

رؤية الاستعمارية: دراسة نقدية لمقتطف من مسرحية العاصفة لشكسبير باللغة الإنجليزية لمدارس الصف الخامس الإعدادي العراقية.

م.م. وسام عبود حمود / كلية الإمام الكاظم (ع)

**A Decolonial Vision: A Critical Study of the Extract of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in English for Iraqi 5<sup>th</sup> Preparatory Schools.  
Wisam Abbood Hammood / Imam Kadhum College**

**Abstract:** Through the examination of the extract of the play *The Tempest* in Iraqi Secondary schools, this paper explores the depictions of colonial and cultural identities within this work in the book entitled 'English for Iraq'. The paper challenges the domination of narratives and how they express the characterization and themes in the extract to form a colonial experience of Iraqi students' history and culture. This colonial ideology is hidden in Prospero's and Caliban's speeches. The aim of this paper explores a complex interface between the colonial strategy and Iraqi students' understandings, emphasizing the necessity of utilizing such a Decolonial vision that enables us to make scrutiny and evaluation of the colonial impacts on Iraqi students' identities and experiences. The paper applies Edward Said's contrapuntal mode of reading on the extract to gain this Decolonial vision. The mode has two stages of analysis. The examination and exposition of the extract are done in the first stage, and the discussions of juxtapositional analysis lie in the second stage. The contribution of this study revolves around the decolonization of literary texts on the academic level. Ultimately, the mode provides the vision that helps the progress of Iraqi students' critical thinking about social justice and Iraqi cultural identity in Iraqi secondary schools.



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Corresponding author:  
Wisam Abbood Hammood  
[Wissam.abod@iku.edu.iq](mailto:Wissam.abod@iku.edu.iq)

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**المستخلص :** من خلال دراسة مقتطف من مسرحية العاصفة في كتاب بعنوان "الإنجليزية للعراق المدارس الثانوية العراقية، يقوم هذا البحث تصوير بكشف عن الهويات الاستعمارية والثقافية داخل هذا العمل. تهاجم هذه الورقة الهيمنة الاستعمارية الروائية وطرق التي تعبر فيها عن تكوين الشخصيات والمواضعات في المقتطف والتي تشكل خبرة استعمارية في ثقافة وتاريخ الطلاب العراقيين. هذه توجد هذه الأيديولوجية الاستعمارية مخفية في حديث كل من بروس بيرو وكالبان. الهدف من هذه الورقة البحثية هو دراسة الترابط المعقد بين الإستراتيجية الاستعمارية وفهم الطلاب العراقيين مؤكدة على ضرورة توظيف رؤية الاستعمارية التي تمكننا من عمل تمحيص وتقييم الآثار الاستعمارية على تجارب وهويات الطلاب العراقيين. تطبق الورقة نموذج إدوارد سعيد في القراءة التضادية على المقتطف للوصول إلى هذه الرؤية الاستعمارية. يتألف هذا النموذج من مرحلتين من التحليل. في المرحلة الأولى، يتم فحص المقتطف وعرضه، وفي المرحلة الثانية، مناقشة التحليل التجاورية. تتمحور مساهمة هذه الدراسة حول إزالة الطابع الاستعماري عن النصوص الأدبية على المستوى الأكاديمي. وفي نهاية المطاف، تُقدم هذه النموذج رؤية تُسهم في تطوير التفكير النقدي لدى الطلاب العراقيين حول العدالة الاجتماعية والهوية الثقافية العراقية في المدارس الثانوية العراقية.

## 1.1 Introduction

Shakespeare was and is still an inspiration for many literary and intellectual thoughts all over the world. His characters and themes are reflections of individuals' experiences and identities to those who read and study his works, especially in the academic field. John Adams, the second president of the United States, describes him as ' the great teacher of morality and politics '(Ritcher,2022, p.37).

In the Introduction of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Michael Witmore, a scholar of Shakespeare, also mentions that Shakespeare's plays are universal because they depict their readers' own lives, and the difficulty of understanding the world is something inevitable and unimagined without Shakespeare (p. 4). Talking about Shakespeare's characters, William Hazlitt, a prominent figure in literary criticism, emphasized that ' Every single character is as much individual as those in life itself'(Hazlitt, p. 11).

