H

Hamartia

When the world is dark

around us, we discover

our true colors.

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Table of Articles

Formalist Literary Analysis

1984 and 2009, Justin Murdock 1
Downfall by the Deception of Obsession, Nicole Tucker 2

Theory-Based Analysis

The Man Without Syzygy, Scot Dyer 4

Research Paper

A Fatal Flaw: The Disregard of Tragic Heroines, Rachel Clark 10
The Tragic Hero as a Faith Device, Derek Haderlie 13
"To Be or Not to Be" a Tragic Hero, Vicki Nye 16

A Letter of Introduction

BOARD OF EDITORS

Thank you for taking an interest in our journal, Hamartia. Our mission is to explore the impact tragic heroes have had on literature. Harmartia (ha-mar-TEE-uh) is the word used by Aristotle to describe the tragic flaw, literally meaning to miss the mark. This title describes the purpose of our journal, as we aim to gather information on the classic tragic hero and explore that character through an omniscient eye. We will publish a set of essays that explore the mission of tragic heroes, the lessons they teach us, and the personal connection we share with them.

Each of the papers included in this edition not only explore the tragic hero, but uncover a new aspect of him or her. We are confident of their quality and hope you'll enjoy them.

Sincerely,
John Larsen
Joyce Stinson
Ana Juarez
Megan Addams

1984 and 2009

JUSTIN MURDOCK

Winston Smith is a regular guy in unusual circumstances. He becomes a tragic hero as he hopelessly fails to defeat an unstoppable military force. Originating in the early postwar world of 1948, 1984 was published as a prediction of the world to come. Although the novel was written sixty years ago, many of Orwell's warnings are still an impending reality. Though the world of 1984 did not end up as Orwell predicted, are we completely in the clear? Winston's realization of government oppression is relative to the world both in 1948 and today as a warning of destruction.

1984 is set in a world where the government is pervasive and omniscient, and people's rights are diminished and defined. Winston's struggle represented what everyone experienced after the war, and carried a particularly poignant message for Britain in the early 1950's. The terrors of war were very fresh in everyone's mind. People distrusted government ethics, and would have identified with the fear Winston felt toward the government. The German Gestapo for example, would have particularly resembled the Thought Police (or ThinkPol, as they were known in Newspeak). "Sooner or later they were bound to get you." Winston narrated, "People simply disapeared, always during the night . . . You were abolished, annihilated: vaporized was the usual word" (Orwell 19). He was always afraid that he would eventually get caught. His secret defiance of the government would inevitably lead to his capture and torture. Essentially, there was no resisting the Thought Police. In a similar way, the Gestapo was notorious for its brutality, and had the authority to imprison people without a trial. Those who desired to resist the Nazi regime were stalled in their opposition by the fear of punishment from the Gestapo. Additionally, the omniscient leader, Big Brother, was very similar to Adolf Hitler. Both were unreachable, seemingly unbeatable, and presumed immortal. Both were recognizable for their influence through words and propaganda, and both had an electric influence on his nation with unstoppable, fanatic followers. These similarities were striking enough to cause people to speculate how the world might have looked if Hitler had prevailed, or even how it would look if the democratic system failed. Orwell essentially mirrored recognizable world terrors to underscore his message.

The country of Oceana, in which Winston is a citizen, closely resembles the fanaticism of the communist world. The nation was currently engaged in adopting a new national language, which would shrink the expressible scope of words. Winston was especially shocked by this, for its purpose was to brainwash the nation. "With all their cleverness [the government] had never mastered the secret of finding out what another human being was thinking," Winston said (Orwell 138). His most startling realization was that they actually could. A person could be convicted of thoughtcrime—executed for no reason except thinking of rebellion. Winston Smith's life reflects this fanaticism. While working for the government, it was not wise to openly express moral disagreements; it was safer to obey commands. For most people in Germany, anyone who disagreed with Hitler's poli-

cies was executed with very little trial. Similarly, Winston continued to live in and work for the country of Oceana even though he knew that he would eventually be convicted of thoughtcrime. Open rebellion would mean certain and instant death. His search to join a rebellion proved to be impossible; the government's control was far too powerful, and there was nowhere to run.

When 1984 eventually rolled around, the world was settling back into relative economic and civil comfort. World War II had ended and the threat of terrorism seemed to be a foreign affair, yet many people began to view 1984 as a failed prophecy, when, in reality, Orwell's predictions were more accurate than even he imagined. For example, Oceana and its enemies all possess weapons of mass destruction as well as floating fortresses (Orwell 23), which connote every aspect of military power. Conversely, our national weapons of war have continued to get stronger. The most feared weapons in 1948 were nuclear-powered, yet today that control is now necessary in order to defend oneself. The military of Oceana is so powerful that Winston is essentially powerless to avoid his eventual capture. Another example of military prowess is its surveillance capabilities. Everyone is monitored at all times by the means of an instrument called a telescreen. Winston is always forced to disguise his countenance while in front of the screen to hide his inward feelings (Orwell 23). This is a good example of how global manipulation could happen. In today's world, surveillance is considered to be a useful tool to combat crime and terrorism, but the telescreen is a good example of what could happen if this control were to fall into the wrong hands.

Winston's role in the text is to show us the horrors of war and how fascism can tyrannize a country. Winston was arrested and convicted of being a thought-criminal, yet by today's standards Winston never committed a crime. His only desire was to experience personal happiness, which he believed would happen if he could obtain certain "inalienable rights," as they have come to be known. We gain the strongest picture of Winston's defiance against the Party as he writes the following in his journal: "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows" (Orwell 69). This was written in defiance of the Party's indoctrination of society. The destruction of the right to seek truth and hold personal belief was the goal of his brainwashing. Winston was tortured until he admitted that two and two made five. This stripped him of his freedom to believe as he chose, and forced him to believe how the Party chose him. The book concludes with Winston wholeheartedly believing that two plus two equals five (Orwell 239). This demonstrates that Winston had been totally stripped of his beliefs. It is terrifying to contemplate how far governmental control could stretch. This sends a strong message that in order to prevent this sort of thing, people should always be aware of the decisions of their government. The only way a democratic system could ever fail would be if people ceased to care about government decisions.

The year 1984 has come and gone, yet certain aspects of Orwell's warning are still applicable today. Though some people termed 1984 a "false prophecy," it is important to remember that Winston was really unsure if the year was 1984. Misinformation had spread so far that it was impossible to be sure. Obviously the world hasn't disintegrated to a feudal system. In fact, Orwell's choice of 1984 had no prophetic significance; he simply reversed the years in the publication date (1948 to 1984) to invent his title (Kumar 405). While the specific year may be insignificant, Orwell's pessimistic view of the future continues to warn and shape ideologies of concerned citizens today. The world increasingly conforms to how Orwell imagined it. The real question is this: how much longer can we go before we find ourselves either embracing totalitarianism or arrested for thoughtcrime? How much farther will we go before we find ourselves in Winston's shoes? If we learn nothing else from Winston, we must understand that there is nothing more worth fighting for than freedom.

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Downfall by the Deception of Obsession

NICOLE TUCKER

A young boy having a crush on his friend's sister seems harmless, but at what point can a crush become dangerous? The narrator in James Joyce's "Araby", a young boy whom remains unnamed throughout the story, is on that fine line that separates a crush from obsession. He does nothing but dote on a friend's sister, who also remains unnamed. The boy insists that "her image accompanied [him] even in places the most hostile to romance" (243). He spends "every morning" lying on the floor in his home, staring at her house. He makes sure to keep the crack in the blind only an inch open so that he "could not be seen" (243). This obsession causes him to lose everything; most important, he loses his self-respect. In "Araby", a religious motif, symbols, and irony are utilized to display a young boy's downfall as the result of obsession, which is his tragic flaw as a tragic hero.

Prayer is used in the story as a way for the boy to reiterate his obsession with the girl. The boy chooses the room in his home where a priest has died as the place to proclaim his love of this girl out loud on a "dark rainy evening" (243). He shows insensitivity towards the sacredness of the room because of his indifferent attitude to the events that took place there. By allowing his inward emotions (that of obsession for the girl) to take control of his character, he cannot draw a line between the sacred matters in life and those that are of little importance. He emphasizes this point

by choosing to proclaim his love by pressing "the palms of [his] hands together until they trembled, murmuring: O love! O love! many times" (244). He is praying to a girl that, at this point, he has "never spoken to…except for a few casual words" (243). This ambiguous attitude towards religious matters creeps in with the obsession; the boy claims, "Her name sprang to my lips at moments in strange prayers and praises which I myself did not understand" (243). At first, the mention of the girl in prayers was confusing and strange to the boy, but he eventually submits himself to it by choosing to dedicate a prayer to her. This is the beginning of his downfall, the transition from being confused about his feelings to becoming a willful participant in expressions of his obsession.

