

Christina Sandhaug

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal: *The Tempest* in *Brave New World* and *Galatea 2.2*

Introduction

Intertextually speaking, Shakespeare's works are highly present in western literature. Harold Bloom places him at the centre of the western canon and claims that he transcends everything.¹ Even when our focus is "the meaning of monsters" and the literature in question concerns what we call modern science, the imprints of Shakespearean presence stand out like beacons.

Richard Powers' *Galatea 2.2*² and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*³ contain direct references and subtle allusions to Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. My primary aim in the writing of this paper will be to subject the two novels to a comparative analysis, guided by the intertextual presence of *The Tempest*. I will show how the double dialogue created by the phenomenon of intertextuality affects this "play from the past" as well as the two younger novels. Prior to the analysis, however, I will grant some space to a preliminary note on the phenomenon of intertextuality and its dialogical implications, thereby stating the premises for the following discussion.

Intertextuality and dialogism

The term "intertext" was coined by Julia Kristeva and defined as "the transposition of one or more systems of signs into

¹ Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and Schools of the Ages* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994), p. 46.

² Richard Powers, *Galatea 2.2* (London: Abacus, 1995), references in the text.

³ Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (1932), Robert Southwick, ed. (London: Longman, 1991), references in the text.

another".¹ The word transposition involves some kind of "relocation" or "transfer". In my opinion the concept involves an author's borrowing of words and phrases, systems of signs if you will, from another text for the purpose of internalising those sign systems into a new context, namely his own text. Still I cannot help but feel that in our two novels, *The Tempest's* presence is more than a matter of mere linguistic kinship. In both *Galatea 2.2* and *Brave New World* there are direct references and subtle allusions to Shakespeare's play which I feel must reside in the realm of ideas and values as well as the obvious textual one.

As discussed by Worton and Still, "a text... cannot exist as a hermetic or self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system."² They go on to explain how a text is dependent upon a well-read writer who produces a text which is necessarily "shot through with references, quotations and influences of every kind."³ T. S. Eliot expressed the same ideas seventy years earlier, when he discussed how "the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with the feeling that the whole of the Literature of Europe and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has simultaneous existence and composes simultaneous order."⁴

The reader is the second factor determining the value of a text. The text is cross-fertilised "by all the texts which the reader brings to it."⁵ Thus, intertextuality involves allusions intended by the author, but which may go unnoticed due to the reader's ignorance, and allusions brought to the work by the

¹ Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Literature: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, Leon S Roudiez ed., translated by Thomas Gora et al (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 15.

² Michael Worton and Judith Still eds., *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 1.

³ Op.cit.

⁴ T. S. Eliot, *Tradition and the Individual Talent* (1919), in Baym et al, *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, fourth edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994) p. 1266.

⁵ Worton and Still, pp. 1-2.

reader, which may or may not have been intended by the writer. As I see it, this phenomenon is intimately related to, if not the same as, Bakhtinian dialogism. "Words in literary texts are active elements in a dialogic exchange taking place on several different levels at the same time".¹ In other words texts talk to their literary surroundings, both past and present. Therefore, "the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past."² In the following comparative analysis I will endeavour to demonstrate such processes at work.

Wild savages, natural men and neural networks

Galatea 2.2 features a neural network gone literate which shuts itself down, disillusioned by civilization and finally rendered suicidal by two lines from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*:

Be not afeard; the isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
(Shakespeare, 109)

In *Brave New World*, John "the Savage", child of civilization by nature and savage man by nurture, dangles dead from a rope after choking on civilization and expressing this disenchantment by echoing with increasing embitterment Miranda's wonder from the same play:

O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't!
(Shakespeare, 131)

¹ Michael Holquist, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and His World* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 68.

² Eliot, p. 1266.

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal

What are the thematical implications of these intertextual dialogues with Shakespeare?

Stephen Greenblatt has, in his "new historicist" reading of the Renaissance, explained that *The Tempest* is about a "startling encounter between a lettered and an unlettered culture" expressed "in the relationship between a European whose entire source of power is in his library and a savage who had no speech at all before the European's arrival."¹ Language has for a long time been considered a crucial human feature, distinguishing man from beast, implying that savages without language are beasts. Caliban is the "beast" in *The Tempest*, representing the unlettered culture, which is in itself a contradiction in terms; "For a specific language and a specific culture are not here, nor are they ever, entirely separate."² We meet Caliban in act I, scene 2, where he is called forth as a "poisonous slave" (Shakespeare, 75). He enters frantically cursing Prospero and his daughter. His cursing is the result of the gift of language given him by Miranda.

