OVIDIUS UNIVERSITY OF CONSTANȚA
DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES
DOCTORAL FIELD: PHILOLOGY

ABSTRACT OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

WORLDS OF POSSIBILITY: SHAKESPEAREAN SEASCAPES

PhD Coordinator:
Prof. univ. dr.habil. Monica MATEI-CHESNOIU

PhD student:
PAVEL ANA-MARIA(căs. IONESI)

CONSTANȚA
2023

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Seascapes are extensive views of an expanse of sea, and these representations can be found in visual arts, such as painting (marine art), cinema, theatre, as well as in literary fiction, mainly novels, but also in the theatre. This dissertation examines geocritically (Bertrand Westphal, Y-Fu Tuan, Doreen Massey, Robert T. Tally Jr.) and ecocritically (CheryllGlotfelty, Greg Garrard, Andrew McMurry, Simon Estok), and from the perspective of the blue humanities (Bernhardt Klein, John Gillis, Steve Mentz, Dan Brayton), Shakespeare's seascapes as represented in a corpus of twelve Shakespearean plays (*The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Comedy of Errors*, as well as *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Cymbeline* and *King Lear*). Additionally, the analysis focuses on early modern translations of classical texts, such as Homer's *Odyssey* (1614), as well as pamphlets and reports about mermaids and whales, exemplified in *The Worldes Hydrographical Description* (1595) by John Davis, the anonymous *A True Report and Exact Description of a Mighty Sea-Monster or Whale* (1617) and *A most strange and true report of a monsterous Fish, who appeared in the forme of a Woman, from her waist vpwards*(1604), as well as a report of an English expedition to Virginia by George Waymouth, entitled *A true relation of the most prosperous voyage* (1605). These texts provide some of the contemporary literary and informational background about the sea against which Shakespeare's plays are constructed.

I argue that Shakespeare represents seascapes, tides, shipwrecks, and sea creatures (fish, whale, mermaids, nymphs, Neptune, sea monsters) as metaphors constructing multiple, often contradictory spaces of risk and possibility. While human characters experience existential perils across the dangerous and unpredictable seas—often ending in shipwrecks—the metaphorical sea creatures represented in Shakespeare's plays are associated with human emotions, and often with individual faults (allurement, greed, envy, ingratitude, inconstancy, deceit). Seascapes, therefore, are natural environments against which these human traits are challenged, tested, exposed, and transformed. For this reason, theatrical representations of seascapes open new possibilities for exploration of the self.

Where does Shakespeare fit within the literary discussion of seascapes and aquatic creatures? How can ecocriticism and geocriticism use Shakespeare's plays to develop an analysis

of seascapes in the early modern period? To answer these questions, I consider how Shakespeare's characters and plots reflect the frequency of sea travel during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Organized around three key oppositional themes—classical and early modern images of the sea and its creatures, the dangers of seafaring (represented by shipwrecks and castaways), masculinity and femininity in relation to the sea and the sea-creatures—this dissertation does not merely attempt to explain how one term of each oppositional metaphor governs its counterpart. Rather, my dissertation argues that seascapes in Shakespeare's plays are always both at the same time, in point of representations of spatial metaphors of the sea: seas and oceans in Shakespeare's comedies, tragedies and romances are both safe and dangerous, free and constrained, masculine and feminine, rich and barren, developing and reductive, creative and seductive. Representations of seascapes in Shakespeare's plays are expressive and eloquent metaphors, not despite but because of their essential mutuality, combination, and contradiction.

Shakespeare's seascapes emerge as spaces of risk and self-determination, as well as spaces of possibility, while the sea creatures are often dangerous and strange, but suited to the humans' needs and their psychological states at different times during theatrical action. Because of the fundamental risk involved in leaving the shore and taking to the vast sea, individual choice and its limits come to the foreground, and the sea offers metaphors for inner experience under extreme circumstances, as well as the ways of dealing with the uncontrollable elements of nature. Often, Shakespeare's literary sea serves as a metaphor for an interior representation of selfhood. When early modern English writers evoke risk, self-determination, and individual freedom in maritime images and language, they mark those concepts as part of an elemental world governed by the seas and oceans; these notions are inherent and foundational to the physical world, to the individual and humanity. Shakespeare's romances portray the sea as a seemingly endless mass that separates family, inspires action, heals psychological trauma, and ultimately transforms body and soul. Thus, Shakespeare's seascapes reveal worlds of infinite possibilities.