Light, a symbol of truth, is used throughout the story to show the boy's downfall and his allowance for his downfall. At the beginning of the story, outside forces are what effect whether he is in the light or the dark; "my uncle was seen turning the corner we hid in the shadow", and "if she remained, we left our shadow" (242) are just a few instances the boy gives the reader of the effect others have on his absence or presence to light. For the rest of the story he willingly submits himself to the dark, which eventually leads him to a preference for it there. Right before the boy offers his prayer of love to the girl he notes that "some distant lamp or lighted window gleamed below me. I was thankful that I could see so little" (243-244). He appreciates the fact that he cannot see well and that not much light is present, in fact he expresses that he is thankful for the lack of light; he is allowing that symbol of truth to slip from his life because of his desire for darkness. The physical darkness around him is leading him to a desire for inner darkness. He is no longer allowing others to affect his presence in the dark but embracing the dark. At one point, the boy is in his home and he can hear his friends "playing below in the street" (245). He has no desire to go down and join them. Instead, he claims that the "high cold empty gloomy rooms liberated" him (245). Instead of having the natural desire that any young boy would have, that is to go play with his friends, he would rather be alone in a dim house, trying to be further and further away from light. This downfall, or pull away from light, is occurring due to the boy's desire for one thing; the girl. "I looked over the dark house where she lived. I may have stood there for an hour" (245). This obsession of the girl is methodically enveloping his mind to where he thinks about nothing else.

A few times, the boy sees light as being good and positive, but this is only done when it is associated with his obsession for the girl. When having his first conversation with the girl, the boy notices that "the light from the lamp opposite [his] door caught the white curve of her neck, lit up her hair that rested there and, falling, lit up the hand upon the railing" (244). The girl is being firm and strong, holding to the railing as she speaks to this young boy. The light is having a positive effect on the girl and her character, but the boy does not see the light as being the beautiful thing, he only sees the girl. The boy becomes determined to go to the bazaar because of the simple fact that the girl mentioned "she would love to go" (244). The boy has become blind to the light and only sees and hears what he wants to. The boy is determined to get the girl a gift from the bazaar although she never asked or indicated that she wanted one. This obsession with getting a gift is what drives his actions and thoughts for the rest of the story.

The boy continues his downward spiral into the darkness; "I wished to annihilate the tedious intervening days. I chafed against the work of school" (244). The boy has no room in his life for anything, except the girl. She fills his thoughts; "her image came between me and the page I strove to read" (244). The boy's perspective of everyday items and people are changed and blurred. "I watched my master's face pass from amiability to sternness" (244). It is not the master that is changing, but it is the fact that the boy is losing light in his life. The boy refers to the man as master instead of teacher. When hearing the word master the allusion of Christ is brought directly to mind, yet the boy is not seeing his teacher as a Savior figure but rather as a nuisance. At one point the boy thought of the man as amiable but now he only sees the man's concerns as being annoying. The boy's temperance for every day life is changing, although he mistakes it as the master that is changing. Since he no longer feels the need for school, he sees his master as someone just intruding in his life.

As this young boy lets the obsession over take him even more, irony becomes evident in the text. He cannot perceive what is important and what is not; "I had hardly any patience with the serious work of life which, now that it stood between me and my desire, seemed to me…ugly monotonous child's play" (244). It is ironic that he calls school both the "serious work of life" and "ugly monotonous child's play"; it could not be both but his desire is all he sees and it is blurring his perception of life. His Uncle lets him go to the bazaar merely because the uncle recalls a saying, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy", yet the boy refers to getting a present at the bazaar as the "purpose of [his] journey" (244). Going to the bazaar is a serious business to the boy, although the Uncle ironically refers to it as being the boy's chance to play. The bazaar could have been a fun event but the obsession is taking control and "makes Jack a dull boy" despite what he is doing or where he is going.

At the very end of the story, the bazaar closes and "the light was out" (247). After all of his time hating the light that disturbed him, he finally gets to be in the dark completely, but he does not find joy; "Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger" (247). The obsession has gotten to him and brought him to his tragic end. He started out as an innocent school boy, just living a typical school boy life. By allowing his flaw of obsession to completely control him, he becomes a creature to the night. He, himself, realizes just how awful an ending he has come to. He recognizes that his flaw leads him into the dark; he even recognizes it as truly being his own fault. He is a prime example of a classic tragic hero, one who began as just an average person living an average life but due to the downfall of obsession, he ended with nothing, not even self-acceptance.

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The Man Without Syzygy

SCOT DYER

The Road by Cormac McCarthy is the story of a man and his son struggling for survival in a ravaged world. In the end, the father dies tragically leaving his son to fend for himself. The man is a tragic hero because he is incapable of fulfilling the archetypal role of the father and mother. Through analysis of the man's relationship with his wife, child, and the rest of society, it is clear that the man's tragic flaw is his inability to trust someone outside of his family. The man becomes a tragic hero because his wife leaves him; their separation creates a hole in the man that skews his perception of the world and his ability to raise his son.

Even though he loved the boy, the man was too robotic and could not fill the roles of both mother and father after his wife left them both. With the absence of the man's wife, he survives solely to care for his son. Very early on in the story the boy asks his father an endearing question:

> "Can I ask you something?
> Yes. Of course you can.
> What would you do if I died?
> If you died I would want to die too.
> So you could be with me?
> Yea. So I could be with you.
> Okay" (11).

Throughout the book the man is scavenging for food to feed his boy. After his wife leaves the family, the man becomes purely mechanical in his survival. She was the anima, or "the female aspect present in the collective unconscious of men" (Boeree), for both the man and the boy. On page fifty-five, the boy says, "I wish I was with my mom," demonstrating a very archetypal emotion for a young boy in his circumstances. Without her, there was no longer anyone to care for the man and the boy emotionally. She had left a hole in both the boy and the man that only she could fill. Carl Jung used a specific word to describe how the anima completes a male: syzygy. Syzygy is "both conjunction and opposition of two heavenly bodies" (OED). Jung used this word to describe the opposition of the male and female and how they are related and necessary to each other. Without the mother there was no syzygy, and what was left of the family was emotionally lopsided, as if the earth lacked the moon and only had the sun.

The reason there was no syzygy in their family was because the man could not fulfill both the father and the mother roles. The family fell apart without the mother's role being fulfilled because he and the boy missed her nurturing. Jung said on the subject of man and his anima, "Clearly the man who has mastered the anima acquires her mana…" (Jung 228). Mana is "an impersonal supernatural power which can be associated with people or with objects and which can be transmitted or inherited" (OED), in this case her ability to nurture both the man and the boy. In a healthy situation the father can assume both roles, but the man does not assimilate his wife's mana. He lives with a longing for her nurturing. In the first flashback of the novel, the man remembers an image of his wife, and she is standing in the doorway, cradling her pregnant belly (53). This image is an archetype for a nurturing mother. The fact that the man remembers his wife in a nurturing way suggests that she is what he and his son needed in order to function as an archetypal family. In the novel the man did not master his anima. The man did not inherit this motherly power that would have enhanced his ability to rear his child. Since he was not nurturing to the boy but only took care of his temporal needs, there was no syzygy in their family. Without his wife they were no longer a functioning family because the man could not assimilate her mana.

The reason the man has a negative world view is because of his wife. The man was not always cynical toward society. In their conversation before she left, she alters his perception of the world.

"We're survivors he told her across the flame of the lamp.

Survivors? she said.

Yes.

What in God's name are you talking about? We're not survivors. We're the walking dead in a horror film" (55).

When she leaves the man, his view of the world is changed. Before this point the man only thought of their family. After telling the man the gruesome things will happen to their family if they are caught by those that survived the disaster, his wife tells him, "They are going to rape us and kill us and eat us and you wont face it. You'd rather wait for it to happen" (56). Before she left, she made him see her opinion that the other survivors were monsters, causing him to distrust everyone he meets. At the end of their conversation he is speechless and she says, "You have no argument cause there is none" (57). He was convinced to believe what she said. She was the reason he developed his tragic flaw: his inability to trust society.

he man's flaw is tragic because it prevents him from being the archetypal father. According to author Dr. Anthony Stevens, the archetypal role of the father is helping their children achieve positive world views that will enable them to succeed. He said, "It is not just that a father's attitudes to work, social achievement, politics and the law condition the developing attitudes of his children, but that he constellates for them the whole of extraverted potential of the world as a place-to-be-known-and-lived-in"(Stevens 107). This is precisely where the man failed with his son. The man's tragic flaw is his inability to trust society. Because he has a negative view of society, the man teaches his boy to be the same way. If a father fails in this role the child is not prepared to live on his own in society. Stevens continues with his description of the role of the father. "Inasmuch as [the father] succeeds in this role, he sets them free from their involvement with mother and fosters the necessary autonomy (ego-self axis)" (Stevens 107). The man's tragic flaw ill prepares his son to be a part of society. That is why he is a tragic hero.

Throughout the novel, the man teaches his son by example to treat others with indifference. When the boy and the man talk to different men that they find on the road, the boy always asks if they can give them food, and the man always says no, teaching his son not to be giving. Although there is one instance when the man concedes and they give food to someone they find, but the man is reluctant and tells the boy, "Okay means okay. It doesnt mean we negotiate another deal tomorrow" (165). The man's attitude towards society does not change in the novel. Every time they meet someone, he treats him or her poorly in front of his son. Through his example, the man teaches his son to have a negative view of the world. Because of his view of society, the man fails to fulfill the archetypal role of the father.

The man shows that he does not care for anyone else but the boy. One of the most powerful moments of the novel is when they encounter the food storage of a certain cannibal family. The man opens the cellar and they find live humans trapped and waiting to be eaten. While these people are pleading for the man to help save them from their awful fate, he slams the cellar door and leaves them there (110-111). The man left these poor people in need in order to save his son's life. The cannibals were coming home. Because the man cared only for his family's survival, he was ok with this. Another instance to prove the man cared only for his boy happened on the road after passing another man. The man and his son have a short conversation.

"Who is it? said the boy.

