

**AESTHETIC OF UGLINESS IN THE ART OF PAINTING BETWEEN 17TH
CENTURY AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY**



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JUNE,2021

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BY

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PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ÖZET

“Aesthetic of Ugliness in the Art of Painting Between 17th Century and Early 20th Century” başlıklı bu tezde, içinde çirkin barındıran resimler incelemektedir. Temel amaç, içeriği çirkin olan yada çirkin figürleri konu edinen resimleri ele alıp açıklayarak çirkin unsurlar barındıran eserlerin de seyirciyi etkileyebileceğini göstermektir. Bu bağlamda, çirkin anlamak için, öncelikle güzeli tanımlamak ve anlamak adına ikinci ve üçüncü bölümde felsefe ve sanatlarda tarih boyunca güzelin nasıl ele alındığı açıklanmıştır. Dördüncü bölümde çirkin tanımlanmış ve sanat tarihi dönemlerine göre örneklerle desteklenmiştir. Beşinci bölümde ise çirkinlik içeren, seçilmiş resimlerin açıklamaları 17. yüzyıl Barok dönemiyle başlayıp 20. yüzyıl Yeni Nesnellik dönemiyle bitirilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, çirkin konu edinen eserlerin önemini vurgulamak amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Resim sanatı, estetik, güzellik, çirkinlik, çirkinin estetiği*

ABSTRACT

Hereby this thesis titled “Aesthetic of Ugliness in the Art of Painting Between 17th Century and Early 20th Century” investigates the paintings that contain ugliness in them. The main focus is to show and discuss paintings that include ugly content or figures to reveal the fact that in the History of Fine Arts, since the 17th century, ugliness is used as a conceptual and aesthetic parameter. In this context, to understand and to define ugliness; beauty is explained first in chapter II and III, both in philosophy and in art. In chapter IV, ugliness is described and exemplified in accordance to the art periods. In chapter V, the explanations of the selected examples of paintings that mention ugly in them from 17th century starting with Baroque and until the early 20th century ending with New Objectivity is explained. As a result, the aim is to show the importance of ugliness in the art of painting.

Key Words: *Art of painting, aesthetic, beauty, ugliness, aesthetic of ugliness*

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1.INTRODUCTION

Human beings' response immediately in an unwelcomed manner when encountered with anything ugly. The impulse that is triggered with the previous unwanted incidents, cause people to act so. However, it would be wrong to think that ugly is not worth appreciating. The value that has been given to beauty is far too much for centuries, whereas ugly has been looked down on. It is not possible to understand the degree of beauty without the presence of ugly and for all the times the both terms have been two inseparable pieces that constituted the world. The term aesthetic, on the other hand, is generally used as a synonym of beautiful in daily use and, also in philosophy it is discussed hand in hand with beauty too.

Aesthetic in philosophy, is seen as the main heading which splits into three subparts that are all about beauty. The first is about the idea of beauty, the second is about the production of beauty; in other words, about the art making, the third is about the system of arts; to recreate the idea of beauty with a medium of art.

(Rozenkranz,2018, p.11) From this explanation, it can be understood that ugly cannot be classified as an aesthetic concept but as ugly is, basically, the exact opposite of beauty, it would be logical to discuss it under aesthetic title.

Moreover, the word aesthetic comes from the Greek words 'aisthesis' or 'aisthanesthai'. Aisthesis, means sensation, sensible perception and aisthanesthai, means to perceive with the help of the senses. Therefore, aesthetic actually is about the information we achieve from our senses, not really all about beauty. (Tunali, 2002, p.13)

The founder of Aesthetics, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten on the other hand states that, logic as a science is to receive information through mind and thinking, and to affirm that information by analyzing them with the sense and perception is called aesthetic. According to Baumgarten, logic and aesthetic is very close to each other, but aesthetic is a way to reflect the logic of the information we have through senses. (Uncu & Çalışır, 2018) So, it would not be wrong to bring it up as the aesthetic of ugliness.

“Proust thought ugliness is aristocratic because it suggests a confidence about not having to please anyone. And ‘ugliness is superior to beauty because it lasts longer’, according to grizzled chanteur Serge Gainsbourg. Peter Schjeldahl, The New Yorker’s art critic summed up the hiatus nicely: ‘Beauty is, or ought to be, no big deal, but the lack of it is.’

Ugliness really is a big deal. But, then, if everything were beautiful... nothing would be.” (Bayley, 2012, p.261)

To understand that sometimes ugliness could arouse attraction in people, beauty must be understood first, as the usage of the term beauty goes back a long way and as people always attached importance to it, finding evidences from very old times will be the first thing to do to see the aesthetic perception. Without realizing what both terms have been used as for centuries it is impossible to address their significance they hold now, in today’s world.

In this thesis the importance of ugliness in the paintings since the 17th century until the early 20th century will be revealed. Though, in order to understand the place of ugliness in arts, first we have to specify what was defined as beautiful throughout history. In Chapter II, the ideas of the philosophers about what beauty is, discussed. In

Chapter III, what was seen as beautiful in the art periods were discussed; with the discussions and the definitions done in the Chapter II and III, revealed what was once accepted as beautiful, in both the history of philosophy and the history of art. Later on, in the Chapter IV to reveal that how the idea of including ugliness in art emerged and developed in the history of art, the definition and discussion of ugliness was made. In the Chapter V, by presenting examples of the artworks of the great artists who used ugly as a tool to communicate with the people and to reflect the real world in their arts, the main purpose that is to show how the paintings that have ugliness in them can actually be masterpieces will be supported. Even if the content or the stylistic approach have elements that disturb people, it does not change how that piece of art impresses the audience. Most of the works that are listed and explained in the next chapters, still are being counted as great works of painting in the History of Art.

2.HISTORY OF BEAUTY IN PHILOSOPHY

How beauty is understood and what is called as beautiful was a very popular question in the philosophy world. Almost every philosopher had an opinion on this subject, some shared the same point of view, some suggested totally different ones. Although the philosophers did not agree on one particular definition of beauty, they made great contributions to the literature and even shaped what people think about beauty today.

There have been several different ideas on what to call as a beautiful thing and what features does one have to have, to be remarked as beautiful. The method to describe beauty through mathematics, for instance, was a very old way when looked to the history of aesthetics. It goes back to Greek philosophy and the way they described the aesthetic. Describing beauty through mathematics was first connected with the term “proportion”. When we talk about proportion, it is understood that there is a relevancy between two dimensions or the parts of a whole. This numerical relevancy pleases us, and it can be comprehended by our senses and attributed to beauty since the Ancient Greeks. This very old way to define beauty trace back to Herakleitos (B.C. 540-480), he explains his way of understanding beauty as the harmony of oppositions for instance the usage of black and white in a painting or the usage of high and low tones in a song get together and appear to be a proportioned work with harmony. This harmony is not only seen in art, but the universe is built in this way too. Empedokles (B.C. 490-430) was another Greek philosopher who thought like Herakleitos, he also suggested that an artist’s duty is to create harmony through colors. These two philosophers both used the term harmony as a synonym of beauty. (Tunalı, 2002, p.322)

However, the base of discussing harmony (beauty) through mathematics was formed by Pythagoras' followers. The doctrine of Pythagoras understands the cosmos as a harmonic whole and this harmony is based on the arithmetic.

“The early evidence suggests, however, that Pythagoras (B.C. 570-495) presented a cosmos that was structured according to moral principles and significant numerical relationships. The heavenly bodies also appear to have moved in accordance with the mathematical ratios that govern the concordant musical intervals in order to produce a music of the heavens, which in the later tradition developed into ‘the harmony of the spheres.’” (Huffman, 2005)

The famous sculptor and the one who found the canon of sculptures, Polykleitos (B.C. 450-420) also believed in this harmony between numbers and shaped his canon according to this view. He even made a sculpture trying to show that the physical beauty comes from symmetry; only understood with numbers and named it Kanon.

From a conversation between Socrates (B.C. 470-399) and Aristippos on the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon, the opinion of Socrates about beauty can be understood. He suggests that the good and beauty is when something fulfills the purpose of its being. Briefly if anything is useful it is beautiful according to Socrates.

“‘Is a dung basket beautiful then?’

‘Of course, and a golden shield is ugly, if the one is well made for its special work and the other badly.’

‘Do you mean that the same things are both beautiful and ugly?’

‘Of course -- and both good and bad. For what is good for hunger is often bad for fever, and what is good for fever bad for hunger; what is beautiful for

running is often ugly for wrestling, and what is beautiful for wrestling ugly for running. For all things are good and beautiful in relation to those purposes for which they are well adapted, bad and ugly in relation to those for which they are ill adapted.’ (*Memorabilia* iii, 8, 4-7; cf. *Protagoras* 334a-c) “ (The Socrates of Xenophon, n.d.)

The beauty explained by Plato (B.C. 470-399) can be classified in three different parts according to the periods of his life. The first one is the Socratic period, the second is the ontological period and the last one is the senescence period. In the earlier Greek philosophy, the terms beauty and goodness were appeared to be the same (*kalo-kagathia*).

According to his second phase, for him beauty was the reflection of God, the beauty that comes from the higher power. The beauty is not related with any of the creatures or incidents but the light that is shining on them from the world of ideas. In Plato’s mind, beauty was not something only related with what people saw; the expression of people on the physical means is independent from the presence of beauty in them so that without the need of a tangible thing, a beautiful person can shine everywhere. The ugliness of Socrates for instance was known by everyone, but it is said that because of the inner beauty of him, he always walked with his own shine.

Plato was one of the philosophers who explained that beauty comes from the harmony created by mathematical proportion. But he approaches this view in his senescence period until then he has a different way of describing beauty.

After Plato started to get effected by Pythagoras’ doctrine, the world of ideas was changed into a world of arithmetic. He mentions that, beauty comes only from the geometrical shapes, these shapes are not beautiful when compared to others (*pros ti*

kalon), they are beautiful all by themselves (kala kath auta), quintessentially they are beautiful and pleases the viewer. Beauty is nothing but proportion; direct proportion and the harmony comes from the arithmetical order of it. (Tunalı, 2002, p.221)

Alfred Baeumler states that, Aristotle (B.C. 384-322) does not use the term beauty as a guide to aesthetic. He uses beauty, the way the old Greeks used it in their everyday lives; it means, at first, something that is natural and alive. When Aristotle explained the term beauty in his books, *Metaphysics* and *Poetics*, he referred to it as not a transcendent or metaphysic element but directly a mathematics related element which suits well with his teacher Plato's latest understanding of beauty. Aristotle suggests that for something to be called as beautiful, that thing must be proportional, must be identified in terms of mathematics, numbers. In the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle writes about how good and beauty are two very different things, he says both action and stillness could contain beauty but good could only be found in action. The beauty of a creature or an object depends on its magnitude and the order it holds in; due to this, a very small thing cannot be considered as a beautiful one likewise a very big thing too. When it is in an extreme condition in terms of magnitude, very large or very tiny, our understanding cannot process it as a beautiful thing. In the Greek thinking one should be understandable to be labeled as beautiful, but it can be aesthetic even if it is extremely small or big. After centuries this will be called as the "sublime" and will be included in the aesthetic categories. (Tunalı, 2002, p.330)

To completely understand what beauty is, it is important to understand the term sublime too. This term is as old as beauty, even according to J. Volkelt in his *System der Aesthetik II*, he states that sublime is dwelled on in a detailed way before beauty did. In the aesthetic history the first name to talk about sublime is Longinus

(B.C. 213-273). Yet, before Longinus there was a term used in Greek culture and meant sublime: hypnos.

According to Kant, the similarity between beauty and sublime is just one thing and it is that both is included in the aesthetic category, they both are individualistic and arouse pleasure in human beings. Beauty is related to an object that has boundaries, on the other hand sublime is limitless and formless, independent of the form. As Aristotle stated too beauty is limited to a magnitude. When there is a beautiful landscape, it can be easily understood because it is limited in terms of form. But sublime comes along with the term uncertainty.

Kant talks about two different sublime categories: mathematical and dynamic sublime. Mathematical sublime is related to an incomprehensible magnitude like the limitlessness of a desert; dynamic sublime is related to an incomprehensible force like a destructive hurricane. For both categories, they awake fearsomeness in human beings. Sublime is beyond the understanding of our senses, so they terrify us and makes us feel smaller but at the same time we are impressed and feel some kind of pleasure.

Besides these, Kant's opinions on beauty is important too because he broke the connection between beauty and goodness, at the same time the connection between beauty and usefulness. Kant thinks that being useful is linked to the being of the object. For instance, water is useful because the being of it, is a life source to living things and necessary. According to Kant, beauty is not about the being of an object or someone; it is about how that thing is described. Every detail that is about the being of that creature is taking our attention away from the aesthetic focus, and even the object is beautiful, it would distract us and ruin the beauty of it, he says. This attempt to show how the two terms differ from each other was successful in the 19th century

which was accepted by lots of people. When, in 1919, Walter Gropius founded the Bauhaus Institute at Germany, the useful and beautiful was bonded again. In fact, the aesthetic rules changed with the radical alterations they did. Everything became simple constituted even from only one form. This, both made the beautiful a practical and a functional notion and universalized it. (Tunalı, 2002, p.349)

Human beings tend to aesthetically evaluate the things around them, try to put labels, to a landscape or a tree or another person they saw, as beautiful or ugly. These objects constitute the natural beauties and included in the physical beauty suggested by Benedetto Croce who is a rather recently lived philosopher. But the world is not only consisting of the natural things that people are born into, also they live in a world where they create things which is basically the culture built up with their lives. In this cultural world, the artworks hold an important place and when people are encountered with those artworks, they, again, tend to evaluate them aesthetically by saying they are beautiful or not. The two different types of beauty were always set apart from each other. Croce put natural beauty and artistic beauty under one integrated title which he called is physical beauty. Everything that is considered as a natural object; regardless of whether it is organic, like animals or plants, or inorganic, like crystals or rocks, counts as a natural beauty. According to Croce, natural beauty cannot be analyzed, if it is taken into consideration as a data than the beauty fades. For instance, for a zoologist, nature cannot be beautiful or ugly, it is just a set of data for him but for other people nature can be judged aesthetically. The artificial, artistic beauty that Croce, refers to is directly about the artworks and the beauty of those artworks. Even if the work is figurative or phonetic, he says they all are counted as the aesthetic reproductions that help stimulate. Croce relates artistic beauty to spirituality so for him it is more important than the natural beauty. (Tunalı, 2002, p.281)

A contemporary philosopher Roger Scruton suggests that there are four different kinds of beauty which are human beauty, natural beauty, everyday beauty and artistic beauty. Scruton explains human beauty as an object of desire and says that human beings tend to like physical features that attracts their gaze. Natural beauty was seen as an object of contemplation; people got a contemplative attitude when encountered with natural objects and cultural and historical sceneries. In Scruton's view everyday beauty is addressed as an object of practical reasons, by which he meant to reach an aesthetic appreciation an object must be well fitting to the situation, it must be right and appropriate so that it can be counted as harmonic in terms of appearance. Even the decorations or the handiworks can be counted for the everyday beauty. Artistic beauty is a form of meaning an object of taste according to Scruton and he suggests: "When it comes to art, aesthetic judgement concerns what you ought and ought not to like." This statement is about the morality. "He correctly notes, however, that genuine art may entertain us but that it does so in literature and drama by 'creating a distance sufficient to engender disinterested sympathy for the characters, rather than vicarious emotions of our own'" (Scruton, 2009, p.102) Further, he links artistic beauty with expression, style, form and content, meaning and metaphor.

In general, some of the important philosophers' views on beauty is explained and it can be seen that, reaching an agreement on what exactly beautiful is and what it is not is very hard. From the ancient times until now, everyone had a thought on this subject, but we cannot say one is wrong and the other is right as the philosophers couldn't even come to terms with each other.

3.HISTORY OF BEAUTY IN ART

For centuries “beauty” has always been an important subject in philosophy and in all branches of art. The definition of beauty changed over time for countless times and even today we cannot define what is actually called as a beautiful thing. We generally instinctively call something out as beautiful, but the important point is that how history shaped our perception of looking. Beauty is an ever-changing term which does not only differ in various times, but also geographical perspective of people has an impact on the definitions too. Defining beauty properly will lead us understand not only the meaning of the term ugliness but also how it affected the perception of aesthetic.

