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TO PEOPLE AN ISLE: *THE TEMPEST* AND COLONIALISM

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ABSTRACT. ***To People an Isle: The Tempest and Colonialism.*** Contemporary critical directions often construe *The Tempest* in the post-colonial paradigm. The relationship between the slave Caliban and Prospero, his master, monopolizes many analyses of the play. The present author attempts to identify several foibles of this frame of thinking, reconsiders several tenets of New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, and finally offers alternative interpretations.

Keywords: *Shakespeare; The Tempest; Post-Colonialism; New Historicism.*

REZUMAT. ***A Ocupa o Insulă: Furtuna şi Colonialismul.*** Direcţiile critice contemporane adesea configurează *Furtuna* într-o paradigmă post-colonială. Relaţia dintre Caliban sluga şi Prospero stăpânul monopolizează multe analize ale piesei. Autorul acestui studiu încearcă să identifice anumite carenţe ale acestui tipar de gândire, reexaminează diverse principii ale noului istorism şi ale materialismului cultural, oferind în final interpretări alternative.

Cuvinte cheie: *Shakespeare; Furtuna; post-colonialism; noul istorism.*

Harold Bloom once noted that "Shakespeare's mysterious Orphic drama is never easy to perform, and is more difficult to understand now than it ever was" (Bloom, 242). The Yale scholar suggests that our *Zeitgeist* has engendered a novel sensitivity to the play's issues, and a diversity of interpretations which obscure the play's meaning and puzzle the reader. In order to articulate a clear and accurate hermeneutic today, it may then be necessary to analyze the play with special attention to its cultural and linguistic background. In line with the directions traced by Umberto Eco (1988), we consider faithfulness to the *intentio operis* to be the litmus test distinguishing between the 'interpretation' and the 'use' of a text. Thus, we eschew the many problems raised by groping

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for an apocryphal and ineffectual *intentio auctoris,* as described by Wimsatt and Beardsley (1946) under the name of 'intentional fallacy'.

This is not to say that the 'uses' of a text are devoid of interest or legitimacy. A case can be made for politically appropriating Shakespeare, as José Enrique Rodó, Roberto Fernandez Retamar and Robert Márquez did with Ariel and Caliban, in order to oppose oppressive forces (Vaughan and Vaughan, 144-157). And, indeed, it is perfectly legitimate to cast Elizabethan plays against present concerns, as is the case of *The Merchant of Venice* or of Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* after the Holocaust. Yet, our concern is what distinguishes legitimate hermeneutic viewpoints from political instrumentalization. In order to heighten the understanding of the play, not the prejudice of his age, the critic must understand and respect the *intentio operis*.

To a large extent, the exegesis of *The Tempest* has coincided, since the mid-twentieth century, with the attempts of interpreting Caliban. He holds such a crucial role in the economy of the play that one cannot advance any major reinterpretation of *The Tempest* without reconsidering Caliban, and vice-versa. This is not to say that we neglect Bloom's warning[1] and are substituting Prospero's play for Caliban's, but that the conception of the magus is indelibly linked to that of the "salvage and deformed slave". Each is the other's obverse: when the monster acts as the quintessential representation of the *yanqui* colonists, who are "rough and obtuse Calibans", Prospero is dubbed "the wise magician of Shakespeare's *Tempest*" (Rodó, 31).

With Octave Mannoni's seminal essay on the Madagascar crisis, *La Psychologie de la colonisation* (1950), an inversion of that imagery occurs – Prospero becomes the autocratic miscreant, and Caliban the enslaved martyr. The rhetoric duly changes. Philip Mason considers Caliban "the man who will be Prime Minister after independence", while Prospero becomes the cunning master of *Realpolitik* on the island, handing out knighthoods to Ariel for loyal submission, and attempting to suppress the native's "seditious" speech – somewhat puzzlingly, considering Prospero conferred it to him in the first place (Mason, 78-79).

Given Caliban's potent poetic or counter-poetic function (with the exception of Prospero, he speaks the greatest number of lines in the play)[2], interpreting him is key to discerning the *intentio operis*. If, as Virginia and Alden Vaughan believe, "Shakespeare used no single idea or figure as Caliban's model"

[1] With a somewhat rhetorical prick, Bloom asserts that "Caliban and Prospero are antithetical to one another, as they desperately discover. It is Caliban's island, but Prospero's play, and any critic who tries to displace Prospero will become only another Stephano." (245)

[2] Bloom was right to say "that Caliban has aesthetic dignity, and that the play is not wholly Prospero's because of him." (204)

(274), then no single idea is governing *The Tempest* either. Ambiguity is a poor steward in Shakespeare's motley court of meanings, multiplicity and polyphony being much more likely figures.

