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Abstract	<p>□ John Warburton (1682-1759), a herald and collector of many plays, seems to have attached little importance to masques, arguing that "Shakespeare was an enemy to these fooleries, as appears by his writing none." Against this line of argument Isaac D'Israeli (1766-1848) noted : "Warburton forgot that Shakespeare characteristi-cally introduces one in The Tempest's most fanciful scene." The question is thus posed as to what kind of masque-like elements can be indeed recognized in The Tempest. Firstly, there is the banquet scene in Act III, Scene iii, 18-82. To the accompaniment of solemn and strange music, spirits set a sumptuous banquet table before the gaze of Alonso and his crew. Just they are about to eat the dishes that have been set before them, the table is cleared away suddenly by Ariel, who charges them with their criminal act. In IV, i, 60-139 Ariel is told to present a little masque. In front of an audience of Miranda and Ferdinand, Ariel conjures up the spirits such as Iris, goddess of the rainbow, Ceres, goddess of fertility, and Juno, queen of heaven, and presents a dance of Naiads, nymphs of the brooks and the reapers. Towards its conclusion the graceful dance is oddly disrupted and the spirits disappear in a disorderly mirage. Next, there is the subsequent interlude, which functions as an anti-masque, wherein Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano are hounded by dogs for the crime of stealing garish costumes. Lastly, in Act VI, i, 172-74 the chess scene comprises "the inner stage," which can be seen as a part of the main "masque." However, Miranda makes critical comments on the way Ferdinand plays the game, disparaging the perfect status of ideal couples like them. More-over, they are so engrossed in their own business that the courtiers are unable to pay their respects to them, as if the couple rejects the idea of becoming an icon of worship. Considering that the structure of the masque characteristically pro-gresses from chaos to order, or from anarchy to harmony, how does The Tempest evolve as regards to structure? In light of the entire work, with Alonso and his company deemed as anti-maskers, we can under-stand chaos and selfishness come to be restrained and order and harmony are thereby restored to the nation thanks to wisdom and virtue. It is certain there is more than a little affinity between this play and the court masque. But the order restored by Prospero is incomplete since the former enemies forgiven by him are not fully under his control. Russ McDonald contends: "The forces of evil cannot be thoroughly accommodated and may not even be subjugated. Antonio's menacing silence in the final moments, which everyone noticed, is surely a Shakespearean caveat to the final harmony." However, it is not clear whether the play provides us with any clues as to the unity that Prospero might ultimately achieve. Conversely, one can say that it has the tone of a tragedy, and lacks the resolution that would mark a masque culminating in prosperity, security, and triumph. In other words, it signals a storm, or a social strife awaiting the hero that lingers even at the close of the drama. Related to the festive ceremonies of the court, masques are perfor-med for the elite members of the</p>

	upper echelon of the social hierarchy, thereby suggesting that the monarch of transcendental power governs everyone and is the centre of everything in the universe. Of particular importance was the marriage of a royal couple, which might have occasioned entertainment such as in the form of a masque. Such entertainment has an emblematic significance of harmony, unity and reconciliation of opposites within society. According to historical records concerning The Tempest, it was acted on Hallowmas nyght, 1 November 1611 in the banqueting-house of Whitehall Palace. This performance is thought to be one of the earliest, if not the first staging of The Tempest. As an entertainment to celebrate the engagement of Lady Elizabeth, King James' daughter (1595-1662) and Frederick V, Elector Palatine (1596-1632), it was performed again there during the winter of 1612-13 when Frederick was visiting England. On 18 October 1612 he arrived in London, got engaged to her, and on 14 February 1613 they held a wedding ceremony. It is known that at the second performance of The Tempest in Whitehall Elizabeth, Frederick, and Prince Charles (1600-49) were among the spectators, and they would have been undoubtedly seated beside the King, his Queen and Henry, Prince of Wales (1594-1612). While bearing this in mind, I would like to explore masque-like characteristics of The Tempest. After analyzing the process of transformation in Prospero, I will consider elements of Misrule seen in this play, and then make a comparison with Hymenaei (act. 1606), one of Ben Jonson's court masques.
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# *The Tempest* : Elements of the Masque