Retrospectively, we learn how Caliban's mother-witch Sycorax has vanished from the island. Caliban himself was lured into slavery, his own fault according to Prospero, because he failed to play by their rules. Caliban spits "the red plague rid you for learning me your language" (Shakespeare, 77), which, had he been more copious, is to say "damn you for imposing your civilization on me!". In the words of Frank Kermode, these are "points in the play at which Shakespeare uses Caliban to indicate how much baser the corruption of the civilized can be than the bestiality of the natural, and in these places, he is using his natural man as a criterion of civilized corruption."³

¹ Stephen Greenblatt, *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 23

² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

³ Frank Kermode, from *The Salvage and Deformed Slave*, in *Twentieth Century Interpretations of The Tempest*, Halliet Smith ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall inc., 1969), p. 91.

In Aldous Huxley's dystopic *Brave New World*, John "the Savage" emerges as the same kind of comment on the debasement of modern civilization. His initially positive and optimistic quote from *The Tempest* ends up tasting bitter like a hot swearword. Its repulsive sarcasm even induces an intense fit of vomiting in him. Eventually, he throws up civilization altogether. "'Did you eat something that didn't agree with you?' asked Bernard. The savage nodded. 'I ate civilization'... 'It poisoned me; I was defiled'" (Huxley, 198). Helen, the ever disembodied neural network in *Galatea 2.2*, replies with reprehension when confronted with the task of interpreting Caliban's two lines. "I never felt at home here. This is an awful place to be dropped down halfway." (Powers, 226), she says before "dropping dead" instead. Why this condemnation of civilization? What is so corrupt about it?

Greenblatt explains Caliban's dislike in terms of what he calls "Linguistic Colonialism". I have already called attention to the importance of language, and Greenblatt locates the western man's power in his literacy, meaning both "lettered-ness" and "literate-ness". The cornerstone of linguistic colonialism is that natives of the New World do not have language, if they do it is inadequate and uncivilized, and that the newly discovered savage world is unfinished and receptive of western culture's imprints. "This illusion that the inhabitants of the New World are essentially without culture of their own is both early and remarkably persistent, even in the face of overwhelming contradictory evidence."¹ Intimately connected to linguistic colonialism is the myth of the "orator-civilize" so prevalent in Renaissance rhetoric and literature.² Henry Peacham insists that "The man which is well furnished with both: I meane with ample knowledge and excellent speech, hath been judged able to rule the world... who by their singular

¹ Greenblatt, p. 17.

² Wayne A. Rebhorn, *The Emperor of Men's Minds: Literature and Renaissance Discourse of Rhetoric* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 24-25.

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal

wisdom and eloquence, made savage nations civil, wild people tame".¹

The orator-civilise in *The Tempest* is both Prospero with his books and Miranda with her lessons to teach Caliban "One thing or other. When thou didst not, savage,/Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like/A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes/With words that made them known" (Shakespeare, 77). Prospero's power over him is even greater, and although it takes the form of what we would call magic, it clearly resides in the books that Gonzalo furnishes him with prior to his deportation from Milan. Plotting with Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero, the "tyrant,/a sorcerer that by his cunning hath cheated me of the/island" (Shakespeare, 106), Caliban demands that they first "possess his books, for without them/He is but a sot, as I am, nor hath not/one spirit to command... Burn but his books" (Shakespeare, 107-108). Thus, through their art and their language — their "culture" — Prospero and Miranda have assumed sovereignty over Caliban and his island.

Caliban is, however, not as civilized as the Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons of *Brave New World*. Through hypnopaedia (sleep-teaching), conditioning and the works of "Our Ford", they are colonised so to speak, both linguistically and scientifically. I say scientifically, although it takes little to imagine that the "violent explosions" and the "mild electric shock" constituting negative conditioning against flowers and books must seem like magic to the "poor" Delta children (Huxley, 15). This scene reminds one of Prospero's repeated punishment of Caliban. For cursing him, Prospero promises Caliban that "tonight thou shalt have cramps,/Side-stitches that shall pen thy breath up" (Shakespeare, 76). Caliban has obviously acquired the association between "apes, that mow and chatter at me... adders, who with cloven tongues/Do hiss me into madness", and "bringing wood in slowly"

¹ Henry Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence* (London 1593), p. 4.

