

Problematics of Plato's Aesthetic Theory in Contemporary Society

Joseph Situma & Peter Wasamba

Abstract

This paper interrogates the new thinking on Plato and the arts. Plato reflected on arts and framed issues that he considered to be pertinent to aesthetics universally. His use of dialectic and interlocutors in the process was not incidental as it had consequences on the 'findings' of his inquiries. His inquiries terminate in *aporia* where diverse perspectives on art are articulated. This paper interrogates Plato's assertions on the arts and how they are addressed in contemporary aesthetics. The paper is a contribution to the vibrant discourse on the nature, methods and significance of the arts to theorists and policy-makers in the post-modern society. Pedagogically, it is worthwhile because, "Everyone who teaches philosophical aesthetics should be able to clearly articulate what kind of lectures and curricula are relevant to students right now and why" (Noukkarinen, 2014). The first part is a reflection on some significant thoughts of Plato. It is followed by an inquiry into contemporary theories with the view of testing Rorty's thesis that successive theories do not address the problems of predecessor theories. The third part looks at the contemporary methods of the arts and how they respond to philosophical inquiries. The conclusion is an affirmation of the value of arts in human life and society in general.