



## Platonic Nature of Christian Philosophy with Special Reference to Heidegger's Reading of Plato

Ali Naqi Baqershahi\*

Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Imam Khomeini International University,  
Qazvin, Iran.

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Article type:</b> <b>Research Article</b>	Plato's views heavily pierced Christian philosophy, filled with religious fervor and irreligious philosophy of continental philosophies such as Heidegger's. This paper focuses on the impact of Platonic philosophy on the development of Christian philosophy with special reference to Heidegger's reading of Plato. Platonic spirit has not only been confined to Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages but even in the contemporary period attracted the attention of philosophers like Heidegger. There is a debate among Christian theologians concerning the role of Plato's philosophy in developing Christian philosophy. Similarly, there is controversy among the opponents and proponents of Heidegger as to whether he succeeded in conducting a constructive dialogue with Plato and benefiting from his views, or, by misreading him, he sought to call into question and overcome Plato's philosophy. The author holds that Heidegger has been considerably indebted to Plato in his philosophical development, but his way of approaching Plato is different from that of other classic commentators. He made a new beginning by approaching Plato from the postmodern perspective and transcending modernity. The main objective of Heidegger was to reconceive the original character of philosophy; to do so, he began his work by rereading Greek philosophy, particularly Plato's philosophy. In this article, Heidegger's works on Plato, such as <i>Plato's Sophist</i> , <i>The Essence of Truth</i> , and <i>Parmenides</i> , have been studied to bring to light his way of dialogue with Plato.
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\* E-mail: baqershahi@ikiu.ac.ir

## **Introduction**

There is a broad consensus among philosophy experts that Plato is the most influential Western philosopher with whom many philosophers, both in the West and the East, conducted a constructive dialogue and reaped a great deal of learning from his philosophical contemplations. This is why Alfred North Whitehead, the English mathematician and philosopher, once quipped that all philosophy is a footnote to Plato (Zuckert, 1996: 1).

The impact of Plato's philosophy is deep and extensive, particularly on Christian philosophy. Indeed, it was through a constructive dialogue between the early Church fathers like Justin the Martyr, Clement the Alexandrian, and Origen with Plato that a particular philosophy distinct from that of the Greeks came into existence in the world of Christianity following which Christian theologians and philosophers sought to incorporate Platonic ideas into their religious worldviews as well.

Plato also played a significant role in the Continental philosophy, particularly in developing Heidegger's philosophy. By rereading Plato's philosophy, Heidegger aimed, first of all, to reconceive the original character of philosophy. But by approaching it from a postmodern perspective and transcending modernity, he indeed made a new beginning in his philosophical endeavor. The repeated returns to Plato, as inaugurated by Friedrich Nietzsche, do not represent exercises in antiquarian history. On the contrary, when Continental philosophers such as Heidegger, Gadamer, Leo Strauss, and Derrida followed Nietzsche in seeking to discover what philosophy was originally like, they began to reread Plato, in an attempt to reconceive the character of the Western tradition as a whole. However, Heidegger's critics maintain that he failed to undertake a meaningful dialogue with Plato's work, but sought merely to force Plato into a role that suited his agenda.

## **Plato and Christian Philosophy**

It is widely recognized that Platonic philosophy had a significant influence on the development of the Christian philosophy in general and the Christian doctrine of God in particular. According to some church fathers, Plato's idea of a Good (the Idea of the Good) has been recognized as analogous to the notion of a Christian God.

