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PART I · PLATO & ARISTOTLE

Plato

1. In his theory of Mimesis, Plato gives the example of a _____ to argue that art is an imitation of an imitation.

- (1) Cloud
- (2) Chair
- (3) Tree
- (4) River

Ans: (2) Chair In Republic Book X, Plato uses the example of a bed/chair — God creates the ideal form, the carpenter copies it, and the painter copies the copy.

2. The issue of privileging speech over writing was taken up for discussion in Plato's:

- (1) Ion
- (2) Republic Book III
- (3) Republic Book X
- (4) Phaedrus

Ans: (4) Phaedrus In Phaedrus, Plato famously argues through Socrates that speech is superior to writing, which he calls a mere aid to memory.

3. In Book III of the Republic, which mode of narration does Plato distrust most?

- (1) Simple narration by the poet
- (2) Mixed narration and dialogue
- (3) Lyric song sung by a chorus
- (4) Pure imitation, as in drama

Ans: (4) Pure imitation, as in drama Plato distinguishes simple narration, imitation and a mixture of both. He distrusts pure imitation, since the guardians may come to imitate base characters.

4. Plato censured poetry because he believed it:

- (1) Eliminates the ego
- (2) Promotes sensuality
- (3) Distorts reality
- (4) Cripples the imagination

Ans: (2) Promotes sensuality In the Republic, Plato argues poetry appeals to the lower passions and promotes sensuality, weakening rational self-control.

5. In which book of the Republic does Plato call the artist "thrice removed from the truth"?

- (1) Book II
- (2) Book VII
- (3) Book IV
- (4) Book X

Ans: (4) Book X In Book X, Plato argues that the painter copies the carpenter's bed, which itself copies the Form, so art stands third from truth.

6. Why did Plato banish the poet from his ideal state?

- (1) Poetry makes an artificial distinction between form and content
- (2) Poetry deals with form, to the neglect of content
- (3) The poet can never produce a completely accurate replica of reality
- (4) In representing the sensual aspects of reality, the poet fails to discern the transcendent reality behind mere appearance

Ans: (4) Plato's core objection is that the poet represents only the sensual world of appearances, failing to perceive the transcendent Forms (true reality) behind them.

7. What does Socrates mean when in Plato's Ion, he says "Poets are nothing but the interpreters of gods"?

- (1) The poets are the makers of their poems
- (2) The poets are acutely aware of gods in composing their poems
- (3) The poets are divinely possessed when they compose their poems
- (4) The poets first hear what gods say then put that into words

Ans: (3) In Ion, Socrates argues poets compose not through skill but through divine possession — they are vessels through whom the gods speak.

8. In Plato's Ion, the rhapsode Ion is an expert in reciting the poetry of:

- (1) Hesiod
- (2) Pindar
- (3) Sophocles
- (4) Homer

Ans: (4) Homer Ion is a celebrated reciter of Homer. Socrates shows that his skill comes not from knowledge but from divine inspiration.

9. Following Plato, which two statements about 'Phantasm and Semblance' are correct?

1. 'Phantasm' is an image, while 'Semblance is the real object'.
 2. 'Phantasm' is the real object while 'Semblance is only a resemblance'.
 3. 'Phantasm' unlike semblance has the same proportions as the object.
 4. Semblance is 'unreal' but looks 'real' as compared to phantasm.
- (1) (b) and (c)
(2) (c) and (d)
(3) (a) and (b)
(4) (d) and (a)

Ans: (2) (c) and (d) In Plato's framework, phantasm preserves true proportions (3) while semblance appears real but distorts proportions to create an illusion (4).

10. Plato wanted to judge poetry from the tool of:

- (1) Beauty
(2) Sublimity
(3) Truth
(4) None of these

Ans: (3) Truth Plato judged poetry by the standard of truth and moral effect, and found it wanting because it imitates mere appearances.

11. In the Ion, Socrates compares the chain of inspiration from Muse to poet to audience with:

- (1) A river and its tributaries
(2) The sun and its many rays
(3) A potter shaping soft clay
(4) A magnet drawing iron rings

Ans: (4) A magnet drawing iron rings Socrates likens the Muse to a magnet that holds the poet, then the rhapsode, then the audience, like a chain of iron rings.

