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Idea of Fate: A Comparative Study of Macbeth and Oedipus Rex

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ABSTRACT

The idea of Fate is essential and irrevocable predetermination of all activities and, the impossibility of chance, the dedication of human beings, and, ultimately, the truth that God didn't have the power over his decisions. Shakespeare in his book - "Macbeth" and Sophocles in his book - "Oedipus Rex" try to assert that no matter what or who you are, the destiny that's written for you shall not be changed.

In this paper, the work by both the writers' that are, William Shakespeare and Sophocles is being analysed on the grounds of Idea of Fate and Tragedy that they face and the Kingship they hold and how they themselves are the reason of their own downfall.

Keywords: Fate, Macbeth, Oedipus Rex, Downfall, Tragedy

INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare wrote the tragicomedy Macbeth. It dramatizes the detrimental psychological and physical impacts of political ambition on people who aspire to power. The play Macbeth best captures Shakespeare's relationship with King James, who supported Shakespeare's playing troupe, of all the plays he composed during the reign of James I. A trio of witches tells a valiant Scottish general named Macbeth that he would one day rule Scotland in a prophecy. Macbeth kills King Duncan to claim the Scottish throne for himself. Driven by ambition and his wife, he does this. His remorse and paranoia soon consume him. He soon develops into a despotic leader because of being forced to carry out more and more killings to defend himself from hostility and suspicion. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are quickly plunged into the realms of madness and death by the bloodshed and civil war that follow.

Oedipus Rex, also known as Oedipus Tyrannus or Oedipus the King in Greek, is a tragedy by Sophocles that was set in Athens and premiered about 429 BC. Prior to the beginning of Oedipus Rex, Oedipus has unknowingly carried out a prophecy that states that he will kill his father, Laius (the former king), and marry his mother, Jocasta (whom Oedipus took as his queen after solving the riddle of the Sphinx). To put an end to a plague that is wreaking havoc on Thebes, Oedipus sets out to find the person who killed Laius, unaware that the person he is looking for is none other than himself. Jocasta hangs herself in the play's conclusion, after the truth is revealed, and Oedipus, horrified by his patricide and incest, then goes on to tear out his own eyes in sorrow.

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this article is to show that when destiny is written and predicted, it always happens no matter how far one travels and how severe the pain, but even the Individuals of God cannot change the outcome of destiny.

1. To explore the destructive nature of ambition: One of the main themes of "Macbeth" is the corrupting influence of ambition. The play shows how Macbeth's desire for power and status leads him to commit increasingly heinous acts, ultimately leading to his downfall. One objective of the play may be to caution against the dangers of unchecked ambition.
2. To question the nature of fate and free will: The play also deals with the idea of fate and free will, and the extent to which humans can control their own destinies. Through Macbeth's tragic arc, the play suggests that fate may be predetermined, but that human actions can also influence the course of events. One objective of the play may be to explore the complexities of this relationship between fate and free will.
3. To critique the corrupting influence of power: "Macbeth" can also be read as a critique of power and the corrupting influence it can have on individuals and society. The play suggests that the pursuit of power can lead to moral decay and a breakdown of social order. One objective of the play may be to caution against the dangers of unchecked power and to advocate for ethical leadership.
4. To explore the nature of fate and free will: One of the main themes of "Oedipus Rex" is the relationship between fate and free will. The play raises questions about whether individuals can control their own destinies or whether their lives are predetermined by fate. One objective of the play may be to explore the complexities of this relationship and to challenge the audience's beliefs about free will and determinism.
5. To examine the consequences of ignorance and arrogance: Another key theme of the Play is the consequences of ignorance and arrogance. Oedipus's tragic fate is brought about in part by his own hubris and his refusal to heed the warnings of others. One Objective of the play may be to caution against the dangers of pride and ignorance, and to emphasize the importance of humility and self-awareness.
6. To reflect the values and beliefs of ancient Greek society: "Oedipus Rex" was written in ancient Greece, and it reflects the cultural and social values of that time. The play may have been intended to reinforce the importance of obedience to the gods, the authority of the state, and the sanctity of family relationships. One objective of the play may be to reinforce these values and to provide moral guidance to the audience.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The main plot of both the plays revolves around the fulfilment of a prophecy in which the main characters foresaw their own demise and try to hasten or delay it.

Macbeth is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare around 1606. Over the years, the play has been the subject of numerous literary analyses and reviews, with scholars and critics examining different aspects of the text, including the themes, characters, and language used by the playwright.

One of the most prominent themes explored in Macbeth is the idea of ambition and its consequences. Scholars have argued that the play is a cautionary tale about the dangers of unchecked ambition and the desire for power. In addition, the play explores themes of guilt, betrayal, and the corrupting influence of power.

Another aspect of Macbeth that has received significant attention is the character of Lady Macbeth. Critics have analyzed her character, motivations, and the role she plays in the tragedy. Some scholars have argued that Lady Macbeth is the driving force behind the play's action, while others see her as a victim of her own ambition.

There are a few examples of research papers on Macbeth by William Shakespeare:

The Tragic Hero in Macbeth: This research paper explores the concept of the tragic hero in Macbeth arguing that Macbeth's downfall is the result of his tragic flaw, which is his unchecked ambition.

The Role of Lady Macbeth in Macbeth: This research paper analyzes the character of Lady Macbeth and her role in the play, arguing that she is a complex and multifaceted character whose motivations are not always clear.

The Use of Supernatural Elements in Macbeth: This research paper examines the use of supernatural elements in "Macbeth," including the witches, ghosts, and visions, arguing that they serve to deepen the play's themes and add to its dramatic effect.

