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GOING NATIVE: A BRAZILIAN APPROPRIATION OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *THE TEMPEST*

por

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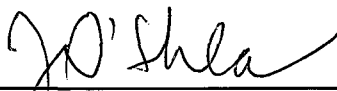
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À minha mãe, sempre presente.

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**ABSTRACT****GOING NATIVE: A BRAZILIAN APPROPRIATION OF  
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S *THE TEMPEST*****CLAUDIA BUCHWEITZ****UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DE SANTA CATARINA  
1999****Supervising Professor: Dr. José Roberto O'Shea**

The present thesis examines Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade* as a pedagogical appropriation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, with the intention of foregrounding the Brazilian resonance in the text. Boal's play is analyzed in search of an internal cycle of reflection, action, and dialogue, which is projected onto the reader, leading to my own reading of the play. To contextualize *A Tempestade*, the contribution of Paulo Freire to the notion of critical pedagogy is presented. *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (Pedagogy of the Oppressed) is addressed, as well as its implications for Boal's *Teatro do Oprimido* (Theatre of the Oppressed). The main principles of the poetics of the oppressed are outlined and contextualized within postcolonialism. This introduces a discussion regarding the postcolonial practice of appropriation. After the theoretical background is outlined, a structural contrast between *A Tempestade* and *The Tempest* is presented. Then, Soares dos Santos' reading of *A Tempestade* – in which she discusses Boal's "hemispheric" approach to his work of appropriation – is introduced. Finally, I propose my own reading, which expands Soares dos Santos' reading and foregrounds the play's Brazilian theme – a "lack

of conscience,” namely the inability to look at oneself from a distance to overcome “limit situations.” As a result of this analysis, I conclude that *A Tempestade* is indeed a postcolonial appropriation of *The Tempest*, and as such it must be read in contrast with the master narrative. It is also a true example of the Theatre of the Oppressed, because it raises questions that produce transgressive knowledge. In broad terms, I conclude that works of appropriation may serve to reveal alternative accounts of “official truths” and to open up space for alternative esthetical paradigms, by generating conflict and destabilizing the idea of institutionally sanctioned (or not sanctioned) versions of culture.

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## RESUMO

VIRANDO O OUTRO: UMA APROPRIAÇÃO BRASILEIRA DE *THE TEMPEST*, DE WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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Esta dissertação examina a peça teatral *A Tempestade*, de Augusto Boal, como uma apropriação pedagógica de *The Tempest*, de William Shakespeare, a fim de trazer à tona a ressonância brasileira do texto. A peça de Boal é analisada em busca de um ciclo interno de reflexão, ação e diálogo que é projetado sobre o leitor e que gera minha própria leitura da peça. Para contextualizar *A Tempestade*, a contribuição de Paulo Freire à noção de pedagogia crítica é apresentada. Discute-se a Pedagogia do Oprimido, assim como suas implicações para o Teatro do Oprimido. Os princípios da poética do oprimido são resumidos e contextualizados em termos do poscolonialismo. A partir disso, é introduzida a noção da prática poscolonial de apropriação. Depois da resenha teórica, apresenta-se uma comparação estrutural entre *A Tempestade* e *The Tempest*. A seguir, introduz-se a leitura proposta por Soares dos Santos para *A Tempestade* – na qual esta autora discute o enfoque "hemisférico" de Boal. Finalmente, apresento minha própria leitura da peça, que expande a leitura de Soares dos Santos e dá ênfase ao tema brasileiro – a "falta de consciência," ou seja, a inabilidade de ver-

se a si próprio à distância para vencer “situações-limite”. Como resultado desta análise, concluo que *A Tempestade* é, de fato, uma apropriação poscolonial de *The Tempest* e, como tal, deve ser lida comparativamente à narrativa fundadora. *A Tempestade* também é uma obra do Teatro do Oprimido, porque levanta perguntas que produzem conhecimento transgressivo. Em termos amplos, conclui-se que as obras de apropriação podem trazer à tona relatos alternativos de “verdades oficiais” e abrir espaço para paradigmas estéticos alternativos mediante geração de conflito e desestabilização do conceito de versões da cultura institucionalmente aprovadas (ou não aprovadas).

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## CHAPTER 1

### LIVING AND TRANSITIVE LEARNING

Since their earliest contact with Europeans, the Kaluli people who live at the foothills of Mt. Bosavi in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea have viewed books as powerful and authoritative sources of information that white people use to shape and control the behavior of others. In a narrative told to Steve Feld and myself in 1990 about government contact in the early 1950s, an educated Kaluli man told us about his father who had been selected by white patrol officers as the first local counselor. As he put it, "my father was given the black shirt with a red stripe, the belt, knife, stick and a book, that book, people thought that if you kill the blood of a dead person will go inside in the book, and the white man will know straight away and come and shoot you with a gun; that fear, everywhere so, everyone got frightened when my father got this."

This book, which was kept by the counselor as part of his responsibilities and taken out only during infrequent government patrols made by white officers, listed the names of villagers. While Kaluli people did not share an understanding of why their names were written down by government people, they did not miss the fact that this book and its meanings were created and owned by white people, who used it as an instrument of control, authority, and information. These early census and record keeping activities, part of pacification efforts, were used to track and document Kaluli people in order to discourage their periodic relocation to new village sites, their solution to minimizing the depletion of local resources. This was one of the earliest experiences for Kaluli people of what books could do, and what people did with books. (Schieffelin 453)

There are many good reasons why I start this thesis with such a long quote. Very briefly, the work I present here is an analysis of Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade* as a Brazilian appropriation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, with which the story of this "educated Kaluli man" bears a great resemblance. It is indeed striking that the Kaluli story is a true story, an account of historical facts; and yet, does it sound any more or less truthful than *The Tempest*? In fact, should the Kaluli wish to

recount their story in postcolonial terms, all they would have to do is to write it as a play, and, chances are, it would be read as another appropriation of *The Tempest* – not just as an adaptation, or as a restaging for a given public, but instead as an **appropriation** – an interpretation within the context of postcolonialism, which has a clear ideological and political orientation (Soares dos Santos 66), and which emphasizes the act of transgressing.

When I think about the Kaluli example in contrast with the contents of this thesis, three initial issues immediately spring to my mind. These are three "Shakespearean" issues, which will be discussed in more or less depth in this work. The first one is related to Shakespeare's "here-ness."

Researchers have asked if Shakespeare is indeed our contemporary (Jan Kott's *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, 1961) and if Shakespeare is still our contemporary (John Elsom's *Is Shakespeare Still Our Contemporary*, 1989). I believe the Kaluli story is one evidence that he is, or, at least, that *The Tempest* is a contemporary account, meaningful and clearly related to events that happened as recently as half a century ago, and, for that matter, clearly related to events that happened. Ania Loomba, writing about Shakespeare and cultural difference, states that "Empire, race, colonialism and cultural difference are rather belatedly becoming central to Shakespeare criticism. In 1985 . . . it was necessary to establish that colonial expansion was a crucial Shakespearean theme, rather than just a backdrop" (164). In the light of examples such as the Kaluli people's,

is it relevant to establish whether or not Shakespeare was concerned with matters of colonialism, and what these matters were?

The second issue relates to Shakespeare's and, more specifically, *The Tempest's* "global there-ness" (to use Susan Bennett's term). It is my belief that *The Tempest* is indeed a global narrative, maybe simply because it deals with the global and broad issue of one culture coming into contact with another culture; whatever the reason, my guess is that the Kaluli would receive a straightforward staging of *The Tempest* with some familiarity. Besides, among all Shakespeare's plays, *The Tempest* is the one with the largest number of **non-English** adaptations and appropriations, and as such it has been at the center of a complex discussion regarding issues of power and (post)colonialism. Looking at *The Tempest* from a historical perspective, it is possible to say, with Italo Calvino,<sup>1</sup> that it

. . . nunca terminou de dizer aquilo que tinha para dizer. . . . [traz] consigo as marcas das leituras que precederam a nossa e atrás de si os traços que [deixou] na cultura ou nas culturas que [atravessou] . . . . provoca incessantemente uma nuvem de discursos críticos sobre si, mas continuamente os repele para longe. (11-12)

The thought of literary works as everchanging entities rather than untouchable vaults is especially interesting because it includes the readings of a work as part of the work itself, and it also allows us to

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<sup>1</sup> The concepts I am borrowing from Italo Calvino at this point are part of his discussion on reading "classics." However, I am not so much concerned about *The Tempest* as a classic, especially because such notions have been revised after Eurocentrism was challenged by postmodernism and postcolonialism. What I would like to emphasize is the changing historical trajectory of *The Tempest*, as well as the contributions it has received from its many adaptations and appropriations and the resulting critical debate.

perceive the meanings generated, for example, by temporal succession (Simon 67). And this points to the third of the Shakespearean issues which can be evoked by the Kaluli story: why should the numerous works of Shakespearean appropriation be at all considered detrimental to Shakespeare? In fact, they attest to the here and there-ness of Shakespeare; they attest to the fact that the Shakespearean *oeuvre* is alive and well. As Simon puts it, “the life of culture is not to be found in *conservation*, but in the risky play of dialogue” (60).

It could be argued that if the Shakespearean *oeuvre* is alive and well it is only because of the imperialistic efforts of Britain. Such a strained statement would cancel the notion of an “open-ended” Shakespeare according to the definition I have outlined above — since that definition implies an organic relationship between a work and its environments, resulting from a symbiotic interaction, and not from imposition. In fact, such a notion would frame Shakespeare solely as a British Institution, a view which transcends that of Shakespeare as canonical writer (canonical in the sense of being an “officially sanctioned version of human culture”; I will return to this concept in my discussion of “pedagogical appropriation”). In my view, appropriations (which I have previously defined as interpretations with a clear ideological and political orientation, or as readings which emphasize the act of transgressing) do not necessarily question Shakespeare as canonical writer, but they do question Shakespeare as a British Institution because they question the existence of a structure which claims to have the right (or the duty) to grant or deny

access to a certain body of knowledge. And that structure is based upon institutions which it defines as **right** as opposed to other institutions which are labeled as **wrong**. If appropriations question this structure, that seems like a better reason to explain why appropriations are considered disturbing rather than the claim that appropriations "reduce" Shakespeare. And, in fact, if the Kaluli were to tell their story and name "Prospero" the man who held "the belt, knife, stick and a book," would their story be any less their own? Or would Britain have the right to claim it?

The problematization of definitions and truths and of concepts in general is, indeed, a matter that foregrounds cultural difference. So if we return to the question raised a few paragraphs back, although it might not be essential to establish whether or not Shakespeare the playwright was concerned with matters of colonialism, it is possible that we should insistently place Shakespeare "alongside other texts that can help us to think seriously about 'cultural difference'" (Loomba 165). To do that is a way of revealing prejudice that many times is hidden and disguised. And actually, that is what appropriations do, and what we do when we study works of appropriation, for example in the present thesis.

I will not in this introduction discuss the notion of why the Kaluli would want to use Shakespeare's play to tell their story, because such a discussion needs more space than what I have here, and I will deal with the issue in Chapter 2. However, I believe that at this point I should warn the reader against what would be a terrible fallacy, which is to consider

Shakespeare's works as mere vessels for other works, devoid of their own meanings. That of course would be a mistake.

Having said that, I will now focus on another aspect of the Kaluli story which is extremely pertinent to my work. Although the man in the story received a number of instruments to perform his job, it is the book that was seen as the most striking and powerful of all. Schieffelin tells us that this was probably the first contact of the Kaluli with books and with what books can do. Books symbolize knowledge (both the object and that object's contents), knowledge which can be good or bad depending on how it is revealed.

In *The Tempest*, Prospero has an ambiguous relationship with his books. Antonio's plot to usurp the dukedom of Milan works because Prospero is too engrossed in studying them. When Prospero is deported to the island, the very books which in a sense made him lose power ensure his role as a master and serve as key-instruments that enable him to reclaim his dukedom. Then, at one point he tells Miranda that there are books "I prize above my dukedom" (*The Tempest* I.ii 168); but when the time comes, Prospero actually gives up the books and chooses the dukedom. For the Kaluli people, books were first seen as a source of danger. Now that written Kaluli will be taught and used for the first time, they will probably find endless new meanings for books.