The first chapter, entitled "Metaphor, Transformation, and Early Modern Seascapes" (1), establishes the methodological framework and the general argument of this dissertation. Apart from presenting the critical literature, and the theme of the sea as a crucial concept in the blue humanities studies, the chapter explains how close-text analysis is informed by ecocritical and geocritical theories in order to reveal the metaphoric representations of seascapes in

Shakespeare's drama. The first subchapter of chapter 1, entitled "Metaphoric Seascapes" (1.1), defines the concept of seascape and shows the various uses of the metaphor of the sea in critical literature. The second subchapter of chapter 1, entitled "Ecocritical Practice" (1.2), defines the basic tenets of ecocriticism and explains the importance of looking at literary texts through the lens of nature and the environment, especially from the perspective of the blue humanities, which debates the meanings of oceans and seas in ecocritical practice. Finally, the third subchapter of chapter 1, entitled "Geocritical Transformations" (1.3), presents the distinctions between space and place in geocriticism and spatial literary studies, and the interactions of space and place in Shakespeare's drama. What this dissertation brings new in point of methodological approach is a combination between these two critical methodologies (ecocriticism and geocriticism), as I argue that Shakespeare's representations of seascapes, shipwrecks, and sea creatures (fish, whale, mermaids, nymphs, Neptune, sea monsters) are dramatized as blue/ecocritical metaphors which reconstruct multiple and contradictory spaces of risk and possibility.

Since early modern literary representations of the sea are influenced by ancient sea metaphors, the second chapter, entitled "Ancient and Early Modern Epics of the Sea" (2) debates the ways in which this dynamic is manifested through early modern translations of ancient literature (Homer's *Odyssey*) and how it is further reflected in sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century pamphlets and travelogues about the sea and its creatures. In the subchapter entitled "Jonah Metamorphosed: Homer's *Odyssey* (1614)" (2.1), I argue that the sea is interpreted as both a friend and an enemy in ancient texts, but George Chapman's 1614 translation of the *Odyssey* particularly associates the sea with the explorer's mentality, as Ulysses and his son Telemachus defeat perils in their search for new lands. While the biblical story of Jonah being swallowed by the waves suggests human resilience against the adversities of fortune, Ulysses is transformed into the hero who succeeds in defeating nature through rational dominance. This is especially revealed in the dedicatory epistle to Chapman's translation of the *Odyssey*, where the translator identifies Ulysses as the first explorer of humanity and extrapolates the idea of human success over nature as a remarkable feat in ancient and early modern times.

The second subchapter of chapter 2, entitled "Mermaids: *The Worldes Hydrographical Description* (1595) by John Davis" (2.2), examines the record of three Elizabethan voyages by John Davies, aimed at finding the Northwest Passage to China, in order to show that sea creatures and the vast icy expanse of the northern sea are viewed as tameable and accessible by

early modern explorers who dare to venture to these remote places. Nature, represented by the riches of the seas, coasts, ebbs and flows of the tides, depths, and marine creatures, appears, throughout these voyages, and it is shown as opening new possibilities for navigators. Even if the three voyages by John Davis ended in apparent defeat (as the explorers did not discover the northwest passage through Canada to China, but just the islands and bays of Greenland), the narrative is transfigured by the idea of hope and the pragmatic thought that, through constant endeavour, human resilience can defeat the powerful forces of nature, represented by extreme cold, icy shores, and deprivation of food resources. The vast sea, therefore, can be defeated by resistance to the opposing forces of nature.

The third subchapter of chapter 2, entitled "True Reports of Whales" (2.3), examines an anonymous published pamphlet entitled *A True Report and Exact Description of a Mighty Sea-Monster or Whale* (1617), as well as the maritime evidence of spotting live whales on the coast of Virginia, in the Maine region, as documented in *A true relation of the most prosperous voyage made this present yeere 1605, by Captaine George Waymouth*(1605), written by James Rosier. In these early modern narratives about the sea and its creatures, the vastness of the seascapes is impressive, yet explorers attempt to tame its depths and defeat its dangerous creatures. The living sea creatures inhabiting these newly discovered worlds are useful for food (such as codfish, salmon, caplin, haddock sea birds); if huge and dangerous, however (such as the beached whale), these sea creatures are passive, unable to harm people, because they are dead. The live whales sighted by English explorers off the coast of Greenland or Virginia, on the other hand, are signs of the riches of the sea rather than fearful monsters of the deep. In this way, early modern accounts of voyages overseas are success stories of exploration, meant to encourage further voyagers to attempt defeating the vicissitudes of the sea.

Seascapes in Shakespeare's plays are sites of danger and challenge, anxiety and hope, but also revealing worlds of unforeseen possibilities. The third chapter of my dissertation, entitled "Castaways and the Sea" (3), examines the theatrical figures of castaways, such as Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*; Prospero and Miranda as castaways on their island in *The Tempest*; Marina's birth at sea in *Pericles* and Thaisa's being cast away in a casket at sea; as well as Viola and Sebastian's shipwreck on the coast of Illyria in *Twelfth Night*. These dramatic castaways suffer a sea-change throughout the play's action, as they demonstrate strength and resilience, which emerge from vulnerability and loss. Even if the female social castaways are alien to the sea-

shores they reach (such as Viola in Illyria, Thaisa in Ephesus, Marina in the brothel in Mytilene, Perdita on the sea-shore of Bohemia, or Miranda on the desert island), they overcome the perils and learn who they are through this life-threatening incident. Male castaways (such as Pericles, Leontes, Antigonus, Sebastian, Caliban, the Neapolitan party, and also Prospero) are equally resilient, but their defeat of the natural obstructions of the sea (as represented by fate) is rather like a romantic tale told several times over, which suggests meta-theatricality.

