A TEMPEST
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Curriculum Guide for Postcolonial Educators

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Shakespeare is referred to as the western canon because he excelled at literary innovation (Bloom 43). His work is studied in many schools and has been translated into many different languages. However, Shakespeare is being studied as “the destruction of the canon” because his work represents western ideologies such as racism, colonialism, and sexism (Bloom 7). The tradition of studying Shakespeare through many generations presents a struggle between the past culture and the present morality standards. Shakespeare was popular because his dramas were attended by the elite upper-class and represented the “immoral frame of mind of the upper class” (Bloom 54).

Aimé Césaire chose Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* to rewrite in a post-colonial light to confront the western ideologies as well as change the audience from the aristocracy to the low to middle class. Decolonization is the process of removing the effects of colonizers. Theatre plays a crucial role in decolonization by providing a platform for activism and empowers the audience to make political changes. It can also reverse colonization by using plays to reconnect with the time before colonizers. In addition, theatre can be used as an expression of the colonized, so they don’t lose touch with their native culture and beliefs. The performing arts is a medium that cannot be suppressed easily because of its versatility, and it is one of the most important weapons that the colonized can use to fight back and reverse colonization.

Another way to decolonize theater is to rewrite famous plays in a post-colonial point of view. Aimé Césaire, author of *A Tempest*, decolonizes Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* by writing from the colonized point of view and changing western ideologies to African ideologies. This makes the reader stop and think about how much the colonized lost due to colonization and therefore decolonizes the original play as well as precept of western literature.

Theatre is a platform for activism because it brings like-minded individuals together to renounce their oppression (Amkpa). In Africa, a cultural practice called Theatre for Development was created by Ahmadu Bello University to unite communities to tell their stories of oppression (Amkpa). Nigeria was colonized by Britain in the early 1900s, and colonial rule lasted for 60 years. After their independence, Nigerians struggled with post-colonial poverty and the neocolonial system (economic control from Britain after independence).

Theatre for Development practices in Nigeria helped evaluate, resist, and decolonize the neocolonial nationalist state by using the performing arts as a political weapon for social development (Amkpa). An example of Theatre for Development sparking activism happened in Samaru, Nigeria, by a group of students. They performed a play about real-life health hazards such as poor sanitation and lack of potable water in the Samaru community. The students showed how impoverished their community was, which sparked political activism to bring about change. Their performance galvanized the community into speaking up and fighting for safe living spaces. Eventually the community’s cries for help were heard from the government, and in return, they acquired access to potable drinking water. This would have never happened if theatre was not used to enact political activism (Amkpa).

Figure 1: Post-colonial poster campaign (Haughey, 2011)
Practitioners of Theatre for Development compare it to Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed because they have the same goal of using theatre to empower activism (Amkpa). Theatre of the Oppressed is a style of theatre that engages communities to be aware of their social situations and provoke change. Boal states that inequalities can be eliminated by Greek tragedies because it gives the audience a cathartic experience. This release of emotion inspires the audience to correct the wrongdoings upon which the play was based. It makes the aristocrats who usually attend Greek tragedies think about their actions. Theatre can be used as a weapon for liberation not only for the actors but the audience, who identify with the actors (Boal).

Theatre for Development and Theatre of the Oppressed both prompt changes by addressing issues of oppressed, underrepresented, and marginalized communities. The main difference between the two is that Theatre for Development shows ways to fix the problem being exposed. Theatre for Development constructs a tighter relationship between the theatre and the community. However, Theatre of the Oppressed was the inspired basis for establishing Theatre for Development, which calls for Theatre of the Oppressed to be reimagined to engage people on a local and global scale about social inequalities (Amkpa).

James Connolly’s *Under Which Flag* (1916) is a great example of how a play can cause an uprising during a period of extreme oppression (Thompson). Ireland was Britain’s first and last colony and has been in the stages of decolonization since the 1920s. During the time before decolonization, it was against the law to publish anything that criticized the British government. To get around the extreme censorship, Connolly used historical allegories and melodrama to reveal anticolonial struggles. The play’s setting was in 1867 during the Fenian Rising. The anti-colonial struggles during the Fenian Rising were similar to the ones currently faced by Ireland during the Easter uprising in 1916. Three weeks after the play made its debut performance, the conductor and main actor were shot and killed. The building the play was performed in was destroyed and the British regime tried to eliminate any existence of the play. It is unknown how, but luckily the manuscript and typescript survived (Thompson). Not only do the physical copies of the play exist, but the memories of everyone who attended the play exists too.

The audience, mostly lower class, was risking their life by attending the play because it was seen as a form of rebellion against Britain rule. The play gave hope to the Easter rebellion and inspired them to overthrow British rule in 1920. This is like Theatre of the Oppressed because it made people aware of their own anticolonial struggle and empowered them to take a stand. The poster below (Figure 1) is from a movement in Ireland started by the Troubling Ireland Campaign. Their goal was to raise public awareness about the lingering effects of colonialism in Ireland such as discrimination and neocolonialism (Atkin). There were many public debates about how to reverse the remaining problems in the country and how individual citizens could find ways to improve the situation.

![Forum theatre poster for *Censored*, based on the theme of freedom of expression during times of war (BeyondBorders, 2008)](image)

Figure 2: Forum theatre poster for *Censored*, based on the theme of freedom of expression during times of war (BeyondBorders, 2008)

In addition to platform for activism, theatre can also be a powerful tool that can help reverse the damage that was done to the colonized by the colonizers. Somatic theatre, which focuses on internal sensations, can be used to explore embodied knowledge, which allows people to see that they are the creators of their own lives, stories, and action for justice (Butterwick and Selman). The key to using theatre as a means of decolonization is to define, uncover, and eventually work toward dismantling the oppressive regime that has been put into place.
Colonization works by exploiting resources and dominating people, which is important in keeping the colonized docile and non-resistant to secure the colonizer’s power. This occurs when the colonized adopt the language, internalize, and imitate the colonizer to survive (Butterwick and Selman). Reclaiming what was lost is one of the extraordinary ways theatre can be used for decolonization. This comes in many forms; however, the reclamation of the body is the most freeing. You cannot do theatre without using the body and many physical bodies have been colonized. Somatic theatre helps the colonized to reconnect with their bodies, and that is a tremendously powerful part of decolonization (Butterwick and Selman).

For colonizers to stay in power, they attempt to assimilate colonized cultures, so the culture loses what makes them special. It is the culture of people that makes them strong. This is the focal point of Tomson Highway’s theatre. Highway blends a mix of aboriginal Canadian folklore and modern urbanization in his plays and music to deconstruct colonial narratives and reconnect people with what they lost to colonization (Cunha 1). Highway looked to African slaves for inspiration. When they were beaten and abused, they sang songs in their native tongues about their homes. It was a means of resistance and maintaining an identity that was trying to be stripped away from them. It gave them hope and made them strong in the face of the colonizers. This was one of the reasons that Highway used mythology and folklore to make connections with his people. He saw the impact it had on other colonized people and knew it would work for him (Cunha 1). Once there is a distinction between native culture and the culture of colonizers, decolonization can finally begin (Cunha 2). Highway’s use of aboriginal mythology paints colonizers as tricksters who plan to destroy and dismantle the aboriginal’s way of life. Using theatre and mythology establishes a sense of who his people were and reasserts their relationship to Mother Earth (Cunha 2). The act of reinventing dramas has a much deeper impact when looked at through the perspective of natives since mythology and storytelling were all orally transferred and constantly adapted to new lifestyles. Using these same premises in his plays, Highway makes bonds that cannot be easily broken, repairing the damage done by colonizers.

Equally important in showing ways that theatre can be used as a tool to decolonize is the research conducted by the University of Canada and Concordia. The university partnered with youths from the Appelle Tribes to use theatre workshops to improve health and choices they make (Goulet et al.). Their goal was to use Forum theatre (Figure 2), a type of theatre that lets people explore actions and make personal transformations, to create a safe space so that indigenous youths could express and critically examine their decisions regarding health. Colonization destroys social systems and is detrimental to youths who must grow up and attempt to survive in an oppressive world. The destruction of these social systems has taken an enormous toll on indigenous populations. The workshops seek to decolonize the mindsets of youths and start healing through independent decision-making. Forum theatre was also used so that the youths could engage in scenarios and pursuits that were denied to them. Using this form of "Power Plays," a technique used in health and literacy education, a dialogue could be created to examine challenges to prosperity, equality, and health. This process provided a discussion on social, cultural, and health-related issues (Goulet et al.), which resulted in the youths being able to see that they have the power to take action for a healthy future and do not have to be subjected to continued colonial domination.

Forum theatre taught the youths to look within themselves to determine their value and not to the constraints placed on them. Youths were able to find their identity through their stories and project an image of themselves that they could live with (Goulet et al.). Finding self-value despite the image imposed by the colonizer on the colonized relates to Caliban’s monologue in A Tempest when he confronts Prospero about the constraints Prospero placed on him:

-And you lied to me so much,  
-About the world, about myself,  
-That you have ended up by imposing on me  
-An image of myself:  
-Underdeveloped, you brand me, inferior.

-Caliban, in Aimé Césaire’s A Tempest (Act III, Scene 5, Line 129)
The Apelle youth confront and change the colonialist views of themselves through Forum theatre, just like Caliban confronted Prospero. Another way to reverse colonization is to rewrite western literature in a post-colonial light. Aimé Césaire wrote *A Tempest*, a post-colonial version of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. In Césaire’s version, the focus was on Ariel and Caliban (colonized) and their journey in standing up to Prospero (colonizer). Caliban, a black slave, is represented as Malcom X in the Civil Rights movement. Ariel, a mulatto slave, is represented as Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. This invokes the audience to identify with Ariel and Caliban and confront the colonial structures such as racism, oppression, and slavery (Eward-Mangione).

Not only did Césaire rewrite *The Tempest*, but he also removed and added characters. He undermined the Greek gods of Iris, Juno, and Ceres, representing western ideologies, by overpowering them with the African god, Eshu, who represents the persistence of African values and ideologies. This act decolonizes Shakespeare because it eliminates the ideologies brought by the colonizers and reestablishes the West African, specifically Yoruba cultural primacy as exemplified in Eshu. Césaire also added the Swahili word “uhuru,” meaning freedom. It is the first word that Caliban speaks in the play, and it is in his last monologue. This is important because it is Caliban’s way of keeping his culture alive and taunting Prospero. It gave Caliban back his power because he was effectively denying Prospero authority over his native language, and his resistance infuriated Prospero (Eward-Mangione).

Césaire wrote this play for the colonized and colonizer. He intended black actors (the colonized) to explore their past oppression and to confront the colonizer. For the colonizer audience, Césaire wanted them to realize the impact that colonization has on the indigenous populations. By rewriting Shakespeare, Césaire unites the upper-class audience of Shakespeare with the low to middle class of the colonized. This relates to Theatre of the Oppressed because the play has a cathartic experience not only for the audience but the actors too (Eward-Mangione).

In conclusion, theatre is used as a platform for activism to change the oppressive effects of colonization, such as poverty, unsanitary conditions, and hunger. By illuminating these problems on a stage, the audience connects on an emotional level to invoke change in their communities. In the case of *Under Which Flag*, theatre had such a powerful influence that the British colonizer went to extreme measures to silence it. This implies that theatre had the power to provoke social change, which was feared by the colonizers. Theatre is also used to reverse the effects of colonization. The actors can reclaim what was lost and take back their bodies in the form of expressing themselves on stage. Youth can attend theatre workshops where they are taught to break free from the restraints (religion, language, and culture) that the colonizers imposed upon them and to connect with their precolonial heritage by decolonizing their minds. Rewriting western literature further decolonizes theatre. Aimé Césaire decolonized Shakespeare by replacing western ideologies with African ones, by referencing the advocacy of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcom X, and by using the Swahili language. Overall, theatre is a powerful weapon used to overthrow the colonizers.

Works Cited


Further Reading

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

HANNAH VON ZUP & SYDNEY FOX

Aimé Césaire was a major modern poet from the French Antilles and Francophone background, who became known as the founding father of Negritude and a major critic of colonialism (Davies 1). Césaire was born in the Caribbean Island of Martinique, and although born into the lower class, he still pursued reading and writing at the Lycée Schoelcher. His parents were Fernand and Eléonore, whom were very passionate about education (Davies 4). Martinique was a small island near the Caribbean that was deeply involved in the enslavement of Africans and the spread of imperialism in Europe. Later on, Césaire attend the prestigious Lycée Louis le Grand in Paris, specifically on a scholarship. At this school, Césaire found inspiration from the Harlem Renaissance's efforts to dive deeper into the richness of African cultural identity, which then encouraged him to resist French assimilationist policies. Césaire was one of six children and learned to read at the age of four by his grandmother. Not only was Césaire taught to read so early, but his father would wake up all his siblings at six am to teach them more French language and culture (Davies 5). As mentioned before, his family remained in the lower class, so low that his mother was just a cut above being a field worker (Hale 135). In 1937, Césaire married another Martinican, Suzanne Roussy, who he worked with to create “Tropiques,” a piece of work that helped further the Negritude movement. Following his parents tradition, he had six children with Suzanne. Both Césaire and Suzanne became teachers at Lycée Louis le Grand. As he was returning home for this job, his first poem “Cahier d’un retour au pays natal” (Notebook of a Return to the Native Land or Journal of a Homecoming), was published in November 2017 by Georges Pelerson, but was ignored by most. Along with his strive to be a poet, he became drawn into politics. Césaire was elected numerous times as deputy in the French parliament and mayor of Fort-de-France. As Césaire started to work towards the Negritude movement, he had adapted into the communist party. Nonetheless, the communist party lost influence quickly, so Césaire lost his political point of view, but continued on with his Negritude beliefs.