In general beauty can be defined as:

“The quality present in a thing or person that gives intense pleasure or deep satisfaction to the mind, whether arising from sensory manifestations (as shape, color, sound, etc.), a meaningful design or pattern, or something else (as a personality in which high spiritual qualities are manifest).” But the important thing is, that pleasure or satisfaction occurring in the mind changed from time to time. (The Art of Ugliness, n.d.)

“What is considered a beautiful face is often influenced by what is going on in the society.” says the political science professor at American University, Bruce F. Norton. (Romm, 1987) In other words, the reason of the constant change in the definition of beauty is the constant change in the society. History provides us the record that, there have been an intend to shape and dominate the perception of beauty and how an ideal human body would look like.

The Ancient Greeks, to start with, believed that beauty did not only consist of a face being nice but also requires a goodness of the spirit as well. “Beauty was considered an excellence, like honesty or bravery.” says Dr. Dietrich von Bothmer, chairman of the Greek and Roman department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. (Romm, 1987) The Greek beauty standards that were depicted in the artworks was mostly based on the proportions of the facial features, harmoniously put together with a ratio and a mystical appeal too. There was an importance of the number 3 in the Greek tradition, according to this mathematical approach “the perfect face was divided into three sections: from hairline to eyes, from eyes to upper lip and from upper lip to chin. The ideal face was two thirds as wide as it was high.” (Romm, 1987) The most important characteristics of a face to be considered beautiful, in the Greeks, were first, the eyebrows shaped like an arch and especially the ones that grew together which in today’s world it is not defined as a charming feature. Second characteristic that holds an importance is the naturally reddish mouth where the upper lip is thicker than the lower. Moreover, the chin had to be smooth and round. The hair, on the other hand, is loveable if that is blond, simply combed, put together behind the head and accessorized with ribbons.

The Ancient Romans did not differ from the Greeks on defining what the beautiful is. Both shared the same opinions on what was called as a beautiful thing. Cosmetics: a significant way to elevate your beauty was used in both cultures. Greek women used makeup to cover the undesirable things like signs of aging, wrinkles and used pencils and rouges to look better. They even tinted their hair when it turns into gray to hide their age. The Romans did tint their hair too to cover the grayish parts and also, they started covering their wrinkled skin with wax to make it look smoother

than it really is. Besides, they invented to put additional fur to avoid the spaces between their eyebrows. (Romm, 1987)

When we reach to the Renaissance period, we can say that a new way of seeing emerged. Almost all important paintings contained beautiful figures but all of the painters had different techniques of expressing the beauty they see. In the Renaissance era, there appeared a new trend, Renaissance Humanism, the Ancient Greek, and Roman legacies were used as an example to develop their own art. It means as the name Renaissance refers, the re-birth period in which artists used figures that looked like the ones that we were used to seeing in the ancient times. But instead of directly applying the canon of beauty that was appreciated, they took the artworks as a guide to drawing. It cannot be said that there was a specific description of beauty in those times but there was a tendency to depict the ideal beauty. They used models to create their art, both the real-life models and the paintings or sculptures that were done beforehand. Botticelli's depiction of Venus was approved as a good example of the idealization of the beauty but there were various other portrayals of Venus which differed from Botticelli's. Da Vinci, for instance used mysterious elements to reflect his way of seeing the beauty where Raphael used mathematical proportions to create the beautiful in his compositions. This does not mean that Da Vinci did not use numerical proportions, on the contrary; he made a drawing called "The Vitruvian Man" (c. 1492) to show how he is good at anatomy and to show he knows the ratios successfully to create a well-proportioned depiction of a man. The Northern Renaissance on the other hand depicted women more voluptuous than the Italian Renaissance painters. Michelangelo's David, is the best example to understand the perception of beauty; he was shown in a very good shape physically, muscular, tall and strong, like he was a Greek god but in the real story he is just a shepherd boy, he

is idealized because of how he acted while bravely defeating the Goliath. Generally speaking, Renaissance artists depicted physically perfect figures depending on their scholarly ambitions and developing skills, combining the ideal features and the reality. (Haughton,2004)

In the Baroque Period the standards of beauty shifted to a certainly different path. The skin of the women, for instance, should be pale instead of a tanned one because the tanned skin is a reference to country women who work outside, under the sun all day and these women cannot be accepted as beautiful because of the social and economic norms at that time. While the skin is pale and soft, the cheeks should be pink like a baby's face and other than that if a person have a double chin that is most likely to be described as a beautiful person which in the ancient times was considered as a fault. The ears should be small where the eyes should be big. But of course, these standards were accepted generally not by all of the artists. Peter Paul Rubens, for instance, depicted women in a slightly different way than what was stated above, he showed them in chubby bodies, not in a good shape as it was used to be. (Romm, 1987)

When we reach to the Neoclassical era, the most important aim of creating art become the depiction of the classical beauty. The beauty standards of Ancient Greek and Rome come to life again in this period. Simplicity and symmetry gained importance in the Neoclassical artworks and the artists were inspired by the ancient masters. German art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann suggested that: "The one way for us to become great, perhaps inimitable, is by imitating the ancients." (Motta, 2020) They started their own canon by combining the classical harmony and idealistic style with dramatic touch. The figures appear to be serious and unemotional. The ideal beauty that is depicted in the Neoclassical period, become even more

conservative and boring, when compared to the idea of beauty in the Renaissance period.

In the Romanticism Period the idea of beauty shifted a bit. To start with, Romanticism movement can be seen as the rejection of the calm, ideal and harmonic art that was addressed in the Neoclassical Period. The artists generally started appreciating the beauties of nature. The depiction of emotions and moods of people gained importance; we can say that, this period turn out as the expression of the inner self. Instead of classical and traditional rules and canons of painting, they started showing the mental situation of the figure depicted. The subjects started being bizarre, pathetic, or heroic where we were used to seeing things in an ideally beautiful way even the description of beauty changed over time. Linearity and bold contrasts with light and shade was used to give the senses of the scenes. (Romanticism, n.d.)

The Realism era, on the other hand, started with the Industrial Revolution and the modernization of the world. There appeared a change in the transportation, clothing, businesses, and everything that people were engaged with, so the change in the social life affected the art too. The artists started including everyday life to their paintings and they used a naturalistic way in depicting the real world. The content of art become ugly because of the subject matter that it included in, but on the contrary the technique of painting become beautiful. Realism term even sometimes was used as the photographic depiction of what the artist saw, so creating the beautiful was losing its significance day by day. One of the most important painters of the time, Gustave Courbet said that if he could not see something, he should not paint it. (Realism, n.d.) As it can be understood the aim to depict the ideal beauty was no longer in demand, the reality was much more tempting with the new lifestyle it

brought with alteration. The beauty of the paintings in the Realism Period can be measured with how realistic the scene is depicted.

Following with the Impressionism, it can actually be said that everyday life depiction continues but not in the way they applied in the Realism period. They started painting the world as the way they saw it, without any idealization or effort to make it look like the reality, they did not even try to make the painting look finished; just used their brushstrokes and depicted the color and light they experienced. The main aim was to show the fleeting moment. The beauty of the paintings in this era come from the new way of seeing, for instance the *Impression* by Claude Monet, the initiator painting, was only showing the reflections of the sun on the sea and the visual experience that the artist encountered. When this painting was exhibited in the Impressionists exhibition, an art critic called Louis Leroy called it as nothing but a pure impression while he was staring at the work in shock because he was expecting to see finished, academic paintings like in the Paris Salon, instead he was encountered with a work that looks unfinished and sketchy. (Impressionism: Art and Modernity, n.d.)

“If one wants to characterize them with a single word that explains their efforts, one would have to create the term of Impressionists. They are Impressionists in the sense that they render not a landscape, but the impression produced by a landscape” says Jules Castagnary about this period. (The Beauty of Impressionist Art, n.d.)

Post-Impressionism was a more diverse period than the Impressionism, there was not a single aesthetic approach that the artists agreed to. To generalize, we can say that the artists included in this movement used unnatural colors, symbolic motifs,

and painterly brushstrokes but their aim was to show the underlying messages of their own subconsciousness. An art critic, historian, and curator Roger Fry suggested that “Art is an expression and stimulus to the imaginative life rather than a copy of actual life.” (Art & Architecture, 2020) When it is individually analyzed, every painter called as a Post-Impressionist, they all defined and depicted beautiful in their way of seeing, they felt it first and then put it on their canvases. One of the most significant painters of the time, Paul Cezanne said, a work of art which did not begin in emotion is not a work of art and again one of the painters of Post-Impressionism, Paul Gauguin said “Color! What a deep and mysterious language, the language of dreams.” (Art & Architecture, 2020) These two quotations summarize different paths they followed to reach the perception of beauty in their minds.

Starting from the Post-Impressionism era, the inner self and feelings gain an importance while producing an artwork. The depiction of this inner world continued with the Expressionism movement too but in a more different way. The paintings mostly included abstract shapes and intense, unrealistic colors. Depicting the real world and the everyday life was losing its significance day by day and the beauty perception shifted from a figure being nice to; brushstrokes being loose, texture being used, and mysterious feelings included. The primitive taste and distortion of the figures and objects shows the way how they perceived beauty.

With Cubism, the distortion of objects peaked and all it was put in the paintings become shapes now. Primary geometrical shapes were used to create the beauty that is seen by the artists. “In a Cubist painting, the viewer is given a series of perspectives combined in one image, and the significance of the subject grows in consequence. This can be considered beauty in and of itself.” (Torsch, 2013) The way of seeing that Cubists brought into the art world was a new definition to the word

beautiful, it was a revolutionary move. It is even told that when Picasso first show his painting “Les Demoiselles d’Avignon” (1907) to a friend of him, he told him never to show this again to another person because of the unconventional way of depiction. The public and even the people who are close to Picasso was shocked by seeing the new technique he started using, with the fragmentations and distortion of the figures. (Pablo Picasso, n.d.)

Futurism as the name suggests is the celebration of modernity and mostly the artists aimed to glorify the new world that was surrounded with industry, technology, speed, noise, and urban life. The beauty of the new modern life and the dynamicity it brought was depicted by the artists. Stabilized figures were no longer considered as beautiful because of what the technology offered to the people; mobility was the new trend.

Suprematism created a new language that encourages the supremacy of the pure feelings which is expressed with the usage of triangles, rectangles and circles covered in intense colors. Feeling of color floating in space is the most important thing for the Suprematists. This period suggests a pure abstraction where no figures are being used, it is a step taken forward after the Cubists who used shapes to create figures or objects. The beauty in this era comes from the spiritual experience coming from the non-representational forms depicted and the feelings that they brought to the viewer. (Suprematism, n.d.)

Constructivism is in a way following the footprints of Suprematism in the usage of shapes, but it lacks the spiritual and emotional experience part. In this period, artists were not into depicting any beauty they saw around them, their only aim was to carefully analyze the objects and built a design that will be used functionally. For

instance, Vladimir Tatlin's Design For The Monument To The Third International (c. 1919-1920) is a tower which never really was built and it had no beauty in it, only designed to be used in full function in a very modernist outlook. (Tatlin's Tower, n.d.)

De Stijl, was again a pure abstract style where a universal visual language was developed, the aim was to make everyone understand art, no matter what their status was. It was against the idea of Constructivism where most of the people did not understand what the art tries to explain. Grid of lines and primary colors were used to create harmony and beauty of the new chaotic world. (Cubism, Futurism, Suprematism, n.d.)

Dada changed the art world in a very radical way by aiming to destroy the traditional way of creating art. The usage of readymade objects and producing art works made out of these objects was considered as the new way of expression. The aesthetic of Dada art works come from the mockery and rejection of the pessimistic scene after the World War I. The artists hand was minimized in the process of creating an artwork. The beauty was the absurdity of Dada art works. Man Ray's Gift (c.1958) for instance, is an iron with nails on it which cannot be defined as a gift at all; the artlessness and meaninglessness in this work is what Dada tries to give to the viewer. (Dada, n.d.)

"The marvelous is always beautiful, anything marvelous is beautiful, in fact only the marvelous is beautiful." says Andre Breton in the first Surrealist Manifesto. (Breton, 1924) In the Surrealism period, artists wanted to depict their subconsciousness by mostly using the unexpected elements which is a technique they borrow from the previous movement, Dadaism. The dreamy worlds they created was all from their imagination and it also was a reflection of their psychology. Even if the

Surrealist art seems unreal it holds lots of meanings in it; the imaginary worlds and the symbols they have in them is what makes Surrealism beautiful.

The idea of depicting the unconscious mind was followed by the Abstract Expressionists too. They also claimed that art is done by automatism, but they refused depicting any figures. Abstract Expressionism was divided into two groups, one of which, was only produced by the spontaneous manners of the artist, was called the action painting and the other technique, was basically to apply large areas of a color, was called the color field painting. In both approaches the main idea is to show the inner world of the artist and evoke emotions in the viewer. 'Instead of making cathedrals out of Christ, man, or "life", we are making it out of ourselves, out of our own feelings'. says Barnett Newman. We can only understand the beauty that these paintings hold by understanding what the artist felt while producing the artwork. The emotions and the inner impulse the paintings hold and the psychological experience the viewer acquire is where the beauty comes from. (Abstract Expressionism, n.d.)

When we get to the Pop Art period, it can be said that they followed the footsteps of Dada artists. Refusing the "high art" and producing art from the objects they engage with in the everyday life was their main aim at the Pop Art era. The mass-produced items which are the symbol of the new popular culture were the source of their artworks. The new world they live in included a new trend which was based on the idea of consumerism, therefore they suggested to apply this popular culture to their art so that the society would think the art works they produced are appreciable and beautiful. They used objects and scenes they were being exposed to every day to create the beauty of that time. (Pereira, 2015)

Postmodernism was mostly based on the refusal of any authority of definition of what art should be. While supporting an anti-authoritarian idea, they seek an individual experience by leading people to a skeptical thinking process. The art works produced in the Postmodernism era included individual stories or mini narratives in them. The main questions they focused on was “Who decides what is beautiful?” and “Who decides what knowledge is?”. The experience and the understanding achieved by the viewer while questioning these two ideas is the beauty presented by the Postmodern art. By leaving the understanding part to the beholder, postmodernist artists created a beauty of unlimited possibility. (Bosch & Mancoff, 2009)

Appearing in the 1960s, Performance Art opened a new window in the art world. It can be said that Performance Art changed the medium of art from paper, canvas, marble, or anything that people were used to; any medium that is conventional, to human body. RoseLee Goldberg who is an art historian states that “Historically, performance art has been a medium that challenges and violates borders between disciplines and genders, between private and public, and between everyday life and art, and that follows no rules.” (Performance Art: An Introduction, n.d.) As Performance Art changed the way that art is produced, it also changed the way people look at art. The performance of the artist does not have to give a good message, be pretty, flawless or beautiful; it has to be memorable though and people should be somehow disturbed and to be oriented to think about the background of the performance; what lies under it and see if that implies to oneself.

“The foremost purpose of performance art has almost always been to challenge the conventions of traditional forms of visual art such as painting and sculpture. When these modes no longer seem to answer artists' needs - when they seem too conservative, or too enmeshed in the traditional art world

and too distant from ordinary people - artists have often turned to performance in order to find new audiences and test new ideas.” (Performance Art, n.d.)

Performance Art is a radical movement and most of the rules about art does not imply to the performance artists. Taking some of the artworks into consideration, like Yoko Ono’s Cut Piece (1964) where she made people cut pieces from her clothes or Marina Abramovic’s Rhythm 0 (1974) where she let people do anything on her with the tools they can get from the table next to her which led her getting bruised and even get her so close to death; it can be understood the traditional concept of beauty was long gone. (Yoko Ono Cut Piece, n.d.) (Rhythm 0 Marina Abramovic, n.d.)

With Minimalist Art, the attempt to show the reality that is taken from the outside world was canceled out. The minimalist artists were against to the imitation of the reality and suggested that art should have a meaning of itself with the purely abstract artworks they produced. Because that the Minimalist Art does not imitate anything; it shows us the truth, order, simplicity and harmony with the purified beauty it holds. (Minimalism, n.d.) One of the most important artists of Minimalist Art, Frank Stella stated, “What you see is what you see.” and this statement became the slogan of the movement in general. As it is understood there is no hidden meaning, the beauty comes from the directness of what you see as a viewer.

