

# Colonialism and the tempest assignment



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Prosper intends to bring his brother to Justice for, through “foul play”, stealing his thrown and leaving him and baby Miranda to die by stranding them in the ocean. Prosper seeks to right the wrongs that have been dealt to him by reclaiming his thrown. The tempest at the beginning, which the play is named after, obviously holds very important significance. The treacherous storm represents the torment Prosper has lived through, and his desire to make them suffer just as they made him suffer. Yet he chooses not to kill them in the tempest, but leaves them unharmed at the end.

Such acts of mercy from Prosper prove that though he uses his magic to intimidate, in the end that is all he does, for he is compassionate at his core. Prosperous treatment of those who have wronged him speaks volumes for his nature as well as the themes of justice and reconciliation. Although Prosper has his enemies shipwrecked and at the mercy of the sea, he chooses not to kill them or make them truly suffer. He seeks to create an illusion of justice from which they will learn. This illusion of justice is seen when he makes Alonso believe that he has lost his “dear son Ferdinand”.

Even though Ferdinand is not truly dead, the illusion which Alonso is under evokes very real suffering, as evident when he cries, “I’ll seek him deeper than ever plummet sounded/And with him there lie muddied”. However, the fact that Prosper did not truly kill his son makes redemption possible, for once the illusion has been lifted, Alonso has learnt his lesson and harmony has been restored. When Ferdinand is found alive, Prosper creates an illusion of a miracle. Yet the true miracle is not his “rebirth,” but the forgiveness of all their sins.

The theme of forgiveness is just as vital to Shakespearean play as that of Justice. The tempest and the calm after it are the ultimate symbols of Justice and reconciliation in the piece. Shakespeare seems to lead the audience into the illusion that Prosperous power is his ability to use magic and control nature. However, when he renounces his magic at the end, it is evident that Prosperous true power lies in his ability to control Colonialism and The Tempest By dipsomania his vengeful impulses and reconcile his worst enemies.

Both the distance and the connections between the real and the illusory world generate an ambivalence that is strengthened by the ambiguous subjectivity of the island. The island is not wholly fantastical occupying an imaginary space; it is situated in the Mediterranean somewhere along the Naples-Tunis sea route yet reenacts a recent ship wreck off the Bermuda islands in the Atlantic, thus complicating its geographical co-ordinates. Nor does it conform to the topography of the region: it is an enchanted isle peopled with unearthly, sub-human beings belonging to the realm of fairy tales and folklore.

More significant is the fact that it does not seem to have a stable natural surrounding. Its sweet air; which is subtle, tender, and delicate invigorates Ferdinand and Adrian; Gonzalez, enamored by the lush and lusty' vegetation, longs to establish a ' commonwealth' there. For Clinical it is a treasure trove of fresh-water springs, berries, pigpens, crabs, marmoset, filberts and camels. But for Antonio and Sebastian the same ground is ' tawny', ' perfumed by a fen'.

Stephan and Triathlon follow Ariel blindly through '(toothed briars, sharp furze's, pricking goes into a filthy mantled pool)' reeking of horse-pips'. The musical magic of the island too appeals differently to different sensibilities. It restores Ferdinand spirits, brings remorse to Alonso, and lulls some to sleep while others remain impervious to it. Ariel's song that sounds like 'humming to Gonzalez, is identified as 'a hollow burst of bellowing', 'a din to fright a monster's ear' by Sebastian and Antonio.

The island is constructed subjectively by various perceptions leading to numerous, conflicting manifestations, all of which intensify the aura of radical ambivalence. The constant shape-shifting of the native inhabitants adds to the island's fantastic quality. Ariel metamorphoses into fire, water, wind, harpy, a nameless voice with equal felicity: he is indeed 'the picture of Nobody' and every-body. This leads us to question the efficacy of supernatural actions will the gods' blessings prove substantial for Ferdinand and Miranda or are they merely false promises made by an 'insubstantial pageant'?

Prosperous magic adds the final touch of the miraculous to this elusive, unreal fantasia. He orders natural disorder in more ways than one: he initiates the storm and then allays it to bring his enemies safely ashore, resurrects Ferdinand, Alonso and himself, and engineers a match between the future rulers to affect the miraculous reunion of Milan and Naples. In a play obsessed with issues of order and chaos, nature and nurture, Prosper is the prime mover encompassing all binaries to facilitate the realization of dreams collective and personal.

But his very omnipotence calls attention to the limits of romance as a vehicle of wish-fulfillment. The simple faith in men's (or the aristocrats') ability to regenerate themselves witnessed in the early pastoral plays like *As You Like It* now requires the magical aid of the supernatural and even then its effect is far from complete. In *As You Like It*, the community restructuring is total, everybody returns to the court refashioned and vested of previous ills. Jacques, who chooses to stay back in Arden, is no threat to the new social order.

In *The Tempest*, Prosperous magic fails to mould all; unregenerate Antonio and Sebastian accompany reformed Alonso and Prosper back to Milan and Naples, and Marina's inability to detect their potential disruptiveness signals dangerous times ahead. Also, where even magic fails to re-model all, what will happen to the brave new world when 'charms are all overthrown' (Epilogue 1) and Prosper no longer has access to magic? However, within the plays action-time Prosper is the enlightened magus whose power is derived as much from his magic as from the righteousness of his cause.

Moat's article provides useful information on the kind of studies engaged in by a Renaissance magician thus giving us an insight into the magical practices of the period. But Prosperous supremacy as a magician on the island is closely related to the legitimacy of his project the rewriting/righting of the wrongful usurpation of Milan by his evil brother Antonio. This prime project is endorsed to such a degree by the text that it seems to justify Prosper's manipulative handling of – characters not directly inked with the event, namely Ariel, Ferdinand and Miranda.

His personal stake in the recovery of Melamine dukedom is obscured by the pervading rhetoric of Justice, peace and order. Prosperous magic apparently works on behalf of a grand design dictated by the stars and it is extremely convenient that his individual gains coincide with it. The potency of Prosperous magic is further highlighted by its contrast with that of Scoria- it is good as opposed to evil, inclusive instead of Selfish, educative and benevolent rather than cruel and coercive. Corral's magic is weaker than Prosperous cause of its negative extra-magical associations.

Shakespeare insidiously extends this contrast to implicate magic in the racial and gendered discourse of the play by suggesting a natural dominance of the male European magus over the female non- European witch. The above strategy of privileging the set over the other, works to prioritize masculine rule over feminine authority in the British context as well. Both Macbeth and The Tempest the two Shakespearean plays dealing largely with supernatural rowers, designate female occult activities as diabolic.

Macbeth written within two ears of Sesame's accession in 1603 explores in great detail the potency of witchcraft and the defensiveness of the men subjected to it. Female authority is viewed as essentially disruptive and malevolent and empowered by non-sanctioned sources. But it undoubtedly has the power to direct the destiny of men. Patriarchal anxieties of being subject to a female sovereign, Elizabeth, seem to reverberate through the play. By the time The Tempest is staged (1611), James has cast off the shadow of inheritance through the female line and re-established male dominance in the lattice arena.

Prosper has similarly taken over from Scoria; her threatening authority is a distant memory, vanquished conclusively by Prosperous god-oriented magic. As Clinical admits, ' His art is of such power J It would control my dam's god Settees,/ And make a vassal of him' Magic, in The Tempest is therefore multifaceted: it provides the Spectacular effects of the storm and the masques, accentuates the attestation Witt the exotic it evil other, but it is integral to the operations of various kinds of power in the play-personal, patriarchal and colonial. Political, domestic,