



FROM PROSPERO TO THE PARLIAMENT: REPUBLICANISM'S ENDURING IMPACT

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Abstract

*Centuries ago, Man was born on this land as a free man. When he started learning things, there were many changes in modern man's living conditions. Gradually, a free human became captive to the monarchy, feudal aristocrats, etc. He learned many new things from all of these rulings. So, he wanted to make himself free from all. The word republic has a long history. In the modern world, the United States of America, India, and France are republic countries. The Shakespearean society did not imagine the survival of republicanism in their forthcoming future generations' societies. It was a thought in the plays of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*. It was not expressed directly, but a notion in these writings.*

There are several instances of such thoughts that were expressed in Shakespeare's drama "The Tempest". Prospero was in power without responsibility and made an alternative constitution to run the kingdom. He holds supernatural powers but uses them only for realization. The character Cannibal is a revolutionary figure who is neither entirely human nor a demon. It is a transitional body between half-man and half-beast. It needs a transition, which is an essential and integral one for the transformation of society. A textual analysis technique is employed in this research paper to address a distinct research question.

Key words

Prosper, Parliament, Shakespeare, republic, drama, Cannibal, half-man, transformation of society

Introduction

The research question "How do the themes of power, governance, and accountability in Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' inform our understanding of modern parliamentary democracy and the principles of republicanism?" is the guiding source in writing this article. His works often explore the complexities of power, governance, and politics, reflecting the tumultuous context of Elizabethan and Jacobean England (Bacon, 2008). In contrast, his plays do not completely or partially say anything about republicanism; they frequently engage with themes and

ideas that resonate with republican thought (Skinner, 2002). In the plays *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus*, he examines the agitations between the monarchical and republican forms of government (Pocock, 1975). These works are the result of Shakespeare's fascination with the Roman Republic. It is ideal for civic virtue, public service, and the rule of law (Arendt, 1958).

William Shakespeare is the bard in the portrayal of his characters. His characters Brutus and Cassius in *Julius Caesar* emphasize the republican ideology complexity, more particularly the struggle to balance individual interests with a common good (Nadler, 2011). In the same line, “Coriolanus” explores leadership challenges. It highlights the individual role in a republic, raising questions about the nature of power and accountability (Hadfield, 2004). Shakespeare's views on republicanism are nuanced and multifaceted. His works demonstrate a deep intellectual understanding of his contemporary time, which includes classical republicanism influence (Norbrook, 1999). The character Prospero in the play *The Tempest* embodies themes like power, authority, and governance. It is the reflection of early modern debates about political legitimacy and republican ideals (Hadfields, 2014).

Prospero, as the ruler, was exiled to a barren island. His control over his domain raises questions about sovereignty, its nature, and the relationship between the ruler and the subject (Greenblatt, 1980). The article mirrors how Shakespeare uses Prospero's character to employ republican ideas, particularly about consent, virtue, and the rule of law (Skinner, 2002). Examining Prospero's actions and decisions, the study aims to focus on Shakespeare's nuanced understanding of republicanism.

Hadfield indicated that the works of Shakespeare, such as *The Tempest*, demonstrate republican ideals through the character of Prospero. It is the embodiment of complex power and governance (Hadfield, 2004). Greenblatt provides insight into the Renaissance context that shaped Shakespeare's works.

Adam Tomkins' *Our Republican Constitution* posits that Britain's parliamentary system is rooted in republican principles, emphasizing popular sovereignty and accountability (Tomkins, 2005). He wishes the parliamentary democracy is more effective in defending popular sovereignty than other systems.

The relationship between the study of politics and literature in modern thought. Undoubtedly, Andrew Hadfield is the pioneer who raises the timely and challenging question of how republican thought was identified and explored in the writings of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare's age was predominant by vast and significant changes. The rise of the middle classes. The stable centralized government. The disappearance of medieval religious beliefs. The invention of the printing machine. These conditions made England into a modern nation. Shakespeare was living in a world that idealized self-realization and self-respect, and the boldness of thought and action produced a good number of plays with different subjects. His characters are intensely individual and dynamic. Powerful impulses conceive his dramatic situations. It may be considered that he has self-realization. The main objective of the research paper is to strengthen the thoughts of republicanism and its ideas during the Renaissance period in Shakespeare's *The*

Tempest. Prospero was in power without responsibility, an Alternative constitution to run the kingdom, Ariel and Caliban quest for freedom, and Prospero holds the powers but uses them for realization.

The textual analysis technique is adopted to pen this research paper, for the text from the play *The Tempest* is drawn and analyzed.

Republicanism is the ideology of governing society or a state as a republic, where the head of the state is appointed by means other than heredity, often through elections. Depending on the cultural and historical context, the meaning of republicanism varies. The term republic may indicate rule by many people and by law. It opposed monarchy. The republicanism developed during the Renaissance. It is known as classical republicanism during that period.

