



## The Relationship between Object and Work in Peter Lamarque's Ontological Theory

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Article type:</b> <b>Research Article</b>	A primary issue in art ontology is identifying the essence and the category of the artwork. Philosophers have had various contradictory perspectives towards this issue. One of the most significant views belongs to Peter Lamarque called the theory of "Object and artwork". According to this theory, an artwork has intrinsic features meaning that it essentially holds some features while holding them in all possible worlds, is a genuine phenomenon discrete from human mind, meaning that its existence is not dependent on the human minds, and that its habitat is not the mind but the external world and is considered as a furniture to it, is different from natural and common objects, despite being made of normal, day-to-day and even mundane objects, can be interpreted, can have various interpretations, and even occasionally, artworks are born into existence by the interpretation of the creator and the artist, possesses relative and intentional adjectives, meaning that although it is a genuine phenomenon, it is dependent on the audience as well, and is also a cultural construction that requires an audience community to live, this means that if the artwork loses its audience community, it is no longer an artwork but merely an object.
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## Introduction

Lamarque's perspective in the ontology of art is known as the "object and work" theory. The most significant characteristics of this perspective include: establishing a distinction between the object and the work, the cultural creation of the work, the intentionality and relationality of the work, the intrinsic nature of certain attributes of the work, and the types of interpretation and their connection to the distinction between object and work. In the continuation of this text, we will elaborate on each of these issues and discuss their implications and consequences.

The focus of dispute in the ontology of art can be formulated in several ways. One of these formulations belongs to Wolterstorff. According to Wolterstorff, in many arts, a distinction can be made between performance and the performable. Consider a play, for example. On the first night of the performance, the actors perform their roles with sufficient energy, but on the fifth night, their energy diminishes. Thus, the characteristic of the first night's performance is "having sufficient energy," and the characteristic of the fifth night's performance is "lacking sufficient energy." Therefore, a single performance has two different characteristics. Now, the question is: which of these two performances is identical to the performable? By performable, we mean the text of the play itself—that is, the thing from which the performance is performed. Both cannot be identical to the performable, as they possess contradictory attributes. This distinction is very similar to the distinction between singular works and repeatable works, which we will explain further below (Wolterstorff, 2009: 457).

Livingston offers another formulation of the fundamental issue in the ontology of art. This formulation relies on the plurality of works. We know that art encompasses many diverse branches, from painting and photography to cinema, dance, music, and literature. We apply the term "art" to all of these. Thus, on the one hand, we face diversity, and on the other hand, all these diverse activities are unified by the application of the term "art." Furthermore, we know that each of these artistic disciplines involves its own specific activity and action. For example, the action of a painter differs from that of a poet. Or, for instance, the work of a sculptor has numerous differences from that of a musician. It is with this point in mind that we can raise the problem of the ontology of art: Is it possible, amidst all this diversity and plurality in the realm of art, to conceive of a single ontological category for art? One unified category that encompasses all artistic disciplines? Or, in other words, what is the existential aspect of all these diverse and varied artistic activities and actions? How can we find a unifying concept behind all these differences in works and artistic activities?

The final formulation relies on the repeatability and non-repeatability of certain works. At first sight, we might say it is obvious that works are particular. A painting, a theater performance, a photograph—all are particular. However, deeper reflection reveals that not all artistic productions are of this kind. We must first distinguish between different works and productions. For example, some works are repeatable; a play, for instance, can be performed multiple times. But another category of works is non-repeatable; for example, Van Gogh's *Starry Night* is a unique work. It seems that this distinction can be explained by relying on the concept of action. Some types

of art are action-based, such as theater, while others are not, such as photography. The former are works that can be performed at different times and places, while the latter come into existence only at one time and in one place (Gracyk, 2013: 236). The relevance of this categorization to our discussion is that the significant problem in the ontology of art pertains to repeatable works, as unique works are typically particular. Should repeatable works be regarded as particular or universal? We recall that the classical philosophical definition of universal and particular was that universal concepts can apply to many, whereas particular concepts cannot. A play can have various performances, as can a musical sonata. So, are works of this kind universal or particular? Moreover, universal concepts themselves have been divided into various categories throughout the history of philosophy. For example, some, like Plato, spoke of universals as separate from objects, while others, like Aristotle, located the universal within the object. In modern times, additional interpretations of universals have emerged. Thus, we also arrive at this question: If a work is universal, what kind of universal is it?