Shakespeare's Macbeth and the Gunpowder Plot: This research paper explores the connection between Macbeth and the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, arguing that the play reflects the political and social upheavals of Shakespeare's time.

The Significance of Sleep in Macbeth: This research paper analyzes the recurring motif of sleep in Macbeth arguing that it serves as a symbol of guilt, conscience, and the psychological torment experienced by the play's characters.

Oedipus Rex is a Greek tragedy written by Sophocles. Over the years, numerous research papers have been written on various aspects of the play, including its themes, characters, and historical context. Here are some examples of research papers on "Oedipus Rex":

The Tragic Flaw in Oedipus Rex: This research paper explores the concept of the tragic flaw in Oedipus Rex arguing that the protagonist's downfall is the result of his hubris and his inability to see the truth.

The Role of Fate in Oedipus Rex: This research paper examines the role of fate in the play, arguing that the events that unfold are predestined and inevitable.

The Use of Irony in Oedipus Rex: This research paper analyzes the use of irony in the play, including dramatic irony, situational irony, and verbal irony, arguing that it serves to deepen the play's themes and add to its dramatic effect.

CONCLUSION

So, it would be safe to say that in the essay "The Idea of Fate: Macbeth V/S Oedipus Rex," a person's fate rests on their freewill decision regarding how they choose to respond to the events presented by life or that no matter which way a person chooses it will one way or the other turn the table of events into the favour of fate (that is, into the way the things are written).

The biggest connection between Oedipus and Macbeth is that both of them are monarchs who suffer a downfall due to their own mistakes. By responding to what the paranormal powers instruct them, both become rulers. The two wouldn't have attempted to become king if the supernatural influences hadn't swayed them. Both heroes recognise the significance of supernatural forces.

The three strange sisters inform Macbeth that he will become king, while the oracle directs Oedipus to exact revenge on Laius, the former king's murderer, in order to put an end to the epidemic. Their demise is due to how the two heroes perceive the messages of the otherworldly forces.

When Creon returns from the oracle with the news that the plague in Thebes would stop when the murderer of Laius, the king before Oedipus, is found and thrown out, this is when Oedipus the King's rising action takes place.

When Creon demands that Oedipus return to Thebes and tries to coerce him into doing so, the rising action of Oedipus at Colonus begins. Antigone's choice to disobey

Creon's orders and bury her brother is the book's pivotal action. The messages are taken as gospel truth by both. The comments of the sisters give Macbeth too much self-confidence, which leads to his suicide. After searching for Laius' killer, Oedipus learns that he was the actual perpetrator.

They both started out quite wealthy and, if things had been left alone, would have lived long and happy lives. But because they are both deposed at the conclusion of the plays, these two serve as a lesson for us. Nonetheless, there are some significant

distinctions between the two and how they fall. Among the two, Oedipus is a greater human being.

The noble act of defending Thebes from the Sphinx earns him the title of king. While merely one soldier in a vast army that repels the assaults, Macbeth contributes to the defence of Scotland.

Oedipus displays arrogance by believing that he alone can save the city from the plague, but he actually wants to save the city and has the residents' best interests in mind.

As King Duncan counts on Macbeth to be a courageous and obedient vassal. Yet, the seeds of ambition don't start to sprout in his head until he hears the witches' forecasts. The king and several nobility were brutally murdered by him because of his unbridled ambition and passion for power.

So, it turns out that his ambition was his fatal weakness. Another idea that is a recurring theme in this drama is the idea of fate. In an effort to control his destiny when the first prophesy is realised to be true, he decides to carry out the second prophecy alone.

In some bizarre twist of fate, perhaps he would have been the king if he had allowed nature to take its course. Nonetheless, he had unbridled ambition.

Moreover, fate plays a significant role in the play since Oedipus, who learns through Creon that there is a murderer among them, neither knows who was slain nor that he was the murderer. Oedipus uses his free choice in the play to defy the oracle's prediction of his fate.

This demonstrates how motivated Oedipus is to identify the king's murderer. He travels throughout the theatre conversing with everybody who could have information about what occurred prior to his coronation.

According to popular belief, each person is born knowing their fate. In the drama Oedipus Rex, fate decrees that Oedipus, the family's son, will kill his father and wed his mother. This information was revealed to the mother queen and father king Laios by an oracle.

As a result, they send their son to a shearer to have his ankles pierced and to disappear forever in an effort to escape this terrible fate. That, in their minds, marked its conclusion. Oedipus becomes a misfit in his kingdom, which he will control after his father dies. When Oedipus, their son, is an adult and lives in Corinth, he learns that the monarchs there are not his real parents. Oedipus was intended by Sophocles to be the most resilient character throughout the entire play.

In my opinion, if Oedipus hadn't been a powerful character, there might have been negative effects before the drama even reached its climax. Oedipus had to the courage to

realise that he killed his father. Oedipus had to the courage to realise that he had killed his father. Aristotle discusses the application of a reversal.

At this point, stated informs him that Oedipus is the murderer and clarifies that this Cornish family is not at all his kin. Additionally, because his mother bred his children, this turns them into his sisters rather than his children. Oedipus and Macbeth's stories demonstrate how someone could purposefully attempt to change the prophecy and succeed in doing so.

Despite some noteworthy differences in the main characters' basic perspectives on the associated predictions, there are common elements, such as justice, power, and prophecy, throughout the stories.

Although Macbeth attempts to both fulfill and avert a piece of the prophecy, Oedipus mistakenly kills his father in response to a minor altercation, fulfilling his prophecy.

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