THE TEMPEST FROM COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL LENS

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ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on how the colonizers who in this play are Prospero and Miranda in particular, endeavor to inflict their own socio-cultural precept including their language to make the colonized fully unprotected in The Tempest as a colonial play, but eventually fail to fulfill this attempt. In addition, the high importance of learning the language of the colonizer by the colonized gets illuminated which finally contributes to Caliban so as to undermine the roots of the colonizer in the colony. This article fully evaluates affected literary works by The Tempest, the importance of transferring the colonizer’s language to the colony, and the main colonizer and his manners and attitudes towards the colonized; it also brings forth postcolonial concepts including Mimicry, Orientalism, the double consciousness of the colonized and his unhomeliness. Furthermore, it features the dirge situation of mimic men who come across a disappointing dead end from both colonizers and the colonized. After all, this article reflects on the ever-presence of ambivalence and mimicry in colonial discourse and also the vital importance of violence as an inseparable part of the decolonization.

KEYWORDS: Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Ambivalence, Mimicry, Language, Violence

INTRODUCTION

The Tempest, Shakespeare’s last play, is a dramatic romance. Prospero, the Duke of Milan, who is avid for books and thaumaturgy, is dismissed by his brother Antonio and cast adrift with her daughter Miranda in a cracked boat. Prospero inhabits a desert island and enslaves Ariel who is an ethereal spirit and Caliban who is a subhuman in their eyes. Twelve years later when the play commences, Prospero devises shipwreck and tempests. He struggles to make Ferdinand isolated, Antonio’s son, who is in love with Miranda. He releases Ferdinand from his fetish and entangles Antonio who is pardoned but must bring back the dukedom to Prospero who abandons his thaumaturgy, releases Ariel from his captivity, and desert that ‘Brave New World’ for Italy, leaving Caliban the only inhabitant of the Island. It is appealing to know that Prospero is frequently taken into account as Shakespeare himself who is a magician-dramatist. Prospero buried his magic books just like Shakespeare who left the theater and moved to live his numbered years of life in Stratford. In terms of genre, this play is labeled as a comedy and tragicomedy in which elements of both ones exist; for example it has a grave tone and brings forth a dire situation in which the reader runs into abundant fear yet he can’t see any trace of destruction such as death which is an inextricable part of Shakespeare’s tragedies. If the comedy labeled is stuck is stamped on this play that’s because we experience joyous moments; for example in the second scene of Act 2, Caliban begins to worship Trinculo
and Stephano for the alcoholic drink he was given.

*Caliban*

*These be fine things, and if they be not sprites. That’s a brave god and bears celestial liquor. I will kneel to him.* (2.2)

Another moment of mirth which makes this work as a comedy one is Act 3 Scene 3 when all the characters start dancing and singing which transports a comic relief to its readers. It is not meaningless to know that Shakespeare’s style in comedy was under the impression of the great Roman playwright Plautus and all his comedies such as *The Tempest, The Taming of the Shrews, As You Like It, and Twelfth Night* hold a common characteristic; their subject matter is poetry and imagination not reality, nature or philosophical ideas. After all, *The Tempest*’s plot is neither probable nor true to real life since in his comedies, his first and foremost aim is taking us out from our everyday life to an imaginary area in which there’s not a realistic setting and he also takes us to an exotic fairy land in *The Tempest*. Furthermore, *The Tempest* is a totally different play compared to all his works, in which, colonialism, love, and lust for power have been gathered in five acts to stamp his unforgettable literary vestige on English literature. To go deeper, *The Tempest* which is considered written in 1610-11 is a contentious work, specifically in terms of the colonial discourse which it goes through. Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* is considered as a New World drama, in which the discovery of America is clarified by the plot and actions of its characters. This drama strove to make its readers realize the notion of colonization. Although Shakespeare himself did not directly refer to colonization in his play, the vestiges of this ambivalent process transpires when the domineering side considers the colonized as the “other” who in Prospero’s term, are “poisonous”, “wicked”, and “devil” (2.2). Also through the words of Gonzalo, we can perceive the very fact that Shakespeare was excessively impressed by the discovery of the New World.