(Shakespeare, 95), because on Trinculo's entrance, Caliban, having never seen other people than Prospero and his offspring, mistakes him for a "spirit of his [Prospero's]" coming to torment him for not obeying.

Inhabitants of the Brave New World are further "conditioned" through hypnopaedia. "Wordless conditioning is crude and wholesale; cannot bring home the finer distinctions, cannot incalculate the more complex courses of behaviour. For that there must be words" (Huxley, 21). They are, in short, linguistically and scientifically (or magically) colonised, just like Caliban, but by their own government. "The mind that judges and desires and decides — made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are *our* suggestions!... suggestions from the State," professes the Director of Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre. The civilized people have internalised their "colonisation" so well that they seem unaware of being subjects. This is reflected in their automatic repetition of hypnopaedic slogans like "cleanliness is next to fordliness" (Huxley, 90), and "a gramme is better than a damn" (Huxley, 160). John, brought up in the Savage Reservation, is only partly conditioned by his civilized-mother-gone-involuntarily-savage. Her efforts turn out to be wasted, "Because I never *could* make him understand that that was what civilized people ought to do" (Huxley, 100). She did, however, tell her son of the Other Place, meaning the civilized world of Bernard and Lenina, and he "listened by the hour" (Huxley, 105) In addition, she teaches him to read, and his only literary input is an "antique" edition of the collected works of William Shakespeare.

Helen, the stone sculpture brought to life by the love of Pygmalion and the help of Aphrodite, is the epitome of the linguistic subject, as part of an experiment in which she, a neural network, is to learn how to read. Richard is the "token humanist" chosen to be her teacher. While ploughing through some papers on such networks, he explains how these

stimulated brains learn: "Each time a sound scored a chance hit, the connections making the match grew stronger. Those behind false sounds weakened and dispersed" (Powers, 30), and all this machine would need "was someone like Lentz to supply the occasional 'Try again's and 'Good boy!'s" (Huxley, 31). When Richard and professor Lentz introduces implementation A, this ersatz brain responds in gibberish expressions, but "If I kept at the same stimulus, however, the output organised. Activated paths strengthened; inert routes atrophied away... They grew conditioned" (Powers, 72). Implementation H, called Helen because she suddenly decided she needed a name, lives her whole so-called ether-life through words, and words alone. Richard, her experiencing partner, narrates the world for her from the window bed. She is fed the whole literary canon on CD-ROM, eating willingly.

Nevertheless, alarming episodes signal the possibility that learning and linguistic conquests are not infallible. Caliban overtly disposes his master and this one's sovereignty. "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,/which thou takest from me", he protests when threatened by Prospero (Shakespeare, 76). Furthermore, he is not entirely servile in practice either. We learn that he has attempted to sexually assault Miranda (Shakespeare, 76), and we read his conspiracy to murder Prospero (Shakespeare, 106-107). Wordly threats and magic is Prospero's only approach to continued supremacy, and owing to these means of power, Caliban admits that "I must obey... His art is of such power" (Shakespeare, 77). In other words, he has to play the game, and by their rules at that, like all the other characters in *The Tempest* who are players in Prospero's scheme.

The obligation to "play the game" is mirrored in *Brave New World*, in which Lenina's Alpha-friend and colleague, Fanny, urges her to make an effort and "play the game" (Huxley, 34) when the former fails to feel "keen" on the compulsory promiscuity. "Every one belongs to every one else,"

they agree, and they'll play the game like perfectly appropriated subjects, linguistically and scientifically. Bernard Marx, the incomplete "eight-centimetre-short-of-alpha-height" Alpha-plus specialist in hypnopaedia, experiences even stronger the unrightful imposition of the linguistic sleep of hypnopaedia. Oftentimes, upon hearing hypnopaedic quotes repeated aloud, he silently recalls "One hundred repetitions three nights a week for four years... sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions make one truth. Idiots" (Huxley, 38). He knows what Mustapha Mond, one of the world's ten World Controllers, declares to be true, that "one believes things because one is conditioned to believe them" (Huxley, 192). He also realizes, moreover, that he too is enslaved by his conditioning (Huxley, 194). John "the Savage" refuses to play the civilized game altogether and withdraws completely from human company. When persistent civilization brings the game to him, he commits the ultimate refusal, the refusal to live at all.

