Colonial and Postcolonial Perspectives on Racism:
Ourika and *Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem*

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ABSTRACT

JULIA ANNE STEELE: Colonial and Postcolonial Perspectives on Racism: *Ourika* and *Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem*
(Under the direction of Dr. Dominique Fisher)

This work explores the perspectives on racism presented in Claire de Duras' *Ourika* and Maryse Condé's *Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem* while looking at the historical context in which each novel was written. The ideas of oppression, Otherness, family, patriarchy and religion, as well as how they affect the black female protagonist in each novel are explored. While Tituba has more autonomy, both she and Ourika convey their thoughts to the reader in an intimate and personal manner. As a result of oppression, Ourika internalizes the power structure of the dominant culture to such an extent that she tries to become white, while Tituba internalizes the power structure but not to the same extent as Ourika. Ourika demonstrates the helplessness and entrapment felt by those under a colonial regime, whereas Tituba resists her oppressors and gives hope to future generations that one can triumph over racism.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Colonialism and slavery are two components of France's history that appear in varying degrees in French and Francophone literature. Claire de Duras and Maryse Condé are two authors that treat such topics in a manner that was revolutionary for their times. In *Ourika*, Duras reveals the plight of a young Senegalese girl brought to France and legally given her freedom in a way that conveys the intimate thoughts of an African protagonist and challenges some of the prevailing political ideals of the time in which it is set. Ourika speaks to the reader using first person, which allows her to convey her most intimate thoughts, albeit through the mediation of the doctor and the author who relay it to the reader. Ourika's story calls into question the extent of social and political success brought about by the French Revolution and, more specifically, France's imperialist ideals.

In a somewhat different manner, in *Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem*, Maryse Condé presents the life of a black female slave living in Barbados who is brought to the American colonies and accused of witchcraft. Tituba expresses her trials and tribulations in a personal and intimate way that calls into question the practices of the societies in which she lives. Tituba's story is recounted in first person and, unlike *Ourika*, there is no third person involved in telling the story. The title of the novel, which is in the first person, asserts Tituba's identity as opposed to the third person reference to

Ourika in the title of Duras' novel.[1] The events told by Tituba focus the reader's attention on westerners' misunderstanding of Tituba's value system, as well as the oppression she suffers because of being black and a female.

While considering the way in which these two works unfold, it is important to note the background from which each writer comes. Claire de Duras belonged to the aristocracy, and while she was not directly involved in the slave trade, her family was. It may seem puzzling that a white woman of the aristocracy would choose to write about an African slave. However, if one considers the time in which the novel was written and her family background, Duras' interest in such a topic becomes clearer.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there was a great deal of interest in slaves and their fate. It was a time marked by ever-changing laws concerning slaves in France. For example, slaves were automatically freed once they reached France, but a few years later were not even allowed to enter France.

Duras' Creole mother was born in Martinique, and her liberal father, the Count of Kersaint, was considered to be a traitor to his class who was eventually guillotined for a controversial political view. After the death of her father, when Duras was just sixteen, she went with her mother to Martinique to recover a fortune. Although researchers are not certain, Duras' mother most likely inherited land and slaves to work on the land.[2] So, after considering her father's deviance from his class' ideals and her mother's ethnicity, it

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[1]The title of *Ourika* is in third person, but the novel is written in first person which demonstrates a white author allowing a black narrator to speak. In contrast, *Moi, Tituba sorcière…Noire de Salem* asserts the identity of the Other in the title. The use of italics for the second portion of the title (*Noire de Salem*) represents Tituba's voice which is set apart from the first portion of the title by ellipses. In this first person narrative, a black narrator speaks and criticizes colonial power.

[2]Françoise Massardier-Kenney speculates that the fortune Duras and her mother inherited involved slaves since the primary source of income in Martinique was sugarcane fields which implies slaves. Françoise Massardier-Kenney, "Duras, Racism, and Class," Translating Slavery: gender and sex in French women's writing, eds. Doris Y. Kadish and Françoise Massardier-Kenney (Kent State UP, 1994) 186.

is not altogether surprising that Duras would write about a black female slave. Not only does Duras portray a young black female in this novel, but she also explores a new dimension of writing in French literature by showing Ourika as a person with psychological depth. While Duras makes a literary breakthrough with her portrayal of Ourika, it is important to note that her nationality, class and skin color affect her depiction of the young protagonist.

The critical analysis of *Ourika* relies on the historical context in which the plot unfolds. The novel is set during the French Revolution and was first published shortly thereafter, in 1823. The Chevalier de B. brings the young protagonist from Senegal to France shortly before the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789. The eighteenth century witnessed many changes concerning slaves in France and its colonies. With the success of slave markets in the early 18th century, many feared there were too many blacks entering France. Therefore, the king issued a declaration in 1738 that, as Sue Peabody states, "attempted to eliminate many of the loopholes that favored the proliferation of black slaves in France" (37). As Linda Rouillard explains, Louis XVI denied blacks entry into France, disallowed the freeing of black servants already working there and outlawed whites marrying blacks or people of a mixed race.[3] Resistance to slavery and rapidly changing laws concerning the subject marked the time surrounding the French Revolution.

During this period, relations between France and Senegal were notably better than with other French colonies as demonstrated by the allowance of marriages between the

[3]Linda Rouillard points out the historical conditions of the time in which Ourika lives. Rouillard speculates the reason Ourika was allowed to enter France was because of the more tolerant relationship between France and Senegal than with other colonies. Linda Marie Rouillard, "The Black Galatea: Claire de Duras's Ourika," Nineteenth-Century French Studies 32.3-4 (2004): 211-12.

French and Senegalese living in Senegal.[4] Although the French government did not accept these marriages for those living in France, it does show that relations between the two countries were fairly tolerant and more open than with other colonies since intermarriage was allowed in Senegal .

Maryse Condé's background is very different from Duras' and more similar to her protagonist, Tituba. Condé is a black female originally from Guadeloupe who was born in 1937, roughly a century and a half after Duras. It is important to note that *Moi, Tituba* was written in postcolonial times, being first published in 1986. However, the events in the novel take place at the time of the historic Salem witch trials, which began in March, 1692. The time interval between the events in the novel and when it was written may have played a role in the portrayal of Tituba. More specifically, the fact that this novel was written during postcolonial times may account for the primary difference between the approaches Ourika and Tituba take.[5]

Condé rewrites Tituba's story in a way that gives Tituba psychological depth and an identity that is more than just a name mentioned in a history book, as well as a story ending that gives hope to slaves and all those who are considered the Other. *Moi, Tituba* focuses on Puritan New England and the Anglophone West Indies. Puritan New England was an extremely religious society that adhered to very strict rules. Those who deviated

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[4]Linda Rouillard states that the French had a more harmonious relationship with the Senegalese than with other colonists which is evidenced by the allowance of intermarriage between the French and Senegalese even though it went against the Code Noir. She also states that there was less concern about intermarriages because the French living in Senegal occasionally sent their Eurafrican children to Europe to be educated (212).

[5]Ourika tries to appear like those around her and is mostly paralyzed by her Otherness; whereas Tituba holds fast to her practice of witchcraft and eventually helps the fight against slavery. This shows that Ourika internalizes the violence of the colonial system and returns it upon herself whereas Tituba actively resists slavery and colonialism.

from the rules of this society were treated with great suspicion. Since this religious society succeeded in isolating itself, it was much easier to accuse and punish the few who deviated from the mass.

While Tituba spends a considerable amount of time in the American colonies, her journey both begins and ends in Barbados. Once the English settled in Barbados in 1627, it was apparent that they regarded the Africans living there as inferior and were especially skeptical of their religious beliefs.[6] As Hilary Beckles demonstrates in *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados*, masters regarded slaves working on plantations as "units of capital with property values"; whereas the slaves viewed their masters as "brutal exploiters who were indifferent and generally opposed to their basic interests" (79).

Ourika and *Moi, Tituba* both portray black female slave protagonists who confront issues such as oppression and alienation as well as patriarchal traditions although they are set in different historical contexts. While Ourika shows the paralyzing effects of attempted assimilation into the colonizer's culture, Tituba conveys resistance and rebellion.[7] As each character sets out on a journey in which she will question her identity and try to form an identity that reconciles the past with the present, I will examine what constitutes Otherness for each one as well as the forms of oppression each suffers.

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[6]Larry Gragg says "English settlers saw the West Africans in their midst as an inferior people, particularly when they considered their slaves' religious beliefs and practices. Some argued that the slaves had no religious beliefs, that they were 'absolute atheists.' Others worried that they paid homage to the devil." Larry Gragg, Englishmen Transplanted (New York: Oxford UP, 2003) 118.

[7]Assimilation implies being completely absorbed into a culture or population and entails a conversion as opposed to integration which involves incorporating something into an existing unit. Albert Memmi expresses the notion of assimilation in the context of colonialism by saying that the colonized is "fondu au sein des colonisateurs." According to him, assimilation precludes a colonial relationship. Albert Memmi, Portrait du Colonisé (Corrêa: Buchet/Chastel, 1957) 160-165.

I will examine how whites dominate blacks in *Ourika* and *Moi, Tituba*. Furthermore, I will give examples that demonstrate the different ways in which whites constantly exercise power over blacks, and I will show how this power represents an internalized hierarchy. I will also examine how symbolic and physical violence are directed toward women in both novels. We will see that Ourika is denied a relationship with a white man because of the aristocracy's concern for protecting its purity (symbolic violence), while in *Moi, Tituba* there are multiple rapes (physical violence) that are examples of men exercising power over women and that represent hybridization of the white and black races.

In addition to oppression and the aforementioned forms of violence, I will analyze the role of family, patriarchy and religion for Ourika and Tituba. I will focus on the reactions of each narrator in order to show that Ourika is more passive and continues to struggle with her identity, never finding complete freedom from exile; whereas Tituba takes an active role that leads to the discovery and creation of her own identity as well as freedom from exile.

CHAPTER 2
OURIKA

The governor of Senegal, le Chevalier de B., rescues Ourika from a slave ship about to set sail and brings her to France at the age of two, shortly before the French Revolution. After making the journey to France, le Chevalier de B. gives Ourika to his aunt, Mme la Maréchale de B., and grants her freedom. Thus, Ourika enters a predominantly white society where her caretakers are white and members of the aristocracy. In her early years, Ourika remains unaware of her past and of her racial difference. Mme de B. nurtures Ourika and gives her excellent care. Ourika quickly finds a friend in Mme de B.'s grandson, Charles. She spends most of her time listening to Mme de B.'s highly distinguished friends and receiving an education fitting of an aristocrat.

At the age of fifteen, Ourika becomes brutally aware of her Otherness when she overhears a conversation between Mme de B. and her friend, the Marquise. Mme de B. expresses her fears that Ourika will always be alone in the world. The Marquise questions Mme de B. about Ourika's future:

> A qui la marierez-vous, avec l'esprit qu'elle a et l'éducation que vous lui avez donnée? Qui voudra jamais épouser une négresse? Et si, à force d'argent, vous trouvez quelqu'un qui consente à avoir des enfants nègres, ce sera un homme d'une condition inférieure, et avec qui elle se trouvera malheureuse. Elle ne peut vouloir que de ceux qui ne voudront pas d'elle. (Ourika 13)

The Marquise continues by accusing Ourika of inappropriate behavior. She claims that Ourika "n'a pas rempli sa destinée: elle s'est placée dans la société sans sa permission; la

société se vengera" (Ourika 13). This conversation thrusts Ourika into overwhelming despair and total isolation. After hearing the conversation, Ourika expresses her emotions by exclaiming, "Hélas! Je n'appartenais plus à personne; j'étais étrangère à la race humaine tout entière" (Ourika 15). With this statement begins her exile in the only home she has ever known.

