

**When an Ephebe Interpolates into his Precursor's
Colonial Discourse: "The Man Who Would Be King"
Reinterpreting The Tempest**



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Summary:

This paper aims at examining how the English writer Rudyard Kipling appropriates and interpolates into William Shakespeare's colonial discourse in *The Tempest* (1610-11). Precisely, it claims that Kipling's short story "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888) re-writes, consciously or unconsciously, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in a way that enables him to comment on some of the emphatic themes that are implied in the play, such as racism, colonialism, conflict between the Self and the Other, and, more importantly, resistance. The tension between the two Englishmen and the indigenous people of Kafiristan is adapted from Shakespeare's play, especially between Prospero, the two Neapolitans, and their slave, Caliban. This essay is based on a close reading and a textual analysis of *The Tempest* and "The Man Who Would Be King" from an anti-colonial perspective. Ultimately, this paper argues that through his text, Kipling attempts to deconstruct Eurocentrism by giving voice to the marginalised people regarding the colonial discourse.

Keywords: Appropriation; colonialism; Other; racism; re-write

INTRODUCTION

Daniel Fischlin and Mark Fortier, in their edited book *Adaptation of Shakespeare: An Anthology of Plays from the Seventeenth Century to The Present* (2000), argue that "in the story of Prospero and Caliban, Shakespeare had dramatised the practice and psychology of colonisation years before it came a global phenomenon" (p. 256). The tapestry of their argument draws an emphatic theme that centres on the conception of colonialism, which can be defined as "the conquest and control of other people's land and goods" (Loomba, 2005, p. 2). In light of this, despite the fact that, as Jonathan Gil Harris (2010) believes, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* may be categorised

among the romances, especially in its representation of families, it really bears the burden of a political matter that foretells the dramatist's awareness of "Europe's rising global power" (p. 192). Hence, in reading Shakespeare's plays from a post-colonial stance, Mahmoud F. Al-Shetawi (2013) presupposes that the Bard's plays, including *The Tempest*, are mainly concerned with shedding light on the Europeans' supremacy that acts as a vindication for their colonial discourse over the Other.

It is worth mentioning that the essence of this essay stands for tackling Shakespeare's *The Tempest* from an anti-colonial perspective and analysis. In other words, the play opens the gate for an arena of criticism to react against the stereotypical image that positions the West at the top of the hierarchy while the East and The Third World are dogmatically at the bottom. Therefore, authors, to deconstruct this binary opposition, find it as a dire need to revise, as a state of resistance, the metanarratives and the powerful discourses of the past centuries that shaped the hegemonic 'misrepresentation' of the 'Other'. As a matter of fact, for the accomplishment of this task, Kipling's short story, "The Man Who Would Be King", is to be analysed as a re-written text of *The Tempest* in which Kipling, either consciously or unconsciously, appropriates many themes and motifs from Shakespeare.

As the methods of deconstruction have proved a major inspiration for anti-colonial writers, this essay elucidates how Kipling's short narrative critiques the colonial discourse that is implied in *The Tempest*. Therefore, this paper argues that even though he, as a point of departure, draws on many themes that can be found in *The Tempest*, such as racism, discourse and power, and resistance, he diverges from his precursor, especially in the portrayal of the Englishmen and the resistance of the indigenous people. He departs from Shakespeare's text to deconstruct it as well as to empower the discourse of liberty.

Through a critical reading, this research attempts to answer the following questions: how does Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King" rework and reflect on the Shakespearean traditions? And how does Kipling reinterpret Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to assert his own individuality, and what acts of revision does he employ to signal the break from his literary precursor? To address these questions, one could contend that the theories of appropriation and adaptation provide a critical framework for examining how writers interact with Shakespearean traditions, exposing a dynamic interplay between creative alteration and homage. More significantly, in reference to Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* (1997), it is assumed that Kipling interprets Shakespeare to assert his own literary individuality by deliberately revising *The Tempest*, employing acts of creative transformation that both acknowledge and distance his narrative from his canonical precursor.

2. Theorising Harold Bloom's Anxiety of Influence

Harold Bloom, a preeminent figure in American literary criticism, has profoundly reshaped the understanding of poetic inheritance through his seminal work, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973). This treatise transcends

the realm of a conventional literary theory, instead presenting a profound psychological drama enacted upon the stage of intellectual history. Bloom's central thesis posits that authentic poetic creation is not a tranquil transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next, but rather an intense, frequently unconscious, struggle undertaken by the younger poet (designated the 'ephebe') against the formidable presence of a revered predecessor (termed the 'precursor'). This struggle is not reducible to a mere imitation; rather, it is underpinned by a profound anxiety that one's own distinctive voice will be subsumed, that originality is an illusion, and that the literary 'parent' has already articulated all that is worthy of expression.