Shakespeare's literary works continue to represent humanistic experiences of the world in which people live. This is one of the main causes for the universality of his works, which has the capacity to outline moral, political, and universal lessons for people in and out of school. For many, *The Tempest* is one

of his plays that could achieve the goals of the lessons in Shakespeare's works. From the point of view of Hazlitt, *The Tempest* is an exemplary mode because of its reflection of 'grace and grandeur', and it is also so because it blends imaginary characters with humanistic ones. (Ibid., p. 80). By the same token, Olivia Johnston and Farrel Mark assign the play *The Tempest* to students in the fifth preparatory school in Iraq. In doing such an assignment, they try to increase students' understanding of the English language and culture. One of the main goals of the extract is 'to develop students' awareness of other cultures and forms of artistic activity'(Johnston& Mark, p 261).

Without any doubt, studying literary works plays a vital role in the development of Iraqi students' ability to understand literature and culture all over the world, but Decolonial examinations should be a pillar in the process of selecting any literary form. Because of this, Shakespeare's '*The Tempest*' has to be scrutinized in this study to shape a Decolonial vision that can enhance the understanding of effects in the play upon Iraqi students' culture and identity. That's to say, the reason behind checking *the Tempest* is that it creates a reality in which the colonizers instruct the colonized regardless of their national identity and culture. In this context, *The Tempest* is not an innocent play in the history of colonialism and postcolonialism to be allocated in the academic field, particularly in Iraqi secondary schools. For many intellectuals, it creates a world in which westerners become masters of teaching colonial experiences to make people follow their power because the play carries colonial ideologies within its characters and themes.

Allen Carey-Webb, a professor of English at Western Michigan University, says, 'The connection between book-learning, schooling, and the obedience of citizens was an important historical reality before, after, and during Shakespeare's life. ' For him, the Englishmen and Europeans are in charge of teaching the colonized, and *The Tempest* bridges education and colonial power and authority in the colonial and postcolonial era. He explains that *The Tempest* is 'a model of colonial relationships and a metaphor of colonial history'(Carey-Webb,1999, National and Colonial Education, para.1). Similarly, Sunita B. Nimavat (2019) points out that *The Tempest* depicts not only the conflict between the colonizer and the colonized but also questions the existing ideologies of colonization (p.428).

Under such an umbrella of colonialism, *The Tempest* is a mirror that reflects and establishes authority and colonial identity over Iraqi students' understanding and experience. It tries to reshape colonial culture and literature in a logical (academic) way to be a means of colonial and postcolonial domination.

## 1.2 Significance of Decolonial Vision

Certainly, Decolonial vision is a crucial part of postcolonial literature. Ngugi Wa Thiong was one of the intellectuals who advocated extremely literary dimension in the Decolonial process. In his groundbreaking work 'Decolonizing the Mind', Ngugi Wa Thiong calls attention to cultural identity and self-esteem for people who undergo colonization of politics, economics, and language. As explained by Thiong, the removal of imperialistic language is a required step in Decolonial procedures and activities (Rani, Mamta, 2022, p 106).

Hence, the Decolonial vision is an essential part in the process of appointing a literary text within the Iraqi Educational curriculum. By the use of such paradigmatic vision, Iraqi students' identity, culture, and language are not affected by the colonial ideologies and practices. Secondly, this vision is beneficial not only for Iraqi students in preparatory schools but also for people in the educational system of Iraq. Lastly, it plays an important role in understanding cultural diversity and deconstructing cultural differences.

## 1.2 Methodology and Data Collection

To form a Decolonial perspective on *The Tempest*, in the book English for Iraq: 5<sup>th</sup> preparatory school, qualitative analysis is utilized to focus on literary elements of the play, such as plot, characters, and themes. The analysis identifies the needed Decolonial vision by relying on Edward Said's 'Orientalism'. This framework of such analysis enables us to inspect the colonial themes in the play *The Tempest*. The excerpt of *The Tempest* is collected for the sake of the analysis. In this way, the analysis uncovers the implications of colonial narratives and opens the door for consideration of Decolonial interpretations in selecting any literary texts in the Iraqi curriculum.