*GONZALO*

*Here is everything advantageous to life.*

*How lush and lusty the grass looks! How green!* (2.1)

Furthermore, The Tempest deals with colonial approach of Prospero and the postcolonial position of Caliban’s resistance against Prospero and Miranda; in other words this masterpiece is bidimensional. This well-written play has led numerous literary authors to derive their plot or theme from this play; for instance, Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), Aimee Friedman’s *Sea Change* (2009), T.S. Elliot’s *The Waste Land* (1932) in which the poet has extracted some lines from Act I, Scene II of the play, Marina Warner’s *Indigo* (1922), and Derek Walcott’s *Dream of Monkey Mountain* (1970). It is notable how “the writers of the Caribbean often see themselves as the progeny of Caliban, using the colonizing Prospero’s language to express a self that is beset by hatred and self-loathing” (Patke2006,95). Because this play has been considered regarding its colonial clues, “it is rare now to see productions of the play which do not relate it to a colonial and political context” (Innes 2007, 41). In contrast
to Shakespeare’s aforementioned reluctance either to support or attack colonialism, some critics in the world are liable to consider Shakespeare as a figure who tacitly support colonialism clear in Prospero, “because people like Caliban deprived of full humanity can be regarded as people without history, culture, and they have therefore no logical claim to sovereignty” (Didea 2009, 1). Cartelli goes to extremes and blames the play and avers, “it is no doubt true that The Tempest has long functioned in the service of ideologies that repress what they cannot accommodate and exploit what they can” (1987, 112).

Unlike many studies made about the colonial dimensions of Prospero, many critics have gone great lengths to analyze Caliban who is believed to be the only aboriginal resident of the island. It is manifest in the text that Caliban is a cooperative character with regards to his cooperation to both Miranda and Prospero when they just arrived in the island; however, Prospero’s approach towards Caliban is treacherous, specifically when he calls Caliban “hag-seed” which poses an abusive meaning, “child of a witch” (1,2). As a perceptive reader, we must ruminate on the meaning of seed which tacitly shows the fact that Prospero didn’t recognize Caliban as a human, instead he attributed this word which is pertinent to plants not a human being. But that would not be the end of the story because this so-called “hag-seed” is, “biologically capable of impregnating Miranda, and hence is probably human” (Vaughan and Vaughan 1993, 12). This article will go to great lengths to define colonialism manifest in The Tempest and how the colonizer justifies his relentless acts against the colonized with the superficial binary oppositions such as the superiority of the European colonizer and the inferiority of the non-European colonized. After all, this essay strives to elaborate not only on the colonial discourse present at the text, but also the postcolonial concepts such as mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity regarding both elaborate definitions of Homi Bhaba and the textual clues provided by Shakespeare.

Colonialism and Colonial Discourse

In the first place, we must know the exact meaning of colonialism which denotes the authority and jurisdiction of a superior and powerful country over an inferior country in which the colonized is subjugated and is forced to give up its land and people including the resources of the land and the mind of the colonized nation which is dramatically acrimonious to the aboriginal. Moreover, the colonizer seeks to inflict its own socio-cultural, religious beliefs, and linguistic structures on the colonized and that is what exactly happened in this composite play by the Bard of Avon. Be that as it may, as an experienced literary reader, we should not fall for this superficial subjugation. By superficial subjugation, we mean a one-way subjugation, while it is a totally wrong interpretation of colonial discourse. Since in colonial discourse there is no fixity, accordingly we have to take into the account the interaction between the colonized here as Caliban, Ariel and the people living in the island with the colonizers including Prospero and Miranda as the main characters and the rest trivial ones. This encounter between the colonizer and aboriginal is a dialectical interconnection. In other words, the colonizer is always being influenced by the culture, religion, and existing discourses in the colony. To put it another way, the colonist affects the indigenous nation and vice versa. In addition, “colonialism was not an identical process in different parts of the world but everywhere it locked the original inhabitants
and the newcomers into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history (Ania, 1998).