In his book, Bloom (1997) posits that states that any poet who lives in a culture of guilt cannot start a new chaos; he must recognise that creation is not his top priority, which also means that he must accept that divination is failing, as it is the first of many small deaths that foretell a final and complete extinction. His word is not only his own; a lot of others before him have been acquainted with his Muse. Despite his late arrival, it has always played a major role in the narrative, and he has legitimate concerns that his upcoming disaster would just be another in its long list of tragedies (p. 61). Stated otherwise, Bloom (1997) claims that the poet is unable to create something original or different because of their culture of guilt or ethical responsibility. In the overall scheme of things, he is compelled to realise that his work has no unique position, which prevents him from even having a clear or divine insight into it. This sense of loss or failure is only the start of a more significant and unavoidable consequence. Considering the inspiration, or 'Muse', that moved him had previously inspired many others, the poet's lyrics are not his own. The Muse has been a part of the tale from the very start, and he is joining the game late. He frets that his own failure or conflict is only one more instance of this Muse's terrible heritage (p. 60).

According to Bloom (1997), the Anxiety of Influence posits that poets are inescapably shaped by the works of their predecessors, an experience that can engender feelings of despair and/or stagnation (p. 5). In light of this, within this theoretical framework, the ephebe, or nascent poet, must engage in a struggle with the influence of their predecessors – symbolic paternal figures whose eminence threatens to suppress the ephebe's potential originality – in order to produce authentic poetry and discover their distinctive voice. Bloom's theory challenges the conventional, romanticised conception of artistic influence as a benevolent, inspirational force, instead presenting it as a fraught battle for imaginative survival. This entails a 'swerving' away from the precursor, allowing the ephebe to carve out a unique creative space. An understanding of Bloom's work facilitates the excavation of seemingly original texts, revealing the complex, often agonistic, relationships they maintain with their literary antecedents.

At its core, *'The Anxiety, Influence'* conceives poetic influence as a profoundly unsettling, combative struggle, rather than a gentle inspiration. Bloom contends that strong poets – the 'ephebes' – are haunted by the 'precursor,' a highly esteemed earlier poet whose achievements cast a pervasive, inescapable shadow. As the ephebe develops admiration and respect for the preceding poet, they begin to experience a growing anxiety that the precursor's influence may overwhelm their own creative voice (p. 15). This phenomenon is not characteristic of weak poets imitating their predecessors; rather, it is a manifestation of powerful talents striving for their own imaginative space. The anxiety arises from the ephebe's fear that the precursor has already articulated everything of worth, thereby leaving no room for genuine originality. This existential dread prompts the ephebe to engage in a series of psychological defenses, or 'revisionary ratios,' in order to differentiate their work from that of their predecessor (p. 14). Through the revisionary ratios, as identified by Bloom, the ephebe is able to transmute feelings of anxiety into creative energy, thereby enabling the production of an original and innovative work that is informed by, yet distinct from, the precursor's oeuvre.

Bloom asserts that "Poetic influence—when it involves two strong, authentic poets—always proceeds by a misreading of the prior poet, an act of creative correction that is actually and necessarily a misinterpretation" (p. 31). This underscores his theoretical stance, which eschews the notion of influence as a straightforward transmission of ideas or a source of benign inspiration. Instead, Bloom conceptualises influence as a 'misprision' or 'creative misreading,' wherein the ephebe deliberately distorts or reinterprets the precursor's work, not out of ignorance, but as a strategic maneuver to establish their own creative identity. This anxiety manifests as the ephebe's tendency to misinterpret or misread the predecessor's work (p. 30). Thus, Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence* elucidates the intricate dynamic between the ephebe and the precursor, where the ephebe must navigate the predecessor's influence to achieve originality, necessitating a working through of their anxiety and creative impulses. The ephebe's 'swerve' away from the precursor enables them to claim their distinct vision and voice, creating the illusion of independent creation (p. 66). In other words, the ephebe, "in writing his poem, is forced to see the assertion against influence as being a ritualized quest for identity" (p. 65). His task is not to praise or emulate, but to creatively 'misread' and appropriate the precursor's work, driven by an urgent need for self-expression and identity. This complex mission involves simultaneous acknowledgment and rejection, where the new work honors and undermines the old, affirming its lineage while asserting its difference.

As a matter of fact, the relationship between the 'precursor poet' and the 'ephebe' constitutes the central dynamic of Bloom's theoretical framework. The precursor, a towering figure of literary greatness, inspires awe and simultaneously instills dread in the aspiring poet. The ephebe grapples with the precursor's

imposing legacy, engaging in a deliberate, creative 'misprision' – a robust misreading or revisionary interpretation. This process is not a failure of comprehension, but rather an act of imaginative self-preservation and assertion, enabling the ephebe to produce novel and distinct work without succumbing to the overshadowing influence of their literary predecessors. Consequently, this dynamic serves as a catalyst for literary evolution, ensuring that tradition is not merely replicated, but continually reimagined and transformed through the ephebe's innovative endeavours.

