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### Article abstract

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# “Not so much perdition as an hair”: The Political Deployment of Christian Patience in *The Tempest*<sup>1</sup>

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*Early modern theology and martyrology understood patience as a transformation of one's perspective on suffering, so that pain and humiliation came to be seen by the sufferer as honourable and even desirable. This article suggests that *The Tempest* explores the political implications of Christian patience when the concept is translated to the secular spheres of courtship and politics. Miranda and Ferdinand find a sense of agency through Christian patience, leading to the fulfillment of Prospero's political goals and the dynastic union that concludes the play. However, the repressive side of Christian patience is also revealed through the play's exclusion of Caliban.*

*La théologie et la martyrologie des débuts de l'ère moderne ont défini la patience comme une transformation de la perspective d'une personne sur la souffrance, jusqu'à ce que la douleur et l'humiliation en viennent à être perçues par la personne qui souffre comme des choses honorables et même souhaitables. Cet article suggère que *La Tempête* explore les implications politiques de la patience chrétienne lorsque ce concept est importé dans les sphères séculaires de la cour et des affaires d'État. La patience chrétienne permet à Miranda et à Ferdinand d'acquérir une certaine agentivité, aboutissant à l'accomplissement des objectifs politiques de Prospero et à l'union dynastique sur laquelle s'achève la pièce. Cependant, le côté répressif de la patience chrétienne est également révélé par l'exclusion de Caliban de la pièce.*

**I**n the second scene of *The Tempest*, when Prospero tells Miranda about his former life as the duke of Milan, he presents himself as a fundamentally patient man. Emphasizing the painful length of his and Miranda's exile, he explains that when they first arrived on the island, the infant Miranda was like a “cherubim”<sup>2</sup> whose “fortitude from heaven” (1.2.154) inspired in him “An undergoing stomach, to bear up / Against what should ensue” (1.2.157–58). If

1. I am grateful to the Azrieli Foundation for the award of an Azrieli Fellowship, which enabled the completion of this research. I am also indebted to Noam Reisner, Jonathan Stavsky, Paul Stevens, Mary Nyquist, David Galbraith, Michael Donnelly, and the anonymous reviewers at *Renaissance and Reformation* for their feedback and recommendations on earlier drafts of this article.

2. William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Arden, 2011), 1.2.152. All citations from the play (hereafter given in the text) are from the same edition.

this heavenly fortitude sounds vaguely religious, the impression is made even stronger by Prospero's scriptural allusions in his explanation of the shipwreck:

I have with such provision in mine art  
 So safely ordered, that there is no soul—  
 No, not so much perdition as an hair,  
 Betid to any creature in the vessel  
 Which thou heard'st cry, which thou sawst sink. (1.2.28–32)

The phrase “not so much perdition as an hair” alludes to Luke 21:18, which is part of Jesus's description of patience: “And ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake. Yet there shall not one hair of your heads perish. By your patience possess your souls.”<sup>3</sup> Prospero's allusion to this passage suggests an analogy between Christian providence, which inspires patience in the persecuted church, and Prospero's own “provision,” which brings order to the shipwreck and quells Miranda's anxiety. Having learned patience from the heavenly fortitude of his daughter, Prospero now attempts to teach her a form of patience inspired by the Gospel.

Given *The Tempest's* critical history, however, any analogy between Prospero's teaching and the Bible must be careful not to elide the play's thoroughgoing critique of his power on the island. While literary critics once saw Prospero as a benevolent agent of order,<sup>4</sup> contemporary approaches illustrate the play's consistent foregrounding of the shortcomings in his moral character and educational method.<sup>5</sup> Caliban in particular testifies to the coerciveness of Prospero's teaching and to the contested nature of his authority on the island.

3. Luke 21:17–19. All scriptural citations are from the Geneva version of the Bible at biblegateway.com. The allusion has already been noted by Naseeb Shaheen, *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), 740.

4. For a representative reading of Prospero as an ideal artist whose magic heals disorder in the play, see Alvin Kernan, *The Playwright as Magician: Shakespeare's Image of the Poet in the English Public Theater* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 136–45.

5. For early examples of anti-colonial readings of the play, see Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Borchardt, 1986) and Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967). New Historicist approaches to these issues tended to emphasize the role of education and discourse in colonization. Representative readings include Stephen Greenblatt, “Learning to Curse: Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century,” in *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 22–51, and Stephen Orgel,

Even on its own terms, Prospero's ambition to secure the political future of Milan has been described as Machiavellian, especially in light of the historical connections between his plans and Jacobean dynastic politics.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising therefore that *The Tempest's* evocations of scripture and religion now tend to remind us of Prospero's all-too-human failures. For example, Sarah Beckwith has argued that Prospero achieves some measure of redemption only when he lays aside his coercive magic in act 5,<sup>7</sup> thereby enabling "the penitential work of forgiveness in the entire community of speakers."<sup>8</sup> Alternatively, Prospero's deployment of scripture might be compared to that of other Shakespearean characters, such as the duke in *Measure for Measure*, who deploy religious rhetoric for political ends.<sup>9</sup> Either way, scriptural allusions in *The Tempest* are inseparable from the enduring inequalities and power struggles on the island.

What I want to argue in this article is that *The Tempest* illustrates how religious rhetoric, particularly the Christian concept of patience, contributes to the success of Prospero's dynastic ambitions. Throughout the play, Prospero cultivates patience in characters under his control, ostensibly in preparation for an eventual abandonment of his magical art. I argue that the patience taught by Prospero is closely related to the concept of *gloria passionis*, or "triumph of suffering," which Erich Auerbach has identified as central to Christian

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"Shakespeare and the Cannibals," in *Cannibals, Witches, and Divorce: Estranging the Renaissance*, ed. Marjorie Garber (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 50–66.

6. For the view that James's absolutism is a more appropriate historical context for the play than New World colonialism, see Meredith Anne Skura, "Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in *The Tempest*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40.1 (1989): 42–69. See also David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare after Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 169–82, for a reading that contextualizes the play in terms of James's dynastic politics. For a more recent attempt to join the colonial reading with the absolutist deployment of Virgil, see David Scott Wilson-Okamura, "Virgilian Models of Colonization in Shakespeare's *Tempest*," *English Literary History* 70.3 (2003): 709–37. These critical trends are revisited by Paul Stevens, "The New Presentism and Its Discontents: Listening to *Eastward Ho* and Shakespeare's *Tempest* in Dialogue," in *Rethinking Historicism from Shakespeare to Milton*, ed. Ann Baynes Coiro and Thomas Fulton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 133–58.

7. Sarah Beckwith, *Shakespeare and the Grammar of Forgiveness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 165–67.

