



# The English Renaissance

## And Shakespeare's *The Tempest*



*A tempestuous noise of Thunder and lightening  
Enter a Ship-master, and a Boteswain.*

*Master.*

*Ote-swaine.*

*Botes. Heere Master :*

*Maſt. Good : Speake to th' Mariners : fall too't, yarely, or we run our ſelues a ground, beſtirre, beſtirre.*

*Enter Mariners.*

*Botes. Heigh my hearts, cheereely my harts :  
Maſt. T' heere challenge ſeile : T'end to th' Maſters*

*Auth. Hang cur, maker, we are leſſe  
Gonz. Ile warrant for drowning, though the  
Ship were no ſtronger than a Nutt-shell, and as leaky as  
an vnſtanch'd wench*

# Today's Agenda

## Lecture Agenda:

1. A Bit of History
    - a. What does it mean to be Early Modern?
    - b. The War of the Roses (aka, *Game of Thrones*)
    - c. Mercantile Trade, England, and the Ottoman Empire
  2. William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*
    - a. About William Shakespeare and his company, The King's Men
    - b. The Shakespearean Sonnet
    - c. Overview of the play
    - d. Sycorax and Caliban
    - e. Miranda
  3. Excerpt: *Caliban and the Witch* by Silvia Federici
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# The Early Modern Period, aka the Renaissance

- In England, this took place roughly between 1485 to 1714 CE.
- The period named itself the renaissance, which stands for rebirth. The people of the renaissance saw themselves reinventing and/or elevating great works of rhetoric, philosophy, art, drama, science, and writing like the Romans and Greeks did before them. This was known as Humanism.
- Modern historians named the period the early modern period for a few reasons:
  - This is where capitalism first started to transition into the main economic system of power
  - English and other languages spoken at this time (like Spanish) entered into a modern form with fixed vowel sounds
  - This is also where we start to see advances in medicine and a better understanding of the human body

# The Great Chain of Being

This is a core belief of medieval Christianity that continues through the early modern period. The higher you are in the chain, the more divine you are and thus the more social, political, and cultural power you had as a being.



1579 drawing of the Great Chain of Being from  
*Didacus Valades, Rhetorica Christiana*



# The War of the Roses

1455-1485



*Lancaster Rose*

And the house of Lancaster  
(Lannister)

Between the house of York (Stark)



*York Rose*

**Aka, Game of Thrones**  
**RIP after Season 5**

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GAME OF THRONES

WAR OF THE ROSES

## After Henry VII united the houses and claimed the throne in 1485

- Henry VIII ruled from 1509-1547 (Catholic but switched the nation to Protestantism and became head of the Protestant Church of England)
  - Yes, there is also a show (I think on HBO?) about this king. He's infamous for marrying women, having daughters, then divorcing or beheading his wives in order to marry someone who could produce a male heir.
- Edward VI was king from 1547 to 1553 (Protestant)
  - Edward was a sickly boy; it is thought he suffered from tuberculosis. Edward succeeded his father at the age of 9, the government being carried on by a Council of Regency with his uncle, Duke of Somerset, styled Protector.
- Mary I (Bloody Mary) ruled from 1553 to 1558 (Catholic)
  - Having no other sons, Mary I inherited the throne as the eldest daughter of Henry VIII. Mary ordered the people of England to convert to Catholicism and refusal to convert meant death (hence the nickname). Mary ruled for only a short period. It's believed she developed some sort of reproductive cancer.
- Queen Elizabeth I, the last Tudor ruler, ruled from 1558 to 1603 (Protestant)

When Queen Elizabeth I took the throne in 1533 C.E., she did not inherit a strong kingdom that was ready to colonize the world; rather, England was a small European island nation that was behind in development. England's Renaissance (roughly 1450 C.E. to 1660 C.E.), for example, started later than other European nations on the continent whose Renaissance started as early as 1300 C.E. Elizabeth I's England had little hope of becoming a domineering sea power or a capitalist colonial enterprise but was rather more known for being at the edge of the known world during the Renaissance in England. While the Americas and India later became a strong focus for mercantile trade, exploitation, and early capitalist profit, during Elizabeth's early tenure as queen and going back roughly 400 years, the Mediterranean was at the heart of trade and wealth for much of Europe – and it was under the control of the Ottoman Empire after the fall of the Byzantine Empire when the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453 C.E. These facts didn't stop Queen Elizabeth I from issuing the 1533 Act in Restraint of Appeals once she took the throne to forever declare England a sovereign empire and to break away from the Holy Roman Church.