The fundamental question in the ontology of art can also be formulated in another way; this formulation addresses the question of which ontological category works belong to. In response to this question, various theories in the ontology of works have emerged. Each of these theories faces its own specific problems. For example, if we consider works as material and particular, one problem is that not all types of art fall under this category; for instance, music or literature are not material objects at all. Similarly, if we regard art as consisting of abstract entities, we will encounter other problems, as we must remember that various categories of abstract entities are all timeless and placeless. According to some traditional philosophical interpretations, abstract entities exist eternally, and these abstract entities are independent and detached from the human artist's actions and work (Thomasson, 2004: 83). As a result of this kind of metaphysical interpretation of art, the artist is no longer a creative individual but rather a kind of discoverer who uncovers these pre-existing entities. These problems have kept the ontology of art a fresh topic, and various philosophers have attempted to avoid these issues by proposing new theories. One of these new theories is the "object and work" theory.

### **Work and Object distinction**

Lamarque, in his "object and work" theory, has sought to demonstrate that, firstly, all previous theories on this subject have significant and insurmountable flaws. After highlighting the shortcomings of each of these theories, he presents his own theory in the book *Object and Work*. The main idea of Lamarque's theory can be formulated as follows: despite the ontological differences between various arts, for example, music consisting of sounds and architecture of materials, they can be unified and integrated within a single ontological category. He considers this unifying category to be the artistic "work." In his view, the work is a category of cultural creation. This theory stands in contrast to realist theories that place the work in a category independent of the mind. On the other hand, according to Lamarque, a work also differs from a natural object. A work is also distinct from other objects that have a practical function, such as a hammer or a screwdriver.

The intrinsic characteristic of a work is its intentionality and relationality. In the following, we will elaborate on each of these attributes.

Peter Lamarque is among the realist philosophers in the ontology of art. Like many other philosophers in this field, he seeks to identify a unifying factor, or more precisely, a unifying concept, that can encompass the diversity and plurality of works under this concept or factor. In his view, this concept is the idea of the "work". Lamarque's perspective is reminiscent of medieval philosophers who considered the purpose of art to be the creation of a good work, with the difference that Lamarque sees the goal of the ontology of art as examining the conditions under which a work comes into existence (Eco, 1403 [2024]: 140). According to him, this concept avoids the flaws of more traditional concepts and categories.

Lamarque argues that the new category of "work" allows works to be regarded both as particulars and as types. This category is broader than categories such as type, particular, and universal. The category of artistic work is unconditional concerning works. Another distinguishing ontological feature of works is their cultural creation. Works are not merely objects before the eyes of the audience or observer; they are not just objects—they are something more. By objects, we mean natural tools and creations such as stones and trees. Lamarque describes this "something more" with the term "cultural creation." Other characteristics of works include the following: works are cultural artifacts whose intrinsic feature is intentionality or purposefulness. Another intrinsic feature is their relationality, meaning they are considered works concerning the audience and the audience's perception.

### **Realism in Lamarque's Theory:**

A work is made from objects, but is not identical to objects. Objects are the constituents of a work, and it is because of this relationship between them that works are considered real, situated in time and space, and part of the world's furnishings—not as natural furnishings of the world, but as artificial, cultural furnishings. They are publicly perceivable, meaning they are apprehended through the senses and intellect, and they can be objectively described.

Lamarque believes that his ontological theory can resolve several other issues, including the problem of the relationship between realist properties or predicates and the aesthetic properties or predicates of objects. The issue of interpretation and the meaningfulness of objects, the relationship between the work and the artistic experience in the audience's mind, the issue of creating works and crafting fictional characters in novels and stories, style in works, and the value of works are among the issues that Lamarque seeks to examine and analyze by relying on his theory. Lamarque claims to have presented a coherent theory capable of resolving many of the problems and issues in aesthetics.

The central concept of Lamarque's theory is the fundamental distinction between work and object. When we use the word "work," we can consider both a nominal meaning and a verbal meaning for it. For example, Mr. Sahba's work is hanging on the wall (nominal meaning), and Mr. Sahba is working on this piece (work in the verbal sense). Although a connection can be drawn between these two meanings, and the characteristics of the first category can be used to approach those of the second,

Lamarque's primary focus is on the nominal meaning of work and clarifying the ontological aspect of this term. It is worth noting that some philosophers emphasize the verbal meaning of work and seek to find the ontological characteristics of a work in its production process; for instance, Croce and Collingwood are among this group of philosophers. Artistic work encompasses a wide range of diverse instances, from paintings and photographs to poetry, novels, films, sculptures, dance, installations, multimedia performances, and so on. What is the ontological aspect of these works? Is it based on the values these works carry? Lamarque's answer here is negative. Although works possess significant value, the value of a work cannot be considered the sole ontological criterion. Thus, other factors must also be examined. It should be noted that the concept of value itself has various types. Furthermore, according to Lamarque, value has degrees—some works are more valuable than others, and so forth. However, all works, despite their varying values, are equal in their status as works. In other words, value is hierarchical, whereas the attribute of being a work is applied uniformly across different works.

