

# David Garrick's Two *Tempests* and Shakespeare

## Adaptation in the London Georgian Theater

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### Abstract

This essay places David Garrick's operatic adaptation of *The Tempest* in the context of a competitive, commercial theater market in the 1750s that was operating at a time of particularly fraught relations between different status-based groups in the theatrical public. This opera was Garrick's last attempt to adapt Shakespeare into an opera and it failed miserably. Key to understanding this failure are the challenging class politics of managing Garrick's audience in the 1750s and the unperformability of Caliban in the context of those politics given the character's association with plebian unruliness. Garrick's attempt at taming him into a singing sidekick failed to convince as "polite" performance, motivating the theater manager's return, in the following season, to a shortened version of the original play. The business of the theater had as much to do with Garrick's decision as his devotion to Shakespeare.

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### Introduction

David Garrick is widely credited with the establishment, in the last half of the eighteenth century, of Shakespeare the National Poet of England; Garrick's 1769 Shakespeare Jubilee at Stratford was the tipping point in a 200-year long process on stage and page that turned a respected, if archaic, playwright into the mythic Bard of Avon (Dobson 1992, 214-22).<sup>1</sup> Garrick is also credited by his editors, biographers, and critics with "restoring" Shakespeare's original plays, albeit with alterations in accordance with contemporary taste, to the London stage after a century of radical adaptations. But Garrick had his own adaptive way with Shakespeare on multiple occasions, including turning both *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Tempest* into light-hearted operas more akin to musical comedy than dramatic poetry. While *A Midsummer Night's Dream* did well enough with audiences to last out a season, the operatic *Tempest* was a major flop, protested by audiences and shut down after just a few nights.

I place Garrick's operatic *Tempest* in the context of a competitive, commercial theater market in the 1750s that was operating at a time of particularly fraught relations between different status-based groups in the theatrical public. Betsy Bolton and David Worrall document the increasing concern with managing unruly, mixed audiences during the Georgian period (Bolton 2014, 31-52; Worrall 2013, 47-70). Garrick was in the business of marketing entertainment to audiences who were not shy about expressing their displeasure in catcalls, thrown objects, and even property-destroying riots. His production choices in the 1750s show us a master actor and theater manager struggling to please and tame a diverse audience with conflicting demands and expectations.

Key to understanding the opera's failure, as I will show, are the challenging class politics of managing Garrick's audience in the 1750s and the unperformability of Caliban in the context of those politics. Unlike the child-fairies of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, he could not be detached from too-strong associations with plebian unruliness linked to the most frequently performed adaptation of *The Tempest*: John Dryden's and William Davenant's *The Enchanted Island*. Caliban's performance history since the Restoration points to plebian deviance on both sexual and social registers. Garrick's attempt at taming him into a singing sidekick to hearty British tars failed to convince as "polite" performance or to thrill audiences with exotic but nonthreatening spectacle. Garrick's recasting of Caliban could not completely disconnect his performance from potentially "uncivil" plebian elements in the audience—or in the street outside the theater.

### Garrick's Year of Living Dangerously

The political climate in 1755-56 shaped a social milieu that cried out for unifying patriotism but was rife with instability and controversy. The summer of 1755 brought news that British conflicts with France had broken out afresh in America, with the landing of French troops in Louisbourg and the death of Major-General Edward Braddock in another failure of British efforts to consolidate control over the New World. Britain was on the brink of the Seven Years War, and the successful outcome of that conflict for the British was still uncertain. Other themes speaking to the definition of the British state and civic identity swirled through the newspapers and pamphlets of the mid 1750s. Before his death in 1754, Prime Minister Henry Pelham had been forced to repeal the Naturalization Act in the face of violent social protests against "the Jew Bill" as a perceived threat to British control over its own economy. The legal debates and pamphlet wars around the trial of Elizabeth Canning, the servant girl whose story turned on the plausibility of a female servant's moral integrity as well as considerable paranoia over the role of "gypsies" in crimes against British citizens, was just winding down; London had been rocked by two earthquakes in the early years

of the decade, leading to dire prophecies and mass hysteria in the city, and the devastating Lisbon earthquake was in Londoners' newspapers.

The Marriage Act of 1754 had also set off a flurry of public debates over the authority of civil versus canonical law, a controversy that touched Garrick's theater directly early in the 1755-56 season when word got out that Joseph Vernon, a principle singer, had informed on the clergyman who had (innocently but illegally, under the new law) married him to a teenaged actress, Jane Poitier. The beleaguered clergyman published a pamphlet asking for "the charity of the Town to keep his Family from Starving," a plea that kept audiences hissing Vernon off the stage for much of the season. The close call with French invasion in 1745 was only ten years in the past (Cross n.d.). This decade was one of crisis over the nature and stability of the British state and British subjects, and what laws and the laws and enforcement would regulate them.