The word “Negritude” is said to have first appeared in Césaire’s book-length poem, “Cahier d’un retour au pays natal” in the 1930s (Edmonson 92). This led Césaire to obtain the title as the founding father of the movement. Later, Césaire would define this movement as “the simple recognition of the fact that one is black, the acceptance of this fact and of our destiny as blacks, of our history and culture” (Achebe 152). However, Césaire did not establish this movement alone, as Léopold Sédar Senghor and Léon Damas should be recognized for playing significant roles to restore Black cultural identity as well. Césaire exclaims, “I would like to say that everyone has his own Negritude” (Salaam 1). With that being said, Césaire is claiming that Negritude is that of what you make of it or see it as. The whole concept of Negritude developed from the revolt against French colonialism and racism. Soon after World War I, the Africans who were in the French army stayed there, which brought out the ideas of colonialism and political assimilation. These French citizens met with blacks in the United States to discuss the troubles within African culture. Césaire and his partners, Senghor and Damas, all belonged to the group that was considered uncivilized and different. Therefore, as these men worked toward furthering the movement, it also had its detractors. Others accused the movement as another form of racism or the idea of black exoticism. Some felt that it was just setting up blacks for a hostile environment, but instead it was a cry for help against assimilation. Even though the goal was to work towards equality, it was still looked at as European culture over powering Africa. All in all, the Negritude movement gave a poetic voice to black identity and allowed black people to see their qualities with a better perspective (Sprauge 244).
Because of Césaire’s complex background in African culture, he went on to adapt The Tempest into a work that was intended to be more relevant for a black audience, titled A Tempest. In this theatrical production, the character Caliban replaced the Shakespearean, dominant, and controlling Prospero as the new protagonist. He emphasizes a new theme of a master/slave relationship as he took on a more critical perspective of western humanism. Césaire also differs from Shakespeare in the way he highlights the social roles of characters. In this version, Caliban can be perceived as a Malcolm X figure, and Ariel is viewed as a parallel for Martin Luther King Jr. Caliban is characterized by his “affirmation of indigenous cultural values and most particularly by his insistence on the necessity of seizing his freedom” (Arnold 240). This same description could be applied to Malcolm X himself. Meanwhile, Ariel’s character “articulates coherently the position of moderation, conciliation, and nonviolence” (Arnold 240). This definition is much closer to Martin Luther King Jr., as he chose more peaceful ways of protest when compared to Malcolm X. Along with these two central figures, Césaire added the African God, Eshu, in his version of A Tempest. His role is to “counterbalance the divinities of classical antiquity in the masque of Shakespeare’s Act IV” (Arnold 239). The difference and depth of these characters create a new and refreshing take on Shakespeare’s original story.

In regards to Césaire’s stance on colonialism, his opinion is clearly stated in another one of his works. Entitled Discourse on Colonialism, this book was published in 1955 and has sold more than 75,000 copies to date. When published for the first time in English, this piece inspired a new generation that held Civil Rights, Black Power, and anti-war movements. Readers of this piece most likely assumed that colonialism offers mutual benefits for the European colonized and the colonizers, but Césaire states a different perspective. In this piece, he often mentions that it is a good idea for civilizations to join in order to “redistribute energy” and “blend different worlds.” Although Césaire admitted that is a good idea to connect civilizations together, he still contemplates the idea of if it actually helped to develop a relationship. Césaire claims there is still too much distance between the colonizer and the colonized, with not a single value in common. Colonization is a process of decivilizing the colonizer, basically stripping one of their instincts. Throughout Césaire’s argument, there is a continuous drive towards the idea that no one colonizes innocently or correctly. There is only forced labor, taxation, rape, pressure, selfishness, etc. This is a cause of an imbalance of power within civilizations that eventually also leads to violence (Césaire 173). The year before Césaire died, he stated “I remain faithful to my beliefs and remain inflexibly anticolonialist” (Edmondson 97).

The legacy that Césaire has created through his beliefs on colonialism and African American culture lives on today through the Black Lives Matter Movement. This is a contemporary movement, and shows how Césaire’s beliefs from the past are still alive in present day culture. This movement is a result of the Negritude movement that Césaire started, due to both movements encouraging the history, culture, and individual identity of Blacks. Afroamerican and African Studies professor at the University of Michigan, Frieda Ekotto, says that “to read Césaire’s work in light of recent events is to bear witness to the ongoing struggles of Black people. His work is rooted in the history of Blackness” (Sprague 244). During the African Studies Center Speaker Series at the UCLA International Institute, Ekotto talks about the difficult matter of racial politics and the violent issues that were present in the past and still remain today. However, Ekotto is a big supporter in the role social media can play in society and argues that “social media has allowed Black activists to rebel against dominant discourses, much like Césaire rejected white narratives in his poetry, which spurred the Negritude literary movement that embraced the writer’s African identity” (Sprague 243). Racialized violence through Césaire’s time never had a true ending, therefore violence against the black population sometimes goes ignored due to the chaos that always remains. The Negritude movement and Black Lives Matter movement can both be seen as one long ongoing battle for equality. Rather than looking at this movement as a struggle in the past, it is embraced as the celebration of Black people and the values of African culture. Overall, this movement was the motivation to stand up to the inequality within the justice system and to reach out for public support. Not only does it apply to the people of Africa, but to all people who should embrace their culture with pride. As Césaire says, “Black I am and Black I will remain” (Sprague 245).
Works Cited


Further Reading

WHY THE TEMPEST?
A POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS OF SHAKESPEARE

L. BROOKE BUSBY & HAILEY FRICK

Aimé Césaire was a Martinican activist, politician, and author who was also founder of the Negritude movement in the 1930s. Protesting assimilation, Negritude fought against French colonial rule and colonialism generally. His anti-colonial literature can be exemplified by his fourth and final play, A Tempest. He adapted William Shakespeare’s famous play, The Tempest, and this decision was motivated by many factors, including Shakespeare’s influence in time and industry and his intention to display his views on anti-colonialism.

The Western canon of literature is a collection of traditional intellectual work, ranging from literature to music to philosophy. These works are considered to be the best of Western culture, in other words “classics.” Well-known figures within the literary canon include William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Joseph Conrad, Mark Twain, Nathaniel Hawthorne, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Leo Tolstoy, and Ernest Hemingway among many others. This canon is taught within the traditional curriculum of public schools to this day, but the canon itself is not the issue. The issue is that canon fails to show cultural diversity and modern ways of thinking to young and growing minds. In order to combat this, teaching the canon paired with postcolonial writings will allow for a more complete understanding of society. In the words of John Searle, an American philosopher, “The texts once served an unmasking function; now we are told that it is the texts which must be unmasked” (Bérubé 24). The postcolonial era of history invites new and diverse literature to decolonize the Western canon.

In 1969, Aimé Césaire wrote the play A Tempest, which is a postcolonial adaptation of The Tempest, which was first performed in 1611. The Tempest was one of the few of Shakespeare’s plays which are thought to be wholly original. This play is believed to intentionally encompass the colonial views of Shakespeare’s time. Césaire was able to use Shakespeare’s societal recognition in order to publish A Tempest through an anti-colonial lens. This is important because Césaire’s work captured the restructure of the Western canon for modern purposes. Postcolonial literature is used as “a critique of Western tradition involving the rewriting of specific works and the appropriation of entire genres” (Lazarus 83), the goal of which is to create fundamental change in the teaching of literature by creating texts that aim to expose racial, sexist, and classist injustices of the past. In order to further analyze Césaire’s motivations in choosing this particular example of the Western canon to adapt, it is imperative to understand William Shakespeare, and then to understand The Tempest.

William Shakespeare was born into the European middle class by a craftsman father in 1564. He was born into the context of the expansion of the British Empire under Queen Elizabeth, which undoubtedly influenced his work. Shakespeare was not only a playwright, but also an actor and a poet. He was considered vulgar and uneducated in his time, and although he wrote 37 plays, less than half of them were published in his lifetime. The plays span tragedy, romance, comedy, and history, and he is also credited with the invention of over a thousand words, including “amazement,” “champion,” and “zany.” In his 1983 book Enthusiasts, English journalist, author, and broadcaster, Bernard Levin wrote the following to outline Shakespeare’s span of influence:

‘If you cannot understand my argument, and declare ‘It’s Greek to me,’ you are quoting Shakespeare; if you claim to be more sinned against than sinning, you are quoting Shakespeare if you recall your salad days, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you act more in sorrow than in anger; if your wish is farther to the thought; if your lost property has vanished into thin air, you are quoting Shakespeare; if you have ever refused to budge an inch or suffered from green-eyed jealousy, if you have played fast and loose, if you have been tongue-tied, a tower of strength, hoodwinked or in a pickle, if you have knitted your brows, made a virtue of necessity, insisted on fair play, slept not one wink, stood on ceremony, danced attendance (on your lord and master), laughed yourself into stitches, had short shrift, cold comfort or too much of a good thing, if you have seen better days or lived in a fool’s paradise - why, be that as it may, the game is up and that truth will out even if it involves your own flesh and blood, if you lie low till the crack of doom because you suspect foul play, if you have your teeth set on edge (at one fell swoop) without rhyme or reason, then - to give the devil his due - if the truth were known (for surely you have a tongue in your head) you are quoting Shakespeare; even if you bid me good riddance and send me packing, if you wish I was dead as a door-nail, if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then - by Jove! O Lord! Tut tut! For goodness’ sake! What the dickens! But me no buts! - it is all one to me, for you are quoting Shakespeare.’

This quote adequately describes the vast presence of Shakespeare in the everyday lives of even modern individuals, to the point that it has become almost impossible to separate his influence from the culture of the West. Shakespeare is an entire industry in present culture, with his work coursing through contemporary theatre, film, music, art, and literature. In addition to the historical circumstances of his life, his fame and popularity also make him a good candidate for postcolonial attack.
Over the centuries many of Shakespeare’s works have been translated and adapted, but what remains is the transcendent nature of his work. This means that his art is representative of familiar human experiences, such as love, war, and family troubles. “Every Shakespeare play had a passage or speech that demanded spectacle or pageantry (Collick 29).” The general population is able to relate with his works because of the emotional authenticity the plays offered, which contrasted the typical writings of this time that acted as a mirror to a more privileged life. Shakespeare was able to create recognizably human characters, which in turn are still able to represent life as it is known presently. Even though times have changed, humans are typically still subject to similar emotional turmoil.

The Tempest was originally written as a colonial play that describes the struggles between European powers, as the former duke of Milan, Prospero, was exiled to an island ostensibly because of his practice of sorcery. However, upon being shipwrecked on an island, he discovers that it is already occupied. The Tempest presents power struggles through many characters but one of the most prominent is between Prospero and his slave Caliban, a man indigenous to the island. As an example of the Other, Caliban is represented as a savage monster in opposition to the “civilized” Prospero who demonstrates godliness and class society while justifying colonial projects (Willis 281). Prospero is portrayed as large hearted, trusting and blameless, especially when positioned opposite his deceitful brother, Antonio; these are all factors that develop his character into the civilized man who displays power through order.

In turn, these colonial power dynamics present in The Tempest lent themselves to adaptation to the post-colonial view of Césaire. Even so, there is an obvious shift of emphasis between Shakespeare’s and Césaire’s respective plays, despite the similar setting and cast of characters. On Césaire’s part, this was done in order to shed light on important themes such as the colonial circumstances inscribed into the relationships between characters. Césaire’s A Tempest emphasizes the damaging effects of colonization on specific parties involved in colonialism, such as master and slave relations, and the effects of assimilation on the colonized. Furthermore, Césaire’s work establishes and promotes the connections between literature and real-world struggle by highlighting the oppression associated with colonization.

Césaire chooses this play to adapt into a postcolonial perspective of colonization because there are several aspects woven into this play that he can critique to show the negative and damaging effects of colonialism. Some of these aspects include Prospero’s relentless hunger for power, the murder of Caliban’s mother Sycorax, the harsh conditions in which Caliban lives, and the psychological manipulation of Ariel. Césaire’s hope is to adapt, share and reeducate the public on the truth of colonization through his play. He does this by turning Caliban’s filthy, dark and cold cave into a veritable “ghetto,” isolated and criminalized by Prospero’s “magic.” These adaptations show the cruelty of the colonizer and the lasting impacts of colonization that reverberate throughout Césaire’s literary oeuvre.
Césaire’s personal life experiences contribute to his decision to adapt *The Tempest*, one of which was to demonstrate the racial polemics in the United States in the mid-20th century. Césaire uses characters to amplify his position of anti-colonialism and make connections to leaders in the civil rights movement, such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Crispin explains that Caliban-X took a “stand to recuperate a stolen history. He recognizes, like Césaire, how his own culture and heritage were razed from the collective memory of an enslaved and transported African diaspora and it is this that he will strive to re-discover, value and honour” (Crispin 151). The display of Césaire’s life and struggles are presented through the character of Caliban as he fights for his self-worth and people’s history. While Caliban can be equated to Malcolm X, the character of Ariel is equated to Martin Luther King Jr. These civil rights leaders used different techniques to make progress for racial equality, and these diverse methods are shown through the aggressive rebellions of Caliban versus the pacifist optimism of Ariel. At the beginning of Act II, Césaire demonstrate these ideological differences through a dialogue between Ariel and Caliban regarding how best to defeat the colonizer, embodied in the person of Prospero. Ultimately, *A Tempest* demonstrates how Césaire understood the story of decolonization in the twentieth century, and how different strategies, including his own Negritude, contributed to the freedom of colonized people.