## 2.A Theoretical Framework of Decolonial Vision

### 2.1 A Perspective of Decolonial Thought in Literature

Colonial hands always try to distort people's identity, culture, literature, economics, politics and etc. They are not something imaginary, but they are harsh and continuous realities that human beings have to face their materialistic

mind at some point of time. Through targeting people's self-determination, language, and power, they support their centrality and imperialistic ideologies. In the face of these colonial attitudes and practices, postcolonial theory and literature stand firmly to explain colonial effects upon people and to clarify the best ways of getting rid of these colonial hands and minds. Many prominent intellectuals, such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Wilson Harris, Chinua Achebe, Bill Ashcroft, and Wole Soyinka, have been the main contributors to Decolonial thought in postcolonial literature. As elucidated by Hans Bertens (2008), cultural independence is a driving force for postcolonial literature in the mid-twentieth century. Basically, the sturdy concentration of this literature is the criticism of Eurocentrism and the people who are victimized by such Western-centric thoughts (p.155).

For instance, the studies in the postcolonial literature introduce a new reading of Western literary texts, particularly Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. For Bertens, probing the structure of values that imperial powers need as a way of domination, enables postcolonial theory and criticism to investigate the impacts and ways of colonizing powers on the displaced 's identities. Such postcolonial examination also shows how to protect displaced the colonized culturally from such colonial effects and processes (Ibid.p.160).

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, one of the most well-known intellectuals in postcolonial literature, criticizes the teaching of English literature in the colonial period in India. Such colonial literature provides a tacit method that carries out imperial tasks of instructing colonial goals. She attacks imperial literary works in her literary criticism, for they serve the colonial ideologues ( Stephen. 2003, p. 3). She points out that English literary texts are advisably studied without forgetting their imperialist and cultural dimensions. In '*Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism*', she confirms that reading nineteenth British literature must take the imperial aspects of the text since the imperialism was a vital element of representation of England to the English. The role of literature greatly supports the imperial portrayals socially (Spivak, p. 243). Moreover, in '*Can The Subaltern Speak* ', Spivak explains that the interested desire for Westerners is to keep ' the West as Subject', and the story of the Subject comes from Western ideologies with hidden geo-political determinations (Williams and Chrisman, p.66).



Postcolonial literature considers the duality between the colonizer and the colonized as a very important issue in which the directions of its effort are about the questions of conventional depiction of oppression, revolt, and resistance. As literary processes, postcolonial writings help the colonized people to express their cultures and identities as independent entities from European colonial masters. They become a writing back paradigm for colonial literary texts. As a field of study, postcolonial literature specializes in explaining, analyzing, and responding to the literary texts that are used for colonial and imperial goals and culture (Ahmad, p. 34).

The linking between ideology and literature is done by language, in which literature is able to conceal power relations (Peter Childs and Roger Fowler, 2006, p. 115). In 'Orientalism', Said stresses the connection between the colonial practices and Western cultural and intellectual thoughts as a way of domination, which is a salient feature of postcolonial analyses. An analytical study and examination of the dominant structures of colonialism is one of the elements in the postcolonial area of study. This analysis examines and deconstructs the ways of reproducing colonial discourses and representations that are implanted in the consciousness of the colonized (Ibid. 183). Utilizing the Western discourse, hegemonic ideologies are achieved. As explained by Said, the representations of the East in such the colonial course highly support Eurocentric ambition that creates a binary framework where the East or colonized is inferior to the superiority of the West or the colonizer. On one hand, such a dualistic construction of imperialism includes the rationality, democracy, and centrality of the West. On the other hand, it has the primitiveness, irrationality, marginal identity, and otherness of The East (Ibid. PP.162-164).

## **2.2 Edward Said's Contrapuntal Mode as A Decolonial Vision**

Postcolonialism provides various approaches for challenging colonial ideologies and ambitions, and it is the window through which Decolonial visions are formed to ensure their own culture and identity. In *The Pleasure of Exile*, George Lamming, a Caribbean writer, uses a postcolonial lens to criticize

Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Similarly, Edward Said's 'Orientalism' defends the Orient and increases the popularity of postcolonialism. (Bressler,2011, p.201)

As indicated by Charles E. Bressler, the term 'Postcolonialism' refers to 'writing that sets out in one way or another to resist colonialist perspectives,' both before and after the period of colonization.' The existence of postcolonialism emerges due to the occurrence of colonization, the colonized people's oppression, frustration, and their fear, hopes, and dreams, and their identities (Ibid. p.202).

