

RESEARCH PAPER ON ARISTOTLE POETICS AND CRITISISM

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Abstract: The paper focuses on the Aristotle's ideals in poetics and criticism and their Influence on English literature. His ideals inspired great writers in their writings and analysis. Taking a brief but close look to his book 'Poetics' in which he wrote down his theories in drama, tragedy and comedy. Before the conclusion, the paper also spots the light on the elements of Aristotelian Tragedy.

Keywords: Aristotle's ideals, poetics, criticism, Aristotelian Tragedy.

1. PREFACE

Aristotle was one of the greatest philosophers of Ancient Greece. A philosopher looks for ideal forms, and tries to explain the nature of reality. The search for ideal forms led Aristotle to explore many subjects. His analysis of the ideal form of tragic plays became a guideline for later playwrights in Western civilization and in English literature in particular. For centuries, European playwrights like William Shakespeare tried to write plays that would match the ideals of Aristotle's model.

The leading Greek philosopher and the tutor of Alexander the Great was born on 384 BC. He was the student of the Plato. His writings deal with many aspects of life: physics, metaphysics, theater, linguistics, policy and biology. His writings were the first of its kind that formulate the western philosophy.

Aristotle was born in Stageira, Chalcicie. his father was the physician of the royal Court. He was educated and taught in aristocratic society. He was appointed as the head of the royal academy of Macedonia where he gave lessons to many students one of them was Alexander the Great.

Aristotle considers the Epic poetry, comedy and tragedy should be imitative.

2. HIS BOOK 'POETICS'

Poetics is the earliest surviving work of dramatic theory and first extant philosophical treatise to focus on literary theory in the West.

This book is a very important literary one that deals with the theory of tragedy which is "the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in appropriate and pleasurable language; in a dramatic rather than narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish a catharsis of these emotions."

Also as for the theory of the literature at large, the book has taken high place in the context of international literature. 'Poetics' is the early –surviving book on the drama theory. Aristotle supposes account of on the dramatic theory. He examines the principles and establishes identification to its genres. He presents an analysis to the tragedy as the core of the book .

The Arabic version is the version of the book through which the book has been translated to Latin, then to the modern European languages .

The book contains the concepts of tragedy and its element from Aristotelian perspective. Aristotle has deeply admired with Sophocles' Oedipus the king, considering it the perfect tragedy form; that his analysis is in agreement with the play most perfectly.

Aristotle engagement in aesthetics consisted the Poetics. As mentioned above the book is mainly involved in dramatic theory. According to some references the book is divided in to two "books" or what we can call it as volumes, the first book discusses the tragedy, this book survives. The second part with comedy, this part is lost.

According to Aristotle's 'Poetics' every tragedy falls in two parts, which are Complication and Unraveling or Denouement. Incidents extraneous to the action are frequently combined with a portion of the action proper, to form the Complication; the rest is the Unraveling .

Two kinds of drama in Aristotle perspective: comedy and tragedy , in this distinction , Aristotle distinguishes between the human natures . Tragedy deals with more serious subjects more crucial affairs than comedy. Aristotle finds that tragedy treats serious, important, and virtuous people. Comedy, on the other hand, treats of people who are less virtuous, who are unimportant, undignified, laughable.

In his view, Aristotle defines the tragedy as a complete representation of significant and serious, action with its rhythm and melody (songs), with each of its elements separately used in the different parts of the play and represented by people acting and not by narration, accomplishing by means of pity and terror the catharsis of such emotions.

3. ARISTOTELIAN TRAGEDY CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING PARTS

The Plot:

The plot is a main element of tragedy; it expresses the "structure of the event" which means actions. Plot must have its key elements are reversals, recognitions, and suffering .The most interesting dramatic plot should be "complex" ;that is to say involve a change of fortune. It should "imitate" actions arousing fear and pity .Hence good fortune is the striking point of the plot to bad involving high degree of "suffering" for the protagonist, physically or , leading to harm or death .

Actions should be logical, following up naturally from the proceedings, thus more satisfying to the audience if they come about by surprise or seeming coincidence and are only afterward seen as logical, even necessary

The Character:

The audiences are mainly moved by a tragic accident happens to a hero because of a mistake he makes instead of things which might happen anyway. The hero may have committed it knowingly or unknowingly like Oedipus the king. By and large the main characters in tragic play should be good, that the morals are important to make people happy, see tragedy, since they want to realize the anger. The character should be also appropriate which means if a character is supposed to be wise, therefore is old man not young for example, seeking that wisdom is gained with age.

Melody:

Chorus is one of the main actors in the tragedy, that means the chorus sharing the action with other characters.

Thought:

When the characters are well reflected from speech, here is the thought. Thought is when something is proved to be or not to be,

Diction:

Diction is expression of proper word meaning to the plot and characters and to the climax and catastrophe of the tragedy to the n in words.

Spectacles:

Spectacles reflected on the visual apparatus of the play, like costumes, set and props. Aristotle identifies spectacle as the "least artistic" element of tragedy, referring to work of the playwright. For example: if the play has "beautiful" costumes and "bad" acting and "bad" story, there is "something wrong" here.

Catharsis:

The Greek philosopher Aristotle was the first user of the term Catharsis to express "emotions, that is to say Catharsis describes the "emotional cleansing", it refers to a sensation or literary effect that ideally experienced by the characters in the play. Catharsis describes an extreme change in emotion, occurring as the result of experiencing strong feelings like fear, pity.

Catharsis is described as "purification" or a "purging" of such emotion. We recently use the term Restoration to describe the event.

4. CONCLUSION

Aristotelian criticism is a critical theory, doctrine, or approach based upon the method used by Aristotle in the Poetics, implying a formal, logical approach to literary analysis that is centered on the work itself. (Cf. Platonic criticism).

Usually Aristotelian criticism is practiced on plays, and even then is used in Greek tragedies. According to Aristotelian criticism, in *The Death of a Salesman* Wally Loman is often considered a tragic hero; his downfall is also brought about by hubris.

Aristotle is mainly interested in theoretical construction of tragedy. The elliptical way of writing, encouraged different ages to place their own interpretation upon his statements and to take as prescriptive what many believe to have been meant only. The tragic playwright is not divinely inspired, but he motivated by human needs.

Longinus raises against the popular rhetoric of the time by attacking ancient theory in its concern with a detailed criticism of words, metaphors, and figures. He refused that and promotes the appreciation of literary devices.

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