According to the technological advancements in navigation, colonialism took to spreading into different parts of the world. Consequently, the British Empire became vain because of the vast so-called positive changes in the colonies such as free institutions, order, and creation of uncorrupted governments, and so forth. Transferring the colonizer’s language to the colony, which must be considered as a crucial social institution of great importance to the colonizers, was the case which happened in *The Tempest* when Caliban was forced to learn this language in order to infiltrate the encoded colonial system organized by Prospero so that he could regain his inherited island. In line with my assertion, Darrel (2010) states that “English became, for example, the primary language of the United States because the vast majority of the colonists spoke English. In effect, what goaded Shakespeare into writing such a masterpiece is the discovery of America by Columbus; from my point of view, taking control of the unknown and mysterious lands was such an appealing subject which obliged him to produce this composite play. All in all, the colonialism found a very crucial echelon in the literature, specifically in *The Tempest*. But what can move a literary critic to categorize this play as a colonial work? It can be answered that Prospero who gained the sovereignty of the island by means of power and his knowledge is the main character who established the colonial discourse in this play. From another vantage point, this play might be taken into account as an overt model of master/slave relationship in which Shakespeare sought to draw a cruel master Prospero who subjugates the indigenous including Caliban and Ariel for drudgery and he strives to maintain his jurisdiction applying a medley of wicked strategies such as spells, menace, and terrorization.

Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism develops from a long time ago, “from a four-thousand-year history of strained cultural relations between colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Western world” (Bressler, 200). During this period of time, the West became the colonizer and African, Asian countries became the subject of this colonization. It is not meaningless to know that Postcolonial criticism didn’t emerge as an important force the sphere of studying literature until the 90s commenced. In fact, it is a realm of intellectual query when colonial dynasty took to be deposed after World War II. Postcolonial critique is nowadays considered as a theoretical framework and subject matter simultaneously. Postcolonial criticism examines literary works engendered by those cultures which were constituted as a response to colonial supremacy but when it comes to the theoretical framework, it tries to figure out political, social, cultural, and psychological operations of colonialist and anticolonialist ideologies. As a literary scholar, I found an appealing point within all the colonial works, specifically *The Tempest* and that’s the fact that the colonizer looks upon the colonized simultaneously as subject and object; in other words, when the colonizer considers the colonized as the immoral, lazy and uncivilized, at this moment they have objective view towards them, however, when they consider the resources, land, and sexuality of the aboriginal, the colonized becomes the subject. Accordingly, this contrasting point of view towards the colony brings about a crucial point in the postcolonial discourse,
ambivalence. For instance, Prospero addresses Caliban as a “slave”:

PROSPERO
Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself
Upon thy wicked dam, come forth! (2.2)

Another account of Caliban was made by Stephano which derives from his first encounter with Caliban:

STEPHANO
Four legs and two voices; a most delicate monster! His forward voice now is to speak well of his friend; his backward voice is to utter foul speeches, and to detract. I fall the wine in my bottle will recover him, I will help his ague. Come. Amen! I will pour some in thy other mouth. (2.2)

Both Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha argue that the colonizer always strives to justify its authority over the colonized through the creation of a corrupted, shiftless, disorganized, and unruly other to make its expansionism as a fair act. From the vantage point of many White Westerners, the people who are living in Africa, Americas, and Asia were worthless “heathens,” who must be Christianized; to put it in another way, “how one treats peoples who are so defined does not really matter, they maintained, because many Westerners subscribed to the colonialist ideology that all races other than white were inferior or subhuman” (Bressler, 200). In other words, they define the indigenous as truculent people who are retarded and undeveloped. Since the colonizers are more advanced in terms of knowledge and technology they consider themselves as the center of the world in which the natives are merely needy people who are marginal.

When we start perusing the play, we come to know a better fact; and that’s Prospero and his retinue deem themselves as the quintessential of humanity or the apt ‘self’; but the indigenous (Caliban and Ariel) are considered as the ‘other’ who is different and of lower echelon in terms of the standards of humanity based on the colonizer’s definition. This division of the We/Others overtly appears in this play in which Caliban is seen as a truculent, aggressive, and assaulter of Miranda; however, this Other holds a kind of exotic nobility and attractiveness which looks like the purity of nature. In both cases, he remains other and is not fully human.