Book-shaped knowledge is central to this study not only because of Prospero's relationship with his books in *The Tempest*, but also because *A Tempestade* was written by Augusto Boal, whose Theatre of the

Oppressed is very much concerned with teaching and learning. The Theatre of the Oppressed is clearly indebted to Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, a remarkable theoretical approach which has been worked out conceptually and practically to reveal, at many levels, the hidden and disguised prejudice I mentioned above. Freire's notion of knowledge and education, of the way knowledge should be revealed, has been successfully employed for promoting literacy and for educating educators throughout the world, and that is an amazing contribution to change.

The Pedagogy of the Oppressed was instrumental in the development of the poetics proposed by Augusto Boal, who believes in theater as a way of promoting change through knowledge. The notion of "transitive learning" in the Theatre of the Oppressed is one in which the learner is "both subject and object: that is, instead of being merely a vessel into which information is deposited, the student is actively engaged in educating him / herself." Along the same line, the notion of **spect-actor** "refers to the activated spectator, the audience member who takes part in the action" (Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz 238). In a sense, this means sharing power and using it for purposes other than oppression.

In *The Tempest*, Prospero and Miranda fail in their pedagogical efforts because they believe that their knowledge is a gift which Caliban will not be able to return. In *A Tempestade*, Caliban fails in helping some of his fellow oppressed make the move from being spectators to becoming active participants (or spect-actors), maybe because some of his



pedagogy is still a reproduction of Prospero's. There have been many Brazilian appropriations of Shakespeare (see Resende 1997). Among them, *A Tempestade* is especially apt for a consideration of cultural difference and indifference, as we will see in the following chapters. Therefore, my intention in this thesis is to foreground a Brazilian resonance in Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade*, which I consider to be a pedagogical appropriation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. That will be carried out through a theoretical and historical contextualization of *A Tempestade* as a postcolonial work and through an expansion of the Latin American reading proposed by Soares dos Santos.

Before I move on I must explain what I mean by **pedagogical appropriation**. According to the definition outlined in the beginning of this chapter, works of appropriation retell stories with a clear political and ideological orientation, or, in other words, tell alternative stories that challenge the "officially sanctioned, authorized version of human knowledge and culture" (Goldstein 67).<sup>2</sup> If we consider that telling an alternative story is a predefined objective, to be achieved through the strategy of appropriating a given work, then we may say that appropriations in general are pedagogical in the sense that they "teach" a new concept, and, strictly speaking, that the idea of a pedagogical appropriation is redundant (according to the definition by Goldstein, that "'teaching' refers to the specific strategies and techniques educators use

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<sup>2</sup> The citation originally refers to school textbooks which, according to Goldstein, hold a particular and significant social function. They "represent to each generation of students an officially sanctioned, authorized version of human knowledge and culture" (Goldstein 67).

in order to meet predefined, given objectives”) (68). However, by framing the present analysis within the theories of the oppressed, I am bound to go one step further: not only do I have to read Augusto Boal’s appropriation as the retelling of an old tale with the purpose of foregrounding a previously baffled voice, but I have to read it as an attempt at drawing out “voices and put[ting] these voices into dialogue with others in a never ending cycle of meaning making that is characterized by reflection/action/reflection/new action” (Goldstein 68). This is the **critical pedagogy** (cf. Goldstein) that I emphasize in the analysis of Boal’s text: first, I will look at the text dynamics to ask what type of reflection, action, and dialogue goes on inside the text; then I will enter into the reflection action cycle to offer my own reading, which I hope will start a dialogue with other readers.

Although many authors have offered contributions to the notion of critical pedagogy, in the present study I will focus specifically on the contribution of Paulo Freire. Therefore, in chapter 2, I address Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as well its implications for Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Next, the main principles of the poetics of the oppressed are outlined and contextualized within postcolonialism. This will introduce a discussion regarding the postcolonial practice of adapting other works, namely, appropriation; and then I will move on to establish a relation among postcolonialism, appropriation, and *The Tempest*. Finally, chapter 2 also discusses my decision not to center my discussion on A

*Tempestade* as an example of cannibalism as proposed by Oswald de Andrade in the Cannibalist Manifesto.<sup>3</sup>

Chapter 3 presents my analysis of *A Tempestade*. First, I present a structural contrast between *A Tempestade* and *The Tempest*, while at the same time I highlight some aspects which are relevant to the reading which will ensue. The next step is to present some of the specific historical information that surrounds the period in which *A Tempestade* was written; that will help present Soares dos Santos' reading in which she discusses Boal's "hemispheric" approach to his work of appropriation. Finally, I move on to present my own reading, which emphasizes the play's "Brazilianness." My reading foregrounds the theme of "lack of conscience," namely the inability to look at your own world from a distance and of locating "o ponto de decisão de sua atividade em si, em suas relações com o mundo e com os outros," to overcome "situações-limite"; and the inability to produce actions which are directed "à superação e à negação do dado, em lugar de implicarem sua aceitação dócil e passiva" (Freire 90). In Chapter 3, I also offer some considerations regarding the staging of the play. The last chapter is concerned with the development and final discussion of my main conclusions in terms of reading *A Tempestade* as a Brazilian and pedagogical work of appropriation.

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<sup>3</sup> That might seem a natural path to follow given the fact that many have read in Caliban's name the expression "cannibal" (Bennett 120), and that Oswald de Andrade proposed "a critical devoration of the universal cultural heritage," from the perspective of the "'bad savage,' devourer of whites — the cannibal" (Campos 44). There is an interesting parallel between Prospero / Caliban and cultural heritage / bad savage as proposed by Andrade. Refer to chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion on this issue.

There are still a couple of points which I believe should be emphasized. The first refers to the scope and conclusiveness of my work. I do not intend to offer any definitive answer or to dismiss the validity of any work in the fields into which I have ventured. I read much, but far from enough; and I have chosen to cite some sources, thus leaving out many others. However, I hope I am able to suggest a reading which is truly mine, a result of the amalgamation of the works I have read, including those that were not directly cited. In addition, I hope I have raised enough questions to make up for the lack of answers. I believe that questions are an intrinsically valuable way of amplification and inclusion, even in a restricted work as is the case of the present thesis. I must also say that the questions I ask are not always my own, but are questions suggested by the works that have been contrasted here.

Finally, if I offer my own reading, I feel I must say a few words about what it is I understand by such an action. In this introduction, I outlined the thought of "open" literary works, in which the notion of reading, and thus of change, is also included. Obviously, this change will not occur in the structural framework of the writing, but, instead, in the structural framework of the **reading**. Borrowing once again from Calvino, to read we must define where the reader stands while performing the reading; "caso contrário tanto o livro quanto o leitor se perdem numa nuvem atemporal" (14).

As I read both *The Tempest* and *A Tempestade*, I am doing it from a historical perspective that is different from that in which each of the works

was created, and, for that matter, is also different from the perspective, let's say, of Soares dos Santos, or Roberto Fernández Retamar. From the particular vantage point where I stand, "we find that Western society as a whole has turned into an immense contact zone" (Simon 58), and it seems insensible that *The Tempest* has ever been considered as something but a narrative about the relationship between colonizers and colonized. And as I consider *A Tempestade*, I am not able to fully realize what the Vietnam War meant, and as a child during the Brazilian era of military rule I was not arrested and tortured. Still, as I write I know other things that Boal didn't know when he wrote *A Tempestade*, for example, that the Berlin wall no longer exists, that Apartheid no longer rules in South Africa, and that in Brazil the first president to be elected after the end of the military regime was Fernando Collor de Mello, whom we bitterly ousted.

All this information, present or lacking, was extremely important when Boal wrote his poetics of the oppressed and when he wrote *A Tempestade*, and it is important as I read and compare the works discussed in this thesis. Therefore, by placing *A Tempestade* alongside *The Tempest*, I wish the present work may renew its focus on the oppressed, and on Brazilian issues which are, indeed, contemporary.

## CHAPTER 2

### DRAMATIC PEDAGOGY, DRAMATIC CHANGE

Sua luta se trava entre serem eles mesmos ou serem duplos. Entre expulsarem ou não o opressor de "dentro" de si. Entre se desalienarem ou se manterem alienados. Entre seguirem prescrições ou terem opções. Entre serem espectadores ou atores. Entre atuarem ou terem a ilusão de que atuam na atuação dos opressores. Entre dizerem a palavra ou não terem voz, castrados no seu poder de criar e recriar, no seu poder de transformar o mundo.

Este é o trágico dilema dos oprimidos, que a sua pedagogia tem de enfrentar.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogia do Oprimido*

As I have mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study, my aim will be to discuss Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade* as a pedagogical work of appropriation, i.e., as an attempt at drawing out voices, reflection, dialogue, and action by retelling a known story from a point of view not contemplated in the original text. In my reading of Boal's appropriation of *The Tempest*, I would like to emphasize the Brazilian resonance of the text, in addition to a Latin American resonance, which has been described by Soares dos Santos (1997). Since I will be discussing pedagogy, Brazil, and the Theatre of the Oppressed, I must of necessity start my theoretical discussion with another "theory of the oppressed," Paulo Freire's *Pedagogia do Oprimido*, or the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (PO).

What is the Pedagogy of the Oppressed? In very broad lines, it is "Paulo Freire's method of teaching illiterates in Latin America" (Shaul 15). Indeed, what Shaul defines as "method" came into existence in the 1960s as part of the educational process of teaching people how to read and write. However, the implications of teaching and learning within this frame

are deep enough to turn this "method of teaching illiterates in Latin America" into a truly comprehensive **theory** of the oppressed. Paulo Freire has outlined this theory in various writings, the most important of which may be *Pedagogia do Oprimido* (first published in 1970).

"As afirmações que fazemos neste ensaio não são, de um lado, fruto de devaneios intelectuais, nem, tampouco, de outro, resultam apenas de leituras," writes Paulo Freire;

Estão sempre ancoradas, como sugerimos no início destas páginas, em situações concretas. Expressam reações de proletários, camponeses ou urbanos, e de homens de classe média, que vimos observando, direta ou indiretamente, em nosso trabalho educativo. Nossa intenção é continuar com estas observações para retificar ou ratificar, em estudos posteriores, pontos afirmados neste ensaio. (24-25)

Such a description is suggestive of the most important elements that come into play in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: Dialogue, Praxis, Action, and Transformation.

In the foreword to the twentieth North-American edition of *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Richard Shaull writes that Paulo Freire "operates on one basic assumption":

. . . that man's ontological vocation . . . is to be a Subject who acts upon and transforms his world, and in so doing moves toward ever new possibilities of fuller and richer life individually and collectively. This *world* to which he relates is not a static and closed order, a *given* reality which man must accept and to which he must adjust; rather, it is a problem to be worked on and solved. It is the material used by man to create history, a task which he performs as he overcomes that which is dehumanizing at any particular time and place and dares to create the qualitatively new. For Freire, the resources for that task at the present time are provided by the advanced technology of our Western world, but the social vision which impels us to negate the present order and demonstrate that

history has not ended comes primarily from the suffering and the struggle of the people of the Third World. (14)

Teaching and learning, then, become tools that bring such a social vision into life, validating it.