One of the various ways to tackle colonial literary texts is Said's Contrapuntal mode of reading, which breaks the binary structure of colonialism. For Said, this way of reading enables us to interpret 'inconsistent experiences with their own agenda, their internal and external relationship (Said, .1994, p 32). Furthermore, it explains the interaction and the co-existence of these experiences. His new analysis or contrapuntal reading can be divided into stages:

The first one is to examine both the perspectives of the colonizers and the colonized at the same time. The second step is to match the colonizer's narrative to the repressed stories of the colonized. This is so as to uncover the hidden history in the events of the story. The Third step is to delink that connection of conflicting experiences for both the colonizer and the colonized. The fourth step is to reveal and to explain the unstated relations between Western texts and imperialism (Aslam, 2024, p.3).

Said's contrapuntal readings focus on the present ignored aspect for the improvement of understanding and reading. They have no relation to authors who take this relation as a granted reality (Abedi Valoojerdi, 2020, p.43). From Said's perspectives upon the relation between culture and colonialism, they play an essential role in showing the dynamic nature of cultures and submerged histories, and they challenge colonial ideology that is seeking unchanging identities and cultures for the binary opposition of the colonizers and the colonized. (Ibid., p.3). Referring to contrapuntal reading, He says 'that only the second perspective (contrapuntal reading) is fully sensitive to the reality of historical experience. Partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one

another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic'(Said. . op. cit. , p.XXV).

Said's contrapuntal reading can be used as A theoretical framework through which a Decolonial vision could become a part of enhancing the understanding and interpretation of *the Tempest* for Iraqi students. To examine ' *The Tempest* ' in the book ' English For Iraq ', Said's contrapuntal readings are set to outline the postcolonial paths in which the analysis comes across to trace the colonial connectedness to the text and to refer to the absent ideas that are overlooked or may be forgotten while allocating *The Tempest* for Iraqi students in the preparatory school.

### **3.Edward Said's Contrapuntal Mode of Reading for *The Tempest***

To get a Decolonial vision of the authors' extract in *the Tempest*, Said's contrapuntal mode of reading applies in the literary analysis and discussion in this paper. This mode can be divided into two stages. In the first stage of the mode, the analysis sheds light on the dualistic structure of *The Tempest*, where narratives of the colonizers and the colonized are examined and matched. That is to say, the perspectives of both the colonizer and the colonized are scrutinized, and the events in the play are compared to these narratives, allowing the analysis to reveal colonial themes such as identity, repression, and domination. In the second stage, the analysis deconstructs these narratives to delink the colonial connection in the play. Then it exposes and explains the undefined relation. The second stage is discussed in chapter four of this research.

#### **3.1 The Dualistic Structure of the Extract in *The Tempest***

Said's contrapuntal mode compares the contrasting forces in the context, plot, symbolism, setting, characters, and themes in the extract, which is taken from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The mode provides the dualistic structure that offers the context, characters, and plot in the extract from the play. In doing so, the first stage of the contrapuntal reading is done.

##### **3.1.1 The Context of the Extract**

The Extract from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* is a written dialogue which is put at the end of the book entitled ' English for Iraq: 5<sup>th</sup> Preparatory School' by Johnston and Farrel. Based on the authors' objectives, the first and most priority



of the text is to read for pleasure. Furthermore, the texts are written for the Iraqi students to come up with knowledge of other cultures and to develop their critical thinking skills (Johnston and Farrel, .op.cit.,p.261).

In the section ' Literature Focus', they give a brief introduction to drama and its types. They define drama as a mode of fiction that portrays individuals' lives, conflicts, and emotions. The events of the drama end impressively. As explained by them, the types of drama are comedy and tragedy. *The Tempest*, written in 1610-1611, is commonly believed that is Shakespeare's last farewell to the stage. The most important thing in this comic play is that it finishes cheerfully (Johnston and Farrel, student's Book, 2013, p.114).

