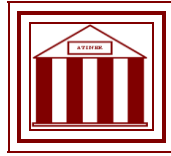


**Athens Institute for Education and Research
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**William Shakespeare's The Tempest:
A Story of Freedom, Friendship,
Repentance and Forgiveness**

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**William Shakespeare's The Tempest:
A Story of Freedom, Friendship, Repentance and Forgiveness¹**

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Abstract

The Tempest (1611) by William Shakespeare was first performed during the Elizabethan era on the 1 November 1611. It was not printed until 1623, 7 years after Shakespeare's death. His plays were recorded and published by two of his fellow actors John Hemmings and Henry Condell. The setting is on board of a ship on an unnamed island where 4 characters live before the other characters come after a shipwreck due to the storm – The Tempest. The human characters on the island are Prospero – a magician who is the rightful Duke of Milan and his daughter Miranda. There is a half-human, half-beast character called Caliban and Ariel, a sprite. This essay will discuss the idea of freedom, friendship, repentance and forgiveness. The discussion will be conducted by using Jean-Jacque Rousseau's Discourse on the Origins of Inequality (1755) to discuss the theme of slavery which can be comprehended in the text and how the master repents and the slave forgives. The issue of slavery and the idea of repentance and forgiveness will be discussed using the Christian and Islamic framework which discuss the two ideas in the Bible and the Al-Quran respectively as well as the hadith (the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)). The Tempest was written during the European Renaissance era – after the fall of the Muslim Empire in Spain. European literature shows how both religions have influenced the writings of the Enlightenment era. This paper will discuss this influence as well.

¹ This essay has been presented with a grant from Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Introduction

The Tempest (1611) by William Shakespeare was first performed during the Elizabethan era on the 1 November 1611. It was not printed until 1623, 7 years after Shakespeare's death. His plays were recorded and published by two of his fellow actors John Hemminges and Henry Condell. The setting is on board of a ship on an unnamed island where 4 characters live before the other characters come after a shipwreck due to the storm – The Tempest. The human characters on the island are Prospero – a magician who is the rightful Duke of Milan and his daughter Miranda. There is a half-human, half-beast character called Caliban and Ariel, a sprite. This essay will discuss the idea of freedom, friendship, repentance and forgiveness. The discussion will be conducted by using Jean-Jacque Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1755) to discuss the theme of slavery which can be comprehended in the text and how the master repents and the slave forgives. The issue of slavery and the idea of repentance and forgiveness will be discussed using the Christian and Islamic framework which discuss the two ideas in the Bible and the Al-Quran respectively as well as the hadith (the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)). *The Tempest* was written during the European Renaissance era – after the fall of the Muslim Empire in Spain. European literature shows how both religions have influenced the writings of the Enlightenment era. This paper will discuss this influence as well.

The Play

The play is about a king from Naples who lives on an island with his daughter Miranda and his slaves, a witch's son Caliban and Ariel an airy sprite. His kingdom was taken away from him by his brother, an usurper named Antonio. *The Tempest* although it was written hundreds of years ago is contemporaneous because it can be applied to modern day situations. It is stated that:

Many scholars argue that, along with Shakespeare's other late romances, The Tempest is a play about reconciliation, forgiveness, and faith in future generations to seal such reconciliation. However, while it is clear that the theme of forgiveness is at the heart of the drama, what is up for debate is to what extent the author realizes this forgiveness. An examination of the attitudes and actions of the major characters in the play, specifically Prospero, illustrates that there is little, if any, true forgiveness and reconciliation in The Tempest (<http://www.burstnet.com/ads/ad6493a-map.cg>).

This paper will try to determine to what extent there is forgiveness and reconciliation in the play.

It is a play that highlights human relationship with their fellow humans and human relationship with spirits. It is a political play. It does not only discuss the master-slave relationship, but also family relationships, and how even brothers cannot be trusted when the issue of power is involved. This is because power is equivalent to wealth. The saying “What would it gain man if he owned the whole world?” (Anon) can be questioned via the reading of this play.

