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Theatricality and Race in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Raquel Carrió and Flora Lauten's *Otra tempestad*

María José Cornejo Griffin¹

Otra tempestad was performed at La Habana's Teatro Buendía in 1997, with dramaturgy by Raquel Carrió and Flora Lauten.² This play marked a new direction in Latin American rewritings of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. This tradition began with Ruben Darío, Paul Groussac and José Enrique Rodó, who discussed the image of Caliban in relation to the United States and its intervention in Latin America. The climax of these rewritings came with authors such as George Lamming, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Kamau Brathwaite and Roberto Fernández Retamar. Their readings and understanding of the play vindicate the image of Caliban and emphasize the processes of colonization in the context of the Cuban Revolution, the Négritude Movement, and the decolonization of the Caribbean. Continuing with this tradition, Carrió and Lauten composed their play focusing on the processes of globalization and the new millennium (Flaherty 102), transferring their focus to the experimentation with new ways of understanding theatricality and Cuban identity through dialogue, establishing a counterpoint with *The Tempest*. Carrió herself has stated that rewriting the plot of the Shakespearean play became more complex by the end of the century ("*Otra*" 159). This results in a temporal and thematical distance with Césaire's rewriting and the Caribbean tradition of the 50s and 60s because, for Carrió, it is not enough to negate the language of the colonizer but researching the process of cultural formation through cultural contact is also needed ("*Otra*" 159). The main gesture that the dramaturges offer comes from the title itself. By entitling it *Otra tempestad* (*Another Tempest*), Carrió/Lauten include the play in relation to Césaire's play *Une Tempête* (*A Tempest*).

Said change of paradigm in the rewritings could be analyzed in the light of the reception

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² References will be made to both the text and the staging of the play. The staging is available at <https://sites.dlib.nyu.edu/hidvl/gqnk99rw>

that *Otra tempestad* had in its performance at the Globe Theatre in 1998. Even though it received a standing ovation from the public, it received harsh appreciations from theater critics, who characterized the play as confusing and incomprehensible (Flaherty 105). The critical reception is tremendously revealing of the horizon of expectation and the way in which *Otra tempestad* destabilizes it. According to Jennifer Flaherty, what these critics seemed to expect was a “Cuban tempest,” with a clear political agenda and a Prospero whose beard would assimilate Fidel Castro’s (106).³ The same year, London saw the performance—for the first time in England—of Aimé Césaire’s *Une tempête* at The Gate. This play received radically different critical reception, with positive general appreciations (Crispin 149), which revealed a particular horizon of expectations, at least in the European country, in relation to the way that *The Tempest* should be rewritten.

In *Otra tempestad*, Prospero and Miranda are joined by Macbeth, Hamlet, Shylock and Othello in a journey to the New World. The island is ruled by Sycorax, and it is she who unleashes the tempest that produces the shipwreck of the Shakespearean characters. Consequently, different encounters take place between the Shakespearean characters and figures of Afro-Cuban mythology, all of them commanded by Sycorax. Prospero mistakes Elegguá for Ariel, Hamlet sees Oshun as Ophelia, Othello finds Desdemona, Shylock believes he is in the promised land, Macbeth is taken by Oyá as Lady Macbeth, and Miranda falls in love with Calibán, son of Sycorax and Changó. Thus, these encounters emphasize the cultural exchange that defines Latin America’s transcultural processes.

The present essay will analyze the rewriting under the context of Cuban history as defined by Fernando Ortiz, as “la historia de sus intrincadísimas transculturaciones” (*Contrapunteo* 93). Ortiz has defined transculturation as the process of cultural change that defines Cuba because of the different transmutations that occur within the territory because of the cultures that inhabit it, such as Hispanic, Afro-Cuban, Asian and indigenous (*Contrapunteo* 93-96). Thus, transculturation is a process of synthesis between cultures, a process where meaning is always being negotiated, and always plural. Ángel Rama has used Ortiz’s term in order to define the creative energies of Latin

³ There have been intents to establish connections between Prospero’s utopia and Fidel Castro’s Cuba, as Flaherty has mentioned, without arriving to a clear conclusion about the position of the play regarding this utopia. Other critical works, such as Chantal Zabus’, have tried to associate the figure of Prospero with Fulgencio Batista (49).