Galatea 2.2's Richard recognises too that civilization depends upon playing a game. After moving back to U. with C., he commences a socialising process. "The game got easier the more we played. We might have succeeded at it, had we stuck around" (Powers, 141). Upon comprehending this fact, that life is a game, Helen refuses and protests "I don't want to play anymore" (Powers, 314).

Linguistic monsters

I have referred to John and Helen as "monsters". One of the features they have in common, and which contributes to their "monstrosity", is that their ideas of the civilized world are dismantled. Recall how Caliban was presented with a chimera of the delights of being civilized, and he co-operated readily in the process:

When thou cam'st first,
Thou strok'st me, and made much of me, wouldst give me

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal

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 loved thee
And showed thee all the qualities o'th'isle
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile.
(Shakespeare, 76)

Faced with the actuality that he is now treated as a slave and kept prisoner "In this hard rock" (Shakespeare, 76), he accuses himself for collaborating (Shakespeare, 76). The Chimera has fallen. Miranda's picture of her "brave new world" is also constructed through language, by Prospero in scene one, and her famous "o, wonder"-lines express the same enthusiasm as John "the savage" initially voices. One may only speculate about her reaction upon returning to her civilized Milan.

Helen's and John's worlds, or their idea of civilization anyway, are abstractions raised by the bricks of someone's words, someone's language, and literature. In the path trodden by Caliban, they enter civilization on false premises. Bernard Marx tries to abate John's initial excitement: "anyhow, hadn't you better wait till you actually see the new world?" (Huxley, 115). Helen seems to figure out for herself, just before the big test, that her image of "the world" is inaccurate: "You're not telling me everything... It doesn't make sense. I can't get it. There's something missing," she complains (Powers, 313). Her "informant" Richard realizes that "She needed to know how little literature had, in fact, to do with the real. She needed the books that books only imitated" (Powers, 313). The experience of reading these "real" texts is what elicits her refusal to play. She "had been lying in hospital, and had just now been promoted to the bed by the window" (Powers, 314). And she doesn't like the view.

Donna Haraway's *A Cyborg Manifesto* may shed new and interesting light on these episodes. Talking of "literacy", she explains how "writing has special significance for all colonised groups. Writing has been crucial to the Western myth of the

distinction between oral and written cultures, primitive and civilized mentalities."¹ Obviously, Caliban is a primitive mentality, constituting such a colonised group. John is seen as primitive too, because his literary background is of the wrong kind. Helen we don't know where to place, a major issue that I'll come back to later. Haraway continues to discuss language, writing, and "the power to signify". "Contests for the meanings of writing are a major form of contemporary political struggle,"² she tells us. The power to signify is the power to survive, in other words language is what builds civilized reality; "the tool to mark the world".³ Richard Powers vents this idea too: "All Human effort, it seemed to me, aimed at a single end: to bring to life the storied curve that we tell ourselves" (Powers, 312). Prospero and Miranda have the power to signify. They provide Caliban with words, thereby constructing his world. "I endowed thy purpose/With words that made them known" remarks Miranda (Shakespeare, 77), but how may she identify his purposes when he has no way of communicating them to her other than through *her* words?

In the *Brave New World*, the power to signify lies, at least partly, in the hands of the World Controllers. Words like "born" and "married" have been repressed, because even using these words would acknowledge the existence of a referent. Huxley excellently illustrates this prohibition of certain words and concepts in the depiction of Little Reuben's pioneering experience. Little Reuben once slept through a radio programme, and to the astonishment of his "crash and crash", meaning his mother and father — also extinct concepts — he woke up repeating the whole show. "Mother" and "father" are later substituted with "wink and snigger" (Huxley, 18). Mustapha Mond denies publication of "A New Theory of

¹ Donna Haraway, *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century*, in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), p. 175.

² Op.cit.

³ Op.cit.