With the death of Queen Mary I, Elizabeth's older catholic sister, Catholicism – at this time an enemy to Protestantism, Judaism, and Islam – was at an end in England. Queen Elizabeth I solidified England as a protestant nation and the catholic church, especially the pope at the time, Pope Pius V, and the Spanish monarch, King Philip II, were not going to let this little island nation at the edge of the known world dismiss their religion and practice a heretical form of Christianity. While Pope Pius V called for the death of Queen Elizabeth I, offering pre-absolution for the catholic that would be her assassin after the church officially excommunicated her in 1570 C.E., catholic nations like Spain put an end to trade with England in order to starve the nation back into submission. Without trade with catholic European nations and wanting to hold onto her throne in a patriarchal society that constantly challenged her right to rule because of her gender, Queen Elizabeth I was open to new ideas on how to keep England afloat when the rest of Europe and her own countrymen were eager to see it and her sink.

This resulted in Elizabeth I taking two main economic ventures that would result not only in England's salvation, but its eventual place as an imperial and colonial world power. The first venture she engaged in was to create what is known as the very first joint-stock company, the Company of Merchant Adventurers to New Lands in 1552 C.E. soon followed by the Muscovy Company in 1555 C.E., and the second was to respond to a letter from Sultan Murad III, sent in 1579 C.E., and to open England to trade with the Ottoman Empire for the first time ever in the history of England.

Mercantile trade with the Ottoman Empire, along with the defeat of the Spanish Armada by a storm at sea in 1588, saved England and allowed it to regain its footing, establish its new religion and own church, and to become a colonizing nation in which the sun never set upon.



*Queen Elizabeth I's  
"The Coronation Portrait"  
Unknown Artist - 1559*

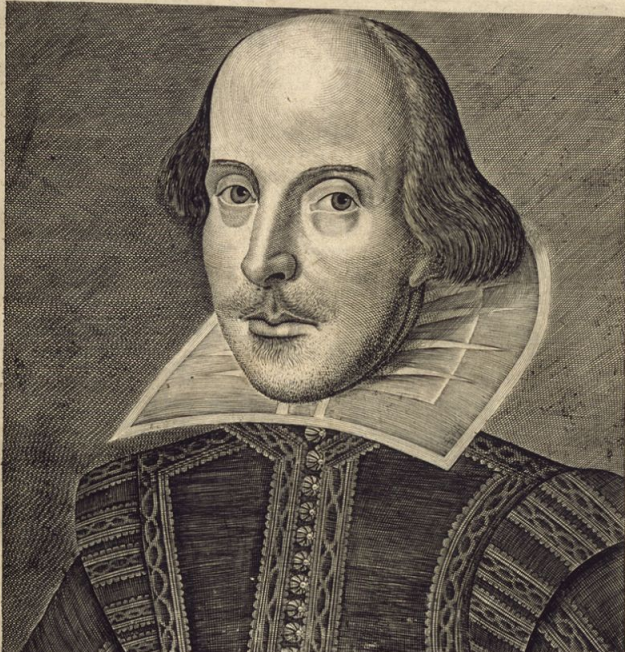
*A Life-Sized portrait of  
Sultan Murad III (1574-1595)  
Unknown Spanish Artist  
17<sup>th</sup> Century*



This is the setting for our  
reading today by Mr.  
William Shakespeare

# HISTORIES, & TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies.



William Shakespeare's (1564-1616)  
Droeshout Portrait  
Engraved by Martin Droeshout  
Published in the 1623 First Folio

William Shakespeare, born in 1564 as the son of a middle-class man John Shakespeare and his wife Mary, was one of the first beneficiaries of the education boom of the era. As Greenblatt highlights in his book *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*, Shakespeare's father John "himself seems to have had at most only partial literacy: as the holder of important civic offices in Stratford-upon-Avon, he probably knew how to read but throughout his life he only signed his name with a mark." Shakespeare's mother Mary, "the mother of England's greatest writer, also could not write her name." Shakespeare, as one of the most celebrated poets, dramatists, and rhetorical figures of the Early Modern period, gained his rhetorical knowledge and ability to write through public education.