8. Beckwith, 150.

9. See Debora Shuger, *Political Theologies in Shakespeare's England: The Sacred and the State in Measure for Measure* (New York: Palgrave, 2001).

martyrology.<sup>10</sup> In contrast with the Roman Stoics, who saw patience primarily as indifference towards the passions, the aim of Christian *gloria passionis* was to reimagine suffering itself as desirable and honourable because it enabled a passionate love for God.<sup>11</sup> Christian martyrologists often represented this transformation of suffering as a sudden shift in perspective within the martyr which gave a new value to experiences normally considered humiliating. While the tone of *The Tempest* is more playful than martyrological, the rhetoric of *gloria passionis* shapes Ferdinand and Miranda's courtship. The lovers undergo the shift in perspective that characterizes Christian patience, but their inspiration is secular love rather than a religious motive. Love inspires them to embrace the humiliating restrictions placed upon them by Prospero, and to envision patience as a turn away from worldly conceptions of honour towards new values. A series of soliloquies and dramatic exchanges invites the spectators of the play into psychological intimacy with the lovers as they undergo their conversion through love into a new understanding of patience. This secularized deployment of *gloria passionis* ultimately has political implications. Patience teaches the lovers to express their agency in Prospero's terms, thus ensuring that they voluntarily cooperate with his plan to regain Milan and effect the dynastic succession. By transferring the language of Christian patience to the secular realm of courtship, the play contributes to the success of Prospero's political ambitions even as he gives up his magic and coercive power.

In addition to buttressing Prospero's political goals, the rhetoric of Christian patience also suppresses Caliban's rival claim to sovereignty on the island. Postcolonial criticism in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has understandably approached Caliban in terms not only of *The Tempest's* explicit engagements with colonial discourse but also of the history of European colonialism in the centuries after the play was first performed. The language of *gloria passionis* provides an additional context through which we can see the play from Caliban's perspective. As we shall see, Christian patience was often inherently exclusionary in the early modern period. Theologians routinely refused to acknowledge the patience of heretics and religious opponents even when they bore their pain with exemplary endurance. Thus, a celebration of a true martyr's patience often implied a parallel denigration of the apparent

10. Erich Auerbach, *Literary Language and Its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Routledge & Paul, 1965), 65.

11. Auerbach, 68–69.

patience of heretics. *The Tempest* evokes the exclusivity of patience by inviting comparisons between Caliban and Ferdinand, a comparison that works to Caliban's disadvantage by suggesting that he is predisposed to impatience, among other undesirable traits, because his nature is inherently corrupt. While Caliban is no more a heretic than Ferdinand is a martyr, the comparison between them evokes the doubling of true and false patience which enabled theologians to predetermine whose patience should be celebrated and whose should not. By exploring how this exclusionary logic works on Caliban, the play foregrounds the fact that Caliban appears vicious to the other characters in part because they presuppose his nature to be unfit for recognition. Whereas from the perspective of the Italian characters, patience enables a harmonious royal marriage and the restitution of the rightful duke of Milan, Caliban's experience reveals that Christian patience also serves repressive ends.

The words "patience" and "passion" derive from the same Latin root, *patior*, which means "endure" and "suffer."<sup>12</sup> This etymology points to the close relationship between patience and suffering in classical philosophy and early Christian martyrology.<sup>13</sup> Auerbach demonstrates that while Stoics and other pre-Christian philosophers considered suffering to be shameful, early martyrologies such as the *Acts of Perpetua* reimagined suffering positively:

The aim of Christian hostility to the world is not a passionless existence outside of the world, but countersuffering, a passionate suffering in the world and hence also in opposition to it; and to the flesh, to the evil *passiones* of this world, the Christians oppose neither the apathy of the Stoics nor "good emotions" (*bonae passiones*) with a view to attaining the Aristotelian mean by rational compromise, but something hitherto unheard of: the *gloriosa passio* that springs from ardent love of God.<sup>14</sup>

In contrast with Stoic and Aristotelian philosophers, who sought only to ameliorate suffering, early Christians redefined suffering itself as the basis

12. For a detailed etymology of patience, see Auerbach, 67–68.

13. For an overview of Stoic and then Christian deployments of suffering, see Gerald J. Schiffhorst, "Some Prolegomena for the Study of Patience, 1480–1680," in *The Triumph of Patience*, ed. Gerard J. Schiffhorst (Orlando: University Press of Florida, 1978), 1–35.

14. Auerbach, 68–69.

of a new form of nobility. Persecuted Christians are “in the world” because they experience genuine pain with passionate intensity, but they are also “in opposition to [the world]” because, in contrast with their worldly expectations, they reimagine suffering itself as a positive experience.<sup>15</sup> Christian patience thus emerges at the intersection of two incompatible perspectives on suffering—one worldly and philosophical, the other claiming illumination from the Gospel. The tension between these perspectives created the opportunity for Christian martyrologists to reimagine the martyr’s submission as a paradoxical expression of agency.<sup>16</sup> By submitting to persecution fully—even joyously—the martyrs manifest their conversion away from the world toward the Gospel.<sup>17</sup>

Prospero teaches Ferdinand and Miranda the paradoxical agency-in-submission that characterizes *gloria passionis*. However, his aims are political and educational rather than religious. His theatrical displays, such as the spectacle of the tempest, are meant to demonstrate that apparent loss, frustration, and humiliation can be honourable if approached with patience. Instead of encouraging piety, however, the patience taught by Prospero persuades others to cooperate with his plan to unite Naples and Milan. His words to Miranda, with which I began this article, exemplify his approach to patience: “there is no soul— / No, not so much perdition as an hair, / Betid to any creature in the vessel / Which thou heard’st cry, which thou sawst sink” (1.2.29–32). The scriptural passage alluded to in these lines, Luke 21:19 (“by your patience possess your souls”), was frequently used by Christian writers to explain the paradoxical agency of the Christian martyrs.<sup>18</sup> In the preface to

15. Auerbach, 68–69.

16. The pattern for this paradoxical agency-in-submission is Jesus’s Passion. See Georgia Ronan Crampton, *The Condition of Creatures: Suffering and Action in Chaucer and Spenser* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 1–44, for an elaboration of this link between patience and the Passion.

17. For a parallel reading of the paradoxical agency of patience, see John R. Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563–1694* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 8–29. Knott summarizes the agency of the martyr as follows: “By remaining unmoved by punishment, or even exulting in it, the victim shows the limitations of the power of church or state to control the subversive spirit. Such resistance is seen as enabled by God, portrayed as strengthening the suffering Christian to endure affliction and torment” (8–9). It is important to note here that the martyr’s joy stemmed from the opportunity to imitate Christ, not from any desire to die. Seeking death unnecessarily could be a form of despair. Therefore, patience was a source of comfort only when death was imposed on the Christian.

