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SALLY MANIKIAN

'MARVELOUS DISPOSSESSION: ABU GHRAIB AND SHAKESPEARE'S *THE TEMPEST*'

DECLARATION.

The word length of this dissertation is.....14, 835 words.

I hereby declare that this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree. It is the result of my own independent investigation and all authorities and sources which have been consulted are acknowledged in the bibliography.

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ABSTRACT.

Why was 'Abu Ghraib' a scandal? Approaching that question involves not only asking what was contained within those images, but also examining the visual field those images disturbed, a question of context, of the discursive parameters of the United States's war on terrorism. The discourse of the war on terrorism constitutes the United States as 'civilized', an identity that is constantly in a process of becoming as it locates and differentiates danger in the 'barbarian' terrorist. The recourse to the wild barbarian as a mythic category of interpretation has a long history, present most recently in colonialism and the Cold War. It is an unsettling of the certainty and bright lines offered by an essentialized category that is achieved by 'Abu Ghraib'. To understand this process of de-essentialization, I turn to the presence of wildness in Montaigne's essay 'On the Cannibals' and Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. Through these two works, the presence of wildness becomes a tool for rendering mythical certainty into total uncertainty, through juxtaposing forms of violence but also in the struggle for meaning in maintaining discursive wholeness. These works display a form of self-criticism that utilize the wildness that both confirms the self but is also involved in a schematic of global political-economic dominance. In the war on terrorism, attempts to maintain discursive consistency rely upon the insistence of 'certainty' in evidence, fact, and recourse to the mythic wild man. However, these practices reach critical mass in the extralegal position of the enemy combatant detainee, and the limiting 'visual field' of mediascape and information technology indicates the manner in which the individual 'I' can be unsettled. The images of Abu Ghraib disturbed a visual field that had rigorously excluded the wild man, a rigorous exclusion that also enabled the marvelous dispossession whereby we become strange to ourselves.

for my mother.

INTRODUCTION.

Prospero: I'll rack thee with old cramps
Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar
That beasts shall tremble at thy din.' (I.ii.444-6)

'Americans did this to an Iraqi prisoner' (Rather, 2004, cited in Amann, 2005: 2091).

In April 2004, images of brown naked bodies in positions of submission, humiliation and abuse began to circulate, images torn from the 'digital scrapbooks' of the American military officers in charge of Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison (Amann, 2005: 2085). Hours after Deputy General Paul Clement assured the U.S. Supreme Court that the U.S was going to 'abide by its treaty obligations' as expressed in the Geneva Accords and the Convention Against Torture, Dan Rather broadcast the images of bodies on national news accompanied by the statement above (Id.: 2091). Attempts to show that 'Abu Ghraib' was an aberration, the regrettable fault of a few soldiers, were quickly eviscerated in the release of an internal Army report and a flood of executive and judicial memoranda that indicated similar abuse occurred at U.S. detention centers around the world. 'Abu Ghraib' became synonymous with a dark underbelly of U.S. detention policy, and nine court-martialed soldiers became the face of that underbelly (Smith, 2006: 673; Id.: 2085). The narration of these events has become strangely familiar. But what was at stake in this 'scandal'? What truth was unsettled in those images that made them 'scandalous' at all? A question of scandal then becomes a question of context, of what was unsettled in the scandalous image, of what interpretive visual frame the images from Abu Ghraib disturbed, of the discursive parameters of the United States's 'war on terrorism.'

‘Abu Ghraib’ disturbed the secure self-image of the United States, a disturbance felt on the individual level; this paper will attempt to examine the imaginative¹ processes that form the limits of community and the ‘I’ within it, and the manner in which the image of wholeness produced is disturbed and unsettled. Part of the process of imagining community in the discourse of the war on terrorism relied upon a discursive trope² of the ‘civilized’ self and the ‘wild’ other, a trope with a long history. The presence of wildness, as many authors have shown, is not an ontological entity ‘out there’ but is a thesis that confirms its dialectical antithesis of the civilized self (White, 1978: 151). This process of self-definition is always unstable, in a process of becoming, in an endless pursuit of legitimacy; yet, as David Campbell argues, this is also the ‘paradox’ of the identity of the nation-state (Campbell, 1992: 11).

The existence of the national-state in the international realm is confirmed by performing, through acts of ‘foreign policy’; the paradox lies in the recourse, in this process of identity, to ideational myths defined by their *certainty*. A ‘myth’ supplies a sign ‘designating the existence of things or entities whose attributes bear just those qualities that the *imagination*...insists they must bear’ (emphasis added) (White, 1978: 154). In the case of the nation-state, the imaginative constitution of identity rests upon the figuring of difference as danger: ‘the articulation of danger through foreign policy is not a threat to a state’s identity or existence; it is a condition of possibility’ (Campbell, 1992: 12). The recourse to the myth of ‘wildness’ in the discourse of the war on terrorism leads to a particular (exploitable) paradox—what happens when the mythic assurance of the excluded characteristics of the barbaric other becomes uncertain?

¹The term ‘imaginative’ is a reference to Benedict Anderson’s ‘imagined communities.’ Anderson uses ‘imagine’ to denote the processes by which the ‘I’ is connected to a wider network of individuals, necessarily ‘imagined’ because they do not meet face to face ‘yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Anderson, 1991: 6).

²A discursive trope/ tropic of discourse is a reference to the discursive establishment of the adequacy of language, whether imaginative or realistic, used in analyzing a ‘new field’ of human experience and the objects that appear to occupy it; ‘discourse effects this adequation by a *prefigurative* move that is more tropical than logical’ (White, 1978: 1). ‘Tropic is the shadow from which all realistic discourse tries to flee. This flight, however, is futile; for tropics is the process by which all discourse *constitutes* the objects which it pretends only to describe realistically and to analyze objectively’ (White, 1978: 2).

The tense relationship between certainty and uncertainty in nation-state identity formation reaches critical mass when the certain myth of the barbaric other appears ‘fictionalized’. In reaching this position, I turn to prior examples of the fictionalization of wildness as a tool of intracultural criticism—Michael de Montaigne’s essay ‘On the Cannibals’ and William Shakespeare’s play *The Tempest*. Figures of wildness, New World Natives for Montaigne and Caliban in *The Tempest*, appear as agents for a ‘marvelous dispossession’ as we become strange to ourselves and lose the certainty that licensed cruel actions against the dehumanized Other (Greenblatt, 1991: 150). The literary practices of Montaigne and Shakespeare provide an interpretive context for the impact of the images from Abu Ghraib. ‘Abu Ghraib’ became a scandal precisely because the images disrupted the field created in public political rhetoric and media visuals, as the characteristics that are mythically fixed to ‘barbarity’ become loosened, fictionalized—the U.S. soldiers in the pictures appear strange, and the actions carried out in the name of a ‘we’ become uncertain.

This paper will proceed in four parts. The first part addresses issues of methodology, as a seventeenth century play about Italian noblemen, at first glance, seems to have little relevance to the contemporary war on terrorism; building upon the work of the ‘new historicism’ and the discipline of postcolonialism, I aim to display the relevance. Part two investigates the presence of wildness in the imagination of political community, drawing heavily on Hayden White’s essay ‘Forms of Wildness.’ My use of ‘myth’ and ‘fiction’ comes from White’s portrayal of wildness in practices of community and in practices of self-critique; the work of David Campbell is useful in connecting White’s wildness with U.S. foreign policy. The literary self-critiques of Montaigne and Shakespeare are the subject of Part three. The final section examines the processes of imagination at work in the constitution of the United States’ identity in the war on terrorism, at both an individual and nation-state level, and how the characteristics involved in that process of imagination are directly unsettled in the images from Abu Ghraib.

I.

‘We read the past to understand our own lives, and equally, our own commitments direct us to the ‘truth’ about the past.’ (Loomba and Orkin, 1998: 6)

‘We are all dramatists, all actors, those in the audience as much as those on the stage, united by our ‘talking’ nature and drama’s ‘talking’ art. We ‘talk’ our world into existence.’ (Hawkes, 1973: 210).

What it means to discuss ‘Shakespeare’ is difficult, as there are many Shakespeares. His plays are performed ‘traditionally’ but also ‘reinterpreted’ even ‘mutilated’, he is the Bard of the English Language to schoolchildren, he is an instrument of cultural imperialism in a colonial context, and there is even the question of whom we write when we refer to *he*.³ The tense cultural symbol of ‘Shakespeare’ has been critiqued by the new historicism, cultural materialism, feminism, and the discipline of postcolonialism, to name a few, influenced by Foucault, Derrida, and the relationship between structures of power and forms of knowledge. To understand and study Shakespeare in the twentieth century does not mean a study of ‘the past’, nor ‘pure literature’, but to attempt to mediate the textuality of history and the historicity of text, and to critically view the cultural symbols of our present. The culture that Shakespeare was situated in and the language that he spoke has through a series of contingent events acquired global prominence. The complexity and the continued interrogation of ‘Shakespeare’, has ensured his relevance to understandings of culture and action in the contemporary world, thereby providing the opportunity to view *The Tempest* as an interpretative context for the Iraqi prison scandal. In this section, I address these issues of methodology that enable the discussion of Abu Ghraib and Shakespeare in the same paper.

First, there is no distinction in this paper between ‘political’ and ‘cultural’ texts. The problematization of the distinction has been achieved by the works of poststructuralists, feminists,

³ Debate is ceaselessly circulating around William Shakespeare as a person, especially regarding authorship and life (Bassnett, 1993: 7-9). Also, emphasizing the ‘he’ can run the risk of assuming a blazing moment of genius striking ‘the writer’ sitting at his desk, whereas the ephemeral nature of the play at the time, the vagabond personality of the players, and the collective changes made to the plays in performance defies such an image (Id.: 10-11; Greenblatt, 1988: 6-7). Moreover, to what do we refer when we talk of his plays—the ‘text itself’, the manner of performance, the nature of theater? There is a vast oeuvre of Shakespeare criticism, and of various ‘Shakespeares’ (See Holderness, 2004; Evans, 1989: 1-16, 239ff).

cultural materialists, postmodernists, all of whom recognize that the production of the individual speaking subject, the 'I', is constituted within a field of discourse and knowledge, a structure of power that extends beyond institutions-of-state-as-politics. The fact that the images from Abu Ghraib stimulated particular reactions, that they were 'scandalous,' is indicative of those processes of agency and forms of knowledge that inform understanding and action in the contemporary world. Since the actions I am referring to involve mobilization of military forces, physical destruction, and loss of life in the war on terrorism, the need to pay particular attention to the rationalities and effects of power, in all its manifestations, is made even more urgent.