I dont know. Who is anybody?" (49)

McCarthy's excellent use of diction in this short exchange is a clear depiction of what society has become to the man. "Who is anybody?" People have lost names and identities, and they have ceased to be people to the man. He himself is even denied a name. Through his question, "Who is anybody," it is evident that the man thinks of everyone the same way. The man's view of society affects the boy. After every instance in the book when they meet someone on the road, the boy stops talking to the man for a while. The boy's silence is the direct result of how the man's flaw affects his son negatively. He often questions whether or not he and his father are the good guys because of his father's actions. The man is not a bad person, but his tragic flaw of not trusting society prevents his son from preparing to go out and be a part of the world. The man's archetypal role is to do just the opposite.

Another way that the man's flaw affects the boy is that he teaches his son to fear everyone. On page 63, an unnamed cannibal attempts to kill the boy. Until this point, the man had been saving his last two bullets to kill the boy and then himself if their problems worsened. In a quick decision the man shot the cannibal to save his son with the same bullet intended to kill the boy. This instance was not entirely the man's fault, but he did kill the cannibal in front of his son, teaching him to be afraid of what cannibals can do and to act violently to prevent it. After this point in the book, people are referred to as either "the bad guys" or "the good guys" (92). Even though he makes reference to the other good guys, he teaches to boy to be afraid of them too.

"There are other good guys. You said so.

Yes.

So where are they?

They're hiding.

Who are they hiding from?

From each other" (184).

Teaching his son that they hide from each other suggests not only that they fear each other but that they should stay away from them. The man teaches his son to be afraid of society and to cling him alone, lessening the boy's chance of future happiness.

There is beautiful irony in the relationship between the man and the boy. The boy knows his father is tragically flawed but displays love for him by following him anyway. He does this because he has no one else. The man taught him that as was stated in the previous paragraph. At one point the man says to his son:

"You dont believe me.

I believe you.

Okay.

I always believe you.

I dont think so.

Yes I do. I have to" (185).

The reason he boy has to trust his father is because the man is all the boy has in the world. The boy continues to follow the man through the whole book, even until the man dies. The boy may not have realized it, but his father held him back from his happiness. When the man dies, the boy is left alone in the world.

"Just take me with you. Please.

I cant.

Please, Papa.

I cant. I cant hold my son dead in my arms. I thought I could but I cant.

You said you wouldnt ever leave me" (279).

The boy is then abandoned in a bleak world filled with "the bad guys". The man's tragic flaw was his inability to trust other people. Ironically, after the man's death, the boy was found by another man. This other man and his family took care of the boy from then on. In contrast to how the man treated the boy, his new father figure gave the boy happiness in the end. This new man and his wife have two children: a boy and a girl. This symbolizes the future and the society that the boy will find with them. Since the boy found happiness by trusting a stranger three days after the man's death, it can then be assumed that, had the man been more trusting, he would have found happiness too.

In Cormac McCarthy's The Road, the man is a tragic hero. The man acquired his tragic flaw from his wife, and after she left him his family lost the balance, or syzygy, that it needed to succeed. The man then starts down the road to his death. Failing to fulfill his role as the archetypal father, the man dies, leaving his boy alone to find happiness when he himself was the one keeping his son from attaining it.

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A Fatal Flaw: The Disregard of Tragic Heroines

RACHEL CLARK

What identifies a tragic hero? Is it the fatal flaw, the fall from good standing, or the unfortunate circumstances that result from his or her quest for something greater? Generally they are "men of importance, complex characters who engage out sympathies as ordinary, flawed human beings and their downfall often affects the welfare of the society around them" (McConnell 291). Interestingly enough, not all tragic heroes are "men of importance." In fact, many are not men at all, such as Electra, Antigone, Medea, and even Hans Christian Andersen's little mermaid. After an examination of the general traits and requirements of the role, many female characters clearly fit into the tragic hero category rather than their assumed role of a helpless victim. These female tragic heroes have earned their spot among the ranks of Heracles, Oedipus, and Macbeth and Hamlet. These tragic heroines can teach valuable lessons, yet they are often overshadowed by the prominent male prototypes of the tragic hero, despite being more than deserving of the title. They cast off the stereotype placed upon them by society and strive for something greater, despite their downfalls. By allowing the female to assume the role of tragic heroine, she is able to go beyond the idea of submissiveness and helplessness.

Why have female characters so often been denied the role of a tragic heroine? Where do they miss the mark? Like many literary terms, there is no official definition to a tragic hero; it is generally accepted as a hero with a significant flaw that brings about his downfall or defeat. This broad definition covers a variety of characters that can then be labeled as tragic heroes. Narrowing the definition down, a consistent trait of the tragic hero is that of a choice. "Whether the heroes have to make a choice between two equally legitimate courses of action, they have to make a choice and the usual result of that is self defeat" (Boas 11). A famous tragic hero, Hamlet, goes to seek vengeance while Ophelia waits. She, unfortunately, is no tragic heroine. She longs to be with him, and would likely attempt to be of aid as she loves him to the point of blind obedience. Ophelia could have easily become a tragic hero, dying due to her loyalty. She misses the mark as she is constantly doing only what her role permits her. A tragic hero must make a conscious choice and achieve something to earn the title of hero. Ophelia is therefore useless. Aristotle said, "The male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules and the other is ruled. Women are matter, waiting to be formed by the active male principle" (Bressler 169). Helpless, the female remains passive and often cannot take on the quests and journeys that the males have.

The tragic heroines who manage to pursue quests despite opposition from society have existed as long as male tragic heroes. Unfortunately, they have not been identified or shared as much as male tragic heroes. Well known Greek tragic heroes, such as Oedipus and Heracles, existed around the time of Electra and Antigone and yet are not commonly considered heroines. Evidence attributes this to a possibly unintentional sexist definition given by several literary critics to the tragic hero. The ways the earlier definitions of a tragic hero have been formed exclude the possibility of a female assuming such a role. For example, in a 1955 essay, George Boas stated, "It should also be pointed out that the heroes of all Greek tragedies were either gods or princes. This was erected into a rule by Aristotle and transmitted to us by the Renaissance theorists" (11). Aristotle, one of literature's earliest critics, elaborates on this need for noble heroes for he "viewed both stature and a mixed or balanced character as necessary to arouse both pity and fear in the audience" (Murfin 405). This statement correlates with the idea that a good tragic hero must be on a higher level than the common man in order to fall. This explains a reason for the lack of stories about females; they were, and sometimes still are, considered lower-class. They did not fit in with the gods and princes that were so common in tragedies. "Ancient history says next to nothing about the common people and even the most unpleasant characters come from the nobility? indeed sometimes from Olympus" (Boas 11). However, being a prince or god is not necessary as the female is realized as being more than a helpless character and the possibility of tragic heroine is opened to her.

Often, rather than being identified as an actual tragic heroine, the female has instead been assumed the victim. Females are identified as tragic rather than tragic heroes. "The 'frail vessels of affection,' it would seem, remain victims of a 'culture lag,' hazily aware of exciting expansions in the world about them, but excluded from full participation in these activities by virtue of their womanhood" (Sabiston 341). However, if permitted to take on the role of a tragic heroine, she can find in herself her own strength. She can become more than just a victim. For "a victim also suffers, but his suffering is not the outcome of his own acts or choice. A victim suffers rather than acts . . . In contrast, on the tragic hero, suffering is never merely imposed; he incurs it by his own decision" (Willner 62). With a closer observation, females have a strength that allows them to be brave enough to go beyond the role of victim to that of heroine.

Going beyond the role of a victim is Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid." In it, the little mermaid falls in love with a human and trades her fins for legs. She sacrifices the idea of ever returning to the sea, along with having her tongue cut out as payment to the sea witch to transform her legs. However, if her affections were not returned, she would perish and turn into sea foam. This occurs when her love, the Prince, finds a wife. The little mermaid's sisters wish to save her life and attempt to kill the Prince. The little mermaid saves his life and gives up her own by taking the edge of the dagger herself. Thus, her perhaps naïve and obsessive love, a very feminine trait, brings her downfall. The little mermaid took action. She saw what she wanted and made a choice. She knew that she would suffer both physi-

cally and emotionally, yet she still chose to go after what she wanted. Although her success or failure was determined by a male, the little mermaid was able to do more than many female fairy tale characters. She was able to be active in seeking her goals and have a quest.

If acknowledged as a tragic heroine and not just a victim, the little mermaid can be admired for her determination and independence in her pursuit of the prince. Women of all ages can benefit from the idea of having an ambition and being willing to sacrifice for it, rather than rely on being helped as a Cinderella type of victim, waiting for a fairy godmother and prince. "Because fairy tales are accorded significant power in the process of socializing and educating children these textual images play a central role in acculturating readers to accept and reproduce normalized gender expectations" (Franzak). Females can see the possibilities of their gender through the experiences of the tragic heroine.

The unconsciously sexist perspective of determining a tragic flaw causes some tragic heroines to be overlooked. Often, what is viewed as a fatal flaw in a woman is not even considered such in a man. In Shakespeare's Hamlet, the protagonist's fatal flaw is his indecisiveness. It is not often contemplated that his flaw was his desire for revenge. In fact, many may feel that Hamlet is seeking justice. Ironically, women are not permitted within their role to seek out vengeance, while it is glorified as a duty for the male. "It is also in the Homeric order that a man, not a woman, takes blood revenge; and he takes it on another man" (Willner 66). For example, although Electra had as much right as her brother Orestes to avenge her father's death, as a female, she was not able to. Even though the idea was hers, and she assists in implementing the plan, she still had to have her brother act in her stead to complete the task. This idea keeps many females from transcending their role of victims to heroines. Many of these female characters have all of the potential to become tragic heroines. They have a task; a choice; and, essential to the tragic hero, they have a tragic flaw.