On the other hand, in the early 1970’s Hyperrealistic Art was emerged which actually was the direct opposite of what Minimalist Art suggested. The real world and the elements of it, was depicted in an overly realistic manner. The line between the reality and the art disappeared, every little detail was put on the canvas based on the reality. The term “trompe l’oeil” in the French literature is the best way to describe the Hyperrealistic Art, which can be translated as “deceive the eye”. The beauty of

hyperrealistic artworks is that it almost tricks the eye of the audience; it gets really hard to tell if it is real or it is a produced art. (Hyperrealism, n.d.)

Arte Povera translated as “poor art” is, actually a movement where artists rejected to use the traditional materials of art, instead they preferred to use rags, soil or twigs in their artworks. The “poor” in the name of the movement is a reference to the throwaway materials that are used. Piero Manzoni who was seen as the pioneer of the Arte Povera, canned his own excrement and sold these in accordance with the price of gold in the gold market which was the equivalent of 37\$ for a can.

“What we can note about this artistic attitude is the constant reference to nature, but above all the interest of the artists in their own creative gesture more than the result of their work which aesthetic aspect is not important. A “beautiful” work of art is not important for them.” (A Short Guide to Arte Povera, n.d.)

The intellectual process that led the artist to produce that artwork is much more important for the Arte Povera artists rather than the prettiness of it.

John Berger, in his book “Ways of Seeing”, stated: “Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at”. (Fulleylove, (n.d.)) As he summarized the general situation in the society, he also summarized the art world too. When the inequalities between men and women came to an unbearable level, artists started to speak up with their artworks to show their reaction; this is how the Feminist Art emerged. The organizations that are founded by women artists started to protest the most popular museums and galleries in the USA. To show the world that women can do as much as men, was their first purpose of producing the artworks, all of the works had a meaning behind it, in fact most of them did not even want to hide a

meaning they just put what they wanted to say in an obvious way. There was not an aesthetic approach in general, to show beautiful elements was not their aim, to raise a question in the audience's head about the world they live in and encourage them to take a step to stop this discrimination was all they wanted.

Street and Graffiti Art was first appeared as a way to show the dissenter opinion towards the art world where they wanted to show that they do not accept the laws of the hegemony of the rich. They suggest that the art should be accessible to everyone not owned by galleries or museums or any other purchaser; every artist should be equal in front of the audience no matter what their race, age or gender is and with carrying the art out of the organizations to streets they aimed to achieve this. Because Street and Graffiti Art is a symbol of the rebellious souls of the artists to political views, some people might not see it as something that shows beauty but for some this is exactly why urban art impresses the viewer.(Maric, 2014) Even if people had different point of views about the beauty of it, it can surely be said that the street artists changed the notion of exhibition techniques and the way people perceive art.

Neo-Expressionists produced their works with the intention of rejecting the traditional standards where ideal depiction is not important, the vivid colors and the brushstrokes that overlap each other to create a primitive composition where the inner self of the artist is shown is the only concern. The works often done with the immediacy which actually shows the life it holds in it. The Neo-Expressionist artworks became so famous in the year 1980's and appreciated a lot but that was for a short time when one day they just rejected the Neo-Expressionists and moved them to the out of the art market. The raw beauty in the artworks were replaced in that times

with others but even today we can see the emotions and the naive beautiful way of expressing the souls of the artists. (Widewall Editorial, 2016)

As it is stated above the perception of beauty and the beauty that the art works contained in them varies from time to time. As time passes, cultural elements change therefore what art represents and what it tries to tell changes too in addition to what the artist depict in their artworks as a beautiful thing.



4.DISCUSSION AND DEFINITION OF UGLINESS IN ART

As the definition of beauty is explained above from one period to another now ugliness term will be defined and discussed. Ugliness is often defined and stated to be the opposite of the term beauty. But as it is understood these terms does not have only one true meaning that people all agree. Just like beauty, the way of defining ugliness has changed over time and it also varies according to the place. Often, we use the word ugly as very unattractive or unpleasant to look at; offensive to the sense of beauty; displeasing in appearance or morally revolting or threatening trouble or danger or mean; hostile; quarrelsome.(The Art of Ugliness, n.d.)

“Calling something ugly is like calling something beautiful. The minute you say it, you’re in a difficult spot, trying to define what that really means.” says the curator of Museum of Bad Arts Michael Frank. (Kelleher, 2018)

Thinking an artwork as an ugly piece is often related to an instinctive emotional response to the visual subject matter that we are being exposed to. The response is out of our control because describing something as aesthetically pleasing or not, influence our reaction to the artwork, unintentionally. In an artwork there is two important elements which are stylistic beauty and contextual beauty. If an artwork is not able to make the audience feel the emotion than the importance of the morality and rationality of it will be insignificant; this is the stylistic beauty. The mastership and the interpretation power of the artist is the contextual beauty of the piece.

Karl Rosenkranz was the first to address ugliness as a category of aesthetic.

Rosenkranz explains this concept generally as:

“Aesthetics has become the collective name for a large group of concepts, which is in turn divisible into three particular classes. The first has to do with the idea of beauty, the second with the notion of its production, that is to say, art, the third with the system of the arts, with the representation of the idea of beauty through art in specific medium. We tend to gather concepts of the first class under the rubric of metaphysics of beauty. But if the idea of the beauty is to be considered, an investigation of ugliness is inseparable from it. The concept of ugliness, of negative beauty, thus is a part of aesthetics.”

(Rozenkranz, 2018, p.48-49)

With this Rosenkranz, clarifies the contradiction which might come to mind about how ugly is considered as an aesthetic notion. For some people ugly cannot be discussed under the title of aesthetics because it is usually defined as the opposite of what beauty offers to us. Yet, the two terms are actually inseparable from each other and one cannot exist without the other. Beauty is seen as the godlike the essentially existing idea and ugly is the negative of it so the secondary in existence but eventually, all aesthetics have to mention the negativity of ugliness to describe the positivity of beauty itself. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.58-61)

In nature, ugly and beauty is mixed in a random way as Aristotle describes it with the term ‘katabebekos’. The spirit also does the same with its empirical reality therefore, to take pleasure from the beauty, the spirit must create a special world for itself. Art is generated by this too; it is based on the needs of people but the real reason why art is created is the longing for the pure and unblended beauty. This might sound like art is only about creating and presenting the beauty however, as it is mentioned above the beauty is in need of ugly, to secure its position and can benefit from it, in such a way that there must be an immorality to consider a behavior as a virtue. This does not

mean that beauty becomes more beautiful when there is an example of ugliness but the pleasure that is taken is increased with it. The beauty does not need ugly or anything to exist but with the usage of ugliness, beauty is felt more vividly in our spirits. If art is not in desire of presenting the idea one sidedly, then it is inevitable to use the ugly in it. The pure ideal world is based on the positivity of the beauty but to show the reality of the nature and the spirit, evil and bad must be added too.

“The Greeks, as much as they lived in the ideal, nevertheless offered the world Hekatocheires [hundred-handers], Cyclops, satyrs, Graiae [the grey sisters], Empusas [blood-drinking female demons], harpies, chimeras, a limping god and in their tragedies crimes of the most abominable kind (Oedipus, Orestes), madness (Ajax), disgusting illness (Philoctetes’s pus-filled foot) and finally in their comedies vice and in indignities of every sort.” (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.84)

To create an integrity, both sides of the world must be included in the arts so that it does not appear to be a groundling approach.

Rosenkranz suggests that, art must represent the ugly and its deformity sharply but must do it ideally with the same approach it depicts the beauty. For instance, to depict someone who is urinating or throwing up is obviously disgusting, but artists did not hesitate to include these in their artworks either. To ensure that the integrity of the world is not destroyed, the artists did not want to take those scenes out. The Wedding Feast at Cana (1563) by Paul Veronese is a good example of this situation, in the painting a little boy who is urinating is added to give a reality to the setting. He is depicted in the front of the painting, smiling while holding his clothes and showing his hips to the audience. Also, in the background there is an adult who must have drunk and ate too much, that he is leaning to a wall and vomiting. These too

depictions are considered as acceptable samples that are ideally put in the painting, not that disgusting to look at. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.86-90)

Having a specific limit is the first condition of beauty, it must generate a collectivity and must show the differences in it as an organic part of the whole. The opposite of this general collectivity that is referred above is formlessness. Not to have a specific form cannot be considered as a beautiful thing, but at the same time it cannot be considered as an ugly thing too. "Formlessness becomes ugly only when some content ought to have a form and lacks one, or where there is a form, but it is not yet shaped as it should be to match the concept of the content." (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.95) Therefore, the beauty is in need of a form and content and the integrity of the two with a proportion and also has a sensible side too which cannot be neglected. Without nature there cannot be any beautiful form and so artists has to know all the natural elements to master the forms of art. The scene becomes inevitably ugly when it opposes the proportions of nature. Even the nature itself becomes ugly when it lacks the natural laws. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.95-99)

"...the ugly as the negative beauty: (1) consists in the non-unity, non-closure, indefiniteness of form; (2) that the difference, when it occurs, is produced either as a false irregularity, or as a false equality and inequality; and (3) that instead of the reunion of form with itself, it much rather produces the transition from rupture to a tangle of false contrasts. ...We can, namely, the opposite of form, amorphism; that of the rational ordering of differences, asymmetry, and that of a living unity, disharmony."

Amorphism is basically the uncertainty of the form but it tries to reach that unity within the form. With the lack of differentiation in the shape it becomes shapeless.

(Rozenkranz, 2018, p.119) Asymmetry, on the other hand, cannot be popularized as shapelessness but it can be described as the non-shape. Symmetry is not a representation of a simple unity, nor a simple difference and a simple regularity; it is actually a representation of equality within the inequality it holds. An equilibrium which includes oppositions like right and left. Disharmony is the total unity that is made out of the differences it holds and the differences are put together freely which is called as organic. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.117-147) The three terms that are explained above are the three different ways which create formlessness.

Other than formlessness, incorrectness is counted as a feature which leads to ugliness too. In general, correctness is considered as the rightness of a form which comes from its own natural or historical being. For instance, when a landscape painting is discussed, if the trees can be distinguished as their natural types or the columns in an architectural construction are aligned in a way with the rules of it and the ornaments are shaped accordingly than they can be considered as correct samples. If a person identifies an artwork as a correct one, then this is absolutely a compliment because it actually means that, that artwork is done with the orders of the specific art field. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.154-155) “Art must demand correctness and may not in bad faith exercise tolerance toward incorrectness.” (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.156) Behaving derogatorily to the school that is represented and the ideal conditions that it consists of would lead to incorrectness, thus ugliness. (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.183)

The last feature which considered as ugly is the disfiguration or the deformation. Meanness and repulsiveness are generally linked together but both actually stand for different things. The mean can end up being repulsive but not all the time. For instance, someone who is eating or drinking way too much than the normal

amount can be considered as a meanness but if that person ends up throwing up what he has eaten, that incident becomes a repulsiveness example.

“... for the sublime on one hand that form of the beautiful that is the negation of freedom through the cancellation of its bounds, whether they be real or ideal, realized in such a way that its infinity becomes an object for us: in other words *greatness*; on the other hand it is that form which represents the infinity of freedom in the power of *creation or destruction*; finally the power abiding in itself with quiet self-certainty in the greatness of its creation or destruction: in other words, *majesty*.” (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.210-211)

The mean is understood as the opposite of sublime. Types of the mean can be listed as: if a being is ugly because it reduces its existence under the normal limits that are accepted which is *pettiness*; or it has lower amounts of the power that it normally should have which is *feebleness*; or it combines the bigotry and helplessness with a dependency which is *baseness or the low*.

The pleasant beauty is the positive opposite to the sublime beauty; the sublime beauty evokes the infinity, it is great, powerful, and majestic where pleasant beauty has limits in itself, it is cute, playful and charming. The opposite of sublime is mean; it negates the great to the petty, the powerful to the feeble and the majestic to the low. On the other hand, the repulsive is the negation of the pleasant beauty; it negates the cute to the clumsy, the playful to the empty and dead, the charming to the hideous. The pleasant beauty awakes the want to enjoy it in all senses where repulsiveness awake hate. “... it awakes distaste through its clumsiness, horror through its deadness, and disgust through its hideousness.” (Rozenkranz, 2018, p.290)

At last caricature is another element of the deformed ugly, after the mean and the repulsive. Caricature moves a feature over to the normal proportion it should have and creates a non-proportion with this. It becomes funny, not necessarily, but especially because it depicts the total opposite of what it ideally is. The exaggeration of the destruction of proportion makes it look unpleasant or even horrifying.

Being the first one to describe ugly as a part of the aesthetics, Karl Rosenkranz opened a new window to everyone who thinks ugliness cannot be discussed under the term aesthetic. His point of view to this subject and his definitions to both ugly and beauty which is stated above, holds a huge importance today.

“This can be intentional, or it can be the result of badly applied technique or poorly chosen colors. Typically, the ugly art we see in museums was made that way consciously, either to highlight the artist’s abilities (like with Leonardo’s elegantly drawn caricatures), to rebel against the conventions of the art world (for example, Philip Guston or the contemporary painter Neil Jenney), or to reveal something about the world and our place in it (Hieronymus Bosch, Otto Dix, and Francis Bacon and their stomach-turning depictions of bodily pain).”(Kelleher,2018)

What is perceived as ugly changed over time. Starting from the ancient times there have always been an idea of ugliness. In the ancient times foulness was seen as the interpretation of ugly when it was included in a depiction. In the Middle Ages anything that stands against Jesus Christ was seen as the opposite to beauty.

For a Western person, the masks of the Africans which were used in the spiritual rites could seem ugly but for the Africans it has an importance because it is believed that the masks have a protecting divinity over people. (Eco, 2009, p.10) The

simplification of the faces that are depicted in the masks may make people think that they are ugly. Also, the nonconventional physical appearances of the masks disturbs people; even though it is known that the mask is a representative of a human face people tend to think that it does not seem like a normal human being so they label it as an ugly piece. Primitivism which was actually an escape from the European traditional art, emerged with the influence of tribal art, the objects they used in tribes and the way they lived they lives in African cultures. “Primitive art's use of simpler shapes and more abstract figures differed significantly from traditional European styles of representation, and modern artists such as Gauguin, Picasso, and Matisse used these forms to revolutionize painting and sculpture.” The African masks that affected these artists made the paintings look uglier to the audience. (Primitivism, n.d.)

Besides, for the believers of the non-European religions, the bleeding, suffering and humiliating portraits of Jesus could be annoying but for a Christian this physically ugly depiction could raise sympathy and excitement. (Eco, 2009, p.10)

Laocoon (B.C. 50) may be the first example for us that discuss about the aesthetic of ugliness. The scene depicts the moment when a Trojan priest and the two sons of him getting eaten by a snake while trying to inform his people about the upcoming threat which is hiding in a wooden horse. In Virgil's Aeneid, this story was told too, and the snake is referred as the monster which savagely tries to shiver the pieces of the bodies of the three people. However, even the story is filled with violence, the sculpture is done with an ideal intend so the ugly and even horrifying scene seems like a heroic classical scene. (Eco, 2009, p.270)

“We find grotesques more fascinating than disturbing. The affection felt for gargoyles is, surely, evidence of how pleasing ugliness can be.” (Bayley, 2012, p.68)

The gargoyles are an important element of the medieval architecture which are humanoid grotesque creatures used for usually to dress up the rainwater spouts. The gargoyles of Notre Dame are the most famous amongst others and even the word itself is coming from the French word ‘gargouille’ which means throat and also the name of the dragon who lived around the river Seine and spread terror. Because their aim was to remove rainwater they sound almost like a gargle and it even makes the name more logical. Using gargoyles, a creature which looks ugly but serves a need, shows us that ugly can both be used as a decorative figure and a functional element.