The extract is a dialogue between Prospero and Caliban. This dialogue takes place in Act I, Scene ii, and it shows Caliban's argument about his right to the island and Prospero's controlling language. The authors of the book invite the reader to pay attention to Caliban's second speech in the extract because it is extremely well-known in English literature. It is noteworthy that the authors rewrite the dialogue in modern English (Ibid., p.114).

### 3.1.2 The Characterization of the Extract

The author of the extract use binary opposition as a springboard to the description of characterization in *The Tempest*. The main poles of this opposition are Prospero and Caliban. Prospero is one of the most vital colonizers on the island. He is a magician who has a powerful personality. He is Caliban's master and king who enslaves and imprisons Caliban. In addition, he teaches Caliban his language so that Caliban can speak and communicate with others (Ibid., p.120).

Caliban has the opposite illustration to his master, Prospero. He is a servant with dark skin, and he is a complex character. Everyone calls him a ' monster'. He is also regretful for guiding and helping Prospero when he arrives on the island. He feels that he has the right over the island, which he inherited from his mother, Syocrax. Syocrax is an unseen character, who is a magician. During his Caliban calls her magic spell to curse Prospero for tying him to the hard rock inside a cave (Ibid).

### 3.1.2 The Plot of the Extracted Dialogue

The extracted dialogue opens with Caliban's speech in which he says that Prospero has taken his island. Then Caliban says that he loves Prospero for his kind treatment. Because of his kindness, Caliban loves and guides him through the beautiful places on the island. After that, he shows his regret for Prospero, who makes Caliban his only subject and imprisons him in a cave. In the final

part of this speech, He curses himself and Prospero for doing this. Afterward, Caliban's speech, Prospero begins by describing Caliban as a hateful slave who does only evil things and as an animal, who could not speak without his efforts. He reminds Caliban how he worked hard to teach him language and all new things incessantly. Next, he informs Caliban that good people do not come near him because of his bad blood. For Prospero, Caliban deserves worse than prison. The dialogue ends with Caliban's second speech. In this short speech, 'Caliban says that Prospero teaches a language for swearing and cursing only. At the end of the speech, he curses Prospero with the red plague ' (Ibid., pp.120-121).

#### **4. Juxtapositional Analysis of The Extract**

After revealing the colonial events of the extract, the juxtapositional analysis is used to expose and delink the colonial narratives in the dialogue. This leads the way to state the hidden relation in the selected extract. The analysis deals with the context, characters, plot, and some literary elements such as themes and characterization. This stage is the final stage for Said's contrapuntal mode of reading a literary text.

##### **4.1 The Juxtapositional Context of the Extract**

In the context of the chosen extract, the analysis examines two levels: extracting and reading the dialogue, so the analysis traces the colonial relation in the extract.

##### **4.1.1 Level of Writing and Reading the Extract**

The text is extracted from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and it is placed in the book 'English for Iraq: 5<sup>th</sup> Preparatory School', which is written by the authors of the extract. These authors come from a colonial country, England. Among all Shakespeare's universal works, they take out dialogue to focus on colonial dominance, language, exploitation of land, and knowledge. These ideas lie at the heart of the colonizer's culture and thought.

On the level of reading the extract, Iraqi students, who live in the colonized country, study the dialogue without having knowledge of the colonial texts.

Neither they nor their teachers have a background in colonial literature, so they cannot examine the text from a colonial or postcolonial perspective. That is to say, they cannot get critical insights or think of such challenging text. If this is true enough, the author's objective of developing students' critical thinking fails in literary and academic ways.

#### 4.2 The Colonial Nature of the Dialogue

The colonial nature of the dialogue can be traced in terms of the titles and the content of the dialogue. The title of the text, *The Tempest*, comes within the title of the book 'English for Iraq'. According to John Paul Hampstead (2007), a professor of English at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Shakespeare's use of the storm refers to tragic death or the inescapable reality that his characters experience, but his use of *The Tempest* is employed for colonial harmony and restoration. He clarifies that 'The title of *The Tempest* refers to the incomplete generic and metaphysical containment of the event; it unwillingly suggests the massacres and enslavements which followed the arrival at the New World' (p.21).