The first subchapter of chapter 3, entitled "The Storm-Tossed Ship: *The Winter's Tale* (3.1), examines the social and psychological castaways in Shakespeare's romance in order to demonstrate that the characters are both castaways, survivors of shipwrecks on the seas of life, and skilled navigators on these seas, when they are guided by reason in conquering their passions. Leontes is a castaway lost in the seas of his own emotions in Sicilia, but he manages to find some equilibrium only when he subdues his passions of jealousy and suspicion. Polixenes is the king of Bohemia, but he is a castaway on his anachronistic sea-shore as long as he is dominated by feelings of mistrust and social inadequacy, because he cannot accept his son's marriage with a shepherdess. Antigonus dies tragically on the sea-coast of Bohemia (eaten by a bear) but his dramatic fate has the role of pushing the action forward. Cleomenes and Dion travel across the seas to the island of Delphos, so they are catalysts of the plot. Hermione only seems a social castaway, subsequently believed dead but she regains her royal status through an amazing coup-de-theatre. Perdita only seems a social castaway and a literally shipwrecked baby, cast away on the barren but non-existent sea coast of Bohemia, but eventually she regains her status as a princess by defeating the separating powers of the sea. All characters in *The Winter's Tale* are metaphorical / theatrical castaways, because the play's spatial coordinates are illusional. The seas in this play are both imaginary geographically (as in the fictional seacoast of Bohemia) and metaphoric seas of emotion, which reveal the characters' identity.

The second subchapter of chapter 3, entitled "Fortune and the Sea: *Pericles* and *The Tempest*" (3.2), examines the storms and shipwrecks in the two romances as symbols of fortune, and the ways in which sea metaphors are powerful forces dominating the dramatic spaces of these plays. Shakespeare's and Wilkins' *Pericles* features two sea storms and one shipwreck, while *The Tempest* is dominated by the metaphor of the magical shipwreck, which sets the theatrical action. As in the classical stories about the sea, such as the *Odyssey*, the metaphorical sea storms dramatize the changes brought about by destiny. However, this sea-change is a meta-

theatrical one because the transformations brought about by the sea are not real, but illusionary, summoned by the power of language in the theatre. In *Pericles*, the sea storms are described through the intercession of Gower (the Chorus of the action), while in *The Tempest* the shipwreck is the result of Prospero's manipulative action and lies at the basis of the play's meta-theatricality. In both plays, however, metaphorical shipwrecks are pathways to self-knowledge, so the condition of castaway is both real and metaphorical.

The third subchapter of chapter three, entitled "Double Shipwreck: *Twelfth Night*" (3.3), examines the double and symmetrical shipwreck in Shakespeare's romantic comedy in order to show that the shipwreck is seen as both a tragic and traumatic experience (which separates twin brother and sister and presages family disaster) and a formative experience for all characters interacting with these identical twins. The sea represents an agent of destiny, embodied by the figures of the two sea captains who save Viola and Sebastian, and whose role is to further the mistaken-identity plot. Viola is a social castaway on the unknown shore of Illyria, so she is forced to assume an androgynous false identity as page Cesario, which exposes her to false social interactions. Sebastian is also a social castaway in the world of Illyria, forced to hide his identity, and so is the sea captain (Antonio) who saves him. Even Orsino and Olivia are castaways in the seas of their own emotions; Orsino thinks he is romantically involved with Olivia, and his love is as deep as the sea, which he thinks to assuage with the sounds of pleasant music; while Olivia is overwhelmed by the waves of her own self-indulgence, and she is thus vulnerable to fall prey to false emotions, such as that of falling in love with a woman disguised as a man. The comic group represented by Maria, Sir Toby and Sir Andrew are, each in his/her own way, social castaways in the world of Illyria, as they do not acknowledge their own feelings. Malvolio is and will remain a castaway at the margins of the Illyrian society because he is guided by a false image of himself. Most of these characters learn about human compassion and love through the trials of the sea, thus avoiding selfishness and egocentrism.