In the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, the traditional hierarchy involved in teaching and learning — the one who knows passes on knowledge to the one who doesn't — is suspended. Prescription is replaced by Dialogue, Praxis, Action, and Transformation. "Quando tentamos um adentramento no diálogo como fenômeno humano," writes Freire,

se nos revela algo que já poderemos dizer ser ele mesmo: *a palavra*. . . . Esta busca nos leva a surpreender, nela, duas dimensões: ação e reflexão, de tal forma solidárias, em uma interação tão radical que, sacrificada, ainda em parte, uma delas, se ressentida, imediatamente, a outra. Não há palavra verdadeira que não seja praxis. Daí que dizer a palavra verdadeira seja transformar o mundo. (77)

In such a context, teachers and students together re-create the world, since they re-name it according to their momentary reality, creating what Freire calls "dialogical education" in opposition to a "banking" concept of education, in which teachers deposit knowledge onto empty and ignorant students. This activity of saying the world anew is carried out through a conversation about "generative themes," themes which will be found "na realidade mediatizadora, na consciência que dela tenhamos, educadores e povo" (87). In doing so, people have a chance of perceiving themselves from a distance, and thus identifying what limits them:



Ao se separarem do mundo, que objetivam, ao separarem sua atividade de si mesmos, ao terem o ponto de decisão de sua atividade em si, em suas relações com o mundo e com os outros, os homens ultrapassam as “situações-limite” . . . No momento mesmo em que os homens as apreendem como freios, em que elas se configuram como obstáculos à sua libertação, se transformam em “percebidos destacados” em sua “visão de fundo”. Revelam-se, assim, como realmente são: dimensões concretas e históricas de uma dada realidade. Dimensões desafiadoras dos homens, que incidem sobre elas através de ações que Vieira Pinto chama de “atos-limites” – aqueles que se dirigem à superação e à negação do dado, em lugar de implicarem sua aceitação dócil e passiva. (90)

Very briefly, this is what Paulo Freire proposes: a true revolution, in which education equals overcoming the limit situation of a general social arrangement that grants only some people the right to "pronounce the world." We will now examine some of the implications of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed for the Theatre of the Oppressed.

### ***The Theatre of the Oppressed***

It is not by chance that Augusto Boal has called his theatrical approach *Teatro do Oprimido* — The Theatre of the Oppressed (TO). The *Pedagogy* has clearly inspired the *Theatre*, which bespeaks a similar discourse, only adapted to the semantics of drama. If for Freire the word is action, for Boal action is theater. Where Freire wants a true word to transform the world, Boal wants a true theater; where Freire wants people to have the right to pronounce the world, Boal wants to give people the

freedom to act their own world out; and in the end, what both want is to stir change.

As Frances Babbage explains:

In [the book entitled *Theatre of the Oppressed*], Boal argues that theater has become a form of ruling class control and has lost its proper place as a form of communication and expression for the people. Through an examination of Aristotle and Machiavelli, then of Hegel and Brecht, he arrives at a discussion of his own experiments in *Theatre of the Oppressed*. A central focus throughout the work is the spectator, as Boal states 'a passive being' who must be liberated in order to think and act for her or himself. The thoughtful, critical spectator of Brecht is not enough, as the barriers between spectator and actor still remain. (2)

In Boal's view of theater, characters are the reflection of dramatic action (and not the opposite); in the *Theatre of the Oppressed*, drama equals action (Boal *Teatro* 181), and action results from the transformation of spectators into actors. And, for this transformation to take place, spectators must learn the rules of the game, the possibilities of each play (Boal *Teatro* 210) — to borrow an expression from Susan Bennett, spectators must be given “transgressive knowledge.”

According to Boal, “para que se compreenda bem esta *Poética do Oprimido* deve-se ter sempre presente seu principal objetivo: transformar o povo, “espectador”, ser passivo no fenômeno teatral, em sujeito, em ator, em transformador da ação dramática. . . . Não importa que seja fictícia: *importa que é uma ação*. (Boal *Teatro* 138-139)

Boal's *Teatro do Oprimido* (first published in 1974) is the dramatic face of the Pedagogy of the Oppressed. When describing the origin of theater (“The fable of Xua Xua, the pre-human woman who discovered

theatre"), Boal recounts that "this discovery takes place 'at the moment when Xua Xua gave up trying to recover her baby and keep him all for herself, accepted that he was somebody else, and **looked at herself**, emptied of part of herself. At that moment she was at one and the same time Actor and Spectator. She was Spect-Actor" (Auslander 125, emphasis added).

In the story told by Boal, Xua Xua was able to achieve what Freire describes as "ponto de cisão," that is, she is able to step outside and perceive herself from a distance; she is able to act upon her own self, not only to change it, but to make it better. Boal objects to Aristotelian poetics because it encourages a catharsis that purifies "the desire to change society" (Taussig & Schechner 27). "I favor the dynamicization of people — making people do. I don't want people to use the theatre as a way of not doing in real life." Theater can be used as a weapon both for domination and for liberation; to be a weapon for liberation, the "barriers created by the ruling classes must be destroyed." This is what the poetics of the oppressed attempts to do.

But how does that come into being on the stage? "É necessário derrubar muros!", says Boal (135); "Primeiro, o espectador volta a representar, a atuar: teatro invisível, teatro foro, teatro imagem, etc. Segundo, é necessário eliminar a propriedade privada dos personagens pelos atores individuais: Sistema Coringa".

Boal describes four stages in the process of transforming the spectator into **spect-actor**, which involve exercises, games, and actual

performance.<sup>4</sup> In the first stage, participants get to know their bodies; in the second stage, they work on making their bodies expressive. The third stage is called "theater as language," and involves "simultaneous dramaturgy," in which spectators create a plot which is acted out by actors; "image theater," in which spectators produce action by creating images with the actors' bodies; and "forum theater," in which the spectators command the dramatic action and actually take part in the acting. The fourth stage in this process is "the theater as discourse," in which the "espectador-ator apresenta o *espetáculo* segundo suas necessidades de discutir certos temas ou de ensaiar certas ações" (Boal Teatro 144). One example is "invisible theater," in which a group of people act out a scene in an environment where nobody is aware that this is a dramatic performance. At some point onlookers are expected to become involved in the scene.

The "Joker System" was created in a different, more formal context, when Augusto Boal was the head of Teatro de Arena, in São Paulo, with the performance of *Zumbi*. In the Joker System, all the actors play all the characters, thus eliminating the possibility of identification between actor and character. Besides having objectives of an "economic nature" — being a fairly cheap solution for staging plays — the Joker enabled the presentation, "dentro do próprio espetáculo, [da] peça e [de] sua análise" (Boal Teatro 207).

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<sup>4</sup> For practical examples, see Boal's "Uma Experiência de Teatro Popular no Peru," in *Teatro do Oprimido* (136).

In addition, the Joker System introduced the idea of a stable structure which may be used for different plays. Once this structure is revealed to the public, people are able to make an expanded reading of each part of the play. Finally, the Joker System tries to resolve the option between the character-object and character-subject:

Procura-se assim restaurar a liberdade plena do personagem sujeito, dentro dos esquemas rígidos da análise social. A coordenação dessa liberdade impede o caos subjetivista conducente aos estilos líricos: expressionismo, etc. Impede a apresentação do mundo como perplexidade, como destino inelutável. E deve impedir, esperamos – interpretações mecanicistas que reduzam a experiência humana à mera ilustração de compêndios. (Boal Teatro 212)

In the words of Paulo Freire, if in the effort to present individuals with “dimensões significativas de sua realidade” these individuals should perceive reality as

algo espesso que os envolve e que não chegam a vislumbrar, se faz indispensável que a sua busca [da realidade] se realize através da abstração. Isto não significa a redução do concreto ao abstrato, o que seria negar a sua dialeticidade, mas tê-los como opostos que se dialetizam no ato de pensar.

Na análise de uma situação existencial concreta, “codificada” [a representação desta situação], se verifica exatamente este movimento do pensar. . . .

Realmente, em face de uma situação existencial codificada (situação desenhada ou fotografada que remete, por abstração, ao concreto da realidade existencial), a tendência dos indivíduos é . . . dar o passo da representação da situação (codificação) à situação concreta mesma em que e com que se encontram. (97-98)

It is exactly because theater offers a literal possibility, as acknowledged by Freire, of leading individuals into taking the step from “representação da situação (codificação) à situação concreta mesma,” that Boal describes theater as “soma de todas as linguagens possíveis: palavras, cores,

formas, movimientos, sons, etc.," thus encompassing the possibilities of all these languages (Boal Teatro 183).

One more word must be said at this point regarding the theories of the oppressed. It is important to recognize the emphasis these theories place on concepts such as reality, objectivity, concreteness, and, as a consequence, in **cultural contextualization**. Frances Babbage, for example, tells us that "in Boal's Forum theatre participants are encouraged . . . to consider whether a spectator's intervention is magic, a fantasy solution to the problem under examination; if it is, it is likely to be rejected as unrealistic, or at least unsatisfactory" (5).

Also, Auslander describes Boal's theatre as "intensely physical in nature: everything begins with the image, and the image is made up of human bodies . . . . The initial apprehension is of the body; discussion of the ideological implications of the images follows upon that apprehension" (124). Schutzman and Cohen-Cruz add that "we have found that TO exposes the insufferability of politics that are artless and dogmatic, the presumptuousness of art that lacks self- or collective consciousness, and the ultimate futility (if not harmful ethnocentricity) of therapies devoid of playfulness and cultural contextualization" (1-2). As we will see next, the emphasis placed by both TO and PO on concreteness and contextualization will have fundamental implications both for the placement of these theories of the oppressed within the theories of postcolonialism and appropriation, and for the analysis of Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade*.

## **Postcolonialism**

Having called attention to the importance of cultural contextualization for the Theatre of the Oppressed, it is time to address the esthetical environment surrounding Boal's poetics. There are many explicit assumptions that come with TO: The first of them is that it acknowledges the existence of somebody who is oppressed; therefore, it acknowledges the existence of an oppressor. Also, as we have seen, TO advocates change, a change which we can assume implies improvement. The objective of changing in TO is not taking the oppressor's place, but transforming the oppressed into not-oppressed, and, maybe, ultimately to transform society into a non-oppressing system.

What exactly is TO fighting against? There are many possible answers to this question, and once again they are related to cultural context. One specific answer will be discussed later when we look at Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade* as an example both of appropriation and of Boal's poetics. For now, however, it is enough to point out that the assumptions in TO suggest an identification with certain aspects of postcolonialism.

Initially, according to Mishra & Hodge, the term "post-colonial" was used to designate a field that gathered literatures produced in English but which did not include the literature of the center, that is, the literature produced by British writers (276). Looking further into the meaning of "post-colonialism," however, Mishra & Hodge proposed, first of all, that the

hyphen separating "post" and "colonial" be dropped. Hyphenated post-colonialism, these authors claimed, would refer merely to something which is "after colonial" (276). Unhyphenated postcolonialism, on the other hand, was defined as "an always present tendency in any literature of subjugation marked by a systematic process of cultural domination through the imposition of imperial structures of power" (284). In the words of Mark Fortier, "post-colonialism is an attempt to describe the contemporary situation and its culture, this time by focusing on the effects of the western imperialism which has dominated the world since the sixteenth century" (130).

Postcolonialism is bound to be problematic because it addresses a complex and often unresolved political and cultural situation, namely the situation of countries which were once "colonized" by other nations. For such former colonies, the concept of independence can cover a wide range of meanings with many subtle nuances. Anne McClintock, for example, rightly claims that "'post-colonialism' is unevenly developed globally," so that Brazil is not "'post-colonial' in the same way as Zimbabwe" (256). She calls for "innovative theories of history and popular memory" which take into consideration "the global situation as a multiplicity of powers and histories, which cannot be marshaled obediently under the flag of a single theoretical term" (266). For the purposes of the discussion of Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade* that will follow, I will dismiss neither concept, so that McClintock's relevant concern with multiplicity will be considered within the frame of postcolonialism.



Another characteristic of postcolonialism is, again in the words of Fortier, the "challenge [of] the canon of western art, a challenge which takes myriad forms, from outright rejection to reappropriation and reformulation" (131). This aspect of postcolonialism has special relevance for the present discussion, especially in terms of reappropriation, or, as I have called it, appropriation, which we will look into in more detail next.

### ***Appropriation***

According to Soares dos Santos, "modern readings are no longer called 'interpretations' but 'appropriations' which denotes their ideological and political orientation" (66). As can be seen from Santos' statement, the idea of "reading" or "interpreting" a work of art is not new; however, in modern times, "to interpret" is very often "to appropriate." Why is it so important to requalify the act of interpretation of an existing work?

The answer lies in the context within which such modern interpretations occur, the context of postcolonialism as described in the previous section. Within the context of postcolonialism, interpretations are appropriations, or readings in which what is emphasized is the act of transgressing, "taking possession, taking without consent, or seizing" (Random House Dictionary 74). Although the exercise of appropriation has been attacked for allegedly reducing the original text,<sup>5</sup> such attacks

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<sup>5</sup> For example, Dinesh D'Souza, cited in Fortier, has called it "unfair and an indignity to reduce Shakespeare to a mere function of colonial forces" (Fortier 134).

