José Manuel González[*]

Remote Islands as Fictional and Metaphorical Places in Cervantes, Fletcher and Shakespeare

Abstract: Islands have always occupied a significant place in literature and have been a source of inspiration for the literary imagination. Fictional islands have existed as either lost paradises, or places where law breaks down under physical hardships and a sense of entrapment and oppression. Islands can be sites of exotic fascination, of cultural exchange and of great social and political upheaval. However, they are more than mere locations since to be in a place implies being bound to that place and appropriating it. That means that the islands narrow boundaries, surrounded by the sea and cut off from mainland, can create bridges between the real and the imaginary as a response to cultural and social anxieties, frequently taking the form of eutopias/dystopias, Edens, Arcadias, Baratarias, metatexts, or cultural crossroads, deeply transforming that particular geographical location. This article is concerned with insularity as a way of interrogating cultural and political practices in the early modern period by looking at the works of Cervantes, Fletcher and Shakespeare where insular relations are characterized by tensions of different sort. The arrival of Prospero and Miranda, Periandro and Auristela (*The Trials of Persiles and Segismunda*), and Albert and Aminta (*The Sea Voyage*) to their respective islands take us to a different world, revealing different political and cultural interests and generating multiple perspectives on the shifting relationship between culture, society and power.

Keywords: islands, sea, travels, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Fletcher, barbarism, gender, culture, metaphorical, exotic.

> But all the islands have that legendary oarsman
> Slapping down dominoes on a rumshop table,
> Then raking the slabs in with a gravedigger's breath.
> Derek Walcott, *Omeros*, LVII.ii

Islands are everywhere. They were places for merchants, travelers and adventurers that take us back to early modern England where the theatre was seen as a metaphorical location. Tom Brown in *Amusements Serious and*

---

[*] University of Alicante.

Comical (1700), compares it with an island, claiming "The Play-House is an Inchanted Island, where nothing appears in Reality what it is, nor what it should be" (12). His comment refers to *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, one of the most successful theatrical productions in the last decades of the seventeenth century, as drama was one of the key means by which early modern English society strove to make sense of space.

Islands have always occupied a significant place in literature and have been a source of inspiration for the literary imagination. They have become fictions whose natural boundaries have helped shape and contain narratives. Fictional islands have existed as either lost paradises, or places where law breaks down and conventional morality gets tested due to physical hardships and/or a sense of oppression. Islands can be sites of either exotic fascination, or great social and political upheaval. But in both cases, they are more than mere locations since being in a place implies being bound to that place and appropriating it. We should not regard islands simply as geographical features. We should think of them as "a construction and a way of seeing the world" for "landscape is not merely an aesthetic product or the object of scientific inquiry. Instead, a landscape is a materialization of the external world, a way by which topography is brought into discourse and into knowledge (Denis Cosgrove qtd. in Sullivan 2).

We should consider islands not only as literary settings, but also as narratives about people's lives. Barbara Bender reminds us that islands as landscapes "are created by people through their experience and engagement with the world around them (Bender 1-2). The landscape of islands shapes the manner in which people conceptualize and give meaning to their world and location. That means that the islands' narrow boundaries, surrounded by the sea and cut off from the mainland, can create bridges between the real and the imaginary as a response to cultural and social anxieties, frequently taking the form of utopias/dystopias, Edens, Arcadias, and Baratarias, deeply transforming that particular geographical location and leading to multiple and profound transformations in early modern narratives. It goes without saying that islands as places "aren't inert physical shells, but localities of experience or of being where interaction not only *takes place* but also *makes place*" (Hutchinson 84) under a particular social, cultural and economic system subject to a network of power, authority and duty.

In the medieval period, the island was simply a setting, a site for the articulation of stories. In the fourteenth century, *Sir John Mandeville's Travels* represented the peoples and societies of Asia in terms of islands: islands where the natives have faces on the front and back of their heads or gems in their eyes; islands with pygmies where the sick are hung from trees to be eaten by birds; and islands as the earthly paradise. Thomas More's *Utopia* is not only "a revolutionary book" as "it challenges major tenets of western thought, above

all in the economic, social, political and religious organization" (Cro 238), but also the text that establishes insularity as an early modern location: it introduces a way of thinking that is properly called utopian, and opens its consideration as of a more complex phenomenon. It explores how the imagined geography of the island form is linked to the possibility of social change and suggests that utopia is a dream that comes out from our fallen state just as islands have their origins in ruptured continents. Utopia's transformation from land to island expresses the social desire for self-containment, autonomy, and unchangeable stability.