3. Echoes of *The Tempest* in "The Man Who Would Be King"

The plot of the source text, *The Tempest*, revolves around a story that takes place on an island whereby Prospero controls the natural elements as well as every single individual, even his daughter, Miranda. The striking scenes in the play occur between the two Neapolitans, Trinculo and Stefano, and Prospero's slave servant, Caliban; the latter is misrepresented and dehumanised by his master and later on by the new intruders in the island. To stand in apposition to this stereotypical representation, Caliban shows some 'verbal resistance' to the discourse of power performed by his masters (Abu Amrieh, 2020). On the other hand, "The Man Who Would Be King" centres on the portrayal of the two British adventurers, Peachy Carnehan and Daniel Dravot, in British India who become kings of Kafiristan. Their ambition cannot be unobtrusive throughout the story; they declare that after years of trying their hands at all manner of things, they have decided that "India is not big enough" for them (Kipling, 2012, p. 7). They tell the narrator that with their weapons they plan to find a king to help him defeat his enemies. Once that is done, they will take over themselves. Moreover, they show the narrator a contract, which is significant in the course of events and about the representation of the white, they have drawn up between themselves, which swears loyalty between the pair and total abstinence from women and alcohol. Yet, two years later, Carnehan comes to the office of the narrator with lethal injuries to inform him that their plan did not last forever and that they have been forced to leave by the 'violent resistance' of the natives, who have beheaded Dravot.

In *The Tempest*, Shakespeare writes, "I prithee now, lead the way without any more Talking. Trinculo, the king and all our company else Being drowned, we will inherit here: here; Bear my Bottle: fellow Trinculo, we'll fill him by and by again" (Shakespeare, 2. 2. 172-75). This quote shows how Shakespeare's text is engulfed by the theme of colonialism; by the same token, in his short story, Kipling demonstrates how the nineteenth-century

was influenced by the idea of Empire through Dravot's words, "I won't make a Nation... I'll make an Empire! These men aren't niggers; they're English... We shall be Emperors- Emperors on the Earth!" (Kipling, 2012, p. 17). In this manner, the theme of colonialism, which is given advantage by the notion of racial superiority, is shared between the two texts. In *The Tempest*, Trinculo and Stephano's attitude, an imbecile and a drunken man, takes a different path once they encounter Caliban. They seem to look forward to plunging into the top of the hierarchy, especially when Caliban introduces his inferiority in his first utterance by saying, "Do not torment me. Oh!" (Shakespeare, 2. 2. 56); hence, they immediately identify themselves as superior to him, for he appears to be subjected to them. He pledges loyalty to serve them by any means, and he tells them everything about the island and its ruler; as a matter of fact, their ambitions grow stronger to become the rightful masters themselves, which is evident in Stefano's words when she states that they "will inherit here" (2. 2. 174).

The work of the ephebe has many similarities to that of the precursor through commonalities in topics, styles, and images (Bloom, 1997, p. 20). The former may also incorporate elements of the latter's work into their own literature, either consciously or unconsciously. In this light, Kipling recognises Shakespeare's legacy, excellence, and influence. On the one hand, this could be interpreted as Kipling, the ephebe, as Bloom calls the young authors, seeking safety in rewriting his precursor. Bloom (1997) refers to this sort of anxiety in his work, quoting Edward Young: "they (the precursors) engross our attention, and so prevent a due inspection of ourselves; they prejudice our judgment in favour of their abilities and so lessen the sense of our own; and they intimidate us with this splendour of their renown" (p. 27). That is to say that the bright legacy that the prior authors left makes the current artists who attempt to write regard them with awe, but additionally, it makes them feel intimidated and less confident about their own talent. Hence, one could argue that reworking Shakespeare while incorporating his personal insight is Kipling's coping mechanism against his anxiety of being a subordinate author. It lends itself to an interpretation that he found comfort in reworking canonical literary history, which provides both a sense of relevance in art's world and an experience of individual creativity that reinforces his self-perception as an author.

Edward Said believes that the European representations of the Orient have built the Other's culture as an irrational feminine while they, the Westerners, are convinced of their rational masculine (Harris, 2010, p. 194). In this manner, as Yousef Abu Amrieh (2020) argues, the representation of

Caliban stands precisely for 'the Other' in a rising colonial discourse. He is made known from his master's point of view, Prospero, as a 'savage' and an 'abhorred slave'; indeed, his name alludes to the term 'cannibal', which refers to the complete lack of human features. This representation is not merely stated from Prospero's perspective; the point, however, is that Stephano and Trinculo, likewise, direct him as a 'monster' as well as a 'deformed slave'. Therefore, for Gerlinde Didea (2009), Shakespeare delivers a biased image in favour of the colonisers especially when Miranda says, "Tis a villain. Sir, I do not love to look on." Caliban's portrayal does not solely denote the colonised victim, but it also signifies the dehumanised savagery; through this, the natural identity of the coloniser is identified (p. 4-5).