"fail to appreciate the post-colonial reading project as it manifests itself especially in theatrical adaptation: reading is always in part political and adaptation is always a remaking with different emphases and with a new purpose" (Fortier 134).

The concept of appropriation raises yet another crucial question. Why is it important to appropriate in order to denote an ideological or political orientation? Why is it not enough — or even possible — simply to tell a new story in a straightforward way?

The work of Susan Bennett (1996) is concerned with just such questions, especially in relation to the present-time proliferation of Shakespeare performances. At one moment, Bennett places an emphasis on what she calls the "nostalgic" character of present times. Postmodernity is equated with a mood of nostalgia in which "consumers vie for a diverse but eclectic range of commodities with which to anchor their experience and desires" (5), and which might be seen as evidence that humanity is going through a moment of cultural aridity:

This simplified notion of the effect / effectiveness of nostalgia relies on its function as a marker of both what we lack and what we desire; expressed another way, nostalgia is constituted as a longing for certain qualities and attributes in lived experience that we have apparently lost, at the same time as it indicates our inability to produce parallel qualities and attributes which would satisfy the particularities of lived experience in the present. (5)

Bennett also calls our attention to a "marketing logic which makes the performance canon of Shakespeare's plays so contemporary, " and which is based on the ease with which Shakespeare's plays are sold to audiences all over the world (16). In that sense, the "epidemic

consumption of historical texts" could be read as evidence of "a process of economic and cultural decline" (Holderness, cited in Bennett 3).

But, since postmodernism is also a contemporary of postcolonialism, and since postcolonialism is much more "strident and activist than an acquiescent postmodernism" (Fortier 130), the postcolonial reading of past and canonical texts might be more related to the notion of "creative vandalism" (coined by Jonathan Dollimore, cited in Bennett 1), in which the act of appropriation antagonizes the source text to emphasize its gaps and excesses. It is when such gaps and excesses become the text, says Bennett, "that their inclination to disrupt the notion of the linearity of progress is made manifest" (2). In other words, it is possible that, by reenacting old texts, postcolonial appropriations can dislocate and contradict the authority of tradition, and thus "produce a 'transgressive knowledge' which would disarticulate the terms under which tradition gains its authority" (Bennett 12).

It is important to keep in mind that Bennett is not merely referring to old texts in general, but specifically to old Shakespeare. "The performances which attach to the signifier Shakespeare," says Bennett, "add up to the most intensive and most obvious reuse of the past since Shakespeare's plays form . . . one of the central agencies through which culture generates meaning" (21). Or (citing Terence Hawkes) "Shakespeare doesn't mean: we mean *by* Shakespeare" (Bennett 21). If, on the one hand, we could mean Shakespeare as the undisputed symbol

of high culture,<sup>6</sup> on the other hand we may invoke "lines (or bastardized versions) from his plays [and plunder them] for their capacity to mean in particular ways" (Bennett 36). Shakespeare, submits Bennett, has a "normative value" (37).

Moreover, Bennett acknowledges that Shakespeare "has a global there-ness," although, she adds, "particularly in the English-speaking world" (27). However, Howard and Connor (cited in Bennett 25) point out that "probably more than any other figure in western culture, Shakespeare has been used to secure assumptions about texts, history, ideology, and criticism. ... He functions, in many quarters, as a kind of cultural Esperanto." And, as we will see later, Shakespeare, and especially works of Shakespeare appropriation, in fact transcend the English-speaking world to become emblematic symbols of other traditions and cultures.

Besides, it is truly impossible to deny the global sources that inform the colonial inhabitant, especially the colonial intellectual. Roberto Fernández Retamar writes that there is only one type of man who truly knows European literature, and that is the colonial man. Retamar writes uncomplimentarily about such an inheritance when discussing the work of Jorge Luis Borges, who, according to Retamar, personifies the typical colonial writer: Borges' writing, claims Retamar, seems more like an act of reading. Borges' writing stems directly from his reading, in what Retamar calls "peculiar processo de fagocitose" that reveals beyond doubt that this is a colonial man (Retamar 50).

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<sup>6</sup> As does, for example, Harold Bloom, when he states that "Shakespeare is the canon" (47).

My intention is neither to discuss Retamar's assumptions, nor to emphasize the negative side of phagocytosis, which has also been suggested by Bennett. However, in my view it is essential to establish that the colonial quality of **knowing Europe** characterizes the work of many (for example) Latin American intellectuals: such a quality may go beyond mere phagocytosis to offer one explanation for the gesture of appropriation (maybe even in a Freudian sense) that is synonymous with vandalism, or with seizing property. Knowing Europe better than knowing oneself is at the root of the seemingly eternal dilemma of colonial intellectuals, especially Latin Americans: the European inheritance is both desired and despised, an always-present reminder of oppression's double edge. The colonial man is in part a descendant of the oppressor who has oppressed native peoples, and is in part one of the oppressed, who now has to speak both for himself and, in some cases, for those who have been oppressed before.

If Retamar calls the work of Borges the tormented testimony of a trapped class, which is sadly forced to recognize that "o mundo, infelizmente, é real; eu, infelizmente, sou Borges" (50-51), from a different perspective these very words are the unspoken message sent to those who question the worth of works of appropriation. Be it from Shakespeare or from any other representative of the canon, there is no denying the fact of appropriation: the world, both European and non-European, is real; and so are we, Latin American and Third World oppressed people.

## ***Postcolonialism, appropriation, and The Tempest***

Having said that, I would like to focus on a specific example, that of one special (not by chance) Shakespeare play: *The Tempest*. For Bennett, "no Western text has played a more visible role in the representation and reconstruction of the colonial body than Shakespeare's *The Tempest*" (119). No doubt, critical writings have amply acknowledged that *The Tempest* is, perhaps

the most important text used to establish a paradigm for post-colonial readings of canonical works. So established are these readings that in contemporary productions 'some emphasis on colonialism is now expected' (Griffiths 1983). In fact, more important than the simple rereading of the text itself by critics or in productions has been the widespread employment of the characters and structure of *The Tempest* as a general metaphor for imperial-margin relations (Mannoni 1950; Dorsinville 1974) or, more widely, to characterize some specific aspect of post-colonial reality. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 190)

This "employment of characters and structure," which is of particular interest to the present work, has focused, according to Bennett, mainly in the antagonistic relationship between two characters (199): Prospero, white and powerful, and Caliban, dark, "abhorred slave / Which any print of goodness wilt not take" (*The Tempest*, I.ii 351-352). As is now known, the relationship between Caliban and Prospero has proved an irresistible metaphor for the relationship between colonized and colonizer nations, and for the cultural eurocentrism that has dominated the West since the so-called Age of the Discoveries. In the words of Roberto Retamar,

Nosso símbolo . . . é Caliban. Isso se torna particularmente claro para nós, mestiços que habitamos as mesmas ilhas onde morou Caliban: Próspero invadiu as ilhas, matou os nossos antepassados, escravizou Caliban e lhe ensinou sua língua para poder se entender com ele. Que outra coisa pode fazer Caliban, senão empregar esta mesma língua — hoje não há outra — para amaldiçoar Próspero . . . . Não conheço outra metáfora mais adequada para nossa situação cultural, para nossa realidade. (29)

As colonies become politically independent states, and colonialism is replaced by imperialism — that is, economical, social, or cultural control over distant lands (Lopes 10) — the employment of the play's structure and characters is also updated. Indeed, as Virginia Mason Vaughan has pointed out,

Since Caliban's first appearance in 1611, Shakespeare's monster has undergone remarkable transformations. From drunken beast in the eighteenth century, to noble savage and missing link in the nineteenth, to Third World victim of oppression in the mid-twentieth, Caliban's stage images reflect changing Anglo-American attitudes toward primitive man. Shakespeare's monster once represented bestial vices that must be eradicated; now he personifies noble rebels who symbolize the exploitation of European imperialism. (390)

Of course my point here is that Caliban's stage images not only reflect changing Anglo-American attitude toward primitive man, but that they also (and especially) reflect the changing attitude of primitive, oppressed peoples, towards oppressive powers.

As I move closer towards a Brazilian appropriation of *The Tempest*, Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade*, it is important to contextualize the forthcoming discussion in relation to yet another aspect. When discussing *The Tempest*, appropriation, and Brazilian art / culture, a connection with "Manifesto Antropófago" ("The Cannibalist Manifesto") is inevitable.

Peter Hulme and others read in Caliban's name the expression "cannibal," which, in 1611, when *The Tempest* was first performed, was a new word "appearing as part of the colonizer's drive to chart discoveries in / through language" (cited in Bennett 120). Centuries later, in 1928, Brazilian modernist Oswald de Andrade published "Manifesto Antropófago," in which he proposed "a critical devoration of the universal cultural heritage," not from the perspective of the good savage, but "from the point of view of the 'bad savage,' devourer of whites — the cannibal" (Campos 44). There is an obvious parallel between Prospero / Caliban and cultural heritage / bad savage as proposed by Andrade; therefore, the fact that what is under analysis here is a Brazilian appropriation of *The Tempest* underscores the connection with the Cannibalist perspective.

My discussion of Boal's *A Tempestade* will inevitably entertain some of the ideas outlined in the Cannibalist Manifesto, especially those which are closely related to postcolonialism (contradicting the authority of tradition) and appropriation (challenging the canon).<sup>7</sup> In addition, cannibalization is the "never punctually resolved movement of the same and otherness, of what is native and what is foreign (European)" (Campos 46), which, as we have seen earlier, is *par excellence* the dilemma of the Third-World writer (Virginia Vaughan's "primitive man," what I have previously referred to as the "eternal dilemma of colonial intellectuals").

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<sup>7</sup> According to Campos: Hence the necessity to consider the difference, to consider nationalism as a dialogical movement of difference. . . .: the dis-character, instead of the character, the rupture instead of the linear course; historiography as the seismic graph of fragmentation, rather than the tautological homologation of the homogeneous. A refusal of the essentialist metaphor of gradual, harmonious natural evolution. A new idea of tradition (anti-tradition) to be made operative as a counter-revolution, as a countercurrent opposed to the glorious, prestigious canon (45).



Although I will emphasize a Brazilian resonance in Boal's text, and Cannibalism is part of an intrinsically nationalist cultural effort (Teles 1983), Cannibalism deserves to be in the center of another discussion; in the present work I would like to shift the focus to concentrate in a concept which appeared in the very beginning of this chapter: I would like to discuss Boal's *A Tempestade* from a pedagogical perspective, which, in my view, is very much in keeping with the Theatre of the Oppressed. As defined in chapter 1, this pedagogical reading focuses on looking for change promoted by reflection, action, and dialogue inside and outside the text. Thus, the discussion that follows will be framed in terms of the "employment of the characters and structure of *The Tempest* as a . . . metaphor for imperial-margin relations," as stated before, but also in terms of the employment of this structure as a pedagogical and theatrical, change-promoting tool, of and for the Oppressed, and as a metaphor for such process of change.

We shall now move on to the analysis of *A Tempestade*. For that, the next chapter will briefly outline a comparison between this example of appropriation and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*; next, the Latin American reading proposed by Soares dos Santos will be broadened to include a specifically Brazilian reading of Boal's play. Finally, the next chapter will develop the general ideas that will lead to the conclusion in the final chapter of this work.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE FOLLY OF THIS ISLAND: WHAT OF YOUR CONSCIENCE?

Às favas, Senhor Presidente, com todos os escrúpulos de consciência.

Minister Jarbas Passarinho  
December 13, 1968<sup>8</sup>

In the previous chapter, I discussed the theoretical background that concerns Augusto Boal's appropriation. In this chapter, I will fine tune the contextualization of *A Tempestade* (AT) in more specific terms, for example in relation to Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (TT) and to the historical moment at which Boal wrote it. After that, I will offer my own reading of *A Tempestade*, in which I both discuss and expand the reading offered by Soares dos Santos (1997).