It is in the literature of the early modern period that a major shift in the use of insular geographies occurred with profound consequences: "There was a kind of synthesis or co-existence between the real and the imaginary, truth and fantasy, literal reality and metaphor [...] considerable tension remained between the constraints of exactitude or realism and men's appetite for marvels" (Marientras 161). The shift is conveyed in Renaissance narratives through a process of metaphorization and relocation of marvelous contents that reveal the configuration of a new way of writing and creating new fictional worlds.

As islands are susceptible to articulate metaphoric perspectives on the shifting relationship between culture, society and power, I shall be dealing with islands as metaphorical places that attach themselves to people and possess them as well as with insularity as a way of questioning cultural and political practices in the early modern period. To this end, I shall examine the works of Cervantes, Fletcher and Shakespeare, where insular relations are invariably tense, ambiguous and contradictory, revealing different political and cultural interests and generating multiple meanings and metaphors in the relationship between past and present, civilization and barbarism, and fiction and reality.

Their narratives also show a transnational concern decentering particular views that join people and places in a complex geographical network and create problematic representations of the new imaginary locations in contrast to the real geographies from which their different narratives depart. They unfold "in a heterogeneous world containing a series of different fictional realms, which sometimes butt up against one another in outright contradiction, and sometimes interpenetrate" (Childers 127). These realms present various images of political and social exchange, with particular attention paid to the struggle for political power, the regulation of social behaviour, and the confrontation of cross-cultural values, showing the conflicts that result from them and suggesting new ways to resolve them. Cultural identity, intercultural dialogue, and social change become major topics in their fictional accounts, including moments of instability and confusion which are often initiated by a transgression of social norms in relation to political power, gender role and sexual conduct. That transnational dimension, which is the result of different transactions and exchanges, leads, in the end, to a transformation of that particular society as seen in the works of Cervantes, Shakespeare, and specifically Fletcher, who "is above all a European dramatist

[…] With a compendious habit that drew him repeatedly to Spanish literature and to Cervantes in particular." (McManus 16-17)

References to islands throughout *Don Quixote* are numerous: there are in fact 118 cases of the word *insula* in the text, and the plural *insulas* occurs an additional twenty-eight times. Though there are few allusions to specific, named islands, *paninsularity* becomes central in *Persiles and Segismunda*. As Jonathan Bate points out, Shakespeare was also "interested in islands because they constitute a special enclosed space within a larger environment of geopolitics, perhaps a little like the enclosed space of the theatre within the larger environment of the city" (Bate 290). It is John Gaunt in *Richard II* who reminds us of the metaphorical and physical geographies of the British Isles: "[…] this sceptred isle, / This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars/ This other Eden, demi-paradise, The fortress built by Nature for herself/ Against infection and the hand of war, / This happy breed of men, this little world…"(2.1.40-45). Much influenced by Cervantes (Samson 223) and Shakespeare, John Fletcher sets the dramatic action of *The Island Princess*, of *A Sea Voyage* and of *The Custom of the Country* on islands.

Like other timeless spaces, islands appear and fade away. They are places that are naturally bounded, self-contained and removed from the real world. In Cervantes, fictional islands take us to a faraway isolated dimension as narrated in *Persiles and Segismunda* whose plot tells us how they have to leave their respective lands and embark on a journey, pretending they are brother and sister. They travel from the Northern regions of Europe under the false names of Periandro and Auristela. Through various adventures that include cross-dressing and mistaken sexual identities, they manage to escape. The narratives of the islands they visit, unlike the static descriptions one finds in the representations of other locations, show how they are disturbed from either inside or outside, which we can appreciate from their many accounts of the sea-storms and shipwrecks they experience. These may be seen as an anticipation of the trouble and mysteries they will encounter on the islands, where the sea symbolizes the anarchic and inhuman power of the elements and the dangers it represents for seafarers that are "subject to the sea´s inconstancy and the mutable pleasure of the winds" (3/1); such primitive power produces the conditions for lawlessness, barbarism, piracy, mutiny and confrontation and provides access to other worlds where the uncanny, the strange and the marvelous prevail.