The fourth chapter of this dissertation, entitled "Dramatic Bodies and the Fluidity of the Sea: Shakespeare's Sea Creatures" (4), examines Shakespearean representations of marine creatures—sea gods, mermaids, nymphs, sea-monsters, Neptune—in plays such as *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *King Lear*, *Cymbeline* and *The Merchant of Venice*. These notions about sea creatures are influenced by a period-specific discourse of sea-monstrosity as being particular to marine creatures, with

emphasis on hybridity and category crossing. Shakespeare's theatrical seascapes abound in images of sea creatures—mermaids, nymphs, strange fish, sea-gods—but their relevance is theatrical and metaphoric, related to both social discourse and the natural world. While these sea-creatures (such as various species of fish or seashells), or large ones (such as whales and sea-monsters), as well as imaginary gods and nymphs are drawn from classical Greek and Roman mythology, Shakespeare's sea-creatures have dynamic roles in the economy of their respective plays, in relation to the spatial meanings related to a particular scene. Mermaids are both alluring and dangerous, and they are imaginary creatures and cultural constructs at the same time.

The first subchapter of chapter 4, entitled "Cleopatra as Mermaid in *Antony and Cleopatra*" (4.1), debates the image of the mermaid as a sea creature in early modern English culture to demonstrate that Shakespeare's theatrical mermaids (such as Cleopatra or Ophelia) are cultural constructs suggesting meta-theatricality. Mermaids in these plays are interpreted as theatrical texts, so they are only potential dangers to the social world; they are imaginary sea-creatures which are an integral part of the adverse natural world, but their real nature is connected with female agency and the power of imagination to create new forms of expression. For this reason, mermaids are associated with the capacity of the theatre to summon mythical illusions in the minds of the audience, just like Enobarbus' narrative about Cleopatra's seduction of Mark Antony, through her indirect/metaphoric representation as a mermaid on the golden barge on the river Cydnus. Even if Cleopatra herself is not represented as a mermaid (but as the goddess Venus), her lady companions are associated with mermaids, and thus their dangerous seduction potential is revealed. However, this is a narrative, a story told by Enobarbus in front of a male audience, so the mermaid metaphor acquires meta-theatrical dimensions, highlighted by Cleopatra's histrionic nature.

The second subchapter of chapter 4, entitled "Classifying Caliban and Other Sea-Creatures in *The Tempest*" (4.2), examines the figure of Caliban as a sea-monster (a fish or an aquatic creature), as described by Stephano, Trinculo and Antonio. The subchapter reviews the critical theories that consider Caliban as a figure of colonialism, New World natives, animality versus civilization, and witchcraft and sexuality, demonstrating that it is difficult (and almost impossible) to classify the dramatic representation of Caliban as a fish and an anomalous sea-creature. Even if several characters in the play see him as a fish, a monster, a slave and a misshapen being, these are meta-theatrical illusions engendered by minds subjected to extreme

psychological pressure. I argue that Caliban's sea-creature quality is the result of his theatrical nature, because he is represented as such by characters who are under the influence of alcohol (such as Stephano and Trinculo) or under the influence of Prospero's magic (such as Antonio). Therefore, Caliban is a crossbreed sea creature with whom the audiences can sympathize, but his incongruous and artificial presence is associated with the hyperbolic nature of the theatre.

The third subchapter of chapter 4, entitled "Mermaids and Aquatic Bodies" (4.3), examines sea-creatures, such as nymphs (symbols of chastity), the sea god Neptune (symbolizing the artificiality of poetry versus the natural world), or whales and fish that populate the sea, and even sea monsters, in order to show that these metaphors signal the transformative power of the theatre, in *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream, Cymbeline*, *King Lear*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. Just like the sea and its creatures, the theatre develops a world of possibilities creatively. Seascapes emerging from these poetic worlds are just as powerful as the real views of the sea, with the difference that they are not threatening, but they can summon images of danger, nature's power, destiny, emotions (love, hatred), as well as essential human events, such as death, marriage, and family reunion. Ophelia is associated with a mermaid in Gertrude's description of Ophelia's death by water, and she is called a nymph by Hamlet, suggesting that she is changing and inconstant, like the water, and an agent of emotion, allure and betrayal. Neptune is invoked by Horatio in a meta-theatrical context, when he refers to a historical event in the time of Julius Caesar, which is Shakespeare's earlier political tragedy. Neptune is mentioned by the Player King in *Hamlet*, in another meta-theatrical context. Neptune symbolizes the sea and rhetorical persuasion in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as does the reference to Helena as a nymph. Sea-monsters in *Cymbeline* are associated with imagined fictions about monsters of the deep, in contrast with the social reality of the court. In *King Lear*, sea monsters are associated with ingratitude. In *The Merchant of Venice*, Portia associates the sea monster with an ancient tale of Troy, thus suggesting the power of discourse to create fictions.