Controversy outside the theater often made its way in, as the Vernon case demonstrates, adding to Garrick's considerable problems with public image. As manager since 1747, his decisions were constant objects of complaint: he did not accept enough new plays; he suppressed rivals' acting talent; he did not perform enough himself but palmed off inferior actors on audiences; he was cheap and did not spend enough on the scenery and spectacle that audiences demanded. As Thomas Davies explains, "all arts were supposed ineffectual to fix the wavering taste of the public, unless Mr. Garrick made a part of the entertainment" (1780, 177-178). The theatrical season of 1755-1756 put its best foot forward with "The House new Gilt, Painted & ornamented wth Festoons &c," according to Richard Cross's diary, and the manager planning "to surprise and captivate all ranks of people" (Cross n.d.) with *The Chinese Festival*, an extravagantly staged and very expensive ballet by the talented choreographer, Jean Georges Noverre, performed as an after-piece and debuting on November 12, 1755. This infamous event in English theater history comes to us in many vivid accounts, from Cross's diary to newspaper articles and biographies of Garrick, documenting the rioting of audiences over the course of seven nights at Drury Lane Theatre. According to Cross, the trouble began on November 6, 1755, when Garrick, in the *Tragedy of Jane Shore*, spoke the line, "Die with pleasure for my Country's good." A person in the gallery cried "no French Dancers then," an exclamation that Cross took as a bad sign for the "24 we have engaged" for the Chinese Festival (Cross n.d.). Signals were mixed, however; just a few days before, on November 3, "Sigr Baletti, Mr Lauchery, &c from France" had been "pretty well receiv'd," and "Little Pietro & Miss Noverre from France...with a Figure of Children" met "with great App" and "were encor'd the first Night" (Cross n.d.). These performances of mixed audience response played out over the course of seven nights at Drury Lane. Two of Garrick's biographers, Davies and James Boaden, look back on these events as a battle between the aristocratic "inhabitants of the boxes" and the "plebian part

of the audience" (Davies 1780, 181). According to Davies, the boxes "very warmly espoused the cause of the managers against the plebian part of the audience, whom they affected to look down upon with contempt. The pit and galleries became more incensed by this opposition of the people of fashion, and entered into a strong alliance to stand by each other, and to annoy the common enemy" (1780, 181). As Boaden explains, Francophobia was more an expression of the conflict between different ranks of the audience than a cause of its own: "The higher orders among us, as a mark of discrimination from the vulgar, at all times affect an admiration of foreign artists. The question soon alters its shape in the contest of this nature, and it is no longer whether French dancers shall be encouraged that they debate, but whether the gentry shall dictate to the populace, or the people to the great" (1831, xxx-xxxi).

This class warfare produced highly gendered performances by different constituencies in the audience, primarily men. Upper-class women initially played a supporting role to the men of the boxes but soon assumed the role of needing protection from the violence that ensued: "The ladies at first were so far from being frightened at this resolution of the gentlemen, that they pointed out the obnoxious persons with great calmness. Swords were mutually drawn, and blood shed. The females at last gave way to their natural timidity, they screamed out loudly, and a mighty roar ensued" (Davies 1780, 181). The performance of class-coded, gendered responses to conflict dominates Cross's account, as it does multiple second-hand retellings, with British army officers playing a starring role. Garrick hoped to suppress the pit's and gallery's displays of hostility by inviting George II, a dutiful if somewhat indifferent theater patron, to attend an evening's performance. Despite the king's presence, the *Festival* was met with catcalls and hisses, and many of those men in his majesty's service took umbrage. On Nov 12, Cross writes, *The Chinese Festival* began with "a great deal of Hissing—but the Boxes being on our Side some Swords were drawn, & several turn'd out of the Pit & Gallery the officers of the Army are very busy in this Affair, on account of their hissing when ye King was there—saying it was an Affront.—he did turn his back to the Audience" (n.d.). British patriotism is divided by aristocratic notions of propriety before the sovereign and plebian demonstrations of anti-Gallicanism. On November 13 and 14, the performance was allowed to go on with some "noise," but "not great" (Cross n.d.). On November 15, however, "being Sat: our friends were at ye opera, & the common people had leisure to do Mischief," and Garrick's partner James Lacey withdrew the dance (Cross n.d.). *The Chinese Festival* was not on the bill for November 17, but was "call'd for by the Boxes, & strongly oppos'd by a few in the Pit, the Gentlemen came out, & insisted upon its being given out" (Cross n.d.). Garrick complied, attempting a compromise by which "it shou'd be done 3 times a week for the Boxes, & other Entertainmts. the other 3 Days for the Pit" (Cross n.d.). On November 18,

however, despite the presence of "Justice Fielding and Welch" on the stage "with Constables & a Guard," the audience, including "the Gentlemen" in the boxes, who "came with sticks" (Cross n.d.), determined to fight, which predictably resulted in over £4000. of damage to the theater and the breaking of windows in Garrick's home on Southhampton Street (Boaden 1831, xxxi). British aristocrats and officers asserted—and lost—this battle for authority over the commercial space of the theater, which was equally if not more subject to the will of "the Pit." If the gentlemen chose their weapons to enforce class hierarchies, wielding "sticks" instead of their usual swords to beat their lower-class antagonists, plebian men more effectively acted out on the property of the commercial space they sought to control. It seems likely that the "gods" of the galleries would have been in no mood later that year for plebian sailors designed to entertain the boxes, with their warbling sidekick, Caliban.

