First Paper

Ph 2113: Philosophy of Art

Assignment: Write a 900-100 (3-page double-spaced) paper and send to me as a MSWord.docx file using this template for a filename: **2453LastName11.docx**.

A religious world (in the primitive or archaic sense intended here) is one in which the here-and-now of life in this world is tethered to hidden forces and beings of a world beyond. This is the realm of the dead, those who have departed. Since there is no death in the sense of utter extinction, it is an invisible realm, a world beyond this one, in which the deceased take up a new residence. There is migration and communication between two realms, that of the living and that of the dead, not simple extinction.

The rise of philosophy, to the contrary, corresponds to the emergence of a secular world, as if the natural and social worlds and individuals, too, were centered in themselves or autarchic (self-sufficient, self-sustained).Comparable in some ways to ours today, it was a world in which death is final; there is only this world, the world of life; and freedom (emulating divinity) are to be sought and achieved in the here-and-now. The representation of the dead, for example, would be commemorative but not communicative, replacing his presence with a simulacrum reproducing the appearance of a reality no longer extant.

Write an essay on the tension between the religious and the secular, as it plays out in Biblical iconoclasm and in the Greek passage from the bare idol or iconic figure of the dead into the mimetic image proper, art as imitation of reality and human action, in Plato and Aristotle. How is this tension reflected in Biblical iconoclasm? And Plato and Aristotle? What does it say about the nature and function of images and works of art? Use examples like those we examined in class to flesh out these contrary sensibilities.