It is just at the opening of Book II that a severe sea-storm breaks:

> . . . that the wind altering, and thick clouds arising therewith, dark night came upon them and lightning foregoing thunder, as messengers of their coming, began to trouble the mariners and dazzle the sight of all those in the ship. The tempest increased with so great fury that no art or diligence of the mariners could prevent it. Yet all of them did their best, each one in executing his charge,

> though not to avoid death, yet at least to prolong his life; for the most hardy
> lengthened the same as much as they could, even to put their hope in a raft
> which the storm had broken from the ship, which they took fast hold of, and yet
> thought this hard embracing for a great good comfort […] In this resemblance
> and likeness of hell they exempted themselves from beholding, at times that
> heaven might be touched with the hand when the ship rose above the clouds,
> and at other times to dash with the mast upon the sand of the deep sea. They
> shut their eyes waiting for death or, to speak more aptly, they feared, without
> seeing it; for the shape of death in what fashion so ever it come is terrible, and
> that which surpriseth us in health is yet more to be feared. (3/1)

This is precisely the panic, horror and confusion that we witness at the onset of
The Tempest that also begins with a violent storm with Alonso, King of Naples,
caught on board and the crew horrified and confused at that spectacle of nature.
It is what Transila, Ladislao, Auristela and Periandro also experience at sea as
"All was in confusion, in cries, in sighs, in prayers. The captain was in a trance,
the mariners gave all over, all strength of man yielded, and silence possessed the
voices of all these wretched people that lamented" (2/1).

The illusory and magical tempest dreamt by Periandro and created by
Prospero's art represents political confrontation and social corruption, though for
different reasons. It also symbolizes the dark side of human nature with its
unbridled passions and instincts beyond control, producing tension, revealing the
vulnerability of the characters and anticipating what is to come. But once
the storm fades away we discover a magical and mysterious location. Like
Prospero's, Periandro's island is an exotic place made for the pleasure of the five
senses:

> the eyes with their beauty, the ears with the sweet noise of springs and rivers
> intermeddled with infinite notes of birds leaping from tree to tree, and from
> bough to bough, seeming to have their freedom enthralled in this narrow room,
> without any desire to recover it: our smell, by the sweet scent of herbs, flowers
> and fruits: the taste, by trial we made of their pleasantness: and our touching by
> handling them, for we imagined them pearls of Sur, and diamonds of India.
> (2/15)

Periandro goes on to describe how a ship-like carriage drawn by lascivious apes
and ridden by a beautiful woman carrying a banner with the word "sensuality"
and followed by female musicians who had come to meet him. In this way, The
Dream island and Prospero's island, full of noises and music, become exotic and
sensual locations arising from their fantasies and anxieties.

Fletcher's *The Island Princess* borrows material from Cervantine sources
and Spanish culture. In this case, Fletcher's main source is Bartolomé Leonardo
de Argensola's account of the Spanish conquests in Indonesia and Maluku,

La Conquista de las Islas Molucas (1609). He focuses his narrative on the affair between Rui Dias, a Portuguese captain on Tidore between 1589 and 1592, and the native princess Quisara, though she finally marries Armusia who describes the Moluccas as "the blessed islands," transforming the surrounding landscape— trees, rivers, air, soil—into a place of exceptional beauty and fecundity (1.3.16-33). In his description they are presented as ideal locations, resembling "the old Paradise" (1.3.20), whose natural "beauties" and "riches" like precious "pearls" and gems come to the earth's surface without any labour. Nature that "Strives to bring forth immortal fruit—the spices" (1.3.21) appears in all her seductiveness and richness. Armusia's description also portrays islands as female bodies that become interchangeable objects easily yielding to foreign desires as seen in Periandro's dream where a complicated network of erotic relationships appears, and love becomes a manifestation of unfulfilled desire in a world full of cruelty, lies and confusion. The arrival of Persiles and Segismunda on the Barbarous island, turns it into a mad world of jealousy, desire, and intrigue, as "All had endless desires, but accomplished nothing" (2/4). This episode shows how almost everyone is longing for the possession of an unattainable love that makes them suffer, as in the case of Policarpo, the old king, who is mad for the seventeen-year-old Auristela. But she is also desired by Periandro, Arnaldo and Clodio; while the king's daughter Sinforosa is obsessed with Periandro, and Rutilio is infatuated with the king's other daughter, Policarpa.

