

Essay on World Literature

Shakespeare's Macbeth

Macbeth is one of the most brilliant, fascinating, well thought works of Shakespeare. Equally, it is widely accepted as one of Shakespeare's darkest works. The play is set in the Victorian age and pundits and critics have come to describe it as a tragedy. This is due to the fact that, despite the heroic acts of the lead character Macbeth, his expeditions are laced with tragedy. Shakespeare seeks to portray the utter destruction rendered when evil is allowed to have its way. He uses a brave, courageous, regal general in Macbeth. Macbeth's ambition is further increased when a trio of witches informs him that he would be king. The mere thought, complemented by taunts from his wife pushes him to murder the incumbent king. After assuming the throne, guilt and paranoia engulf him and his wife. To protect the throne, they continue to murder any plausible threat. Eventually, their atrocities and moral decadence lead them to their demise. The play tragically juxtaposes the question of bravado and insatiable ambition. The obvious tragedy is the dangers that are brought about when ambition exceeds moral restraint. Moreover, a man brave as Macbeth is the epitome of manliness and moral perfection. Yet, he is shaken off from his moral pedestal by jibes of unmanliness and lack of manhood. The ultimate tragedy is that Macbeth knows too well the consequences of murdering the king. He also possesses the moral acumen to desist from such a temptation, but still falls short showing the inner fight between evil and the soul.

McPherson's, The seafarer

Question 1

The seafarer is a play set in Ireland. It is about the constant duel between man and evil. The playwright uses the lead character of a recovering alcoholic (Sharky) with a history checkered with crime and a stint in prison. The devil is depicted as conniving and determined as he never gives up. Despite Sharky having defeated him in a game of cards a few decades prior, he seeks a rematch in an audacious attempt to win his soul. The devil is very opportunistic and chooses his moments of dueling when Sharky is at his worst. Presently, he has been in constant altercation with his aging brother. Overall, the play successfully manages to articulate the obvious truth that after all is said and done the devil is ultimately defeated through the man whom God loves.

Question 2

The devil apart from wanting Sharky's soul, also wants to divide him from his ailing brother. McPherson portrays Lucifer as opportunistic and divisive. However, Sharky proves to be resilient and eventually triumphs, against all odds.

Question 3

In a bid to shed light on the prevailing theme of the play, the playwright constantly places words such as sight and light against blindness and darkness. Evil is postulated as dark. The blindness of Richard renders him into the prison of alcoholism. He can only be recovered by his brother who has sight and has managed to emancipate himself from the shackles of alcoholism. This goes to show that darkness can only be eliminated through light.

Question 4

A seafarer is a person who navigates waterborne vessels. Ireland is a country vested with enormous water bodies ranging from rivers, lakes to coastal waters. A seafarer faces turbulent, waves and countercurrents. The unpredictability and cruelty of the waters ensures that they have to be constantly alert to avert oncoming dangers. The playwright chose that title since he knew that the plights of Sharky resembled those of a seafarer and the title could resonate with his audience.

Question 5

The playwright sets the play in a time period between the eve and morning of Christmas to symbolize the birth of Christ and the demise and decimation of evil. The timeframe is meant to accentuate the victory of good over evil.

Works Cited

Shakespeare, William, and A. R. Braunmuller. *Macbeth*. Cambridge New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Print.

McPherson, Conor. *The seafarer*. New York, N.Y: Dramatists Play Service, 2008. Print.

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