PART - II

PRINCIPLES OF LITERARY CRITICISM -
EAST AND WEST -
A COMPARATIVE STUDY
CHAPTER V

Early Greek Period: Plato and Aristotle

Principles of Literary Criticism in the West, had their origin in their contact with the Greeks and in Greece, it is sometimes held. Aesthetics originated in the ancient quarrel between Poetry and Philosophy to which Plato makes a pointed reference in his Republic. Greek rationalism of the 6th Century B.C had a mythical conception of the origin of Universe to which Ionian Philosophers opposed and tried to substitute a scientific explanation of it. The works of Homer and Hesiod were read not for any aesthetic interest but as source-books of knowledge of science and philosophy. But the Greek mind of the 6th Century B.C was not prepared to concede any scientific value to the work of the poets. They challenged it, or tried to read some allegorical sense into it.

The first thing they attacked is the understanding of the universe in the light of human activities that is created by the Gods in a process similar to either sexual generation or artistic creation. The Anthropomorphic view of the Gods was criticized by Xenophanes. He thought, Gods have no resemblance to man, either in their shape or in their character. These divinized humans or humanized divinities have not created mortals nor have they revealed to them all things from the beginning. Philosophers at
this stage were not prepared to invoke wrath and fury of the people at large by inducing disbelief and thereby proving themselves as atheists. On the contrary, they were in search of an ultimate reality, all-powerful, ever-existing and omnipresent, which would be self-sufficient to bring an order in the divinities. Xenophanes says "there is one God among Gods and men, the greatest, not at all like mortals, in body and mind .... He sees as a whole and hears as a whole. But without toil, he sees everything in motion, by the thought of his mind .... And he always remains in the same place, not moving at all, nor is it fitting for him to change his positions at different times". What can be the nature of such a God?

Earlier than this period, the Greeks found nature not beyond their comprehension. Their busy hard life, as the land was not fertile except the valleys below the hills where food crops could be grown by excessive efforts with water preserved in pools and wells in winter, as the meat and milk were not plentiful as the country was unable to feed the flocks on a large scale, as the life, in short, was quite hard, made them practical in their attitude to everything and prevented them from indulging in negative thoughts and idle speculation. They felt that any irregularity or disturbance in natural occurrences, in their physical and psychic states or in their failures and successes in the struggle for a happy existence were guided by some powers, though invisible to ordinary
eyes, not without physical forms or bodies like their own, and these powerful beings, they believed, could be appeased by invocations and sacrifices and induced to make their life happy and easy-going.

In still earlier period when Greek thought was not established independently, when it shared the native Creto-Minoan culture that had amply adopted the thoughts of ancient Egypt, these powers were thought to have bodies of animals or birds. Faint echoes of this stage are found in Homeric myths where Athene is owl-faced, Hera is cow-faced, Zeus takes the shape of a bull, Apollo is associated with wolves and mice, Poseidon with horses and Artemes with bears. But the more the Greeks became matured in thought and independent in their speculations, the more their Gods became concrete with bodies and nature like those of themselves. This was so because their untiring labour, strong impulses and heroic struggles made the Greeks confident of the possibilities of human power.

"Wonders are many and none is more wonderful than man", sings Sophocles. Man is helpless only against Death. Men with their hard work or manual labour developed a sturdy and muscular frame, women likewise, without sitting idle at home, worked in the fields with males joining them even on ships and sports, developed stout figures with hard breasts and shapely buttocks. The Mediterranean climate made their eyes blue, cheeks rosy and
lips red enriching them with a sound sexual urge. The Greeks were so fond of the virile charm of a feminine figure that they dreamt of a war-loving race of charming women in their myths of Amazons.

Beauty and Power among the values, were the most attractive for the Greeks and they believed that their supreme manifestation was possible through human forms. It is because of this, that their Gods were all human in form and character born of the same mother earth of which the mortals were the products. In humanizing their Gods, the Greeks felt themselves more intelligent than any other neighbouring races.

The Greek Gods have bodies of flesh, blood and bones and they have the same passions of love, jealousy and anger as the mortals have. Like the earthy kings, they have their heavenly kingdom on the unsurpassable mountain of the Olympus.

Cronus could castrate his father Uranus and blood would flow from his wound Aphrodite could be enamoured of Gods other than her husband and of the mortals and could even bear children to them and could be wounded by the arrows of human warriors. No more holy were they, than human beings as their indiscipline in the affairs of sex, power, vengeance and cruelty even surpassed those of the latter. The only distinction by which Gods and men were distinguished was the physical bodies of the Gods are invisible
to the ordinary human eyes for the extreme lusture of their appearance and the strength, beauty and longevity of these bodies knew no decay.

If the Gods possess forms similar to those of human beings, both the races must have the same process of generation. The Pre-Hellenic creation-myth suggests that creation is not possible by a single being, it is the result of a union of two separate bodies. Eurynome, the Goddess of All things, rising naked from the chaos found no support for her feet. So she divided the sea from the sky and danced towards the south and the wind blew behind her. She thought of creating the universe with this wind which was something new and separated from her. Turning about, she caught it within her palms and a serpent came out of it with which she copulated and having assumed the form of a dove, she released the Universal Egg on the waves. Homeric myth of creation narrates that the Gods and all living creatures originated in the stream of Oceanus which girdles the world. Sometimes mystic attitude to the problem is also noticed in the Orphic myth of creation in which black-winged Night and Wind are said to be the primeval parents.