Conflict between different "bodies public" in the theater, to use Lisa Freeman's useful term for capturing the embodiedness of different publics (2017, 4-5), played out in print. The events within the playhouse during the week of *The Chinese Festival* were re-coded in pamphlets and other forms of print ephemera as gendered rather than class conflict. *The Dancers Damn'd; or, the Devil to Pay at the Old House*, a pamphlet written against opposition to the ballet, pits masculinized, plebian performance against a feminine, personified "Reason," chivalrously defended by gentlemanly officers (1755). The lower-class "Gods" of the gallery demand patriotic music before the play: "my brother Gods chose to shew their loyalty by stopping the music that was intended for the evening, and calling for *God save the King, Britain strike Home, Britannia, &c. &c.*" (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755). After the play, as soon as the "Chinese scene" appears for the dance, "the Leader of the loyal party, advanced to the front of the gallery" and addressed the house: "O BRITONS! O my countrymen! Ye will certainly not suffer these foreign dogs to amuse us. Our destruction is at hand. These *sixty* dancers are come over with a design to undermine our Constitution. This *Navarre* is Marshal *Lewendahl*, and the least amongst them is an ensign, disguised, in order to perpetuate our ruin" (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755). Catcalls ensue, and a feminine, personified Reason steps on to the stage, only to be rejected, unrecognized, by her audience. She departs in tears, but returns at the encouragement of some applause from the boxes to make a plea for the dancers, who are hardly a threat and hardly even French: "there are no more than four *French* men, and about the same number of females; that their chief is a *Swiss* protestant, who, had not his merit protected him, would have been hissed off the stage at *Paris*, for being a *Swiss* protestant: and will you damn him for the same reason? will you pay less regard to genius than a *French* audience?" (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755). The rioters respond with misogynist vehemence, calling Reason a "hellfire bitch" (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755). She seeks a better witness to her authority by appealing to "those gentlemen in

scarlet" in the boxes to "determine the dispute": "It may be your ambition to fight a few French children in the play-house; but it is theirs to meet that nation in the field" (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755). The "Speaker" in the gallery damns the officers who then

leap from the boxes into the pit, seize a couple of these lunatic patriots (who, finding the galleries full, had been obliged to crowd into that part of the house) and thrust them out of doors. They then insisted that the speaker above stairs should be thrown over, which was no sooner desired than executed. His head pitch'd upon that of one of his own party, and both were dash'd to pieces. A skilful anatomist who stood not far from the place where they fell, expressed great desire to examine the texture of their brains, which he said must certainly be very extraordinary; but notwithstanding he was assisted in his search, by the whole pit, it was not in the power of any one to find aught in either their or strange heads that bore the least resemblance to brains. (*Dancers Damn'd* 1755)

In *The Dancers Damn'd*, militarized, aristocratic masculinity comes off as the defender of femininity as well as reason, while plebian masculinity is ill-informed, woman-hating, and, literally, without brains, freakish and "strange." Gendered difference in this text naturalizes the divide between plebian and aristocratic audience members. *The Dancers Damn'd* frames the conflict between aristocratic and plebian audiences in terms of a decidedly "middling" code of gendered conduct in which men divide into those who "naturally" protect women and those without the "brains" to perform their proper roles as male protectors.

Gender-coded behavior in performances of heterosexual chivalry and romance was a rhetorical resource for suppressing class conflict, as Garrick was well aware. His operatic adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* had capitalized on the courtship and marriage plot of Shakespeare's lovers while jettisoning the mechanicals. His operatic *Tempest* similarly focused on the courtship and marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand, though with less crowd-pleasing results. The spectacle of heterosexual romance celebrated in music and dance was potentially a problem-solver for Garrick. In 1749, he had sympathetically held a benefit performance for a French acting company stranded in London by a wave of anti-Gallic sentiment and was definitely more on the side of aristocratic cosmopolitanism than plebian Francophobia, but the season of 1755-56 brought intolerable pressure on his carefully managed performance as entertainer of both aristocracy and the populace. By the middle of November, 1755, the Drury Lane Manager must have wanted to unite and calm his divided and unruly audience. Almost fifteen years before his Shakespeare Jubilee, Garrick was still finding his way in marketing Shakespeare, and he had a delicate balance to perform between the gentlemanly friend of the aristocracy and the popular darling of the pit. At

this moment in the theatrical market, the operatic *Tempest* should be seen as part of a larger effort on Garrick's part to meet the conflicting demands of an audience ready to engage in nothing less than class warfare—at the manager's expense—within the walls of Drury Lane Theatre. Cue the music, bring on heterosexual romance, and enter Caliban as a song-and-dance man in the 1756 opera.