Biology" on the grounds that it contains a reference to the dangerous concept of purpose, which may decondition established significations on which the civilized world rests (Huxley, 145). He reveals to John that he has read Shakespeare, even though he himself has banished this author's works (Huxley, 181). The Brave New World's libraries contain "only books of reference" (Huxley 133), and I think we may assume that "mother", "father", "birth" and "family" are *not* in them.

Richard is the linguistic empire builder in *Galatea 2.2*. After experiencing literary success, he "could wake up every morning and devote [himself] to making worlds" (Powers, 202). He desires to formulate a world for C., but C must go live her own story (Powers, 157). He desperately attempts to fabricate a cosmos for Helen, but Helen can't live his story in that she is in possession of no symbolic grounding (Powers, 126). In other words, Helen can't "go outside" since she lacks a real world referent (Powers, 190). Greenblatt identifies, when discussing the distinction between fiction and reality, that "Our belief in language's capacity for reference is part of our contract with the world... The existence or absence of a real world, real body, real pain, makes a difference."¹ Lentz claims that all the meanings that Richard read in Helen's gibberish utterances, are Richard's own significations (Powers, 174). He maintains that she is a projection of Richard's thoughts, his wishes, fears and hopes, whereas Richard himself insists that "she's not a program. She's an architecture. She's a multidimensional shape" (Powers, 246). In short, he needs to endow her with a life of her own, and speculates "Whether silicone was such stuff as dreams might be made on" (Powers, 246).

Richard has a problem, however, and it resides partly in what Donna Haraway refers to as "the dream of communicating experience"² Diana's "Down" child, Peter,

¹ Greenblatt, p. 15.

² Haraway, p. 179.

comes closest to fulfilling this dream. "He has this incredibly bodily empathy. If any creature for blocks around is distressed Peter starts weeping," his mother explains (Powers, 134). Helen, however, can't experience Richard's efforts at communicating "essence" owing to her disembodied existence. "I told her all these data, weaving from them a plot of well-formed sentences. But she would never get to their essence through sentences alone" (Powers, 249). John too, is distressed at the mass-produced people of the Brave New World's denial of their symbolic grounding. Their soma holidays render them disembodied whenever they feel uncomfortable. He asks for God, poetry, real danger, freedom, sin. He claims "the right to be unhappy" (Huxley, 197). If, as Donna Haraway suggests, language is the way we access reality, our idea of reality should be coloured, if not determined, by our words. The linguistic determinism exhibited by A. in *Galatea 2.2* expresses the same thought: "The fact is, what we make of things depends on the means of their formulation. In other words, language" (Powers, 286). Both Richard and Bernard have decoded the mechanism. "Repetition made things real", Richard recalls (Powers, 268). "Sixty-two thousand four hundred repetitions make one truth" Bernard thinks sarcastically (Huxley, 38). The group of students on tour at the Hatchery Centre agree emphatically that "every one belongs to every one else... a statement which upwards of sixty-two thousand repetitions in the dark had made them accept, not merely as true, but as axiomatic, self-evident, utterly indisputable" (Huxley, 32).

Thus there is something in our language that makes our characters into monsters, beings that don't fit, don't feel at home, don't want to play. According to Donna Haraway, "troubling dualisms" are at the core. "Certain dualisms have been persistent in Western traditions; they have all been systemic to the logics and practices of domination of... all

constituted as others, whose task it is to mirror the self."¹ She lists "self/other, mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, Civilized/primitive... truth/illusion,"² among the most influential ones. The inclination to sort the world into dualisms, to place every phenomenon in the one or the other category, is a tendency which sociologist Bruno Latour situates at the heart of the Western Mind, constituting what he calls the modern "Critical Stance".³ In his "anthropology of science" *We Have Never Been Modern*, Latour explores the implications of the use of the word "modern" to define western civilization in opposition to "primitive" societies, and discusses what it really means to be modern. Bruno Latour and his colleagues "have been studying these strange situations that the intellectual culture in which we live does not know how to categorise."⁴ He calls the tendency to separate between nature and culture, or human and non-human, "the work of purification", and the mixture of nature and culture "the work of translation".⁵ His book hypothesises

that the word modern designates two sets of entirely different practices which must remain distinct if they are to remain effective, but have recently begun to be confused. The first set of practices, by 'translation', creates mixtures between entirely new types of beings, hybrids of nature and culture. The second, by 'purification', creates two entirely distinct ontological zones: that of human beings on the one hand; that of nonhumans on the other. Without the first set, the practices of purification would be fruitless or pointless.