Comparably, the title *The Tempest* suggests the harmonic relation in which the colonizer or Prospero enslaves the colonized or Caliban, and it is a metaphysical containment of the event through which the colonizers could prove their control over the island, language, and resources of the colonized.

The second title, 'English for Iraq', unquestionably means the language in the book is only for Iraqi students. Regarding the meaning of the titles, the language, at least in the extract, expresses the binary opposition between the colonizer and the colonized, as its words and phrases illustrate the colonial culture and imperialism. Intentionally or unintentionally, Johnston and Farrell create the colonial context for Iraqi students; the narrowness of the title suggests a different and isolated culture.

Coming to the content of the dialogue, The authors of the extract suppose that the ending of the extract has a cheerful and striking conclusion, but the extract finishes in a static way that is not particularly impressive. This leads to the readers' frustration with the dialogue because no one could find such an exciting speech in the dialogue, as the authors expect in their context of the play. In addition to this disappointing end, the dialogue between Prospero and Caliban

in Act I, Scene II, is used to reinforce the strong picture of the colonizers, but the dialogue, is between Miranda and Caliban. Lastly, their invitation for the readers to focus on the second speech of Caliban is problematic. On the one hand, the readers of the extract have no idea about the irony in Caliban's speech. This is so because the extract is very selective and colonial. On the other hand, the second speech is only about the colonizers' language as a means of domination for the colonized.

#### 4.2.2 Juxtapositional Literary Elements

Characters, plot, and themes of the dialogue are juxtaposed to show the colonial impacts upon the readers. Prospero and Caliban are the contrasting characters. Prospero carries the qualities of powerful colonial identity, culture, language, and imperialism in the speech, while Caliban is the colonized who is imprisoned on his land.

In the course of the dialogue, the characterization outlines the structures of the dualistic morality, such as the colonizers and the colonized, superiority and inferiority, good and evil, and pure and impure. It also presents the structure of the dualistic psychology, like order and chaos, dark and light, and rationality and irrationality. These structures lock up not only Caliban in the cave but also the readers, who have no literary knowledge of how to analyze such structures.

The dialogue of the extract is the plot, that have no beginning, climax, or end. Caliban's speeches and Prospero's speech are the setting of conflicting ideologies, identities, and cultures. The plot is an incomplete and distorted form of the play, for Prospero's response is extracted wrongly. The reader could no longer understand the sentences, curses, and phrases of the extract. This mistake incredibly supports the colonial perspective since Miranda is removed in favour of the strong personality of Prospero, or the colonizer. Overly, the plot is colonial in every sense of the word.

The main theme in the extract is the colonial binary opposition the authors of the extract emphasize this by saying:

' The fact that Caliban is the native of the island and other characters are colonizers is a key theme in the play '(op. cit., p.120).

In the speeches of the dialogue, other ideas are derived from this theme. These ideas, like oppression, exploitation, dominance, physical and mental imprisonment, and colonial language, are rooted in the colonial text of the dialogue. The readers are unaware of these derivational matters of the colonial text because their focus is on the irony of Caliban's speech, and even this irony is not easy to realize by theme. Supposedly, realizing the colonial theme, they could know only the colonial design of other cultures. In other words, the objective of the text is to make Iraqi students' consciousness about other cultures always fail because of colonial discourse.

## Conclusion

Based on the preceding analysis and discussions, this paper infers the following points : Firstly , Edward Said's contrapuntal mode of reading is a literary method that applies to get a Decolonial vision of literary texts. Next , This Decolonial vision is an essential lens that enables us to break down the cultural differences in the postcolonial literature. Thirdly , A Decolonial vision protects Iraqi students' identity and culture through using the contrapuntal mode of reading. The extract *The Tempest* should be reevaluated for its representation of colonialism. Adoption of Said's mode is very necessary in the process of selecting literary works that are taught in Iraqi schools. Lastly , Said's mode is a window through which Iraqi students could gain knowledge about the diverse cultures. Said's mode is a resilient method because it has the capacity of inspecting literary elements and devices, the context, and writers, of juxtaposing the information with the postcolonial perspective. doing that, the mode reveals the unstated relation that is implied in the text.

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