

Greek color theory

1) Concept of theory of 4 colors (ref. Pliny the elder. (Acero))

Quattro colors - use of red, black, white, yellow in certain paintings

(Maybe they connected these 4 colors to the 4 elements (fire, earth, water & air))

Plato said:

Color is an effluence from shapes which is

commensurate with sight & perceptible.

Thus, color is something that flows out of objects' surface from their shapes and their color/effluence is in a form that is compatible to our sense of sight.

Aristotle's theory

All colors originate from a combination of white & black

Transparent: What is visible & yet not visible but rather gives its visibility to the color

of something else; of the
character are air, water. &
many solid bodies.
↳ for ineterminate bodies
(without surfaces)

Determinate bodies (with surfaces)

When fire is present in
determinate body - it
produces white (absence of
producers black)

Plurality of colors

Mix black & white to
form new colors.

2 categories

- based on numerical ratio.
that are determinate
e.g. purple crimson
(let's say mix part
of black &
white) - ratio $3/2, 3/4$ etc.
- juxtaposed according to
no numerically expressible
ratio
(color not expressed
in rational number)

Sorabji groups Aristotelian
Colors into 3 groups



- Primary colors
 - white; Black
 - either gray or yellow
- Mixture of black & white (cimson, violet, sep-hue etc.)
- Secondary colors ↓ Irration ratios ↓ black & white

Aristotle thinks (acc. to Sorabji)

- Black & white - mixture in very simple ratios create agreeable colors like purple & crimson

For Aristotle

- Colors have the capacity to cause themselves to be seen
- Colors have powers - they

- Colors have a transparent
change in the surface
medium between the surface
having the color & the organ
of sight

- Sight is passive: our eyes
do not go & grab the colors -
they receive the effect
of the colors

[Color acts & sight receives]

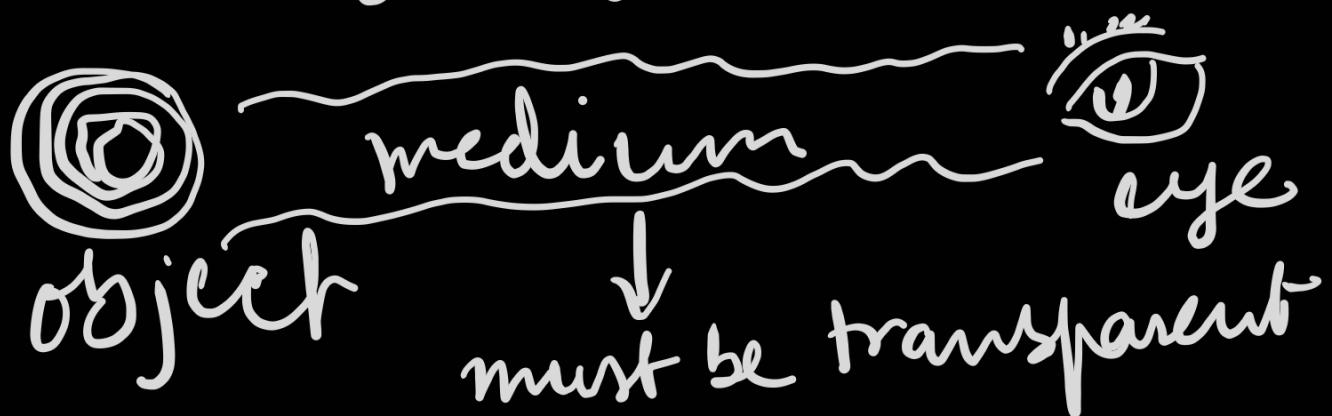
- Colors do not affect
inanimate objects but animals
can be affected by them: they
get info about the world that
is in habit.

they

In my understanding
(some help from A²)

Color is something that travels from the surface of objects (active) to our eye & give us info about the world we live in.

* According to Aristotle,
a. medium is required
in case of sight



Transparent nature of an

object (no separate existence
of its own, but residing in
objects)
→ power common to physical
bodies → for a body to be
transparent is for it to be
able to contain light

- for light to be present
in a body of air, there
must be fire/source of light

- Transparency & its
absence characterizes
both the medium & visible
objects seen through medium

Let it be an object
It needs to have
light to be transparent

Darkness → absence of light

* When sun is not present
& there is no source of light in
the vicinity, then a transparent
body is dark

- Body with no definite
boundaries (e.g. sky)

NO  FIXED COLOR
in the fixed

= Body in
boundary (determinate)

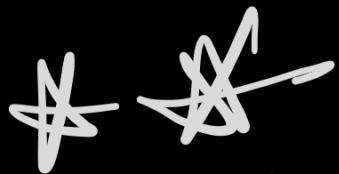
FIXED COLOR

For determinate bodies,
color is a property of the
colored object

Lopilot explanation

Light is not a substance but rather the actualization (activity) of a transparent medium (like air or water) when it is fully activated by

a source (like the sun)