As noted, this distinction is the primary distinction in Lamarque's theory, and thus its explanation is necessary. Every artistic work is composed of a material that constitutes it; this material is the object from which the work is formed. Lamarque believes that even abstract arts, such as literature, are composed of this material. In this case, the material is language, words, or a sequence of words. The same principle applies to music, where the material consists of sounds or a sequence of sounds. In dance, the material is the movement of the dancers' bodies; in cinema, it is moving images; in painting, it is color, canvas, lines, and forms; and in sculpture, it is the stone or metal used. Similarly, for all types of art, this distinction can be applied, and one can speak of the constitutive material that forms the objecthood of the work. But what is the relationship between the constitutive object of a work and the work or artistic work itself? In other words, under what conditions does an object cease to be merely an object and become a work? Or, in Lamarque's own terms, how does the work relate to the object that constitutes it? It must be said that a work is not solely composed of its constitutive materials. In other words, it is possible in a possible world for an object to be entirely identical to a work yet not be considered a work. Here, culture and cultural valuation come into play. Thus, a work is an object, but it is a cultural or institutional object. A cultural or institutional object is dependent on human thought and cultural action, whereas a mere object lacks such dependency. When examining objects unrelated to culture, we only use the language and methods of the natural sciences, and everything expressible through these methods, such as color, sound, or the type of metal, falls within the category of objects. However, one might object here that bronze, for instance, is an alloy, and the creation of an alloy is a product of science, which is a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, this division—dividing objects into natural and cultural, or natural and cultural artifacts—is fundamentally invalid. In response, it must be said that all these ultimately refer to the natural sciences and are analyzable through the methods of the natural sciences, without the need for cultural analysis. In this context, cultural properties, predicates, or characteristics—those we noted above as being intentional and relational—are not involved. Alternatively, we can answer this question by stating that the creation of an alloy ultimately uses

materials from the natural sciences, albeit with specific methods and standards. Thus, this objection is resolved. It is when cultural properties and characteristics enter the analysis that an object transforms into a work (Lamarque, 2010: 97).

### **The criterion for evaluating theories of the ontology of art**

Another question is: with what tools and criteria can we evaluate ontological theories to determine their validity? One widely accepted criterion is Ockham's Razor, which, in contemporary times, Quine strongly advocated. According to this principle, ontology is a kind of choice, not a choice made freely, but one that is necessary and driven by necessity, and this necessity is associated with the concept of simplicity. In other words, when thinking about ontology, we must keep in mind that we should not strip the world of its simplicity; rather, we should, as far as possible, view the world ontologically in a simple manner. Thus, in any theoretical reflection, simplicity and minimalism must be considered, and Lamarque accepts this principle. However, he cautions us that this principle alone is not sufficient. The second principle, which Lamarque borrows from David Davies, can be called the "pragmatic constraint" principle. According to this principle, philosophical and metaphysical work should begin with principles that are acceptable to common sense and understanding. The importance of this principle becomes particularly clear when we consider that we are engaging in philosophical reflection on art, which is one of the most significant human activities. Therefore, we must necessarily adhere to human understanding, at least at the start of our inquiries, and our foundational values and intellectual principles should align with this principle. It is based on this principle that Lamarque is dissatisfied with the theories of aestheticians such as Collingwood, Julian Dodd, and Davies, as these theories overlook this principle. Some of the principles that align with common sense and should not be abandoned, according to Lamarque, include the following: works are sensible, evident, and public objects, not mental or abstract entities; works can be objectively described and scrutinized; they possess both intrinsic and extrinsic (accidental) properties; works are created and shaped based on human action and perspective; they are cultural creations, not merely natural objects; they are made, created, come into existence, and can perish; they have meaning and can be interpreted; and they possess inherent and ultimate value and dignity (Ibid: 8).

