

*The Rhetoric of Inferiority of African Slaves in John Fawcett's Obi; or,
Three-Fingered Jack (1800) Re-evaluated
in Charlie Haffner's Amistad Kata-Kata (1987)*

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Abstract: John Fawcett's *Obi; or, Three-Finger'd Jack* (1800) draws a distorted picture of the life of slaves in Jamaica. This paper investigates the ambivalence in this distortion as Fawcett creates two kinds of slaves by pitting them against each other: the loyal and obedient slaves (but still inferior) vs. the superstitious-ridden and rebellious slaves deeply rooted in old traditions, thus considered inferior, uneducated, immoral and dangerous. The juxtaposition of what I call 'anglicised' slaves instrumentalised by the coloniser and the heathen 'savages' that are beyond the reach of the imperial ideology enables Fawcett to substantiate the claim that Christianity successfully promotes slaves to 'anglicised' mimic men/women who are then able to carry out its mission: to eradicate the pagan practice of obeah, three-finger'd Jack, and all those slaves that threaten the stability of the coloniser's superiority. Charlie Haffner's play *Amistad Kata-Kata* (1987) is about the heroism of Shengbe Pieh and his fellow slaves on board the *La Amistad*: on their way to the colonies they revolted, were sent to prison, tried, finally freed, and taken back home after 3 years. The paper shows how Haffner repositions the 'Amistad trope' in the 20th century by effacing the materiality of the body of the African slaves, thus re-evaluating the corporeality of the colonised slave in the 19th-century post-abolition debate by coming to terms with the cultural trauma post-independent African collective identity has been experiencing. The re-staging of the play by the 'Freetong Players' in 2007/8 commemorated the bicentenary of the abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade, a unique opportunity to direct the attention to asserting the identity of 'Post-European' Africa.

Keywords: Slavery Studies, Post-European Identity, Body, Materiality, Ideology

The 18th Century: The Self-Appointed Image of Britain as an Idealized Nation

Identity as a marker distinguishing different European nations/rivals from each other was particularly relevant when applied to the contact with non-European countries/colonies. According to Greene, the English "had retained their identity as a

free people by safeguarding their liberty through their laws.”ⁱ The acquisition of colonies and the trade in people around the globe catapulted the concept of British identity to a whole new level as “[...] liberty...not only remained the ‘hallmark of Englishness’ but rapidly became the emblem of Britishness.”ⁱⁱ British identity not only connoted liberty but also “Protestantism, social openness, intellectual and scientific achievement, and a prosperity based upon trade,”ⁱⁱⁱ a combination that corroborated the image of Great Britain as the leading nation in the civilizing mission of ‘other’, non-European countries.

Scrutinizing images of African slaves created by the imperial ideology in the contact zone is most essential to understand how they came into being and, most importantly, how they influence modern thinking in terms of national/cultural/ethnic differences and divergence. Particular emphasis in the analysis of the plays featuring African slaves is laid on the national identity of the British Empire in creating ‘auto’ and ‘hetero’ images, whose frequent reiteration successfully familiarized the British public with the character of the ‘non-familiar.’ When attempting to come to terms with European/British attitudes towards the ‘other’, it is thus of vital importance to subject the “negative connotations surrounding *black* and *blackness*”^{iv} in the images of African slaves to close scrutiny. The(se) attitude(s) towards “black bodies” provided the foundation for the categorization of a black African identity, an identity divergent from what was perceived as the white European norm. Sanchez-Eppler avers “if the body is an inescapable sign of identity, it is also an insecure and often illegible sign.”^v Taking this assumption as a starting point, it is crucial to shed light on how British playwrights instrumentalised the insecurity and illegibility of the black body and forged a rhetoric of its inferiority, which obstructed “the inscription of black...bodies into the discourses of personhood.”^{vi} Denying black bodies the status of a person led to the strengthening of the mastery of the European over the African body as being “annihilated...a person [is] owned, absorbed, and un-named.”^{vii} The absorption of the body leads to the absorption and dissolution of an old and the creation of a new identity. Kathleen Wilson defines identity as “a historical process, rather than an outcome, a negotiation between individual conceptions of self and collectivity and their social valence.”^{viii} The so-formed collective identity of Britons was made to contrast markedly with the collective identity of Africans. Britain thus provided the cultural benchmark against which African identity was assessed. The problem with the conviction that Britain “stood high for liberty” is that “[n]ational characteristics...function as commonplaces – utterances that have obtained a ring of familiarity through frequent reiteration” rather than through its “empirical truth value.”^{ix} This high regard for liberty, that is the empathy towards Africans who enslaved by the British Empire were manumitted by Britannia sailing across the Atlantic to unfetter the poor slaves, was ultimately embedded in the territorial control of colonies and their subjects. The image of the free slave thus served the purpose of advancing ameliorist tendencies rather than true emancipatory interests. Nussbaum calls it a “manipulation of abolitionist impulses to advance imperialism...Sub-Saharan Africans become more clearly recognizable as prototypical subjects of slavery through the process necessary to identify them as eligible for freedom, a process that also, ironically, increasingly racialises them.”^x The communicative strategies used to spread Britain’s love for liberty and thus her contempt for tyranny and violence were “an important propagandistic means of nurturing the culture’s dominant fictions.” Distancing Britishness from the ‘otherness’ of non-

