# ANAŞAY

*koynunda büyüdük*

# INDIVIDUALITY IN ANTIQUE ART

## ANTİK ÇAĞ'DA SANATTA BİREYSELLİK

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**ABSTRACT**

Antique age is a very important period in the history of mankind in terms of the emergence of philosophical views that enlighten today. In addition, the antique age maintains its importance in terms of producing new creations in painting and sculpture by getting rid of thousands of years' conventional shaping of human anatomy and describing the human anatomy as an ideal beauty element that has never been achieved. With the establishment of free cities in antique times, a new political and social understanding was introduced into the world history. Being born in that period when the new doors of human liberation were partially opened, the sculptors and painters of Antique Age were able to produce their works freely without being bound by any rules compared to the

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previous periods. The purpose of this study was to examine the change in the forms of government along with philosophy and scientific thought; the transformation of reasoning-based management into the democratic consciousness in individuals and society; and how this democratic consciousness affected the individual productions of sculptors and painters between the 5th century BC and the 6th century AD, known as Antique Age. The individuality of the artist in antiquity was examined and discussed in terms of philosophy, thinking, reasoning, and participation in management by means of comparing the traditional stylized archaic artifacts.

**Keywords:** Individuality, Antiquity, Artist Individuality, Democratic Consciousness, Antiquity Art.

## ÖZ

Antik Çağ, günümüze de ışık tutan felsefi görüşlerin ortaya çıkması ve bu görüşlerin tartışılmasına izin verilmesi bakımından insanlık tarihi için çok önemli bir dönemdir. Ayrıca insan anatomisinin binlerce yıllık alışılmış biçimlendirilmesinden kurtularak resim ve heykelde yepyeni yaratımlar gerçekleştirilmesi ve insan anatomisinin hiçbir dönemde başarılamayan ideal bir güzellik unsuru olarak betimlenmesi bakımından da Antik Çağ önemini korumaktadır. Antik Çağ'da özgür kentlerin kurulmasıyla dünya tarihine yeni siyasi ve toplumsal bir anlayış gelmiştir. Kısmen de olsa insan hürriyetinin yeni kapılarının açıldığı bu dönemde doğan Antik Çağ heykeltıraş ve ressamları herhangi bir kurala bağlı kalmaksızın kendilerinden önceki dönemlere göre özgürce eserlerini üretme şansını bulabilmişlerdir. Halkın deniz ticareti ile uğraşması, pek çok farklı kültürü tanımalarına ve bunun sonucu olarak da daha demokratik düşünmelerine yol açmıştır. Kendilerinin de bir birey oldukları bilinci oluşmaya başlamıştır. Doğalcılık felsefesinin de etkisiyle MÖ V. yüzyıldan itibaren Yunanistan, en parlak dönemini yaşamasını aynı dönemde eş zamanlı olarak başlayan demokratik gelişmeye borçludur. Bu çalışmayla; Antik Çağ olarak bilinen MÖ 5. yüzyıldan MS 6. yüzyıla kadar olan süreç içinde felsefe ve bilimsel düşünceyle birlikte yönetim biçimlerinin değişmesi, akla dayalı yönetim biçiminin bireyler ve toplumda demokratik bilince dönüşmesi ve bu demokratik davranış bilincinin heykeltıraş ve ressamların bireysel üretimlerine nasıl yansıdığını değerlendirmek amaçlanmıştır. Antik Çağ'daki sanatçı bireyselliği; geleneksel

