



# Aristotelian Vision of Film

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**Abstract--** Plot's student Aristotle gave definition of tragic drama in his small treaty "Poetics"; his definition of drama, constituent parts, medium and function. This definition is not only limited to drama but also applicable to film. Film is the modern version of drama. Film is in action, an imitation, in language and uses embellishments. Film is the modern means to create revolution in the society. In this paper Aristotle's definition of tragedy is explained with the example of different films. This paper is try to show that literature and film are complimentary to each other; in the other langue literature is film and film is literature.

**Keywords--** *Serious, imitation, action, dialogue, embellishments, purification*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The literature is the mirror of the society. English literature has poetry, drama and fiction as its major genres. The Drama is the most oldest and popular genre in literature. As poetry is in verse; fiction is in prose and drama is in dialogue. Drama is not for reading but to perform on the stage. The English History found beginning of English drama with the "University Wits" or before that drama started in festivals. Drama flourished in the hands of Shakespeare, G.B. Shaw, Ben Johnson, Samuel Beckett, John Osborn and many more. Dr. Johnson explained that Drama is the mirror of life; it is a mixture of all feelings. First of all Drama needs good plot, plot builds characters; characters have emotions, feeling, romance, cruelty, surprise, suspense, fortune, misfortune, event and accident etc. Drama shows the story of Characters.

Film is a digital or screened version of drama. Drama and film are two sides of single coin. Drama is the actual performance before the audience and film is the virtual performance on the screen; Drama is primary version of the film. Ancient Greek teacher Aristotle gave the definition of drama in his small treaty "Poetics" for his students in the form of teacher's notes. That definition do not have superficial meaning but it has depth; in this paper it is try to relate the Aristotle's broad vision of his definition to film.

## II. ARISTOTLE'S DEFINITION

Aristotle gave definition of Drama in his treaty "Poetics"; in that definition he defines what is drama, their constituent parts, medium and function. Aristotle define "A tragedy is the imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; with

incidents arousing pity and fear." Let us explain this definition with the examples of film:

## III. DRAMA IS THE IMITATION OF ACTION

First Aristotle says Drama is the imitation of action; Film is also imitates of action; it imitates issues from society to discuss on the screen. Film like "Border" is tackle with the issues of boundaries issues of the nation; this film pasteurises adventure, courage, brevity and sacrifice of the mighty soldiers and it evokes patriotism. Another example is the film "Three Idiot" it is the film about issues of education; the role of the teacher and the student; it also depicts shouldering the responsibility of educational field towards the society and society's responsibility towards the educational field. The Character of Amir Khan underlines the need of quality education and quality products. On the other side Principal of the college Boman Irani is focusing on rules and regulations of the institutes; the film shows that it is important to give the freedom for the children to choose their career otherwise it leads to burden and destruct the career of the students; Film not only it imitates the society but produce or create better version of social picture.

## IV. DRAMA MUST BE COMPLETE

Second word used by Aristotle is drama should be "Complete". It means drama must have beginning, middle and end. Film with good plot should always have beginning, middle and end. Film always starts with blooming issues, suspense, surprise and accident; it creates climax in the middle and at the end it try to resolve complexity of the issues. Film like "Swadesh" is a complete one. It started with Sharukh Khan working in the glittering NASA; it tackles the issue of ruler area and at last proposed some kind of solution on it. Film like "Humraaz" is a good combination of medical science and superstitions; it creates suspense, horror and terror in the film; it started and develops with suspense and ended with disclosing hidden truth in the heart of science.

## V. A CERTAIN MAGNITUDE

Third, term used by Aristotle is "a certain magnitude". Drama must be continue with logical linking; all characters must connect to the main part and there must be logicity between, before and after the action. Film is totally creation of logical action, linking of all characters to the main plot. In the film "Hum Aapke Hai Kaun" there is crowd of characters but all characters linked with main plot of the film and love story of Salman Khan and Madhuri Dixitis the centre of the interest for the audience. Film "Lagan" has historical issues, events and background; the main plot moves around clash between



British Empire and Indians. The film Lagan opens with imperial issues, the issues developed in the middle and end proposes the solution on the uplifted issues in the film

After this Aristotle comes to “language”. Language is power of film. The powerful dialogue creates appropriate atmosphere for the main issues. In film “Don” after the song of Helen; police is about to catch Amitabh Bachhan who is a great underworld don. At that time Bachhan’s dialogue with Helen is a excellent example of good language. Bachhan said

“Yeh tum janti ho ki yeh revolver khali hai ... main janta hoon ki yeh revolver khali hai ... lekin police nahin janti ki yeh revolver khali hai”

