

"School of Athens" - The figure of Aristotle

Post by "Cassius" of May 23, 2021 at 3:02 PM

Let's discuss the symbolism of the portrayal of Aristotle here.



Post by "Eikadistes" of May 23, 2021 at 11:19 PM

I believe ARISTOTLE is carrying his *Ethics*, an interesting choice since Plato (*to the left of Aristotle*) is carrying his seminal text of metaphysics, the dialogue *Timaeus*. Raphael **could** have chosen to have Aristotle carry a copy of his own *Metaphysics*, but, instead, has shifted the association of Aristotelian philosophy away from speculative metaphysics and toward practical ethics, thus, Aristotle gesturing **away** from Plato's Demiurge.

As a general note, blue tones (Aristotle's fabric) tend to represent the concepts of tranquility and grounded-ness, whereas red tones (like pink and orange) indicate romance and passion. This seems like an appropriate difference to point out between Aristotle and Plato: Plato wrote in poetic dialogues versus Aristotle's dry, logical prose. The blue is also complimented by Earth tones, another way for a Renaissance-era artist to distinguish the cultural archetype of Plato's Forms versus Aristotle's Nature.

Post by "Cassius" of May 24, 2021 at 7:39 AM

I came back here this morning to check to see if the figure of Aristotle appeared to be "walking." Portraying him that way would have been one of the most obvious allusions to Aristotle's school, yet Raphael apparently chose not to do that.