Viewing the contemporary scandal of Abu Ghraib through reference to Shakespeare raises the problem of the relationship between past and present in general, a paradoxical one as evident in the statement by Loomba and Orkin above. In this methodology, I am indebted to a body of work, focusing mostly on early modern England, loosely termed 'new historicist.' The new historicism⁴ is 'new' because of its refusal of unproblematic distinctions between 'literature' and 'history', between 'text' and 'context', new in 'resisting a prevalent tendency to posit and privilege a unified and autonomous individual to be set against a social or literary background' (Montrose, 1989: 18). By dissolving these distinctions, the manifold ways in which culture and society affect each other are loosened, overarching hypothetical constructs eschewed 'in favor of surprising coincidences' (Veeseer, 1989: xii). The end result is a practice rather than a doctrine where 'history' may be drawn from Marlowe's *Richard II* or Lyly's *Midas*, an understanding of the fluidity between conventional categories of history, politics, religion, and art (Greenblatt, 1989: 1). In approaching the study of the collective making of distinct cultural practices and the relations among these practices in the Renaissance, Stephen Greenblatt proposes a 'poetics of culture,' arguing there is an interlocking

⁴ There is an unresolved tension in the 'new historicism.' H.A. Veeseer describes the new historicism as 'seiz[ing] upon an event or anecdote...and re-read[ing] it in such a way as to reveal through the analysis of tiny particulars the behavioral codes, logics, and motive forces controlling a whole society' (Veeseer, 1989: xi). This statement illuminates this weakness, as there is a great leap between identifying a particular and arguing its embodiment in an *entire* culture. Greenblatt, in his introduction to *Learning to Curse*, addresses this paradoxical 'universalist' danger of this kind of particularism, yet this remains an unresolved tension in the 'practice' of new historicism (See Greenblatt, 1991, 1990).

between the aesthetic creation and the society in which it is located, a fluid exchange that is both foundational of forms of the world and representative of the world from which it springs⁵ (Greenblatt, 1980: 4; 1988: 5). Viewing the relationship between art⁶ and world as such moves away from a stable, mimetic theory of art and attempts to construct in its stead ‘an interpretative model that will more adequately account for the unsettling circulation of materials and discourses’ (Greenblatt, 1989: 13).

The new historicism has not only broadened the scope of inquiry into ‘the past’, but it is a method that acknowledges, to a degree, the difficulties of the present. By engaging in the re-invention of Elizabethan culture, the engagement also is part of the re-formation of contemporary culture:

‘If, by the ways in which we choose to read Renaissance texts, we bring to our students and to ourselves a sense of our own historicity, an apprehension of our own positionings within ideology, then we are at the same time demonstrating the limited but nevertheless tangible *possibility of contesting the regime of power and knowledge that at once sustains us and constrains us.*’ (emphasis added) (Montrose, 1989: 30).

Thus, although there is a seeming inconsistency between the drive to problematize distinctions and the awareness of a need to historicize our own position⁷, it is not a dead end, but rather the productive matrix that engenders a self-interrogative direction of inquiry. The contemporary existence of a cultural symbol such as Shakespeare draws on our own understanding of the past in which he is situated, and also how that past as a form of knowledge is imbricated in contemporary structures of power.

Part of the reason why *The Tempest* is relevant to contemporary international politics is the moment in which Shakespeare was writing: the ‘early modern’ period, somewhere between

⁵ Here Greenblatt admits the influence of poststructuralism that problematizes the difference between the fictive and the actual, where discourse is not a transparent glass through which we glimpse reality nor mere ‘reflection’, but the creator of what Barthes termed the ‘reality-effect’ (Greenblatt, 1990: 14).

⁶ To a degree, Greenblatt relies upon an category of ‘art’ that appears to be posited against ‘society’. Yet Greenblatt does not accept the category of ‘art’ unproblematically, arguing that there is no prediscursive entity of ‘art’, rather a particular society has deemed that ‘art’ exists (Greenblatt, 1988: 13).

⁷ For some, the new historicism fails to adequately address the contemporary politics of scholarship; this criticism often comes from the discipline of postcolonialism (*See eg* Loomba and Orkin, 1998).

medieval and modern, between feudalism and capitalism and the germinations of empire. England's imperial infancy became an aggressive ascendancy in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and both Shakespeare and colonialism left their imprint on the globe as English, the 'minor European tongue', became a major world language and Western culture went with it (Loomba and Orkin, 1998: 1; Hawkes, 1973: 195). Shakespeare's 'universalism' is part of an imperial confidence in the superiority of English culture; the effect of presenting Shakespeare as a 'mindless [genius]' whose 'only consistent quality was a sense of compassion' was to create the local as the universal and to obscure the cultural specificity of Shakespeare (Neill, 1998: 174; Evans, 1989: 4). The universal application of Shakespeare becomes, in the colonial context, an instrument of cultural domination—it is a playwright from Europe that possesses the true vision of a universal humanity.

The imperial Shakespeare was then challenged as *The Tempest*, in particular, was seized, re-written, also totally discarded. Anticolonial writers such as Aime Césaire challenged Shakespeare's right to represent the Caribbean Native, re-writing the play as *Une Tempête*, while Roberto Fernández Retamar invoked Caliban as a symbol of the intercultural mixing of American society (Loomba, 1998: 174-5). Prospero and Caliban, transferred from the fictionally cross-referenced island in the Mediterranean to the nineteenth and twentieth century colonial and postcolonial world in Mannoni's ethnopsychiatric 'Prospero complex,' are attacked by Aime Césaire in his *Discourse on Colonialism* (Césaire, 1972: 39ff.). Prospero haunts African fiction, in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), appearing as the title of a treatise written by a colonial agent in British Kenya. George Lamming (as well as Ngũgĩ) uses the metaphor of Prospero and Caliban to display the 'prison house of language' of the complexities of speaking the language of the colonizer (Lamming, 2004; Zabus, 2002: 30, 38). These critiques have affirmed the relevance of Shakespeare to contemporary politics-as-culture and displayed the importance of *The Tempest* as a form of cultural knowledge in understanding relationships of power in a (post)colonial world.

Yet it is dangerous to unproblematically connect Shakespeare to the present in a straight line in a biological metaphor of growth of empire, just as it is risky to embed Shakespeare in ‘colonial discourse.’ Although part of the reason why *The Tempest* retains its contextual power is because of the postcolonial critique, one must also be careful to attribute monolithic intention to early modern ‘colonial discourse’ and the eager reading of *The Tempest* into that emerging, extremely contradictory, discourse (Brotton, 1998: 24-27; Said, 1993: 51). At the time, English empire was anything but certain,⁸ and as recent critical work has shown, the expansion to the New World was not directly on the political agenda of the monarchy and state (*See* Andrews, 1984). Moreover, although England’s poets, cartographers, lawyers, and theologians were ‘writing’ forms of nationhood within England, it would be anachronistic to identify a coherent body of ‘nationalism’ nor a stable view of what constituted ‘England’ as a society (Helgerson, 1992). The imperial structure of the nineteenth century did not arise from some pre-existing (‘semi-conspiratorial’) design that writers such as Shakespeare then manipulate, ‘but are bound up with the development of Britain’s cultural identity, as that identity imagines itself in a geographically conceived world’ (Said, 1993: 52). Although the figuring of the New World in *The Tempest* is bound up in that process of imagining, the historicity of the moment in which Shakespeare was writing can not be reduced to a concept of ‘colonial discourse’ that is apprehended through nineteenth century imperialism.

At the same time, the over looming connections and critiques regarding colonial discourse and Shakespeare can not be ignored. The textual traces that are at the center of our literary interest in Shakespeare are ‘the products of extended borrowings, collective exchanges, and mutual enchantments’ (Greenblatt, 1988: 7). In the space of four centuries, Shakespeare and *The Tempest*

⁸Although in 1530 Parliament declared England an ‘empire’, by 1580 England did not control territory outside the Isles, had one moderately successful long-distance trading connection with Russia, and the majority of England’s only export in cloth was controlled by foreign merchants in London (Helgerson, 1992: 4, 164; Andrews, 1984: 7; Rabb, 1967: 2). Following the catastrophe of Roanoke in the 1580s, where the entire colony disappeared, the first permanent colony, Jamestown, did not become ‘permanent’ until nearly 1620, only to have the colonists killed by the natives in 1625. ‘The repeated failures of England...[suggest a] view of this colonial theory and practice: that, whether by necessity or choice, England’s relation to the New World was essentially a frivolous one.’ (Knapp, 1992: 4). *The Tempest* was written during the period 1611-12.

have existed in various, mediated forms; rather than separate the ‘truth’ of those textual traces (what Shakespeare ‘means’) from the ‘fictive’, I take those traces as found (Evans, 1989: 9). Thus my engagement with Shakespeare is not *because* he contributed to colonial discourse, but because ‘Shakespeare’ remains a persistently conflicted, politicized, and tense cultural symbol in the analysis of power. If *The Tempest* has become the site of contention for the postcolonial critique of power, knowledge, and subjectivity, perhaps the play has something to offer regarding other forms of knowledge and relations of power in the contemporary world.⁹ In applying *The Tempest* to the Iraqi prison abuse scandal, this essay will attempt to test this hypothesis.

⁹ Of course, to separate ‘other’ forms of knowledge and relations of power creates a distinction that contains a politics of its own; I do not refuse that the colonialism bleeds through unevenly into the present, nowhere more patently than in invocations of ‘the past.’ Nor do I deny the critiques of those who see the current war in Iraq as ‘imperialist’ (Todorov, 2005). However, viewing the war on terrorism as a discourse is incompatible with inscribing a form of intentionality to the direction of discourse; unproblematically viewing the discourse of the war on terrorism as ‘imperialist’ runs the risk of passing over the discontinuities and differences between forms of knowledge in the contemporary war on terrorism and the theoretical baggage associated with the term ‘imperialism.’

II.