18. See Shaheen, 740.

his *Institutes*, Calvin deploys Luke 21:19 to illustrate the passive resistance of French Protestants before Catholic persecution:

[Protestants] will be reduced to the last extremity even as sheep destined for the slaughter [Isa. 53:7–8; Acts 8:33]. Yet this will so happen that “in our patience we may possess our souls” [Luke 21:19]; and may await the strong hand of the Lord, which will surely appear in due season, coming forth armed to deliver the poor from their affliction and also punish their despisers, who now exult with such great assurance.<sup>19</sup>

Although Protestant martyrs will submit themselves to torture and death, they will thereby reclaim suffering as spiritual nobility. Prospero’s allusion to Luke 21 evokes this view of patience as a form of passive assertiveness. But instead of religious zeal, he cultivates in Miranda voluntary obedience to his own authority and education. The point of his speech is that Miranda’s “compassion,” which is to say her “suffering together” with the victims of the shipwreck, is a “virtue,” an assertive form of self-expression only so long as she trusts obediently in Prospero’s “provision” over the tempest. Prospero thus solicits from her the shift in perspective and the agency-in-submission that also characterize Christian patience, but his aim is to make her trust in his own power and authority rather than the Gospel’s.

The Christian evocations in the play’s representation of patience are clearer when compared to the Stoic version of the same virtue.<sup>20</sup> In a key moment in Justus Lipsius’s *Two Bookes on Constancy*,<sup>21</sup> the Neostoic teacher Langius imagines someone who observes a shipwreck from a safe distance: “Suppose a man be on the shore beholding a shipwrecke, it will moouue him somewhat, yet truelie not without an inward tickling of his mind, because he seeth other

19. John Calvin, “Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France,” in *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols., ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:31.

20. For more on the ambivalent relationship between Stoicism and Christianity in Shakespeare’s culture, see Geoffrey Miles, *Shakespeare and the Constant Romans* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 63–70; Reid Barbour, *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998).

21. Lipsius’s *De Constantia* was a major text in Neostoicism, a Renaissance movement that sought to integrate Christian ideas about providence with Stoic moral philosophy. See for example Justus Lipsius, *Two Bookes Of Constancie: Written in Latine by Iustus Lipsius*, ed. Rudolf Kirk, trans. John Stradling (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1939), 103.



mens danger, himself being in security.”<sup>22</sup> While I am not aware of any critical comparisons between this part of Lipsius’s treatise and *The Tempest*, Langius imagines a man who is virtually in the same situation as Miranda.<sup>23</sup> His point is that while most people take pleasure in safely observing the pain of others, a Stoic sage should endure his own suffering with the same attitude of calm indifference.<sup>24</sup> This attitude is the ideal of *apatheia*, or dispassionate endurance, which Lipsius inherited from Roman Stoics such as Cicero and Seneca. Miranda and Prospero, on the other hand, approach suffering as potentially redemptive. Unlike Langius’s hypothetical observer, Miranda’s compassionate suffering bridges the boundary between self and other and leads her to make an assertive call for clemency.<sup>25</sup> Prospero does not promote Stoic indifference either. In fact, he deliberately increases Miranda’s anguish by emphasizing the sailors’ cries: “Which thou heard’st cry, which thou sawst sink” (1.2.32). Far from counselling Stoic *apatheia*, therefore, Prospero encourages Miranda to experience suffering fully and yet to also transform it into an expression of faith. This view of suffering echoes the shift in perspective in Christian *gloria passionis* more clearly than it does Stoic *apatheia*.<sup>26</sup> “Patiently to bear the cross,” Calvin claims, “is not to be utterly stupefied and to be deprived of all feeling of pain.”<sup>27</sup> For William Jeffray, it is “a *Stoicall* stupiditie” to call it patience “when

22. Lipsius, 90.

23. Leah Whittington draws a more general comparison between Lipsius and Shakespeare in “Shakespeare’s Virgil: Empathy and *The Tempest*,” *Shakespeare and Renaissance Ethics*, ed. Patrick Gray and John D. Cox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 101–02. However, although Whittington acknowledges the importance of Lipsius and the Neostoic tradition as possible sources for the education of Miranda, she does not explicitly compare Miranda’s response to the tempest with the shipwreck imagined by Langius. As a result, Whittington sees Miranda’s response as a negative form of pity rather than as an alternative conception of patience inspired by *gloria passionis*.

24. Lipsius, 91.

25. For a parallel reading of Miranda as both assertive and submissive, see Jessica Slights, “Rape and the Romanticization of Shakespeare’s Miranda,” *Studies in English Literature* 41.2 (2001): 357–79, 364–67.

26. See Barbour, 228–39, for the differences between Stoic and Christian readings of patience in a text such as the Book of Job in this period. For more on the commonplaces of English anti-Stoicism in this period, see Henry W. Sams, “Anti-Stoicism in Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century England,” *Studies in Philology* 48 (1944): 65–78.

27. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, 2 vols., trans. Ford Lewis Battles, (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 1:709.

a man seems to be senseless in affliction.”<sup>28</sup> Miranda’s patience resembles *gloria passionis* insofar as she reinterprets suffering as redemptive by placing her trust in someone or something more powerful. The difference is that the play uses this Christian language to describe the worldly relationship between a father and his daughter, not the relationship between a martyr and God.<sup>29</sup>

Christian patience was also different from its Stoic counterpart because it presupposed the direct involvement of grace in the mind of the suffering martyr. Martyrologists such as John Foxe represent patience as an internal drama within the martyr where divine grace transforms his experience. This tendency is clear in Foxe’s account of the martyrdom of John Hooper, whom he compares favourably to the ancient Polycarpus of Smyrna:

[T]hough Polycarpus being set in the flame was kept by miracle from the torment of the fire till he was stricken down with weapon and dispatched; Hooper, by no less miracle armed with fervent spirit of God’s comfort, despised the violence thereof, as though he had felt little more than did Polycarpus the fire flaming round about him. Moreover as it is written of Polycarpus, when he should have been tied to the stake he required to stand untied saying, “Let me alone, I pray you; for he that gave me strength to come to this fire will give me patience to abide in the same

28. William Jeffray, *The picture of patience. Or, a direction to perfection* (printed by T. H. for Robert Milbourne, London, 1629), 8–9, Early English Books Online, accessed 2 February 2020, search.proquest.com/eebo.

