

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.)

- ✚ Born in 384 B.C.E. in the Macedonian region of northeastern Greece in the small city of Stagira
- ✚ Sent to Athens at about the age of seventeen to study in Plato's Academy
- ✚ Tutored Alexander The Great
- ✚ Aristotle left a great body of work, perhaps numbering as many as two-hundred treatises, from which approximately thirty-one survive.
- ✚ Discussed a wide range of disciplines, from logic, metaphysics and philosophy of mind, through ethics, political theory, aesthetics and rhetoric, and primarily non-philosophical fields as empirical biology

Theory of Soul

- ✚ Presented primarily in the *De Anima*
- ✚ **The soul is a “first actuality of a natural organic body”**
- ✚ **It is a “substance as form of a natural body which has life in potentiality”**
- ✚ **It “is a first actuality of a natural body which has life in potentiality”**
- ✚ He introduces the soul as the *form* of the body
- ✚ Body is said to be the *matter* of the soul
- ✚ Aristotle identifies the soul as a principle or source (*archê*) of all life.
- ✚ For Aristotle all living things, and not only human beings, have souls
- ✚ The soul is the cause and source of the living body.
- ✚ The body (matter) serves as a tool for implementing the characteristic life activities of an organism
- ✚ Soul, according to Aristotle is a system of abilities possessed and manifested by animate bodies of suitable structure
- ✚ Souls and bodies are different yet connected.
 - Aristotle seems to think that all the abilities (for movement like flying, sense-perception using sense-organs) that are constitutive of the souls of plants, beasts and humans are such that their exercise involves and requires bodily parts and organs.

A soul is the actuality of a body that has life, where life means the capacity for self-sustenance, growth and reproduction. If one consider living organism as a combination of matter and form, then soul is the form and body is the matter.

Theory of Beauty

- ✚ Aristotle distinguishes between the good and the beautiful
 - Good is always in action (en praxei)
 - Beautiful may exist in motionless things as well (en akinetois.)
 - Though essentially different things, the good might under certain conditions be called beautiful.
- ✚ The absence of all lust or desire in the pleasure it bestows.
- ✚ The universal elements of beauty Aristotle finds (in the *Metaphysics*) to be
 - order (taxis),
 - symmetry
 - definiteness or determinateness
- ✚ Beauty is also of a certain magnitude; it being desirable for a synoptic view of an object. Thus the object should not be too large, while clearness of perception requires that it should not be too small.

Theory of Art

- ✚ Aristotle differs from Plato in his concept of art
- ✚ Plato gives a moral criticism of art according to which
 - Work of art have a lower rank than real objects.
 - They are morally suspect.
- ✚ Aristotle's views on art differs from this moral criticism.
- ✚ Aristotle says:
- ✚ General origin of poetry was due to two causes
 - Imitation
 - Pleasure
 - Art is imitation.
 - Imitation is natural to man from childhood, one of his advantages over the lower animals being this, that he is the most imitative creature in the world, and learns at first by imitation.
 - Purpose of art is immediate pleasure not utility
 - It is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation as it gives a chance of learning
- ✚ He took a higher view of artistic imitation than Plato

All people by nature enjoy a good imitation (that is, a picture or drama) because they enjoy learning, and imitations help them to learn.

Theory of Nature

- ✚ *The Physics* holds Aristotle's ideas of nature.
- ✚ Aristotle defines a nature as "a source or cause of being moved and of being at rest in that to which it belongs primarily".
- ✚ Nature is the principle within a natural raw material that is the source of tendencies to change or rest in a particular way unless stopped.

Hylomorphism

- ✓ A conceptual framework which underlies virtually all of Aristotle's mature theorizing
- ✓ 'Hylomorphism' is simply a compound word composed of the Greek terms for matter (*hylê*) and form or shape (*morphê*)
- ✓ Aristotle's view of body and soul as an instance of his "matter-formism."
- ✓ The notions of form and matter are themselves, however, developed within the context of a general theory of causation and explanation.

When we wish to explain what there is to know, Aristotle accounts four factors or four causes

The <i>material cause</i> : that from which something is generated and out of which it is made, e.g. the bronze of a statue.
--

The <i>formal cause</i> : the structure which the matter realizes and in terms of which the matter comes to be something determinate, e.g., the Hermes shape in virtue of which this quantity of bronze is said to be a statue of Hermes.

The <i>efficient cause</i> : the agent responsible for a quantity of matter's coming to be informed, e.g. the sculptor who shaped the quantity of bronze into its current Hermes shape.

The <i>final cause</i> : the purpose or goal of the compound of form and matter, e.g. the statue was created for the purpose of honoring Hermes.
--