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

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Article Info ABSTRACT

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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 *Plato's Sophist*, *The Essence of Truth*, and *Parmenides*, have been studied to bring to light his way of dialogue with Plato.

Keywords: Plato, Heidegger, Christian philosophy, being, dialogue, postmodern, Greek philosophy.

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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 (Copestone, 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 Marcello 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 19th 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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ماهیت افلاطونی فلسفه مسیحی با تأکید بر خوانش هایدگر از افلاطون

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اطلاعات مقاله	چکیده
نوع مقاله: مقاله پژوهشی	آرای افلاطون به شدت هم در درون فلسفه دینی مسیحیت رخنه کرده و هم بر آرای غیردینی فیلسوفان قاره‌ای، به ویژه 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 مانند سوفیست افلاطون، ذات حقیقت و پارمنیدس-اشاره شده است.
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The Trend of Western Atheistic Approaches since the Beginning of the Modern Era

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article	In the modern era of the West, various atheistic approaches have emerged, each reflecting the philosophical perspectives of its time. This article aims to outline the evolution of these diverse approaches and demonstrate the challenges each has posed to theism. Typically, these challenges have allowed theism to refine its perspectives and rebuild its beliefs more logically. The article will then illustrate how theism has developed along this path. I identify this process as a nine-stage journey, each of which will be explained in this article. Ultimately, it will be shown how each of these challenges has become a chapter in the philosophy of religion, and the areas in which philosophical discussions about religion have been shaped will be explored. As a result, the article will present the 13 key themes of the philosophy of religion that have emerged following these challenges.
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Introduction

The structuring of religious propositions is not of much interest in the philosophy of religion. Rather, it only deals with the questions and problems that exist in the context of those propositions. That is, the philosophy of religion is "problem-oriented". Usually, there are problems related to religious beliefs, and arguments are made to show that the problem calls religious beliefs into question. On the other hand, some arguments are presented to solve that problem. Philosophers of religion analyze these arguments logically. These problems are usually raised by some philosophers who did not exist before. These problems, one after the other, create a process that we can call the historical trend of the issues of the philosophy of religion.

The evaluation of the problems is not limited to an academic discussion, but it encourages some people, for various reasons, to create opposing beliefs by accepting it as a religious failure. It means that these beliefs are against religious beliefs. Based on these problems, some believe that religious beliefs are wrong or that religious beliefs should be rejected. These beliefs have a wide range and are of various types. Some people deny monotheistic belief in God. Some take other religious attitudes other than belief in God. Some believe that theism is unable to prove its beliefs, and therefore, there is no reason to accept the beliefs that theism presents. Some say there is no God at all. For example, J. L. Schellenberg says that "in philosophy, the atheist is not just someone who doesn't accept theism, but more strongly someone who opposes it." In other words, it is "the denial of theism, the claim that there is no God" (2019: 5). Some people take an agnostic position and say that we do not know or cannot know that there is a God. Some argue that there is no God, not that there is no room for believing in God. For example, Robin Le Poi Devin writes, "An *atheist* denies the existence of a personal, transcendent creator of the universe, rather than one who simply lives his life without reference to such a being" (1996: xvii). There are other types of these approaches. In this section, we call all these beliefs atheistic beliefs. So, atheism has had various forms and includes a wide range of approaches. However, in this paper, we consider the broad meaning of atheism, of which all the above cases are examples.

Due to different types of stances towards theism, we are faced with a wide range of atheism, which has appeared in various forms throughout history. As a result, after examining the various positions taken in this field and its historical trend, a more comprehensive meaning of atheism and agnosticism can be obtained. So, if in this paper a type of thinking is referred to as atheism, then the strict type is not intended, and it should not be referred only to that type of belief that, for example, there is no God.

The philosophy of religion, which is a discipline in the modern era and after, conducts its investigations mostly around the types of views that have emerged since the beginning of the modern era. So, different approaches from the beginning of the modern era in the field of atheism will be our attention. In my opinion, one of the currents that have helped theism has been atheistic views. Theism has usually suffered from doctrinal deviations, epistemic deficiencies, superficiality,

inconsistent beliefs, and even superstitions. Many critics of theism have shown with their analysis that some common beliefs in the usual types of theism have problems or shortcomings. In the face of these criticisms, theists have tried to correct their set of beliefs, fix the problems of their views, and build a new and stronger structure of religious beliefs. Criticisms that atheistic approaches have presented can cause the beliefs of theists to be trimmed from semi-correct beliefs and semi-superstitions. Also, these criticisms can make many ambiguities that exist in religious beliefs and their explanations become clearer and more accurate day by day. The set of these activities has led to the growth and development of theism.