Although often ignored in readings of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare’s play demonstrates that the colonizers believed they deserved a higher position in society and had the right to enslave indigenous peoples. This play shows the view of the colonizers, their belief of superiority and dominance, and the justification of their actions. Naturally then, Césaire adapted *The Tempest* as a backlash to the tacit acceptance of colonialism as widely taught in literature and theatre courses around “the globe.”

Discussion Questions
1. Why is the Western canon still taught in education systems? What can be learned from it?
2. Is Amie Césaire’s adaptation of *The Tempest* effective in the education of the impacts of colonialism?
3. Was *The Tempest* the best choice for adaptation? Why or why not?

Works Cited

Further Reading
“MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Come gentlemen, help yourselves. To each his character, to each his mask. You, Prospero? Why not? He has reserves of will power he’s not even aware of himself. You want Caliban? Well, that’s revealing. Ariel? Fine with me. And what about Stephano, Trinculo? No takers? Ah, just in time! It takes all kinds to make a world. And after all, they aren’t the worst characters. No problem about the juvenile leads, Miranda and Ferdinand. You okay. And there’s no problem about the villains either: you, Antonio; you, Alonso, perfect! Oh, Christ! I was forgetting the Gods. Eshu will fit you like a glove. As for the other parts; just take what you want and work it out among yourselves. But make up your minds… Now, there’s one part I have to pick out myself: you! It’s for the part of the Tempest, and I need a storm to end all storms…I need a really big guy to do the wind. Will you do that? Fine! And then someone strong for Captain of the ship. Good, now lets’ go. Ready? Begin. Blow, winds! Rain and lightning, ad lib!”

_A Tempest_ (Césaire, 1 – 14)

The quote above is the beginning of Aimé Césaire’s 1969 play _A Tempest_. Here, Césaire decides to use the traditional Master of Ceremonies to do something very interesting: he calls the characters to life. While this might seem trivial, it gives an importance and meaning to the play that is astronomical when analyzing and comparing the racial and social dynamics underlying _A Tempest_. In fact, the most important point of the introduction is the ambience of psychodrama that it sets for the entirety of the play. Jacob Moreno, a 20th-century psychiatrist, described psychodrama as the “scientific exploration of truth through dramatic method” (Good Therapy). Essentially speaking, a psychodrama is an air of unease, unreality, and a sense that something clearly isn’t normal, and through the use of masks and psycho-dramatic effect, Césaire introduces the audience to the exploration of the non-normal construct of racial hierarchy and power dynamics between the characters of _A Tempest_ and the characters of the colonial stage. Here each character is given a mask to represent the differences between social, assumed race, and truly cultural race. This is also meant to introduce the viewer to the arbitrariness of the circumstances of our birth, and how something so minor can have such a major impact and control on the struggles and conditions we will face throughout life.

One of the main, and most important meanings behind the play’s introduction is the arbitrariness of racial categorization throughout the play. Césaire decided to implement an all-black cast in _A Tempest_, and this is important because no matter what mask the actor chooses or the character they play, there is always a black actor behind the mask. The use of masks also allows for cross-racial casting, and the creation of racial ambiguity amongst the characters. By doing this, Césaire intends to “re-write” or essentially change the audience’s ideals of racial categorization (Levonian). This dynamic is shown especially through Prospero and Caliban. Not only are both characters now played by black actors, but both must don a mask at the beginning of the play. Despite being played by the same physical race, these characters are depicted so differently just because of the “masks” they don. It completely shifts the power dynamic between Prospero and Caliban, because as an audience we now understand the masks to be the one dividing feature between them. This is how Césaire reveals to the audience the arbitrariness of the power dynamic between the two characters by making the difference in power as simple as the color of a person’s skin.

The Master of Ceremonies also plays an important role in the psychodrama of the introduction. A master of ceremonies, or MC, is a traditional point for most plays, including the original _The Tempest_ written by William Shakespeare. The MC has been used in many plays to introduce the staged event and the characters in it. However, Césaire uses the MC in _A Tempest_ to do something extraordinary by essentially calling each of the characters into existence. Once again, this fact is intended to make the audience question the power dynamic happening already in the introduction.
Césaire’s *A Tempest* is also based on the book *Black Skin, White Mask* by Frantz Fanon. The book is at first referenced in the introduction through the use of cross-race casting, where Césaire literally embraces “black skin” behind a “white mask.” The message is the very essence of Negritude’s anti-assimilation policies, and it is what Césaire most openly aims to convey throughout the play. Negritude plays an important and undeniable role in *A Tempest*, due to its historical importance, but also its massive importance to the author. Negritude was a literary movement, starting in Paris during the 1930s and 40s, and “is a product of black writers joining together through the French language to assert their cultural identity” (Micklin). In fact, Césaire was such an influential part of the Negritude movement that he is the first to coin the term in one of his literary works. Eventually, Césaire joined other important French writers like Leon Domas and Léopold Sédar Senghor to define Negritude in the years to come. While the movement attracted many writers of its time, Césaire is one of its most notable advocates, and *A Tempest* is a play where this ideal truly shines through.

Everything in *A Tempest* is rooted solely in African culture, from the masks to the very power that Prospero has. White power is black power, and Césaire makes that very clear. The most notable example of this dynamic is between Prospero and Caliban, when Caliban clearly denounces Prospero’s interpolation of his race. He finds power in his heritage and in doing so is able to take power away from Prospero. In *A Tempest* (Act III, Scene V, lines 127-137) Caliban says to Prospero:

Prospero, you are the master of illusion.  
Lying is your trademark.  
And you have lied so much to me  
(lied about the world, lied about me)  
that you have ended by imposing on me  
an image of myself.  
derelaxed, you brand me, inferior,  
That is the way you have forced me to see myself  
I detest that image! What’s more, it’s a lie!  
But now I know you, you old cancer,  
and I know myself as well.

In a sense here, Caliban is “taking off the mask” and finding power in his own true identity. Césaire is also able to add to the ambience of psychodrama in the introduction through the use of cross-race casting, or using black actors to play white, black, or mulatto roles. Through this, Césaire is able to manipulate and transform the racial dynamic, creating new races and racial categories all their own (McNary).

Another notable feature of the introduction was the use of actual, not just symbolic, masks. The masks, while having many figurative meanings, also represent an important call back to traditional African culture, specifically, Yoruba culture. Masks are an important part of traditional African culture and have strong representational meaning in ceremonies and African heritage. In Yoruba culture, masks are meant to represent the “visible present and perceived past” (Balogan). It’s hard to perfectly describe what this means within *A Tempest*, but it could possibly be the differences between perceived identity and cultural history and the image someone has put upon you, as in the case of Prospero and Caliban. The masks look human, but at the same time they are anything but, challenging our perceptions about the characters, and about each other. It’s also necessary to note that Yoruba masks were not necessarily always depicting African faces. There are instances of white, yellow, and black masks across Yoruba and other African cultures, which depict the historical changes that introduced various other ethnic groups to the African continent.
Finally, after all this information, it’s important to ask, does Césaire convey all of these intentions effectively in the introduction? While the use of the masks significantly adds to the psychodrama of the play and aims to convey Césaire’s analysis of racial deconstruction, Timothy Scheie writes that the masks do quite the opposite. He states that Césaire undermines his own ideals through the use of masks because he is still placing them into racial categories. Despite the fact that they are all black actors, each character must still don a white, black, or mulatto mask. This, therefore, just creates an entirely new racial structure and completely undermines Césaire’s original intentions (Scheie 17-29). However, this is not necessarily the case. While Scheie, makes a valid point, he seems to have missed Césaire’s true intentions behind the introduction. Scheie argues that Césaire undermines his ideals through the use of masks, but instead Césaire is able to present the audience with the arbitrary idea of being “called into existence” and categorizing each character by looks. Césaire doesn’t undermine his own argument, but instead perpetuates it. Further, by giving each character a mask, he is able to address new racial categories and opportunities for character developments, especially through the character of Caliban, a point Scheie seems to have missed.

Another author, Peter Hulme, makes an important point about Césaire’s use of the masks. Hulme brings attention to the technical “stereotyping” that takes place in the beginning of the play, and that while Césaire intended to stereotype Caliban as the violent, black slave and Ariel as the Christian mulatto, placing them in masks undermines that stereotype. However, to counter Hulme, Césaire makes it a point throughout A Tempest to stereotype stereotyping (meta-stereotyping), adding to the irony of racial constructs present in the play (Hulme 241-249). Therefore, Hulme, while also making a valid point, may simply have misread Césaire’s true intentions for A Tempest.

Césaire truly did convey these ideals through his introduction effectively. Just by reading the introduction of A Tempest, there is an air that something isn’t right, that calling these characters into being isn’t normal, and that is exactly the feeling and ambience of psychodrama that stays with the audience throughout A Tempest. It’s also the exact feeling and mindset that Césaire wants the viewer to have while witnessing the later scenes of the play so that the viewer then understands the true intentions behind every scene.

Through the introduction of this monumental play, Césaire has shown how to truly give an ambience of psychodrama to A Tempest. By using masks, traditional racial undertones, and implementing his own ideals, Césaire effectively introduces the audience to the arbitrary world of A Tempest and its characters’ dynamics. However, in doing so, he also enlightens his own audience on the non-normality behind the issue of colonialism, and how the power dynamics of history and the present are anything but normal. At the beginning of the play, everyone is alike until they put on their masks. When the character of Prospero puts on his white mask, something that should be so trivial and meaningless already seems to give him an empty power over everyone else. This is the arbitrariness that Césaire seeks to convey, and does so very effectively through the psychodrama of A Tempest.

Works Cited
THE MECHANICS OF EXILE

JOY CARLSON

One of the most important elements of both The Tempest and A Tempest is the exile of Prospero to the island where the play takes place. In Shakespeare’s original play, Prospero recalls that his exile from Milan is due to his focus on studies in “dignity, and for the liberal arts” (Act 1, Scene 2, Line 73). These studies were so alluring and enticing that he slowly lost control of Milan, leading to the usurpation of his dukedom (by his own brother) and exile from the nation completely. Based on Prospero’s display of magical abilities, the audience is put in a position where they must assume that if his studies were so irresistible that they would eventually lead to exile on a faraway island, they must be dangerous. However in Césaire’s version, Prospero is told of his exile by a friar who tells him that his banishment is caused by his “notorious use...of Arabic calculations and scribblings in Hebrew, Syrian and other demonic tongues” (Césaire, Act 1, Scene 2, Lines 46-47). Both during his time and today, readers and audiences of Shakespeare’s work know little of his political opinions (Cooper) despite key themes and messages found throughout his different works. If Shakespeare’s plays have political undertones, it is simply because “man is a political animal and Shakespeare’s understanding of men meant he understood politics, too” (Cooper). However, with The Tempest, it is difficult to ignore the political circumstances. The Crusades and Reconquista occurring at this time dominated the thoughts and feelings of western Europeans (Riley-Smith), which explains the edits that Césaire makes to Prospero’s exile in A Tempest. Given the historical context of the European Crusades and the Reconquista against Muslims and Jews, Césaire is most likely commenting on the racism that was masked by religion and exploration during the time period. The works described in The Tempest are left intentionally vague and cryptic to create mystery and are implied to be full of dark magic and evil to entice wonder, but Césaire reveals that they are actually just ordinary scientific texts written in Arabic and Hebrew. This detail could also be intentional by Césaire to call out the hypocrisy of European countries. Arabic scientific works were considered demonic, yet these same studies were the foundation that gave Europeans the ability to “discover” the new world, a fact that is hidden underneath the illusion of European achievement. This small detail added by Césaire opens up a bigger discussion of the cultural and scientific appropriation of Middle Eastern countries through the Age of Discovery.

One important note is that while The Tempest is set during the Age of Discovery, the setting of A Tempest is more ambiguous. While elements such as the Friar informing Prospero of his exile and the colonialist attitudes of multiple characters (Prospero, Gonzalo, etc.) are certainly influenced by the Age of Discovery and the surrounding historical events, A Tempest does not have a concrete setting or time period in which the play takes place. Details such as Caliban’s wish to be referred to as X (Césaire, Act 1, Scene 2, Line 181), which comes from Malcom X of the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, and his reference to “the ghetto” (Césaire, Act 1, Scene 2, Line 150) lend a hand to the ambiguity. Césaire may not have a clear temporal setting for his version of the play in order to comment on the idea that colonialism never truly went away; while the world recognizes a time period of decolonization, the attitude of colonialism still lingers in the 20th century and beyond, which allows Césaire’s adaptation to transcend time and space (Crispin 137). A Tempest’s setting is open to interpretation, but like The Tempest, its content undoubtedly has influence coming from the Age of Discovery and the preceding historical circumstances.