If we cast a glance at the history of Western philosophy, particularly since the advent of Medieval Philosophy onwards, we will come to know that such an assertion about Plato's role in Christianity is not out of place. Indeed, Christian philosophy came into existence through a constructive dialogue between the early church fathers and Plato during which they sought to incorporate Platonic ideas into their belief system or their articles of faith and in this way develop their particular philosophy distinct from Greek philosophies (Copstone, 1965: 111). In their earlier period, Church Fathers faced two rivals that had to be overcome: first Jewish religion, and second, Greek rationalism. To safeguard their religion, they deemed it better to equip themselves with philosophical and intellectual tools, so drawing on Platonic philosophy, they sought to develop a kind of philosophy to

become compatible with their religious beliefs and worldviews. Among the Greek philosophers, the best option for them was Plato's philosophy rather than Aristotle's, for the former enjoyed a kind of religious fervor and was deemed to be closer to Christian religion for three reasons: first, in Plato, the existence of an immaterial world (the world of Ideas) is explicitly stipulated, which is suitable for Christianity. Second, the idea of the pre-existence and immortality of the soul is advocated in Plato's philosophy, which is the essential element of any religion, and third, Plato epistemologically believes in a kind of illumination that is also compatible with that of Christianity. All these items are in line with Christian worldviews and beliefs.

Among the Christian religious dogmas, the doctrine of the Trinity is the most fundamental one. This doctrine is considered to be the inner dynamics of the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and has been formulated using Plato's distinction between the Good, Nous, and "Pneuma" (World Soul). There is a controversy among ancient and even contemporary Christian theologians that the doctrine originated in Greek speculative philosophy and has nothing to do with the biblical view of God. At the same time, conversely, the majority of Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, or evangelical scholars deny these findings based on clear biblical testimony about the Trinity. However, the term itself is not used in Scripture. It seems obvious that the Orthodox or traditional church's Trinitarian formula is grounded on at least some metaphysical ideas and models derived from Greek thinking.

The Demiurge is eventually equated with *Logos* (in Stoicism) and *subordinated* to the supreme God. This *Logos* eventually becomes equated with the *Logos* of the Prologue of St. John's Gospel. Arians might have employed this principle for attacking the traditional doctrine of the Trinity.

Apart from them, Plato was Aristotle's mentor, that is, Church fathers were right in preferring the mentor rather than his student to equip their religion, so all these elements pushed the early Christian fathers to conclude that there was no reason for obtaining a philosopher other than Plato as a source of their philosophical contemplations. Accordingly, Plato's presence turned up to be very prominent in the early Christian era to the extent that they called Plato a Christian in faith who lived before Jesus Christ. As is known, in the Medieval Period, the Plato-Christians dialogue expanded considerably and reached its culmination in St. Augustine's philosophy.

Even in the thirteen century Plato's philosophy was highly appreciated by Franciscan philosophers particularly Bonaventure, "as a balance to the intellectualism of St. Thomas Aquinas, a Franciscan friar named Bonaventure attempted to do two things: a) to rescue the good name of Plato (and Augustine) and b) to reassert the importance of love and devotion to knowledge and science" (Vidmar, 2005: 141). This century has witnessed the return of Aristotle to the world of Christianity through Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina, Farabi, Ibn Rushd, etc., during which Scholasticism came into being and in the same century reached its zenith. It is strange to note that at the beginning of the thirteenth

century, Aristotelian books were strongly banned by the Church authorities but towards the end of thirteenth century Aristotelian ideas were welcomed warmly by Christian philosophers like Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas and turned out to be a part and parcel of Christian ideology (Thilly, 1914: 188). Scholasticism brought in its wake certain problems that here it is out of place to go into its detailed account. But at that time, a kind of Aristotelian-Christian dogmatism had gripped the whole sphere of Christian life, to the extent that the outbreak of a new movement felt to be inevitable against such an atmosphere, and the Renaissance was a movement that erupted to fulfill such demand.

The spirit of the Renaissance was also Platonic. At that time Renaissance thinkers approached Plato from three aspects 1- some of them like Marcelo Ficino sought to translate Plato's works and present them from Christian's world views, 2- some like Plato attempted to translate Plato's works independently without tingeing them with Christianity, 3- some scientists like Keebler, Galileo, and Copernicus pierced through the mathematical views of Plato to incorporate them into their views.