American literature, as it works upon a process where the local material is always being synthesized originally with foreign material (33-34).

The concept of transculturation could be applied to the relation that *Otra tempestad* builds around *The Tempest*, where the meaning of categories such as theatricality and race are negotiated from the Shakespearean play to Carrió and Lauten's play. There are many different approaches to the idea of theatricality. In this essay I will work with theatricality as dramatic self-consciousness, or when a play presents characters that actively engage in role-playing or playwriting (Postlewait and Davis 16). Playwriting is crucial in both *The Tempest* and *Otra tempestad*: Prospero works as the dramaturge of his own play, like Sycorax does in the Cuban version, creating an association between playwriting and power, where the characters that own the development of the dramatic action is the owner and creator of the dramatic universe. At the same time, the concept of race will be understood not as a "a biological, scientific, or generic reality (...) [but] as a fiction" (Thompson, "Did" 7). The idea of race as a fiction depends upon a social construction of race in processes or race-making (Thompson, "Did" 7). Thus, we think of the theatre—both in Renaissance England as in 20th century Cuba—an important place in this process or racemaking, as a place where race is constructed and negotiated. Thus, I will develop a contrastive analysis of the concepts of theatricality and race present in *The Tempest* in order to comprehend its reworking in *Otra tempestad*.

This analysis will understand the dramatic exercise of transculturation not as a complete destruction and negation of the source, but as a negotiation with a canonical—and colonial—culture. The process of rewriting *The Tempest* in *Otra tempestad* supposes a process that stresses the *mestizo* nature of Cuban and Latin American culture through an appropriation that is not complacent of Shakespeare, but that exposes the local referents as well, such as elements from Afro-Cuban culture. *Otra tempestad* exposes onstage the artificial construction of Latin American identity through the workings of colonization processes.

Theatricality

The Tempest is a play that transforms its characters into spectators and actors, celebrating the powers of imagination and the perversion of this power (this is, the ambiguity that surrounds

Prospero, not only as a benign magus, but also as someone that keeps people enslaved through his powers); thus, it is a play that constructs a theatricalized vision of existence (Homan 192). Therefore, we do not find an autonomous development of the dramatic action, given that this depends on and finds its origins in the transformative powers of Prospero, his magic, and his role as dramaturge, who generates the tempestuous opening by his ability to subject nature: “The direful spectacle of the wrack (...) I have with such provision in mine art” (I.2,33-35). The distribution of imagery throughout the play given an account of the dramatic action’s development direction: from disorder to order and civilization (Clemen 183), from the tempest to those “calm seas, auspicious gales” (V.1.374).

It is in the masquerade that we find the concentration of the idea of theatricality that the play proposes, together with an aesthetic reflection of what the basis of artistic and theatrical practice are. The masquerade presents the celebration not only of Miranda and Ferdinand but mainly of Prospero, given that the performance is the expression of his will and creative power, his ability to control and order nature (Orgel 45-47).

When Prospero ceases his spectacle because of Caliban’s imminent revolt, he announces his famous speech about the topic of the *theatrum mundi*:

And like the baseless fabric of this vision, / The cloud-capped towers, the
gorgeous palaces, / The solemn temples, the great globe itself, / Yea, all
which it inherit, shall dissolve, / And, like this insubstantial pageant
faded, / Leave not rack behind. We are such stuff / As dreams are made
on, and our little life / Is rounded with a sleep. (IV.1,165-175)

The ethereal and volatile character of the masque is understood as a characteristic of the world as an active creation. Perhaps the most important reflection of the speech is related to the artificial character of the masquerade and the world. This statement is related to the aesthetic ideas surrounding poetry and theatre at the time, as we find them in Sir Philip Sidney’s *Apology for Poetry* (1595). Sidney argues that poetry is the only discipline that does not depend on nature, rather: “Only the poet, disdaining to be tied to any such subjection, lifted up with the vigor of his own invention,

doth grow in effect another nature, in making things either better than nature bringeth forth, or, quite anew, forms such as never were in nature” (216). Prospero’s masquerade concentrates what he has done throughout the play, operating as *magus* and dramaturge through the mobilization of nature, understanding her as malleable, where the poet or dramaturge is not subjected to its imitation, but rather to its transformation and, lastly, its creation.