Unlike other contemporary writers, Shakespeare invested in ticket sales at *The Globe Theater* and avoided debtors prisons and remained relatively wealthy during his lifetime. We have *many* records of Shakespeare's life (he's not an anonymous collection of authors) including many lawsuits he filed against others who defaulted on loans they owed him.

# The Shakespearean Sonnet

Shakespearean Sonnets, also called Elizabethan Sonnets, used Iambic Pentameter and had the rhyme scheme of abab, cdcd, efef, gg with some variations for specific poetic effects.

Shakespeare had a total of 154 sonnets. We're just going to look at a few.

A complete copy of the Sonnets was first published in a 1609 Quarto, titled "SHAKE-SPEARE SONNETS. Neuer before Imprinted."



Shall I compare thee to a Summers day?  
Thou art more louely and more temperate:  
Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie,  
And Sommers lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,  
And euery faire from faire some-time declines,  
By chance, or natures changing course vntrim'd:  
But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,  
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,  
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,  
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,  
So long as men can breath or eyes can see,  
So long liues this, and this giues life to thee,

Let me not to the marriage of true mindes  
Admit impediments, loue is not loue  
Which alters when it alteration findes,  
Or bends with the remouer to remoue.

O no, it is an euer fixed marke  
That lookes on tempests and is neuer shaken;  
It is the star to euery wandring barke,  
Whose worths vnknowne, although his high be taken.  
Lou's not Times foole, though rosie lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickles compasse come,  
Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,  
But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:  
If this be error and vpon me proued,  
I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued.

My Mistres eyes are nothing like the Sunne,  
Currall is farre more red,then her lips red,  
If snow be white,why then her brests are dun:  
If haire be wiers,black wiers grow on her head:  
I haue seene Roses damaskt,red and white,  
But no such Roses see I in her cheekes,  
And in some perfumes is there more delight,  
Then in the breath that from my Mistres reekes.  
I loue to heare her speake, yet well I know,  
That Musicke hath a farre more pleasing sound:  
I graunt I neuer saw a goddesse goe,  
My Mistres when shee walkes treads on the ground.  
And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare,  
As any she beli'd with false compare.

The first folio of Shakespeare's complete works was published by his acting company in 1623; Shakespeare had long since passed. While Shakespeare was alive to see the reception of his sonnets in print form as well as the popularity of his plays as performance pieces, he never knew how popular his plays would become as a collection.

# Genre Features

## of early modern English plays

Shakespeare's plays specifically are broken up into three categories today:

- Comedies (generally take place before marriage and end in marriage)
- Tragedies (generally take place after marriage)
- Histories (or very nationalized pro-whatever-was-on-the-throne histories)

- Plays in general are both meant to be read and meant to be performed
  - When a play is performed, the audience sees one set interpretation of the text, from start to finish, with specific actors embodying the characters and the vision of the director uniting the performance on stage
  - When plays are read, the reader can imagine multiple possibilities for a character, a scene, a delivery of a line, etc. and aren't fixed to one interpretation of the text
  - Silent reading, as we imagine it today, wasn't really a thing until the 19th century; so even though these plays were meant to both be read and be performed, they were meant to be read out loud
  - During the early modern era in England, all parts were performed by men or boys - women were not allowed to act on stage despite this being normal in other European nations like Spain
  - All of these actors would also be white despite the race of the character they were playing
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# Shakespeare's plays, by (estimated) chronological order

1. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1589-91)
2. *The Taming of the Shrew* (1590-1)
3. *Henry VI, Part I* (1591)
4. *Henry VI, Part II* (1591)
5. *Henry VI, Part III* (1591)
6. *Titus Andronicus* (1591-2)
7. *Richard III* (1592-3)
8. *Edward III* (1592-3)
9. *The Comedy of Errors* (1594)
10. *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594-5)
11. *Richard II* (1595)
12. *Romeo and Juliet* (1595)
13. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595)
14. *King John* (1596)
15. *The Merchant of Venice* (1596-7)
16. *Henry IV, Part I* (1596-7)
17. *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597)
18. *Henry IV, Part II* (1597-8)
19. *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598-9)
20. *Henry V* (1599)
21. *Julius Caesar* (1599)
22. *As You Like It* (1599-1600)
23. *Hamlet* (1599-1601)
24. *Twelfth Night* (1601)
25. *Troilus and Cressida* (1600-2)
26. *Measure for Measure* (1603)
27. *Othello* (1603-4)
28. *All's Well That Ends Well* (1604-5)
29. *King Lear* (1605)
30. *Timons of Athens* (1605-6)
31. *Macbeth* (1606)
32. *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606)
33. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1607-8)
34. *Coriolanus* (1608)
35. *The Winter's Tale* (1609-11)
36. *Cymbeline* (1610)
37. *The Tempest* (1610-11)
38. *Henry VIII* (1612-3) Co-author John Fletcher
39. *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613-4) Co-author Fletcher

# Queen Elizabeth I

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# King James I

After Queen Elizabeth I passed in 1603, there's a notable shift in the way Shakespeare writes his women characters. Earlier headstrong women like Kate from *The Taming of the Shrew* (1590-1) or plays with a strong cast of multiple women characters like that of *Measure for Measure* (1603-4) give way to *The Tempest* (1610-1), where we literally have only one women-coded character on the stage, Miranda.

Before Queen Mary I and Queen Elizabeth I, power linked to the ruling class and the state was the work of men – kings, dukes, princes, barons, landlords, earls, and so forth held sway in the public arena that shaped and led to the early modern world.

With the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, the reign of women in the public sphere as ideological creators was challenged by King James I taking the throne, and women were once again stripped of power and agency.

It's also important to mention that James pulled away from Ottoman support for England and instead invested in The East India Company and gave them exclusive contracts to start bringing back regular shipments of goods from India in 1603. James was less concerned with international treaties and was more concerned with profit.

King James I also granted passes to the Royal African Company to export goods like gold and precious woods from Africa in 1618. While England benefited from the exploitation of Africa and India, England wouldn't engage directly with the Transatlantic Slave Trade until King Charles II, James' grandson, in 1663.

# *The Tempest* (1610-1)

The last play solely written by  
William Shakespeare  
But also - the first play to appear  
in the 1623 first printed folio

Yeah, there's a 2010 movie for this one too.





# THE TEMPEST.

*Actus primus, Scena prima.*

*A tempestuous noise of Thunder and Lightning heard: Enter a Ship-maister, and a Boatswaine.*

*Maister.*

*Boatswaine.* One-swaine.  
**B.** Heere Maister: What cheere?  
*Maister.* Good: Speake to th' Mariners: fall too't, yarely, or we run our selues a ground, besture, besture. *Exit.*

*Enter Mariners.*

*Boatswaine.* Heigh my hearts, cheereely, cheereely my hearts: yare, yare: Take in the toppe-sail: Tend to th' Masters whistle: Blow all thou burst thy winde, if room be enough.

*Enter Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Ferdinando, Gonzalo, and others.*

*Alonso.* Good Boatswaine haue care: where's the Maister? Play the men.

*Boatswaine.* I pray now keepe below.

*Alonso.* Where is the Maister, Belon?

*Boatswaine.* Do you not heare him? you marre our labour, Keepe your Cabines: you do asill the storme.

*Gonzalo.* Nay, good be patient.

*Boatswaine.* When the Sea is: hence, what cares these seafarers for the name of King? to Cabine; silence: trouble vs not.