As a consequence, the colonized were deemed as the savages who equally became evil. Bhabha reasserts that the ultimate telos or aim of the colonialism is, “to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” (1994, 70). Nevertheless, the colonial discourse is entangled and never fulfills this aim because it “is always pulling in two contrary directions at once” (McLeod 2000, 52).

The above-mentioned idea, maintains the fact that the colonizer recognizes the colonized as peculiar and exotic which is impossible to be understood from the Western eyes. By contrast, this colonized is simultaneously categorized under Western understanding which engenders an increasing aperture between the colonist and the colonized. The Tempest broadens
and reduces this aperture in its colonial discourse; in other words it “produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an ‘other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible” (Bhabha 1994, 70-1). Regarding the Colonialism, there is a concept which usually goes hand in hand called Orientalism which provides rationalization for European Colonialism based on a self-serving history in which the West built the East as highly different and inferior and therefore in need of Western intervention or rescue. In fact, Orientalism which was analyzed by Edward Said has been applied in America, Europe, and Britain. As a matter of fact, the ultimate aim of Orientalism is to show the colonized in a static state in which there is no progress or change by preserving “terrifying stereotypes of savagery, cannibalism, lust, and anarchy” (Bhabha 1994, 72), unless the colonizer strives to make the colony make progress.

In spite of the very fact that the colonists have always sought to prevent any progress or change in the colonized and forced them to be silent and made them deny themselves, this fundamental aim is always postponed and never fulfilled. Totally, the colonized is always fluctuating between the fixity defined by the colonizer and its own desire to have agency or motion. Although the colonial discourse seeks to stop the ambivalence in its portrayal of the colonized through the stereotypes, it fails to do so. In my view, the colonizer endeavors to conceal its failures, through a blurred portrayal of the colonized, for example, “the same old stories of the Negro’s animality, the Coolie’s inscrutability or the stupidity of the Irish must be told again and afresh, and are differently gratifying and terrifying each time” (Ibid., 77). These stereotypical representations abound in The Tempest, when Prospero as an example calls the black aboriginal Caliban, “hag-seed”, “tortoise”, “poisonous slave” (2,2). It is not uncanny that not only Prospero but also other characters do their best to marginalize Caliban who here is the colonized of the story. For instance, Miranda calls Caliban “abhorred slave” (2.2). It seems to me that all the members of the colonizer side have a uniform treatment against the colonized.

Another significant keyword in the realm of postcolonial literature is Mimicry coined by Bhabha. For centuries, it was practiced in the European and in particular the British schools that one of their duties is to instill their values and beliefs into the so-called retarded minds of the indigenous (Others) to prevent them from any probable recalcitrance. The result was spectacular for them since they were highly successful to create countless colonies in particular in America and Africa in which people were ready to be subjugated and their land was diametrically rich in terms of natural resources. Numerous individuals were absorbed in the colonizer’s lifestyle, dress, talk, and manners. Literary experts identify this occurrence as both pleasant and painful for the colonized because when the colonized come across the colonizers, he feels a deep shame because he has been led to see his culture as inferior. Postcolonial literature calls this concept as Mimicry which is a metonymy of presence and it transpires when the members residing in a colony imitate the culture of the colonizers.

In other words, mimicry is a diplomatic policy which undermines the roots of the colonizer not suddenly but gradually. In my point of view, mimic men have got two approaches but one aim. Their ultimate telos is freedom but some of them may excessively have conciliatory approach like that of Ariel who undoubtedly craves for freedom, but decides to serve Prospero because he assumes that it is a more effectual approach to regain his freedom and independence from the colonizer:
ARIEL

All hail, great master! Grave Sir, hail! I come
To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curled clouds. To thy strong bidding task
Ariel and all his quality (I, ii, 189-93)