To assume a man has the same flaws or conflicts as a woman would be ignorant. What concerns a male differs from what concerns a female. An ideal world would like equality between the two and feels that "there can be universalization of the qualities, so that the qualities are seen as attributes of a type or category applied to all human beings" (Davidson 851). However this does not occur, for "culture assigns masculine gender to such traits as intelligence, ambition, and aggressiveness, feminine gender to intuition, self-effacement, and nurturing" (Sabiston 310). In tragedies, the male protagonists often possess the flaw of hubris, or excessive pride. Where men seek revenge, females seek justice, or even a peace of mind. While men often act in rage, women act out of obsessive love or a love scorned. Women have flaws that allow them to become tragic heroines, but these traits are still specific to their gender. In order to allow the female gender to have equal opportunity to associate and indulge in a tragedy, to truly have the experience, a female tragic hero is necessary along with specifically feminine traits and struggles. "By empowering certain images with 'good' or 'bad' qualities, one can foresee their actions, natures, or essences. They become controllable because one can sense what actions they will undertake, what views they will espouse, and what danger or benefit they will provide within one's sense of one's own thought-collective" (Davidson 851).

By having only males as the examples of tragic heroes, the literary world does a disservice to females. Tragic heroes were not created for entertainment, but for an audience to connect with and learn from. While lessons can be learned from the likes of Macbeth and Hamlet, the female reader cannot benefit in the same amount a male reader would. The female's "thought collective" can relate and gain more from the tragic heroine, as they are more likely to have situations and issues that apply to them (851). By accepting more females as tragic heroes, female readers are given the opportunity to learn from tragedies, as well as step up and cultivate heroic traits of their own.

Despite her heroic traits and ambitions, a tragic heroine is still part of a tragedy. Thus, her role is not to entertain. Aristotle has stated that a tragedy should be "a dramatic imitation of a serious, complete action of some magnitude that evokes both fear and pity in the audience and therefore allows catharsis, which in Greek means "purgation" or "purification to occur" (Murfin 406). Without a female tragic hero, female readers are denied the opportunity to relate and evoke such emotional connections to the male tragic heroes, and are therefore less likely to experience catharsis. When discussing females need for female role models and heroines, Fisher states in her research that those females " seek out validation and support from the lives of others, from the awareness that others have done comparable work, from the knowledge that others have survived and that, where they did not, their work lived after them" (Fisher 215). While a reader can feel some catharsis from that of a different gender, a female reader can more readily identify with a female tragic hero. "Tragedy may be seen as rooted in the human need to extract a value from human mortality. Viewed from this perspective, tragedy has a positive side in its search for meaning in individual life" (Quinn 423). To find such "meaning in individual life," a woman can benefit from a hero individualized for her. The female tragic heroes can address the flaws specific to their gender and allow further insight to how the fall of woman differs from the fall of man.

Females suffer an even greater tragedy in their fall than common male tragic heroes do. Most often they must exchange their womanhood for the role of tragic hero. "They are heroic in transcending their gender role, yet in transcending it they also are denied fulfillment as women" (Willner 70). Many male tragic heroes who met their end due to hubris or other common masculine flaws did not lose their identity as a male. In fact, the male tragic hero can even be salvaged as a hero easier than a female can. "The male hero, Heracles, who unknowingly kills a wife and sons still finds friendship and refuge. A virtuous wife can be the victim of a husband who, nonetheless, still remains a hero. The virtuous wife who unknowingly kills her husband is cursed and must die" (Willner 73).

One example of a tragic heroine going beyond her feminine role and being cursed for it is illustrated in Euripede's Medea. The heroine, Medea, offers to assist Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece in exchange for his love and

marriage. He agrees to take her as his wife, and Medea uses her cleverness and sorcery to help him. Medea's obsessive love for Jason causes her to commit crimes that strip her of her feminine nature. When Jason abandons her and marries Creon's daughter instead, Medea is driven mad by jealousy and kills Jason's new wife without feeling any guilt. Realizing that for true justice to be done, Jason's posterity must be destroyed, Medea slaughters their own children. "As the terrified screams of the children give way to deadly silence, the once sympathetic heroine has become a repulsive and alien being" (Tessitore 591). Medea has broken the strongest female bond in existence: the bond of mother and child. Even after this horrid act, "Medea regards herself as belonging to the race of heroes" (593). Tragic heroines like Medea "are ambitious and idealistic in ways that had hitherto been reserved to male characters, and they mark a distinct break from the literary tradition of feminine helplessness or of merely moral supportiveness" (Sabiston 338).

This ambitiousness or "spiritedness" mutates into insanity that brings Medea to her doom as both a woman and tragic heroine (Tessitore 593). However, Tessitore examines that spiritedness, "the very quality which is most necessary to defend and protect one's own is shown to have a power capable of severing even the powerful natural bond which unites mother and child" (596). Medea is a female that fits the role of tragic hero and "fallen man" almost too well. The disgusting act of murdering your own children not only robs Medea of her role as a woman and mother, but even a human. She has gone from being the helpful wife of Jason to a monster; a great and tragic fall indeed. It is then ironic that such a strong and profound example of a tragic hero is still largely unrecognized in comparison to milder, male tragic heroes.

Another female that trades her role as an acceptable women for that of a tragic heroine and suffers for it is Antigone. In The Antigone, Antigone's brothers die, and King Creon does not permit Polynieces to be buried or to have any funeral rites done. It is decreed that anyone who does so will receive the punishment of death. Antigone, with her feminine traits of compassion and love for her brother, faces the conflict of being obedient to the law or loyal to her family. Her sister Ismene encourages her to remain within the obedient role of a woman and to obey the law. She cannot bring herself to break her role. Thus she is submitted to role of victim by not acting. "These women are victims not only of the tensions between the public world and the private world of their creative imaginations, but also of their own emotional and intellectual limitations, some of which are the result of their having "internalized" the values of their society" (Sabiston 339). She submissively entreats Antigone, saying, "We twain are left alone, and if we brave the king's decree, an unhappy death awaits us. Weak women such as we cannot strive with men; rather were it seemly to bow to those that are stronger than ourselves" (Fitts 461).

Antigone makes her choice and secures her downfall along with abandoning any chance of domesticity. "Antigone, although female, is a hero. This role was allowed a few women in Greek tragedy, but none in Greek society where women were confined to the domestic sphere" (Wilner 59). She goes against the law and, although finding favor in the sight of the gods, becomes dishonored and loses her chances of becoming wife and mother. King Creon's son and Antigone's lover, Haimon, must reject her as she accomplishes her task and becomes a heroine. "I am no man and she the man instead if she can have this conquest without pain" (Fitts 482). Antigone shows great bravery and even feminine compassion to her family as she sacrifices what means most to her for her brother's sake. She mourns her loss of womanhood briefly before being led to her death to starve in prison.

> To sin in boldest daring. Therefore, now
> He leads me, having taken me by force,
> Cut off from marriage-bed and marriage-song,
> Untasting wife's true joy or mother's bliss
> With infant at her breast, but all forlorn,
> Bereaved of friends, in utter misery,
> Alive I tread the chambers of the dead
> (485-486).

The loss of life, along with that of "wife's true joy or mother's bliss" creates a fall—a greater fall, in fact, than a male tragic hero often experiences (486).

The great loss of womanhood as they become more than victims qualify these female characters even more for their titles as tragic heroine. As said before, tragic heroes tend to be males of high rank or stature, even godly. This is common to "remind us the tragic hero faces on a more exalted level the dilemmas of ordinary men and that his fall will therefore have a greater resonance than that of most men"(McCollom 52). While not godly to most, womanhood is a treasured asset and the most important trait a woman has. The inborn ability of women to create, nurture, and love is precious to their very being. Along with their lives and stature, whether princess or pauper, the tragic heroine loses that which defines her as she takes action, rather than stay passive and obedient.

The tragic hero and tragedy has been an essential part of literature, drama, and even culture from the earliest of times. They have taught morals and lessons through their downfalls for ages. It is even said that in a tragedy the conflict "is not between people so much as within individuals" (Boas 12). To deny the female characters to have the opportunity of becoming more than a victim further denies females examples and learning experiences that would have benefited them. Without these tragic heroines, a female reader is persuaded over and over again that the female is a victim, consistently reliant on the male.. By identifying these tragic heroines through their individual and personal struggles and flaws, females can relate and take valuable lessons from their stories. It is time to bring the overshadowed tragic heroine into the light to teach and encourage the entire world.

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The Tragic Hero as a Faith Device

DEREK HADERLIE

Introduction

The tragic hero has been an important part of literature throughout history; and remains an important part of our literature even today. In the past critics have looked at the tragic hero as a device for moving the plot of a story forward. Although this interpretation of the tragic hero is a good one, one of the most important purposes for the tragic hero device has been un-discussed. The tragic hero, as expressed in Christian literature, is a type for the fallen man, as found in Christian theology, which expresses the need for the Christ figure. "Literature affects us by its symbols, images, and setting…" (Young 16). Readers see the tragic hero as a type for their own lives and their need for mercy and redemption because of their own "fatal flaws." In Christian literature the tragic hero serves as a "faith device" which leads one to faith in Christ as a redeemer and savior.