### Singing *The Tempest*

Garrick sought, with his opera, to continue the appeal of the highly popular Shadwell operatic adaptation of the Dryden/Davenant *Tempest*, which ramped up music, dance, and spectacle with elaborate scenery and a splashy masque of Neptune and Amphitrite. Garrick put music at the heart of his production, with a cross-cast Italian soprano playing Ferdinand, one of his best singers, John Beard, playing Prospero, and William Smith, a student of Handel, composing the music. The operatic *Tempest* sticks most closely to Shakespeare's play in the scenes in which the Ferdinand/Miranda love story plays out; it goes to the operatic version for the three comic scenes that depart from the love story and adds jolly drinking songs (including a terzetto) for the mariners. Significantly, while Ariel's part restores the spectacle of fairy magic in the performance of a very young Miss Young, well-known for her earlier fairy role in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Caliban is cut to one short scene with the mariners, and his character is never on stage with either Prospero or Miranda. The opera emphasizes heterosexual romance and, above all, music, as a performance meant to unify a divided and difficult audience.

The prologue between "Wormwood" and "Heartly," performed by the actors William Havard and Richard Yates, stages a debate for and against operatic Shakespeare that makes Garrick's intention to calm and unify his audience explicit. Ironically, according to Cross's diaries, the prologue was itself a contested performance, demanded by some audience members and met by catcalls from others. Not surprisingly, as in *The Dancers Damn'd*, gendered, heterosexual norms naturalize differences that actually played out in the playhouse and press as class conflict. Wormwood objects to Garrick's production in terms that oppose heteronormative, manly Shakespeare to effeminate, "unnatural" opera: "are we to be quivered and quavered out of our senses? Give me Shakespeare in all his force, rigor, and spirit! What! would you make a eunuch of him?" (Garrick 1981, 270). Wormwood hates music "and dancing too" because "They pervert nature. Legs are made for walking, tongues for speaking, and therefore capering and quavering are unnatural and abominable" (Garrick 1981, 271). His use of the language of gendered sexuality and perversion anticipates (as Garrick's prologues often do) the language of later attacks, such as Theophilus Cibber's charge that Garrick had "castrated" *The Tempest* "into an opera," (Cibber [1757?]) and William Shirley's 1758 complaint that he had "be-fribbled"

Shakespeare (11). ("Fribble," an effeminate male character in Garrick's *Miss in her Teens* was an *au current* icon of questionable masculinity.)

Heartly counters with the famous quote "The man that has not music in himself..." from *The Merchant of Venice*, which Wormwood flatly denies as being Shakespeare's, but rather the insertion of some "Fidler." The debate continues with Wormwood evoking common tropes of music as emasculating<sup>2</sup>, a force that "enervates the body, weakens the mind, and lessens the courage," a charge that Heartly answers by linking music with support for British manufacturing: "would you choose that your country shou'd be excelled in anything by your neighbors?": "WORMWOOD. In manufactures? No—from casting of cannon to the making of pins, from the weaving of velvets to the making of hopsacks—but your capering and quavering only spoil us and make us the jests, who should be the terrors of Europe" (Garrick 1981, 271).

Despite the binary opposition between music lovers and haters in this prologue, music occupies an ambiguous position in the London theater. Its appeal spanned aristocratic tastes for Italian opera and oratorio and plebian demand for traditional English ballads and "hornpipes." Since Gay's fabulously successful *Beggar's Opera*, followed by numerous imitations, English opera held a liminal place between these two status-based tastes, holding out the possibility of appeal across different factions of the theatrical audience. The future success of Isaac Bickerstaffe's popular musical productions *Love in a Village* (1762) and *The Maid of the Mill* (1765) at Drury Lane suggests how well this potential could be realized, and, as usual, Garrick had his finger on the pulse of emerging trends in the theater.

Garrick's Heartly attempts to fuse this cross-class appeal with British patriotism by asking Wormwood to imagine "an invasion," with "ten thousand French landed" on British shores:

WORMWOOD. The devil they are! What then?

HEARTLY. Why, then I say, let but "Britons strike home!" or "God save the King" be sounded in the ears of five thousand brave Englishmen with a Protestant Prince at the head of 'em, and they'll drive every Monsieur into the sea and make 'em food for sprats and mackrell.

WORMWOOD. Huzza! and so they will! 'Egad, you're in the right. I'll say no more. Britons strike home. You have warmed me and pleased me; you have converted me. I'll get a place in the house and be as hearty as the best of 'em for the music of old England! Sprats and mackrells! that's good. Excellent! I thank you for it. Music for ever. Britains strike home! God save the King! (Garrick 1981, 271)

Heartly does not stop with this militaristic image, but presses the analogy to British "manufacture" by stressing support for "many excellent English composers" who deserve it as much or more than "foreigners." He ends the prologue with a plea for music as the "young sister of poetry": "let not our musical brethren be cast off because fashion, caprice, or manner too refined may have given you prejudices against 'em" (1981, 271). Garrick serves up his musical offering with the implication that his audience is participating in English patriotism..