For that reason, one may simultaneously interpret the play as the opposition of nature and nurture, and the former's sordid triumph; a re-enactment of Plato's σῶμα-νοῦς-ψυχή distinction (Papahagi, 139); a Freudian (or Jungian) excavation of the subconscious– "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine" (V.i.276); the conclusion of a destruction and regeneration cycle[3]; a colonial allegory that operates at the level of consolidation or subversion of the status quo[4]; an experiment in *commedia dell'arte* and court masque, as a response to Ben Jonson and in compliance with King James I's tastes[5]; an anti-Utopian, anti-Platonic treatise on the impotence of philosopher kings, as formulated by Erasmus a century earlier[6]; *enfin*, it is hard to resist the interpretation of *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's farewell to the theatre.

In the second half of the twentieth century, a newfound preoccupation with the historical, linguistic and cultural aspects of human knowledge generated substantive changes in critical discourse: *Gott ist tot,* there is nothing outside "the text", identity is negatively constructed, subjects are products of power relations and linguistic determinism (*cf.* Rorty 1967, Cusset 2007). Such theories, however, have proven as capable of distorting truth as of dispelling prejudice. Spearheaded by Mannoni's work, *The Tempest* has been subjected to post-colonialist colonization from the direction of deconstruction and certain ramifications of Marxist, Althusserian and Foucauldian thought. The stress falls on context, so much so that the primary text becomes a mere pretext, crushed under the weight of historical references and linguistic juggling. This is not problematic if one's purpose is to shed light on the complexities of an epoch, to use the text as an exercise in an interpretative *jeu de massacre*, or to make a

[3] "Not only do Ferdinand and Miranda sustain Prospero in representing a new order of things that has evolved out of destruction; they also vouch for its continuation. At the end of the play Alonso and Prospero are old and worn men. A younger and happier generation is needed to secure the new state to which Prospero has so painfully brought himself, his friends, and all his enemies save Caliban." (Tillyard, in Bloom, 139)

[4] Jonathan Dollimore provides a technical clarification of these terms from a Cultural Materialist point of view: "Three aspects of historical and cultural process figure prominently in materialist criticism: consolidation, subversion, containment. The first refers, typically, to the ideological means whereby a dominant order seeks to perpetuate itself; the second to the subversion of that order, the third to the containment of ostensibly subversive pressures." (52)

[5] "Given that *The Tempest* was performed for James's court and that Shakespeare was a member of the King's Company, the dramatist was aware of royal concerns. […] Shakespeare must have known what his contemporary and rival, Ben Jonson, was doing." (Vaughan and Vaughan, 277)

[6] "No state has been so plagued by its rulers as when power has fallen into the hands of some dabbler in philosophy." (Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly,* quoted by Kenny, 2)

point about the nature of language, but such approaches often fail to explain "the text as a coherent whole" (Eco 1988, 163).

One can notice the shift of interest from auctorial intent towards subtext and context in Sibnarayan Ray's interpretation of Shylock, Othello and Caliban as metaphors for oppressed communities. "A work of art, once completed, may communicate meanings which were outside the conscious intentions of the artist," Ray wrote (2). As a starting point, this angle is correct – utterances can also communicate unconsciously disclosed or completely unintended meanings. However, the issue is not that the meanings may be outside the artist's conscious intentions, but lies in the manipulative approach to those meanings.

In 1974, *The Massachusetts Review* published an issue titled *Caliban*, whose editor, Robert Márquez, wrote rather tendentiously: "Against the hegemonic, Europocentric, vision of the universe, the identity of Caliban is a direct function of his refusal to accept – on any level – that hegemony…" (Vaughan and Vaughan, 157). However, the African witch's son is not to be taken at his word when telling Prospero "For I am all the subjects that you have, / Which first was mine own king" (I.ii.342-43). The magus speaks true when calling him "a most lying slave" (I.ii.345).[7] Prospero also reigns over Ariel and his host of spirits, and Caliban is compulsively slavish; while Prospero is busy tending to Alonso's group, the demi-devil squanders his interim of freedom by mirthfully bending the knee to Stephano: "Ban' ban' Ca-caliban, / Has a new master, get a new man" (II.ii.180-81).