29. We might expect that Socrates was an exception to the Christian polemics against the patience of classical philosophers, because he seems to have expressed agency in accepting death. However, the Christian conception of Socrates was complicated. Some writers did extend their polemics against the Stoics to include a negative view of Socrates’s suicide too. One example is an influential treatise on patience by Otto Werdmüller which was translated into English by Myles Coverdale in 1550; see Otto Werdmüller, *A Spiritual and Most Precious Pearl in Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale*, trans. Myles Coverdale, ed. George Pearson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 84–194. When Werdmüller sets out to “mark the right difference between the heathenish and the Christian patience,” he explains that “Socrates, in his manly sufferance and patience, neither desireth nor looketh for any help, comfort, or mitigation of his afflictions from God. [...] But David in his patience and obedience calleth upon God for help and deliverance” (178). Here, Socrates is taken to be part of the “manly” discourse of classical philosophy without any sharp distinction between him and the Stoics. The reason for this conflation seems to be that Socrates, like the Stoics, sought comfort from reason rather than from the Christian God.

without tying;" so likewise Hooper, when he should have been tied with three chains to the stake, requiring them to have no such mistrust of him was tied with but one; who, if he had not been tied at all, no doubt would have no less answered to that great patience of Polycarpus.<sup>30</sup>

God saves both martyrs miraculously, but instead of directly stopping the flames from burning Hooper as he did with Polycarpus, God "arm[s]" Hooper with the "spirit of comfort" and allows the bishop to voluntarily despise the fire. Hooper is neither totally passive nor entirely in control of his patience; his very willingness to confront the flames is a miracle, a sign of grace raising him above normal human limits.<sup>31</sup> This understanding of patience as a psychological confrontation with grace extended beyond martyrology into other popular genres such as Puritan godly life treatises.<sup>32</sup> John Downname, for example, writes that "[F]or the attaining vnto grace and glory, let vs not thinke it enough to be afflicted in the world; but let vs labour withal to make such an holy vse of our troubles."<sup>33</sup> Labouring with God means engaging in acts of patience and penitence—"humbling our selues vnder the mighty hand of God, bewailing our sins wherby we haue deserued them"—so that suffering "may be made fit meanes for the working of [God's] grace in vs."<sup>34</sup> According to this view, grace seizes Christians and makes their suffering honourable, and they respond by embracing this transformation with acts of patience. These writers conceive of the suffering Christian's experience as an internal theatre in which the worldly

30. John Foxe, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, ed. G. A. Williamson (New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1965), 228.

31. For the role of this paradox in Augustinian thought, see Donato Ogliari, *Gratia et Certamen: The Relationship between Grace and Free Will in the Discussion of Augustine with the So-Called Semipelagians* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003).

32. See Ann Thompson, *The Art of Suffering and the Impact of Seventeenth-Century Anti-Providential Thought* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 25–83.

33. John Downname, *Consolations for the afflicted: or, The third part of The Christian warfare: wherein is shewed, how the Christian may be armed and strengthened against the tentations of the world on the left hand, arising from trouble and affliction; and inabled to beare all crosses and miseries with patience, comfort and thanksgiuing* (printed by John Beale for W. Welby, London, 1613), 586, Early English Books Online, accessed 2 February 2020, [search.proquest.com/eebo](http://search.proquest.com/eebo). See also Thompson, 11, for a reading of the same passage.

34. Downname, 586.

perspective on suffering encounters the transcendent perspective of grace and is utterly transformed by it.

While religious grace does not manifest in *The Tempest*, the experience of falling in love reproduces for Miranda and Ferdinand the transformation in perspective that characterizes Christian patience. Ferdinand in particular uses the rhetoric of *gloria passionis* to represent his transformation as he falls in love. Ferdinand's labours are conventional and playful, and his experience is a far cry from Caliban's genuine suffering as he moves the logs.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, he deploys the language of Christian patience when he submits to Prospero:

My father's loss, the weakness which I feel,  
The wreck of all my friends, nor this man's threats,  
To whom I am subdued, are but light to me,  
Might I but through my prison once a day  
Behold this maid [...] (1.2.490–95)

This passage evokes Christian patience insofar as it depicts the transformation of Ferdinand's negative experiences, such as his anguish at losing a father and the humiliation of submitting to Prospero, into assertive expressions of love for Miranda. Moreover, the lightness of Ferdinand's suffering evokes Matthew 11:30, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden light," which theologians routinely glossed in terms of Christian patience. The gloss in the Geneva Bible implies a concern with the kind of patience that overcomes the world: "Matthew 11:30. May easily be borne. For his commandments are not grievous, for all that is born of God overcometh the world, 1 John 5:4." Similarly, in a discussion on Romans 8:28, "all things work together for the best unto them that love God," Augustine uses Matthew 11:30 to explain the lightness of patience: "What does this phrase, all things, mean, but the terrible and cruel sufferings which affect our condition? That burden, indeed, of Christ, which is heavy for our infirmity, becomes light to love."<sup>36</sup> Ferdinand's burdens become light because of Miranda's

35. See Melissa Sanchez, "Seduction and Service in *The Tempest*," *Studies in Philology* 105.1 (2008): 50–82. For an overview of Ferdinand's conventional courtly role, see William G. Meader, *Courtship in Shakespeare: Its Relation to the Tradition of Courtly Love* (New York: King's Crown, 1954), 160–61.

36. Augustine, "On Grace and Free Will," in *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, ed. Whitney J. Oates, trans. P. Holmes, vol. 2 (New York: Random House, 1948), 33.1. The original Latin text for this passage is: "De cooperante autem cum jam volumus et volendo facimus: Scimus, inquit, quoniam diligentibus

love, signalling his adaptation of religious language to the playful context of love and courtship.<sup>37</sup>

In act 3, Ferdinand's soliloquy stages the internal shifts in perspective that characterize patience, thus inviting the theatrical audience to experience what is ordinarily a mental process. As he moves the logs, he emphasizes the multiplicity of perspectives vying for his attention:

There be some sports are painful, and their labour  
 Delight in them sets off: some kinds of baseness  
 Are nobly undergone and most poor matters  
 Point to rich ends. This my mean task  
 Would be as heavy to me as odious, but  
 The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead  
 And makes my labours pleasures. (3.1.1–7)

This soliloquy multiplies several paradoxes—"sports" are "painful," "labour" is "delight," "baseness" is "nobly undergone," and "poor" is "rich"—in order to represent Ferdinand's love as emerging from the collision of two incompatible perspectives on his new reality. The perspective of the world sees forced labour as too "mean" for a prince, but the encounter of Miranda has made him into a new man: "The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead" (3.1.4–6). Ferdinand's words are part of courtly love convention, but Miranda's ability to quicken the dead also evokes the spiritual quickening promised to patient believers in Romans 8:11: "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Although Miranda is not literally a religious influence on him, the love she inspires in

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Deum omnia cooperatur in bonum. Quid est: omnia, nisi et ipsas terribiles saevasque passiones?" For the Latin, see Augustine, "De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio," in *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne (Paris: Garnier, 1844–55), chapter 17, *Patrologia Latina Database*, accessed 2 February 2020, [pld.chadwyck.co.uk/](http://pld.chadwyck.co.uk/).

37. I am suggesting that the playfulness of the love affair implies a difference in tone from martyrology, but it is important to note here that, according to a powerful tradition within Christian theology and love poetry, earthly love could also be seen as a reflection of heavenly love. See Augustine's understanding of *ordo amoris*, or "order of love," as outlined in Augustine, *City of God*, trans. George E. McCracken (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 5.22. For more on the social and political implications in *ordo amoris*, see Robert Dodaro, "Justice and the Limits of the Soul," in *Christ and the Just Society in the Thought of Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 27–71.