The Age of Discovery was a time period lasting from the 15th to 17th centuries, in which European countries sent ships around the world in search of new trading routes, trading partners, goods, raw materials, and land. Numerous circumstances and historical events prior lead to the Age of Discovery, but one of the most crucial - and overlooked - was the European Crusades and Reconquista against the Muslim and Jewish religions. Christian religious leaders longed for Christianity to become the one true religion through conversion and baptism (Kedar 43), wanted to regain control of Christian religious sites located in the Middle East, and for Muslims to leave Europe altogether. They believed that Muslim and Jewish teachings and beliefs were incorrect and dangerous, which corresponds with how the people and leaders of Milan viewed Prospero’s readings and studies. These wars are considered “one of the great forces in our history” (Riley-Smith 11) due to the “vast-scale, in terms of both geography and the numbers of men involved” (Riley-Smith 11). Fear of those who were different and believed different things lead to centuries of war and inconsolable hatred between Christianity and the Islamic and Jewish faiths. Yet, the battle between the opposing forces was more complex, and consisted of more than just violent warfare. The Crusades integrated lasting political changes in the Mediterranean (Riley-Smith 11) and “helped to foster elements in Latin Christianity” (Riley-Smith 11) that are viewed as vital today. The Reconquista is also characterized by the fiscal and political changes occurring in the eastern Mediterranean from the 8th to 15th centuries, which were caused by territorial expansion, settlement, and exiles taking place because of the Christian-Islam opposition (Ray 5). Both the Crusades and Reconquista forced the exodus of Muslims and Jews out of European countries, but where they differ is the lands in which they were trying to “win back” for Christianity.
The main goal of the Crusades was to regain control of the Holy Land (Israel, Palestine, and Jordan) which was under Muslim control. The main goal of the Reconquista was to regain Iberia from Muslim control. Both the Crusades and Reconquista fueled the division between Europe and the Middle East.

As the Crusades and Reconquista continued on for years, European countries looked for any way to gain advantage over their Middle Eastern enemies. European countries sent ships on missions to "discover a new sea-route to Asia which avoided the necessity of crossing the Muslim Middle East" (Hamdani 274). This new trade route would further distance Europe from the Middle East and enable Europe to block trade from reaching the Middle East, whose lives had already been devastated by the Crusades and their forced removal from Europe. The old route, and all of the people who depended on it in the Middle East, would become obsolete when the new route would be established, thus giving Christianity another advantage over Islam, which, because they were at war, was more important to them then actually doing trade.

Another reason for European countries’ desperate search for a new route to Asia was to search for Antilla. In the Middle Ages, not much was known about the Atlantic Ocean by Europeans. However, there were stories of mythical islands found scattered throughout the ocean, one of which being Antilla. Antilla was “equated with the legendary Ilha das sete cidades (“Island of the Seven Cities”) - a mythical place of refuge for Spanish Christians” (Hamdani 274) during the time periods in the 8th century when Muslims conquered Spain. In fact, scholars such as Henri Vignaud believe part of Columbus’ reasoning for his trip to India was to search for Antilla; on one of his maps after his journey he designates America as Antilla (Hamdani 275). Despite the nearing end of the Crusades and Reconquista, Columbus and the Europeans felt the need to search for refuge, still frightened of those they had fought relentlessly for years.

Finally, the racism behind the Crusades is apparent in the fact that one of Columbus’s main reasons for embarking on his journey was in hopes of meeting the Grand Khan in Asia. The Grand Khan was a major influence behind Europe’s search for a faster route to Asia. They believed that the East was ruled by a “Priest King” or “Grand Khan” “who presided over a large and influential community of eastern Christians” (Hamdani 277). If they had contact and an alliance with him and those he ruled over, they would have a great advantage over Islam, as having a large Christian community in Asia would lead to more Christian conversions and less people practicing Islam. Columbus was very passionate about the Crusades, specifically the reconquest of Jerusalem. He was so passionate about the European cause that he took it upon himself to search for an ally that did not exist, and even expressed his desire for the Queen of Spain to “spend all the profits of [his] enterprise on the conquest of Jerusalem” (Delaney 261). The extremes that he and other Europeans would go to in hopes of defeating who Columbus called “infidels” (Delaney 261) is astounding and again reiterates the racism behind what they saw as a noble fight.

The end of the Reconquista is marked by the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon’s victory in the war against Granada, “the last Muslim Kingdom of Spain” (Hamdani 273), in 1492. In this same year, Columbus would make his trip to map a route to India (and as mentioned above, search for Antilla and the “Priest King”), and unknowingly make landfall in the Caribbean Islands, thus beginning the Age of Discovery and European colonization. The overarching theme of both the Crusades and the Reconquista was the idea that Islam and Judaism, and the people practicing them, were dangerous, and that the quickly-spreading religion of Islam had to be stopped. The racism fueling these sentiments, however, was hidden behind what was depicted as a brave and necessary fight. Given the extent that Europeans went to belittle the Middle Eastern people and religions, through exile, deceit, execution, forced conversion to Christianity, accusations of witchcraft, and so on, it is not far-fetched to see Césaire’s version of Prospero’s exile as a realistic depiction of what actually occurred. Fear of Middle Easterners was widespread across Europe, and anyone associated with the culture or religion was forced out, just as Prospero was.

European racism and hatred of Middle Eastern culture has been clearly demonstrated by the Crusades and Reconquista. They went through decades of war because of how much they disagreed with their religion and culture. However, in order to gain advantage over, and eventually defeat the Middle East, European countries began embarking on trips around the world which as explained before, was solely to find trade routes that excluded travel through the Middle East and safe havens for Europeans to escape Muslim “wrath.” The Age of Discovery is always described as a peak of European knowledge and exploration; they would even eventually “discover” the New World because of it. However, a majority of the important information and tools that the Europeans utilized to take these trips in the first place came from Middle Eastern science and scholarship. While Europeans were exiling Muslims for being demonic, they saw what they were learning about and carried out the teachings as if they had done the studies and work themselves.
The hypocrisy of these European countries is vastly unknown in society today despite the fact that major elements of their “great discoveries” can be credited to Middle Eastern culture and knowledge. The first example of this uncredited knowledge is the idea that the Earth is spherical. This idea is at the basis of the Muslim geographical theory. Their other geographical concepts, including the equator and encircling oceans, were adapted into European geography after Middle Eastern scholars had already done so. Columbus even commented in a letter to Queen Isabella of Spain that he had “no doubt...[that] Islamic geographical theory may claim a share in the discovery of the New World” (Hamdani 278). Basic navigational knowledge and tools still used today were being utilized in the Middle East before Europe as well.

Major elements of Arab navigational science, such as ishārāt (the study of landmarks and other visible signs), mawāsīm (the estimation of monsoons), the science of majora (compass bearings); masāfāt (longitudinal measurements) and so on were adapted and utilized by Europeans in their voyages (Hamdani 291). Different route classifications, like the dirat al-mīl (coastal route), the dirat al-mutlaq (a direct route across the sea between two opposite coasts), and the al-iqīdā (a change in route when out of sight of land), originated in Middle Eastern voyages through the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean (Hamdani 291). Without these contributions, European exploration would not have succeeded. The astrolabe (pictured below, left), a tool used in navigation used to measure altitude and identify stars and planets, come from Muslim astronomers. Even the most basic navigational tool, the compass, was used by the Arabs before Europeans. It was initially developed in China, then passed through the Middle East where, again, they used it to navigate the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean before it eventually moved to Europe (Hamdani 291). Ottoman captain Seydi Ali Reis wrote famous works regarding navigational techniques, “particularly celestial navigation” (Hamdani 289) that referenced older works of other Middle Eastern writers (Majid, Mahri, etc.) all of whom lived during the 1400s. Therefore, “the Arab and Muslim navigational tradition goes way back to a period before Iberian sailors began their explorations” (Hamdani 289), so it would be incorrect to believe that European nations “developed their expertise independently of the Arabs” (Hamdani 289). Also, the caravel, the ship adapted by European countries for exploration was modeled after the Arab qarib “which had been successfully used by the Arabs in the eastern Mediterranean for centuries” (Hamdani 290). This improvement is illustrated specifically through the ships used by Columbus.

His original ship, the Santa María was a square-rigged nau (Hamdani 291), a European style of boat (pictured below, right), that was deemed too cumbersome and sluggish for exploration. He then switched to the Niña and Pinta, which were caravels (pictured on the following page). They were described as “fast and seaworthy” (Hamdani 291) and would eventually lead Columbus to the New World.

The most likely reasoning behind the major contributions made by Middle Eastern culture on European discovery is probably due to the Eurocentric perspective of history that is emphasized in the Western World. Primary sources from the Middle East throughout the Crusades and Age of Discovery are not as widespread and shared because they are not all available in English (Gada 9). The bodies of literature that are primarily available have been written by Western scholars (Gada 12). Any history, perspectives, or scholarly works from the Middle Eastern people who lived during these times is subject to how it is perceived by the white man. Europeans were anti-Muslim and anti-Middle East, yet they had no problem using the techniques and research gathered and cultivated by these people and cultures to get ahead of the rest of the world. Not only did they use knowledge and contributions that were not their own, in the end they were able to use them to infringe upon indigenous people all over the world through colonization, which would have detrimental effects in and of itself. This hypocrisy parallels with a theme that is repeatedly seen throughout colonialism: the colonizers took over the land and resources of the colonized in order to make advancements for themselves. The cultural and scientific appropriation of Middle Eastern countries by Europeans throughout the Age of Discovery is often overlooked. Thankfully, there are pieces of postcolonial work like A Tempest to shed light on an otherwise unfamiliar subject.

Not only are the Middle Eastern contributions to the Age of Discovery unknown or ignored by a majority of the world, The Tempest implies that their works are demonic and dangerous. Prospero, a once noble Duke, was completely and utterly possessed by mystical readings and studies. The only way to save Milan was to banish him to a faraway island. While Shakespeare’s vague description of Prospero’s studies does a good job in a performance sense of evoking mystery for those in the audience, Césaire’s depiction of the exile is historically accurate given the circumstances. Not only is it more accurate, it opens up a whole new conversation over the true motives behind multiple elements of the Crusades, the Reconquista, and Age of Discovery, while also exposing the cultural and scientific appropriation of the Middle East by Europe that allowed them to move lightyears ahead of the rest of the world. Césaire’s A Tempest focuses primarily in giving a voice to the colonized, but he also sheds light on those who, prior to colonialism, felt the wrath of the colonizers through war, exile, execution, forced conversion, and scientific appropriation.
Discussion Questions

1. After seeing illustrated how racial differences were a major motivating factor behind certain elements of the Crusades and Reconquista, how do your perspectives of the Crusades and Reconquista change? Morals are usually not held to the same standard when it comes to war (self-defense, etc.), but does that apply to this situation?

2. What other examples can you think of where Eurocentrism has had negative impacts on the rest of the world?

Works Cited


Further Reading


This article investigates different examples of cultural and scientific appropriations of indigenous people seen in the medical field today.


This is a chapter found in the book The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth Century Art and Society, in which the author depicts examples of Orientalism (the representation of Asia and the Middle East, in a stereotyped way that embodies a colonialist attitude) in famous pieces of artwork.
The Colonizer and the Colonized

Aspen Fleming & Mackenzie Eramo

Have you noticed a disconnect between the different dynamics of society and individuals that presents in daily life? That’s because there is a clear divide in the psychological aspects between social classes, more specifically between colonizers and the ones being colonized. Through colonialism, psychological facets are deemed to be more prevalent between colonizer and colonized. This is due to their contrasting positions in colonialism. Colonialism has been a very prominent discussion topic after reading Cesaire’s A Tempest. Cesaire shines a light on the negative aspects of colonization that are normally avoided in discussions. There are many negative aspects of colonization, especially the effects it has had on all of the people who have been involved. The effects it has had on people and the divide it has created are still noticed today. To fully understand these different dynamics, we must deeply examine psychology through colonialism, the psychology of the colonizer, the psychology of the colonized, and the psychology of all that lies in-between.

Colonialism is a practice of domination, which ultimately involves the subjugation of one people to another. Psychology and colonialism are linked together in a way that may not seem evident. During colonization, groups of similar people took control over indigenous people and the area that they were settled in. These people who took control, also known as the colonizer, created fear: they denied the worth, rights, and dignity of the indigenous people (Maricris). This ultimately led to internalized oppression, which can easily create many psychological impediments. These complications shown are still common in situations and people today due to discrimination. There is no question that when it comes to linking psychology and colonialism, in the colonial setting, oppression can oftentimes transform the psychology of both colonized and colonizer, which affects the self-image and relations of both entities. Colonialism continues to significantly matter and affect the formerly colonized. Knowledge of internalized oppression and colonial mentality should be understood in this context. In the formerly colonized states, there has been a great discussion of colonial legacies to the practice and study of psychological aspects. Frantz Fanon, a post-colonial theorist, has various works that have a large emphasis on how dehumanizing colonialism is, while also elaborating on numerous theories on racism, both biological and psychological.