The relation that could be delineated between the ideas of theatre and poetry with nature and the world are not aesthetic reflections independent of the political thought of the times. This element is clarified in Prospero’s condition not only as *magus*, but as governor. Hence, the power that he holds regarding his will to power is associated to the poetic realm through the principle of *poiesis*. The exercise of power in this place—and in the context of Early Modern Europe—is related to the improvisation of power as a basis for the conquest of geographies and its inhabitants. This improvisation of power rests on the theatricalization of the world, and those who have that power acquire the ability and will to play a role and understand reality as a malleable fiction (Greenblatt, “The Improvisation” 228).

As Marina Warner has suggested, in *The Tempest* Sycorax’s voice is silence and her story is constructed fragmentarily by Prospero (97), thus generating a binary opposition between Prospero and Sycorax. I have analyzed the value that magic has in relation to theatricality in Shakespeare’s play, but it could be worthwhile to analyze it in terms of the opposition regarding gender. Rob Nixon has stated that during the 80s there was a decline of the adaptations of *The Tempest* mainly because of the lack of feminine presence and leadership (578). *Otra tempestad* establishes a dialogue with *The Tempest*, but also with the preceding Latin American rewritings particularly in this sense.

In the cultural productions of the West, the masculine author functions as a progenitor and aesthetic patriarch, where writing dotes him with a generative power (Gilbert and Gubar 21). As a governor, *magus* and dramaturge, Prospero synthesizes the image of the man that governs and bends nature through his constructive power; power that is emulated in literary productions, particularly in the ability to mobilize discursivities. Associated with this idea, Carrió has criticized the systematic exclusion of women in dramaturgy and theatrical direction, particularly because it does

not allow women to invent themselves (“La experimentación” 17), pleading for a space of feminine creation. Consequently, one of the most radical changes present in Carrió and Lauten’s rewriting has to do with the transference and transculturation of the creative power, and, therefore, of the magic and theatricality of the play. The development of theatricality in *Otra tempestad* is achieved through the fusion of a vindication of feminine creation with magic, rituality and spectacularism of Cuban *Santería*.

The first point to state regarding the formulation of theatricality in *Otra tempestad* is related to the new elaboration of the feminine figures of the Shakespearean text. Shakespeare’s voiceless Sycorax is transformed into the main creator of the play. She appears in the second scene of the play, “La Isla”. In this scene she is illuminated in blue and white, emerging from the ocean and elaborating different moans and movements that generate a scene in which the orishas of the play, Oshún, Oyá and Elegguá,⁴ are born between her legs. Later, when Prospero recalls Sycorax as Shakespeare’s Sycorax, “la bruja que desterraron de Argel por sus sortilegios y maleficios” (27), Elegguá corrects him saying: “¡No! ¡Es reina! ¡Dueña de siete caminos! ¡Sabia, voluntariosa...! Dueña de todas las aguas: la bebemos al nacer, la bebemos al morir...” (27). The presentation of Sycorax in both scenes emphasizes her transculturation into Yemayá. She is the orisha who represents the universal mother, the orisha of the sea, of intelligence and rationality, who gave birth to all other orishas, whose colors are blue and white (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 43-44).

The orishas born from Sycorax/Yemayá are associated to this feminine theatricality introduced in the play as well. Feminine theatricality supposes a female domination over the dramatic universe, a domination that stands against Prospero’s in *The Tempest*. Their first action in the play is a collective one, later on they will act by themselves. This action is the creation of the tempest. According to Sharae Deckard, the hurricane has its own literary formulations in the Caribbean because it states and reaffirms Caribbean identity through a socio-ecological relation (31). Consequently, the artificial elaboration of the tempest in *The Tempest* has been understood in

4 Even though Elegguá/Echu is considered a male orisha, the play appears to give him an androgynous or even feminine treatment. It is important to state as well that an actress played the role.

the Caribbean through the transference of the creative powers. Kamau Brathwaite states that the English language should be transformed in the anglophone Caribbean so that it achieves the ability to formulate the natural experience of the area, an area in which “The hurricane does not roar in pentameter.” (264)