Ferdinand nevertheless transforms what he previously considered noble.<sup>38</sup> This soliloquy thus enables a theatrical audience to enter the privacy of a lover’s mind and experience his patience. As Brian Cummings has argued, in early Christian texts “the rhetorical analogy for soliloquy, ‘talking with oneself’, is a form of colloquium with God as silent witness. In the post-medieval theatre, this is transferred to an implied presence beyond the self.”<sup>39</sup> If Christian writers imagined patience as an encounter with grace, Ferdinand’s soliloquy adapts this internal conversation to the theatre by discussing the transformative effects of love on his mind, in the process inviting an implied theatrical audience to greater psychological intimacy.

In addition to displaying these paradoxes, Ferdinand actively describes himself as a patient lover in order to make himself more attractive to Miranda:

I am, in my condition,  
A prince, Miranda; I do think a king  
(I would not so!) and would no more endure  
This wooden slavery than to suffer  
The flesh-fly blow my mouth! Hear my soul speak:  
The very instant that I saw you did  
My heart fly to your service, there resides  
To make me slave to it, and for your sake  
Am I this patient log-man [...] (3.1.4–6)

Ferdinand’s main claim in this passage is that he would relinquish a kingdom for Miranda, but he once again presents this rather simple point in the language of Christian patience. The speech begins with an assertive “I am, in my condition, / A prince,” but halfway through, his “soul” and “heart” begin to “speak” and “fly” as if independently of Ferdinand’s direct control, signalling that they have become metonymies for a new subjective disposition over which he does not have complete control. In other words, the activity of his “heart” and “soul” as semi-independent entities signals that Ferdinand is experiencing a conversion away from a familiar way of seeing the world and

38. See Steven Petersheim, “‘As I am a man’: Shakespeare’s Ferdinand as Renaissance Man in Training,” *EIRC* 38 (2012): 77–94, 83, for a parallel reading of the religious evocations in these lines.

39. Brian Cummings, *Mortal Thoughts: Religion, Secularity and Identity in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 182.

towards a radically new point of view. By the end of the speech, Ferdinand's assertive "I am" has accordingly become a transformed "am I": "for your sake / Am I this patient log-man." Ferdinand thus represents his love as a conversion from the perspective of the world, which sees slavery as a living death, to a new perspective informed by love, which sees service for Miranda as nobler than a royal title. The process by which Ferdinand becomes this "patient log-man" thus resembles the passive agency of *gloria passionis*, but the force that seizes his mind and transforms his perspective is love, not the transcendent gift of grace.

Miranda similarly hails Ferdinand as a "thing divine" when she first sees him, and during the courtship she continues to treat his appearance as a transformative event that has endowed her with a new sense of self. Her clearest similarity to *gloria passionis* is her sense of assertiveness within submission. Even though she continues to be a model of filial obedience throughout the courtship, she also flouts convention when she offers to move Ferdinand's logs (3.1.22–24).<sup>40</sup> The same irreverence leads her to propose marriage: "I am your wife, if you will marry me; / If not, I'll die your maid [...] I'll be your servant / Whether you will or no" (3.1.84–86.). Miranda thus submits patiently as a "servant" and "maid," but her submission is also an assertive expression of love. In her patience she displays signs of the internal shift in perspective and the paradoxical agency-in-submission that Christian martyrology typified as signs of religiously inspired patience. Her tone in the courtship is, of course, much lighter than that of Christian martyrology. Miranda's "suffering" is at worst a benign form of erotic longing, and her patience is animated by her love for Ferdinand, not the Gospel. Although Miranda adapts religiously evocative language to describe her love, her patience does not imply the physical anguish of a martyr, nor does her love for Ferdinand look to any transcendent source of authority to make their metaphorical "suffering" meaningful. In other words, what makes the lovers resemble the discourse of *gloria passionis* is not any acute suffering commensurate to martyrdom, but the perspectival shift that leads them to value patient service above worldly honour.

By thus adapting the rhetoric of Christian patience to the worldly concerns of love and courtship, *The Tempest* also foregrounds this virtue's capacity to support Prospero's political power. Christian patience involves

40. See Slights, 368–69, for the view that Miranda's offer to move logs violates traditional assumptions about courtship and represents an increasingly independent voice within obedience.

finding agency in obedience, which in this play often means obedience to Prospero and his dynastic ambitions. Even though Ferdinand and Miranda fall in love seemingly against Prospero's wishes, he secretly welcomes their union and feigns displeasure to teach them the desired patience: "this swift business / I must uneasy make, lest too light winning / Make the prize light" (1.2.451–53). The rationale behind this illusion of paternal disapproval is complicated. Part of Prospero's aim is to teach the lovers the value of marriage rather than unbridled sexuality. But the illusion of paternal disapproval also provides the lovers with the opportunity to display the agency-in-submission that characterizes patience. This virtue is politically necessary for Prospero because it reconciles Ferdinand's and Miranda's independent expressions of love with continuing obedience to his patriarchal authority. The dynastic union of Naples and Milan depends upon this balance because they must fall in love freely and voluntarily in order for the marriage to work, yet their freedom must not openly rebel against Prospero.<sup>41</sup> Christian patience thus contributes to Prospero's wielding of indirect control over his pupils, which some critics have identified as a key feature of humanist pedagogy.<sup>42</sup> Even though his promise to drown his book and break his staff (5.1.54–57) suggests a desire to abdicate authority, the rhetoric of Christian patience suggests that Prospero's power also evolves into an indirect form. Instead of ruling despotically over every detail of the courtship, he sets up the dramatic situation of paternal disapproval which spurs Ferdinand's and Miranda's patience.

This approach to Christian patience is ultimately a more secure path to power than the simplistic Machiavellianism espoused by Antonio and Sebastian.<sup>43</sup> The plot to assassinate Alonso rehearses the scheming that

41. See Tom Lindsay's reading of Miranda's passive assertiveness, in "'Which first was mine own king': Caliban and the Politics of Service and Education in *The Tempest*," *Studies in Philology* 113.2 (2016): 397–432, 423. Lindsey argues that Renaissance English pedagogy in general aimed to cultivate the student's autonomy within limits, and "willing subordination became the mechanism through which they moved toward adult independence" (404–05).