This exchange demonstrates that the Marquise does not foresee a solution that will make Ourika happy, only a life of unhappiness. Mme de B.'s solution for the situation is for Ourika to remain unaware of her difference as long as possible and to stay by Ourika's side to protect her from racism.[1] However, as the Marquise points out, it is only a matter of time before circumstances will force Ourika away from Mme de B.'s side. There is still a glimmer of hope in Mme de B.'s heart that Ourika will be able to rise above her fate.

Overhearing this destructive conversation shatters Ourika's identity. Because she is a former black slave from Senegal, people view her as the Other in France. Not only is she the Other in the country where she resides, but she also has become the Other in relation to her homeland since the only culture she knows is that of France. Thus, if she were to return to Senegal, an impossible option, she would also be considered the Other from a cultural standpoint. Because Mme de B. is the only family and France is the only country she has ever known, Ourika is seemingly left with no means to construct a viable identity.[2] The knowledge of her Otherness has shattered the identity she previously knew.

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[1]Even when she wishes to protect Ourika from racism, Mme de B.'s actions display racism by isolating Ourika and making her blind to her Otherness. Also, the act of isolating Ourika is one way in which Mme de B. exercises power over her.

The attention Mme de B. accords Ourika, as well as the luxurious life Ourika lives, only serve to make the blow struck by the Marquise even more brutal. When Ourika looks back, she realizes this and expresses that this type of life "prolongeait mon erreur et autorisait mon aveuglement" (Ourika 10). Even though Mme de B. loves Ourika and tries to protect and help her, Mme de B. also exerts power over Ourika. As Pierre Bourdieu explicates, Ourika contributes to her own domination, by accepting the limits placed upon her even though these limits are imposed out of love, affection and admiration.[3]

In her early years, Ourika identifies herself with Mme de B. and the upper class. She develops disdain for anything that is not part of her luxurious world with Mme de B. Thus, once Ourika learns of her difference from Mme de B. and those around her, Ourika begins to hate herself as the Other.[4] In other words, she internalizes the colonial hierarchy and demonstrates it in her thoughts and actions by hating herself for her Otherness and trying to become part of the dominant race. [5]

Her education only contributes to Ourika's feelings of Otherness. It is through her education that Ourika is further set apart from her native culture, which she never knew,

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[2]Kari Weil suggests that the Marquise's words force Ourika to disidentify with the sole family and culture she has known. Thus, it appears she is left with no means of constructing an identity that will be functional in French society. Kari Weil, "Romantic Exile and the Melancholia of Identification," Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies 7.2 (1995): 120.

[3]Pierre Bourdieu says that "les dominés contribuent, souvent à leur insu, parfois contre leur gré, à leur propre domination en acceptant tacitement les limites imposées, prennent souvent la forme…de passions et de sentiments - amour, admiration, respect…" Pierre Bourdieu, La domination masculine (Paris: Seuil, 1998) 44-45.

[4]Kari Weil argues that Ourika's disdain for other cultures turns inward, causing her to hate herself as someone of a different culture (121).

[5]Pierre Bourdieu asserts that one of the ways in which "la violence symbolique" manifests itself is through the internalization of the social/cultural power structure which in turn causes the dominated person to adopt the thoughts and beliefs of the person or group exercising power (39-48).

and becomes more like those around her who reject her. This gives Ourika cause to question why, if she thinks and acts like those around her, she is rejected.[6]

Her education also serves as a barrier to finding love since the only man who would marry her would not be someone with whom she could have a happy relationship due to the differences in their backgrounds and ways of life. The impossibility of love between Ourika and a white man intensifies her feelings of not belonging. Claudine Hermann, editor of the feminist edition of *Ourika*, expresses this sentiment well by saying, "l'étrangeté, pour une femme, c'est bien d'être au dehors de l'amour" (Prabhu 134). In other words, to be denied a relationship with a man she loves who would share her values and education makes Ourika feel as though she is the stranger, the foreigner. On a larger scale, it means that she is denied access to love, which is a fundamental need of every human.

Once Ourika becomes acutely aware of her Otherness, she enters a state of mourning. She has lost her love, her innocence, her connection with society, her hopes and a place where she feels accepted. She withdraws from life which causes concern for her caretakers. Because of this self-hatred, she tries to change herself to look like those around her. Ourika wishes to no longer stand out because of her skin color and even wishes to become invisible. She demonstrates the desire of some black people to "blanchir la race," as Frantz Fanon would explain it, which is the case with Mayotte Capécia.[7] In other words, the black person internalizes the way whites view blacks, and

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[6]Michèle Bissière suggests that Ourika's education separates her from men of her race and therefore, from motherhood, which was the only way for women to achieve self-fulfillment in post revolutionary times. Michèle Bissière, "Union et désunion avec le père dans Ourika et Edouard de Claire de Duras," Nineteenth-Century French Studies 23.3-4 (1995): 321.

he or she tries to become white since whites are viewed as superior. This is an example of symbolic violence. Ourika refers to her skin color as "ce mal sans remède" (Ourika 26). She expresses hatred of her skin color:

> Ma figure me faisait horreur, je n'osais plus me regarder dans une glace; lorsque mes yeux se portaient sur mes mains noires, je croyais voir celles d'un singe; je m'exagérais ma laideur, et cette couleur me paraissait comme le signe de ma réprobation; c'est elle qui me séparait de tous les êtres de mon espèce. (Ourika 15)

In this statement, Ourika even dares to compare herself to a monkey,[8] implying that she is subordinate and dehumanized. Referring to herself as an animal and referring to her ugliness and the damning mark of her skin color exhibit how Ourika has internalized the stereotypes of blacks held by white people. Also, in the statement above, she reveals her perceived likeness to the French by referring to them as "mon espèce." She considers them to be her natural kind from a cultural standpoint. For Ourika, this is the basis of belonging and the symptom of the extent to which she has internalized the way of thinking of the dominant race. Ourika recognizes her biological difference from the French which is the cause of the racism she suffers.

In order to hide her skin color and in a last attempt to appear like those surrounding her, Ourika removes all mirrors from her room. Thus, she cannot see herself as black and can pretend to be invisible. In addition, she wears gloves and dresses that hide her neck and arms. She even resorts to wearing a hat with a veil to hide her face. At times, she wears the hat indoors in an effort to conceal as much of her skin as possible

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[7]In *Je suis Martiniquaise*, Mayotte Capécia loves a white man and finds no fault in him. Like Ourika, she tries to become white. Franz Fanon, Peau Noire Masques Blancs (Paris: Seuil, 1952) 54-58.

[8]This is a reference to "les zoos humains" that took place in France during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. People deemed "exotic" (blacks and aborigines) were displayed in cages like animals for the public to view. Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard and Sandrine Lemaire, "Ces zoos humains de la République coloniale," Le Monde diplomatique Aug. 2000, online, Internet, 2 Apr. 2007.

and for as long as possible. These actions demonstrate how much Ourika has internalized French society's belief in the inferiority of blacks and applied symbolic violence to herself.

In addition to her skin color, Ourika's difference lies in the fact that she was not born into the aristocracy. While Mme de B. incorporates Ourika into her circle and Ourika possesses the mannerisms and education of an aristocrat, society still considers her to be different, which prolongs her subjection to racism. One example of this is when it comes time to choose a wife for Charles. At this time, Ourika has developed strong romantic feelings for Charles, although Mme de B. is most likely unaware of those feelings. Choosing a wife for Charles must be presented as a deliberate and calculated betrothal. The narrator describes the young lady chosen for Charles, Anaïs de Thémines, as having had "tous les avantages de la naissance, de la fortune et de l'éducation" (Ourika 29). This description implies that Mlle de Thémines was born into the aristocracy, unlike Ourika, who was placed there at the age of two. The fact that Mme de B. never even considers Ourika may have feelings for Charles shows that she does not view Ourika as an equal or perhaps even as a person.[9]

Charles represents "all that Ourika's blackness denies to her - family, future, and a desire that was perceived as wholly within the natural order" (Weil 121-22). The denial of the possibility to be united with Charles is a constant source of pain for Ourika and is a continual reminder of her racial difference and rejection. At one point, Ourika expresses her deep longing and despair by saying, "Qu'ai-je fait pour être condamnée à n'éprouver

[9]Françoise Massardier-Kenney argues that by race and class being signs of Ourika's difference, Duras shows the central issue is the difference existing between the class that wishes to protect its purity and everyone else. The strict class boundaries present in the process of choosing a wife for Charles demonstrate the subconscious ideology of the aristocratic class (192).

jamais les affections pour lesquelles seules mon coeur est créé" (Ourika 39). She continues to mourn for the loss of Charles and an impossibility that she is powerless to change.

The need to marry or else be faced with a very bleak and unacceptable future confirms the weight of the patriarchal system in which this novel is set. The role of women in the late eighteenth century was extremely traditional. It was a time when women were expected to be supporting wives and mothers in order to be accepted in the eyes of society. Marriages resembled business deals in which one was forced to look out for his or her own economic welfare. Ourika views herself as a woman in the most traditional sense. The traditional view of women places them, as Massardier-Kenney aptly states, "in the realm of the circulation of property within specific classes" (191). Chantal Bertrand-Jennings articulately sums up the status of women during this time by referring to "le cauchemar de leur minorisation, de leur dévalorisation et de leur exclusion à l'aube du siècle" (56). Thus, it is clear that this society places many restraints on women and sets forth a very prescribed way women should behave.

Throughout her life, Ourika suffers many forms of oppression, some of which are less recognizable than others. She suffers from living in a patriarchal society because it denies her certain liberties and forces her to follow strict rules that require submission to those in power. The white society in which she lives is very oppressive in its view of black people as subordinate and its refusal to accept those with a different skin color. The class into which Ourika is forced to try to assimilate is also continually oppressive. Ourika experiences much distress and despair as a result of what Massardier-Kenney describes as the class that "wants to protect its purity" and refuses to accept those who are

not born into it (192). Ourika lives under a white patriarchal regime concerned with class distinctions which denies her many freedoms including a desirable future.

One form of dominance by whites is the presence of intermediaries.[10] It is through intermediaries that Ourika learns about some of the significant events in her young life. For example, Ourika cannot remember any firsthand experience in her native country or her life there. Early in the novel she refers to this by saying, "Je ne sus que longtemps après l'histoire des premiers jours de mon enfance" (Ourika 7). It is another person, most probably Mme de B., who makes Ourika aware of this important component of her sense of self. Thus, it is only through the interpretation of someone of the dominant race and class that she learns of these events. Ourika first experiences racial prejudice at age fifteen when the Marquise abruptly and indirectly makes her aware of her racial difference. Therefore, it is through the discourse of the dominant French society that she learns of her difference. A third intermediary is present in the form of the doctor who relays Ourika's story to the reader. As the doctor mentions in the introduction, it is through his conversations with Ourika at the convent that he learns her story and then shares it with the reader. Throughout this novel, the intermediaries, who are representative of the oppressive white patriarchal regime, exercise their power over Ourika by controlling certain information given to her and by reformulating her words before presenting them to the reader.

