

**The Sir Henry Thomas
Memorial Lecture**

**Department of Hispanic Studies,
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Shakespeare's Spanish *Tempest*: Colonial Sources, Postcolonial Readings

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It was a great honour to be asked to give The Henry Thomas Memorial Lecture for 2002. And it gives me particular pleasure to be here this evening since the current holder of the Chair of Hispanic Studies, Trevor Dadson, was a friend and fellow student at the University of Leeds more years ago than either of us will care to remember. In fact I think this is the first time we've met since our graduation day in July 1970. When we graduated Trevor had a fairly clear idea of where he would pitch his tent, in terms of research interests: in the Golden Age poetry which we'd studied at Leeds. I was rather less sure. I went to Essex to study Latin American literature, before I finally came to rest in the Caribbean – 'rest' being the verb my colleagues tend to associate with 'Caribbean'. I mention my academic background because – although the Caribbean and Latin America do feature in this lecture – at least some of what I say this evening will constitute a kind of return voyage for me, back to Spain and the Mediterranean, back to the themes of several of the courses Trevor and I took at Leeds, and back to the work of Henry Thomas himself, which I first read as an undergraduate working on Cervantes. Indeed, as well as being a *memorial* lecture, what I have to say will pay tribute to the continuing relevance of Henry Thomas's outstanding scholarship, this year, exactly fifty years after his death.

My title is "Shakespeare's Spanish *Tempest*". Shakespeare's last play – first performed in 1611 – is one of his most enigmatic, in part because no source has ever been identified for its strange story of a magician and his daughter – Prospero and Miranda – cast away on an island, where they find a native inhabitant – Caliban – who they enslave, and an imprisoned spirit – Ariel – who the magician rescues in return for his service. However, as soon as

possible sources began to be put forward for *elements* of the play, Spanish materials and references started to accumulate. And when, rather later, references were sought in Shakespeare to illuminate events in the Hispanic world, it was *The Tempest* which was usually invoked. All in all, *The Tempest* has been – in different ways – the most Spanish of Shakespeare’s plays, and my talk this evening will discuss the extent and significance of that *hispanidad*. I’ll look at three historical ‘moments’, each roughly associated with a particular year. I’ll work backwards, starting in 1959, a year of crucial significance for the Spanish Caribbean; moving then to 1898, arguably *the* key year within the global history of the last two centuries because of its political and eventually cultural realignments; and ending up back in 1520 – for reasons which will eventually become apparent.

1

The year 1959 could be seen as both a continuation of and as a response to 1898. The Cuban Revolution of 1959 concluded that island’s unfinished war of independence from the end of the previous century, and at the same time it offered a significant challenge to US hegemony in the Caribbean, which had been established by the momentous defeat of Spain in the war of 1898. 1959 also provided the context for the most significant modern Spanish-language reading of *The Tempest*, which was eventually produced – very much in the spirit of the Revolution – by the Cuban writer, Roberto Fernández Retamar, in the early 1970s. 1959 is also significant as the year when the Barbadian novelist, George Lamming, started writing his book of essays, *The Pleasures of Exile*, which uses *The Tempest* as a template for an assessment of colonial relationships on the eve of West Indian independence from Britain, and includes the first full-scale postcolonial reading of the play. Lamming openly embraces Caliban as standing for the possibility of the kind of revolutionary change eventually initiated by the Haitian war of independence, while he also identifies Caliban as a Carib Indian, native to the West Indies and therefore an appropriate symbol for the Caribbean. Following Lamming, Retamar made a similar kind of identification, remembering José Martí’s invocations of the Carib Indians killed during the Spanish conquest of northern South America, and identifying Prospero with the early European invaders of the Caribbean islands. “What is our history, what is our culture”, Retamar asked, “if not the history and culture of Caliban?”