By the same token, the undertaking of colonialism or imperialism in "The Man Who Would Be King" is fostered by Dravot and Carnehan's racist language and their prejudices regarding their superiority. The notion of positivism is clear, as Dravot believes that "there is only one place now in the world that two strong men Sar-a-whack" (Kipling, 2012, p. 5); he is driven by the romanticised idea of exploration and adventure because, for him, Kafiristan is a place of mystery, a blank space that will be filled by him and Carnehan. This stereotype might be attributable to the idea that, as they state in the beginning of the story, "India is not big enough" for them, trusting their presumed cultural and ethnic supremacy and their modern weapons, such as guns and rifles; hence, they plan to "establish a Dy-nasty" (p. 8).

It is worthy to note that Kipling rewrites Shakespeare in a new context whereby the colonial ideology was dominant in the sphere. His narrative echoes the situational atmosphere of the nineteenth-century when the United Kingdom underwent an unparalleled widening in all the different corners of the world due to its colonial possessions. It is a vigorous expansion that can keep track of the years after the Indian Mutiny in 1857, when the British imposed their crown over India; this ubiquitous spread out continued to crawl even in Africa in the last decades of the century. This peak of imperialism marks Britain with words that are not likely to be forgotten; it is the Empire where "the sun never sets" (Mehta, 1999, p. 5).

3.1 Power and Hegemony in Shaping Commonsense

Power and hegemony play an important role in shaping people's attitudes. Michel Foucault suggests that discourse has a powerful influence and is a central human activity; he bridges the gap between power and

discourse, which refers to the “violence that we do to things,” and sees that the former is gained through the latter (Selden et al., 2005, p. 178). He stands in opposition to the quasi-objectivity for that there are no absolutely true discourses, only, however, “more or less powerful ones” (Ibid). In other words, Prospero’s means of maintaining control over Caliban, Ariel, and even his daughter is shaped by his powerful discourse in the play in which he incites his hegemony to entrap them by a systematic domination. This is exemplified in Caliban’s words to Trinculo and Stefano when he says that he is “subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer, that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island” (Shakespeare, 3. 2. 42-4). This can be interpreted as a commentary on questions related to legitimacy, colonisation, and power. Caliban’s words show a sense of resentment and injustice, and unearth his perception of Prospero as a tyrannical ruler who has cunningly exploited his power to usurp his rightful claim to the island.

In this regards, in order to seize control over the island, Caliban tells Trinculo and Stefano, prototype agents of colonialism, “...First to possess his (Prospero’s) books; for without them he’s but a sot, as I am, nor hath not one spirit to command: they all do hate him as rootedly as I. burn but his books” (3. 2. 90-95). Therefore, this sentiment of loathing towards Prospero is not unique to Caliban, rather is a pervasive attitude among ‘all’ the unvoiced island’s indigenous inhabitants, who are submissive to his rule and see him as an interloper who has disrupted the natural order. As a matter of fact, it is not Caliban, the indigenous being, that lacks origins and culture, but this quasi-fact is only told from Prospero’s point of view at the beginning and from the two intruders later on. Individuals, like Caliban, who are imprisoned “within (these) discursive practices, cannot think or speak without obeying unspoken ‘archive’ of rules and constraints; otherwise they risk being condemned to madness or silence” (Selden et al., 2005, p. 179). Foucault’s ideas are evident in describing Caliban’s inevitable state chiefly when he whispers aside, “I must obey: his art is of such power, it would control my dam’s god, Setebos, and make a vassal of him” (Shakespeare, 1. 2. 370- 75).

In his book, *Corporate Character: Representing Imperial Power in British India, 1786-1901*, Eddy Kent (2014) claims that the “avaricious protagonists of Kipling’s short story, ‘The Man Who Would Be King’... chose a life of relative anonymity full of bureaucratic toil in an unfamiliar country” (p. 64). Thus, it portrays a parable of the personal as well as the political ambitions of the expansion of the British Empire in the second half of the nineteenth-century. In light of this, the story centres on unequivocal themes

such as domination and power; this might be lucid in the positivism of the two travellers. From the very beginning, it is believed that if someone longs for a crown, then he must go 'there' and hunt it for himself. This explicates the British attitude and their desire to be crowned all over the world despite the fact that they might seem wanderers the first time they set foot in a foreign land. Carnehan and Dravot, with their ardent ambition, can be an exemplification of hungry climbing wolves that are always hungry for the next feast of domination. In other words, based on an established superiority and ideology, they suppose that "(they are) English, an' (they)'ve got a right to rule"; therefore, they resolve to head farther than they are (Kipling, 2012, p. 5). Their ambition is typified in how they perform their dominance; the source of power for Dravot and Carnehan refers to the modern weapons they take with them to Kafiristan. Guns and rifles signify a symbol of authority and a means to earn the reverence of the natives, who, as Carnehan claims, "are all afraid of us, and we've got to keep 'em afraid"; i.e., through exhibiting a sign of the British military force as they conquer Kafiristan with "twenty Martini rifles" (p. 18), the two British travelers hegemonically restrict the natives' agency, voices, beliefs and culture to maintain a commonsense of embracing the whites' intrusion.