While relating psychology to colonialism, the power imbalances created by colonialism contribute to the individual’s identity and perception. Many forms of literature that focus on social psychology and its effects on discrimination, self-worth, and attitude. This has been an ongoing issue in understanding the paradox of the targets of prejudice which can lead to a societal devaluation and can be negative towards themselves or their ethnic group (Okazaki et al.).

However, colonialism and psychology, are important to each other in the past and even now in the present. In the past, when the rights of indigenous people were terminated, that left them experiencing internal oppression. Internal oppression is usually found in a group of people are being targeted out of an act of hatred. It causes those who are being discriminated against to believe that what they are being told, such as they are the problem and are inferior to others. This concept is shown in social justice, where the oppressed will believe the false claims that they are inferior to the oppressors, which leads to these people to internalize the oppression being put on them (Pak). Now, in the present, colonialism continues to cause internal oppression from discrimination among the different dynamics which include various ethnic groups and social classes that are presented in society.

In A Tempest, Césaire uses characters such as Ariel, Prospero, and Caliban to represent the different groups created through colonialism. In addition to A Tempest being a fantastic example of the divide created in society, there are three notorious psychological experiments that help deepen the understanding of a divide between people. The Stanford Prison Experiment is one of these experiments. In August 1971, nine “normal” college students willing participated in this experiment. A coin flip determined whether they were going to be the guards or prisoners. Those who were prisoners were arrested at their doorstep and taken to Stanford University’s psychology department, which they used as their Stanford County Prison during the experiment. Within 24 hours, the guards began humiliating and psychologically abusing the prisoners.
The prisoners took the abuse with little to no protest. As the experiment went on, the behavior became more extreme with the guards becoming abusive and prisoners experiencing severe stress and anxiety. Finally, the experiment had to be ended early (Konnikova). The Jane Elliot: Blue Eyed, Brown Eyed is another experiment that shows a similar divide. During this experiment, third-grade teacher Mrs. Jane Elliot, made the blue-eyed children and the brown or green eyed-children sit apart to try and explain King’s assassination and how discrimination feels. She told the class that the brown-eyed people were smarter due to having more melanin. Throughout the day, the brown-eyed students were given more privileges than the blue-eyed. By the end of the day, brown-eyed students had transformed into confident leaders of their class, while blue-eyed students started to feel powerless (Bloom). The Clark Doll experiment also shows the divide in our society when it comes to race. In this experiment, psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark used four dolls that were identical other than their color. They asked three to seven-year-old children to identify the race of the dolls and pick which one they would prefer. Most of the children preferred the white doll over the brown doll and described the white doll with positive characteristics (Brown v. Board). When asked to pick which doll resembled them, many of the dark-skinned children would not pick one or ran away crying. This showed that many dark-skinned children had experienced internalized racism because of segregation (Stereotypes). These are just a few of the experiments that have been conducted to demonstrate the extent of the social divide that has been a prominent psychological aspect of the world since the days of colonialism.

To fully understand the relationship between psychology and colonialism, we must examine the psychology of the different groups involved. The psychology of colonizer plays an important role in this understanding. The colonizer is the group of people taking control. They believe that they are superior and take away the freedom and rights of those whom they are colonizing because they believe that their way is the right way. They completed their conquest by using violence and by treating others unfairly - they felt joy in the terror they caused because it resulted in power for them. A lot of the people who fall under this category may feel as if they are entitled. Most of their feeling of entitlement comes from their races, especially in the past. These people feel as if they are better, or have a better lifestyle, that they must push on those who they do not feel as are as good, usually those with darker skin. They may justify their actions by saying that they are just trying to help others out. We can see this still today. We can take a look at a white savior, a self-serving white person who uses inherent privilege to help or fix those whom they believe require assistance. In the play, A Tempest, the character of Gonzalo is a classic example of a white savior. At the same time, Prospero is the classic example of the colonizer. He colonizes the island and uses his power to control and dehumanize others. In the social experiments discussed above, the prison guards in the Stanford Prison experiment, the brown-eyed students in Jane Elliot’s experiment, and the white children in the Doll experiment exemplify the psychology of the colonizers. These experiments show that when people are given too much power, they can easily transform into oppressors and cause others to feel less of themselves (White).

On the other hand, the colonized are the people who have been overcome or taken control of. The colonized and the colonizer’s relationship has direct psychological and sociological effects on both groups although through different components. This is where most of the psychological aspects are found in the literature on colonialism. Imagine a group of people who came and knocked on your door and took everything that you deemed to be yours and claimed it now belonged to them. You were told that you had to change your way of life and adapt to a different way, their way. Life as you knew it was just completely destroyed. Indigenous people endured these very prominent hardships when colonizers came and claimed their land. The colonized is forced to adapt to the colonizer and the way that they live their life. “Colonial education and culture; colonization has made the subjugated nations believe that their culture, religion, customs, and traditions are inferior to the Western richness in these fields. Their efforts to identify themselves with the empire has created fragmentation in their minds because they cannot associate themselves with the colonizer either” (Sharmin 6). This causes the mentality of the colonized to suffer, enduring in dislocation and a loss of identity.

In the book Black Skin, White Masks by Frantz Fanon, he goes to describe the effects that colonization has on the mind. “There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect” (Fanon 10). This ultimately sheds light on how the colonized change their minds because they feel as if they need to adapt to the different forms of thinking that the colonizer expresses. They feel as if they need to adapt because they have hope that this will eventually give them equality. However, when they try to adapt to the colonizer, it leads to a loss of self-image. In A Tempest, Caliban’s character represents the colonized by being enslaved due to his race. In the social experiments previously stated, the colonized would be the prisoners from the Stanford Prison experiment, the blue-eyed children from Jane Elliot’s experiment, and the black children from the Doll experiment. In both A Tempest and these experiments, the colonized feel as if they have less value, which affects their self-image and sense of worth.
Even in the postcolonial world, many people still act similarly and possess the same psychological mindsets as the colonizers and colonized in the past. These histories have profound implications for the post-colonial search for cultural and national identity. It is not easy to determine when a nation is in a postcolonial state, and it is "well understood that colonial era foster elites who mimic the colonizer; post-colonial political power and systems of stratification again have colonial period echoes" (Okazaki et al. 95). We still see that those with more money or a higher social standing still hold superiority today, and these people are benefactors of colonial pasts. This causes continuous debates over culture and power.

Based on a historical figure from the biographical book of the same name (Doris Pilkington and Nugi Garimara, 1996), Moodoo acts as a mediator between two races, as he was Aboriginal but worked for the British colonizers. He had more power than others in his own family but was still not treated equally to those with light-colored skin. Others who fall into this category may consider themselves to be Indigenous allies - they recognize that the settlers are more privileged and want to break down the barriers that are in the Indigenous communities. La Malinche, a Nashua woman from the Mexican Gulf Coast (pictured on the left), was an example of this. She played key roles and had ties to the Spanish conquest of the Spanish empire. Her role in this conquest is controversial because many viewed her as a traitor to her own people, yet she appeared to have many noble attributes as well. For example, when the Spanish were attempting to convert the Aztecs to Christianity, she encountered members of her family. She noticed they were terrified, and she was said to have wiped away their tears, comforted them, and forgave them for their wrongdoings. Her actions might be considered noble because she may have turned her back on her family to prosper, but she still knew what was happening during the conquest was wrong (Mingren).

In A Tempest, Césaire shows another side of colonialism that is usually avoided. He shows the different aspects of colonization. He uses characters to represent the different divides that have been created. After reading his play, many common questions arise and are asked. Many of these questions are related to the different characters, the absence of females, race, power, and other questions related to colonialism. Unfortunately, there is one topic that seems to be overlooked in the discussion of colonialism - the psychological impacts on those involved.

People too often neglect to ask questions such as: What makes the colonizer do this? What are they thinking? How are they feeling? Or questions like: How do the colonized adjust? Do they ever become okay with being overruled? How does this affect everyone and everything that lies between the colonizer and colonized? It is important to take a step back from the big picture of colonialism and examine the psychological aspects of those involved to get a better understanding. The colonizers feel as if they are more worthy than others, using their power against those they are colonizing to create fear, which results in internal oppression. At the same time, those who do not fit into either category feel like they are misfits. Colonialism has created a divide in people in the past, and the psychological aspects that were found then are still found today, reinforcing that same divide in our own society.
Discussion Questions

1. What do you think life would be like now if the colonized were the colonizers?
2. Why are the psychological and sociological aspects of colonialism often not discussed?
3. How do you believe it would affect your mental health if people tried to come in and overrule your property and life today?
4. Do you believe that there are any “good” colonizers?

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Further Reading


THE MISSING MOTHER,
SYCORAX
KINOKIA BROWN

In just about every reading that involves colonialism, the voice of the white man is always dominant. He is always heard and turns the story in a way that better suits him since he is regarded as more important if not the victor. Even though the man of color is not vital to the white man’s story, his voice is still present. As for women, especially those of color, their voices are completely silent or missing from the story entirely. This phenomenon is present first in The Tempest by William Shakespeare. Caliban’s mother, Sycorax, does not have any speaking roles or even a character. Sycorax is only mentioned in the play by Prospero, showing that her voice is completely missing from the narrative and her story is being told by him. Sycorax’s silencing is also present in the postcolonial adaptation of Shakespeare’s play. A Tempest, written by Aimé Césaire, but here, the character is voiced by her son Caliban along with Prospero.

The idea of women’s voices being absent from colonial literature has caused some uproar in the feminist community. As stated earlier, this phenomenon is due to the patriarchal system of women being valued less than their male counterparts. It is also mixed with racism when the voices of women of color are not present and their appearance is described in ways that decrease their worth in comparison to white women. Unfortunately, we cannot rewrite older literature to make them politically correct in today’s terms, but we can learn from these colonialist writings and shape what is being taught in this time period. In this section, we will discover how the voices of women, especially those of color, have been silenced and how the application of feminism can bring voices to the silenced. Finally, we will discuss Césaire’s possible intentions of leaving Sycorax out of the play.

Think back to colonial literature you have read, for example, Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad or The Tempest by William Shakespeare. What was the gender of the main character? If you answered male, then the literature you read most likely silenced any female characters present. In most colonial literature, the white male is usually the main character since his voice and story had much more value compared to those of people of color. Interestingly, men of color had a slight presence in these works of literature, but women were usually completely silenced, especially those of color. Consciously or subconsciously, this silencing was a way to show how little power women had and that they were merely background objects composing the white man’s story. The idea of being objects relates to how white men view ownership of the territory they “discovered.” Abena Busia makes note of that by stating, “Power and sexuality are inextricably linked in the landscape of the colonial literature” (Busia 91). Not only did this idea play a role in the literature of that time, but it was also present in real life.

Women had very little rights compared to their male counterparts, and if you were a woman who was not white, you had even fewer rights. Women from our past such as Abigail Addams and Mary Wollstonecraft ached to have equal rights compared to men. When the idea of women’s suffrage rose to popularity in the mid-19th century, the first wave of feminism had struck. Right after women’s right to vote was constitutionally recognized in the United States, the second wave of feminism began, which was focused on gaining more rights for women. Unfortunately, there was some irony behind the goal of feminism.

It was not for all women, being mainly concerned with the struggles that white, heterosexual, and upper-class women faced. This exclusivity has been widely recognized by historians: “Critics have argued that the benefits of the feminist movement, especially the second wave, are largely limited to white, college-educated women and that feminism has failed to address the concerns of women of color, lesbians, immigrants, and religious minorities” (History.com Editors). Even though feminism’s mission was to uplift women, it instead silenced “lesser” women.

Invalidating these “lesser” women’s voices completely ruins feminism. Like black, lesbian feminist Audre Lorde stated in her essay, The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House, “The absence of these considerations (the inclusion of women from different races, sexuality, class, and age) weakens any feminist discussion of the personal and the political” (Lorde 1). Lorde makes the connection that being non-inclusive will not benefit feminism but tear it down, and that a homogenous feminist movement only reinforces the value judgements of patriarchy that feminism was supposed to be challenging. A woman of color has to deal with two struggles, not being white and not being a man, making her life experiences different from a white woman or a black man. She stands at two intersections of life that are different but cannot be separated. Therefore, within white colonialist patriarchy, women of color are doubly silenced, and this is seen time and again in literature such as Heart of Darkness and films such as The Help. The voices of women of color are erased from the real world and popular culture.
Sycorax, Caliban's mother from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, also falls into this erasure of women of color (Shakespeare 1.2. 259-84). She is only mentioned in the play by Prospero, and she does not have any speaking lines or even a character. Perhaps more surprisingly, her character is also missing in Césaire's *A Tempest*. Busia explains that "Sycorax is not necessarily physically absent, as in the case of her prototype — Caliban's Mother, Sycorax — but she is actually constructed as being essentially absent from any locus of dramatic action or power" (Busia 86). Busia acknowledges that Sycorax may be mentioned by Prospero in the play, but she does not have any sort of authority to defend herself. Busia also notes that "her absence takes the form of voicelessness — voicelessness in a discourse in which sexuality and access to language together form part of the discourse to access to power" (Busia 87). In combination with Sycorax being a woman, she did not learn the language of the white man, causing her voice to be unheard, yet her story is told by that same white man.

