DC English IV
World/British Literature

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Aristotle (c. 384-322 BCE)

Aristotle was born with connections to the elite class

    which was set within the Ancient Macedonian court

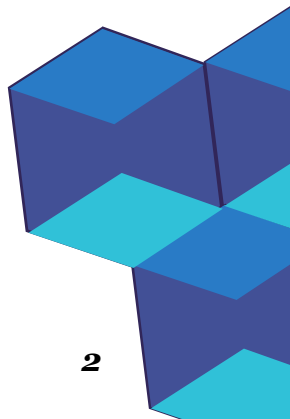Studied under Plato for a large number of years

    • Aristotle's theories branch off the **ideals** of Plato

    • like Socrates, both Aristotle and Plato are major influences on

        Western philosophy

He would later mentor Alexander the Great of Macedonia

Created his own school, the Lyceum, in Athens

Consider:
How do these notions apply to modern literature? —critical analysis?
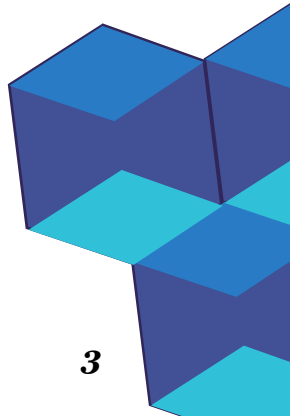
Aristotle's Ethics

One of the many achievements of Aristotle is his development of the three Appeals of Argument

Logos   (*logical, scientific evidence*)

Pathos   (*emotional, personal evidence*)

Ethos   (*ethical, authoritative evidence*)

Ethics / Ethos

The philosophy behind Ethos is complex.

Ethos explores:

• proper attitude and conduct towards one's audience

• explains how to develop a sense of authority in a discussion

• provides a road map which details how humans should behave

Most importantly, through his concept of ethos, Aristotle's theories juxtapose against the methods used in the theoretical sciences.

• ethical theory: examine morality and consequences of right or wrong action

• theoretical sciences: aims to improve theories from natural sciences

In this branch of philosophy, **generalizations** are the common structures for argument.

• generalization: a concept obtained by *inference*

Ethos / Ethics

Students can earn either a **Bachelor's Degree in Ethics**
or gain supplemental education with a **certificate in ethics**

- law

- business

- medicine

- other fields that address ethical issues

As far as **Literary Criticism** is concerned, examining ethics allows beginning writers to find their own opinions and impressions to help influence their skills with writing and research, plus strengthening their personal style and voice.

Virtue

All three of the major Greek philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) follow a common thread of ethics—

• virtues are important for developing a sense of well-being

• ethical virtues are complex, vital social skills

Aristotle specifically believed practical wisdom is not gained through simple memorization of set rules.

• through practice and personal usage of **virtues**, an individual

     can gain a stronger sense of ethical knowledge

Virtue Theory

Virtues—states of character conducive to happiness

Although Socrates stresses that *knowledge is the only true virtue*,

Aristotle expands upon this idea, stating there are *two groups of virtues*:

Moral Virtues (emotional satisfaction) = mean (balance)

Intellectual Virtues (mental enlightenment) = truth

- both classifications contain numerous diverse principles
- both classifications pertain to *positive* human characteristics
- within Aristotle's publication *Nicomachean Ethics* he establishes

    the notion of **The Golden Mean** as a notion of balance

    every individual should obtain from the Moral Virtues.

The Golden Mean

"If it is thus, then, that every art does its work well — by looking to the intermediate and judging its works by this standard (so that we often say of good works of art that it is not possible either to take away or to add anything, implying that excess and defect destroy the goodness of works of art, while the mean preserves it; and good artists, as we say, look to this in their work), and if, further, virtue is more exact and better than any art, as nature also is, then virtue must have the quality of aiming at the intermediate. I mean moral virtue; *for it is this that is concerned with passions and actions, and in these there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. For instance, both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue.* Similarly with regard to actions also there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. Now virtue is concerned with passions and actions, in which excess is a form of failure, and so is defect, while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success; and being praised and being successful are both characteristics of virtue. *Therefore virtue is a kind of mean, since, as we have seen, it aims at what is intermediate*" (2.6).

See Google Classroom, "Codes of Law and/or Morality" for further breakdown of the Golden Mean.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W.D. Ross. July 15, 2015,
        https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/nicomachean/complete.html. Accessed August 2019.

Intellectual Virtues

Aristotle further declared there are **Five Intellectual Virtues (Wisdoms)**.

"Let us begin, then, from the beginning, and discuss these states once more. *Let it be assumed that the states by virtue of **which the soul possesses truth** by way of affirmation or denial are five in number, i.e. **art, scientific knowledge, practical wisdom, philosophic wisdom, intuitive reason**;* we do **not** include judgement and opinion because in these we may be mistaken" (6.3).

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W.D. Ross. July 15, 2015, https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/nicomachean/complete.html. Accessed August 2019.

philosophy = philo + sophia (fondness/love for wisdom)

Be sure to visit: *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PrvtOWEXDIQ*