Slavery

The polemic of slavery began ferociously during the era of the American slavery. The American slavery was pure black slavery which has resulted in the contemporary black-white tensions. According to M.I. Finley (1983: 11), “One commentator has recently remarked rather biting that because of the ‘coercion of the times’, every ‘new interpretation of slavery has professed to be more antiracist than the one it replaces’”. Thus, this essay will try to discuss the issue of slavery without any bias towards the master or the slave since these are the types of polemics that have been created by modern Western scholars of slavery. Finley further argues (1983: 12):

The moral spiritual approach has dominated the discussion of ancient slavery since the early nineteenth century and almost monopolized academic study (apart from ‘neutral’ antiquarianism), so much so that it is now the common view that modern interest in ancient slavery ‘awakened out of the idea of freedom in the eighteenth century and almost monopolized academic study (apart from ‘neutral’ antiquarianism), so much so that it is now the common view that modern interest in ancient slavery ‘awakened out of the idea of freedom in the eighteenth century with the beginning of modern social constructive criticism’, and that the climax of that initial impulse came in 1847 with the appearance of Henri Wallon’s Histoire de l’esclavage dans l’antiquité. When Wallon published his three volumes, he introduced them with a 164 page chapter on ‘Slavery in the Colonies’.

This research too will apply the moral spiritual approach to discuss slavery. However, the slavery that is discussed is Enlightenment slavery, written by Shakespeare in 17th century. It was introduced to the world by the Dutch. During this time in the Middle East especially in Arabia, Muslims had gradually ceased to practice slavery due to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Slaves were freed because Muhammad’s religion believed that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. Allah (the name for God in Arabic which means the one and only God) in the Al Quran the Muslim holy text repeats many times his decrees about the slaves and slavery as well as how they should be treated and why they should be set free.

Christianity and Islam are both divine religions. It is universal knowledge and Muslims have to believe that Christianity and Islam as well as Judaism are religions from the same God. They are all revealed to men by prophets chosen by God and each has holy text. God orders Muslims to have faith in all three, but to practice only teaching present in the al Quran. Both the Bible and the Al Quran advocate similar teachings, that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. Thus, like Islam, Christianity too does not advocate slavery. Finley argues the solution to slavery is abolition because it was an un-Christian institution . A tradition that corrupted slaves and masters as well and this spread to the entire society (1980: 13). According to Finley (1980: 13), “In 1847 abolitionism was a live issue in Europe. By 1879, however ... slavery had been banned in virtually all the New World colonies, abolitionism had become an issue of the past, a dead issue”.

What is slavery? According to William E. Channing (1968)²:

The slave-holder claims the slave as his Property. The very idea of a slave is, that he belongs to another, that he is bound to live and labor for another, to be another's instrument, and to make another's will his habitual law, however adverse to his own. Another owns him, and of course, has a right to ask him without his consent and to determine the kind and duration of his toil, a right to confine him to any bounds, a right to extort the required work by stripes, a right, in a word, to use him as a tool, without contract, against his will, and in denial of his right to dispose of himself or to use his power for his own good.

The above excerpt defines slavery in detail. A slave is owned by someone and he does not have the freedom to act as he pleases, neither does he have the right of speech. He works without being paid any wages. His food is provided by his owner and he is given clothes and living quarters in exchange for the work that he does for his owner. He is chattel to the slave holder. A slave is powerless even to conduct his own affairs or his family's affairs.

Channing argues that, “Now this claim of property in a human being altogether false, groundless. No such right of man in man can exist. A human being cannot be justly owned. To hold and treat him as property is to inflict a great wrong, to incur the guilt of oppression” (1968). Channing further states that he cannot prove his statement with evidence that it is wrong to treat human being as property. However, the text that was originally published in 1836, later argues on the grounds of religion that slavery is wrong. Channing postulates that all races are equal in the eyes of God. He states, “The Gospel was designed not for one race or for one time, but for all races and for all times”. As has been stated above, Christianity views human beings as equal. God through the Al-Quran, the Muslim holy book, also decrees that human beings are equal. In the verse titled An-Nisa, God decrees that men and women

² The page numbers for quotations taken from William E. Channing. 1968. Slavery and Emancipation. New York: Negro Universities Press cannot be put in this paper because the text does not have page numbers.

will be judged equally for their deeds in this world regardless of their gender,” And whoever does righteous good deeds, male or female, and is a true believer in the Oneness of Allah (Muslim), such will enter Paradise and not the least injustice, even to the size of a *Naqira* (speck on the back of a date-stone), will be done to them” (4:124). There is another verse in the Al Quran, Surah al-Hujurat that states, “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted” (49:13). It can be deciphered from this verse that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God, except those that prostrate to him the most.