‘The Wild Man...appears always as a criticism of whatever security and peace of mind one group of men in society had purchased at the cost of the suffering of another.’ (White, 1978: 180)

The figure of the European ‘wild man’ is projected on a global scale with the New World encounter. Many authors have addressed the relationship between the justificatory right of European civility to govern pagan barbarity and the structures of domination and material exploitation of colonialism and conquest.¹⁰ Whether a form of extreme difference that denies the Other’s humanity or a pale similarity that sees the ‘savage’ as uncorrupted humanity, each view of the ‘barbarian’ operated within a suite of practices that justified forms of intervention, domination, and control within the system of colonialism. What makes the unsettling power of wild barbarity possible is its implication in discourses of conquest and domination. Drawing on Hayden White’s essay ‘Forms of Wildness’ (1978) and David Campbell’s *Writing Security* (1992), this section will address how the discursive tropic of the ‘wild man’ marks the lines of community through its exclusion, and how that exclusion is related to practices of state.

The figure of the wild man, and of wildness, belongs to a set of culturally self-authenticating devices that does not designate a specific condition or state of being but confirms the value of its dialectical antithesis—civility (White, 1978: 151). Barbarity and wildness are part of an attitude governing a relationship between a lived reality and some area of ‘problematical existence that cannot be accommodated easily to conventional conceptions of the normal or familiar’ (Id.). Although ‘civilization’ did not appear in English until the eighteenth century and ‘barbarian’ has been used interchangeably with ‘salvage’ and ‘infidels’ the Greek origin of the word ‘barbarian’ as foreigners with incomprehensible speech ties this trope to the production of concepts of self, nation and empire (Salter, 2002: 18).

¹⁰ Franz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, and Albert Memmi critique the relationship between colonizer and colonized within the justificatory structures of colonialism; that the subjectivity of the ‘colonized’ created and justified colonial domination and governance.

More simply, the presence of ‘wildness’ is part of the process of self-definition by negation, but of a particular kind contrary to the ‘barbarian’. The barbarian occupies a location conceived to lie ‘far away’ in space, completely external to civilization and extremely different; the appearance of ‘barbarian hordes’ is a sign of the cracking of the foundations of the world. The wild man poses a different threat, always present, inhabiting the immediate confines of the community: ‘He is just out of sight, over the horizon, in the nearby forest, desert, mountains, or hills...’ (White, 1978: 166). The wild man is a man released from social control, both *representing* those desires that civility represses from guilt (sexuality, idleness, disobedience, existing outside the norms of society, politics, and law) and *servicing* as a figure of anxiety from a sense of shame (Id.:156, 166). By the end of the Middle Ages, the wild man had become endowed with two possibilities: the antitype of desirable humanity (a warning of dangerous subversion if man strayed from society) or the antitype of social existence (a warning of how society has fallen from its natural origins) (Id.: 173). These two myths, of barbarian and of wild man, support two views of difference in the New World natives—one of extreme difference and another of pale similarity.

One axis along which these myths manifest and confirm the ‘self’ is language.¹¹ Cicero¹² states that only eloquence had been powerful enough ‘to gather scattered mankind together in one place, to transplant human beings from a *barbarous life* in the wilderness to a civilized social system, to establish organized communities, to equip them with laws and judicial safeguards and civic rights’ (emphasis added) (cited in Greenblatt, 1990: 20). Alternatively, the inability to speak appears as a consequence of condition rather than its cause. The Salvage Man in Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* is an example:

‘For other language had he none, nor speech,

¹¹ Language has been examined closely with regard to empire, partially because the humanist elevation of language affirmed the cultural superiority of those who *had* language. (Zabus, 2002: 36; Greenblatt, 1991: 10-11). Linguistic difference is a central axis of interpretation in early New World texts, and is tested in Montaigne and Shakespeare, below

¹² A necessary part of the humanist education was his *De oratore*. The elevation of language by humanism demanded that unlettered cultures existed elsewhere.

But a soft murmur, and confused sound
Of senseless words, which Nature did him teach' (cited in Greenblatt, 1990: 21).
Spenser's Salvage Man appears as an infantilized human, where the lack of language is not a curse, but indicative of innocence (Id.). This supposes an (egocentric) universalism; where even the most monstrous of men are still *men*, potentially capable of partaking in God's grace (Todorov, 1993: 40-2; White, 1978: 163). The wild man represents an inescapable condition, occupying the place of absolute (barbaric) difference; likewise, the notions of wildness that gesture towards the 'noble savage' of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, fits with the universalism of Spenser.

These views, although posing different problematics, produce the same result in the encounter between the Old and the New World. The first, the problematic of absolute difference, denies individual identity at the level of values where the emphasis of irrevocable difference isolates the European community from the natives (Todorov, 1982: 191). The second relies upon a set of universal assumptions, a belief that there is no language or cultural barrier at all (Greenblatt, 1991: 29). However, both forms are equally destructive—one denies the humanity of the natives because of their extreme difference, and the other denies their particular human existence through rendering them in the image of the Europeans. Ultimately, the end result is the same: a loss of *interhuman* communication as the natives were literally and metaphorically destroyed (Todorov, 1982: 97).

These views of linguistic difference are only one example of how the discursive trope of the wild barbarian has been used in constituting the boundaries of community, and justifying actions against and upon the barbaric wild 'other'. European imperialism in the nineteenth century and the 'civilizing mission' presented a view of a barbaric world that justified colonial domination, Freud's psychoanalysis included the barbarian Id threatening unrestrained wildness within every individual, and barbarism was invoked by both sides in the two world wars and in the Cold War (Salter, 2002: 26). Each barbarian bore the qualities that the process of imagining the 'self' directed it to bear (White, 1978: 154). For example, the image of the wild barbarian in nineteenth century imperialism justified unrestrained violence to subdue the barbaric native; to ensure the continued dominance of

the colonizer the colonized became a problem that necessitated dominance and control over the disruptive ‘other’ (Salter, 2002: 35; Brown, 1994: 58). Through these various incarnations, there have been continuities and also discontinuities, as civilization and its barbarians, citizens and their wild men, have acquired different characteristics—but what remains consistent is how the myth of the barbaric wild other, in its ‘philosophical fixity’¹³, is connected to practices of state through ‘foreign policy.’

David Campbell has suggested that national-states do not possess a prediscursive ontological status: they are never ‘finished’ as entities, but rather, paradoxically, the surety of their existence in the international realm is the practices that constitute it—those of ‘foreign policy’¹⁴ (Campbell, 1992: 11). Those practices are predicated upon the identification of insecurities, dangers, and threats; the state’s legitimacy derives from its promise to offer security to its citizens who would otherwise face ‘manifold dangers.’¹⁵ Foreign policy rests upon representational practices and tropes that constitute the ‘self’ by figuring difference and danger through negation, whether socio-medical (terrorism is a disease) or mythical-moral (terrorism is barbarism) or both (Id.: 100). The practice of foreign policy, thus, reproduces through the identifications of danger the boundaries of community in the negative. Paradoxically, this *process* is one that is constantly in a state of movement and becoming, never fixed, while simultaneously dependent upon the *philosophical fixity* of myth.

A form of critique of this process of imagination and mythification is to fictionalize the ‘myths’ by loosening them from fixed certainty. One of the main points of White’s essay is that Montaigne’s and Shakespeare’s invocation of wildness is as a ‘fiction’, as a form of benign imagery

¹³This term is from Homi Bhabha, who notes the reliance of colonial discourse upon essentialisms and fixities, requiring the reproduction of stereotypes (Salter, 2002: 19).

¹⁴Campbell differentiates between foreign policy and Foreign Policy. The former is ‘those practices of differentiation implicated in all confrontations between a self and other’, while the latter, in contrast, is ‘one of the practices which contingently constructs through stylized and regulated performances the identity of the state in whose name it operates’ and is more dependent upon particular discourses of fear and danger (Campbell, 1992: 85). In discussing the details of the war on terrorism, I will be referring to Foreign Policy in the contingent construction of the United States.

¹⁵Similar to the church project of salvation, the state engages in an ‘evangelism of fear,’ succumbing in the process to the ‘temptation to treat difference as otherness’ (Campbell, 1992: 56).

rather than an 'essence' of wildness. This transition from mythical imagination to fictive play enables a form of intracultural criticism—a demystification of the 'myths' that deny the world as complex and fluid and uphold an imaginative retreat into mythical certainty (White, 1978: 176-77). In discussing Shakespeare and Montaigne below, I attempt to show how both writers critique the process of imagining through the fictionalized play with figures of wildness—Montaigne's 'canibal' and Shakespeare's 'Caliban.'

III.

*'Europe is indefensible'*¹⁶ (emphasis in original) (Cesaire, 1972: 9).

The New World appears *ex silencio*, vigorously excluded yet so strongly suggested, in *The Tempest*. This marked absence does not mean that *The Tempest* does not refer to the New World, rather it suggests a particular object of analysis—the instability of the image of Europe and England, and the process of imagining identity. Approaching *The Tempest* through Montaigne's essay 'On the Cannibals' displays how the images of New World wildness constitute a critique directed at the imaginative processes that enable empire. Recognizing the mutually constitutive relationship between the figure of barbarous wildness and the material effects of conquest, appropriation, and expansion, the ironic use of the rhetorical power of the presence of the wild man appears as a criticism of a security, an imagined wholeness, demystifying the link between man and society. Montaigne plays with notions of the 'wild man' and barbarity as a device of intracultural criticism, to show how we become strange to ourselves. In a similar manner, the unease generated from the 'wildness' within *The Tempest* is produced because the 'wildness' and 'darkness,' subsumed within a greater critique of imagining, is acknowledged as intimately bound to the 'I'. Through these two texts, I intend to trace the use (and fictionalization) of wildness and barbarity as a tool of intracultural criticism that produces uncertainty, anxiety, and self-doubt.

The starting point is the relationship between *The Tempest* and Montaigne's essay. Shakespearean scholarship that has concerned itself with sources has identified Montaigne's essay 'On the Cannibals' as providing material for *The Tempest* (See eg Bloom, 1999: 662; Zeeveld, 1974: 248).¹⁷ However, my intent here is not to debate the extent to which Shakespeare draws on or critiques Montaigne. Rather, I intend to view the similarities and difficulties within and between the

¹⁶ Cesaire, in his *Discourse on Colonialism*, focuses on the corruption within the colonizer because of the violent dehumanizing effect of colonialism. His critique posits a relationship between a 'defensible' self image and the violence carried out in its name, thereby critiquing the processes of imagination focused on in this paper.