In attributing to the Gods a similar form and a similar process of generation as they possess themselves, the Greeks have narrowed the scope of the cosmic creation into mechanical process and that of human activity into a mimicry of divine activity.
And as human beings are themselves made after the image of the Gods, nothing can they perform which has not already been practised by the Gods previously. It is even believed that the activities which they perform in order to facilitate the happiness and prosperity of their life, are taught to them by the Gods. These activities are called technai which includes all the useful crafts together with pleasing arts and any activity that needs skill and contrivance. Hephaistos and Athene were technicians among Gods. Athene is always associated with wisdom and intellect - the activities of head and is held as the Goddess of wisdom. She remains ever a virgin hating the sexual relation. She taught all the artistic devices to human beings. The myths of the divine artisans suggest that any piece of art or craft is a technique and its maker must be an intelligent being. With a strong and stout body, he must possess enough mental power to control the sense organs. Generocity of heart, sensitivity of soul and smartness of mind are not less important. Gross sexual passion is not, perhaps, favourable for art creation.

Greek mind sought after an art-form suitable for its special choices. It demanded a form as vital as the form of life itself with its throbbing sensation and expressive emotion. But the Greeks had no intention to make art, a substitute of Nature. They were rather well aware of the impossibility of such substitution. In praising the naturalistic character of art, they praised
the genius of man which although inferior to Nature, could produce things, having forms no less enlivened than hers. Greeks with their friendly attitude towards nature evolved such a type of art. Greeks honoured the participants of Olympic games by raising their statues symbolizing mementoes of glory of the victors. The statues were the representations of the physical form and the valour of the heroes and can serve the purpose of memorisation of the glory of the heroes, sportsmen, kings and benefactors of the society. A statue was called an "imitation". The Greek word for imitation is Mimesis. Eikôn and Eidolon were synonyms used for not only portrait-statues but also for the entire gamut of plastic and graphic art-figures. It also denoted poetry, dance and music. Nature was the supreme artist whom man was to imitate.

Poetry - a silent painting that speaks:

What is true of the visible art is equally true of the verbal art - poetry. The Greeks found a close relation between poetry and painting as Simonides says "Painting is silent poetry, poetry is painting that speaks". Homer's epics were to them as the Bible is to the Christians, full of facts and narration of actual events, which Homer was incapable of seeing through his eyes as he was blind. Homer was a divine seer and like a soothsayer, he could perceive all the divine affairs by his extra-ordinary power as clearly as an ordinary man perceives the sensuous world.
What Homer did through words, dancers did through gestures. Dance stood as a separate form of art parallel to drama. Lucian defines dance as a "Science of imitation and portrayal, of revealing what is in the mind and make intelligible what is obscure". The Greeks considered music to be the most imitative of all arts in the sense that it could represent the emotions of a soul more appropriately and perfectly, being itself of the character as the soul's and as such, in influencing the soul more deeply than other arts it was also a means to instruction and mystic purification.

The tendency of doing something very close to nature was a typical feature of the Greek character. In a successful achievement of this tendency, they found perhaps the utmost success of human skill. They thought that although they are inferior to nature in power, yet they can produce something with their limited agility, which will be so close to the form of its natural counterpart that a distinction between the two will be rare. They call this product an imitation but not a duplication, for their creation is by no means another thing exactly existing in nature. They call an artist an imitator because he cannot be simulator or duplicator, for his product is not similar to that of Nature. It is only a likeness of it. It is a memetic. Their belief that a work of art is mimesis does by no means indicate that their artists have produced only the reflected copies of Nature. Many things e.g. monsters are represented in their arts, the counterparts of which are absent in nature.
They are purely imaginary. In depicting them, they probably believed that they were imitating the superb visions of the poets, that they shared an equal vision with the poets and in this sense, visible arts became complimentary to verbal arts. The artist embodied his own vision of what a God or a monster ought to be. All these required more than a servile imitation. The artist looked freely at nature with a deep sensitive soul and felt the points of beauty, features of qualities divine or monstrous, human or beastly and deduced principles therefrom by an inductive method.

Philosophical background of Pre-Socratic Greek thought:

It is held, that in Greece, Aesthetics originated in the ancient quarrel between poetry and philosophy to which Plato refers. The Ionian philosophers of the Sixth Century B.C., defied the mythical concept of the origin of Universe held in high esteem in Greek tradition. They tried to substitute scientific explanation based upon reason forming first stage of Greek rationalism. Upto this time, the works of Homer and Hesiod were read not for any aesthetic interest but rather, they were the only source-books of knowledge - of Science as well as Philosophy. But the Greek mind of the 6th Century B.C. was not in a mood to concede any scientific value to the work of the poets. They challenged it or sometimes tried to read some allegorical sense into it. The first thing they attacked is the understanding of the universe in the light of human
activities, that it is created by the Gods in a process similar to either sexual generation or artistic creation. Gods, they thought, have no resemblance to man either in their shape or in their character. These humanized divinities have not created mortals nor have they revealed to them all things from the beginning. "The cosmos which is the same for all, was not created by any one of the Gods or of mankind" says Xenophanes. The philosophers by declaring this, did not reveal disbelief in the existence of Gods for that would invite terrible punishment, rather, they searched for an ultimate reality, all-powerful, ever-existing and omni-present, which would be self-sufficient to bring an order in the diversities. It would have no birth, no death, no suffering, nor any of the human passions. Such a God has no shape, for while a sensuous shape is fluctuating, God must be changeless to retain order among the changing effects. It is thus a substance for Xenophanes. He sees as a whole and hears as a whole. But without toil, he sees everything in motion by the thought of his mind. He always remains in the same place, not moving at all nor is it fitting for him to change his positions at different times. But what can be the nature of this God?

