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M.A. Thesis in Philosophy

June - 2014

# MIMESIS IN ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF ART

Thesis submitted to the  
Institute of Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Philosophy

by

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June 2014

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## **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

2. The program of advanced study of which this thesis is part has consisted of:

i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate study

ii) Examination of several thesis guides of particular universities both in Turkey and abroad as well as a professional book on this subject.

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## **ABSTRACT**

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**June 2014**

### **MIMESIS IN ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF ART**

The major attribute is theory of mimesis which differentiates Aristotle to other philosophers. In aesthetics the mimesis has a general concept which is imitating to nature and actions in art works. But, also it is an open concept for discussing. Because of that we especially see understanding of mimesis in art. The art can change with perception of artist or beholder and the object which is madding for art. Because of that when aesthetics is investigating to perception of art, it should be looking to art all sides of it. When we look at concept of mimesis, it can explain the good one for culture and people also it can find different comments for others perspectives. Therefore it finds a place of in art and science.

In the world there are some hidden things in nature and they are waiting for discovering. Artists are persons who, by conscious find a place in art. They imitate and represent various objects through the color and form. Another way is by the voice, they can feel the sounds. And the imitation is produced by rhythm, language, or harmony either singly or combined. Aristotle is most important philosopher for representation of art.

In dissertation, I will focus on perception of aesthetics and how this mimesis effects the fact of art. On this account, firstly I try to explain what is mimesis? What are the basic faculties of it in aesthetics and what are effects of aesthetics perception to fact of beauty. I will describe the basic underlying sense of catharsis and appreciation of an art also I focus for understanding to how these concepts effect to people and nature.

**Key Words:** Mimesis, Art, Beauty, Culture, Nature

## KISA ÖZET

**Berna KOCA**

**Haziran 2014**

### ARİSTO'NUN SANAT TEORİSİNDE TAKLİT

Taklit teorisinin büyük özelliği, Aristo'yu diğer filozoflardan ayırmasıdır. Estetikte taklit, sanat çalışmalarında doğayı ve insan eylemlerini taklit eden genel bir kavrama sahip. Fakat, aynı zamanda tartışılmaya açık bir kavram. Bu nedenle biz taklit anlayışını daha çok sanatta görüyoruz. Sanat, sanatçının ya da seyircisinin bakış açısıyla sanat için yapılan objenin değişimidir. Bu nedenle, estetik sanat algısını sorgularken, ona bütün taraflarından bakmalı. Taklit kavramına baktığımızda kültür ve insan için en iyi olan olarak tanımlanır, ayrıca farklı bakış açıları ile yeni yorumlar bulabilir. Bu yüzden bilim ve sanatta kendine bir yer bulur.

Dünya da doğada gizlenmiş bazı saklı şeyler var ve onlar keşfedilmek için bekliyorlar. Sanatçılar da bu şeyleri akıl ile sanatta yer bulan kişiler.

In the world there are some hidden things in nature and they are waiting for discovering. Çeşitli objeleri renk ve form olarak taklit ve temsil eder. Başka bir yolu da sesle, onlar sesleri doğuştan yetenekleri ile hissedebilirler. Ve taklit ritim, dil, ya da uyum tarafından tek başına ya da bir arada üretilmektedir. Aristo taklidin sanatta ki temsili için en önemli filozoftur.

Tez de, taklit algısı ve bu taklidin sanatta nasıl etkili olduğu üzerinde duracağım. Bu bağlamda, öncelikle taklidin ne olduğunu anlatacağım. Estetik içinde onun nasıl özelliklere sahip olduğu ve güzellik gerçeğinin estetik kavramında nasıl etkili olduğuna yoğunlaşacağım. Katharsis duygusunun altında yatan temel anlamı ve takdir olarak bir sanata yoğunlaşırken bu kavramların doğa ve insan üzerindeki etkilerini tanımlayacağım.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Taklit, Sanat, Güzellik, Kültür, Doğa

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| Ed., Eds. | Editor(s)     |
| Rep.      | Republic      |
| Trans.    | Translated by |
| BCE.      | Before Christ |

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I gratefully acknowledge all those who has contributed to the preparation of this guide. It is hard to say what I feel but, firstly I am really indebted to my thesis advisor Yrd. Doç. Dr. Stephen Daniel Snyder. He was the best guidance with his ideas, help and support. Also, he was a friend for me who kept me in the right way during to all my work.

Secondly, I owe my special thanks to Yrd. Doç. Dr. David Donald Butorac for all his advices and helps what motivated to me for continuing. In addition, I am thankful to Prof Dr. Andreas Günter Hetzel and Yrd. Doç. Dr. Martin Cyr Hicks I am happy for all their suggestions for my studies on thesis and presentation. I am thankful to all these people who took place during to process of my defense, writing, and searching.

Finally, I am also grateful to my family Nihat Koca and Fatma Koca for supporting my education and their encouragement throughout my education life. Also, my grandma Zehra Kılıç had a special place in my life and she was very helpful during my education process of complete to my thesis.

**CHAPTER I**  
**INTRODUCTION**  
**MIMESIS IN ARISTOTLE’S THEORY OF ART**

*“A good poem helps to change the shape and significance of the universe, helps to extend everyone's knowledge of himself and the world around him.”*

Dylan Thomas

When we look at the idea of mimesis, we see that Plato points to the heavens, to the ideal world of the Forms. On the other hand, Aristotle is shown with his hand open toward the earth. In the side of art the painting, we see Raphael’s important work of “School of Athens” which represents to Plato and Aristotle and this painting explains their intellectual world and differentiates their ideal perspectives. Because of that, these kinds of paintings show how passionate Renaissance intellectuals were about the views and achievements of the ancient Greeks and Romans. It also accurately portrays the difference between Plato and Aristotle. It's a difference that shows up in their approaches to the arts. Aristotle mentions all his ideas and critiques of Plato’s theory of art in his book of *Poetics*. According to them, both the poet imitates nature, thus, a work of art is a reflection of nature. Plato and Aristotle come from same manner about function of mimesis in art and

poet. But they focus on the different sides of form in the artwork; is the form in the matter of real things or is it in the ideal world?

In literature, the word 'mimesis' has two diverse applications; it is used "to define the nature of literature and other arts and to indicate the relation of one literary work, which serves as a model" (Abrams, M.H., *Glossary of Literary Terms*, p.89). Aristotle and Plato define mimesis to the nature of art. This meaning of mimesis includes side of literature.

Like Plato, Aristotle thought that art involved imitation (*mimesis*), though on this point as on many others he was flexible and allowed for exceptions. He also thought harder than Plato about what art imitated. For example, he says that Tragedy is an imitation "not of persons but of action and life, of happiness and misery" (Poetics 1451b).

All these ideas about mimesis and art are developed in connection with the arts in Aristotle's *Poetics*. Rather than shying away from Greek drama, as Plato did, because of the way that it arouses the passions, Aristotle embraced this characteristic. One famous element of his aesthetics is his theory of the catharsis, or purging of the emotions "through pity and fear", that is accomplished by a tragedy. While he does not develop this theory at any length, it has had a lot of influence. Aristotle does seem to have believed that this emotional catharsis was a good thing, and thus he seems to have embraced an aspect of the arts that Plato rejected.

The idea of catharsis is important as it is the idea that art portrays the universal, "not a thing that has been, but a kind of thing that might be." When

Aristotle was explaining tragedy, he stated that it is the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories. In addition, each kind of imitation of action brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, when Plato is explaining mimesis in *Republic*, it is a bad thing and is problematic. For Plato in an epistemological way, an imitation is at three removes from the reality or truth of something. Plato mentions imitation in lots of different ways: theological poets and other artists represent the gods in inappropriate ways. When Plato was differentiating mimesis, he followed a systematical way. I understand that this makes him clear about understanding to problems of mimesis. Another problem is psychological and moral which is that a good imitation can undermine the stability of even the best humans by making us feel sad, depressed, and sorrowful about life itself.

Aristotle gives answers to Plato's problematic definitions. In Aristotle's *Poetics*, art is imitation and that is all right, even good. In addition, imitation is natural to humans from childhood. From this point I understand that imitation has an educational side which is how children learn, and we all learn from imitations. Also, tragedy can be a form of education that

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1449b.24

provides moral insight and fosters emotional growth. So, can we ask that what is tragedy? Tragedy is the imitation (*mimesis*) of certain kinds of people and actions. But, in tragedy there are some rules which are the essential characters of the tragedy for writing a good tragedy. Good tragedies must have certain sorts of people and plots. If I explain in an example, good people experience a reversal of fortune due to some failing. In conclusion, a good tragedy produces a catharsis in the audience. Catharsis is a kind of purification through pity and fear.

When we look at Aristotle's theory of catharsis, it represents purification and education in art. So we do not get away from our feelings, we make noble our mind with our experiences. We desire personal improvement beyond ordinary. For Aristotle, art is good in itself which artwork experienced by man. The process of creating artwork can be good for art product or artist but at the same time creating process has an aim of product for art. If so creating process has decided by an aim which has been out of to control to artwork. In this context, Aristotle's ascription about oratory is right, it is an instrument for to be heard. Aristotle's approach is more positive than Plato.

In this thesis, I will examine the question of whatever art is a passive copy of nature or an active construction that is world formative. Specially, I will examine the notion of art as a lesser copy of nature that non the-less can bring about harmony and or develop the faculty of mind based on Aristotle's

claim that art with the edition of intellect presents a puzzle which is educational and enjoyable.

Art emerges as a process in history. Therefore, we cannot say same idea of art exists for each era. Because every era has its own view in artists, I mean with that every artist has their own view but they come together in a common view in their era. Meaning of aesthetics articulations in history, artists initiate a process of social interaction which is both analytical and critical. Danto's theory of art shows how the changing morphology of contemporary art can be understood in terms of its post-history.

When I look at the side of Plato, I understand that the beautiful is gleam of the truth. Therefore, the art as mimesis cannot be truly beautiful, thus excluding art from ideals for Plato. According to my view again, the mimesis is the imitations of particular human and animal actions. At the same time the artists should not break his bond with world of ideas. When artist is doing an artwork, he should be aware of his society. In a society if we do not recognize human needs, we cannot know what give to its members. Because of this, we should not expel artwork from our society. If the artist removes his/her artwork from his/her society, this situation makes him/her incomprehensible and artwork becomes meaningless. The artist does not submit to anyone's appreciation of works of art. So, the artwork and artist must be a whole, and they must reflect their own cultures and other humans.

## CHAPTER II

### MIMESIS IN ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF ART

#### ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF ART

##### 1. Plato's Critique of Poetry and the Mimetic Arts

In this part, I will focus on the notion of imitation in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Plato and Aristotle come from the same generation of Ancient Greek thinking in regard to the application of mimesis in art and poetry. Nonetheless, they have different views on the applications of imitation in art and literature. Plato postulated the existence of the ideal world, in which there exists a real form for every object found in nature. For this reason, a work of art which reflects nature is a copy of a copy, it is less real. On the other hand, Aristotle did not agree with Plato's conception of the ideal world, and he understands the forms to have a place in the material world. Aristotle asserts that a work of art does not imitate nature as it is, but as it would be. In this sense, Aristotle's idea tells us that an artist's activity should not diminish the truth but reflects a more philosophical account of reality.

##### **Plato's Life**

Plato was born in Athens in 428/27 BCE. Athenian culture was flourishing, and as Plato's family was outstanding in Athens, his early education included the rich constituent of that culture's politics, philosophy and art. Plato became a student of Socrates and after that he developed his ideas in the book *Republic*. Around 387 BCE, when he was about 40 years old, Plato founded the Academy of Athens.

Plato's Academy took an important place because it was the first university to come out in the history of Western Europe. Also for 20 years, Plato masterminded its affairs as its director. When Plato was lecturing at the Academy, he did not use of notes because his lectures were never written and they were never published.<sup>2</sup> What comes to us today are notes which were circulated by his students. "Aristotle, for example, who entered the Academy in 367 BCE, when he was 18 years old, took notes of Plato's lectures."<sup>3</sup> Aristotle's approach was different than Plato's: it was an empirical method. In addition, this empirical method affected his philosophical outlook, he found it useful for research and for his way of formulating scientific concepts. He had different interests from Plato therefore in 335/34 BCE Aristotle founded a new school for lecturing his own ideas. Aristotle formulated his main ideas about the classification of the sciences, fashioned a bold new science of logic, and wrote his advanced ideas in every major area of philosophy and science, exhibiting an extraordinary command of universal knowledge.<sup>4</sup>

According to Janko from his "Introduction" to Aristotle's *Poetics*, Plato talks about four issues when he was criticizing to poetry. Plato's first critique says that the poet does not use to reason, and because of that she composes from inspiration. When we look at his second critique, he believed that poetry is not good, because it teaches the wrong things period. He also, mentions this criticism of Homer's epics. About the third criticism, he believed that poetry is mimesis; the object it points to is not real, so it is an imitation of the objects. These things are a

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<sup>2</sup> Stephen Halliwell, 'Plato', in D.E Cooper (ed.), *A Companion to Aesthetics*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, p.337.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper, John M., ed., *Plato: Complete Works* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Barnes, Jonathan ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984).

copy of a copy, and for this reason, poetry moves away from reality. And last criticism is that poetry encourages the emotions of those who perform or listen to it, so our emotions weaken things that our reason. When we focus on the side of our emotions, they soften our capacity of reason. Because of this poetry is dangerous for us. All of these issues demonstrate that poetry is diminishing to our rational skills.<sup>5</sup>

While, Plato was explaining his ideas he used several allegories which indicate and show to his ideas. Looking at, Plato's conversation in *The Republic* Book 6 (509D-513E), the dialogue explains the literary application of the *divided line* to introduce the fundamental philosophical ideas in the four steps of observation. This shows the forms of existence through which knowledge is achieved regarding what subsists, or arrives at simple ideas regarding what exists. In addition, the allegory of the divided line is mirrored in the allegory of the cave.