Another form of oppression comes through Mme de B., whom the narrator presents as an extremely kind woman. Ourika describes Mme de B. as "la personne la

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[10]Mme de B., French society and the doctor serve as intermediaries by making Ourika aware of something or by relaying something to others instead of Ourika experiencing it firsthand or relaying it directly to Ourika.

plus aimable de son temps" who possesses "la bonté la plus touchante" (Ourika 7). Ourika expounds upon her description by adding that "on valait près de Mme de B. tout ce qu'on pouvait valoir, et peut-être plus, car elle prêtait quelque chose d'elle à ses amis sans s'en douter elle-même: en la voyant, en l'écoutant, on croyait lui ressembler" (Ourika 8). While this kind and generous woman may seem an unassuming oppressor, she belongs in this category because of the power she exercises over Ourika. One example when Mme de B. objectifies Ourika and treats her as an exotic other as opposed to viewing her as an equal is when Ourika performs a comba, which is the national dance of Senegal. While Mme de B.'s intentions are to showcase Ourika's talent, she nonetheless places Ourika center stage to be viewed as the Other.

In reaction to an oppressive society, Ourika, as previously shown, tries to become white like her oppressors by covering up her black skin, which is the most obvious sign of her difference. In Bourdieu's sense, Ourika's actions are an outward sign of what has been internalized.[11] Ourika's actions, as well as what she communicates to the reader, demonstrate that she adopts the values of her oppressors as she begins to hate herself as the Other. As Albert Memmi explains, it is common for the colonized person to hate himself or herself and at the same time love the colonizer.[12] Due to the internalization of the colonizer's values, the colonized person tries to equal the colonizer by changing the color of his or her skin and by emulating the colonizer. Another change in Ourika caused

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[11]Pierre Bourdieu says that "les dominés appliquent des catégories construites du point de vue des dominants aux relations de domination, les faisant ainsi apparaître comme naturelles" (41).

[12]Albert Memmi says, "Le refus de soi et l'amour de l'autre sont communs à tout candidat à l'assimilation." He continues by saying, "l'amour du colonisateur est sous-tendu d'un complexe de sentiments qui vont de la honte à la haine de soi" (158).

by what she considers to be an awakening to her "malheur" is a shift in the way she thinks. She describes this change in the following way:

> Un sage d'Orient a dit: 'Celui qui n'a pas souffert, que sait-il?' Je vis que je ne savais rien avant mon malheur; mes impressions étaient toutes des sentiments; je ne jugeais pas; j'aimais: les discours, les actions, les personnes plaisaient ou déplaisaient à mon cœur. A présent, mon esprit s'était séparé de ces mouvements involontaires…Depuis que je me sentais étrangère à tout, j'étais devenue plus difficile, et j'éxaminais, en le critiquant, presque tout ce qui m'avait plu jusqu'alors. (Ourika 16)

While Mme de B. suffers due to events surrounding the French Revolution, Ourika is overcome by the desire to help Mme de B. and share her pain. Ourika explains, "Je pleurais, je m'unissais à ses sentiments, j'essayais d'élever mon âme pour la rapprocher de la sienne, pour souffrir du moins autant qu'elle et avec elle" (Ourika 22). In this statement she also alludes to the idea that she is subordinate to Mme de B. While Mme de B. does experience adversity, it is not in the same way as Ourika. Mme de B.'s suffering is caused by temporary circumstances that do not affect her sense of identity; whereas Ourika's suffering is due to her skin color and the racial identity crisis she experiences because of it.

As time passes, Ourika's reaction to the oppressive society around her begins to change. A sense of longing for Senegal overcomes her. Ourika conveys her longing by saying, "J'aurais voulu être transportée dans ma patrie barbare, au milieu des sauvages qui l'habitent, moins à craindre pour moi que cette société cruelle qui me rendait responsable du mal qu'elle seule avait fait" (Ourika 28-9). This native land of Senegal to which she refers is a place unknown to Ourika. The way she has come to know it exists only in her imagination.[13] Ourika's longing for Senegal represents a longing to escape

[13]Edouard Glissant explains that for Caribbean people Africa remains imaginary. "Le troisième avatar du gouffre projette ainsi à la parallele de la masse d'eau l'image renversée de tout cela qui a été abandonné,

her situation. As Ourika cannot forsee a way to escape her situation, she questions why she was ever born and why she was "condamnée à la vie" (Ourika 32). At one point, she even prays that God take her from the world because she can no longer bear living in it.

One aspect of life that deeply affects Ourika throughout her life is family. For her, it is an adopted family, but it is the only one Ourika has ever known. In her early life, Ourika's family brings her great joy and pleasure. As a child she sits at Mme de B.'s side and gladly listens to her and her distinguished friends. Looking back on her childhood, Ourika says she was happy to be by Mme de B.'s side and that "aimer, pour moi, c'était être là, c'était l'entendre, lui obéir, la regarder surtout" (Ourika 8). She was perfectly content with this lifestyle, and she claims that she desired nothing more in life than to be by Mme de B.'s side. Ourika's devotion to Mme de B. is unyielding as a child. Ourika expresses this when she says "je ne pensais qu'à plaire à Mme de B." (Ourika 9). Ourika's hopes lie in Mme de B.'s approval and esteem which she aptly communicates to the reader by saying that "un sourire d'approbation sur ses lèvres était tout mon avenir" (Ourika 10). Ourika's relationship with Mme de B. illustrates the internalization of the dominant race's views, which manifest themselves in a seemingly natural way, as Bourdieu explains.[14] Ourika demonstrates love, admiration and respect for Mme de B., symbolizing the colonizer's superior position and Mme de B.'s worthiness of such affections.

Similarly, Charles' presence in Ourika's early life brings her much happiness. As children, they take walks together and Ourika listens as Charles tells her of his hopes,

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qui ne se retrouvera pour des générations que dans les savanes bleues du souvenir ou de l'imaginaire, de plus en plus élimés." Edouard Glissant Poétique de la Relation (Paris: Gallimard, 1990) 19.

[14]Pierre Bourdieu's explanation of this notion is stated in footnote 18.

fears and thoughts on life. When speaking with Ourika, Charles hides nothing from her, and Ourika thrives on the intimacy of this relationship. Their relationship is reciprocal in that Charles also enjoys spending time with Ourika. She describes their relationship by saying, "mon amitié était pour lui comme sa vie; il en jouissait sans la sentir…il savait bien qu'en me parlant de lui, il me parlait de moi" (Ourika 26). Ourika shows just how intimately she knows Charles when she says, "j'étais plus *lui* que lui-même" (Ourika 26). One reason she so profoundly enjoys her time with Charles is because it causes her to forget her troubles. Ourika describes their conversations as having a kind of spell over her. Despite her closeness to Charles, Ourika is not able to share her most intimate thoughts and secrets with him. For example, she is never able to tell him of the pain it causes her that people view her as different and subordinate because of her skin color. Thus, her relationship with Charles cannot be completely reciprocal due to the barrier created by racism directed at her by white people.

It is clear that Ourika's early life revolves around her family and that she derives happiness from her family. This happiness is possible only because of her blindness and isolation.[15] Thus, she is quite sorrowful when Charles leaves at age seven to go away to school. His absence creates a void that nothing and no one is ever able to fill completely.

Once Ourika overhears the conversation between the Marquise and Mme de B., Ourika's attitude toward others, including her family, drastically changes. Ourika's awareness of her difference creates a distance between her and everyone else in her society. Her temperament toward her family changes as a result of feeling cut off from

[15]Tahar Ben Jelloun mentions the notion of isolation in the context of Maghrebians in France. He points out that immigrants were often kept from interacting with French society by being placed in immigrant neighborhoods and communities. While Ourika is not in an immigrant community, she is kept from interacting with anyone except those who come to Mme de B.'s home. Tahar Ben Jelloun Hospitalité Française (Paris: Seuil, 1997) 132-33.

society. Also, her family serves as a reminder of what her society denies her. She conveys this sentiment when she states, "Les liens de famille surtout me faisaient faire des retours bien douloureux sur moi-même, moi qui jamais ne devais être la sœur, la femme, la mère de personne" (Ourika 17). Since these three roles defined French women in the eighteenth century, it is the equivalent of society denying Ourika recognition as a woman or even as a human being.

As Michelle Chilcoat argues, it is the realization that she will never marry a white man that ultimately leads to Ourika's fatal illness.[16] While Charles is engaged to Mlle de Thémines, he and Ourika have a conversation which causes a marked change in Ourika. During this conversation, Charles speaks of his love for Mlle de Thémines. As a result, Ourika questions why she is even alive if she must be denied the one thing she desires most. It is the sudden and violent realization that she will be alone forever that causes Ourika to fall to her knees in pain and despair:

> Jusqu'à l'époque dont je viens de vous parler, j'avais supporté mes peines; elles avaient altéré ma santé, mais j'avais conservé ma raison et une sorte d'empire sur moi-même: mon chagrin, comme le ver qui dévore le fruit, avait commencé par le cœur; je portais dans mon sein le germe de la destruction, lorsque tout était encore plein de vie au dehors de moi…Enfin jusqu'à l'époque dont je viens de vous parler, j'étais plus forte que mes peines; je sentais qu'à présent mes peines seraient plus fortes que moi. (Ourika 33)

From this moment, her health declines and those around her only serve as reminders of her misery.

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[16]Michelle Chilcoat argues that "this 'natural' institution [marriage] is the cause of woman's dis-ease in the confining and oppressive cultures of Revolutionary and Restoration France." Michelle Chilcoat, "Confinement, the Family Institution, and the Case of Claire de Duras's Ourika," Esprit Créateur 38.3 (1998): 14.

For a brief period after learning of her fate, Ourika experiences relief from her troubles. It is the Revolution that brings this reprieve. As Michele Bissière explains, for Ourika, the Revolution brings hope of a new society which values the inherent qualities in people and what they do as opposed to their social status.[17] Ourika enjoys the pain of others and the chaos around her to some extent because it makes her feel as though she has company in her suffering. It even brings her some sense of happiness in the midst of her troubles which she expresses when she says, "Quelques fois, malgré ma tristesse, je m'amusais de toutes ces violentes opinions" (Ourika 19). She conveys no longer feeling alone by saying, "je ne me sentais plus isolée depuis que tout le monde était malheureux" (Ourika 22). If others are suffering, regardless of the cause, she does not feel so alone. In addition, it gives Ourika something besides her own troubles on which to focus. At one point she expresses, "Je ne pensai presque pas à mes peines, tant que dura la Terreur" (Ourika 22).

The Revolution comes to an end without the fulfillment of Ourika's hopes. While it does bring her some amount of hope for a short time, Ourika is glad to see the Revolution's end because of the danger in which it places Mme de B. Once the Revolution with all of its disappointments ends, Ourika's health steadily declines. This implies the end of the Revolution marks the time Ourika gives up hope that her situation will improve. She claims that she does not know how to "se soumettre à la nécessité" (Ourika 26).

Early in her life, Ourika mentions God and confesses to a priest several times a year, but her beliefs do not seem to bring her any solace. However, she explains in

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[17]Michelle Bissière says of Ourika, "Elle espère que la Révolution créera un monde fondé sur le mérite et non la condition sociale, dans lequel elle pourra s'intégrer" (319-20).

retrospect that her understanding of God was different at that time by saying, “je ne savais pas que, pour être profitable, la piété a besoin d’être mêlée à toutes les actions de la vie” (Ourika 16). A little later on, she comments again on how her view of God has changed. At this particular point, she looks back and says, “Vous ne m’aviez pas encore appris, ô mon Dieu! à conjurer ces fantômes; je ne savais pas qu’il n’y a de repos qu’en vous” (Ourika 28). This statement conveys that Ourika does eventually find some type of escape from racism through religion. However, since Ourika is the Other, the act of turning to the religion of the dominant society is another example of submission to the colonizer.