Katsuya Hiromoto

John Warburton (1682-1759), a herald and collector of many plays, seems to have attached little importance to masques, arguing that "Shakespeare was an enemy to these fooleries, as appears by his writing none."<sup>1</sup> Against this line of argument Isaac D'Israeli (1766-1848) noted: "Warburton forgot that Shakespeare characteristically introduces one in *The Tempest*'s most fanciful scene."<sup>2</sup> The question is thus posed as to what kind of masque-like elements can be indeed recognized in *The Tempest*. Firstly, there is the banquet scene in Act III, Scene iii, 18-82. To the accompaniment of solemn and strange music, spirits set a sumptuous banquet table before the gaze of Alonso and his crew. Just they are about to eat the dishes that have been set before them, the table is cleared away suddenly by Ariel, who charges

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\* All citations of *The Tempest* and Jonson's works are from the following editions: *The Arden Edition of the Works of William Shakespeare: The Tempest*, ed. Frank Kermode (London: Methuen, 1954; 1964). *Ben Jonson: The Complete Masques*, ed. Stephen Orgel (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1969; 1975).

<sup>1</sup> Isaac D'Israeli, *Curiosities of Literature*, vol. 3 (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, 1863), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *loc. cit.*

them with their criminal act.

In IV, i, 60-139 Ariel is told to present a little masque. In front of an audience of Miranda and Ferdinand, Ariel conjures up the spirits such as Iris, goddess of the rainbow, Ceres, goddess of fertility, and Juno, queen of heaven, and presents a dance of Naiads, nymphs of the brooks and the reapers. Towards its conclusion the graceful dance is oddly disrupted and the spirits disappear in a disorderly mirage. Next, there is the subsequent interlude, which functions as an anti-masque, wherein Caliban, Trinculo and Stephano are hounded by dogs for the crime of stealing garish costumes.

Lastly, in Act VI, i, 172-74 the chess scene comprises "the inner stage,"<sup>3</sup> which can be seen as a part of the main "masque." However, Miranda makes critical comments on the way Ferdinand plays the game, disparaging the perfect status of ideal couples like them. Moreover, they are so engrossed in their own business that the courtiers are unable to pay their respects to them, as if the couple rejects the idea of becoming an icon of worship.<sup>4</sup>

Considering that the structure of the masque characteristically progresses from chaos to order, or from anarchy to harmony, how does *The Tempest* evolve as regards to structure? In light of the entire work, with Alonso and his company deemed as anti-maskers, we can understand chaos and selfishness come to be restrained and order and harmony are thereby restored to the nation thanks to wisdom and

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<sup>3</sup> Enid Welsford, *The Court Masque* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1927), p. 340.

<sup>4</sup> See David Lindley, "Music, masque and meaning in *The Tempest*," *The court masque*, ed. David Lindley (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1984), p. 54.

virtue. It is certain there is more than a little affinity between this play and the court masque. But the order restored by Prospero is incomplete since the former enemies forgiven by him are not fully under his control.<sup>5</sup> Russ McDonald contends: "The forces of evil cannot be thoroughly accommodated and may not even be subjugated. Antonio's menacing silence in the final moments, which everyone noticed, is surely a Shakespearean caveat to the final harmony."<sup>6</sup> However, it is not clear whether the play provides us with any clues as to the unity that Prospero might ultimately achieve. Conversely, one can say that it has the tone of a tragedy,<sup>7</sup> and lacks the resolution that would mark a masque culminating in prosperity, security, and triumph. In other words, it signals a storm, or a social strife awaiting the hero that lingers even at the close of the drama.

Related to the festive ceremonies of the court, masques are performed for the elite members of the upper echelon of the social hierarchy, thereby suggesting that the monarch of transcendental power governs everyone and is the centre of everything in the universe.

Of particular importance was the marriage of a royal couple, which might have occasioned entertainment such as in the form of a masque. Such entertainment has an emblematic significance of harmony, unity and reconciliation of opposites within society. According to historical records concerning *The Tempest*, it was acted on Hallowmas nyght, 1 November 1611 in the banqueting-house of Whitehall Palace. This

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<sup>5</sup> See Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare & Jonson / Jonson & Shakespeare* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1988), pp. 152-53.