These two Caribbean writers – George Lamming and Roberto Fernández Retamar – were doubly positioned. They both offered readings of *The Tempest* which challenged the established pieties of Shakespearean criticism (which had largely identified Prospero with Shakespeare and read the play through his eyes), and they rediscovered its themes of violence and dispossession. And over the last thirty years their approach to the play has been followed and vindicated by mainstream Anglo-American criticism, which has slowly established postcolonial readings of *The Tempest* as dominant, even now orthodox.

As well as readings of the play, however, both Lamming and Retamar were concerned to make use of the plot and characters of *The Tempest* to construct an allegorical narrative about the identity of parts of the American world – for Lamming, the British West Indies; for Retamar, the Spanish Caribbean, and Spanish America more widely. Here they drew on an allegorical tradition established in Spanish America at the end of the nineteenth century. In fact a major element in Retamar's identification of Spanish America with Caliban is his disidentification with the character of Ariel, inherited from 1898.

2

From a Spanish perspective that year of 1898 marked the end of empire and a moment when Spanish intellectuals started to question the country's rôle in the modern world. For the Caribbean in particular, and for Spanish America more generally, 1898 marked the moment when the United States emerged as the dominant military and political power in the region, displacing both Spain and Britain.

Various writers associated with the *modernista* movement of that period alluded to or drew on *The Tempest*, among them the Nicaraguan poet, Rubén Darío, and the Uruguayan José Enrique Rodó, author of two influential essays, *Ariel* and later *El mirador de Próspero*, which openly invoke the characters of Shakespeare's play. Rodó's initial involvement with *The Tempest* was spurred by the commentaries and adaptations of late nineteenth-century French writers, such as Ernest Renan, for who Caliban tended to play the part of 'the people' in an examination of changing political imperatives after the European revolutions of 1848. In broad terms, the Spanish American reading extended the materialism and sensuality associated with this plebeian figure of Caliban to the new colossus of the United States, while it suggested a Spanish American identification with the character of Ariel. In this allegory Caliban could be associated with earthly matters, while Ariel represented the spiritual and artistic realms in which Spanish America, now rediscovering its Hispanic roots, could count itself as superior. In outline, that is the approach to the play associated with Rodó, although his essay, *Ariel*, published in 1900, is almost entirely concerned with the connotations of the title character's creativity and spirituality. If Caliban is Ariel's opposite, as at that moment he surely is, and if he is to be associated with the USA, then readers are largely left to draw that conclusion themselves. The modalities of Rodó's prose operate well above the level of anything as mundane as geopolitics.

Interestingly enough, at exactly this same moment, critics in the United States were also making efforts to claim *The Tempest* as an American play, although in a rather different way. In fact, it was in this key year of 1898 that one US critic declared that *The Tempest* "has an entirely American basis and character",¹ while in the same year an English scholar unequivocally identified Caliban as a Native American as part of his argument that *The*

Tempest was in fact staging a version of the British colonisation of North America. So it was peculiarly appropriate – if actually coincidental – that Spanish American writers should turn *The Tempest* against the USA by using it as an allegory through which to read *contemporary* political events, even though these Spanish American writers were not concerned with any supposed Hispanic or even American background or reference in the play itself. This initial Spanish American allegory was based on what had become during nineteenth-century Shakespearean criticism a quite traditional reading of the qualities of Ariel and Caliban. It was also, to a large extent, an allegory of consolation: US power – military, technological, commercial – was now ascendant. To identify the USA with Caliban was – on the basis of a traditional *reading* of the play's themes – to suggest the brutality of the aggressor and to indicate, perhaps subliminally, that the aggressor – like Caliban – might ultimately be defeated. There's little sign yet of that happening.