Republicanism was revived in Europe in the late Middle Ages. Knud Hakossen noted that in Europe, new republics appeared in the late Middle Ages. A number of small states embraced a republican system of government. These were small but wealthy, like Italian cities. But these were the cities with a sort of republican government without a constitution.

Shakespeare's work is distinguished from that of his contemporaries. No two plays are alike in his thirty-six plays, and no two plays create the same impression. Every play has its distinctive manner; he handled the most diverse subjects.

Shakespeare and republicanism consequently argue that we lose a vital literary and political history. We must cordon off Shakespeare's dramatic and poetic work from a cultural and intellectual context. Scholars have studied the rise of Tacitean history in the 1590s, the poetry and politics of the Leicester-Sidney Circle, and epic poetry in the anti-imperial tradition of Lucan. In his book, Andrew Hadfield ambitiously aims to close the gap between Shakespeare, whose political opinions often seem to be a matter of speculation and conjecture, and contemporaries, whose learning ideas seldom generate the same aura of mystery.

What critics might say about Prospero is that he is a symbol of metaphysical abstraction, or does Shakespeare speak through the mouth of Prospero? He is a human being with human failing and weakness, and he has that touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. It may not raise any direct thoughts of politics and the Constitution. Though it may not be a main study of politics, it reveals the relationship between politics and literature. For instance, Prospero was in power by giving administration to their brother. Here, we infer about politics and administration. In the modern period, several countries are flourishing with republican governments.

When we analyze the situation of Prospero and his brother Antonio, we see that Prospero was in power. He did not have the power to be his brother, but only the administration. He made some of the changes in his government to obey his brother's orders in his absence. It may be a sort of government, like the parliamentary democratic ruling, which Germany and India hold.

Shakespeare made Ariel and Caliban elemental beings. But Ariel of the higher order, with the love of freedom, and Caliban of the lower order, with the love of power, transform only. The president held the highest position in the country but rarely directly intervened in the administration. Thus, Prospero was in power in Milan.

Literature and republicanism

The Tempest raises many interesting issues about the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods.

Prospero's Republican Thoughts

*Thy father was the Duke Milan and
A prince of power* (Act I: Scene II)

In Act I: Scene II, Prospero explains to his daughter the story of the misfortunes that he and his daughter have experienced. But Miranda did not know what her father had told her. She learned from him that her father was the Duke of Milan twelve years ago. He was the most potent prince in Italy.

*Of all the world I loved, and to him put
The manage of my state, as at that time
Through all the signories it was the first,
And Prospero the Prime Duke, being reputed
In-dignity, and for all the liberal arts
Without a parallel, those being all my study,
The government I cast upon my brother* (Act I: Scene II)

Further, he enlightened his daughter that Milan was recognized as the first of all small kingdoms in Italy. Prospero, the first of the dukes, was celebrated for his position and rare, unrivaled intellectual accomplishments. He handed over the reign of government to his brother, Antonio.

*Being once perfected how to grant suits,
How do we deny them, who't advance, and who
To trash for over topping, new creator*
(Act-I: Scene-II)

When Antonio had mastered the art of administration, he wanted to grow and plotted the officers in the court against Prospero.

From the above, we can conclude that Prospero had liberal thoughts. He had formed a sort of government in which he was the supreme of the kingdom, but the administration was made by his brother, Antonio. We may consider that the government that Prospero formed was like a Presidential system. As the head of the kingdom, he played an almost purely ceremonial and apolitical role, such as in Germany and the Indian parliamentary democratic government. Surely, it was a sort of republican government that existed in some of the Italian cities in the pre-

Renaissance and Renaissance periods. Antonio was given the freedom to make any decision in administration. With this, his brother plotted against him.

Ariel and Caliban: Longing for Freedom

Ariel and Caliban insisted on their freedom. The following ibid supports the republican thoughts in *The Tempest*. During the conversation between Ariel and Prospero, Ariel insists on his liberty many times.

Pros: How now? Moody?

Ari: My liberty.

Pros: Before the time be out? No more?

Ari: Remember I have done the worthy service,

Told thee no lies, made no mistaking, served

Without or grudge or grumbling. Thou did promise

To bate me a full year

(Act I: Scene-II)

By growing impatient, Prospero asks Ariel what he wants. Then Ariel says that he did an excellent service to him and is loyal to him, and for that, Prospero promises to reduce his service by one full year and grants him freedom. Prospero accepts his request and wants to make him free once his tasks are completed; then, he will be free, and Prospero will be his taskmaster.

Caliban, too, insisted on his liberty.

I must eat my dinner.

This islan's mine by Sycorex, my mother,

Which thou tak'st for me. when thou com'st first

Thou strok'st me, and much of me; wouldst give me

Water with berries in't and teach me how

To name the beggar light and how the less

That burn day by day and night. And then I love thee

And whoed thee all the qualities o'th isel

The rebellious, obstinate Caliban tells Prospero that he has a right to eat dinner. The island was the inherited property of his mother, Sycorax. He condemns that he is with affection, which he had shown all the resources of the island to Prospero. In return, he was cursed and treated like a pig. But Caliban said that he was the first king of the island.