It is after the Marquise accuses Ourika of possessing “une passion malheureuse” and “une passion insensée” for Charles that the totality of the situation thrusts Ourika into a state of absolute despair (Ourika 41). Her doctor believes she is about to die when Ourika feels drawn to God in a way unlike what she has ever experienced. Ourika believes that “Dieu eut pitié de moi” at this particular moment (Ourika 42). Her health improves and through a conversation with a priest, she changes her perspective on life. She believes that she has been given the means to be happy, but has not done her part. Peace overwhelms Ourika like never before, and she decides to devote her life to God by becoming a nun.[18]

A nun, according to Ourika, is someone who creates “une famille de choix” (Ourika 44). She explains this concept by saying, “elle est la mère de tous les orphelins, la fille de tous les pauvres vieillards, la sœur de tous les malheureux” (Ourika 44). Thus,

[18]This can be compared to *La Princesse de Clèves* where the Princess decides to spend part of each year in a convent as a way of escaping a difficult situation, just as Ourika decides to become a nun to try to escape racism. However, since Ourika is the Other unlike the Princess, Ourika's actions demonstrate submission to the colonizer whereas the Princess’ do not.

by becoming a nun Ourika is in control of her life and is able to choose a family. It is almost as though she were born a second time and given a chance to start anew. Also, becoming a nun provides some degree of liberation from the racism she has experienced for so long because God, as she has come to understand, is color-blind. The act of turning to God as a means of escaping present earthly conditions illustrates the failure of earthly measures as a viable escape from racism for Ourika.

While Ourika's faith in God gives her peace near the end of her life and allows her some type of control over her life, she does not find complete escape from her past and her desires. Ourika continues to submit to the colonizer by practicing the dominant religion. Also, even at the end of her life, she still wishes to think about Charles even though the situation with him has caused her so much pain. When she tells Charles of her decision to become a nun, he begs her not to do so. Ourika's response is, "Laissez-moi aller, Charles, dans le seul lieu où il me soit permis de penser sans cesse à vous" (Ourika 45). From this statement, one can see that her past follows her and even plays a part in her motivation to become a nun.

In *Ourika*, the thoughts, fears and wishes of a black female are conveyed in a manner unlike French works that preceded it.[19] While Duras presents Ourika as an individual with depth, it is crucial to consider who recounts her story. It is a white author who is part of the oppressive colonizer who writes the story of this young Senegalese girl.

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[19]Such previous works are *L'esclavage des noirs ou l'heureux naufrage* by Olympe de Gouges and *Mirza* by Madame de Staël. These two previous works are vague and while they inspire reflection on the situation of slaves, the black characters in these works are not seen as individuals with their own thoughts and feelings. Joan DeJean, Introduction, Ourika (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1994) xi.

Moreover, Duras belongs to the aristocracy, a class extremely concerned with preserving its purity and very unaccepting of those perceived to be different.

In addition to the author being part of the dominant society, a white male French doctor relays Ourika's story. The doctor also belongs to the dominant society and represents the white patriarchal society in which Ourika lives. As Anjali Prabhu explains, the narration of Ourika's story by the doctor is a metaphorical representation of imperialism where the colonial power dominates the subject and denies her autonomy.[20]

The voice of the protagonist is somewhat problematic because it is filtered through an intermediary. However, the intermediary is necessary because the voice of an Other alone is not accepted by French society. In order for Ourika, who occupies the position of the Other, to be heard, she must have a voice that is accepted by society. Therefore, she needs some type of assistance in making her thoughts truly heard. In this work, the doctor, whose voice is accepted by society since he is respected as part of it, is used to tell Ourika's story. The employment of this tactic gives the Other a voice even though it is not an autonomous one.

Given the circumstances at the time this book was written, French society was not ready to accept Ourika's words if they came directly from her. While her life's story is told from a first person point of view, it is important to realize that what is presented to the reader most likely is not the precise way in which Ourika would have expressed it. It

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[20]Anjali Prabhu argues, "on doit voir dans la genèse du texte de Duras et dans la narration achevée par le médecin, l'impérialisme-la prise d'un sujet. Il s'agit d'une exploitation symbolique et d'une commodification qui font partie de l'exploitation du sujet (ici) noir par la machine qu'est l'administration coloniale." Anjali Prabhu, "Deux nègres à Paris: La Voix de l'autre," RLA: Romance Languages Annual 7(1995) 133.

is still through the eyes of the colonizer that the plight of this protagonist is portrayed. Even so, it is not what one might typically expect from a colonizer's point of view.

For example, the novel challenges the idea of assimilation and shows that it fails miserably. French society never accepts Ourika and never considers her an equal. It was believed by many that education was all that stood between the colonizer and colonized. However, Ourika proves this is not the case, for she is educated but never able to assimilate. It becomes apparent that in wanting to do good for Ourika, Mme de B. actually does more harm than good. Instead of assimilating into French society, Ourika actually becomes isolated and paralyzed, not knowing how to respond to the situation in which she finds herself. The doctor, who narrates Ourika's story, is unable to cure her illness despite his best efforts. As Massardier-Kenney explains, the message is that "science cannot cure social prejudice" (192).

In analyzing *Ourika* in its greater historical context, it presents a social and political commentary that brings to the forefront several controversial facets of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century French society such as colonialism, slavery and racism. Duras works within the constraints of the society in which she lives to create a story that begins to show problems with colonialism as well as rigid class distinctions. While Mme de B. believes Ourika can remain unaware of her Otherness for awhile and possibly overcome her fate one day, Ourika does not follow the pattern Mme de B. envisions. Instead, Ourika quickly becomes aware of her difference and begins to adopt the values and thoughts of those around her. Ourika contributes to her own domination by whites by internalizing the values of the dominant society. She tries to outwardly become like those around her by hiding her skin color and by practicing the religion of

her oppressors. Duras uses Ourika's thoughts and actions to provide a detailed account of one possible outcome of attempted assimilation within a colonial context.

While Duras was forced to use a male voice to relay the events in order for the work to be accepted by society, the pain that patriarchy causes Ourika is not masked by use of the doctor's voice. The need and desire to marry weighs on Ourika. It causes her great distress and pain when the possibility of love with a white man is denied her. It is this pain that causes her health to drastically deteriorate and ultimately leads to her death.

Even though Ourika's adoptive family provides her with comfort and companionship, Mme de B. and Charles belong to the oppressive white aristocracy and represent what Ourika is denied in life. They are part of the society and class that continually exercise power over Ourika and deny her what she most desires in life. They even control, to some extent, the information Ourika receives about her homeland and events in her life. In addition, it is through a member of the dominant society that Ourika's voice is allowed to be heard. Even though there is a brief period of hope in the midst of oppression that is brought about by the Revolution, the outcome fails to fulfill Ourika's hopes.

Similarly, Ourika's newfound understanding of God and her devotion to her beliefs is only further submission to those that dominate her. Her last days are spent in the convent thinking of Charles and trying to come to terms with all that has happened in her life. Thus, Ourika continues to bear the indelible mark of colonialism and racism as she finds no complete escape from either one.

CHAPTER 3
MOI, TITUBA, SORCIERE…NOIRE DE SALEM

Maryse Condé's protagonist, Tituba, is a black female born into slavery on the island of Barbados. Over the course of her life, Tituba finds herself under the control of one master after another. In all but one of her masters, she finds a cruel enemy who makes her life miserable. While under the control of these harsh masters, Tituba struggles to find her own identity as she constantly experiences displacement.

Tituba's mother, Abena, was aboard a slave ship sailing from Africa to Barbados when an English sailor raped her. Eventually, this violent act led to the birth of Tituba, who served as a constant reminder to her mother of that dreadful day when the sailor violated Abena's body. Moreover, as Vivian Nun Halloran explains, Tituba has lighter skin and eyes than her mother, which serve as prominent physical symbols of the English sailor.[1]

As Jeanne Garane explains, Tituba's Otherness not only lies in her outward appearance, but also in the fact that she does not have a pre-colonial homeland with which she can identify.[2] Tituba is torn between the land of her heritage (Africa), from which her mother was forced to leave, and the new land where Abena and consequently,

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[1]In a comparison with André Schwarz-Bart's *A Woman Named Solitude*, Vivian Halloran states that the lighter skin and eyes of Tituba and Solitude are constant reminders of the humiliation their mothers suffered. Vivian Nun Halloran, "Family Ties: Africa as Mother/Fatherland in Neo Slave Narratives," Ufahamu 28.1 (2000): 7.

[2]Jeanne Garane argues that the historical roots of Antillean nationalism are "hidden and dispersed" and that they "can only refer to myths." Jeanne Garane, "History, Identity and the Constitution of the Female Subject: Maryse Condés Tituba," Moving beyond Boundaries, II: Black Women's Diasporas, ed. Carole Boyce Davies (New York: New York UP, 1994) 155.

Tituba were forcibly placed (Barbados). Tituba's European father represents the aggressor and the imperialism with which Tituba cannot identify. In addition, this father figure from Britain ignores Tituba and others like her and forces them to live subordinate lives. On the other hand, her African mother rejects Tituba because of the way in which she was brought into the world. Thus, both parents ignore and reject Tituba. At one point, Tituba alludes to the fact that she is not familiar with her mother's homeland when she says, "Peut-être en Afrique d'où nous venons, il en était ainsi. Mais nous ne savons plus rien de l'Afrique et elle ne nous importe plus" (Tituba 152). This statement confirms that Africa exists as a distant land without memory and that it exists only in Tituba's imagination.[3]

Samuel Parris, one of Tituba's masters, forces her to move to the American colonies, thereby displacing her. When she enters America, she finds herself in a foreign land that she cannot call her own. As she is forced to leave behind everything that is familiar to her when she is deported from Barbados, Tituba's tenuous connection with Barbados grows more and more distant and Africa slips further away into her imagination. Shortly after her arrival in America, Tituba witnesses the public execution of a woman in a manner very similar to the execution of her own mother, which Tituba witnessed at the age of seven. Witnessing this act intensifies Tituba's feelings of being the Other and her isolation:

> Je hurlai et plus je hurlais, plus j'éprouvais le désir de hurler. De hurler ma souffrance, ma révolte, mon impuissante colère. Quel était ce monde qui avait fait de moi une esclave, une orpheline, une paria? Quel était ce monde qui me séparait des miens? Qui m'obligeait à vivre parmi des gens qui ne parlaient pas ma langue, qui ne partageaient pas ma religion, dans un pays malgracieux, peu avenant? (Tituba 83)

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[3]Edouard Glissant's explanation of this idea is stated in footnote 20.

The repetitive use of the verb "hurler" strongly emphasizes the profundity of her agony and the trauma of dislocation.