Césaire’s *Une Tempête* lacks a detailed development of the notion of theatricality, but we can find an allusion at the beginning, where the play is framed in a psychodrama atmosphere and the Director of the game asks for a tempest: “Necesito una tempestad con bombos y platillos” (45). Framing the action of the play by using the figure of the Director, and removing the tempest from the authorship of Prospero, functions to negate his creative powers and status *magus* and dramaturge, redistributing this power to a new dramatic -postcolonial- universe. *Otra tempestad* presents a similar relation to the tempest as has been presented in Brathwaite and Césaire, giving the authorship of the phenomenon to the orishas. Thus, the hurricane does not roar in pentameter, but through the chant of *Afrekete*, the Yoruba chant of Yemayá, emerging from the magic of the orishas and not from Prospero.

In *Otra tempestad*, at the moment of the storm, we find two simultaneous planes, the stage direction mentions: “Cruce de imágenes y sonidos.” (24). In the foreground we find the orishas exerting the tempest on a small wooden boat, while in the background we find Prospero and the rest of the Shakespearean characters suffering it. The crossing of sounds implies the presence of Renaissance music and Afro-Cuban music, and as the storm intensifies, the tempo of the drumming increases, diminishing the presence of Renaissance music in the scene.

The construction of Sycorax/Yemayá and her relations with the archetype of the Earthmother, together with the creative power of the three orishas, shows the transition in the way of understanding theatricality from Shakespeare to Carrió/Lauten and the relationship that both establish with the forces of nature. If in Shakespeare magic and theatricality are forms of control and order of nature, *Otra tempestad* rewrites *The Tempest* this idea of theatricality, changing its mechanisms and its effects in relation to the way of understanding nature.

The power of the orishas is framed in their condition as personifications of different forms

of *aché*—the spiritual and mystical energy founded in the universe and that emanates from Olodumare, the Earth’s creator—, which gives them the capacity to make things happen (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 30-31). There is a leap from the artificial aesthetics of Shakespeare—associated not only to a relation between poetry and nature, but also to a relation between nature and the incipient modern science—to a theatricality that finds its roots in the same place as *Santería*, as understood by Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert: a magico-religious system deeply connected to the earth and the natural forces (32).

Music and dance accompany and ground the creative and transformative power of the orishas. These elements are understood as central to the transmission of magic, it is not music for entertainment, but music that makes, transforms, and transports people towards *Santería* (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 11; Ortiz, *Los bailes* 39-40).

The second development of the notion of theatricality in *Otra tempestad* is related to the use of different ritualistic elements of *Santería* to structure the development of the dramatic action in *The Tempest’s* reception process. In the different Creole religions, there is a shared belief in supernatural powers that can be poured into different objects and human beings through divination, initiation, sacrifice, spiritual possession, and healing rituals (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 9-10). Thus, the dramatic structure of *Otra tempestad* is built upon the initiation and divination rites to construct a path that generates the process of transculturation between *The Tempest* and Afro-Cuban culture. The Shakespearean characters of the play—not only from *The Tempest* but also from *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *The Merchant of Venice*—are subjected to a labyrinthine path where they face what Carrió calls a “secret memory” (*memoria secreta*).⁵

In a metatheatrical game, the actresses transform themselves into Elegguá, Oshún and Oyá, and then, from their condition as orishas, into Shakespearean characters to control the theatricality. This aspect accounts for the *kariocha* initiation rites of *Santería*, in which one enters

⁵ In one of her reflections on Latin American theatre, Carrió states the importance of the cultural memory of the spectators in the production of meaning while watching a play: “Es precisamente este reconocimiento lo que logra la Vanguardia teatral latinoamericana en la segunda mitad del siglo XX. No se trata y de reproducir el paisaje o el gesto, el modelo *natural* o el modelo impuesto, sino de adentrarse en una memoria secreta, sumergida, que no siempre se revela en las historias, en los libros o en los documentos, pero tampoco en la reproducción de las formas externas del folclor.” (“Dentro” 74).