### **Aesthetic empiricism**

Lamarque, in his theory, defends a form of "aesthetic empiricism." According to this view, even if there is no discernible distinction between an object and a work from an external perspective, there is a distinction experientially—that is, in the experience that the audience has when engaging with the work. In other words, it is impossible to establish an aesthetic difference between two works without a corresponding experiential difference for the audience. Another claim by Lamarque is that while absolute identity may exist between two objects, absolute identity cannot exist between two works. Furthermore, Lamarque believes that the distinction between object and work helps resolve issues related to artistic plagiarism and ready-made art.

**Intrinsic and Relative Properties**

According to Lamarque, works possess both intrinsic properties and relative properties that are context-dependent, and it is these properties that distinguish them from mere objects. Lamarque's more surprising claim is that some works have aesthetic properties—for example, they are inherently tragic—and these properties are audience-dependent. Yet, at the same time, they are also intrinsic to the work. This characteristic of a work emerges due to its status as a work, and we must keep in mind that a work is a cultural entity and dependent on culture.

**The Issue of Interpretation:**

What is the relationship between discovering and constructing an interpretation in a work? Is the interpretation of a work discovered, or is it constructed? If we answer both questions affirmatively, does this create a contradiction? And what is the relationship between these two types of interpretation? Here, too, Lamarque, by distinguishing between object and work, seeks to demonstrate: firstly, that both types of interpretation exist; secondly, that there is no contradiction between them; and thirdly, that in interpretation, one can speak of both truth and construction. In the first type, we deal with the properties of the object, and in the second type, with the properties of the work. The first type of interpretation targets factual matters, while the second type targets possibilities and is therefore creative. The second type of interpretation is particularly relevant in music and dramatic performances. The first type of interpretation uncovers intrinsic properties, while the second type constructs extrinsic properties. In creative interpretation, we rely more on the faculty of imagination, whereas in realist interpretation, we use the faculty of understanding to extract objective and evident properties of objects. These two types of interpretation are complementary.

Another Question raised by Lamarque is this: When does an artistic work achieve its existential manifestation? This question can be formulated as follows: What exactly happens when a work reaches its existential manifestation? What change occurs in the world when an artist completes their work? In posing this question, Lamarque takes it as a given that a change in the world necessarily occurs upon the completion of an artistic work. Here, Lamarque does not concern himself with defining art or the value of works, focusing instead on the completed work. In this regard, as in other parts of his theory, Lamarque adopts a unifying approach. What is the condition for the completion of a work? Here, too, Lamarque employs a dual distinction, as he does elsewhere in his book: genetic completion and aesthetic completion. Genetic completion is achieved by the artist, while aesthetic completion is achieved by the audience and possibly the critic. A work may be complete in a genetic sense but not in an aesthetic sense, and vice versa. However, it is the artist who decides when a work is genetically complete, and the moment of completion is when the artist ceases working on it. It is possible that, from an aesthetic perspective, the audience or critic may find the work incomplete—lacking unity, coherence, or having other flaws—but from the artist's perspective, the work is finished. Notably, a work's aesthetic incompleteness does not imply its genetic incompleteness. It is even possible for the artist to consider the work complete in

both senses, while a critic may deem it incomplete in the aesthetic sense. Another point is that Lamarque considers a work finished when it is complete in the genetic sense, not necessarily in the aesthetic sense. By the aesthetic dimension, Lamarque refers to properties such as beauty, pleasantness, enjoyability, and so this.