12. Who had banished poetry from his ideal commonwealth?

- (1) Plato
(2) Horace
(3) Gosson
(4) Wilson

Ans: (1) Plato In Book X of the Republic, Plato banishes the imitative poet from his ideal commonwealth.

13. Who is the originator of the Theory of Imitation in literature?

- (1) Plato
(2) Longinus
(3) Aristotle
(4) None

Ans: (1) Plato Plato first set out the theory of imitation (mimesis) in the Republic; Aristotle later reshaped it in the Poetics.

14. Plato's famous Allegory of the Cave appears in which book of the Republic?

- (1) Book I
(2) Book V
(3) Book X
(4) Book VII

Ans: (4) Book VII The Allegory of the Cave opens Book VII. It shows prisoners mistaking shadows for reality, a picture of the soul's ascent to the Forms.

15. In which of the following works does Plato discuss his Theory of Poetry?

- (1) Ion
(2) Apology
(3) The Republic
(4) None

Ans: (3) The Republic Plato's theory of poetry is set out mainly in the Republic, especially Books II, III and X.

16. According to Plato's Republic, the ideal state should be governed by:

- (1) Inspired poets
- (2) Elected orators
- (3) Warrior priests
- (4) Philosopher-kings

Ans: (4) Philosopher-kings Plato argues that only those who know the Forms of Justice and the Good, the philosopher-kings, are fit to rule.

17. What is mimesis?

- (1) A reversal
- (2) An imitation
- (3) A satire
- (4) A poetic metaphor

Ans: (2) An imitation Mimesis (Greek: μίμησις) means imitation or representation — Aristotle's central concept in the *Poetics*, stating that all art (poetry, drama, music) is a form of mimesis of human action and life.

18. Plato used the word mimesis in relation to literature with the meaning of?

- (1) Copying
- (2) Criticism of life
- (3) Representation
- (4) Interpretation

Ans: (3) Representation For Plato, mimesis meant representation — but a false, thrice-removed copy of reality (the ideal Form → physical object → artistic representation). He used it negatively to critique poets for deceiving through representation.

19. Who was the most illustrious disciple of Socrates?

- (1) Sophocles
- (2) Plautus
- (3) Plato
- (4) Critus

Ans: (3) Plato Plato was Socrates' most famous pupil; he immortalised Socrates' teachings through his dialogues, including *The Republic*, which contains the famous critique of poetry and the theory of Forms.

Aristotle

20. The soul of tragedy, according to Aristotle is:

- (1) Thought
- (2) Character
- (3) Plot
- (4) Spectacle

Ans: (3) Plot In the *Poetics*, Aristotle calls Plot (mythos) the soul of tragedy, ranking it above character and thought.

21. "Peripetia" means:

- (1) Purgation of emotion
- (2) Tragic flaw
- (3) Reversal of fortune
- (4) Recognition of error

Ans: (3) Reversal of fortune Peripeteia (peripetia) is Aristotle's term for a sudden reversal of fortune or circumstances in the plot of a tragedy.

22. According to Aristotle, comedy imitates men who are:

- (1) Better than the average
- (2) Just like the audience
- (3) Gods and great heroes
- (4) Worse than the average

Ans: (4) Worse than the average In *Poetics* ch. 2, Aristotle says tragedy represents men better than ordinary, comedy men worse than ordinary.

23. "Hamartia" means:

- (1) Reversal of fortunes
- (2) Purgation of emotions
- (3) Depravity
- (4) Error of judgement

Ans: (4) Error of judgement Hamartia in Aristotle's *Poetics* refers to an error of judgement by the tragic hero, not a moral failing or depravity.

24. 'Anagnorisis' is a term used by Aristotle for describing:

- (1) The moment of discovery by the protagonist
- (2) The reversal of fortune for the protagonist
- (3) The happy resolution of the plot
- (4) The convergence of the main plot and the sub plot

Ans: (1) The moment of discovery by the protagonist Anagnorisis means 'recognition' — the moment when the protagonist discovers a crucial truth about themselves or their situation.

25. In Aristotle's Poetics: 'it is the imitation of an action that is complete and whole, and of a certain magnitude...having a beginning, a middle, and an end.' What is 'it'?