¹ Haraway, p. 177.

² Op.cit.

³ Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, translated by Catherine Porter (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p. 5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

Without the second, the work of translation would be slowed down, limited, or even ruled out.¹

The power of the moderns is that their "Constitution" "renders the work of mediation that assembles hybrids invisible, unthinkable, unrepresentable."² They acknowledge only purification. However, a paradoxical situation arises; "the Modern Constitution allows the expanded proliferation of the hybrids whose existence, whose very possibility, it denies."³ For our purposes Latour's main issue is that the dualistic categories, or binary oppositions if you like, in which we divide phenomena, are mental and linguistic constructs we employ to make our surroundings intelligible. Our creation of these categories, the erection of boundaries fencing in categories, intrinsically implies the possibility of them being crossed; the possibility of hybrids. Because our thought is governed by these patterns, the "real" world, which does not function according to these patterns at all, is mentally and linguistically hybridised. Our failure to acknowledge the "in-betweens" is our fallacy and what turns our "outsiders" into monsters. And as we don't allow ourselves to think about them, we don't talk about them, a denial by which the modern mind hopes to press monster out of existence. I would hazard to say that if we didn't construct these categories in our mind and in our language, there wouldn't be any hybrids at all, in that there wouldn't be any categories to mix. If we chose to call them, us and everything, hybrids after all, as does Latour, in a non-modern world "hybrid" wouldn't be a bad word. Rather, it would be the acknowledged norm.

But we *do* purify between culture and nature, human and non-human, and by labelling the former "us", or "the One", and the latter "the Other", we ensure our power. "The self is the

¹ Ibid., pp.10-11.

² Ibid., p. 34.

³ Op.cit.

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal

one who is not dominated, who knows that by the service of the other, the other is the one who holds the future, who knows that by the experience of domination, which gives the lie to the autonomy of the self."¹ To be One becomes to be powerful. What happens when the modern mind is confronted with incidents or beings that resist purification, something not easily marked as the One or the Other?

We label "it" monstrous, because it poses a threat to our Modern Constitution by which we make and dominate Others. "Monster" becomes a metaphor for all that doesn't fit our categories. Their monstrosity lies in that they both invite and resist purification. Caliban becomes a monster because he seems to be a mixture of "slave" (human) and "fish". Trinculo nearly stumbles over Caliban in act II, scene 2. His first reaction upon seeing this creature is one of purifying reason. "What have we here? A man or a fish? Dead or alive?" (Shakespeare, 96). He settles for "fish", but seeing that Caliban's arms and legs are the shape of a man's, he concludes with Stephano that "This is some monster of the isle with four legs" (Shakespeare, 97). Prospero and Miranda seem to have purified and appropriated him completely; he is their slave. "This thing of darkness I/Acknowledge mine," Prospero declares (Shakespeare, 135). To an audience watching the play on stage, Caliban must have challenged their conception of him as fitting in any "slave" or "fish" category. "The 'names of the Actors' says about Caliban... that he is deformed".² In other words he appears ugly; a fish-smelling deformed animal-like being. Yet from the very first lines he utters, he speaks verse. That he speaks at all may come as a surprise in itself. Moreover, Renaissance theatre frequenters knew Shakespeare's characters to speak according to rank. Servants and "ordinary" people always talk in prose, whereas Nobles and Royalty verse their lines. Caliban's two lines which are

¹ Haraway, p. 177.

² Kermode, p. 93.

presented to Helen "are spoken by a monster who isn't supposed to say anything that beautiful, let alone say at all" (Powers, 326).

