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## **The Currency of Greek Tragedy and Mythology in Contemporary Society**

What is the relevance of Greek tragedy? In a world so radically different from fifth-century Athens, it initially seems counter-intuitive to suggest that the literature and theatre of an ancient culture can have meaning in our world today. Science, mathematics, philosophy and theatre might have their roots in ancient Greek culture, but times change, civilisations move on and, in our contemporary society, these roots become forgotten.

This presentation will argue that ancient Greek culture does, however, have significant currency and relevance today. Greek myths and the way they are used and contextualised in Athenian tragedy have shaped Western culture, introducing ideas and archetypes that are now embedded in the fabric of our society.

Through a specific examination of use and power of Greek myth and tragedy in a variety of works, ranging from the Renaissance paintings of Raphael to the Neil Gaiman's ground-breaking Sandman, this presentation will argue that Greek tragedy and mythology maintains a strong social currency to our contemporary society. Moreover, this presentation seeks to demonstrate the relevance of understanding the transmission and adaptation of a mythos across a period of time, and how changing attitudes to, and usage of, a given myth reflect the social, political and religious climate of the time.