To compound Tituba's feelings of Otherness due to displacement, her skin color marks her as inferior. Even though Tituba's skin and eyes are lighter than those of her mother, she is still black. While in the American colonies, Tituba is in a society that readily associates black skin with Satan. Tituba expresses that one of her masters, Susanna Endicott, had told her that her skin color was indicative of her "intimité avec le Malin" (Tituba 107). Yet another master, Samuel Parris, states that Tituba's skin color is an outward sign of her damnation. Not only is black skin color associated with inferiority but also with a deviance from the prevailing and only accepted religion in the American colonies. The Puritans living in the American colonies were working toward religious reforms during the seventeenth century. There, the Puritans were able to practice their religion as they desired. Being in a position of power, they were also able to force others to adhere to certain rules concerning religion or else face severe consequences. Tituba's experience in the American colonies demonstrates the interconnectedness of colonization, religion and racism present at the time.

Although Tituba's skin color marks her as different and contributes to the oppression she experiences, her blackness is not the only cause of her suffering. The fact that she is a female causes her to suffer more than her husband, John Indian, for example. John Indian is able to escape suspicion in the Salem witch trials even though he is black.[4]

[4]This is due to the patriarchal system and the fact that John Indian eventually accuses Tituba of witchcraft in order to spare his own life. Even though he is black just like Tituba, he is able to escape the trials in part because he is a man. Isabel Carrera Suárez, "The Americas, Postcoloniality and Gender: New World

The idea of patriarchy weaves its way through the events of this novel. At times, patriarchy is embraced by Tituba, but at other times it is resisted. When Tituba is born, it is her adoptive father, Yao, who names her.[5] Her name is never questioned until she is in prison in America, sharing a cell with Hester. It is Hester who asks Tituba, "Tu portes le nom qu'un homme t'a donné?" (Tituba 152). In saying this, Hester points out that accepting the name given by Tituba's father is an example of her acceptance of the patriarchal system in which she lives. On the other hand, this acceptance symbolizes a new beginning. Therefore, Tituba's acceptance of the name Yao gives her may have undertones of patriarchy, but it also represents freedom from a burdensome past in which Tituba's biological father had no relationship with her.

Tituba's voice is limited by the patriarchal system in place both in Barbados and the American colonies during this time, as well as by her skin color.[6] Due to the constraints of society, love is the primary language that Tituba uses to express herself. She speaks this language by choosing to be with men out of love.[7] In fact, when given the choice to live in freedom or to live with John Indian and be a slave, Tituba chooses to

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Witches in Maryse Condé and Lucía Guerra," Post/Imperial Encounters: Anglo-Hispanic Cultural Relations, eds. Juan E.Tazón Salces and Isabel Carrera Suárez (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005) 148.

[5]This name was most likely invented by Yao to show that Tituba was his daughter by choice and love. Tituba says, "Sans doute, Yao en l'inventant, voulait-il prouver que j'étais fille de sa volonté et de son imagination. Fille de son amour." Maryse Condé, Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem (Paris: Mercure de France, 1986) 19.

[6]In Barbados, patriarchy exerts itself through the white slave owners as well as black men. In the American colonies, patriarchy primarily manifests itself through white men. Maryse Condé refers to the debasement of black Antillean women when she says, "La femme noire n'y est plus que la servante, chargée de nourrir et de veiller l'enfant du Blanc, la bête de somme retournant le sol sous le soleil, la concubine toujours humiliée." Maryse Condé La Parole des femmes (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993) 30.

[7]Paula Barnes suggests that Condé shows Tituba has a choice about her sexuality because she chooses to be with men out of love instead of being forced to be with men. Paula C. Barnes, "Meditations on Her/Story: Maryse Conde's I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem and the Slave Narrative Tradition," Arms Akimbo: Africana Women in Contemporary Literature, eds. Janice Lee Liddell and Yakini Belinda Kemp (Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1999) 200.

be with John. Later in life, her master and lover,[8] Benjamin Cohen d'Azevedo, offers Tituba her freedom, but she responds by saying, "Je ne veux pas de cette liberté. Je veux rester avec toi" (Tituba 208). Yet again she chooses to be bound to a man when given the opportunity to be free, which is an expression of Tituba's love.

The power that men exert over women in both societies in which Tituba lives is evident throughout the telling of her story. It is a hierarchical power system where white men possess the most power, followed by white women, then black men. This leaves black women at the lowest point of the system. While people often treat Tituba badly because of her skin color, white women are also treated as inferior by white men. For example, one of Tituba's masters, Samuel Parris, exercises control over both Tituba and his wife, Elizabeth. One day when Tituba is visiting with Elizabeth, Samuel returns home to find the two women enjoying each other's company. Tituba describes Samuel's reaction:

> A ce moment, la porte s'ouvrit sous une poussée brutale et Samuel Parris entra. Je ne saurais dire qui, de maîtresse Parris ou de moi, fut la plus confuse, la plus terrifiée…Il dit simplement: 'Elizabeth, êtes-vous folle? Vous laissez cette négresse s'asseoir à côté de vous? Dehors, Tituba, et vite!' (Tituba 69)

This event, and the fear that Samuel creates in both Elizabeth and Tituba just from witnessing his anger, demonstrate not only the power, but also the severity of this man's presence. Later, when Tituba reflects on the situation, she is disappointed in herself for allowing someone to speak to her in such a manner.

While at times Tituba conforms to patriarchal society, she also resists it in two ways. By participating in witchcraft, a religion that empowers women, Tituba resists the

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[8]This relationship with d'Azevedo combines the roles of master and lover thereby allowing the male to exert more power over the female.

power structure of patriarchy and colonialism. Near the end of her story, Tituba participates in a slave rebellion that resists the ideologies of the ruling white class, including patriarchy. In these two ways, Tituba takes an active role in opposing patriarchy.

Tituba's decision not to bring a child into the world may be viewed as a two-fold decision that includes a resistance to patriarchy. Tituba becomes pregnant but does not want her child to suffer in a cruel world. Also, she believes that motherhood for a slave contains no happiness. Ultimately, she decides not to give birth to the child. Tituba's refusal of biological motherhood is a way of resisting the traditional role of a woman.[9] While part of her desires to be a mother, another part of Tituba resists that desire in order to prevent more suffering and to refuse a prescribed role.

Tituba's desire for motherhood reemerges near the end of her story when Iphigene enters her life. While she acts somewhat like a mother to Iphigene, the line between mother and lover is muddled. The narrator describes Iphigene as a boy who Tituba nurses back to health, treating him as she would a child. Iphigene repeatedly refers to Tituba as "mère." However, a short time after meeting for the first time, Tituba and Iphigene become lovers. At first, Tituba experiences shame and guilt because she views Iphigene as a son, a family member. At his insistence though, she gives in. This struggle between desires and roles is representative of a larger struggle to resist the dominant society. Tituba succeeds at resisting the white society at times, but at others she is trapped by strong desires or a system that does not allow her to resist and survive at the same time.

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[9]In an interview with Lydie Moudileno Maryse Condé explains that by killing her biological child, Tituba refuses to be confined to the traditional role of a woman. Lydie Moudileno, "Moi, Maryse Condé, libre d'être moi-même…," Women in French Studies 10 (2002): 123.

Other characters in *Tituba*, namely Yao and Abena, challenge the line between traditionally prescribed gender roles. After Abena's rejection of her daughter, Yao takes over the maternal role. He spends time with Tituba, looks after her and instructs Abena on how to show affection. At one point, Yao tells Abena "Prends-la sur tes genoux. Embrasse-la. Caresse-la." (Tituba 20). In this manner, Yao fills the role of mother.

The actions of Abena clearly exhibit a rejection of motherhood. She only shows affection to Tituba when Yao instructs her to do so. Tituba describes the rejection she experiences from her mother when she says, "quand je me blottissais passionnément contre elle comme aiment à le faire les enfants, elle me repoussait inévitablement. Quand je nouais les bras autour de son cou, elle se hâtait de se dégager" (Tituba 20). Not only does Abena reject motherhood, but she also challenges the authority of Darnell Davis, her white master.[10] When he is about to rape her out in the open, in front of her daughter, Abena defends herself by striking Darnell with a cutlass. By rejecting motherhood and defying her master, Abena resists the white patriarchal society in which she lives.

A white patriarchal system is one of the many forms of oppression Tituba experiences. She falls victim to oppression by men, women, blacks, whites and even children, all of whom have internalized patriarchal values. Even though women are considered inferior to men both in Barbados and the American colonies, white women are allowed to exert some amount of power and control over blacks. Susanna Endicott, Tituba's second owner, is a quintessential example of a female oppressor. Susanna humiliates Tituba on several occasions including the time when they first meet. Susanna quickly tells Tituba "baisse les yeux quand tu me parles" (Tituba 41). A little later during

[10]Vivian Halloran suggests that Abena takes on traditionally male characteristics which are illustrated when Abena defends herself and challenges the authority of Darnell Davis (5).

the same encounter, Susanna says to Tituba, “tu ne t’occuperas pas de la nourriture. Je ferai ma cuisine moi-même, car je ne supporte pas que vous autres nègres touchiez à mes aliments avec vos mains dont l’intérieur est décoloré et cireux” (Tituba 42). Shortly afterward, Tituba becomes aware of Susanna’s malicious intentions when she overhears a conversation:

> Quand je rentrai dans la cuisine pour entamer mes corvées matinales, Susanna Endicott était en grande conversation avec Betsey Ingersoll, la femme du pasteur. Elles parlaient de moi, je le savais, leurs têtes rapprochées à se toucher, au-dessus de la buée qui montait de leurs bols de gruau…Un complot se tramait. (Tituba 50-51)

Not only is Susanna oppressive in her manner of addressing Tituba, but also in her actions, as is discovered in the overheard conversation. These examples of Susanna Endicott’s actions demonstrate the internalization of the aforementioned hierarchical power structure. Even though Susanna is a woman, she still is able to and does exert power over Tituba because Susanna belongs to the dominant white race.

It is not only Tituba’s female owner who exerts power over her and oppresses her, but also those who may never be suspected, children. In fact, in the beginning, Tituba does not believe children can do any harm. When speaking about Betsey, Tituba says, “Et n’était-elle pas une enfant? Une enfant ne peut être dangereuse” (Tituba 92). However, children play a role in oppressing and condemning Tituba.

The hysteria that sweeps across the American colonies infects children close to Tituba and first makes its presence known one morning. As Tituba enters the room where the Parris family is seated for breakfast, Betsey begins to act as though Tituba has cast a spell on her. Tituba describes the event in the following manner: “ma petite Betsey sauta de son siège et se roulant par terre, se mit à hurler. Ces cris n’avaient rien

d'humain" (Tituba 116). A few moments later, the contagious hysteria spreads to Abigail:

> Abigail resta d'abord debout, visiblement interdite. Puis son regard auquel rien n'échappait, alla du visage accusateur de Samuel Parris à celui, à peine moins terrifiant, de maîtresse Parris, puis au mien qui devait exprimer le désarroi le plus total. Elle sembla comprendre de quoi il s'agissait et alors, comme un téméraire qui se jette dans une mare sans savoir ce que sa surface verdâtre recouvre, elle sauta à bas de son siège et se roulant par terre, commença à hurler de même manière.
>
> Ce hideux concert dura quelques minutes. Puis les deux enfants semblèrent tomber en catalepsie. (Tituba 116-17)

Sometime after the screaming fits of these children, four men who serve as judges question Anne, Betsey and Abigail. When one of the men, Edward Payson, asks, "Dites-nous, pour que nous tentions de vous soulager, qui, qui vous tourmente?" the girls exclaim, "C'est Tituba!" (Tituba 145). Shortly after this statement by the girls, the four men tie and bind Tituba then torture her. Adults wishing to convict Tituba of being a witch use these three young and impressionable girls to make their claims seem credible. Due to the fact that these girls are of the dominant race and that people view them as pure because of their young age, the girls' claims appear credible. Therefore, once the girls publicly claim that Tituba is responsible for tormenting them, it is as though sufficient evidence has been presented according to those in power. In other words, the three girls are used to give credibility to adults' claims so that the colonial power may continue to exert power over and even torture those not deemed equal.