To make matters worse, women are also the victims of violent practices, as in the episode on Transila's island when she is forced to leave on her wedding night to avoid institutionalized rape by all her bridegroom's male relatives. She manages to escape, however, by delivering an eloquent speech to her people before departure. It is also the case of Zenocia who, in Fletcher and Massinger's *The Custom of the Country*, runs away just before her deflowering ritual. This episode is the starting point of the central action and provides the title of the play that incorporates some episodes from *Persiles and Segismunda* (Weller and Colahan 28), sharing a similar vision of life that includes desperate sea-adventures and threatening episodes on land. The settings in both works suggest again the liminality of island settings specifically in the surprising number of situations in which the characters reverse their sex roles, showing cruel customs and violent passions that horrify the protagonists in the barbaric countries. The dominant motifs of these scenes are those of animal-like behavior, violence, lust, trade in human beings, and false religion. Similar to the inhabitants of the Barbarous island, the opening scene of *The Custom of the Country* presents Count Clodio as a "Maiden-monger", a "cannibal, that feeds on the heads of Maids / Then flings their bones and bodies to the Devil". But it is precisely through the combination of feminine and masculine attributes that Transila successfully escapes when she falls into the hands of the barbarians, using her

intelligence and language skills to ensure her survival by becoming an interpreter between the barbarians and traders. In the same way, Zenocia challenges male power and abuse, using her skills as a huntress, as she is determined to die, "combining the female qualities of beauty and chastity with masculine independence and self-reliance" (Weller and Colahan 38).

In *The Island Princess*, where the English, Portuguese and Dutch were competing to establish trade monopolies at the time Fletcher was writing, he "foregrounds the representation of female characterization and examines the construct of female changeability" (McManus 46). The marriage between Quisara, the central female character, and Rui Dias, the Portuguese conquistador, neither brings peace nor relieves tension as it conceals actual forms of male violence and oppression, producing political instability and sexual trouble; she becomes the prototype of the foreign woman, whose "last subject position is that of the conventional silenced woman […] almost wholly silenced by the resolution of tragicomedy in marriage" (McManus 48). Massinger and Fletcher's *The Sea Voyage* is also concerned with gender relations and female authority, as amazons are ruled by a governess, Rosellia, whose daughter Clarinda, "Scarce rememb'ring that she had a father / She never dreames of man" (2.2.30-1) is enthralled by the handsome castaway Albert, just as Miranda is in Shakespeare's play when she encounters Ferdinand. Rosellia also warns her about breaking the amazon vows:

> Did fortune guide–
> We could appoint–our bark, to which
> We could appoint no port, to this blest place,
> That keep men in subjection? Did we then,
> By their example, after we had lost
> All we could love in man, here plant ourselves
> With execrable oaths never to look
> On man but as monster? And wilt thou
> Be the first precedent to infringe those vows
> We made to heaven?
>
> (2.2.194-204)

Both islands are also experimental places "where opposing forces are brought together in dramatic confrontation" (Bate 290). Moreover, they become "spaces of dissolution, menacing areas where civility could so easily dissolve into barbarism" (Padgen 3) as the Moluccans in *The Island Princess* are presented as "barbarians", "rascals", "devils", "villains" "hounds" (5.1.24, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36) as if they had animal ancestry. In *The Sea Voyage* the unexpected presence of men on an island full of women represents a real threat of erotic and ritual cannibalism that puts women's safety in danger:

Master. They would have ravished her upon my life
          Speak, how was it, lady?
Aminta. Forgive 'em 'twas their hungers.
Tibalt.   Ha, their hungers!
Master. They would have eaten her.
Tibalt.   O damned villains!
          Speak, it is true?
Surgeon.   I confess an appetite!
                    (3.3.146-150)

This monstrous behavior is similar to what the seafaring group in *Persiles and Segismunda* finds when it arrives on the Barbarous island where social relations are characterised by anarchy, male force, slavery and cannibalism. This is how Taurisa, Auristela's handmaid, describes the Barbarians, as a savage and cruel people whose new king is appointed in this way according to the prophecy:

> through the persuasion of the devil, or some old sorcerer, do believe that a king shall issue from amongst them who shall conquer the greatest part of the world. They be ignorant who the king shall be which they expect; but more assuredly to know it, this sorcerer hath appointed them to sacrifice all the men that shall arrive in their isle, whose hearts they must reduce into powder, giving the same to drink to their chiefest personages, with this charge: that he who shall swallow it down without altering his countenance, or showing any token of the least fear shall be chosen king; although it be not he that shall conquer the world, but a son of his. (1/2)

This dehumanizing prophecy states that he who is able to eat the powdered heart of a foreign male victim must mate with the most beautiful woman captive. The offspring of this union will become the new king who will lead them to the conquest of the world, making a clear distinction between native and foreign and male and female. While foreign males are nothing but sacrificial victims, the foreign females are only valued by their beauty in a society whose distinguishing features are beauty, bravery, and foreignness. This savage description clearly shows the negation of basic human values, as the king is elected on the basis of natural instincts beyond social control and regulation.

