

Comparison of shakespeare the tempest, t.s. eliot the wasteland, and chinua acheb...

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



The Tempest is a play that involves a sea tempest that strikes a crew of men who were headed to Italy in a ship. They get scared and decide to neglect the ship since they see a potential of it being wrecked.

Prospero is a great scholar and therefore, becomes a powerful magician where Ariel is put under his service because he rescued him when he was ensnared in a tree by Sycorax, a witch. Ariel continues to be loyal to Prospero since he is promised of being freed from the airy spirit (Shakespeare 3).

Sycorax had been exiled in the island where she had lost her life before Prospero arrived there. She had a son, Caliban who is monster-like and the sole nonspiritual individual in the island prior to Prospero arrival.

Caliban guided Prospero on the survival in the island as he learnt religion and foreign language from Miranda and Prospero. However, Caliban tried to rape Miranda and therefore was demanded to become Prospero's slave causing him to grow resentment against the two, who observed him with contempt and dislike (Bloom 47).

In the opening of the play Prospero is the one who, had conjured the storm in a desire to entice his, brother Antonio and the king of Naples, Alonso. He had divined their presence in the ship nearing the island and triggers a tempest to wreck the ship (Shakespeare 25).

This divinity is manifested by a woman in The Waste Land who could read tarot cards and accurately predict the future. The crew are from Alonso's

daughter's wedding Claribel, who is married to King of Tunis a North African country.

The play features a North African country on a positive light just as Chinua Achebe's Umofia village in Nigeria, which depicts cultural richness and plenty of food and peace. Chinua Achebe also incorporates use of magical or spiritual powers for divinity.

Caliban encounters Trinculo and Stephano who are drunkards supposed to have come from the moon and the three rebel against Prospero but don't succeed. In a different setting, Prospero develops the romantic relationship between Ferdinand and Miranda who wins her love.

This worries Prospero who makes him his servant as a spy. On the other hand, Sebastian and Antonio pursue to murder Alonso as well as Gonzales for Sebastian to get the kingship. Following this, Ariel impedes them when Prospero demands so.

He becomes a harpy and reprimand then for betraying Prospero, who draws the enemies near him. Sebastian Alonso and Antonio who are the enemies appear before Prospero, who forgives them but give a warning against another act of disloyalty.

Ariel directs the entire crew through a fine weather, cruising to the Naples where Ferdinand and Miranda wed. Ariel is freed while Caliban is pardoned and the Alonso's crew is invited to the departure party from the island.

Prospero plans to keep them entertained with his encounters in the island and finally neglect his magic.

This act shows that Prospero realizes that magic cannot help him but he instead want to be freed from it. The tempest is a story line about romance and depicts Prospero as a rational being but uses magic to meet his selfish ends (Bloom 64).

The tempest has a sole, woman character as Miranda but it only slightly mentions Caliban's and the daughter to Alonso named Claribel. The play does not highlight on the role of women and it depicts Miranda as a woman who has no freedom and her father requires her to hold on chastity. Therefore, she is under the submission of her father.

Even the other women mentioned in the play are under subjugation since the reader becomes aware of their existence through the eyes of men. For instance, it is through Prospero that the reader is informed of Sycorax who is Caliban's mother through the two never met (Bloom 83). Therefore the woman is overlooked just as in Things Fall Apart.

The tempest depicts on the genre of romance, a fiction whose setting is distant from the real life. A remote island is inhabited by Prospero and Miranda, his daughter whom he desires to enhance her welfare through unjust tactics.

They have been stranded in the island for about twelve years due to the jealousy of his brother, Antonio being assisted by Alonso when they let

him adrift together with Miranda who was three years at that time (Shakespeare 5).

All the same, the king's counselor, Gonzalo had in secret stocked the boat with much food and water as well as clothing and reading materials from the library of Prospero. This is a utopian world such as that depicted by Chinua Achebe's *Things fall apart* where the Igbo are segregated in their own world.

Romance genre revolves around supernatural, wander, adventure as well as invention. Their settings are in the coast and are erotic fantasy and incorporate the theme of redemption or transgression. Besides, there is losing and retrieving as wells being in exile and reuniting.