Not only does Tituba suffer because of her owner Susanna Endicott and the children mentioned above, but also because of the accusation by her master's wife, Elizabeth Parris, whom Tituba befriends. Once the hysteria over witchcraft begins, Elizabeth holds Tituba accountable for causing the children's screaming fits. She accuses

Tituba, exclaiming, “Tu vois l’effet de tes sortilèges!” (Tituba 117). While Tituba is surprised by the allegations of those she believes to be friends, she recognizes earlier in the book that there are profound differences between her and the white females with whom she develops a relationship. Tituba verbalizes this observation when she states, “Nous n’appartenions pas au même monde, maîtresse Parris, Betsey et moi, et toute l’affection que j’éprouvais pour elles, ne pouvait changer ce fait-là” (Tituba 103). The actions of these white females are not only examples of ways in which they oppress Tituba, but also how they have historically played a role in the exploitation of black women.[11]

In addition to suffering caused by women, Tituba suffers greatly as the result of the actions of men. Men not only address her in a degrading manner, but also torture and sexually assault her. Not only is Tituba subjected to symbolic violence, as evidenced by the internalization of the power hierarchy, but here she is also subjected to physical violence. One of the most atrocious examples takes place once Anne, Betsey and Abigail accuse Tituba of casting evil spells. The four men who serve as judges, including her master Samuel Parris, tie up Tituba so that she cannot move and begin to torture and rape her. Tituba provides an account of the violent rape of these men:

> Le coup m’atteignit en travers de la bouche et elle pissa le sang…
>
> L’un des hommes se mit carrément à cheval sur moi et commença de me marteler le visage de ses poings, durs comme pierres. Un autre releva ma jupe et enfonça un bâton taillé en pointe dans la partie la plus sensible de mon corps en raillant: ‘Prends, prends, c’est la bite de John Indien.’
>
> …Alors, de nouveau, ils s’acharnèrent sur moi et il me sembla que le baton taillé me remontait jusqu’à la gorge. (Tituba 146-47)

[11]Jeanne Garane suggests that the white women in *Tituba* are “emblematic of a fact that western feminism has tended to ignore, that is, that white women have had a role in exploiting women of color” (161).

The violence of this occurrence demonstrates two types of power or possession over Tituba. As white males, the four men are able to exert physical power over her. At the same time, raping and sexually violating a female are symbolic ways of possessing her.[12]

It is not clear how oppressive the black men in Tituba's life are, but she alludes to this idea when she speaks of Christopher. At one point, she refers to his "étreinte brutale" (Tituba 243). In addition, Christopher appears to use Tituba for sex in exchange for the use of her witchcraft powers to help with the slave rebellion.

In addition to the oppression Tituba experiences directly, there is oppression of women all around her. According to Mara Dukats in *A narrative of violated maternity: Moi, Tituba, sorcière…Noire de Salem*, "The 'events' that make up the plot of Tituba's story all have a common frame of reference: violated female sexuality" (747). There are examples throughout Tituba's story of females who are tortured and violated. These acts include the actual rape of Tituba's mother, Abena, by the English sailor and the attempted rape of Abena by Darnell Davis. These examples of rape are not only violent acts, but also symbols of female possession by males. There are also examples of women who are hanged, oppressed and repressed.

In reaction to these various forms of oppression, Tituba experiences a range of emotions and employs various coping techniques. As a means of escape from current conditions, Tituba longs first for her homeland of Barbados then much later on for America. Shortly after arriving in the American colonies, Tituba is reminded of

[12]Véronique Nahoum-Grappe argues that sexual intercourse demonstrates male possession of the female and that rape is an instance where the male claims the female as his territory. Véronique Nahoum-Grappe, "Guerre et différence des sexes: Les viols systématiques (ex-Yugoslavie 1991-1995)," De la violence et des femmes, eds. Cécile Dauphin and Arlette Farge (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997) 168.

Barbados when she looks out at the sea in Boston. Tituba describes her love for her country and what she was forced to leave behind:

> Il est étrange, l'amour du pays! Nous le portons en nous comme notre sang, comme nos organes. Et il suffit que nous soyons séparés de notre terre, pour ressentir une douleur qui sourd du plus profond de nous-mêmes sans jamais se ralentir. Je revoyais la plantation de Darnell Davis, la hautaine Habitation et ses colonnades au sommet du morne, les rues cases-nègres, grouillantes de souffrances et d'animation, enfants au ventre ballonné, femmes vieillies avant l'heure, hommes mutilés, et ce cadre sans joie que j'avais perdu me devenait précieux tandis que des larmes coulaient sur mes joues. (Tituba 82)

In this account, Tituba describes the love of one's country as an integral and vital part of oneself, referring to it as "comme notre sang, comme nos organes." It is when she is separated from Barbados that she feels a connection to it and longs for it, as though she were separated from a part of her own body. This separation is traumatic and appears to be almost like a form of mutilation. Her memory of the country is by no means a utopian haven that she has invented in her mind. However, even while remembering the difficulties experienced in Barbados, she still thinks of it fondly.

Once Tituba returns to Barbados and resettles there, she is overcome by an idealized vision of America:

> "Quand Christopher s'acharnait sur mon corps, mon esprit vagabondait et je revivais la jouissance de mes nuits d'Amérique. L'hiver et le froid se pressent dans la nuit. Ecoutez leur long hurlement! Et le gallop de leurs pattes sur le sol durci de givre! Mon nègre et moi, nous n'entendons rien car nous suffoquons dans l'amour." (Tituba 235)

As opposed to her memory of Barbados, she does not remember America as a place filled with suffering. Instead, she focuses on being immersed in love, which allows her to blot out everything else.

While the image Tituba paints of America is idealized, unlike her image of Barbados, both are examples of longing to be where she is not. The longing Tituba expresses in both of these accounts demonstrates a means of escape from her current conditions. This escape does not necessarily last very long, but it provides Tituba with a place and time where she was happier than she is in her present state. Also, in both examples, the country that is remembered and longed for exists only in Tituba's imagination as a result of deportation.

Soon after arriving in America, Tituba expresses her keenly felt Otherness and her reaction to it upon seeing the execution of a woman, as previously cited. From this account, it is evident that Tituba feels the need for some type of release of the emotions and trauma she has experienced as a result of the oppressive society in which she finds herself. Also, the language she uses to communicate her distress demonstrates her extreme feelings of displacement. Her anxiety and mistrust of others increases daily; it is

> un fardeau que je ne pouvais jamais déposer. Je me couchais avec lui. Il s'étendait sur moi par-dessus le corps musculeux de John Indien. Au matin, il alourdissait mon pas dans l'escalier et ralentissait mes mains quand je préparais le fade gruau du petit déjeuner. (Tituba 102)

While in Barbados, Tituba begins the process of detachment from the torture taking place around her. She makes it known that at one time she would have been "révoltée" by the torture and killing of a slave, but now she feels indifferent. Slowly, after arriving in America, this feeling of indifference gives way to a desire for revenge and self-preservation. Tituba fights back, "je commençais à me conduire comme une bête aux abois qui mord et griffe qui elle peut" (Tituba 133). By behaving as an animal, she endorses the stereotype of blacks and applies symbolic violence to herself. However, after Betsey and Abigail first have their screaming fits, Tituba consciously decides to

change from being passive to being more active and aggressive in her approach toward those around her:

> Il fallait ensuite que je me protège, ce que j'avais trop tardé à faire! Il fallait que je rende coup pour coup. Que je réclame œil pour œil. Les vieilles leçons humanitaires de Man Yaya n'étaient plus de mise. Ceux qui m'entouraient étaient aussi féroces que les loups qui hurlaient à la mort dans les forêts de Boston et moi, je devais devenir pareille à eux. (Tituba 118-19)

Due to the oppression, malice and torture Tituba has suffered for so long with no viable escape, she begins to lash out at those around her. When Tituba gives her deposition in court, she accuses Sarah Osborne and Sarah Good of acting in an evil way toward children and of having told her to do the same. These accusations come after a period of resistance during which Tituba refused to accuse others even though she was surrounded by people who eagerly made accusations. After being surrounded by such people and after finding no escape, only condemnation, Tituba decides to fight back by doing to others what has already been done to her several times. By accusing others, Tituba does exactly what the dominant culture has been doing. Thus, her accusations are an outward sign of what has been internalized; the values of the dominant culture.

After returning to Barbados from America, Tituba encounters a group of maroons[13] living there. At first, she is hesitant to join the group, saying, "Malgré tout ce que je venais d'endurer et en moi, ce désir de vengeance qui n'avait jamais été satisfait, je n'avais pas le coeur à me mêler à des histoires de Marrons et à risquer ma peau" (Tituba 223). However, she decides to live with the maroons out of a desire to live peacefully on her island. After a short time, she decides to join the maroons in their fight against the whites who have oppressed Tituba, the maroons and others like them for so long. Pascale

[13]A maroon is defined as a fugitive Black slave in the West Indies in the 17th and 18th centuries. "Maroon," The American Heritage Dictionary, 1992 ed.

Bécel interprets Edouard Glissant's definition of marronnage as connoting "l'opposition culturelle fondamentale au nouvel ordre imposé à l'esclave…un exemple incontestable d'opposition systématique, de refus total" (612). Thus, by making this decision to join the maroons in the fight against the whites and following through with it, Tituba rebels against the dominant society and her position in it.

Near the end of her life, Tituba aids the maroons in a slave rebellion. This failed rebellion eventually leads to her death. However, Tituba is not portrayed as a victim, for even after her death she continues to fight against slavery by using her powers. Tituba continues to use her powers to heal, as well as to inspire the desire for freedom among slaves. She becomes an inspiration and a spiritual guide for other slaves by opposing the dominant race after her death.

Above all of the aforementioned reactions to her oppressors, the ultimate and most lasting act of revenge is the telling of her story. By recounting her life, Tituba makes sure that she and the fate of others like her are not forgotten. Through her life story, she reveals the atrocities she has suffered.

In the example of the slave rebellion at the end of Tituba's story, it appears she desires freedom. However, at other points earlier in her life, she knowingly chose not to be free. It is important to understand the complex levels of freedom and power at work in this novel. Freedom for Tituba is a journey. She is born into slavery and thus does not know true freedom. When she is given the opportunity to be free and live in Barbados, she chooses to live in slavery in order to be with John Indian.

When Tituba is freed from prison in America after being bought by Benjamin Cohen d'Azevedo, she describes the event in detail:

> Je hurlais et ce hurlement, tel celui d'un nouveau-né terrifié, salua mon retour dans le monde. Je dus réapprendre à marcher. Privée de mes chaînes, je ne parvenais pas à trouver mon équilibre et chancelais comme une femme prise d'alcool mauvais. Je dus réapprendre à parler, à communiquer avec mes semblables, à ne plus me contenter de rares monosyllabes. Je dus réapprendre à regarder mes interlocuteurs dans les yeux. Je dus réapprendre à discipliner mes cheveux, nid de serpents sifflant autour de ma tête. Je dus frotter d'onguents ma peau sèche et crevassée, pareille à un cuir mal tanné. (Tituba 189)

The process of being freed from her prison chains is equivalent to being reborn. In fact, Tituba also says, "Peu d'individus ont cette déveine: naître par deux fois" (Tituba 189). Once her chains are removed, she does not know how to act and must relearn everything. Freedom is overwhelming in a sense, and it takes time for her to learn how to accept it.