- (1) Tragedy
- (2) Epic
- (3) Poetry
- (4) Farce

Ans: (1) Tragedy Aristotle is defining Tragedy here — a complete action of a certain magnitude with beginning, middle, and end.

26. Aristotle advises the poet to prefer:

- (1) Improbable possibilities
- (2) Recorded historical facts
- (3) Plain moral instruction
- (4) Probable impossibilities

Ans: (4) Probable impossibilities In Poetics ch. 24, Aristotle prefers a probable impossibility to an improbable possibility, since conviction matters more than literal fact.

27. The word "Catharsis" signifies:

- (1) Pontification
- (2) Personification
- (3) Purgation
- (4) Publication

Ans: (3) Purgation Catharsis means purgation — Aristotle used it to describe the emotional cleansing (of pity and fear) that tragedy produces in the audience.

28. Aristotle argued that poetry provides a/an _____ outlet for the release of intense emotions.

- (1) Safe
- (2) Dangerous
- (3) Uncertain
- (4) Unreliable

Ans: (1) Safe Aristotle's concept of catharsis implies that tragedy provides a safe, harmless outlet for audiences to purge pity and fear.

29. Which of the three unities does Aristotle actually insist upon in the Poetics?

- (1) Unity of place
- (2) Unity of time
- (3) Unity of tone
- (4) Unity of action

Ans: (4) Unity of action Aristotle insists only on unity of action. Unity of place is never mentioned, and time is only an observation about practice.

30. In which chapter of Poetics does Aristotle use the word 'catharsis' in his definition of tragedy?

- (1) Chapter IV
- (2) Chapter VI
- (3) Chapter III
- (4) Chapter V

Ans: (2) Chapter VI Aristotle's famous definition of tragedy including catharsis appears in Chapter VI of the Poetics.

31. Which of the following is true of Aristotle's Critical Position?

- (1) Writers are likely to be mere entertainers who appeal to emotions and passions.
- (2) Texts created by poets are almost inevitably inaccurate as imitations.
- (3) The best artistic texts will be both complex and unified: every part essential and linked to every other part.
- (4) Texts should be judged on the basis of how accurately they imitate philosophical truth.

Ans: (3) Aristotle's central critical principle is that the best literary works are both complex and unified — every part essential and interconnected.

32. Aristotle's phrase "a single revolution of the sun" refers to:

- (1) The proper length of an epic
- (2) The duration of a choral ode
- (3) The lifespan of the tragic hero
- (4) The usual time span of tragedy

Ans: (4) The usual time span of tragedy Aristotle notes that tragedy tries to keep within a single revolution of the sun; Renaissance critics later hardened this into the unity of time.

33. Which statement is true about Aristotle's Poetics?

- (1) He asserted poetry's value by integrating rhetoric and imitation.
- (2) He asserted poetry's value by focusing on both rhetoric and imitation.
- (3) He asserted poetry's value by giving preference to rhetoric over imitation.
- (4) He asserted poetry's value by focusing on imitation (mimesis) rather than rhetoric.

Ans: (4) Aristotle focused primarily on imitation (mimesis) as the basis of poetry's value, setting it apart from mere rhetorical persuasion.

34. What was called as 'Organon' by Aristotle's followers Peripatetics?

- (1) Collection of Aristotle's Works on Politics
- (2) Collection of Aristotle's Works on Poetics
- (3) Collection of Aristotle's Works on Logic
- (4) Collection of Aristotle's Works on Metaphysics

Ans: (3) Collection of Aristotle's Works on Logic The Organon ("instrument") is the name later Peripatetics gave to Aristotle's six works on logic, logic being the tool of all enquiry.

35. The function of tragedy, according to Aristotle, is to offer:

- (1) Understanding
- (2) Transportation
- (3) Enlightenment
- (4) Tragic pleasure

Ans: (4) Tragic pleasure Aristotle speaks of the pleasure proper to tragedy, which arises from pity and fear through imitation, often called tragic pleasure.

36. Aristotle calls poetry more philosophical and of graver import than:

- (1) Philosophy
- (2) Rhetoric
- (3) Music
- (4) History

Ans: (4) History Poetry speaks of universals, of what may happen, while history records particulars, of what has happened (Poetics ch. 9).