Homi Bhabha states on behalf of Jaques Lacan, the preeminent French psychoanalyst and psychiatrist “the effect of mimicry is camouflage…it is not a question of harmonizing with the background, but against a mottled background (1994). Mimicry “reflects both the desire of colonized individuals to be accepted by the colonizing culture and the shame experienced by colonized individuals concerning their own culture, which they were programmed to see as inferior” (Tyson, 2006). Regarding ‘Mimicry’ the most obvious strife of the colonized to resemble its colonizer is the strife of learning the colonizer’s language. There are two accounts of this event, one from the colonizer’s point of view and another from the colonized herself. The colonizers believe that in order to fully control the colonized they must embed their culture which is overt in their language into the mind of the colonized and through this way the colony will be fully unprotected against them. Nevertheless, Bhabha believes that learning the colonizer’s language enables the colonized to undermine the colonial power and uncovers its ambivalence.

Unlike Edward Said, who considers the mimic men as immobilized men who are easily controlled, Bhabha maintains the mimic men could undermine the colonizer to more extent compared to those who possess direct resilience against the colonizer. However, they are every now and then derided by their fellow men who reside in the same colony for the fact that they hold the same traits of the colonizer; for instance they try to learn the colonizer’s language to infiltrate their authority and by doing so they intend to attenuate them. Postcolonial connoisseurs identify this phenomenon as a double consciousness because the mimic men are stuck between two antagonistic cultures; one belongs to the colonizer and another to the colonized. These individuals alight on that they are somehow homeless because neither side fully accepts them and this is what

Postcolonial experts such as Homi Bhabha refers to as unhomeliness. It is critically important to know that being unhomed is worlds apart from being homeless; in effect, being unhomed means that you might not be able to feel home yet at home since having been colonized has left mental traumas in which the veins of identity crisis could be discovered. In other words, mimicry is “a double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority” (Bhabha, 1994).

Clearly, learning the language of the colonizer enables the colonized to undermine those absurd boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized in which, the colonized had been deprived of her own language and had no authority or ability against its so-called master. Caliban has obtained a Western language which now has become his gun against his master Prospero and this defensive apparatus has strongly made Prospero worried. That is to say, “There is clearly no trust between master and slave, colonizer and colonized, and language
reinforces the abyss that divides them” (Basnett 2010, 85). In fact, after Caliban was equipped with the language of the West, he became able to defy Prospero’s strives to hide the ambivalence. In reality, by acquiring this language, the shortcomings of the colonizer’s project in colony transpired in a way the characters in this play became perturbed. As an overt example of this anxiety, I can refer to Stephano when he saw Caliban in his fantasies as a “monster” who could speak his language and how he as the “other” had learned this language is his fundamental question:

**STEPHANO**
*This is some monster of the isle with four legs, who has got, as I take it, an ague. Where the devil should he learn our language?*

The strength of mimicry as a subverting apparatus transpires when Caliban applies the colonist’s language to curse the colonizer; thus, it is not meaningless to take a glance at this excerpt:

**CALIBAN**
*You taught me language, and my profit on’t
Is, I know how to curse: the red plague rid you,
For learning me your language!* (2.2)

The above excerpt not only depicts the function of language learning as an apparatus in the hand of the colonized against the colonizer, but also illuminates violence and mutinous attitude towards the colonizer as an essential element of decolonization. Frantz Fanon hypothesizes “The violence which has ruled over the ordering of the colonial world, which has ceaselessly drummed the rhythm for the destruction of native social forms and broken up without reserve the systems of reference of the economy, the customs of dress and external life, that same violence will be claimed and taken over by the native at the moment when, deciding to embody history in his own person, he surges into the forbidden quarters. To wreck the colonial world is henceforward a mental picture of action which is very clear, very easy to understand and which may be assumed by each one of the individuals which constitute the colonized people” (Fanon 1961, 39). Thus, one of the postcolonial perspectives of *The Tempest* is elucidated both when Caliban attempts to breach the chastity of Miranda and when he wants to injure the head of Prospero using a log. The mutinous attitude and severe rebellion against the colonizer which is accompanied by rancor against him, transpires in this excerpt in which Caliban rebukes Prospero for having usurped his homeland.