### **Contemporary Period and Plato**

In the contemporary period, too, Plato had something to do with philosophers, during which two approaches came up to make dialogue with Plato, namely the analytic approach and the continental approach. In other words, interpreters of Plato today tend to divide into standpoints that are often regarded by each other as opposed and mutually incompatible: “analytic” interpretations and “continental” or sometimes “postmodern” interpretations. The former takes their interpretive bearings from the predominantly English-speaking standpoint widely known as “analytic philosophy.” Their failure to pay careful heed to the dramatic aspects of the dialogue form in which Plato wrote, and so their attribution to Plato of the various theories and doctrines known as Platonism, is a function, in my view, of their consistent adherence to a fundamental premise of analytic philosophy that they see no reason not to apply to the dialogues. That is the conviction that philosophy is inseparable from the presentation of arguments for this or that view, indeed, in its strong versions, that philosophy just is an argument. Armed with that conviction, when such scholars turn to the Platonic dialogues, where are they going to look for the philosophy? Certainly not in the dramatic portrayals of existential situations, of characters, of personal attractions, of playful teasing, of the telling of myths. No, from their standpoint, such literary accouterments can be safely ignored, perhaps explained away in a preface as a kind of hangover from Plato’s youthful aspirations to poetry. The philosophy in the dialogues, given their construal of philosophy, can be found in and only in the rather narrowly construed arguments therein, to which they can safely turn without much attention to the various literary flourishes in which Plato might have indulged. In the case of the analytic tradition, then, the ignoring of the dialogue form, and so the imposition on the dialogues of the various doctrines that constitute Platonism, is at least a consistent consequence of their very construal of the nature of philosophy, even if

there is no reason to believe that it was a construal held by Plato himself. For interpreters of Plato in the continental tradition, the situation is at once more complex and more curious. On the one hand, not one of them, so far as I can see, would accept the presupposition of analytic philosophy that effectively reduces philosophy to a series of arguments for this or that position (Hyland, 2004: 11).

On the contrary, one of the great contributions of continental philosophy is to have disturbed the boundaries between philosophy and other disciplines, especially the arts and literature, and so to have brought to philosophic thinking the sensitivity to literary style, drama, myth, to the poetic character of thinking, that has been largely missing from the analytic tradition but which is exhibited par excellence in the Platonic dialogues. Thus, Martin Heidegger, for example, finds in poetic thinkers from Sophocles to Holderlin, Rilke, and Trakl, the stimulus to profound philosophical meditations. Not surprisingly, his writing, especially his late writing, becomes increasingly infused with poetic gestures, poetic tropes, and poetic spirit. The same is true, perhaps even more so, of thinkers such as Jacques Derrida, Luce Irigaray, or Adriana Cavaleiro. One would expect that these thinkers, when they turn to the reading of Plato, would be much more attuned to the dramatic, literary dimensions of the dialogue form, and so would not simply assume that Plato was trying primarily to assert his philosophical views as if he were writing treatises (Ibid: 12).

### **Heidegger's Platonism**

Plato played a significant role in the Continental philosophy in general and in the philosophical development of Heidegger in particular. In his attempt to study philosophy, Heidegger first sought to reconceive the original character of philosophy, and to do so he began his work by rereading Greek philosophy, particularly Plato's philosophy but approached it from a postmodern perspective, so to speak, he made a new beginning in his philosophical endeavor by transcending modernity.

The repeated returns to Plato as inaugurated by Friedrich Nietzsche do not represent exercises in antiquarian history, however. On the contrary, when Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Leo Strauss, and Jacques Derrida follow Nietzsche in seeking to discover what philosophy was originally like, they reread Plato, in an attempt to reconceive the character of the Western tradition as a whole. I call these thinkers "Postmodern Platos" for two reasons. First, I am arguing that their understanding of Plato is a central, if not the defining, factor in their thought as a whole. When these thinkers return to Plato to find out what the character of philosophy originally was, they understand themselves to be inquiring into the roots of their activity. Their interpretations of Plato thus constitute essential parts of their self-understanding. The second reason I refer to these thinkers as "Postmodern Platos, is that they look back to the origins of philosophy from an explicitly "postmodern" position. That is, they return to Plato and ask what the character of philosophy was at its origins, explicitly based on a conviction that modern rationalism has exhausted its promise and its possibilities (Zuckert, 1996: 2).

