

Macbeth as a tragedy assignment

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Macbeth as a tragedy BY polly4434 Macbeth as a Tragedy According to Aristotle's Definition Literature provides us the various sensation; for examples; love, hate, sorrow, melancholy, pity, fear and Joyfulness. Melancholy is the origination of many great literature works; for instances; the works written by the greatest writer in English literature, William Shakespeare. He wrote many precious works and his masterpiece namely tragedy of Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth. The Tragedy of Macbeth seems to fit to an idea mold created by Aristotle. Aristotle is one of the greatest philosophers of Ancient Greece.

In the Poetics, Aristotle explained about his theory of tragedy was based on: Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy. " A tragedy is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in appropriate and pleasurable language;... in a dramatic rather than narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish a catharsis of these emotions. " (classics. mit. edu) This means that a good tragedy always deals with the serious issue. We can see in many tragedies that they were involved with the death.

The tragedy cannot be the tory of a small failure or unsuccessful of something which can be founded in everyday life; for example; lost of wallet or car crash. Besides, its plot should be complete and have a unity of one main issue; for preventing the audiences get lost of the plot. For making the audiences understand clearly, the language in the play should be easy to listen and the rhythm should have good harmony when it was sung. Moreover, the play is not like the story that can be simply told. The play should be acted out more dramatic compared to narrate a story.

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In the tragedy, the events in the play will lead the audience to feel mournful because of the main character or the tragic hero; and they may fear when the main character was divided to cause the ruination in the end. As the play moves along, the events should arise up the pettiness and fear of the audiences. The audiences can release their tension when the story comes to the end as the main character will fall to the lowest point. They may feel like their emotion finally is exploded. Aristotle has given the definition of a tragedy that it was combined of six elements that making the sort of a work becomes a tragedy.

In generally, a tragedy play is divided into five acts. The first act begins with the state of happiness of the main characters, or at the glory of their power, or their fame. The second act usually presents a difficulty which reaches the critical point in the third act but in the third act the main characters may be able to confront it. Then, they fail to avoid the crisis and the catastrophe will be occurred in the fourth act. At last, in the fifth act shows about the grieve outcomes of the failure. Thus, refer to all six aspects, Macbeth fits the definition precisely.

Aristotle said that tragedy has six main elements: 1. Plot; 2. Character; 3. Thought; 4. Diction; 5. Melody; 6. Spectacle. These six elements are the main principles of the play but the priority of the organization may be different. Some writers may arrange the topic by spectacles, character, plot, dictation, melody and thought; but some may not. However, the most important point is the neat combination of every part. Because the tragedy play is not only the imitation or representation of humankind but it also demonstrates the action which moved step by step.

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Furthermore, it has to be shown about the mixture of happiness and sorrowfulness and showing about the way of life starting from the penning until the end. It must be presented in chronologically events and should not show only in the specific part of the whole story. In sum, we can conclude that the most important element is Plot which must have a unity. In afterwards, the good plot was required both of Peripety and Discovery. Character is the second most important element of tragedy. The true tragic hero cannot be too good or too bad, but he must end up in misery.

Aristotle concluded that the best tragedy centers on a basically good man who changes from happiness to misery. The last four elements (Thought, Diction, Melody, and Spectacle) are important orderly as they were arranged from the most important to the least. Thought may be involved to politic or rhetoric of the poet. Some of poets may combine Thought with the habit of the characters. The expression of each character's behaviors makes the audiences can realize what thing should do or which one should avoid. Dictation; the fourth important element; is the actual composition of the lines that are stated.

Next is Melody which should be compounded with the play appropriately; sometimes there was musical accompaniment in the play. Last is Spectacle, usually refers to the stage of the play. This is an obligation of the costumers rather than the poet. Construction of the plot According to the Poetics, Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete, and whole, and of a certain magnitude; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude. A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end. A beginning is

that which does not itself follow anything by causal necessity, but after which something naturally is or comes to be.

An end, on the contrary, is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it. A middle is that which follows something as some other thing follows it. A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard, but conform to these principles. (classics. mit. edu) Therefore, construction of the plot is not only concern about how completely of each parts, it has to organize the chronological events in proper but also be of certain magnitude. The beautiful plot depends on magnitude and order.