In terms of structure, AT and TT are organized as follows: AT is divided into two acts and seven scenes (act I, three scenes, and act II four scenes); whereas TT is usually divided into five acts, nine scenes (Act I.i-ii; Act II.i-ii; Act III.i-iii; Act IV.i; Act V.i), and an epilogue. Still, the development of the action is fairly parallel, as we shall see from the detailed comparison that follows.

In terms of characters, it is interesting to note that AT does not include a list of the *dramatis personae*; participants in the play are

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<sup>8</sup> "To hell, Mr. President, with all scruples of conscience": These words were uttered by Minister Jarbas Passarinho in 1968 during the meeting which passed the Institutional Act no. 5, known as AI-5, which gave the Brazilian military government the power to take away all political rights of any citizen at its own discretion. An audio tape of the meeting was aired on Brazilian television on December 3, 1998.

introduced as the action develops.<sup>9</sup> As a result, most characters do not simply appear for the first time; they are named and described. Próspero, for example, introduces himself as "Próspero, o dono desta ilha, quem é? Quem sou? . . . Escuta. Teu pai, minha filha, era o Duque de Milão, a próspera cidade da Itália! Príncipe de grande poder e 'pedigree'" (AT I.ii). Exceptions among the core characters are Antônio, Gonçalo, and Miranda, who do not deserve detailed introductions directly referring to their person (for a list of characters, acts and scenes in the two plays, see Appendix). Sycorax and her Brazilian counterpart are both physically absent characters, whose action and existence are nevertheless an essential part of the plot.<sup>10</sup>

In both plays, I.i presents a description of the tempest (the magical / meteorological phenomenon which causes the sinking of the ship where the king and his party travel). Also, in both plays, the king is "deposed" by the tempest, since the might of the winds and the fury of the sea make of him an ordinary human being: "What care these roarers for the name of king?" asks the boatswain in TT; "o furacão não conhece realeza," the captain wisely states in AT. This is obviously a foreshadowing:

Pr(ó)spero's might, dramatically displayed in the tempest (albeit through Ariel), will be used to seize back the power taken from him twelve years

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<sup>9</sup> That is relevant when one is analyzing a written text instead of a staged production, as is the case here.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Halpern raises the point that *The Tempest* makes a reference to an anonymous seventeenth century play called *No-body and Some-body*, in which the "characters Nobody and Somebody are employed as satirical devices to depict the displacement of denial of social responsibilities" (276). It could be said that "Nobody" also displaces social and moral status, for example in the case of Sycorax and of the island itself, which is said to be "uninhabited." There are probably other levels of the same instance which could be explored within *The Tempest*.

earlier. In terms of AT, this atmosphere also serves to set the action in the right direction: this is a play about rebellion, a play in which power is questioned throughout.

An interesting and subtle shift from TT to AT is the following: in TT, in the thick of the tempest, when the boatswain sends all passengers back to their cabins, Gonzalo warns him: "Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard" (TT I.i 19). The Boatswain then challenges Gonzalo, ironically underscoring the king's powerlessness before the tempest:

. . . You are  
a councillor; if you can command these elements  
to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will  
not hand a rope more. Use your authority. If you can-  
not, give thanks you have liv'd so long, and make  
yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of  
the hour, if it so hap. ... (TT I.i 20-26)

In AT, the boatswain's irony is replaced by the king's plain foolishness, as he tries to control the tempest: "Ordeno pois que retorne a razão aos espíritos, o amor aos corações, e que retorne enfim a calma a estes mares. Sendo quem sou, ordeno que cesse a tormenta! Que se apaziguem as ondas e serenem os ventos!" (AT I.i). Although of course this admonition does nothing to make the situation better, the shift from irony to bravado works to establish the tone for Boal's play: this is a play of exaggeration, and also a play in which the powerful are shown to have a rash trust in their power.

What follows is the first of a series of songs in AT. "Canção da tempestade equivocada" addresses such issues of power and resistance:

Mas ao vento e furacão  
 nada os poderá parar:  
 os raios e a trovoada  
 não conhecem a autoridade. (AT I.i)

It should be noted that the songs in AT are a counterpart to the speeches in TT. In TT, the speeches are important dramatic moments at which a character talks at length to describe and qualify certain issues, or to frame certain issues according to a point of view that can serve as a contrast to other, stated or understated, points of view. Examples are Caliban's "this island's mine" speech (TT I.i 331-343) and Trinculo's "fish" speech (TT II.i 24-36).

Scene II (Act I), in both plays, starts with Miranda and Pr(ó)spero discussing the phenomenon that just happened. This is the time chosen by Pr(ó)spero to reveal to Miranda his real identity, and thus by extension Miranda's real identity as well: ". . . thee my daughter, who / Art ignorant of what thou art, nought knowing / Of whence I am, nor that I am more better / Than Prospero . . ." (TT I.ii 17-20).

In AT, the innocent and sensitive Miranda of TT becomes, just like the king, foolish and childish in a somewhat exaggerated way: "Papaiê, ah, papaiê querido! Eu sei que foi você, foi você, mau, você foi o culpado! Com as suas artes mágicas, você fez rugir as ondas selvagens. Ah, papai, papai querido do meu coração, como você me faz sofrer!" (AT I.ii). (Miranda's mother, "a piece of virtue," is further qualified in AT I.ii as "muito feia e nada apetecível").

Próspero's true story is told in AT in the form of another song, "Canção da traição fraterna," in which he briefly describes the events that caused him to leave Naples with his child. Próspero then proceeds to describe their current whereabouts:

E chegamos a esta ilha,  
do caribe tropical, tão selvagem e primitiva,  
triste, sozinha, abismal!  
Aqui reinava Sicorax,  
velha bruxa bestial,  
a quem venci a patadas  
com elegância mortal: (AT I.ii)<sup>11</sup>

Next, Ariel appears to give his own account of the tempest, since he was actually the executioner of Próspero's plot. In Ariel, Boal exaggerates lyricism and sexual ambiguity: Próspero's "doce e podre laçao" speaks and behaves like a queen.<sup>12</sup> Sycorax and Sicorax are mentioned in this scene for the first time. Sycorax's ambiguous ethnic background (" . . . from Argier / Thou know'st was banish'd"; TT I.ii 265-266) is better defined in AT: "a negra Sicorax" (AT I.ii)

In AT, Sicorax is not accused of "sorceries terrible," but only of making lazy Ariel work: "trabalhar no campo, arar a terra, semear a cana nos canaviais . . . construir a tua própria casa, estudar todas as noites, enfim, eram essas as terríveis torturas que sofrias. Ela fazia-te trabalhar para comer: imperdoável!" (AT I.ii).

<sup>11</sup> Note that in AT, Próspero calls the island "sozinha," but acknowledges that it was inhabited.

<sup>12</sup> In English, "a male homosexual, especially one who is flamboyantly campy" (Random House Webster Unabridged Dictionary 1583).

Exploitation of labor is a major issue in *A Tempestade*. Before Próspero arrives on the island, it seems that work was focused on the workers, that is, Ariel had to work in the fields but he also worked to build his own house; and he had time to study. Próspero brings with him the notion of work which focuses on the master, in other words, the notion of exploitation. Ariel and Caliban are each at opposite and extreme ends of Próspero's exploitation continuum: Caliban is acknowledged as a slave (and therefore as an inferior creature). He is submitted to never-ending physical hardships with no right to any kind of compensation. Ariel's slavery, on the other hand, is disguised as advantage and honor; he does not have to do what he fears most (physical work), and he is many times praised by his master. And still, he is a slave who is not allowed to do as he chooses.

In "Canção de horror ao trabalho," Ariel sings his aversion to work. In this song, Ariel promises to be faithful to Próspero as long as Próspero spares him from this affliction (an attitude which in turn helps maintain the social arrangement in which Caliban and others are exploited).

Both AT and TT introduce Caliban in this scene. This is where TT's Caliban proffers, full of emotion, a speech in blank verse which reveals "a poetic side to his nature which remains invisible to Prospero" (Halpern 265), a moment in which "ugly, rude, savage, Caliban nevertheless achieves . . . an absolute, if intolerably bitter, moral victory" (Greenblatt, cited in Halpern 265):

This island's mine by Sycorax my mother,  
 Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,  
 Thou strok'st me and made much of me, wouldst give  
 me  
 Water with berries in't, and teach me how  
 To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
 That burn by day and night; and then I lov'd thee (TT I.ii 331-336)

In AT, Caliban sings in an explosion of anger: he curses Próspero and all the invaders in the world. Caliban's song is a wish that all the worst diseases in the world should fall upon the invaders. It is a long song, and we will return to it a little later; in the meantime, it will be sufficient to say that it targets (among others) the United States, and that some lines of the chorus are sung in English.

Act I scene II in both plays is also where Fer(di)nando and Miranda meet. Miranda and Fernando's love at first sight is fueled by practical reasons in AT. The details of the deal are discussed in “Dueto do preço da virgindade”:

*Fernando*: Serás deusa, amada amante,  
 terás o meu amor constante.

*Miranda*: Quero algo mais pujante,  
 o amor se desfaz num instante.

*Fernando*: Sou príncipe e tu princesa,  
 tua será a realeza;  
 e se morre o meu papá  
 rainha logo serás. (AT I.ii)

And they go on to wish the death of *papá*, *mamá*, and the entire family:



*Miranda:* Que morra, que morra,  
que lindo será!

*Fernando:* Tu serás rainha.

*Miranda:* Tu serás o meu rei. (He moves towards her, but she steps back.)

Mas antes, meu tesouro,  
vamos cumprir com a lei. (Shows the wedding ring).

Of course, once again, Boal is merely exaggerating what is more subtle in TT; although he is very impressed by Miranda, Ferdinand sees to it that his condition is established right from the start: "O, if a virgin, And your affection not gone forth, I'll make you / The Queen of Naples" (TT I.ii 449-451, emphasis added).

The two plays go on with parallel stories. Next we see all the members of the court, tired and somewhat confused after the wreck. Gonzalo and Gonçalo try to comfort their kings: "Beseech you, sir, be merry; you have cause / (So have we all) of joy; for our escape / Is much beyond our loss." (TT II.i 1-3); in summary, "quando alguém é desgraçado / tem gente em pior estado" (AT I.iii).

In this scene,<sup>13</sup> the king is once again in danger of being deposed, this time not by the tempest, but by Sebastian(ão) and Ant(ô)nio. Ant(ô)nio, experienced in seizing power, since he has successfully plotted against his brother Pr(ó)spero, convinces Sebastian(ão) that they should take advantage of the moment of drowsiness cast by Ariel over Gonz(ç)alo and Alonso, and kill Alonso. "But, for your conscience?," asks Sebastian.

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<sup>13</sup> This is also the scene in which Gonzalo proffers his famous "commonwealth speech." For an extremely interesting discussion on that, see Halpern (1994).

Vinte mil consciências estivessem entre Milão e eu, nem um segundo hesitaria. A mim pode-me parar uma espada ou o menor punhal: nunca um tratado de moral. (AT I.iii)

Antônio's answer is at the core of *A Tempestade*: On the one hand, there is the absolute lack of conscience on the part of those who use power and who will only be stopped by force; on the other hand, there is the lack of conscience on the part of those who consent to such a misuse of power. Many times, the latter are consenting powerless who are among the oppressed, those who are to become spect-actors in the Theatre of the Oppressed. This is the message that Caliban tries to get across to Trinculo, in the play's third articulated moment of rebellion:

*Caliban*: Escuta, desgraçado: porque é que tu serves ao teu senhor?

*Trinculo*: E a que senhor teria que servir senão ao meu?

*Caliban*: A ti mesmo.

*Trinculo*: O meu senhor é muito poderoso, é melhor obedecer-lhe.

*Caliban*: Tu não percebes, traidor miserável, que ele só é forte porque usa o teu braço? A sua força é a tua força. Tens medo do chicote que tu mesmo empunhas?

*Trinculo*: Assim são os costumes. Eu estou acostumado a obedecer, obedeço.

*Caliban*: E porque não obedeces a mim? Não percebes que és meu irmão? Porque não me obedeces a mim e juntos estrangulamos o tirano?

*Trinculo*: Não. Esse é o costume: eu necessito um senhor. A-tenção!

*Caliban* (GRITA): Eu sou o teu senhor! Ordeno que mates o invasor Próspero!!!