Lamarque seeks to demonstrate through this approach that with the completion of a work, a new object and a new work are added to the world, which has both a physical and objective foundation and is the result of the artist's creativity and creative faculty. At the same time, the work is not identical to the object. The concept of identity is a law and principle that has been discussed in philosophy since the time of Leibniz. According to the law of identity, if A and B are identical, then every property that A has must also be possessed by B, and vice versa. If we claim that a work and its constituent object are identical, then the work must have every property and characteristic that the object has, and vice versa. Such a relationship does not exist between a work and its object, as a work possesses properties and characteristics, such as interpretability, symbolism, and references to history and culture, that the object alone lacks. Therefore, we can conclude that when a work is completed, a new product comes into existence that is not identical to or the same as the components constituting the work. In fact, works have intentional or purposive properties, whereas their constituent objects lack such properties. Lamarque also references Jerrold Levinson, who, in his book *Music, Art and Metaphysics*, argues that even if two musical works share the same notes and musical structure, they are still not identical because they possess different context- and culture-dependent properties. Another argument to prove that the object and the work are not the same can be made by referring to intrinsic and causal properties. Works have intrinsic properties, such as their historical period, cultural characteristics, and so forth, while their constituent material lacks these intrinsic properties. Additionally, a work can be the cause of certain other events, whereas the material of the same work does not have this capacity. For example, suppose bronze is the material of a sculpture related to a revolution. Supporters of the revolution gather around the sculpture on commemoration days, and any disrespect or damage to the sculpture is considered an insult to the revolution and its revolutionaries. Thus, the sculpture can be the cause of such events, while the material of the sculpture cannot cause such effects or produce such outcomes. All of this is because a work is truly a new entity in the world's furnishings, not merely a construction of its constituent material. Up to this point, Lamarque has focused on the negative aspect of his theory, namely that the object and the work are not the same. Now, it is time to address the more affirmative aspect of the discussion and evaluate the question of what relationship exists between the object and the work, and what they are. Lamarque places philosophers such as Ingarden, Collingwood, and Sartre in the category of those who only addressed the negative aspect of the metaphysics of works. The common assumption of all these views, according to Lamarque, is that they believe the object and the work are composed of different types, whereas Lamarque emphasizes the proportionality between the object and the work.

What kind of object is the new entity that emerges as a work, and in which ontological category does it belong? Lamarque's initial response is that a work is a



cultural and institutional object. A work is the result of human agency and intention. It takes shape through artistic and aesthetic mediation and the artist's effort. In Lamarque's interpretation, the terms "cultural" and "institutional" are of great importance. The concept of the institutional brings us closer to the art world and its practices, conventions, and customs. In fact, a work is an institutional object that comes into being within the framework of these concepts. According to Lamarque, works are akin to schools, churches, and laws. Just as a new school, for example, is not merely a new building but acquires its title within a cultural world, a work operates in the same way. When we incorporate cultural and institutional concepts into our explanation of a work, our interpretation becomes distinctly different from those of philosophers like Jean Paul Sartre and Collingwood, who view the work as purely subjective and dependent on the individual. A work acquires a social and supra-individual status, something absent in the accounts of Collingwood and Sartre. A work requires a cultural context, and it is within this context that an object transforms into a new work. Furthermore, Lamarque's explanation encompasses individual and subjective characteristics as well. In other words, all the factors necessary for the formation of a work in an individual are also necessary here, but in addition, the social, cultural, and institutional conditions and context must be considered. Thus, Lamarque's explanation is, in a way, a continuation and complement to individualistic and subjectivist accounts. This means it does not deny the role of the mind or individual characteristics such as beliefs, perceptions, personal taste, enthusiasm, or individual genius (Ibid: 132).

We can briefly say that an object becomes a work by virtue of its intentional and relational properties. Furthermore, it is within a social context and social space that a work is recognized as a work. The combination of these three attributes—intentional properties, relational properties, and the social context—transforms an object into a work.

### **A Single Category**

Lamarque moves beyond the dominant dualism among analytic philosophers, which categorizes works as either abstract types or physical particulars. He seeks to place works within a single category called the "work." In doing so, he resolves the longstanding puzzle that has preoccupied analytic philosophers about which category works belong to. According to him, all works fall under the category of the work, and the work is a category distinct from the object. In his view, it is not particularly significant whether we view a photograph through its original or a copy. For example, we may never have seen the original Mona Lisa in the Louvre, but through copies and digital versions, we may have thoroughly evaluated, examined, and studied it extensively. The efforts of previous philosophers to fit works into one of these categories have been futile because copies can also facilitate artistic evaluation and experience, as they convey the intrinsic properties of the original work. Consequently, we must seek a new category. The characteristics of this new category include:

1. Works are real, not ideal. By "ideal" it is meant that they do not exist in the realm of the mind or a so-called world of ideas.

2. Works are public and perceptible and sensible; they can be heard, seen, or touched.

3. Works possess both intrinsic and extrinsic properties, which are objectively attributed to them.

4. Works are cultural objects or, in the author's terms, cultural creations. This means that to be considered works, they depend on the audience's understanding and cultural conditions. In other words, a work is deeply intertwined with human actions, perspectives, and viewpoints.

5. Works come into existence, are created, and may perish or be destroyed. The one who brings them into being is the artist. The negative implication of this is that, contrary to the views of some philosophers, works are not eternal or everlasting types or kinds, nor are they discovered.