European nations “strengthen[ed] a sense of Britain’s superiority that was based on the principle of inequality.”^{xi}

This paper analyses John Fawcett’s^{xii} (1768-1837) famous *Obi; or Three-Fingered Jack*, a pantomime that deals with the rebellion of Jack and his followers involved in the magic of obi. The discussion of the play will reveal the range of interpretative possibilities regarding the ‘cultivation’ of images: even if the theatre “became a vehicle for abolitionist sentiment”, they still served as a vehicle to reinforce or harden images of African slaves people had in mind. It was not only “a sentimentalized site for resistance to the evils of slavery”^{xiii} but also a site for the confirmation of already existing biased views of non-European people, a justification for the evils of slavery, and thus an approval to the British civilizing ‘mission’. In a second step, Charlie Haffner, playwright, songwriter, and oral historian,^{xiv} repositions the ‘Amistad trope’ in the 20th century by ‘re-semanticising’ the materiality of the body of the African slaves and their leader Shengbe Pieh in particular. *Amistad Kata-Kata* re-evaluates the corporeality of the colonised slave in the 19th-century post-abolition debate by coming to terms with the cultural trauma post-independent African collective identity has been experiencing. The recuperation of their own (African) history during the colonial period comprises commemorating the effacement of the African body by the European coloniser and confirming the African body in establishing a ‘modern’, 20th-century/21st-century ‘us’. Haffner makes sure that the national identity of Sierra Leone ‘witnesses’ the “‘re-memory’ of the past as well as the validation of the past.”^{xv}

A Rhetoric of Inferiority: The Anglicised Slave(s) vs. Native Barbarism

John Fawcett’s *Obi; or, Three-Fingered Jack* (1800) opened at Colman’s Haymarket on 2 July 1800. It is based on “Jack Mansong in Benjamin Moseley’s *Treatise on Sugar*” (1799) but also echoes “the Maroon communities of Jamaica...with whom the British authorities had been forced to sign a peace treaty in 1739, and who had gone to war against the British in 1795-6.”^{xvi} An immediate hit, the pantomime was running “for 39 performances that summer; it played 20 times the next year and 15 times in 1802.”^{xvii} Set on a plantation/Montego Bay in Jamaica in 1780/1 the story opens with the arrival of the English Captain Orford who has come to visit his father’s best friend, the Planter. He is introduced to the Planter’s daughter Rosa who is celebrating her birthday with the slaves. After the Captain has retired, the celebration is spoilt by the announcement that he has been shot at by Three-fingered Jack, who got his name after a fight with Quashee where he lost two fingers. Convalescing in the Planter’s house Captain Orford vows eternal love to Rosa. Later while on a hunting expedition with the Planter, Captain Orford is attacked by Jack and abducted into a cave. A declaration offering “[o]ne Hundred Guineas, and Freedom to any Slave who brings in the Head of Three-Finger’d Jack”^{xviii} induces the slaves Quashee and Sam to go in search of Jack and Captain Orford, but not without Quashee being christened before – changing his name to James Reeder. Rosa, who accompanies them, finds Captain Orford in the cave and rescues him. A fight ensues between Quashee, Sam, and Tuckey, Captain Orford’s slave, and Jack who is eventually stabbed and decapitated by Quashee^{xix}. The pantomime closes with a sweeping march and procession celebrating Jack’s death and Britain’s victory over the villainy of obi.^{xx}