Thales held the Primal substance of the nature of moist or water. He was aware of the much discussed four substances - earth, water, fire and air, but held water as the chief one. Air was the first principle for Anaximanes. As our soul, being air, holds together, so do breath and air surround in the whole
universe. According to Heraclitus, fire is the primary substance. As a contemporary of Pythagoras, he was probably influenced by his concept of harmony or measure as the organizing principle of the universe.

These philosophers though differed in their view of the origin of the Universe from the mythic view, agreed with the mythic cosmology that the sensuous commonplace world is so related with the ultimate reality that the substances of both are the same in kind though not in degree. The form and substance of the mortals and gods remained the same though mortals lack the degree of longevity which the Gods possess. Now philosophers say that the sensuous world participate in or are imitation of the ultimate reality which is one and unending in so far as their substance is one in kind.

The basic principle derived from this, was that, the particular participates in the universal or the microcosm is the imitation of the macrocosm. Ultimately, it is coincided with an aesthetic principle that the artistic creation is an imitation of the commonplace reality.

Pythagorianism, for the first time, explicitly mentioned the imitative character of the fine Arts. Pythagorians agreed in admitting an imitative relation between the universal and the particular - the microcosm imitates the macrocosm. The human art imitates the divine art. It was for them an imitation of the principles
of the structure of the universe in a smaller scale. Pythagorian doctrine is essentially an attempt to give a physical explanation to the Universe. Their lesser emphasis on matter e.g. air may point to their more longing for the formal character of the universe as they emphasized mathematical nature of things.

Empedoclis determines the artistic activity with a striking insight into the individual talent of the artist in producing the resemblances of physical objects. According to him "a painting is fundamentally an activity that produces likenesses of objects animate and inanimate, either visible such as trees, birds and human beings or invisible beings such as Gods". But this production of likenesses is not merely a passive act of imitating something blindly as a mirror reflects an object. The role of the artist's intelligence is emphasized here. Thus an artist does not merely copy the objects of nature. The artistic likeness, thus produced, cannot be said to resemble the original in both form and matter. The artist's materials are considerably different from the materials of the cosmos and in this respect, the artist is incapable of imitating nature perfectly. It is the form of cosmic creation which contains harmony and order that the artist imitates. Artistic imitation is thus, formal. This is the nature of artistic imitation according to Empedoclis wherein the genius of the artist is obvious in his production of the likeness out of materials that are very unlike those of the original creation.
Hippocrates in his writings, however, overlooks the work of human intelligence in artistic imitation. The cosmic creation for Hippocrates too, involves matter and form. There are two materials - water and fire - and form involves the process by which the two materials of opposite nature unite so as to create the universe. The very essential principle of creation, according to Hippocrates, is the combination of contrariety such as hot and cold, giving and receiving, increasing and diminishing, union and separation, visible and invisible, conscious and unconscious, right and left, up and down etc. All the opposites are only verbal and apparent. In truth, they are the same. The world is a creation of the mixture of opposite elements in various proportions. What is true of the cosmos is also true of man, the microcosm. He is like all other animals composed of two opposite elements - fire and water. The soul is intelligent and conscious while the body is unconscious and non-intelligent. Everything is fast changing. The becoming ceases to be what it was and becomes something what it was not. The microcosm is an imitation of the macrocosm.

Regarding the creation of arts and crafts, Hippocrates agrees with Xenophanes that these are all human creations and not given to man by the Gods wholly. The principle and materials are supplied to him by Gods upon which he improves. The mind of the Gods taught them to copy their functions and though they know what they are doing yet they know not what they are copying.
The artists are thus only blind imitators of the truths underlying the creation of the universe. Philosophers like himself possess the rational faculty of knowing this truth.

Hippocrates agrees with Empedocles that artistic imitation is formal in nature. The only difference between the two is that according to latter, the artist imitates directly the cosmic function, while for the former, he imitates the human function which is itself an imitation of that of the cosmos, the artist, thus imitates an imitation.

History rather tells us that the Hellenic art was on its summit in the middle part of the 5th Century B.C. It is from about the late 5th Century onwards that the Greeks began to be more practical in their attitude to life and more rational in their speculations on the systems of the universe. A plain belief in the things and a frankness in the expression of emotion lost their strength now. This pragmatic outlook can be well marked in the cosmology of Anaxagoras.

According to Anaxagoras, the forces acting upon the root materials come from the outside. They are non-physical. It is intelligence which produces these forces. They are directed towards some particular purpose. The world is not a chaotic organisation governed by chances. Our observation shows that Nature adopts some means to achieve the end for this purposive function for which intelligent power or mind is required.
Sophistic philosophy is the outcome of this rational and practical outlook. The sophists were least interested in astronomical or physical problems. They were aware of the limits of human knowledge and were led to preach a sort of pragmatic philosophy. Man's main concern is with the society in which he lives and hence they became sceptic. Protagoras says "About the Gods, I am not able to know whether they exist or do not exist, nor what they are like in form, for the factors preventing knowledge are many - the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of human life". Hence, any attempt to know the reality behind the sensible shape will end in a deception. For example when one tries to identify the works of arts with the reality beyond it, he is deceived. Of course he gets pleasure in such deception but it is in no way the pleasure derived from the knowledge of the reality. Gorgias says "Tragedy by means of legends and emotions creates a deception in which the deceiver is more honest than the non-deceived, and the deceived is wiser than the non-deceived".