*Gonzalo.* Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

*Boatswaine.* None that I more loue then my selfe. You are a Counsellor, if you can command these Elements to silence, and worke the peace of the present; wee will not hand a rope more, vntill your authoritie: If you cannot, giue thanks you haue liu'd so long, and make your selfe readie in your Cabine for the mischance of the houre, if it so hap. Cheereely good hearts: out of our way I say. *Exit.*

*Gonzalo.* I haue great comfort from this fellow: methinks he hath no drowning marke vpon him; his complexion is perfect Gallows: stand fast good Patere to his hanging, make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our owne dole little bouyages: If he be not borne to bee hang'd, our case is miserable. *Exit.*

*Enter Boatswaine.*

*Boatswaine.* Downe with the top-Mast: yare, lower, lower, bring her to. Try with Main-courie, A plague—

*Actus primus. Enter Sebastian, Antonio, & Gonzalo.*

vpou this howling: they are lower then the weather, or our officer yet againe? What do you heere? Shall we giue ore and drowne, haue you a minde to sinke?

*Sebastian.* A poxe o' your throat, you bawling, blasphe-mous incharitable Dog.

*Boatswaine.* Worke you then.

*Antonio.* Hang cur, hang you whosefou insolent Noys-maker, we are lesse afraid to be drownde, then thou art.

*Gonzalo.* He warrant him for drowning, though the Ship were no stronger then a Nutt-shell, and as leaky as an vnstanch'd wench.

*Boatswaine.* Lay her a hold a hold, set her two courses off to Sea againe, lay her off.

*Enter Mariners wet.*

*Mariners.* All lost, no prayers, to prayers, all lost.

*Boatswaine.* What must our mouths be cold?

*Gonzalo.* The King, and Prince, at prayers, let's assist them, for our case is as theirs.

*Sebastian.* I am out of patience.

*Antonio.* We are meerey cheated of our hues by drunkards, This wide-chop'd rascall, would thou mightst lye drowning the washing of ten Tides.

*Gonzalo.* Hee'l be hang'd yet.

Though euery drop of water sweare against it, And gape at width to glut him: *A confused noise within.*

*Mercury on vs.*

We split, we split, Farewell my wife, and children, Farewell brother: we split, we split, we split.

*Antonio.* Let's all sinke with' King.

*Sebastian.* Let's take leaue of him. *Exit.*

*Gonzalo.* Now would I giue a thousand furlongs of Sea, for an Acre of barren ground: Long heath, Browne firs, any thing; the wills about be done, but I would faine dye a dry death. *Exit.*

*Scena Secunda.*

*Enter Prospero and Miranda.*

*Miranda.* If by your Art (my deere father) you haue Put the wild waters in this Rore; I lay them: The skye it seemes would powre down stinking pitch, But that the Sea, mounting to th' weikins cheeke, Dashes the fire out. Oh! I haue suffer'd With those that I saw suffer: A brave vessel

## Main Characters

- Prospero - a former duke of Milan, now magician on a Mediterranean island
- Miranda - daughter of Prospero
- Ariel - a spirit and servant to Prospero
- Caliban - native to the island and servant to Prospero
- Ferdinand - prince of Naples
- Alonso - king of Naples
- Antonio - duke of Milan and Prospero's brother
- Sebastian - Alonso's Brother
- Gonzalo - counselor to Alonso and friend of Prospero

Lots of other servants, butlers, and ship workers along with sprites and goddesses.

# Overview of *The Tempest* (from The Folger)

Putting romance onstage, *The Tempest* gives us a magician, Prospero, a former duke of Milan who was displaced by his treacherous brother, Antonio. Prospero is exiled on an island, where his only companions are his daughter, Miranda, the spirit Ariel, and the monster Caliban. When his enemies are among those caught in a storm near the island, Prospero turns his power upon them through Ariel and other spirits.

The characters exceed the roles of villains and heroes. Prospero seems heroic, yet he enslaves Caliban and has an appetite for revenge. Caliban seems to be a monster for attacking Miranda, but appears heroic in resisting Prospero, evoking the period of colonialism during which the play was written. Miranda's engagement to Ferdinand, the Prince of Naples and a member of the shipwrecked party, helps resolve the drama.

