

Name of Examination: M.A. ENGLISH 3rd SEMESTER EXAMINATION (2020)
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COURSE: 3.1
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Q2) What according to Aristotle are the different elements of tragedy? Write a note on them.

Ans: Aristotle was one of the greatest philosopher 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 ideal form of tragic plays become a guideline for later playwrights in Western civilization. For centuries, European playwrights like William Shakespeare tried to write plays that would match the ideals of Aristotle's model. Drama was not invented by Aristotle. In fact he used examples from the works of famous Greek playwrights such as Sophocles to illustrate his main ideas. The Greeks believed that tragedy was the highest form of drama, and Aristotle's ideas about tragedy were based on this belief.

Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy

"A tragedy is the imitation of an action that is

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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, where with to accomplish a catharsis of these emotion."

Having examined the definition, nature and function of Tragedy, Aristotle comes to a consideration of its formative or constituent parts. He enumerates its formative elements as — plot, character, Diction, thought, Spectacle and song.

1) plot — Aristotle declares plot to be supreme importance the soul of tragedy. Aristotle considers plot "The Soul of Tragedy". The most important of these parts is the arrangement of incidents, for tragedy is not an imitation of man but of human action and life and happiness and misery. The arrangement of incidents is the plot. Tragedy is possible without character but not without action. Aristotle's action means "process" not "activity". A play without action. In this sense, would be a play in which nothing happens — in which there is no be-

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gaining and no end.

2) character - characterization is subsidiary, since it only adds to the revelation of what personal qualities, what is best revealed in action. Nor does a string of speeches, however, finely work out, provide the same tragic effect. Character without action will not achieve the end of tragedy. A group of speeches that show character is not in itself drama. Unless the speeches are incorporated into plot, they remain 'set pieces', no matter how interesting they may be individually. Reversal and Recognition are the most powerful means of securing the tragic effect. Because they are part of plot rather than the characterization, they confirm the idea that plot is more important than character.

Aristotle gives a good deal of consideration to the character of hero. In tragedy good men should passing from happiness to misery and bad men from misery to happiness. The tragic hero must be a man is the enjoyment of great reputation

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and propriety with a flaw in his character.

3) Diction — Aristotle calls for finding the "signify" or center between limit of character. The language utilized is most likely excessively distant to current crowds to meet Aristotle's 'clarity' measure.

4) Thought — Thought is third in importance. Aristotle "By thought I mean that which is found in whatever things men say when they prove a point or maybe; express a general truth".

5) Spectacle — The Spectacle or the scenic effect has more to do with stagecraft than with the writing of poetry, and hence Aristotle is of the view that the dramatist must depend for his effect on his own powers rather than on Spectacle. But fear and pity can produce by Spectacle.

6) Song/Melody — the lyric element is to be found in the choric parts of tragedy, it is the 'establishment' which distinguishes the tragedy from epic. It is the element that makes the tragedy pleasant.