Obi; or, Three-Finger'd Jack is an excellent example of how the imperial ideology forged a rhetoric of the inferiority of African natives by drawing a distorted picture of the life of slaves in Jamaica. By denying Jack and his followers the status of persons within the ideological discourse Fawcett creates a hetero-image that stresses their inferiority in contrast not only to the white Europeans but also to the 'anglicised' natives that once converted are misused to hunt down their own people. Fawcett pits the slaves against each other and creates two groups, the loyal and obedient (but still inferior) vs. the superstitious-ridden and rebellious slaves deeply rooted in old traditions, and thus considered inferior. In the opening scene the cruel fate of being enslaved is decried,

The white man comes, and brings his gold
The slaver meet him on the Bay
And, oh, poor negro then be sold,
From home poor negro sails away.
Oh, it be very very sad to see
Poor negro child and father part

only to then add,

But if white man kind massa be,
He heal the wound in negro's heart. (*Obi* 204)

The benevolent and feeling master who refrains from punitive measures turns into the authority that protects the obedient slaves from their rebellious counterpart, slaves branded as the enemy not just by the white man but also their own 'Europeanised' brothers and sisters.

We love massa - we love massa, when he good,
No lay stick on negro's back

...

And save us from Three-finger'd Jack. (*Obi* 204)

Jack is therefore identified as the common enemy of both the master and his slaves. Jack is not just an individual character they intend to wreak revenge on, but the embodiment of *obi*^{xxi}, of the evil wretchedness of the slaves rebelling against white civilization. Waters identifies Jack as being the cause for white fear "with his continuation of African cultural practices and traditional religion," a fear that induces white vengeance, "the riposte to black revolt."^{xxii} But before this evil world of 'savages' living in the wood is introduced, it is the happiness and frolicking of the Planter's slaves that the pantomime focuses on, in particular when describing the march and procession of the slaves: "Eight Negro Boys, in pairs, with Triangles – Six Dancing Girls, in pairs, with Bells" when Rosa "distributes presents to the Slaves of ribbons, handkerchiefs." (*Obi* 206) This rough sketch of the slaves' life on the plantation, that is obedient slaves working for a benevolent master whose attitude towards the slaves abounds with empathy, is somehow blurred by the fact that the moment Jack comes into play, the Planter reprimands the slaves for their "cowardice" and "temerity." (*Obi* 207) It is neither the Planter nor the Overseer who are supposed to hunt Jack down, but the

obedient slaves. The Overseer reminisces about their past days in Africa and appeals to their sense of duty:

Swear by the silver crescent of the night,
Beneath whose beams the negro breathes his pray'r
Swear by your fathers slaughtered in the fight,
By your dear native land and children swear.

By doing so, he apportions the blame for the 'miserable' condition of the slaves on Jack and the ritual of obi rather than on the fact that, even if treated 'humanely', they are still exposed to the malice of the Planter.

Swear to pursue this traitor, and annoy him
This Jack, who daily works your harm,
With Obi and with magic charm
Swear, swear you will destroy him! (*Obi* 207-8)