After the appearance of *Ariel* it became difficult for Spanish Americans to invoke *The Tempest* without alluding to Rodó, and *arielismo* became a significant intellectual movement in Spanish America. However, Rodó's *Ariel* had been preceded by a much more uncompromising piece of writing. Rubén Darío's essay 'El triunfo de Calibán' was written in the heat of the moment, in May 1898, right after Spain's humiliation in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Cuban writer and politician, José Martí, had spent the last part of his life warning against US ambitions in the Caribbean and Central America, before being killed in the early stages of the final Cuban war of independence against Spain. Against this background, the events of 1898 crystallised feelings of animosity towards the USA, which Darío's essay expresses in terms which, although allegorical, are also presented in a deeply personal way:

I have seen those Yankees in their oppressive cities of steel and stone, and the time I spent among them made me uneasy. I seemed to be living under a mountain. I felt I was breathing in a country of Cyclops, flesh-eaters, bestial blacksmiths living in the houses of mastodons. Ruddy, sluggish, and overweight, they push and shove each other up and down the streets like animals, in search of the dollar. The ideals of these Calibans are limited to the stock-exchange and the factory. They eat and eat, calculate, drink whisky, and make millions... "We have," they say, "all the biggest things in the world."

The war of 1898 had produced what Darío calls a "surge in the blood", bringing the USA and Britain closer together than they'd been since the American Revolution, an Anglo-Saxon alliance that produced – almost as a counterweight – a renewed sense of *hispanidad* in the inhabitants of Spain's former possessions in America.

But Darío's allegory is subtly different from Rodó's. The basic opposition between US materialism and Hispanic spirituality is the same, but for Darío Ariel represents Spain itself – a Spain of chivalry, idealism, and nobility, of Cervantes, Quevedo, and Góngora – while Spanish America (and, explicitly, Darío himself) is represented by Prospero's daughter, Miranda: "Miranda will always prefer Ariel," Darío writes. "Miranda is the soul of the spirit, and all the mountains of precious stones, of iron-ore, of gold, and of pork-barrels will never be enough to get my Latin soul to prostitute itself to Caliban." The gender implications of all this are intriguing. Spain is conventionally female, but there is no obvious mother figure in *The Tempest*: Prospero's wife is presumably dead, as is Sycorax, Caliban's mother, who would hardly be appropriate anyway. Ariel just about fits the bill as an androgynous character, unsullied by earthly concerns, although if Spanish America is Miranda, then you might have thought that Spain would be Prospero himself, teaching Miranda all she knows. In any case, it's Darío's own identification with Miranda, the young virgin, which is most unusual, and which remains so: Miranda doesn't tend to feature in subsequent Spanish American allegories of *The Tempest*, at least until quite recently. The implications are arguably problematic: there is no contest between Ariel and Caliban over Miranda, because Ariel is asexual, and Miranda – obedient daughter and pawn in Prospero's political manoeuvrings – makes a strange identification for a postcolonial culture struggling to find its own identity; however much we might welcome Darío's unexpected willingness to break out of the masculinist stereotypes which often dominate the allegorical deployment of *Tempest* characters.

However, it's also Darío, rather than Rodó, who pointed the way forward. The one US writer who avoids criticism in Darío's essay is Edgar Allan Poe: "that poor swan drunk on suffering and alcohol, ... the martyr of his dreams in a country which will never understand him". In his collection called *Los raros*, published in 1905, Darío used *The Tempest* again to discuss Poe, and again the terms of the allegory refuse to settle into easy identifications. Indeed this time they tie themselves in even stranger knots. As, once again, a figure for the United States, Caliban is imagined as having established his material empire in Chicago. Saturated with whisky, and free from the control of any Prospero, Caliban multiplies himself: his name becomes Legion, Darío says. Then, through God's will – por voluntad de Dios – which is presumably the only force strong enough to explain such a miracle, a being of superior nature – Edgar Allan Poe – is engendered by these monsters, someone who will stretch his wings towards what Darío calls "the eternal Miranda of idealism," only to find himself persecuted. For Darío, Poe may still be "el cisne desdichado", the unfortunate swan; but the very vigour of Darío's language begins to suggest an undercurrent of admiration for this demonic Calibanic force. After all, it was Poe who was saturated with whisky and whose works were legion. Poe begins to seem a genuine son of Caliban, and Caliban begins to appear less purely brutal as a result. In this Spanish

American attempt to allegorise the relationship between the two Americas lies the beginning of the process of reassessing Caliban, which we can now see as having dominated twentieth-century interpretations of *The Tempest*.