<sup>6</sup> McDonald, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup> See Nicholas Grene, *Shakespeare, Jonson, Molière : The Comic Contract* (London : Macmillan, 1980 ; 1985), p. 66.

performance is thought to be one of the earliest, if not the first staging of *The Tempest*. As an entertainment to celebrate the engagement of Lady Elizabeth, King James' daughter (1595-1662) and Frederick V, Elector Palatine (1596-1632), it was performed again there during the winter of 1612-13 when Frederick was visiting England. On 18 October 1612 he arrived in London, got engaged to her, and on 14 February 1613 they held a wedding ceremony. It is known that at the second performance of *The Tempest* in Whitehall Elizabeth, Frederick, and Prince Charles (1600-49) were among the spectators, and they would have been undoubtedly seated beside the King, his Queen and Henry, Prince of Wales (1594-1612).

While bearing this in mind, I would like to explore masque-like characteristics of *The Tempest*. After analyzing the process of transformation in Prospero, I will consider elements of Misrule seen in this play, and then make a comparison with *Hymenaei* (act. 1606), one of Ben Jonson's court masques.

## I. Transformations of Prospero

At the conclusion of a masque, the players remove their masks to disclose their identity, which poses the question as to whether a similar change can be seen in *The Tempest*. It is evident that Prospero, for one, undergoes a process of transformation on several occasions.

Prior to the start of the play, Prospero is a wretched drifter, having been banished from his own country. He settles on the island, but is not accredited with the official status to govern it. We could liken Prospero to the owner of a plantation who uses labourers for tilling and logging, but who is not endowed with political authority or officialdom as he is not a colonist but rather a mere settler.<sup>8</sup>

William Strachey (?1552-?1634) is known to have sailed to the New World as secretary to the Governor of the Virginia colony. The vessel he was sailing in was shipwrecked off the coast of Bermuda. A letter he wrote to an English noblewoman, perhaps Lucy, the Countess of Bedford, was later made into an account of the entire accident. Shakespeare appears to have read this account in this form and adopted it as one source for his play. Philip Brockbank contended that Strachey as the "Governor with his authority" influenced Shakespeare's shaping of Prospero.<sup>9</sup> Still, we should note that Prospero has no office with authority appointed to him by his country, a fact which represents one point of divergence from the Strachey model. Throughout the main evolution of the drama from the beginning to V, i, 87 Prospero plays the role of a magician living in a cell. In Shakespeare's England, people such as Simon Forman (1552-1611) and John Dee (1527-1608) achieved renown as magicians, despite having studied astrology and alternative medicine, in the case of Forman, and alchemy and astrology, in the case of Dee. Both strike us as somewhat dubious characters connected in some fashion to sorcery. In Prospero's character as the governor of darkness, we can see that he shares something in common with these two.<sup>10</sup> Prospero as a magician he is neither a monarch,

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<sup>8</sup> Linda Woodbridge, *The Scythe of Saturn* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 74; p. 81.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Brockbank, "'The Tempest': Conventions of Art and Empire," *Later Shakespeare*, ed. John R. Brown and Bernard Harris (London: Arnold, 1966), pp. 186-87.

<sup>10</sup> See David Wiles, *Shakespeare's Almanac: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Marriage and the Elizabethan Calendar* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1993); Lindley, p. 57.

nobleman or government official, but merely a commoner marginalized outside the court.

At V, i, 50ff. Prospero makes clear he will discard his disguise:

. . . But this rough magic  
 I here abjure; and, when I have requir'd  
 Some heavenly music,—which even now I do,—  
 To work mine end upon their senses, that  
 This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,  
 Bury it certain fadoms in the earth,  
 And deeper than did ever plummet sound  
 I'll drown my book. (V, i, 50-57)

Upon saying this, he begins to remove his magician's gown and changes into a courtier:

. . . Ariel,  
 Fetch me the hat and rapier in my cell:  
 I will discase me, and myself present  
 As I was sometime Milan . . . (83-86)

Thus he appears in front of everyone on the stage as "The wronged Duke of Milan." (108) At this juncture, however, he is not restored to the dukedom, but returns instead to the status he had as an exile. He makes himself known as a former duke, whereas Antonio, his brother is silent about whether he will follow the lead of Prospero who has opened the court on the island. In fact, whether he has a secure footing in Milan or not remains to be seen.