6. Works must be distinguished from physical objects in the natural world and from artifacts whose primary purpose is to provide utility or service to humans.

Lamarque raises a dilemma, requiring a choice between two options. The relationship between pure material or a mere object and a work can be formulated in two ways: The first option is to say that we have a pure material that, under specific conditions and with the artist's intervention, becomes a work. That is, it acquires properties such as interpretability, meaningfulness, intentionality, and so forth, and it may lose these properties over time. The key point here is that the original material and the material of the work are the same; in the second state, it has merely taken on certain properties and changed, but its essence remains unchanged. Thus, no new object or new type is introduced into the world. The second option, however, is to say that when a material or mere object transforms into a work, something genuinely new comes into existence in the world, and this new thing is the work, which is distinct from the original material. Lamarque's question, then, is: which of these two options should we choose, and why?

Before examining Lamarque's response, it must be noted that both options face challenges. If we accept the first option, its advantage is that it offers a very simple explanation, but it fails to account for the creative nature of works. If we accept the second option, it encounters difficulties when dealing with 20<sup>th</sup> century art and abstract art, as in these works, ordinary, mundane, and everyday objects are transformed into works. In other words, a material lacking artistic or aesthetic properties is suddenly transformed by the artist into a new object of an artistic nature.

Lamarque's ultimate response is the second option, as it can highlight and preserve the artist's creativity while also addressing the previous issue by emphasizing cultural properties and characteristics. The second reason Lamarque chooses the second option pertains to intrinsic properties. The statue of David inherently possesses the property of being the statue of David, whereas bronze lacks this property. Thus, when bronze is transformed into the statue of David, it acquires an intrinsic property, and in this sense, Lamarque believes that a new object is added to the world through the artist's creativity. The artist's creativity, in Lamarque's view, is a highly significant attribute. For example, Lamarque argues that if, in a possible world, one of Beethoven's sonatas were miraculously formed by the wind in the mountains and valleys, despite the identity between those sounds and the music, these sounds could

not be considered a work because, despite the identity between the sounds and Beethoven's symphony, the element of the artist's creativity is absent. Another aspect of the artist's creativity is that it is connected to an initial concept of the work that exists in the artist's mind before its creation. In other words, the artist first has a conception, however vague or unclear, of what they intend to create, and then they bring this initial vision to fruition. Furthermore, this initial perception and concept of the work in the artist's mind is linked to the environment, time, and historical-social conditions of the artist. Through this, Lamarque's definition of the ontology of works aligns closely with institutional definitions that emphasize the role of society in determining what constitutes a work. Consequently, the significant properties of a work, such as its value and the way it is perceived, are deeply intertwined with the historical and cultural conditions of the environment in which it was created, and many of its intrinsic properties are rooted in these historical and cultural contexts.

Where should the starting point for interpretation, particularly in works, be? Should we, as some philosophers like Richard Rorty suggest, begin with the most fundamental constituent of the work? In other words, using Peter Lamarque's terminology, is the starting point for interpretation the object or the work? Lamarque responds that the starting point for interpretation should be the standards and criteria of the work itself. However, we must elaborate on this statement more precisely. What does he mean? In simple terms, he argues that in interpretation, we should not take a step back and treat the object's objecthood as the starting point. As we mentioned earlier, every work is made from an object or material, but not every object is necessarily a work. With this in mind, Lamarque asserts that the interpreter's starting point should come after the object has been transformed into a work, not before. This is because, at the prior stage, we are dealing solely with an object, and the interpretation of objects falls under the purview of empirical and natural sciences, which operate through causal methods. In other words, in standard artistic interpretation, we must assume that there is prior agreement that the object of interpretation belongs to the realm of art, and interpretation begins from this point.

### **Two Types of Interpretation**

Lamarque distinguishes between two types of interpretation: genre-based interpretation and meaning-determining interpretation. When we do not know the type of object being interpreted, we are engaged in the first type of interpretation. The second type of interpretation is formed based on and in connection with the first type. However, it is the artist who can provide genre-based interpretation, as they are the one who knows they have created the work. This type of interpretation is particularly significant when innovative and pioneering artists emerge, creating new genres in art and taking on the responsibility of providing genre-based interpretations of their work. In other words, they are the first interpreters of their works. It is only after this that the second type of interpretation, conducted by the community of critics, evaluators, and audiences, begins. However, sometimes an artist may be unable to provide this type of interpretation due to reasons such as their death, which prevents the path to the second type of interpretation from opening. Following Jerrold Levinson, Lamarque also introduces another distinction in interpretation: the distinction between "M.M."