If the organism is too small, it could not be beauty because the audience would either not perceive it clear or feel imperceptible. In the same way; if the object is enormous, it could not taste that it is beautiful because it hard for the audience to grab the idea at once and they are likely to lost the unity and sense of the whole. So in the plot, a certain length is essential and an easy for the audience to be able to memorize the whole story. The limitation of length is related to dramatic performance and it should not be breached the rule of artistic theory.

Although most of tragedy performances have been adjusted by the water-clock but time limit of the play may flow appropriately to the nature of drama and another point, it must be fit for six items in the plot as well. It can be inferred that the greater the length, the more beautiful will the piece be by reason of its size, provided that the whole be perspicuous. In brief, the beautiful plot should have the proper magnitude that allowing the hero (main

character) faces the change from the bad state to being luck and turn from being luck to bad state again.

The Unity of Plot Unity of plot does not contain the unity of the specific individual hero in the story like other people think because in reality one man has to face many events which most of them are not able to be eliminated for making a unity. In the same way, if one man has many actions, it could not be reduced also. Some poets made an error on their works since they misunderstood of the meaning of “ Unity’; for examples; all poets who have composed a Heracleid, a These’ d, or other poems of these sorts. They supposed that Heracles as one man so his story must also be a unity.

Except only one poet, Homer, he comprehended the concept excellently perhaps his perception was either the gifted talent or his instinct. He considered that every actions of one man can be associated and have a relation in term of cause and effect; or instance; Odyssey, Homor said about the painfulness of Parnassus and his pretended madness when he has been recruited to fight in war. Since it still was the events that happened to Parnassus, Homor made a unity by connecting all events together. We can see in both of Odyssey and Iliad.

In fact, the good imitative art means initiation of or stated to one thing or one event only for explaining it crystal- clear. Thus, again the plot is the imitation of an action which must imitate only one thing as a whole story. So the structure union is such that kind, if any part is removed r rearranged the order, these changes would not be seen by others. It also sum up that an

organic poetry would be stated to various actions but all of them be a unity. Simple and Complex Plots Either Simple or Complex Plots is not only demonstrated the actions in real life but it also shows actions that cause pity and fear.

Aristotle said that the Simple Plot is one action which continues and goes on and if the changes occurred they must not be the Peripety and Discovery. In other words, the Complex Plot is the continuous actions which go along with either Peripety or Discovery, or both of them. Another last point; following the internal structure of the plot, the following event should be the probable results or being as part of the previous action. Peripety (or Reversal) “A peripety is the change of the kind described from one state of things within the play to its opposite,” says Aristotle in Chapter 11 of Poetics.

Peripety can be translated as ‘reversal’. It referred to a reversal of situation i. e. changing of one state in the beginning of the play to be opposed in the end of the play. It could be the change from being beautiful to being ugly, or from being wealthy to being poor, or from being powerful to being powerless. This happened to the main character or other characters in the tragedy converted from state of happiness to a state of misery. Aristotle considered peripety as the essence of the complex plot because it can give the tragedy a sense of surprise. The audience has not interested or expected because of the novelty of the story.

Most of Greek tragedies were based on well-known stories so we all know the whole story and the original story had not ‘new anymore. Thereby, the peripety is the core of the complex plot not the element of surprise in the

novelty of story. This is a reason why Aristotle prefers the complex plot than the simple one. It is so clear that peripety is a part of the plot naturally. It is the law of essential for the whole plot and it also makes more notable appearances. Discovery (Anagnorisis or Recognition) Discovery, says Aristotle, is a transition from ignorance to knowledge.

A part of the complex plot, it can occur either by itself, or in combination with peripety. Discovery may concern about the identity of persons, things or situations. If it concerns persons, it means the totally changes towards their attitude such as creates hate or love among of them. Both of Peripety and Discovery are able to arouse tragic feelings; pity and fear. In generally, Discovery is gaining knowledge compared to the first state that did not know anything. This normally happen to the hero in the tragedy that learn how himself make a difficulty until the end of the play.