They are thus instrumentalised to denounce the magic of Obi and Jack's resistance to conform to European oppression. The outsiders within the slave community, Jack, the Obi Woman and the "Negro Robbers", are therefore characterised as most despicable creatures endangering the supposedly peaceful slave community. The cave of the Obi Woman is described as "covered with rushes and straw. The whole of the walls are entirely covered with feathers, rags, bones, teeth, catskin, broken glass, parrots' beaks;" the Obi Woman is described as "an old decrepit Negress, dressed very grotesquely" (*Obi* 209). The ostensible inferiority and baseness of Jack, his followers, and the Obi Woman, the lack of anything remotely resembling Western culture, religion, experience, moral values stands in stark contrast to white society, which is not the Planter, the Overseer or Captain Orford but the 'whitened' devotees, that is the slaves Quashee, Sam, and Tuckey. The image of the savage 'obi-ridden negroes' posing a threat to 'white society', which also comprises the obedient slaves, runs counter to the image of the aforementioned 'civilized/christened' slaves. When Jack finally wounds Captain Orford, drags him into the cave, and lets out a yell of triumph, it is as if a ferocious animal retreated to the cave with its prey. This 'monster' in human form can only be overpowered by a Christian act: empowered by Christianity the newly converted Quashee "crosses his [Jack's] forehead, and tells him he has been christened;" Jack is literally disarmed and lets his gun fall. Wounded by Tuckey's gun, Quashee stabs and decapitates him. The baptism empowers him to free his fellow slaves as well as the Europeans from the constraints of obi. The pantomime closes with a "Grand March and Procession" (*Obi* 218) which displays the "Obi Woman" and "Jack's head and hand" being successfully subdued by superior colonial 'morality' and conduct. The slaves have been instrumentalised in overcoming their traditions and cultural heritage, here stigmatized as a threatening force to the order of society. Eventually, order has been restored,

Bring good news to Kingston town, O.
O no fear Jack's Obi bag,
Quashee knock him down, O,

...

The negro now may go
For charm he broke, and Jack he kill
'Twas Quashee give the blow,

...

Here we see villainy brought by law to short duration
And may all traitors fall by British proclamation (*Obi* 219)

It is the British moral imperative for liberty that not only saves the loyal slaves from morally degenerating, but also elevates them to a higher status by bestowing on them the Christian doctrine of justice in combatting heathenism and the culture of the 'other', that is their very own culture.

Amistad Kata-Kata: A 'Post-European' Re-evaluation^{xxiii}

Amistad Kata-Kata premiered at the British Council in Freetown, May 1988. It recounts the Amistad event of 1839-42 where a group of Sierra Leonean slaves led by Shengbe Pieh mutinied and killed captain Ferrer and his cook Celestino on the *La Amistad* ('friendship' in English) bound for Puerto Principe. Horrified by the prospect of being chopped to pieces and eaten by the white man, they took charge of the ship and forced the two Spanish seamen Ruiz and Montez to take them back to Sierra Leone. Misled by the two Spaniards into believing that they were sailing back to Africa, they were actually sailing westward. They were finally captured by an American ship, charged with murder and jailed in New Haven, USA. When the case went to the Supreme Court, former President John Quincy Adams assumed the Africans' defence and won the case, with the slaves eventually boarding the *Gentleman* for Freetown, Sierra Leone. Haffner's play features a second narrative plot with "grandma" who is upset about the "student's" ignorance of the story of Shengbe Pieh as part of the national history of the country. Grandma represents the oral tradition passed on to the younger generations with the student who "[...] relies on the usual Western representations in books rather than on the cultural reality around him as the validating source of his own cultural experience."^{xxiv} Grandma reminds the student of Pieh's importance for the country, "Our people have still not seen the importance of using him as a symbol of national pride."^{xxv} When summoned by the Chief Priest, the ghost of Pieh appears and retells his story of his being captured and sold into slavery.

Haffner instrumentalises the Amistad trope to make Africans aware of the postcolonial gaze on their own identity by "[...] recuperat[ing] marginalised subjects, or, alternatively, [by] dismantl[ing] all racial categories by showing their constructedness."^{xxvi} He recuperates marginalised characters like Three-Finger'd Jack, and de-silences the past by re-evaluating the history of African(s). He gives a voice not only to Shengbe Pieh and the other slaves but also to Sierra Leoneans so that they can look back at the past and come to terms the "constructedness" of the imperial story, a single story^{xxvii} that after being continuously repeated had and still has a profound impact on how auto- and hetero-images influence intercultural relationships. In *Amistad Kata-Kata* Haffner uses arguments most slave trade/slavery supporters fell back on in their argumentation: the fact that the inner-African slave trade played an essential part in the actual selling of slaves and the superstitiousness of the African slaves. Celestino's joke of the cannibalistic devouring of the black man by the white coloniser unleashes

the mutiny and Shengbe's determination to free his brothers from slavery: "I swear that I will never surrender to the white man. None of us will be left in slavery. We rather die fighting. God be with us" (AKK 10). The act of regaining their freedom means that the body acquires new significations as "[t]he body which has been violated, degraded, maimed, imprisoned, viewed with disgust, or otherwise compromised [...]"^{xxviii} is viewed from a different perspective, transforming the trope of Africans destined to be enslaved into the postcolonial agent of his/her own identity:

Part of the project of redefining staged identity is to affix the *colonised's* choice of signification to the body rather than to maintain the limited tropes traditionally assigned to it. This oppositional process of *embodiment* whereby the colonised creates his/her own subjectivity ascribes more flexible, culturally laden, and multivalent delineations to the body, rather than circumscribing it within an imposed, imperialist calculation of otherness.^{xxix}

The recuperation and 're-semanticisation' of the past therefore allows for the resurrection of a national/cultural African identity long forgotten, suppressed or simply neglected. One might ask why Haffner is commemorating the *Amistad* revolt. It is because the "use of historical knowledge in interpreting the present"^{xxx} does not only 'interpret' but also 're-define' identity in the sense of redressing wrongs and 're-focalising' the frozen and distorted vision colonial history had turned into reality. "So whether the past is mythical or implied objective, its validity lies in the position it occupies in society's shared consciousness or collective memory."^{xxxi} Haffner for instance uses the colonial trope of cannibalism to show how it was instrumentalised to emphasise the alleged inferiority of the slaves. It exposes not only the slaves' superstitious belief in the cannibalistic rite of whites enslaving, killing, and eating slaves, but it also illustrates that Africans are allocated a place low on the ladder of civilisation. When the crowd in New Haven yells, "Stop the pirates!! Capture the cannibals!! Save the white race!! Down with savagery!! We are not safe!! Our life is threatened!! We can't sail our own ships!! We can't go fishing!!" (AKK 13), Haffner alludes to the general absurdity of the situation, highlighting the mutual manipulation of the two bodies – black/white, colonised/coloniser, black cannibals/white cannibals – thus ridiculing the semanticisation of Europeans/Americans vs. Africans. Matthew J. Christensen interprets the trope of cannibalism as a "symbol for the economic exploitation, material accumulation, and violent coercion carried out by postcolonial elites".^{xxxii} AKK is Haffner's revolt against the West "project[ing] the label of cannibalism onto those Africans it wants to subordinate, thereby disavowing the cannibalistic underpinnings of its own racially stratified economic organization."^{xxxiii}

Haffner thus uses Shengbe to determine the postcolonial gaze that is (supposed) to 'rewrite' colonial history and to amend this otherness, for instance when Adams compares him to a hero of "ancient Greece and Rome", the "Black Prince" (AKK 17).

[...] had he lived in the days of Greece and Rome, his name would have been handed down to posterity as one who has practiced the most sublime of all virtues – disinterested patriotism and un-shrinking courage. Had a white man done it, they would have immortalized him. His name would have been made glorious...Africans...are entitled to their liberty...Africans

were born free and are entitled to their freedom...It demands, from a humanly civilized nation as ours, compassion. It demands, from the brotherly love of a Christian land, sympathy. It demands, from a republic professing reverence for the rights of man, justice. (AKK 22)

It is this 'civilizational' aspect of the West supposed to instruct the poor Africans that the three abolitionists in the play, Tappan, Leavitt, and Joselyn, capitalise on when they claim that

[t]hey are ignorant of our language – of the uses of civilized society and the obligations of Christianity. It is under these circumstances, that several friends of human rights and abolition of slave trade have met to consult upon the case of these unfortunate Africans and appointed a committee to employ all the necessary means to secure the rights of the accused. (AKK 16)

The abolitionists have faith in Jones as they want to see “[...] if a man, although he is black, cannot have justice done him here in the United States of America” (AKK 16). They hand over a letter to Jones, declaring that “[m]any of the Africans can, now, read and write...This has been part of the committee’s effort – to provide for their physical well being and their intellectual and religious instruction” (AKK 17). That is when Shengbe and his fellow slaves submissively declare that “[...] he [Mr. James Covey] teach us to sing Christian songs in Mende language” (AKK 17). Here we are provided with the confirmation of the coloniser’s attempt at justifying the enslavement of Africans: being enslaved and transported to the colonies implies effacing their identity by reproducing their ‘bodies’ and turning them into ‘European’ bodies. Their accusation of the inhumane treatment of the African peoples is combined with the belief in God’s punishment of such an immoral behaviour.