Another recurrent aspect in this type of criticism is its anachronistic bent**.** Our understanding of the "hegemonic vision of the universe" cannot be superimposed on the Jacobean worldview[8], just as Caliban is no disgruntled proletarian log-bearer, and the "red plague" from his curses is not a subtle reference to Gonzalo's communist Utopia. Again, Umberto Eco offers the antidote to radical readings: "To say that a text has potentially no end does not mean that every act of interpretation can have a happy end" (1992, 24).

In Cultural Materialist and New Historicist paradigms, a penchant for anecdote also runs the risk of producing sweeping generalizations that end

[7] A reasonable, and certainly not a "somewhat hysterical response" (Barker and Hulmes, 202), nor an "indirect denial" of Caliban's claim to the island (as he renounced it to Prospero); In addition, one must mention that the "counter accusation of attempted rape" is corroborated by Caliban in the lines immediately following Prospero's: "Would't had been done;/ Thou didst prevent me, I had peopled else/ The isle with Calibans." (I.ii.350-52)

[8] In line with Meredith Anne Skura's thoughts: "The recent criticism not only flattens the text into the mold of colonialist discourse and eliminates what is characteristically "Shakespearean" in order to foreground what is "colonialist," but it is also – paradoxically – in danger of taking the play further from the particular historical situation in England in 1611 even as it brings it closer to what we mean by "colonialism" today." (Skura, 213)

unhappily. Viewing *The Tempest* as a "play imbricated within the discourse of colonialism", Francis Barker and Peter Hulmes' exhibit that penchant from the opening paragraph:

> No one who has witnessed the phenomenon of midsummer tourism at Stratford-upon-Avon can fail to be aware of the way in which 'Shakespeare' functions today in the construction of an English past: a past which is picturesque, familiar and untroubled." (191)

Is this quasi-bucolic Shakespearean past truly represented in schools, theatres, broadcasts and books throughout England? Impossible to know, as the article offers no further evidence for its questionable hypothesis. It would seem, however, that Barker and Hulmes offer a critique of tourism rather than of Shakespeare's function in modern England.

These authors are critical of New Criticism's "autotelic" text, defined by Hirsch as "fixed in history and free of historical limitation" (46), and stress the significance of contexts when interpreting any written work:

> The text is designated as the legitimate object of literary criticism, *over against* its contexts, whether they be arrived at through the literary-historical account of the development of particular traditions and genres or, as more frequently happens with Shakespeare's plays, the study of 'sources'. In either case the text has been separated from a surrounding ambit of other texts over which it is given a special pre-eminence. (192)

The problem is that this separation is what any critical effort implies. Barker and Hulmes' contention seems to be founded on a repudiation of something as fundamental as disciplines. If a text cannot be foregrounded over other texts in the genesis of critique, how exactly can any one text be chosen over another? One cannot write about all texts ever written and their outer structural interplays – not in a study, a book or a lifetime's work. Even if that were possible, one would still have to decide in what order texts should be interpreted, which of them are causally connected, and what apparent connections are merely cautionary tales of the tempting *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy. A categorization and hierarchy of texts is implicit in any critical endeavour; if *The Tempest* does not deserve precedence "over against its contexts", why exactly should a study focus on contextualizing it in light of other works and not on contextualizing other works in its light?

Five years after the publication of John Drakakis' *Alternative Shakespeares*, this style of criticism occurs in denser form in Stephen Greenblatt's *Learning to Curse.* Addressing colonial narratives about the languages of New World inhabitants,

Greenblatt corrals sources as diverse as Anonio de Nebrija's 1492 grammar (also mentioned by Hulmes and Barker, 200) and Samuel Daniel's meditative poem *Musophilus (*first connected to the play by Frye*,* 184), providing an overview of the Renaissance association of eloquence and civilization. What wavers in Greenblatt's nuanced argument seems to rest not so much on its content as on some of his main assumptions: firstly, that Caliban represents a hypertrophied example of Renaissance narratives about wild men and natives; secondly, that teaching Caliban language is an act of oppression; thirdly, that Renaissance scholars were generally prejudiced against minority and aboriginal languages.[9] Commenting on attitudes that set the native Americans either as speakers of barbarous gibberish or as having acquired a pristine English, Greenblatt notes:

> If it was immensely difficult in sixteenth-century narratives to represent a language barrier, it is because embedded in the narrative convention of the period was a powerful, unspoken belief in the isomorphic relationship between language and reality" (38).