In the *Republic*, Plato was defining some periods which are consisting to the *Divided Line*<sup>6</sup>:

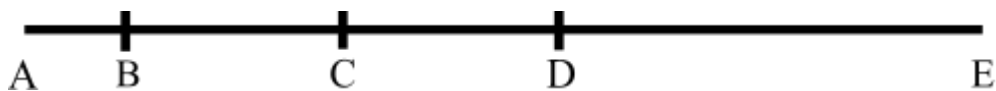


Figure 1: *Divided Line*

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<sup>5</sup> Janko, *Plato's Challenge to Poetry*, Intro.2, 1987.

<sup>6</sup> The Divided Line (AC) is generally takes as representing the visible world and (CE) as representing the intelligible world.

When, we look this dialogues we can clearly understand to Plato's point:

“Now take a line which has been cut into two unequal parts, and divide each of them again in the same proportion, and suppose the two main divisions to answer, one to the visible and the other to the intelligible, and then compare the subdivisions in respect of their clearness and want of clearness, and you will find that the first section in the sphere of the visible consists of images. And by images I mean, in the first place, shadows, and in the second place, reflections in water and in solid, smooth and polished bodies and the like

Do you understand?

Yes, I understand.

Imagine, now, the other section, of which this is only the resemblance, to include the animals which we see, and everything that grows or is made.”<sup>7</sup>

In this way, AB exemplifies things on the wall what we call shadows and the outline of bodily matter. Then, when we look at the BC, it exemplifies the bodily matter itself. All of this acknowledges there are two types of perspective understanding, that is to say the notion about bodily stuffs, the other is about shadow what is an illusion and also, which is not actually subsisting. Later, Plato changes this structure, “In the *Timaeus*, Plato includes the natural sciences in the category of belief, while the category of illusion includes all the ‘opinions of which the minds of ordinary people are full.’”<sup>8</sup> When we look at the side of soul part, Plato mentions that, “There are two subdivisions, in the lower of which the soul uses the figures given by the former division as images; the enquiry can only be hypothetical, and instead of going upwards to a principle descends to the other end; in the higher of the

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<sup>7</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, Book 6, translated by Benjamin Jowett.

<sup>8</sup> Desmond Lee and Rachana Kamtekar, *The Republic*, Notes to Book 6, Penguin, 1987.

two, the soul passes out of hypotheses, and goes up to a principle which is above hypotheses, making no use of images as in the former case, but proceeding only in and through the ideas themselves.’’<sup>9</sup>

While, we look at Plato’ allegory of cave, he concludes that the common operation human thinking and speaking is reached without cognition, so he argues there is no control at this level from the *Forms*. Another major aim of Plato’s allegory of the cave is to clarify the process and reaction to humankind’s becoming aware. When, looking at his allegory he compares human beings illiterate in terms of his theory of *Forms* to men who are shackled in the cave, helpless because they are turning their heads away from reality. At the same time, their sole observation is the wall of the cave. On the back side of the prisoners, a fire burns and there is also a parapet which throws shadows on the walls somewhere between the fire and the prisoners. The prisoners cannot move because they are helpless to observe to the original that form the images of shadow that cross from behind them. In this way, the prisoners just come to know and observe the things which are shadows on the wall and the sounds of shapes which come by object they do not see.



Figure 2. *Allegory of the Cave*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> At Perseus Project: *Plato's Republic*: Translated by Paul Shorey (1935).

This deception is a fault of perspective reality in general. The prisoners could not be sure about the originality of what they see and observe on the walls of cave; what is real or what is not. Also, the uncertain status of the things on the wall makes them skeptical about the real reasons behind things and the shadows. Plato had an answer in the Book 7 of the *Republic* at line of 515b2:

*“And if they could talk to one another, don’t you think they’d suppose that the names they used applied to the things they see passing before them?”*

Another point of Plato makes in regard to the chained men who are errantly accepting the sayings about things observed on the wall in their language is that before they see something different, which is a shadow of real objects on the wall, they ascribe a meaning to these objects based on mere appearances. After, they break the chains, they see some real things that cross the shadows. When, we look at the aim of Plato in the *Republic*, it is explaining the thing or matter that is essential for us to reach understanding of the real meaning of the differentiation things. However, when if we do not become aware of this understanding of differentiation, it negatively affects our capability to think about and understand the *Forms*.

According to Kosman, the major issue concerning the aesthetics of Plato is looking for the real meaning or essence of the reflected things and the problems that come with aesthetics. For these reasons we should look at his dialogues in order to find an explanation for how to differentiate aesthetics in objects from what makes them special to beauty. From the Classical Greek generation we understand that all

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<sup>10</sup> *From Great Dialogues of Plato* (Warmington and Rous, eds.) New York, Signet Classics:1999., P.316.

philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, who were the most famous ones, as well as other followers of Greek morality, the *beautiful* has a specific place in ethical reception.<sup>11</sup> Because of this we see that the *Symposium* has an important place because it includes Plato's other major analysis of beauty.

When we look at Socrates' reference to his teacher Diotima in the *Symposium*, it concerns the issue of love. I understood Socrates to mean that for her, every existing thing in the universe associates with beauty. According to him, she articulated the progress of the soul which takes inspiration from purer beauty. Socrates said that "she calls beauty the object of every love's yearning." His teacher stated that the improvement of the soul progresses from "every purer beauty from one body to all, then through all beautiful souls, laws, and kinds of knowledge, to arrive at beauty itself" (210a-211d). All these discussions of Socrates and his teacher about the beautiful recommend that works of art are assumed to be beautiful things to us. Also, she explains, "the poet's task as the begetting of wisdom and other virtues" (209a). But on the other hand, the *Symposium* looks formulated to treat anything but a poem as an image of beauty.

Plato's work *Republic*, on the other hand, includes different images of Plato's resistance to associate beauty with poetry. When, we look poetry's first dialogue, this includes education of the youth. The poems should be censored if they have a negative effect, seducing the young generation (377b-398b). Besides, Socrates was talking about the education of society's youth for the meaning of beauty. The guardians are looking for something which can be a model for development and in this sense the works of Socrates and Plato provide a kind of guiding path for youths.

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<sup>11</sup> (Aryeh Kosman, *Plato and Aristotle: Genesis of Western Thought*, 2010, 348-350).

By supporting this point with his words, he then says: “their taste for beauty will help them prefer noble deeds over ugly vulgar ones” (401b-d, 403c). From, all this information we understand that our fundamental idea depends on understanding Platonic beauty, what Plato refers to as the pleasures and beauty. When, we look at the idea of Plato, he sees no antinomy between the goals of philosophy and pleasures carried in true formal beauty. In *Symposium* for Plato the most important thing is the *Form* and there is no other important thing; the beauty of the *Form* is enough. For him, philosophers believe that we can arrive at supreme knowledge through the experience of formal beauty. I mean with this, that the experience of beauty opens to our deepest love and it is a way of uncovering our inside explorations. And this kind of love is a supreme knowledge of beauty, because of that it is perfect and pure.

For Plato, the most important thing is the ‘*Forms*’ and *Forms* are that which we can apprehend only with our intellect and not with our senses. From this theory, which is mimetic we understand that Plato concluded that art relates to our world of appearances in the same way that our world of appearances relates to the world of the *Forms*. When we look at Aristotle’s view, he sees mimesis is a representation of human action in nature. For him this is the subject of the art. In contrast, Plato says everything real is in the ideal world, therefore, this sensible world is an imitation; what we call mimesis.

When, I look at the Plato, he was talking about the meaning of the arts and he thought that arts are strong shapers of personality. In this way, to teach and maintain in the citizens for the foundation of an ideal society which must include the precise controlling of the arts. In art, Plato considers the negative effects of mimesis in politics as an ethical problem. Aristotle uses mimesis as a positive aesthetic

phenomenon. Plato and Aristotle just come together agreeing that the idea of poetry is mimetic, but both of them have different ideas about mimesis and poetry. Aristotle defines mimesis such that it adds value and meanings to the nature of the art object.

Plato's theory includes art as an imitation. This is seen in the short early dialogue, the *Ion*. Socrates is interrogating a poet named *Ion*, who rehearses Homer's poetry extraordinarily but is no good at rehearsing any other poet. At this point, Socrates is confused by this because it appears to him that if *Ion* has an art, or skill, of reciting poetry, thus he should be able to implement his skilled knowledge in his performance of other poets as well. Therefore, he accomplishes that *Ion* does not actually have skilled knowledge. Rather, when he recites Homer, he must be inspired by a god.<sup>12</sup>

In the Ancient era philosophers and Plato were referring to praise of glory in society and philosophy, but in time they searched for a new concept. This concept was aesthetic beauty because in it they fall in a deep passionate dependence. "The glory was a concept of life which includes pain, war and rigor, we see it just in Homer's poets and tradition of Sparta."<sup>13</sup> When we think about the Homer, the *Iliad and Odyssey* takes a place of great importance. Thus, the criticisms of this epic poetry did not win acceptance until 350 BC. It is clear that Plato's ideas of beauty were not shared with Homer. It seems that Plato's life was a long journey looking for ideal world, the aim of which was to find what was good, true and beautiful. If we focus on love of war, we could not see love of beauty in our imagination.

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<sup>12</sup> Pappas, *Ion*, 534a-e.

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert Murray: *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, 4th ed. 1934, Oxford University Press reprint 1967 p. 299.

Socrates made the point in the *Republic*: that “Plato and his brothers Glaucon and Adeimantus might have to inform poetry about the ancient quarrel between it and philosophy.”<sup>14</sup> Glaucon was a mainly proverbial and familiar character in the *Republic* with Socrates as well he was an interlocutor throughout Plato’s Allegory of the Cave. In addition, Adeimantus was another character who discussed how of the guardians should be involved with happiness as representatives in an ideal city. He argues, that they would have a good live provided that they had been living in a good life which was ordinary and entailed no personal belongings. As a result, Adeimantus is frequently presented with having greediness while exhibiting a deep love for money in Plato’s dialogue. All around, Adeimantus appears to be still prudential and broadminded, yet he is not more imaginative than his brother Glaucon. Plato’s brothers show no disapproval of Socrates’ opinion on the constitution of the ideal state. All these conversations of Socrates, and other similar considerations, lead us to the following idea that Plato most likely invented this quarrel. Anyway, we do not see any evidence of it before him. This is an important starting point for understanding Plato's conception of philosophy and poetry as disciplinary names for what had been long standing cultural values. Also, the existence of *Forms* takes an important place in his dialogues which makes Plato’s separation of poetry and philosophy different from other philosophers in the ancient quarrels.

A conversation in *Republic* Book 10, 597b-d;

“Let us take any common instance; there are beds and tables in the world plenty of them, are there not?  
Yes.

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<sup>14</sup> Gould, T., *The Ancient Quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.

But there are only two ideas or forms of them one the idea of a bed, the other of a table.

True.

And the maker of either of them makes a bed or he makes a table for our use, in accordance with the idea that is our way of speaking in this and similar instances, but no artificer makes the ideas themselves: how could he?

Impossible.

And there is another artist, I should like to know what you would say of him.

Who is he?

One who is the maker of all the works of all other workmen. What an extraordinary man! Wait a little, and there will be more reason for your saying so. For this is he who is able to make not only vessels of every kind, but plants and animals, himself and all other things the earth and heaven, and the things which are in heaven or under the earth; he makes the gods also.”

and this conversation shows a skeptical view about creation of the things. But it is not about creation, all levels exhibit a way of creation. I understand with this that for Plato all visible things are a representation of the real world and a painter is just creator of appearances. So everything in the world and all art products of artist are just semblance of the existence.

For Plato poetry is an art. Based on this idea, Plato’s philosophy of ‘Art’ is mimesis, which is one of these disturbingly indefinite concepts. When we look at in general the arts for Plato are strongly critiqued, because from his perspective, artistic activity is merely an imitation of an imitation. Consequently, what I understand from the point of Plato is that the artistic efficiency is actually nothing more than a blossom out, a growth which, however, is perilously appealing.

Every society like Roman, Greek, or Byzantium has their own identity, cultural terms, values and view of art. When we examine Plato’s society, he experienced the influences of mimesis in the way human beings have been touched by art. Therefore, in the area of art, Plato’s exhaustive view in *The Republic* is to

reject mimetic art as something bad, as not rating of presentment. Plato has required that admittance of mimetic art, be refused as imitation of bad models would degrade the *Republic*. A part from *Republic* Book 10, 601b-c:

“Then the imitative poet who aims at being popular is not by nature made, nor is his art intended, to please or to affect the principle in the soul; but he will prefer the passionate and fitful temper, which is easily imitated? Clearly.

And now we may fairly take him and place him by the side of the painter, for he is like him in two ways: first, inasmuch as his creations have an inferior degree of truth in this, I say, he is like him; and he is also like him in being concerned with an inferior part of the soul; and therefore we shall be right in refusing to admit him into a well ordered State, because he awakens and nourishes and strengthens the feelings and impairs the reason. As in a city when the evil are permitted to have authority and the good are put out of the way, so in the soul of man, as we maintain, the imitative poet implants an evil constitution, for he indulges the irrational nature which has no discernment of greater and less, but thinks the same thing at one time great and at another small—he is a manufacturer of images and is very far removed from the truth.”

When, we look at Plato’s book of *Republic*, this shows all Plato’s criticisms about mimesis. His allegory of cave is the world of shadows. The whole system of this allegory is a kind of shadow, it is not real because we cannot touch a shadow. The world which we perceive with our senses is not real, we can understand it just poetry with our reason.<sup>15</sup> This type of poetry and all other arts rely on to mimesis.

When we look at the aim of Plato’s criticisms of poetry, we reach the essence of poetry in the idea of Plato. In his *Republic* he focused on the inflammatory nature of the art, and he claims that, state order should be oriented around virtue and common sense. Therefore the person should be restraining his excitement but art stirs up to our pleasure and feelings so it is dangerous for us. For this reason, he we

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<sup>15</sup> Barfield, *The Ancient Quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy*, 2011.

should approach art carefully. Plato's idea emphasizes this side of art, but it can be shown to restrain our pleasure with virtue and wisdom. Thus my critique addresses the good side of art. This cannot be achieved from Plato's negative view. In the course of time, people become unsatisfied and they look for new pleasures like becoming immortal which is the representation of goodness and beauty. In addition these kinds of desires and claims drag us into a deep darkness. Therefore we arrive at a position of the artist in human life; the artist should be reflecting beauty to people. In my mind art is to reaching pure beauty in the wake of Eros and also, we should discover its educational side. For example, when we look at the branches of art, music directly confronts the human's soul and good music feeds courage, justice and wisdom. On the other hand, a poet should tell good things to people in rhyme and meter. When I look at the perspective of Plato, he gave an important role to poetry and ideal poetry should commend and sublimate moral values. Also, the gods just give favor to us and they do not do an injustice. As a result, Plato's idea of a state based on the doctrine of the *Forms* results in an ideal system of the state that excludes art except for the benefit of the arts for youths. On the one hand, he underestimates the positive role of imitation in art, on the other hand, he needs art for education of youths.