Hegemony is emphatically found in the words of the characters and how their future vision is framed, principally when Dravot says, "I won't make a nation, I'll make an Empire" (p. 15). He is overwhelmed by his discourse of power that positions him above the indigenous people who are "the Lost Tribes" that need to be governed. Over and again, he repeatedly stresses the belief that he is the rightful representative of the British Empire in Kafiristan for the reason that he thinks that the natives are his people and they have to be English. Hence, following the wish to shift from the margin to the centre, he, escorted by Carnehan, decides to go to those parts of the world and seize the thrones in order to establish a dynasty and to become emperors on earth (Ibid).

4. Kipling's Interpolation into Shakespeare's Colonial Discourse

Kipling is often considered the world's 'Bard of the Empire' because he was an ardent supporter of imperialism in Britain through much of his work (Said, 1993, p. 159); however, a closer examination of his writings shows that his relationship with Empire is complex and conflicted, reflecting his own ambivalence regarding imperialism. His early life and experiences in colonial India shaped his view of imperialism: born in Bombay in 1865, He

was raised in a culturally British India (Gilbert, 2002, p. 12). This environment instilled in him a strong sense of duty and responsibility towards Empire, as evidenced in works such as "The White Man's Burden" (1888), which urges the British people to accept the burden of civilizing the 'savage' nations of the Earth. A notion of they are going to bring them civilisation that is demonstrated through the characters in the short story. Kipling's experiences in India also exposed him to many of the horrors of colonialism, including racist exploitation and violence, creating a conflict within him between his beliefs and ideals regarding British civilization and the brutal realities of colonialism (McKiplin, 2008, p. 56). In works such as *Kim* (1901), he explores the complexity of the relationships between colonisers and colonised people.

Kipling's conflicted connection to the British Empire is also evident in his personal life; while he supported imperialism, he also felt excluded from British society, in part because he grew up in a colonial environment and in part because he felt alienated from it, an idea that is central in his works (Parry, 1998, p. 102). Another example of this theme comes from *The Jungle Book* (1894), where Mowgli, the main character, represents an individual who has been torn between two cultures. Moreover, Kipling's view of artists and their place in society is telling of his ambivalent feelings towards imperialism. In "The Man Who Would Be King," he discusses the contrast between the freedom of artistic expression and the restraints placed upon that freedom by the Empire. Significantly, he also cautions against the potential for art to become a tool of the imperialist machine (Williams, 2004, p. 248).

In his book, *Covering Islam*, Said (1981) posits that historical knowledge, not natural facts, shapes the Westerners' ideas. Their knowledge is just based on an opinion, and therefore it "rests upon judgment and interpretation" (p. 154). The "Other" is imagined by the European Orientalist knowledge that is grounded in previous discourses about Africa, the Caribbean, and other non-European cultures (Harris, 2010, p. 200). This way, in reference to François Lyotard, cultural narratives and ideas find their ground and acquire their meaning and legitimacy by following the footprints of the metanarratives' framework (Taylor and Winkquist, 2003, p. 165). The historical knowledge, particularly that of the Orientalist travellers from long ago, is often taken for granted as a fact. This can be best illustrated in Antonio's words when he says, "Travellers ne'er did lie" (Shakespeare 3. 3. 20- 25). *The Tempest* partakes in the visionary stereotype of the 'Other' in the European novels and the travellers' tales

(Hulme, 2000, p. 75). Thus, Lyotard's critique of the Westerners' universalising historical narratives opens the door wide open to anticolonial studies; in his case "there is ironically a totalizing thrust to his 'war on totality' and to his 'incredulity towards master narratives'" (Selden et al., 2005, p. 219). As a matter of fact, by writing a short story to appropriate Shakespeare's play, Kipling proves his point of departure as a resistant of his precursor; what he does first is deconstructing the genre, which transits from a play to a little narrative.

It is worth noting that this upsurge of imperial missionaries over the world has a ubiquitous influence on the British culture and, precisely, literature as a unique example. Therefore, inevitably, the imperialist project draws itself in the culture of that time. The Victorian culture is indeed framed by the colonial ideology; however, according to Said (1994) in *Culture and Imperialism*, it also has an emphatic impact on shaping it because it is a reflection or an arm of imperialism. It imposes the dogma of the West over the East and determines their thoughts with its hegemony (p. 16). Said (1994) tends to elucidate the complicity that bonds culture and the notion of imperialism together as they seem complementary. This spark of the Empire, equally, reflects itself in books and literature that demonstrate the power of language to serve the imperial needs. Thus, the nineteenth-century writings stand for a discourse and socio-political evidence of imperialism; simply put, one may say that narratives create nations (p. 74).

