

BA. in English

Victoria University of Bangladesh

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Final Assessment

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Submitted By,

Submitted To,

Shahid Uddin Shuvo

Azimur Rashid Kanak

Reg. No: 1820450021

Lecturer, VUB

Ans to the ques No-1

Postcolonialism is the critical academic study of the cultural, political and economic legacy of colonialism and imperialism, focusing on the impact of human control and exploitation of colonized people and their lands. More specifically, it is a critical theory analysis of the history, culture, literature and discourse of imperial power.

Postcolonial literature is the literature by people from



formerly colonized countries. It exists on all continents except Antarctica. Postcolonial literature often addresses the ~~probrme~~ problems and consequences of the decolonization of a country, especially questions relating to the political and cultural independence of formerly subjugated people and theme such as racialism and colonialism. A range of

literary theory has evolved around the subject. It addresses the role of literature in perpetuating and challenging what postcolonial critic Edward Said refers to as cultural imperialism.

The Tempest begins with one of the most spectacular scenes in all of Shakespeare the storm at sea that threatens the vessel whose passengers include King Alonso of Naples, his son Ferdinand



and Prospero's hated brother  
Antonio, the usurping duke of  
Milan. Their life and death  
struggle enacted on stage is  
subjected to a double focus as  
Prospero reassures his daughter  
Miranda, distraught over the  
fate of the passengers and  
crew that he controls the  
tempest and that their danger  
is an illusion. The disaster,  
which he calls a spectacle is

artifice and the play establishes an analogy between Prospero's magic and the theatrical sleight of hand that initially seemed so realistic and thrilling. Prospero stands in for the artist here, Both magician and playwrights are conjurers, able to manipulate nature and make others believe in a reality without substance. The contrast between illusion and reality will be sounded throughout the play,



Prospero finally tells his daughter how they arrived on the island, how his brother Antonio, joined in a conspiracy with Alonso to usurp his place as duke of Milan, how 12 years before Prospero and Miranda were set adrift at sea, provisioned only by a compassionate Neapolitan, Gonzalo. Prospero therefore, will use his long studied magical arts to stage a reckoning for past offenses. The play proceeds under

Prospero's direction with a cast that either cooperates or complicates his intentions. Serving him are the ethereal Ariel, whom Prospero promises to free after completing his bidding and the contrasting his early and brutish Caliban, a witch's son.

Prospero, therefore, controls symbols of both sides of human nature, aspects of the imagination and fancy and baser instincts that come in conflict on the island as the play progresses.



It's hard not to see Prospero's magic as, on one level, a metaphor for Shakespeare's own art as a playwright. Both summon spirits, creatures of illusion and, to tighten up this parallel, both create performances involving actors. Just as Prospero uses his art to conjure Ceres, Juno, and the other figures who act in his masque, so Shakespeare uses his art to conjure Prospero himself. And art is even used in *The Tempest* to describe magic



Caliban describes Prospero's magic powers as an art stronger than the powers of Setebos, the god his mother Sycorax worshipped, just as we talk about the 'dark arts' of magic. Art meaning not only the arts, including play-writing and poetry but also more broadly, so, it's little surprise that critics have seen a touch of self-reflexivity in Prospero's abjuration or renunciation of his rough magic at the end of the play, just as Shakespeare is preparing to hang up his quill and stop writing for the theatre.