It is under the influence of tragicomedy, which is arranged in a neoclassical style. Most importantly, the play portrays a post-colonial era and involves a utopian world where there is discovery of cannibals and might be discussing on the ethical issues relating to colonialism.

This is indicated through Utopia of Gonzalo, the enslaving of Caliban and his later anger. Caliban is a natural person who cannot be detached from the natural world and this way, there might be a reflection of being under the insulation of the European influences.

Prospero is depicted as the colonizer while Ariel and Caliban are the colonized fellows. Ariel symbolizes struggle against impacts of colonization on their cultural norms (Bloom 84).

The Waste Land is a poem, which portray a religious sentiment due to the rising limitless human sexuality. Sexual revolution was evident during the twentieth century yet, the poem is satirical yet prophetic on the issue.

It discusses death with statements such as " April is the cruelest month." (Eliot & Bloom 3) In the wasteland, there is a depiction of a woman enthroned splendidly in a drawing room, which is well decorated. During the Victorian society, the immorality heightened and the poem challenges this sexual revolution.

The initial part involves a man complaining of desolation " the dead tree gives no shelter." in the game of chess a neurotic wealthy woman is depicted and is under male subjugation, frustrated by aspects of sexuality, such as abortion and infidelity.

The fire sermon depicts meaningless sexual encounter of a typist and a contrast of Queen Elizabeth and her lover sailing in Thames River.

Death by Water is a part that depicts a fulfillment of predictions of the fortune teller while the final part depicts an impotent thunder since it is not followed by rain. A cock crow depicts rebirth but the rain, which comes on the ground as flood causes death by water which is an aspect depicted in the tempest (Miller 24).

The poem criticizes various European aspects maintaining that sexual immorality is an insult to the society. It marked various cultural and gender references though a conservative Christian point of view.

It is timely on the period following the First World War and instead of seeing the peace that was presumed in the society, the poet felt a sense of disunity and pessimism. This is similar to Achebe's view on colonialism where European influence is negatively highlighted on the Igbo community.

The poet is disillusioned with the contemporary society's sexual misuse. He is passionate and hateful of the moral degradation in the society and through the poem, frustration is evident and caused his ultimate nervous breakdown (Miller 43).

The feminine aristocratic figure in the burnished throne incorporates seasons and her infertility. There is a prophetic tone where there are childhood memories regarding a woman and negativistic epiphany that follows the meeting.

April should be a good breeding period after winter. This is painful since it triggers memories of the happier and fertility in the past. Winter is often regarded as time where most of activities are numb and silent preferred by many.

The childhood memories of Marie are painful since the luxurious life of pleasure has been subdued by ugly marks left after the war. Memories especially regarding the dead play an important part in the waste land. These past memories confront the present, which juxtapositions and reflect the moral degradation in the society.

Marie for instance, stays all night reading while detested politically and cannot engage in anything else. Reading is an act of the past to give way to an intelligible literary culture. Similar, memories of the past haunt Okonkwo who tries much to oppose effects of western imperialist on the village.

Following this is the unstable and satirical religious proposition where the waste land is termed as stony rubbish with 'broken images' (Eliot & Bloom 5). However, salvation is at hand, which gives light to new experiences. This is a prophetic stance, which scares since it is empty.

The speaker in the play is haunted by the past memories of a woman whom they had a romantic encounter. This confronts the present as the memories are luxurious with plenty of blooming flowers but a revelation that follows that depicts emptiness and gives a difference of the present and the past.

Most importantly, coherence in both situations is brought up as the emptiness of sexual degradation, where impotence is manifest. Irrespective of the pleasures experienced, there is nothing to show for it and this result to the desert waste land at hand.

The desert consideration shifts to the sea, reflecting nothingness as depicted by Tristan, who waits for Isolde for healing. However, she does not arrive since he had travelled by ship. Therefore, the ocean can offer nothing since it lacks potential to facilitate curative ability or a revelation (Miller 26).

