

Kermode→ tries to simplify the text too much so there's a coherent reading of the tempest through Prospero's ability to control nature through art. This reduces masques to a simple mechanism

Kermode doesn't do them justice. Knowing their historical background, the use of masques is actually super important.

- 1.) Critique the aristocracy→ prospero's speech
- 2.) Based on the work done by Brown, the masque reveals the anxiety behind the colonizing mentality. **spot to break into the conversation because Brown doesn't specifically apply this to the engagement masque section
 - a.) Prospero cuts off the speech because of Caliban's threat
 - b.) Add history on antimasques

The so what

- What seems like a half thought out afterthought addition, is actually a an extremely integral part of the tempest for understanding the aristocratic mentality when it came to their power dynamics, both in England, and outside of it

Essay Structure:

- Problem framing introduction incorporating Kermode and Brown, incorporate new thesis (stated above)
- History
- Pleasure reconciled to virtue
- Prove the monarchy critique first, ends on the note of revealing their insecurities
- Take it further with the antimasque, their anxieties extend further than the borders of England
- More history--specifically on antimasque
- Pleasure reconciled to virtue, antimasque
- Evidence it in the tempest--prospero cutting it off because of Caliban
- Conclusion--revise to incorporate newest part of essay. Really punch on the "so what"

Introduction:

The engagement masque seems weird and it's hard to understand, mostly because it's not situated in its historical context. Kermode partially situates it in its historical context, but his unified reading of the tempest is too narrow to allow the the masque to be anything more than a pale literary mechanism. Add Kermode's reading of the masque. To fully comprehend the criticisms it represents within *the tempest* it has to not be thought of as a tool, but as an independent entity that held specific purpose in its time period, a period where colonialism was at a high point.

When fully situated in its historical context, it reveals the anxieties and criticizes them. Brown's reading of the tempest is able to shed even more light on the interruption that occurs. Brown's reading of the tempest. The tempest is full of colonialism, but in a way that it fails to contain "the other." It really says more about the anxieties and fears of the governing than the orientals themselves. This sheds a light on the function of the masque in the tempest as a critique of the English aristocracy, and how their anxieties spilled over into colonialism.

WHILE BROWN OFFERS AN ORDERED READING OF THE TEMPEST, IT FOCUSES ON THE CULTURAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE TIME

Background, add on antimasques, mention a bit about Jonson.

Pleasure reconciled to virtue, add on antimasques.

The tempest masque never got to the same point of flattery that the real ones did....?

Prospero's speech

LOSE FOCUS ON THE CRITIQUE OF POWER AS A WHOLE, FOCUS MORE ON THE CRITIQUE OF THE SUPERIORITY OF THE ARISTOCRACY IN TERMS OF COLONIALISM.

Like any piece of literature, *The Tempest* is a product of its time, intrinsically weaving in its contemporary art forms and influences. Frank Kermode, in an excerpted essay from *Shakespeare: The Final Plays*, evidences the influence of the aristocratically popular court masque in *The Tempest* as a part of his overall argument which advocates for a coherent reading of the text centered around Prospero's ability to institute order over nature through Shakespearean-level art. (Kermode 215-23). While there is a strong case for Prospero controlling his fellow characters through the use of narrative power and high art, the danger of trying to fit *The Tempest* into this coherent schema of literary mechanisms is reducing the significance and simplifying the resulting consequences that resonate from the presence of influences like the court masque. Comparatively, Paul Brown, in a chapter from his book *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, argues, like Kermode, that there is a vision of order in *The Tempest*, but it is based on the Western justification of colonialism, and that order actually breaks down by failing to squash its seditious elements. Brown asserts that when a Western country such as England ostracizes a colonial minority and shows a desire to assimilate or eradicate the other, they are actually giving the minority power by revealing their own insecurities of power and recognizing that the minority poses a threat to their status (Brown 280-292). Brown's reading of *The Tempest*, allows the influence of the court masque to be more than a pale mechanism, and reveal itself to be an extremely integral piece of *The Tempest* for understanding the aristocratic mentality of power dynamics. In Kermode's reading, elements of the court masque simply function as a way to resolve subplots which threaten Prospero's ultimate goal of regaining his dukedom, like the incomplete engagement masque of Act IV, celebrating the orchestrated union of Ferdinand and Miranda, which Prospero's goal ultimately relied upon. Prospero's interruption of the entertainment that Kermode interprets as Shakespeare's inability to play the masque out to fruition is actually a deliberate interjection meant to criticize the purpose of the genre as political propaganda in favor of the monarchy. Given its due historical context the court masque was a medium specifically developed to trumpet the otherworldly superiorities of the

aristocracy, and through its internal use of the contrasting antimasque, assert those same superiorities over England's colonial conquests. Assuming Brown's argument, Prospero's interruption of the revelry with a speech stemming from the fear of Caliban's—a cultural minority—assassination plot that then turns to focus on the universal mortality of man is too deliberate to ignore. The engagement masque of Act IV shines a spotlight on the insecurities of the English monarchy and criticizes the use of the court masque as a means to uphold their own superiority and belittle the colonial other.

Speech on the mortality of man levels the aristocracy with the cultural others--specifically going against Prospero's first advocacy of the masque and then his stopping it on the grounds of Caliban's threat.

Prospero's emulation of the aristocracy's insecurities and need for reassurance through flattery and the act of eradicating colonial minorities actually criticizes the aristocracy's own habits when Prospero directly speaks against all of it in his speech.

Need to put the emphasis on Prospero as the element that critiques the masque through his hypocrisy.

A prime example of the flattery power of masques for individuals of power comes from one of the most successful masque writers of the time—Ben Jonson—who helped to praise many members of the royal family and their endeavors through his literary prowess. For instance, Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue* singles out King James as a superior being for being able to unite two seemingly disparate values. The masque parades around characters such as Atlas, Hercules, and Daedalus who represent and discuss the seemingly impossible ability for any individual to understand and command both pleasure and virtue at once. While even these classical characters fail to boast the ability, there is one person in the masque who does: King James, in the form of Hesperus. Mercury singles out Hesperus, the brother of Atlas as capable of wielding both pleasure and virtue:

... It is not with his brother

Bearing the world, but ruling such another

Is his renown. Pleasure for his delight

Is reconciled to virtue... (Jonson 159-162)

The “such another,” which Hesperus rules, is classically referred to as the western isles, and blatantly refers to King James, ruler of the isle of England and “pride of the western world.”

Since, in this case, Hesperus is King James, this masque transparently asserts that he is able to make peace between two seemingly disparate values. This assertion is essentially political propaganda because it suggests that James is not a man, but a god, able to accomplish what even Hercules cannot and is thus superiorly fit to rule.

ADD AN EXAMPLE OF AN ANTIMASQUE