üsluplaşmış arkaik eserlerle karşılaştırılarak düşünce biçimi, aklın kullanılması ve yönetime katılım ilişkileri üzerinden incelenerek tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bireysellik, Antik Çağ, Sanatçı Bireyselliği, Demokratik Bilinç, Antik Çağ Sanatı.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In narrow terms, the Ancient Age or Classical First Age includes the Greek culture which stemmed from the Hellenism and Roman cultures. It covers a history of more than a thousand years, beginning in the 8th century BC and ending in the 5th century AD. The emergence of philosophy in the history scene, the defense of ideas in the scientific sense clearly, and the production of ideas outside the religious tradition started in many parts of the world simultaneously between the 6th century and the 5th century BC (Cevizci 2009: 5). The first individual views and thoughts occurred in ancient Greece, which had a relatively more democratic structure and where philosophy was systematized. Antique age is a very important period in the history of mankind in terms of the emergence of philosophical views that enlighten today and make it possible to discuss these views. Furthermore, the antique age maintains its importance in terms of producing new creations in painting and sculpture by getting rid of thousands of years' conventional shaping of human anatomy and describing the human anatomy as an ideal beauty element that has never been achieved. There is no doubt that philosophy and art are also seen in other cultures such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, Hittite, Phoenician, Jewish, and Persian culture. However, the philosophical views and the basis of art in these cultures are based on religion and the tradition passing down from generation to generation; so they do not include new individual views. Considering the structure of the societies of those days, the emergence of new ideas and opinions was not possible in the civilizations mentioned above.

## 2. INDIVIDUALITY IN ANTIQUE ART

In antique age, the art form based on the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian traditions was replaced by the anthropocentric approach. Starting from the 6th century BC onwards, the 'God-King' state was replaced by the 'King' state. Thus, for the Greeks, the age of sacred tradition started to end, and the sovereignty of one person was rejected. It was replaced by a structure which was based on science and reason and designed by a single person based on the

reasoning and view of that single person. With the establishment of free Helen sites (police) in the same century, a new political and social understanding was introduced into the history of the world and, in part, new doors were opened for the human freedom. As it is known, in all cultures governed by God-Kingdom, people were all slaves and everything was for God-King. People were not seen as an individual; they have almost no free form of behavior, and have no say in the administration. However, with the establishment of the police states, people living in these police states had the chance to live more freely than other societies. Because, in this administration, the king and the god were separated from each other, the dignity of the gods was taken as a basis instead of the dignity of the king. In the police state, special buildings and palaces were built not for the kings but for the gods. Thus, the artist was at the disposal of the God, not the king.

The artists of Antique age would be born and grow in such an environment. In such an environment, art would not be limited by any rules and would be free. (Lechat 1944: 9). However, even the gods resembled the rulers in the statues of Egypt where the art was limited by the thousands of years old tradition. Greek art of the antique age had never put emphasis on individuals, and considered art as a human ideal that is worthy only of heroes and gods. They started their works by erecting the sculpture of a young, strong, and athletic. Artists had no difficulty in finding the model they want. Because at that time the athletes were attending the competitions and their daily clothes were showing off their athletic bodies. Thus, we know that the sculptors and painters had the opportunity to get to know the human anatomy through athletes.

Greek plastic arts bear the traces of the Archaic Egyptian art between 600 and 475 BC. However, Greek sculptors went beyond the thousands of years of Egyptian tradition and this was an important step in art. Getting the work from the point left by the Egyptian and Assyrian artists by carving stone sculptures, the Greek sculptors had reached the level of the unique sculptures of the classical period only after the trials that lasted about a century (about 600 - 500 BC) (Gombrich 1984: 48). Of course, the sculpture of the classical period was not easy to realize. Although the Egyptian sculptor adhered to the known rules, the Greek sculptor wanted to know the image of a particular human body. Because of this reason, they made continuous observations and tried new techniques and methods. There was no pressure on them while they were working on these

techniques and methods. They were very free in pursuing their art compared to an Egyptian artist. The way of thinking of antiquity also pioneered the promotion of free behavior for the artists (Kılıç 2000: 14). For example, Peplos Kore, which is an ancient Egyptian art sculpture, is one of the best examples of Hellenistic and Roman women's sculptures in terms of reflecting how the closed and solid forms of Archaic art under the influence of Egyptian culture were broken. (Fig. 1-2).



