

The Tragicomedy of Anakin Skywalker alias Darth Vader - an Essay

This is a tragicomedy in the ancient Greeks' way like the Iliad or the Odyssey. I call it "tragedy" because the story of Anakin Skywalker is the telling about a heartwarming little boy born in the dirt and dust of the Galaxy as a slave, becoming one of the most powerful Jedi with his mental and technical skills, falling from Good to Evil with the loss of his mother and his wife, becoming a terminating cyborg, a "Machine of Darkness" as a Servant to his Master, being led back to the Lightside by his son and saving the Galaxy by destroying the Emperor, the "Master of Evil" as the "Chosen One" what an old myth predicted. I call it a "comedy" because it's a story that life writes, a hero's journey full of archetypes and marvellous, foreign worlds.

The birth of Anakin Skywalker was nearly biblical. A father was not existing, only a mother. A "Virgin birth" with the highest count of "midichlorians", the microscopic life forms in the cells of beings as a link to the "Force" in the Galaxy. He was born in the dust bin of the universe, a desert planet called Tatooine with twin suns reigned by the mighty Crime Lord Jabba the Hutt. Nobody would have wished to be born there, to live there. Anakin and his mother lived there in slavery, not freedom. With no self-determination but subjected to the will of others. Against all odds he had outstanding technical skills. Skills in repairing machines or podrace, building androids like C-3PO. Skills in piloting. A very fast perception. A high intellect. Someday some "magic human-beings" from the mystic "Order of the Jedi" landed on his planet accidentally. The Jedi are a monk-like Order meditating and fighting for Justice in the Galaxy like the Chinese Shaolin or the Knights Templar. They told Anakin from an old myth that he is the "Chosen One" to bring Peace and Balance to the Galaxy. They freed him, took him to the Jedi Temple on Coruscant, the Capital of the Old Republic, away from his beloved mother...-

Into the Jedi Order he rushed in like a hurricane and climbed all the steps of apprenticeship in high-speed. He reached the highest fighting performances with the lightsaber. He was the first on each battlefield in the Clone Wars. It was a competition for him to be the first, to be the best, to be "the one and only". For him the Jedi Order acted too slowly, too rigidly, too emotionlessly. For Anakin it took too much of time wasted in his qualification and in the battleground. And

thus he was one of the most powerful Jedi the Order never rewarded him with the title of “Master“. He felt the Order blocked him in development, made him slower, stopped his run. The Order disappointed him. And Palpatine, the Chancellor, the later Master of Evil, the camouflaged “Lord of the Sith“ recognised that. He flattered Anakin like some Lucifer. He devilishly deluded Anakin to be his friend and his help in that bad times. He infiltrated Anakin until there was no return... In his dependent love to his mother who was hijacked by Tusken Raiders on Tatooine enraged he killed the whole tribe no matter the age or the gender. He had no remorse.- He felt in love with Padme, the former Queen of Naboo and later Senator, who he first saw as a boy in his slavery. Bad dreams about Padme’s future darkened his mind and he relentlessly searched for solutions to save her. The only one who realised this conflict and traded on that was Palpatine. Anakin had an apprentice Ahsoka Tano. Ahsoka fitted him. She was of high intelligence and skills too. She was adventurous in her backing of Anakin. She went in competition to Anakin on the battlefields. Anakin loved that. He held her in high esteem. Then the „holy“ Jedi Order falsely accused Ahsoka. When the Order recognised and rectified that it was too late. Ahsoka left the Order deeply hurt and frustrated. Anakin lost his last anchor and hence his believe in the Order.