He goes on to forsake magic as predicted. If magic is a metaphor of academic learning, this suggests to us that we should interpret this act as a sign that he has decided to more positively involve himself in the political scene and that he has decided not to confine himself to study. Another interpretation is that Shakespeare paints him as a man who leaves the mythological world for reality, thereby making himself vulnerable to the vagaries of life with no recourse to *deus ex machina*—a common device seen in the masque.

During the Epilogue, he undergoes another transformation on the stage. Although he does not change his costume at this point, he is not the Duke of Milan, but evidently a play actor playing a role, a fact revealed by his speaking directly to the audience. In this case “magic” can be understood as the stage art that engages players in acting out their parts, and thus capturing our imagination.

According to Glynne Wickham, “the closing scene and Epilogue serve . . . as an apotheosis of the sovereign before the eyes of an assembled Court,” reminding us of King James’ diplomatic urge to “wage peace, not war.”<sup>11</sup> His remarks may be applied to the general characteristics of the court masque, which starts off with the entry of the King and ends with participants’ praising him and showing their gratitude for his patronage, and with their declaration that they are all created by the King. In the same way that the performers reveal their identity at the end of the masque, the hero of *The Tempest* shows himself, but the implication is that he is a creature of the ordinary citizens who have come to the commercial theatre rather than a

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<sup>11</sup> Glynne Wickham, “Masque and Anti-masque in ‘The Tempest,’” *Essays and Studies*, vol. 28 (1975), p. 13.

King's at his Court. Therefore, *The Tempest* is quite different from the court masque, as it rejects the idea of apotheosis absolutely, and has a protagonist who discards his supernatural power and abandons the make-believe world.

This stance is presumably taken because the play was first shown in the commercial theatre of Southwark, perhaps the Blackfriars, prior to moving to Whitehall, and the Epilogue was initially addressed to a paying audience, whose admission fee helped the theatre company stay in business. We can see it is not the sovereign but the common people that are the lifeblood of the stage when Prospero asks for the applause of the spectators:

But release me from my bands  
 With the help of your good hands:  
 Gentle breath of yours my sails  
 Must fill, or else my project fails,  
 Which was to please. (9-13)

Speaking a new language as a spokesman for the author, Prospero emerges from this dramatic scene to provoke the audience into asking questions as to how they look at the entire situation and how they later take action.<sup>12</sup> Robin Headlam Wells asserts: "Whether or not an idealized world could be realized depends ultimately on whether humanity—ruler and subject alike—is capable of abnegating the destructive

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<sup>12</sup> Lindley, p. 55.

<sup>13</sup> Robin Headlam Wells, *Elizabethan Mythologies: Studies in Poetry, Drama and Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), p. 77.

passions that have been the root of human suffering since the Fall.”<sup>13</sup> In *The Tempest*, passions of this kind have not been renounced, and Prospero thus creates a dialogue between the actors and the audience, asking them what they can do to get the storm of darkness under control. Finally, as the Epilogue reveals Prospero’s true nature, we imagine that his ship, or the group of actors who staged the play, will not sail for Milan, but will instead most likely head for a dingy pub on Bankside.

## II. Misrule

In the court masque, anti-masques are contrasted with the main masques. In *The Tempest*, a group of three men, Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban evolve into what is considered to be anti-masques. They may confront the hero in the certain scenes, but they also help to make the plot more complex by failing to undermine the plans of the hero towards the play’s resolution. In a comedy, a hero’s enemies cannot cut the thread he spins, and tragic scenes are used to heighten the moment of triumph after a hardship. In this sense, Antonio and his allies are placed under Prospero’s restraint, and yet remain the major threat to him, creating moments of crisis at certain stages in this tragi-comedy. Although Antonio and Caliban both function in the plot as anti-masques, Caliban’s scheme is episodic, and he entertains us in the form of comic relief, and does not cause serious problems for the hero.