Figure 1. Domenico Ghirlandaio, *An Old Man and His Grandson*, 1490, Oil on canvas

Even if the trend was to depict everything in an ideal way in the Renaissance, there are some examples that include ugly too. Domenico Ghirlandaio’s *An Old Man and His Grandson* (1490) is one of the best samples for this situation. In this painting the actual aim was to depict the tenderness between the old man and the grandson and to show the contrast in age to make a reference to the life cycle but the way that the grandfather was depicted is an unusual one. The disfigurement of his nose can be

noticed at the first glance. It is known that this man had an illness called the rosacea which eventually led having those kinds of skin conditions. Ghirlandaio, even though he is known as a Renaissance artist, painted this man and his grandson in a total realism which can be labeled as an ugly representation of a person. (An Old Man and His Grandson, n.d.)

Leonardo Da Vinci, as a Renaissance artist was one of the early artists who included the ugliness in his works too. He started drawing misogynistic images, diseased and disabled people. The grotesque head figures (c.1493) he depicted can be defined as horrible, one cannot even look at.

“Leonardo has a more general interest in ugliness. His drawings betray a fascination with deformity and disfigurement. In fact, for many centuries Leonardo’s work was better known through copies of these troubling drawings than through his solemnly beautiful paintings. You could say there was a Leonardo da Vinci ugliness industry.” (Bayley, 2012, p.18)

According to his old sketchbooks that are consisted of drawings of the ugly, it can be understood that he has a tendency to experience the ugly where at the same time, from his most popular paintings it is obvious that he has a tendency to experience the beauty too. “...to Leonardo, you could not have a meaningful *bellezza* (beauty) without an equally meaningful *bruttezza* (ugliness).” (Bayley, 2012, p.22)

Another artist who also lived and produced art in the Renaissance period but included an ugly scene in his artwork was Gerard David. In the right panel of the diptych called The Judgement of Cambyzes and The Flaying of Sisamnes (1498), the moment of skinning a man is depicted which was taken from an ancient story. The man Sisamnes was punished because of being a corrupt and unjust judge. This was

painted to make society learn a lesson, to make them act in justice but the way that Sisamnes is laying on a wooden bench while being flayed alive and the way his muscles that are seen under the skin that is taken out is disturbingly ugly even if it is not a realistic depiction. (Judgement of Cambyses, 2011)

Before the nineteenth century the artworks that are called as ugly works are intentionally done in this way to, often show people a warning. These warnings generally were based on the biggest fear of all people: doom. The afterlife which is a mystery for human beings was depicted in the ugliest ways to warn people of what might happen after death. Heaven was always depicted as the best place to be, where hell is always scary and hideous. The reason of the huge difference while depicting these two places, is to fear people from doing bad and show how unpleasant the afterlife can be. The Garden of Earthly Delights (c. 1490-1500) by Hieronymus Bosch for instance is one of the best examples of the two different depictions of heaven and hell. This triptych cannot be counted entirely as an ugly painting; it is even somehow pretty with the fascinating usage of colors and figures, but it is inevitable to see the disturbing details when looked closely enough. Hell is depicted in the right-hand panel. It can be seen that the cities are on fire reeking, tortured and tormented people are suffering, some people are defecating where some are throwing up.

“The famous Tree Man is made of a broken egg, and a monster with a bird’s head is, we assume, The Prince of Hell. The Garden of Earthly Delights can be read on very many levels, but its meaning is unambiguous: Hell is realistic. It

contains all the ugly, frightening, and deformed things we see on Earth.”

(Bayley, 2012, p.86)

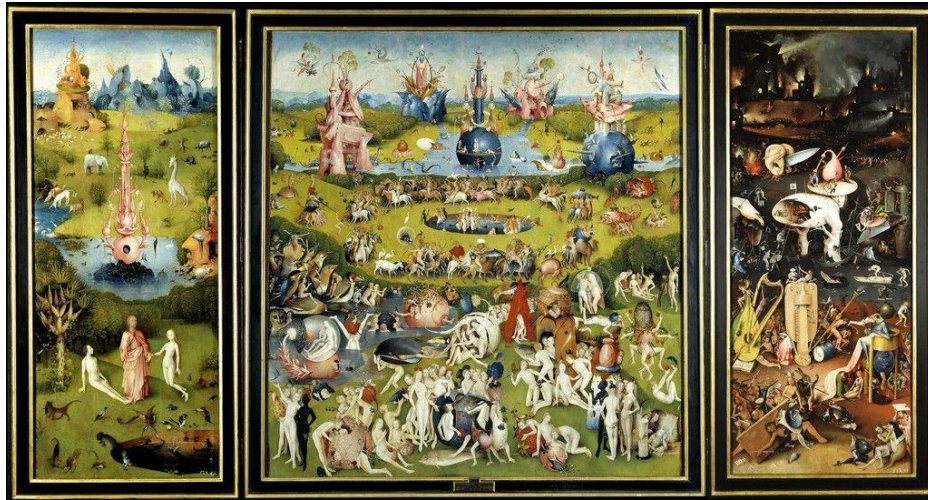


Figure 2. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, c.1490-1500, Oil on oak panels

In addition to *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, there is one more artwork by Hieronymus Bosch which also has elements that are considered as ugly, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (c. 1500) which is a triptych telling us, in general, about how mentally tormenting incidents St. Anthony got through. There are several details in this painting that refer to the hell and the apocalyptic world. Demons flying in the sky or walking around the people in different shapes are all around the panels. These fantastical beasts generally look like disfigured animals which seem grotesque even ugly. The purpose was the same with *The Garden of Earthly Delights* which is to show if you act as a dishonest person you will be punished in the afterlife with these kinds of demons.

Mathias Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece (c. 1510-1515) involves a very disturbing image in it when the altar is fully opened. Ergotism, a fungal infection is the disease that is depicted in this piece; people who are suffering from this disease start having hallucinations, gastroenteritis and dry gangrene. In the Middle Ages lots of people suffered from this illness and told to feel almost like burning alive. Far worse than that, fingers, toes and hands may drop off. At last, people who experience ergotism end up with delirious madness. In the Isenheim altarpiece, the person who is suffering from this disease is lying down on the ground in pain with lots of wounds and acneiform defects on his greenish skin. Although this was an old illness which was known by everybody else who lived in those times, this part of the altarpiece was seen as a disturbing and ugly way to represent it. (Bayley, 2012, p.86)



Figure 3. Quentin Massys, *A Grotesque Old Woman*, 1513, Oil on oak panel

This, depicting the ugly faces of people tradition, was followed by Quentin Massys in the “A Grotesque Old Woman” or some may refer to as “The Ugly Duchess” (1513) painting. The woman that is depicted in this painting, later appeared to be suffering from osteitis deformans; an illness called Paget’s Disease. The bones become deformed when people catch this disease which is a metabolic abnormality.

Normally, the affects appear on the lower body but in this case the duchess have them on her face too. “In this case the enlarged upper jaw has led to a hideously distended lip and a scrunched-up nose. Her forehead and chin are also distended and, one might assume, so too are the collarbone and arms.” (Bayley, 2012, p.64) Even today, despite the fact that it is known to be a disease, we cannot stop ourselves to label this person as an ugly one. When compared to the other portraits of duchesses or important people, it is an unconventional way of describing one.

In the Renaissance Period the depiction of, particularly, women was unrealistically beautiful and the ugliness that comes with the features that are out of the aesthetic rules of that time, was a subject to the lampoons; the exceptions that included ugliness in the Renaissance period was explained above. But with the emergence of Baroque, finally the flaws of women started to be seen as an attractive characteristic. (Eco, 2009, p.158) But even before Baroque, Mannerism was one of the important movements in the art world with the opposite views to the ideal beauty concept. It is a rejection of the classical and natural depictions of the Renaissance and the High Renaissance, the Mannerists wanted to have a personal and subjective point of view while producing their artworks.

“Mannerist artists evolved a style that is characterized by artificiality and artiness, by a thoroughly self-conscious cultivation of elegance and technical facility, and by a sophisticated indulgence in the bizarre. The figures in Mannerist works frequently have graceful but queerly elongated limbs, small heads, and stylized facial features, while their poses seem difficult or contrived.” (Mannerism, n.d.)

The artists like, El Greco, Parmigianino, Arcimboldo was looked down on in those times because of the new way they brought to their arts and even defined as the ones who are degenerating the High Renaissance figures and rules. They included bizarreness in their arts and people might tend to have an interest towards those abnormal things because of the curiosity that they have over them, like the fantastic figures of Arcimboldo's who portrayed human faces that made out of fruits. El Greco used distorted figures in his paintings, even people thought that the reason for this disfigurement is because he suffered from astigmatism which was not proved but there is a slight chance. It does not matter if that is because an illness or not; he created his own style by using elongated body parts of the figures he painted, stretched some parts of the bodies of them. (Itzhaki,1995) In addition to El Greco's distorted style, Tintoretto was another painter who used elongated figures in his art too. He also created a unique style of his own by including longer parts to the people in his paintings, as an opposition to the understanding of the ideal beauty. El Greco and Tintoretto's style called to be wild because it was unconventional to depict figures like this in those times. The tradition of depicting the odd and distorted, started with Mannerism and was carried on with the Baroque artists. The curiosity to the extraordinary continued increasingly. With these two periods, the classical canons of aesthetic started to fade away and the ugly started gaining importance.

Baroque as a word, means "a deformed pearl", which actually explains the stylistic features of the period, it is decorated with ornaments, but they are not ideally put in the artworks, rather unevenly created on the space. (Bayley, 2012, p.33)

Baroque is mostly known with the use of chiaroscuro, the opposition of light and dark to create a dramatic scene with a shadowy atmosphere. The best use of tenebrism was

applied by Caravaggio which means the darkness dominating the artworks in general. The extreme usage of dark colors connoted unconventional and ugly.

With the emergence of Romanticism movement, some subjects that were once seen as negative references by the former generations become the focus of interest of the artists. Mountainous landscapes, for instance, was considered as ugly paintings just because they were scary, and people did not feel comfortable being around such places. Romanticism artists like Caspar David Friedrich, started to create landscapes that are scary but fascinating at the same time where we cannot define them directly as ugly scenes but for some people they are still considered as disturbing thus ugly. By looking at different stories that have terrifying content, artists like Goya, Gericault or Fuseli created their works which mostly disturbed the audience because of the ugly elements that they hold.

It would not be wrong to say that Industrial Revolution was the emergence of everything modern. Industrial Revolution started in the second half of the 18th century, in 1760; the agriculture-based societies made a big turn to the urbanized life which was a very unusual change for all of the people who lived in those times. As the name stands for itself, the world started to be industrialized. Until that time every item people used were produced by human beings, with human labor which was painful and required long time. But with the new machines that started being used in the new factories, all productions became quicker than ever, but most importantly mass production came into people's lives which can be done with very less people than before. The production line which ruled by people, now ruled by the machines. Steam power became one of the most known symbols of the Industrial Revolution. The steam locomotives and steamships started a new age in transportation. Steam engines entered the coalmining, textile and other heavy industries and made lives

much easier. But the agricultural workers that lived outside of the city became unemployed all of a sudden, which led them to move in the city and work in the factories. The workers migrated to cities where they worked in really bad and hard conditions for a small amount of money which made the bosses rich and created the term “middle class”. The wealth of the rich and the poverty of the workers seen collateral in a huge contrast. Cities became overpopulated growing larger which gave rise to dirty, crowded streets. Industrial pollution, on the other hand, is one of the biggest effects of industrialization. (History.com Editors, 2009)

The steps that are taken for modernism bring out a new world with new rules and new technologies which eventually led to modernity yes, but the results that occurred because of this new era are mostly negative like the ones above.

“Ruskin came to believe that every modern invention generates ugliness. Railways destroyed the countryside. New sports such as mountaineering turned the Alps into racecourses. Although he became a utopian socialist after a period of crusty Tory bigotry, Ruskin believed that modern forms of collectivism would lead only to mass-produced ugliness. Socialism does not care for beauty. And everywhere the snigger of Mephistopheles, who has trapped us into this false bargain of wealth in exchange for ugliness, is barely disguised behind the hiss of industrial steam.” (Bayley, 2012, p.94)

The modernism may be the reason why ugly started being on the life scene much more than ever, as Ruskin stated. Industrialization, indeed, made people’s lives uglier and for most of them harder. The importance of arts and crafts disappeared where goods are done specially for one person only, instead the standard typed goods appeared which lacked the exclusiveness thus beauty in it. The only important thing

became, the money that is gained from the mass-produced products, nobody cared about the beauty of or the effort that was spent on a good. The new world was fast, and the production lines must be fast too, to meet the needs of the society.

During the Industrial Revolution, the two movements that took place in the Europe art scene was Romanticism and Realism. Romanticism started to get more stronger with the emergence of the Industrial Revolution, it was an artistic, literary and intellectual movement and it was against the Age of Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. In Romanticism there is a yearning to the previous lives, the one without the effects of new inventions, it is a way to escape from the realities that the new modern world brought to people. Realism arose as a contrary movement to the Romanticism; Realists depicted the reality that the eye can see and directly put it into their artworks without changing it. Everyday life started to be included in the artworks, the real scenes, situations, and stories of the new modern world was the artist's subject now. The realists were not interested in the emotion and the individuality of the art like romantics but they were interested in the everyday themes like in the "Third-Class Carriage" (c. 1862-1864) painting of Honore Daumier which was showing us the railway carriage and the poor people that use this transportation line every day to go to their work where they gain very little money but have to do it to keep living. This painting shows us the poverty of these people, the misery in their faces and the real impacts of the urbanization and the industrialization on the people without filtering or idealizing anything to make it seem prettier.

Impressionism, as a movement that took place after this Industrial Revolution, is mostly know by the colorful paintings that aim to depict the sunlight and its effect on natural elements however, there are paintings that represented the industrialized world too. "As Zola noted, Impressionists defied artistic conventions by depicting

urban and industrial subjects and addressing the rapidly changing social environment of 1870s France.” (Moog, 2019)



Figure 4. Claude Monet, *The Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877, Oil on canvas

In the painting *Le Pont de L'Europe* (1876) by Gustav Caillebotte, for instance, the bridge that stood up above the Saint-Lazare Station which was one of the most important railway stations of the time was depicted. The industrialized world can be seen by looking at the big iron bridge or the smoke that is coming out of the factory on the back. Also from Claude Monet's *The Gare Saint-Lazare* (1877) painting, it can be seen that the new world is mostly made out of iron and the sky is filled with the smoke that is coming either out of a factory or a train. The world became an environmentally polluted and visually different place than what people were used to live in thus, this made them think that the world become more uglier than ever. Art is a way for people to express themselves in their works, even if the world does not seem appealing, the artists put it in their art. The impact of the Industrial Revolution on art cannot be neglected and the scenes of that period can be counted as a depiction of ugly because of the fact that the world beforehand was much more natural and beautiful. But the ugly that is referred in this thesis is much more

different than the ugliness caused by urbanization. The ugly that the industrialization brought is what today's people are used to seeing. "We now see the remains of industry as hauntingly beautiful." (Bayley, 2012, p.101) The new world seemed ugly and so the art included that ugly in itself while representing the everyday lives of human beings. The emergence of the new technologies and what it brought to people, was seen as culturally ugly even if today the effects of industrialization does not seem ugly to us, it can be understood why people thought the world is becoming somewhere that is totally the negative of what they were used to and what they described as beautiful. In today's world, what was seen ugly in those times is seen as everyday normal to us. Before the Eiffel tower's construction was finished in 1889 for the Paris World Fair, a letter was published in the *Le Temps* paper to protest against the building saying that it is unnecessary and monstrous, opposing the huge black factory chimney-like iron tower because it seems like a stain which will ruin the way Paris looked. (Eco, 2009, p.346) The ugliness that is referred in here is actually what modern world looks like, for most of the people when looked at those paintings that show us the new industry based world, it is not disgusting or disturbing, it is not that kind of ugly people avoid to look at. However, the impact on art is obvious and culturally the world people lived in became ugly so art imitated that ugly and shared it with other people so it can be said that the art started being ugly because the entire world started being ugly in the 19th century.