¹⁷ The echoes of Montaigne are found not only in the anagram 'Caliban' but also in a speech by Gonzalo, who views the island in direct echo of Montaigne's terms (II.i.143-163).

two texts as a ‘circulation’ of social energy, of discourse, of commonalities (Greenblatt, 1988: 6). In so doing, the starting point is not with ‘the author’ as a discrete genius, instead the text is viewed as a ‘node’ within a network that extends beyond the confines of the play and the essay on the page (Said, 1984: 180). Although there is much to be unpacked in both Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and the thought of Michel de Montaigne, and they are implicated in various discourses, reading them into and across each other emphasizes particular practices: namely the imagining of Europe.

A central concern for Montaigne, in his *Essays*, is the lines of his own identity and the circumstances of custom that produce it. Essaying for Montaigne is not strictly a method of writing, but is a ‘decisional or therapeutic practice’ which ‘attunes the mind to its incapacities in order to bring it to the recognition of its object as its own creation’ (O’Neill, 1991: 181). As a matter of form, Montaigne writes self-consciously, tying his observations to his own self-development, evident in his opening epistle to the reader: ‘I have dedicated this book to...my friends and kinsmen so...keep[ing] their knowledge of me more full, more alive’ (Montaigne, 2003: lix). The book is Montaigne’s literal embodiment; he admonishes us as readers that the book contains only himself as a subject, his journey of passage (O’Neill, 1991: 181). Within the book that is the self of Montaigne barbaric wildness appears in the essay ‘On the Cannibals.’

Montaigne’s (in)famous essay is not so much a defense of the act of cannibalism as an attempt to unfix the Old World certainty of New World ‘barbarity.’ He begins by stating the pejorative nature of ‘barbarian,’ in that ‘every man calls barbarous anything he is not accustomed to.’ This practice of judgment, indeed the concept of ‘barbarian’ itself, is particularistic and situated in European knowledge, of the ‘example and form of the opinions and customs of our own country’ (Montaigne, 2003: 231). For Montaigne, the conception and identification of the notion of ‘wildness’ and ‘barbarity’ does not designate a specific condition so much as confirm the value of their dialectical antithesis of civility (White, 1978: 151). The danger, Montaigne argues, is that in judging of the barbarity of others that ‘we should be so blind to our own’ (Montaigne, 2003: 235).

Montaigne's relativism provides a philosophical framework in which to 'fictionalize' the myth of the wild man.

Montaigne achieves this fictionalization through the shock of the strange of juxtapositions. He compares cannibalism to the practice of torture: 'there is more barbarity in lacerating by rack... a body still fully able to feel things, than in killing him and eating him' (Id.: 236). The practice of contrast powerfully achieves the shock of the strange in this passage, worth quoting at length:

...[the Natives] hack at [the prisoner] with their swords and kill him. This done, they roast him and make a common meal of him, sending chunks of his flesh to absent friends. This is not as some think done for food...but to symbolize ultimate revenge. As proof of this, when they noted that the Portuguese...practiced a different kind of execution on...prisoner[s]—which was to bury them up to the waist, to shoot showers of arrows at their exposed parts...[T]hey thought these men from the *Other World*...who were *greater masters than they were of every kind of revenge*...so they began to abandon their ancient method and adopted that one. (emphasis added) (Id.: 235).

In the sudden transition from New World barbarity to Old World revenge and cruelty and back again, the reader is pushed to the point where 'we' become far stranger (indeed, 'other worldly') to ourselves than any aliens that are placed at a distance from 'us': 'the essay...involves the reader in an exotic journey in which the truly distant point is the very ground upon which he believed himself to stand' (O'Neill, 2001: 194). Thus 'we'¹⁸ can indeed call those folk barbarians...but not in comparison with ourselves, who surpass them in every kind of barbarism' (Montaigne, 2003: 235).

The value of Montaigne's essay 'On the Cannibals' lies in its contribution to Montaigne's self-development and self-interrogation as a European, not in its liberation of the natives of the New World from the judgments of Europeans. Montaigne's judgment of value is based on the projection of the European self onto the Native other, evident in his use of European cultural signs such as the Scythians, the Greeks and Romans, contemporary practices of torture, and the Golden Age of Plato (Todorov, 1993: 41). The poetry of the natives is not barbarous to Montaigne, for (in translation) it resembles the ancient poet Anacreon, the natives' speech is sweet to the ear and has terminations 'rather like Greek' (Montaigne, 2003: 239). Montaigne's universalism denies the Natives' historical

¹⁸ It is also possible that Montaigne's critique is directed at Spain (and Portugal) (See Helgerson, 1992: 149 ff.).

specificity through explaining their cultural tongues to a prior stage in European experience—one begins to wonder how Montaigne would argue if the natives were viewed as *not* like the ancient Greeks (Todorov, 1993: 41). The natives remain captured within Old World structures—but to what effect?

The speaking natives, located theoretically outside the Europe's boundaries, but speaking within them through Montaigne, provide an avenue of criticism within the political parables of Montaigne's essay (Conley, 2005: 82; Greenblatt, 1991: 149). The native's subjection to the limits of Montaigne's knowledge is displayed when Montaigne forgets part of what the natives say (Montaigne, 2003: 240). What is remembered of the speech¹⁹ of the natives are two statements that, couched in child-like confusion, appear as quintessentially European concerns: the nature of authority and hierarchy.²⁰ The natives operate as a 'go-between,' agents for a 'marvelous dispossession': 'a loss of the fiercely intolerant certainty that licensed unbearable cruelty' (Greenblatt, 1991: 150). In that loss of certainty, the 'I' is loosened from its reliance upon essentialized fixity as the barbarous horror of New World cannibalism is a means of articulating the horror at home (Id.).

What we encounter in Montaigne's essay is not his direct response to the New World discoveries, but a complex discourse about his own culture.²¹ Montaigne's essayed queries, in his attempts to present his coherent 'self', provides a nuanced character of human definition, of the interlocking between man and society. In the juxtaposition between contemporary European practices and those of the Caribbean, and the confusion of judgments that attends them, the reader is

¹⁹ Narratives of natives and Europeans in sophisticated dialogue are often 'filling in the blanks,' as communication was limited to a few phrases and gestures (Greenblatt, 1991: 95). However, there were many explorers, such as Rene de Laudonniere, who attempted to learn their language in depth (Greenblatt, 1990: 31).

²⁰ The natives wonder why 'full grown bearded men' (Montaigne translates this to the Swiss Guard) would obey a 'boy.' Second, the natives are appalled at the unequal distribution of wealth, asking why that the beggars at the doors of the 'engorged' wealthy would not 'seize them by the throat or burn down their houses' (Id.: 240-1).

²¹ The intracultural nature of Montaigne's essay, and Shakespeare's *Tempest*, is problematic—although not condoning the cultural superiority of their 'civilization', they fail to reject colonialism and conquest outright. This the criticism of their nineteenth century counterpart, Joseph Conrad, by Terry Eagleton (Watts, 1996: 53). However, at the center of the *Essays* and *The Tempest* is an ambivalence, a lack of resolution brought about by the skeptical use and fictive play of 'wildness' and 'barbarity'.

directed to see that barbarism consists in his own unexamined artifices (O'Neill, 2001: 195). The formative power of circumstance and custom, mentioned above in the understanding of 'barbarity', calls us as readers to display an alarming amount of attention to the context of our own 'passage' (Dollimore, 2004: 174). In Montaigne's search for his own self, as he parses fashioned civility from 'nature' and rejects the category of barbarity, he finds not unity but disunity: 'whosoever shall heedfully survey and consider himself, shall find...volubility and discordance to *be in himself*' (cited in Dollimore, 2004: 174). Montaigne's unease regarding the variability and contingency of terms codified by custom, such as 'barbarity,' suggests an 'I' that is not *in himself*, but exists outside, constituted in cultural norms that 'precede and exceed' individual identity in a field of power that conditions the 'I' (and 'us') fundamentally (Butler, 2004: 45).

Montaigne wants his readers to identify the artificiality in their selves, and to recognize the extent to which their superficial civilization masks a deeper barbarism (White, 1978: 176). By 'torturing one concept with its antithesis, we are cloven closer attention to our own perceptions' and by manipulating the 'fictions of artificiality and naturalness' we begin to 'approximate a truth about a world that is as complex and changing as our possible ways of comprehending that world' (Id.: 177). The apprehension of this complexity is induced by the demystification of man and society, achieved through the use and abuse of and fictive play with wildness. In the process of this demystification, the presence of the wild native, fictionalized and appearing as an agent of piercing strangeness, is the source of unease and uncertainty.

The unease found in Montaigne is produced as well in *The Tempest*. Before launching into an analysis of *The Tempest*, I will briefly sketch out the outline of the plot and the characters. The play is set on a deserted island ruled by a vengeful magus, and involves a romance, two revolutionary murderous plays, and a redemptive final scene. The play begins with a storm at sea, on

a ship²² containing Alonso, the King of Naples; his son Ferdinand; Gonzalo, his counselor; Sebastian the brother of Alonso; Antonio the current Duke of Milan; Stephano and Trinculo, two drunkards; and other assorted courtiers. The first scene ends with the ship crashing at sea (I.i).

In the second scene, the storm is revealed to have been caused by the magic of Prospero, the former Duke of Milan, who was exiled to the island with his daughter Miranda; Prospero has the spirit Ariel as his familiar and the 'salvage and deformed slave' Caliban as his servant.²³ During the second scene, after revealing that the storm was created by him and that the ship containing the nobility is safely in harbor, Prospero informs Miranda (and us thereby) of the events that have transpired *prior* to the beginning of the play. Prospero became so introverted and involved in his solitary intellectual pursuits that Antonio was able to usurp his dukedom.²⁴ Towards the end of the scene, the King's son Ferdinand appears, having been separated from his father the King and his entourage; when he and Miranda see each other they instantly fall in love (I.ii).