Summary, the conclusion of the above, plot of tragedy play consists of: 1. Peripety 2. Discovery 3. Suffering which is limited to the action of being harm, destroyed or hurt; for examples; murder (as showed on the stage), torture, being hurt, or falling during other hardships same in these ways. Furthermore, tragedy is divided the sequences of performance as follows: 1 . Prologue: the opening scene in which the background of the story is established by a single actor or through dialogue between two actors. 2. Parados: the entrance of the chorus, usually chanting a lyric which bears some relation to the main theme of the play. . Episodes: an incident in the course of a play performed by actors (not chorus members) 4. Stasima: the term for a choral ode, sung or chanted; the odes recited by the chorus alternated with the episodes 5. Exodos: concluding portion of a tragedy; final <https://assignbuster.com/macbeth-as-a-tragedy-assignment/>

episode usually sung by the chorus as they exit. Therefore, tragedy play includes: 1. The order of the various sectors as mentioned above 2. Six main elements of tragedy i. e. Plot, Character, Thought, Diction, Melody, Spectacle. It may infer that the beautiful tragedy should better have complex plot instead of simple one.

The expression should raise the emotion of pity and fear to match character of this type play. (The Satyr Plays or Comedy is no need to have structure and expression like this) By these reasons, I would like to study Macbeth and analyze Two elements; Plot and Character out of six elements which both of them how much similar to the Tragedy Theory of Aristotle. Fable or Plot I ne Plot of Macbeth has appropriate length regarding to Aristotle's definition as follows: In the early scene of Macbeth, Macbeth was a Thane of Glamis and then he was promoted to be a Thane of Cawdor because he could get victory of war.

Because of perceiving the prophecies from the Witches, his ambition drove him to kill the king and he could succeed to the throne. He also slay every one whom he imagined his enemies. Afterwards, he was suffered from his guilty and became mad. He could not sleep and often saw phantom. At last, he was killed by Macduff. It can be implied that the main character in Macbeth started from bad fortune to good and good back to bad again. So the plot of Macbeth follows the rules of Aristotle's Tragedy.

The Unity of Plot Aristotle said that a unity of plot means a connecting of each action reasonably and ordering properly. In Macbeth, the events which were happened to Macbeth were organized with appropriate procedure.

According to A Brief History of English Literature, An anarchic, violent state of affairs is the very essence of Macbeth. Stirred on by his wife and tempted by the prophecies of the Witches that he ing. Macbeth murders the king of Scotland, Duncan. Then, in shall be order to make himself safe, he has the noble Bangquo and his son killed, and also Macduffs family.

Duncan's son, Malcom, however, escapes the slaughter, and, with the help of Macduff, overthrows Macbeth's tyrannical rule and kills him. The plot is short, brutal and violent, with Macbeth's manliness and ambition put to the test by his wife. (67) Thus, Macbeth has a unity plot following to Aristotle's theory.

Complex Plot Peripety The peripety occurs in a situation which the hero has obviously reached the peak f his fortune (climax), but the opposing forces that will bring the hero fall down at the final. A peripety in Macbeth, occurred whereby the three witches had notified Macbeth that he was to become the king.

Macbeth took advantage of this; He murdered Duncan in cold blood while he slept. Instead of gaining the happiness he expected, he was overwhelmed and feel both of guilt and sorrow. " I am afraid to think what I have done; Look on t again I dare not" said Macbeth as he tried to understand the implications of his actions (Act II, Scene II). So Shakespeare put a peripety into Macbeth by turning Macbeth's feeling of happiness completely around into a misery. We can see more peripety in the feast scene, the feast was held to celebrate Macbeth as the king of Scotland.

His position was very strong because Banquo, the only man who knew the prophecies of witches was killed but Fleance, son of Banquo, was able to

escape. Moreover, Macbeth wanted to establish his dynasty but there was a resistance from the Scottish; Malcom, son of King Duncan, formed a military trying to restore his position from Macbeth. This marks the “ reversal of Macbeth’s fortune”. Discovery Anagnorisis is the recognition by the tragic hero of some truth about his or her identity or action that accompanies the reversal of the situation in the plot, the peripeteia... (english. awaii. edu)

Discovery occurred when Macbeth absolutely realized that the withes had led him to his downfall. He could see from the prophecies which seemed to be true and it actually happened; avoid Macduff, who moved to Dunsinane and a person who not born from a woman. Besides, Aristotle defines the tragic hero as a “ great” man and Macbeth is also a tragic hero since he is so important. He died because of his own fault. He is an honored soldier of King Duncan and he also is beloved of the king and admired of his friends. He is a brave man who fought valiantly in a war.