A parallel can be traced here; in Kipling's text, the two travellers seem to be quite obsessed with maps and books right from the start. This is epitomised in Carnehan's words speaking to the narrator; he says, "We have come to you to know about this country, to read a book about it, and to be shown maps. We want you to tell us that we are fools and to show us your books" (Kipling, 2012, p. 6). The quote shows the question of knowledge and power and reveals how books can be seen as a form of cultural imperialism in viewing them as a source of exotic knowledge to be extracted and consumed. Carnehan and Dravot's source of knowledge regarding everything about the country from books such as the "*Source of the Oxus*" echoes the role of grand narratives in legitimising the Westerner's superiority and acquired knowledge. This, consequently, legitimises Carnehan's belief that the natives are born to be nothing but English, uttering, "Dan (Daniel Dravot), they're all-fired lot of heathens, but this book here says they think they're related to us English" (Ibid). In addition to that,

even the role of the narrator can be cogent to contextualise the issue at hand; he works in an office as a reporter, and he knows a lot about the country. In the beginning, he acts as a guide when the two travellers come to seek knowledge; subsequently, two years later, Carnehan visits the office again to inform him about their unfortunate journey to Kafiristan. Therefore, one may say that the narrator, on his own, is going to write something in the newspaper, not about the celebratory upsurge of the Empire but about its fall.

Anti-colonial writers use theory to re-write Shakespeare, specifically *The Tempest* (Harris, 2010, p. 200). Hence, from this perspective, Kipling seeks to undermine the imperial subject; he calls for, to allegorically quote Said, a critical 'decentred consciousness' to shatter the 'First/Third World' relations (Selden et al., 2005, p. 220). He creates a dialogue of power and resistance, of refusal and recognition with and against Shakespeare's colonial discourse. In *The Tempest*, Caliban is enslaved by his European master, yet he shows 'verbal resistance' to talk back; this can be seen when he says, "You taught me language, and my profit on it is I know how to curse you" (Shakespeare, 1. 2. 365- 66). Therefore, through this, he identifies himself as more human than how he is introduced by Prospero. Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that Caliban's resistance might be "presented as evidence of his barbaric nature" (Harris, 2010, p. 201); i.e., although Caliban tries to show his resistance when he attempts to assault Miranda, this intended act only demonstrates his savagery. Thus, his resistance seems to be weak. Moreover, he, deep in his unconscious, embraces colonialism; in other words, when he first sees Stefano and Trinculo, he says, "Do not torment me: Oh!" (Shakespeare, 2. 2. 57). His attitude, in reference to Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1981), shows the fact that an individual is not a slave until he believes that he is a slave (p. 12). His would-be resistance of Prospero is solely a will to be the servant of another master; he affirms to Stefano, "I'll show thee every fertile inch o' th' island; and I will kiss thy foot: I prithee, be my god" (Shakespeare, 2. 2. 148- 149). Accordingly, he is ready to pledge loyalty just to be the subject of a new coloniser.

The character of Caliban is presented as a subaltern who opposes Prospero's colonial domination. However, the way that he resists colonial power is portrayed as childish and futile because of his inferior language skills compared to those of other characters. The treatment of Caliban by Prospero is that of a slave, which is the source of Caliban's desire for freedom, as well as his feelings of resentment toward his master. Ultimately,

Caliban is shown to fail in his attempts to gain his freedom, reinforcing Shakespeare's idea that colonial domination is justifiable and inevitable.

Caliban's resistance is a matter of speeches, as he changes nothing in the course of the story. He, indeed, conspires with Stefano and Trinculo in order to seize Prospero's books, as they symbolise the source of his power, yet ultimately the books are never touched, and Caliban does not reach Prospero to deconstruct the colonial discourse. It is, instead, Prospero himself who decides to stop his magic and leave the island with his companion, not Caliban's resistance that has made him do so. He is entrapped in a system, as Hulme (2000) suggests, that "within this brave new world Caliban rediscovers the difficulties of making a place for himself and the impossibility of a return in any sense to the island home from which he came" (p. 164).

Nonetheless, the influence of the precursor can also create both anxiety and creativity in the ephebe. Due to the greatness of their precursors, the ephebes often feel that they will never achieve the same level of success, and this anxiety can create an overwhelming sense of inferiority (Bloom, 1997, p. 30). The ephebe's reaction to his predecessor is expressed in a number of ways, including the former imitating the latter, rebelling against him, and making modifications to his work (p. 40). When he chooses to emulate the work and style of his predecessor, the ephebe may develop feelings of derivative nature and lack of uniqueness; however, when he chooses to resist the power and impact of his predecessor, the ephebe has the opportunity to create an entirely new and original style that is not derived from his predecessor (p. 50).