*Trinculo*: Não posso. ... o costume! Eu devia estar acostumado a obedecer ao meu irmão e não estou. Teria que estar acostumado a estas transformações.

*Caliban*: Puta, merda, o que disseste é verdade. As pessoas precisam-se acostumar às transformações. Tens toda a razão. Mas caramba, é preciso começar. (AT I.iii)

In AT, there are many consenting powerless: Trínculo, who believes it is natural that only some are powerful; Ariel, whose self-centered interests lead him to exchange lack of conscience for comfort; Sebastião, who suspects a conscience might exist but does not actually believe in following it. Among such people, Caliban is indeed a "strange fish," as Trinculo aptly describes (TT II.i 24-36).

The "strange fish" episode in TT is funny, while at the same time disturbing, since humor is derived from a generalized confusion of identity. First, Trinculo finds Caliban, who pretends to be dead:

What have we here?  
 a man or a fish? dead or alive? A fish, he smells  
 like a fish; a very ancient and fish-like smell; a kind of,  
 not-of-the-newest poor-John. A strange fish! (TT II.ii 24-27)

Caliban, in his turn, is pretending to be dead because he thinks Trinculo is a spirit sent by Prospero to torment him; and when Stephano appears, drunk, he for a moment thinks both Caliban and Trinculo are devils, and then, for another moment, Trinculo questions whether Stephano could be a ghost: "But art thou not drown'd, Stephano? I hope now thou / art not drown'd" (TT II.ii 107-109).

In AT, this becomes a moment to question and define, or maybe qualify, identities. Próspero, Trínculo, and Caliban all pose a direct question: "Who am I?" Caliban sings "Canção da Identidade," in which he first questions "E quem sou eu? Quero ver-me. E eu quem sou? quem devo ser?" (AT I.iii), and then answers angrily "eu sou negro, todo negro,

eu sou negro como um negro!! . . . Diz o branco mentiroso que sou feio e salafrário; mas só isto é verdadeiro: sou negro como o operário" and "eu sou negro, eu sou pobre,/ eu sou pena e eu sou pranto. / Sou índio, sou amarelo, / sou triste, mas assim canto" (AT I.iii).

For a brief moment, Trínculo buys Caliban's idea that "all men are created equal," and Próspero becomes afraid. However, soon enough both of them re-establish peace and order; Próspero manages to convince Trínculo that he can reach "the highest ranks" if he should acknowledge his true identity: "Tudo é uma questão de identidade: cada um de nós tem que se identificar, e / então, nunca mais poderemos dizer que somos todos iguais." Trínculo, then, decides that he is "o guarda de honra... e mais, e muito mais... capitão e talvez general... e mais, e muito mais e mais... ." Próspero becomes confident again and reinstates his power: "E eu sou Próspero, senhor desta ilha, senhor de tudo o que aqui existe, de todos os homens, senhor!" (AT I.iii).

The closing of this scene in AT and TT is somewhat different. After Caliban's attempt at speaking to Trínculo and Estevão's conscience, he closes the scene with a bitter remark ("Moral da história: ninguém deve beber com os seus inimigos") (AT I.iii), whereas in TT Caliban chants to newly-found freedom:

'Ban, 'Ban, Ca-Caliban  
 Has a new master, get a new man.  
 Freedom, high-day! high-day, freedom! freedom, high-  
 day, freedom! (TT II.ii 184-187)

However, it is just a matter of time: It takes TT's Caliban only a while longer to realize that freedom does not come that easy, or with a simple exchange of masters.

And so the stories proceed. Fer(di)nando works hard to win Miranda; Caliban, Stephano / Estevão and Tr(i)nculo get together to plan their final assault on Pr(ó)spero; Ariel continues his surreptitious work on behalf of Pr(ó)spero while waiting for his freedom; and Miranda and Fer(di)nando get married in a ceremony prepared by Pr(ó)spero.

The elaborate wedding is suddenly interrupted by Prospero himself, who "forgot that foul conspiracy / Of the beast Caliban and his confederates" (TT IV.i 139-140). And soon enough Caliban, Tr(i)nculo and Stephano / Estevão are driven out by Pr(ó)spero's dogs and hounds, so that he can rightly say: "Now does my project gather to a head: / My charms crack not; my spirits obey; and Time / Goes upright with his carriage" (TT V.i 1-3).

And finally, after much walking and talking, after having been imprisoned by Ariel, it is time for the king and his party to stand face to face with Pr(ó)spero. In the end all are forgiven, including Pr(ó)spero's brother, Tr(i)nculo, Stephano/Estevão, and Caliban. In TT, before they return, Prospero tells the story of his life on the island to his fellow Europeans, just as he had told the story of his European life to Miranda:

Sir, I invite your Highness and your train  
To my poor cell, where you shall take your rest  
For this one night; which, part of it, I'll waste  
With such discourse as, I not doubt, shall make it

Go quick away — the story of my life,  
 And the particular accidents gone by  
 Since I came to this isle. And in the morn  
 I'll bring you to your ship, and so to Naples  
 Where I have hope to see the nuptial  
 Of these our dear-belov'd solemnized,  
 And thence retire me to my Milan, where  
 Every third thought shall be my grave. (TT V.i 302-312)

Before leaving, Prospero finally keeps his word and frees Ariel; Caliban will probably remain on his island, to which Prospero shall not return.

In AT, after Próspero and his party leave for Europe, Antônio and Sebastião stay on the island and continue to exploit Caliban, Trinculo and Estevão.

Finally, in the Epilogue to TT, Prospero prays for good winds on their journey back to Naples, and begs for mercy for whatever sins he has committed: "As you from crimes would pardon'd be / Let your indulgence set me free" (TT Epilogue 19-20). No need to worry. The final song in AT, "Canção de tudo que fica igual," would serve to calm Prospero down. It is not a matter of sins, it is just a matter of class: "eles se juntam ao final / e volta tudo a ser igual" (AT II.vii).

The ship sails back and we remain behind; if we look dreamily from our island at the ship heading towards Europe, what do we see? What is *A Tempestade* telling us? After all, how does this play fit into the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, the Theatre of the Oppressed, postcolonialism and appropriation? Why exactly was *A Tempestade* written at all? Whose story does it tell?

As I pointed out in chapter 2, to find answers we will have to resort to "cultural contextualization." Susan Bennett writes that

It is not enough to acknowledge that a text can be and is rewritten, we must also explore how such rewritings function within the constructs that are culture. Furthermore, it might be thought crucial to examine in whose voice a text is performed and with what relation to a mainstream culture that is [...] increasingly practiced on a global-local nexus. (22)

*A Tempestade* was published in 1979, at a time when Augusto Boal was an exile in Europe. After the military coup in 1964, and especially after the establishment in 1968 of the AI-5, the institutional act number 5, through which the government granted itself the power to suspend the political rights of citizens, life became especially difficult for many Brazilians who did not partake of the government's views. In 1956, Boal had become involved with *Teatro de Arena*, a "left-oriented" company which "worked towards the idea of a national and popular theater" (Soares dos Santos 68). Arena emphasized national, Brazilian ways of speaking and acting, and it spoke for the underprivileged classes of society. According to Soares dos Santos, "theater became a special target of the regime which feared it more than any other cultural manifestation" (69). In 1971 Boal was arrested, jailed and tortured, and after three months he was released. He then moved to Argentina, where he lived until 1976; and from 1976 until 1986 Boal lived in Europe (Schutzman & Cohen-Cruz 3). In 1986 Augusto Boal returned to Brazil.

The 1960s (especially the late 60s) and the 1970s, as we all know, were turbulent times. There were plenty of revolutions and clashes all over the world, not only in Brazil. The Berlin wall was built; there was the Cuban revolution (more precisely in 1959), the unsuccessful invasion of Cuba by the United States, the student rebellions in France, the Vietnam War; and starting in the late 1950s and all through the mid 1970s, Africa and Asia underwent a process of decolonization. Also, as is pointed out by Soares dos Santos (65-66), it is during this period that some of the most important non-English appropriations of *The Tempest* appear, namely Aimé Césaire's *Une Tempête: Adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre* (Martinique, 1969) and Retamar's essay *Caliban: Apuntes Sobre la Cultura en Nuestra América* (Cuba, 1971). Boal's *A Tempestade* is actually dedicated to Retamar for having proposed the idea and for having offered stimulus.

So, very briefly, the context for *A Tempestade* is one of postcolonialism, or another cycle in the "universal interdependence of nations" (Campos 42-43), where "global capitalism in its latest avatar dominates our lives" (Mishra & Hodge 288). According to Soares dos Santos,

*A Tempestade* exposes the expansion of colonialism and draws attention to the plight of Latin Americans due to the enormity of their task: to fight against the old and the new colonizers — Europeans and North-Americans. . . . [Boal], once more, uses his Manichean approach structuring Shakespeare's story as a fight between good and evil, that is, between the oppressor / exploiters / capital and the oppressed / exploited / work, in two acts . . . . The protagonist of the play is Caliban. He is the politically conscious worker who is willing to fight for a revolution which should abolish tyranny. A slave in his own country, Caliban voices the accusatory discourse of the oppressed,



constantly claiming for revenge and freedom. He leads two rebellions against Próspero and he loses both of them. (72)

The Manichean approach that Soares dos Santos refers to is a technique used by Boal when it is required "that the audience should make immediate connotations with its reality . . . . Dividing the world between good and evil, he simplifies the structure of the play and the delineation of the characters in order to provoke a quick response from the spectators" (Soares dos Santos 70).

Soares dos Santos' reading confirms *A Tempestade* as a postcolonial work of appropriation: The original text is significantly changed, since the spectator's attention is shifted from Prospero to Caliban as a protagonist, as well as from Prospero's wisdom to Caliban's life as oppressed slave. According to J. R. O'Shea, the *praxis* of postcolonial literature has two main characteristics:

1. para o escritor pós-colonial, o que importa é a maneira em que uma outra "narrativa-fundadora" (master-narrative) é utilizada para libertar o colonizado; e
2. uma leitura pós-colonial enfatiza o significado de palavras não traduzidas, bem como **as ressonâncias culturais específicas ao texto** (50, emphasis added).

I will start by looking into the second characteristic defined by O'Shea. What cultural resonances are emphasized in *A Tempestade*? Soares dos Santos underscores a Latin American resonance: "Boal's approach to the problem of colonialism and oppression has always been hemispheric, so it is not surprising that his Caliban, who defines himself as

'black,' 'Indian' and 'yellow,' is not portrayed as specifically Brazilian but as Latin-American" (71). Indeed, identity is one question that concerns (and interestingly, unites) all Latin Americans, as affirms Darcy Ribeiro in his preface to "Caliban":

A obra ensaística de Retamar, é, de fato — como a de todos nós que nos ocupamos em decifrar a América Latina, para transformá-la —, um longo comentário à interpelação angustiada e lúcida de Bolívar, que ainda ressoa: — *Quem somos nós? Não somos europeus, nem somos índios. Somos uma espécie intermédia... possuímos um mundo a parte, cercado de dilatados mares, novo...* (9)

In addition, *A Tempestade* has an international resonance, which appears in connection with "A very important point raised by Boal's and Retamar's appropriations of *The Tempest*," specifically "their revolt against the visible presence of North-American neo-colonialism which Retamar dates back to 1898 with the North-American invasion of Cuba" (Soares dos Santos 72).

In AT, Caliban cries against the United States (stage directions ask for "North-American type music"; two parts of the chorus are sung in English) – although his rage is directed against all oppressors,<sup>14</sup> something which is clearly stated in Caliban's song "Que todas as pestes do mundo caíam sobre o invasor." But he is especially speaking against the United States, and in doing so, makes references beyond Latin America:

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<sup>14</sup> ... a todos os seus agentes / e ao brutal imperialismo (ou colonialismo) / que sejam já destruídos / por colossal cataclismo (AT I.ii). There is also a mention to France: E para a gendarmaria, que mal lhe podemos desejar? (AT I.ii).