In addition to the ugliness that comes from the Industrial Revolution and modernism, there are several paintings that are called as ugly in the Impressionism era. Edouard Manet's famous *Olympia* (1863), was actually based on the traditional female nudity which was one of the most common subjects in the art history, but it was nothing like the earlier depictions. This scene is familiar, Titian's *The Venus of*

Urbino or Goya's *Maja* are nearly the same in subject matter but in this case the female figure is depicted as a prostitute, lying on an odd bed looking directly to the audience with inviting eyes.

“Aside from the reference to prostitution—itsself a dangerous sign of the emerging margins in the modern city—the painting's inclusion of a black woman tapped into the French colonialist mindset while providing a stark contrast for the whiteness of Olympia.” (Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, n.d.)

The way Manet created this scene was revolutionary therefore raised lots of critiques; people who visited that exhibition in the Salon, saw this as a scandal and got disturbed with the approach that is provoking and opposing to the academic style. (Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, n.d.)



Figure 5. Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863, Oil on canvas



Figure 6. Paul Cézanne, *A Modern Olympia*, 1873-1874, Oil on canvas

A Modern Olympia (1873-1874) done by Paul Cézanne was another painting with the same subject of Manet's *Olympia*.

“At that time Cézanne's style was moving towards Impressionism. It was during his stay with Doctor Gachet at Auvers-sur-Oise that, in the heat of a discussion, Cézanne picked up his paintbrush and produced this colored

sketch, thus creating a much more daring interpretation of Manet's subject.”

(Paul Cezanne, *A Modern Olympia*, n.d.)

In the Impressionist exhibition this painting was exhibited and also like Manet's *Olympia*, was belittled and critiqued. The unconventional style of Cezanne in this painting and the way that the man in black watches Olympia who lies on her bed naked made the audience feel uncomfortable.

The period called as Decadence comes from the word “decline” referring to a period of downfall. In this period the line between beauty and ugly disappeared; the intention was to exclude beauty and embrace ugly. According to this movement ugly is the new beauty, it is much more interesting. While trying to show that ugly has an aesthetic value too, the society strictly disagreed with this view. Wickhoff stated that the society tend to refuse and reject what they do not understand and label it as ugly. (Uncu & Çalışır, 2018)

The Futurist artists published a manifesto in the early twentieth century stating that racing cars are much more beautiful than *The Winged Victory of Samothrace* and remarking their passion to war and fight. In 1913 Boccioni finished a sculpture and named it *Antigratzioso* which means unpleasant. In addition to that, Futurists also invented a new way of creating music which was called as the art of noise. As the machines came to people's lives, the sound that it makes came with it, too. They used the noise of the machines as a concert to make the audience feel uncomfortable. (Poggi, 2009) The futurist ugliness aimed to intentionally provoke people as much as the German Expressionists aimed to show the socially corrupted world they lived in as a reaction to it. *Die Brücke*, for instance, from the time when they were established until the rise of the Nazism, aimed to show the miserable, arrogant and disgusting

faces of the supporters of this dictatorship regime which mostly are made out of the bourgeois class. (Eco, 2009, p.368)

Avant garde movements starting from the 20th century accepted ugly can be a part of artworks and included it in their artworks. They thought that having a grotesque subject matter is a way to express the inner self too. The notion of ugliness is even raised as the same level to beauty to show the link between ugliness and emotions. As human beings, good and bad emotions define us when they are combined so the art could reflect these two not only the beautiful part. Expressionism started to show the awful face of the new society built on industry and the inner world of the painter. After expressionism, abstract expressionism even narrowed the use of ugly to just show the corrupted inner emotions and soul of the artists without a certain subject matter.

In the Dada movement, the attractiveness of the ugly arose with the tendency to the grotesque. Duchamp gave Mona Lisa a provocative mustache and even used a urinal as an art object that started the ready-made art. Photomontage emerged in this period, John Heartfield for instance was famous for his montages. "Heartfield is not being aestheticized. Instead, the diversity and ambivalence of his montages become obvious." Heartfield created art through combining pictures and writings together to raise provocation. (Heartfield Art, (n.d.)) Another important artist of Dada was Hannach Höch who also made collages. Höch showed the women point of view in Dada, she usually worked on gender issues in addition to the racial and political issues. She used women figures from fashion magazines combining them with African tribal masks.

“The result is a weird, hybrid figure presented to us as if on display. The incorporation of materials from other cultures were used as the point of departure for a critique on the status of women in her contemporary German society.” (From an Ethnographic Museum, 202)

In those times women were belittled in Germany to stand up against this view she produced her art. (From an Ethnographic Museum, 202) This tendency continued in the Surrealist Manifesto too. The artists of Surrealism, aspired to reveal the dreams that are repressed in the subconscious, to free the mind by removing all the restraints ahead of it and let the mind float in the symbols and all of the associations of ideas. Artists like Ernst, Dali and Magritte included horrifying scenes and disturbing ugly images in their artworks by reforming the natural element according to what is in their mind. Even after Surrealists, artists like Andy Warhol who was one of the first representatives of the Pop Art, used garbage to create something aesthetic by making changes on it. (Eco, 2009, p.368-378)

The peak of the discussion about ugliness in art took place in the Degenerate Art Exhibition in Munich (Entartete Kunst (1937)). The fascist regime was disgusted by the artworks that were being showed in this exhibition. The show’s main purpose becomes clearer through its humiliating title. This exhibition, to mock the artworks done by famous artists, was supposed to start a new period in the art history of Germany. The works done by Africans, Jews, degenerate Nordics including Emil Nolde and lots of other artists were looked down on. Jacob Epstein’s sculptures, for instance, which were robust primitive nudes were exhibited to slender because of the way they looked. The works somehow reflected the strange, surreal, and awful part of the world people lived in. Giving pleasure to the audience was not the purpose of

these artists, arousing discomfort in them was the aim and it worked. (Eco, 2009, p.368-378)

To produce products with the help of the technological improvement which came with the modernization, led the term “kitsch” to emerge. There are two main reasons that kitsch appeared; one of them is that there are lots of art movements and art is changing constantly so the artistic values and tastes of the higher, richer class and the lower, poorer class does not match so there is a duality between them. The other reason is that with industrialization and the mechanization that it brought limits the human beings. Kitsch is a superficial, an effortless and a fake mass-produced product for the popular culture to consume. It is a critique to the modernization, showing us the effects of it. Kitsch is actually taking revenge from art. They do not have a purpose to show any artistic value in their works, they are commercially designed. Everything can be a subject to Kitsch without a goal to leave a mark on the audience. (Uncu & Çalışır, 2018)

Abject art is an art that especially references the body and bodily functions to threaten our cleanliness and appropriateness perception. Abject art is also seen as a performance art too. The movement started with a performance by Hermann Nitsch that represents bloody bodies of animals. It aims to show the ugly and disgusting part of the body not to elevate it. Abject art has a strong feminist content too, most of the artists used woman bodies as a reference to create subjects such as gender and identity issues. Artists like Cindy Sherman, Kiki Smith and Patricia Piccinini used bodies in different ways to strikingly show how terrifying bodies can be but at the same time how close we felt to them, how relatable their situations are. (Uncu & Çalışır, 2018)

Performance Art made a breakthrough in the art world, artists using their bodies as their medium and making violent acts was a shock to everyone. Chris Burden who was one of the performance artists, made his friend shoot him with a 22 long rifle while he was standing still in front of a wall. “Burden put himself in danger, thus placing the viewer in a difficult position, caught between a humanitarian instinct to intervene and the taboo against touching and interacting with art pieces.” He performed this piece to a small numbered group of people which was really a terrifying and disturbing experience for them, seeing someone being shot. In Vito Acconci’s Seedbed, he made himself a ramp where he hides under it for eight hours to masturbate while visitors were visiting the exhibition. He was talking about his sexual fantasies while hiding under the floor about the audience. “Participants were prone to shock, discomfort, or perhaps even arousal.” Interior Scroll by Carolee Schneemann was a performance where she started taking out a rolled paper out of her vagina and read it out loud while she was on top of a table covered with paint on her body. Marina Abramovic the most influential performance artist once lied in the middle of a star shaped fireplace in Rhythm 5 (1973-1974), which led her faint because of the lack of oxygen and taken to the hospital, the audience could not realize it for a while because the fire and the smoke made the vision unnoticeable. These are some of the examples out of a dozen horrible performance which ended up artists to be injured, blacked out and even dead; watching them doing these as an audience and being unable to do anything is uncomfortable, scary and disturbing. (Top 10 Strangest Art Performances, 2016)

Arman who was one of the pioneers of Nouveau Realisme with Yves Klein his best friend, prepared an odd exhibition in 1960. Le Plein (1960) was a work where Arman himself filled the gallery space with trash and garbage all over. The viewer

could only see the installation by looking out from the window. (Arman Artworks, n.d.)

The reason why we show much more interest to ugly than we did before is the effect of social media in the society. Human beings are surrounded with advertisements and as a contrary view they turn to the ugly, horrifying, disgusting elements. The world people live in is made out of the clutter of popular culture nowadays, so the aesthetic of ugliness is elevated as an anti-aesthetic manner. This manner made the representation of ugly in arts more aggressive and lift its effectiveness. (Uncu & Çalışır, 2018)

The Museum of Bad Art was established (1994) to exhibit the collection of really awful artworks. The main purpose is to play with and break the rules of beauty, to challenge the ideal beauty that people have in their minds. The starting point of this museum was a painting found in the trash by the founder of the museum, *Lucy in the Field with Flowers*. “To be included in MOBA's collection, works must be ‘original and have serious intent, but they must also have significant flaws without being boring; curators are not interested in displaying deliberate kitsch’.” (The Aesthetic of Ugliness, n.d.)

A piece of art can be defined as ugly and unappealing to the viewers eyes, but it also can be delightful and appealing at the same time for those reasons. It somehow captures the attention of the audience, even if it is seen as an ugly artwork, it arouses some questions in minds like what it means, why it is depicted in an ugly way, what the artist tries to do here.

Beauty is always associated with the good feelings, thoughts and acts where, ugliness is seen as the opposite, correlated with bad feelings, thoughts, and acts.

However, ugliness is a more powerful instrument to describe the meaning of the artwork. Using ugliness generally, increases the sense of the work and adds more emotion to it by being more expressive and outrageous than anything beautiful.

(Ugliness As Beauty, (n.d.))

In general, ugly is associated with disfigurement, formlessness, incorrectness, or illnesses that make changes in the physical appearances of people or the uncanny situations and scenes which annoys people even when you look at it.

To sum up, ugly started to be a crucial element of art because it is understood that the world does not always offer the pretty and flawless things to people, as the art is a reflection of those people onto their canvases, artists ended up depicting the worst situations too in their masterpieces. The dreadfulness of hell, the industrialized world, the psychological situations of people, the war, the horrible details that are embedded in the subconscious were reflected by these great artists throughout the art history and were seen ugly because people were not used to seeing the terrifying side of human beings.

5. EXAMPLES AND EXPLANATIONS OF THE RELATED ARTWORKS

In this chapter, the paintings that are labeled as ugly and disturbing will be defined and explained through the knowledge that has been given in the previous chapters. The explanation of the artworks will be done in accordance to how the ugly and beautiful defined above. Starting from 17th century Baroque Period until the early 20th century New Objectivity Period, the paintings that are done to awake disturbance and disgust will be included in this chapter.

5.1. Baroque

5.1.1. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *The Incredulity of Saint Thomas*, c.1601-1602

Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio was a painter who was born in Milano, Italy in 1571 and raised in between Milano and a small town called Caravaggio. Starting from his early youth he was known as a different character and even an aggressive and bizarre one. He was forced to leave Milano because he was involved in a fight and accused of murdering someone and had to go to Rome. Caravaggio mostly was known for his naturalistic paintings where he depicted his models in a realistic way including the ugly little details too without idealizing them. (D'Orazio, 2015)



Figure 5. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Doubting Thomas*, 1601-1602, Oil on canvas

One of the first paintings that can be counted as a depiction consisting ugliness and even disturbance is Doubting Thomas (c.1601-1602). In this artwork, a biblical story was depicted; in this moment Jesus was showing himself to his followers after his resurrection and Thomas, one of his twelve apostles, was refusing that he is Jesus so he needed an evidence to believe in this. Jesus found this way to show his wound that was done before his crucifixion and invite Thomas to even touch the wound to show that he is the real Jesus. In the painting it can be seen that Thomas is touching the wound, and even he is disturbingly putting his finger in the wound to believe in him. It can be seen that, Thomas while trying to find out if the wound is real or not, is even reopening the fresh cut and when looked closer the dirt in the fingernails of Thomas is obvious. With the usage of light and dark Caravaggio made Jesus and the hand that is put into his wound, as the focus. The scene was not idealized, in fact concentrated on the disgusting wound poking hand and the dirt on it. (Caravaggio, Doubting Thomas, n.d.)

5.1.2. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, David with the Head of Goliath, c.1610

David with the Head of Goliath is another painting that was based on a biblical story like Doubting Thomas done by Caravaggio. In the biblical story it is told that there was a battle between Israelites and Philistines, where a giant was included in the army of the enemy of Israel. This giant called the Goliath was defeated by just a shepherd boy who voluntarily fought with him, David. While the Goliath had weapons with him to fight, David only had a sling and a rock. Hitting the Goliath with the stone, David found the chance to take his own sword and cut his head off. The power was sent from the God to him. The main content of the biblical story was

bravery and courage; if you do not fear than you can beat a giant even if you are just a shepherd boy. (Old Testament Stories, n.d.)



Figure 6. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *David with the Head of Goliath*, c.1610, Oil on canvas

The way Caravaggio depicted this scene is way more different than the other paintings that mentioned the same story. The setting is the same with the previous painting a dark, plain background without any distractions that move our attention away from the main subject. The head of the Goliath that is placed in the front right was Caravaggio's own self-portrait. The wound that has been given by David on the forehead of the Goliath with the rock can be seen clearly, making a hole on his head. Also, the blood that is still running down from the neck of the Goliath shows us that the he is freshly beheaded. Even David is looking in a disturbed facial expression towards the Goliath's bleeding head. The look on the Goliath's face has a horrified way, it can be seen what he felt just before he is dead. Even if the underlying purpose of this painting is known, these details on the Goliath's head makes the audience disturbed just like it did David.

5.1.3. Peter Paul Rubens, The Massacre of the Innocents, c.1612

Peter Paul Rubens one of the most important Baroque painters, was born in Siegen, Germany in 1577. He moved to Antwerp to live there with his family. He started his artistic education early in his life. He lived in Spain to copy and experience the old masters of Renaissance where he learnt that his mother was dying, he missed the last days of her. “Having suffered painfully from gout for several years, in 1639 a particularly bad attack left Rubens unable to paint and he died a few months later in May 1640.” (Peter Paul Rubens, n.d.)



Figure 7. Peter Paul Rubens, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, c.1612, Oil on canvas

Massacre of the Innocents is one part of a pair painting. The scene depicts a biblical story about. “The subject, as the title suggests, is the massacre of innocent children by the soldiers of King Herod who had ordered the slaughter of all young males in Bethlehem.” (Massacre of Innocents, n.d.) In the painting there is a great chaos, women trying to protect their children from the soldiers, children trying to run away, soldiers ruthlessly slaughtering them and death children on the floor lying. The faces of people are depicted in depth and emotions of both women and soldiers are put properly. There is a woman who looks up to a soldier in the right part of the

painting who looks horrified and helpless. The soldiers look brutal and doing their job without any empathy. Even if the colors are vivid and the background of the place was put beautifully, Rubens wanted to depict a disturbing scene where there is violence towards little child who are not related with any of the events that happened so this makes us appreciate the usage of artistic elements but still it makes people uncomfortable while looking at it.

5.1.4. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Judith Beheading Holofernes, c.1620



Figure 8. Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, Judith Beheading Holofernes, c.1620, Oil on canvas

Judith who is the main character of this scene is a heroine from bible who showed herself as an ally of the enemy army and tricked the general to kill him. She cut the general, Holofernes' head with her bare hands.

“The iconography had been common since the 1400s, yet it had never been depicted with such harsh and spectacular realism. Life is still coursing through Holofernes' contracted hands and limbs, though not for much longer. The general's mouth gapes in a strangled cry, and we see the spurting blood, as if

Caravaggio wished to freeze the flashing instants of an act that cannot be halted with the gaze.” (Caravaggio, Judith, n.d.)