In order to overcome this anxiety, this paper posits that Kipling undergoes a process of revision, which Bloom terms, 'revisionary ratio'. The term revision ratio describes the process of reinterpretation, and revision by which an ephebe develops an independent creative identity (Bloom, 1997, p. 45). It can also refer to the manner by which an ephebe interprets, and creates a revision of their precursor's creative identity. In this regard, Kipling 'swerves' from the model of Shakespeare to create his own original work. In reviewing Shakespeare's creative identity, Kipling either re-read, or reinterpreted his precursor's work to be able to produce something original like "The Man Who Would Be King". As an ephebe, he used the same themes and motifs from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, but to produce his own

creative identity. In the revision ratio, the revision of the precursor is critical to the creation of the ephebe's original work.

Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888) demonstrates a different view of the colonial movement, racism, and, more importantly, the idea of resistance than that which is seen in *The Tempest*. Both Kipling's short story and the Shakespearean play view colonialism as complex and multifaceted. Particularly, *The Tempest* depicts Prospero as a benevolent coloniser, with Caliban as the subjugated savage, while "The Man Who Would Be King" depicts how imperial ambitions are countered by local people's resistance. There are also both racist and essentialist portrayals of non-European people in the two works, with Caliban described by Prospero as a savage and monster and in "The Man Who Would Be King" where Kipling describes the characters as wild and heathen. However, Kipling's work also critiques the racist views that were perpetuated by the British Empire, demonstrating the complexities of colonialism (McKiplin, 2008, p. 56). In fact, the two works delineate different views of resistance and the subaltern agency; Shakespeare portrays Caliban's rebellion against Prospero in *The Tempest* as an ineffective and juvenile act of defiance (p. 30), while Kipling presents a more complicated view of rebellion through the native characters in "The Man Who Would Be King".

In *Orientalism*, Said declares that "never was it the case that the imperial encounter pitted an active Western intruder against a supine or inert non-Western native; there was always some form of active resistance, and in the overwhelming majority of cases, the resistance finally won out" (cited in Harris, 2010, p. 200). In this manner, "The Man Who Would Be King" appears to be an allegory parodying the upsurge of British imperialism in the Third World. The ending of the story signifies an important issue that needs a meticulous consideration; it propels the individual to ponder about how Kipling views the notion of imperialism during the time when this short story was written. Carnehan tells the narrator that they have realised that they "can't stand (they have to) make a run for it down to the valley! The whole place is against" them (Kipling, 2012, p. 18). Ultimately, he informs him that the natives "cut (Dravot's head), and old Dan fell, turning round and round and round, twenty thousand miles, for he took half an hour to fall till he struck the water, and I could see his body caught on a rock with the gold crown close beside" (p. 19). Thus, the death of Dravot at the hands of the indigenous might pertain to the death of the British dream of ruling the world; although the natives, as introduced by the white, are ignorant, they realise that they must show what Frantz Fanon calls a 'Revolutionary

Violence' by rebelling against the deceitful king. Likewise, the crucifixion of Carnehan may stand for an analogy that refers to facing imperialism (p. 20). One may believe that he is left alive in order to convey a message, as is the case when he goes to the narrator, to the colonisers that no matter how hard they try to settle down there, the natives will have a stand against them.

Kipling's short story depicts the native people as having the power to make their own choices and resist the rule of British colonisers. As opposed to *The Tempest*, it shows violence on behalf of the indigenous characters, and depicts how there are many examples of the power involved in resisting colonialism by the indigenous population. In "The Man Who Would Be King", Kipling illustrates how the colonised people resisted colonial rule by engaging in acts of rebellion against their oppressors and shows us what happens to people that try to take advantage of the colonised population. He uses the character of Dravot and Carnehan to elucidate the results of colonialism on the indigenous as well as the actions they took to resist their oppressors. Besides, He attempts to demonstrate how the indigenous people were not intimidated by Dravot and Carnehan and how they acted as true warriors during their defiance to the British. Their resistance is justifiably rebellious actions against colonialism. Differently put, the scene in which they attack and kill Dravot is a powerful example of the violent resistance of the natives (Kipling, 2012, p. 19). It stands as a clear illustration of mockery and defiance performed by the indigenous people against Dravot and Carnehan. Thus, when viewed in the context of the story, it represents the triumph of the native people over the white usurpers.

Kipling's (2012) representations of the native people depict individuals as having autonomy through speech, action, and deeds; they are not represented solely as victims of colonialism. They are portrayed as having agency and the ability to construct their own future. Interestingly, the role of the priest is a representation of how subaltern members resisted the effects of colonisation (p. 21- 2). Kipling portrays him as being able to manipulate the British people by using his intelligence, cleverness, and British knowledge to further his own objectives. Moreover, his speech to Dravot and Carnehan is a powerful example of subaltern agency (ibid). He argues that the British are not welcome in the region and that they should leave. His words are a clear expression of resistance to colonialism and a demand for autonomy and self-governance. Hence, his depiction reflects

how subaltern members of society are capable of rebellion and resistance against colonialism in an effort to reclaim their identity. By illustrating the violence and exploitation of colonialism, Kipling exemplifies how colonialism results in both violent revolts and uprisings.

