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From Plato to Tolstoi art has been accused of exciting our emotions and thus of disturbing the order and harmony of our moral life." Poetical imagination, according to Plato, waters our experience of lust and anger, of desire and pain, and makes them grow when they ought to starve with drought. "Tolstoi sees in art a source of infection. "Not only in infection," he says, "a sign of art , but the degree of infectiousness is also the sole measure of excellence in art." But the flaw in this theory is obvious. Tolstoi suppresses a fundamental moment of art, the moment of form. The aesthetic experience – the experience of contemplation- is a different state of mind from the coolness of our theoretical and the sobriety of our moral judgment. It is filled with the liveliest energies of passion, but passion itself is here transformed both in its nature and in its meaning. Wordsworth defines poetry as " emotion recollected in tranquility'. But the tranquility we feel in great poetry is not that of recollection. The emotions aroused by the poet do not belong to a remote past. They are " here"- alive and immediate. We are aware of their full strength, but this strength tends in a new direction. It is rather seen than immediately felt. Our passions are no longer dark and impenetrable powers; they become, as it were, transparent. Shakespeare never gives us an aesthetic theory. He does not speculate about the nature of art. Yet in the only passage in which he speaks of the character and functions of dramatic art the whole stress is laid upon this point. " The purpose of playing," as Hamlet explains, " both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as, twere, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." But the image of the passion is not the passion itself. The poet who represents a passion doest not infected us with this passion. At a Shakespeare play we are not infected with the ambition of Macbeth, with the cruelty of Richard III or with the jealously of Othello. We are not at the mercy of these emotions; we look through them; we seem to penetrate into their very nature and essence. In this respect Shakespeare's theory of dramatic art, if he had such a theory, is in complete agreement with the conception of the fine arts of the great painters and sculptors.

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Philosophers and their interpretation of Art.

Art has always been trialed for watering the sentiments and hindering the peace of a virtuous life. Plato and Tolstoi considered art as an emotional roller coaster of feelings, phases and a delightful experience. Whereas, Wordsworth thought of poetry as a strengthful, passionate and peaceful form of art. On the other hand, Shakespear believed that dramatic art was about performance and interpretation of emotions, not about being affected by them. Therefore, Shakespear's idea complemented the thoughts of great artists.

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