From the third scene, transformation is evident where Madame Sosostris, a tarot reader identifies vague signs and interprets them as a prediction to be

fulfilled. This use of spiritual powers is used in the *Tempest* by Prospero and also by the Igbo in *Things fall Apart*.

A drowned sailor takes a transformation of the tarot pack to meet his ends. Like *The Tempest* magic becomes the ultimate potency of man to fulfill his desires and injustices. This is linked to an inexpensive mysticism that is carried out by Madame Sosostriis, who appears correct in her predictions.

This depicts a degraded religious mysticism where man has neglected spirituality into the modern European culture. Conversely, the Igbo have embraced Christianity to modify their living standards. Sexuality has turned sterile and meaningless. Regeneration is the only solution to the potency of the land (Miller 54).

In Chinua Achebe *Things fall apart*, the role of women and men are depicted as different. Women are subjugated in the Igbo village during the pre-colonial period. Males dominate the society where they degrade women through violence and they are enslaved as properties.

Besides, women engage in bearing and raising children. Using Okonkwo as the male protagonist, *Things Fall Apart* shows the influence of western colonization and struggle against it by Okonkwo. Okonkwo is in a dire need to fight feminine weaknesses manifested by his late father afraid to “become like a shivering old woman” (Achebe 72).

Okonkwo is also a polygamist and he violates women though beating even if they help to build his social status as a clansman in the village. Like the

tempest and the wasteland, magical powers are applied in the Igbo community since Oracle of Agbala is controlled by a priestess (Achebe 56).

The pre-colonial conservative Igbo community dawns into western civilization. The Europeans introduce Christianity in the village but face resistance from natives like Okonkwo. He desires to depict his masculinity to fight the foreigners.

Instead, the white missionaries have come to the village on a good course of enlightening them through education and Christian values. In the course of manifesting his masculinity, Okonkwo kills his adopted son Ikemefuna and a boy during a funeral ceremony.

He has a stubborn male pride that resists change in Umofia. He would rather commit suicide than see himself detained under the leadership of the white man. Okonkwo's egoistic nature and his irritability justify his foolish moves and this impetuous individualism triggers his downfall (Bloom 37).

Things Fall Apart reflects the socio-cultural situation for the Igbo in the nineteenth century as western imperialism seemed to threaten these values. Okonkwo prevents them as a village elder renowned for his successful wrestling, which gained him a lot of respect.

However, he uses his position as a clansman and his status to induce his own down fall. The native land is jealously guarded by Igbo just like in the tempest where Prospero and his crew moves from exile into the native land.

Similarly Okonkwo had been sent into exile after killing the son of a fellow kinsman but later had to return to his home in Umuofia. Things start to fall apart when Okonkwo defied the guidelines from Ezeudu who demanded that the oracle requires that Okonkwo should not kill Ikemefuna by himself.

He declines and during Ezeudu's death he strikes his sixteen year old son and kills him (Achebe 67). This makes him to be sent to exile for him to be atoned. The role of women is further stressed when Uchendu, Okonkwo uncle states that;

It is true that a child belongs to his father. But when the father beats his child, it seeks sympathy in its mother's hut. A man belongs to his fatherland when things are good and life is sweet. But when there is sorrow and bitterness, he finds refuge in his motherland. Your mother is there to protect you. She is buried there. And that is why we say that mother is supreme (Achebe 134).

When missionaries arrive in Mbanta, a new language is introduced. With the help of the interpreter Kiaga, the village can understand the missionaries message.

The Umuofia is a North African village in a country Nigeria and the pre-colonial people are depicted as naïve and conservative. Western imperialist obstructed the way of life of these villagers, interfering with even their political setups.

The Igbo have a well-founded social setup for instance wrestling, family and religious rituals dominated by the males while a woman is confined at home

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1958. Print.

Bloom, Harold. *Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart*. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2010. Print.

Bloom, Harold. *The Tempest*. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008. Print.

Eliot, T. S & Bloom, Harold. *The Waste Land*. New York: Infobase Publishing, 2007. Print.

Miller, James. *T. S. Eliot's Personal Wasteland: Exorcism of the Demons*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State Press, 1977. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Philadelphia: Classic Books Company, 2001. Print.