To set himself free from the chains of Shakespeare's influence, and in writing back to Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Kipling does not merely empower the resistance of the indigenous; the point, however, is that he also shows the fragility and the lack of morality of the white. Kipling employs what Bloom (1997) calls *Askesis*, which stands for a self-purging movement that seeks to achieve a condition of isolation (p. 15). Kipling condemns the weak personality of the English through the representation of his characters; i.e., once they reach a foreign land, they lose their values as well as their humanity, and this might be attributable to the fact that their culture is not deep enough to help them survive. Carnehan, as a case in point, looks to be fragile in comparison to his partner, whose orders are always obeyed; notwithstanding that in the start he sees himself as equal to Dravot, he confesses, "I knew he was thinking plans I could not advise him about, and I just waited for orders" (Kipling, 2012, p.14). Besides, even Dravot epitomises a brittle person who breaks a principle promise or an agreement whereby he does not comply with the contract that says "neither women nor liquor" (p. 5); as a result, he positions himself far away from morality when he resolves to have a wife. This point demonstrates how Kipling frowns at the white men who justify their presence abroad by the objective of the civilising mission because deep within they favour their personal serenity and successes.

The Europeans are weak once they step a foot away from home; in the story, the two adventurers are seen flattering here and there with their deeds. On the one hand, they are depicted as brave, intelligent, and ambitious, which are all positive traits, while on the other, they appear vicious, manipulative, and brutal men. To say it differently, despite the fact that the narrator, who knows that place of the world and its people very well, warns them not to undertake their missionary expedition, and although Carnehan himself believes that "the country isn't half worked out because they that govern it won't let you touch" it (p. 5), Dravot stands steady with his decision to go and hunt the crown. Additionally, another striking scene that foreshadows their immorality and fake civilising mission takes place when they disguise themselves to reach Kafiristan (p. 12); it is, indeed, the faulty first impression when even the narrator could not recognise them at first. Dravot's disguise as a mad priest and Carnehan's role as his servant

demonstrate Kipling's criticism that imperialism is covered up by false realities.

"The Man Who Would Be King" (1888) provides an insightful critique of ambition, pride, and the corrupting effects of power through its depiction of the characters Dravot and Carnehan. By examining these two men's rise and eventual fall from grace from their selfish ambitions to become kings of Kafiristan (Kipling, 2012, p. 15), Kipling warns against the potential for ambition to corrupt an individual's morality and respect for the welfare of others. The ambition of both men arises from their feelings of superiority and desire for dominance, with no concern or care for the wellbeing of the individuals they desire to lead. As the narrative unfolds, it becomes evident how Dravot and Carnehan's pride became the catalyst that instigated their fall due to their hubris. Kipling also explores the effects of increased power on an individual, as Dravot and Carnehan's corruption grows greater as they attain greater levels of authority. Dravot, as the ultimate model of the colonial ruler's idea of tyranny, exemplifies this corruption by using his power to take advantage of and dominate the local population. This text points to how irresponsible the practice of one nation imposing itself onto another is, without consideration of their culture(s), traditions, and/or welfare. Kipling makes the character of Dravot symbolic for colonialism and uses him to demonstrate the various ways in which colonialism has been exploited through acts of violence, and that his demise is a reminder to future generations about the deadly effects of colonialism, along with the need to continue to respect and promote the autonomy and ability of subalterns (p. 45).

5. CONCLUSION

In "The Man Who Would Be King", Kipling re-writes and comments on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The two texts have in common themes and motifs such as racial superiority, cultural tensions, and resistance; thus, from an anti-colonial perspective, he attempts to deconstruct Eurocentrism. Significantly, unlike Caliban's 'verbal resistance' which causes and affects nothing throughout the story, the indigenous people's 'violent resistance' in the story seems to be prolific. Moreover, Kipling gives a voice to the voiceless regarding a political issue, i.e., the colonial discourse; this goes alongside portraying the natives as rebellious, especially in the end, and he decentres the extreme stereotypical image of the colonised in *The Tempest*. They gain back what they have lost once they behead Dravot and crucify Carnehan

who symbolise the Western colonial discourse. Lastly, empowering the oppressed is not the sole issue that Kipling tackles, but he also seems to criticise the immorality of the white. In this light, he undergoes a revisionary movement; he gives up a portion of his own human and imaginative endowment to distance himself from his precursor. As an ephebe, Kipling purifies himself and relinquishes the influence of his precursor. In interpolation into Shakespeare's colonial discourse, he realises his novice artistry and decides to maintain composure while composing his work of art.

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