While Tituba is freed from the chains of prison, she is still not entirely free because she has been bought once again, this time by Benjamin. At one point, Tituba tells Benjamin her freedom is what will truly make her happy. However, when he offers Tituba her freedom, she refuses it. She desires her freedom, but not at the price of losing Benjamin, the man she loves, just as with John Indian. The act of Tituba choosing love over freedom twice demonstrates that she values love more than freedom. This is one way in which Tituba resists her oppressors and shows that she has a choice regarding what she values as well as some of her decisions. Throughout her life, Tituba struggles to attain freedom of the body as well as the mind. However, she will not pay any price for her freedom. It is only when her journey on Earth ends and she enters the afterlife that she truly attains freedom.

Even though Tituba's life is mostly painful and filled with sorrow, there are a few people who bring her great happiness. The companionship certain men provide her at various points in her life brings her happiness, if only temporarily. For example, while

serving Samuel Parris, Tituba says, “les seuls moments de bonheur étaient ceux que je passais avec John Indien” (Tituba 84). Other lovers, such as Benjamin, also bring her happiness.

The importance of family, whether biological or adoptive, is evident in Tituba’s life. She develops a close relationship with Yao, her adoptive father who also fulfills the maternal role for Tituba. Yao is gentle and loving and gives Tituba the care she needs when she is young. Tituba develops an extremely close relationship with Mama Yaya, who becomes her adoptive mother after her biological mother, Abena, dies. Even after Mama Yaya’s death, Tituba continues to speak with her. Tituba uses her special powers in order to seek instruction and guidance from Mama Yaya. At times, Tituba also speaks with her mother, Abena, even though they never had a close relationship when she was alive. Just before Tituba is hanged for her participation in the slave revolt, she takes great comfort in knowing that she will be reunited with her family after death: “Bientôt j’atteindrai au royaume où la lumière de la vérité brille sans partage. Assis à califourchon sur le bois de ma potence, Man Yaya, Abena ma mère et Yao m’attendaient pour me prendre par la main” (Tituba 263). Death is the door that finally leads to liberation for Tituba. She can now be in peace with her family and loved ones and, at the same time, free from dominance by others.

Tituba’s desire to be a mother demonstrates the importance of family to her. Even though she never has biological children, she still acts as a mother figure to certain children. For a time, she acts as a mother to Iphigene, and after her death she reveals in the Epilogue that the spirits allow her to choose a descendant. Tituba chooses a girl named Samantha whom Tituba will guide and instruct by using her powers. Family

remains an important aspect throughout Tituba's life. For Tituba, family provides sustenance and some degree of happiness.

Perhaps even more instrumental than family in shaping the events of Tituba's life is witchcraft. The framework around which the events of her life take place is centered on witchcraft. Tituba and the societies in which she lives represent two opposing forces consisting of two different religions. Maryse Condé's explanation for slaves from the Antilles retaining their traditional African religion may be applied to Tituba. In *La Parole des femmes* Condé says, "L'Antillais…garde au fond de lui le besoin d'une approche du surnaturel qui ne soit pas celle qu'édicte la religion officielle" (49). Tituba, who practices hoodoo, lives in Puritan societies in both Barbados and the American colonies. Neither society is tolerant of other religions. While the Puritans in these two societies, especially in the American colonies, wish to impose their beliefs and strict moral code on others, Tituba does not wish to impose hoodoo or her way of life on others. Instead, she uses it to heal others and to communicate with the dead in an effort to obtain guidance and comfort.

Tituba's religion, which she calls hoodoo, is always referred to as witchcraft in the American colonies. Referring to Tituba's religion by another name and always associating witchcraft with evil suggests a lack of understanding on the part of the American colonists.[14] Hoodoo seems so much a part of life that Tituba is surprised when attention is drawn to it, especially negative attention. In fact, she is not even aware of the term "witch" and what it entails in the society where she lives. The first time Tituba is

[14]In *La Parole des femmes* Maryse Condé refers to "la méconnaissance des esprits de ce temps en ce qui concerne les religions traditionnelles africaines" (48).

called a witch she asks herself, “Qu’est-ce qu’une sorcière?” (Tituba 35).[15] She also notes, “le mot était entaché d’opprobre” and wonders why this is so (Tituba 35).

As Tituba has come to know it, hoodoo is something positive used to help others. After the term witch is first used to refer to her, she explains her view of witchcraft: “La faculté de communiquer avec les invisibles, de garder un lien constant avec les disparus, de soigner, de guérir n’est-elle pas une grâce supérieure de nature à inspirer respect, admiration et gratitude?” (Tituba 35). In her eyes, hoodoo and the way she uses her powers should be respected and recognized as something positive. In the American colonies, hoodoo is in sharp contrast with Puritanism which is used to condemn those who do not adhere to it.

In the beginning, Tituba uses her powers to help others. For example, Tituba heals Elizabeth Parris when she is on the brink of death. Even when it is suggested that Tituba use her powers for evil, she resists. When Rebecca Nurse asks her to punish others, Tituba responds by saying, “Ah non! Ils ne me rendraient pas pareille à eux! Je ne céderai pas. Je ne ferai pas le mal!” (Tituba 113). However, Tituba considers doing harm to others at times, as in the case of Susanna Endicott. In the end, however, Tituba follows Mama Yaya’s strong warning not to do so.

In addition to using her powers to heal, Tituba uses her powers to communicate with those who have died. She frequently talks with Mama Yaya and her mother, Abena, seeking advice from them. At times, Tituba helps others contact loved ones who have died, as is the case when Benjamin is able to connect with his deceased wife and children.

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[15]Sorcière in this context is not the same as in the title of the novel. In this context it refers to a witch who uses religion to do harm to others; whereas in the title of the novel it refers to someone who possesses magical powers without any kind of negative connotation.

As Pascale Bécel demonstrates, by communicating with people from her past who were a part of her life in Barbados, Tituba feels more connected to her homeland and is able to escape her current surroundings while still in exile.[16]

Tituba holds values such as hoodoo that differ greatly from those of westerners. Tituba and her religion are largely misunderstood. This misunderstanding causes witchcraft to be feared and seen as a threat to male power. In addition, witchcraft is seen as a threat to white Puritan Barbados and the American colonies because Tituba has the power to disrupt and taint the "purity" of these societies.[17] Because witchcraft is viewed as a serious and very large threat, it is condemned and disallowed.

Shortly after agreeing to allow Tituba to work for her, Susanna Endicott forces Tituba to formally convert to Christianity. Tituba never truly converts but does so formally so that she may continue to live with her husband, John Indian. Later, this formal declaration of faith is used to harm Tituba. Because Tituba had formally proclaimed Christian beliefs, her continued practice of witchcraft was viewed more harshly than it would have if she had never made the public statement of Christian faith.

Christianity, as it is lived in Barbados and even more shockingly in the American colonies, is a source of confusion for Tituba. Even when she believes that she understands it better, Tituba remains appalled by what she sees:

> Je n'avais pas pris la pleine mesure des ravages que causait la religion de Samuel Parris ni même compris sa vraie nature avant de vivre à Salem.

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[16]Pascale Bécel says that Tituba's "knowledge of nature's healing power and her ability to communicate with the invisible world enable her to withdraw from the vicissitudes of the Puritan world at Susanna Endicott's and later at Samuel Parris's, and to preserve a relation with her native Barbados when living in exile." Pascale Bécel, "Moi, Tituba Sorciere…Noire de Salem as a Tale of Petite Marronne," Callaloo 18.3 (1995): 613.

[17]Pascale Bécel states that Tituba's "capacity and her stigmatization as a witch gives her the potential to disrupt the 'essence' of white Puritan Barbados and New England" (613).

> Imaginez une étroite communauté d'hommes et de femmes, écrasés par la présence du Malin parmi eux et cherchant à le traquer dans toutes ses manifestations…Moi-même, je m'empoisonnais à cette atmosphère délétère… (Tituba 107)

When Tituba looks around at the turmoil in Salem and surrounding villages, she expresses her belief that God "leur tournait le dos" which she says in reference to those around her (Tituba 182).

Tituba's original religion, as opposed to the one she is forced to formally proclaim, may be viewed on a more symbolic level as representing hybridity.[18] Hoodoo is a metaphor for Tituba's own background, one that combines different nationalities, races and classes such as her African and English heritage. Mama Yaya teaches Tituba how to make hybrids and substitutions with plants to be used in the practice of hoodoo, usually in order to heal others. Tituba clearly refers to creating hybrids when she explains that "je m'essayai à des croisements hardis, mariant la passiflorinde à la prune taureau, la cithère vénéneuse à la surette et l'azalées à la persulfureuse" (Tituba 26). By making these hybrids from different plants, Tituba is able to heal others, a positive result of hybridity. Upon her arrival in the American colonies, Tituba finds that many of the plants and herbs she has been taught to use do not exist. Instead of giving up the use of her powers for healing while in this foreign land, she decides to make substitutions. Her resourcefulness proves helpful as she is able to heal others with the substitutions she makes. By cross-breeding and making substitutions in order to help others through the practice of hoodoo, Tituba provides an example of positive hybridity.

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[18]Bruce Simon explains "By bringing alternative epistemologies and value systems to bear on Puritan and Anglo assumptions, Condé effectively turns the 'discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention.'" Bruce Simon, "Hybridity in the Americas: Reading Condé, Mukherjee, and Hawthorne," Postcolonial Theory and the United States: Race, Ethnicity, and Literature, eds. Amritjit Singh and Peter Schmidt (Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2000) 425.

Condé portrays Tituba as a multi-dimensional character who struggles to claim her rightful place in history so as not to be overlooked like many others have been. Tituba expresses her outrage at the thought of being forgotten:

> Au fur et à mesure que j'avançais, un sentiment violent, douloureux, insupportable déchirait ma poitrine.
>
> Il me semblait que je disparaissais complètement.
>
> Je sentais que dans ces procès des sorcières de Salem…mon nom ne figurerait que comme celui d'une comparse sans intérêt. On mentionnerait çà et là 'une esclave originaire des Antilles et pratiquant vraisemblablement le 'hoodoo.'' On ne se soucierait ni de mon âge ni de ma personnalité. On m'ignorerait. (Tituba 171-72)

By standing up to some of her oppressors and participating in the slave revolt, Tituba creates a legacy she hopes will find its way into history as more than a brief statement.