3

Allegorical readings of the kind I've been discussing are largely unconcerned with the origins of a literary work's materials. Characters like Ariel and Caliban tend to be read as personifications of particular moral qualities, say spirituality and grossness, which can then be applied to wherever the allegorist wants – in this case the Americas. Only with Lamming and Fernández Retamar, in the Caribbean, is there the beginning of a sense that *The Tempest* may be an *appropriate* provider of allegorical materials because some of the very materials which went into the play's making may have come from the Americas in the first place. That question about American materials is – in ways I'll now suggest – inseparable from the question I want to pursue more directly, which is whether the importance of *The Tempest* for Spanish American writers can find any justification in the play's use of *Spanish* materials. Is *The Tempest* to any significant degree a Spanish play?

This is where Henry Thomas enters the story. On at least three occasions, Thomas addressed the relationship between Shakespeare and Spain. In his classic work, *Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry*, published in 1920, Thomas considered the influence of the romances outside Spain, including in England and on Shakespeare. Two years later, in the Taylorian lecture at Oxford, he gave in his own words, “a conservative account of the various reflections of Spain in Shakespeare's works... under the vague title *Shakespeare and Spain*”. And in 1949 he gave the British Academy's annual Shakespeare lecture under – again in his own words – “the equally vague title *Shakespeare in Spain*”.²

Literary texts can accommodate multiple readings; indeed, Shakespeare's work is supposedly characterised by its capaciousness in this respect. Sources for texts are a different matter. In his eminently sensible discussion of this issue, Thomas refers to George Saintsbury's remark that source-hunting is one degree higher than hunting cats. These days – even more so than in 1920 – identification of textual sources is certainly as unfashionable and unrespectable as cat-hunting, mostly for good reasons, two of the best being that it's almost impossible to identify a source as definite --since even identical passages could have a third common source; and secondly that even if a source is widely recognised, the *significance* of the source is often far from apparent. In discussing Spanish sources of *The Tempest*, I'll try to keep an eye on the larger issues, the one of most relevance here probably being that of literary reference. To what extent do Shakespeare's plays involve specific and topical references, either political or geographical? *The Tempest* has always offered a test case in this respect. Its overt geographical references are mostly

Mediterranean – Milan, Naples, Tunis, Algiers; but over the last century it has been consistently read – as I’ve suggested – as a significantly *American* play. The Spanish contexts of the play might, I hope, cast some light on all this.

Just about the only accepted source for even a single passage in *The Tempest* is Michel de Montaigne’s essay, “Des cannibales”, published in French in 1580. Gonzalo’s speech, which begins “Had I plantation of this isle”, offers a classic image of a utopian community: “no kind of traffic..., no name of magistrate..., riches, poverty, and use of service, none;... no occupation, all men idle”. That exaltation of a golden age quotes directly, as well as paraphrasing, John Florio’s translation into English of Montaigne’s essay. In that essay Montaigne has been in discussion with a Tupi Indian brought to France from Brazil. That utopian topos is obviously classical in origin, but Montaigne may have been drawing on the version of it popularised by Peter Martyr’s account of Amerigo Vespucci’s description of the Indians of South America. As Vespucci put it, in Richard Eden’s translation of Peter Martyr: “they have no Magistrates... Thei use no lawful conjunction of mariage... They use no kynd of marchaundise... They have no kynde of corne... They eate no kynd of fleshe except mans fleshe”.³

Peter Martyr’s version of Vespucci is one of several of the essays in Richard Eden’s translation of Spanish and Italian texts which may have been the origin of the name Caliban, which most critics reckon to be an anagram of ‘canibal’. This name provides a linkage back to the very earliest of Spanish New World texts, the journal and letter of Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus) in which a version of the word ‘canibal’ first appears, in Spanish, naming the indigenous inhabitants of what became known as the Caribbean (through a parallel development of the same native word). Caliban is indeed indigenous – born on the island where the play is set – and he has some of the qualities that Columbus reported in Caribbean islanders. He does not appear to eat anybody but, tellingly, he’s described by Trinculo as a “strange fish” and Alonso, the King of Naples, wondering whether his son Ferdinand has been lost at sea, asks “What strange fish did make his meal of thee?”; so the *theme* of cannibalism is at least implicitly present in the play.