It is believed that Heidegger agreed with Nietzsche that not only is Western philosophy Platonic in nature, but this metaphysical tradition has come to its end as well. Again, both philosophers hold that they should begin to study Plato's philosophy anew. Naturally, in the course of studying Plato, they underwent some drastic changes in their philosophical views. Even some of them, like Heidegger, sought to overcome Plato, for following Parmenides, Plato too held that being is constant, intelligible, and self-subsistent; in contrast, Heidegger held that being is not constant but historical.

Again, in line with Nietzsche Heidegger too returned to Plato for rereading philosophy, for he believed that modern philosophy suffers from certain epistemological weaknesses, but unlike Nietzsche, he never concluded that man is at all unable to attain knowledge (Ibid: 34). In this regard, Heidegger held that each science has its particular subject matter. Yet there is no science to deal with the very being, for being is considered to be a self-evident notion. There is no doubt that being was once upon a time, for instance, in the Middle Ages, the subject matter of philosophy, but modern philosophy is not interested in dealing with it. They considered being as a self-evident, universal, and indefinable notion. This approach towards being is rooted in Aristotelian philosophy (Ibid).

Among the many significant dialogue partners that Heidegger has engaged, Plato stands out as one having especially captured Heidegger's attention, so he set on to grapple with Platonic works and conducted a kind of dialogue with Plato to achieve a new beginning in Germany. Indeed, in the light of this dialogue and conversation with Plato, he developed and presented his philosophy. In order to recapture the way of his dialogue with Plato and trace the Platonic elements in his views, it is better primarily to cast some light on his respective works on Plato, such as *Plato's Sophist*, *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, *The Essence of Truth*, and *Parmenides*. In these books, Heidegger approached Platonic ideas differently; that is, he avoided interpreting Plato's views in a conventional way but sought to conduct a kind of dialogue between himself and Plato. So, it is necessary to make a meticulous study of his works, among which *Plato's Sophist* enjoys a particular place since this is the only work of Heidegger's that engages in a thorough interpretation of an entire Platonic dialogue.

In his *Plato's Sophist*, which indeed contains Heidegger's lecture as conducted at Marburg in the winter semester of 1924/25, he begins his dialogue with Plato with a meticulous analysis of a small section of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* and *Metaphysics* to pave the way for reading the *Sophist*. The main theme of the *Sophist* is the question of the meaning of being, the guiding thread of Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927). In this work, Heidegger is strongly under the influence of Husserlian phenomenology, and interprets Plato largely from the standpoint of the extent to which they prepare the way for something like philosophy as scientific research in the phenomenological mode (Hyland, 2004: 17).

In the same book, Heidegger states that the issue of being should be revised. The importance of this issue goes to the extent that at the beginning of his *Being and Time*, he refers to a quotation from *Plato's Sophist* concerning being and the

place of being in Plato: For manifestly you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression "being". We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed" (Heidegger, 1962: 1). Such a quotation from *Plato's Sophist* at the beginning of the chief work of Heidegger indicates the importance of the issue of being in his philosophy. Indeed, in his first book, he held that it is necessary to carry out a kind of deconstruction of accepted tradition and a fundamental change in the prevailing reading of being. Such work will assist in recapitulating its root. It seems that Heidegger never fulfilled such a task.

For exploring the nature of being in Plato, Heidegger first prefers to approach it from Aristotle's point of view, as in *Plato's Sophist*, he says:

To be able to watch Plato at work and to repeat this work correctly, the proper standpoint is needed. We will look for information from Aristotle about which beings he, and hence Plato and the Greeks, had in view and what were for them the ways of access to these beings. In this fashion, we put ourselves, following Aristotle, into the correct attitude, the correct way of seeing, for an inquiry into beings and their Being. Only if we have a first orientation about that do we make it possible to transpose ourselves into the correct manner of considering a Platonic dialogue and, once having been transposed, to follow it in each of its steps. The interpretation has no other task than to discuss the dialogue once more as originally as possible. (Idem, 1997: 9)