Slavery in Islam is discussed in *Slavery in the History of Muslim Black Africa* by Humphrey J. Fisher (2001). According to Fisher (2001: 19):

The lynchpin , the lighthouse amid this sea of troubles, should be the fundamental rule, that no free Muslim can be made into a slave. This ruling ring-fences the Muslim community within black Africa: none of its free members may be enslaved. In the sole work known to have survived from al-Hajj Jibril. Usuman dan Fodio’s most respected teacher, the selling of free men ranks with adultery, wine drinking and manslaughter, among the things which “our people forbid”³.

Research shows that Islam, even in black Africa did not advocate slavery. To enslave a fellow human being is considered by Islam to be a deadly sin, as deadly as adultery or murder. Thus, like Christianity the Islamic doctrine does not advocate slavery. A free man was not allowed to be sold, and it was against the law to sell a free man. If there was a war and pagans became prisoners of war, they were asked to become Muslims. If they did not embrace Islam, then they were either turned into slaves or sold to slave holders.

Theory: Jean-Jacque Rousseau

Jean-Jacque Rousseau was born in Geneva on the 28 June 1712. He was a French writer and a political theorist of the Enlightenment and the romantic generation. Rousseau arrived in Paris in 1742 and befriended Denis Diderot who later became a famous philosopher like himself. Before he published serious work he was a famous composer. His first important philosophical text was ‘A Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts’ (1750) which discussed mainly the corruption of man due to society and civilization. ‘Discourse on the Origin of Inequality’ was published in 1755. The original man, according to him, though he lived alone was happy, noble and liberated. His writings show that he was a social critique. His ideas were profound because he was trained as a

³ Fisher has taken this information from A.D.H. Bivar and M. Hiskett, “The Arabic literature of Nigeria to 1804”, *Bull. School of Oriental and African Studies*. 1962, 143.

philosopher, and have influenced the world in many fields. This essay will use his work 'The Social Contract' and his discussion of slavery in order to discuss the Master-Slave relationship that is present in *The Tempest*.

In the 'Social Contract' Rousseau discusses the idea of slavery. He refers to Grotius and states, "Grotius denies that all human power is established in favor of those who are governed. He cites slavery as an example" (1975: 10). Later in the text he makes a reference to Aristotle. According to Rousseau:

...Aristotle had also said that men were not naturally equal, but that some were born to be slaves and others to be masters. Aristotle was right, but he mistook effect for cause. Nothing is more certain than any man born in slavery is born to be a slave. Slaves lose everything in their chains, even the desire to be free of the; they love their servitude as Ulysses' companions loved their brutishness. If then there are slaves by nature, it is because there were once slaves against nature. Force made the first slaves, and their cowardice perpetuated slavery" (1975: 10).

Rousseau also argues:

Even assuming that terrible right to kill everyone, I say that men enslaved in war, or conquered peoples, are under no obligation to their master; they must obey him only as long as they are forced to do so...Thus, no matter how we look at it, the right of enslavement is invalid, not only because it is illegitimate, but also because it is absurd and meaningless. The words "enslavement" and "right" are mutually contradictory: they exclude each other. It will always be nonsensical for a man to say to another man or to a people, "I make with you an agreement entirely at your expense and entirely to my advantage. I will keep it as long as I please, and you will keep it as long as I please" (1975: 15).

Rousseau contradicts Aristotle's statement who states that men were not born naturally equal, thus slavery is legitimate. Rousseau denies the theory that a slave has to follow the whims of his master, and states explicitly that a slave has a right to a voice. He criticizes the masters of slaves who take advantage of their slaves and do things at their expense.