The audience, according to the diary of Cross, performed its own mixed response to this patriotic plea, giving evidence that Heartly's feared "prejudices" were anticipated accurately. Cross writes of the February 11 first performance, "Compos'd by Mr. Smith—The Introduction, which was a Dialogue in Prose, between Mr. Havard & Yates, much hiss'd & dislik'd, the Opera had great App" (Cross n.d.). However, Cross writes of the second performance on February 13, "The Introduction (tho left out of the Bills) was call'd for, & had some Appl." (Cross n.d.). Cross's notes reflect some of the difficulty that Garrick's attempt to unify his audience was up against. The opera itself was neither a commercial nor a critical success. According to Cross, it grossed £180. for its first performance, a respectable profit, but pulled in only £140 for its second and £100, respectively, for its third and fourth performances. It was not staged again and was the last of Garrick's attempts to give audiences Shakespeare in operatic form. The opera asked its audience to perform British unity. Instead, they performed their indifference to what was left of Shakespeare's play—a rather bland love story—by staying away from the playhouse. Even William Smith's music could not save the play.

What was *not* in the operatic *Tempest* is probably as responsible for its failure and what made it to the stage. The one brief scene in which Caliban appears is based on the Dryden/Davenant version. He enters without introduction or explanation as to who or what he is, carrying wood and uttering the "needs must curse" speech of complaint against Prospero. The rest of the scene is abbreviated Dryden/Davenant, with music added: Caliban gets drunk with Trincalo, sings an air, and participates in a chorus on the joys of drunken camaraderie with the rest of the mariners. The scene in which Prospero explains Caliban's origins and his reasons for subjugating him (his attempted rape of Miranda) is cut, as is Caliban's sadder-but-wiser rejection of Trincalo's authority at the end of the play. The sexually threatening aspect of both Shakespeare's and Dryden's Caliban is gone, as is Shakespeare's hint at political rebellion and Davenant and Dryden's revision into Cromwellian republicanism. What's left of Caliban is harmless, plebian clowning, set to music. It seems to me that this Caliban is Garrick's somewhat desperate response to what had been one of the most difficult years of his career in managing his Drury Lane audiences. The usually canny manager served up a castrated song and dance man instead of the monster who seems to have interested

most seventeenth- and eighteenth-century commentators. Caliban's performance history and his audience's perceptions of the character would have worked against the audience's acceptance of Garrick's "light" version.

### Caliban, Restoration to 1756

Garrick's operatic *Tempest* brought to the theatrical market in the 1750s the ghosts of prior performances, primarily those of the popular Shadwell opera, based on the Dryden/Davenant play. The Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*, or *The Enchanted Island* (1667), altered into Thomas Shadwell's 1674 operatic adaptation, dominated the London stage with 180 performances in the first half of the eighteenth century. As Marvin Carlson teaches us, all performances are haunted by prior performances (2001, 1-15), and the performance history of *The Tempest* is a particularly pointed case of self-conscious references to and reproductions of prior aesthetic performances. Since Dryden's 1670 prefatory remarks to his and Davenant's adaptation, referring explicitly to Fletcher and Suckling as well as to Shakespeare, no production of this play could be innocent of its precursors, and Garrick's productions of *The Tempest* are no exception, as the manager sought to remarket elements of prior performances that carried a history of pleasing different constituencies in his diverse audience. Hence, the Shadwell opera and the Dryden/Davenant play on which it was based haunt Garrick's productions through either repetition or absence, forming part of its performance of interlocking motifs of desire and difference.

Dobson rightly reads the Dryden/Davenant *Tempest*, *The Enchanted Island*, in the context of early Restoration politics and manners, and attributes its original appeal and endurance on the British stage to its justification of patriarchal authority and the patriarchal family (1992, 43). According to Dryden's preface to the printed version of the play, Davenant is responsible for giving Miranda a sister, Dorinda, who has never before seen a man, and adding Hippolito, a young man (usually played by a cross-dressed actress) who had never before seen a woman. In addition, Caliban acquires a sister, Sycorax, who occasions "low" sexual comedy with the sailors stranded on the island. The result is, as Dobson notes, a very playable sex comedy involving both plebian and aristocratic characters, all reassuringly framed by naturalized patriarchy. Within that frame, however, the play enacts polygamy, incest, and general sexual chaos in scenes of sexual misrule that mirror the play's satiric depiction of anarchic Commonwealth politics as acted out by the mariners. While I agree with Dobson that the play offers a reassuring picture of civil and sexual misrule contained, its enduring appeal might also be attributed to what was contained: the spectacle of plebian political rebellion and sexuality.