Even Judith gets disturbed while beheading the enemies head, she looks at the man who is in the death agony with an uneasy face expression while the blood is squirting with every cut. The maid of Judith is waiting patiently with even a more disgusted face. With the hope to save her people from the enemy, Judith had to act violently to Holofernes and Caravaggio made the scene even more ugly than it really was with the realistic and naturalistic depiction of his own.

5.1.5. Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp, c.1632

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn was a master in Baroque period who was born in Leiden, Netherlands in 1606. “... an artist who favored an uncompromising realism that would lead some critics to claim that he preferred ugliness to beauty.” (Rembrandt, n.d.) He started as a portrait painter early in his artistic years. After his painting “Night Watch”, he gained a reputation in the Dutch art scene. He rapidly become a painter who was other artists look up to and even adopt his style to their own.



Figure 9. Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp, c.1632, Oil on canvas

This group portrait is one examples from a series of portraits done for the Guild of Surgeons. The anatomy lesson that has been chosen as a subject in this work, was part of the training of medical students. The lectures were held by the doctors twice a week and this scene depicted an extra training by Dr. Tulp, the most important side of the lesson were that students can see the parts of the body to learn. In this public autopsy scene, Rembrandt carefully depicted the setting where people are giving their attention to the doctor who is showing them the muscles in the dead man's arm who actually is a real person who was a criminal, Adriaen het Kint. The realism in this painting is obvious and striking where the muscles in the arm is detailly painted and the pale and cold body of the dead man is exposed to the audience not to disturb or disgust them but to show the scene as real as is can be. However, because of the realistic even naturalistic depiction, this group portrait disturbs when analyzed deeply. (The Anatomy Lesson, n.d.)

5.2. Romanticism

5.2.1. Henry Fuseli, The Nightmare, 1781

Henry Fuseli whose full name is Johann Heinrich Fuseli was born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1741. Fuseli actually is a theologian, he met his teacher Johann Jakob Bodmer which helped him to learn about art and literature. Then travelled to Italy where he studied and got influenced by the classical art. Fuseli also was inspired and got influenced by William Blake too. Besides he was a professor of painting in the Royal Academy in London for several years. His relationships that he went through and the emotions he experienced were the first source to his art. (Hayes, 1992)



Figure 10. Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare*, 1781, Oil on canvas

In this painting a sleeping woman in white dresses whose head hangs from the bed is depicted, but the odd part is that there is a demonic figure on her torso looking directly to the audience, even more there is a horse emerging in the dark background with weird looking eyes. In 1782, the painting was exhibited in the Royal Academy exhibition where the audience were shocked and startled by seeing this work. The subject was not from Bible or any literature which everyone expected from artists in those times. The painting was based on the painter's imagination only. The creature on her chest is called a mare which tortures people in their sleep.

“As Samuel Johnson’s *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) defined it, a mare or “mara, [is] a spirit that, in heathen mythology, was related to torment or to suffocate sleepers. A morbid oppression in the night resembling the pressure of weight upon the breast.” Thus, Fuseli’s painting may in fact be understood as embodying the physical experience of chest pressure felt during a dream-state.” (Paulson, n.d.)

The horse might be a demon from the nightmare too, but it still holds its mystery of why it is included to this painting. The reason why this painting disturbs and even

frightens people is that the truth it contains in, the dark and annoying side of a nightmare is depicted and all of the people who look at this painting can empathize with this situation.

5.2.2. Francisco Goya, Witches' Sabbath, 1798

Francisco Goya whose full name is Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes was born in Fuendetodos, Spain in 1746. Goya started his art education when he was so young and eventually found himself a place in the Spanish royal court as a portrait painter and become famous with those portraits. Besides those portraits, he painted social and political criticisms in his works. He got influenced mostly from the nature and artists like Rembrandt and Velazquez. After he suffered from an illness that caused him to become deaf completely, his style changed too. Goya can be counted as one of the most talented artists of all time that understood the violence because he lived that in his soul. (Eroğlu, 2015, p.77-80)

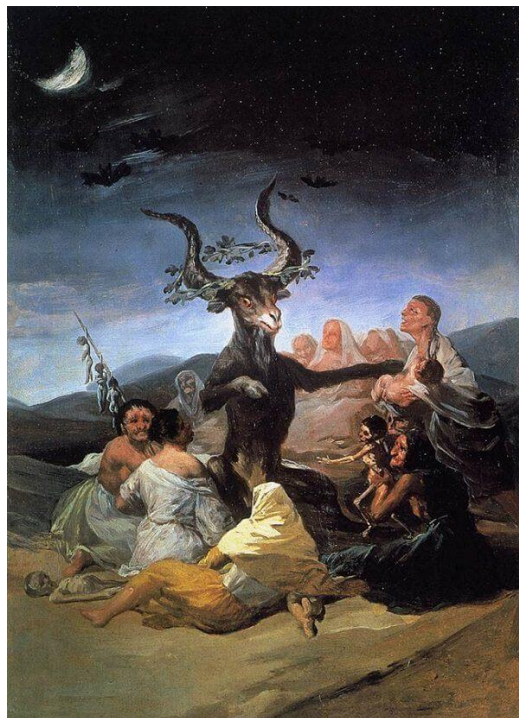


Figure 11. Francisco Goya, Witches' Sabbath, 1798, Oil on canvas

As one of the most important figures of Romanticism, Goya used supernatural subjects in his paintings which was a characteristic of the Romanticists. This painting called *Witches' Sabbath*, depicts a scene of witchcraft. In the middle of the scene there is a goat shaped devil whose huge horns decorated with branches of oak tree and circling around him there are witches whose faces look disfigured. It is believed that the devil used to feed on children and that exact moment was depicted in this painting. There is a woman standing up and sacrificing the child in her hands to the devil, also there can be seen two skeletons of children that were already been sacrificed; one on the left corner lying down and one held by an old woman in the center. The painting includes some elements that connote with witchcraft. The quarter moon that is placed in the left upper corner or the bats that are flying up in the sky can be counted as the symbols for witchcraft. Even if this scene depicts a witch ceremony held by a goat devil, the people who lived in those times thought this was a protest against the Spanish Inquisition where witch hunts were made. The reason why this artwork disturbs and even disgusts people is that the disfigured depictions of women, the discarded children bodies and the way the goat shaped devil stands and looks at the audience directly in the eyes. (*Witches' Sabbath*, n.d.)

5.2.3. Theodore Géricault, *The Raft of Medusa*, 1819

Jean-Louis-André-Théodore Géricault was born in Rouen, France in 1791 to a wealthy bourgeoisie family. After his mother died with his father, Géricault moved to Paris and he started his art education there. He got influenced by the artworks he saw when he went to Italy and came back after a while to make himself a studio at Paris. Eventually he became one of the most known painters of Romanticism movement. Géricault had a short life which was filled with rough mental situations. He used

history, mythology, and modern life scenes as a subject to his art; valued light and movement more than the colors he used. (Eroğlu, 2015, p.80-81)



Figure 12. Theodore Géricault, *The Raft of Medusa*, 1819, Oil on canvas

This major painting of *The Raft of the Medusa* is a narrative of the scandalous event that caused a frigate to sink and left with a wreck where 150 people were drifted for 13 days. The small quantity of lifeboats caused these 150 people to be in this situation, which led only 10 of them to survive at the end. The 13 day of drifting in the sea made people go mad and become cannibals. Géricault wanted to depict the hope of the people that are left behind with including the lifeboat that has sailed away and can be seen far from the distance leaving the others in a brutal way. The composition was made to head in the direction of the lifeboat on purpose, to show the hope of the people that were left to struggle to survive. Géricault made lots of investigation and prepared sketches before he finished this painting, he interviewed with two survivors and learned the horrible details from them to reflect the truth. The painting includes hope in it with the people on the right side still waiting to be saved and tries their best to be seen by the others but on the other hand the dead bodies that almost fell down to the sea, the ones that are trying to save them and the mourners

reflect the audience the helplessness of those people and how they suffer. The painting was put in a setting where people can sense the terrible ambiance even when they took a glance at it. Knowing the story makes people sad and horrified at the same time, empathizing with the ones that are left behind and how they turned into scavenger barbarians but even though the story is unknown for the audience, the scene brings discomfort with the realist details of the dead and the indefinite journey to nowhere on a shipwreck.

This painting was exhibited in the 1819 Salon. “Critics were divided: the horror and "terribilità" of the subject exercised fascination, but devotees of classicism expressed their distaste for what they described as a "pile of corpses," whose realism they considered a far cry from the "ideal beauty" incarnated by Girodet's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (which triumphed the same year).” (*The Raft of Medusa*, n.d.)

5.2.4. Theodore Gericault, *Anatomical Pieces*, 1818-19



Figure 13. Theodore Gericault, *Anatomical Pieces*, 1818-19, Oil on canvas

In this painting *Anatomical Pieces*, there is a pile of cut off limbs on display with plain dark background to have all the attention to the cut body parts.

“The painting was based on a 1816 tragedy in which poor lifeboat supplies and the thoughtlessness of the captain of la Meduse saw over 135 survivors of a ship running aground becoming lost at sea for twelve days as they drifted on a massive makeshift raft, dying in torments of thirst and starvation and becoming unwilling cannibals as they tried their best to survive the traumatic experience.” (Anatomical Pieces, n.d.)

Gericault was really into this heart-breaking situation and tried to talk to the survivors and gather information besides gathering body parts from the morgues and hospitals. Creating a setting in his studio with the parts Goya, depicted this scene to show his respect to the dead ones as a memorial. Even if this painting is attributed to a good cause, the detailed imagery of the cut off parts of the bodies makes people sick and disturbed to look at. (Anatomical Pieces, n.d.)

5.2.5. William Blake, The Ghost of Flea, c.1819

One of the most important English artists of literature and art, William Blake was born in Soho, London in 1757. He started making drawings when he was 10 years old and writing poems when he was 12 years old. His first job was to be an apprentice to an engraver where he learnt to make book images. He was accepted by the Royal Academy. People thought that Blake was a great poet but where the words were insufficient, he expressed himself with the paintings. Blake was not valued back in his time, after he was dead his talent was understood. (Eroğlu, 2015, p.92-93)



Figure 14. William Blake, The Ghost of Flea, c.1819, Tempera mixture panel with gold on mahogany

The idea of this painting of *The Ghost of Flea* emerged after his friend, an astrologer and an artist, John Varley told him that he can paint his visions that he has. In one of his spiritual visions Blake saw a flea and it is told the flea explained him that their kind is actually bloodthirsty people confined to the body of a flea and the reason for this was if they were confined in larger bodies like a horses body, they would consume all of the blood of the people in the world. After this vision, Blake painted this, showing the flea in a larger body that looks like a hybrid creature composed of a human being and a flea. The bloodthirstiness of the flea is shown by the tongue that it stucked out, looking at the cup that he holds which is filled with blood in a desirable way. The setting is a dramatic one with low light but with lots of details. The look of the creature's eyes, the way he holds the cup, the eager tongue waiting to taste the blood, the parts of his disfigured body and place that he is walking in, creeps people because the scene and the subject are unusual and unfamiliar. Even a little flea in real life disgusts people whereas this hybrid insect is a huge one, it is understandable to feel disturbed while looking at this painting. (William Blake, *The Ghost*, n.d.)

5.2.6. Francisco Goya, Saturn Devouring his Son, 1819-1823



Figure 15. Francisco Goya, Saturn Devouring his Son, 1819-1823, Oil mural transferred to canvas

Saturn Devouring his Son was one of the mural paintings that decorated his house which is called “la Quinta del Sordo” in other words “the villa of the deaf”. The villa of the deaf was not a reference to Goya even though he lost his hearing sense too, but the real owner of the house was deaf like him too, so the house was called like that. These paintings that he have made on the wall of the house he lived were called “ the Black Paintings” because of the colors he used and the subject matters he chose and after his death these mural paintings were transferred to canvases which led to a huge loss of details he put in the artworks. (Saturn, 2015)

The painting is based on a mythological story about a god who was named as Saturn in Greek Mythology, and as Kronos in Roman Mythology. Saturn was told

that, as a prophecy he will be dethroned by one of his children just like his own father Ouranos who is Uranus in the Roman Mythology. When Saturn finds out that one of his children will betray him to get the throne, he starts to get mad about this situation for this reason he starts to eat every child of him alive when they were just born into life. The last child of Saturn who was Zeus, was taken away from him by the mother and sent to a place far away where Saturn cannot find him. After living a lonely life away from his family Zeus finally comes back to dethrone his father and rule the Olympos Mountain, just like the prophecy told. The painting depicts the very moment of Saturn eating one of his children alive with vindication. The black background puts forward how Saturn sees in red. The baby has already lost his head and one arm to his father and now it is time for the other arm to be eaten. The look on his face shows how much he lost his mind, holding the baby so tight that it bleeds under his fingers and without even realizing what he is holding in his hands, only focusing on the devouring. The details on his hand muscles squeezing the child, the look in his eyes and the missing parts of the body all in blood makes people sick, disgusted and disturbed. It is told that while this painting was on the wall, Saturn was depicted as an erected man, showing the pleasure he took while achieving his greatest aim but in the process of transferring to canvas, this part was lost. (Saturn Devouring His Son, n.d.)

5.2.7. Eugene Delacroix, The Death of Sardanapalus, 1827

Eugene Delacroix was born in Charenton-Saint-Maurice in France in 1798. The color spectrum he used in his paintings were seen as a big influence on the forthcoming movements like Impressionism. Due to the fact that his family was keen on art, he was raised in an artistic home. He started having artistic education when he was 16 years old. He worked with Gericault in a studio where Delacroix got influenced by Gericault's style. His first painting that was exhibited was Dante and

Virgil in Hell in the Paris Salon in 1822. Most of the works he has done were based on historical events or anecdotes from literature. (Eroğlu, 2015, p.84)



Figure 16. Eugene Delacroix, *The Death of Sardanapalus*, 1827, Oil on canvas

The Death of Sardanapalus was an inspiration from a poem of Lord Byron from 1821 which was about an ancient Assyrian King, Sardanapalus. The story told is that, after finding out that his city is under attack from the enemies of him, Sardanapalus decided to take the control in his own hands and before the enemy kill all his possessions, his wives, slaves and even horses were killed after he commanded his soldiers to destroy them. The chaos is obvious in the painting; people being killed, the bodies of the dead ones, the others waiting for their time to come and the King watching all of these happenings up from above lying down on his bed. The greed that the King have in him is horrifying, not wanting to let his enemies kill his possessions and taking their lives by himself instead is disturbing. The way the King watches the destruction around him is without any expressions, just seeking this event to be done. Even though the colors and the composition are spectacular and influential, the incident is violent and chaotic. (The Death of Sardanapalus, 2014)

5.3. Realism

5.3.1. William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Dante and Virgil in Hell, 1850

William-Adolphe Bouguereau was born in 1825 in La Rochelle, in France. He was sent to a Catholic school to get his education but while he was studying in the college, he had a chance to be tutored in drawing but it was interrupted when he was told to come back to his family house. This did not stop him to produce art. He was influenced so much by the great artists like Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and Titian. “During his lifetime, Bouguereau was regarded as the greatest French academic artist of the time.” (William-Adolphe Bouguereau Biography, n.d.) His works were exhibited in Salons for several times.



Figure 17. William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Dante and Virgil in Hell, 1850, Oil on canvas

Bouguereau attended two occasions of the Prix de Rome and failed to win in both of them which made him much more ambitious. With this vengeance in him, he wanted to prove himself to others and painted Dante and Virgil in Hell. This painting depicted a scene from Dante's Inferno, Dante and Virgil are in the eighth circle of

Hell where they encounter a fighting scene between two damned souls called Capocchio and Gianni Schicchi. “Capocchio, a heretic and alchemist is attacked and bitten on the neck by Gianni Schicchi who had usurped the identity of a dead man in order to fraudulently claim his inheritance.” (Dante et Virgile, n.d.) The details in this painting is extraordinary, the muscles of the two fighting figures and the poses of them is exaggerated but put detailly on the canvas, even the detail of Gianni holding Capocchio around his chest strongly squeezing his skin can be seen. The scene is actually a moment of chaos where Dante and Virgil are watching it in shock and uneasy where the two front figures are showing too much emotion and action. The act of biting and attacking is disturbing but the actual thing that makes people disturbed is the devil flying up and watching the fight with a joyful smile on its face, his shoulders wrapped around looking at the chaos and approving what people would be afraid of like Dante and Virgil. This scene actually is continuing in the back too, there are people on top of each other in fire and at the front floor we can see someone lying down after getting out of the fight. The action is all over the canvas which annoys people because of the violence it holds in it with the confirmation of the devil.