## **2. Aristotle`s Aesthetics: *The Poetics* as a Response to Plato**

The origins of aesthetics owe much to the Greek thinkers. The meaning of aesthetics entails feelings, perception and sensations. Aesthetics began with Plato but it found meaning with Aristotle. For this reason, I will focus on Aristotle in this part. In *Republic* Plato talked about the ideal world but he did not show where the ideal world to was. In response, Aristotle tried to show that ideal world when he was teaching in school of Lyceum.

The Greek philosopher Aristotle was born in 384 B.C at Stagira in Greece and also his father was physician to the King of Macedon. He was sent to Athens at age seventeen to complete his education. There he joined Plato`s Academy; he was a student there and then he began to lecturing. After the death of Plato he moved to Assos near Troy where two of Plato`s disciples had set up a college with the local ruler`s encouragement. He died on island of Euboea at age sixty two.

One of the first discussions about idea of beauty is found in the writings of Plato. In *Symposium*, Plato discussed some characteristics of beauty. My criticism of Plato is that he views sensual beauty as his own glory of power found in praise, for all that, real creativeness and innovation comes from taking pleasure to beauty. The things that give pleasure to us but it depends to our creativeness and ability. At this point, instead of the love of beauty, Plato combines the love of beauty with creativeness and awareness. In think as a result, the love of beautiful things are included the creativeness of intelligence and the capability of hands. In the account of Aristotle, beauty takes place in the equal predicament what consists of idea of God and idea about their essence and absolute existence (Spinoza, *Stanford*, 2.1., 2001).

For this reason, beauty is absolute for all time and also valid in all conditions. So, beauty results as an achievement of theoretical reason. Aristotle considers beauty an order and concordance. All the different forms of matter are in an order in the universe and because of their material they can be beautiful. Besides all this information about beauty, I understand that beauty has a precious place in the universe and when we see a beautiful thing we try to keep it in safe because our sensations find body with its existence. But our actions are not about necessity because they are just impulse what makes us to feeling interest on beauty. At the same time, when we are talking about beauty, we should look for it's meaning in the particular arts or we should be aware about kinds of what we experience in artwork.

When, we look at a part of *Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita De Divinis Nominibus*, it supports my explanation of my point about beauty:

“One should distinguish between beauty and beautifulness as the cause embracing at once all beauty. For, having made this distinction in all being between participation and things participating, we call beautiful the thing which participates in beautifulness, because from it is imparted to all reality the beauty appropriate to everything, and also because it is the cause of proportion and brilliance” (Tatarkiewicz, *History of Aesthetics*, 1970: 33).

When, we look at Aristotle, he considers, like Plato, that art entailed imitation. But his understanding of mimesis was very different, and for this reason his theory was more flexible and allowed for exceptions to Plato's rules. In addition, Aristotle thought more in depth than Plato about what art imitated. For instance, Aristotle tells that “Tragedy is an imitation not of person but of action and life, of happiness and misery” (*Poetics*, 1451b). In this point, what I understood from the ideas of Aristotle is that human characteristics take shape around passions like fear

and anger or feelings that and are trained and evolve over time. These kinds of characteristic effects come together as a result of our psychological state. Likewise, in artistic creativity, as emotions are trained, innate talent must be combined with practical knowledge and emotional development.

“The *Poetics*’ treatment of tragic pity and fear as the basis of a special form of pleasure and the wider principle that the pleasure derived from mimetic works of art rests on an underlying process of comprehension” (*Poetics*, p.80-83, 10-13, trans. Gerald F. Else, University Of Michigan Press, 2000). Before Aristotle, the term catharsis was used in many different contexts but when; we look at Aristotle’s idea of catharsis, it is a kind of purgation which is a remedial activity for our minds. And Aristotle appears to equate the subsequent catharsis with the essential tragic pleasure that pity and fear induce (*Poetics*, 1453b11). According to Aristotle, the poet has something like a story he or she is waiting tell to us. For him or her the poem is rational and we can have cognitions about it. Contrary to Aristotle, Plato had wanted to ban poetry Aristotle’s claims are intended to disprove Plato’s thoughts that claim what poets say are ignorant and created from inspiration which for him indicate that poetry produces falsehoods. In addition, Aristotle does not agree with Plato, because Plato said that in *Republic*, “poetry’s inherent makes it irrational” (605c). According to Janko, Aristotle thought that poetry is rational and mimesis is a representation (*Poetics* 2, 1448a1). In representing, the actions of human beings, poetry is able to carry general truths about our situation, ones incorporate with that which is necessary and probable. Moreover, the purgation reading presumes that everyone needs to be liberated from passion, but Aristotle’s ethics call for neither the celebration of the passions nor their expurgation but their regular and well regulated expression

(*Nicomachean Ethics*, II.1109a25-29). Therefore, Aristotle rejects Plato's idea about the distinction between reason and passions.

Aristotle was concerned with establishing that arts like poetry can benefit both understanding and emotions. Also, *Poetics* shows the correct way of configuring plots and the true value of art in relation to our associated capacities for feelings and understanding. In my way of thinking, poetry recalls our pity, happiness and fear from our past. In addition, I see poetry looks like an outlet of our emotions. I think, all these direct us to read and write more, poetically, we become more open to new feelings and ideas...new points of view from different people. Taking the perspective of another is essential for moral action. Poetry has been well considered and appreciated historically even poetry of different epochs. Ancient texts and legends show the greatest expression of emotion and imaginative descriptions of physical reality. We should contemplate its almost endless shape in regard to all branches of the arts from music to painting, from simple wordplay to physical expression. All of these tools of art show different characteristics of feeling. Also, when we look the poetry, we see it in the way one talks or even walks and the way one feels or lives. All these things taken into consideration, I agree with the idea of Aristotle's poetry.

As Janko tells us, Aristotle looks at poetry differently than his teacher Plato and he gives answers to Plato's four critiques of poetry in three points. First, poetry is a skill or art that we call *techné* which can be learned with rules comprehensible by reason. In addition, *Poetics* itself is a guide to how to make a good tragedy so it is not made through inspiration, it is a *techné*. The second, point is that poetry is a mimesis of reality, but a useful one from which we learn, this point answers Plato's

second and third critiques. This claim argues that not a copy of a copy, but a representation, which to Aristotle adds to reality. And the third point, poetry does work by arousing the emotions of the audience but this can be beneficial by appealing to the educational side of emotions. This point is consistent with catharsis and Aristotle argues that we can learn about reality from art, while Plato believes that art deceives us. In addition poetry represents generalized statements which are quasi universal (Janko, *Aristotle: Poetic*, Intro.7, 1897).

I agree with Aristotle, that mimesis comes naturally to us, like rhythm and melody in the earliest times. This capacity of mimesis is a special natural talent which brings us into the world of poetry when we deeply feel what the poet tells us. We can ask the question ‘how can we feel the poetry?’ My answer is the feelings of the artist because when he is writing he follows his senses. The artist looks to his or her environment. Their feelings do not come spontaneously it takes place through a process and great toil. The artists have ability from birth but they are unaware of their natural talent. When the artist becomes aware of his ability, he educates himself with reason, nature and his society. In addition there is an order in nature; things live in a harmony. If you expel a being from nature, the balance breaks down. Can you imagine an ocean without water? May be you can imagine but it is far from reality. If you want to do this in the imagination it should be reasonable or should evoke a feeling of people. Likewise, if we want to write a good tragedy, it should be within an order and have boundaries. When we throw out a part of tragedy, the whole of tragedy should not change and we should not get far from the main issues. The concern of form is nothing less than the structuring and shaping of poetic meaning in the view of Aristotle. If we look at content of tragedy, its patterns of suffering

explore the experience of limitation upon human control of life. On the other hand tragedy represents excitement to us far from the real danger. Everything in art and nature stands with the good because it is the major value of society. The tragedy stirs up to feelings of love, fear and mercy in us. “Tragedy like Epic poetry produces its effect even without action; it reveals its power by mere reading. If, then, in all other respects it is superior, this fault, we say, is not inherent in it” (*Poetics*, Book XXVI). The imitation of an action in tragedy is important it has magnitude, and is complete in itself. Because of this reason, all parts of the work in separation, it is in a dramatic way what occurrences evoking the feelings of fear and pity which are the characteristic emotions of the catharsis. According to Aristotle’s explanation of tragedy: “Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished which kind of artistic ornament, the several being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions. By ‘language embellished,’ I mean language into which rhythm, ‘harmony,’ and song enter. By ‘the several kinds in separate parts,’ I mean, that some parts are rendered through the medium of verse alone, others again with the aid of song” (*Poetics*, Book VI).

Aristotle’s works about art have an important place in studies of the art form. When we look at his ideas about the Forms, he puts them in the center of the universe, I mean by this that forms are the beginning point of creation. In, his main aesthetic work *The Poetics*, we find the primary views of Aristotle about art. Also, in *Poetics*, he describes tragedy’s characteristics. In it Aristotle explains these bodily characters as mimesis, catharsis, seriousness and action, as a result they are the body

of a tragedy. At last, Aristotle says: “A beautiful poem should be remembered with every part and understandable with the whole” (*Poetics* VI).

According to Pappas’ essay on Aristotle’s aesthetics, some accounts of catharsis refers to “purging the emotions.” Aristotle mentions catharsis in connection with certain kinds of music, associating it with both religious and medical forms of experience, and promises further elucidation of it ‘in my treatment of poetry’ (*Politics*, 1340a19-21). Since, Aristotle’s accounts of the virtues are attach ethical behavior to well-trained emotions, catharsis, which has a tragic affect on the audience and is the final cause of tragedy, must be related to the training of the virtues if it is to be beneficial and enjoyable. For Aristotle, mimesis is representation and is a talent that is innate in human beings. Plato focuses on mimesis as a mere copy and not at all on the educational properties brought about through catharsis. But, Aristotle focuses on a broader account of mimesis capable in the properly formed tragedy of bringing about catharsis. When, we look at catharsis as a treatment, we see it contains the spiritual purification and the mental purification. According to that I believe, the art can lead to catharsis because we take pleasure from artistic things. And I think, along with Plato, that the artistic things are determinant of our emotional side, which takes us under the influence of pleasure. On the educational side of catharsis, we see a rational treatment for the vegetative part of our body which is not a kind of cure for our body but an education of the emotions. All these parts of catharsis are an education method for our life. We are a director of our existence and catharsis is a pathfinder of us. Accordingly, when we look at the idea of A.E. Taylor about Aristotelian catharsis, he says:

“He holds that the very exciting and sensational art which would be very bad as a daily food may be very useful as an occasional medicine for the soul. He would retain even the most sensational forms of music on the account for what he calls their ‘purgative’ value. In the same spirit he asserts that the function of tragedy, with its sensational representations of the calamities of its heroes, is ‘by the vehicle of fear and pity to purge our minds of those and similar emotions.’ The explanation of the theory is to be sought in the literal sense of the medical term ‘purgative’” (Taylor, *Aristotle*, 109).

In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle says “something we become good by nature, some by habit, and other by teaching. Nature’s contribution is clearly not in our power, but it can be found in those who are truly fortunate as the result of some divine dispensation. Argument and teaching, presumably, are not powerful in every case, but the soul of the student must be prepared beforehand in its habits, with a view to its enjoying and hating in noble way, like soil that is to nourish seed” (1179b). In my estimation, we are the beings who take shape around that what nature gives us. From nature we have the innate capacity of thinking and with this we can authority of our sensations and ideas. We should educate the side of us which makes us good and noble because this kind of values gives happiness to us. If we want to live happy and have a good life, we should keep going on the right way.

Aristotle’s *Poetics* was important book in history of Western art because it was the only a surviving work of a paired set. Book one of *Poetics* was exclusively concerned with discussion and an analysis of poetry as the art of tragedy. This information about *Poetics* shows us the major reason for its historical significance in throughout time. In addition it has a special place for artists and in the Renaissance becomes an important text regarding what an artwork should be. In some parts of *Poetics* we understand that art represents something in the nature of teaching materials (Don Krug, *Teaching Art in the Context of Everyday life*, 2003). So we are

not far from reality in the universe and nature is the main part of this material world. I believe that when Aristotle was teaching at a school in Athena in 335, it was the beginning point of his ideas about place of the poet in society because he found a chance for spreading his own ideas not under Plato or any other philosopher. *Poetics* entailed some social and ethical considerations about living with virtue and becoming happy. It served the function of guidance for the philosopher about art. Another aim of the *Poetics* is a defense the critique of the Homeric epic and Athenian drama made in Plato's *Republic*. Aristotle was a student of Plato but in many ways he was really different from Plato. We see this difference in *Poetics* more than other works of Aristotle because in *Poetics* he talked about catharsis as the education of emotions. Plato rejected the idea that the emotions could be trained. On the other hand they were not concrete about mimesis. When I look at the Aristotelian theory of mimesis from the Hegelian perspective, I see mimeses takes an important place for basis of literary art. The function of the human is more important because the human is superior than other beings in nature.

“Aristotle exploits mimesis as a pliant concept of human propensity to discover an understanding of the world in terms of the whole of human experience itself. The understanding of humans about the world includes the imaginative and fictive representation of their experience. There is a mimetic relation between the artist and artwork also, there is a relation between artwork and its reception. All these relations show that every part of nature is created with an order in the universe. Aristotle says that if there had not been an order, we would come face to face with endless chaotic problems” (George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel *The Philosophy of History*, with Prefaces by Charles Hegel, 2001).