However, according to Vivian Salmon, the Renaissance seems to display a much greater sensibility to cross-linguistic richness and nuance than Greenblatt allows for:

> Associated with the advocacy of teaching by rule was the argument that it was necessary to be aware of the rules of one's native language before attempting to learn another; Hoole (1660: pt. 2,5) reported, for example, that he prepared his schoolboys for Latin by teaching them to 'take notice what every part of speech is… And this I did by English examples'. This system eventually gained such popularity that it earned the designation of 'syncrisis'. (57)

The mentality surrounding foreign languages seems to be lucid: being aware of the discrepancies between languages means being aware of multiple perspectives that languages can provide, and simultaneously being able to conceive and "represent a language barrier".

In addition, some English scholars even argued that the languages of some often stigmatized and ostracized groups (such as Hebrew and Arabic) are superior to those of their Occidental, white-skinned, "civilized" neighbours. Speaking about the influence of Edward Brerewood's survey of the "seuerall Languages wherein the liturgies of Christians in seuerall Parts of the World are celebrated", Salmon notes:

[9] "The rough, illiterate sea dog, bartering for gold trinkets on a faraway beach, was far more likely than the scholar to understand that the natives had their own tongue." (27)

> As a result of such comprehensive studies, English scholars learnt to distinguish between 'occidental' and 'oriental' languages (Leigh, 1663:56) and to disparage the former on the grounds of their 'far greater toyle in composition, many terminations without any need', whereas the oriental is 'as single and simple as the English it selfe' (Ravis, 1649: 17,18). (58)

This goes to show that "colonial" discourse did not monopolize linguistic investigations and apprehensions in seventeenth-century England among men of letters. Therefore, Prospero's act of teaching Caliban language need not have been informed by "colonial" narrow-mindedness. While it is true that colonists tended to believe that their own language "represented the true, rational order of things in the world" (Greenblatt, 38), in the case of Caliban the question is not whether one language is superior to another, but whether any language is superior to none.

Though Greenblatt's Wittgensteinian speculation that Caliban's "construction of reality" maintains a certain "independence and integrity" (43) by virtue of the word "scamels" is thought-provoking[10], the play nonetheless makes clear that before Prospero taught Caliban language, the monster did not know how "to name the bigger light and how the less/ That burn by day and night." (I.ii.336-37).

If the play's aim truly were to construct a character who has been linguistically displaced, it presents us with a lamentable failure. There are many transparent ways in which to develop a representation of somebody with an ambivalent relationship to language. And yet, there is no evidence of interspersed native words or telltale exotic accessories, no lachrymose reference to some lost linguistic repository and no evidence of garbled linguistic conventions (as with Gobbo and Old Gobbo in *The Merchant of Venice*). Therefore, learning to curse is concomitant with learning to speak[11], and the fact that this is more of a benediction than a malediction is as moot a point to make as the rectitude of teaching language to a wild foundling.

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[10] Though Brian Vickers rebuffs this hypothesis: "True, that word [scamels] is baffling, whether it refers to sea-mels (seamews), shellfish, or perhaps, as has recently been suggested, derives 'from *squamelle,* furnished with little scales. (Contemporary French and Italian travel accounts report that the natives of Patagonia in South America ate small fish described as *fort scameux* and *squame*). Whether the indeterminacy of the word is due to Shakespeare's handwriting, the printers' misreading, or just an unfamiliar expression from a garbled traveller's manuscript, it seems the height of empathy with the oppressed to ascribe to Caliban this proof of the authenticity of his world, before the colonists overran it." (248)

[11] Which is why we should be wary of interpretations such as Barbara Fuchs', who believes that: "Emphasis on the impenetrability of Caliban's language – even he, according to Miranda, cannot understand it – evokes the English colonizers' frustration with Gaelic as a barrier to their penetration of the territory" (53). Construing the unintelligibility of Caliban's babble as a question of accessibility against impenetrability is not even wrong, it is meaningless, as there is nothing to penetrate *to*.