During the second Act, the first murderous plot is formed. Among the four remaining nobles, Antonio tries to convince Sebastian to kill Alonso while he is sleeping; if Ferdinand is dead, Sebastian is the next in the line to be the King of Naples (II.i). Prospero, aware of the plot, intervenes and sends Ariel to wake up Alonso. In another part of the Island, Caliban encounters Stephano and Trinculo, who get him drunk, and he calls them his new masters (II.ii). As we move into the third Act, Ferdinand and Miranda's courtship develops under Prospero's controlled discipline (III.i), Caliban convinces Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero (III.ii), and the four nobles are terrified by Prospero's magic (III.iii). The fourth Act is mostly a masque that Prospero

²² The ship is returning to Italy from Africa, where Claribel (the King's daughter) was married to the King of Tunis. This is not revealed until II.i.

²³ We are also informed of the background of Ariel and Caliban; Caliban's mother, the Algerian witch Sycorax, was abandoned by sailors on the island before Caliban was born, and Sycorax imprisoned Ariel in a tree, from which Prospero freed him. Caliban appears to us as a grumpy servant, and Ariel as a tense but submissive servant; the contrast between Caliban and Ariel as two versions of 'native' are seized upon by Aime Césaire in his *A Tempest* (Zabus, 2002: 13; Césaire, 1992 [1969]).

²⁴ Prospero's rage regarding this state of affairs is visible in his speech in this scene, which is convoluted and difficult to follow (Kermode, 1954).

creates in honor of Ferdinand and Miranda's relationship. Prospero halts the masque before it is over as he recalls the plots on the island, in the first of his two famous speeches (IV.i). The conclusive fifth Act gathers all the characters; the ending resolution has Prospero returning to Milan, Ferdinand and Miranda marrying, Ariel free, and Caliban's future not entirely clear (V.i). In the 'epilogue,' Prospero delivers his second famous speech, begging for the audience to 'set him free' (Epilogue).

Although the play²⁵ appears as a form of comedic romance in this plain presentation, it is charged with the intracultural criticism mentioned above. The critique of imagining is found, at the individual level, in the string of mistaken identities, confused realities, and 'subtlety' of uncertainty that pervades the Island. The action in the play is controlled by and centers on Prospero; his performative identity is relational and dependent upon those around him, an identity confirmed by his magic. However, the limits of Prospero's ability to 'perform' and direct those around him is embodied in Caliban, the fictionalized wild man. Caliban exists as an item of contrast to the Italians, and, like Montaigne's Natives, is the agent of a 'marvelous dispossession' at the end of the play. I will address each in turn.

The skeptical blow regarding the power of imagination²⁶ is levied at us, the audience, in the second scene when Prospero reveals to us that the storm²⁷ which we have just witnessed performed on stage was not real and that no one had been hurt. Our skepticism is raised, the audience is bewildered: if the overwhelming storm, that convinced the mariners and nobles of their immanent deaths, is unreal, then what in the play can be accepted when it appears? (Bloom, 1999: 675). When the courtiers and nobles discuss among themselves, comically, their impressions of the island, the

²⁵ Although I somewhat facetiously remarked on the fluidity of 'Shakespeare' in the first Section of this paper, there is still an issue as to what constitutes 'the text'—the various Folios, editions, the play in performance versus on the page, even in the 'silences' of the play (*See* Holderness, 2003). 'Just like Marx insisted that matter, not spirit, is the real substance of the world, so modern bibliographers have looked to the 'material text' rather than to the original authorial utterance or 'idea' as the 'real foundation' of textuality' (Id.: 22).

²⁶ It is worthwhile to note the nature of the play in general as individuals *enacting* roles, as to witness a play and read a playtext is to already take a leap into the imaginary.

²⁷ The crisis in authority induced by the storm becomes a question of our own individual ability to imagine. The opening scene of the storm appears as a crisis of authority, partly because of a tension between the courtly language of the nobles and professional language of the mariners who complain about the nobles' interference, but also because of the common use of a ship at sea as a metaphor for governance (Hawkes, 1973: 200-1; I.i).

cheery Gonzalo who finds ‘everything advantageous to life,’ indeed to rival the ‘Golden Age’, is contrasted to the bitter Antonio and Sebastian who argue that he ‘mistake[s] the truth totally’ and see the island blowing with ‘rotten’ air and able to bear only ‘nettle-seed’ (II.i.45-55, 139-165). The island, for Caliban, sometimes tortures him with sounds and wild beasts, but also is full of sweet sounds that ‘hurt not’, inducing him to dream of riches (II.ii.4-14, III.ii.133-141). We quickly grasp that perspective is what governs on this island.

The fluidity of perspective continues in a string of mistaken identities. There is an initial play at the imaginary, for at the time Shakespeare was writing, the King of Naples and the Duke of Milan are titles that no longer exist having since been usurped by the Spanish King Charles (Knapp, 1992: 233-4). The common romantic dramatic device of mistaken identity appears in Miranda and Ferdinand’s first encounter, where she declares him a ‘thing divine’ and in true Romantic fashion he sees her as a ‘goddess’ (I.ii. 421, 424) This dramatic device is then turned on its head, deliciously parodied in the comic meeting between Caliban and the two drunkards, as Caliban sees the drunken butler as a ‘fine thing’ potentially ‘dropp’d from heaven’²⁸ (II.ii.117, 137). The incurring of the doubt of our own ‘certainties’ continues throughout the play, and is especially patent in the final scene where the tired and confused nobles refuse to believe that it is Prospero, the exiled Duke of Milan, that appears before them (V.i.111ff). It becomes clear that perspective governs on this island ‘that will not let you/ Believe things certain,’ as ‘no man [is] his own’ (V.i.124-5, 213). Just as Montaigne demystifies the certainties of culture and custom, Shakespeare’s use of the confusion of identity, of material event, and of the geography of the island itself instigations a questioning regarding the process of imagining and of what seems certain.

The source of these uncertainties is Prospero, whose magical control over the island and those within it displays his performative and theatrical identity, whose power lies in the ability to

²⁸ This echoes the Natives in Montaigne, who claim that the Portuguese are from the ‘other world’; the mistaken identity of the Europeans as otherworldly is another common theme in early accounts of the New World (See Hulme, 1986).

amaze and imagine. Critiques that view ‘Prospero-as-Shakespeare’ identify the performative and theatrical²⁹ aspects of Prospero in organizing visual displays of amazement such as the storm, the masque, and the feast³⁰ in the fourth Act (Hawkes, 1973: 197). To wreak revenge upon the nobles who have betrayed him, he relies upon his ‘high charms’ to ‘knit up’ his enemies ‘in their distractions’, as Prospero’s power lies in not violence or injury but the ephemeral ‘distraction’ of the theatre (III.iii.88-90). Like all good dramatists, part of the role of performing is defining the characters—Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban—and directing them.

Prospero’s relations with his three subjects, Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban, are a struggle to maintain discursive consistency. Prospero contains a ‘squirring unease’ about his control over those around him, and his security acquired by his magical prowess is offset by the contradictions in Prospero’s ‘incessant hectoring’ of his subjects³¹ (Evans, 1989: 77-9). We must accept Prospero’s version of history,³² as in the second scene Prospero relates to us the events of his exile, through which he traps Miranda in her identity, bidding her to ‘obey and be attentive’ to his story. Prior to learning of this she was ‘ignorant of what thou art’; constantly seeking her affirmation, he petitions her attention throughout his discourse (‘Do’st thou attend me’, ‘Thou attendest not’, ‘Do’st thou heare?’ he asks) (I.ii.18, 78, 87, 106). When Ariel attempts to assert his own version of events, reminding Prospero of his promise to release the sprite, Prospero retaliates by insulting Ariel and reminding him of the debt he owes Prospero for releasing him from the pine³³ (I.ii.245ff). With

²⁹ Prospero is self-consciously aware of the passage of time, paying close attention to the precise amount of time passing in the course of the play—about three to four hours, or the length of the play’s performance itself. Prospero notes the time in the second scene and final scene (I.ii.241, V.i.3).

³⁰ Prospero appears on the stage above the nobles, during this scene.

³¹ Evans uses Hegel’s theory of recognition and the master-slave relationship to display the contradictions and tensions in the formation of Prospero’s identity. (Evans, 1989: 76-81). Viewing the text in this manner, according to Evans, emphasizes the discordance and instability of the play, in contrast to the ‘neo-Aristotelian morality play’ of Frank Kermode, that endorses the ‘unspoken paternal assumptions of empire.’ (Id.: 79).

³² Lamming caustically views Prospero as an expert at ‘throwing the past in your face’ (Lamming, 2004: 153). In this scene, Caliban is the only one to tell us his ‘own’ story, discussed below.

³³ Prospero makes Ariel complicit in his own binding, through forcing him to volunteer information in this exchange:
Prospero: ‘Hast thou forgot
 The foul witch Sycorax...?
 Has thou forgot her?’

Ariel, Prospero is concerned with the relation between identity and forgetfulness, of losing his control over Ariel's self-identification as he states 'I must/ Once in a month recount what thou hast been/ Which thou forget'st' (I.ii.261-3). Prospero's narrative control is achieved through linguistic imposition, imposing the shape of his speech on the world and the individuals within it, to 'make that world recognizable, habitable, 'natural', able to speak his language' (Hawkes, 1973: 211).

The limits of Prospero's ability to impose (and maintain) the shape of his world and his speech is found in Caliban. Caliban appears as an Old World wild man, and his wildness exists at the limits of Prospero's ability to control, to imagine. Caliban is a difficult figure within the play, partially because of the political weight he has accumulated, but also because of his uncertain forms within the play itself. Although Prospero begrudgingly admits Caliban's humanity, or at least his 'human shape' (I.ii.284), and the cast of characters describes him as a 'salvage and deformed slave', his form shimmers somewhere between human and animal.³⁴ He is a 'dead dog', a 'puppy-headed monster' (II.ii.154-5), a 'plain fish' (V.i.266) who is 'legg'd like a man! And his fins like arms!' (II.ii.33-4), a 'freckled whelp hag-born' (I.ii.283), and even an 'Indian' (II.ii.34).³⁵ In the figure of Caliban we have the 'go-between' of the native, encapsulated within Old World frames of knowledge yet occupying a place somewhere outside it, who will bring about our marvelous dispossession through a juxtaposition of violence as in Montaigne.

The barbaric violence of Caliban's plot to kill Prospero exists alongside the civilized actions of Antonio's plot to kill the King of Naples, Alonso. Antonio, who has already usurped Prospero's dukedom, seeks increased power by convincing Sebastian to kill Alonso; Caliban convinces

Ariel: 'No sir.'

