

The Philosophy of Life and Death in Greek Theater Comedy and Tragedy

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Abstract:

Theatrical literature arose and developed in different historical environments, and has at every stage or environment a certain development. Writers and critics have been adding principles and dispensing with Others, depending on the circumstances of life (religious, social, political, cultural factors) that had a profound impact on literature in general and theater in particular, as it is closely linked to life at every stage Of its stages, and this is what we will see clearly as we follow these stages, in which this art developed And came out in its current form known to this day, and it was preceded by pictures from the ancient theater“ like what was in the courtyards of ancient Egyptian temples,” which tells some of religious rituals, and displays features of their myths and beliefs.

Keywords: Greek theater - Drama - Tragedy - Comedy - Life and death

1.Introduction:

The Origins of Greek Drama

The first beginnings of Greek theater were also linked to religious rituals, theater arose within it Myths. The Greeks thought that there were unseen forces controlling the universe, so they approached them, and They flatter them with laws and worship.” The oldest plays known in history are Greek plays, and its emergence origin in Greece was related to their beliefs, since they believed in pluralism (multiple gods), because of their country nature which has diverse aspects, many changes, and landforms one of the gods they sanctified were Dionysus or Bacchus, the god of growth and fertility in particular Vineyards and wines, and they used to give him two ceremonials, one of which was in early winter after the grapes had been harvested And wine press, which is characterized by fun, religious hymns are sung, dancing circles are held, and Songs begin, and from this type of theater arose (comedy), and They believed that the god Dionysus has something to do with the fertility and prosperity of nature.

The theme of comedy was criticism through laughter and ridicule making of situations, and this is how the "purification" happens According to Aristotle, when a person can get rid of life's residue worries and burdens. “In this, there is an imitation of the most vile people, not in all its ugliness, but in the comic aspect that makes you laugh its themes and characters get inspired from community life and common people problems, and the comedy writer intended to depict people in caricatures, or in The ugliest aspect of what they are, to arouse laughter, or to elicit laughter from their situations, behavior, and actions that the hero does.

The second ceremony takes place in early spring, when the vines have leafed out, and it is a sad ceremony, from what arises “tragedy” or “drama”

which Aristotle defines as: “an imitation of a complete action.” Which has a known length, and is performed in an elegant language that varies according to the different Parts, and this simulation is done by people who act, not through narration and telling stories It arouses compassion and fear, which leads to purification from these emotions.” Tragedy was a sort of supplications intended to please the god Dionysus, to bestows blessings on them (agricultural production), and This tragedy is based on simulation as much as it is based on imitating action, and moving from one situation to another Contradictory, and Mandour defines it by saying: “It is the serious play that aims to influence through Arousing feelings. So the essence of "tragedy" is that its events arouse pity and fear in order to achieve purification, and then the hero may be exposed to the influence of diverse moral conflicts, which end in disaster, such as the death of hero himself.

If its themes and characters are inspired from common people life, then tragedy themes On the contrary, are inspired from gods myths, kings and heroes, and this is what made it a noble artistic expression for its themes, characters, and the elegance of its poetic language, and then stems the fierce conflict happening, that aroused fear and pity, as it was between the characters of the tragedy and inevitable fate, or between it and an overwhelming moral force, such as the force of truth.” This conflict was embodied when Oedipus, who has been struggling in vain to get rid of the truth, and to expose his terrible crime in the play (Oedipus Rex).

If the merit of dividing the play into tragedy and comedy goes back to (Thyrsis) was the first to introduce acting Aristotle, then we must mention that: into performance, and it gradually became an independent art itself. The acting was nothing more than some dancing, group chants, and religious songs Supplications to God, and then he represented the person of Dionysus, and the While he was on a high stage, then a dialogue was choir. (band) pointed to him. in songs characters introduced between him and the choir, then other mentioned

and chants played, where the actors appeared in human form in the upper body they wore goat skins while performing lower half. and the image of a goat in the

Four theatrical roles, because goats are sacred animals for them, many people With the advent of the poet Aeschylus (525-654 BC), he reduced the importance of the choir and its songs, gave importance to the dialogue, and increased the number of actors to two people with the vocal band, "Then came the great poet Sophocles (695-604 BC) Who raised the number of actors to three, and ordered the scenes to be drawn." Ahmed Mandour divides the parts of the theatrical performance as follows:

Greek Tragedy

Drama has artistic roots, elements and colors in the extent of their connection to its conscience, its events, and its characters. It was used to refer to anyone who wrote for the theater or a group of plays that were similar in style or content. It also indicated any situation that involved a conflict and included an analysis of this conflict through borrowing the existence of characters and therefore it is a theatrical art. "The play is not life, but rather a representation of life, and its essence is not a real situation, but rather the representation of a real or imagined being." Thus, we find the play has main images: tragedy, comedy, and Tragicomedy is a mixture of tragedy and laughter the noblest of all the main theatrical images is "tragedy." It has contributed more than any other theatrical images to man's goal. It is the highest of these images, and is considered the finest, noblest, and greatest dramatic form. Tragedy aims to depict a tragedy that may be based on a historical story. The origin of the word Greek 'tragedy', is derived from two words (Tragos: ram. Ode: singing), and it was used to refer to the hymn that was sung by a chorus dressed as a ram The reason for this name is due to the theatrical and religious rituals in which the chorus was sung with the sacrifice of goats in ancient Greece. The members of the ancient choir in the

