

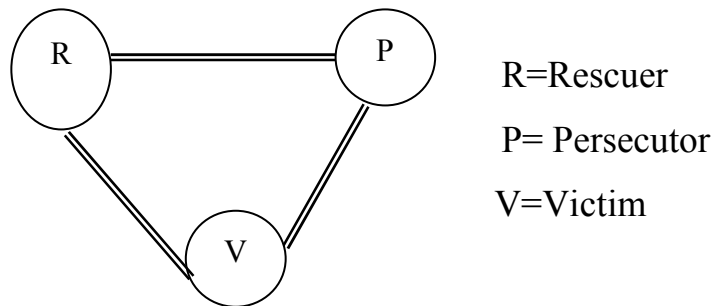
The Resque Triangle in Thuglaq, Caligula and Macbeth

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The protagonists in William Shakespeare's Macbeth, Girish Karnard's Tughlaq and Albert Camus's Caligula are all tarred with the same brush with different hues in every warp and weft. Each one is a man in the moon before tyranny and evil can cling them. They desperately and deliberately metamorphose to evil. Their vision sparkles with all the speckle of evil and all their idealisms turn to ashes and thereby they turn their land into inferno, Tughlaq's mad idealism and warped mind, Caligula's absurdity of human life and Macbeth's vaulting ambition eclipse their goodness. This paper makes a psychological study on their tyranny and shows how the good souls commit evil deeds simply because the evil in them takes an upper hand over the good.

The concept of the Rescue Triangle is borrowed from "Transactional Analysis", a Neo - Fruedian School of Psychology, originated by Dr. Eric Berne. According to it, there will be three roles in the Drama Triangle. The Rescuer, the Persecutor and the Victim. Almost all human beings suffer from various psychological problems without knowing the intensity of their damage on their life. Each of us tends to act any one of this role as accord with our situation. A racket of guilty feelings make one to play the Rescuer: a racket of angry makes one to play the Persecutor: and a racket of helplessness makes one to play the victim. The Rescuer feels that he is superior to the victim and that the latter is helpless and hopeless without his rescue. He sacrifices his own interest and comfort for the sake of rescuing which usually proves to be a failure. He is never thanked by the victim for his rescuing and he finds himself being exploited. This would turn him into a persecutor. When all his anger is spent he once again feels guilty for having persecuted his victim.

The persecutor also feels that he is superior and his favourite feeling is angry. He taunts his victims verbally or physically when they go wrong or disbelieves him or his help. When their victims remain disloyal to him the persecutor uses his power to whip them. But when the Persecutor sinks with guilty he jumps back to the role of the Rescuer. On the other hand the victim feels helpless and allows others to take advantage of him: He sends verbal or non-verbal signals to the Rescuer to rescue him to come out of his trap. Later he bluntly resents and pushes the Rescuer down to the role of Persecutor. This is clearly shown in the drawing below.



This concept of ‘Drama Triangle’ is used in analyzing Tughlaq, Caligula and Macbeth. All of them assume their favourite role as Rescuer but later they play the role of Persecutor and in the end they turned into victims of their own actions.

This concept provides a better platform for our understanding of Tughlaq, Caligula and Macbeth. All the characters in Tughlaq are involved in this and this is evident from the beginning of the play where the old Muslim is persecuting Muhammad verbally and the young Muslim is rescuing the sultan.

Old man : God, what’s this country coming to!

Youngman : What are you worried about, grand father?

The country’s in perfectly safe hands safer than any you’ve seen before

(Scene I p.1)

Muhammad plays an indomitable role of a Rescuer. Even before the play opens he has floored some reforms to help his victims – Hindus. One of the reforms is the removal of the Jizia tax. But the Hindu victims criticize the sultan instead of thanking him. As a Rescuer, Muhammad forgoes even his physical comfort such as sleep and marital bliss. He wants to build an ideal kingdom for his people. He suffers from his guilty feeling thus Ratan Singh, Sultan’s frontier soldier, comments “he murders a man calmly and then actually enjoys the feeling of guilty”(Scene - 4 p.28) When Mohammed’s reforms are not understood and acknowledged by his victims he feels that he is exploited by his ungrateful victims. He turns into a persecutor and whips them. He announces his capital is to be shifted from Delhi to Daulatabad. He Says

Najib; I want Delhi vacated immediately. Every living soul in Delhi will leave for Daulatabad within a fortnight I was too soft. I can see that now they’ll only understand the whip. (Scene-6 p.44)

When his angry feelings are spent, Muhammad again feels guilty he says

God, God in Heaven, please help me
My skin drips with blood and I don’t know
How much of it mine and how much of
Others. I started in your path, Lord,
Why am I wandering naked in this desert now?