The play's transgressions, while firmly renounced, had stage appeal. While, as Dobson also notes, this version of *The Tempest* is insistent in its proliferation of heterosexual desire and resistant to alternatives that might sustain specifically same-gender couplings, it effectively conveys a sexuality that flirted openly with the arbitrary nature of desire. In addition to Hippolito, the man who has never seen woman (but once he has, wants them all), Dorinda, Miranda's sister, and Sycorax, Caliban's sister, both act on "natural" desires that mark the limits of normative sexuality by implying and sometimes explicitly acting out what goes beyond it. The aristocratic characters Hippolito and Dorinda are naïve sexual empiricists: speculation or reasoning on partial evidence leads to merely hypothetical incest or polygamy. Caliban and his female double Sycorax, however, act out sexual deviance. Caliban is, as in Shakespeare's *Tempest*, a subjugated, would-be rapist, his plans for peopling the island with Calibans expanding to include Dorinda. He also pimps for the plebian comic characters, by offering Trincalo his sister, who is also his incestuous lover. The Restoration play achieves a naturalized patriarchy in the end, but in getting there it must perform a process of sexual education for its aristocratic empiricists, Hippolito and Dorinda, whose "errors" in understanding gesture to territory beyond the limits of Prospero's model of chaste, monogamous heterosexuality. When Hippolito learns that there are more women in the world than Dorinda, he wants to possess them all in a comic version of libertine manifest destiny: "I will have all of that kind, if there be a hundred of 'em" (Dryden and Davenport 1670, 64). Dorinda is initially confused about men and who or what the proper object of desire is, but once she sees Hippolito her desire, while monogamous, compels her to filial disobedience and sexual impropriety. Prospero's patriarchal discipline over his children's unrestrained desires depends on a perilous and uncertain process of education, not the natural order of things. Hippolito and Dorinda do learn their parts in the play of heterosexual monogamy, but only after the violence of Hippolito's desire nearly kills him.

The "natural" unruliness of Caliban and Sycorax lies outside educability. Sycorax embodies roving, indiscriminating female desire, as she makes serial lovers out of the repulsed but compliant sailors and even engages in incest with her brother. Furthermore, the sexual unruliness of the play's supernatural characters is aligned with the plebian mariners' political anarchy, as Trincalo capitalizes on Caliban's pimping of his sister to gain control of the parodic Commonwealth of Dryden's and Davenant's re-imagined island state. While the play firmly re-establishes political, gender, and sexual norms, it does so by marking the limits of the patriarchal power that enforces them. Dryden and Davenant, writing just after the Civil War, satirize Commonwealth politics in the power-grabbing, drunken mariners, and Caliban and his sister intertwine plebian grappling for power with sexual coupling and uncoupling, playing both anarchic sex and politics for laughs.

By the mid-eighteenth century, with a growing "middling" class and a mixed theater public, it was hardly to Garrick's advantage to perform a play that suggested that the consumers in his pit and gallery could not internalize the boxes' upper-class manners. It is not surprising, then, that he gave his audience a desexualized Caliban, joining in harmless, drunken, depoliticized merriment and song with the British sailors of the play, themselves sanitized, plebian performances of the popular, theatrical Jack Tar, a figure that speaks of British nationalism rather than class conflict.<sup>3</sup> Garrick's operatic Caliban, purged of any socially or sexually uncomfortable suggestions, joins the patriotic figure of the Jack Tar, placing plebian energy in the service of the British navy—and nationality. The character's sexuality is erased, with no hint at the rapist of prior versions; indeed, Garrick's singing Caliban never appears on the stage with any of the aristocratic characters, let alone threatens rape. How would this diminished Caliban play to audiences who almost certainly carried the pandering, desiring Restoration monster, and maybe also Shakespeare's inhuman creation, in their memories?

Even if audiences had not read Shakespeare's play or seen the Shadwell opera, Caliban's image offstage suggests that the character was not an easy fit with patriotic, plebian performance. Shakespeare's Caliban, with his threat to Miranda and his desire to "people the isle with Calibans," haunts William Hogarth's 1731 painting of *The Tempest*. Stuart Sillars notes how Hogarth picks up on aspects of the play that posit alternative ways of being that are not a part of Enlightenment reason and nature: "As social and political criticism it is remarkable, offering what seems a complete equality between the two worlds of the play in which Caliban is by no means the weaker rival to Ferdinand, and in which the discussion of Gonzalo's idea of a Utopia (2.I.144-65) is perhaps also implicit" (Sillars 2006). Sillars points to the image of Caliban crushing doves underfoot as indicative of the irrelevance of human love to Caliban's motives; his "attempted rape of Miranda is not immoral but amoral, driven by the need to people the isle with Calibans (I.2.350-1): consequently, he treads on the dove not as an act of conscious brutality but because he is driven by quite different imperatives" (2006, 55). Hogarth may have been building on the idea of Caliban as a character with no reference to the human, an idea at least as old as Dryden, who says that in Caliban, Shakespeare "seems there to have created a person which was not in Nature," noting further that "His person is monstrous, as he is the product of unnatural Lust; and his language is as hobgoblin as his person" (1670, 283). Nicholas Rowe, in his 1709 edition of Shakespeare, also observes that the "extravagant character of Caliban is extremely well sustained" and "shows a wonderful invention in the Author, who could strike such a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the finest and most uncommon grotesques that ever was seen" (Rowe 1709, xxiv). *The*

*Adventurer* repeats this observation as late as 1753: "the monster CALYBAN is the creature of [Shakespeare's] own imagination, in the formation of which he could derive no assistance from observation or experience."