Textual Analysis

Slavery

The *Tempest* is one of Shakespeare's masterpieces that portrays one of the ills in human society – slavery. It is a moral tale that is meant to educate the audience. It puts forth the idea that no being either human, supernatural or beastlike – half-human and half-beast as Caliban the slave is, who was born to a witch, should be treated with indignity and enslaved.

Prospero, an artful black magician who is the rightful Duke of Milan, turns both the sprite Ariel and the beast-like man Caliban into his slaves on the uninhabited island. His slaves have to suffer and follow his every whim. The relationship between man and man, and man and the supernatural is not equal. The Tempest portrays the extent to which a powerful man can stoop down to when he has ultimate power, without outer checks because on the island he is the only man in control of the fate and lives of his subjects. The discontent of his supernatural slave, Ariel the sprite is depicted in the quotation below,

Ari. Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains,/Let me remember thee what thou hast promis'd,/Which is not yet perform'd me.

Pros. What is 't thou canst demand?

Ari. My liberty.

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 242-246, pp. 25-28).*

Ariel tries to extract her liberty from Prospero. She reminds him of his promise. However, the cunning Prospero reminds her that it is not time yet,

Pros. Before the time be out? No more!

Ari. I prithee,/ Remember I have done thee worthy service; Told thee no lies, made no mistakings, serv'd/Without or grudge or grumblings: thou did promise/To bate me a full year.

Pros. Dost thou forget/From what a torment I did free thee?

Ari. No

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 247-252, pp. 25-28).*

When Ariel reminds Prospero of all the good deeds that she has performed while being his slave he dismisses them without a thought. He reminds her that he was the one responsible in freeing her from the clutches of a with name Sycorax, who was a worse master than he is.

Prospero's dialogue below with Ariel is a reminder of Aristotle's theory that is refuted by Rousseau. He states, "...Aristotle had also said that men were not naturally equal, but that some were born to be slaves and others to be masters" (Rousseau, 1975: 10).

Pros. Thou dost, and think'st it much to tread the ooze Of the salt deep, To run upon the sharp wind of the north,/To do me business in the veins o'th' earth/When it is bak'd with frost.

Ari. I do not, sir.

Pros. Thou liest, malignant thing! Hast thou forgot/The foul witch Sycorax, who with age and envy/Was grown into a hoop? hast thou forgot her ?

Ari. No, sir.

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 253-261, pp. 25-28).*

Prospero reminds his slave rather powerfully, like the master that he is of his slave Ariel, how he saved her from the witch Sycorax. The above quotation shows that he suffered in order to save his slave from the witch. Thus, she owes him her life.

Ariel's demand for freedom can be read using Aristotle's theory about slavery. He argues:

“Nothing is more certain than any man born in slavery is born to be a slave. Slaves lose everything in their chains, even the desire to be free of them; they love their servitude as Ulysses' companions loved their brutishness. If then there are slaves by nature, it is because there were once slaves against nature. Force made the first slaves, and their cowardice perpetuated slavery” (Aristotle quoted by Rousseau, 1975: 10).

Although, Ariel is not a human being, she has been enslaved by Prospero. Although the sprite was not born to a slave she was saved by her master from a witch that had enslaved her. Thus, the force of circumstances has made her into a slave.

The Ariel-Prospero relationship reminds us of Rousseau's statement that slaves are not bound to obligate their masters. Although Rousseau talks about men and Shakespeare cleverly portrays the master-slave relationship between a man and a supernatural being Rousseau's theory can be used to read the text. Although Shakespeare wrote before Rousseau he might have been aware of the criticism that surrounded the human slavery institution. Thus, with the cunning, brilliance and expertise that he possessed he only portrayed a supernatural being and the son of a witch – half-man, half-beast Caliban as Prospero's slaves. Rousseau argues that:

Even assuming that terrible right to kill everyone, I say that men enslaved in war, or conquered peoples, are under no obligation to their master; they must obey him only as long as they are forced to do so...Thus, no matter how we look at it, the right of enslavement is invalid, not only because it is illegitimate, but also because it is absurd and meaningless. The words “enslavement” and “right” are mutually contradictory: they exclude each other. It will always be nonsensical for a man to say to another man or to a people, “I make with you an agreement entirely at your expense and entirely to my advantage. I will keep it as long as I please, and you will keep it as long as I please” (1975: 15).

