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Topic : - Aristotle Poetics (1)

Aristotle begins his Poetics straightaway, stating that different art forms are only different modes of imitation, and they differ from each other in almost three parameters: means (i.e. language, for literature) objects (actions with agents) and manner (i.e. dramatic or narrative).

The most important of the already mentioned parameters of literature that arrests Aristotle's attention is the object of their imitation. Whereby he states that what is imitated in art (literature) are the actions of human being. It is the classification of action and the human beings who determine the different art form and their respective positions in the hierarchy. Aristotle asserts that art as imitation -mimetic art- is the result of two inherent propensities of human nature:

“First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from Childhood... he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation learns his earliest lessons; and no less Universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated...”

After a brief detour, in poetics V, where he comments on ‘comedy’ ‘and epic poetry’, Aristotle takes up the question of the Tragedy from Poetics VI onwards and tragedy comprises most of his theoretical formulations henceforth. In the discussion of the elements of tragedy the main emphasis as expected is on the centrality of action, which is evident in the definition itself:

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished ... in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions.”

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