Based on the history of critical encounters with religious propositions, different approaches can be seen in this field, which I have categorized into the following nine stages based on my personal opinion. This does not mean that these approaches are all of them, but other people can either provide another division or show other approaches that I have not noticed. In the following, I will try to show each approach by explaining the axes of each claim and its arguments, as long as it does not lead to a long discussion. But another important point is to show how useful this approach has been for theism.

To understand the problems of interest in the philosophy of religion, the contexts of those problems must be shown. Then we can understand what the philosophy of religion considers to be its main problems that it must evaluate. By analyzing different approaches to atheism, we can understand many of these problems. In this way, it will be determined what basic questions we should examine and what the background of these questions.

Different approaches to atheism since the beginning of the modern era in Western thought

In my opinion, different approaches to atheistic views can be shown historically in the following stages.

The first stage, abandoning traditional approaches to religion and ignoring religious authorities

During the Renaissance, with the development of humanistic views, some intellectual and artistic activities ignored religious values and, in a way, questioned the official religion and the authority of the church. But this did not mean that they ignored some religious beliefs, such as the existence of God and his presence in the natural process of the world. Rather, on the contrary, instead of the authority of the church, all kinds of religious approaches centered on human reason were brought to their attention. This approach is the same deism that was noticed by some scientists and thinkers in the 17th century, like Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third Earl of Shaftesbury, who lived from 1671 to 1713. Michael B. Gill (2021) proposes his position: "Shaftesbury's position on religious belief has negative and positive aspects. The negative aspect is opposition to belief based on revelation. The positive aspect is the affirmation of a perfectly good God based on

observation of the natural order”.

Cartesian subjectivism gave the centrality of human thought to the subject. From then on, instead of explaining the world, "the world from my point of view" was analyzed. Humanism was formed with this kind of epistemological view and became the religion of the modern era. The reference for recognizing the truth was the subject and the self-founded reason of the human being decided on this issue. Even the explanation of God was changed to "God from my point of view," so that I had to prove him with my reason. Each of the philosophers of this era, based on their interpretation of this type of God, believed in Him. Therefore, each of these philosophers was interested in certain characteristics of God. God, according to Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Malebranche, Locke, Barclay, Newton, and Pascal, each had characteristics that they considered based on their philosophical attitude. Such philosophical interpretations of God were more important in terms of belief in his existence and nothing more. It seems that believing in God is a kind of philosophical attitude toward the truth of the world. But this God was not a God who should be worshiped and ruled over everything, especially human relationships. This God was not considered the resourceful of the universe and the guide of human life. In other words, during this era, God's Lordship was ignored and even denied. So, I call this type of atheism "atheism in God's Lordship".

However, the authority of human reason was also faced with new scientific findings that increased the power of human explanation and showed that it can make scientific predictions based on that. For this reason, special attention was paid to the relationship between this type of God and science. Science made some explanations in which the role of God could not be seen, so it encouraged some to show God in situations where the explanatory power of science was impaired. It was in this way that the "God of gaps" appeared. This view reflected a misunderstanding of God prevalent at the time, which saw divine intervention (God of the Gaps) in unexplained phenomena as evidence of God's existence.

This distinct approach from official theism caused the religious authorities to reconsider the structure of their beliefs or reform unnecessary or unjustified religious teachings, and make reforms either in the form of the church reform movement or in the form of other Catholic changes, and make them more reasonable. It also urged theists to consider scientific findings and scientific laws in their views. If they present a theological view, it should also consider scientific facts.

So, in my opinion, in this era, the approach of atheism in God's Lordship emerged.

The second stage, the denial of all kinds of argumentational viewpoints in the theism of the first era

Since in the previous era, human self-based reason was the authority in regulating religious beliefs instead of official religious authorities, there were many attempts with this rational approach, religious beliefs that were centered more on the existence of God, were to be shown in the form of justified arguments.