Art according to sophists has no practical value which is well preserved by crafts. It is an imitation of either a thing directly perceived or of the facts told in the legends. Their imitations, in order to be successful, should be so vivid that they would allure the observer to accept it as the real and thus will deceive him ultimately. The aim of these imitative or "deceptive" arts is only to give pleasure.
Socrates too, is a sophist. He agrees with other sophists that it is no part of man's business to search after the astronomical or physical mysteries of the Universe. The best object to know is himself. He differs from other sophists on the point that while they denied any possibility of an objective standard of knowledge in admitting sense-perception as the only means of knowing that led to consider all knowledge subjective. Socrates founded knowledge on reason which must have an objective standard. All knowledge is knowledge through concepts and concept means the universal characteristic. In arriving at this conclusion, his motive was not to apply this formula to the knowledge of reality but to acquire goodness. Among all arts, according to him, the royal art was to know how to live well and to live well depends upon the attainment of Good which according to him, is equal to virtue including all the human qualities such as temperance, prudence, foresight, benevolence, kindness etc. He also identified beautiful with the Good and ultimately with the useful. While discussing with Aristippus he says that the good and the beautiful are the same and they are judged by their usefulness. The one and one thing may be ugly and beautiful according to the purpose it serves.

In his discourse on arts like painting and statuary, he observes, however that they are imitative because they represent visible objects. In fact, the object of imitation must be sensible, otherwise imitation would be impossible. The painter's imitation is not an exact copy of the visible object point by point.
Socrates thought that a successful product of art must have a soul, a view which develops over the Pythagoreans and Empedocles, who gave emphasis upon the imitation of the proportion only. But this proportion or formal imitation is not sufficient, art must be an emotional imitation as well, and one can imitate the emotion of the soul by imitating the actions of the body. This outstanding suggestion of Socrates regarding the mystery of art creation was taken up and developed over by Aristotle.

Inspite of fine sensitivity, Socrates, however, could not be a perfect aesthete for the idea of the good or useful although kept haunting over his mind due to which he considered that paintings and coloured decoration of the walls give us less pleasure than the walls do because walls are useful while their painting and coloured decorations are not useful. They are useless and hence less pleasurable than the useful. Socrates, thus guided by the contemporary taste, lost the balance of his sensitivity to the fine arts.

**Imitation of imitation:**

Poetry and philosophy were perhaps for the first time in Greek history blended up uniquely in the mind and thought of Plato who preferred reason to emotion. But none the less, he was sensitive to art. Plato agreed with Socrates' view, that all knowledge is knowledge through concept but while this concept
or definition was for Socrates a rule of thought, Plato turned it into a metaphysical substance. Knowledge of truth or substance is possible only through reason or intelligence, while no knowledge of the sensible things is possible, as they have no stability of existence. How can one know a thing which changes every moment? Permenides' Being is Plato's truth or eidos and his physical object is Heraclitus's flux or Permenides' becoming, and the relation between Phainomenon and eidos is one of imitation, a relation which his predecessors traced between the macrocosm and the microcosm. Phenomenon imitates the idea, its very essence. Thus there are many phenomena but one idea. For every class of physical objects, then, there is one idea. Plato's system, thus, starts with an idealistic attitude, but ends in a pluralistic realism, because, he could not be free from the essentially realistic outlook of the Greeks.

The imitative relation between the sensible or becoming and the intelligible or Being is the essential point of the Platonic philosophy. This explains Plato's typical bias for an imagistic way of thinking which was unique in the formation of Greek thought. Plato extended the imitative relation between the microcosm and the macrocosm established by cosmologists to other spheres like linguistics, dialectics and aesthetics. Hence the word imitation (Mimesis) or a class of words having the sense of imitation is used not within a limited circumference. In Theatetus, he says, imitation is a very comprehensive term which includes under one
class the most diverse sorts of things. Its scope is almost universal
and application is indeterminate owing to its use in several contexts.
In Statesman, he says true imitation becomes itself truth, not imita-
tion. Similarly in the Sophist he makes Theatetus admit by a
stranger that an image is not a real or true thing, but produces
an illusion of truth. Imitation, according to Platonic concept, means,
essentially an inferior activity. An imitation may be more or less
like the original and can be divided as good and bad.

According to him, if cosmology is true, then the physical
object is an imitation of the idea. While objects are many but
the idea of wholeness is only one and if the object is an imitation
of the idea, the particular is also an imitation of the universal.
Every creation, according to Plato, is an appearance as opposed
to reality and every created sensible object involve three factors,
the material, the pattern and a moving or efficient cause which
impresses the idea upon the matter. This Platonic matter is in-
determinate. A piece of Gold is so because the idea of goldness
is impressed upon it. If the idea is taken out, it ceases to be
gold or anything else. Its name and nature, both are determined
by the presence of an idea. But the exact nature of this matter
is not developed by Plato. Plato believed that nothing can be
spoken of categorically or assuredly by the physical world as it
is to be comprehended by the senses and in the senses, there is
no truth but only confusion.
The physical world thus becomes a formal imitation of the truth or the world of ideas which existed independently of any other world of creation. God is the efficient force who has impressed these ideas upon matter. What motive had God in creating this world? To such a question, Plato gives a mythical answer that God is good and self-ordered, so he brought order in creating sensible world out of the visible mass of matter moving in a disorderly fashion by impressing the forms, existing independently on matter. But this impressed form and the original paradigm are not the same. The former is only an imitation of the latter. Thus the order in the creation or created world is an imitation of God's order and its objects are imitations of the forms and as such are inferior to both.