Lastly, conceptualizing Caliban as the Ignoble Savage *par excellence* follows from an argument built on shifting sand. Contrasting Caliban's admirable defiance and its "sense of devastating justness" with the grotesquerie inherent to the traits of our "freckled whelp", Greenblatt writes:

> Caliban is deformed, lecherous, evil-smelling, idle, treacherous, naive, drunken, rebellious, violent, and devil-worshipping. […] *The Tempest* utterly rejects the uniformitarian view of the human race, the view that would later triumph in Enlightenment and prevail in the West to this day. (35)

With sufficient rhetorical verve, one can flip the image: Caliban is resolute, sensitive, repentant, tenacious, well-spoken and self-aware, being virtuous enough to transcend his wicked origins in the final act. But Caliban is simply too nuanced a character to polarize or appropriate.[12] Though the grotesque is explicit in the character's description and behaviour, and his heritage has malevolent underpinnings, these are not sufficient measure for the whole of Caliban's character. It may be with this in mind that Greenblatt adds that "Shakespeare, in *The Tempest*, experiments with an extreme version of this problem, placing Caliban at the outer limits of difference only to insist upon a mysterious measure of resemblance." (42)

Complexity often begets mystery. For that reason we cannot assent to Brian Vickers' hypothesis that Caliban is a case study of the disseverance of Cicero's link between *ratio et oratio*.[13] Nor can we adopt Northrop Frye's position that he "is to comedy what Swift's Yahoos are to satire: evidence that the animal aspect of man, when isolated by itself, is both repulsive and incompetent" (185).

The ground for these rejections is that Caliban, in spite of his base bearing, is actually *cunning*. He is well aware of the extent of Prospero's magical powers: "I must obey; his art is of such power/ It would control my dam's god Setebos,/ And make a vassal of him." (I.ii.372-74). He knows that Stephano is preferable to a far more formidable and hostile master. Privy to the power of Prospero's books, he suggests burning Prospero's tomes as a strategic move, not out of bibliophobia, as Greenblatt suggests by citing reports of Indian superstitions towards books (33). He even lies in order to encourage his newfound companions:

[12] Hazlitt develops this idea judiciously: "The character of Caliban is generally thought (and justly so) to be one of the author's masterpieces. It is not indeed pleasant to see this character on the stage any more than it is to see the God Pan personated there. But in itself it is one of the wildest and most abstracted of all Shakespeare's characters, whose deformity whether of body or mind is redeemed by the power and truth of the imagination displayed in it. It is the essence of grossness, but there is not a particle of vulgarity in it." (in Bloom, 84)

[13] "The best way to see Caliban, I suggest, is as an anomalous category within the Great Chain of Being. He is capable of language, and thus above the animals, but incapable of reason, that ability to control the appetites and live peaceably in the social group." (Vickers, 243)

"[…] Remember/ First to possess his books, for without them/ He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not/ One spirit to command: they all do hate him/ As rootedly as I." (III.ii.91-6). And as far as language is concerned, his command of English is flawless and occasionally spun in an exquisite idiom. Though a slave, Caliban is definitely not a barbarian. His various skills, alongside his reasonable scheming and the conciliatory note of his closing resolution, renders untenable the views that he is wholly repulsive, incompetent or intemperate.

The "mooncalf", "abhorred slave", "puppy-headed monster", "deboshed fish", "tortoise", "born devil" , "demi-devil", "earth", "freckled whelp, hagborn", "hag-seed" is not just the incarnation of an oppressed class of individuals, but a dramatic formulation of the psychosocial principle upon which the notion of the 'enemy' or the 'outsider' is constructed, hence explaining the sheer multitude of keys in which he can be interpreted – Old World wild man, Irishman, African, American Indian and so forth. Past perceptions of the character point towards the same conclusion, as Meredith Anne Skura notes:

> In *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) Jonson refers scornfully to a "servant-monster," and the Folio identifies Caliban as a "salvage and deformed slave" in the cast list. Both "monster" and "salvage" are firmly rooted in the discourse of Old World wild men, though the latter was of course also applied to the New World natives. In other words, these two seventeenth-century responses tend to invoke the universal and not the particular implications of Caliban's condition." (in Bloom, 214)

Thus, it is scarcely unreasonable to assume that Caliban, as viewed by other characters, is not a particular case of colonial subjection, nor even a dramatization of the ideas surrounding colonial islanders in general,[14] but rather an inquiry into the way people have since times immemorial verbally willed each other into inferiority.[15] Caliban is the *genus* to which multiple interpretative *species* are subordinated.