In the beginning, Caliban receives an education from Prospero, a Westerner, who teaches him how to communicate verbally. When he is caught in an attempt to rape Miranda, and is blamed for it, he retorts harshly, using the language he learned from his master. Thus he changes a blessing in Western culture into a curse. Although the

relationship between them has deteriorated, and Caliban wants to flee from him, Prospero does not allow him to do so since he is needed for slavish work. Upon meeting two other Caucasians, Stephano, a drunken butler, and Trinculo, a fool, Caliban decides that Stephano will be his new master because he offers him wine.

He refers to this wine as “celestial liquor” (II, ii, 118), as it intoxicates him both physically and spiritually. We can see the “wine” in Stephano’s bottle (II, ii, 94) as a parody of “nectar,” which can be considered divine drink in the masque.<sup>14</sup> Indulging in a day dream of “freedom” (II, ii, 180ff.), Caliban presents the image of the delightful land of idleness (III, ii, 133–41), which leads Stephano to call the land “a brave kingdom” (142). If Prospero, a dictator, ceases to exist, the land of liberty and abundance will appear—this idea of Caliban’s corresponds to the utopia Gonzalo envisages. Kenneth Muir noted: “In Gonzalo’s commonwealth nature produces food ‘without sweat or endeavour’ so that ‘all men’ are ‘idle, all’” (281).<sup>15</sup>

Stephano, admired by Caliban as if he were a god, plays the lord of misrule, as if he had already taken over the land. These two in addition to Trinculo enjoy “the reversal of the normal, of topsy-turveydom”<sup>16</sup> for a brief space of time under the control of Prospero, and are not the object of our hatred but are our “joyful friends,” who make us laugh, thereby relieving the tense atmosphere. This is a type of misrule seen during the Christmas season, which permits a temporary suspension of

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<sup>14</sup> See, for instance, *The Golden Age Restored* by Ben Jonson, l. 161.

<sup>15</sup> Kenneth Muir, *The Sources of Shakespeare’s Plays* (London: Methuen, 1977), p. 281.

<sup>16</sup> A. L. Morton, *The English Utopia* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1952), p. 20.

law and order.<sup>17</sup> They are not seditious at all, only providing us with a small version of a folk utopia.<sup>18</sup> This group of three men, lacking in wisdom but having fun, brings about a farce that is destined to be an abject failure under the existing regime. But people like Antonio and other courtiers are astute enough to take advantage of any situation that offers the chance to attain power.

According to Wickham, "a reference can be glimpsed in Caliban's plot on King James' life to the Gunpowder treason."<sup>19</sup> However, Caliban was ordered to clean up the cell as punishment, whereas Guy Fawkes, the chief architect of the Gunpowder Plot was sentenced to death, and thus a major difference exists between the two. Besides, Guy Fawkes and his group were Roman Catholics who were angered by the fact that James would not allow them to worship as they wished. By contrast, Caliban does not appear to believe in any religion despite the education given to him by Prospero.<sup>20</sup>

David Bevington contended that: "The final figure of authority is Prospero himself, and his authority is that of Shakespeare."<sup>21</sup> If this is indeed the case, one could surmise that Shakespeare himself considers Caliban a "poisonous slave" (I, ii, 321) or a "mis-shapen knave" (V, i,

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<sup>17</sup> See Enid Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (1935; Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1966), pp. 202ff.

<sup>18</sup> See Morton, pp. 21-22.

<sup>19</sup> Wickham, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Richard G. Moulton, *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* (Oxford: Oxford Univ., 1906), p. 250.

<sup>21</sup> David Bevington, "The *Tempest* and the Jacobean court masque," *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1998), p. 237.

268). Yet his way of looking at Caliban does not always coincide with that of Prospero.<sup>22</sup> In the play, Prospero redefines himself several times, and his views of circumstances are not entirely the same as those of the author. Caliban is depicted in a humorous way so that we come to enjoy his company, whereas Prospero does not always win likability because he is oppressive to everyone on the island,<sup>23</sup> including Ariel who is at his beck and call, and Ferdinand who is given orders not to have sexual relations with Miranda before taking formal procedures.

Playing a major role in misrule, Caliban is looked upon as a character who befits a festive mood, which should be distinguished from a revolt. He is "a born devil" who incites anger in Prospero, but is a man who embodies freedom and sensuality, and thus builds up a joyous mood on the stage. As Brockbank says, he has a taste for music and is wise enough to ridicule the possessiveness of civilized men.<sup>24</sup> There is no denying of the favourable manner in which he is painted in this drama.