The arts were created, not created exactly, rather developed, on the basic are activities that prevailed among Gods. Plato, thus, divides all arts into two primary classes - divine and human according to their origin. The entire world with its minute parts including human beings, animals, natural phenomena and heavenly bodies, was created by God; this is divine art. Human arts, on the other hand, are all that are wrought in imitation of the models of divine arts. This, again, is divided into two subclasses: Productive or useful and imitative or fine arts. Those that are required in the everyday life of man, are productive arts such as tools like chisels, sickles, vessels, vehicles, dresses
arms etc. To them should be added activities like production of materials like growing food-grains and preparing food, herding animals and so on. These arts do thus have a serious purpose—serving human beings in their practical needs of life but the other class has no pragmatic interest. They are connected only with the emotional aspect of human mind and is solely meant for pleasure. It is not productive, but, it imitates a production either divine or human. A painter, for example may paint a man, which is a divine product, or a cot, a human product, but in both the cases, they are only imitations of the originals. That is the only purpose which the imitative arts serve. Music, dance, poetry, sculpture, rhapsody etc., besides painting, fall into this class.

This is an outline of the Platonic idea of the origin of Art. The process of God in creating the world and that of the artist in creating his work are the same. Both of them have models first, and then they imitate or copy these forms in impressing them on matter.

A philosopher imitates through language the form or truth but a poet imitates the events of the sensible world through the same medium. Although both are imitators a poet is inferior to a philosopher in so far as his product is thrice removed from the Form. A Philosopher directly imitates the Form, but a poet imitates a sensible object which is itself an imitation of the Form.
What does "imitation" mean to Plato?

It certainly does not mean a slavish copy of the sensible object - it is to be only "lively and analogous" to the object it imitates, copying its quantitative and qualitative proportions only. What is the value of such a creation by imitation? We know Plato did not assign any practical or pragmatic and metaphysical value to it. Artistic creation has a value only in causing a perfect and harmless pleasure that springs from enjoyment of beauty. Hence this imitation is also beautiful.

Beauty according to Plato involves three factors: (1) appropriateness, (2) usefulness, and (3) pleasurableness.

Ordinarily something is useful if it serves a purpose and if in this sense 'useful' is identified with 'beautiful' then a robber's sword, that kills a man will appear as beautiful. But Plato's idea of useful does not include all kinds of service. His useful is necessarily advantageous or that which produces good effect only. In the Republic and in the Timacus, good is therefore identified with beautiful - the perfect 'good' is the perfect 'beautiful' - which produces harmless and sound pleasure. True pleasure is derived from the love of Beauty. The soul loves the transitory beauty of the sensible things because they bear copies of the ideal Beauty.
Plato's contempt for imitative arts:

Plato condemns the imitative arts for their practical usefulness and metaphysical unreality in 'Republic'. He is there mainly a Statesman and metaphysician. In the second book however, Socrates realizes the need of imitative arts in a civilized state which would facilitate the education of the soul.

Drama, according to Plato, is the best of all imitative arts in imitating the actions, sorrows and enjoyments of human beings.

In the tenth book of the Republic, Plato seems to condemn all the imitative arts.

Critical estimate by critics:

Collingwood disagrees with critics who attribute to Plato the syllogism - "imitation is bad. arts are imitations, therefore arts are bad" and argue that Plato banished all the arts from his ideal state. Collingwood thinks that Plato attacks art from an aesthetic point of view, and he never attacks all the fine arts, but only the representative or imitative arts that showed the sign of decadence in his own time. Plato does never say that imitation as such is bad, rather the imitation of the noble is the very core of the Athenian ideal, his polemic on the imitative arts is in no way conducted from an aesthetic point of view.
Collingwood's attack on Croce is equally ill conceived for Croce is right when he says that reason is the only means through which apprehension of Platonic truth is possible.

Collingwood's criticism that Plato condemns only the bad elements in contemporary decadent arts is also misdirected for as he means badness does not imply imitative character or the tendency towards creating illusions of physical objects aiming merely at amusement. Plato indeed says that the artists in their imitative products, give us only the illusion of truth but his conception of bad and good art is very different. He does not classify fine arts, as Collingwood thinks, into imitative or Pseudo art and art proper or non-imitative good art.

Structural view of Art by Aristotle:

The most untenable point in Plato's philosophy is, for Aristotle, his separation of the essence of a thing or the idea and the sensible object. The idea of horse, for example, cannot be intelligible without its embodiment in a particular sensible horse. Similarly a particular animal is a horse only because it contains the essence of a horse i.e. horseness. To separate these two is to universalize a particular.

Thus a sense-object is not a copy or imitation of the Idea, it is not mirroric or watery image without any solid existence
of its own, it is a combination of both Form and Matter. Aristotle thus removed Platonic scorn against sensation - it being not a way to deception but a source of knowledge.

Aristotle also denied the existence of any pure form known by intelligence only. He also denied the existence of pure matter. Every matter possesses a form and every form a matter and both these require sense as well as reason for their successful apprehension. To explain creation or movement and change, he deviced a scheme of four causes: formal, material, efficient and final.