Shakespeare's representations of seascapes and sea creatures are connected with the nature of theatrical discourse and its fiction-creating strategies. Whether these creatures are mermaids and nymphs, suggesting allure and femininity; the sea god Neptune, suggesting power and fertility of the sea; whales and fish, indicating the imaginary fertility and greediness of the sea; and sea monsters, evoking ingratitude and potential metaphorical disaster, all these sea creatures indicate the poetic power of sea-change or transformation, adduced by metaphorical

discourse in the theatre. Theatrical embodiment, through metaphors, recreates the natural world in different and paradoxical ways, as seascapes are both real and imaginary. They are real because they evoke the dramatism and danger-ridden events occurring at sea, but they are imaginary because these metaphors are deployed through language, in the theatre. However, they have the power of sea-change and metamorphosis because they evoke, in the audience's minds, emotions that are associated with various events occurring at sea: fear, distress, loss, but also hope, compassion, and joy of family reunion. The elemental power of these emotions—expressed through language in the theatre—creates such storms in the minds of the audiences that the sea-monsters seem almost real, while never forgetting that they are imaginary products of the theatre world.

Conclusions

In the process of fashioning and remembering the self through sea-faring experiences—in ancient and early modern times—the sea has represented an immense potential site for moulding identity. Ancient epics—such as the *Odyssey*—render the fictional seascapes of Ulysses' voyages as both eventful and deterministic, action-packed and fatefully determined by forces governed from the outside of human power. While the sea and its creatures—as well as land sites related to the sea (Calypso's cave on her island, Ogygia and Polyphemus' cave on his island), and the natural elements (chaos, earth, air, fire, winds, storms)—are viewed from the perspective of each narrator, there is also a general perception of the sea and its creatures as imbued with human traits. From the larger-than-human gods and sea gods (Neptune/ Poseidon, Amphitrite, Oceanus, Phorcys, Jove, Aurora, Pallas Athena, Hephaistos, Atlas), nymphs (Calypso, Ino, Arete, Thoosa) and sirens, to the subhuman sea-monsters (Scylla and Charybdis), whales, sea-calves, dolphins, dogfish, and land-monsters with sea ancestry (the Cyclops Polyphemus, Proteus on his island of Pharos), these creatures' existence is mediated by Odysseus' mortality and his all-too-human aspiration of reaching the place of home.

This is because seascapes in Homer's *Odyssey* represent both the ancestral ocean of the world and the human mind, with its hopes, aspirations, fears and uncertainties. Human agency is part of Nature in the early modern English translation of Homer's *Odyssey* by George Chapman, and the natural environment is not seen as inimical, but as friendly and open to conquest, according to the political imperial aspiration in the time of James I. When seafarers are animated

by a sense of purpose, they are able to discipline the wild sea environment, just as the sixteenth-century explorers. Whether rough seas or adverse natural elements (winds, tempests, floods), nature and seascapes define human interiority. Seascapes in ancient literature are challenging places, where the mind is faced with external and inner perils in order to demonstrate resilience and flexibility. On the other hand, the early modern translation of the ancient epic responds to England's aspirations to form a new empire in the New World overseas.

In a similar manner, the travelogue (*The Worldes Hydrographical Description* by John Davis) and the anonymous report about a whale (*A True Report and Exact Description of a Mighty Sea-Monster or Whale*), as well as George Waymouth's travelogue about the still-unknown land of Virginia (*A true relation of the most prosperous voyage*) are realistic reports debating early modern explorers' aspirations. The name of the ship, *The Mermaid*, used in the failed attempts of finding a North Western Passage to the New World; the sighting of a whale on the Welsh coast; or the sea, rivers, and fish of America (seen as a tameable wilderness) are just as many instances of the explorers' attempts at defeating the sea powers. As these are non-fictional accounts of real-life travels or sightings, the readers' expectations of imaginary or metaphorical seascapes are limited. However, these accounts create an image of the sea and its creatures (mainly fish, sea-birds and sea-mammals) which is both familiar and alien, and also dangerous for the English voyager.

Influenced by ancient representations of the sea and the reports, pamphlets, and travelogues of his time, Shakespeare shapes dramatic representations of seascapes and sea creatures that show these spaces as both dangerous and challenging. These spaces are seen as natural environments that are capable of being domesticated by human endeavour. Moreover, the materiality of the theatre creates the possibility to suggest powerful emotions by means of the sea metaphors, which show both dramatism and liminality. Thus, Shakespeare creates an immersive and inclusive ecological dramatization of the global oceans through metaphoric representations of seascapes and sea creatures as belonging to a world of theatrical possibility. Shakespeare's seascapes are both precarious and liberating, harmful and therapeutic, challenging and tame. Sea creatures are manifestations of their own theatrical character, in the sense that plays allude to mermaids, fish, sea monsters, or hybrid aquatic bodies, but they are represented in their theatrical capacity, as metaphors of human emotions and actions, such as seduction, fear, ingratitude, greed, animality, and despair. Seascapes and sea creatures are placed within the spatiotemporal

continuum of the dramatic setting, which is both universally recognizable and specific to each individual play or character. While no seascape or sea creature represented in Shakespeare's plays symbolizes definitive human or sociological traits, which may be amended (or not), there is a common trait belonging to sea metaphors as agents of change.