### III. A Comparison of the Play with *Hymenaei*

It has been said that the portrayal of masque fairies in *The Tempest*, IV, i is much influenced by Jonson's *Hymenaei*. This assertion is supported by the characteristics of a masque that appear in Shakespeare's play, including a transient show, the emergence of a cosmic scene and its sudden disappearance.<sup>25</sup> We might ask, then, what common features and differences can be noted between the two works. It is readily noticed that mythological characters of a similar kind appear in both.

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<sup>22</sup> See Brockbank, p. 193.

<sup>23</sup> See Nicholas Grene, pp. 58ff.

<sup>24</sup> Brockbank, p. 192.

<sup>25</sup> See Kenneth Muir, p. 282.

In *Hymenaei* Jove (125) or Jupiter (202) residing in Juno's shrine governs the world, with Iris, a rainbow god, under the thunder. When the chastity of a young couple is endangered due to allegorical figures such as "humours" and "affections" without constancy, Hymen, a god of marriage, appeals to an emblematic figure called "Reason." Noticing they do not appear to value the marriage ceremony, Reason chides them, saying, "Are Union's orgies of so slender price?"

This scene corresponds to what Prospero expresses in the following: ". . . lest too light winning / Make the prize light" (I, ii, 453-54). That chastity is precious and that marriage is sacred is voiced in plain terms:

If thou dost break her virgin-knot before  
All sanctimonious ceremonies may  
With full and holy rite be minister'd,  
No sweet aspersion shall the heavens let fall  
To make this contract grow ; (IV, i, 15-19)

Here thought they to have done  
Some wanton charm upon this man and maid,  
Whose vows are, that no bed-right shall be paid  
Till Hymen's torch be lighted: but in vain; (IV, i, 94-97)

In one of his early works Shakespeare believes Romeo's romantic relationship with Juliet is not acceptable to the society of the time, and that such relations would thus tend to end in tragedy. Likewise, Jonson is of the view that sexual affairs without a parents' consent or without following proper protocol are to be regarded as delinquent and are against the ideal of chastity. In addition, Caliban is a barbarian who

must be condemned for his actions, if indeed he has attempted to have relations with Miranda, a white Westerner's daughter. Even if she were ready to accept him, Prospero, her father, would not permit her to do so.

When we go to assess the differences between the two works, the most important considerations are whether the focus of attention in them is the King, and what structure of a masque that they have. At the outset of the first night of *Hymenaei*, Hymen compliments King James and Queen Anne on their unification of the power of the state (80-83) after paying tribute to Juno (72-79). As has been already mentioned, Jupiter, a symbol of the King, rules in the residence of Juno, a symbol of the Queen. In the passage following the one quoted above (123), Jupiter is described as the beginning and end of everything: "Jove, / Is spring and end of all things." (126) At the end of the dance on that night Reason blesses the marriage of the young couple while praising the unity and peace of the nation brought forth by the King.

On the second night of *Hymenaei*, two ladies called "Truth" and "Opinion" begin a quarrel about whether marriage is desirable for everyone. They attempt to settle the fight through a tournament wherein their respective knights defend their positions. Truth, who is in support of marriage, wins the tournament, and praises the governing power, prudence, and wisdom of the King in a proclamation that concludes that "treason" (857) to him means a rebellion against the truth. The participants then reconcile hand in hand, celebrating the victory of Truth, which closes the pompous masque.

As for the masque scene in *The Tempest* there is no direct reference to the King or the Queen, and its beginning is rather anomalous. Aerial frivolously responds to Prospero when he tells him to invoke spirits.