The value attributed to each and every particle of the creation, to its reality and purpose is the necessary result of Aristotle's unique compromise between sense and reason.

According to Aristotle there is no need to consider every creation as an imitation. Natural creations are by no means imitations. Nature follows its own models which are not existing outside its own compass. They are rather outcome of its dynamic progress which tends to fulfil a purpose. And nature means form as well as matter.

Although there is an apparent or causal distinction between the products of men and those of Nature, human product is ultimately Natural for human beings are themselves Natural products.
This casual distinction is not like the mythical gaps between the divine and the human creations which can never be bridged.

Art, according to Aristotle, is not only the product but also knowledge and skill of its production. Art imitates nature but in imitating nature, it also supplies missing elements in nature. Nature cannot produce, what art produces, nor art, what nature does. Art develops nature. Art partly completes what nature cannot bring to finish and partly imitates her. Hence art does not suffer from any want itself. It rather completes the want of Nature. Art has another advantage over nature i.e. art can make the objects which nature makes, but nature cannot make what art produces.

Aristotle thus properly evaluates sense and sense objects and strikes a compromise between sense and reason. Aristotle, thus, considered the study of imitative arts not with reference to education as did Plato, nor the reference to Politics or ethics as did Socrates but as an independent branch of knowledge. The question of artistic imitation according to Aristotle, is not a question of mere sense-activity or a mirror-like reflection. It also involves addition and elimination and in doing so, reason also functions here very strongly.

Philosophy and art, according to Aristotle, do not belong to two opposite spheres of human behaviour such as rational
and irrational, they are rather two sides of the same rational behaviour. He says, "Art, a form of making, together with doing, belongs to the practical, while philosophy or science belongs to the theoretical side of it." An imitative artist, according to Aristotle, is not less intelligent than either a philosopher or a productive artist. The question is why should the artist engage himself in this mimicry at all? To this Aristotle's answer is, no human activity is aimless or for nothing. Mimicry is an inherent activity of man and of all animals, he is the most apt for this act. Man has an impulse to imitate as do other animals have rudimentary impulses like hunger, sleep, sex etc., which grows at the level of human being into an impulse or a sense of emulation which forms the basis of their ethical, political, economical - in a word their entire cultural development.

"Man learns by imitation" - Aristotle:

According to Aristotle the origin of imitative art is in the mimicry performed by children who enjoy them and this enjoyment comes from a feeling of rudimentary curiosity without any intellectual involution. An ancient cave-man for example, sitting in an isolated mood drew or tried to draw the face of the animal he had killed, just being instigated by the imitative impulse inherent in him and when the work was done he delighted in the resemblance, he had an effect of the animal in his drawing. From this
primary stage, art developed through a series of modifications, where it achieved the value of an intelligent human activity.

From a mimicry it developed into a deliberate art not because it was necessary in man's daily life or served any practical purpose, but because it delighted him. The more was the degree of resemblance of this imitative product with its real counterpart, the more was the pleasure in the observer. The source of this pleasure is not necessarily beauty, because the most realistic representations of even the ugly objects giving pleasure. Aristotle admits that a thing-in-imitation does not change its original quality. An object ugly in its original form, cannot be beautiful in imitation. It is not beauty but a realization of the artistic skill through a recognition of similarity between the original and imitation, which gives pleasure.

Art as conscious illusion:

In the real world, objects with their factual reality compel us to remain attached with them. The ugly irritates us and the beautiful pleases us. We are conscious that a lion will devour us if we are both face to face, so a living lion will rouse fear in us and will compel us to try for the safety of our life. But in art, this sort of practical attachment is absent because we know that what we see has no factual reality. It is a sort of illusion, though not illusion proper, for while illusion can arouse
the sensation of a real object e.g. the appearance of a rope as a snake can frighten us, artistic imitation of a snake only delight us. We are conscious throughout or whole course of perception that what looks like a snake is not really a snake, hence art turns out to be a conscious illusion - neither a subjective nor an objective truth absolutely - rather a combination of both subjective belief and an objective resemblance. Aristotle very strongly suggests this in his distinction of discursive thought and imagination.

Imitation of Music, Dance and Poetry:

According to Aristotle music is the most imitative of all arts for in music varied notes, sometimes even opposed, play significant role in creating harmony. Our soul is attracted by music for it has natural affinity with music because soul is composed of different contrary characters such as anger and gentleness, love and hatred. Our soul is an imitation of the harmonic character of nature and so also is the art of music.  

Next comes the place of Dance and Drama for in both of these the object of imitation, as in the case of all arts, man-in-action for Greeks loved form and power of human body and shunned at the Egyptian conventional style that lacked a lively expressiveness. By music Greeks did not mean either a vocal or the instrumental music alone. It was chiefly connected with words and was, in a sense, one of the accessories of Poetry.
The place of poetry as an imitative art is next to music. The object to be imitated by Poetry is man-in-action and the means is language consisting of words which do not directly imitate action like rhythm. Plato tried to trace the onomatopoetic origin of words. Spoken words, according to him, are mostly imitations of mental expressions. But according to Aristotle, they are symbols, not images and similarly, written words are symbols of spoken words. A word is a symbol, not an image of the experience and poetry imitates an action through the meaning which the sounds or words convey.

For Plato, history, philosophy and Poetry are all imitations of some event, for Aristotle, only Poetry is an imitation. There is no compulsion that the action of poetry should have its exact counterpart in the same place and time of the real world. It may not have its counterpart at all and in this sense may be an invention. One should not seek for the factual truth in poetry, he should rather read history for it.