One of the few other acknowledged textual sources for *The Tempest* are the pamphlets which may have provided some of the language Shakespeare uses to describe the storm which opens the play. In the summer of 1609, a ship carrying the new Virginia governor – the *Sea Venture* – was driven off course and wrecked on the small islands making up Bermuda. The company survived, built another ship, and eventually reached Virginia; although their stay on Bermuda was marked by dissension, conspiracy, and execution. This seemingly miraculous survival was greeted back in England as the work of Providence in a group of texts that have come to be known as ‘the Bermuda pamphlets’. It’s often assumed that one particular account, written in 1610 and entitled ‘A true repertory of the wreck and redemption of Sir Thomas Gates,

Knight, upon and from the islands of the Bermudas...’, found its way to Shakespeare, possibly through his association with members of the Virginia Company.⁴ Be all that as it may, Bermuda – “the still-vexed Bermoothes”, as Ariel calls them – had been named after its first European visitor, Juan de Bermúdez, a reminder of Spain’s priority in that north Atlantic region and one of only two proper names that find their way into *The Tempest*. But Spain had not, of course, settled Bermuda and the island’s reputation for storms and dangerous seas, along with its isolated and intermediate position – between the Spanish islands of the Caribbean and the English settlements of North America – make it a possible template for *The Tempest*’s island, similarly off the beaten track, poised between two cultural systems, and seemingly prey to bad weather, at least when Prospero wants it to be.

4

Beyond the historical works I’ve briefly mentioned, Spanish con-texts for *The Tempest* fall into three categories: pastoral fiction, romances of chivalry, and travel accounts. As modes of writing these aren’t always easily separable: the books of chivalry often have pastoral episodes, and equally often they include lengthy accounts of journeys. I don’t have time to talk about pastoral fiction here, although Gaspar Gil Polo’s *Diana Enamorada* is the most recent Spanish text to be adduced as a *Tempest* source.

Spanish romances, or *libros de caballería*, have often been put forward as possible sources for *The Tempest*, and just as often rejected. There are, for example, some plot parallels between *The Tempest* and Antonio Eslava’s *Noches de invierno*, written in 1609, but there was no immediate English translation and no evidence that Shakespeare could have seen a copy, even if he could read Spanish, for which there is no evidence either. A better candidate is *El Espejo de Príncipes y Caballeros*, begun by Ortúñez de Calahorra in 1562 and continued by other hands. This was gradually translated into English, the first part as *The Mirrour of Princely Deedes and Knighthood* in 1578. In his book Henry Thomas discusses the overt references to *The Mirror of Princely Deedes* in *Henry IV pt 1*, so it was a text that Shakespeare certainly knew. One early twentieth-century critic had *The Mirror of Princely Deedes* as “the probable source of the plot of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*”.⁵ Thomas is sceptical about this, although he does note some interesting plot similarities, especially in the story of Polisteo, a magician who lost his wife in childbirth, withdrew from the world, and passed his life with his children and their attendants on an island, where the daughter falls in love with the picture of a renowned knight, who her father obligingly kidnaps to keep her happy.

However, the Spanish romance of chivalry which has most complicated the American connections of *The Tempest* is one which Thomas mentions only in passing: *Primaleon, Prince of Greece*. *Primaleon* is the second book of *Palmerin de Oliva*, the great rival of *Amadís* as a serial chivalric romance. It first

appeared in Spanish in 1512, and wasn't translated into English, by Anthony Munday, until the late 1590s, when it enjoyed considerable popularity.