42. See Lindsay, 397–423; Jonathan Bate, "The Humanist Tempest," in *La Tempête: Etudes Critiques*, ed. Claude Peltrault (Besançon: Université de Franche-Comté, 1994), 5–20; Goran Stanivukovic, "The Tempest and the Discontents of Humanism," *Philological Quarterly* 75 (2006): 91–119. For more on the context around Shakespeare and humanism, see Lynn Enterline, *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

43. Some critics have argued that Shakespeare went beyond the stage Machiavel to a more sophisticated engagement with Machiavelli's ideas. See for example Hugh Grady, *Shakespeare, Machiavelli, and*



originally ousted Prospero from Milan, thus rehearsing a fratricidal pattern that is apparently endemic to Italian political culture. Antonio justifies such actions by alluding to Machiavelli's view that the best way to control one's fortune is to seize the *occasione* or political opportunity when it presents itself.<sup>44</sup> For example, he accuses Sebastian of letting his "fortune sleep—die, rather" (2.1.216) and counsels him to seize the occasion: "the occasion speaks thee, and / My strong imagination sees a crown / Dropping upon thy head" (2.1.207–09). Antonio's haste in seizing the occasion distinguishes him from Ferdinand, who uses his humiliation as an opportunity to display patience rather than rebel at the earliest available opportunity. However, Ferdinand's Christian patience ends up being more successful even on Machiavellian grounds, because it cements the political legitimacy of his successors more securely than Sebastian and Antonio could ever hope. By deploying Christian patience to secure a legitimate dynasty, Prospero is even more faithful than his brother to the actual writings of Machiavelli, who admits hereditary succession as a more secure path to power than usurpation.<sup>45</sup> In Prospero's hands, Christian patience becomes an effective alternative to the reductive opportunism of a stage Machiavel such as Antonio.

When Prospero secures Alonso's blessing for the royal marriage, he once again deploys patience to foster voluntary obedience and cooperation in the Italian nobility. Alonso and Prospero initially commiserate as two fathers in need of a shared patience:

Alonso. Irreparable is the loss, and patience  
Says it is past her cure.

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*Montaigne: Power and Subjectivity from Richard II to Hamlet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 26–49; Anne Barton, "Livy, Machiavelli, and Shakespeare's Coriolanus," *Shakespeare Survey* 38 (1985): 115–29.

44. See Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. James B. Atkinson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2008), 361–72. For more on early modern literary adaptations of Machiavelli's *occasione*, see David Norbrook, "Republican Occasions in *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*," *Milton Studies* 42 (2003): 122–48.

45. Machiavelli privileges hereditary monarchy for strictly pragmatic reasons: "I submit, then, that hereditary states accustomed to their prince's lineage are retained with many fewer difficulties than are new states, because it is enough for the hereditary prince merely to observe the customary practices of his forefathers and then to use delaying tactics when faced with unforeseen events. Hence if this kind of prince uses normal diligence, he will always retain his power unless an extraordinary and extreme force deprives him of it; even if he is deprived of it, he regains it whenever adversity strikes the usurper" (Machiavelli, 99).

Prospero. I rather think  
You have not sought her help, of whose soft grace  
For the like loss I have her sovereign aid  
And rest myself content. (5.1.140–45)

While Alonso believes his son to be genuinely dead, Prospero and the theatrical audience know that the metaphorical "loss" of Miranda and Ferdinand is due to love. The dramatic irony of this exchange, coupled with the subsequent revelation of the couple, illustrates to the Italian nobles that the meaning of suffering and loss depends on one's perspective. As we have seen, the reinterpretation of suffering as honourable was central to Christian *gloria passionis*. However, whereas in Christian martyrology patience involves a conversion from the world to a point of view informed by grace, Prospero stages a parallel shift in perspective through theatrical manipulation. In particular, he withholds his true intentions from the characters being tested until they become willing to reimagine suffering on Prospero's terms. Thus, what initially appears as a shipwreck to Ferdinand and Miranda becomes, thanks to Prospero's art, an opportunity for love and courtship. What appears as an irreparable loss of a child to Alonso soon becomes the "miracle" (5.1.177) of the couple's sudden appearance at a game of chess (5.1.172). The rhetoric of Christian patience helps these characters see their earlier suffering as redemptive in light of the dynastic union. The political result is that Prospero secures the nobles' voluntary obedience to his authority even as he leaves his magic behind, all the while outsmarting those like Sebastian and Antonio who refuse to cooperate.

While there is a political motive behind Prospero's teaching on patience, *The Tempest* represents this strategy as a justified and relatively lenient way to regain control over Milan. Patience enables Prospero to reshape the perspective of the Italian characters, thus correcting the political transformation of the court that led to his exile in the first place. According to Prospero, Antonio's most dangerous skill was his capacity to transform others: before the exile, Antonio "new created / The creatures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em, / Or else new formed 'em" (1.2.81–83). The rhetoric of Christian patience enables a parallel change in perspective, but this change repairs the damage brought on by Antonio's original Machiavellian transformation of Milan. While patience "new form[s]" the people around Prospero, Ferdinand and Miranda do not experience their transformation as merely coercive. On the contrary, they

contribute to the transformation with their autonomous decision to imagine labour as desirable. Thus, if Antonio changed others only to achieve his own narrow political purposes, Prospero's gradual teaching of Christian patience benefits the lovers and allows them to cooperate voluntarily by adding their imaginative creativity to the courtship.

Moreover, act 5 in particular makes Prospero more sympathetic than earlier acts by emphasizing his change of heart towards forgiveness rather than revenge. The turning point is usually taken to be his dialogue with Ariel.<sup>46</sup> The spirit notifies him of the pain suffered by the Italian nobles: "Your charm so strongly works 'em / That if you now beheld them, your affections / Would become tender" (5.1.17–19). Prospero confirms that he will indeed forgive them because he feels the same passions as they do: "shall not myself, / One of their kind, that relish all as sharply, / Passion as they, be kindlier moved than thou art?" (5.1.22–24). Once again, this change of heart is imagined as a new relationship with passion in the sense of sympathetic suffering as well as affection. This exchange proves what Prospero later claims to Alonso: he does not see himself as a god of power, but as a human being susceptible to passion and in need of the "sovereign aid of patience" (5.1.144). The exchange with Ariel proves his intention to set aside coercive magic in favour of a more lenient approach to conflict.

However, Prospero's perspective is not the only one in *The Tempest*. In what remains of this article, I explore how the rhetoric of Christian patience shapes Caliban's experience. Even though the play presents Prospero as increasingly sympathetic in act 5, it also presents Caliban's point of view consistently enough to enable a more critical reading of how Prospero shapes events in this concluding act. As with so much of Prospero's pedagogy, from Caliban's point of view his teaching on Christian patience appears as a complicated issue.

In a classic essay, "Aspects of Linguistic Colonialism in the Sixteenth Century," Stephen Greenblatt suggests that *The Tempest* navigates between two competing theories of linguistic education that contributed to the colonization of the Americas in the sixteenth century. According to one perspective, the Amerindigenes lacked an intelligible language and were therefore in need of European education to become capable of speech. This point of view tended to

46. For an example of this reading, see Beckwith, 165.

push them "toward utter difference—and thus silence."<sup>47</sup> The other extreme was a theory of language that presented the language of the Aborigines as almost indistinguishable from that of the Europeans, thereby moving them "towards utter likeness—and thus the collapse of their own, unique identity."<sup>48</sup> In *The Tempest*, Caliban is poised between these extremes of likeness and difference in relation to the Europeans:

Shakespeare, in *The Tempest*, experiments with an extreme version of this problem, placing Caliban at the outer limits of difference only to insist upon a mysterious measure of resemblance. It is as if he were testing our capacity to sustain metaphor. And in this instance only, the audience achieves a fullness of understanding before Prospero does, an understanding that Prospero is only groping toward at the play's close. In the poisoned relationship between master and slave, Caliban can only curse; but we know that Caliban's consciousness is not simply a warped negation of Prospero's.<sup>49</sup>

From this perspective, the play presents Caliban as categorically different from the European characters and, at the same time, as someone whose frustration with Prospero is nevertheless recognizable. Central to this reading is Caliban's rejection of Prospero's teaching: "You taught me language; and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse" (1.2.364–65). As Greenblatt notes, Caliban's cursing could be interpreted as a "self-indictment" of himself as an unteachable monster or, more sympathetically, as a complaint of "devastating justness" against Europeans who benefit from his enslavement.<sup>50</sup> The play's great achievement in these moments is that it preserves Caliban's marked difference from the Europeans without using this difference to silence him or his complaint against slavery.