5.3.2. Gustave Courbet, The Wounded Man, c.1854

Gustave Courbet was born in 1819 in Ornans in France. He started his education in art when he was 14, when he was 20, he attended a law school, but this was not for so long after he started to produce art again. He was influenced by the old masters and copied their works to improve himself. His works were exhibited in Salon of 1848 and 1850 where he gained popularity however, his two works were rejected in the following years. Courbet was one of the most influential painters who affected the next generations. (Gustave Courbet, n.d.)



Figure 18. Gustave Courbet, *The Wounded Man*, c.1854, Oil on canvas

Courbet made lots of self-portraits which differed from time to time according to his mood and lifestyle. He made a statement about his self-portraits saying that: "During my life, I have painted myself many times, whenever my state of mind changed. In short, I have written the story of my life". (L'Homme Blesse, n.d.) The aim of this painting was to show himself as a suffering hero, lying down with a wound on his chest. The Wounded Man was originally made ten years before this in 1844, in the first one there was a woman reclining on his shoulder where in the second one it was replaced with a sword to show the ending love affair he had and added a blood stain on his heart to show his heart was broken. The way he depicted his face is not clear to read, he is in the middle of a death scene seeming that he is falling into sleep in a peaceful mimic. The disturbing part starts here in this very point because him, even seeming that he is willing to die almost smiling and happy to have the wound is bothering the audience where most of the people are afraid of dying, Courbet depicted himself peacefully almost like sleeping.

5.3.3. Thomas Eakins, *The Gross Clinic*, 1875

Thomas Eakins was born in 1844 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His education was mostly based on art both in high school and in college while helping his father in his calligraphy art. In the Academy of Fine Arts in Pennsylvania he started to pay attention in the anatomy which continued along his art career. Also, to learn the real anatomy he attended courses at Jefferson Medical College. He also had artistic education in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris and went back to his hometown where he spent his entire life painting the people around him and his city. He started giving lectures at the Academy of Fine Arts in Pennsylvania. (Portrait of Dr., n.d.)



Figure 19. Thomas Eakins, *The Gross Clinic*, 1875, Oil on canvas

The Gross Clinic was done out of the interest that he has in medical and painted after his courses he attended at Jefferson Medical College. This scene depicts a lecture given by Dr. Samuel D. Gross while four other doctors are performing

surgery on the patient. Dr. Gross, after seeing that everything is going fine in the surgery, turns and addresses to the students to explain the situation. In the left corner, there is a woman who is in fear of losing the patient, closing her face which shows us that she is the mother of the person lying. Both criticisms and praises were done after the painting was done but the fact is that this artwork was known as the greatest work he has done in his career. The very detailed depiction of the patient's thigh being cut by one of the doctors, the bloody hand of the doctors and the dramatic state that the mother is in makes people feel uneasy. (Portrait of Dr., n.d.)

5.3.4. William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Flagellation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1880

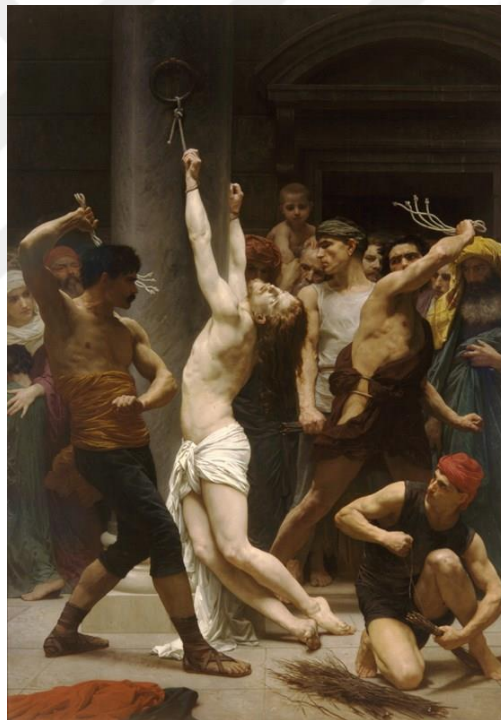


Figure 20. William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Flagellation of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1880, Oil on canvas

In the painting called, Flagellation of our Lord Jesus Christ, there was a depiction of Jesus being tied up, hanging from a column of the building while being whipped by two men. He is letting himself down, his head falling down, his feet sweeping the floor. The suffer of Jesus can be understood from his facial expression

which is been watched by lots of people who are curious about the situation; there is even a little child who is being exposed to this horrific scene. In the crowd there is a man looking directly at the audience, who is told to be a self-portrait of Bouguereau, to pull the viewer into the scene and makes them a witness of this torture. Although the torture that is being done to Jesus Christ is horrible and disgusting, seeing that he surrendered himself to the pain makes people sorry for him; there is the fact that Bouguereau wanted the audience to see themselves as a witness to this scene which is actually the reason why people feel disturbed, putting them in a position where they are not anymore looking to a painting but included to a terrible incident. (Flagellation de Notre, n.d.)

5.3.5. Ilya Repin, Ivan the Terrible and his Son on November 16 1581, 1885

Ilya Yefimoviç Repin was one of the most important Russian painter and sculptor who was born in 1844, in Chuguev in Ukraine. He had Russian military settler parents. Repin studied at the Imperial Academy of Arts in St.Petersburg. He had the chance to visit Italy and France where he was encountered with the Impressionist paintings and old masters that influenced his style. Most of his life he was interested in the normal people and painted them but also in his last years he depicted the aristocracy too in his artworks. (Biography Of Ilya, n.d.)



Figure 21. Ilya Repin, *Ivan the Terrible and his Son on November 16 1581*, 1885, Oil on canvas

In this painting Repin depicted a scene from the famous Tsar Ivan's life, who was the first tsar ruled Russia. The story of this painting is that one day Tsar Ivan beat his son to death, who is the heir to the reign, in a moment of hysteria attack. The painting was attacked twice by vandals who are offended with the subject that was depicted. The way Repin put this scene in his canvas is impressive and scary. Ivan the Tsar looking shocked after what he has done to his son with eyes bulging, holding him in his arms regretting the act in a calm way and the son lying down, his head covered in blood, his eyes also bulging but looking with disappointment. The scene is filled with a psychologically heavy atmosphere. Red color dominates the painting with a reference of the shedding blood of the son. The facial expressions and the emotion that the painting holds in it disturbs the audience, in addition to this if the story of the painting is known than it is possible that people even get disgusted with the act and the scene too. (Ivan The Terrible, n.d.)

5.3.6. Ilya Repin, Saint Nicholas of Myra Saves Three Innocents from Death, 1888

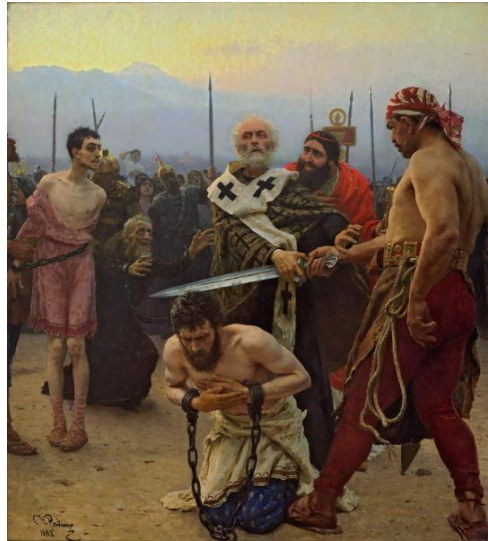


Figure 22. Ilya Repin, *Saint Nicholas of Myra Saves Three Innocents from Death*, 1888, Oil on canvas

In this painting, a story of the bishop Saint Nicholas who was commissioned in Lycia was told. While Saint Nicholas was absent in town, Governor Eustathius ordered to kill three innocent people because he was bribed to do so. After learning this incident, Saint Nicholas rushed to the venue and stopped the act to bring the justice back. The very moment of him stopping the execution, taking the sword from the killer's hand is depicted in this painting.

“The painting represents the contrast between the characters: the toughness of Nicholas of Myra who is sure of his rightness, the surprise of the executioner, the afraid, flattering expression of the governor (“a Byzantine courtier”) and the faces of the condemned who didn’t believe that they could be rescued. One of them is depicted as obedient, the other looks puzzled and the third is in a burst of mad hope.” (Collections: St. Nicholas, n.d.)

The way that the sentenced people look is awful, the kneeling one is ready to die waiting for his end; the second one who stands in the back looks physically in a bad

shape and the elderly one looks happy to be saved even looking like he is showing gratitude to the God. The terrifying event is stopped in this moment, but the chaotic scene and the emotional states of the condemned people looks disturbing.

(Collections: St. Nicholas, n.d.)

5.3.7. Ilya Repin, *The Self Immolation of Gogol*, 1909



Figure 23. Ilya Repin, *The Self Immolation of Gogol*, 1909, Oil on canvas

This painting, *The Self Immolation of Gogol* was a controversial one that Repin produced. In it, there are two figures depicted, one on the front seems like he is suffering both physically and psychologically. “The face of the first character of the picture is disfigured by excruciating pain, but his eyes shine with the hope that the flame devouring him from within will become cleansing and lead to the gates of Paradise.” (Description Of The, n.d.) The other figure on the back is depicted as he is taking care of the person in the front; Gogol, as the title suggests, carefully trying to help him. The colors that were used to create this painting is dark only light source is the fireplace. The general atmosphere of the scene is filled with sorrow and pain, which can be understood by the facial appearance of Gogol.

5.4. Expressionism

5.4.1. Edvard Munch, *By The Deathbed (Fever)*, 1896



Figure 24. Edvard Munch, *By The Deathbed (Fever)*, 1896, Oil on canvas

Born in 1863, in Løten, Norway, Edvard Munch was a worldwide known painter. Starting from his early ages, he suffered several traumas like the death of his mother and sister because of tuberculosis and his other sister being in an asylum for almost her entire life. He started studying engineering first but then left the school. Munch's art was influenced very much with the misfortunate life he lived. "I was born dying", he recalled shortly after his 70th birthday, 'Sickness, insanity and death were the dark angels standing guard at my cradle and they have followed me throughout my life.' He had mental health issues and a drinking problem which led him to go to a mental hospital willingly. He kept painting for his entire life even right before he died. (Edvard Munch Biography, n.d.) Munch was one of the most influential artists that helped Expressionism to spread in the Europe with Van Gogh and James Ensor; especially the German art movement Die Brücke was effected too much. (Eroğlu, 2015, p.156-157)

“Illness, madness and death were the black angels that watched over my cradle and have since followed me through life, Munch wrote in his notes, almost as an explanation for all the death-related motifs that were to form a large, significant part of his pictorial world.”(By The Deathbed, n.d.)

The early death of Munch’s mother and sister devastated him. From even the start of his life, death was an important subject for Munch and in his paintings, he used these motifs too. It will not be wrong to say, he struggled because of the illnesses in his family and also in himself. In this painting, there is a depiction of a dead person and the mourners around him. The atmosphere is melancholic, everybody is dressed in black; some praying for the dead, others only looking at him with sad eyes but the woman in the back is the odd part of the work. She is looking directly at the audience to give the message that, dead is coming for you too, some day you will be on this bed. The general ambiance is terrifying, death makes everyone uncomfortable but the woman staring at the viewer is the most disturbing detail of this painting.

5.4.2. Edvard Munch, Self-Portrait in Hell, 1903

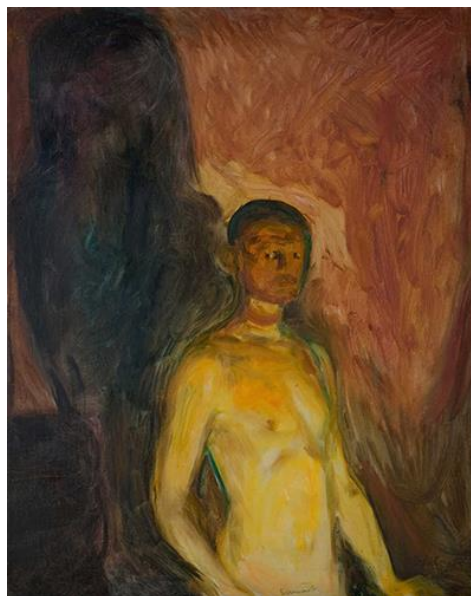


Figure 25. Edvard Munch, Self-Portrait in Hell, 1903, Oil on canvas

As the title refers, this painting is a self-portrait of Edvard Munch, standing in the hell naked. “Self-Portrait in Hell clearly reveals how Munch at the time perceived his position as a man and an artist: a private hell.” (Self-Portrait In Hell, n.d.) The background is filled with colors and rough brushstrokes. The colors used in this painting is a reference to hell, as Munch used warm colors; red, orange, yellow and some dark colors as a shadow behind him. The shadow behind Munch can be considered as a wing or a gravestone. Even if, it is known that Munch suffered from some psychological issues with the impact of death and illness; in this painting Munch is not depicted as frightened to be in hell. On the contrary, he stands tall facing what he has undergone almost like a ruler of his own doom. This painting can also be seen as a simulation to his own life, being in the horrifying situation for almost his entire life.

5.4.3. Emil Nolde, Masks, 1911

Emil Nolde who was born in Nolde, Denmark in 1867 was one of the most significant artists of German Expressionism group Die Brücke. As the name itself refers, Die Brücke aims to build a bridge between the old style of German art and the new. He was also a member of the German Secession group after he left Die Brücke which again aimed to reject the traditional way of art creation. “His work was included in the 1937 traveling exhibition Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art), and in 1941 he was banned from painting by the Nazi regime.” His unique style included vivid colors with rough brushstrokes. (Collection Online, Emil Nolde, n.d.)

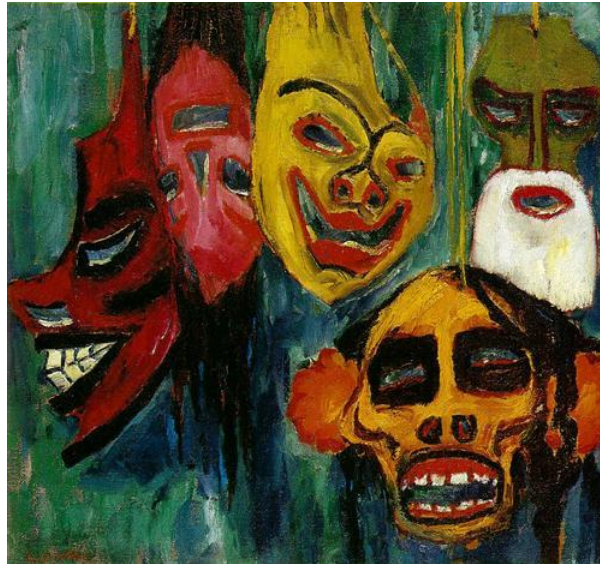


Figure 26. Emil Nolde, *Masks*, 1911, Oil on canvas

Emil Nolde's *Masks* painting was a depiction of the African tribal masks with unusual, horrifying facial expressions on them. The painting is counted as a still life because of the subject matter it depicts but the masks seem almost alive, as they are ready to move. With the brushstrokes and the usage of colors, the figures appeared to be grotesque and even scary looking to the audience. This painting is an example of primitivism, the artifacts of the non-European countries were used to create artworks like this. But in this case, the masks that are used seems to have emotions with them which terrifies people with almost coming out of the canvas to haunt them, in addition they are distorted to create even more discomfort. (Emil Nolde Artworks, n.d.)

5.4.4. Bohumil Kubista, *Kiss of a Death*, 1912

Bohumil Kubista was born in 1884, in Vickovice, Bohemia. He was one of the most important Czech painters and art critics. He attended to the Prague Academy of Fine Arts but eventually left the school to have an education in Florence. Kubista was

influenced by the famous expressionist painter Edvard Munch and the Cubists.