The island is not a fit place to live, since no stable sociopolitical system or set laws exist, generating moments of crisis such as when Arnaldo brings the cross-dressed Periandro, with his face covered by a veil and dressed as a woman, to be sold to the Barbarians, making Brademiro believe that "like the rest that he was a woman, cast in his mind to choose her for his own, without staying till the conditions of the prophecy were tried or accomplished." (1/4), falling in love with her and producing hostility among the other men, as Cervantes details:

whereupon the arrows began to fly on either part, which in the end were all spent, but not their hands and poniards, wherewith they stoutly rushed one against another in such sort that the son had no respect of his father, nor the brother his brother, but as though they had ever been mortal enemies for wrongs that were past amends they rent with their nails and killed each other with stabs of poniards, there being none who could endeavour to set them at peace. Amongst the arrows, wounds, and dead men, the old Cloelia, the damsel interpreter, Periander and Auristela were close together in very much fear and confusion. But in the heat of this fury, certain barbarians who should have been partakers with Bradamire departed from the fight, going to set on fire a forest belonging to the Governor. The trees began to burn, the wind favoured their anger, and it seemed that all of them could not choose but be either blinded with smoke or burnt with flame. The obscurity of the night, the sighs of such as lay a-dying, the clamours of them that threatened, nor the noise of the fire, could not any whit terrify the hearts of these barbarians, because they were wholly set upon wrath and vengeance. (1/4)

The result would not be other than complete destruction and devastation, demonstrating the inadequacy and transitory nature of a society based on the categories of bravery and beauty transgressed by Periandro's crossdressing. The natural cruelty and savagery of the inhabitants has generated delusions of power and diabolic sorcery that, in turn, has produced widespread piracy and commerce in the entire region. The Barbarous island illuminates, therefore, some aspects of the dark side of civilization as in the case of Caliban in *The Tempest* where sorcery, monstrosity and primitivism are also key features of Prospero's island. Under those circumstances language breaks down. Communication is no longer possible between the natives and the invaders, though Riecla, the prototype of the natural woman, shows an interest in learning the language of Antonio, who teaches her just as Miranda does with Caliban.

Yet islands in Cervantes, Fletcher and Shakespeare are also auspiciously represented as imaginary sites where individuals encounter unusual situations and are confronted with supernatural events in amazement and wonder that cannot be related in the same way as the places they have left, bringing about a certain utopian nostalgia as a consequence of the crisis of the historical context from which it emerges. In this respect, Carlo Ginsburg argues that "Only in periods of acute social change does an image emerge, generally a mythical one, of a different and better past, a model of perfection in the light of which the present appears to be a deterioration, a degeneration [...] The struggle to transform the social order then becomes a conscious attempt to return to this mythical past" (in Jehenson and Dunn 131).

The island of the hermits and Soldino's sanctuary, where Periandro and Auristela arrive before they return to the mainland, is a completely different world, a peaceful and heavenly island, very different from the Barabaric island in many respects:

> Shortly after, the venerable hermits called their guests and, spreading herbs in the hermitage, they made a carpet on the ground: peradventure, no less pleasing than such as are spread in kings' palaces. Immediately they brought forth green and dry fruits, and bread which was not so tender but it much resembled biscuit, crowning the table with vessels made of cork, full of fresh water. The ornament, the fruits, the pure and clear waters which, in despite of the colour of the cork showed their clearness, and above all, necessity, obliged, or rather constrained them to seat themselves round about the table. (2/18)

The travelers really feel that they are in a radically liminal location, a realm between heaven and earth. Soldino's sanctuary is purposely located on the island of the hermits, providing him with a far more rewarding personal experience beyond the pressures of power, riches and trade. It is a utopian space as he observes: "Here, fleeing from war, I found peace. The hunger I felt in that world up there, if you can call it that, found satisfaction here. Instead of the princes and monarchs who rule the in the world and whom I served, I've found these silent trees […] Here I have no lady rejecting me, no servant serving me badly. Here I'm lord of myself" (2/20), reminding us of Gonzalo's speech in *The Tempest*, when he praises Prospero's island as a utopian paradise.