**Figure 1.** Peplos Kore, Acropolis Museum. (Inv. No: Acr. 679)
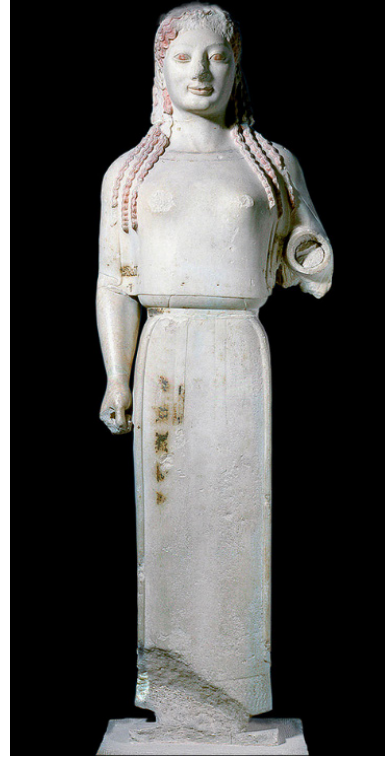
**Figure 2.** The Statue of Amazon Metropolitan Museum. (Inv. No: 32.11.4).

We see that the people who put forward the first philosophical thoughts started to emerge in the same welfare in this region called Ionia. The public engagement in maritime trade in this region led to the recognition of many different cultures, resulting in a more democratic system of thought. Awareness of themselves as an individual started to develop. They had the opportunity to learn other way of lives and worlds of thought out of the strict rules of tradition.

Developing more universal views was a great success for the individuals in that period.

The large mass of people living in the police states were not able to be fully free from the influence of the old religion and tradition and did not have a say in the administration of the state. A partial democracy existed only for the top rulers and elites (Akkoç 2014: 34-35). The artists were not as prestigious as the artists of the Roman and Renaissance periods yet. Because the artists were not at the disposal of a religious institution or state. The artists were seen as a craftsman rather than an artist. A craftsman who was doing his job well was not interested in the aesthetic aspect of art at that time. Each sculptor had a workshop where statues were made according to the order. Large sculpture and painting projects were realized with the orders and contributions of the local governments. Until a period when the elitist tendency in the Roman aristocracy reached its peak, the aesthetic consciousness in Antiquity was underdeveloped (Kılıç 2000: 15). At that time, art was considered as an ordinary industrial product and was appreciated for its effective appearance of the material it made from. The Greeks' arts were functional like the way they lived. The poem was not written for those who loved it to read it on their own. National epics were like a holy book. The poems were being read in front of a group of people, people were going to the temples and watching the sport activities en masse (Genç 1990: 4).

Even though the artists were from the public, the thinkers and philosophers were from the aristocratic groups. There were not so many people to be considered as a philosopher who not only finds the highest value of his life in knowledge, lives to know but also wants to build his/her life based on the knowledge he has acquired. In the first age, it was only possible to see this type of people in ancient Greece. Unlike the Eastern societies, in these societies we encounter researchers, thinkers rather than clergy. These thinkers, who have made important contributions to the democratic thinking of individuals and artists in ancient Greece, were a center of gravity between the school and academy and a center directing important actors and artists in politics. In this regard, it is useful to briefly mention the ancient Greek philosophers and thinkers who deeply influenced the Eastern world and regarded Western culture as the main source of philosophy of life. Because all opinions that direct the individual and deeply affect the artist belong to them.

### 2.1. Pre-Socratic Philosophy and Its Relationship Between Art

The first period of the ancient Greek philosophy is the philosophy of nature which is separate from religious or mythopoetic thought. The philosophers of Ancient Greek nature discussed the problems related to the essence of being and its formation (Cevizci 2009: 14). Under the influence of the philosophy of nature, the most brilliant period was seen starting from the 5th century BC onwards due to the democratic development that started simultaneously during the same period. In the democratized Athens, the question "*How to raise a successful citizen?*" was addressed, which was an indicator of the value attached to the individual in Athens. In the middle of the 5th century BC, after the philosophical speculation on existence or reality, the human being was placed in the center of philosophy; the philosophical interest shifted from the universe to the human being, from the important intellectual questions about cosmology and ontology to the questions about human life and action (Cevizci 2009: 30). The Sophists tried to meet this need by travelling the country city by city.