I. The Development of the Tragic Hero Device

Understanding how the tragic hero has been used as a device in non-Christian and Christian literature is an important part of understanding the role of the tragic hero as a faith device. A faith device is one which is used to bring a person to believe or desire to believe in a doctrine and dogma. The non-Christian tragic hero functions differently than the Christian tragic hero in two key ways: the tragic flaw, and catharsis in contrast to redemption. The non-Christian tragic hero's flaw is intellectual compared to the Christian's moral flaw, and catharsis is found through emotional release rather than a spiritual redemption which is found in the Christian tragic hero stories. The Christian tragic hero developed over time and began to take attributes which would make it more amenable to Christian theology.

The non-Christian tragic heroes always have some sort of flaw which the Greeks referred to as hamartia. This is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "The fault or error which entails the destruction of the tragic hero." This "fault or error" is predominantly made because of some lack of information or judgment on the part of the tragic hero. This contrasts with the Christian tragic hero, whose flaw is a moral one. In regards to the Greek hamartia, scholar, and critic F. L. Lucas said, "If we seek the hamartia…it becomes clearer than ever that an intellectual mistake is all that the term need mean" (Lucas 102 emphasis added). Oedipus is a good example of a hero whose hamartia is an intellectual problem; his tragedy occurring because of his ignorance concerning his progenitors. Aristotle, the eminent Greek philosopher, scientist, and writer, said that tragic heroes were "the intermediate kind of personage, a man not pre-eminently virtuous and just, whose misfortune, however, is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment, of the number of those in the enjoyment of great reputation and prosperity; e.g. Oedipus, Thyestes…" (Poetics 13 emphasis added). Obviously Aristotle has an intellectual sort of tragic flaw in mind. He says it is not "vice and depravity" or what some might call a moral flaw, but it is "some error of judgment" or what some might call an intellectual flaw. Non-Christian literature demonstrates this most often.

The flaw found in the Christian tragic hero is a moral flaw rather than an intellectual one. "Othello's jealousy is a famous example" (Oxford Reference). Othello, rather than having some sort of intellectual flaw such as a lack of knowledge or an error in judgment, has the moral vice of jealousy. Professor Kenneth Myrick defends the idea of a moral flaw by saying:

Othello's story is the perfect illustration of man's tragic vulnerability.... His elevation of soul all seemed to raise him above the fallibility of the other sons of Adam. His downfall gives the lie to the Stoic in the strength of his own virtue, and demonstrates the inability of unaided human nature to govern its own life. In him we see exemplified in the highest degree alike the spiritual greatness and the tragic weakness of men (245).

Myrick is showing that it is a moral flaw that Othello demonstrates. His "tragic vulnerability" is "the inability of human nature to govern its own life." Human nature or what some might call moral depravity is an important part of Christian theology.

In non-Christian literature and drama, the tragic hero was used as a device to help the audience experience catharsis—"The purification of the emotions by vicarious experience" (OED). Catharsis became an important part of pre-Christian literature and dramas, functioning uniquely to help the audience become emotionally strengthened by ridding themselves of negative emotions and beliefs. The Concise Oxford Companion to Classical Literature states that "Aristotle seems to suggest that the catharsis (purging) of these emotions may … be beneficial" This is the precursor to the Christian tragic hero, as a device which supports the Christian culture and theology. This is because catharsis functions as a sort of redemption from the anguish portrayed by the tragic hero. It provides the forum for the reader or the viewer to rid themselves of negative emotions.

These changes in the tragic hero began after the advent of Christianity. This transitional event created many changes as the pagan Greco-roman culture was replaced by Christianity after the conversion of Emperor Constantine. The state religion became the vehicle through which

literature was preserved. "According to the laws of the time [during the period of early Christianity] it was necessary for a man to be a Christian in order to hold an official post" (Downey 90). Literature began to take on a distinctly Christian feeling and outlook. Many of the ideas that were used in literature, such as the tragic hero, were slowly altered and began to serve as devices to teach Christianity in subtle ways.

The Christian culture values the person. They believe that each individual has inherent value, which makes the salvation of each individual of the utmost importance. This idea is demonstrated in Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel The Scarlet Letter. Arthur Dimmsdale, one of the main characters in the novel, is a good example of the Christian tragic hero. His tragic flaw is not some intellectual problem like the Greek's hamartia. Instead, it is a moral flaw. Dimmsdale has sinned against God. His sin stands in the way of his own happiness. Hawthorne describes how Dimmsdale's sin leads to his fall: "Tempted by a dream of happiness, he had yielded himself with deliberate choice, as he had never done before, to what he knew was deadly sin. And the infectious poison of that sin had been thus rapidly diffused throughout his moral system" (Hawthorne). Yet his value as a person remained pre-eminent. God's mercy for him affirms his value through his final redemption just before his death. "God knows; and he is merciful! He hath proved his mercy, most of all, in my afflictions… Praised be his name! His will be done! Farewell!" (Hawthorne 215). This is a reflection of God's mercy, and Christian values being portrayed through the story.

So, it can be seen that the tragic hero has changed as a device. Tragic heroes are characterized differently in Christian literature than in non-Christian literature. The Christian tragic hero has a moral flaw, leads to redemption rather than emotional catharsis. These changes can be seen in literature that has been written in the Christian context. These changes support the idea that the tragic hero has become a "faith device" rather than just a literary device.

II. The Tragic Hero as a Type for The Fallen Man

The Christian tragic hero works as a type for the "fallen man" as found in Christian theology. In part this is because it is something which readers can relate to; this is significant because in Christian theology all mankind are all fallen. The tragic hero reflects the fallibility of the fallen man or the "natural man." In order to understand the connection between the fallen man and the tragic hero we must understand what the idea of the fallen man contains. The fallen man is an individual in the state which mankind finds itself here on earth. According to Christian doctrine it is because of this fall that mankind is incapable of returning to the creator by their own power. Because of the fall mankind must have a redeemer or atoning one in order to return to God.

In order to be considered a tragic hero, a character must have attributes which the reader can relate with. Even in the past when the character was a part of nobility, he fulfilled this requirement. Emerson describes how people internalize and even become a part of the stories they read when he said, "All that Shakespeare says of the king, yonder slip of a boy that reads in the corner feels to be true of himself" (Emerson 115). In this way the reader will understand vicariously the idea of fallen man through the tragic hero. Wayne Booth says something about this as he discusses the value of ethical criticism:

> Whenever I engage seriously with any metaphors, petty or grand, whenever I join in any narrative, religious or secular, and whenever I then choose to discuss my venture, after the fact, with those who have traveled the same way, I become part of a venture in self-education that is both supremely practical and at the same time the very end of the life itself… it is something we live, both as we engage with works and as we converse about them after the event (369).

Booth is here saying that when readers engage the text (metaphor in the text) then the text is "something we live." The text can actually engage the reader in such a way that the reader might feel that the text is merely an extension of themselves.

The tragic hero must have some sort of a flaw which leads to his or her destruction. The Christian tragic hero often suffers from the vices of sin, e.g. Faust's pact with the devil, Macbeth's murder of the king, and Joe Keller's lie found in Arthur Miller's All my Sons. According to Christian theology we "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3.23). Thus, in this way the Christian reader finds himself having a common tie with the tragic hero. The tragic hero then becomes an expression for the reader to experience and understand what it is that the fallen man experiences. The tragic hero then becomes the tool or "faith device" which will point the reader to Christ.

Christians consider Adam and Eve to be the first Christians. Adam and Eve also typify the Christian tragic hero. They transgress a law, and the rest of their experience is one of pain and suffering, leading to an impending doom (death, in their case). They are aware of their need for some sort of redemptive action in their lives, and, therefore, they turn to God. This closely correlates with the tragic hero that readers experience in literature. The tragic hero transgresses, or sins, and is then locked into a downward spiral, leading to his or her impending doom. Adam and Eve are the first to fall.

The fallen man is a characteristic that, according to traditional Christian theology, must be overcome by all men. This is a part of the larger plan of salvation described in the Old and New Testaments. It is a state into which all mankind are all born. Man's fall is described in this scripture from the Old Testament: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man" (Gen. 3:22-24). Adam is cast out of the state of paradise and enters into a world where there is pain and misfortune. This is a state of separation from God. This is what all men must overcome—this separation from God. This fall is what all men must overcome.

"Fallen man," therefore, is a term which describes the fallibility of man—the imperfections, the sorrows, the pains,

sinfulness, and anguishes of man. According to Christian theology we are all born into this state. Hence the scripture found in the New Testament "In Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22). Although not all believe the Christian doctrine of fallen man per se, it is deeply rooted in the culture, as seen in tragic hero literature. Those who live within the Christian culture and society have a conviction, although perhaps never recognized, that they are fallible and that they are trying to overcome some imperfection; so, even non believers can relate with the fallen man. This is important because the "faith device" functions to bring non-believers closer to a belief in Christ.

According to Christian theology mankind is like the tragic hero because mankind is all fallen. This is a part of living in this world. The Christian audience is acutely aware of their fallen state and their need for redemption. This is why tragic hero literature appeals to the Christian audience so much. This means that the tragic hero is a more meaningful device for the Christian reader than for the non-Christian reader. The Christian reader sees himself reflected in the tragic hero. Our fatal flaws are our own sins and weaknesses. Every sin is an expression of our fatal flaw and our fallen state.