For Shakespearean purposes the central character of *Primaleon* is the Knight of the Enclosed Isle. Due to a misunderstanding of the kind common in romances Primaleon and an English prince are involved in a dreadful combat at sea when the Knight of the Enclosed Isle makes a dramatic appearance, jumping on board their ship and striking the mast with his book, which causes everyone on board to lie down, "as if they had béene dead", not unlike the effect of Ariel on the courtiers' ship. The Knight takes the entire ship's company back to his island, where he separates them into groups.

One eminent Shakespearean scholar has noted no less than seventeen significant parallels between the plot of *Primaleon* and that of *The Tempest*; and certainly the Knight of the Enclosed Isle has some real similarities to Prospero. However, what makes *Primaleon* a really significant potential source for *The Tempest* is that it rather surprisingly offers to bring together the play's 'Mediterranean' materials – in other words the romance and pastoral literary topoi (many of them Spanish) – with the 'Atlantic' materials – the exotic vocabulary and incidents drawn from the sixteenth-century voyages of discovery to Africa and America (many of them again Spanish). This is my last example, which is both the most complicated and the one which – perhaps surprisingly – has the clearest local – Birmingham – connection.

5

Apart from Caliban, whose name seems to be an anagram of 'canibal', the only other name in the play which has a clearly non-European origin, is Setebos, the name of Sycorax's god, invoked by her son Caliban. The conduit that is usually thought to have brought Setebos to Shakespeare is Hispanic in context, although – as so often in these cases – pan-European in detail. In 1519 the Portuguese captain known in this country as Ferdinand Magellan crossed the Atlantic in the service of Spain on the first leg of his circumnavigation of the globe. Towards the southern tip of South America he encountered native people who were described by the Italian who accompanied the expedition, Antonio Pigafetta, as "Patagoni". Pigafetta tells of how Magellan captured two of these natives by a trick, imprisoning them in fetters. "When they sawe howe they were deceived", he writes: "they roared lyke bulles, & cryed uppon theyr great deuill *Setebos*, to help them".

The route from the South American coast to Whitehall, where the word Setebos was first spoken on the English stage, was by no means straightforward. The first published version of Pigafetta was an Italian translation of a French translation of the lost Italian original. That Italian translation was itself translated into English in abbreviated form by Richard Eden in his *The Decades of the New Worlde* published in London in 1555, and then posthumously reprinted in an augmented version in 1577 called *The*

History of Trauayle in the West and East Indies, which is where Shakespeare probably came across it. It's one of the oddities of the translation process that a non-European word, precisely because it is unfamiliar to all parties in all European languages, once it finds its first European – in this case Italian – form as 'Setebos' remains absolutely constant as Pigafetta's text is translated from Italian to French, back into Italian, and then into English. And that such a previously unknown word should reappear in absolutely identical form in *The Tempest* nearly a hundred years after its first recording off the South American coast makes Pigafetta's text one of the very few certain verbal sources for the play.

Setebos has never been subsequently identified as a native word in the language spoken by the people Magellan encountered, who may have referred to themselves as the Aonik'enk, and later became known in Spanish – and other European languages – as the Tehuelche. Magellan called these people Patagones, and by extension the region they inhabited in the very south of the American continent Patagonia. The usual account of the name Patagones is that it derives from the Spanish 'patacón', supposedly meaning bigfoot, supposedly because of the giant-sized feet of these natives. According to the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, this connection was first made by Jerónimo de Huerta in his 1599 translation of Pliny. However, there is another derivation – which oddly enough has a Birmingham connection.

In Book Two of *Primaleon*, the hero lands on another island where he hears of a terrible monster, who of course he eventually slays in single combat. In the account given by the the lord of this island, the monster "whom we call Patagon" is described as "the strangest mishapen and counterfeite creature in the world: he hath good understanding, [and] is amorous of women... He hath the face of a Dogge, great eares, which hange down upon his shoulders: ... his feete are like a Harte, and be runneth wondrous lightly."