What such a "wild image" that is "not in Nature" means can vary, however, and Caliban also gathered a history of commentators "making sense" of his character in different ways. Dryden reads Caliban as consistent with lower-class superstition. The idea of offspring "begotten by an Incubus on a Witch," he writes, "is not wholly beyond the bounds of credibility, at least the vulgar still believe it" (Dryden 1800, 283). In 1801, Arthur Murphy could compare Shakespeare's invention to Peter the Wild Boy, a feral teenager brought to the court of George I in 1726 who garnered philosophical attention as a (failed) demonstration of education's power to civilize a "savage" blank slate (303). Caliban's otherness, his monstrosity, his amoral lust are, variously, products of lower-class imagination and belief or a newly discovered "savage" with potential for colonialist improvement: "Can Caliban learn?" The 1753 *Adventurer* thinks that attributing this capacity to the wild Caliban is, at best, an error on Shakespeare's part: "I ALWAYS lament that our author has not preserved this fierce and implacable spirit in CALYBAN, to the end of the play; instead of which, he has, I think, injudiciously put into his mouth, words that imply repentance and understanding". Murphy's comparison of Caliban with Peter the Wild Boy at the beginning of the nineteenth century constructs the hope of an other who can learn civilized behavior, although most reading his biography of Garrick would have known that this hope proved futile in the case of Peter, who never progressed beyond speaking a few garbled words and bowing to the ladies at court. Garrick's operatic Caliban neither sustains the "fierce and implacable spirit" of the character nor reconstructs him as pedagogical subject. Instead, Garrick's Caliban attempts to neutralize plebian threat at a historical moment when Drury Lane Theatre was rife with it.

It seems likely, then, that both Shakespeare's and Davenant's Caliban constituted a problem in performance for Garrick in the difficult season of 1755-56. As many critics have noted of Shakespeare's play, and as the popularity of the Shadwell opera suggests, the "magical" elements were attractive as spectacle and lent themselves to Garrick's attempt to defuse audience conflicts with music. Garrick's singing Ariel follows Shadwell's precedent and certainly conforms to this model, but Caliban is a more difficult fit into midcentury ideas of theatrical "magic" and musical spectacle. *The Adventurer* writes of him, "IT must not be forgotten, that SHAKESPEARE has artfully taken occasion from this extraordinary character, which is finely contrasted to the mildness and obedience of ARIEL, obliquely to satirize the prevailing passion for new and wonderful sights, which has rendered the English so ridiculous. 'Were I in England now,' says TRINCULO, on first discovering CALYBAN, 'and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give

a piece of silver.—When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame begger, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian" (*The Adventurer* 1753). Caliban is positioned as bait fit only for a plebian audience for raree shows and fairs, not a draw for the allegedly more sophisticated, mixed theater audience of midcentury.

*The Adventurer* satirizes the popular appeal of the monster as outworn or déclassé, what succeeds "with the Multitude" (1753). While it is therefore possible to see Caliban as a "monster," an instance of the "new and Wonderful" in the eyes of naïve (and probably lower-class) audience members, performing Caliban in the commercial theater of midcentury London was fraught with mixed messages about what such a "monster" means. A "wonder" from the New World he could be, but only to the unsophisticated, as the prologue to Garrick's *The Male-Coquette* suggests: "Like cloths hung out at country fair; / On which strange monsters glare and grin, / To draw the gaping bumpkins in" (1757, ii). Only Trincalo seriously considers Caliban as a marketable commodity in the entertainment industries of London. If not a freak or "wonder" to the audience united by "middling" standards of politeness (the audience that Garrick wished for and tried to cultivate), what, then, was Caliban? In the 1756 *Tempest*, he performs as an adjunct to drunken but harmless plebian performance, aestheticized as opera, the genre of the aristocracy. By attempting to appeal to all factions of his class-divided audience, Garrick's opera not only failed to sell tickets but aggravated already uneasy relations among them. Garrick's resort, after this failure, was to rehabilitate Shakespeare's problematic but interesting monster as the creation of the "wild" genius of Shakespeare, the "Bard of Avon" who would emerge full-blown in British media over the next forty years.

### After Garrick

A tame, singing Caliban does not return again to Drury Lane Theatre after Garrick's operatic experiment. The restoration of original Shakespeare in the shortened version of his *Tempest* in the following year after the opera failed may, in this case, be as much a response to audience performance as to bardolatry, although the growing tide of reverence for Shakespeare must have helped disconnect the character from uncomfortable associations with plebian, sexual unruliness. That said, the historical narrative of growing audience respect for "original" Shakespeare should be qualified by the persistent popularity of the Dryden/Davenant *Tempest*, last performed in 1838. Stage history and print responses to *The Tempest*—both Shakespeare and the Dryden/Davenant adaptations—in the second half of the eighteenth century suggest the continuing attractions of the earthy, plebian sexual humor and spectacle of the Restoration play.