(Scene -10 p.67)

Just like Tughlag, Caligula, the Emperor prefers to play his metaphysical anguish through the role playing of the Rescuer. His sister Drusilla’s sudden death, with whom he had an illicit affair, awakens his mind to meaninglessness, finiteness, suddenness of death and impermanence of human life. Caligula wants to explore on this absurdity of human life. The death of Drusilla is more

than a traumatic shock to him. This strange encounter forces the young Emperor to enact the role of Rescuer. He says. “I suddenly felt a desire for the impossible” (Act I p.119)

Caligula feels that it is his missionary zeal to teach this absurd lesson to his people. Being the Emperor he enjoys absolute power and it is his sole duty to raise his people from their ignorance. Death metamorphoses his idealism and he traces a new philosophy in human life. He feels that his victims “are without understanding and they need a teacher: some one who knows what he is telling about” (Act I p.121). But just like Tughlag; he too realizes that they cannot understand him and therefore he wants to whip them to teach his philosophy.

He starts his teaching by ordering that every citizen, with any capital, must die by inheriting his children and leaving his money to the state. He creates an artificial famine; insults poets; takes away the wife of the citizens and forces her to work in a public brothel; relegates those who do not get the identity card by making frequent visits to the brothel; and rapes the spouse of another; compels his own old nurse to drink poison; murders his mistress and assumes himself as Venus.

‘Men die and they are not happy’ (p.120) – this feature prevails behind all his inhuman activities. He thinks that power can enable him to teach his victims but he knows that labial teaching would end up only with partial success, so he uses tyranny and cruelty. According to Caligula the physical delight which we feel at being alive is tragic because it highlights the horror of our inevitable death. His rally is to teach his people who live on the mirage of false life. He wants to engrave the tyranny of existence in their conscience. Thus he voluntarily takes on the role of the persecutor.

Even he refuses to wage wars since human life matters much to him than the glory of military triumph. As the play progresses Caligula feels that he is alienated from all around him and he gets his ease only in the company of the dead since they resemble him. When he has done enough damage he is engulfed with guilt and says

I have chosen a wrong path, a path that
Leads to nothing, my freedom are not the right one (p.122).

Unlike Tughlaq and Caligula, Macbeth wants to play his role for his selfish motive. He does not have any of their vision and idealism to the welfare of his victims. Yet Macbeth believes that he can make a good king of Scotland for he believes in his virtues; thus he spins his ambition which becomes his tragic flaw. He wants to impose his will to power as he believes in his strength to protect Scotland better than Duncan, the king of Scotland. His passion for power estates in him which stimulates him to murder the king Duncan. Thus he reveals his desire to play the role of the Rescuer. But he is haunted by the passion for absolute power which corrupts him absolutely.

To safeguard his kingship he kills one after the other and mars his soul. When all the lords and people suspect him for his foul play in acclaiming the power he turns to the persecutor. Ambition by itself is not dangerous but the problem with Macbeth's is divorced from social consideration; individualistic advantage is gained outside of social benefits. What he thought was the murder of king Duncan would end up there itself and he could be the king of Scotland; but the presence of Banguo and Macduff shakes his confidence and thus he wants to get rid off them all.

When Macbeth regrets, it is already too late and he cannot hope for any rewards of life. He knows that he has fouled his soul beyond redemption. He says

I have lived long enough; my way of life
Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf
And that should accompany old age

(Act –V, scene –III p.152)

When all his persecution ended with nothingness he realizes that

Life is but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury
Signifying nothing.

(Act-V, Scene V.p.160)

Thus all the three characters swift from one role to another simultaneously. Their idealism and divine inspiration are the reflection of their rescue philosophy; and the realism and the deft intrigue are the angry reaction of the rescuer or the victim who become the persecutor of the other. Thus this ‘Drama Triangle’ has helped to analyze these colossal figures psychologically to understand the reason for their metamorphism, their ideal vision and their colossal failure. But even in their failure they stand as great heroes and all their ideal dreams exalt them as tragic heroes.

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