In *The Essence of Truth*, Heidegger seeks to explore the essence of truth. In order to fulfill this job, he turns to reread the legacy of Greek philosophy, particularly that of Plato. But unlike *Plato's Sophist*, in which he approached Plato through Aristotle, he did not follow the same path but sought to read Plato immediately. To cast light on the notion of truth, Heidegger proceeded to interpret Plato's allegory of the cave in order to unveil the primary views of the ancient Greeks. In these books, he proved that truth is not referred only to the correspondence theory of truth but refers to what is unveiled (Idem, 2002: 7). Truth as self-assertion is related to the very beings rather than certain propositions about them. Things expose themselves as beings only to men. In his allegory of the cave, Plato also asserts that truth is an event or aspect of man, which discloses itself in different stages of life.

Moreover, in his book *The Essence of Truth*, Heidegger states that the essence of truth involves a kind of freedom as well, but freedom in a genuine positive sense rather than a negative sense. "The allegory, i.e., the whole story as we have followed it, provides clues as to how freedom should be understood. The second and third stages show that it is not only a matter of removing the shackles, i.e., of freedom from something. Such freedom is simply getting loose, and as such is something negative. Unshackledness has no content in itself. He who has just been

unshackled becomes insecure and helpless, is no longer able to cope; he even regards those who are still shackled as possessing an advantage in terms of this negative freedom. By wanting to return to his shackles, he who is only negatively free betrays what he authentically wants but does not understand: the positive which genuine positive freedom offers; it is not only freedom from but freedom for (Ibid: 43).

Heidegger again in the course of interpreting Plato's allegory of the cave makes a relevance between freedom and light, "to become free now means to see in the light, or more precisely, to gradually adapt from darkness to brightness, from what is visible in the brightness to brightness and light itself, such that the view becomes an illuminating view (Ibid: 44). There is also a relationship between light and being, "the light symbolizes the idea. The idea contains and gives being. Seeing the ideas means understanding the what-being and how-being, the being of beings. Becoming free for the light means to let a light come on, to understand being and essence, and thus to experience being as such (Ibid).

It seems that in the course of interpreting Plato's allegory of the cave, Heidegger tries to present his theory of truth as separate from that of Plato and pretends that he has some common and different points with Plato, but in reality, Heidegger is indebted considerably to Plato in dealing with the notion of truth. Even his concept of being is impressed by Plato's views to the extent that some of the writers, such as Rakowski hold, "Heidegger appears to have discovered his later distinction between Being as such and the Being of beings in his appropriation of Plato's sun analogy" (Rakowski, 2009: 75).

In his book, *Parmenides*, Heidegger again refers to his other view of truth. *Parmenides* is, indeed, a translation of a lecture course that Heidegger conducted in the winter semester of 1942-1943 at the University of Freiburg. The title of the course was: "Parmenides and Heraclitus". But as the reader of *Parmenides* discovers, the course was dedicated primarily to Parmenides. Following his question of whether Aletheia is a goddess, Heidegger presents his translation from Greek of a section of Parmenides' didactic poem. As far as we know, Heidegger's translation of this poem has not been challenged by scholars who study the Greek language and history. Heidegger states that, in this didactic poem, Parmenides brings into language the word of the goddess, Aletheia.

As stated in the foregoing remarks, in their philosophical development, German philosophers like Heidegger and Gadamer sought to reread Greek philosophy in general and Plato's philosophy in particular to recapture its cultural roots, following which they were considerably impressed, overtly or covertly, by Plato's philosophy. Heidegger emphasized the need to return to the beginning in Greece to achieve a new beginning in Germany in his inaugural address as Rector of the University of Freiburg in 1933: "The Self-Assertion of the German University", trans. Karsten Harries, *Review of Metaphysics* 38 (March 1985): 471-73. Since this speech has often been dismissed as a politically charged aberration, the philosophical importance of the argument has generally been missed. Heidegger continued to emphasize the need for a return to the first



beginning to make a new beginning in the sketch he drew for a second major work to follow *Being and Time* (Zuckert, 1996: 284).