E supondo que esse outro . . . me odiasse porque sou o dono do meu país, e viesse com os seus navios e bloqueasse as minhas terras, e lançasse bombas de fósforo vivo para queimar as carnes dos meus irmãos e das minhas irmãs, e bombas e canhões que destruíssem as casas do meu pai e de minha mãe... (AT I.ii)

The picture Caliban paints clearly evokes Vietnam. Therefore, we find that Boal's play has Latin American resonances, and indeed, international resonances. But what are the specific **Brazilian** resonances in the play? I ask this question in the light of Anne McClintock's idea, presented in the previous chapter, that "'post-colonialism' is unevenly developed globally"; I wonder where, in Boal's play, Brazil is. Because, although there might be a confluence between Retamar and Boal, I believe that Brazil is not "post-colonial" in the same way as Cuba is, just as it is not postcolonial in the same way as Zimbabwe. What I am actually looking for is the Brazilian facet in a multi-faceted, unquestionably present, Latin American resonance. In the light of the pragmatic emphasis of the Theatre of the Oppressed, why would Boal clearly "center on the denunciation of the two types of colonialism [European and North American] and their mechanisms of oppression" (Soares dos Santos 72) but make no clear mention to the specific situation of the Brazilian military dictatorship?

Also, although he is a worker with a conscience, Boal's Caliban is not exactly a role model in his fight against the oppressor; he drinks too much in crucial moments, although he tries to resist; he is not able to clarify to Trínculo and Estevão what their "limit situation" is. He is easily fooled both by Próspero (during the first revolution attempt; AT II.v) — "Como é que a

gente pode fazer isso: convidar a uma assembléia contra o nosso tirano, justamente o nosso tirano?" — and by Ariel:

*Caliban [talking to Trínculo and Estevão]:* Como eu estava dizendo, todos nós estamos submetidos ao mais vil, cruel, sangrento e facínora agressor, que nos roubou a nossa ilha, a nossa pátria, que nos escraviza, que prostitui as nossas mulheres e as nossas filhas, que nos mata fazendo-nos trabalhar de sol a sol, e não comer de domingo a domingo, e não descansar de Verão a Verão. [Ariel has entered and speaks, hidden]

*Ariel:* Mentira.

*Caliban [infuriated, to Estevão]:* Mentiroso és tu, macaco bêbado, animal!

Although Caliban knows Ariel and his tricks, as well as Próspero and his tricks, he will rather suspect his companions. Besides, the most central aspect of Caliban's revolt is his wanting the island back; however, why should that move Trínculo and Estevão? After all, they come from Europe, and although they are also oppressed, they might not feel the same urge to get Caliban's island back from Próspero. Finally, Caliban's rage is blind: he accuses the aggressor of enslaving and prostituting the women of the island, but he himself is accused of having tried to rape the oppressor's daughter, an accusation he does not deny.

Therefore, in the end, Caliban does not look so good to stand against Próspero as an impersonation of evil; Caliban does not seem to be much of a conscious worker, although he suspects of the problem and has a glimpse of his limit situation, of the social arrangement in which he is denied the right to pronounce the world. In fact, Caliban learns through his actions that

The citing of the dominant norm does not [necessarily] displace that norm — rather it becomes the means by which that dominant norm is most painfully reiterated as the very desire and the performance of those it subjects. (Bennett 23)

Maybe Caliban fails to turn Trinculo into a spect-actor because the only concept of education he knows is Próspero's, which is a "banking" concept of education. And, in the end, Caliban himself becomes a consenting powerless, although unlike Trinculo; he becomes a consenting powerless who believes that no matter how hard you try, nothing will ever change.

In that sense, *A Tempestade* could be read as a metaphor of a "post-tempest" Brazil: After the tempest of the 1964 coup, in which citizens are explicitly and literally denied the right to pronounce mostly everything, let alone the world, what becomes most striking is a general lack of conscience, a general wish not to see, a general pessimistic view that nothing will change. Or, in other words, the inability of producing action which denies the given. As says Richard Halpern, "this looking or pointing *at* also is also a looking or pointing *away from*" (291). So if Boal is pointing in the direction of the North-American oppressor, is he pointing away from the Prósperos, Antônios and Sebastiãoos who are also part of this culture that Retamar has identified with Caliban? Is *A Tempestade* suggesting that this is perhaps what we have been doing?

Within this context, the remark that "the end of the play betrays Boal's disillusionment with the possibility of a rebellion by the oppressed" (Soares dos Santos 72) can also be expanded: What if the end of the play

is consistent with the theme of lack of conscience? It seems that Mr. Passarinho's words are a curse that has lasted to this day: "To hell, Mr. President, with all scruples of conscience." An updated and somewhat trivial version of Caliban's words is the expression "tudo acaba em pizza," a popular metaphor which means that no matter how serious the crime, the powerful will not be held responsible.<sup>15</sup>

The point is that the end of the play may also reflect the denial of a people to take responsibility for their actions, right or wrong. In such terms, it seems that what Boal is telling us pedagogically to do is not to be like the Caliban in *A Tempestade*, and, for that matter, not to be as any of the *dramatis personae*; but instead, to wake up from this long lack of conscience and to realize that we have to shift our focus from the other to ourselves, exactly as Xua Xua did when she discovered theater (Auslander 125).

In the end, as Soares dos Santos says, *A Tempestade* "no doubt . . . expresses us in a very difficult moment of our history." And in fact what she calls the "enormity" of the task we, Latin Americans, have to face, seems even larger than what she describes (72): "to fight against the old and the

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<sup>15</sup>In 1994, Folha de São Paulo published the results of a survey among adolescents to elect the best and worst of that year. The story says that "94 vai ficar como o ano em que Senna morreu, o Brasil foi tetra e a CPI acabou em pizza. . . . Os teens que pediram o impeachment de Collor não se conformam com sua absolvição. Para eles, foi a mancada do ano. Por falta de provas, Collor foi absolvido das acusações de corrupção passiva, no último dia 12. A frase mais citada é outra mancada. O ex-ministro da Fazenda Rubens Ricupero disse, em conversa com o jornalista da Globo Carlos Monforte, que não tinha escrúpulos. O papo foi captado por parabólicas e resultou na queda de Ricupero." Still on the subject of Fernando Collor de Mello's acquittal by the Supreme Court (Supremo Tribunal Federal), representative Jaques Wagner declared: - Na campanha contra a fome, o STF entrou com a pizza (Purvini; Folha de São Paulo).

new colonizers — European and North-Americans" — and I would add, against what is seemingly an irresistible wish to decline responsibility as a nation to look at the colonizer within. In the previous chapter, I quoted Babbage saying that the poetics of the oppressed emphasizes realistic solutions; but Babbage also warns us that "theatre can serve an important function in its ability to stage wishes, to present the impossible, and perhaps we should be wary of dismissing fantasies too quickly . . ." (5). Therefore, it might be worth reading *A Tempestade* as a pedagogical lesson that would incite us to try to change the ending of the play, although for some this may paradoxically be a "fantasy solution." However, such an attempt would solve the problem pointed out by Soares dos Santos, who claims that in *A Tempestade* Boal "asserts his belief in the theatre as a mean of a socio-political transformation although the end of the play seems to contradict it" (73). If we try to read this ending differently, if we try to read it as a warning against simply accepting the given, this may be how, to return to the first part of O'Shea's characterization of postcolonial works, the master-narrative can be used to free the colonized.

In short, the reading I propose for *A Tempestade* is one that points towards a (more or less) subtle relation between global imperialism and local opportunism. Indeed, along with all other forces of imperialism, Caliban also curses "the president, an indecent criminal," a curse that could very well be directed at the head of the Brazilian government at the time when *A Tempestade* was written.

I believe that the reading proposed in this thesis views *A Tempestade* as a truly postcolonial work, for "Post-colonialism aims to give voice to an oppressed group by understanding and critiquing the structures of oppression and articulating and encouraging liberation and revolution" (Fortier 130). It is only by looking inside as well as out that we will be able to identify the structures of oppression, and, in that sense, the reading proposed reflects a truly Brazilian theme. It is essential that we ask ourselves the question that Babbage asks in relation to the Theatre of the Oppressed:

The recognition of the appeal and the value of Theatre of the Oppressed is still apparent, but alongside it is a note not of doubt, but of caution and questioning. Have we become over-confident in our use of these techniques? Are we too ready to define the oppressed [or the oppressor] as the *other*, ignoring or blind to the oppressive structures we ourselves operate within and are perhaps complicit in maintaining?" (2)

There is more to be said about *A Tempestade*. This is a play, and although the present analysis is based mainly on a written text, it must also be considered in terms of staging. Soares dos Santos writes that

The main difficulty with Boal's plays — and *A Tempestade* is no exception — is that they do not read well for he writes them for the theatre. As it [sic] has been said, if the proof of the pudding is in the tasting, the proof of the play is in the staging. *A Tempestade* requires excellent performers — who should at least be competent singers — and excellent music to be fully realized on stage. The production of *A Tempestade* in 1981 was in charge of a *semi-professional company* . . . who ignored Boal's main ideas and techniques . . . . (73-74)

Soares dos Santos quotes one critic saying that "*A Tempestade* na versão de Boal [vira] uma pobre borrasca," and that the play is above all, dated:



"nem velha, nem ultrapassada — mas datada" (73). A better reading, she says, is the one proposed by a second critic, who warns us that we should keep in mind that *A Tempestade* is totally different from *The Tempest*, and that we should forget Shakespeare when considering Boal's play.

However, if we do this we might well forget about *A Tempestade* as well. *A Tempestade* is acknowledged as a work of appropriation, and as such it cannot be separated from the master narrative.<sup>16</sup> Going back to Loomba, and to the identification of our limit situations proposed by Freire, we have to have the courage to insistently place master narrative against appropriation to generate the "transgressive knowledge" which is essential for the identification of our limit situations.

Deborah Cameron, writing about "gender, power, and pragmatics," states that "the process of interpretation is also a site where social inequalities and conflicts may have significant effects. It is in the workings of that process and not only . . . in the surface forms of discourse that [we] should seek the effects of . . . power" (443). Regarding *A Tempestade*, we may say that we should not look only at the play itself, but instead we should look at the meaning generated from the contrast between the appropriation and the master narrative. What this contrast generates is difference; and we should not look upon such difference as if were "misunderstanding" (cf. Cameron 443), which is, I believe, what construes

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<sup>16</sup> There is yet another reason why it is interesting to keep *A Tempestade* next to *The Tempest*. *A Tempestade* builds a general atmosphere which is exaggerated and sometimes a little tasteless; characters use four-letter words and speak loudly. Such an atmosphere is remindful of a parody, and it would be interesting to explore this aspect of the contrast between the two plays.

from the suggestion that *A Tempestade* is so different from *The Tempest* that a comparison would be unfair to the Brazilian play. Instead of misunderstanding, the comparison between the two plays actually generates conflict, a conflict which encompasses the dismay of the critics cited by Soares dos Santos *vis-à-vis* a text of appropriation which they see as so poor in relation to the master narrative that it has to be either excluded or forgiven. By avoiding conflict, we avoid change; and by doing that we deny *A Tempestade* its place as a work of appropriation.

The acknowledgment of conflict is crucial to understand works of appropriation. I have previously quoted Virginia Vaughan, who describes Caliban's transformations since his first appearance in 1611. Since Shakespeare's text has not changed, **what** has? The answer is the perception of Caliban's relationship with Prospero, which went from not problematic to problematic. Like many others, this relationship has existed for a long time, but it is only when it is disputed that it foregrounds difference and thus conflict. Appropriations take this problematization to an extreme, and generate not reduction or misunderstanding, but conflict; and it is that conflict we have to focus on.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> In addition, the exercise of appropriation may elicit a feeling of precariousness. As with certain works of translation, for example, appropriations take "aesthetic risks in foregrounding [their] own uncertainty, breaking literary convention by forfeiting the security of a unified idiom" (Simon 71). It may be that it is exactly this sense of precariousness that works to destabilize the idea of repeating a model, or of reproducing the canon.

In order to stage *A Tempestade*, as Soares dos Santos points out, it is essential to look through the Poetics of the Oppressed: besides context, there are many other ideas that could be explored, mainly the involvement of the public, or the presence of a joker. Here again, the reading of the play as a straightforward criticism of our lack of conscience might help its staging. This would mean more than simply updating the examples of North-American imperialism by, for instance, exchanging the Vietnam War for some other, more recent, conflict. It would mean accepting that everything has ended in pizza for rather a long time, and that maybe we have a hand in this.