In Irene Lara's *Beyond Caliban's Curses: The Decolonial Feminist Literacy of Sycorax*, she writes, "It is as if her story of banishment in the text sets Sycorax on a path to future discursive banishment, marking the continuity of dominant cultures' refusal or inability to see and listen to Sycora" (Lara 81). Lara is making the connection that Sycorax is essentially invisible to the white man's culture and language. Sycorax is discounted as not being "good" in *The Tempest* as she is described as a witch or hag (Shakespeare 1.2. 264-9). This description further adds to the narrative that Sycorax is not of any importance because she is a woman of color. Also, Lara brings up the comparison between Sycorax as being "foul" while Miranda, Prospero's daughter, is "beautiful" (Lara 83). This comparison between these two women also brings further separation to feminist thought as Sycorax is pictured as evil (due to her skin color) and Miranda is angelic since she is of European descent. Sycorax's darker skin is a synonym of being immoral since the color black is associated with evil and white is good: "Darkness is associated with evil, ugliness, scary monsters, and super creeps" (tvropes.org). This statement can be applied to Sycorax, which further adds to her "banishment" from *The Tempest*.

In theory, Sycorax is a representation of women of color in a white world. She is inherently bad and can never be the same in the eyes of the white man. Sycorax is a powerful, African woman who rules the island and practices magic, but since she is a woman of color, she cannot be good. Even though she practices magic similar to Prospero's, he is perceived as possessing magic better than hers. Sycorax is discredited as being a horrid witch, and cannot even defend herself since she was killed even before the events of play begin. Sycorax reigned over the island that Prospero took from her son, Caliban, after Prospero is shipwrecked on the island, following having been banished from his own land. This aligns with a statement from Lara's *Beyond Caliban's Curses*, stating, "The implication is that Prospero's success in colonizing the land depends on also taking Sycorax: her soul, culture, knowledge, history, literacy" (Lara 85). Everything that reminds Caliban of his mother dissolves once Prospero comes and takes over the island.

This leads to the question: was Sycorax left out intentionally or not? In both plays written by William Shakespeare and Aimé Césaire, there are suggestions that Sycorax was left out for a reason. For both *The Tempest* and *A Tempest*, Sycorax's exclusion is to show how women of color do not matter to the white man's story. With all the evidence compiled from this section of the curriculum guide, one can agree that it follows that there were intentions of leaving Sycorax out. With her being a woman of African descent, she is deemed unworthy to have any speaking lines, as it follows how women of color were actually silenced in real life. However, the counterargument to Sycorax being intentionally left out is equally valid. Maybe both playwrights did not want to add her as they could still get across the message of what the play is supposed to mean. Sycorax's presence in each play could have drastically changed the meanings and outcomes. Unfortunately, no one knows the intentions that William Shakespeare and Aimé Césaire had of leaving Sycorax out. Their plays since both men are dead. Only speculations can be made from their respective legacies.

In the 21st century, feminism still suffers from divisions. Feminists who are not white, rich, and heterosexual are usually silenced. These divisions amongst this movement cause the main idea behind it to fall. Contemporary feminism is more radicalized than its predecessors, as the main focus is to bring down men, instead of uniting men and women through equality. With the invention of the internet, many people share their opinions online, including feminists of this day in age. In Ealasaid Munro's *Feminism: A Fourth Wave?*, she states, "What is certain is that the internet has created a 'call-out' culture, in which sexism or misogyny can be 'called out' and challenged" (Munro 23). While the idea of calling out rude or abusive people on the internet appears to be a powerful force for good, sometimes, the canceling of someone can ruin their reputation if they have done nothing to deserve it, except, perhaps, to disagree.
It is unfair that we still have divisions in the movement meant to uplift women, so it is time for a change. The biggest way to change the silencing of women of color, poor women, and non-heterosexual women is to include them in conferences and present-day literature. There are many ways to be inclusive without being exclusive. One idea of improving feminism would acknowledge that intersectionality exists. Intersectionality is a word created by Kimberlé Crenshaw, a Professor of Law at UCLA and Columbia Law School, is a leading authority in the area of Civil Rights, Black feminist legal theory, and race, racism and the law (aapf.org). The word intersectionality, as defined by Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary refers to “the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups” (merriam-webster.com). Not all are alike, and intersectionality brings that idea to the light. If women of color cannot have her voice heard in white media, they should start their own and practice diversity. The idea of feminism rests on the idea of equality, but divisions and radicalizations only make this social movement less and less successful with each passing year. If more events and conferences such as the Women’s March on Washington in 2017 could be held to bring women of all backgrounds together, maybe feminism could be saved. Also, becoming less radicalized is another great way to improve current-day feminism.

In summary, the few women who are present in literature about colonialism are silenced, but it happens disproportionately more to women of color. Sycorax, Caliban’s mother in The Tempest and A Tempest, experiences this phenomenon as she lacks speaking roles. Analyzing these plays through the scholarship of Abena Busia, Audre Lorde, and Irene Lara, have demonstrated why she is silenced and why this trope is problematic. Feminism may be seen as a retaliatory force in response Sycorax’s silencing, but looking at the history of feminism, it is clear that the original movement toward the legal recognition of rights for women was not inclusive. By critiquing current-day feminism, solutions may be found to improve the movement, and to prevent the further silencing of women’s voices, regardless of the intersections they inhabit.

Discussion Questions
1. If the voices of women of color were not silenced, do you think that the pieces of literature they are featured in would change?
2. Is there a clear connection between patriarchy and colonialism?
3. Even if we change the narrative to make today’s literature more inclusive, do you think there will still be divisions between white women and women of color?
4. Is there a way to somehow add Sycorax’s voice to A Tempest without changing the plot of the play?
5. Do you think Césaire actually meant to leave Sycorax out of his anti-colonial adaptation of The Tempest?

Works Cited


Further Reading


The idea of the “Noble Savage,” a “primitive” individual who has not been exposed to civilization, has been around since Europeans started to plunder the world beginning in the 15th century. These “primitive” individuals were a threat to Europeans as they were considered evil or subhuman, and most were slaughtered by the Europeans through violence and disease. Some Europeans recognized a kind of purity and nobility to the “savage” and so went as far as to “fix” them by learning their culture and language for the purpose of converting them to Christianity, introducing them to the “superior” ways of the colonizer, or to appropriate their knowledge of land and resources. These are the origins of the literary tropes of “Noble Savages” and “White Saviors.” Both tropes, “White Savior” and “Noble Savage,” go hand-in-hand with the philosophy of primitivism. Primitivism is the theoretical state of human existence stripped of civilization, and it can be classified as either “hard” or “soft” primitivism. Hard primitivism, espoused by Thomas Hobbes for example, focuses on the disappearance of moral standards when industrial civilization is removed from humanity, and tends to view indigenous peoples as “savages” both demonic and subhuman. On the other hand, soft primitivism, espoused by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, is less dehumanizing but still relies on supposed fundamental differences between industrial and pre-industrial cultures. Soft primitivism, which is prone to idealized and romanticized notions of the Noble Savage, is the idea that the evils of human life, such as inequalities, disappear when civilization is removed. Clearly, both facets of primitivism rest on the same logical foundation of Otherness.

These three concepts (white savior, noble savage, and primitivism) can be found in the play A Tempest by Aimé Césaire. The focus of this section is to explore these terms and how they fit into the ideas that Césaire wanted readers to understand through careful dialogue between the characters of Prospero, Gonzalo, and Caliban. As you read this section along with A Tempest, you will be able to comprehend the links between primitivism and the tropes of the noble savage and white savior.

The white savior is a term that is used to describe a white person that believes they are “saving the day” for non-whites. It can be traced back to a 16th-century Spanish friar named Bartolomé de las Casas (pictured below). De las Casas was the first person to document the atrocities that the Spaniards committed to the people of Central and South America. He might be considered the first white savior because, although he wrote against the enslavement and abuse of indigenous peoples, his main form of assistance to them was conversion to Christianity. De las Casas might also be considered as the first initiator of the noble savage trope as well, since he believed that the people of Central and South America were good despite their “primitive” ways. Furthermore, his 1522 book, A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies, was highly influential among European readers, many of whom also came to believe that Indigenous Americans were pure if “primitive.” The saving or fixing of the white savior is usually done without asking the group in question their permission or even finding out what they value. Britney A. Aronson's study on the white savior complex involved researching multiple teachers, including herself, to understand what causes this mentality. Aronson starts her paper linking the connection between the distorted narratives placed on colonized countries, many of which are in Africa. African countries are often stereotyped and represented as run-down and full of starving children just waiting around for white people to come and save them. These representations create a need for white intervention in order for “emotional needs to be satisfied,” the international nature of which often overwhelms agency at the local or individual level (Cole).

Aronson goes on to say the complex “creates a white savior who able to be emotionally rewarded about the contribution made to the cause and that he or she has made a difference in the lives of these poor unfortunate individuals with disregard for how” (Aronson 37). In further explication, she discusses the misconception that people of color need help in the first place, and gives the example of white people doing mission work in foreign countries to help people of color. Aronson concludes by saying that being taught that white is superior influences only spreads the idea that they can and should “save” people of color (Aronson 51). Over the course of the study, she acknowledged that she had been helping her black students even when they might not ask for help. The research encouraged her to take a step back to analyze herself and her privileges. Once she realized that she had privileges, it opened her eyes to the way she too fell into the white savior mentality (Aronson 51).
Similar to Aronson’s findings, Harvard professor Teju Cole recently wrote a series of tweets about the white savior complex (pictured above). Although his tweets could be seen as problematic as they started heated arguments, he brings up how Africa has been seen as a place that is screaming to be helped and the only people who feel the need to save them are white. Cole says “It is a liberated space in which the usual rules do not apply: a nobody from America or Europe can go to Africa and become a godlike savior or, at the very least, have his or her emotional needs satisfied” (Cole). The main problem with the white savior complex is that these people could genuinely be helping others, but they could also be trying to make themselves feel better, in effect, by easing white guilt over colonial and ongoing racist atrocities. This leads to the philosophical question of whether or not humans can ever do good simply for goodness’s sake (altruism), or if “good” actions always motivated by the promise of getting something in return (egoism).

Raising another philosophical question of the relationship between life and art, the white savior trope is also a regular feature in films and books. For example, in the film The Help (Tate Taylor, 2011), even though the black maids’ stories were told, they were told by a white woman named Skeeter, who thought she had to save the maids, one of whom worked in the house where she was raised. Thinking that she was the chosen one sent down to help them, even when they didn’t want to work with her, she still persuaded them to talk to her so she could write and publish her story on them. Going back to the question of altruism and egoism, with the publication of her book and success she won, Skeeter certainly received something out of the transaction with the maids. However, it is difficult to know what her true intentions were. Another big film that features the white savior trope would be The Blind Side (John Lee Hancock, 2009). Based on a true story, a white woman named Leigh Anne felt compelled to help a struggling black student by the name of Micheal Oher, even when he didn’t ask for or seek out her help. Although the story ends in his success, being drafted to the NFL, it is similar to The Help in that it is hard to tell why exactly the white female protagonist was motivated to help the young black male: altruistic good or egoistic self-benefit, even if in the form of a clear conscience.
The white savior trope is present in both plays by William Shakespeare and Aimé Césaire. In *The Tempest*, Prospero reminds Ariel that he saved him from Sycorax (Shakespeare 1.2 251-9). Prospero feels as if Ariel owes him for having freed him, so Prospero makes Ariel his personal servant in repayment for his freedom. This scenario follows the white savior trope as Prospero, a white man, feels that he deserves repayment for "helping" Ariel, a spirit native to the island. Prospero has another slave, Caliban, who was also "saved" by Prospero after the death of his mother, Sycorax (Shakespeare 1.2 269-84). However, Prospero only perceives that he saved Caliban, as he had been the island’s sole occupant before Prospero colonized it. So really, rather than saving Caliban, Prospero took the island that once belonged to him and then forced him into slavery (Shakespeare 1.2 331-43). In *A Tempest*, Prospero says that Caliban should be more grateful and speak Prospero’s language as he did Caliban a favor by “teaching” him (Césaire 1.2 110-2). Teaching Caliban Prospero’s language was supposed to improve Caliban’s life, and echoes so many colonial narratives of imposing the supposedly superior language of the colonizer on the colonized in order to assimilate the latter into the former’s way of life. In Act III, Scene 5, Césaire makes the white savior trope explicit with the character of the nobleman Gonzalo, who tries to convert Caliban to Christianity, with the express result of Caliban laughing in his face.

Also aligning with the soft primitivism that encourages the white savior complex, the noble savage trope is a depiction in the visual or literary arts of a “primitive” individual who has not been exposed to the hardships of civilization. Civilization, according to Early Modern European standards, is where a society of individuals peak in technological, cultural, and social development. The idea of the noble savage dates back to the 15th century. People indigenous to the lands being conquered by European empires were seen as different from the Europeans because they appeared to lack a civilization that was similar to theirs. Despite some of these “savages” appearing to possess a certain nobility or purity of mind and intent, they were also considered fundamentally evil since they did not practice Christianity as the Europeans did. Looking in from the outside, the Europeans believed that because “savages” functioned without a civilization, by extension, they were lacking Christian morality. The Europeans in return slaughtered these people through wars and diseases at the same time as they tried to assimilate them into European culture and convert them to Christianity – practices that have long encouraged the white savior complex. Such oversimplification of cultural difference was an irreversible misjudgment because even though theirs did not mirror European civilization, they certainly had their own way of life that was no more or less riddled with all the complexities of civilization elsewhere. Colonial narratives in visual and literary arts that feature Indigenous peoples as downtrodden, doomed, passive, unchanging, outdated, or even extinct all succumb to the trope of the noble savage.