Anakin was completely opened to the seduction of Palpatine after the distrust of the Order and the loss of his mother as well as Ahsoka as his apprentice. Palpatine moved him to spy on the Order for him. Palpatine persuaded Anakin to believe that the Order was no more help for his education to reach his aims. That the Order was guilty of his discomfort. That the Order didn’t choose the right way of fighting for Justice in the Galaxy and was not infallible in his decisions. Palpatine convinced Anakin that he was the only one who knows about the power to save Padme. To bring Peace to the Galaxy. With “Order 66“ Anakin became Darth Vader and punished the Jedi Order for the betrayal on Chancellor Palpatine and on him as he thought. Anakin freed all of his pent up emotions against the Order and slaughtered all living beings in the Temple. He had no more perception of Love. He blamed everybody of betrayal even his wife Padme and his former Master Obi-Wan. In his outrageous Hate he lost the fight against Obi-Wan on Mustafar. He was left severely mutilated by Obi-Wan’s lightsaber and the superheated air from the lava fires of Mustafar damaged his lungs permanently. Palpatine saved his life to encage him in the iconic “Black Suit“, commemorative to the Japanese Samurai. The black armour was a survival kit. A mobile “iron lung“. And a grave.- Palme died broken-hearted after giving birth to their twins Luke and Leia.

Emperor Palpatine had gained a dictatorship like Hitler or Stalin nearly limitless. Even Grand Master Yoda of the Jedi Temple couldn't defeat him. Palpatine was the Master, Vader the Servant. Palpatine told Vader he was guilty for Padme's death. Vader tried to oppose Palpatine but he put Vader in his place and showed him what character he had to cast in the future of the Empire. While Vader was tortured by doubts about Padme his Hate against the remaining, hiding Jedi in the Galaxy enlarged inexpressibly. The more the Hate grew the more Anakin was fading away within Vader. Vader killed each of the Jedi he traced cold-blooded. But his most desired goal would be Obi-Wan who had put shame on him. In the meantime Palpatine sent Vader to the place of his most painful defeat to Mustafar to build his Castle and Reign. Vader used bacta tanks in his Castle to ameliorate the harm of his wounds and scars all over his nude body with disembodied arms and legs from elbows and knees downwards. He was just a cyborg with an automated breathing device in his suit. Heavily tortured flesh in a metal cage with only Hate that was left in his mind.

After the destruction of the first Death Star Vader sent bounty hunter Boba Fett to find out the name of the young rebel who did the deadly shot. Fett told Vader of his son Luke. Vader was obsessed with the idea to "reign the Galaxy with Luke as Father and Son". Luke came to know about his father after the duel with him on Cloud City. And Luke's goal was to bring him back to the Lightside. In the last duel in the throne room of Emperor Palpatine the obviously stronger Luke refused to kill his father to take his place beside Palpatine. Palpatine tortured Luke with Force lightnings. Then the last spark of Good inside the black shattered armour of Vader gained the upper hand. He gripped Palpatine and threw him to death into a reactor shaft. The Evil was defeated. Vader, Anakin has fulfilled his destiny as the Chosen One. Luke couldn't save his father's body but his soul who became one with the Force as a Force Ghost joining Obi-Wan and Yoda...-

George Lucas' Skywalker Saga tells the story of Anakin Skywalker in the Prequel Trilogy and of his children, Luke and Leia in the Original Trilogy as rebels against the Empire. George Lucas uses the wisdom of myths, history and religions of Professor Joseph Campbell who published "Man and Myth", "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" and "The Masks of God". He invents a complete, conclusive universe with many different planets and their inhabitants as well as creatures who could really exist. Lucas introduced us Luke Skywalker in the hero's journey and his companions as psychological archetypes like the wise, old leader Obi-Wan, the Princess Leia, the scoundrel-smuggler Han Solo with

his copilot the hairy Wookie Chewbacca, the dynamic comedian duo impersonated from the droids R2-D2 and C-3PO as well as monsters like the Rancor or the Sarlacc in the Pit. Darth Vader is defined as the “Dark Lord“ believing the ancient ways of the Force and controlling an uncountable mass of white Stormtroopers who fulfill his and the Emperor’s will.

Darth Vader is *the* icon of George Lucas’ Star Wars. There’s no Star Wars that works without Vader. The best Disney World Theme Park in Orlando, Florida, has to accept this even in Galaxy’s Edge. Darth Vader is a symbol of Science Fiction. Darth Vader is Pop Culture since 1977. Darth Vader shaped generations. Darth Vader will last forever.-