Therefore, I believe that, in the end, *A Tempestade* is a postcolonial appropriation of a Shakespeare work, as well as a true example of the Theatre of the Oppressed, in which the raising of questions produces transgressive knowledge. I also believe that the staging of the play should emphasize a national theme of lack of conscience, the play's nature as an appropriation, and a provocative relation with its public. After all, as Augusto Boal says, it is more important to achieve a good debate than a good solution – what incites spectators into entering the game is the discussion and not the solution, which may or may not be found.

## CHAPTER 4

### DOES IT ALL STAY THE SAME?

You didn't teach me a thing! Except to jabber in your own language so that I could understand your orders—chop the wood, wash the dishes, fish for food, plant vegetables, all because you're too lazy to do it yourself. And as for your learning, did you ever impart any of that to me? No, you took care not to. All your science and know-how you keep for yourself alone, shut up in big books like those.

Aimé Césaire, *Une Tempête*: D'après "La Tempête" de Shakespeare  
Adaptation pour un Théâtre Nègre

Na visão "bancária" da educação, o "saber" é uma doação dos que se julgam sábios aos que julgam nada saber. Doação que se funda numa das manifestações instrumentais da ideologia da opressão – a absolutização da ignorância, que constitui o que chamamos de alienação da ignorância, segundo a qual esta se encontra sempre no outro. . . .

O educador se põe frente aos educandos como sua antinomia necessária. Reconhece na absolutização da ignorância daqueles a razão de sua existência. Os educandos, alienados, por sua vez, à maneira do escravo na dialética hegeliana, reconhecem em sua ignorância a razão da existência do educador, mas não chegam, nem sequer ao modo do escravo naquela dialética, a descobrir-se educadores do educador.

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogia do Oprimido*

Throughout this study, I have tried to foreground a Brazilian resonance and a pedagogical emphasis in Augusto Boal's *A Tempestade*. I have attempted to carry out a theoretical and historical contextualization of *A Tempestade* as a postcolonial work of appropriation. In the end, as I have just said, I believe *A Tempestade* raises questions which produce transgressive knowledge. And what is that knowledge?

To answer that question, I would like, first of all, to return to Bennett's statement, cited in chapter 2, that transgressive knowledge is produced by dislocating and contradicting the authority of tradition. One way of defining tradition, within the work of Boal, is to equate it with the Freire's "banking"

concept of education. This is the type of education which Próspero believes in; he considers Caliban's ignorance absolute, and his own wisdom infinite. Boal's *A Tempestade* challenges the "banking" concept of education as tradition when Caliban questions Próspero, but also when Caliban fails to go through with his plan to seize the power from Próspero. As I said previously, it might be that the only concept of education Caliban knows is Próspero's, and although he suspects there is a different way, he tries to make change by using methods which are very similar to those used by Próspero. That tradition obviously does not work in favor of the oppressed. Thus, in the end, Caliban becomes a consenting powerless in the sense that he believes no change can be achieved. Here again *A Tempestade* challenges tradition: such an ending seems paradoxically unresolved, and we, readers, feel that we have to find an explanation for why this particular play would have this particular ending. If we deny this ending as a solution, then we start a process of inquiry which contradicts tradition in the form of the "banking" concept of education; we produce transgressive knowledge, and might even become "spect-actors."

Therefore, I believe that as a work of appropriation, *A Tempestade* is neither a "nostalgic" play in Susan Bennett's terms, nor does it present evidence of a process of cultural decline. By making us think about ourselves as oppressed and oppressors, and by making us think about why we should at all try to produce literature in the same way as William Shakespeare did, *A Tempestade* avoids being reductionistic, both in relation to the themes it proposes and in relation to its master-narrative.

Within this context, I believe it is important to stress, as I did in previous chapters, that the source materials being analyzed here are **written texts**, although they were written to be staged. Despite the fact that I have made a few considerations regarding the possible staging of *A Tempestade*, this is not a performance-oriented study, and my conclusions were drawn solely on the basis of the written text. In the case of the Theatre of the Oppressed (perhaps in the case of drama in general) this is a shortcoming, and maybe future works should be concerned with reading, producing and commenting on their own staged reading. I believe this would be feasible and my guess is that it could yield a number of interesting insights.

Moreover, there are many additional topics which could have been discussed in relation to *The Tempest* and which have not been touched upon in this thesis. For example, *The Tempest* raises extremely complex issues of power which I did not deal with.<sup>18</sup> I suggested one such issue in Chapter 1, by pointing towards Prospero's ambiguous relationship with his books as a source of power. I believe that could be an interesting topic for further discussion, especially in the light of the notion proposed herein, that knowledge is power. What is Prospero telling us when he gives up his books in order to have his dukedom back?

Miranda's status is another interesting topic, as others have already suggested. No doubt, Miranda was educated from a "banking" perspective (a perspective in which she is also a merchandise) by her father, and she

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<sup>18</sup> See Sebastião Lopes' thesis, listed in the bibliography, for a discussion of language and power in *The Tempest*.

tries to reproduce this model when teaching Caliban. Miranda is quite complex in her inertia. As I read the play I wondered if we, Latin Americans, are not, too often, more like Miranda than like Caliban; like Miranda, we are not quite sure of who we are (Miranda's father tells her, in the beginning of the play, that she is not who she thought she was, and she finds out that she didn't know her father at all). Miranda tries to be good to the native on the island and ends up doing harm. She has always lived on the "new world," and, although she is "civilized" in European terms, she is mesmerized by her first glimpse at Europe which, in an inversion, she calls "brave new world." Therefore, Miranda is food for thought from several perspectives.

In general, as others have also suggested, the women in *The Tempest* are an interesting topic. Besides Miranda, there are the "absent" women: Claribel, Sycorax, Miranda's mother, Miranda's caretakers, and even Miranda's grandmother, of whom she says: "I should sin / To think but nobly of my grandmother. / Good wombs have borne bad sons" (TT I.ii 117-119). Doesn't it seem quite remarkable that, upon hearing that her father's brother has wronged them, such should be Miranda's first reaction?

In this thesis I hope I have been able to offer my own reading of *A Tempestade*. As I said in the introduction, my reading has inevitably stemmed from the context where I stand, and it does not exclude other readings which are made from different perspectives. Also, I hope to have

raised more questions than answers, and I hope I have raised some questions that point in the direction of topics I was not able to argue.

I believe this work is important in the sense that it foregrounds matters that are of great relevance (both academically and for the world that surrounds academia) to the literatures of the oppressed in relation to themselves and to other literatures. The exercise developed during the process of producing this thesis was no doubt one of placing Shakespeare insistently alongside other texts, to repeat the words of Loomba quoted in chapter 1. What made this exercise eloquent are the texts alongside which Shakespeare was placed, most of all, the theories of the oppressed.

The theories of the oppressed offer consistent theoretical principles which can be used for the analysis of literary works. Although, as Babbage points out, "since its publication, *Theatre of the Oppressed* has had a major impact on theatrical theory and practice outside its original Brazilian context" (5), both the *Theatre of the Oppressed* and the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* are especially meaningful for the oppressed. Such theories are libertarian in the sense that they allow us to develop readings which create knowledge instead of merely taking revenge. Looking at the first world from the perspective of the third world does not necessarily mean denying the worth of canonical first world literary works; however, it does not mean institutionalizing those works either. The theories of the oppressed offer analytical concepts which allow us to look at ourselves without the embarrassment with which sometimes we are looked upon, while at the



same time it allows us to undress canonical works of art from their institutional robes.

Third-world intellectuals should not accept either the role of victims or the denial of their own agency, and they should always keep in mind that “the social vision which impels us to negate the present order and demonstrate that history has not ended comes primarily from the suffering and the struggle of the people of the Third World” (Shaul 14). This is the limit situation which we have to overcome, and I hope the present work has made a contribution in helping us to pronounce our world. Long live the Kaluli! Colonial encounters have produced complex and unresolved relationships between the colonizer and the colonized. If the colonized have been deeply affected by such encounters, the colonizer could not expect to come out untouched. Encounters between cultures, no matter how asymmetric, are bound to be two-way roads. There will always be moments in which “the supposed *binary* division of civil and other into virtue/vice, positive/negative, etc., [is] shown to be erodable as the forces of the subordinate term of the opposition [seep] back into the privileged term” (Brown 57). Such are moments of appropriation; moments in which we celebrate Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* gone native.

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## APPENDIX

*Dramatis personae*

The Tempest	A Tempestade
Alonso, King of Naples	Rei Alonso: (ao capitão) <i>E eu? Sabes quem é a minha real pessoa? Antônio: É nada menos do que o próprio Rei em pessoa!</i>
Sebastian, his brother	Sebastião: (ao capitão) <i>Sabem quem sou... ainda que não o pareça? Antônio: É o irmão do Rei!</i>
Prospero, the right Duke of Milan	Próspero: (A Miranda) <i>E tu nem sequer sabes quem sou! Próspero, o dono desta ilha, quem é? Quem sou? (...) Escuta. Teu pai, minha filha, era o Duque de Milão, próspera cidade da Itália! Príncipe de grande poder e "pedigree"!</i>
Antonio, his brother, the usurping Duke of Milan	Antônio: (ao capitão) <i>Senhor: somos fidalgos!</i>
Ferdinand, son to the King of Naples	Fernando: (ao capitão) <i>Sou o filho do Rei!</i>
Gonzalo, an honest old councilor	Gonçalo
Adrian and Francisco, lords	Nobres
Caliban, a salvage and deformed slave	Caliban (Próspero a Miranda) <i>Ele nos presta serviços, traz a lenha e faz outros trabalhos pesados.</i>
Trinculo, a jester	Trínculo: (Caliban a Trínculo) <i>Tu és um vendido que te entregas de corpo e alma pra defender o invasor.</i>
Stephano, a drunken butler	Estevão (e um amigo)
Master of a ship	Capitão
Boatswain	
Mariners	Marinheiros
Miranda, daughter to Prospero	Miranda
Ariel, an airy spirit	Ariel (Próspero speaking): <i>Como você é diferente de Caliban, o filho da bruxa, o monstro, selvagem, indigna criatura, macaco, escorpião!</i>
Iris, Ceres, Juno, Nymphs, Reapers, all spirits	Índios e pretos de papel crepom, José Carioca, Carmen Miranda, Latin Lover, Mexicano Dorminhoco, etc..
Other spirits attending Prospero	Cães de Próspero
	Sicorax: <i>A negra Sicorax obrigava-te a trabalhar no campo, arar a terra, semear a cana nos canaviais,... a ti, um homem tão delicado, tão sensível. . . . Moer o açúcar, construir a tua própria casa, estudar todas as noites . . . essas as terríveis torturas que sofrias. Ela fazia-te trabalhar para comer: imperdoável!</i>

## **Acts and Scenes**

### **The Tempest Act I**

Scene i: A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning heard. Enter a Ship-Master and a Boatswain.

Scene ii: Enter Prospero and Miranda.

### **Act II**

Scene i: Enter Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian, Francisco and others.

Scene II: Enter Caliban with a burthen of wood. A noise of thunder heard.

### **Act III**

Scene i: Enter Ferdinand bearing a log.

Scene ii: Enter Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo.

Scene iii: Enter Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian, Francisco, etc..

### **Act IV**

Scene i: Enter Prospero, Ferdinand and Miranda.

### **Act V**

Scene i: Enter Prospero in his magic robes, and Ariel.

### **Epilogue**

### **A Tempestade Act I**

Scene i: Os atores mimam a tormenta. Em um navio.

Tempestade. Música.

Scene ii: Casa de Próspero, numa ilha desolada.

Scene iii: Floresta. Está toda a Corte reunida debaixo de uma árvore. Entram cansados e jogam-se no chão.

### **Act II**

Scene iv: Casa de Próspero. Está Fernando sozinho vestido de criada, fazendo os trabalhos da casa.

Scene v: Perto da casa de Próspero, entram Caliban e Estevão.

Scene vi: Floresta. A Corte vem caminhando. Caem no chão.

Scene vii: Casa de Próspero.