Castaways and their shipwrecks, which are exterior representations of the harmful effects of the dangers of the sea on human subjects, are represented in Shakespeare's plays discussed (*Twelfth Night, The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles* and *The Tempest*) as dramatizing conflicting characters shaped by their formative experiences. When pushed to the limit of their psychological endurance, through the extreme maritime situations they are forced to face, castaways in Shakespeare's plays have the alternative of metatheatrical dissimulation (disguise, mistaken identity, miraculous rescue, and even a magical storm, as in *The Tempest*) to epitomise dramatically their liminal condition of metaphorical and social castaways. Female characters, such as Viola, Perdita, Marina, and Miranda are emblematic and fluid sea-creatures, embracing contradiction and mutability. However, each of them approaches the position of castaway in a specific manner, somehow similar to the traditional metaphoric association of femininity and the sea proliferated throughout literary discourses.

Other sea creatures (Cleopatra as mermaid) and aquatic bodies (nymphs, Neptune, sea monsters) in Shakespeare's plays (*Antony and Cleopatra*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *King Lear* and *Cymbeline*) reveal a metatheatrical discourse of sea monstrosity with emphasis on hybridity and category crossing. The early modern association of water imagery with fluidity and possibility is given a new metatheatrical dimension in these plays, as sea deities and sea creatures are ascribed a dynamic role in Shakespeare's dramatic seascapes. Female mermaids seduce, male sea gods and sea monsters are sexually aggressive and rapacious, but they are also associated with fertility rites. Other dramatizations of aquatic bodies (nymphs, Neptune, sea monsters) are water metaphors through which Shakespeare represents the transformations of human nature through the medium of the theatre. Thus, traditional ancient and early modern metaphors of sea creatures receive a metatheatrical dimension through the sea-changes operated by the theatre's dynamism on these notions. While in ancient and early modern metaphoric representations of sea creatures these aquatic beings are relegated to liminal seas at the margin of the habitable world, in Shakespeare's theatre these creatures are social beings integrated in the meaningful world of the theatre.

Shakespeare's seascapes, therefore, are multiple spaces/places of risk and self-determination, defined as both vast physical spaces, which challenge the individual mind to meditation and exploration, and circumscribed places of human recognition and memory. Each space/place undergoes a sea-change, depending on the development of the play's action. All these transformations are brought about by the sea surrounding the settings of all the plays discussed, so that the sea is not only a background for the respective play's settings, but a catalyst for action. Rather than being merely metaphors of human actions or emotions, seascapes and sea creatures in Shakespeare's plays discussed generate debates and are challenging initiators of contradiction and change through the theatre.

WORKS CITED (selection)

Primary Sources

Anonymous. *A True Report and Exact Description of a Mighty Sea-Monster or Whale, cast vpon Langar-shore ouer against Harwich in Essex, this present moneth of Februarie 1617. With a briefe touch of some other strange precedent and present occurents*. London: H. Holland, 1617. STC 20892.

———. *A most strange and true report of a monsterous Fish, who appeared in the forme of a Woman, from her waist vpwards*. London: for W.B, 1604. STC 11501.5. *Early English Books Online*.

Davis, John. *The worldes hydrographical discription. Wherein is proued not onely by aucthoritie of writers, but also by late experience of trauellers and reasons of substantiallprobabilitie that the worlde in all his zones clymats and places, is habitable and inhabited, and the seas likewise vniuersallynauigable*. London: Thomas Dawson, 1595. STC 6372.

Homer. *Homer's Odysseys.* Translated according to ye Greeke by. Geo: Chapman. London: Rich: Field, for Nathaniell Butler, 1615. STC 13637. *Early English Books Online*.

Montaigne, Michel de. *The essayes or morall, politike and millitarie discourses of Lo: Michaell de Montaigne*. Translated by John Florio. London: Val. Sims for Edward Blount, 1603. 18041. *Early English Books Online*.

Plutarch. *The liues of the noble Grecians and Romaines, compared together by that graue learned philosopher and historiographer, Plutarke of Chæronea*. Translated by Thomas North. London: Richard Field for George Bishop, 1603. STC 20068a. *Early English Books Online*.

Topsell, Edward. *The historie of serpents*. *Or, The second booke of liuing creatures*. London: William Jaggard, 1608. STC 24124.

Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Edited by Harold F. Brooks. The Arden Shakespeare. 7th ed. London: Methuen, 1993.

———. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Edited by John Wilders. The Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Routledge, 1995.

———. *The Comedy of Errors*. Edited by Ken Cartwright. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

———. *Cymbeline*. Edited by Valerie Wayne. Arden Shakespeare, Third Series. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

———. *Hamlet*. Edited by Harold Jenkins. The Arden Shakespeare. 5th ed. London: Routledge, 1993.