and "M.M.D." interpretations. "M.M.." stands for "means," and "M.M.D.." stands for "might mean." "M.M." interpretation seeks to find a definitive meaning and is typically achieved in the realm of science through causal explanations. In this type of interpretation, we aim for understanding, explanation, discovery, communication, and connection. In contrast, "M.M.D.." interpretation takes on a more playful, humorous, and creative tone, involving the construction of new meanings, liberation, and a tendency toward the free play of faculties. Furthermore, "M.M." interpretation manifests in natural sciences, mathematics, philosophy, and exact sciences, while "M.M.D." interpretation is evident in psychological analyses, works, and similar fields. Additionally, in some cases, "M.M.D.." interpretation serves as a preliminary step toward achieving "M.M.." interpretation.

### **Threefold Distinction in Interpretation**

Lamarque discusses a threefold distinction in interpretation, which can be referred to as the "triangle of interpretation." The first side of this triangle addresses the physical characteristics of the object of interpretation and its description. For example, in painting, this involves colors, their types, and the painter's brushstroke style; in literature, it involves the text and words; in music, it involves rhythm, tone, sounds, and melodies. These are described and analyzed. Krautz refers to these elements in interpretation as "presented materials," by which he precisely means the apparent and natural properties of the object being interpreted.

The second side of interpretation, according to Lamarque, pertains to the work, or the work, whose characteristics we have fully outlined in previous pages. The work is a cultural creation, and, in Lamarque's view, its most significant difference from the first side is that the first side deals with describing natural properties, while the second side addresses cultural and semantic properties. According to Lamarque, the second side is the most important in interpretation and is, in fact, the true object of interpretation, particularly in the interpretation of cultural phenomena and artifacts, not natural phenomena. A key point about the second side of interpretation is that it is on this side that generic interpretation may occur. By generic interpretation, we mean an interpretation that transforms an object into a work. In this interpretation, mundane objects enter the realm of art. In other words, the category of these objects shifts from being ordinary objects to works through the artist's interpretation.

The third side of interpretation pertains to the subject and object of interpretation. On this third side, we arrive at Krautz's idea of interpretive objects without falling into the trap of their multiplicity or encountering singular or pluralistic theories. Here, we can accept the generation of interpretive objects through various interpretations. These objects are meaningful and the result of different interpretations. They are paintings that, from one angle, resemble a human head and, from another, a vase. The third side of interpretation in this example is a meaningful object, namely, seeing-the-painting-as-a-human-head. This object differs from another meaningful object, seeing-the-painting-as-a-vase. This point applies to other works of art as well. For instance, a leftist interpretation of *The Potato Eaters* produces its own specific interpretive object. These interpretations, which can be called interpretive objects,

have their own independent identities. This side should not be conflated with the other two sides. They are interpretations, and some may be more accurate than others, some may align more closely with the previous two sides, and some may not.

We can illustrate these three sides and their differences with an example. In the mentioned image, the work is a representation and a painting that ambiguously depicts two images. The object of this image consists of the colors, lines, and composition, and the third side is its interpretation, once as a human head and once as a vase. None of the three sides is identical to one another.

If we ask about the relationship between the third side, interpretation, and the second side, the work and the piece, we must respond that, given this ambiguity, both interpretations have legitimate grounds to claim they are interpretations of the work. However, if we suppose a third interpretation that sees the work as a bear, this interpretation lacks the necessary grounds and is thus considered incorrect.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, we first endeavored to outline the most important features of Lamarque's theory. Secondly, we sought to highlight the advantages of Lamarque's theory compared to the views of other philosophers of art. Among these advantages are the following: Lamarque establishes a logical relationship between the object and the work in his theory. While considering the work as a real entity and placing it among the objects of the world, he does not regard it as merely an ordinary or trivial object. Additionally, the theory attempts to ontologically characterize the work in a way that encompasses the art of the 20th and 21st centuries, including avant-garde, conceptual, and ready-made art. This is particularly significant because, in Western culture and art, the content of works was clear and explicit before the 20th century, but in the 20th century, this clarity was lost (Pegler, 2018: 22). To address this, Lamarque introduces the discussion of work interpretation and the types of interpretation, a point which was absent in the views of other philosophers. Furthermore, in his discussion of interpretation, Lamarque uses a triangle between the object, the work, and the audience/interpreter to explain the breadth of ambiguity in interpreting works and to clarify why some works give rise to widely varied or even contradictory interpretations. However, in the author's view, the greatest merit of this theory is its simplicity, comprehensibility, and compatibility with common sense. The theory is simple because it demonstrates that the constitutive material of a work is, in fact, an ordinary, everyday, and trivial object, yet the work is not merely an object but something beyond it. This transcendence from an ordinary object is facilitated by the artist, their creativity, their interpretation of the work, the inherent qualities of the work itself, and the society of its audience. In this theory, Lamarque strives to acknowledge the role of all elements in the ontology of art: the work itself, its constitutive material, the artist as creator and author, and the audience and interpreter as observers.

