always careful and wise, since he is afraid of the outcomes of the disloyalty to Prospero. Alonso is repenting for his past deeds such as exiling Prospero and

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[7]Thompson, Ann and Susan Sellers. *Miranda, Where's Your Sister?: Reading Shakespeare's The Tempest*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991. Web.

taking the whole control of the kingdom under his dominion. In a way, his reaction unfolds the complexity of power struggle, for he did all these to be a king and then he expresses deep regret. Unlike Gonzalo, Antonio and Sebastian render a defiant reaction to his threatening discourse and they have plotted against Alonso to usurp his power. And when Prospero forgives the two despite their greedy plot against Alonso, they remain silent. In this sense, it is possible to say that their silence at the end of the play reveals their true sense of guilt and their powerlessness to speak. Stephano and Trinculo, like Antonio and Sebastian, do not bow down the discourse, namely the power of Prospero, and they, with Caliban, make a plan to usurp Prospero's power to establish their rule in the island. Therefore, we can point out that except for Gonzalo, all the Italians experience power struggle as a reaction to the colonial discourse of Prospero.

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A Tempest by Aimé Césaire is, I suppose, worth considering as we analyze the colonial discourse of Prospero. The play absolutely gives a voice to one of the repressed or unspoken points in Shakespeare's play, which is –as a matter of course- the colonialism, and the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. As Césaire advocates, colonialism works to "decivilize" the colonizer: torture, violence, race hatred and immorality constitute a dead weight on the so-called civilized, pulling the master class deeper and deeper into the abyss of barbarism. According to him, this is the fundamental problem the modern world faces. To lay bare its roots, he gets back to *The Tempest* and unfolds the unspoken part in the play. Shakespeare' play is, indeed, mildly dealing with the matter of colonization, but it is never overtly criticizing the matter. Hence, Césaire, who is one of the founding fathers of Negritude, has a chance to make serious criticisms against the colonialism in *A Tempest*, through making a couple of changes in the original play. For instance, he gives Caliban a

major role in his work so that the reader is able to question the realities of slavery and the result of the colonial order, which is, actually, decivilization of the colonizer, as he argues. Besides, not only the position of Ariel and Caliban as slaves but also Caliban's liberal discourse is foregrounded, since Shakespeare does not openly reveal Prospero's position as the colonial master. Furthermore, we can compare their position as slaves in Césaire's work: Caliban, on the one hand, is obviously rebellious and Ariel, on the other hand, is amore obedient slave, despite his disgust with his master's orders. What is more, Caliban wants to be called X, instead of his name. By doing so Césaire foregrounds Caliban's position as a functional tool or a subject, for he is nothing but a slave in the eyes of the colonizer. Additionally, he thinks that the language he has learnt from Prospero prevents him from reaching his own self and that is why he is assimilated. In this sense, we can point out that he is imprisoned within the language, as well. This reminds me of Kafka's short story, "A Report to an Academy". In the story, ape is the narrator and he is telling how he is transformed into such an educated ape that he is capable of giving a report to an academy, as title refers and how he loses his own identity. And he says:

> "And I learned, gentlemen. Alas, one learns when one has to. One learns when one wants a way out. One learns ruthlessly. One supervises oneself with a whip and tears oneself apart at the slightest resistance. My ape nature ran off, head over heels, out of me, so that in the process my first teacher himself almost became an ape and soon had to give up training and be carried off to a mental hospital.(...)"[8]

As the ape implies, education is a kind of torture. In the similar manner, Caliban refers to this sort of torture while he is being taught the language. In addition to this, Caliban uses his native language, which reminds me of Alyson's resistance to the dominant ideology thanks to her demanding discourse in "the Wife of Bath's Tale" in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury*

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[8] Kafka, Franz. "Franz Kafka Online." *A Report for An Academy by Franz Kafka*. Web. <http://www.kafka-online.info/a-report-for-an-academy-page7.html>

Tales. So his being bilingual and his insist on using his mother language can be seen as an advantage for breaking free from the imprisonment of the second language. Also, Prospero's anxiety of usurpation is foregrounded as well, thus we can clearly see how a colonizer feels all the anxiety of usurpation. Along with all these alterations made by Césaire, when we consider the new comers to the island who has a conscious to protect the Indian culture existing in the island, we can assume that he offers the reader a future in which people look after cultural heritage, instead of demolishing it.

Even though he takes the colonialism as a subject matter of the play, he never mentions Miranda and Sycorax. They constitute one of the unspoken parts of Shakespeare's play, indeed. And that is why his play, I assume, fails to represent the colonized in a whole way. If we regard how Prospero turns Caliban and Ferdinand into his slaves or so to speak, his own subjects, it is pretty obvious that they are womanized, bowed down and reduced to being inferior by the colonial discourse of Prospero. In this sense, the colonization and problem of women, namely misogyny, are deeply interconnected. For this very reason, they cannot be regarded as irrelevant subject matters. They are, in fact, indispensable matters, since people are emasculated and womanized so that they can be considered as –naturally- weak and powerless in both cases.

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