### **Heidegger's Critics**

Advocates and critics of Heidegger have different views concerning the nature of Heidegger's dialogue with Plato. Those with more sympathy for Heidegger, while acknowledging these points, allow themselves to wistfully imagine what might have been if Heidegger had had the good sense to undertake a meaningful dialogue with Plato's work, rather than merely to force Plato into a role that suited Heidegger's agenda. Few, if any, have devoted significant attention to the many points in Heidegger's lengthy career where Heidegger undertakes sympathetic and profitable engagements with Plato, largely because these charitable readings are hard to fit into the story of Heidegger's Plato as an original metaphysician -- a story so forcefully and laid out by Heidegger himself in the only work devoted to Plato which he chooses to publish (O'Leary, 2012).

These are the points made by Josef S. O'Leary in his book review of Francisco J. Gonzalez's book is called *Plato and Heidegger: A Question of Dialogue*. In his view, Francisco makes many important contributions to our view of Heidegger's Plato, but none is more important than his success at complicating this consensus story that Heidegger is merely a bad reader of Plato. Even some philosophers like Gadamer, who was Heidegger's student, are of the view that Heidegger failed to understand Plato's idea of Good because he sought to see it through the lenses of Aristotle.

There are some Heidegger's harsh critics like Rackowski, who believes that Heidegger's later thought is heavily indebted to Plato, but whose politics failed to learn from him the most important lesson: humility. In this regard, he says: had Plato known Heidegger, he probably would have considered him a failed philosopher, at best another Alcibiades, who shattered the hopes and future of Athens on the rocks of Sicily's coastline because he could not choose the love of wisdom over the love he felt from the *demos*. More than truth, Alcibiades wanted his reputation and...influences to saturate all mankind... Heidegger shattered the future of his revolutionary philosophy when he repeated Alcibiades' mistake and desired power before truth, that is, when he became more mesmerized by Hitler's hands than he was by the liberating light of Being outside the cave (Ibid).

Moreover, in *Parmenides*, Heidegger seeks to show that the origin of Western modernity is more Roman rather than Greek. One of Heidegger's most insistent assertions about the identity of modern Europe is that its origins are not Greek, as has been assumed in discourses of Western modernity since the Enlightenment, but Roman, the epochal consequence of the Roman reduction of the classical Greek understanding of truth, as a-letheia (un-concealment), to veritas (the correspondence of mind and thing). In *Parmenides*, Heidegger amplifies this genealogy of European identity by showing that this Roman concept of truth--and thus the very idea of Europe--is also indissolubly imperial. Heidegger's genealogy has been virtually neglected by Western historical scholarship, including classical.

Even though restricted to the generalized site of language, this genealogy is persuasive and bears significantly on the conflicted national identity of modern, post-Ottoman Greece. It suggests that the obsessive pursuit of the unitary cultural ideals of the European Enlightenment, in the name of this movement's assumed origins in classical Greece, constitutes a misguided effort to accommodate Greek identity to the polyvalent, imperial, Roman model of the polity that informs European colonial practice. Put positively, Heidegger's genealogy suggests a radically different way of dealing with the question of Greek national identity, one more consonant with the actual philosophical, cultural, ethnic, and political heterogeneity of ancient Greece (what Martin Bernal has called the "Ancient Model") and, thus, one less susceptible to colonization by "Europe."

There is also a dual aspect of Heidegger's reading of Plato, which is discerned by Peter Warnek. According to which, Heidegger refuses or fails to carry on a reading of Plato before Platonism, although he often insists on such a need. In a rather Derridean fashion. He argues that a detailed reading of Plato before Platonism (metaphysics) is never performed by Heidegger. This is to say that another, non-metaphysical reading of Plato is presented only as a promise for the future (See Warnek, "Reading Plato before Platonism [after Heidegger]" and "Saving the Last Word: Heidegger and the Concluding Myth of Plato's *Republic*").