(Bohumil Kubista, n.d.)



Figure 27. Bohumil Kubista, Kiss of a Death, 1912, Oil on canvas

In this painting there is a depiction of two skeletons hugging each other and one kissing the other on the head. The work is very much influenced by Cubism with the forms composed of geometrical shapes. The background and the general colors used in the painting are dark with an ambiance of negativity. The idea of two skeletons kissing each other is a contradiction between life and death; skeletons as they are parts left of dead people, kissing which is a human action is a contrast in itself. The death acting like they are alive even showing each other affection is the part that is disturbing.

5.4.5. Emil Nolde, Kopf, 1913

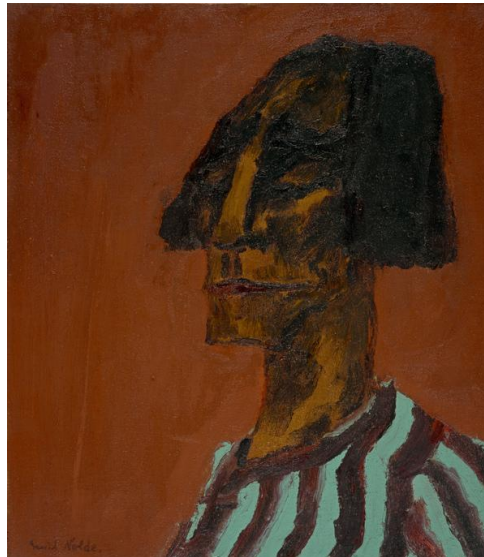


Figure 28. Emil Nolde, Kopf, 1913, Oil on canvas

This painting, Kopf is a depiction of an African man's head. As it is known that Emil Nolde is influenced very much from the life in Africa, he included primitivism in his artworks. "He made frequent visits to the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin to study and draw the sculptures and objects of various global cultures held there." (Emil Nolde, Kopf, n.d.) Nolde also travelled to New Guinea to see how the culture is in there and to experience the life in there. It is told that this painting is done before the trip to New Guinea, so it is not wrong to say that he made this painting with the impact of looking at the African masks; it is understood by looking at the angular face of the man. The eyes of the man are barely painted with just a touch of a dark colored brushstroke even like he does not have any. The depiction of the face is not what people were familiar and the fact that it looks like a face carved out of a wood is the reason why it is annoying.

5.4.6. Gert Wollheim, *The Wounded Man*, 1919

Gert Wollheim who was born in Dresden, Germany in 1894, was one of the most significant German Expressionists. He attended Weimar School of Fine Arts. He went to serve in the World War I and ended up being wounded in the stomach which actually has an effect in his artistic style too. He reflected what he has experienced in the war to his artworks. “His work is violent and contorted and stresses the element of the grotesque. “ (Gert H., n.d.) Three of Wollheim’s artworks were exhibited in the Degenerate Art exhibition which was prepared by Nazis to belittle the unique works of very important artists.



Figure 29. Gert Wollheim, *The Wounded Man*, 1919, Oil on wood

The Wounded Man is actually a self-portrait of Wollheim who was injured and nearly died in the World War I. The painful experience of him was the basis of this piece. The people who attended the war to fight were psychologically harmed and traumatized when they were back from it. “Their lives had been squandered on the battlefields, and when they returned home, mutilated, crippled, and shell shocked, they were unwanted and forgotten.” (Vallen, n.d.)

The very moment of Wollheim being shot is depicted in this painting, the fear can be seen from his face, the facial expression, the eyes bulging and the blood that is running down from his stomach and hand is horrifying. In addition to that, the bodily features of him are terrifying too, his bones can be seen almost like a skeleton to show how bad the situations in the battlefield. The atmosphere of this painting is disgusting, the emotion that is being transferred to the audience makes people uneasy.

5.4.7. Max Pechstein, Self-Portrait with Death, 1920

Max Pechstein who was one of the most famous German Expressionists, was born in 1881, in Zwickau, Germany. He was one of the members of the Die Brücke group before he was dismissed from it because he submitted his artworks to German Secession group. He was influenced by primitivism too like the other artists in the same period. Pechstein served in the World War I, he was harmed psychologically which led him having a nervous breakdown. Even after these problems he kept producing art in his genuine style. (German Expressionism, 2011)

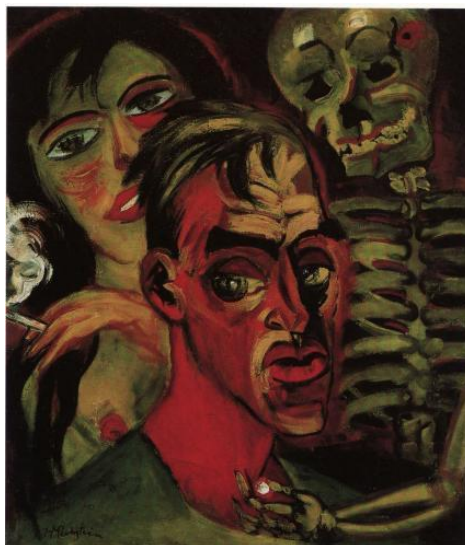


Figure 30. Max Pechstein, *Self-Portrait with Death*, 1920, Oil on canvas

Self Portrait with Death was executed after Pechstein returned from the battlefield. “The butchery he witnessed led to this grotesque work, as well as to a portfolio of lithographs on the horrors of war.” (Vallen, Self-Portrait With Death, (n.d.)) The intimate relationship between Death, which was represented with a skeleton, and the man standing in the front, who was Pechstein himself, is a reference of his near death experience in the war zone. The eyes of Pechstein looks like he is tired of the closeness of him and the death, but he is powerless to do something. The figures in the painting were influenced by the primitive art and the setting was done intentionally in a dark manner to transfer the misery that was experienced during the World War I to the audience. The idea of death being so close to us is terrifying and disturbing.

5.4.8. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Suicidal Person, 1921

One of the most influential artists of the Die Brücke, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner was born in Dresden, Germany, in 1880. Kirchner was one of the artists who served at the World War I and eventually had a nervous breakdown. He suffered from psychological problems for the rest of his life. After he returned from the war, he moved to Switzerland to escape from his hometown and his past experiences and started producing his art there. Kirchner was one of the Degenerate Artists who were humiliated by the Nazis.

“In 1937, more than 600 of his works were confiscated from German museums and were either destroyed or sold, many ending up in America. In 1938 the psychological suffering caused by the Nazi authorities rejecting him as ‘un-German’, the dispersal and destruction of his works, and the Nazi

occupation of Austria so close to his home in Davos led to Kirchner's suicide.”

(Ernst Ludwig Kirchner Biography, n.d.)



Figure 31. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Suicidal Person*, 1921, Oil on canvas

The reason he committed suicide was because his works were destroyed and him being discounted. Before he eventually started to think about killing himself after this incident, it can be seen that he was engaged with the idea of suicide. The painting is dominated by the color red, the person in the middle is touching the wounded parts of him where blood is running down, and the same blood color is applied to the rest of the canvas around the figure. The psychological state is reflected with the figure and the action of him. He tried to kill himself as the title of it suggests and the facial expression is showing that he is scared to be surrounded with blood. The reality of the problem in Kirchner's mental health is reflected with this figure and the hideousness of the depiction is the reason why this painting is counted as a disgusting one.

5.5. New Objectivity

5.5.1. Otto Dix, The Nun, 1914

Willhelm Heinrich Otto Dix was born in Untermhaus, Germany in 1891. He studied at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts, he learned Old Masters but were influenced by Post-Impressionists too. He went to World War I and affected negatively because of the scenes he saw, and he got wounded more than once. His paintings were mostly based on post-war affects and religious subject matters. In 1927 he became a professor at the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts but was fired after the National Socialists came into power based on his immorality and his provocations against the military work and moreover his paintings were banned to be exhibited. (Eroğlu, 2015 p.175-176)



Figure 32. Otto Dix, *The Nun*, 1914, Oil on cardboard

“In a painting he later described as ‘completely characteristic’ of his work before World War I, Otto Dix envisions a nun's internal struggle between her hope for eventual heavenly rewards and her desire for immediate worldly pleasures.” The pleasures of the nun is depicted in the sides of her, on the right there is a woman

figure who holds her bloody stomach, reference to the motherhood; on the left there are two elements, one is bloody Jesus in sorrow and the other is a vulva placed under Jesus. The nun feels upset because of the desires she gave up to become a nun, the yearning for those earthly feelings she has can be read from her sharp, angular face. The color red used on her face is the same tone of the blood used in the other parts of the painting, it is almost like her face is bleeding too. The facial expression, which is given with the linear structures reveals the psychological state of her which makes the audience feel pity towards her. (German Expressionism, 2011)

5.5.2. Otto Dix, *The War*, 1929-1932



Figure 33. Otto Dix, *The War*, 1929-1932, Oil on canvas

The War which was a monumental triptych that depicts the World War I done by Otto Dix. He wanted to reflect the horrifying experience he had encountered while he was serving at the battlefield.

“In the style of an Old Master, the four panels reveal the First World War, showing troops setting off at daybreak (left panel), the battlefield as a place of death (central panel), soldiers returning from the hell of battle (right panel) and fallen soldiers resting in peace in a dugout (predella).” (The War, n.d.)

The panel in the center is showing a village being destroyed, the enemy forces killing everyone who came in their way. In the right down corner, the pieces of human bodies torn apart can be seen, covered in blood and a pile of organs that are left after the people who are gone. In the right upper corner, there is a man lying down upside down whose body is bullet-riddled which is clearly seen on his white legs. The figure on the left standing up with a mask on his face is also covered in blood, most probably he was one of the enemy soldiers who killed those people, looking at what he has accomplished. The misery in the war zone was reflected in this painting. The details of the separated body parts and the dead people that are even naturalistically depicted are disgusting to look at and knowing that these are true stories that he have experienced in the war is even making it more tragic. (Vallen, Central panel, n.d.)

5.5.3. George Grosz, Peace II, 1946

George Grosz was born in Berlin, Germany, in 1893. Grosz applied to the Dresden Academy and School of Arts and Crafts in Berlin to study drawing. He was one of the most important artists that was included in the Berlin Dada group but associated with New Objectivity primarily. “Shortly before Hitler seized power, Grosz moved to America to teach art and thus avoided Nazi persecution when his work was deemed ‘degenerate’.” He lived in the war time experiencing both world wars which affected his art too. (George Grosz, n.d.)

This painting, Peace II was created with the impact of the horrifying incidents that happened during the World War I but done after the World War II. Grosz had a negative thought about the war and believed that the world will never be at peace again. “Regarding the Treaty of Versailles and the resolution of WWI, he stated, ‘Peace was declared, but not all of us were drunk with joy or stricken blind.’” There is

a figure depicted in the center of the painting, walking out of a destroyed place. The tragedies that happened during the war and the outcomes of it is put on the canvas in an obvious way. This figure in the painting is known as the auto portrait of Grosz himself, he have lost his mother in the World War II, here painting himself as a survivor of the war, everything but he is long gone and he is walking away from the ruins. The piece is a display of his mourning and everyone that have lost their families and loved ones. The consequences of the war is terrific and disturbing, everywhere is on fire, buildings are wracked, even the air seems gloomy with the dark colors used. (George Grosz, Peace II, n.d.)

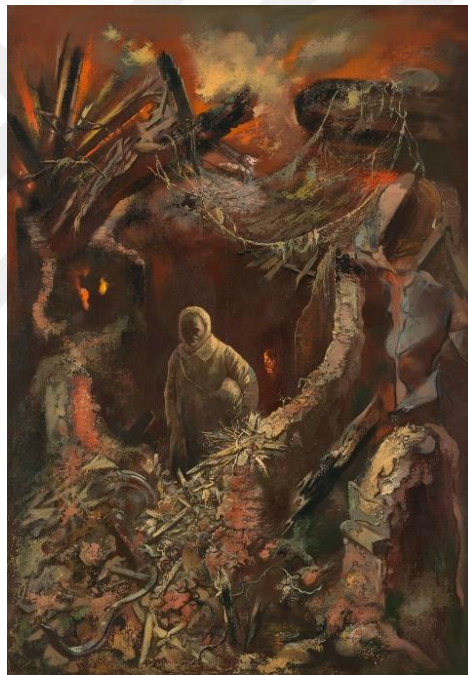


Figure 34. George Grosz, *Peace II*, 1946, Oil on canvas

6.CONCLUSION

As the world changes every day socially, the idea of what is considered as the beauty and the ugly changes too. The definition of both beautiful and ugliness changed in time but the necessity of it did not change. Since the ancient times the notion of aesthetic was valued by people. For years, aesthetic was used as a synonym of beauty and most of the time even today it is used as the same. But ugliness can be aesthetic and appealing too.

What was defined as beautiful was a crucial question that all philosophers studied since the ancient times until now. Where Socrates thought that beauty comes with the purpose of that being as if that object fulfills its purpose then it is considered as beautiful; Kant suggests that it is wrong to associate beauty and the aim of that object because being useful is about the existence of it, not about the aesthetic value it holds. As it can be seen from this example, the idea of beauty is changing from one philosopher to another and from time to time. There is not one opinion that all agreed on when it comes to defining what beauty and ugly is.

In a similar way with philosophers trying to define what beauty and ugly is, artists depicted several images which talk about beauty and ugly in lots of different ways. With the change in the society, what people understood about aesthetics changed and shaped the way artists reflect their impressions on the canvas. In Renaissance Period, the ideal beauty was the most important thing in the art world, depicting the people and places in an idealized way was the trend. The recreation of the ancient Greek beauty standards was acknowledged, and the perfection of the created works was reworked in this movement. Ugliness as an idea, started to be included in the artworks starting from the Baroque Period, even if there are examples of exceptional artworks that have ugly elements in them before Baroque Period, the

general point of view was against the usage of ugliness. The tendency to include ugly, continued after the following art periods with an ascending interest in time. Both formal and conceptual ugliness started to be used as a tool in the artworks. The formal ugliness can be defined as, the figures or the objects that are used in the artwork, being disfigured in a unnatural way and the conceptual ugliness can be defined as, the content that is explained in the artwork, being a negative narrative. By starting to include the elements of ugly both as a formal and a conceptual way, artists showed that the world did not only consisted of beautiful things, the reality of life started to appear in the artworks too. In the Realism Period for instance, after the emergence of Industrial Revolution, the world entirely changed in a more modernized way. The habits of people changed completely with the new versions of transportation, clothing and even living. The world became a concrete jungle which was seen unusual when compared to the environment people lived in before. However, this was the new tendency to include in the arts and this might be read as art becoming uglier than what was called as art beforehand.

The use of ugliness started to increase in the art scene as a content and as a stylistic approach after the Industrial Revolution. Artists started to depict disturbing settings both as a subject matter that narrate a horrifying story and as a technical way with changing the figures in an unconventional way. Including the war scenes, bloody moments, illnesses of people, and psychological problems in the art, made people call them as ugly pieces. Likewise, distorting figures in a way that is unrelated with what the real image is, also made people label the artworks as ugly ones. The Degenerate Art Exhibition was the peak of the display of ugly art. Facing ugly works made people become disturbed and react in a negative way in all times.

Even if the audience in that time was uncomfortable with the emergence of ugly in art world, the examples that were stated above show us that having an ugly content or depicting it in a different way does not make the works worthless. On the contrary they are still some of the most important works that are produced in the art history which made a breakthrough and even today when people are faced with one of the ugly paintings they are fascinated with what they see.

In Chapter II, it is revealed that what was seen as beautiful changed over time and changed from one philosopher to another but the fact that it was important did not change. In Chapter III, it is revealed that what was considered as a beautiful thing in the art world changed from one artist to another too. In the Chapter IV the definition and the discussion on the use of ugliness was analyzed to reveal the purpose of including it in the art and to reveal the significance of it. In the Chapter V, to reveal that there are important artworks that include ugly elements in them, examples were given and explained. To conclude with, it is stated that ugliness as a parameter to aesthetic, was used in the History of Fine Arts and was significant because of the fact that it changed the general concept of what was considered as art.

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