Aristotle even ventures to say that poets are liars. But they lie with such cleverness that we believe the lie to be true. In other words like visual arts, it produces conscious-illusions.

**Imitation in Drama is more perfect:**

According to Aristotle, human action in drama is more perfect than in any other form of poetry. For here, action is
imitated through action, and tragedy, again is more perfect than comedy because, its action is serious and in that respect more true to life. The life we see before us is problematic and full of serious events. The laughter-provoking the light actions as we find in comedy are very rare in life, hence they are less universal, sometimes they are less creditable or quite increditable. Tragedy would be even more imitative than music, according to Aristotle, in the sense that it uses all the means of the imitative arts such as language, rhythm, melody, colour and form. With all this elaborate materials, its imitation is vivid and so easily moving, so that its effect can be felt even by reading only, without a stage performance.

Tragedy, according to Aristotle is healthy and instructive in freeing one from the troubling effects upon the characters such as pity and fear by a sort of cathartic process. The cause of this catharsis lies in the vividness of imitation which is unique in tragedy.

Aristotle thinks that, it is not identification but a sympathisation that is neither true nor false or in other words, as true as false which gives rise to aesthetic pleasure. Aristotle also mentions another source of pleasure in tragedy i.e. "Dramatic turns of fortune and hair-breadth escapes from perils are plesant, because we feel all such things wonderful"\(^{15}\), but a feeling of this
type of wonder is not the real aesthetic feeling. It is as if one enjoys the wonderful actions of a hero in a modern thrill-picture and it is meant for those people who cannot judge the imitative nature of the work of art.

Aristotle thus agrees with Plato that the enjoyment of imitative art requires a knowledge of reality or the experience of human life - the thoughts and actions of human beings in general.

Studying Aristotle's aesthetics, one feels that his sense of imitation runs parallel to the modern notion of creation with the difference that by 'creation' he would have meant 'completion' because, for him, the source of both the arts - productive and imitative - is Nature. Human arts and crafts, though they have their origin in nature - Spider's weaving the cobweb or swallow's building the nest or swan's melody for musical tuning - are neither exactly like nor completely unlike those of Nature. Human intelligence, has modified them. Art may develop over particular objects of Nature, but the general principles of both remain the same. Aristotle warns the artist that this principle must be faithfully followed or imitated when he is developing over the particulars. There is no object in imitative art whose counterpart does not exist in Nature. He suggests by implication that an artist is by nature, incapable of any invention and hence, on principle should not invent something completely new\textsuperscript{16}. 

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We shall close our account of Aristotle by his own comment that art partly imitates and partly completes nature. This remains his last word on imitative and productive arts.

Poetry as structure in Aristotle:

Aristotle, unlike Plato, emphasizes the structural aspect of art when he says that "Art imitates partly nature". According to him the form must be in the thing as one of its causes. His emphasis both biological and structural is on the stable living things or organic substances. His emphasis falls upon the qualifications which a thing must have in order to be a thing at all.

Poetry for Aristotle is an art to be understood, and praised or blamed only in its relation to the whole human being of whom it is both the instrument and the reflection.

The parts of the Poetics which have been most often quoted by later theorists are the dicta that Poetry is a more philosophic and a more serious thing than 'history' because it deals with the universal while history deals with particular; that it cares not for what has happened but for what may happen and that it prefers impossible probabilities to improbable possibilities and this, by certain internal laws set up by a work of art for itself rather than by laws of scientific external reference.
Imitation (mimesis) which meant for Plato removal from reality and distortion is manipulated by Aristotle to mean something apparently better than reality. In *Politics* IV, 17, he says "Every art and educational discipline aims at filling out what nature leaves undone" or again "Art finishes the job when nature fails, or imitates the missing parts" (Physics, II,8). The peculiar object of poetic imitation is said in the *Poetics* to be "men in action" their characters, passions and deeds or experiences.

The possible objects of poetic imitation are said in the *Poetics* to be not only men as they are in real life, but men either better or worse than they are and not only things as they were or are, but things as they ought to be, or as they are said or thought to be. The things as "they ought to be" says Butcher must be taken not in a moral but simply in an aesthetic sense. And with this he confirms the apparently cantological statement of Aristotle that the only artistic fault is to paint the animal inartistically.

**Tragedy and Comedy - Two forms of Drama:**

According to Aristotle tragedy is more representative of imitative arts than comedy and has passed through many phases, reached its natural form and there it stopped in its bio-generic evolution. He being, an inductive observer, projects his scientific viewpoint even in the growth of dramatic art and describes its
structure in a mechanical manner. He says that a play should be of certain size i.e. not too long so that the mind cannot entertain it, not too short so as to preclude certain internal relations. The play should have a certain magnitude because it must be of a certain structure and proportions. He says "Beauty depends on magnitude and order"^20. The action of a tragedy is not longer than one day, must be large enough to admit a change from evil to good or from good to evil, or, it must be large enough to display both good and evil adequately. A complex action is better than simple, including a sudden turn and its recognition. The action must not only be complicated, involving change of fortune or unravelling. The action must be whole and complete. It must have an end, a beginning and a middle^21. He sees the whole as more than the sum of its parts if only in that, it includes the relations among the parts.

