

## SAA Seminar: Travel and Rhetoric in Early Modern Literature (led by Natalya Din-Kariuki)

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### Expressing gratitude in print: John Taylor's domestic travel narratives and the rhetoric of hospitality

English domestic travel writings accord extensive narrative space and creative energy to descriptions of the hospitality, or lack thereof, that English travelers experienced in their own country. These descriptions have been commented upon individually, but less often considered as a consistent thread of domestic travel writing. Using the travel narratives of John Taylor as an entry point, this paper explores how expressions of gratitude in English domestic travel writing call attention to their texts' status as rhetorical gifts in exchanges between guests, hosts, and readers. Taylor's work notably applies the language of hospitality to his relationships with commercial hosts, combining discourses of commerciality and generosity in ways that reflect his own attempts to profit through his travel narratives. His work thus explores the materiality of writing and the place of rhetoric within hospitality exchanges. Moreover, I suggest, Taylor's and others' careful expressions of gratitude complicate the assumed relationship between travel writing and individualism. By viewing domestic travel narratives as documents of hospitality, not simply of travel, we can see the genre positions its not-so-solitary travelers within a web of commercial, hierarchical, and ethical obligations to other people.

James Seth

### The Rhetoric of "Strange Fish": Caliban, Kalicho, and the Language of Indigenous Selfhood

My paper on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610) analyzes the rhetoric of Caliban's identity and selfhood vis-à-vis one of the play's most deeply inspired--and critically underexamined--sources: the first written record of captive Inuk translator, Kalicho, first published in Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1586). By putting the play in conversation with Kalicho's first descriptions and communications, as well as with postcolonial and raciolinguistic scholarship, my reading highlights the problems with European conceptions of Indigenous language, knowledge, and agency. A fundamental connection between the Frobisher capture narrative, written by Lieutenant George Best, and the plot of *The Tempest* is the power and profundity of language, as well as its ability to confuse and confound. It is this link that deeply ties Kalicho to Caliban, beyond their similar names and Indigenous heritages. Shakespeare's play contains many echoes of Best's account in reimagining the Indigenous other as violent and creaturely. For example, Trinculo describes Caliban using the exact phrase as Best when first seeing the Inuit at *Saknirutiak Imanga* in present day Canada—"strange fish"—evoking a specific kind of racial/racist animalism that others the islanders while the White European gazer gains a clearer focus for the White reader-audience. Language is also crucial to Kalicho's and Caliban's roles as servant-guides, willing or unwilling. Kalicho showed Frobisher where the "crabs grow" (*Tempest* 2.2.166), and he familiarized the English with the natural resources and his Inuktitut language using signs and gestures. This paper will critically examine the concept Stephen Greenblatt calls "linguistic colonialism" by focusing not only on the implications that the colonizer's language can strip away Indigenous selfhood, but also on the way this concept overlooks nonverbal Indigenous languages and nonlingual forms of communication, which guides like Kalicho used during introductions with European outsiders.

Suggested readings:

Lemercier-Goddard, Sophie. “‘Any Strange Beast There Makes a Man’: Interaction and Self-Reflection in the Arctic (1576-1578).” *Revue LISA/LISA e-journal: Littératures, Histoire des Idées, Images, Sociétés du Monde Anglophone – Literature, History of Ideas, Images and Societies of the English-speaking World* 13.3 (2015).

Rosa, Jonathan and Nelson Flores. “Unsettling race and language: Toward a raciolinguistic perspective.” *Language in Society* 46 (2017): 621-647.