———. *King Lear*. Edited by R. A. Foakes. The Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury, 1997.

———. *The Merchant of Venice*. Edited by John Drakakis. The Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury, 2011.

———. *Titus Andronicus*. Edited by Jonathan Bate. The Arden Shakespeare Third Series. London: Bloomsbury, 1995.

———. *The Tempest*. Edited by Frank Kermode. The Arden Shakespeare. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 1988.

———. *Twelfth Night, Or What You Will*. Edited by Keir Elam. Arden Shakespeare. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008.

———. *The Winter's Tale*. Edited by J. H. P. Pafford. 3rd ed. London: Methuen, 1991.

———. *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. Edited by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Shakespeare, William and George Wilkins. *Pericles*. Edited by Suzanne Gossett. The Arden Shakespeare. 5th ed. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

Waymouth, George. *A true relation of the most prosperous voyage made this present yeere 1605, by Captaine George Waymouth, in the discouery of the land of Virginia where he discouered 60 miles vp a most excellent riuer; together with a most fertile land. Written by Iames Rosier. a gentleman employed in the voyage*. Londini: [Printed at Eliot's Court Press] impensisGeor. Bishop, 1605. STC 21322. *Early English Books Online*.

Whitney, Geffrey. *A Choice of Emblemes*. Leiden: Christopher Plantin, 1586. STC 25438.

Secondary Sources

Amin, Nora. "The Female Voice in Egyptian Theater." *Theatrical Speech Acts: Performing Language, Politics, Translations, Embodiments*. Edited by Erika Fischer-Lichte, TorstenJost and Saskya Iris Jain. London and New York: Routledge, 2020, pp. 188-203.

Barrows, Adam. *Time, Literature, and Cartography after the Spatial Turn: The Chronometric Imaginary*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Beaulieu, Marie-Claire. *The Sea in the Greek Imagination.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

Borlik, Todd A. *Ecocriticism and Early Modern Literature: Green Pastures*. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

Brayton, Dan. *Shakespeare's Ocean: An Ecocritical Exploration*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012.

———. "Shakespeare and the Global Ocean." *Ecocritical Shakespeare*. Edited by Lynne Bruckner and Dan Brayton. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 173-190.

Brayton Dan and Lynne Bruckner. "Introduction: Warbling Invaders." *Ecocritical Shakespeare*. Edited by Lynne Bruckner and Dan Brayton. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 1-9.

Campana, Joseph. "Shakespeare, as the Waters Rise." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 59, no. 2, Spring 2019, pp. 415-428.

Charlebois, Elizabeth A. "Prospero in Prison: Adaptation and Appropriation in Margaret Atwood's *Hag-Seed*." Shakespeare and Cultural Appropriation. Edited by Vanessa I. Corredera, L. Monique Pittman, and Geoffrey Way. London and New York: Routledge, 2023, pp. 112-129.

Clark, Timothy. *The Value of Ecocriticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome. "The Sea Above." *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Water, and Fire*. Edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015, pp. 105-133.

Cohen, Jeffrey Jerome and Lowell Duckert. "Introduction: Eleven Principles of the Elements." In *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire*. Edited by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2015, pp. 1-26.

Corbin, Alain. *The Lure of the Sea: The Discovery of the Seaside in the Western World, 1750-1840.* Translated by Jocelyn Phelps. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994.

Domaradzki, Mikolaj. "Of Nymphs and Sea: Numenius on Souls and Matter in Homer's *Odyssey*." *Greece & Rome*, vol. 67, no. 2, 2020, pp. 139-150.

Dougherty, Carol. *The Raft of Odysseus: The Ethnographic Imagination of Homer's Odyssey*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Duckert, Lowell. "*Pericles*'s Deep Ecology." *SEL: Studies in English Literature*, 1500-1900, vol. 59, no. 2, Spring 2019, pp. 367-381.

Egan, Gabriel. "Gaia and the Great Chain of Being." *Ecocritical Shakespeare*. Edited by Lynne Bruckner and Dan Brayton. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 58-69.

Elden, Stuart. *Shakespearean Territories*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

Estok, Simon C. *Ecocriticism and Shakespeare: Reading Ecophobia*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Feder, Helena. *Ecocriticism and the Idea of Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, 2016.

Garrard, Greg. *Ecocriticism*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Gibbons, Daniel R. "Inhuman Persuasion in *The Tempest*." *Studies in Philology*, vol. 114, no. 2, 2017, 302-330.

Giglioni, Guido. "Fantasy Islands: *Utopia*, *The Tempest* and *New Atlantis* as Places of Controlled Credulousness." *World Building and the Early Modern Imagination*. Edited by Alison B. Kavey. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, pp. 91-117.