The insula of Barataria also appears to be the true goal of Sancho's high aspiration, whose utopian dimension "begins with Don Quixote's offering his advice to him" in view of his "imminent nomination as governor" (Cro 235). Prospero's island in *The Tempest* is also a fanciful location made out of his art resembling a real island in many respects. However, Sancho's Barataria in the second part of *Don Quixote* is just an imaginary site as it is not surrounded by the sea and Sancho, the new governor, arrives there without crossing any water. The existence and location of the fictional island in the near vicinity have been devised by the duke and his household. They transform an ordinary place into an *ínsula*, which is really insular in a figurative sense where he the duke, like Prospero, enacts the show and controls the events. They give Sancho what he has been looking for: an insula whose promise, made by Don Quixote, coincides with his birth as a character and leads him to leave his home, wife, and children (1/7.61). His dream has come true and has materialized unexpectedly in the form of a republic with a carnivalesque dimension.

The *ínsula* provides him with the opportunity to be a good and righteous governor, and for this purpose Don Quixote has taught him the political strategies to follow for the welfare of his people. It is interesting to notice how this incident reflects the anxieties and expectations of "the same collective unconscious […] the fabulous islands discovered by Columbus, the Spanish conquistadores, and the English explorers and conquerors in different parts of the world" (Cro 236). As governor, Sancho appropriates the world that transforms him. Although Sancho tries to respect the existing social order and puts everyone to work, the term Barataria has other negative connotations as it

may refer to deception, dissipation, dilapidation, or fraud, as a word used among sea merchants. The name of Sancho's fictitious insula Barataria was defined by Sebastian de Covarrubias in 1611 as "bribing a judge with an especially low price (*baratería*) […], a place defined by a combination of corrupt government and mercantile practices" (Johnson 11).

Cervantes utopian ideas on power, framed by popular wisdom, and regulated by linguistic practices, re-appear in this metaphorical space in the midst of a rural landscape, where Sancho proves to be a good administrator and a rightful judge, though he is ultimately defeated as a soldier in the episode of the false threat of rebellion that makes him resign as governor, refusing to fight for his citizens during the invasion as it should be left to Don Quixote:

> "To arms, to arms, lord Governor, to arms! Hordes of enemies have invaded the island, and we're lost if your skill and courage don't come to our rescue."
> Amidst all this noise, this frenzy, this pandemonium, they charged up to where Sancho stood stupefied and fascinated by what he was seeing and hearing, and one of them said:
> "Arm yourself at once, Your Lordship, unless you want to be destroyed and the whole island with you!"
> "What do you mean arm myself?" said Sancho. "What do I know about arms or rescues? It'll be better to leave all this to my master Don Quixote, he'll see to it good and proper in a brace of shakes […]"
> "Oh, my lord Governor!" said another. "This is no joking matter! Arm yourself, we've brought arms offensive and defensive, and come out into the main square and be our guide and our captain, because that's your place by right, as our Governor." (2/53.846)

Thus Cervantes invites us to reflect on the transitory nature of power which is also a major concern in The *Island Princess* which has often been read as Fletcher's anticolonial manifesto. This theme is particularly evident in Act 4, scene 1, where the disguised governor warns about the danger and perils of the Portuguese occupation:

> Beware these Portugals—I say, beware 'em—
> These smooth-faced strangers: have an eye upon 'em.
> The cause is now the gods'. Hear and believe, King […]
> These men came hither, as my vision tells me,
> Poor, weather-beaten, almost lost, starved, feebled;
> Their vessels, like themselves, most miserable;
> Made a long suit for traffic and for comfort,
> To vend their children's toys, cure their diseases.
> They had their suit, they landed, and to th' rate
> Grew rich and powerful, sucked the fat and freedom
> Of this most blessed isle, taught her to tremble.
>   (4.1.32-4, 44-51)

Though this speech may appear as a counterpart to Caliban's complaint against Prospero's usurpation of the island he calls "mine by Sycorax, my mother" (1.2.331), the exotic noises of Shakespeare's island spirits are transformed by Fletcher into a banal world of trade and commerce.