Prospero: 'Thou hast. Where was she born? *speak; tell me.*'

Ariel: 'Sir, in Argier'

Prospero: 'O, was she so?' (emphasis added) (I.ii.257-261).

³⁴ Shakespeare does not shrink from the darkest European fantasies about wildness, as Caliban is 'deformed, lecherous, evil-smelling, idle, treacherous, naïve, drunken, rebellious, violent, and devil-worshipping' (Greenblatt, 1990: 26).

³⁵ His two companions, the drunkards Stephano and Trinculo, settle on the term 'monster' (or 'moon-calf', a term of European deformity) to describe him. They use the term so repeatedly that one gets the impression that they are attempting to tie Caliban down to a solid form, referring to Caliban as a 'monster' no less than 9 times in a 45-line passage in Act IV.

Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero. In these concurrent plots, Caliban and Antonio appear alike³⁶, a deadly parallel between civil barbarity and barbarous civility, for what ‘three inches of obedient steel’ will accomplish for Antonio, Caliban can ‘brain him...or with a log/ Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake/ Or cut his wezand’ with a knife (Zeeveld, 1975: 253; II.i.289, III.ii.86-89). Through this parallel, we begin to wonder which is worse: the unnurtured nature of Caliban, or the superficial civility of Antonio (Zeeveld, 1975: 254). When Gonzalo, amazed at the ‘monstrous form of Prospero’s sprites’³⁷, remarks that they are ‘more gentle’ and ‘kind’ than any found in ‘our human generation,’ Prospero agrees: ‘some of you present/ Are worse than devils’ (III.iii.31-4, 35-6). As in Montaigne, the contrast between Caliban and Antonio demonstrates the dangerous incivility that lies within the imagined civil order of the Old World as we (Europeans) become strange to ourselves. We become ‘marvelously dispossessed.’

Caliban consistently resists Prospero’s attempts to maintain discursive control over him. Unlike Montaigne’s natives, whose poetry contains the graceful endings of Greek and whose child-like perceptions are comprehensible within European criticisms, Caliban does not yield ‘kind answer’ and appears unfathomable within our schemata of knowledge and language, possessing his own nouns (paunching, wezand, scamels) and rhythm of prose (I.ii.311, II.ii.1-14, 67-72, III.ii.133-141). Caliban’s first entry onto the stage is with a string of curses and with an aura of defiance. In contrast to Miranda and Ariel, Caliban seizes the power of narrative formation from Prospero, injecting his own version of events before Prospero has the chance to exercise narrative control:

When thou cam’st first,
Thou strok’st me, and made much of me; wouldst give me
Water with berries in ‘t; and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less,

³⁶ The dramatic practice, of paralleling civility and barbarity is found elsewhere in Shakespeare, for example in a gruesome fashion in *Titus Andronicus* (the civil Roman Titus kills and cooks, then serves the sons of the barbarian Gothic Queen to her, seeming to out do the barbarity of the rape and mutilation of Titus’ daughter Lavinia by the Goths) (Zeeveld, 1974: 186). Also, Caliban is not the first figure of wildness or darkness: examples include the Moors Othello and Aaron, and the dark skin of Dido and Cleopatra (Knapp, 1992: 239).

³⁷ Throughout the play, Gonzalo’s opinions echo Montaigne’s most clearly, in his ‘Golden Age’ speech, his statements here, and his line at the end of the play when he recognizes that no man is his own.

That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee,
 And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
 The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
Curs'd be I that did so! All the charms
 Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have,
 Which first was mine own King: and here you sty me
 In this hard rock, whiles you do keep form me
 The rest o' th' island. (emphasis added) (334-346)

As a result, Caliban achieves a moral victory in his first interaction, displaying Prospero's arrival as a curse (rather than the savior of Ariel and the gentle mentor to Miranda). Caliban's exit is with a curse as well, as he famously states that although he learned language, his

profit on't
 Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
 For learning me your language! (365-7)

These few lines might appear as testament to his debased nature, to which no nurture nor gift of language could alter, yet these lines, coupled with Caliban's narrative above, suggest a 'devastating justness' to which Prospero can not retort nor reply³⁸, except command bitterly for Caliban to leave (Greenblatt, 1990: 25).

The justness lies in recognizing that the 'gift' of language is poisoned, as his creation as a speaking subject is set within the terms of Prospero's language, just as the natives in Montaigne's essay speak within the frame of European concerns (Zabus, 2002: 36). However, unlike Montaigne's natives, Caliban's wielding of language constructs an independent reality within the confines of his affected tongue, where he offers to dig pig nuts with his long fingernails, and fetch 'scamels' from rocks (II.ii168-172). Caliban's world can be defined as *opacity*, a whole reality shaded with elements of ours yet impervious: 'the perfect emblem of that opacity is the fact that we do not to this day know the meaning of the word 'scamel'' (Greenblatt, 1990: 31).

Caliban is a reminder of an inconsolable pain and bitterness, which hints at the form of the 'darkness' that Prospero acknowledges at the end of the play. In the final interaction between

³⁸ The majority of Prospero's 'conversations' with Caliban are full of curses and threats; Prospero's prose falls apart when he is faced with addressing Caliban.

Prospero and Caliban, as Caliban enters the stage with his two fellow revolutionaries, Prospero states:

Two of these fellows you [Alonso]
Must know and own; *this thing of darkness I*
Acknowledge mine. (V.i.274-6).

This ‘acknowledgement’ is ambiguous—is it just to indicate whose subject is whose, to separate Stephano and Trinculo from Caliban? Or is it an act of begrudging ownership over a slave? Or is it something simpler, the acknowledgement of a bond? Greenblatt suggests that the acknowledgement is akin to the recognition of a festering wound, of a deep intractable bond—of the poison and pain that passes between Prospero and Caliban (Greenblatt, 1990: 26). Caliban is Prospero’s darkness; an emblem of the instability of Prospero’s certain magic, his imaginations, and his ability to maintain his own linguistic stability as he erupts to Caliban only in curses and as Caliban is able to inject his own narration of events. Moreover, Caliban is a creation of Prospero—through teaching him language, through ‘making much of’ him, through struggling with him. The wild other exists within Prospero’s discursive imaginative realm, continually destabilizes the parameters of his certain knowledge (Brown, 1994: 68). Prospero’s imagined wholeness is dislodged in the acknowledgement of darkness, recognizing of the ‘volubility and discordance’ that Montaigne identifies.

Prospero’s acknowledgement of ‘darkness’, of the unfathomable Caliban, is an acknowledgement of the limits of performance. In a moment of paradoxical ‘troubled’ vision, Prospero becomes ‘vex’d’ by the instability of performance in one of his most famous passages:

‘Our revels are now ended. These our actors,
...were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
...all...shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on’ (IV.i.148-158)

In the Epilogue, the end of the play and of Prospero’s play-ing, Prospero takes the stage as a magician without magic, an actor leaving his part, and places the onus on the audience to ‘set him

free' (Epilogue, 20). This shift, as Prospero leaves the stage, passes the power that Prospero once controlled to the audience—where he once commanded others to 'obey', his now fears the audience 'confin[ing]' him, drawing attention to our own practices of imaginative confinement (4).

The Tempest and Shakespeare have been claimed in various ways, by various critics, each wave leaving a different line in the sand; I drew my line here in this section by reference to Montaigne's essay 'On the Cannibals.' The common currency between Montaigne and *The Tempest* is the presence of wildness, of the wild man, as a rhetorical device, a tool for the production of uncertainty about what is considered certain; or, in White's terms, the 'fictionalization' of mythical wildness that drives us closer to apprehending the complexity and contingency of the world and of discourse (White, 1978: 176). In Montaigne, the European becomes stranger than the cannibal, as he tortures European ideas of civility through the interchange and contrast of the barbaric practices of the natives and the Portuguese: custom and self-identity are dislodged from fixed essences, as Montaigne finds only discordance within himself. *The Tempest* critiques the process of imagining in general at the individual level through the 'subtlety of the isle' of mixed perceptions, while the figure of Prospero embodies the performative entity reliant upon the definition and direction of those around him. Caliban's strong resistance to Prospero's discursive control and maintenance displays the limits of discursive consistency. In the figure of Caliban, our understandings of imagining and wholeness of self are pushed; the opacity and darkness of Caliban's reality is acknowledged as Prospero's own, both his own creation and his own undoing. The 'fictionalization' of the wild man myth is a form of critique that unsettles security, reaching a variation of Césaire's statement above: Europe is not only 'undefensible', it is shown as 'insecure'. In the section that follows, this understanding of wildness provides context for the 'scandalous' intervention of the mistreatment of Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib.

IV.

‘Nonstop imagery...is our surround, but when it comes to remembering, the photograph has the deeper bite’ (Sontag, 2003: 19).

The relationship between Abu Ghraib and *The Tempest* involves a crisis of imagination—the ability to imagine security and wholeness to maintain the lines of (national) community. In Prospero’s final ‘acknowledgment’ of Caliban, as in the achievement of strangeness in Montaigne, is acknowledgement of the limits of discursive consistency, where the certain reality we have been brought to believe in fades and dissolves, an ‘insubstantial pageant’, a *fiction*. In the war on terrorism, the United States posits a certain reality reliant upon a Manichean binary of good and evil, civilization and barbarism, a ‘bright line’ that demarcates the boundaries of legitimate violence and suffering. The political rhetoric is involved in the performative constitution of the United States as a sovereign presence in world politics, a process of ‘becoming’ found in practices of foreign policy (Campbell, 1992: 9). In the process of becoming the discourse of terrorism drew upon the myth of wildness, as the terrorist became the mythic wild man. However, just as in the case of Caliban and the Natives, the mythic wild man threatens discursive stability and consistency. This ‘certain’ myth encountered difficulty in the realm of law and politics, resulting in the confounding extralegal position of the ‘enemy combatant’ detainee, but also these practices of state, the performative constitution, are also present in setting (indeed, imagining) a ‘visual field.’ The images from Abu Ghraib visually fictionalized the myths of wildness and civility that maintained that field; in tracing the effect, I rely upon Himadeep Muppiddi’s account of his own reactions. In the ‘scandal’ of Abu Ghraib, the discursive frame of the war on terrorism is disturbed by the sudden appearance of cruelty—the bright line that confirmed that horror and cruelty existed ‘out there’ dissolves as insubstantial pageant, a fiction.