*Sophistes* actually means *knowledgeable person* (Gökberk 1992: 14). Protagoras, one of the Sophists, had an important view on objects and this view have had a profound impact on the artists living at that time. According to Sextus Empricus, Protagoras asserts that the main substance, whose whole likelihood is collected in itself, is in a continuous flow. Therefore, nothing is a certain "*thing*"; the thing continuously turns into this or that thing (Empiricus, I. 219). There is no pure existence, the attributes of objects arise from their effects on one another. Therefore, we cannot say "*this is this or that is that*" for any object; the only thing we can say is that "*into what it transforms relative to the other things in the ever changing relations.*"

Sensations also depend on the situation at that moment. Therefore, perception tells us the object as it appears to the state of the perceiver at the time of perception. According to Protagoras, the perception of senses and the assumption arising from this perception is our only knowledge.

"*Human being is the bench mark for everything; not only for the existing beings but also for the non-existing.*" (Cevizci 2009: 31; Gökberk 1992: 40).

This view of the Protagoras led to important developments in the perception and interpretation of the object by ancient Greek sculptors. Myron's famous disc-thrower athlete (discobolos) statue in motion was created during the period

when this view was being discussed (Fig. 3). This sculpture is an instant snapshot, there is calmness in motion. With this work, the artist moves away from the frontality and begins to make instant changes as he perceives his sculptures. Here, the artist acts more free than in the past. In addition to humanitarian movements, the human emotions begin to enter into the field of sculpture. There is no limit in front of the freedom of movement of the artist other than the limit drawn by the artist's art, taste, criteria and sense of impression (Lechat 1944: 55). Similarly, the sculpture named Samothrake Nikesi is one of the most original examples of the philosophy of capture on the basis of the idea of Protagoras (Fig. 4). The goddess of victory Nike is seen landing on the fore ship (Boardman 2005: 228). This sculpture is a reaction to naturalism and expressionism against the idealism of classical period sculptures. This attitude also shows the freedom of the sculptor.



**Figure 3.** Diskobolus. British Museum. (Inv. No. 1805, 0703. 43)

**Figure 4.** Winged Victory of Samothrace. Louvre Museum (Inv. No: Ma 2369)

Later, by means of focusing on subject and internal experiment; the sophists not only solved the one-sidedness of their previous philosophy of nature towards the object, the outside world, but also opened up new doors for the artist to recognize the essence of the object and to search for new creations. In addition to the stone, they tried to recognize the plastic effect that would shape various materials such as colored marbles, precious stones, and bronze.

With the effect of Sophists, the development of individualism in Athens and the anarchy created by democracy made the laws questionable. The main cause of the upheaval in Athens was as follows: Sophists were relativist; in their view there was neither a truth nor a criterion that is universally valid, in other words, there is no single truth that is accepted by all; and they accepted the view that "*the human being is the bench mark of everything.*"

### 2.2. Socrates' Era and the Its Relationship Between Art

Socrates, who was in dialogue with the Sophists, argued that "*a universal right*" could be found and eliminated the confusion in Athens. His new ideas enabled the new searches in art to go one step further. Born in Athens in 469 BC, Socrates was the son of a sculptor (stonemason) named Sophroniskos (Cevizci 2009: 35). The fact that he is the son of a sculptor also means getting to know art better. Socrates, who opposed the extreme individualist attitudes of the Sophists, tried to seek the right in union, believing that an absolute truth can exist above individuals. His thoughts were the same as the sophists in term of not being blinded against the religion-tradition authority; however, he believed in the reason, the objective value of thought, and the norm above individuals. Unlike the sophists, Socrates did not attempt to provide insights to people by teaching and tried to seek the right together with those around him. This is clearly seen in Plato's dialogues. The philosopher, who is known to have education on sculpture, asked the artists to carefully observe 'the effect of emotions in the moving body' and to express 'the effects of the soul' (Gombrich 1984: 69). In addition, the following view of Socrates clearly reveals the existence of the individual; *"The individual should believe in the necessity of something. He should find the truth through his own mind and determine the reasons by his own mind. In other words, for virtue, it is not enough to walk the path of traditions or laws which is blindly accepted by everyone; true virtue and correct behavior can only be the product of the individual's own intellectual interiorization."* There are four