However, some scholars disagree with Warnek's claim that Heidegger never attempts a reading that opens up a different Plato, and suggest that his interpretation of the cave allegory during the 30s provides a rich analysis of how Plato preserves a way of thinking that is different from Platonism and the metaphysical tradition.

Some scholars have challenged Heidegger's interpretation of Ancient Greek texts. One of the earliest critiques comes from Paul Friedländer, who challenged Heidegger's translation of the Greek word *Aletheia* as unconcealment (Friedländer, 1973).

## **Conclusion**

Plato has exercised a great influence on philosophers of the East and the West throughout the history of philosophy. In the Medieval Period, particularly in the Patristic period, Plato was considered a part of Christian ideology to the extent that some Christian fathers called him a Christian, but before the birth of Jesus. In the postmodern era, too, Plato played a significant role and had a central place in the philosophical development of thinkers like Heidegger. Usually, German philosophers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century began to study their own culture anew, and to do so, they began first to study the root of their culture, which is considered to reside in Greek philosophy. Again, some German philosophers maintained that they should begin their work by rereading pre-ocratic philosophers, and some others prefer to do so by delving into Plato's philosophy. It seems that Heidegger preferred to engage in dialogue with Plato to recapture his origin. So, in his attempt to study philosophy he too first sought to reconceive the original character of

philosophy, and to do so he began his work by rereading Greek philosophy, particularly Plato's philosophy but approached it from a postmodern perspective, so to speak, he made a new beginning in his philosophical endeavor by transcending modernity. Heidegger's dialogue with Plato has left behind certain critics as well, some of whom believed that he misread Plato, and some others also believed that Heidegger is heavily indebted to Plato and even borrowed his idea of Being from Plato's idea of Good. There is no doubt that Heidegger was heavily under the influence of Plato, but it should be kept in mind that he read Plato from the Postmodern perspective, and his reading of Plato was radically different from those of classical readers of Plato, including medieval and modern ones.

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### با تأکید بر خوانش هایدگر از افلاطون

علی نقی باقرشاهی\*

دانشیار گروه فلسفه، دانشگاه بین‌المللی امام خمینی، قزوین، ایران.

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آرای افلاطون به‌شدت هم در درون فلسفه دینی مسیحیت رخنه کرده و هم بر آرای غیردینی فیلسوفان قاره‌ای، به‌ویژه فلسفه هایدگر تأثیر زیادی داشته است. این مقاله به بررسی این تأثیرات پرداخته و آرای گوناگون در این باره را بررسی کرده است. هدف از این نوشتار این است که نشان دهد تأثیر افلاطون فقط محدود بر دوره قرون وسطی نبوده، بلکه در دوره معاصر نیز تأثیرگذار بوده و در شکل‌گیری فلسفه هایدگری سهم داشته است. درباره اینکه آیا هایدگر دیالوگی سازنده با افلاطون داشته، یا برعکس، در مورد افلاطون دچار نوعی سوء فهم شده است، میان مفسران و منتقدان هایدگر اختلاف نظر وجود دارد؛ که در این مقاله به آنها اشاره می‌شود. به نظر نگارنده این مقاله، روح حاکم بر فلسفه مسیحیت در قرون وسطی بیشتر افلاطونی بوده، به طوری که برخی از آبای کلیسا، افلاطون را یک مسیحی قبل از مسیحیت می‌دانستند. در مورد هایدگر نیز اعتقاد بر این است که او دیالوگی سازنده با افلاطون داشته و در تکوین آرای خود، متأثر از وی بوده است. در این مقاله برای بررسی دیالوگ هایدگر با افلاطون، به آثار هایدگر درباره افلاطون همانند سوفیست افلاطون، ذات حقیقت و پارمنیدس- اشاره شده است.

**کلمات کلیدی:** افلاطون، هایدگر، فلسفه مسیحی، وجود، دیالوگ، پست مدرن، فلسفه یونان.

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\* نشانی پست الکترونیک: baghersshahi@ikiu.ac.ir