When we look at *Poetics*, we can ask ‘why did Aristotle need to write this book?’ We can say the aim of book is a review of the history and development of poetry. In Aristotle's era there was no critical work categorizing and analyzing the

work of art. There were some categorizations, but they were not enough for Aristotle, and for him they were in the wrong way. The *Poetics*, written after Plato's *Republic* can be seen as a response, and though Aristotle and Plato are followers of each a similar school of thought, they explore different sides of art and poetry. I think art is a tool for producing knowledge and, the artwork gives composure to us.

All of these arts rely on mimesis and all these mimetic arts should be thrown out of state. The good mimic should imitate virtues, therefore we should not need a bad mimic, which is harmful for us the new state. Plato thinks that you should not laugh or cry when you are watching a comedy or tragedy because this is an inappropriate behavior. These responses are not appropriate in our daily life, therefore they are harmful for our ethic, so they are unnecessary. The artwork should not provoke society for a reaction. For those who harm the state structure provide no benefit in society. But Plato also says, if mimetic poetry demonstrates us to its own place in virtuous state, we can accept its existence and we do not reject it (*Republic*, Book 10, 607b-607d).

*Poetics* was written as an answer to Plato. Aristotle begins *Poetics* by making explanation of art and he accepts all arts, including poetry as an imitation. There are two natural reasons that inspire poetry. First is imitation and pleasure of imitating in human nature. The reason for this comes from pleasure to learn. People want to recognize an object; they want to know what is imitated. The second reason is the intuition of rhythm and harmony. These issues are characteristics of humans and they are innate. We come face to face with these factors in every part of our life. Because of this, for Aristotle, mimesis is a basic characteristic of human's behaviors.

From innate human nature people take pleasure to in grasping and creating imitation. All of these things come from the wish of knowing, learning. People take pleasure to discover their natural capacity, and in this way they learn and get knowledge. In this way, everybody has the pleasure of learning through poetry, which is an expression of the human's basic ability. Humans are inclined toward the action of creating and discerning between similar object. They and then take pleasure when they understand the difference between the objects and nature. In this approach Aristotle wants to explain why all poetry and pictorial arts stem from the basic instincts of humans. The aim is making a good copy, whether the act achieves its aim or not is not important. This is job of historians and critics to determine this.

Thus, Aristotle says the concept of mimesis in art and the concept of fiction should be consistent. The actions of the poet do not have to match the structure of reality. You can imitate an action in a good fiction, also the poet is interested in what can happen in reality, if an action does not happen in reality, the poem can still make sense. So we can ask 'what can be realized? We can look at the other branches of poetry because they can help us for differentiating to real from non-real. For example myths when, we look at Aristotle point about that, he rejected Greek myths questioning the accuracy of theology because in these myths actions were not possible and necessary, they would not happen (*The Distinction Between Platonic and Aristotelian Dualism*, Abraham P.B., 57-70, 2001).

I understand, at beginning of the human' interaction, they imitated what they need in daily life and the aim of the first mimesis was need. We see the first works on the walls of caves, humans drew objects and animals to discover their nature. But when they become conscious of their sovereignty over nature, they drew stories of

different objects. They combined ability and intelligence when they were imitating of objects. Subsequently, imitation became a pleasure, not a need.

We can say that the story of poetry's emanation is like a discovery of something. Firstly, we become aware of our soul or existence which occurs with our ability and wisdom. Secondly, the human's action and life entailed naturally occurring mimesis which developed through improvisations in artwork. When, poetry became developed, poets and artists learned what they could imitate and how. Aristotle says Homer is the most qualified example of all tragedy, comedy and poetry. Homer shows transformation and development of poet in new versions in tragedy and comedy. Aristotle says tragedy was born from *dithyrambos* plays and over time tragedy was found its distinctive form. I agree with Aristotle, we can say poetry is an art and imitates like all arts.

For Aristotle, poetry should have the concept of plot, this rule is the first step of writing a poem. The artist should look at what he or she is imitating. And the next step, poetry should consist of a dramatic structure. Aristotle talks about the second step because this step gives feelings to the poem like in an epic, the artist does not turn around an empty act, he or she should be in the action because it makes poem more attractive. According to my view, when you are in the action you should not be a narrator, if you are, it does not make sense for the hearer because they want to find something related to themselves in a poet. Otherwise, the poet makes sense to the artist's himself. In art, there should be a unity, therefore, when artist is imitating an object he looks at whole and uniqueness. Plato criticizes poetry, because the poet evokes emotions in the human. But for Aristotle emotions are not irrational because they insist reasonable activity. In Homer we see the bard's role, he gains from

imitating and he gets far from his own personal remarks. The good poetry focuses in actions and persons who are the character of the subject. Every narrative has an aim and that aim includes wording which gives a shape, a form, to all artworks. It is this shape and form which we are able to interpret, using reason and our knowledge of cultures, present and past.

### 3. The Literature on the ‘Ancient Quarrel’

All of us are searching for the truth about the world, the natural and the divine. According to that, we are look to stories, history, philosophy and the gods of a society. Of special interest is poetry, which was thought to include the divine gifts innate in human. Philosophy and poetry make connections between past and future insofar as we are able to understand historical periods. The ancient quarrel is the manifestation of the critiques of the poets Plato made in his *Republic* and Aristotle’s defense of poetry in *Poetics*. Though Plato’s work represents a valuable model for many issues in contemporary philosophy, when, we look at the Aristotelian idea we see an alternative insofar as thinking is the highest form of activity. In ancient times the quarrel began between poetry and philosophy. For aesthetics, the issues continue and it plays an important role in the thought of philosophers and artists today. But, today the quarrel consists of the relation of theory and practice. Therefore, in the discussion of this section, I try to show how ideas relating to the philosophy’s relation to art can change in time. What form of artistic message is effective for the ideas and experiences people have in different periods?

When, we look at the Plato’s writing we see the origin of the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy. In *Republic* Plato says:

“And now since we have reverted to the subject of poetry, let this, our defense serve to show the reasonableness of our former judgment in sending away out of our State an art having the tendencies which we have described; for reason constrained us. But that she may impute to us any harshness or want of politeness, let us tell her that there is an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry; of which there are many proofs, such as the saying of 'the yelping hound howling at her lord,' or of one 'mighty in the vain talk of fools,' and 'the mob of sages

circumventing Zeus,' and the 'subtle thinkers who are beggars after all'; and there are innumerable other signs of ancient enmity between them. Notwithstanding this, let us assure our sweet friend and the sister arts of imitation that if she will only prove her title to exist in a well ordered State we shall be delighted to receive her we are very conscious of her charms; but we may not on that account betray the truth."<sup>16</sup>

When, we look at the beginning of philosophy's language, both the imaginative and conceptual growth have been influenced by poetry and poets. The ideas of thinkers in the history of Western philosophy have sometimes resisted or denied poetry's influence. In addition, many thinkers, like Nietzsche and Nietzsche, commended the concept of wisdom in their poems, then, they saw another useful function of poetry for philosophy. On the other hand, when we look at the beginning of Plato's *Republic* we see a passage in which Socrates banishes poets from the city. On the other hand, his book is a kind of starting point for works of Western poetry and works of the ancient quarrel thinkers. Plato poses a challenge: the task of making a bridge between thinkers in the Western tradition beginning with Plato's own to the work of contemporary thinkers. The ancient quarrel starts with this passage in *Republic*:

“‘The only poems we can admit into our community are hymns to the gods and eulogies of virtuous men. If you admit to entertaining Muse of lyric and epic poetry, then instead of law and the shared acceptance of reason as the best guide, the kings of your community will be pleasure and pain.’

‘You’re quite right’ he agreed.

‘So,’ I said, ‘since we’ve been giving poetry another hearing, there’s our defense: given its nature, we had good grounds for banishing it earlier from our community. No rational person could have done any different. However, poetry might accuse us of insensitivity and lack of culture so we’d better also tell her that there’s an ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy.... All the same, we ought to point out that if the kinds of poetry and representation

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<sup>16</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, 607b5-6.

which are designed merely to give pleasure can come up with a rational argument for their inclusion in a well governed community, we'd be delighted short of compromising the truth as we see it, which wouldn't be right to bring them back from exile: after all, we know from our own experience all about their spell. I mean, haven't *you* ever fallen under the spell of poetry, Glaucon, especially when the spectacle is provided by Homer?' 'I certainly have.'<sup>17</sup>

Thus, Plato set's the challenge for future generations of philosophers. The problem is still present in the philosophical dialogue.

Where did quarrel begin? When, we look at Ancient Greece, there were lots of different states and societies. Consequently, they were in the era of chaos. By this I mean, that they lived under many forms of state government and were faced with several currents of thought. Therefore, history is a significant part of the Greek identity. Ancient Greece produced many great philosophers, poets and historians, like Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Herodotus, Aristophanes, Euripides and Sophocles to name a few. The golden time of Greece was time of Alexander who was the student of Aristotle. In this time the polytheistic religious belief was common. With improved architecture the art of theater developed, because of this it is known as one of the basic intuitions of Western civilization. The 14-15<sup>th</sup> century was the beginning point of the Renaissance and the Neo Classic movements. The aim of these movements was to approach art philosophically. In this era a philosophical critique of art objects and as well as ever day phenomenon was made in aesthetical accordance. The aim was to examine the meaning of creating and taking pleasure in art. Also, it sought isolate the looks for function of art and its meaning for humans. In brief, it makes an analysis of beauty in art and tries to find an answer for aesthetic problems and concepts.

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<sup>17</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, 607a-607b.

When, we look at the issues in ancient history, the topic appears often, especially in fundamental subjects such as politics, historical events lying behind our understanding and historical frame of reference, art and, indeed, our own culture. We see society's beliefs in religion, manifest in the religious image in every area of people's lives. The beginning of this process begins in ancient societies from late Roman time then is transformed to the history of religious images in the Christian West until about A.D. 1400. Art had transformed in this period, but it was not that those images of mediaeval times were not art in some large sense, but their being art did not figure in their production.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the concept of art had not as yet really emerged in general consciousness in the mediaeval time, and such images icons, really played quite different role in the lives of people than works of art came to play when the concept at last emerged and something like aesthetic considerations began to govern our relationships to them.

Some Western philosophers, writers and thinkers agree when they are criticizing beauty and art. This mode of criticism includes the same point of interest and ideas about art per se. Aesthetics had lots of different meanings like in 1859. Sir William Hamilton understood aesthetic philosophy of appreciation, to be a theory of the fine arts and science of beauty. These definitions of aesthetics were very common in Europe and Germany in eighteenth century.

When, we look at the past the historical divisions went roughly as follows: ancient, medieval, and modern. The ancients simply went ahead trying to describe the world, paying no attention to world's subjective properties which modern philosophy made central. There is an analogy here to the history of art. Modernism in

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<sup>18</sup> Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, Chapter 3, Princeton University Press, 1996.

art marks a point before which painters set about representing the world the way it presented itself. In this time they were painting people and landscapes and historical events just as they would present themselves to the eye. But after modernism, the conditions of representation themselves become central, so that art in a way becomes its own subject.

When, I look to Plato in the period of ancient quarrel, he was criticizing the relation between philosophy and poetry. His criticisms had a very strong influence for next generations. But, he did not support the poetry. On the other hand, Aristotle embraced to artwork and tried to explain its importance for man. In this context, firstly we should look at the function of artwork. The artwork should have a proof for its being and an aim for becoming an artwork. And, with that process the artwork finds followers and admirers who are making it valuable for society. But nevertheless, some innumerable ideas come face to face about different subject and it brings problem which is a kind of enmity between philosophers and artists. Consequently, all of reasons show that the position of art depends to artist's ability and thinking for artwork. Artwork can be good or bad, useful or useless in the hands and ideas of artist. After, all these reasons arts of imitation is a creation of artist and a gift for society. If the artwork is good, it can be exist in a state which is a well ordered one and shall be delighted to receive him into it. If artists can do his job well, we fall under the spell of his work, but, if it is not reveal to truth we do not accept to artwork.

Aesthetics was appearance and form of the sensory for Hegel. Every art work is different from the others and they gain their own features which makes it unique in

time. Art works appeal to the senses, therefore they are concrete. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, the aesthetic found new breath through to Kant. Kant was a vanguard for new ideas about the aesthetic and art. His ideas were influential on those who followed and he has shed light on the future of aesthetics. According to Kant, “art can only be termed beautiful” when it has “the appearance of nature” (*The Critique of Judgment*, p.45).

If we look at this perspective on aesthetic perception, we see Kant was in step with other philosophers regarding beauty which is held to be the standard of taste with some enlightenment writers like Hutcheson and Hume. But talking about standards of beauty was not enough for Kant. Kant believed that beauty was not actually a property of things or objects but it is a way which we reply to them. Therefore, Kant tried to demonstrate how these things or properties become subjective aesthetic response. On the other hand, this response does not make an aesthetic value for personal or individual taste; it’s all about the common response.

There are some movements in the time of Kant, one them is Neo-classicism which pushed for the new art. Neo-classicism’s revolution included an art movement focusing on Greek democracy, the promise of genuineness and freedom, a nod to principles of Roman constancy. In spite of all these goals, Neo classicism was not a strong revolutionary force because it quickly gave its place to another new revolution. I understand them all to be part of a historical progression. Neo classicism was a movement for law givers and rules regulated according to the status quo. The aim of the movement was reaching ideal beauty with depended on optimal rules. Following these rules, they could be associated with the art of Athens, thus, becoming transcendent and infinite.

Jumping ahead to the end of the modern era, Arthur Danto's book of *Andy Warhol* says: "leads the reader through the story of the iconic American's artistic life accompanied by a philosophical commentary which reflects Danto's theory with the artist's own narrative. The book shows us how Danto creates a philosophy into art. Danto explains a series of philosophical puzzles surrounding the nature of art in *Warhol*."<sup>19</sup> The struggle of the Ancient Quarrel is one between philosophy and art. This struggle is a process in history therefore we cannot say that it manifests itself as the same idea for each era. Because every era has its own artistic perspective, I argue that all artists have their own views, but they come together in a common view in their era. The meaning of aesthetics is articulated in history through which artists initiate a process of social interaction that potentially is both analytical and critical. This ancient quarrel continues today and shows how the changing morphology of contemporary art can be understood in terms of its post-history. Art does not seek a definition, art is whatever it wants, without the constraint of tradition or taste (Stephen D. Snyder, *Arthur Danto's Andy Warhol*, Abstract. I). On the other hand philosophy assumes the task of defining art's essence also philosophy can answer the question of 'what is the art?'

