Thus, Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and possessing magnitude; in embellished language, each kind of which is used separately in the different parts; in the mode of action and not narrated; and effecting through pity and fear [what we call] the catharsis of such emotions. By "embellished language" I mean precisely the composition of the verses, by "melody" only that which is perfectly obvious. And since tragedy is the imitation of an action and is enacted by men in action, these persons must necessarily possess certain qualities of Character and Thought, since these are the basis for our ascribing qualities to the actions themselves—character and thought are two natural causes of actions—and it is in their actions that men universally meet with success or failure. The imitation of the action is the Plot. By plot I here mean the combination of the events; character is that in virtue of which we say that the personages are of such a quality; and Thought is present in everything in their utterances, so as to prove a point or that expresses an opinion. Necessarily, then, that there are in tragedy as a whole, considered as a special form, six constituent elements, viz. Plot, Character, Language, Thought, Spectacle, and Melody. Of these elements, two [Language and Melody] are the media by which they effect the imitation; one [Spectacle] is the manner, and three [Plot, Character, Thought] are the objects they imitate; and besides these there are no other parts. So then they employ these six forms, and not just some of them, so to speak; for every drama has spectacle, character, plot, language, melody, and thought in the same sense, but the most important of them is the organization of the events [the plot].

Plot and character. For tragedy is not an imitation of men but of actions and life: it is in action that happiness and unhappiness are found, and the end we aim at is a kind of activity, not a quality; in accordance with their characters men are of such and such a quality, in accordance with their actions they are fortunate or the reverse. Consequently, it is not for the purpose of presenting their characters that the agents engage in action, but...
Some plots are simple, others complex; indeed, the actions of which the plots are imitation are at once so differentiated that the action to be continuous and unified, as already defined, I call that action simple in which the change of fortune takes place without a reversal or recognition, and that action complex in which the change of fortune involves recognition or a reversal or both. These events [recognitions and reversals] ought to be so rooted in the very structure of the plot that they follow from the preceding events at their inevitable or probable outcome; for there is a vast difference between following from and merely following after. **

Reversal (Peripety) is, as aforesaid, a change from one state of affairs to another opposite, and this, as I say, should be in conformity with probability or necessity. For example, in Oedipus, the messenger comes to relieve Oedipus by relieving him of fear with regard to his mother, but by revealing his true identity, it does just the opposite of this. ***

Recognition, as the word itself indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, leading either to friendship or to hostility on the part of those persons who are marked for good fortune or bad. The best form of recognition is that which is accompanied by a reversal, as in the example from Oedipus. **

Next in order after the points I have just dealt with, it would seem necessary to specify what one should aim at and what avoid in the construction of plots, and what it is that will produce the effect proper to tragedy.

Now since in the finest kind of tragedy the structure should be complex and not simple, and since it should also be a representation of terrible and piteous events (that being the special mark of this type of imitation), in the first place, it is evident: that good men ought not to be shown passing from prosperity to misfortune, for this does not inspire either pity or fear, but only censure; nor evil men rising from ill fortune to prosperity, for this is the least untragic plot of all—it lacks every requirement, in that it neither elicits human sympathy nor stirs pity or fear. And again, neither should an extremely wicked man be shown falling from prosperity into misfortune, for a plot so constructed might indeed call forth human sympathy, but would not excite pity or fear, since the first is felt for a person whose misfortune is undeserved and the second for a man like ourselves—pity for the man suffering undeservedly, fear for the man like ourselves—and hence neither pity nor fear would be aroused in this case. We are left with the man whose place is between these extremes. Such is the man who on the one hand is not pre-eminent in virtue and justice, and yet on the other hand does not fall into misfortune through vice or depravity, but falls because of some mistake: one among the number of the highly renowned and prosperous, such as Oedipus and Thesey and other famous men from families like theirs.

It follows that the plot which achieves excellence will necessarily be constructed in such a way that, as a whole, the plot does not consist of the worst of two extremes, but of the best of the two extremes, and yet it is possible for the two extremes to be combined in such a way that the plot is not only the best of the two extremes, but also the worst of the two extremes, and yet it is possible for the two extremes to be combined in such a way that the plot is not only the best of the two extremes, but also the worst of the two extremes.

The term "tragic hero" is not Aristotelian. Jones: "There is no evidence - not a shred - that Aristotle entertained the concept of the tragic hero.

W. de Moerbeke (c. 1215) was a professor at Westminster School, Oxford (1287), and his student. He was an important influence on the development of the Latin language in England. He is also known for his translation of the works of Aristotle and other ancient authors. He was buried in the church of St. Mary the Great in Cambridge, England. His works include commentaries on the works of Aristotle and the writings of other ancient authors. He was a friend of William of Ockham and was one of the first to use the term "tragic hero." He is also known for his translation of the works of Aristotle and other ancient authors. He was a professor at Westminster School, Oxford (1287), and his student. He was an important influence on the development of the Latin language in England. He was a friend of William of Ockham and was one of the first to use the term "tragic hero."
at first the poets accepted whatever myths came to hand, today the finest tragedies are founded upon the stories of only a few houses, being concerned, for example, with Alcmeon, Oedipus, Orestes, Meleager, Thyestes, Telephus, and such others as have chances to suffer terrible things or to do them. So then, tragedy having this construction is the finest kind of tragedy from an artistic point of view. And consequently, those persons fall into the same error who bring it as a charge against Euripides that this is what he does in his tragedies and that most of his plays have unhappy endings. For this is in fact the right procedure, as I have said; and the best proof is that on the stage and in the dramatic contests, plays of this kind seem the most tragic, provided they are successfully worked out, and Euripides, even if in everything else his management is faulty, seems at any rate the most tragic of the poets. * * *

In the characters and the plot construction alike, one must strive for that which is either necessary or probable, so that whatever a character of any kind says or does may be the sort of thing such a character will inevitably or probably say or do and the events of the plot may follow one after another either inevitably or with probability. (Obviously, then, the denouement of the plot should arise from the plot itself and not be brought about 'from the machine,' as it is in Medea and in the embarkation scene in the Iliad.* The machine is to be used for matters lying outside the drama, either antecedents of the action which a human being cannot know, or things subsequent to the action that have to be prophesied and announced; for we accept it that the gods see everything. Within the events of the plot itself, however, there should be nothing unreasonable, or if there is, it should be kept outside the play proper, as is done in the Oedipus of Sophocles.) * * *

**The chorus in tragedy.** The chorus ought to be regarded as one of the actors, and as being part of the whole and integrated into performance, not in Euripides' way but in that of Sophocles. In the other poets, the choral songs have no more relevance to the plot than if they belonged to some other play. And so nowadays, following the practice introduced by Agathon,² the chorus merely sings interludes. But what difference is there between the singing of interludes and taking a speech or even an entire episode from one play and inserting it into another?

8. The reference is to an incident in the second book of the Iliad: an attempt of the Greek rank and file to return home and abandon the siege is arrested by the intervention of Athena. If it were a drama, she would appear on the machine, literally the machine that was employed in the theater to show the god flying in space. It has come to mean any implausible way of solving complications of the plot. Medea escapes from Carthage 'on the machine' in her magic chariot.

9. A younger contemporary of Euripides, most of his plays were produced in the fourth century B.C.