Upon reading from lines IV, i, 46 to 47, nobody would think the words signal “a masque of sweet gravity and delicate charm.”<sup>26</sup> But by consciously preventing emotional empathy, the audience is able to see the scene in a cool and critical manner. If this is indeed the author’s intention, the masque of Act IV, Scene i is an integral part of *The Tempest*, and as Frank Kermode convincingly argues, it is a “serious parody” of the masque.<sup>27</sup> The alienating effect is also seen in the method the author’s uses indirectly appeal to our feelings by deliberately imitating the stereotyped styles often used in the masques of his days.<sup>28</sup> The way it ends the masque scene also causes another problem. Towards its conclusion, when reapers and nymphs are performing a graceful dance, Prospero suddenly gets up, and speaks in confusion. Because of this speech, the dancers vanish in disarray as if it signals an oncoming storm, or commotion. Although Prospero is a ruler “who employs the arts of poetry, music and spectacle to civilize his subjects and restore harmony to his kingdom,”<sup>29</sup> he symbolically ruins the harmonious vision of the nation as well as the relationship between men and women. He does this by disrupting their dance, which with respect to its ending, is in sharp contrast with *Hymenaei*.

Although some critics have upheld the theory that in honour of the engagement of Princess Elizabeth and the Count Palatine the masque of Act IV, Scene i was added to the performance at Whitehall, this is

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<sup>26</sup> W. J. Lawrence, “The Masque in *The Tempest*,” *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 117 (1920), p. 942.

<sup>27</sup> Frank Kermode, “Introduction,” *The Tempest*, p. xxiii.

<sup>28</sup> See Hardin Craig, “Shakespeare’s Bad Poetry,” *Shakespeare Survey*, vol. 1 (1966), p. 55.

<sup>29</sup> Wells, p. 73.

inconsistent with the fact that the masque ends in such disarray, which might be construed as the future of the newly married couple. If instead it was intended to be acted in a commercial theatre for common people, one can see nothing wrong or unnatural about it.

One view holds that as the beginning of the masque scene works as a non-identification of the audience with the stage, so does the ending. As Robin Headlam Wells has said, “. . . the results of Prospero’s cancellation of his masque and his reflections on it” have “the effect of breaking the spell that theatre casts on its audiences and calling attention to the fictional nature of the dramatic world within which these inset-plays are framed.”<sup>30</sup> My impression is, rather, that it absorbs us more into the drama, since we are intrigued with what has been disrupted. If “Prospero the artist is a god-like figure,”<sup>31</sup> he could have presented the masque in a complete form, while repressing his own anxiety. Quoting Federico Zuccaro, R. H. Wells argued that “the artist, by ‘imitating God as it were, and rivaling nature . . . [has] the ability to make a New Paradise appear on earth.’ It is just such a power that Prospero possesses.”<sup>32</sup> In fact, he does not have the power to create the world as he wishes, and one can appreciate how Shakespeare heightens the level of curiosity, making the play more dramatic by leaving the masque interrupted.

Conventionally the masque indicates the hopeful future of society at its denouement, as is described, for example, in the closing scene in *The Golden Age Restored* (act. 1615) by Jonson. This scene refers to “a

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<sup>30</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>32</sup> *loc. cit.*

heav'n on earth" (l. 214) created by Jupiter, or King James, where gold, a symbol of wealth, is profusely produced, and Astraea, the goddess of justice, will live forever. On the other hand, Prospero as a presenter in *The Tempest*, is suspicious of the basis of the masque and makes a critical comment about it:

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. (IV, i, 151-56)

Whereas in the Epithalamion of *Hymenaei* the poet hopes for the continuation of the family and prosperity of posterity (ll. 496-511), there is no blessing at the end of the masque in *The Tempest*. The pessimistic tone of the masque makes it doubtful that it was revised to celebrate the betrothal of the young Princess.

Another issue is that *Hymenaei* describes the King's "rule and judgment" as "divine" (849), concluding that treason against him is a rueful rebellion against Truth, an allegorical figure, as well as truth which resides in the King (856-57). Moreover, the King is a man without defects like "spot or gall" and Truth dedicates to him doves to show his moral purity (850-51). Beyond doubt, Jonson tries to espouse King James' theory of the divine right of kings. Prospero is not endowed with any such right, and prepares for his fate after discarding the supernatural power and putting an end to the fiction that the monarchy is flawless. The reason why it is sinful to dispose of him or Alonso, King

of Naples, is that such an act does not go against truth but rather goes against human “nature” (See V, i, 76; 78-79). The Epilogue discloses Prospero to be an ordinary man who is not without human frailty and who ultimately ceases to act in the mythological world, which constitutes the main part of the drama.