**Caliban**
*This island’s mine by Sycorax, my mother,
Which thou tak’st from me. When thou cam’st first,
Thou strok’st me and made much of me;
... And then I loved thee
And showed thee all the qualities o’ th’ isle:
... For I am all the subjects that you have,*
Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o’ th’ island (1.2.332-345).

The exploitative attitudes of Prospero alongside other colonizers in this play which are akin to colonial acts of the British during decades are fully defined in a famous book called An Era of Darkness in which the author says “They (The British) basked in the Indian Sun and yearned for their cold and Fog-ridden homeland; they sent the money they had taken off the perspiring brow of the Indian worker to England; and whatever little they did for India, they ensured India paid for it in excess. And at end of it all, they went home to enjoy their retirements in damp little cottages with Indian names, their alien rest cushioned by generous pensions supplied by Indian taxpayers” (Shashi Tharoor, 2016).

The case of ambivalence has been described concerning Caliban but it is worth considering Ariel as a product of Colonial imagination. In fact, Ariel is a bridge between the man and visionary world; to put it in another way, “he is neither born of heaven nor of earth; but as it were, between both, like a May blossom kept suspended in air by the fanning breeze, which prevents it from falling to the ground, and only finally, and by compulsion, touching earth” (Coleridge, 1916).

Ariel is a composite character which moves into both spheres of human and imagination. Samuel Taylor Coleridge gave a thorough description of Ariel which was received well in that time; he averred “In the air he lives, from the air, he derives his being; in the air, he acts; and all his colours and properties seem to have been obtained from the rainbow and the skies” (1916).

Controversial Interpretations

While the plot itself provides us with the fact that The Tempest is accomplice in colonial power, yet there are so many contrasting interpretations. We see a Prospero who is a cruel invader, upset about the legitimacy of his authority over the island and a character called Caliban who illustrates a dominated race, and Miranda’s language lessons can be considered as an attempt disfigure Caliban’s culture and bring it under the vigor of the colonizer. One of those controversial exegeses is that essay of Stephen Greenblatt called Learning to Curse; of course its broad implications have not been completely perceived. In that essay he claimed that the residents of newly-discovered land (America) lacked their own culture; in other words they had no language and even if they had one, it would be gibberish and these people were truly beast-like in terms of nobility. Greenblatt believes that tough Caliban could use language for loftier aims, he only applied it so that he could curse Prospero. Greenblatt reckons that there’s an ambiguity in Prospero’s final statement when he said: ‘this thing of darkness/ I acknowledge mine (5.1).

Despite the abundance of readers and critics’ interpretations of this excerpt as a representative of colonial power, Greenblatt surprisingly states that this extract stands for the responsibility and caring of Prospero for Caliban. In fact Greenblatt cannot get enough of astonishing literary scholars when he calls Caliban “a noble savage”. He believes that
“Shakespeare doesn’t shrink from the darkest European fantasies about the wild Men; indeed he exaggerates them: Caliban is deformed, lecherous, evil-smelling, idle, treacherous, naïve, drunken, rebellious, violent and devil-worshipping. According to Prospero, he is not even human: a ‘born devil’, ‘got by the devil himself’ Upon thy wicked dam.’ (1980, 26). Regarding the fact that before Prospero resided in the island, Caliban had been living in for a long time without any trouble or disruption and the fact that the island belonged to Caliban’s ancestors not Prospero’s, we come to know that Greenblatt’s statements against Caliban are abusive and unfair.