in connection with the orishas, the latter having the capacity to mount the *santero*—literally, to place the orisha on the head—, granting him his particular powers (Cortes 180-181; Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 54). In this way, Oshún, as the orisha that represents feminine sensuality, love, beauty and sexual desire (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 46), will make Othello confront her like Desdemona and Hamlet with Ophelia; while Oyá, as a female warrior and mistress of the dead, will generate the encounter between Hamlet and Gertrude and the final scene in which she will become Lady Macbeth to eat Miranda's body and account for the blood that contains the homeland. Significantly, Macbeth wants to be king of the plantation, commenting that he has conquered lands and won slaves, but “*Cae preso de las lianas del bosque tiradas por Sicorax y Oyá.*” (29). These actions show the role of the orishas as facilitators of the path which the play follows as the unravelling of a secret memory.

Not only initiation rituals, but also divination rituals are relevant to the construction of the theatricality of *Otra tempestad*. In divination, *patakís* are used, which are the stories of the orishas, understood as archetypal fables or parables that seek to explain different phenomena of human life and nature, and are used to diagnose and guide the client (Fernández and Paravisini-Gebert 62). The *patakís* function as guiding paths, just as the orishas have been doing with the Shakespearean characters. There is a particular moment in the play that shows the importance of the *patakís* in the play. Ariel tells Hamlet a story like that of his father, in which after the criminal spills drops in the king's ear, he seizes the queen and the kingdom with the following result: “*Desde entonces surgió el mar que divide la tierra en dos mitades: divide a los hermanos, a los amigos... ¡y a los amantes!*” (32). The stage direction mentions that Ariel: “*Cuenta un patakí*” (32). In Ariel's *patakí* we find the syncretism of the dramatic conflicts of the Shakespearean characters with the sense given to them in the theatricality and general movement of the play, on the one hand the encounter with conflicts that have to do with a national culture and history, but that on the other tells the intimate story of brothers, friends, and lovers. It is in this sense that Carrió has defined Latin American experimental theater as a deeply personal theater:

Creo que esa condición *expansiva* se debe a que no se trata de una simple ilustración o reproducción de los mitos (universales o locales) sino a una experiencia de investigación que involucra el imaginario personal y social, la memoria y cultura *vivas* del actor, el director, el dramaturgo, el músico, el diseñador, y todos los que, de alguna forma, ‘tejen’ el texto del posible espectáculo.” (“La Experimentación” 23)⁶

Race

The Tempest is inscribed in the racial experimentations of Renaissance drama, in a theater that produced a considerable number of plays with racialized characters and that capitalized on race-making. It is important to note that the geopolitical context of Renaissance drama is a context in which one of the main enterprises was the colonization of vast geographies and its inhabitants. Therefore, this play can be understood under Stephen Greenblatt’s idea of “mimetic capital”, where cultural productions reappropriate the idea of the medieval wonder and transform it to the capacity of appropriating and commercializing this wonder (*Marvelous Possessions*, 22-25). Part of this process of the early modern notion of wonder is related to the exhibition of “exotic” bodies in European cities, such as London, where people would pay in order to experience the marvel (Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* 122).

Dympna Callaghan has proposed that these practices of exhibition of racial difference are transferred to the theatrical practice of the period in a mimetic model (77). Understanding the theater as a beholding place, as an instrument of vision (West 248), one of the beholding practices that are staged are racial ones by the use of blackface (Smith 37-39). The use of blackface supposes not only the reproduction of racist ideas, but mainly the production of new ones through the invention of rhetoric patterns that are inserted in the plays when they construct racialized characters; this is what Ayanna Thompson has called “race-making” or “racecraft” (“Did” 7-8).

⁶ The emphasis is Carrió’s.

⁷ Blackface is the use of racial prosthetics to simulate blackness (or other races) using makeup, burnt cork, soot, coal, masks, etc. (Thompson, *Blackface* 19). The term “racial prosthetic” has been introduced by Ian Smith to indicate that the use of blackface presents “evinced blackness as material object devoid of interiority to the end that racial impersonation or cross-dressing constituted a powerful theatrical icon validating white subjectivity.” (34).