Gillis, John R. *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

———. "Islands in the Making of an Atlantic Oceania, 1500–1800." *Seascapes Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*. Edited by Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and KärenWigen. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, pp. 21-37.

Go, Kenji. "Montaigne's 'Cannibals' and *The Tempest* Revisited."*Studies in Philology*, vol. 109, no. 4, Summer 2012, pp. 455-473.

Habermann, Ina and Michelle Witen. "Introduction." *Shakespeare and Space: Theatrical Explorations of the Spatial Paradigm*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 1-13.

Jones, Gwilym. *Shakespeare's Storms*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015.

Kermode, Lloyd Edward. "Experiencing the Space and Place of Early Modern Theater." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, Winter 2013, pp. 1-24.

Klein, Bernhard. “Introduction: Britain and the Sea.” *Fictions of the Sea: Critical Perspectives on the Ocean in British Literature and Culture*. Edited by Bernhardt Klein. Burlington: Ashgate, 2002.

Klein, Bernhardt and GesaMackenthun. “Introduction: The Sea Is History.” *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean*. New York and London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 1-12.

Linhart, Jennifer. “Sounding Spaces: *The Tempest*’s Uncanny Near East Echoes.” *Shakespeare Studies*, vol. 44, no. 2, 2016, pp. 173-179.

MacFaul, Tom. *Shakespeare and the Natural World.* Cambridge: University Press, 2015.

Mann, Rupert. “Seafaring Practice and Narratives in Homer’s *Odyssey*.” *Antichton*, vol. 53, no 1, 2019, pp. 1-13.

Massey, Doreen. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

———. *For Space*. London: Sage Publications, 2005.

Mentz, Steve. *At the Bottom of Shakespeare’s Ocean*. New York: Continuum, 2009.

———. “Is Compassion an Oceanic Feeling?” *Emotions: History, Culture, Society*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2020, pp. 109-127.

———. “Shakespeare and the Blue Humanities.” *SEL: Studies in English Literature*, vol. 59, no. 2, Spring 2019, pp. 383-392.

———. *Shipwreck Modernity: Ecologies of Globalization 1550-1719*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

———. “Tongues in the Storm: Shakespeare, Ecological Crisis and the Resources of Genre.” *Ecocritical Shakespeare*. Edited by Lynne Bruckner and Dan Brayton. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2016, pp. 155-171.

Myrsiades, Kostas. *Reading Homer's Odyssey*. Lewisburg: Brucknell University, 2019.

Moore, Gaywyn. “‘Was my sister drowned?’: Voyaging While Female in *Twelfth Night*.” *Mediterranean Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2018, pp. 159-178.

Mulready, Cyrus. *Romance on the Early Modern Stage: English Expansion Before and After Shakespeare*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Novy, Marianne. *Shakespeare and Outsiders*. Oxford Shakespeare Topics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

O’Brien, Patty. *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006.

Ord, Melanie. *Travel and Experience in Early Modern English Literature*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Palfrey, Simon. *Shakespeare's Possible Worlds*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Pedersen, Tara. *Mermaids and the Production of Knowledge in Early Modern England*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015.

Roychoudhury, Suparna. "Mental Tempests, Seas of Troubles: The Perturbations of Shakespeare's *Pericles*." *ELH: English Literary History*, vol. 82, no. 4, Winter 2015, pp. 1013-1039.

Scott, Helen C. *Shakespeare's* Tempest *and Capitalism: The Storm of History*. London: Routledge, 2020.

Tally, Robert T. Jr. "Adventures in Literary Cartography: Explorations, Representations, Projections." *Literature and Geography: The Writing of Space throughout History.* Edited by Emmanuelle Peraldo. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016. pp. 20-36.

———. *Topophrenia: Place, Narrative and the Spatial Imagination.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019.

Tally, Robert T. Jr and Christine M. Battista. "Introduction: Ecocritical Geographies, Geocritical Ecologies, and the Spaces of Modernity." *Ecocriticism and Geocriticism: Overlapping Territories in Environmental and Spatial Literary Studies.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 1-15.

Tuan, Y-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. 8th ed. 1977; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.

Van Duzer, Chet. "*Hic sunt dracones*: The Geography and Cartography of Monsters." *The Ashgate Research Companion to Monsters and the Monstrous*. London, Routledge, 2013, pp. 387-435.

Westphal, Bertrand. *Geocriticism. Real and Fictional Spaces.* Translated by Robert T. Tally Jr. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Wilson, Jeffrey R. "'Savage and Deformed: Stigma as Drama in *The Tempest*." *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England: An Annual Gathering of Research, Criticism and Reviews*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2018, pp. 146-177.

Wigen, Kären. "Introduction." *Seascapes Maritime Histories, Littoral Cultures, and Transoceanic Exchanges*. Edited by Jerry H. Bentley, Renate Bridenthal, and KärenWigen. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007, pp. 1-18.