Socratesian schools that continue his teaching after his death: the Elis-Eteria School, the Megara School, the Cynics, and the Kyrene School. The views of the School of Cynics are important in directing the art. In particular, the cynics' defense of liberty as a virtue puts individuality at the forefront. According to Cynics; virtue is to be absolutely free to determine what one wants in total independence from inside, in short; it is to save one's self from the dependence on all kinds of needs. The happiness, which is the goal of life, can only be achieved in the joyful depth of soul and the freedom of the soul, which is achieved when you are free of the meaningless delusions. This is virtue, this is freedom, which means being independent within oneself (Gökberk 1992: 48). After centuries, the following view of School of Cynics on being has formed the basis for the art in the 20th century: *"We can enter into the inside and essence of objects to the extent that we can tear them apart. But when we reach the pieces, research and investigation on the essence end. After that, we can't say anything about the elements; we can only name them."*

There are two important philosophers of the Antiquity, who influenced their time and the whole world of thought after themselves and their views were taken as a basis. Their views on aesthetics and art also shed light on the subjects of art. These two philosophers are Aristotle, student of Plato, and Plato, student of Aristo. These two philosophers systematized the philosophy and the ancient Greek philosophy reached the last limit of its development with them.

In his youth, Plato established his own world of *ideals* and described his views in his works called *Dialogs*. *"Good-beautiful"*, the main principle of the universe for Plato, is the basic principle on which all the ideas are based. These ideas can only be grasped through reason. Thus, the world of all objects or phenomena is a reflection or imitation of these rational universal ideals (Turgut 1993: 5). The artist transfers this world to his/her art and his/her works are the imitations of imitation. Plato deals with art in terms of realism and approaches it negatively. In Plato's "Republic" dialogue, when Socrates tries to explain the work of a painter to Glaukon he says *"You have only to take a mirror, and catch the reflection of the sun, and the earth, or anything else - there now you have made them"* and tells the painter that his job is to mirror the world (Tunalı 1993: 176).

Plato actually sees the art as an act of creation. He wants the real creativity to reflect the essence of objects, not imitation of nature; the ideal truth,

not the apparent truth. In this sense, Plato's advice to the artist is the use of reason. However, Plato's views on art can be seen in abstract art in the 20th century (Kılıç 2000: 20). While Plato sees the art as an act of creation, he takes into consideration the artist's feelings, intuitions, and interpretations. This stems from the way he sees the world (Moran 1985: 12). According to Plato, what art reflects is not the ideals, which are the real truth, but the objects, which are the copies of the ideals. In short, it is the sensory world (Tunali 1993: 176). Plato's approach to beauty is the embodiment of the idea of beauty, and his idealistic philosophy must surely have influenced the idealistic beauties of Antiquity (Fig. 5).
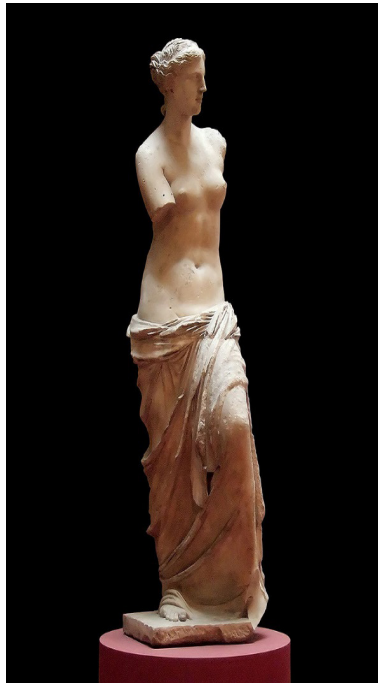


**Figure 5.** The Venus de Milo. Louvre Museum (Inv. No: Ma 399).

In the period of Plato, the ancient Greeks had no concept of *art* or *artist* in the sense we use these terms. The artist was seen almost as a master. They were often called 'master' (technities) or *artisan* (demiourgos) (Peters 2004: 63). As a matter of fact, when Plato mentions about the famous sculptor Phidias, he describes him as an artisan at the peak of his profession and for this reason he describes him as a person worthy to make the sculptures of the gods. (Hippias Major, 290a). It can be understood from this that in ancient Greece the artist and

a manufacturer specialized in his profession were regarded as the same in terms of social status. Every professional has to know the details of his/her job very well. In Republic, Plato emphasizes that every artist should be a "good expert" in his/her own work while making validated propositions in his/her work. This also shows that in ancient times, the functionality of the things rather than their aesthetics was prioritized. Even when handicrafts became the object of formal beauty and pleasure at the highest level, they still did not see beauty as an aesthetic appreciation (Genç 1990: 6).

