

undeed a chain

Carnal Ascension

Throughout The Tempest by William Shakespeare, there is a complex interplay between the causes and effects of the actions that define the characters in the play. For example, the character of Prospero can act as magus or as king. His actions demonstrate a pattern characterized by the effect of one action becoming the cause of the next, and often times, the completion of the cycle is also characterized by a change in his role. ~~The result of the utilization~~ of his skillful intelligence as magus becomes the cause for him to act as an authoritative, respected king (and vice-versa). The constant fluctuation in his roles is reflected in his relationship with Caliban. Caliban is a sub-human creature who was no doubt inspired by the widespread exploration of the time. When the play was written in 1623, Europe was in the midst of its age of exploration. Explorers and pirates from England, Spain, and Portugal were reaching all over the world and bringing back stories of the wild people they had seen. Shakespeare himself was known to be involved with the Virginia Company, one of the first joint-stock companies to try to settle America. The relationship between Caliban and Prospero can be seen as a meeting of the two worlds, civilized Europe and the unsettled New World. Prospero's inner conflict between his roles as magus and king manifests itself in his relationship with Caliban. His final decision to retake his Dukedom is purposely juxtaposed with Caliban's freedom to retake his island to suggest a connection between the uncivilized men of the New World and the civilized men of Europe.

Prospero's roles as magus and king demonstrate a circular pattern of dominance over one another. When Prospero acts predominantly as magus he fails as a king, and when he wields political power, Prospero decides to abdicate his magic art. Prospero's preoccupation with studying his magic books provokes his brother, Antonio, to seek the Dukedom for himself. Prospero speaks of himself, "And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed / In dignity, and for the liberal arts / Without a parallel; those being all my study, / The government I cast upon my brother, / And to my state grew stranger, being transported / And rapt in secret studies" (I.ii.71-6). Prospero immerses himself in his liberal arts to the point of being reclusive to the world and neglectful of his political responsibilities. He admits to empowering his brother with political power, and he acknowledges the estrangement he felt toward Milan. The alienation Prospero feels toward the state implies a decline in his political power. "I thus neglecting worldly ends...in my false brother / Awaked an evil nature, and my trust, / Like a good parent, did beget of him / A falsehood in its contrary as great / As my trust was, which had, indeed, no limit, / A confidence sans bound" (I.ii.89-98). Prospero reiterates recognition of his neglect, but he adds that his dive into introspection and magical studies opened the door to Antonio's avaricious side. In retrospect, Prospero sees that the infinite trust he had for his brother was only equal to Antonio's capability for deception. In his role as magus, Prospero forgetfully transcends the earthly workings of mankind: the greed, power, and betrayal which were invested in his brother. Clearly, the dominance of Prospero's role as magus leads to the failure of his role as an earthly king. Before Prospero can reclaim his Dukedom, he feels compelled to renounce his magical powers. "But this rough magic / I here abjure...I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fathoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book" (V.i.50-7). The describing of

explicitly human at first.

Chain not cycle - too unspecific or sentence at this point.

surely we need a break here.

does this belong here. It seems like an excursion to somewhere else.

linker

Yes see if this could have been the third sentence.