Dithrombo hymns, from which the tragedy arose, were wearing goat skin on the basis that they were playing the role of the satyr: Satyro ** Followers The god Dionysus, when tragedy arose, *"it was in the soul of the people, imprinted on their hearts and represented in their ancient characteristics, and all that was remarkable for it was that it moved from the naivety of the common people to the subtlety of the private, and it was without form or art, so it became, thanks to (Deuteramius), a charming artistic form."* Tragedy relates to presenting events of sadness and an unfortunate result in the end, and depicts the lofty aspects of human beings who are subjected to evil actions in conflict with the forces that surround them and that control the course of their behavior, whether they are external forces, such as fate and the gods, or internal forces, such as impulses and passions, are a form of drama defined by Aristotle. Aristotle's book "The Art of Poetics" is considered the "gospel" of theater, as it contains the first attempt to define the characteristics of tragedy and its effect on the viewer, and he defines it as follows. Tragedy is an imitation of a serious act, complete in itself, of a certain length, in a language that is enjoyable because it is accompanied by every type of artistic decoration, each type of which can be presented separately in parts of the play, and this imitation takes place in narrative form with events that arouse pity. And fear happens as Purification from such two emotions." *All arts try to imitate a certain content, whether from reality, history, or myth, but the means of imitation differs from one art to another and is the reason for the enjoyment in theatre.* We add also *"Imitation is a transfer that includes interpretation and subjective addition by the one who did it, and it also means innovation."* Imitating the action is not just depiction of events, but rather their rearrangement in the regulating line of the play, which is the dramatic act, leading to imitation not as imitation or photography, but rather as creation and creativity. It is *"not a literal transfer or creation from nothing, but rather a transfer that includes a change and subjective addition from the person who did it."* As for the action, it does not mean only human actions and events, but it is a

psychological activity that works outward, and "*the act of drama has a primary meaning for this type of action that expresses itself in an external event, while it emerges from the power of the internal will.*" Action in drama includes the psychological motives that lie behind the behavior it seems. This action must be serious in simulating the problems of human behavior, that is, it must contain a complete idea that explains the reasons and motives. Without this action, it will be ineffective. Indeed, the writer's skill appears in shedding light on the event, and it must be complete and have a beginning, middle, and consistent end. So that each part leads to the next, and thus the organic unity of the tragedy is formed. To achieve this, it is required that the tragedy be simple, i.e, the end should be one. As for length, Aristotle means: "*The act should not be extremely long, such as an epic or an adult the palace is like a lyric poem.*" The size of the drama depends on the action it imitates. Tragedy does not need preferences that do not serve the idea. The writer must pay attention to the dramatic structure of his play. As for interesting language, he means the language that includes rhythm and melody, and the narrative form is not one of the characteristics of Aristotelian drama, but rather one of other literary genres such as the epic and the novel. All of these events arouse fear and pity, and these two emotions arise from the seriousness of the act. Pity is what we feel toward a person who resembles us through his suffering. As for fear, we feel toward a person whose life is threatened and who continues to anticipate a catastrophe.

For that, "*fear is the substance of pity, and there is no pity without fear*" which leads to the purification of the soul. Purification is the goal of tragedy and has a moral significance. It is intended to completely remove fear and pity from the souls of the recipient, i.e, cleansing the soul of illness so that these two feelings can do their work. To the fullest extent, "*the cleansing that results from witnessing violence constitutes a process of purification and emptying* The violent charge present in the spectator, which frees him from his desires Tragedy is considered a means of treating a person subconsciously from all hostile

emotions and repressed instincts, liberating them from evil and directing them towards good. One of the basic characteristics of tragedy is the unhappy ending, which is often the death of the hero in the play, and most tragedies end with an unhappy ending. In addition to this, treating this Al-Massi's topics is serious, because it includes an important conflict between the characters. The greatness of the hero lies in the fact that Al- Massi's writers choose characters that differ from the characteristics of the ordinary man, and the painful fate that befalls the hero makes us feel the greatness of the disaster. More than that, the conflict consisted of two parties, the gods and the humans, and thus it was a vertical struggle

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* Theater arose within the confines of beliefs, since the nature of theater acting is Live is dancing (folklore) and dancing was a religious ritual (praise)

To get closer to God, and this explains the legendary religious character of all ancient plays, Greco-Roman.

** Dionysus: He is called Dionysus by the Greeks and Bacchus by the Romans. Blood has dithyrambe songs

She was accompanied by dancing. These songs are also called Les Dionysus or Les Ball Hanales, which were developed for the stage.

It was a competition held in the spring.

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* Dithyrambus: It is a type of song performed in celebrations. Dionysian and narrates the victories and setbacks of the god Dionysus.

** Satyrisms: Mythic beings accompanying Dionysus in ancient rituals Yama, who is half human.

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