A man who is fallen needs to be given some sort of redemption or ability to overcome the fall. In Christian theology, all men and women should be seeking some sort of redemptive action in their lives, which comes through Christ. This is the Christian version of catharsis. So the non-Christian Greek catharsis changes over time into the Christian redemptive experience. The reader of tragic hero literature will recognize his or her own fallibility through the tragic hero, and will desire this redemptive experience – thus the Christian belief of redemption is affirmed. Therefore, the tragic hero functions as a faith device.

III. Application of How the Christian Tragic Hero Leads the Reader to Christ.

It is because the tragic hero is a type for the fallen man that the reader senses the need for a redeemer. This type vicariously leads the reader to desire to have faith in Christ as the redeemer. This concept is clearly seen when the role of Christ as redeemer becomes clear. The Christ figure functions as redeemer in that it lifts men up from their fallen state and acts as the agent to overcome the fall. Because of the enabling power of the redemption of the Christ figure readers of Christian tragic hero literature will have a greater desire to believe in Christ because the tragic hero works as a "faith device." Although it is the case that tragic hero literature in the Christian context presents the fallen man it does not always overtly present the Christ figure.

The Christ figure is the redeemer. It is through Christ that the fallen man is able to overcome the fall. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15.22). This New Testament passage shows the close correlation between the fall and the need for redemption. The purpose and mission of the Christ figure is described in this New Testament Scripture: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Heb. 2.14-15). The Christ figure is to redeem men from this fallen world. According to Christian theology Christ suffered death and overcame it that all men might follow after him and overcome death likewise.

The power of Christ's redemption is obtained through faith in him: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3.16). This is the "miracle" which Christianity purports to have knowledge of and ability to access. The fall of man is overcome in Christ, "[i]n who we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14). An example of this redemption is Arthur Dimmsdale. It is after his "repentance," or confession of guilt, that he finally finds relief from his great and oppressive sorrows: "It was revealed! But it were irreverent to describe that revelation. For an instant the gaze of the horror-stricken multitude was concentrated on the ghastly miracle; while the minister stood with a flush of triumph in his face, as one who, in the crisis of acutest pain, had won a victory" (Hawthorne 214 emphasis added). Dimmsdale finally trusts in Christ and confesses. It is only at this point when he finally fully repents that he wins "a victory" through Christ. Dimmsdale explains further how this is possible:

> God knows; and he is merciful! He hath proved his mercy, most of all, in my afflictions. By giving me this burning torture to bear upon my breast! By sending yonder dark and terrible old man, to keep the torture always at red-heat! By bringing me hither, to die this death of triumphant ignominy before the people! Had either of these agonies been wanting, I had been lost for ever! Praised be his name! His will be done (Hawthorne 215).

In this passage can be seen another facet of Christian theology – that men and women are brought to Christ by their pains and sufferings. This gives purpose to suffering, and makes pain endurable and even in some ways joyful. This is evidence that the tragic hero is, then, a type for mankind and creates in the reader a desire to come to Christ, through seeing the pains of the tragic hero.

The reader's fatal flaws are the cause for a perceived inevitable destruction unless he or she can grasp Christ in his or her mind and in his or her belief system. Men and women's inner-most feelings vibrate corollary to the tragic scenes depicted in the story of the tragic hero. They then desire to obtain or to strengthen their faith in Christ. So the tragic hero, besides being a literary device to advance a story, serves as a faith device. The tragic hero works as a faith device because, through the suffering that the reader experiences through the character, he or she desires redemption for him or herself. This is how the redemption of Christ is related to catharsis. The reader experiences a feeling of sorrow and pain when they read or view tragic hero literature or drama, which causes them to desire a purging of their own sins. The more that they subject themselves to this type of literature, the stronger will be their desire to purge themselves.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the differences between the non-Christian tragic hero and the Christian tragic hero. Readers see how the Christian tragic hero supports an idea of fallen man. The paper has explored what the fallen man is and how the Christ figure works to bring about the redemption of mankind. The paper has also shown how the tragic hero is a type for the fallen man, and how the tragic hero works as a faith device to bring people closer to Christ. This knowledge will help readers discover insights into Christian theology as they study tragic hero literature, thereby strengthening their faith in Christ and their understanding of how Christianity is reflected in the cultural underpinnings of society.

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"To Be or Not to Be" a Tragic Hero

VICKI NYE

For hundreds of years, readers and critics have considered Oedipus to be a tragic hero, while in fact he really does not qualify. Throughout my research, I have come across characters that although may be considered tragic by some, are in fact falsely categorized. Unlike Hamlet, the true tragic hero, Oedipus' misfortune, which was great, was brought on by vice, depravity, and deception even unto himself. I will be contrasting Shakespeare's Hamlet, the true tragic hero, to Sophocles' Oedipus, who, though generally regarded as the "ideal" tragic hero, will be shown not to be.

Because of Hamlet's and Oedipus' similarities they are both considered "ideal" tragic heroes. Yet, Hamlet becomes the true tragic hero where as Oedipus does not. In many ways, Oedipus' situation is similar to Hamlet's. They both have risen to an elevated status; although, their different choices factor in both of their outcomes. For example, they both are princes whose fathers have been murdered. They have also been accused of incestuous relationships with their mothers, and have antagonists who are trying to usurp their power. We also see that they both lose the women they love to suicide. These two characters make a great comparison because of their similarities and because most critics believe them both to be tragic heroes.

Hamlet's and Oedipus' similar experiences are significant because they differ in how they handle them. Hamlet shows honor and greatness in delaying killing Claudius because he does not want to kill an innocent man. Oedipus however, is rash and hasty in killing the men at the crossroads, especially considering the oracle had just told him twenty-four hours earlier that he would kill his father and marry his mother. One would hope that he would be very careful about killing someone who was old enough to be his father after hearing the oracle's prophecy since he did not know who his father was at the time. Hamlet is trying to justly avenge his father, while Oedipus is the unwitting murderer of his.

Tragedy

Hamlet and Oedipus, like other tragedies, are stories of exceptional calamity, usually leading to the death of a man in high estate of nobility. A. C. Bradley in Shakespearean Tragedy states:

The calamities of tragedy do not simply happen; they are presented through the actions of characters in the story. These actions lead to other actions which trigger a chain of events that inevitably lead to a catastrophe . . . that makes the audience regard the sufferings of the hero with pity and fear for them. The hero also always contributes in some measure to the disaster in which he perishes. (6)

Hamlet, in delaying to kill Claudius, set off a chain of events that consistently delayed him from fulfilling his revenge until he was mortally wounded bringing on his own demise; this because of his error in waiting. Oedipus is also a tragedy, although not a tragic hero, as he too sets off a chain of events when not trusting the oracle and unknowingly killing his father. Oedipus is banished from Thebes by his own decree, but he does not perish from a tragic error as Hamlet does. Although only Hamlet dies, both characters suffer great catastrophes brought on by themselves.

The Tragic Hero

To understand why Hamlet is a tragic hero when Oedipus is not, we need to examine what makes a tragic hero. Is it the tragic flaw, the hero's downfall, or just a tragedy in and of itself? In order for a character to be considered a tragic hero, some basic criteria needs to be met, according to Aristotle's Poetics: First, one must come from a noble background – generally of noble birth or greatness and have heroic qualities. . Second, there must be hamartia – the tragic flaw or error that eventually leads to his downfall. Third, peripeteia is evident – the reversal of fortune brought about by the hero's tragic flaw causing him to fall from his risen stature. Fourth, the audience must feel pity and fear for this character. Peasants do not inspire pity and fear as great men do. (qtd. in Reeves, 172-4, 185-6). Both Hamlet

and Oedipus need to meet all of these criteria in order to be considered true tragic heroes.

Noble Birth or Greatness

If a character is of noble birth or greatness, he/she is usually a king/queen, a leader of men. Also, attributed to the hero's greatness is the fact that his fate affects the welfare of a whole nation or number of people. Aristotle, generally recognized as an authority on the subject of Greek tragedies states, "…the change in the hero's fortunes must be not from misery to happiness, but on the contrary from [nobleness] to misery; and the cause of [his misery] must lie not in any depravity, but in some great error on his part" (Bywater, 53). According to Aristotle then, a tragic hero's fall from greatness cannot be caused by any depravity on the part of the hero. This sudden fall from greatness to nothing provides a sense of contrast. Also, the hero's nobility, or greatness, is partially determined by the number of people affected by his fall to misery or death.

Although both Hamlet and Oedipus are of nobility by birth, nobility does not make Oedipus a tragic hero like Hamlet. Hamlet would have been king if his uncle, Claudius, had not usurped Hamlet's power by quickly marrying his mother, Queen Gertrude. Hamlet needed to reclaim his crown by avenging his father's death. Hamlet's nobility, or greatness, did not only come from his birthright, but also from his noble character. Hamlet demonstrated this nobility by his unwillingness to avenge his father's death without knowing for a certainty that it was Claudius who killed him. Oedipus, on the other hand, was also of noble birthright, and starts out to make noble choices. Although, after he learns of the oracles prophecy he still kills a man old enough to be his father within 24 hours of hearing it, and then soon after marries his mother. His choices are no longer noble because of the knowledge he had at the time.

Hamartia: A Tragic Error

Many critics of literature have been trying to define the term "hamartia" since Aristotle first used it in his work Poetics. Aristotle developed the term giving it a broad meaning of "error of judgment." In Merriam Webster's Online Dictionary it gives the definition as "Greek, from hamartanein to miss the mark, err. 2. Tragic flaw." The hamartia is seen as an error in judgment or unwitting mistake of the hero. Many critics have called this "error of judgment" the "tragic flaw," although Aristotle never uses this term. It is important to note that the true meaning of hamartia shows the differences between Hamlet and Oedipus, and how they each do or do not fit the definition of this term.