To those around her, Tituba is "a voiceless exotic other and an object to be talked about" (Mudimbé-Boyi 751). With the help of Condé, Tituba becomes much more than a voiceless object. In this account of Tituba's life, the author is the listener who records the story, and Tituba is the narrator who controls it. Because Tituba cannot read or write, it is necessary for someone else to record her story so that she is not forgotten. The person who makes it possible for Tituba to be reinstated in the history books is the author, Maryse Condé. It is important to note that the author is a black Caribbean woman who is more likely to closely identify with Tituba than someone of a different skin color and different origin.[19]

Maryse Condé subverts her own authority so Tituba may truly own the account. As Mudimbé-Boyi explains, the "Je" used throughout the story is the voice of Tituba

[19]Maryse Condé claims that while Duras may be admired for *Ourika* in one respect, it should be noted that Duras' thought process expressed through Ourika is "étroitement européocentriste." Condé interprets Duras' thought process as including that "le nègre n'a ni vertus ni valeurs personnelles. Il doit les acquérir, c'est-à-dire mourir à lui-même afin d'avoir accès à la 'civilisation de l'universel' définie par l'Europe" (Parole des femmes 26).

which gives her the authority, not Condé. The only two times "Je" refers to Condé is in the two sentence introduction that allows the reader to know the relationship between Tituba and Condé and in the historical note that follows Tituba's story. The boundaries are clear, which allows for a true distinction between the narrator and the author.

When regarding *Moi, Tituba* as a whole and the manner in which Condé relays Tituba's story, it is apparent that Condé gives validity to Tituba's life. It is a life marked by racism and oppression. As Tituba experiences displacement and exile, she suffers because of her skin color, her gender and her religion. Men, women and children alike cause Tituba to suffer. Tituba's family and religion, hoodoo, give her comfort and guidance as she faces physical and symbolic violence as well as oppression. While at times Tituba accepts the colonial and patriarchal hierarchy, she also resists it. By choosing love over freedom, practicing hoodoo, participating in the slave rebellion, refusing biological motherhood and telling her story, Tituba opposes the forces working against her. Not only does Tituba exhibit resistance, but also Yao and Abena.

Despite the patriarchal system's role of limiting Tituba's voice, she eventually finds a way to make her voice heard. As a result of telling her story and finding her place in history, Tituba's struggles and battles are not fought in vain. Not only does she find her place in history by the telling of her story, but also, as Elisabeth Mudimbé-Boyi asserts, she finds a place in language and literature.[20] Tituba eventually discovers who she is and makes her identity known by recounting the events of her life. It is a long and

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[20]Elisabeth Mudimbé-Boyi argues, "In asserting herself as 'I, Tituba,' Tituba comes into existence and signals the end of marginalization, the end of exile from language, literature, and history." Elisabeth Mudimbé-Boyi, "Giving a voice to Tituba: The death of the author?," World Literature Today 67.4 (1993): 756.

arduous journey to freedom, but as Tituba makes her story known to the public, the final chapter of her exile comes to a close.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSION

The journeys weaving through the struggles associated with exile and racism are recounted in first person by Ourika and Tituba. The use of first person narration creates psychological depth as Ourika and Tituba express their intimate thoughts and desires. Even though Ourika's story is told in first person, she has less autonomy than Tituba because her words are filtered through the doctor. While the doctor allows Ourika's voice to be heard, he nonetheless takes away some of her autonomy.

In both of these works, the protagonist internalizes the power structure of the dominant culture to some extent. Ourika accepts the power that Mme de B. and French society as a whole exert over her. While the actions of Mme de B. are encompassed by love and affection, she nevertheless exerts power over Ourika. The presence of intermediaries acting as filters for some information that is relayed to Ourika demonstrates one type of power and control society exerts over her. Ourika adopts the views of the dominant French society to such an extent that she tries to turn white. Tituba also internalizes the power structure and views of her oppressors. This is evident in her behavior that she describes as animalistic, which is in keeping with the stereotype held by her oppressors. However, Tituba does not adopt the views of her oppressors to the extent that she tries to become white. She still clings to her identity as a black female. From the internalization of the white power and ideological structures, it is evident that both Ourika and Tituba suffer from what Bourdieu calls symbolic violence.

Tituba, as well as other women in *Moi, Tituba*, suffers from an additional type of violence. There are multiple examples of physical violence against women beginning with the rape of Tituba's mother, Abena. The physical violence of rape, which occurs at several different points in the novel, represents symbolic possession of the female.

Both Ourika and Tituba live in patriarchal societies and suffer because of the patriarchal structure. In *Ourika*, patriarchy takes the form of the need to marry or else be faced with an undesirable future. Patriarchy is so deep-seated that when faced with the impossibility of marriage to a white man, Ourika is distraught and her health is negatively affected. Patriarchy in *Moi, Tituba* is also deep-seated, and its effects can be seen in Tituba's life as well as the lives of women around her. Due to the patriarchal structure, Tituba's voice is limited. However, Tituba does not completely accept the patriarchal structure. She refuses biological motherhood, which represents the refusal of a prescribed gender role.

There is a sharp contrast between *Ourika* and *Moi, Tituba* concerning the sexualization of black women. Ourika is extremely desexualized because of her skin color. The aristocracy is so concerned with keeping the class pure that it is impossible for its members to view Ourika as a sexual being. In contrast, Tituba is extremely sexualized, as are other black women in *Moi, Tituba*. Race is not an obstacle to sexuality in this novel. The sexualization of black women by white men is a symbolic representation of cultural hybridity.

While Tituba serves as a painful reminder to her mother of a violent act, Tituba eventually accepts her cultural hybridity even though she never has any type of relationship with her biological father. Tituba identifies with being a black female and

never desires or attempts to become white. Through the practice of her religion, hoodoo, Tituba creates hybrids of plants that she uses to heal others. By showing a positive outcome from hybridity using these plants to help others, Tituba demonstrates that she accepts hybridity. Also, Tituba shows that hybridity may be viewed in a positive light because she who is a cultural hybrid has created hybrids to help others.

Religion plays a key role in the lives of Ourika and Tituba. For Ourika, it is Catholicism that brings her some solace near the end of her life. When she is so ill that it is believed she will die, Ourika experiences peace and is drawn to God. After this pivotal moment in her life, she decides to become a nun. It is in the convent that Ourika seeks refuge and an escape from racism. While she is able to escape further racial attacks, she cannot escape the effects of racism she has suffered up until that point. Her desire to be united with Charles remains with Ourika even in the convent, and, by practicing the religion of her oppressors, she continues to be dominated by French society.

For Tituba, hoodoo is a means of helping others, of seeking guidance from loved ones who have died and of staying connected to Barbados when she is in the American colonies. While the accusations of witchcraft cause Tituba great suffering, she continues to practice hoodoo. This signifies resistance to the dominant society and the patriarchal structure since hoodoo is not the religion of the dominant society and is a religion that empowers women. Also, hoodoo is a part of Tituba's identity, which is expressed in the title of the novel *Moi, Tituba sorcière…Noire de Salem*. Even though Tituba is not able to escape racism while alive, during her life she does form her own identity as a black sorcière, which becomes permanent once she finds her place in history. After her death, Tituba continues to help slaves in Barbados by serving as a guide in the fight against

slavery. It is her religion that allows her to fight against slavery while she is alive, as well as after her death.

Despite the struggles and hardships Ourika and Tituba face, they both draw comfort from family. Even though Mme de B. and Charles belong to the group of oppressors, Ourika possesses a bond with them that helps sustain her during some of the difficult times she faces. For Tituba, both biological and adoptive family members provide comfort and guidance at various points of her journey. Even though Tituba is rejected by her mother while Abena is alive, she eventually develops a closer bond with her mother after Abena's death. Tituba's adoptive family members, Yao and Mama Yaya, help sustain her throughout her journey by showing her love, affection and guidance.

Ourika and Tituba are examples of black slaves confronted with similar obstacles but in different countries and centuries. They demonstrate different reactions and methods of coping with the tribulations they encounter. The differences in their reactions can be linked to the time period in which each one was written. Ourika, whose story was written in the midst of a colonial regime's rule, is trapped by colonialism. She sees no way to fully escape the turmoil she experiences due to racism. Throughout her life she continues to struggle to form a functional identity.

Ourika's reaction to her circumstances possesses a characteristic of Romantic literature that was published around the same time as *Ourika*. Ourika displays characteristics of melancholia, a condition common in Romantic literature, once she discovers she is the Other. Not knowing how to cope with her situation, she is left in despair. Among many other objectives, Romanticism aimed to rebel against the

aristocratic norms present during the Enlightenment. While Ourika does not rebel against the aristocracy, her story does demonstrate problems with the aristocracy such as its disdain for anything or anyone that is not deemed worthy, as well as its unwillingness to truly accept those not born into the class.

Ourika also represents the discontent felt by many French people following the Revolution. The Revolution gave hope to many that it would bring about the end of monarchy and aristocratic privilege. Also, it was hoped the Revolution would bring about the emergence of the common man and democratic rights which would certainly call into question the plight of slaves both in France and its colonies. In the aftermath of the Revolution, it was evident the hopes of many of the French had not been realized. There was much violence and discord. Even though slavery was abolished in the French colonies in 1794, the law was disregarded in some places. Ourika, too, has hope the Revolution will improve her situation. However, life resumes at the end of the Revolution with her situation unchanged. Despite the abolition of slavery, the attitude of many French citizens toward blacks did not change as a result of the Revolution. Blacks in France and elsewhere were still subject to racism. Ourika's life highlights the extremely long and arduous process of change, especially that of a class' ideology.

Moi, Tituba, which was written during postcolonial times, provides glimpses of history from the twentieth century which are presented in the novel in an allegorical manner. Tituba represents a victim of oppression by a political regime. The Puritans in the American colonies as a collective unit demonstrate characteristics of an oppressive political regime. Under such a regime, there exists a lack of civil liberties, and those who

do not adhere to the ruling authority are dealt with violently and are often imprisoned, just as in *Moi, Tituba*.

The Puritan society described in *Moi, Tituba* may also represent a group of people who wish to live in a homogenous society and who employ tactics or use force to try and rid their society of minorities. In the American colonies, Tituba is targeted, along with others who deviate from the mainstream, in an attempt to rid society of her and those like her. The process of creating a homogenous society is accomplished primarily by making accusations that are often unfounded or exaggerated in order to convict, terrorize, imprison and even kill those who adhere to a different ideology. The Puritans' geographical location in the American colonies allows them to isolate themselves which, in turn, makes it easier to create a homogenous society. It is not just one minority that is targeted by the Puritans. Not only is there a black female slave who suffers, but also white women and sometimes their children. Benjamin Cohen d'Azevedo, a Portuguese Jew, suffers because of the Puritans as well. His family is burned along with his house as a sign of the Puritans' lack of tolerance.

Tituba's life in the American colonies is extremely difficult and challenging just as some periods in twentieth century history were. However, Tituba is eventually able to escape from the American colonies and the control of the tyrannical Puritans there. While returning to Barbados does not provide her with a place completely free from racism and oppression, Tituba finds some freedom by joining the maroons. Together they fight their oppressors for freedom. As opposed to Ourika, Tituba resists instead of falling victim to entrapment and shows that one can find her own identity amidst racism. Even though Tituba dies in a slave revolt, she leaves behind hope that slavery will end as

a result of resistance by slaves. Just as tyranny was not abolished with the end of one oppressive political regime, racism will not end with the death of the institution of slavery. However, as Tituba is reinstated in history, she gives hope that others will learn from her life and that, progressively, society will move toward a time when Otherness will not so readily incite violence.

While *Ourika* and *Moi, Tituba* were written by authors of very different backgrounds during different centuries, they both provide insight into racism, its manifestations and the possible results of its effects. Ourika and Tituba convey the mental and physical turmoil they suffer in a very personal way that demonstrates two different reactions to racism. Their compelling personal accounts invite the reader to consider the implications of their words both in the past and in the present as they, perhaps, begin to make revolutionary marks on the different ideologies present around the globe.

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