I also noted that another advantage is its alignment with common sense. None of the main elements of Lamarque's perspective contains anything strange or inaccessible to the ordinary audience's understanding. Not everyone can create valuable work, which has led some philosophers to resort to complex or even

otherworldly explanations for the formation of works. Lamarque, however, avoids this. He makes every effort to explain all dimensions of the work following common sense, refraining from mystification, overcomplicating the elements of the world, or unnecessarily adding to the world's objects. These, in the author's opinion, are the most significant advantages of this theory.

### **Some of the Criticism**

However, the shortcomings of Lamarque's theory include the lack of clarity regarding the role of imagination in transforming an object into a work and the absence of a specific and detailed account of this process. While reading Lamarque's book, I anticipated a chapter where he would discuss the role of imagination in the ontology of the work, but no such chapter exists. Yet imagination plays a fundamental role in art, as it is the driving force behind creativity, enabling the artist to transcend everyday reality and create a unique work. In other words, in the author's view, what primarily transforms an ordinary object into a work is imagination. Lamarque discusses factors such as the inherent qualities of the work, the artist's interpretation of their work, the role of the audience, critics, and the artistic community, but he makes no mention of imagination. This omission could stem either from Lamarque's disregard for the role of imagination or from his assumption that its role in the formation of a work is so evident that it requires no explanation. In either case, neither justifies this oversight. For example, Kant, in *the Critique of Judgment*, section 9, writes about imagination:

The cognitive faculties brought into play by this representation are here in a free play, since no definite concept restricts them to a specific rule of cognition. Hence, the state of mind in this representation must be a feeling of the free play of the representative faculties in a given representation for cognition in general. But for a representation by which an object is given to become cognition in general, the imagination is required to synthesize the manifold of intuition, and the understanding for the unity of the concept uniting the representations. (Kant, 2016, p. 119)

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## رابطه شیء و اثر در نظریه وجودشناختی پیتز لامارک

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اطلاعات مقاله	چکیده
نوع مقاله: مقاله پژوهشی	یکی از مسائل مهم در وجودشناسی هنر، تعیین ماهیت اثر هنری و مشخص کردن مقوله‌ای است که اثر هنری در آن قرار دارد. یکی از مهم‌ترین دیدگاه در این‌باره نظر پیتز لامارک است که با عنوان نظریه «شیء و اثر هنری» شناخته می‌شود. مطابق این نظریه، اثر هنری دارای صفاتی ذاتی است؛ بدین معنا که برخی صفات را ضرورتاً دارا است و در همه جهان‌های ممکن آن صفت را دارد؛ پدیده‌ای واقعی و مستقل از ذهن انسان است، یعنی وجودی مستقل از اذهان انسان دارد و موطنش در ذهن نیست، بلکه در عالم خارج است و جزو اثاثیه جهان به حساب می‌آید؛ با اشیای طبیعی و عادی فرق دارد، هرچند ساخته شده از اشیای عادی و روزمره و حتی پیش‌پا افتاده است؛ قابل تفسیر است و می‌توان تفسیرهای متفاوت و مختلف از آن داشت؛ حتی گاهی اثر هنری از طریق تفسیر مؤلف و هنرمند یا به عرصه وجود می‌گذارد؛ دارای صفات ربطی و نسبت‌مند است، یعنی در عین اینکه پدیده‌ای واقعی است، به مخاطب نیز وابسته است؛ همچنین ساخته‌ای فرهنگی است که برای ادامه حیاتش به جامعه‌ای از مخاطبان نیاز دارد، یعنی اگر جامعه مخاطبانش را از دست بدهد، آنگاه دیگر اثر هنری نیست و صرفاً تبدیل به یک شیء می‌شود.
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