

# Roman republic and rome essay

Literature



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According to Aristotle, “ A tragic hero is a character who is not eminently good and just, yet whose misfortune is brought about not by vice and depravity, but by some error or frailty...” The classic tragic hero has some type of serious character flaw which leads to misjudgement and ultimately their death.

Tragic characters which possess heroic qualities but then have a tragic reversal of fortune are well known in William Shakespeare’s plays. In the play Julius Caesar the audience needs to make a choice in who they believe is the tragic figure. Brutus is the tragic figure of the play Julius Caesar because he is a noble man, he is naïve to the world around him and his fortunes turn from good too bad throughout the course of the play.

Brutus is a very noble man who is always looking out for what is best for everybody else, always putting others before himself. Brutus never betrays anyone throughout the whole play. When Brutus decides to join the conspirators to assassinate Caesar, he does not do it to betray Caesar, he chooses to follow through with the action as it will benefit the plebeians even if it means hurting a friend.

While Brutus speaks to the plebeians he states “ not that I loved Caesar less, but that I loved Rome more” (3. 2. 22-23). Brutus could have easily backed out of the assassination due to the consequences that he and the conspirators could face. Brutus, as usual is willing to do whatever it takes to better Rome. Brutus also displays this trait when he does not tell Portia what is bothering him because he does not want to stress her.

She even goes to the extent of kneeling down and practically begging him to know the reason why he is acting so strange. Brutus continues to think of what is best for Portia, which he believes is not telling her the truth. Even though Antony and Octavius plots against Brutus, at the end of the play they both know that Brutus is the only conspirator in the assassination of Caesar is for the greater good of Rome and they recognize him as, " the noblest Roman of them all" (5. 5. 73). Mark Antony stands by Brutus' limp body and says, " He only in a general honest thought and common good to all, made one of them. His life was gentle, and the elements So mixed in him that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, " This was a man" (5.

5. 76-80). Brutus was naïve to the world around him. Brutus believes the society around him to be good and that all men are honourable. Brutus is honest and truthful, he believes that everyone else is as equally truthful to him. Brutus is so naïve that he does not realize that Cassius is manipulating him. Brutus is so trustful of Cassius and Antony, he believes that they will not do anything to deceive him. In act 1 scene 2, Brutus receives letters which he thought were written by concerned plebeians who are worried about Caesar potentially becoming King.

In reality the letters are actually written by Cassius as an attempt to strengthen his case to assassinate Caesar. Cassius is smart because he knows that without Brutus he cannot follow through with the assassination of Caesar. Cassius is still manipulating Brutus during their argument in the tent in act 4, scene 3. Brutus also shows how naïve he really is when he decides against the conspirator's idea to kill Antony just in case he has any plans of revenging his good friend Caesar's death.

Brutus only joined the conspirators in the assassination because he thinks of Caesar as a sacrifice for the better of Rome. He does not want it to be too gruesome or bloody. " Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius, To cut the head off and then hack the limbs, Like wrath in death and envy afterwards, For is but a limb of Caesar. Let us be sacrificers but not butchers..." (2.

1. 169-173). Unfortunately, for Brutus this is the decision that ultimately resulted in his death.

Brutus' fortunes go from good to bad after the assassination of Caesar. In the beginning of the play Brutus was loved by many and known as one of the most honourable men in Rome. After Brutus and the conspirators assassinate Caesar, the plebeians begin to turn against him and look at Brutus as a traitor of Rome. Brutus did not help his cause when he chooses to let Antony speak at Caesar's funeral. Even though he sets out rules for Antony stating he cannot speak down on what the conspirators and he have just done, Brutus miss judged the sorrow Antony feels for Caesar and his intelligence on how to persuade the plebeians to join him.

Antony is very precise with the words he uses and with his knowledge he is able to rally the plebeians into believing that what the conspirators had done was wrong, without breaking any of Brutus' rules. Antony has presented such an emotionally attached speech that the plebeians have developed a strong mob mentality. In act 3, scene 3 the plebeians are desperately seeking revenge on the conspirators after Antony's speech that they kill Cinna, the poet based solely on his name. The plebeians do not even stop to think when

the poet is pleading to them that he is not Cinna the conspirator. Brutus faces the tough realization of his decision to assassinate Caesar when he learns of his wife's death. Brutus receives information that Portia is full of despair by his absence and worry that Antony and Octavius have become too strong for Brutus and Cassius. " With this she fell distract And, her attendants absent, swallowed fire" (4.

3. 160-161). Brutus's life is completely turned upside down through the deaths of his good friend Caesar and wife as well as going from the noblest man in Rome to one that is hated by Rome. Brutus is the tragic figure in the play Julius Caesar due to many important reasons. Brutus was an honourable man to his country by always putting others before himself.

Brutus also displays a character flaw of being naïve to the world around him. Brutus is a genuinely good man and believes everybody else around him is the same and would never do anything to harm him. The main reason why Brutus is the tragic hero in Julius Caesar is that he went from having good fortunes to bad.

A tragic hero is a great man who doesn't undergo misfortune through any real badness or wickedness but because of some mistake.