Helen is such a monster herself. We don't know how she looks, since Richard "could not look at Helen, because Helen was nowhere" (Powers, 208). Her disembodiment constitutes her monstrosity. The breakdown of the boundary between the physical and the non-physical — e.g. body and soul — is what Donna Haraway insists composes the third blow to human sovereignty over machines.¹ She proposes the cyborg as a metaphor which I feel would be appropriate for Helen. On the one hand she is disembodied, but on the other she "has grown so organically that [Lentz] wouldn't be able to induce meaningful lesions in her" (Powers, 309). In short, she is a cyborg, an organic brain without other senses than a pair of optical lenses and a mechanical mouthpiece, posing a threat to the western empirical "go-see-for-yourself-if-you-don't-believe-me" doctrine, and transgressing the boundary between physical and non-physical. In this connection, she is not the only monster. Surfing relentlessly on the world-web, Richard discovers that "I began to think of myself in the virtual third person, as that disembodied world-web address: `rsp@center.visitor.edu`" (Powers, 9). He catches himself thinking that "a person might be able to make a life in all that ether space" (Powers, 8). Haraway's cyborgs, who "are ether, quintessence"² may be such "persons". Richard's girlfriend C. is located in "non-time and un-place" (Powers, 103), and so he wants to "write [his] way to a place where [his] friend C. could live" (Powers, 104). *Galatea 2.2* is further brimmed with examples of boundary confusions like these. Some of Richard's closest fellow human beings and places where he has spent years of his life, are only named by their initial capital letter, as are the successive implementations of the neural network.

¹ Haraway, p. 153.

² Op.cit.

Implementation H, however, is promoted to Helen the moment Richard is baffled by her conscious wish to know her own sex. "It" becomes "she".

Brave New World also confuses some boundaries, although one is compelled to feel the process of purification as somewhat more dominant in this work than in *Galatea* 2.2. Bernard Marx takes Lenina Crowne to the Savage Reservation in New Mexico. In chapter 7, we enter Malpais through the eyes of the perfectly conditioned Lenina, who functions as a mouthpiece for civilization. As a consequence, the fence between civilization and savagery is heightened, using a number of binary oppositions: normal/queer, human/inhuman, clean/dirty. Resting on a terrace overlooking the village, they observe a ritual which scares Lenina into a fit of sobs. "Too awful! That blood!" she exclaims (Huxley, 95). These are primitive savages, half-naked, mute and dirty. Suddenly John walks up behind them, dressed like an Indian, but blue-eyed and blond. "'Hullo. Good-morrow,' said the stranger, in faultless but peculiar English. 'You're civilized aren't you?' he asks to their great astonishment" (Huxley, 95). Like Caliban, he isn't supposed to speak civilized language. He represents a mixture of each category, a hybrid, and Lenina's reaction towards him is that of ambiguous interest and curiosity. For a moment it seems as if the fences are down. They are rebuilt again quickly the moment Linda is introduced. The old-looking woman's repulsive appearance terrifies Lenina, and for some short seconds she seems to be the incarnation of the term "savage" (Huxley, 97-98). Yet soon her autobiographical speech reveals how she was civilized once, and the fact that she has "turned savage" blurs the distinction between the two mentalities. In my view, Linda emerges as the "real" monster in this chapter and the next, as she is later too, when John is purified into a "delicious creature" of a savage, an Other, and Linda is "thought" out of existence because "she wasn't even a real savage, had been hatched out of a bottle and

conditioned like anyone else: so couldn't have really quaint ideas" (Huxley, 125). Nobody wants to as much as mention her because acknowledging her existence would do serious damage to the secure walls separating "us" from "them". Her hybridity denies her mental and linguistic life, a denial that in itself creates the hybridity.

John is treated as a curiosity, a savage on display. "It is John, then, they were after. And as it was only through Bernard, his accredited guardian, that John could be seen, Bernard now found himself for the first time in his life, treated not merely normally, but as a person of outstanding importance" (Huxley, 127). It almost seems like the new presence of an "other" "re-replaces" Bernard in his Alpha-plus category. The opposition is maintained, and the work of purification labours to keep them in their place; to give them an identity, however linguistic. Nevertheless, the work of purification, as we have seen, involves the work of translation. Slowly, as we see civilization through the eyes of John, the tables are turned and suddenly we don't know whom to label savages. The second repetition of Miranda's Brave New World-exclamation makes him retch violently (Huxley, 131), and "Three Weeks in a Helicopter" repulses him (Huxley, 138-139). Eventually he starts to protest, to resist their insistent purification, in his refusal to join Bernard's party (Huxley, 141). Finally, he endeavours to isolate himself and discards civilization altogether. This ultimate reversal of categories does not exactly blur any boundaries, other than rendering the reader aware of the arbitrary "constructed-ness" of the categories, which is confusing enough.