Caliban says

You taught me language, and my profit on't

Is I know how to curse?

When the play opens, Caliban is a slave. As an enslaved person, he hates his taskmaster, he hates all services, and thus, he further embodies the social ideas of the play, namely slavery and the revolt against slavery. Caliban

is an entirely a creature of the earth and grass and is brutal and savage. He regarded himself as the rightful possessor of the island. Prospero usurped his island from him and his mother. At a young age, he was on good terms with the usurper and consented to be received by the latter in his house and to be educated by him. But being capable of ill, there will be no print of goodness in him.

Caliban had learned human language to curse his master, whom he hates. According to Morten Luce, Caliban is not one but three. Professor Wilson accords that Caliban is a missing link between humans and animals. It seems that Shakespeare exhausted the world for characterization, imagining a new order of characters to express his feelings about his period.

Liberalism is the product of liberal thought. Shakespeare's low-order creation of Caliban, he was looking for the change of his taskmaster, but not for liberty. Caliban hated his master because he behaved like a monarch. He was not looking for the complete freedom but for a liberal master.

The pre-renaissance period was the transition period in which people had thoughts of the Medieval and Renaissance periods. Though Prospero had liberal thoughts, he could not control the inherited aristocratic character towards Caliban. We can consider the role played by Caliban and Prospero as an endless fight between the liberal and the monarch.

As a historian, Shakespeare created a new character unlike Hamlet or Macbeth. Prospero is mature and a genius. It symbolizes the maturity of Shakespeare. So, Prospero does not repent for his loss, but he wants to bring about a change in his brother.

As Prospero had liberal thoughts, he did not want to take revenge. His friendly and cooperative characters reveal that he is liberal. With liberal ideology, his brother plotted against him, and Ariel was promised a reduction of his one-year service and granted freedom when he left the island. However, the same liberal thoughts brought bitter results to him in the case of Caliban. Thus, *The Tempest* reveals the republican ideology of the Renaissance era in the form of Prospero, Ariel and Caliban.

Prospero is one of Shakespeare's more enigmatic protagonists. He is sympathetic in that his usurping brother wronged him, but his absolute power over the other characters and his overwrought speeches make him difficult to like. In our first glimpse of him, he appears puffed up and self-important, and his repeated insistence that Miranda pay attention suggests that his story is boring her. Once Prospero moves on to a subject other than his absorption in the pursuit of knowledge, Miranda's attention is riveted.

The pursuit of knowledge gets Prospero into trouble in the first place. By neglecting daily matters when he was duke, he gave his brother a chance to rise against him. His possession and use of magical knowledge render him extremely powerful and not entirely sympathetic. His punishments for Caliban are petty and vindictive, as he calls upon his spirits to pinch Caliban when he curses. He is defensively autocratic with Ariel. For example, when Ariel reminds his master of his promise to relieve him of his duties early if he performs them willingly, Prospero

bursts into fury and threatens to return him to his former imprisonment and torment. He is similarly unpleasant in his treatment of Ferdinand, leading him to his daughter and then imprisoning and enslaving him.

Despite his shortcomings as a man, however, Prospero is central to *The Tempest's* narrative. Prospero generates the plot of the play almost single-handedly, as his various schemes, spells, and manipulations all work as part of his grand design to achieve the play's happy ending. Watching Prospero work through *The Tempest* is like watching a dramatist create a play, building a story from the material at hand and developing his plot so that the resolution brings the world into line with his idea of goodness and justice. Many critics and readers of the play have interpreted Prospero as a surrogate for Shakespeare, enabling the audience to explore firsthand the ambiguities and ultimate wonder of the creative endeavour.

Prospero's final speech, in which he likens himself to a playwright by asking the audience for applause, strengthens this reading of the play and makes the play's final scene function as a moving celebration of creativity, humanity, and art. Prospero emerges as a likable and sympathetic figure in the final two acts of the play. In these acts, his love for Miranda, his forgiveness of his enemies, and the legitimately happy ending of his scheme create all work to mitigate some of the undesirable means he has used to achieve his happy ending. If Prospero sometimes seems autocratic, he ultimately manages to persuade the audience to share his understanding of the world. This achievement is, after all, the final goal of every author and every play.

Implications

The literature suggests that republicanism's enduring impact on modern governance lies in its emphasis on popular sovereignty, accountability, and parliamentary democracy. By examining Shakespeare's works through a republican lens, scholars can gain insights into the complexities of power and governance that remain relevant today.

Conclusions

The study interpretations are

- Shakespeare has liberal thoughts, so he expressed those in his play.
- Prospero was made great because of his liberal behaviour.
- Ariel was shown a great longing for freedom.
- Caliban quenches for freedom, but it is about transforming power from one taskmaster to another.
- Caliban's character reveals the socio-political issues of the Shakespearean age.

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