-Film “DON”

In another movie “Deewar” dialogue between Amitabh Bachhan and Rishi Kapoor. Amitabh Bachhan is a great gambler and richest person; the other side Rishi Kapoor is a simple, honest responsible police officer. When Bachhan asked I have everything money, prestige and luxury what do you have? Rishi Kapoor’s answer is always valuable and intelligent example of language. Rishi Kapoor said

“mere paas maa hai”

-Film “DEEWAR”

This is very perfect, important, appropriate, sensual, and touching answer; it applies to the audience. Language is the means of communication. Language is the medium to discuss, modify and correct issues. So use of appropriate word and language is the soul of successful film.

## VI. EMBELLISHMENTS

Aristotle’s main focus is on Embellishment. According to Aristotle Embellishment is an extra part but it is important to create proper atmosphere. Embellishment includes songs, light effects, settings, music etc. In film “Dilwale Dulhania le Jayenge” director and producer Yash Chopra gave sweet melodious songs and beautiful scenes of Europe to create romantic atmosphere in the film. The film “Dil to pagal hai” used marvellous light effect; it is not only to make it decorative but focuses on various movements of dance. Music is the soul of the film. Different music is for different events and scenes. The music in the film “Razz” creates suspense and horror; it is a horror movie and music of the film that gives life-force to the action. In “MunnaBhai M.B.S.” comic dialogue, serious issues, funny music and foolish action creates grand overall effects on the film. Along with the action, dialogue, music the next important thing is setting. Appropriate setting for proper event is very important. Romantic song in garden, suspense created in the dark night, ghost appear in old house, race on snaky road, thriller in the ocean or in the sky; hidden secretes in the heart of the forest or romance on the sea shower are the examples of logical appropriateness of the setting and events.

Establishment have no limits and it is the ornament of the film. Now a days with the use of technology various effects are created; for example film “Robot” by Rajnikant is the outstanding example of use of the technology; 3D scenes in the film “Gravity” are the marvellous example of the embellishment. Now embellishment is not limited to Aristotle; due to technology embellishment crosses all boundaries and limits; the technology created revolution in the field of embellishment. Due to technology giant “Titanic” ship shrink in the ocean; Robot creates his own army or intelligent thief stole precious diamond with the use of technology; film changes day by day but Aristotelian Embellishment has still importance; it may change but there is no film without embellishment.

## VII. FUNCTION OF DRAMA

Function of drama is to create emotions of pity and fear. Aristotelian function has still importance. Drama is for purgation of various emotions. The Audience many times identifies himself/herself with the characters, scenes and events. This identification is an escape valve or provide outlet to suppressed things. Film “Singham” is having issues between police and underworld. This film not only tries to give outlet to emotions of police officer but it creates real picture of limitations of police officers before the audience. Film “Hate Story” is not only discloses issues related to women but underlines women’s hate towards patriarchal society. In the film “English Vinglish” character of actress Shridevi represents women denied and deprived under modern culture and foreign language. Film capture and discloses the issue from ruler life, from dance bar, from government offices, from institutes to charitable trusts; from temple to church. It represents some class, may be any person or common man.

Film is the effective tool to create changes in the system, to modify the society and to correct the people. It is a modern means of modern technology; film is not limited to any area or any issues; it is not limited to any nation or society; it is not limited to any region or religion. Film is the most effective and revolutionary means of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## CONCLUSION

Aristotle gave definition of tragedy; its constituents parts, means and function. This definition shows Aristotle’s visionary attitude towards literature. This definition is not only defines drama but applicable to film also. Film is the modern version of drama and updated version of Aristotelian definition of tragedy.

Today also Aristotle’s definition of tragedy has importance and value. Even current film “Bajirao Mastani” is a good combination of literature and history. This film is a romantic love story of Bajirao and Mastani. It touches history but its grand setting, the use of various embellishments, powerful dialogues, heroic action make it literature. These examples show Aristotle’s visionary attitude and its unlimited scope. So



Aristotle's definition of tragedy and his visionary attitude is not only covers generation but generations.

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Hindi Films

***Glossary:***

- [1] Mimesis:- A Greek word for Imitation.
- [2] Imitation:- Representation.
- [3] Magnitude:- Length, Size.
- [4] Embellished:- Ornamental, Decorated
- [5] Catharsis:- Purgation, Purification.
- [6] Hamartia:- Tragic Flaw, Error of Judgment
- [7] Diction:- Special style of the Language, Expression and Wording
- [8] Spectacle:- Stage Property