In *The Tempest*, Caliban’s name is oddly similar to the word “cannibal,” a person who eats human flesh, and which was in Shakespeare’s time, a stereotype of all Indigenous peoples encountered during colonization. This clever anagram, in addition to the explicit description of Caliban as “a savage and deformed slave” (Shakespeare xviii), is an example of Prospero’s, and likely also Shakespeare’s, adherence to the philosophy of hard primitivism. Even Miranda, Prospero’s teenage daughter, calls Caliban a “savage” after he confronts Prospero about the ownership of the island (Shakespeare 1.2 352-5). In *A Tempest*, Césaire’s Prospero follows suit by calling Caliban a savage when he speaks his native language, Swahili, instead of Prospero’s native French (Césaire 1.2 106-12). Prospero accuses Caliban of raping Miranda (Césaire 1.2 151-3), and when the Yoruba god Eshu makes his appearance, the other characters view his song and dance as savagery (Césaire 3.3 19-65). However, Gonzalo, in accordance with his white savior complex, explains the importance of the island’s native inhabitants to remain pure, and to not subject them to the “shortcomings” of civilization during the process of colonization. In Act II, Scene 2, lines 30-31, Césaire makes explicit Gonzalo’s soft primitivist leanings subject to the noble savage trope: “They must stay as they are: savages, noble and good savages, free, without any complexes or complications.” But his motives are clearly not altruistic when he follows this sentiment in the next two lines with, “Something like a pool granting eternal youth where we periodically come to restore our aging, citified souls.”
The white savior complex is still present in the 21st century. In an example from the real world, North Sentinel Island off the coast of India is the home of the Sentinelese people. The people who occupy this tiny island are isolated from the rest of the world and do not wish to interact with their neighboring countries or anyone else. They are considered hostile because they kill any outsider who dares step foot onto their land or tries to interact with them. Nevertheless, many still try, as was the case for John Allen Chau, a missionary who tried to convert the Sentinelese people to Christianity. He was shot dead with their “primitive” arrows. The white savior complex has also taken the form of seeking fame on social media by “helping” children in Third World countries in the Global South, especially in Africa and South America. It is more popular among celebrities who are white and often consists of them traveling to these countries and sharing photographs of them embracing black and brown children. They might also help by building churches and doing missionary work to spread Christianity, or they might raise money for a cause such as feeding hungry kids in India, but all too often, the money raised is pocketed by celebrities or other privateers. This trope is also present in popular and award-winning films, such as The Help and The Green Book. In actuality, this trope is detrimental to the ongoing fight for equality because it reinforces stereotypes that people of color are passive and powerless without help from white people, who, in turn, are shown as entitled to intervene in the lives of black and brown people. The goals of the white savior are rarely if ever in the best interest of those they are supposedly helping.

Likewise, the noble savage trope is also present in artistic representations that either reflect or reinforce the soft primitivist mentalities that prevail among the colonizer and especially those with the white savior complex. Some examples of the noble savage can be seen in Avatar (James Cameron, 2009) and Dances with Wolves (Kevin Costner, 1990). This trope reinforces stereotypes of Indigenous peoples as simple, pure, homogeneous, and ultimately, primitive, without recognizing the nuances of precolonial life, which was just as complicated as it was everywhere else all over the earth. While precolonial peoples may not have had the same problems as industrial societies, neither were they existing in some fictional utopia free of human struggles.

Discussion Questions

1. Can you give some examples of hard and soft primitivism?
2. Can you think of other examples of white saviors from real life or popular culture?
3. Why aren’t many European atrocities considered acts of savagery?

Works Cited


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>Most of the Caribbean inhabited by Carib, Taíno, and Arawak Indians</td>
<td>Emigrating from the northern coastal areas of South America, Carib and Arawak peoples began inhabiting the islands ca. 300 B.C., populating most of the region within a few hundred years. Descendants of these people would become the Island Caribs of the Lesser Antilles and the Taíno of the Greater Antilles and Bahamas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1492</td>
<td>Christopher Columbus made his first voyage to the Western Hemisphere</td>
<td>He shipwrecked on the island of Ayiti (modern Haiti), still inhabited by the Taíno.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1494</td>
<td>Treaty of Tordesillas is signed</td>
<td>An agreement between Spain and Portugal to settle conflicts over newly colonized lands in the Atlantic. The treaty allocated lands west of Cape Verde for the Spanish Empire and those to the east for the Portuguese Empire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1496</td>
<td>Santo Domingo, the first Spanish settlement on Hispaniola is established</td>
<td>This was the first instance of a settler colony in the “New World.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500s</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Spanish Empire claimed the entire Caribbean and most of Latin America. Hispaniola, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Jamaica, and Trinidad were settled in this century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1511</td>
<td>King Ferdinand II of Spain authorizes slaving expeditions in the Caribbean</td>
<td>Spanish explorers ultimately exterminated the Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean, Taíno and Carib, in less than 50 years after their arrival in 1492 because of these slaving expeditions and European diseases. Indigenous peoples were sent to South America to work in gold mines and pearl beds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1519-1533</td>
<td>Taíno cacique (chief or leader) of Ayiti (Hispaniola) named Guarocuya (called Enriquillo by the Spanish), leads a series of successful rebellions against the Spanish colonizers</td>
<td>This series of revolts is the best-known uprising against the Spanish of the early Caribbean period. The Taíno were able to successfully lead the rebellion because of their knowledge of the landscape. An ineffectual treaty was signed, granting rights of freedom and possession, however, there was little impact since the indigenous population was rapidly declining due to European diseases and slaving expeditions. Enriquillo (or Guarocuya) is still considered a hero in the Dominican Republic and Haiti for his resistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1524</td>
<td>The Council of the Indies was created by the Spanish as a governing body over Caribbean and Latin American territories</td>
<td>Following the Spanish conquest of the Aztec Empire in 1521, the Council of the Indies was established as the administrative and advisory body for Spain’s overseas territories. Granting absolute power of the Crown over the territories, the Council was in place until 1834.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600s</td>
<td>British, French, and Dutch forces seized Caribbean territories from failing Spanish Empire. Illegal &quot;piracy&quot; and legal &quot;privateering&quot; began throughout the Caribbean.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1619</td>
<td>Settlement of Jamestown</td>
<td>Jamestown was the first successful British colony in the “New World” and would become the foundation for the eventual United States of America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1635</td>
<td>France takes control of and colonizes Guadeloupe and Martinique</td>
<td>France’s colonial relationship with Martinique, and other relationships between a colonizing country and its colonies, influenced Aimé Césaire’s work in politics, philosophy, poetry, and playwriting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650-1730</td>
<td>The Golden Age of Piracy begins in the Caribbean</td>
<td>Pirates were involved in the slave trade as well as trade of sugar, tobacco, gold, silver, etc…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1697</td>
<td>Spain cedes western portion of Hispaniola to France in the Treaty of Ryswick</td>
<td>French control over what would become Haiti resulted in increased French settler colonies and an economy based on sugar plantations operated by slaves from the Dahomey territory of West Africa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700s</td>
<td></td>
<td>This century saw Caribbean colonies prospering in sugar, tobacco, and rice farming. Plantations and slave economies increased the wealth of European colonizing nations enormously.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1756-1763</td>
<td>Seven Years War</td>
<td>Also called the French and Indian War, infighting between France and its colonies escalated into a European conflict involving France, Austria, and Russia against Prussia and Britain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775-1783</td>
<td>American Revolutionary War</td>
<td>French naval victories over the British in the Caribbean aided the American efforts at independence from Britain by weakening British military power.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1780</td>
<td>The Great Hurricane of 1780</td>
<td>The deadliest hurricane on record, this storm caused the deaths of over 20,000 people in the Lesser Antilles. Islands affected were Barbados, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Sint Eustatius, Puerto Rico and Hispaniola. This hurricane further weakened the British Navy during the American Revolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789-1799</td>
<td>French Revolution</td>
<td>A war in France when the people overthrew the monarchy and took control of the government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1791</td>
<td>Haitian Revolution against French colonizers</td>
<td>This century consisted of continuing wealth accumulated by European countries with Caribbean colonies, in addition to important changes in the recognition of human rights, which affected the slave economies that plantations relied upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800s</td>
<td></td>
<td>This century consisted of continuing wealth accumulated by European countries with Caribbean colonies, in addition to important changes in the recognition of human rights, which affected the slave economies that plantations relied upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>Slavery Abolition Act (1833) is put into effect in August of 1834</td>
<td>The British Empire abolished slavery in Britain and colonies in the Caribbean, Africa, and Canada due to a flux in their economy and the fact that the empire could not compete with larger plantation economies in these areas. A push for free trade and a growing fear of slave uprisings also contributed to the Act. This resulted in Canada becoming a free territory and led to a migration of slaves and free blacks to Canada from 1834 to the early 1860s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Dutch Empire abolishes slavery in Suriname and the Antilles</td>
<td>Although the practice had been outlawed in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) in 1862, The Netherlands was one of the last European countries to end slavery in its colonies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>The United States annexes Hawaii</td>
<td>This was 5 years after the U.S. deposed Hawaiian Queen Liliuokalani. Months after the US granted statehood to Alaska in 1959, Hawaii also became a state for multiple reasons, including economic gain and military advantages for the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Spanish-American War</td>
<td>This conflict between the U.S. and Spain ended Spain’s colonial rule in the Americas and made the U.S. a world power. The U.S. began increasing military might and interest in world and foreign affairs and policies. Spain relinquished control of Cuba, and the U.S acquired Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. The U.S. victory also led to this country taking over the construction of the Panama Canal in 1904.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Explanation</td>
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<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>San Ciriaco Hurricane</td>
<td>This hurricane ravaged the Lesser and Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico, and the Bahamas. In Puerto Rico, the storm hit just one year after America invaded the island, and so disrupted an already unstable environment. Damages were estimated to be around $2.5 million.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900s</td>
<td></td>
<td>This century would see European empires break apart and relinquish colonial territories, resulting in widespread decolonization and the onset of complex processes associated with postcolonial statehood. However, the U.S. in particular began extending neocolonial control over many former European colonies. This would come in the form of military and economic pressure to adopt American political and socio-cultural attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>The Platt Amendment</td>
<td>This amendment stated that the United States would leave Cuba if Cuba could meet certain requirements, therefore implementing a sort of neocolonialist rule of Cuba by the U.S. In 1902, the U.S. withdrew troops and Cuba became a republic, only after the amendment was included in Cuba’s constitution in 1901.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Aimé Césaire is born</td>
<td>The highly influential politician, philosopher, poet, and playwright was born in Basse-Pointe, Martinique, a French colony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1918</td>
<td>WWI, Sykes-Picot Agreement</td>
<td>In conjunction with a League of Nations mandate, this treaty between the UK and France (with assent from the Russian Empire and Italy) defined their spheres of influence and control over the territories of the disbanded Ottoman Empire. Britain and France exerted a kind of quasi-colonial control over their respective territories, which were designated as “protectorates.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915-1934</td>
<td>U.S. occupies Haiti</td>
<td>After the assassination of Haiti’s president, the U.S. was concerned that Haiti could fall under foreign rule, which would not have been in the best interest for the U.S., which was interested in Haiti as a potential naval base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>U.S. purchases U.S. Virgin Islands</td>
<td>The U.S. purchased 3 islands (St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix) from Denmark after negotiating on the sale for almost 50 years. This purchase shows the increasing imperialistic power of the U.S. especially after the Spanish-American War. This meant that the islands, which were named the U.S. Virgin Islands, became territories of the U.S., although they are not necessarily a part of this country and do not receive the same rights and privileges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Cézaire marries Suzanne Roussi</td>
<td>Suzanne Roussi was an influential writer and anti-colonial and feminist activist, also native to Martinique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Cézaire publishes Return to My Native Land</td>
<td>Cézaire’s book-long poem expresses his thoughts on the cultural identity of black Africans in a colonial setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-1945</td>
<td>WWII</td>
<td>WWII was fought between the Axis powers (Germany, Japan, Italy) and the Allied powers (U.S., Great Britain, France, Soviet Union), and caused a major shift in power from Western Europe to the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Colonialism played a part in the Second Great War, as America and Britain disagreed on Britain’s power. By the end of the war, the power imbalance between countries, like the U.S. and the Soviet Union, led to later events, such as the Cold War.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Cézaire is elected Mayor of Fort-de-France, capital of Martinique</td>
<td>Cézaire is involved on and off in politics in Martinique until 2001, which is when he retired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Cézaire joins the French Communist Party</td>
<td>He would eventually abandon the Communist Party in 1956 to create his own party, Parti Progressiste Martiniquais.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Cold War officially begins</td>
<td>The ideological rivalry that developed after WWII between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies was waged on political, economic, and propaganda fronts. An important factor was the United States’ “war on communism,” and its containment theory. Communism opposed capitalism, especially since capitalism is a neocolonialist economic system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1953</td>
<td>Korean War</td>
<td>The conflict between communist North Korea (supported by China and the Soviet Union) and South Korea (supported by the U.S.), the Korean War is included in the Cold War period and can be considered another conflict between the Soviet Union and the U.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Césaire publishes Discourse on Colonialism</td>
<td>Essay on postcolonial literature about how even during postcolonialism and decolonization, the colonizer decivilizes the colonized, after having already debased itself through the initial act of colonization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Césaire publishes Return to My Native Land</td>
<td>Césaire’s book-long poem expresses his thoughts on the cultural identity of black Africans in a colonial setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-1962</td>
<td>The Federation of the West Indies is established</td>
<td>The intention of the Federation was to create a political unit among Caribbean islands that would become independent from Britain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>All colonies in French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa become independent; Belgian Congo also becomes independent</td>
<td>Although these colonies became independent, France made efforts beforehand to destabilize these locations as the post-colonial period approached. Due to these efforts, and the fact that these newly autonomous states had little resources and allies to draw on, France still has interests and influence in these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Cuban Missile Crisis</td>
<td>Confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union when the U.S. discovered Soviet ballistic missiles deployed in Cuba. Considered to be the closest the world has come to nuclear war.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Césaire publishes The Tragedy of King Christophe</td>
<td>Based on historical events, this play depicts the struggles of decolonization in 19th century Haiti following the Revolution and assassination of Jean-Jacques Dessalines in 1806. The play, written as a Shakespearean tragedy, follows the moral descent of oppressed slave Henri Christophe as he becomes the oppressor, King Christophe, using the same means of oppression employed by the French colonizers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Césaire publishes A Tempest</td>
<td>An adaptation of Shakespeare’s The Tempest with a postcolonial perspective. Césaire utilizes most of the original setting and characters of the original, while emphasizing that Prospero is a white master, Ariel is a mulatto slave, and Caliban is a black slave. Césaire depicts issues of race, decolonization, and power in this play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965-1975</td>
<td>Vietnam War</td>
<td>Communist government of North Vietnam vs. South Vietnam and its ally, the U.S. The conflict was intensified by the ongoing Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The U.S. lost the war and pulled troops out of the country, which became the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.</td>
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**HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF COLONIALISM IN THE CARIBBEAN, CONT.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Hurricane Gilbert</td>
<td>Gilbert peaked as a Category 5 hurricane during the 1988 season and brought destruction to the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Gilbert was the most destructive hurricane to hit Jamaica, with over $500 million in damages. It took several months for the country to fully restore water, electricity, and telephone services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Collapse of the USSR; end of the Cold War</td>
<td>After several attempts at a coup, Soviet communism and the economy began to decline. The republics began to separate. President Gorbachev resigned on December 25, 1991. On December 31, the Union was officially dissolved, and the former superpower was replaced with 15 independent countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Aimé Césaire dies</td>
<td>At the age of 94, Césaire died in Fort-de-France, Martinique, and is remembered as one of the Caribbean's most celebrated cultural figures and one of its fiercest advocates for civil rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Hurricane Maria</td>
<td>Maria was a Category 5 hurricane that affected Dominica, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Total damages were estimated to be $91.6 billion. Puerto Rico, however, suffered long after Maria left, due to previous neglect from the United States. Maria destroyed the power grid, and the island was left without electricity for months. FEMA could not seem to provide enough aid to the island due to U.S. budgets cuts and other storms that had hit during the 2017 season. Perhaps the most memorable point of U.S. aid to post-Maria Puerto Rico was when President Trump visited the island and began throwing paper towel rolls to citizens in a PR move that exemplifies neocolonialism at work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Age Of Discovery - The period starting in the late 15th century and continuing into the early 17th century during which European empires engaged in intensive colonization (often termed "exploration") of the world to convert its inhabitants to Christianity, and to supplement these missions economically with the acquisition of goods, raw materials, land, and trade partners.