We all born in Mende country...Some people say, Mende people crazy. Mende people dolt, because we don’t talk America language. America people don’t talk Mende language. America people dolt? Dear Mr. Adams, you have children. You have friends. You love them. You feel sorry if Mende people come and carry them all to Africa...We sorry for America people great deal, because God punish liars...Mende people have got souls. All we want is make us free. (AKK 17)

The accusation of the immoral behaviour of the coloniser in treating the colonised is encapsulated in President Adams’s question “[...] what can [he] do for the cause of God and man – for the progress of human emancipation – for the suppression of the African slave trade?” (AKK 18). The recuperation and ‘re-semanticisation’ of the past is a process that implies resurrecting a national/cultural African identity long forgotten, suppressed, or just simply neglected but at the same time “interpreting the present”^{xxxiv} by ‘re-defining’ identity in the sense of redressing wrongs and ‘focalising’ the distorted vision colonial history turned into reality. According to Osagie, “so whether the past is mythical or implied objective, its validity lies in the position it occupies in society’s shared consciousness or collective memory.”^{xxxv} The past is therefore ‘re-semanticised’ in order to define ‘us’ and not ‘us’ vs. ‘them.’

Summing up, John Fawcett's *Obi; or, Three-Finger'd Jack* helped forge a rhetoric of inferiority by corroborating the fact that 'black bodies' would only be considered worthy of attention if servile to the imperial dogma of white English superiority. It denied black bodies who were still deeply entrenched in the practice of obeah and thus running counter to the Christian principle of the superior British Caucasian 'race' the status of a person. The strengthening of the mastery of the European over the African body led to the creation of a new colonial identity: 'Europeanised' slaves who eradicate the pagan practice of obeah, three-finger'd Jack, and all those who threaten the stability of the coloniser's superiority. Charlie Haffner's *Amistad Kata-Kata* challenges this rhetoric of inferiority by rewriting the story of the Amistad revolt from an African 20th-century perspective. The play deconstructs the process of assigning a preconceived meaning to the African body: it is the "fundamental rights to freedom" that Africans are entitled to in the "name of humanity and justice" (AKK 22). Shengbe, representing Sierra Leonean identity, undergoes a 're-semanticisation' that re-evaluates (his) African identity which was erased a long time ago by colonial history. "I was not born to be a slave. So, it is better for me to die fighting than to live many moons in misery. And if I am hanged, I will be happy if by dying, I will save my black race from bondage" (AKK 21). *Amistad Kata-Kata* generates "a new sense of national and historical belonging," confronting people with an "'available past', a commemorative event belonging to the people of Sierra Leone [...]"^{xxxvi}.

ⁱ Jack P. Greene, "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution," *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. II, The Eighteenth Century, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) 208-230. 209.

ⁱⁱ Greene, "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution" 212.

ⁱⁱⁱ Greene, "Empire and Identity from the Glorious Revolution to the American Revolution" 208.

^{iv} J.R. Oldfield, "Transatlanticism, Slavery, and Race," *American Literary Review* 14.1 (Spring 2002): 131-140. 133.

^v Karen Sanchez-Eppler, "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition," *Representations* 24, America Reconstructed, 1840-1940 (Autumn 1988): 28-59. 29.

^{vi} Sanchez-Eppler, "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition" 29.

^{vii} Sanchez-Eppler, "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition" 31.

^{viii} Kathleen Wilson, introduction, *A New Imperial History. Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 6.

^{ix} Joep Leerssen, "The Rhetoric of National Character: A Programmatic Survey," *Poetics Today* 21.2 (Summer 2000): 267-92. 280.

^x Felicity A. Nussbaum, "Between 'Oriental' and 'Blacks So Called', 1688-1788," *The Postcolonial Enlightenment. Eighteenth-Century Colonialism and Postcolonial Theory*,

ed. Daniel Carey, and Lynn Festa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 137-166. 165, 166.

