

Aristotle's Poetics in medieval Arabic philosophy – Understanding drama without theatres

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Aristotle's Poetics was one of the later works of ancient Greek philosophy to be translated into Arabic (over Syriac) during the medieval translation movement, and it is perhaps the work by Aristotle studied the least in its Arabic reception. The lack of scholarly interest is mostly because the medieval Arabic world did not have theatres or dramatic genres which naturally made the transmission of terminology like tragedy and comedy difficult to transmit. At the same time, the medieval Arabic reception of the Poetics is influenced by the context theory,

namely the Neoplatonic assumption that the Rhetoric and Poetics were to be considered part of the Organon, and, consequently, that the Poetics should be considered one of Aristotle's logical works.

So, what remains in the text about drama and performance in the Arabic philosophical reception, and how was it perceived and applied in Arabic philosophy? This is part of my research project on the medieval Arabic commentaries on Aristotle's Poetics at Ludwig-Maximilian University, Munich.

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