However, he dies because of his tragic flaw; his ambition. Macbeth and his lady planned to slay the king and possessed the throne. By killing him, Macbeth did not want to continue his plan but Lady Macbeth fulfilled her desire to be a queen by persuaded him; moreover, she insulted his manhood. He allowed his wife to convince him even though he did not want to commit regicide. Nevertheless, his death caused by his own fault. He was able to ignore the prophecies of the witches but he did not. Thus, Macbeth is a tragic hero, and Macbeth is a tragedy by Aristotle’s definition as well.

Character Character has the second place in importance. In a perfect tragedy, character will support plot, i. e. , personal motivations should be related complexly to cause-and- effect series and actions should make pity

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and fear to the audience. Characters in tragedy should have the following qualities: 1. Good or Fine Aristotle relates this quality to moral purpose and says it is relative to class: “ Even a woman may be good, and also a slave, though the woman may be said to be an inferior being, and the slave quite worthless. ” 2.

Fitness of character (True to type); e. g. valor is appropriate for a warrior but not for a woman. 3. True to life (Realistic) 4. Consistency (True to themselves) Once a character’s personality and motivations are established, these should continue throughout the play. 5. Necessary or Probable Characters must be logically constructed according to “ the law of probability or necessity’ that governs the actions of the play. 6. True to life and yet more beautiful (Idealized, Ennobled) Macbeth is a loyal and honest Scottish general and the thane of Glamis.

MACBETH The service and the loyalty I owe In doing it pays itself. Your highness’ part is to receive our duties, and our duties Are to your throne and state children and servants, Which do but what they should, by doing everything Safe toward your love and honor. (1, 4, 25-30) He was led to sinful thoughts by the prophecies of the witches. Later, he also was thane of Cawdor as same as the prediction by the witches. Macbeth is a very brave and powerful but he did not have much morality. His ambition drove him to slay King Duncan because he wants to fulfill his desire to the throne.

First time of his murder, he was not confident to kill the king and he was guilty and very confused to do so. We can see since scene I-II, Macbeth was dominated by his wife. After his first crime, he increased his cruelty, he still

killed everyone he thought his obstacles. He governed with a tyrant and violence. He became his own boss and started doing his business without consulting with his wife. After his wife death, he was totally alone and hopeless. I will emphasize the tragic of Macbeth since he could not stop his ambition. He could have enough morality to stop himself to keep on murdering innocent peoples.

In the end of the play, he seemed to be relieved as he could be back as a warrior and went out to fight with the Malcolm's troop. Even though, he realized that the prophecies of the witches seemed to be true but he still had not surrender. Macbeth never seems to intend suicide: "Why should I play the Roman fool," he asks, "and die / On mine own sword?" (5. 10. 1-2). He thought that killing himself is ridiculous and decided to go fighting. This makes the play full circle as the story opens with the scene of Macbeth's victory in the battlefield and ends with his death in war. Lady Macbeth: Macbeth's wife.

She was a strongly ambitious woman who desired power and position. LADY MACBETH Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness To have thee crowned withal. (1, 5,) Early scene of the play, she seemed to have more power and stronger than her husband; Macbeth. She forced him to kill Duncan and seize the crown. After the bloodshed began, she became increasingly obsessed with the blood on her hands which no one else can see and always sleep walking because she fell into her guilty and madness.

Finally, she committed suicide because of her conscience. Lady Macbeth is the key of the relation between power and gender: her husband implies that she is a masculine soul inhabiting a female body. At one point, she wished that she were not a woman so that she could kill King Duncan by herself whereas Macbeth hesitated to do. So she stimulated Macbeth about insulting his manhood until he decided to do because of prove himself. Shakespeare has illustrated in the play that women could be as ambitious and cruel as men.

The Three Witches appeared in the opening scene, they made Macbeth fell into murderous way by telling him to be Thane of Cawdor and later the King. FIRST WITCH All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Glam's! SECOND WITCH All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Cawdor! THIRD WITCH All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter! (1 Their prophecies pushed him to slay Duncan, ordered death to Banquo and Fleance, Lady Macduff and her son as well. The play does not tell us about their true identity; as we know that their appearance look like females but they have beard.