Ex. Sailing routes used in the Age of Discovery:

Capitalism - An economic system characterized by private or corporate ownership of capital goods, by investments that are determined by private decision, and by prices, production, and the distribution of goods that are determined mainly by competition in a free market.

Ex. Walmart pays its full-time hourly employees so little that they have to apply for food stamps (Walmart even helps them with the paperwork), while the Walmart corporation makes more than $100 Billion every quarter.

Civilization - The society, culture, and way of life of a particular area.

Ex. 1 Ancestral Puebloans had a complex road system, a standard style of religious worship, and a unique art style. Ex. 2 The ancient Egyptian civilization consolidated political and religious power to control the production, trade, and defense of important goods.

Colonialism - Colonialism is control that one power has over an area or people. It occurs when one nation dominates another and exploits the population; often, the nation will force its own culture, language, values, etc. onto the people of the nation they are colonizing.

Ex. Australia was colonized by Britain, who exerted total control over the island continent’s Indigenous population. Control was manifested through land rights granted to white settlers, military force resulting in genocide, and policies that forced Aboriginal Australians to assimilate to British standards and lifeways.
Collective Trauma - A case of trauma that happens to large groups of individuals, and can create a cycle of trauma if passed through generations. Collective trauma may be caused by events such as genocide, terrorism, slavery, etc.

Ex. The Jewish Holocaust and Indian Removal Act of 1830 are examples of events that have caused collective trauma in survivors and their descendants.

Communism - Refers to an economic and political theory that was first used in English prose in the mid-19th century that advocates the elimination of private property and the common sharing of all resources among a group of people

Ex. In Cuba the hospitals, medical professionals, medicines and medical supplies are all under the control of the Cuban government. The government is in control of everything including medical needs within communism.

Cultural Appropriation - The act of adopting elements of an outside, often minority culture, including knowledge, practices, and symbols, without understanding or respecting the original culture and context.

Ex. The most common occurrence is when celebrities wear fashions representing a culture other than their own without knowledge of the background behind the fashion, such as, when Kim Kardashian wore braids.

Decolonization - The act of eradicating colonization, or freeing a country from being dependent on another country.

Ex. After 350 years of being a colony under the British rule India became independent after World War II in the year 1947 through the Indian Independence Act.

Globalization - The growing interdependence of the world’s economies, cultures, and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investment, people, and information.

Ex. Global communications systems such as telephone services, and later, the Internet are both examples of globalization and facilitators of it.

Imperialism - The policy, practice, or advocacy of forcefully extending the power and dominion of a nation, especially by direct territorial acquisitions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life of other areas.

Ex. The United States won against Spain in the Spanish-American War in hopes of becoming a world power. The victorious country gained control over Puerto Rico, Guam, the Philippines, and Cuba.
Industrialization - The large-scale introduction of manufacturing, advanced technical enterprises, and other productive economic activity into an area, society, country, etc.

Ex. In the 1700s and 1800s, the United States and Europe underwent an industrial revolution, in which new production methods (for goods that were previously made by hand) were introduced. Textile manufacturing and steam power were two of the main additions.

Intersectionality - The way in which discriminatory attitudes, such as racism and sexism, intersect within different sets of individuals or groups, and how these attitudes affect them.

Ex. A person who is both female and African American would encounter degrees of discrimination that are intersectional, meaning that the different discriminatory attitudes overlap since she is both a woman and black.

Miscegenation - The interbreeding of people considered to be of different racial types with the intent of “purifying” the race.

Ex. The film Rabbit-Proof Fence (Philip Noyce, 2002) shows the mixed-race girls being married off to white men in order to “purify” the generations after them.

Neocolonialism - The economic and political policies by which a great power indirectly maintains or extends its influence over other areas or people.

Ex. In the decade preceding the Vietnam War, the proto-CIA went undercover as medical aid. While there the Americas convinced the Vietnamese they were there to help them when in reality they were working with the French to attack Vietnam in order to make the Vietnamese believe the Americans were only there to help them to earn an ally. This can be seen in the film The Quiet American (Philip Noyce, 2003) and the novel of the same name by Graham Greene.

Negritude - A term coined by Aimé Césaire that, in his words, means, “The simple recognition of the fact that one is black, the acceptance of this fact and of our destiny as blacks, of our history and culture.”

Ex. In his first anthem of negritude, Cahier d’un retour au pays natal (Notebook of a Return to the Native Land), Césaire discusses the identity of African-descendent people of the African diaspora, and how they are represented in culture and the colonial setting.

Noble Savage - In literature, an idealized concept of uncivilized people, who symbolize the pureness of one not exposed to the corruption of western civilization.

Ex. Jean-Jacques Rousseau believed that man was initially unexposed to sin and had no understanding of right and wrong. Those who were viewed as being “savages” were not so; instead, they symbolized the innate goodness of humanity.
O

**Orientalism** - the way of Western artists depicting the East as a place of backwardness, lawlessness, or barbarism enlightened and tamed by European (Christian) rule, while at the same time, entertaining fantasies of the East as a place of exotic (immoral) sensuality.

Ex. Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Snake Charmer*, 1870, is a painting that represents a stereotypical Middle East consumed with magic and substandard morals.

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**Post-Colonialism** - A theoretical approach in various disciplines that is concerned with the lasting impact of the political or cultural condition and colonization of former colonies.

Ex. Frantz Fanon is a postcolonial scholar. He wrote that only the colonized can re-establish their own culture, and it cannot be trusted to the colonizer to assist after centuries of oppression.

**Primitivism** - A belief in the value of what is simple and unsophisticated, expressed as a philosophy of life or through art or literature.

Ex. Hard primitivism is when civilized life is stripped of its virtues, and soft primitivism is when civilized life is stripped of its evils. Jean Jacques Rousseau used the idea of the noble savage in his writing “The Origin and Foundation of the Inequality of Mankind”, which represents soft primitivism. Thomas Hobbes disagreed with Rousseau’s claims, having a mindset of soft primitivism.

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R

**Reconquista** - The Reconquista was a series of campaigns over the course of hundreds of years led by Christian Spain and Portugal to regain possession of territory that had been ruled by Muslim dynasties. These campaigns were conducted concurrently with the Crusades and were completed with the ousting of the Nasrid Dynasty by the kingdoms of Aragon and Castile in 1492.

Ex. Unknown Artist: Reconquista Battle Scene, a detail of a painting that represents the battles of the Reconquista.
Settler Colonialism - A distinct type of colonialism that functions through the replacement of indigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity and sovereignty.

Ex. August 23, 1770, Captain James Cook of the British Royal Navy took possession of the eastern coast of Australia in the name of King George III of England.

Social Contract - An implicit agreement among the members of a society to cooperate for social benefits.

Ex. The Bill of Rights, which are the first 10 amendments of the United States Constitution, guarantees individuals a selection of inherent rights as human beings.

Socialism - It refers to a system of social organization in which private property and the distribution of income are subject to social control, but the conception of that control has varied, and the term has been interpreted in widely diverging ways.

Ex. A bakery pays all staff the same amount of money based on the profitability of the business. Workers vote to make business decisions.

The Crusades - A series of religious wars between Christians and Muslims. They started in 1095 when the Pope called on Western Christians to secure control of Jerusalem from the Muslims.

Ex. The Fourth Crusade (1202-1204) occurred when Pope Innocent III was unable to cope with the loss of Jerusalem. He preached crusades until he finally succeeded to raise an army. On their way to Jerusalem, they captured the Adriatic city of Zara for Venice and shortly after that they got involved in the struggle for the Byzantine throne. Instead of recapturing Jerusalem as the Pope hoped, the Fourth Crusade ended with the Sack of Constantinople and the formation of the short-lived Latin Empire on the conquered Byzantine territories.

White Savior - Caucasian people who try to “fix” or “help” people of color, mainly in other countries, before knowing if they want or are in need of help.

Ex. In the film The Quiet American (Philip Noyce, 2002, based on the 1955 novel by Graham Greene), the character of Alden Pyle, an American undercover CIA agent, tries to “save” the young Vietnamese woman Phuong by promising to marry her and bring her to back to America with him. Symbolically, Pyle rescuing Phuong represents neocolonial America trying to “save” other nations by imposing its political and economic systems upon them.

Western Canon - A list of writings, music, and art that have helped to shape Western culture and are still highly regarded by the Western culture today.

Ex. Shakespeare’s poetry and plays are in the Western Canon.
References


The concept map we created centers around colonialism, with each item being related to colonialism in one way, shape, or form. Initially, Americans believed that it was destined by God that they reshape the world. This leads to the Manifest Destiny. This caused the United States to grow increasingly, thus leading to industrialization. Since more land was needed in order to bring about more agriculture, deforestation became prominent. People began burning fossil fuels in order to produce the concentrated energy that they needed. By burning oil, gas, coal, etc., the global warming crisis begins to increase and become worse. As the temperature rises, the growth rates for plants become much faster, which increases the cycle of breeding for pests and insects. This increase in pet populations puts crops at risk for dying. As supplies of crops decrease, poverty increases, as well as world hunger.

Tracing back to industrialization, this obviously created the availability of more jobs. The increase in jobs led to the rise in the middle class, as individuals were working and saving their money to provide for their families. They also had more money to spend on more luxury items, therefore turning them into a class of consumers (which is the consumerism aspect). However, the consumption habits that we have are also having an effect on global warming. Those in the global middle class began moving to more urban areas, as well. This created a population explosion in those areas. With more people comes less food to be distributed; thus, world hunger begins to increase.

References