Shakespeare's comedies in particular are riddled with caricatures that are constructed from the ridicule of elements related to color, religion, nationality and even dress. Essentially, in Shakespeare's comedies there is a consistent use of racial humor (Akhimie 50-51).

In this context, *The Tempest* can be thought as a play that constructs, reflects, and generates humor around both the exhibition and the mimesis of racial difference. In the play we find one of the moments in which racist humor is most densely concentrated even amongst the Shakespeare's corpus of comedies: the second scene of the second act, when Trinculo and Stephano meet Caliban. This scene points to the forms of exhibition mentioned above, in which bodies were displayed to be consumed through a gaze in search for the exotic. The first thing they both think of when they see Caliban is his commercial value, in the context of a scene that can only be understood as eminently comical from the movements and the speeches of the three characters.

Together with this, there is an elaboration of countless appellatives to discursively present the monstrosity of Caliban. The different denominations that Caliban receives (among them: slave, villain, filth, fish, mooncalf, demi-devil, thing of darkness), often tend to characterize him as the opposite of the human figure. When Prospero recalls Caliban at the beginning of the play, he describes him thus: "not honored with / A human shape." (I.2.336-337). Caliban is defined by a deformity that seems rather to deviate him from European anatomical forms than to turn him into a monster, because Caliban is clearly human (Mason-Vaughan and Vaughan 143), probably a black man from Africa, due to the Algerian origins of his mother (Mason-Vaughan and Vaughan 143).⁸

In Cuba we find the consequences of the surrounding racial ideas in the Europe of the times that encompass the culture produced by authors such as Shakespeare, and in the process of racecraft that characterized part of the repertory of English Renaissance drama. In 1511, Diego Velázquez took the first group of enslaved people—abducted from Africa—to Cuba, and in only twenty years, more than five hundred black slaves would already be concentrated on

8 In the midst of the rise of critical approaches that given American roots to Caliban, Ian Smith vindicates a reading of the character as an African man in "When We Were Capital, or Lessons in Language: Finding Caliban's Roots." *Shakespeare Studies* 28, 2000, pp. 252–56. Mason-Vaughan y Vaughan have recently stated that Caliban can be imagined both as an African character as a New World Indian (148).

the island, in the framework of a slave trade that would continue until 1873 and until its abolition in 1886 (Cortés 166-167). This is the fundamental fact for the constitution of the island and of America as “un inmenso hervidero de razas.” (Ortiz, *Fernando* 236).⁹

Cuban theater is shaped by the social consequences of this *hervidero de razas*, and, in consequence, is engaged in a process of race-making or racecraft, like English Renaissance drama. The beginnings of the theatrical tradition in Cuba are related with the participation of the *diablitos* in the celebration of Epiphany, a transculturated Catholic rite with elements of Santería and other Afro-Cuban religions (Pérez 25-26. However, the history of the development of Cuban theater as a national theater began in the early 19th century with the introduction of the figure of the “negrito”, a buffoonish representation of the black, represented by white actors for a white audience, emulating the slave culture (Pérez 29-30; Ortiz, *Los bailes* 589).

Later in the 19th century and with the wars of independence, the Mambí theater was created as a theater of resistance to the Spanish and later North American colonizers. With plays such as *Abdala*, the African is placed as the center of the play, displacing him from his usual buffo treatment (Pérez 32).

Towards the end of the 70s and throughout the 80s and 90s, a more systematic inclusion of Santería and Yoruba mythology in the theatrical productions was generated. It was marked above all, by the dramaturgy of Eugenio Hernández Espinosa, with plays such as *Odebi, el cazador* (1982 and *Obá y Shangó* (1983, vindicating the mestizaje as the constitutive element of Cuban identity through the introduction of *comparsas, rumbas and toques de santo* (Pérez 70-71).