Danto's theory shows us that many of the art historians and critics such as Gombrich and Greenberg, failed to articulate how the face of non-representational art was changing. Danto's theory shows the reality that there is no longer a standard of taste and achievement of beauty. In addition Danto's theory accounts for differences in functions and forms of the art of the past, for the art of each age is tied to a form of meaning that is historically indexed. The point of Danto's art cannot be pure

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<sup>19</sup> Stephen Snyder, *Arthur Danto's Andy Warhol The Embodiment of Theory in Art and The Pragmatic Turn*, Leitmotiv: Topics in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art , Vol. 1, No. 1, Dec. 2010.

expression, and expression has no continuity and history. Danto's idea about art focuses on the essentialist definition and philosophical of art. Danto's explanation about art says, "I have always been an essentialist, believing that a philosophical definition must apply to art everywhere and always, whatever differences there may in fact be from period to period and culture to culture."<sup>20</sup> From this explanation of Danto we understand that art has an essential nature that applies to all eras. Because of this reason, we can see it in every periods of time. Art's essential existence does not change but its perception changes for each person, each society and each culture.

"I have inveighed against the isolation of artworks from the historical and generally causal matrices from which they derive their identities and structures. The "work itself" thus presupposes so many casual connections with its artistic environment that an historical theory of art can have no philosophical defense."<sup>21</sup>

When we look at Danto's ideas about Hegel, he sees lots of advantages in Hegel's aesthetic. It is able to resolve both the failure of mimetic theory, the notion that art strives to mirror the object it depicts, as well as the relativism of theories that reduce "all art to expression thereby placing art on the continuum of the living, but incommensurable, expression of artists."<sup>22</sup> In Danto's words:

"Hegel's theory meets all these demands. His thought requires that there be genuine historical continuity, and indeed a kind of progress. The progress in question is not that of an increasingly refined technology of perceptual equivalence. Rather there is a kind of *cognitive* progress, where it is understood that art progressively approaches that kind of cognition. When the cognition is achieved, there really is no longer any point to or need for art."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Arthur C. Danto, *The End of Art: A Philosophical Defense*, (pp. 127-143).

<sup>21</sup> Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 175.

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Snyder, *Arthur Danto's Andy Warhol The Embodiment of Theory in Art and The Pragmatic Turn*, Leitmotiv: Topics in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art , Vol. 1, No. 1, Dec. 2010, pp. 135-151.

<sup>23</sup> Arthur Danto, *The Philosophical Disenfranchisement of Art*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 107.

Another important point is that the style no longer differentiates one artwork from the others. Danto defines style as the subjective consciousness of the artists who cannot know their own style save through presenting it to others. (Arthur C. Danto, *Andy Warhol*, 2009) The art world adopts the dimensions of the Absolute on a cultural level. The culture is the essence of the artwork, and you could not think of art the outside of humans who gives soul to the culture. Human's values, senses, experiences, views, etc. all of these issues make culture the mirror of the human. If art has a relation with humans and culture, it could be the part of their reality. When, we look at the past history of art, it presents the mystery of existence to humans and finds an opportunity for self realization. Because of this reason, artists should investigate the essence and the meaning of the artwork. I intend to show that they could look for its pure side, thereof in accordance with this, every citizen will be able to make sense of the original meaning. The artwork and artist are in relation with each other depending on the historical place in time, but there are many issues which are form the main bond of this relation such as imagination, creative thinking and individuality. Therefore we cannot think of the artwork as being separate from the artist and their era. The art develops and moves on under the umbrella of its own culture and values.

When, I come to end of my point about the ancient quarrel, I want to finish it with Danto because he presents new and different ideas about art and philosophy. Danto was one of the best known proponents of the art of his era which his theory helped to explain. He was a model for his era who differentiated the idea of post-historical art from modern thought. Danto focused on the essential aspect of art

which remained constant despite art's contemporary metamorphosis. From his idea we can find a new post-modern or post-historical notion philosophy of art that allows critic to and re-evaluate the work of contemporary art. In addition, beyond providing a means of interpreting art, he gives examples from painting and sculpture which helps us to understand the change. According to the contemporary art theory of Danto an artwork from the post-historical era is distinguishable from its visually identical predecessors but, it should be completely different in terms of conceptual properties of non-artwork object (Levinson, *First Art, Art-Unconscious Art, and Non-Western Art*, 1990a 11). These characteristics of the real artwork are the artist's intention. In addition, these artworks find body or shape through the experiences of artists. Through a learning process, a techné, aesthetic qualities are installed, giving intentions to artworks. In light of his theory, there can be future developed in art objects, but its aesthetic being is part of its internal drive, it just opens up new ideas for art criticism and appreciation. Thus, the merging of theory with art criticism, understanding art's embodied learning process, shows a way that the ancient quarrel can be ended.

#### **4. Theories of Mimesis**

According to the theory of mimesis, the definition of mimesis includes the objects which the artist perceives in general. For instance, a musician reflects his feelings into musical notes, a painter reflects into colors or a poet reflects into words. All these reflections show the aim of mimesis and due to this reason, mimesis represents reflectance. In philosophy, Plato thought that art as a copy of a copy for his theory. For, him the artist imitates the objects, thus for this reason the objects become copies of ideas and art becomes the mimic of a mimic. Therefore, Plato evaluates art itself, as a negative thing. On the other hand, Aristotle agrees on the idea of Plato's art as an imitation but he shows a different way of thinking about the objects. What I mean is that, Aristotle does not focus only on the particular objects and events that we perceive now. He says that we should also focus the meaning of the art object which takes place on the future, same as on the past. Then, if the artist can represent the beauty of nature in his art work accordingly to the origin of the object, then art becomes more real and better.

For Aristotle, the term of mimesis is the actions of human and nature which are represented in the art and literature applied more to action of humans than particular objects in nature. Aristotle approaches mimesis from the aesthetical phenomenon. In addition, Plato does not agree with Aristotle about the meaning of mimesis. For Plato, problems he sees is mimesis necessitate negative political and ethical consequences.

On the other hand, both Plato and Aristotle agree with the idea that poetry is mimetic but they use mimesis in different concept for their understanding of poetry. In poetics, Aristotle says; “mimesis is a natural propensity and pleasant because it is

a way of learning.’’<sup>24</sup> Aristotle rejected Plato’s theory of forms which has ramifications on how properties of beauty are represented. For Plato, those elements are universal abstract entities that exist independently from the objects themselves. Aristotle’s idea is opposite of Plato’s idea, because he says that forms are intrinsic to the object and they cannot exist without objects. Aristotle’s knowledge arrives from the form of universal explanations which is the highest accomplishment of learning.

And also, with this way of learning you can educate your thinking to distinguish universal form natural beauties. At the same time, Aristotle understands active context for mimesis. Therefore we understand that from Aristotle’s point of view mimesis is active for its creator, by that I mean that you can be a composer of plots. All flows of action are governed by your imagination, so your actions include your own management of your life and it gives you a chance for making real your life. Following up, mimesis takes an important place in the creation of tragedy which is the actualization of a plot of our imagination in action. Historically, ‘‘mimesis’ as re-enactment first appears in such rituals, and the historical origin of the term, as located in Dionysian cult drama, this meaning in that ‘mimesis’ in both cases refers to imitation, representation and expression. It is argued that myth, and divine symbols of the rituals are transformed to artistic dramatic representation through which it became possible to represent the divinity and gods in drama. Tragedy, for instance is the transformation of the myth and rituals’’<sup>25</sup>.

There were many ways mimesis could be interpreted as we mentioned above. Aristotle and Plato each held a different view of mimesis because the development of mimesis was a continuous process. The view of Aristotle is that the humans have the

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<sup>24</sup> *Poetics* 1448b13-1448b8.

<sup>25</sup> Ruthven K.K. *Critical Assumption*, p.47-51.

ability to represent objects in art, and they take pleasure in mimesis. At the same time, artists see the ideal in substance, in actions and existences. Because of this, artists imitate using a process involving reason. The artists are finding what is missing in nature and they build a whole. “*Mimesis* is innate in human beings. Since our childhood indeed we differ from the other animals in being most given to *mimesis* and in making our first steps in learning through it and pleasure in instance of *mimesis* is equally general” (*Poetics*, 1448b5). So, the artist adds intelligence through his ability and his artwork becomes an admirable and interpretable work. Imitation is natural for man from his childhood. It is one of his advantages over the lower animals. Because of this man is the most imitative creature in the world and learns at first by imitation.

When, I look at the characteristics of imitation, first it includes the imitation of visual appearances by the use of colors and drawings. Secondly, we can see imitation is a human activity, i.e.: dances, music and poem which are a branch of art. Beauty is superior to reality because there plot – a beginning, middle and end. If we look at the history, we see a regular process about time and events. But, when we look at the poem of Plato, we cannot show the time in the term of the real event. Because of this it is all about our feelings which make our emotions weak. On the other hand, poetry is an art and it makes something endless in nature, which can be transferred from past to future. The nature is not capable of explaining the reasons of the actions of whole eras.

Every art work imitates with different tools. These tools are rhythm, harmony and language but they never connect with imitation itself. When the artists are imitating human actions, they use the noble and the worse behaviors. In poetry is

including what we can learn and what we learned. In some ways it is about our skills of learning, for example Homer teaches war, and Hesiod farming, they have an aim for writing. According to Plato we see a passage in *Republic* which is about the different kind of poems:

“Well, this just between ourselves: please don’t denounce me to the tragic playwrights and all the other representational poets. But, it looks as though this whole genre of poetry deforms its audience’s minds, unless they have the antidote, which is recognition of what this kind of poetry is actually like.’

‘What do you mean’ What do you have in mind?’ he asked.

‘It’s fairly clear’, I said, ‘that all these fine tragedians trace their lineage back to Homer: they’re Homer’s students and disciples, ultimately. And this makes it difficult for me to say what I have to say, because I’ve has a kind of fascinated admiration for Homer ever since I was young. Still, we should value truth more than we value any person, so as I say, I’d better speak out.’”<sup>26</sup>

All these speeches and ideas show us that every person has different ideas, ability and worldview. Therefore we cannot put the artist of different eras into the same patterns. The artwork undergoes a process in imitation and it finds its own story from its creator. Because of the artwork aim, or intention, we see differences in subject. The artist’s vision is represented in them.

The artist should imitate or reflect the object in art perfectly because the idea is beautiful. When, we look at the Plato’s theory of mimesis he sees this world of images as just shadows. It is imaginary and it is not real. All objects are different and they are all in constant change. Also all these are just appearances. Whereas all these object’s origins and essences are in an unchangeable world which we comprehend

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<sup>26</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, (Book 10, 595c).

with our reason. Reason and consciousness get relax and find peace with these unchangeable simulacrum. The world which we live in is a representation of unchangeable ideas. People can see this world from their own perspective and it can carry them on to higher ground by reaching the ideal world.

Besides all of these, I think the artist creates an ideal world to himself. In this way the artist finds beauty and joins the world of beauty. Beauty can be understood only this way. Artists imitate literary and immutable objects which exist in an ideal world which then artwork finds meaning in beauty. Actually it looks like an art is reflection. Plato designates the artist as imitator because God pictured the universe as a real artwork.

If we look at the understanding of mimesis in Aristotle we see that mimesis is an active aesthetic process. When we look at the poetry, we see that it is not imitating reality but it is redounding reality for the existence of mimesis in poetry. According to this idea I understand that mimesis is just a copy of a copy and it is changing in the hands of the artist. In Homer's epic we understand Plato's strong critique which claims poetry is not real and far from reason. In this instance, we say that the poet sometimes creates the non-existing things in the universe, which are not available, but we can imagine them with our mind. But, the imitating object or a plot should be navigating around to the border of man's reason and feelings. Also, the catharsis is a character of tragedy through which a poet effects emotions capable of purging the man. In another side, some thinkers who do not agree with catharsis thought that catharsis is far from feelings so, we cannot relate it with psychological matter but we can say it is a kind of natural end of the aesthetic action. And Salkaver's words suppose this situation;

“Fear and pity are dangerous emotions: painful and troubled feelings arise from the imagination of an imminent evil and cause destruction and pain. Pity, in particular, is a kind of pain upon seeing deadly or painful evil happening to one who does not deserve. However, in the representation of such feelings one feels empathy and gets rid of them. So, a work of art gives a man an opportunity to get rid of painful and troubled feelings arising from the imagination of an imminent evil that may cause destruction and pain on the part of the citizen.”<sup>27</sup>

Plato believes that art is imitating nature. Therefore, an art object is not real, so it is useless and dangerous. When I define art as useless I mean that it serves no useful purpose in society because of that we could not gain from it. The art is imitation of an imitation because of this reason it is far from reason. On the other hand, Aristotle’s theory about imitation was a good defense for art world. According to him all forms of poetry are imitation. I think, we are different creatures from animals and other living things because we have reason which helps to us for giving decision and making choices. When I look at Aristotle explanation of poetry, it comes from forming, making and creating. Also, all forms of poetry are modes of mimesis which imitation is pleasurable and natural. I understand this mimesis is an instrument for educating our emotions through catharsis. According Janko, in Aristotle’ aesthetics catharsis has two explanations. At this point, catharsis is a purgation which is a kind of cure for emotions. This part helps us to finding a balance for emotions when we come face to face with an intense of emotional impression. But, when I look at Plato, he sees this education makes weak to our emotions. Therefore, it is harmful and dangerous for emotions and society.

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<sup>27</sup> Salkaver, A. *Aesthetics and Theory of Criticism*, p.294.