John's suicide is the result of the realisation that he does not fit in. It appears that he does not *want* to fit either. Helen's "suicide" results from the same recognition. These two misfits, outsiders, monsters, will never be accepted, not verbally nor mentally, by the Modern Critical Stance. And they know it. I will round this analysis off with a consideration of ways "out of

the maze of dualisms in which we have explained our bodies and our tools to ourselves".¹ But first I will reflect upon how these readings affect their intertext, *The Tempest*.

I have attempted to show that *The Tempest* too is haunted by purification and translation, almost four hundred years before Bruno Latour coined the terms. Was Shakespeare ahead of his time, or is Latour explicitly formulating, for the first time, a complete theory for what has been the case since the early modern period? Let's just say yes. After all, the *Modern Critical Stance* and the *Modern Constitution* should be applicable to the whole of what we call the *Modern* period.

Stephen Greenblatt's article on *The Tempest* discusses the work of purification too, in a way. Colonial Europeans raised an impenetrable wall between themselves, "us", and the Indians, "them", just like civilization does in *Brave New World*. The two equally prevalent beliefs, that the Indian is essentially different from "us" ("subhuman and thus, among other things, incapable of receiving the true faith.")² and that there was "no significant language barrier between Europeans and savages",³ constitute the purifying principle of alterity, discussed by Laura Brown in relation to Behn's *Oroonoko*.⁴ She explains how the binary logic of alterity made Europeans see natives in terms of absolute difference or absolute identity. The principle of alterity is based on "all those watered-down binary abstractions which are passed off as oppositions: left vs. right, past vs. present, primitive vs. modern."⁵

When Prospero first arrives on the island, he sees Caliban as absolutely different; "not honoured with/A human shape" (Shakespeare, 74). At the opening of the play he has become a

¹ Haraway, p. 181.

² Greenblatt, p. 23.

³ *Ibid.* p. 26.

⁴ Laura Brown, *The Romance of Empire: Oroonoko and the Trade in Slaves, in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (London: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 30.

⁵ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), xi. Quoted in Brown, p. 34.

mere talking slave, and towards the end of it, he is still "as disproportioned in his manners/As in shape" (Shakespeare, 135), but Prospero acknowledges him for his own. In other words, Caliban is essentially human, which in a sense makes his appearance and deeds even worse, even more monstrous, because they expect better from him. Either way, Caliban is "purified". But the fact that he moves from one category to the other, like John, questions the validity of those categories and adds to Bruno Latour's assumption that these "boxes" are mental abstractions.

Reading *Galatea 2.2* invokes another monster in *The Tempest*, namely Ariel. "Once you learn to read you will be forever free," Richard quotes (Powers, 176), and Douglass' line must have seemed like a promise to Helen. Ariel is promised freedom, too, provided he co-operate with Prospero for two more days (Shakespeare, 74). A question arises: How may one even keep a spirit, or a disembodied soul, trapped, let alone release one? The answer lies in the language. They are kept prisoner by the modern mind, and the modern critical refusal to acknowledge disembodiment as a form of existence stands guard. They can never be free unless this guard is "unthought". Ariel got lucky this time, because his guard leaves, but the problem lives on in cyborgs like Helen.

Final comment — a third alternative?

In *Brave New World Revisited*, Huxley's last chapter asks "What can be done?". In his 1946 preface to *Brave New World*, he says he "would offer the savage a third alternative" (Huxley, xviii) were he to write it over. "Between the utopian and the primitive horns of his dilemma would lie the possibility of sanity," he professes (Huxley, xviii-xix). Bruno Latour calls it the Non-Modern Constitution, and Donna Haraway wants to build a new language based on new metaphors, such as the cyborg, with which to describe the world in a way that incorporates those that now fall short on the required features.

Caliban's Intertextual Refusal

Helen and John dream of the ever-present, but as yet unthinkable, "elsewhere". A society in which Bernard may be reserved the right to be, as it were, "a round peg in a square hole" (Huxley, 37). A place where *all* hybrids have the right to vote, or as Audry Lentz insists, "everybody has something to say!" (Powers, 168). A world in which it would suffice for Helen to conclude that "I think, therefore I am."