How is it possible to consider a usurping invader like Prospero and his daughter as enlightened people who taught Caliban their own language for his good? Stephan Greenblatt stated in this essay that Caliban is a ‘noble savage’, yet this label exactly fits in with Prospero who holds a cruel position in this island and tries to mute Caliban as the mere resident of this island. To put it another way, being referred to as ‘Monster’, ‘puppy-headed’, and ‘half a fish’ etc, illuminates the fact that they as the colonizers completely looked down and condescended to Caliban and in particular after they exploited Caliban’s knowledge about the island. After all, as it was mentioned before in the former paragraphs, the mighty Prospero who devised storm and yet maintained the ship and its passengers, this so-called noble person in the eyes of Greenblatt could not provide himself with firewood which is not so difficult. Accordingly, Caliban who kindly supplied everything Prospero and Miranda needed without rubbing I in their faces, elucidates Caliban’s nobility. The ill-usage against Caliban transpires in the following excerpt:

When thou cam’st first,
Thou strok’st me, and made much of me: wouldst give me
Water with berries in’t, and teach me how
To name the bigger light, and how the less
That burn by day and night: and then I lov’d thee
And show’d thee all the qualities o’ the’Isle
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile
Curs’d be I that did so!
All the charms
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!
For I am all the subjects that you have
Which first was mine own king; and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep fro me
The rest o’ th’island (1.2)

The above excerpt stands against Greenblatt’s claims who identified Caliban as a ‘noble savage’ and Prospero as a ‘responsible’ one. This extract could be divided by two parts; at first Caliban mentions his kindness for Prospero and Miranda while they didn’t know anything about the island and were outsiders; in fact, Caliban succored them by providing them with whatever they needed. However, his tone becomes vindictive and aggressive when he started cursing them by means of their own language which served them right regarding their abusive
treatment against Caliban to that point.

The fact that Prospero is a unprincipled character who exerts the attempted rape of Miranda to establish his reign in the island more than before is confirmed by Paul Brown when he maintains that “Miranda is represented as just such a virgin to be protected from the rapist native and presented to a civil lover” (1985, 62). Paul Brown’s ideas about the chicaneries of Prospero and hospitality of Caliban sounds more defensible and fair compared to claims made by Greenblatt.

CONCLUSION

Totally, based on what was analyzed regarding six characters, their attitudes, manners, monologues, and other features in terms of critical opinions of Homi Bhabha, Franz Fanon, Edward Said, and Paul Brown, we come to know that Shakespeare’s play is an uncanny yet exotic one, in which, the reality of violent and bloody events during Renaissance in New World was well depicted. This play was published in 1623, which was the climax of rushing throngs to America so as to exploit its indigenous residents and its natural resources. That is why the sea dominates Renaissance literature. As a matter of fact, The Tempest alongside Shakespeare’s other published plays resonates with sea adventures, shipwrecks, storms, and sailors. Another premise reviewed in this article was the cunning programs of Prospero against Caliban to fully enslave him and justify his reign; he addressed Caliban as a ‘hag-seed’ and ‘lying-slave’ to justify his oppressive treatment against him.

In other words, Prospero is a hypocrite and megalomaniac who deems Caliban in urgent need of help just to warrant his dictatorship and believe his vicious plots against Caliban. After all, we perceive that mimic men such as Ariel are caught between two opposing cultures, one of which belongs to the colonizer and another to the colonized. These individuals detect they are homeless because neither side completely accepts them. In terms of genre, this play should be labeled as a Shakespearean tragicomedy in which facets of both comedy and tragedy could be seen; for instance, grave tone which makes it tragic and mirthful scenes which finally makes it a tragicomedy. In addition, the critical function of violence as an inextricable facet of decolonization was analyzed via the lens of Franz Fanon who believes that the power in the hands of the colonizer will be taken away by the resistance of the colonized which finally causes the colonizer’s deposition. This article compared two controversial and contrasting interpretations of The Tempest; one from Stephen Greenblatt’s point of view, in which Prospero was presented as a responsible character and Caliban as a noble savage who to much extent lacked human attributes. However, Paul Brown presented a wholly different exegesis compared to that of Greenblatt when he claimed that Prospero was a malevolent character who even used the rape of his daughter for his own good.

Moreover it could be inferred that Prospero as colonizer in this play went to great lengths so as to inflict his authority on Caliban which was manifest through forcing Caliban as the colonized to learn his language but the result was shocking to him since Caliban used the language to curse him. Finally, this article attempted to show the ulterior ambiguity in The Tempest as a colonial play in which the colonized is at the same time both the object and subject in the eyes of the colonizer.
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