There is much debate over whether this flaw or error in judgment is moral guilt; in other words, sin. In Guy Kendall's "The Sin of Oedipus" he states, "whatever may be the meaning of hamartia, it does not amount to 'moral guilt'" (196). The tragic flaw is not a "sin" committed by the hero, as many may think, but an error in judgment. In the Bible, hamartia is the Greek word used to denote sin, so it is easy to see how this could be misinterpreted by many critics. The tragic error cannot be considered a moral sin or depravity if it is a simple mistake made by the hero. Hamlet's hamartia of delaying in killing Claudius is clearly just a mistake on the part of the hero. Oedipus did not commit an error and what eventually caused his downfall was caused by depravity on his part, sin, or moral guilt proving he cannot be a tragic hero.

The Greek term hamartia is actually closer in meaning to a "mistake" or an "error," or "failing," rather than an innate flaw. According to Aristotle, all tragic heroes have a hamartia. The tragic error must result from something that goes somewhat awry, usually due to a lack of knowledge. By defining hamartia in this way, Aristotle indicates:

The hero must not deserve his misfortune, but he must cause it by making a fatal mistake, an error of judgment, which may well involve some imperfection of character but not . . . [so we] regard him as 'morally responsible' for the disasters, although, they are nevertheless the consequences of the flaw in him, and his wrong decision at a crisis . . . (Aristotle 6.24).

The tragic error as explained here shows that it cannot be an innate character flaw and the character cannot be held morally responsible for the disasters they cause. The character's mistake or failing is what causes the catastrophe. The hero does not intentionally create havoc; if he did this would take away his status as a tragic hero because of depravity, and we would not feel pity for him.

The tragic error cannot be accomplished with forethought and intent to purposely defraud or do wrong, or it cannot be a tragic error. Aristotle also explains the "hero's misfortune…is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment" (Aristotle 6.24). Almost all critics agree that the error or mistake is not moral guilt or sin committed by the tragic hero. If it were, he would not be a tragic hero but merely a sinner. Isabel Hyde, in her essay "The Tragic Flaw: Is it a Tragic Error?" states:

Tragic error . . . is a mistake or error of judgment…and the deed done in consequence of it is an (erratum) error.… the [error] is said to originate not in vice or depravity but in ignorance of some material fact or circumstance….This ignorance . . . takes the deed out of the class of [intentional] acts, and enables one to forgive or even pity the doer…. It is strange that the [tragic error] of which Aristotle is speaking, should have been taken….by others to mean not an error of judgment, but some ethical fault or infirmity of character… (215).

So Hyde and Aristotle also believe the "tragic error" to be a mistake or error of judgment not a flaw in the hero's character or ethical fault.

Because the term hamartia is so broad and so many critics have their own interpretation of it, it has been difficult for critics to arrive at a set definition. Leon Golden also chimed in with his study of Jan M. Bremer's paper "Hamartia: Tragic Error in the Poetics of Aristotle and in Greek Tragedy." Here Bremer set himself a threefold task: to determine the exact meaning of the term hamartia in Aristotle's Poetics; to survey the different interpretations which this term has undergone in the course of time; and to determine the relevance of this term to existing Greek tragedy. In a detailed discussion, Bremer showed:

These investigations consistently demonstrate the term hamartia, as used in the Aristotelian corpus and in Greek tragedy, must be understood as some form of intellectual

error and that these studies fully refute the view that the term designates a moral flaw. Nor is hamartia tragic [moral] guilt, the state brought about by sinning . . . from the wicked action. . . (Golden 15-7).

Hamartia is simply a mistake that brings the hero from an elevated status to a fallen state which is usually death and cannot be formed from a moral flaw, moral guilt, or moral sin. Again, many critics have proven that the tragic error or hamartia of a tragic hero cannot be a moral flaw or sin and Oedipus clearly falls under this category.

Hamlet's hamartia, or tragic error, is delaying killing Claudius in hopes of achieving justice, as well as avenging his father, which leads to his ultimate downfall and death. Because Hamlet delayed in killing Claudius, not only did Claudius die, but so did his mother, Queen Gertrude, Ophelia, Laertes, Polonius and Hamlet himself. If Hamlet had just killed Claudius in the beginning when his father's ghost first came to him, everyone else's death could have been prevented, including his own, making Hamlet king. So we see that it was Hamlet's error in delaying to kill Claudius that brought his downfall and ended up affecting all of Denmark when Norway's Prince, Fortinbras, was made the new king. Hamlet did not delay to intentionally have all of these people killed. This was his mistake or error. He delayed in killing him to make sure Claudius was his father's killer. Then he delayed again in killing Claudius because he was praying at the time; Hamlet believed Claudius would go to heaven if he killed him while he was praying. Then he accidentally kills Polonius, thinking it was Claudius hiding behind the curtain. So a chain of events caused by Hamlet's tragic error led to his downfall and death.

Oedipus, although considered by many critics as the ideal tragic hero, does not meet the requirements of a tragic error. He falls from nobility to misery due to depravity and not an honest mistake. He has no tragic error because of the knowledge he has that he had indeed been the one who killed King Laius unwittingly. He had just come from the oracle in Delphi only twenty-four hours earlier telling him that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Oedipus then kills a man old enough to be his father, who looks a little like himself, and shortly after marries a woman old enough to be his mother.

Oedipus: Tell me the build and height of Laius? How old a man?

Jacosta: Tall was he, and his hair was slightly strewn with silver; and not unlike thee in form. (Oedipus the King 890-91)

With the prophecy still fresh on his mind, and the fact that Polybus and Merope were not his real parents, he should have been thinking I cannot kill this man, he could be my father, but does so in a blind rage anyways. Oedipus continues to Thebes where the city is in an uproar because the king has been murdered at a crossroads. This is the same crossroads where Oedipus just killed a man and also killed the exact number of those with the king, except for one, who ran off and at the same time period the king was killed there.

Oedipus: I thought I heard you say Laius was murdered at a place where three roads meet.

Jacosta: The story was reported in the city just before you took over royal power here in Thebes. (Oedipus the King 878-79, 883-85)

There are too many coincidences for Oedipus, who is not a dull-witted stupid man, to not have known that he had just killed the king. His ingenious solves the Sphinx's riddle as soon as he enters the city saving it from its plague. Therefore, Oedipus has no tragic error because of his choice to remain silent about the men he killed before entering Thebes. Also, in Aristotle's definition of a tragic hero he states, "the hero's misfortune …cannot be brought upon him by vice and depravity" (Aristotle 6.24). In Oedipus's case, his misfortune of marrying his mother and having children with her is brought on by his depravity. He should have told Jacosta and the people of Thebes that he had just killed a man that had five others with him, but one had escaped and where. Then everyone would have known he had killed the king as he must have also surmised. However, he told no one, and this was his deceit. Remember, according to Aristotle, the hero must not deserve his misfortune or he is not a tragic hero and, in the end, Oedipus gets everything that he deserves. Oedipus does not meet the requirements of tragic error when he brings on his own misfortune by deceit and depravity.

It has also been proven that the tragic flaw or error is not an innate character flaw. Some critics who claim Oedipus is a tragic hero believe his tragic flaw is pride or arrogance. Both of these traits are an innate character flaw and do not make Oedipus a tragic hero.

Tragic Conflict

Hamlet's tragic conflict that shows him to be a true tragic hero is not from despair or indecision but because he has scruples about revenge itself. He delays because he has "a nature that cannot enact the deed demanded of it" (Lawlor 7-8). The duty of revenge is called into question throughout the play. Is this revenge truly justice? Hamlet knows he must enact this revenge for his father, but his conflict is that it must only be carried out in justice. Hamlet is a true tragic hero because he is condemned to do what he has no assurance is right. In the Elizabethan acceptance of revenge, there is no escape for Hamlet from his duty, except in death, so he recoils from a world into which it had been better not to be born. He sees humanity as corruption and tells Ophelia it is better to go to a nunnery than to breed sinners and claims, "O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right" (Hamlet)! He eventually overcomes his conflict and gets his revenge on Claudius but only after being fatally wounded himself.

Oedipus' tragic conflict comes from the tragedy of the play itself because he is not a tragic hero. When Oedipus learns that he has killed his father and married his mother as prophesied, he had to be conflicted; even though, the play does not show this until the end. If the reader looks at the facts of when Oedipus killed his father and that his mother would have seen the scars on his ankles from being pierced and bound as baby and recalled the prophecy, both Jacosta and Oedipus must have known Oedipus' true identity much sooner than the end of the play. Jacosta had to have known even before Oedipus, once Laius was killed and she marries an eighteen-year-old man, knowing the prophecy and seeing

Oedipus' scarred ankles. Both, either chose consciously not to recognize these facts or both consciously put these facts out-of-mind as being a possibility.