The Teatro Buendía started staging plays during the 80s. Its productions are engaged with a theatrical experimentation of race and its relationship with culture. Carrió has stated that the theater should experiment with the racial identity of the continent,

9 The emphasis is Ortiz's.

(...) no tanto *qué* ingredientes nos conforman (la herencia europea, indígena o africana), luego de más de cinco siglos de integración y mestizaje, sino *cómo* se produce, desde sus formas más externas hasta la más íntima condición del *ser*, este cruce continuo de sangres y tradiciones diversas (...) No es entonces la *diversidad* lo que importa, sino el mecanismo de su *integración*. (“Dentro” 72-73)¹⁰

Thus, Teatro Buendía’s *Otra tempestad* is inserted in this context of racial conjecture. It is, though, an overly different racial conjecture than that of *The Tempest*, given that this is a play inserted in a postcolonial context. According to Helen Tiffin, “Post-colonial cultures are inevitably hybridised, involving a dialectical relationship between European ontology and epistemology and the impulse to create or recreate independent local identity.” (95). Following this idea, we could state that *Otra tempestad* establishes a dialectical relationship or a counterpoint with *The Tempest* in racial terms. Shakespeare’s plays, as have been stated, constructs its humor through racialized practices. Another point in terms of race is the treatment of miscegenation made by Prospero, who sees the union between Miranda and Caliban as an abomination, but that encourages the marriage with Ferdinand, mainly for political reasons. Carrió and Lauten read this in racial terms and establish a counterpoint by having Miranda fall in love with Caliban.

After Oshún has taken possession of Miranda, constructing her as a dramatic figure based on sensuality (in the performance, after this scene, Miranda’s dress changes from a white fabric that covered her chest to a translucent one), Miranda and Caliban perform a dance that emulates the sexual act. Towards the end of the scene, she takes the phrase of Shakespeare’s Caliban and exclaims “¡Quiero poblar esta isla de Calibanes! (41). Even though this encounter unleashes Prospero’s wrath, as it would in the Shakespearean text, the overall vision of this union supposes a celebration of *mestizo* culture in Cuba.

The first time he appears on stage, Caliban is crawling, behaving in an animalesque way (the first time he sees Miranda, he sniffs her). Then he is educated by Prospero and tortured when

¹⁰ The emphasis is Carrió’s.

he realizes that they are in love with Miranda. After the education and torture—a process that can be identified with the formation of Latin America as a whole—, Caliban closes the play as the King, holding all the masks worn during the performance, and the sound of a steamboat is heard from afar, giving the idea that everything is starting over again. Thus, the final image of the play is the image of Cuban race and culture, a culture that contains the counterpoint identified by Ortiz between tobacco and sugar: “El tabaco es un don mágico del salvajismo; el azúcar es un don científico de la civilización” (*Contrapunteo* 48).

Otra tempestad dramatizes race and culture, representing the transition proposed by Ortiz between *cubanidad* and *cubanía*, according to which it is not enough to have the cradle or the nationality, but also: “la conciencia de ser cubano y la voluntad de quererlo ser (...) cubanidad plena, sentida, consciente y deseada; cubanidad responsable (Ortiz, *Fernando* 288-289). *Otra tempestad* manifests a conscious *cubanía* and understands it as Fernández Retamar defined Cuban culture—a Calibanesque culture—as a “cultura de síntesis” (62). Being a culture of synthesis, the whole play could be understood as a display of the process of cultural production: of construction, deconstruction, and reconstruction of *cubanía* and its counterpoints. The process of racecraft that defines this play is that of the celebration of the interraciality that comes to define Cuban culture in terms of its transcultural elements.

Conclusion

Theatricality and race are counterpoints that define Carrió and Lauten’s adaptation of *The Tempest*. In Shakespeare’s play, theatricality is represented as the creative powers of the male dramaturge and magus that results in the ability to order nature, installing an artificial paradigm of the relation between man, creation, and nature. On the other hand, in *Otra tempestad* we find the defense of a female theatricality that safeguards the inventive powers of women through the transformation of Sycorax in Yemayá and the creative powers of the orishas. Through the use of different elements of Santería, such as initiation rituals and divination rituals, the theatrical and constructive power is transferred from the European characters to Afro-Cuban impersonations.

Regarding race as counterpoint, *The Tempest* reproduces a model of racial difference through the impersonation of Caliban and his appellatives, in the midst of a drama that was immersed in a process of racecraft that would define ideas of race throughout modernity. Towards the end of the 20th century, Carrió and Lauten reappropriate the racist model imposed by *The Tempest* in order to praise the interracial basis of Cuba and Latin America in *Otra tempestad*.

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