In Cervantes, Fletcher and Shakespeare, islands become the sites where the utopian dreams and mercantile transactions between the new and old worlds meet, materializing different forms of resistance, as well as the clash of two different economic systems, a reactivated feudalism and an incipient capitalism. The islands also symbolize possible forms of resistance. Not only do they appear as plural and contradictory spaces, but such oppositions are not to be understood as something fixed, but as the actualization of cultural tensions and material practices. They also show how the virtual spaces of islands are susceptible to translatability and articulate perspectives on the shifting relationship between self and other, center and periphery, serving as sites of mediation between cultures.

WORKS CITED

Ardila, J.A.G., ed. *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*. London: Legenda, 2009.

Bate, Jonathan. "Shakespeare's Islands". *Shakespeare and the Mediterranean.* Ed. Tom Clayton, Susan Brock and Vicente Forés. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2004. 289-307.

Bender, Barbara, "Introduction: Landscape-Meaning and Action." *Landscape: Politics and Perpectives*, Ed. Barbara Bender, Providence and Oxford: Berg, 1993.

Brown, Tom. "Amusement Five: The Play-House." *Amusements Serious and Comical*. 1700. http://public-library.uk/ebooks/08/71.pdf. 19 June 2016.

Cervantes, Miguel de. *Don Quixote*. Translation by John Rutherford. New York: Penguin, 2003.

Cervantes, Miguel de. *The Travels of Persiles and Segismunda: A Northern Story*. Trans. T.L. Darby and B.W. Ife. Electronic text. http://www.ems.kcl.ac.uk/content/etext/e006.html. 12 May 2016.

Childers, William. *Transnational Cervantes*. University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Colahan, Clark. "Quixotic Idealism Triumphant: *Persiles and Segismunda* in Britain". *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*. Ed. J.A.G. Ardila. London: Legenda, 2009. 243-248.

Cro, Stelio. "The Utopian in Cervantes and Shakespeare". *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*. Ed. J.A.G. Ardila. London: Legenda, 2009. 234-241.

Fletcher, John and Philip Massinger. "A Sea-Voyage". *Three Renaissance Travel Plays*. Ed. Anthony Parr. Manchester University Press, 1999. 135-216.

Fletcher, John and Philip, Massinger. *The Custom of the Country*. Ed. Arnold Glover. New York: Octagon Books, 1969.

Fletcher, John. *The Island Princess*. Ed. Clare McManus. Arden Early Modern Drama. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Fuchs, Barbara. *The Poetics of Piracy. Emulating Spain in English Literature*. Pennsylvania University Press, 2013.

Hutchinson, Stephen. *Cervantine Journeys*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

Jehenson, Myriam Yvonne and Peter N. Dunn. "Discursive Hybridity: Don Quixote's and Sancho Panza's Utopias". *Miguel de Cervantes's Don Quixote*. Bloom Modern Critical Interpretations. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House, 2010. 127-144.

Johnson, Carroll B. *Cervantes and the Material World*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Mandeville, John. *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*. Translated by C.W.R.D. Moseley. London: Penguin, 2005.

Marientras, Richard. *New Perspectives on the Shakespearean World*. Cambridge University Press, 1985.

McMullan, Gordon. *The Politics of Tragicomedy: Shakespeare and After*. London: Routledge, 1992.

---. *The Politics of Unease in the Plays of John Fletcher*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.

More, Thomas. *Utopia*, Trans. Robert M. Adams, New York: W.W. Norton, 1975.

Padgen, Anthony. *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1993.

Pinet, Simone. *Archipelagos. Insular Fictions from Chivalric Romance to the Novel*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2011.

Saffar, Ruth El. "Persiles´ Retort: An Alchemical Angle on the Lovers". *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 10.1 (1990): 17-34.

Samson, Alexander. "Last thought upon a Windmill: Cervantes and Fletcher." *The Cervantean Heritage: Reception and Influence of Cervantes in Britain*. Ed. J.A.G. Ardila. London: Legenda, 2009. 223-233.

Shakespeare, William. *Richard II. The Norton Shakespeare*. Gen. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. New York: W.W. Norton, 2016. 885-956.

---. *The Tempest*. Ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman. A Norton Critical Edition. New York: W.W. Norton, 2004.

Sullivan, Garrett A. Jr., *The Drama of Lanscape*, Stanford University Press, 1998.

Walcott, Derek. *Omeros*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1992.

Weller, Celia, E. and Clark A. Colahan, "Cervantine Imagery and Sex-Role Reversal in Fletcher and Massinger's *The Custom of the Country*". *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*, 5.1 (1985), 27-43.