Greenblatt's emphasis on language is understandable considering how much of Prospero's humanist pedagogy revolves around linguistic concerns. As we have seen, however, Prospero also teaches virtues such as patience, and Caliban displays as much complexity in relation to this concept as other

47. Greenblatt, 42.

48. Greenblatt, 42.

49. Greenblatt, 42–43.

50. Greenblatt, 35.

aspects of his teaching. In fact, patience is central to the play's representation of Caliban as poised ambivalently between similarity and difference in relation to the Europeans. The play's staging insists on a parallel between Caliban and Ferdinand—they move the same logs, in the same place, and within a few scenes of each other—but Caliban does not reimagine his situation in the idealized terms of *gloria passionis*. Unlike Ferdinand, Caliban remains a deliberately *impatient* log-man, and he mentions patience only in the middle of a rebellion (4.1.205). Thus, while the discourse of Christian patience serves to unify many of the Italian characters around a shared moral vision and dynastic settlement, the effect of this discourse on Caliban is to highlight not only his similarities but also his differences in relation to the Europeans. As we shall see, part of the reason why Christian patience enables exclusion in *The Tempest* is that this virtue was often inherently exclusivist in early modern religious writing. Martyrologists often defined true patience by contrasting it with the false patience of heretics and other religious enemies. Patience implied a comparison between true and false Christians, and the crucial differences became visible against the backdrop of a troubling and potentially deceptive similarity. In *The Tempest*, Caliban illustrates the political implications in this approach as he becomes the rebellious and impatient foil for the patience of the Italian characters. While the play cannot be said to take Caliban's side in his conflict with Prospero, the play does foreground the exclusiveness of Christian patience, and this exclusiveness is especially clear if we choose to see the play from Caliban's point of view.

Christian patience was exclusive because it was the result of grace, which Augustinian and Protestant traditions restricted to the elect. Heretics and the reprobate could perform a false version of Christian patience, but true patience was supposed to belong only to the elect and the doctrinally orthodox. Thus, in his *On Patience*, Augustine argues that “for the man with true patience, the human will does not suffice unless it is aided and inflamed from above, for the Holy Spirit is its fire.”<sup>51</sup> Conversely, “the man of false patience” lacks the inspiration of the Spirit, but through “the lust of the world [he] patiently

51. Augustine, *Patience*, ed. Roy J. Deferrari and trans. Luanne Meagher (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1952), 26. In his “Introduction,” Deferrari explains that while the authorship of the text was questioned by Erasmus on stylistic grounds, the attribution persisted because the text does not contradict Augustinian treatments of patience in other sources, and Augustine mentions having written a book on patience in his correspondence (9).

sustains the burdens of any calamity.”<sup>52</sup> Thus grace is the defining element of true patience, and both are available only to an elect minority, but the reprobate may imitate patience and thereby deceive a casual observer.<sup>53</sup> In order to assess whose patience was genuine, it was necessary to consider the cause of suffering: “true patience is recognized only through its cause. When this is good, then you have true patience [...] but when it is maintained by a criminal act, then it is much misrepresented in name.”<sup>54</sup> Later theologians would describe this view with the maxim *non poena sed causa*, which Susanna Monta translates as “the cause, not the death, makes the martyr.”<sup>55</sup> This maxim means that the decision on what constitutes a good cause logically precedes the patience of the martyr despite the fact that the church usually presents its encomia as a response to the martyr’s patience. As a result, Christian patience implied a contrast between orthodox martyrs and others who did not have the same access to this virtue because of their doctrinal non-conformity.

As Monta and other historians of religion have demonstrated, the language of *non poena sed causa* flourished in the early modern period because it allowed various Christian denominations to praise the patience of their own martyrs while vilifying those of their opponents.<sup>56</sup> For example, within a generation of the first publication of the *Actes and Monuments*, separatist puritans such as Henry Barrow imitated Foxe’s depictions of patience and martyrdom so as to challenge the very church organization that Foxe’s martyrs had died to

52. Augustine, *Patience*, 26.

53. Historians of religion have situated Augustine’s view of martyrological patience in terms of his debates with the Donatists, a heretical group that prided itself on the patience of its followers during bouts of Roman persecution. Given the Donatist focus on patience as a source of authority, a discussion of patience would be a natural place to challenge their approach. For a classic study of Donatism, see W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952). See also Marcin Wysocki, “Numuid non et Africa sanctorum martyrum corporibus plena est? (Augustine, Ep. 78,3): Martyrs and Martyrdom in Roman Africa—A Preparation for Donatism?” in *The Uniquely African Controversy: Studies on Donatist Christianity*, ed. Anthony Dupont, Matthew Alan Gaumer, and Mathijs Lamberigts (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 3–28. Wysocki links Donatism to *Passio Cantarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, which inspired Erich Auerbach’s theorization of *gloria passionis*.

54. Augustine, *Patience*, 14–15.

55. For the history and meaning of this dictum, see Susannah Brietz Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 9–34.

56. See for example Monta, 30–49, and Knott, 80–130.

preserve.<sup>57</sup> The religious authorities typically responded that radicals such as Barrow are not really martyrs, because orthodoxy is a prerequisite for true patience. Thus William Cowper claims that “[heretics] may make a shew of voluntary Religion in *not sparing the body*, but seeing they haue not the truth of God, how can they haue true Patience?”<sup>58</sup> Building on the logic of *non poena sed causa*, Cowper argues that martyrs must suffer for an orthodox cause in order for their patience to be genuine. In other words, the institutional definition of what counts as “the truth of God” logically precedes patience and legitimizes the martyr’s death. These arguments qualified what is sometimes described as the “universalist” rhetoric of the Pauline epistles by restricting the fruits of grace to those who conformed to a particular vision of Christian doctrine.