## **5. Art as Mimesis**

### **5.1 Mimetic Art as a Copy of Nature**

In this part, I will explore the question of how we understand art as a representation of nature, using the theories of Aristotle. I will examine the question of whatever art is a passive copy of nature or an active construction that is world formative. Specially, I will examine the notion of art as a lesser copy of nature that none the-less can bring about harmony and or faculty of mind. Aristotle`s notion that art, with the edition of intellect presents a puzzle which is educational and enjoyable is essential to my argument that. Aristotle`s art is active and it representations reflect a construction of nature.

#### **5.1.1 What is Art?**

When, we look at the explanation of art it is widely believed that ‘art’ is impossible to define because the range of diverse objects and performances currently on display do not seem to share any common characteristics; classical standards of beauty and form have been abandoned by modern art, making consensus difficult (Jakop Zaaiman, *What is Art? A Philosophical Definition*, 2012). So, I think we cannot place a border around art that explains it.

Every part of nature has different kinds of miracles and sounds. They want to tell us something about their existence. I want to study on this subject because nature's sounds look like a harmonic song. Everything in an order and aesthetics can show the soul of this dynamic nature. They just wait for

understanding and find a meaning in the world. Aesthetics can give this understanding to us. If we look at nature we see a continuity and change. Art has a duty, that means is it should purify and relieve from internal pressures and suffering. But people are searching for excitement, in daily life but we cannot find it. Art stirs up to feeling love, fear and mercy in us. Arts are valuable because they show missing side in nature and they repair to defects in the society.

### **5.1.2 Art and Nature**

We can say that all human actions are mimetic and people can learn through imitation. If we look at the mimesis, we see some steps and properties. These are characters, thought, spectacle and song, all of them parts of plot which makes up the essence of tragedy. The tragedy is a kind of artwork part of mimetic art. The plot has a process of beginning, middle and end. In addition, every part should be ordered and all actions must be equally essential. The main part is the character who is a noble man in society. And this man is a part of nature who gives meaning of society. So, we can say the human is a part of nature. In this context, art is a product of artist and takes shape with man. Because of that, also art is a part of nature with man.

In the universe, I see that every substance which includes a shape and form comes into being out of something what shares its name with them. For the things which take a place in the universe can come into being either by art or by luck or by nature or by spontaneity which exists with its own future. In nature you should not intermeddle and direct to events, they should be in their own way because of that they are in spontaneity. The nature is in relation with

us. Because of that the most important thing is becoming aware of what nature wants to tell us. If we are a part of it, we have to know who I am and I live to where. When, we look at the nature, we see there is a continuity and division in every object. And with these actions of nature, it is possible to making less, more and equal amount to them. All of these terms of objects have been in themselves or relatively to us and equal is an intermediate between defect and excess. In addition, everything in nature has a reason and art is a way of explaining the world of nature what is it and what is it including. The formation of nature likes a chain and the most important thing about it is to finding where did it begin and when it will be finish. The color and form are not enough for talking about art. It also contains the means with them as a whole are harmony, rhythm and language uses. When we think about art we remember to imitation of real things which exist in the universe because it is product of human and presents to people. So, something should be making sense about reality.

### **5.1.3 Philosophy, Art and Nature**

In philosophy of Tao we see the main aim is controlling the majority to nature of your own character which is the real basis of your creation. In nature you should not intermeddle and direct to events, they should be in their own way. The nature calls us and the most important thing is to becoming aware of this call of nature. According to Shih-t'ao: "All paintings come from the understanding mind. If, then, the artistic fails to understand the inner law and catch the outward gestures of the delicate complexities of hills and streams and human figures, or the nature of birds and animals and vegetation, or the

dimensions of ponds and pavilions and towers, it is because he has not grasped the underlying principle of the one stroke” (*Aesthetics, The One-Stroke Method*, David E. Cooper, p.67). We have to know who I am and I live to where. If we find an association between me and where I live, this make me clear about understanding of what is real or imitation.

Aristotle believed that form exist only as a particular thing in the universe. When, artists are working on art forms, they directly deal with the universal. Because of this, Aristotle is closer to the cognitive value of art more than other values .Also, art is imitating nature but it helps us because, when it is imitating, it communicates information about nature. In addition, art is part of human existence, what I mean is this art reflects a deep facet of our nature. This issue is important because it differentiate us from animals and other being things through the instinct of imitation. According to this human’ instinct, there is a feeling what we call pleasure and it makes us feel upon confronting art. For this reason, “the reason people enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or interfering, and saying perhaps, ‘ah that is he’” ( Aristotle, *Poetics*, Chapter 4). When, we look at the all art products or productive forms of knowledge, we see all of them are effective. They are originative sources of change in another thing or in the artist himself.

Baumgarten sees beauty as a fuzzy perception and feeling, there is no clearness in aesthetic like logic. Aesthetics can reduce to feelings which become subject of art (Alexander Baumgarten, *Reflections on Poetry*, 1974, pp. 42, 43.). After Kant and Hegel, the area of aesthetic expanded also, we began to see it in fine arts. After all of these information, we can say that aesthetic is

philosophy of beauty, and it fronts to beautiful things in nature or object which made by human. We decide to beauty of object with our experiences and analyze them with its own values, standards and characters or qualities. For Baumgarten the matter and soul has an excellence harmony in nature, because of this reason the aim of artist just to be imitate to these natural objects.

In addition, we should do a distinction between aesthetics and philosophy of art because aesthetics subject to obtain beauty in nature and art. I mean with that it does not to diction about beauties object and it directly focuses on concept of beauty. On the other hand, philosophy of art just focuses beauty in art. Also, it subject to obtain artworks which made by artist. Because all of these reasons we see that, aesthetics is wider then philosophy of art.

When, we look at the nature we feel it and it evokes emotion in us. For example; a sunset or waves hits to shore make us feeling relax, calm and happy, so art directs these objects in nature because they are the tools of art which provokes to feelings of human. According to this understanding there are beauty and excellence in nature. And artist imitates this beauty of nature in his artwork. Also, artwork gets better if imitation the closer to reality.

According to every science there should be an authority which demarcates its area with its own rules. This situation is same for aesthetics, I mean with that we should limit aesthetics to the beauty of art. When, we compare the beauty of art with nature, it is higher than nature. But in art, it has some differences which include various kinds of beings and kinds of sensations. All these feelings and beings are not on the same level because all of them have a different story based on the different sense organs. I mean with

these different beauties is the artistic beauty and nature of beauty. The artistic beauty takes a higher level than natural beauty. According to that artistic beauty has different side about quantitatively because of that it is externally. When, we look at from this side to the beauty of nature, we see that it is just reflection of the beauty. We can ask, ‘how can we understand that’? Well, we can understand from language of nature because we focus on its call, sounds, images, smells and etc. After all these tips we find a body for nature of beauty which evokes to our sensations and we get far from its original side. It becomes an imitation what as a representation of our sensations. So, we can say our feelings about beauty give a non real nature. We cannot classify and examine to the realms of nature from the view of beauty but, we can find a vague sphere for our understanding about the beauty of nature.

### **5.2 Mimetic Art as Plot and Copy of Action**

Art and philosophy deal with different kinds of truth. On the one hand, philosophy deals with absolute and concrete truth. On the other hand, art deals with universal and aesthetics truth. If we look at the process of nature, we will see nature moves through internal principles which effects our instincts and art moves through organic principles which effects cultural values.

Art takes shape with perception of artist and the essence of object which is used for an artwork. When, we look at the idea of Aristotle about beauty it seems unclear for some critics but he believed that beauty is objective. For Aristotle “beauty is a real proportion of the things” (*Metaphysics*, 1072b32-35) and “beauty is defined in the terms of size and proportion” (*Metaphysics*,

1078a31-b5). All these ideas show that beauty can relate with design. We see a measurement and an order in beauty. Aristotle says something about that in *Poetic* 1450b35: “either a living creature of any structure made of parts, must have not only an orderly arrangement of these parts but a size which is not accidental-for beauty lies in size and arrangement...” Every living thing in the universe has a cause and these causes exist in nature. Therefore, we can never reject the function of nature in human idea, art and other sensible world. This relation between nature and man is mimesis which differentiates man from animals. So, man is the most mimetic of all and it is equally natural that everyone enjoys objects. And, man’s actions are particular like the principle of life therefore, the aim of this action is plot which includes recognition and gives history meaning with intellect. This point shows why it’s educational and enjoyable to observe it.

At the beginning of humanity, human wanted to understand the cause of their actions. Something was complicated in their life, and they differentiated this situation in two parts: one was the real life and the second was delusion life. In time, daily life and culture got complicated because there must be some difference between them and mythology showed the beginning point to make a difference.

Aristotle is an empiricist in that he relates his works through the senses which are the beginning point of the all knowledge about experience. In addition, this experience is an aesthetic experience which involves objective reality and it can be cognitively perceived and imitated. But, he did not deny its

effect on people. He believed that we take pleasure when we are imitating because it is a kind of learning which makes us aware about our special situations. And he believed that ideas do not exist with themselves, they become abstract to thinking with our reason through the process of creation and reception. So, people are an important step for beginning of plot.

When, we look at the history of beauty in aesthetics, first it found meaning with Plato. He put the beauty in the same category as idea of God, essence in idea and with absolute. According to this understanding the absolute beauty is same for all time and valid for all situations. We can ask this question “what is the effect of this beauty?”. Well, the function is beauty is giving shape to all matter but especially the weak ones because they are changeable. In the creation of weak matter, it cannot perceive the existence of God in their creation. On the other hand, for Aristotle the beauty is in a concordance and harmony. In the universe all matter that we call formed is in balance and harmony with each others. For this reason, we can say the matter is beautiful. Monroe Beardsley makes a good differentiation about effects of our feeling in aesthetics: “what Plato feared most as a bad example for Athenian youth was the suggestion that good men are unhappy and that bad men prosper. Aristotle’s reply might be understood in this way: there is no need to have a moral censorship of plays, but only an aesthetic one. For the play about the good man who becomes unhappy or the bad man who becomes happy will simply not be a

very good tragedy; other things being equal, morality and justice will coincide with aesthetic excellence.”<sup>28</sup>

Aristotle says human imitates to nature but it does not only appearance, artists shows the missing point of nature that are non-visible. If the artists do it well, they create a beautiful work. But, this creation should be the way of nature, if it does not we cannot say it is natural. For all of these reason the imitation, the order and idealization are the elements of mind and sensory, like in tragedy.

When, I think about art, I see that it is a product of an artist. If we draw to object as well as, we will do just a copy of nature. But, if we put our imagination and feelings into the artwork, we can add beauty to its beauty. This situation becomes an internal beauty which exists out of the existing world. Art was just architecture in ancient times but the aesthetics presents to existence of beauty to art. After that art found its soul.

All art works become as a result of acting and making, so there a question takes place in my mind how does art become an object? I think we should understand what we need from art for us. We can say our interests but it is not enough for art. When, I look at the *Nicomachean Ethics* the reasoned state of capacity to act is different from the reasoned state of the capacity to make. In addition you have to be ability of creating and seeing an art product. We understand that art is identical with a state of capacity to make, involving a true course of reason. If we look at the side of acting and making being different, art must be making. It is not about to acting because art's fate is in the hands of artist, and also the future of fate to artist is in the hands of art (Aristotle,

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<sup>28</sup> Monroe Beardsley, *Aesthetics: From Classical Greek to the Present: A Short History* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1966).

*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 6). They are related to each others. Agathon says that “art loves chance and chance loves art” (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 6). With spontaneity, so with chance all of them produce the same result for art and the same process for formation. We cannot say the same thing for nature, I mean spontaneity and chance is not enough for nature. They must be for an end and they are all due to nature. Therefore, action for an end is present in things which come to be and are by nature. As a result if things made by nature, they were made also by art. They would come to be in the same way as by nature. Art completes part piece and piece what nature brings to a finish and partly imitates. The artificial products are for the sake of an end, so clearly they are natural products. All these talking remind me to catharsis. We can talk about catharsis in three points. First one is purification or purgation which represents a medical purify or a spiritual purification for Aristotle. I think this point helps us for finding a balance in feelings of pity or fear. It reduces our pain (S. Halliwell, *Aristotle’s Poetics*, 1986). We see intellectual clarification in the second point which is an intellectual pleasure in mimesis. This point gives pleasure to us in learning and inference (*Poetics*, 1448b4-17).

There is another important point about art and nature, what makes a difference between animals other than man. The animals do things for living and continuity of life. This is controversial for people because they try to understand is that about some faculty or is that by intelligence to creatures work. For example, spider web, beehive and etc. all of them are looks like an art work but how can be sure about their mind or can we say animals know to art? They are acting and producing in some ways but they are not in the same way with reason

of human. They are in the way of some instinct values. Their aims are reproduction, self-preservation and self-feeding all of them are about keeping alive to themselves. On the other hand, all of these values are not enough for humanity. Because people want to feel senses, they look for pleasure. All this thinking that leads me to be human has an instinct from birth. Dutton discusses the distinction of human and animal, giving human culture a position:

“While it is true that culture sanctions and habituates a wide variety of aesthetic tastes, it does not follow that culture can give us a taste for just anything at all. Nor, conversely, does it follow that if in the future no postman is ever found whistling one of Schoenberg's tone rows, the reason must be that the postman's culture deprived him of the chance to appreciate the beauties of atonality. Human nature, so evolutionary aesthetics insists, sets limits on what culture and the arts can accomplish with the human personality and its tastes.”<sup>29</sup>

I believe that there is an excellence and beauty in creation of the universe. The creator of excellence is the God who gives an innate gift to artist. Therefore, artists should use this gift on the proper way. If artist does not add his personal ability and imagination in his work, art work does not have a value in aesthetic. Therefore, the artwork is more than a thing in nature because imagination, ability and essence of real come together in artwork, so artwork is a combination of these values. In addition, the creation is a process which is a plan in creating an artwork. The artist makes combine, weed out and convert to object in nature for find an expression to artwork. Also, if this expression wants to be an artwork, it should be unique and original.

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<sup>29</sup> Dutton, Dennis, *The Art Instinct: Beauty, Pleasure and Human Evolution.*, New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009, pp.205-206.