The Hero's Downfall

The tragic hero's downfall is directly linked to the tragic flaw. Although, the old adage "the bigger they are, the harder they fall" is not necessarily true. In William G. McCollom's "The Downfall of the Tragic Hero," he gives four situations of how a hero may fall. First, one is able to easily attribute his downfall to his wrongful behavior as long as he has not acted in depravity. Second, his downfall is caused by a tragic error. Third, the hero is destroyed not because of his own fault but through fate. Some would say that Oedipus would fall under this category of fate; but understanding the intelligence of Oedipus and facts that led to his downfall, he could not have been a tragic hero. A variation on this third situation is where a tragedy of fate is the chief cause of the catastrophe. Here the hero's failure to act is not morally culpable to the final result. As in Hamlet, where a chain of events led to Hamlet's destruction, he is not faulted for his hesitation to commit murder; we understand that this hesitation, or tragic flaw, contributes to his downfall and death. Although, he is not faultless, his shortcomings are essential to the plot. Fourth, the hero's action is guilty from one point of view and innocent from another. Faced with terrible alternatives, he sees the evil in both, and must choose the less of two evils. The hero must act and in a sense he must choose wrongly no matter what, for the hero's motives when analyzed, cannot be blameless. Although the hero's downfall may come in various ways, it will always be directly linked to the tragic flaw.

Pity and Fear for the Fallen Hero

The last requirement for a tragedy is for the audience to have the emotions of pity and fear for the fallen hero. The end purpose of tragedy is the catharsis of pity and fear and similar emotions that the audience feels for the hero. "Those who are influenced by pity and fear, and every emotional nature, must have a like experience…and all are in a manner purged and their souls lightened and delighted" (Aristotle, 1341b 32-1342a 16). The end purpose of tragedy, then, is a catharsis, or purging of emotions such as pity and fear, which is accompanied by pleasure. Hamlet is fatally wounded just as he accomplishes his revenge and never gets to be king. The deed itself is not tragic. Even his realization of what has happened is not tragic. The tragedy lies in the emotions aroused in Hamlet by this realization and the audience's perception of them. We get the tragic effect because we see the result of Hamlet's realization and feel as an audience that the result is unjust, so we feel pity. In fact, the tragic effect is not produced by actions but by the resultant emotions and effects the audience has for the hero. The knowledge that Oedipus had known he killed Laius changes your perspective of him. You feel no pity for him, especially after he marries Laius' widow and his mother, further proving he cannot be a tragic hero.

Oedipus' Shame

To substantiate why Oedipus is not a tragic hero, the original myth or legend of Oedipus, as it existed in Sophocles' time, before he wrote his play, seems to have been as follows: Laius king of Thebes was told by the Delphi oracle that if he married Jocasta his son would kill him. Laius ignored the oracle and married Jocasta. When the child was born Laius pierced and bound his ankles and left him exposed to die on Mount Cithaeron, where he was found by a shepherd who took him to Corinth; there he was brought up as the son of King Polybus. The Delphi oracle later told Oedipus that he was fated to kill his father and marry his mother. He set out towards Thebes, and on the way killed Laius, not knowing who he was. Oedipus, having arrived at Thebes, he vanquishes the Sphinx by guessing her riddle, and for reward became king of Thebes and married Jocasta. Sixteen or more years later, when Thebes was visited again by plague, Oedipus investigated the murder of Laius and discovered his own double guilt; whereupon Jocasta hanged herself and Oedipus blinded himself. This original myth that had been passed down from generation-to-generation had lost the central truth of when Oedipus knew who his parents were probably after one generation of popular telling. Sophocles must have seen the inconsistencies in Oedipus' myth but decided to write his play on the basis of the popular concept of an innocent Oedipus lured by fate into a disastrous trap. By using this concept of fate, Sophocles lost some of the evidence that proved Oedipus is not a tragic hero. But he left the inconsistencies there for those who were willing to look to find it.

The unfolding of the plot depends closely on a long string of events stretching back thirty-five years and the prophecy first given to Laius—all these events Sophocles pieces together, every one of them necessary to his story. Sophocles added one detail, which is not essential to the usual version: the incident of the man who got drunk at a banquet and told Oedipus he was not the son of Polybus.

Oedipus: At a dinner there a man who was quite drunk from too much wine began to shout at me, claiming I was not my father's real son. . .the accusation always troubled me— the story had become well known all over. And so I went in secret off to Delphi. (Oedipus the King 934-36, 943-45)

Sophocles could have invented a dozen reasons why Oedipus should visit Delphi; but he used this one. When Oedipus hears the oracle's prophecy, he turns his back on Corinth, to go towards any place where he might never see the fulfillment of the oracle. This would have made sense if Oedipus had not gone to Delphi because he doubted Polybus was his father. It has generally been assumed that the horror of the prophecy drove out of Oedipus' mind the question about his parentage, which he had come to ask. That might have been so had the question and the prophecy been unconnected. They were so obviously and frighteningly connected that it is hard to believe Sophocles could imagine that Oedipus would fail to connect them. The doubt about his parents doubled the menace of the prophecy. He would have been thankful indeed, could he have believed that by turning his back on Corinth he could face the rest of the world without fear. That was now impossible: he knew that he might meet his true father or his true mother anywhere in Greece; no place was safe. Oedipus was actually giving

the prophecy more chance of coming true by not returning to Corinth.

If Oedipus is to avoid the crimes prophesied by the oracle he must make for himself two unbreakable rules: never to kill an older man; and never to marry an older woman. The incident at the banquet makes it clear that these two rules, and not the resolve to keep away from Corinth, would be the probable preoccupation of his thoughts as he left Delphi. Then, twenty-four hours later, in the midst of an angry altercation, he looks up and sees before his eyes a furious middle-aged face with graying hair. For a fraction of a second comes the thought of the oracle's warning—this is the man I must not strike. But Oedipus is angry and the man struck him first. The gray haired man lies in the dirt near four other bodies. Oedipus has, at the first opportunity, ignored a divine warning. That this man could be his father would be a coincidence so incredible as to be impossible. This was the risk he ought not to have taken. Sophocles by inventing and introducing the incident at the banquet, has entirely changed the moral situation of Oedipus in the story. He is no longer the innocent victim of Fate.

Teiresias the blind seer gives several prophecies to Oedipus which in fact tells him of his parentage and crimes. He tells him in line 362, 'You killed Laius' and in line 450, 'The killer of Laius is here, passing as a foreigner, but in truth a Theban; brother and father of his own children, son and husband of his mother.' Now look at the man to whom all this is said. First, he is a famous solver of riddles. Second, he had been told at Delphi that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Third, he doubts he is the son of Polybus. Fourth, he remembered only too well killing a man—an older man—on the road from Thebes to Delphi, at a time and place corresponding with the murder of Laius. Fifth, only one man escaped, another point Oedipus has not forgotten. Sixth, if Oedipus had misgivings about killing an older man, he must certainly have had more misgivings about marrying an older woman. How could a man bearing all that in his memory listen to the repeated words of Teiresias and not recognize the truth? Oedipus is not a tragic hero because he was warned by the oracle about killing his father and marrying his mother, yet within a very short time of receiving the prophecy he still does both.

Oedipus' name means 'swollen-footed.' The messenger who rescued him from the mountain and took him to Corinth to be raised tells him how his ankles were pinned and bound when he found him and his scars still show. Sophocles obviously thought of the maimed feet as something which Oedipus was bitterly and constantly conscious of.

Assuming that Sophocles is pondering his characters and their experiences as a dramatist inevitably does, then Sophocles had to examine the possibility that Oedipus really was guilty of knowing at least who his mother was and that he had indeed killed King Laius. Oedipus, conscious that he had acted rashly, knows that one servant escaped back to Thebes. Oedipus on entering Thebes himself can hardly fail to keep his ears open for any talk of a man lately murdered on the Delphi road. Indeed he could not fail to hear, even if he had been innocent, to be told by every Theban he met that the king had been murdered, with the time, the place, and details.

Oedipus: I thought I heard you say Laius was murdered at a place where three roads meet. How long is it since these events took place?

Jacosta: The story was reported in the city just before you took over royal power here in Thebes. (Oedipus the King 878-79, 883-85)

Looking at the facts about the myth, rather than the play, it is certain that within an hour of entering Thebes, Oedipus knew that he had killed Laius. Then he volunteered to interview the Sphinx, knowing that the prize was Laius' widow. Why was he now forced into this situation? Because a drunkard at a banquet had told him he was not Polybus' son. If it were not for one drunkard, his conscience would have been clear.

Finally, Jacosta was in fact a mother who had lost a son eighteen years ago with scarred feet. She would not likely forget her sons eighteenth birthday. The news that her husband had been killed by an unknown assailant should certainly suggest to her that her son was perhaps not far off if the prophecy was true. I know I would be wondering if my son had survived and had he finally fulfilled the prophecy. Then Jacosta meets a wandering foreigner aged eighteen, the same age as her son would be, who has horrible scars at his ankles. She would look in his face for a likeness to her late husband, and at his feet for the scars. So both Jacosta and Oedipus chose to believe as truth the one percent possibility that their marriage was lawful. They then pushed the terrible probability even further into the recesses of forgetfulness, until the return of the plague.

After researching what exactly makes a character a tragic hero and learning these key elements, it should be clear as to how Hamlet is the true tragic hero with all of the requisite qualities. Also, after comparing Hamlet to Oedipus, who most critics regard as the "ideal" tragic hero, it is hoped that many will be able to appreciate a new perspective or outlook of Oedipus. The evidence, information, and knowledge that Oedipus must have known changes an old view of this character that has been around for hundreds of years. Remember, Aristotle shows how the "hero's misfortune…is brought upon him not by vice and depravity but by some error of judgment." Oedipus' misfortune, which was great, was brought on by vice, depravity, and deception even unto himself.

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