Sharona Guri

Stories from the Greek Theatre [Sipurim Mehatheatron hayevany, □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□]

Israel (1996)

TAGS: Aeschylus Agamemnon Antigone Aristophanes Cassandra Creon Eteocles Euripides Haemon Io Iphigenia / Iphigeneia Ismene Jason Lysistrata Medea Oedipus Plutus / Ploutos Polyneices / Polynices Prometheus Sophocles Tiresias Zeus





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General information	
Title of the work	Stories from the Greek Theatre [Sipurim Mehatheatron hayevany, □□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□]
Country of the First Edition	Israel
Country/countries of popularity	Israel
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Target Audience	Crossover
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Creators



Sharona Guri (Author)

Sharona is an Israeli translator.

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Additional information

Summary

The book offers a selection of synopses of Greek dramas, as well as an explanation about Greek theatre, including information about tragedy and comedy and different definitions relating to the theatre). There is even a historical background of 5th century BCE Athens in order to place the plays in their correct historical settings.

The plays are divided by dramatist and each has his own introduction: Aeschylus: *Prometheus Bound*; *Agamemnon*; *The Suppliants*; *Seven against Thebes*. Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*; *Antigone*. Euripides: *Iphigenia at Aulis*; *Medea*. Aristophanes: *Lysistrata*; *Plutus*; *The Birds*; *The Clouds*). Each play has its own plot summary, including quotes from the play in translation. Thus each is more of a brief analysis or summary of the play than a regular retelling of the story.

Analysis

This book aims not just to bring a selection of plays in prose form, but also to educate the readers about Greek theatre. The explanations are clear and adapted for the relatively young readership. It is also nice that the author chose to include comedies as well as tragedies in this collection to show the variety of Greek theatre (which is too often only connected with tragedy alone in the popular imagination).

However, the narration of each story is on occasion confusing. It takes the format of a written account of the play rather than a usual narration in story form, and could deter some readers who were hoping to get a clearer understanding of the mythological story. In the Agamemnon story, for example, the reader is told: “the play opens with the conquest of Troy” (p. 55), but with no explanation for the backstory. There are also a few mistakes: Melaus instead of Menelaus, while Agamemnon is described as the king of Argos rather than Mycenae. Clytemnestra is not named, and the reader gets only bits and pieces of the plot and not a coherent story; there is no mentioning of the Oresteia trilogy. These summaries of the plays are also evaluated by the writer (for example, “the plot of Antigone is not complicated at all” (p. 95)), and these evaluations provide a distraction from the main focus of the book, namely the presentation of the ancient plays.

Similarly, for the plot of Medea there is no explanation at all, and the

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	narration begins, like in the play, “In Corinth, on marble stairs, an old nursing maid sits and laments the miserable fate of her mistress Medea” (p. 107). This throws the reader into the middle of the action without proper explanation. There is a big difference between a play and a book about plays. The book is presumably intended to be a sort of guided reading to the plays, yet in this current format, it does not exhibit the plot well or lucidly enough for uninformed readers.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aeschylus Agamemnon Antigone Aristophanes Cassandra Creon Eteocles Euripides Haemon Io Iphigenia / Iphigeneia Ismene Jason Lysistrata Medea Oedipus Plutus / Ploutos Polyneices / Polynices Prometheus Sophocles Tiresias Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Character traits Conflict Depression Desires Emotions Family Heroism Humour Identity Journeys Loss Murder Parents (and children) Prediction/prophecy Sacrifice Siblings Suicide Theatre

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