In the ‘becoming’ of the national-state identity of the United States in the war on terrorism, the events of September 11, 2001 supply a symbolic moment in which the threatening ‘other’ is

identified; this identification is felt at the individual level, providing the imaginative link between state practice and individual security. The attacks, although not the first within the United States nor the first on the Trade Towers themselves, represented the loss of the prerogative to be the one who transgresses the boundaries of other states, but never is in the position to have one's own boundaries transgressed—the United States was supposed to be the place that could not be attacked from abroad (Butler, 2004: 39; Der Derian, 2002: 108). The loss of that security is felt at the individual level,³⁹ where the corporeal vulnerability of the destruction of September 11, 2001 is personally experienced in the 'terror alert' that asks individuals to be 'on guard' (Butler, 2004: 39). The logic of loss leads to a series of actions, by which the United States seeks to (re)constitute a form of wholeness against the familiar danger of future threats (Id.: 29, 41). The 'wholeness' encompasses the 'body politic'—and the danger posed by the terrorist threat is understood by grisly reference to the injury done to that body and the *bodies within* on September 11, 2001.

The narration of the lives lost on September 11, 2001 provides the literal embodiment of the threat posed by terrorism, and reference to that event posits a form of political community and national identity based upon legitimate forms of grief and suffering. Grief, although viewed as personal and therefore apolitical, serves as a relational force that delineates communities of identification. A community of grief⁴⁰ emanating from the events of September 11, 2001 became

³⁹The violence of the events, both on physical bodies and the pixellated screens and pictures, is a trauma of corporeal vulnerability experienced, at the individual level, as real and unreal. The lines between virtual and real violence appeared blurred, as many onlookers sensed that what they were seeing, hearing, smelling was 'only a movie' but simultaneously more real than a movie (Jackson, 2005: 30). Critics often invoke Jean Baudrillard's 'hyper-real' to explain the confusion of real and unreal in the descriptions of witnesses to the events, but at stake in Baudrillard's 'hyper-real' is the crisis of the capability to discern image from the real, where the 'unreal' is more 'real' than the 'real' itself. The loss incited by the events of September 11, 2001 suggests an inability to equate the imaginative world of antimaterial image with the corporeal vulnerability felt in the destruction of bodies and buildings. Or, in Baudrillard's terms, it is an implosion of the system of image itself (See Baudrillard, 2005).

⁴⁰The acts that produce the communities of grief are practices of public mourning and remembrance, which decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved (Id.: xiv). Extensive reporting of the narratives of the lives lost in the events of September 11, 2001 produce a legitimate narration of the grievable life; traumatic event is aestheticized through memorial services, candlelight vigils, and moments of silence (Id.: 38; Edkins, 2002: 252). Conversely, for those lives deemed un-grievable, such as the civilian deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq, there are no acts of public mourning, no images on the newspaper or screen, no obituaries (Butler, 2004: 38). The boundaries set on *public grieving* add to and enhance the visual field referred to below.

characteristic of United States identity in the war on terrorism (Butler, 2004: xiv). President Bush's consistent references in public addresses to both the lives lost and the families affected presents the nation unified by mourning and grief, as in his 2002 State of the Union address: 'we are one country, mourning together and facing danger together' (Bush, cited in Jackson, 2005: 35). The shift from 'mourning' to 'danger' in President Bush's rhetoric solidifies the community of grievable lives against a perceived threat, and in the process relying upon the divide between 'civilization' and 'barbarity.

. In invoking the terms of 'barbarian' and 'civilization', this discourse taps into a set of heavily weighted signs and symbols, as the terrorist acquires the form of the mythical wild man. Butler's psychoanalytic account of the constitution and imagining of the United States around practices of grieving and retribution produces the lines of 'human' and 'nonhuman', practiced in foreign policy through a Manichean discourse of civilization and its barbaric threat. The invocation of this particular trope of discourse provides the initial grounds for viewing terrorism as wildness, and subsequently the terrorist as wild man. Richard Jackson painstakingly collects the circulation of terms of wildness, animality, barbarity, and inhumanity in the public political rhetoric of the Bush Administration (Jackson, 2005). For example, President Bush stated that September 11, 2001, was an attack on 'enlightened civilized societies everywhere' from those on the 'hunted margin of mankind' who 'hate all civilization and mankind' (Bush, cited in Id.: 49). But this discursive trope of civilization and barbarity, operating as a mythic justificatory structure for the military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq, contains within its parameters the elements of its own instability.

First, the invocation of the civilized/ barbaric trope is only part of the constitution of the terrorist as wild man; the discourse of terrorism possesses an uneasy mix of fact and fantasy that is hospitable for the mythification of the terrorist as a wild man. The 'formless ambiguity' of

terrorism⁴¹ and its ability to stimulate collective imagination and garner riveting attention is what locates the terrorist in the mythic tradition of the spectral wild man along with witches, savages, and shamans⁴² (Zulaika and Douglass, 1996: 182-3). The appearance of ‘the terrorist’ as a danger is overwhelmingly imaginative, as in the discourse of terrorism there is an uneasy relationship between fact and fantasy. Terrorism discourse⁴³ contains ‘brute facts in their speechless horror’, in the destruction of buildings and loss of life, but also a fantastical, not necessarily ‘false’, narrative of mystery (Id.: 4-5). This is evident in the portrayals of the events of September 11, 2001 as containing both the stark fact of destruction of the Trade Towers and the lives within but also the ensuing narration of ‘the event’ into discursive realms of ‘civilized’ and ‘barbaric’ (Jackson, 2005: 5, 30-1).

The confounding relation between fact and fantasy in terrorism discourse is sourced also in the controversies surrounding evidence. For instance, the perception of terrorist groups such as al Qaeda as ‘networks’⁴⁴ rather than ‘organizations’ leads to a difference between proving who was ‘behind’ the attacks and who ‘did’ the attacks, further encouraging speculative connections and imaginative portrayals (Smith, 2002: 50). Gonzales’ classification of the war on terrorism as a ‘new’ kind of war, a war based on ‘intelligence’, places the gathering of information, the collection of fact, as paramount (Amann, 2005: 2094). Yet this drive to find fact, viewed as unquestionable evidence interpreted and justified by reference to a certain myth, appears dangerous in the case of the intervention in Iraq. The extensive criticism surrounding the evidence (later proved false, incorrect) and ideological connections (a stretched logic between the secular state of Iraq and the religiosity of

⁴¹ For example, the ‘definitional problem’ regarding what terrorism is—political violence? Freedom fighters?

⁴² The wild man’s mythification as an imaginative danger reveals more about the practices of representation within the discourse of terrorism than about the ‘real’ terrorist: the distinction between the physical and mental worlds has been dissolved, and fictions (such as wildness, barbarism, savagery) are treated ‘as *signs* designating the existence of things or entities whose attributes bear just those qualities that the imagination, for whatever reasons, insists they must bear’ (White, 1978: 154).

⁴³ Referring to public political rhetoric, media and cultural portrayals, academic studies of terrorism, and terrorists.

⁴⁴ James Der Derian has suggested that there is an intellectual void caused by the inability of the fields of political science and international relations to respond to the complexity and speed of networked conflicts; into this void rush ‘policy makers, military planners, and media pundits’ (Der Derian, 2002: 113).

al Qaeda) used to justify the invasion of Iraq is an instance of the (dis)connect between information and imagination (Todorov, 2005: 5-8; Žizek, 2004, 2-5). The uneasy union between fact and fantasy in terrorism discourse in general, and in the war on terrorism in particular, creates a matrix of uncertain certainty.

Yet within this uncertain certainty, the United States attempted to maintain a ‘bright line’ between acts of civilization and of wildness. Donald Rumsfeld has been quoted as describing a ‘bright line’ between civility and barbarity, a line clearly crossed in September 11, 2001 (cited in Jackson, 2005: 49). Part of what R.B.J. Walker terms the ‘metaphysics’ of state-sovereignty, the ‘ethic of absolute exclusion’ denies the applicability of ethical principles beyond a certain bounded space, or a logic of extreme inclusion/ exclusion (Walker, 1993: 66-7). However, the portrayal of the line between civilization and barbarity as a ‘bright line’ is a maneuver that sets the parameters of the discourse of the war on terrorism dangerously simple; as a practice of definition-through-negation, the externalization of those projected characteristics presents them as ‘taboo’ where it is discursively impossible for ‘us’ to possess the characteristics of the barbaric ‘them’ (Zulaika and Douglass, 1996: 178ff). Within the war on terrorism, that ethic of absolute exclusion is found in the ‘bright line’ on conceptions of violence and harm, evident in Rumsfeld’s invocation of September 11, 2001 as an example of barbaric violence.

This bright line has become increasingly difficult to uphold in the case of individuals seized in the ‘information gathering’ of the war on terrorism as the justificatory myth of ‘civilization’ becomes questionable. Individuals seized in the war on terrorism were classified under a ‘new paradigm’ of the enemy combatant⁴⁵ existing in the unseen spaces between levels of law,

⁴⁵ In focusing on the detainee, I am not ignoring the other violent casualties of this war on terrorism, in the deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq. The detainee, unlike those killed by the U.S. and its allies in Iraq and Afghanistan, is a representative figure of the damaging discourse of the war on terrorism—because the detainee’s continued existence in ‘indefinite detention’ is persistent evidence of the dehumanization process at stake in the war on terrorism (Butler, 2004: 91). In some ways, this distinction between the detainee and the death is akin to a part of debates on torture that seek to find what are the moral differences between torture and killing (*See* Luban, 2005: 1429-1432; Scarry, 1985).

international and domestic (Amann, 2005: 2086, 2119-20).⁴⁶ The detainee becomes, subsumed within the rhetoric of intelligence gathering, a form of ‘instrumental’ life that exists only in relation to the information it can provide to prevent suffering and injury⁴⁷ to grievable lives, a form of life understood in terms of danger (Butler, 2004: 77). It is in the figure of the enemy combatant detainee that the wild man is given form in the war on terrorism—and it is this figure that poses the greatest instability to the discursive consistency of the war on terrorism.