# Caliban and his mother, Sycorax

- Are the only inhabitants of the island before Prospero and his daughter, Miranda, arrive
- Sycorax once was in control of the island and in control of the spirit Ariel, but she mysteriously dies before Prospero arrives. Instead of Caliban inheriting his mother's powers, the island, or control of Ariel, Prospero takes control of all of those plus Caliban
- Are racial coded as non-white and probably Black since the play is set on a Mediterranean Island
- But Caliban and his mother have also been theorized to be stand-ins for Native Americans since the colonization of the New World was taking place during this period - thus the Mediterranean Island is a stand in for the Americas

# *“The Tempest and Early Modern Concepts of Race”*

In Ch. 10 of a 2021 collection of essays titled “Shakespeare and Race,” Dr. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan explore Caliban’s race:

*The Tempest reflects early modern European trends in racial perceptions, especially in the play’s foregrounding of Caliban, who embodies many of the era’s cultural prejudices. Although Caliban was born on a remote island and is its sole human inhabitant when Prospero and Miranda arrive, his sexual assault on Miranda and their contempt for Caliban as savage, pagan, monstrous, and perhaps cannibalistic provokes Prospero to enslave him. This chapter contextualizes those demeaning categories in light of Caliban’s African and perhaps American roots. Among the developments that profoundly shaped England’s (and presumably Shakespeare’s) attitudes toward “Blackamoors” were the increasingly numerous Africans arriving as offshoots of the international slave trade. Concurrently, Spain’s and Portugal’s settlements in Central and South America and their exploitation, often enslavement, of the natives strongly influenced English policies toward racial “others” at home and in England’s colonies, as did Iberian America’s extensive importation of African slaves.*

# Francisco de Victoria and “the Indian problem”

Victoria, a Spanish philosopher, friar, and Roman Catholic theologian that gave lectures and wrote on what was called “the Indian problem” amongst colonizers of the new world. In two of his lectures from 1539, he established the following in relation to colonizing from the point of view of a colonizer:

- Natural rights and duties of any nation is to create fellowship and the way to create fellowship was through trade and commerce, communication, and participation in things in common, as well as the freedom to travel
- Trade is essential in this definition as it facilitates the transfer, exchange, and development of human knowledge, which enriches humanity
- Thus to engage in trade is a natural law that mankind must follow
- To refuse to trade is to go against this natural law, thus anyone who refuses trade is a “barbarian” (his term exactly)
- Barbarians have no rights to property; therefore anyone who encounters barbarians has first claim on their goods

While this stance originated in Catholic Spain, it became the operating doctrine of many colonizers throughout the western world: people were uncivilized or barbarian if they didn’t engage in trade, which was seen as a “natural” law of mankind. To not engage in trade was to not be part of mankind. And, within his philosophy, it was either commerce or conquest. If the native population wasn’t interested in engaging with commerce and thereby demonstrated themselves to be “less-than” the colonizer, the colonizer could then seize the native population’s property, assets, and their very beings to become part of the colonizer’s system of commerce.

## Scene from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* by William Hogarth; Circa 1735



Illustration to *The  
Tempest* with Caliban,  
Ferdinand, and Ariel from  
a 1836 printing of the text  
- the artist is Henry  
Courtney Selous  
(1803-1890).



Illustration of Beerbohm  
Tree (an actor) as Caliban  
in a 1904 production of  
*The Tempest* in London.  
This is an oil sketch done  
by Charles A. Buchel.



CALIBAN - MR. TREE.

A drawing of Sycorax by Robert Anning Bell from 1900



# The Further Dehumanization of Sycorax and, thereby, Caliban

Claire Waters notes in “*The Tempest’s Sycorax as ‘Blue Eye’d Hag’: A Note Towards a Reassessment*” that in the original folio of *The Tempest*, Sycorax’s eyes aren’t described as “blue” but as “blew.” While modern editors have settled on “blue” as in “blue veins,” a sign of pregnancy, another reading of the word as “bleared eyes, meaning running or watery eyes” exists. “Bleary eyes” was commonly used to describe the old and haggard in early modern England. Sycorax’s role as Caliban’s mother is described in the play as being unnatural; as Prospero puts it, Caliban was “got by the devil himself” (I.ii.382). Adding old age as well as demonic parentage to Caliban’s paternal history might explain Caliban’s inhuman appearance, but Prospero’s continued description of Sycorax paints her as inhuman rather than a human host for demonic seed.

