

THE *ΑΝΑΙΣΘΗΤΟΣ ΧΡΟΝΟΣ* IN ART (AN AESTHETICAL INTERPRETATION OF ARISTOTLE)

It is known that each object of «καλόν» is distinguished by: first regarding its content, that is, the subject by means of which the artist expresses his inner world (Theory of «Materialismus»); and, second, regarding the Species, that is the total of several external points through which the above object becomes known to us (Theory of «Formalismus»); for example the language monument besides its subject, has also the external features, the language, the style, the unity of the work, etc. The monument of Art has rhythm, colour, etc. In a passage of Aristotle the following is mentioned:

«Τὸ γὰρ καλὸν ἐν μεγέθει καὶ τάξει ἐστὶ, διὸ οὔτε πάμμικρον ἂν τι γένοιτο καλὸν ζῶον (συγχεῖται γὰρ ἡ θεωρία ἐγγὺς τοῦ ἀναισθήτου χρόνου γινομένη) οὔτε παμμέγεθες· οὐ γὰρ ἅμα ἡ θεωρία γίνεται, ἀλλ' οἴχεται τοῖς θεωροῦσι τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ ὅλον ἐκ τῆς θεωρίας, οἷον εἰ μυρίων σταδίων εἴη ζῶον»¹.

In the above passage of Aristotle it is shown that the philosopher from Stagira accepts the theory of the Species², namely of form, in which the sense of beauty is expressed by external elements and characteristics, as mentioned above; that is to say, that the meaning of beauty depends upon size and order. Consequently neither an extremely small animal can be beautiful, since its appearance is confused in a time that cannot be sensed; nor an extremely great one, since its appearance is not contemporary, for unity and totality of sight are missing for the spectators; for example, if it were an animal of two thousand kilometers.

Besides the above external elements, as concepts of shape and order, which determine the conception of beauty, there is even a third element, which is very closely related to the others, and that is the conception of «time», since without it, it is not possible, as we will see below, that something can be characterized as beautiful, even if the other two are provided.

It is also known that the two aforesaid conceptions, «shape» and «order», express mathematical meanings³, since the first, illustrating forms, as well as the second, expressing the proportion and in general the symmetry, can be presented in the form of numbers.

But the conception of time in Aristotle is a number and expresses the meaning of quantity, as the philosopher himself argues: «Ὁ χρόνος ἀριθμὸς κινήσεως κατὰ τὸ πρότερον καὶ τὸ ὕστερον· οὐκ ἄρα κίνησις ὁ χρόνος ἀλλ' ἡ ἀριθμὸν ἔχει ἢ κίνησις. σημεῖον δέ· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πλεῖον καὶ ἑλάττω κρίνομεν ἀριθμῷ, κίνησιν δὲ πλείω καὶ ἐλάττω χρόνῳ· ἀριθμὸς ἄρα τις ὁ χρόνος. ἐπεὶ δ' ἀριθμὸς ἐστὶ διχῶς (καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἀριθμούμενον καὶ τὸ ἀριθμητὸν ἀριθμὸν λέγομεν, καὶ ᾧ ἀριθμοῦμεν), ὁ δὲ χρόνος ἐστὶ τὸ ἀριθμούμενον καὶ οὐκ ᾧ ἀριθμοῦμεν, ἐστὶ δ' ἕτερον ᾧ ἀριθμοῦμεν καὶ τὸ ἀριθμούμενον»⁴. Then the conception of quan-

1. *Poetics*, 7.1450 b 36 -1451 a 3.

2. In modern times there is Herbart (1776-1841) appearing in favour of the Species aesthetic (Theory of «Formalismus»), while Hegel (1770-1831), Schelling (1775-1854), Schopenhauer (1788-1860) and Fr. Th. Vischer (1807-1887) represent exactly the contrary (Theory of «Materialismus»).

3. Cf. ARIST., *Metaph.*, M, 3,1078 a 31.

4. Cf. ARIST., *Physics*, Δ, 219 b 1 ff.



tity, that is of time, is mentioned in the conception of shape. One could add that the above conception of time, mentioned within the conception of shape, expresses and characterizes the meaning of «logical shape», that is the sense of the «determined», as Aristotle mentions in another passage «... τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ μέγιστα εἶδη τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὠρισμένον, ἃ μάλιστα δεικνύουσιν αἱ μαθηματικαὶ ἐπιστῆμαι»⁵. The third element, therefore, the «ἀναίσθητος χρόνος», is not the explanation of the first conception, that is to say of shape⁶.

But the above meaning of shape, being now in time a logical shape, that is to say, «determined», does not include in itself neither the meaning of «πάμμικρον», nor the meaning of «παμμέγεθες», and therefore it gives the meaning of proportion, that is of symmetry. But all these correspond to the second meaning, that is «Order», which indicates the meaning of symmetry.

Finally, the conception of the beautiful, as Aristotle argues in the aforesaid passage, coexists within the sense of symmetry, as expressing and indicating the above-mentioned concepts, but the sense of symmetry as well known, consists of a characteristical element of the external form of a work of Art.

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5. *Metaph.*, 6.1078 a 3 M, 3.

6. The «ἀναίσθητος χρόνος» characterizes only the conception of «πάμμικρον».