Neither the 1757 performance of the Shakespearian *Tempest* nor its publication in Bell's 1773 "acting" edition can, then, be considered decisive "breakout" moments for original Shakespeare. John Phillip Kemble's adaptation of the Dryden/Davenant version is included in the 1806 *British Theatre* with a headnote by the actress, playwright, and theater critic Elizabeth Inchbald, commenting on the differences between Shakespeare's and the Dryden/Davenant version:

[Shakespeare's play] would never have become a favourite on the stage, without the aid of Dryden's alteration. The human beings in the original drama had not business enough on the scene, to make human beings anxious about them: and the preternatural characters were more wonderful than pleasing; for, whilst an auditor or a reader pours forth his praise before the Creator of Caliban, he loathes the creature. (1808, 3-5).

Inchbald credits the Restoration *Tempest* with more sympathetic human characters and more pleasing supernatural ones. With a palpably bored wave of the hand, Inchbald relegates Shakespeare's Miranda and Ferdinand to the "common order of insipid lovers." She continues, "This drama does *not* interest the passions. Less variety might have engaged them; but here genius has been too much expanded. Exercised on fewer objects, its force had been concentrated, and more effectual" (1808, 5). Inchbald recognizes the excesses that the appeal to "variety" may induce even in a Shakespeare play. On the other hand, she acknowledges that such excesses can make for very successful theater if they pan out as spectacle: "The senses are, indeed, powerfully engaged by the grandeur of the spectacle in a London theatre—and the senses highly gratified, are sometimes mistaken, by the possessor himself—for the passions" (Inchbald 1808, 5).

Theater practitioners like Inchbald and Garrick were attuned to the conflicting demands of theater audiences, and their respective stagings and criticism of different adaptations of Shakespeare's play reflect their awareness of those demands. Inchbald, aware, as was Garrick, of the power of spectacle to manipulate audience, also points towards a division between true and false "passions," reflecting the growing appeal of melodrama emergent at century's turn, the interest in human passions and psychology. She is, however, just as cognizant as Garrick of the power of music and spectacle, which may entertain, even fool the audience into emotional as well as sensory gratification. The heteronormative love story can, by the same token, play as boring or compelling. However, Inchbald's dissatisfaction with both spectacle and "the common order" of monogamous heterosexuality speaks to the interpretive problem that Caliban was for eighteenth-century audiences (and, one might argue, for many others as well). Unlike the fairy figure of Ariel, Caliban, the "grotesque," the "hobgoblin," the object of Inchbald's loathing, can neither make for good spectacle nor play an effective supporting role in a story of the human "passions"; there is no

category that can make sense of him outside the frame of plebian unruliness, a frame that carried with it dangers of which both Inchbald, an actress as well as playwright and critic, and Garrick were well aware.

By the century's end, British imperialism and racism would begin to build a framework for understanding Caliban as racialized, colonial other. But that is another story in the history of Shakespeare's uses in the management of cultural difference. I have only space and time enough to point the reader to an engraving of Henry Fuseli's lost painting from the 1790s, of Prospero facing off against a dark-skinned Caliban, whose nude, muscular body evokes the dangerous sexuality of plebian unruliness, displaced onto the body of the racialized other. While the British slave trade was at its peak in the 1750s and the abolitionist movement was already moving white British consciences against it, the colonialist double-sided trope of black victim/rapist was still on the horizon for Garrick's audience. While comic figures like Bickerstaffe's Mungo in *The Padlock* (1768) would soon take the stage, and while there is reason to believe that, among the many Africans who lived and worked in London, some went to the playhouse, middling discomfort with plebian difference was the "problem" that Garrick's two *Tempests* were meant to solve. His solution was patriotic spectacle that foregrounded heterosexual romance and patriarchal ideologies of gender. As postcolonialist, feminist scholarship has since taught us, these tools were ready to hand in managing the racial conflicts that began taking the cultural stage in the two centuries to come. The meanings of Shakespeare's plays are as much shaped by the conflicts and concerns of his audiences as by editors, critics, or theater practitioners.

### Notes

1. I wish to thank Noémie Ndaiye for her encouragement and the Folger Shakespeare Library for its support for my research on this essay.
2. See, for example, Richard Campbell, *The London Tradesman*, "Of Music," (London: T. Gardner, 1747), pages 104-5.
3. Garrick's performance as a drunken sailor had a memorable association with British patriotism. Murphy reports "A French war had broke out at this time; and to rouze the British spirit, Mr. Mallet prepared a *Masque*, intitled *Britannia*. The music was composed by Dr. Arne, and was a great support of the piece. The Prologue was written by Garrick, and...was spoken by the manager, in the character of a *Drunken Sailor*...it was called for many nights after the *Masque* itself was laid aside, and Garrick was obliged, though he did not act in the play, to be in readiness to answer the public demand." The prologue tellingly appeals to patriotism as an antidote to political and social dissent:

I wish you landmen, tho', would leave your tricks,  
Your factions, parties, and damn'd politics,  
And, like us honest tars, drink, fight, and sing,  
True to yourselves, your country, and your king. (Murphy 1801, 270).

Juliann Reineke discusses Garrick's patriotic, drunken sailor in *Three Sheets to the Wind: The Jolly Jack Tar and Eighteenth-Century British Masculinity*, pages 38-40 (2018).

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