Aristotle, who collected his views on art in his work *Poetics*, is a philosopher who expressed view on aesthetics and art in antiquity and whose views on beauty affected the entire aesthetic world. His views have been taken as a basis by all aesthetists to date, especially in the field of sculpture, and in line with his realist views, he produced the most beautiful works of antiquity. Sculptures made in a realist style in Hellenistic sculptures are among the best examples of this (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6.** Drunk old woman. Capitoline Museum (Inv. No: MC0299).

Differing from Plato in terms of interpreting the art, Aristotle prioritizes the outside world in acquiring knowledge and puts emphasis on the realism (Timuçin 2000: 255). According to Plato, the artistic imitation (*mimesis)*, especially the art of tragedy, nourishes the passions and misleads the seeker of truth, and directs him/her to the wrong places. According to Aristotle; arts are valuable in general. Because they eliminate deficiencies in nature and repair the

defects in society. At this point, Aristotle believed in the necessity of art, gave a noble duty to the artist, and regarded the art as an important way to inform the society (Bozkurt 1995: 97).

In his book 'Ethics', Aristotle identified two kinds of art. The first one is to do something using our hands, that is, *pacton;* the other one is to produce something by designing, that is, *poetion*. With this thought, Aristotle made distinction between craft and art, craftsman and artist and made the artist stand out in the society.

We find the answer to the question of how a painting and sculpture should be in Antiquity in the concept of imitation (mimesis). Aristotle poses this question as follows: "*A person who looks at a painting, learns what this painting says and who is depicted in this painting in reality, so she/he looks at the painting with pleasure..*" (Poetics, IV, 1). Here, while Aristotle emphasizes that the object of art is nature, he wants the artist to be recognized for his/her works.

According to Aristotle, mimesis is more than an imitation and is formed with the consciousness of the artist and is related to the artist's understanding. This view leads us to individual approaches. Where there is artist awareness and intuition, there is individual perception and subjective approach. However, with the determination of classical style in the Antiquity, the artists never made individual interpretations because the subjective approaches were to seek the ideal within the style. The artist never moved away from the object; on the contrary, she/he considered the understanding of producing the most beautiful as a virtue.

Later on (18th century) Aristotle understands the following from *the individuality* and *the beauty* categories we see in Luckas, understands that: Art is never a screen where only the reality is reflected. Because the concept of mimesis has a wide coverage including the reality. The beauty of art, which is one of the beauties one may encounter in nature, is something other than the reality (Bayer 1961: 36). The objects in nature are beautiful. However, when those objects become art objects; they are no longer objects and become objects of the artist. With the subjective approach of the artist, aesthetics gains a new form.

As a result, in Aristotle, mimesis is not imitation of reality. This concept is free from being simple imitation in that it takes into account the subjectivity and personalities of the artist. Both Aristotle and Plato start from the mimesis. According to both, art reflects a kind of reality that has a source (Belge 1976: 30).

### 3. CONCLUSION

The great awakening of art to freedom took place in a period of 100 years between the 520 and 420 BC. At the end of the 5th century BC, artists became aware of their power and skills. The art consciousness started to form in a large group of people and various schools (ecoles) emerged and different styles started to emerge as a result of the competition between these schools. In the architecture; Dorian, Ionic, and Corinthian styles emerged in this period and were used for centuries. Although the sense of new art that is unique to individual identity is only associated with the monumental sculpture art; we know that in addition to the art of architecture and sculpture, the vase painters of Antiquity proudly signed their works in this period (Fig. 7). The tradition of signing emphasizes that the artists is aware of their virtue and they take individual responsibility in their works (Burford 1974: 212).