There are two arguments associated with this passage: the first that it is the origin of Magellan's naming of Patagonia and the Patagonians; the second that the description of the Patagon in *Primaleon* is a source for the character of Caliban in *The Tempest* – a misshapen creature of good understanding, who is amorous of women, swift on his feet, and "hath the face of a Dogge": "puppy-headed", as Caliban is described by Trinculo. The connection between *Primaleon* and Magellan's Patagonia seems first to have been made by the great philologist María Rosa Lida de Malkiel in the 1950s, stressing – among other points – the absence of the word 'patagón' with the meaning 'pie grande' or 'patudo' in Spanish (which in English accounts is often simply asserted). Much later, the substance of Malkiel's argument was conveyed by another Argentine academic to an English writer, who then made the additional connection to *The Tempest*. That English writer, Bruce Chatwin, was journeying through Patagonia in search of a replacement piece of the fossilised skin of the extinct mylodon for the one he had admired as a child

when he saw it in his grandmother's sitting room in her house in Northfield, not far from here, and exactly seven miles from Henry Thomas's house, inevitably called Arden, in Edgbaston. Chatwin's childhood visits to Northfield in the late 1940s and early 1950s coincided with the final years of Henry Thomas's life, spent in retirement in Birmingham.

Chatwin's suggestion – made in two pages of his influential travel book *In Patagonia*, published in 1979 – involves what seems at first blush to be an unlikely coincidence: that as well as knowing the translation of Pigafetta's account of Magellan's voyage – which provided him with the name 'Setebos' – Shakespeare also knew the Spanish romance which had furnished Magellan with the name 'Patagón', given its new indigenous referent at exactly the same moment as the first recording of the indigenous word 'Setebos'. It also looks suspiciously neat: if Patagon is a model for Caliban, then Setebos, as a deity of the natives Magellan called Patagones, is certainly the appropriate name for the god that Caliban inherits from his mother, Sycorax.

Intriguingly, though, when the suggestion was made by that eminent Shakespearean scholar that *Primaleon's* Knight might be a source for Prospero, his proposal was made in ignorance of Chatwin's suggestion that *Primaleon* might provide a source for Caliban. Indeed, the eminent Shakespearean admits that a weakness to his argument might be that *Primaleon* has no figure that might be seen as a source for Caliban. It may therefore be that Bruce Chatwin, unknowingly picking up on the kinds of questions to which Henry Thomas had dedicated himself, has provided the final piece of a jigsaw which makes the Spanish romance of *Primaleon* the strongest candidate yet for the elusive source of *The Tempest*. The play's American and Mediterranean materials are here soldered inseparably, but both sets of materials are in significant senses Spanish.

6

Having hunted that particular Patagonian cat to the point of exhaustion, I'll offer one final, more general reflection. Literary histories have tended to be written as if they were outcrops of the nation state, national literatures growing organically from a process of internal evolution. As we move forward, or perhaps return, to a greater sense of the interconnectivity of European literatures, perhaps we can pay renewed attention to a European intertextuality in which the relationship between texts is neither one of *source*, where one text is seen either as the *origin* of another, or as material which is consumed by the genius of the author who makes use of it. Instead, literary relationships might become genuine objects of study in their own right; translators such as Anthony Munday and Richard Eden, crucial channels in this case between Spain and England, might be studied in their own right; and students of those relationships, such as Henry Thomas, might be re-read with the attention they deserve.

¹ Vaughan, *Americanisation*, 141.

² Sir Henry Thomas, *Shakespeare in Spain*, Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy, from the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxxv (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege), p. 3.

³ Eden, ed. Arber, p. 37 (Bullough 243).

⁴ See Orgel, Introduction, pp. 32 and 62-3. The connection between *The Tempest* and the Bermuda pamphlets was first proposed by Edward Malone in 1808: it excited little attention at the time but is now generally accepted, and Strachey's letter is often reproduced in editions of the play (it is Appendix B in Orgel's edition).

⁵ Thomas refers in note to J. de Perott, *The Probable Source of the Plot of Shakespeare's Tempest*, Publications of the Clark University Library, vol. I, no. 8, 1905.