When, I look at the Romantic era I see many effects of some philosopher and artist such as Aristotle and Longinus. What makes special to this era? I think the artists, philosophers and thinkers had a deeper feeling about understanding and explaining to beautiful objects in this era. They look for their form in nature, so this makes me believe that nature was an important issue for this era's ideal world. The aim of all these men' was about understanding art. For this reason, the Romantic era was enough for them and they relate it with classical, symbolic and romantic eras for looking meaning of art in these eras. But, they were useful for us to understanding deeply the art. We became aware to the concept of arts and found its spirit in philosophy. We reached the essence of art and understood to the function of human in art work. On the other side, our actual life is in relation with our needs to resuming our lives. Therefore, our needs are in relation to art and feelings. We can educate to our life with feelings, sensations, experiences and lots of things like that. And, after all these we create to the shape of our character. After this step, we combine our character with instinct, feelings and experiences for making an artwork. We are putting together our action into plot and trying to say something about the environment to society. We are uncovering our hidden impressions in an artwork which gives us the name of 'artist'. So, the art work is a product of human activity. All this knowledge shows that the work of art has no action or a soul in itself. It finds body, soul and shape with human reason and inspiration.

When, we look at the Aristotle's point about plot in Homer' epic, his idea makes clear the importance of plot for mimetic art to us. According to him in *Poetics*, Book VIII: "But Homer, as in all else he is of surpassing merit, here too whether from art or natural genius seems to have happily discerned the truth. In

composing the *Odyssey* he did not include all the adventures of Odysseus such as his wound on Parnassus, or his feigned madness at the mustering of the host incidents between which there was no necessary or probable connection: but he made the *Odyssey*, and likewise the *Iliad*, to centre round an action that in our sense of the word is one. As therefore, in the other imitative arts, the imitation is one when, the object imitated is one, so the plot, being an imitation of an action, must imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is displaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole.”

## CHAPTER III

### MIMESIS IN THE HISTORY OF ART

#### 1. Understanding The Object of Art in the Theory of Aristotle

The art work occurs when human soul and artist focus deeply to their work. The real artwork should be mystic, arcane and enthusiastic. All these evoke wonder in the human and the artworks get more impressive. For Aristotle says in the *Rhetoric* every art consist its own particular subject or matter (Book 1, Chapter 2). Art is a realization in external form of a true idea. In addition, it a natural love of imitation which consists and characterizes human action. When, people are doing that they take pleasure which they feel recognizing likeness.

Aristotle divides to imitation into two parts which are the visual imitation of art and the human actions of art. The visual imitation consists to drawing and colors what are the tools of art. The other consists human actions of art include. Tolstoy's ideas are agreeing with Aristotle's art theory in so far as the artwork communicates something about human experience; "art is a human activity consisting in this, that one man consciously by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them" (*What is Art?*, p.123). My aim of using Tolstoy is making clear to my ideas about thinking of Aristotle's art.

There is no ideal thing outside of human and what is beyond the world for Aristotle. Therefore, everything in nature is also inside of us and we reach this thought with our reason. The art is a kind of ability and this ability produces and

directs with a genuine wise. Art is therefore a creative production of the new forms and artworks. A particular question which forms in my mind is that where should we be search to art? I think we cannot reach the art in contemporary reality, and in the pre and post history. We cannot do this because beauty is superior to reality.

The idea art of imitation begins with Plato. But, when Aristotle reinterprets Plato' theory of ideas, Aristotle evaluates art differently from Plato. For Aristotle forms are in particular things; therefore perceptual things have a higher position than in Plato's ideas. This situation makes it more valuable to imitate perceptual things in art. At the same time, art is a guide for society, it can be a source of virtue then Aristotle's theory based on cognitive side of art because of that his theory is reasonable. But, in Plato's theory you cannot find a path for imagine to his ideal world, this world cannot be perceive.

Aristotle's ability of analytical discernment is greater than Plato's. I mean with Aristotle's analytic discernment that the different actions dissociate from each other. And when Aristotle was differentiating all theory, praxis and *téchne* from each others, Plato did not. So, different functions are self-determining in art. In aesthetics, we take pleasure in art object when we imitate or copy to artwork. In Greek the meaning of aesthetic is perceive, coming from *aisthanestha*.

Imitating things teaches us to perceive things with special meaning. Let's say see new sides of a thing either see a new form what we seen before or we become aware a thing and action what we seen either lived before. The aesthetic perception is a kind of experience which gives pleasure to the producer and the consumer. But the

artists should be content with existing things, I mean that agreeing with Aristotle, the things which exist in the sensible world.

For example, if we think of a poet, she or he can show good or bad characters and actions. In this situation Aristotle's theory of aesthetics and ethics can be related a little bit with art. At the same time an art function is a moral function, it can purify and clean the morals of society and culture. In the deepest side of art, we see catharsis which correlates with idea of harmony hidden in Greek's culture. The cosmos is harmonious in its essence therefore, it is beautiful. In addition, bad and ugly are inharmonious and imbalanced. So man should be in harmony with nature and should not destroy the balance of the cosmos. I believe that if a citizen gets out of balance and order, the society can punish him or her. In addition, a good society has been in harmony with rules of itself and also, this action is not enough for managing without any complications. For Aristotle humans are by nature social beings, consisting with the rational capacity for ruling themselves which makes us form social unions. Therefore, we look for good, beneficial and rational in society.

A good life has been in a harmony with our ability of actions and according to this, we become a virtuous person. Therefore, if we are creating an artwork or any other thing we should be aware of our abilities and we should use them in proper way. Our actions should not harm other living things, if we harm, we have used our potential for committing bad things. Because of this reason, I think we look for our natural abilities and we improve them to be useful to other living things. In this view, Aristotle tried to reconstruct the idea of art bringing spiritual balance. If we want to

create an unforgotten artwork, we should be constructing the harmony and the peace in poet, theater and music, then we can ennoble to our minds.

When, we look at Aristotle's theory of catharsis, it represents both purification and education in art. We do not get away from our feelings; we enrich our minds with our experiences. We desire to personal improvement, to be far beyond the ordinary. For Aristotle, the process of creating artwork can be for art in itself, or the artist. If so creating process has decided by an aim which has been out of to control to artwork. In this context, I agree Aristotle's ascription about oratory, it is an instrument through which to be heard. Aristotle's approach is more positive than Plato's. Aristotle can differentiate natural and cultural things through four causes. These are material, formal, efficient and final. If we think about a seed, it needs an acting reason for completing its formation. And man is an actuator for a seed, so his action is relates to cultural values. When we think a vase, it has been transformed from soil and this vase gives shape to cultural feelings. Therefore, every art works is representative of its own society and culture. In this sense, art embodies the meaning of the artists and the society they live in. This embodied meaning can be read in the history of art as the manifestation of the cultural knowledge and skill that went into the artwork's creation.

## **2. Developments in the History of Art**

The development of art is separated into periods. We become aware of this information with art's residues in ancient times. Before we improve and develop the history of art, we should start with Prehistoric art. Some sources show that this beginning was 35,000&40000 years ago. The Prehistoric art had an oral tradition because, people did not know to writing. Therefore, they were imitating their environment and painting on the stones or walls. But, this time represents an important step in the formation of art figures, and gives us information about Prehistoric peoples and their life styles.

The History of art can explain is the process of any activity of human or product made by humans with a visual aesthetical form, this creative action manifest in the artwork has communicative purposes. Art is a kind of way for expressing ideas and, emotions, in general or in a broader worldview. Art is the best way for explaining and describing the pre-historical understanding of nature. In this point, I believe that art can only be termed beautiful when it has the appearance what is understood to be nature.

When, I look at the history of art, I ask what is the main issue of art? I think it is sensation and imagination which are showing the creative capacity of the art. Also, I wonder the place of beauty in these issues. Maybe, it can be see the beauty with our sensations but in the capacity of reason. After all this, we can understand the aim of art and what it represents. The aim of painter is saying his ideas with colors and shape with beauty but his work cannot cause someone to perceive same issues. Or, when a singer is singing her or his song in its own language, it makes sense for someone who does not know this language. I mean with that, artworks are produce

by human which is for man or society. In addition, it does not make same senses for everyone because our character or interests can be different from other. But, the issue comes together around the universal one which we call beauty. From the ancient Greece thought, we know that the art as a harmony between components. Their ideas about the aesthetic make them important for aesthetic becoming as a science. So, aesthetic is an important value for art, art can be achieve human ideas and functions with aesthetics.

Originally the meaning and history of art was developed in the West, and dealt with the European art history which is a kind of renewal in art with High Renaissance. This renewal gave a new perspective for artists and thinkers. Because of that, the ideal world about art found a place in reason structures. I mean with that, the thinkers began to making explanations and critics about artwork and artists in this era. Consequently, the analytical thinking has evolved in terms of cultural values in which artifact were created. The same at time with this thinking human ideas and feelings found a value and an importance in this revolution.

Art teaches us lots of thing about our world and about human nature. I mean with that when, we look at the characters in paintings or other matters of an artwork, we see their educational side. But also, they try to give messages about members of the public, and feelings. All these make us aware of real quality of human nature. Artist try to show real ordinary life, when he or she is doing that, give a different perspective for looking to ourselves. This kind of art is liberating what satisfies and stirs to our curiosity about our interests. Because of that, it helps us to discovering our incomplete and excessive sides. After that, we can find a chance for arranging to our life through to suffering or taking pleasure in the world. When, I look at the

writing of Murdoch, she deals with a good idea about poetry and beauty in T. S. Eliot's perspective illuminating: "Mr. Eliot observed that 'the essential advantage for a poet is not to have a beautiful world with which to deal: it is to be able to see beneath both beauty and ugliness; to see the boredom and the horror and the glory.'" <sup>30</sup>

Art has a teaching for relating with ethics therefore, art can help us to becoming a better person. In addition, art "to use Platonic language, inspires love in the highest part of the soul;" and art "improves us morally." "We can all receive moral help," and last "by focusing our attention upon things which are valuable: virtuous people, great art" (Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good*, 1970). When, we look at the effects of art in eras, we can say that art is alive in a different soul in every generation.

The essence of art's nature is revealed in the indiscernibility of what we see in Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*. When Danto was explaining his ideas about art, he focused on the works of Andy Warhol at a 1964 exhibit at the Stale Gallery. After Danto's experiences in this Stable Gallery, he published his novel theory in the 1964 article "*The Art world*". Danto describes the concept that differentiates art from non art as "an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the of the history of art, the theory that takes up into the world of art, and keeps it from collapsing into the real object which it is". "The philosophical transformation Danto experienced at the Stable Gallery in 1964 changed the way he viewed art; it was as if he discovered the light that gives sight the power to see. Allegorically speaking, he escaped his chains and

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<sup>30</sup> Gary B. Reier,son, *Art and Ethics in the Novel of Irish Murdoch*, (London: Routledge and KeganPaul, 1970), 3

emerged from the cave Plato describes for us in *Republic*, to the light of day. True to Plato's allegory, Danto has returned to the cave, with aim of compelling others to consider art in the light of art world theory."<sup>31</sup>

When, we look at the history of art, the art found lots of different meaning during to time and every philosopher explained art and artists from different perspectives. Such as, Plato saw art just as a mimic because artist was imitating to objects which objects were made by God and people. In this point, artist's action is imitating to things in nature. Otherwise, he is imitating objects which object was made by craftsman. In conclusion, for Plato, artist is imitating object which was made by craftsmen.

When, we think about mimic, we should begin to look at the contemporary picture and sculpture. I mean with that, these artworks were moved away from mimic because they found a chance to adding mind in artworks. Therefore, these period's painting and sculpture are representing their idea and senses in the art world. Plato looks from a different point, and he thought the artwork has to be good. I mean with that if poet, painter and novelist do not give a different perspective or a new view to artwork, these works do not add anything to us. The aim of artwork should not imitate to beautiful one because the beauty does not need to imitating, it is already beautiful. But the point is to sublimate, create or to show missing points in artwork. The objects maybe cannot visible but if artist do his job greatly we can imagine his ideal world, we can see his invisible work and world furthermore this situation

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen Snyder, *Arthur Danto's Andy Warhol The Embodiment of Theory in Art and The Pragmatic Turn*, *Leitmotiv: Topics in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art* , Vol. 1, No. 1, Dec. 2010.

makes artist is really good and unique. So, the art creates to beautiful one and does not imitate for Plato.

### **3. Mimetic Art as a Mirror of Nature or a Mirror of Culture?**

Aristotle states in the *Metaphysics* that the cosmos is always in motion and that motion explains the aim of nature. Aristotle says that the motion of nature is God and God has an absolute form with which to understand the universe. God is an unmoved mover and if we look at nature we see it is in motion with non visual circulation. Aristotle`s ideas give us a rational and emotional world which includes differences between imitation of particulars and of human` actions. Art showed differences in every generation and every era. Greeks thought that the source of art is human; others claim it is war and still others said it is nature. Therefore, we cannot claim there is a common source for art.

Art is a representation of nature. So, I believe that we can ask this question about this motion of nature “is art passive or active?” I find an answer to my question in Aristotle and he says it is active. There is an order in everything which aesthetics can show the soul of this dynamic of nature. The beauty of this harmony is in an order, so it seems is, just waiting for the eye of human understanding to find its meaning. Viewed as such aesthetics can give us an understanding of this order. If we look at nature, we see a continuity within change as Heraclitus when he looked to nature.

Understood in this way, aesthetics is a conception rooted in the understanding of natural beauty. Nonetheless, this account of beauty as the order of nature exhibits a great deal of differentiation from generation to generation, society to society and person to person. Human lives, embedded in nature, conceive of nature on their own terms, coloring it with their own values, thoughts and cognitive capabilities. In this sense we can say that the beauty is a relative conception.

If we look at from Plato's perspective, the contents and representational modes of poetry play an important ethical role in the education of guardians and should, because of the effects they exercise through mimetic process, be based on ethical principles. From this explanation we can say mimesis can effect in society which is a part of man's actions. And mimesis can be a education style for man. Young people should only imitate brave, sober, pious and noble men, which will increase their strength and will not infect them with weakness. We see this sense, in the *Republic* that tragedy and comedy, as mimetic poetry, represent injustice among the gods in the assertion that this account of the gods is responsible for unhappiness among people. In the Platonic conception, gods cannot be evil; heroes cannot be weak. The poet's representation violates the truth and by representing the deficiencies of gods and heroes, has negative effect on the community and the education of youth.