Six elements of tragedy:

Aristotle indicates six elements which compose the tragedy. They are: (1) Plot, (2) Character, (3) Thought, (4) Diction, (5) Song, and (6) Spectacle. The first three of these constitute the "matter" and the last three constitute the "manner". All these six can be integrated into three i.e. matter, medium and manner and if we go further in our process of integration we can include rest of the five in "Plot". This is essential according to Aristotle for the unity and reality of the play.
Poetry and Tragedy identical:

Uptil now we have seen that Aristottle has used "Tragedy" almost in an identical sense, or as if it is synonymous with "Poetry" and has devoted large part of his poetics talking about tragedy. Not only this, the six parts we have enumerated above are in fact parts of poetry and that way poetry evolved through several phases, to its full form. When he talked about epic in the last four chapters of Poetics, he talked in an identical manner as if he talked about poetry. Epic, according to him in the process of the genesis of poetry was inferior to tragedy because it was less concentrated and less ideal than tragedy. Lyric according to him was nearer to tragedy because it was less closely integrated with action. He has not talked of the philosophy of lyric in his poetics.

Definition of Tragedy:

The Aristottelian poetics is the poetics of dramā, es­pecially in the form of tragedy which he defines in Chapter VI of Poetics as follows: Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete and of a certain magnitude, in language embelli­shed with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play, in the form of action, not of narrative, through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation (Katharsis) of these emotions.
According to critics, the last clause of this definition is the most debated one and is interpreted as a direct answer to Plato's argument that poetry inflames the passions and weakens moral fibre and that it is an imitation of an imitation and hence doubly away from truth. Aristotle meant by 'Purgation' or Katharsis the expulsion of something harmful implying the purification or aesthetic depersonalization of our usually selfish emotions of pity and fear.

Plot is the soul, the first principle:

Another question hotly debated by literary critics concerns the statement that the plot is the soul and first principle of tragedy. In an earlier chapter of the Poetics, he says that poetry imitates men not only in their actions but also in their characters and feelings. This is impossible if there is no plot or there will be a puzzle in absence of a well-conceived plot in a drama, he says it is better to depend on an artistic handling of the story - and "we ought to get the effect from simply hearing or reading", the emphasis, thus is laid on the poetic element or the verbal content of a drama which is most stable and easily available for criticism.

Tragic poetry, says Aristotle may represent men as better than they are or as they are. It may give us things as they are said to be or so they are thought to be. About distribution
of justice, he says to accord each one to his desert is a weak form of drama and a concession to audience. This appears in comedy and comedy is a weak dramatic form. In an ideal poetry, it should never be depicted that the virtuous man suffers adversity and that the villian prospers. Tragedy being an ideal form of poetry, effects a balance in such cases. A man of strong character may suffer down-fall as a result of some error or weakness inherent in his character but usually a hero or a man of strong character must triumph in the end. The error, due to which man of strong character may suffer downfall, arises only through ignorance. This is argued again and again even by Socrates most eloquently in the Protagoras. It is not really possible to know what is correct and to do otherwise.

The nature of comedy:

Comedy is opposite and complement of tragedy. It is a topic to which Aristottle refers several times but rather casually as if comedy were a minor genre, a reverse or grotesque of serious poetry. This kind of poetry would deal with men as worse than they are or at least as uglier than they are. His definition of comedy is: an imitation of characters of lower type - not however in the full sense of the word bad, the ludicrous being merely a subdivision of the ugly. It consists of some defect or ugliness which is not painful and not destructive. To take an obvious example, the comic mask is ugly and distorted, but does not imply pain.
Comedy is an imitation of an action that is ludicrous and imperfect through pleasure and laughter effecting in purgation of the like emotions.

For such a comedy Aristotle remarks in his *Politics* that "the legislator should not allow youth to be spectators of comedy until they are of an age to sit at the public tables or to drink strong wine". This kind of catharsis for comedy would be the purging of laughter by working it off or as he says in *Rhetoric* "we are peaceful when we are in a condition opposed to angry feeling, for example, at a time of sport or laughter or festivity".

Greek tragedy says Butcher combines in one harmonious representation the individual and the Universal. Whereas comedy tends to merge the individual in the type, tragedy manifests the type through the individual. In tragedy we start with a known individual and see that he comes to - at what being and meaning he arrives through a certain development. In comedy, we start with the defined meaning, and it remains defined or fixed. We only more or less fill it out with examples. This is partly true because, as Aristotle says, comedy deals with the inferior - and hence with a kind of human character which may at least be supposed to occur very readily in every day life.
Literary evaluation:

As Aristotelian theory is a theory of imitation, it is a theory of reference, it is a theory of a universal and an ideal in the field of reference and this ideal tends to be the ethical man. Still this ideal is never quite that because the theory never quite says that the poetic work of the imitation is to be decided directly in terms of the practical ideal. Whether poetry is something which charms or something which teaches is an issue which Aristotle met not head on but by the oblique device of saying that poetry is something which pleases us by being an image and by being at the same time very serious and very philosophic.
1. Plato: Republic 607
4. Quoted by Bowra: P. 155
6. Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers P. 22.
7. Republic
8. Republic VI, 506.
10. Republic: II, 373
11. R.G. Collingwood: The Principles of Art, p. 46
12. Schapar: Prelude to Aesthetics. P. 50
15. Aristotle: Rhetorics: 13716
17. Aristotle: Physics: 199a
18. Aristotle: Poetics: XXV
20. Aristotle: Poetics VII
   Oxford Book Company.
22. Literary Criticism: A short history. P. 46
   P. 388.