^{xi} Ansgar Nünning, "Historicizing British Cultural Studies: Patriotic Xenophobia and the Rhetoric of National Character in Eighteenth-Century British Literature," *Journal for the Study of British Cultures* 9.1 (2002): 69-93. 83, 84.

^{xii} For a detailed account of Fawcett's life see *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation. Writings in the British Romantic Period*, vol. 5, Drama, ed. Jeffrey N. Cox (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999) 201-202.

^{xiii} Virginia Mason Vaughan, *Performing Blackness on English Stages, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005) 17.

^{xiv} For more information about Charlie Haffner go to the homepage of the Freetong Players International: <http://freetongplayersinternational.org>

^{xv} Iyunolu Folayan Osagie, *The Amistad Revolt: Memory, Slavery, and the Politics of Identity in the United States and Sierra Leone* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2000) 110.

^{xvi} Hazel Waters, *Racism on the Victorian Stage. Representation of Slavery and the Black Character* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) 26.

^{xvii} Jeffrey N. Cox, introduction, John Fawcett, "Obi; or, Three-Finger'd Jack," 1800, *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation. Writings in the British Romantic Period*, vol. 5, Drama, ed. Jeffrey N. Cox (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999) 201-202. 202.

^{xviii} John Fawcett, "Obi; or, Three-Finger'd Jack," 1800, *Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation. Writings in the British Romantic Period*, vol. 5, Drama, ed. Jeffrey N. Cox (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999) 203-219. 211.

^{xix} In "Songs, Duets, & Choruses, In the Pantomimical Drama of Obi, or, Three-Finger's Jack" it is mentioned that Jack's three-fingered hand is also cut off.

^{xx} According to John O'Brien, "[p]antomimes were typically referred to as 'entertainments'", understood as a form of entertainment rather than a process of moral education, hence "a form of entertainment that was taken by many to constitute a threat to the integrity of the English stage." (*Harlequin Britain. Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690-1760* (Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004) xv, 36.) The reason why it was perceived as a threat was that the characters were mute, a fact that "enabled the audience to more easily encode onto the role their pre-existing racial perspective, arguably reproducing race within their pre-conceived stereotypes [...]." (David Worrall, *The Politics of Romantic Theatricality, 1787-1832: The Road to the Stage* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) 98.)

^{xxi} "This Obi...has its origin, like many Customs among the Africans, from the ancient Egyptians. Obi for the purpose of bewitching People, or consuming them by lingering illness, is made of grave dirt, hair, teeth of sharks, and other animals." (John Fawcett, "Songs, Duets, & Choruses, In the Pantomimical Drama of Obi, or, Three-Finger's Jack", 3rd ed. (London: Woodfall, 1800) 2. ECCO. University of Munich Lib. Web. 6 April 2011.

^{xxii} Waters, *Racism on the Victorian Stage. Representation of Slavery and the Black Character* 26.

^{xxiii} Passages of this section have been published in Ulrich Pallua, "Amistad Kata-Kata: A Re-Evaluation of the Materiality of the Body," *Afrika – Kontinent der Extreme? Edition Weltordnung - Religion – Gewalt*, vol. 9 (Innsbruck: iup, 2011) 245-258.

^{xxiv} Osagie, *The Amistad Revolt* 107.

^{xxv} Charlie Haffner, *Amistad Kata-Kata (Based on the True Story of the Amistad Revolt). A Play in Three Acts* (Freetown: Sierra Leone, 1987) Unpublished. 1. Hereafter referred to as *AKK* in parenthetical documentation.

^{xxvi} Helen Gilbert, and Joanne Tompkins, *Post-colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) 206.

^{xxvii} I am here referring to Chimamanda Adichie's definition of a single story and the dangers associated with it:

http://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.html

^{xxviii} Gilbert and Tompkins, *Post-colonial Drama* 222.

^{xxix} Gilbert and Tompkins, *Post-colonial Drama* 205.

^{xxx} Osagie, "Historical Memory and a New National Consciousness" 65.

^{xxxi} Osagie, "Historical Memory and a New National Consciousness" 66.

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