The exclusivism of Christian patience contributes to Caliban’s alienation on the island by transforming him into a foil for the Italian characters. On the one hand, the parallel between Caliban and Ferdinand suggests that they are similar enough that Caliban could have displayed *gloria passionis* even though he chose not to do so. Prospero explicitly compares them when he enslaves Ferdinand: “To th’ most of men this is a Caliban / And they to him are angels” (1.2.481–82). The main purpose for this comparison is to test Miranda, but it also serves the purpose of emphasizing Ferdinand’s patience, which is supposed to distinguish his performance of the labour from Caliban’s.<sup>59</sup> The comparison implies that Caliban is responsible for his eventual punishment because of his failure to display the same patience as Ferdinand. On the other hand, the play also suggests that Caliban is categorically different from the Italian characters and so does not have the same access to Christian patience. Prospero’s threats to Caliban emphasize physical pain: “If thou neglect’st or dost unwillingly / What I command, I’ll rack thee with old cramps” (1.2.369–70). The “rack” is a strictly punitive verb, and the “old cramps” emphasize the embodied immediacy of

57. For an expanded account of Barrow’s trial, see Knott, 123–28.

58. William Cowper, *Two fruitfull and godly treatises, to comfort the afflicted* (printed by T. S[nodham] for John Budge, London, 1616), 286, Early English Books Online, accessed 2 February 2020, search.proquest.com/eebo.

59. Critics have long suggested that the parallel between Ferdinand and Caliban destabilizes the idealization of courtly love between Ferdinand and Miranda. See for example Brown, 63, and Kevin Pask, “Caliban’s Masque.” *ELH* 70.3 (2003): 750.

Caliban's suffering.<sup>60</sup> In contrast with Prospero's other wards, who are promised gentle treatment in exchange for patience, Prospero treats Caliban as more deserving of physical punishment.<sup>61</sup> As a result, Caliban's pain is more punitive, and less metaphorical, than Ferdinand's courtly "suffering," thus signalling the sharp differences as well as the similarities between them. This punitive language suggests that patience is not really expected of Caliban, even though he is punished for failing to embody it.

Moreover, Prospero excludes Caliban from patience by essentializing his rebelliousness as a function of his nature. Upon learning of Caliban's plot with Trinculo and Stephano, Prospero blames his unteachability: "A devil, a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (4.1.188–89). After the Italians close ranks around their mutual need for the "soft grace" of patience, Prospero once again excludes Caliban from this patient community by describing him as a "demi-devil" (5.1.272) whose moral disproportions are predetermined by a monstrous body: "He is as disproportion'd in his manners / As in his shape" (5.1.291–92). These statements essentialize Caliban's rebellion and impatience as a function of his "shape" rather than a history of exploitation on the island.<sup>62</sup> The implication is that Caliban is not simply guilty of rebellion, but that he is actually incapable of patience because of an inherited nature that he cannot change. This argument elides Caliban's own account of his history on the island: "This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother, / Which thou tak'st from me" (1.2.332–33). By essentializing Caliban's impatience, Prospero circumvents Caliban's claim to sovereignty and suggests that political power rightfully belongs to the Italian characters because of their superior nature. As a result, if Ferdinand's patience vindicates his titles and his claim to Miranda's hand, Caliban's impatience serves as a retroactive justification for his enslavement by Prospero.

60. For the contrast between Ferdinand's labour and Caliban's genuine slavery, see Barbara Ann Sebek, "Peopling, Profiting, and Pleasure in *The Tempest*," in *The Tempest: Critical Essays*, ed. Patrick M. Murphy (New York: Routledge, 2001), 463–81, 469.

61. For an account of Prospero's differential treatment of each of his wards, see Hiewon Shin, "Single Parenting, Homeschooling: Prospero, Caliban, Miranda," *Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 42.2 (2008): 373–93.

62. For a reading of Caliban's representation as a result of humanist moral philosophy and courtly discourse, see Gary Schmidgall, *Shakespeare and the Courtly Aesthetic* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 196–202.



Understood in this way, the rhetoric of patience in this play contributes to a broader pattern of equivocation in Prospero's justifications for Caliban's enslavement. Sometimes Prospero blames Caliban's rebellious actions such as the attempted rape of Miranda (1.2.345–48), but at other times Caliban is imagined as a natural slave: "Abhorred slave, / Which any print of goodness wilt not take" (1.2.352–53). According to this second account, Caliban is worthy of slavery regardless of his criminality or innocence: "thy vile race, / Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures / Could not abide to be with" (1.2.359–61). As critics have long recognized, this equivocation protects Prospero from the likely possibility that his own pedagogical methods inspired Caliban's less appealing traits.<sup>63</sup> The rhetoric of *gloria passionis* contributes to this pattern. While scripture appears to invite all believers to display patience in suffering, Christian theologians restricted patience to the orthodox. As we have seen, the logic of *non poena sed causa* preserved the language and rhetoric of universalism while at the same time making patience a tool for exclusion. Prospero similarly speaks as if patience is available to everyone, but the play retroactively demonstrates that patience hinges on what Prospero considers to be the right "nature" and "shape." In both the martyrological literature and the play, the sovereign decision—in one case regarding orthodoxy, in the other regarding the correct "shape" for social recognition—precedes the behaviour of the person being judged. The decision is justified, however, as a reflection of the victim's choice to display patience. Because Prospero reserves for himself the right to make such decisions, the play suggests that his coercive power over Caliban persists even though he gives up his magic and forgives his Italian opponents.

As New Historicist criticism has repeatedly reminded us, *The Tempest* does not sentimentalize or idealize Caliban, but neither does it allow his experience to be eclipsed by characters who attempt to speak for him. *The Tempest's* representation of patience contributes to this characterization. On the one hand, Caliban is meant to be a negative foil for Ferdinand's superior patience, but this comparison only goes so far, because his economic enslavement is presented as more severe than the metaphorical slavery of a courtly lover. The question of Caliban's nature complicates the comparison

63. Lindsay suggests that Prospero is responsible for Caliban's attack on Miranda because his humanist education introduces social hierarchy to Caliban's life (415–21). The education may therefore have taught Caliban "how to see Miranda as a politically advantageous tool" (421).

further. He is sometimes treated as responsible for his moral choices, and at other times as a natural slave who does not even have the ability to display patience. I have suggested that the exclusivist history of Christian patience helps explain these apparent contradictions. Christian patience was an inherently doubled concept that implied the exclusion of heretics despite its language of praise. In *The Tempest*, this doubleness manifests in the fact that only some characters may claim true patience despite the apparently universal thrust of this concept. Privileged, humanist-educated individuals such as Ferdinand and Miranda might experience a sense of agency within obedience. But Caliban is condemned to perpetually "seek for grace" (5.1.296) from an audience that sees his slavery as natural. Thus, even though *The Tempest* does not sentimentalize Caliban, it does call attention to the exclusivism of discourses such as Christian patience and to Prospero's power to determine whose patience merits praise in the first place. If we choose to see patience in *The Tempest* from Caliban's point of view, we are left not with a simplistic argument for or against Caliban, but rather with a troubling exploration of how Christianity's exclusivist view of patience aids in legitimizing Caliban's slavery.