The Tempest shows that Ariel, the slave was totally under the power of her master. She is not given a right to refute her master, much less demand her liberty from him. Rousseau's theory reflects the ills of traditional slavery, because he wrote more than a 100 years after Shakespeare's The Tempest was performed. Shakespeare was not only an entertainer, he social scientist, but because the Queen of England was his patron his work shows that he tried to please the Queen and her people more than criticize the ills of his society.

Rousseau was born and wrote in different era, where people had started to question the rulers' motives and agenda.

The Caliban-Prospero relationship begins with his birth. The text depicts Caliban's birth as such:

*Pros. This blue-ey'd hag was hither brought with child,/And here was left
by th'sailors.Thou, my slave,/ As thou report'st thyself, wa sthen her
servant;/And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate/To act her earthy and
abhorr'd commands,/Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,/By
help of her more potent ministers,/And in her most unmitigable rage,/Into
a cloven pine; within which rift/Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain/A
dozen years; within which space she died,/And left thee there; where thou
didst vent thy groans/As fast as mill-wheels strike./Then was this island –
/Save for the son that she did litter here,/A freckled whelp hag-born – not
honour'd with/ A human shape.*

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 242-283, pp. 25-28).*

Above is the physical description of Caliban. It can be read that Shakespeare via Prospero postulate the idea that a beast can be turned into a slave. More so because he is a witch's son. Thus, Shakespeare condemns witchcraft. The Tempest has a dual purpose, it is a critique of witches and witchcraft, but at the same time it tries to reason with the idea of slavery, and offers the West a solution to their conscience, that although slavery is an ill, it is not so when those enslaved are less than humans or are children of black magicians.

Caliban the slave suffers under the enslavement of Prospero. He is more tortured than Ariel. Ariel is depicted as beautiful, but Caliban represents the ugliness of a child born from the womb of a woman who practiced witchcraft. The indignity that Prospero treats him with is shown in the quotation below:

*Cal. As wicked dew as e'er my mother brush'd/With raven's feather from
unwholesome fen/Drop on you both! A south-west blow on ye/And blister
you all o'er!*
*Pros. For this, be sure, to-night thou shalt have cramps,/Side-stitches that
that shall pen thy breath up; urchins/ Shall, for that vast of night that they
may work,/All exercise on thee; thou shalt be pinch'd/As thick as
honeycomb, each pinch more stinging/Than bees that made 'em.*

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 323-331, pp.30-33).*

Caliban enters the act with curse for both Ariel and Prospero. Although he is seen as a victim, but his attitude makes us question whether it is not right for

Prospero to treat him the way he is treated. Prospero retaliates to Caliban's curse with more curses for Caliban.

Caliban's attitude is not of a typical slave that would bow down to his master's curses and orders. This may be due to the fact that he is used to them and retaliates in his own way as much as he can. The answer to Prospero's curses from Caliban is:

Cal. I must eat my dinner./This island's mine, by Syrocax my mother,/Which thou tak'st from me. 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'th'isle,/The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:/Cur'sd 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 keep me/The rest o'th'island.

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 332-343, pp.30-33).*

Caliban the slave is given agency by Shakespeare. His voice and arguments depict that he is using them to demand his right to freedom from enslavement. He states that he **must** eat his dinner and he also does not forget to remind Prospero the alien on the island that it is his because it was his mother's. Caliban tells Prospero that he took advantage of his innocence and trust in him. He also states that he is the only subject that Prospero has. The magician colonized Caliban's island and tuned him into a slave. The rightful king of the island is Caliban. Prospero took advantage of his ugliness and trustworthy character in order to enslave him and control him.