These practices of the national-state in the international realm, the rules of civility/ barbarity that set the parameters of terrorism discourse and the maneuvers that govern the position of the detainee, (re)produce a visual field; in the war on terrorism, the imagining of community produced in the rhetoric of foreign policy is also involved in an imagining at a personal, individual level—the imagining of *self* and *community*. James Der Derian suggests that the war on terrorism is a war of representations, in that people go to war based on perceptions; he further emphasizes the role of information and media technology in the relation between image and imagination (Der Derian, 2002: 110). The overwhelmingly visual nature of the war on terrorism is present in the U.S. military’s ‘shock and awe’ strategy, the imitative oppositions between the United States and Osama bin Laden played out on the television screen, and the visual aesthetics of U.S. news media such as CNN and *The New York Times*; these practices set the parameters of knowable knowledge through a ‘sublimity of destruction...[a] desensitizing dream machine’ (Butler, 2004: 148-9; Id.: 109-110). The insensitivity to human suffering and death becomes the mechanism through which

⁴⁶ This status is, somewhat paradoxically, defined by the international and domestic laws it seems to repudiate. When President Bush declared that the detainees of Guantanamo Bay were not covered by the Geneva Conventions⁴⁶ it was not a disregard of law, but rather the assertion of an exception that requires the suspension of law (Agamben, 2005: 2; Amann, 2005: 2089; Cole, 2003: 2). The detainees are in legal suspension, and as a result they are humans that are not humans, as they are ‘not conceptualized within the frame of a political culture in which human lives are underwritten by legal entitlements’ (Butler, 2004: 77). Diane Marie Amann argues that the passage into the ‘unseen’ spaces was not necessary, as she points to conflict of laws jurisprudence to mitigate the differing obligations (Amann, 2005).

⁴⁷ This ‘instrumental’ or dehumanizing tendency of the discourse of the war on terror is the source of much vigorous debate regarding torture, a debate that runs parallel to the issue regarding abuse in Abu Ghraib (Foot, 2006: 2). Major lines of debate include the line-drawing of what is torture, the political ethics of necessity, and whether torture should be legalized in order to promote transparency in its use (Ignatieff, 2005; Walzer, 2004; Dershowitz, 2002). (See Levinson, 2004).

dehumanization is accomplished—but this ‘derealization’ of human suffering takes place through the very *framing* by which the image is contained (Butler, 2004: 148). This ‘framing’ is found not only in the ‘desensitizing dream machine’ but in the public political rhetoric of the civilized/barbaric and the differential allocation of grievable lives.

Moreover, this ‘framing’ also includes that which is *not* seen. Daily, television news producers and print editors make decisions which ‘firm up the wavering consensus about the boundaries of public knowledge’ (Sontag, 2003: 61). The taped execution of the journalist Daniel Pearl (executed in 2002) and pictures of the dead taken at the site of the World Trade center on September 11, 2001 are hidden, while a triptych of the execution of Taliban soldier makes the front page of *The New York Times* (Id.: 61-65). Graphic photos of United States soldiers dead and decapitated in Iraq and the photos of children maimed and killed by United States bombs are refused by the mainstream media, ‘supplanted with footage that always took the aerial view’; the war in Afghanistan began with the images from the night scope camera lens, a grainy image of green pixels and white flashes⁴⁸ (Butler, 2004: 149; Der Derian, 2002: 109). Part of the process of imagining at the individual level takes place in this bounded space of public knowledge, in the presented visual field with the discourse of terrorism as a caption.

Because of these atmospheric conditions, of visual image and derealized harm, the images released from Abu Ghraib possess their power of disturbing the certainty imagined by the visual field.⁴⁹ The detainee already exists at the limits of discursive consistency in its extralegal subjectivity, and the images of mistreatment of the detainee strikes at the visual field of

⁴⁸ Slavoj Žižek points to the new role of the ‘embedded journalist’ in the war in Iraq, contrasted to the aerial views of the Gulf War and Afghanistan, as offering a ‘personal touch’ while simultaneously obfuscating the ‘global’ picture of the war (Žižek, 2004: 3).

⁴⁹ The unsettling power of the photograph has a long history. During the Vietnam era, war photography became a criticism of war: the pictures of the children burning and dying from napalm brought the United States public to a sense of shock because they were ‘precisely pictures we were not supposed to see, and they disrupted the visual field and the entire sense of public identity that was built upon that field. The images furnished a reality, but they also showed a reality that disrupted the hegemonic field of representation itself’ (Butler, 2004: 150). The consequences were inevitable, as stronger forms of censorship were put in place, as mainstream media are not ‘in the business of making people feel queasy about the struggles for which they are being mobilized’ (Sontag, 2003: 58).

representations that connects the imagined self to the whole nation-state community (and the ‘civilization’ it claims). I have argued that a particular method of critiquing the process of imagining is through the ironic use of the excluded other, achieved by Montaigne and Shakespeare in their texts; to experience Montaigne’s *Essays* and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* is to ‘fictionalize’ myths and view the limits of tropics of discourse, a process that unsettles our own conceptions at an individual level. The images released from Abu Ghraib, incites a similar passage,⁵⁰ disturbing the ‘visual field’ created and maintained by the practices described above that define the scope of the grievable human life through the dehumanizing processes of the ‘dream machine’ of spectacular violence (Butler, 2004: 149).

An eloquent example of the production of the uncertainty that the images produced is Himadeep Muppidi’s account of his own reactions. Muppidi’s narrative provides a passage of self incited by the reception of photographs from Abu Ghraib: ‘I had already seen some of them. These I hadn’t. The brief glimpse of the new ones roils my stomach.’ Disturbed, he shuts down the computer in an attempt to ‘erase those images...unpool their film from my eyes’ for he felt ‘debased and complicit merely by looking. I want to retreat, run, from the implication in those pictures.’ His next impulse to ‘prove them false’ suggests another form of complicity beyond the looking—the sense of his own (potential) complicity in failing to grasp ‘what a language of power and war necessarily entailed’:

Colleagues I respect are puzzled by my response to the photographs: ‘What’, they inquire politely but with just that correct touch of annoyed incredulity, ‘did you *imagine* happens in war?’ I don’t begrudge them that annoyance: What *did* I imagine happened in war? Deep down, did I continue to think that war was only ‘politics by other means’? Did the qualifier ‘only’ allow me to hide from myself what the *otherness* of the means implied? (emphasis added) (Muppidi, 2005: 3). Muppidi’s is moved by the body ‘brown and naked’, whose inability to hide brownness ‘cut too close to my bone.’ Just as in Montaigne’s passage regarding the Portuguese treatment of prisoners,

⁵⁰ There is an ambiguous relation between the shock of uncertainty in the images from Abu Ghraib and the ‘inhuman’ status of the detainee; to what extent do these images re-human the detainee, or serve as the forms of intracultural criticism as Montaigne’s use of the cannibals?

the actions carried out in the name of 'our' defense and 'our' civility appear suddenly strange and 'other.' We become, again, marvelously dispossessed.

CONCLUSION.

‘*Caliban*: ...when I wak’d
I cried to dream again.’ (III.ii.141).

‘A historical discourse, unfortunately, can only struggle with its own terms. Its evolution will be determined by history itself.’ (Chatterjee, 1986: 162).

‘Abu Ghraib’ as an event signifies a moment in which something was lost. If September 11, 2001, represents a loss of physical security (‘it could never happen here’), then ‘Abu Ghraib’ represents a loss of a justificatory certainty (‘we could never do anything like *that*’). To understand the loss of ‘Abu Ghraib’ and the impact of the images from Abu Ghraib is to examine the justificatory structures of the discourse of the war on terrorism. Part of the discourse of the war on terrorism involved recourse to a familiar interpretative trope, the wild man, which operates to guarantee the existence of civilized order through negation. In the performative constitution of the nation-state in the international system, the practice of foreign policy (justified in reference to the bright line between civilization and wild barbarism) draws the boundaries of the nation-state community through figuring difference as the identification of danger. In the case of the war on terrorism, the event of September 11, 2001 provided a vivid example of danger, a danger understood in terms of legitimate suffering to grievable lives; the bright line between civility and barbarism marks not only the boundaries of communities under threat, it marks the boundary of legitimate violence and suffering.

The danger of the discourse of the war on terrorism lay in the emphasis upon the certainty of that bright line and the fixity of the myth of the wild man, containing within its parameters the elements of its own destruction. The impact of the images from Abu Ghraib unsettled the certainty of the discourse as the elements of barbarity and strangeness, so rigorously excluded, appear included—the images disturb the visual frame (re)produced at the individual level, an intersection between the nation-state identity and the ‘I’ within. The fixed essential entity (the myth of wildness)

becomes fictionalized, as ‘we’ become strange to ourselves, marvelously dispossessed, losing the certainty that licensed the military actions taken in the war on terrorism.

In contextualizing this passage, the manner in which myths of wildness are fictionalized, I turned to the fictive use of wildness in Montaigne and Shakespeare, where the alien ‘other’ became a tool of intracultural criticism. Montaigne juxtaposes the ‘barbarism’ of the natives with the ‘barbarism’ of the Europeans, displaying how the production of a certain ‘otherness’ of barbarism obscures a ‘deeper’ barbarism within. Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* incites a general uncertainty about the process of imagining, but in particular in imagining the wholeness of self. Prospero’s attempts to affirm his wholeness and control in his magic and his wielding of knowledge over the other characters is challenged and threatened constantly by Caliban. Caliban, created by Prospero, remains the mark of Prospero’s own uncertainty, the point at which his statements about the world risk becoming fictionalized; when the pageant fades, and his charms are overthrown, Prospero acknowledges his bond with the ‘thing of darkness.’ These two authors are examples of the effect of the fictive play with wildness, a process that reveals that wildness is not ‘out there’, but is contained within our own parameters of knowledge.

The war on terrorism is not simple. In seizing upon the unsettling moment of ‘Abu Ghraib’, I have attempted to identify a moment in which the discourse of the war on terror struggled with itself, and its own terms of imagination. Prospero’s attempts to maintain his own discursive wholeness and confirm his performative identity are consistently challenged by Caliban’s refusal to obey the strictures of Prospero’s rules of engagement, a refusal that is powerful because Caliban is, to a large extent, an agent of Prospero’s own discourse. Just as in Prospero’s island, the discourse of the war on terrorism is operates on terms of representation that are not stable, nor harmonious. However, like all discourse, it can only struggle with its own terms—its evolution will be determined by history itself

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