In short, *Hymenaei* is seen from the perspective of King James from the beginning to the end. Most significantly, the author remains aware that nothing takes place without him, and thus always makes him a focal point among the courtiers. *The Tempest*, contrariwise, does not necessarily focus on the King in its dramatic development, but rather on the common people who are not invited to the court. Taking into account that it is fundamentally a popular drama with masque elements within it, we can regard it as a meta-drama within which the author allows himself to articulate a critical view of the masque.

The ending of *Hymenaei* is marked by the words of Claudian, a Roman poet: “Live in harmony, and learn to perform our duty.” Prospero essentially gives us the same lesson to stabilize society, when he contends that people should maintain the hierarchical relationship between the ruler and his subjects by performing the duty assigned by their superiors and not entertaining the idea of going beyond their rank assigned by God. Although Frances A. Yates thought of Prospero as “a reforming monarch,”<sup>33</sup> one can clearly perceive that he has no intention to reform society. He wants it to revert to what it was before the usurpation of dukedom by Antonio, his brother, and to have the status quo in society maintained in terms of law and order. Within this framework of a larger world, he himself usurped the right to rule the island from Caliban, who says: “This island’s mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou tak’st from me.” (I, ii, 333-34)

At the resolution of the play Prospero does not turn his eyes from the real world, and is not optimistic about the restoration of the old regime. On his solitary island, he predicts that he will be the Duke of Milan again after seemingly reconciling with his former adversaries. However, it is not foreseeable whether he will succeed in returning to his home in safety and thereby assume the office of the head there. It is not the “magic,” signifying the political philosophy of the ruling class, or the absolute power of the King, but it is the will of the common people that gives us a clue as to the ultimate solution of the issue. Therefore, Prospero says: “now, ‘tis true, / I must be here confin’d by you, / Or sent to Naples.” (Epilogue, 3-5)

### Conclusion

Irwin Smith said: “The masque scene in *The Tempest* has consisted of speeches by three goddesses, of songs by two of them, and of a dance whose participants heavily vanished to a strange, hollow, and confused noise. More important, the passage is out of place because it is too majestic, too tranquil, for its present context.” And so he supports the theory that the masque “was written especially for the play’s second performance at Court.”<sup>34</sup>

The court masque is usually a spectacular show that comprises a magnificent setting, breath-taking stage changes, and splendid costumes, accompanying a first-rate orchestra. Thus, the architecture; “The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces, / The solemn temples,

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<sup>33</sup> Frances Yates, *Shakespeare’s Last Plays* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975), p. 94.

<sup>34</sup> Irwin Smith, “Ariel and the Masque in *The Tempest*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 21 (Summer 1970), pp. 219-20.

the great globe itself,” as Prospero describes it in IV, i, 151-53 might be built on a “majestic” scale, but this depends entirely on the director’s idea of how spectacular it should be. The theatre company had to produce it within its given budget, trying not to make it too grand given that the masque was to be included in the play’s first performance in the theatre on Bankside. We can reasonably surmise that the ordinary people who paid one penny to six pence for admission appreciated being able to see a performance of the masque, which commonly catered exclusively to people of the high class at Court.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate my main point that at the Epilogue of the play, Prospero pays more attention to the folks coming to the theatre in Southwark than the royal family at court. Considering certain elements of the court masque and its discourse, the playwright mostly aims to provide the audience with popular entertainment for a commercial theatre, rather than the festivity at court.<sup>35</sup> “Weaving a masque and anti-masque into the text of his play,” Glynne Wickam asked, “whether Shakespeare provided himself with the means to spell out in the fashionable court hieroglyphics of the day the political, philosophical and theological undertones of this enchanting theatrical romance.”<sup>36</sup> After studying the above, however, we are inclined to conclude that Shakespeare’s chief purpose was not to espouse the monarch’s political philosophy. He is instead more interested in looking at the entire dramatic structure from the viewpoint of the common folk, reflecting the spirit of the time. Although the theatre company is called “King’s Men,” this play does not have within it a master, or a

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<sup>35</sup> See Bevington, p. 231.

<sup>36</sup> Quoted with a little change from Wickam, p. 3.

ruler of the state to be praised. This fact alone differentiates it significantly from the court masque.