

The essential forms or types of Greek Drama

If it weren't for the Greeks, the world of drama wouldn't have evolved into a complex being worthy to speak of any human emotion. Through the different types of Greek Drama, the ancient Greeks ensured that every aspect of human life is investigated. This has provided inspiration for most playwrights around the world and led to the evolution of the genre 'Drama'. Although, there are various types of Greek Drama, the following are the primary variations that were successful and popular in the Ancient Greek civilization.

Types of Greek Drama – The Greek Comedy

The Greek Comedies were not only meant to end with victory of the protagonist, but also were directed to mock the men who were in power. There was so much mockery on the contemporary rulers. Aristophanes is considered as the master of producing Comedy plays and his works like "Clouds", "Birds", "Frogs", etc. deal with contemporary problems on a satirical note. The tradition of Comic plays continued for centuries and one can observe them through comic dramatists like Menander and others.

Types of Greek Drama – The Greek Tragedy

The Greek Tragedy tosses the protagonist into sea of harsh emotions either because of a crime committed by him or because of the ill nature of others. As the protagonist tries to fight his way out of the troubles, the world around him collapses which proves fatal to the lead characters in the play. Themes like relationship between gods and men, love, pride, abuse, power, loss, etc. are dealt with in a liberal fashion without concealing the emotional outbursts.

The Greek tragedy is a powerful means to purge emotions and Aristotle in his "Poetics" emphasizes the fact that a well-composed tragedy can cleanse the heart through the extreme emotions like terror and pity (Catharsis). By witness all the extreme psychological states, men will grow mature and stop to worry about the petty problems.

The triumvirate of the Ancient Greek Tragedy were – Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides. Their plays like "Ajax", "Seven against Thebes" and "Medea" respectively are classified as the best when it comes to displaying the merits of tragic elements.

Types of Greek Drama – The Satyr Plays

'Satyr Plays' are the inspiration for the "Interludes" that provided comic relief during the intervals between acts in a play. The satyr plays are connected to the tragic plays and the plays use satire and other comic elements to make fun of the characters in the tragedy. To enhance the comic effect, the actors wore large phalluses. Unfortunately, only few of the Satyr plays are extant.

These are the primary types of Greek Drama that gave the world a rich source to work on and develop extensively on literature. The world wouldn't have been this rich with arts without the presence of the types of Greek Drama developed by those in the Ancient Greek civilization. It is worthy to reiterate, that if it wasn't for the literary interests of the Greeks, we wouldn't have seen many playwrights, painters, composers, etc. of the modern civilization whom we consider as gods amongst men.