We can then explain the scathing treatment of Caliban throughout the play as being an extreme case of *sociogermophobia*.[16] Though Caliban is in many

[14] Also Meredith Anne Skura's conclusion after contextualizing the play: "[D]espite the claims about the play's intervention in English colonialism, we have no external evidence that seventeenth-century audiences thought the play referred to the New World." (in Bloom, 214)

[15] With reference to the contemporaries of Shakespeare, Skura notes: "It is true that no writer ever treated Native Americans as equals—any more than he treated Moors, Jews, Catholics, peasants, women, Irishmen, or even Frenchmen as equals." (in Bloom, 220)

[16] A technical term employed by the historian Gregory Claeys in *Dystopia: A Natural History* in order to offer an account of the social and psychological mechanisms which engender perceptions of the monstrous. He provides the following definition: "Sociogermophobia is a sociomedical term which describes an extreme obsession with group purity that is contingent upon demonizing outsiders and is usually combined with intense paranoia. It is the collective equivalent of a well-known form of obsessive-compulsive disorder, a contamination anxiety resulting in obsessive cleaning." (56)

ways flawed (his attempted rape, his timorous naïvety, his unalloyed ill-temper), his qualities are never acknowledged by anyone but the critics.[17] This is important, as it stands in stark contrast to the contemporary perception of natives, which was far from being as monolithically censorious as it is in the case of Caliban.[18]

Andrei Zlătescu also suggests that conceiving the "thing of darkness" taps into a deeper pattern for conceiving others: "often, what is said of the new world's inhabitants is no truer than what has been assumed previously of otherworldly realms within Christian mythology" (64). Colonial metaphors make intelligible enigmatic and outlandish types which are too complex to grasp without conjuring their diminutive versions[19], and for whose depiction the native may be considered the latest contemporary formal device.

In this sense, other interpretations of the play may be opened up again after the advent of revisionist critique[20]: we are no longer concerned with the purely socio-historical determination of our characters, but with the way in which their perceptions are engendered by certain abiding anxieties that transcend the synchronic horizon of a political unconscious. One needs to value again approaches like Skura's understanding of the bond between Prospero and Caliban as a filial connection, Bloom's replacement of the colonial rapport with "too intimate, too familial a relation for it to be dissolved" (243), or Frye's tripartite structure of Quest, Ordeal and Vision that conceptualizes the characters' development in a play wherein "theatre is the central character".

These efforts notwithstanding, while interpreting *The Tempest* we may find that *The Tempest* interprets us. Joyce had a still juvenile optimism when prefacing *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* with a quote from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* ("Et ignotas animum dimittit in artes, naturamque nouat"). Shakespeare would offer a bleaker resolution on the last leg of his artistic

[17] With the exception of Stephano's conclusion to the second act: "Lead the way, brave monster" (II.ii.184), which is, however, open to interpretation. Considering the ridiculous, comical and ironic connotations associated with the exchanges of the scene in question, it is easy to regard even this as further disparagement of the monster, whether intended by Stephano or not.

[18] Skura remarks, after surveying narratives surrounding the Indians around the early seventeenth century, that "although these do not by any means live up to our standards for non-colonialist discourse, their typical attitude is a wary, often patronizing, but live-and-let-live curiosity, rather than the exploitative erasure which would later become the mark of colonialist discourse." (in Bloom, 220)

[19] Bloom, too, tabulates Caliban together with involuted misfits: "Part of our difficulty in absorbing Caliban is his originality, even in Shakespeare's cosmos of characters. He is in the tradition of Shakespeare's displaced spirits, of figures who seem to have wandered in from the wrong play: Shylock, Barnardine, Lear's Fool, Malvolio." (243)

[20] Yet again, Skura is a voice of reason: "one can still take account of fantasies and motives that, though now regarded as secondary, or as irrelevant to politics, may interact with political motives in ways we have not yet begun to understand – and cannot understand so long as we are diverted by trying to reduce psychology to politics or politics to psychology." (Skura, 231)

journey, quasi "Et notas animum dimittit in artes, nihil nouat". In that sense, and not only by way of Caliban's irreducible quality in the face of interpretative shibboleths, it is true that "Shakespeare also holds an ironic mirror up to his posthumous critics." (Papahagi, 232). Because the play's pessimism implies that between erudition and politics, reason and passion, art and milieu, the latter are bound to prevail, *The Tempest* announces the contemporary critical situation with uncanny prescience.

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