Prospero and his daughter Miranda retaliates to Caliban's taunts. The quotation below shows this:

Pros. Thou most lying slave,/Whom stripes may move, not kindness! I have us'd thee,/Filth as thou art, with human care; and lodg'd thee/In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate/The honour of my child.

Cal. O ho, O ho! Would't had been done!Thou didst prevent me; I had peopled else/this isle with Calibans.

Mir. Abhorred slave,/Which any print of goodness wilt not take,/Being capable of all ill!I pitied thee,/ Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour/One thing or other: when thou didst not, savage,/Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like/A thing most brutish,I endow'd thy purposes/With words that made them known but thy vile race,/Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures/Could not abide to be with;/therefore wast thou/Deservedly confin'd into this rock,/Who hadst deserv'd more than a prison.

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 344-359, pp.30-33).*

Prospero says that he has treated Caliban with kindness all his life. Miranda scolds him by saying that he owes her his language skills. The dialogue between Caliban and his master and mistress show that he is lonely and wants companions that are similar to him to socialize and live with. He says if Prospero had not prevented it, he would have populated the island with his children.

Caliban's next dialogue shows the innocence of a slave that has been brought up and enslaved alone without companions. His only companion is the girl Miranda. Thus, he thinks like a child and banters like it too.

*Cal. You taught me language; and my profit on't/Is, I know how to curse.
The red plague rid you/ Fir learning me your language!*

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest: Lines 360-362, pp.30-33).*

He taunts Prospero and Miranda by saying that the language that he has been taught is a profit to him, because he can use it to curse them with. He curse the plague on for making him learn the language. His sorrow of being a slave is evident, and is portrayed through his curses. Shakespeare projects the idea that although a slave does his master's bidding he is never happy.

Is there Friendship?

The Tempest shows us that a slave and a master can very seldom become friends. This evident through the Prospero-Caliban relationship. Prospero falls into Caliban's trap and becomes a prisoner. The drama portrays that the slave takes over and imprisons his master that he believes has tortured him all his life and taken away his rights from him. He complains to his new found friends, Trinculo, a jester and Stephano, a drunken butler, that his master did not treat him well, and took away his island from him. Thus, he plots with them to overthrow Prospero and, becomes their slave in order to execute his plan.

*Cal. I say by sorcery he got this isle;
From me he got it. If thy greatness will
Revenge it on him, - for I know thou dar, st,
But this thing dare not, -*

The Tempest shows that slaves have a tendency to revolt. Revolt used to be the last thing that slaves used to do against their masters. The most common slave resistance was running away. However, Caliban does not do that, because he knows that the island is his, and Prospero is merely an invader who took over the island and his life. Thus, when he gets the chance Caliban turns against his master and tries to destroy him.

Freedom, Repentance and Forgiveness

Prospero suffers in the hands of Caliban and his friends. He repents and in the end Prospero prepares to leave the island. He releases all his victims including Ariel and Caliban from his charms that he has used to enslave them. He employs Ariel's help to gather all his victims and chants a spell to release them from his slavery,

Pros. And mine shall./Hast thou, which art but air, a touch, a feeling/Of their afflictions, and shall not myself,/One of their kind, that relish all as sharply/Passion as they, be kindlier mov'd than thou art?/Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick/Yet with my nobler reason 'gainst my fury/Do I take part: the rarer action is/In virtue than in vengeance: they being penitent,/The sole drift of my purpose doth extend/Not a frown further. Go release them, Ariel:/My charms I'll break, their senses I'll restore,/And they shall be themselves.

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest, Act 4, Scene 1: Lines 20-30, pp.113-114)*

Prospero chooses to forgive even Caliban, his slave that revolted against him. This can be read in his statement, "Though with their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick (William Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act 4, Scene 1: Lines 22-23, pp.113-114).

Caliban repents his misdeed against Prospero. Although his master releases him, he is not forgiven. The master still holds the upper hand, and decides to leave the island.

Pros. He is disproportion'd in his manners/As in his shape. Go, sirrah, to my cell;/Take with you your companions; as you look/ To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.