37. Who commented that 'Even today the Poetics continues to be studied and prescribed as textbooks in schools and colleges'?

- (1) F. L. Lucas
- (2) Dr Johnson
- (3) Atkins
- (4) Dryden

Ans: (1) F. L. Lucas F.L. Lucas, in his study Tragedy in relation to Aristotle's Poetics, stresses the lasting authority of the Poetics.

38. In criticism, ... is a metaphor used by Aristotle in the Poetics to describe the effects of true tragedy on the spectator.

- (1) Anagnorisis
- (2) Catharsis
- (3) Imitation
- (4) Ethos

Ans: (2) Catharsis Catharsis — the purging or clarification of the emotions of pity and fear — is Aristotle's key explanation of tragedy's psychological and moral effect on the audience in the *Poetics*.

39. Aristotle's ideal tragic hero is a man who is:

- (1) Perfectly virtuous, yet still destroyed
- (2) Thoroughly wicked, and justly punished
- (3) A god punished by blind fate
- (4) Not wholly good, and falls by an error

Ans: (4) Not wholly good, and falls by an error The tragic hero is neither wholly good nor wholly bad; his misfortune comes through some hamartia or error of judgement (Poetics ch. 13).

40. How many elements of tragedy does Aristotle lay out in the *Poetics*?

- (1) 2
- (2) 6
- (3) 8
- (4) 10

Ans: (2) 6 Aristotle identifies **6 elements** of tragedy: Plot, Character, Diction, Thought, Spectacle, and Song (Melody) — ranked in that order of importance, with Plot being the most important and Spectacle the least.

41. The six elements of tragedy are: plot, character, diction, thought, and song. What is the sixth element?

- (1) Theme
- (2) Story
- (3) Spectacle
- (4) Review

Ans: (3) Spectacle The sixth and final element is **Spectacle** (opsis) — the visual staging and theatrical effect. Aristotle ranked it last because it depends on the stagecraft rather than the art of the poet, and can be achieved without reading the text.

42. Which tragedy does Aristotle repeatedly cite as the model of a well-made plot?

- (1) Antigone
- (2) Medea
- (3) Agamemnon
- (4) Oedipus the King

Ans: (4) Oedipus the King Aristotle praises Sophocles' Oedipus the King, where recognition and reversal coincide, as the finest example of tragic plotting.

43. In classical Greek, catharsis meant:

- (1) Purgation or cleansing
- (2) Dirt and defilement
- (3) Tragic turn
- (4) Spite and revenge

Ans: (1) Purgation or cleansing The Greek word *katharsis* (κάθαρσις) literally means purification or cleansing — in medical usage it referred to a purging of the body; Aristotle borrowed it to describe tragedy's emotional effect on the audience.

44. Choose the correct comments on Aristotle's *Poetics*:

- 1. Tragedy is addressed to an inferior public
 - 2. Epic is superior to tragedy
 - 3. Tragedy is superior to epic
 - 4. Epic is addressed to a cultivated audience
- (1) 1, 2 and 3 only
 - (2) 2, 3 and 4 only
 - (3) 1, 3 and 4 only
 - (4) 1 and 3 only

Ans: (3) 1, 3 and 4 only Aristotle argues that tragedy is superior to epic (statement 3), and that epic, with its breadth and length, suits a cultivated reading audience (statement 4), while tragedy (being more concentrated and performed) can address a wider, less cultivated public (statement 1).

45. Hamartia, anagnorisis, and peripeteia are the three key elements in:

- (1) A plot
- (2) An ode
- (3) A lyric
- (4) An epic

Ans: (1) A plot These three are Aristotle's key plot elements: *Hamartia* (the tragic flaw/error), *Anagnorisis* (the moment of recognition/discovery), and *Peripeteia* (the reversal of fortune) — all central to a well-constructed tragic plot.

46. Aristotle distinguishes the arts of imitation from one another by their:

- (1) Length, rhythm and metre
- (2) Authors, ages and nations
- (3) Plot, chorus and spectacle
- (4) Medium, objects and manner

Ans: (4) Medium, objects and manner In *Poetics* ch. 1–3, the arts differ in the medium they use, the objects they imitate, and the manner of imitation.