Moreover, they are resembled to Fates in Mythology weave the fabric of human lives and then cut the threads to end them. We might question that the witches just see human beings as their toy and wanted to destroy it by telling their future or it already had determined as destiny. For example; if there was no prophecies from the witches, does Macbeth still murdered King Duncan. And, yet the play does not give us an answer and we can say that this is a smart of Shakespeare. He makes the character of the witches out of human perception as they represent an evil type.

King Duncan, King of Scotland. He is a model of a righteous, warmhearted, provident ruler. He was betrayed by the original Thane of Cawdor in the early part of the play. Then he appointed Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor with all of his trust but finally he died because he had too much relied on Macbeth. “ From hence to Inverness, And bind us further to you. ” (1, 4, 44) Banquo: the noble, generally and loyal friend of Macbeth. Banquo was a witness when Macbeth knew his prophecies from the witches. He also got the prediction from the witches as he would be a King of the Scottish.

Banquo had ambitious thoughts as same as Macbeth but he did not allow his ambition beyond the morality. Although Banquo wanted to possess the throne with his sinful thoughts but he did not take an action. Unlike Macbeth, he could not control his morality and passion with power. His ambition led him to be a betrayer, murderer and finally doom in his ends. Banquo's character was opposite of Macbeth since the way he acted did not lead him to his downfall. Banquo also appeared as a ghost in late scenes. Macbeth always saw Banquo's ghost as he was so guilty to order the death to him.

Banquo has differed from Macbeth as his reactions towards the prophecies by the witches. Although he may think about possibility of the prophecies but he was able to control himself and did not start doing wicked things. Fleance: Son of Banquo. He went along with his father; Banquo and could escape when Macbeth ordered murders to kill them. By the end of the play, it did not state about him more such as where he had gone or what he had been doing. It might assume that he would come to Scotland and become the ruler following to the prophecies of the witches.

Macduff: A Scottish nobleman. He was a big part of helping Malcolm restored his position as king. He was apparently hostile to Macbeth since Macbeth ordered death to his family. Fortunately, he could escape but his wife and son were killed cruelly so he was willing to get revenge Macbeth. Besides, he was in the prophecies by the witches; only man whom Macbeth must avoid. The fact was revealed in final scene that Macduff was not born regularly; he was born by caesarian section. So he was able to kill Macbeth according to the prophecies.

Malcolm: the son of King Duncan. After his father died, he escaped to England where he wished to form his army to restore his throne, kingdom from Macbeth. His position represented as weak and insecure of his own power. We could infer that without helping from Macduff he might not get back the crown. Donalbain: the son of King Duncan Malcolm's younger brother. After his father died, he fled to Ireland. Siward: Leader of the English army. He led about powerful ten thousand soldiers to beat Macbeth at the end of the play. He lost his son, Young Siward to Macbeth.

Young Siward: The son of Siward, he died from fighting with Macbeth. He represented the belief that nobody who born from the woman could overcome Macbeth. Lady Macduff: Macduffs wife. The scene in her castle illustrated her character which is very contrast to Lady Macbeth. Lady Macduff seemed to not have much role in her family; unlike Lady Macbeth, she could convince and control her husband. Hecate: The goddess of magic. Her character was obscure of the underworld. She could command the three witches to tell Macbeth about his future in afterwards.

Lennox, Ross, Menteith, Angus and Caithness: Noblemen of Scotland fighting Macbeth. Porter: The drunken doorman of Macbeth's castle. conclusion

According to Aristotle's theory, Macbeth plot has appropriate length and the state of main character changes from bad fortune to good and reverse again. The plot has a unity; every action involve to each other reasonably and chronologically since the opening, conflict, climax and solution. Macbeth has a complex plot; every event took lace continuously and when they got into turning point, there were changes in sorts of Peripety and Discovery.

The plot is completely in itself because only one of the obvious conflicts is the ambition. Besides, the changes and the decision of the main character can arouse audience to be fear and pity. In order for a character to be a tragic hero, the character must not be a saint nor a villain, he should have some virtues, have a tragic flaw, and have hubris. Macbeth meets all of these requirements, and can therefore be called a tragic hero. Work Cited _,"

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