Cal. Ay, that I will; I'll be wise hereafter,/ And seek for grace. What a thrice-double ass/Was I, to take this drunkard for a god,/And worship this dull fool!

*(William Shakespeare,
The Tempest, Act 4, Scene 1: Lines 290-297, p.131).*

The Tempest is a play that interests many scholars because of its universal themes. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica:

Forgiveness has over the past quarter century engendered the interest of scholars and practitioners in such disparate fields as psychology, law, politics, international affairs, sociology, and philosophy... Generally regarded as a positive response to human wrongdoing, forgiveness is a conceptually, psychologically, and morally complex phenomenon. There is

disagreement over the meaning of forgiveness, its relation to apparent cognates, the psychological, behavioral, and normative dimensions of forgiveness, and when and under what conditions forgiveness is morally permissible, required, or wrong.

(The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy is <http://plato.stanford.edu>/retrieved 20 February 2015).

Forgiveness does not occur without the repentance of the wrong doer. A person repents because he has suffered either physically or emotionally.

Islam like Christianity too advocates forgiveness. According to Islam forgiveness does not occur before repentance does. However, it is not necessary that if human being forgive that God shall. When a man sins against his fellow humans, he must ask for forgiveness from his fellow human beings, but it is not necessary that God will forgive him. Forgiveness in Islam only occurs when the wrong doer does not repeat his mistake again.

The Stanford Encyclopaedia further defines forgiven:

From the ancient Greeks through the Hebrew and Christian Bibles to the present day, forgiveness has typically been regarded as a personal response to having been injured or wronged, or as a condition one seeks or hopes is bestowed upon one for having wronged someone else. The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'forgivable,' the first entry under the general term 'forgive,' as that which "may be forgiven, pardonable, excusable," referring thereby to the quality of deserving to be forgiven. This sense is illustrated in Jesus' appeal "God forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34), which suggests that ignorance is sometimes a condition that negates or tempers culpability, rendering wrongdoers forgivable. Notwithstanding the association with excusing conditions, forgiving is not, strictly speaking, equivalent to excusing. For wrongdoing that is excused entirely there is nothing to forgive, since wrongs that are fully excused are not blameworthy or culpable. And although excuses that mitigate, rather than negate, culpability, may serve as a rationale for forgiveness, they are not the same as forgiveness.

(The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy is <http://plato.stanford.edu>/retrieved 20 February 2015).

Thus, Christianity and Islam believe in forgiveness. Both religions believe that if a misconduct is done due to ignorance then the person will be forgiven. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and other plays are accepted and performed worldwide because of the moral that they instill in their audience. Shakespeare approaches religion at a universal level. *The Tempest* is prove of it. It is also prove that wickedness begets wickedness. If a person is treated with indignity, it is very difficult for him to forgive thus eventually he revolts. Repentance in *The Tempest* does not mean forgiveness.

Conclusion

The Tempest teaches us that slaves need to be treated with dignity no matter what their form is. However it also conveys the idea that a child born from a wicked woman's womb will turn out to be wicked. Nevertheless, this idea is arguable because Prospero the master did not treat Caliban his slave with dignity and used black magic in order to subdue him. His mother was killed and his home as well himself was colonized by Prospero. Caliban, the native of the island refuses to leave it because he knows that he is the rightful inhabitant of the island and has a right to freedom and to rule his island.

However, as it has been discussed the way Caliban plots and plans against Prospero in order to overthrow him, and take over the island is unforgivable. Thus, in the end when Prospero leaves the island he sets both Ariel and Caliban free, however he refuses to forgive Caliban, while he has good prayers for Ariel who helps him to overthrow Caliban and break the black magic that Prospero put on his slaves as well as unseen creatures.

Prospero repents in the end. That is why he releases all the creatures on the island from his black magic. As has been discussed in the essay ultimate power corrupts, especially when there are no outer checks. Prospero colonized the island and islanders without help from his fellow human beings. He only employed black magic and it made him feel powerful, thus all the mistakes that he made against Caliban, which made him revolt. *The Tempest* teaches us that beings, no matter what they are should be respected. If this is not done the victims revolt against the perpetrators.

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