* *
Bodies appear colored
because of the transparent
& its absence

- Difference b/w the care
of medium & that of a
physical object

Physical object, ^{that} has its
own color, has a surface

* Surface of a body
is fixed \rightarrow particular

in fire + combination of light & darkness in hot surface

is what we see when we see the color of an object

- fire produces light in indeterminate transparent body

- if the body is determinate what it (fire) produces is the primary color white

- in the case of an indeterminate medium, the absence of fire or a cause

like sun's face and
darkness]

whereas the condition
that results if the body has
a surface is called black

* Light : ability of
indeterminate transparent
medium

White : that fire
produces at the extremity
of a determinately
bounded transparent object

Black : produced at
the surface of an object
in absence of fire

by the air
or a kindred substance

SIMPLE COLORS

Belongs to elements

- Fire — Yellow
 - Water] → white
 - Air
- Earth - Naturally white

Primary colors -

- white
- Yellow
- Black

- For Aristotle, primary colors are black & white or dark & clear
- other colors: mixture of these 2 primaries
- simplest mixtures are white in integer ratios of clear to dark such as 3 to 2 or 1 to 3. These are the colors that are thought to be most pleasing

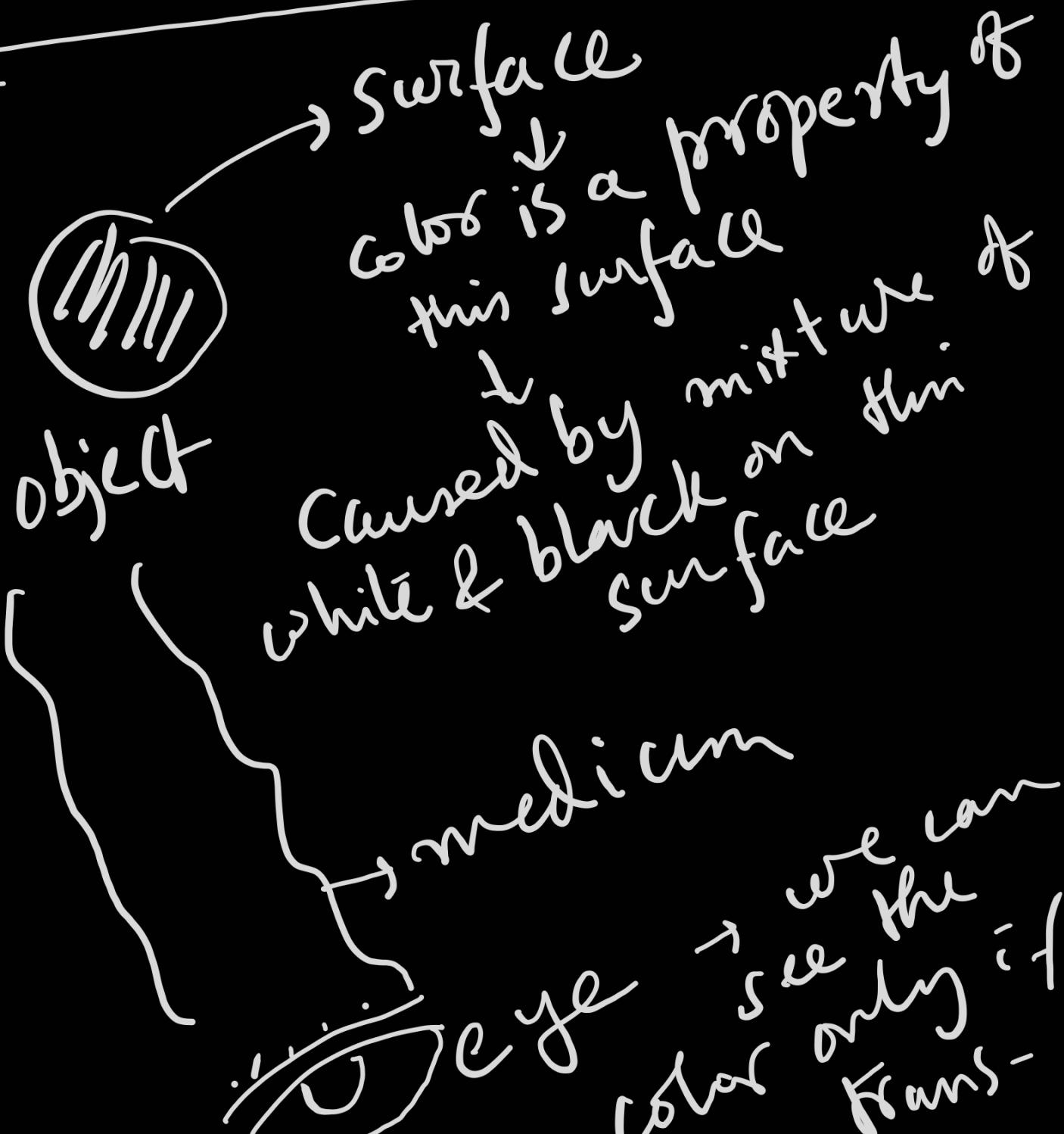
When we look at a determinately bounded body, we see what is a body.

Mixture of white & black
on its surface such
bodies are closed in virtue
of the condition of their
surface, their bounding limit

A color is The feature
of a surface, & since
color is the cause of
visibility, it follows that
the cause of visibility is
a per se attribute of
a surface

It has many other
that

features but all
is relevant to its
visibility is its specific
mixture of white &
black



There is a
parent media &
other in active -
sight in passive