In modern editions of *The Tempest* we also see that Sycorax is described as “most foul” instead of “most fowle” paired with “was grown into a hoop” rather than the original “hoope” in Act I scene ii of the folio. For a modern reader, director, or actor, Sycorax is a human female with blue veined eyes who bore a monstrous child because of her union with the devil, but Sycorax might literally be being described in the text as more bird than human in her appearance which led to Caliban’s misshapeness. Walter Evans et al. explicate that “fowle” could have meant both foul and fowl and is a case of Shakespeare making a pun with language – Sycorax is most foul as a witch and a bird-like witch at that. Furthermore, they argue that “hoope” could have been hoopoe, an uncommon bird which was known in the Early Modern period in England as the “OED identifies references in four books published between 1590 and 1607” containing references to the creature.

This reading of Sycorax-as-bird reinforces Zakiyyah Iman Jackson’s claim in *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an AntiBlack World*, where she highlights the problematic way Shakespeare’s works depict Black and Indigenous subjects “under the sign of ‘the animal,’” where Caliban and Sycorax act as stand-ins for “white anxieties [that] imposes an image of Black(end) men [and women] as bestial.”

# Miranda

Miranda possesses little agency and has grown up isolated on an island with only her father. Other characters on this island all serve Prospero from his invisible spirit Ariel to Caliban. Miranda's isolation as well as her father's mystical manipulations lead to Miranda's lack of agency. She is not the hero of her story, but a victim of her father's will and magic. Miranda has never seen a man nor interacts with anyone outside of her father and Caliban, who she is taught is less-than human and deformed by her father. Miranda can't help but be drawn to Prince Ferdinand when she first sees him. Indeed, she doesn't understand what she is seeing when the prince first appears as she asks "What is 't? A spirit?" (I.ii.489). Later in the play, Miranda encounters more men and exclaims:

O wonder?  
How many goodly creatures are there here!  
How beauteous mankind is! O, brave new world  
That has such people in 't! (V.i.215-9)

# Miranda

Miranda's "spontaneous attraction" extends to all of mankind outside of the island. It is because of Prospero's careful planning and manipulations that Miranda and Prince Ferdinand end up together. Her exclamation upon seeing other men shows that she is ripe to fall in love with any man who first approaches her due to her isolation and ignorance of social matters. Miranda's willingness to wed Prince Ferdinand is a symptom of her isolation and of her father's manipulations – not an express of Miranda's freewill or defiance of her father on her part.

Prospero is a master manipulator throughout *The Tempest*; indeed, he not only orchestrates the storm which forces Prince Ferdinand and company to land, but he finds his daughter a husband high enough in social rank to make his return to proper society easy. But Prospero did not become a master manipulator overnight – he had years on the island, Miranda's whole life in fact, to practice his magic and hone his magical and manipulation skills. In Act I scene ii, Prospero tells his daughter the story of their landing and puts her to sleep when she inquires about his motivation for causing the tempest that sets the play into motion (lines 215-220). Prospero does not start manipulating Miranda when Prince Ferdinand and his crew land on the island; Prospero's automatic response to Miranda's questions is to use his magic to put her to sleep despite her concerns about his actions.

# Miranda

Prospero's manipulations can be understood as an ends-justify-the-means mentality. While Prospero lies, uses magic to manipulate what's going on around him, enslaves Ariel, uses his daughter in a marriage plot, and abuses Caliban, Prospero does so to save Prince Ferdinand and his crew from betrayal. *The Tempest* lacks women because it is not a play about women; the lone woman on the island, Miranda, serves as a prop in Prospero's exploration of absolute male authority. Miranda's mother, her grandmother, the four or five women who may have attended Miranda before she was on the island, Sycorax, Iris, Ceres, Juno, Ariel, and the various nymphs mentioned in the play were never intended to be women on the stage as they are coded as magical, or other, and not as human - often in very deliberate, racialized ways. Women were unnecessary as Shakespeare continued his exploration of male power after the death of Queen Elizabeth I. For Shakespeare's purpose, Miranda, lacking any sort of social knowledge and agency, was the only flesh-and-blood human woman the island needed.