When, we look at the words of Oscar Wilde, he says: "you will not ask me to give you a survey of Greek art criticism from Plato to Plotinus. The night is too lovely for that, and the moon, if she heard us, would put more ashes on her face than are there already. But think merely of one perfect little work of aesthetic criticism, Aristotle's *Treatise on Poetry*. It is not perfect in form, for it is badly written, consisting perhaps of notes dotted down for an art lecture, or of isolated fragments destined for some larger book, but in temper and treatment it is perfect, absolutely. The ethical effect of art, its importance to culture, and its place in the formation of character, had been done once for all by Plato; but here we have art treated, not from the moral, but from the purely aesthetic point of view. Plato had, of course, dealt with many definitely artistic subjects, such as the importance of unity in a work of

art, the necessity for tone and harmony, the aesthetic value of appearances, the relation of the visible arts to the external world, and the relation of fiction to fact”.<sup>32</sup>

For Hegel the artwork is the product of artist’s self determination. The artist is master of the truth of spirit and the beauty is identifying absolute spirit with objects. But the major problem is found in asking the question “what is the difference between beauty in nature and beauty in art?” Beauty existed before art in nature. But the person who’s interested in art should look at nature deeply and evaluates nature in a different view because this awareness makes artists different from other humans. Before this awareness the artist cannot differentiate beautiful and ugly, so he cannot give a meaning or value to the object but with this awareness things gain a new face, form and the beholders become impressed. So, the artist gives a new view to culture, I mean with that the art products find meaning with society and culture effecting different reality with the artist’s techne and feelings. Then reality finds a shape through the artist’s ability. Oscar Wilde says, “nature is imitating to art” (*The Decay of Lying*, 1889). All these show that the idea that the beauty of art and the beauty of nature are different from each other. Therefore, we cannot see them to as identical, but we can say they are complementary to each other.

If we look at history, the poet was a representative of man’s feelings and distress, therefore poem was a life style of man. The poem looks like the conscious of society because its sources come from history, sociology, psychology and culture of man. The poet explains his feelings and ideas in a poem but when he is doing that he does not move away from the existence of society. Art does not try to create

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<sup>32</sup> Oscar Wilde, ‘The Critics as Artist,’ *Intentions*, (London: Methuen, 1913), 190-192.

something from nothing, it is a way of creating a new. When, the artist is doing this he takes advantage of the mimic.

Aristotle interprets to art and especially poetry in terms of society and culture. Art history is a creative process which comes from the past, it exists now and it will continue to exist in the future. Therefore, every artwork will transport its essence and culture to the new generation. Art can take a new shape but it still will have same essence, so we cannot deny testimony of art that comes from other eras. Albert Camus work *Caligula* deliberately manipulates his own assassination. One cannot destroy without destroying oneself. If a thing does not take a portion from reality, how can it take us away to the truth?

On the other hand, for Plato art is far from reality and this distance is not in the image, it is in art's very essence. The artwork can be similar to the object it imitates, but it does not represent the reality of that object. An art work is a mere imitation depicting an object. The artwork is copy of a copy so it is not real. If the artwork is not real, it does not possess an aim and it is far from mind and therefore it is dangerous. In *Republic*, all poetry and other mimetic arts are criticized in some sense asking, whether they are valuable or not. For Plato the stimulating side of art is too dangerous. Therefore, art is not reasonable. Also, the unsafe side of art makes people uncontrolled and unmoral. The conceivable state structure includes restraining of feelings. A sober human controls his feeling of pain when he meets a bad events and this control shows to right way to him. On the other hand, when I look at the ideas of Plato, I understand art provokes our feelings and excites us. So in this way, we are not aware of our behaviors and not do the right thing. Art feeds our dark and bad sides. Therefore, it is not good for culture and society. If a bard wants

to gain praise of crowd, he does not focus on our wise side which is not imitate easily. The bard deals with our gushing side which consists in feelings of love, anger, desire, and sexual love, then he instigates our passions. These feelings are feed by imitation. Because of this, it is not good for society for Plato.

In the *Metaphysics*, for Aristotle the inner principles have an active role in nature. But for Plato it is passive. Considering that for Plato, all artistic creation is part of imitation, and the inner principle really exists in nature created by God. In addition the things that we see in nature are just representation of the ideal type. Therefore, for Plato, the artists such as the tragedian, the painter, and the musician are the imitators of an imitation: they are twice removed from the truth. On the other hand, when Aristotle was talking about tragedy, it was an imitation of an action in which a good man falls from higher to a lower place. According to Shakespeare's Hamlet, he was trying to hold a mirror up to nature in the speeches of his characters. What was the aim of Hamlet? I think, artists can put his feeling in the plot or in and artwork in a clear way because they can control to their skills, emotions and reason. They can put them together and combine for an artwork. Therefore an artist can successfully select and present his or her material through an imitation which is the action of life.

Our interest concerning includes feeling, sense, imagination and intuition but all of them have a different sphere. Their activities and aims are dependent on different sense organs and products. In this situation, mimetic art takes shape around human activity which is the thinking body of culture. The human enjoys the sensation of the artwork but not the artwork itself it is only the sensation of art that inspires to us. Our interest presents the concept of truth because it can give the real

belief about the essence of nature. The truth is important in an artwork because the art is the absolute and highest mode of our minds which brings us the pure interests of the soul. And, when we look at this side of mimetic art shows that a limited and specific content because it is the imitation of an imitation, it is twice removed from truth. Because of that our belief about the mimetic art should be taking a place around our rational interests which is a universal appearance in imagination and in accordance with senses.

In my opinion, like everything in nature the city also has soul a soul. When, you discover it, you can understand the place of art in nature and culture. There are some questions taking place in my mind such as ‘who did think about the creation of that perfect world?’ We see everything is in an order and a process. So we can doubt its reality because it is perfect. Behind of all these doubts and questions we find only one answer it is God. According to Plato in the *Republic*:

“‘He makes everything – all the items which every single manufacturer makes.’

‘He must be extraordinarily gifted.’

‘Wait: you haven’t heard the half of it yet. It’s not just a case of his being able to manufacture all the artefacts there are: every plant too, every creature (himself included), the earth, the heavens, gods, and everything in the heavens and in Hades under the earth – all these are made and created by this one man!’”<sup>33</sup>

I understand that God created one thing which is real. Then man imitates it with some creative ideas. And man add his ability which was a present given by God to him. After all that he combined all his ideas and ability then he imitated to thins. But, it cannot be same with real one because it is copy of a copy. Art reminds us the beautiful things which are taking place in the concept of good in society. We can say

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<sup>33</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, 596c.

it is a cognitive part of the things and consists of our moral goods and desires. The beautiful things are created in an order which makes them different from other created things. Aquinas says: “beauty demands the fulfillment of three conditions: the first is *integrity*, or *perfection*, of the thing, for what is defective is, in consequence, ugly; the second is proper *proportion*, or *harmony*; and the third is *clarity* thus things which have glowing color are said to be beautiful” (Aquinas, 1942). All of these features show an concordance in nature about beauty. According to that mimetic arts such as painting and sculpturing are a way of imitating the appearance of the natural things. They are producing nature’s own products. When, we look at with this sense we cannot say it is fruitless for mimetic arts. Bell says, “some people see in nature what we see in art, and feel for her an aesthetic emotion, but I am satisfied that, as a rule, most people feel a very different kind of emotion for birds and flowers and the wings of butterflies from that which they feel for pictures, pots, temples and statues. Why these beautiful things do not move us as works of art move is another, and not an aesthetic, question. For our immediate purpose we have to discover only what quality is common to objects that do move us as works of art” (*The Aesthetic Hypothesis*, 1981, pp.15-34).

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

I believe that mimesis found an important place in Western thought after Greek and Renaissance intellectual world. When it was a concept, it became an art theory which gives a mystic to the art object. When I look in this direction, we can say Aristotle became aware of this mystic of art and he tried to define it. Aristotle's book of *Poetics* describes the essence of mimesis which is a kind of projection theory.

When Aristotle was defining to mimesis theory, Plato took a stand against. In the Republic Book VII, he describes his system with allegory of the cave. And he believes that this world is not real which we perceive with our senses. There is an only one world which we perceive with our reason. Because of that, poets and other mimetic arts are far from reality.

In the time of Renaissance, artist adopted the idea of mimesis in their art work. They used mimetic idea in nature and anatomy. Therefore, art world found a different new breath. At this point, I have understood that mimesis is not bad for art unlike, it is a kind of current which brings together ability of artist with art object.

According to Plato, there is no meaning of the world we perceive with our senses because mimesis is not real in the art world. The world of the mimetic arts is far from reality. Because of this reason, Plato believed that mimetic arts were not in the ideal world, they exist a copy of the ideals. At this point of Plato, I have understood that mimetic arts are just a world which the shadows of the ideal world.

When I look at to Aristotle, I understand that we see art objects in nature which in relation with human. Aristotle explains human being in two terms. First of

all, man is a kind of political animal. And last man is the only animal who has the gift of logos which makes Aristotle from Plato. I mean with this point Aristotle add to mind for transferring to reality in art works. Human being is in relation with nature from birth to death. The nature alone does not give us all of what we need to live together. We must figure out how to live together for ourselves through the use of reason and ability. Also, in other way we should discover harmony, sounds and rhythm that make it possible for making an artwork. I believe that mind is the major issue of human being in nature. The Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset said: “Man has no nature, only a history.” The very concept of an unchanging human nature seems to have been mocked by history’s spectacle of mindless chaos and blind change. Hegel rejects the characterization of history as mindless and blind: History does have an aim, and that aim is rational.<sup>34</sup> I believe that works of art are all the more excellent in expressing true beauty, the deeper is the inner truth of their content and thought.

According to Plato, the artist just reflects view only to the object. The artist’s world is a kind of mirror which view mislead to our eyes. Because of that, artists cannot create to objects as a carpenter and he/her far from reality more than carpenter. After all these reasons, Plato did not give a place to art in his ideal world. But Aristotle found a different point which explains Plato’s missing point in his world of ideas. Aristotle believes that we cannot think of ideas separate from material. Every human from innate has ability of thinking, curiosity and learning. Because of all these reasons, we think together objects and reason.

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<sup>34</sup> PS: Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V.Miller (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

If the ideas are the essence of the objects, we cannot think them separate from objects. In addition, object exists as a form and the idea exists in it. From Aristotle's point I understand that the goods have an objective presence. I believe that Aristotle did not talk about an over beauty in his aesthetic theory but Plato did it. Because of that, Plato sees the art as a representation of absolute presences.

In the beginning of *Poetics*, Aristotle tried to solve the meaning of art. The art is an abstract concept for Aristotle and I agree that his said about art because intuitions are the main body of the art. All of these make art to light and unique. The objects help us to decide but, the consciousness is not aware of this action. Since from long centuries, the art evaluates to the soul and the world with environment and living conditions. In addition, the art finds meaning and have suggestions with realities of human and psychological laws of him/her. The object is important in its natures and categories. So, I understand that the object is in a relation with actions and has continuity in them.

According to Aristotle, the art born to a mimic which continuous existing in stuff. When Aristotle says that I try to understand what is important for this explanation, and I think he looked to art in some classification. These classifications are comparison, categorical, proportion, distinctions and symmetry. I think looking for reason of something is to give a border to the things. This border shows that the rules of God and the reason which makes different to human from all beings. In addition, we can say the artist is man who has ability of thinking and it gives him to capacity of making artwork. Also, his/her adds sensations to object with his/her own perspective and his/her sensations show us artist's inner world. Aristotle said that about forma, they gained reality because it was hot liquid. I mean with that the

objects take place in the world because they are in time and space. When, the artist is making an artwork, they begin from existence of the object in this world. Plato believed that the object participating in the real world but the forms exist in the ideal world. In this point, Aristotle showed the existence of the forms in the real world. For Aristotle, forms exist in the object and they are not in the ideal world. The forms are in the sensible world.

The art tries to show beautiful side of the objects. But Plato has a different view and he believed that the object who is prone to corruption and change things, it is not nice. The stuff is missing and rough. After all this thoughts, Plato said that this world is sensible world and based on copies. His ideal world is not exists yet. But, it will exist in next. Also, this world is a copy and we are participating just a copy. When, Plato defending this problem something seems forgotten to me. Because of this reason, Aristotle's explanation helps to me clearly understanding to relation of the objects with the real world. Aristotle said there are three important issue and these are being in right action with the right reason and the right action. At the same time, art can try to desire and educate desire. The reason is important because its position in society helps human to interacting make clear to him/her explanation. The artist tries to have been in good action for her/his desire. On the other hand, the emotions effect human, I mean with that it helps us to cultivating to art object. If I try to imitate human nature as a human, I should look for their needs, ideas and feelings. When Aristotle was explaining to mimesis, his way helped to me making differentiation between real and mimic. Following this idea, I saw the position of art in aesthetics and human. Yes, art cannot be a necessity for world or human. But, the art helps us to seeing beautiful side of objects and world. The art shows us the

reserved ore and the beauty in objects. And these issues exist with reason, order and border. Everything in nature has a reason, they do not exist spontaneously. Aristotle on the art of imitation had left the hidden reality of the existence of the asset and he found in imitation of the path. In everything there is a necessity. With all these ways the thing gets deleted from pleasures, they found a fresh and spacious soul. And it turns to a good purpose.

I understand that about Aristotle in art, he believed art has its own mysterious function. This function will prepare young people for life with editing their sensation and motions. Because of this reason, art is the first philosophy and the first idea in every society. I believe that art is an action which includes purity, nobility and spiritual power of human and nature. From ancient periods art continued the things of which the form is in the soul of the artist. For Aristotle art is an artistic creation and imitation. But the most important thing is believe to reality. Aristotle sees art as an abstract synthesis in the existence. Art has an important place for culture and custom because it makes them permanent and gives a character. This character is a representation of different cultures and gives information about their hidden identities. For example, people die but, their inventions, values, customs and ways of life still give information about them. Aristotle is the closest philosopher for explanation to my idea on art and aesthetic. Because of this reason, I focused on Aristotle's theory of aesthetic and mimesis in his theory of art.

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