

# Impact of aristotle on art and drama



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The story of true hero has been told since the beginning of time. A hero is a person all people look up to. Their strength and morality is set apart from all individuals as they dedicate their lives to protecting others around them. In various ways, they are the “ ideal” citizen. For example, they show compassion to those in need, they follow the rules and are role models to the youth. Over the years, there has been many hero’s that has emerged into literature books. Most of the stories are about Greek Gods they ruled over the lands from the heavens. They also are said have a great deal of influence on the world we know today. The role of hero played a major role in the development of drama and art in the ancient civilization. It allowed people to see the good in others and believe in a better world. In addition, they created more diversity within individuals and what they wanted to write about by find the “ ideal” on their work.

Aristotle was a huge contributor to the art world. Drama was the on the rise to being the biggest form of expression in art. He set the tone for numerous drama concepts that are used in today’s society. Tragedy was the main focus of drama. The book defines tragedy as a literary genre by stating “ not so much with catastrophic events as with how these events work to affect individuals in shaping their character and in determining their fate (Fiero 2015)”. The hero becomes who is he by the journey he takes to greatness. Furthermore, that is way his tragedy has to be more than chaos but instead something that creates a bigger picture. On his rise, Aristotle had compiled an abundance of literary samples that he felt should be the blueprint of how to write an artistic masterpiece called “ The Poetics”. He believed that he had discovered what the true essence of what poetry should look like. In

addition, he wanted to influence others around him to see literature and poetry the same way he envisioned it. Aristotle also wanted the audience to feel a certain way towards the heroes he described in his writings.

Furthermore, the audience had to try to relate to the characters and understand that heroes are there to lead by example by showing morality better than the average human being. Furthermore, “The Poetics” shares the guidance of building a strong foundation. The balance between the story and the actions within the story has to be precise. The theme must follow a specific plan that Aristotle designed. Furthermore, the story has to have a big event that feeds from smaller ones. It should all connect like one big puzzle.

Greek drama was one of the many influences on the human society. People were now able to show expression in physical human form. As popularity grew, theaters were being constructed to withstand a large audience. Hundreds of plays were performed at the Dionysus in Athens. Furthermore, writer Sophocles had many of his plays performed there. Sophocles wrote various tragedies that clashed with human’s morality explained in Greek myths and legends. However, because many people already knew these stories writers had to improvise to make the stories more relatable and unexpected. The play Antigone was one of the most popular tragedies. One of the many reasons why it has become so popular over time because it touches bases on many important relatable issues. For example, it dives into the problems between the right of states and the individuals that live in those states, the relationship within a family and the community, the roles of politics according to gender and human law. Over the course of time, we

have seen how every single one of these issues have become big influences within the history of the human race. Sophocles shared many similarities with Aristotle literary views with his famous piece “ Antigone”. In addition, he also wants to show emotion within his work to help the audience develop a certain tone towards his characters.

Aristotle’s aesthetic were the principles of the famous “ Antigone” by Sophocles. Just as Aristotle describes, Antigone relies on a solitary event such as the critical decision of the main character Creon. Furthermore, the decision he made set the tone for the remainder of the story. That single event created a vast amount of possibilities of where the story could potentially go. In addition, the balance between reality and the contents within the play aligns so it’s able to be comparable for the audience. Aristotle wanted to make sure that tragedy was understood as a literary genre instead of a concept within drama. The audience has to be scared and sympathetic and the same time. With these mix emotions, the viewers are find confliction within themselves. They must make a decision on what they believe about the content. In addition, their conclusion may conflict them with their everyday reality. Antigone is the prime example of what Aristotle wanted to instill into the drama world. I believe Antigone conforms to the ideas of Aristotle based upon his perspective in his literary piece “ Poetics”. For example, Sophocles main character Creon states “ But it is those that are most obstinate suffer the greatest fall; the hardest iron, most fiercely tempered 330 in the fire, that is most often snapped and splintered. I have seen the wildest horses tamed, and only by the tiny bit. There is no room for pride in one who is a slave! This girl already had fully learned the art of

insolence when she transgressed the laws that I established; and now to that she adds a second outrage— to boast of what she did, and laugh at us. Now she would be the man, not I, if she defeated me and did not pay for it. But though she be my niece, or closer still than all our family, she shall not escape the direst 340 penalty; no, nor shall her sister: I judge her guilty too; she played her part in burying the body (Fiero 2015)”. Furthermore, from this small section of the play it is clear that there is some concepts of Aristotle’s “Poetics” within the statements. Creon is displaying how his defeat and suffering is causing him to view the world differently. He is showing his true hero morality by taking fault in the prior events that had occurred. In the process, he is making the audience feel sympathetic towards him because of the way he handles himself and the situation. Another example would be when Creon says “ So may you ever be resolved, my son, in all things to be guided by your father. It is for this men pray that they may have obedient children, that they may requite their father’s enemy with enmity and honor whom their father loves to honor. One who begets unprofitable children makes trouble for himself, and gives his foes nothing but laughter. Therefore do not let your pleasure 390 in a woman overcome your judgment, knowing this, that if you have an evil wife to share your house, you’ll find cold comfort in your bed (Fiero 2015)”. In this example, the audience is feeling pity which is the second emotion that Aristotle describes. The audience starts to feel bad for Creon as he describes his hardships and how he can overcome them. In conclusion, it is clear that Aristotle was in the mist of starting a literary movement involving the ideals of a true hero and “ Antigone” is a prime example on how it all works.

## **Works Cited**

- Fiero, Gloria. (2015). The Humanistic Tradition: Prehistory to Early Modern World, Vol. I (7th Edition). McGraw Hill. ISBN-10: 1259360660 , ISBN-13: 978-1259360664.