# Caliban and The Witch

By Silvia Federici

The main initiative that the [European] state[s] took to restore the desired population ratio [after the black death] was the launching of a true war against women clearly aimed at breaking the control they had exercised over their bodies and reproduction.

...this war was primarily through the witch-hunt that literally demonized any form of birth-control and non-procreative sexuality, while charging women with sacrificing children to the devil. But it also relied on the redefinition of what constitutes a reproductive crime. Thus, starting in the mid-16th century, while Portuguese ships were returning from Africa with their first human cargoes, all the European governments began to impose the severest penalties against contraception, abortion and infanticide.

This last practice had been treated with some leniency in the Middle Ages, at least in the case of poor women; but now it was turned into a capital crime, and punished more harshly than the majority of male crimes (88).

It was from this alliance between the crafts and the urban authorities, along with the continuing privatization of land, that a new sexual division of labor or, better, a new "sexual contract," in Carol Pateman's words (1988), was forged, defining women in terms — mothers, wives, daughters, widows — that hid their status as workers, while giving men free access to women's bodies, their labor, and the bodies and labor of their children.

According to this new social-sexual contract, proletarian women became for male workers the substitute for the land lost to the enclosures, their most basic means of reproduction, and a communal good anyone could appropriate and use at will. Echoes of this "primitive appropriation" can be heard in the concept of the "communion woman" (Karras 1989) which in the 16<sup>th</sup> century qualified those who prostituted themselves. But in the new organization of work *every woman (other than those privatized by bourgeois men) became a communal good*, for once women's activities were defined as non-work, women's labor began to appear as a natural resource, available to all, no less than the air we breathe or the water we drink.

This was for women a historic defeat. With their expulsion from the crafts and the devaluation of reproductive labor poverty became feminized, and to enforce men's "primary appropriation" of women's labor, a new patriarchal order was constructed, reducing women to a double dependence: on employers and on men. The fact that unequal power relations between women and men existed even prior to the advent of capitalism, as did a discriminating sexual division of labor, does not detract from this assessment. For in pre-capitalist Europe women's subordination to men had been tempered by the fact that they had access to the commons and other communal assets, while in the new capitalist regime *women themselves became the commons*, as their work was defined as a natural resource, laying outside the sphere of market relations.

Women were accused of being unreasonable, vain, wild, [and] wasteful. Especially blamed was the female tongue, seen as an instrument of insubordination. But the main female villain was the disobedient wife, who, together with the “scold,” the “witch,” and the “whore” was the favorite target of dramatists, popular writers, and moralists. In this sense, Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* (1593) was the manifesto of the age. The punishment of female insubordination to patriarchal authority was called for and celebrated in countless misogynous plays and tracts...Meanwhile, new laws and new forms of torture were introduced to control women’s behavior in and out of the home, confirming that the literary denigration of women expressed a precise political project aiming to strip them of any autonomy and social power. In the European Age of Reason, the women accused of being scolds were muzzled like dogs and paraded in the streets; prostitutes were whipped, or caged and subjected to fake drownings, while capital punishment was established for women convicted of adultery (101).

The definition of women as demonic beings, and the atrocious and humiliating practice to which so many of them were subjected left indelible marks in the collective female psyche and in women's sense of possibilities. From every viewpoint - socially, economically, culturally, politically - the witch-hunt was a turning point in women's lives...as the cause of the downfall of the matriarchal world. For the witch-hunt destroyed a whole world of female practices, collective relations, and systems of knowledge that had been the foundation of women's power in pre-capitalist Europe, and the conditions for their resistance in the struggle against feudalism.

Out of this defeat a new model of femininity emerged: the ideal woman and wife - passive, obedient, thrifty, of few words, always busy at work, and chaste....Once women were defeated, the image of femininity structured in the "transition" [from feudalism to capitalism] was discarded as an unnecessary tool, and a new, tamed one took its place. While at the time of the witch-hunt women had been portrayed as savage beings, mentally weak, unsatiably lusty, rebellious, insubordinate, incapable of self control, by the 18th century the canon had been reversed (102-3).

Within *The Tempest*, we can see these two constructions of early modern woman; Sycorax is the witch, and Miranda is the (albeit because of her father's magic and her isolation on an island) chaste, silent, and obedient woman.