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Subject

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Shakespeare: Hal

The character of Hal in Henry IV established by Shakespeare is a good king. The transformation of Prince Hal from an irresponsible child to great rules reflects qualities of a good king. The qualities of Hal are visible throughout the play the proves that he was a good king. Although he remains irresponsible and careless in youth but in a soliloquy he reveals his cunningness that makes him a dominant ruler. Bravery, cunning nature, loyalty and rationality are prominent attributes that prove the great leadership skills of King Hal.

The bravery of Hal is revealed when he encounters Falstaff in the battle. Shakespeare has dramatized the young prince who explores his personality strengths resulting in his journey of an ideal leader. Irrespective of the corruption, weakness and rebellion in England, Hal didn't turn from his mission. The reconciliation of the character becomes apparent when he rejects his former companion, Falstaff. Although Falstaff puts Hal in troubles his bravery allows him to get rid of the difficulties. Hal refuses to treat Falstaff with pity and ignores his past relationship with him. The ruthless nature can be seen as a prominent strength that makes Hal an inspiring leader (Howe). Hal never feared to experiment with his plans and choosing new methods. Bravery is also visible as Hal decided to fight Hotspur with the purpose of saving the lives of the people in the battle. His valiant characteristics allowed him to defeat the Scottish.

The ability of Hal to manipulate the events reflects his cunning nature. The leadership qualities of the king allow him to transform his behavior and tackle situations intelligently. His cunning nature allowed him to steal the entire empire from Richard II. He has a clear plan to follow as he claims, “to put an antic disposition on” (Shakespeare). This reflects he had worked on his mission of revenge reflecting that Hal had always a plan in his mind. Hal's cunningness is discernible in his capability of choosing an opportunity that leads to political advantage. His decisions depict that he has always been able to control his actions. He mentions, “permit the base contagious clouds I To smother up his beauty from the world” (Shakespeare). This indicates that Hal has always made conscious decisions that proved his kingship potential. Each of his act was pre-calculated that transmits his mastery of estimating outcomes (Fehrenbach). He has always used reasoning for justifying his plans. He assures that the people identify him an unknown and a new character, reflecting his cunning nature. To portray his mysterious persona he covers himself with the mud. He adopts modifying techniques compared to that of his father which reflects his brilliance. He succeeded in avoiding the trap in which Richard II fell by using his scepticism. His decision of rejecting people allow him to protect himself from their corrupt influence.

The loyalty of Hal is another prominent trait that makes him a great ruler. The analysis of different situations depicts that Hal decided to stay on the side of his father that proves his loyalty. He chooses to stay on his father’s side irrespective of the rebellion (GROSS). He only waits to make the rejection apparent to the world because he realizes his responsibility. The ability of Hal to make rational decisions also proved his leadership competency. He chooses morals that reflect his honesty to perform his role as a responsible leader. His conscious decisions are the product of his rational thinking. He stresses on gaining knowledge when he acts on the suggestions of Points by dressing as a humble musician. This reflects his rational mindset because the technique was used for spying Falstaff. The play reveals that Hal has been spying on Falstaff since the beginning, reflecting his rational approach. Another aspect of his rationality involves his decision in interacting with the people of the lower and upper class. This leadership quality allows Hal to remain superior to his subjects. Hal's rationality remains discernible in his politics, physical combat and diplomacy (Drouin).

The overall analysis of the character of Hal reveals that he played the role of a good leader. He possessed adequate leadership qualities that helped him in succeeding in his mission. Bravery is visible as Hal decided to fight Hotspur with the purpose of saving the lives of the people in the battle. He has always used reasoning for justifying his plans. He assures that the people identify him an unknown and a new character, reflecting his cunning nature. The ability of Hal to make rational decisions also proved his leadership competency.

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