**Figure 7:** *Sophilos' signature*: "*sofilos me grafsen*" ("*Sophilos* painted me"). British Museum. (Inv. No: 1971,1101.1)

When we look at the poetic tradition of Antique Age, it is seen that one of the two elements that marked the archaic period poetry was individuality. The best example is the world of anthropomorphic gods in the works of Homeros and Hesiod. The world of gods created by Homer and Hesiod caused the human thought to gain independence at an early stage and influenced not only the art but also the ancient Greek philosophy. According to Aristotle, Homer is the first philosopher.

When we consider all these, we see that the ancient Greek art emerged during a period when the Athens democracy was at its peak. Pericles attached great importance to the artists during his reign and treated them like his peers (Gombrich 1984: 57). He commissioned an architect named Iktios for the design of the lands and commissioned Phidias for the sculptures. The famous Athena and Zeus of Phidias were created as the result of this assignment. The Temple of Zeus in Olympia, the most glorious temple of the Classical Period and the Parthenon were the product of Pericles' art and the value he attached to the artist.

Philosophy after Aristotle was no longer an ancient Greek philosophy, but a philosophy operating based on the values he put forward. Alexander's armies reached India and the Asian expeditions led to the phenomenon called *Hellenism*, and the period called *Hellenistic Age* began. With the Hellenistic period, the Greek culture was opened to outside world and with the death of Alexander the Great, a fusion started to be seen between *Greek* and *Eastern thought*. This thought continued in the Roman Empire and took its final form in Christianity.

The Roman period painting and sculpture is the repetition of Ancient Greece. In this period, the artist is not as free as in the Hellenistic Period and the works of art were not stylistic. In the portraits, we see the novelty brought by the artists of Roman period to art. The portraits of the Roman period have political concern and are full of emotion (Fig. 8).



**Figure 8.** Marble portrait of the emperor Caracalla.
Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (Inv. No: 6033)

The Roman system of thought, which began to be Christianized from the early years of the Christ, continued until the Renaissance. This period, covering a period of about a thousand years, is considered as the *Middle Ages* in history. The discussions in the Middle Ages were not as intense as the antiquity. The individual views in ancient times were shifted to the religion-centered field in the medieval Christian societies. The thought of the Middle Ages is based on a Christianized Ancient Greek thought. In this period, the views of Aristotle and Plato were religiousized.

With the Christianization of Rome, the world and the aesthetic view of the church began to dominate the art, and the artist produced works that are fully appreciated by the church until the emergence of the Renaissance bourgeoisie. The ancient Greece's all aesthetic and ideal understanding of beauty, which is oriented towards objectively understanding, learning and researching the external reality, was abandoned and the art was represented under the control of the church. In the late antiquity, the idea of embodiment of God in the Greeks and the abstract view of God in the Eastern world have always been in conflict. Byzantine art has abandoned the nature study and thus turned into a rigid expression. This rigidity is considered to be an archaic formation (Turani 1992: 210). The idea that art does not imitate the nature, it is superior to it, and it is something transcending it has formed the basis of the whole Medieval art understanding (Gökberk 1992: 119).

In Byzantine art, the effects of an abstract world are seen. For the depiction of this abstract world, mosaics and wall paintings were chosen as a technique. Since a painting program, which took its power from the doctrine of Plato's "ideals", was invariable truth due to the guidance of the "theological" education in churches; we see a clear, simple, plain, and schematic depiction in this period. The aim here is to educate the public through painting by means of presenting a religious event in the clearest, simplest, but awe-inspiring way using an expression language, which is planar and schematic and attaches importance to the subject, rather than a symbolic and narrative form. The spirituality and the dualism of materialism resulting from the belief in Christianity revealed the depictions called 'capital' and 'province' styles in Byzantine art.

Between 726 and 787 AD, Byzantine iconography was interrupted and religious paintings were prohibited. Then, with the end of the prohibition of

portrayal, the church took the revenge of the oppressions it faced in the era of iconoclasm and made art dependent on its laws and allowed artists to go beyond the rules set by the church.

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