On the other hand, by mentioning some defects in scientific explanations, it is supposed to be a place for God. But during this period, the arguments for the existence of God, which were the philosophical basis of theism and deism, were questioned by Kant's and Hume's fundamental criticisms. With these criticisms, the efforts made by theists to justify their views became fruitless. Although Kant himself believed in God as the basis of ethics and could understand God within the scope of ethics, he showed that any theoretical way to prove God's existence was unsuccessful. Although the failure of arguments to prove God cannot be proof of denying God's existence and its logical result is agnosticism, the failure of theism in this context cast doubt on the existence of God. Even though the inability of arguments for the existence of God in rationally explaining his existence can only lead to skepticism and agnosticism, it still leads some to conclude the non-existence of God from this inability. Some thinkers like McLaughlin conclude that the absence of grounds supporting a positive existential statement (like "God exists"—however, "God" is understood) is a good reason to believe that the statement is false (McLaughlin, 1984). The atheism of this era was due to the doubts that arose in the intellectual foundations of theism.

On the other hand, the God of gaps, which was an incorrect explanation of God's presence in the world and his mode of action, was gradually pushed aside with the development of scientific explanations. As science advanced, the "God of the gaps" found diminishing relevance. For instance, when Laplace demonstrated the movement of the Earth and planets through physical laws and addressed the unknown factors from Newton's era, he presented his comprehensive work to Napoleon without mentioning God. When asked why he omitted any reference to God, Laplace responded that he no longer required this hypothesis.

In this way, the God of gaps also lost his role. So, in this era, belief in God was also questioned from this point of view. These two characteristics, i.e., the negation of the proofs of God and the abandonment of the God of gaps, were the main characteristics of atheism of this era.

Kant's fundamental criticisms of the arguments for the existence of God were still accepted by many modern thinkers for 200 years after him.

Following these criticisms, a theoretical despair arose among theists. This made them present other ways to justify their belief in God. Schleiermacher brought religious experience to the field. He tried to show that religious experience, which is an inner state, no longer needs the theoretical proof of God. He paid attention to the realities of God's presence within religious people and paid serious attention to a new element called religious experience, which opened a new way to believe in God. After him, the case of religious experience was developed by others such as William James, so one of the elements of theism after this period became the issue of religious experience.

The third stage, the period of doubt in the cause of believing in God

In my opinion, the 19th century was the peak of atheistic activities. In this era,

instead of questioning the *reason for* proving God, the *cause of* believing in God was questioned. These causes were mostly questioned from a psychological, sociological, anthropological, or economic point of view. Because of the emptying of theists' hands from theoretical arguments for the existence of God, and the rejection of God of gaps, and because of the design of religious experience in this era, theists emphasized the reality of God's presence within the religious people. The atheists, despite all their theoretical efforts, could not seriously influence and lead many people to abandon their religious beliefs.

Each of the thinkers of this era somehow created some doubt in the realness of such beliefs. Feuerbach considered the belief in God as a result of the projection of human desires to reach infinite power and knowledge. The attributes of the Christian God are determined by the most fundamental wishes of the Christian believer (Gooch, 2023). He showed, with this anthropological and psychological analysis, the reason for believing in God to be illusory.

Based on some Christian description of trinity as The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit, Freud (1989, 1990) considered the belief in God to be the result of the Oedipus complex, and also the importance of the existence of totems in primitive societies, which had a unifying role in society, and the resulting idolatry as the source of belief in God, which is this totem in its most advanced state that he saw in Christian theism. Through psychological (Oedipus complex) and sociological (totem) analyses, Freud considered belief in God to be a natural reaction of people to their circumstances, not belief in something beyond material nature.

Marx considered belief in God (as well as ethics and aesthetics) to be affected by the economic infrastructure of society. He considered these beliefs to be influenced by the production instruments that determined the economy of each era, in his opinion. Therefore, he reduced the role of religion and its beliefs to the level of a painkiller and drug in society. "Religion is the opium of the masses", he said ([1843] 1970). Therefore, in his opinion, religious beliefs arise and change under the influence of social and economic factors, and cannot have originality.

August Comte thought that belief in God is caused by human ignorance of the causes of nature's relationships and events. In his opinion, mankind has gone through three eras: religion, philosophy, and science. Man, firstly, used to analyze world events with religious justifications. Then, with the intellectual development of mankind, philosophy took charge of this issue, and religion was gradually abandoned. Finally, in his opinion, with the growth of human understanding, the scientific laws that were discovered one after another explained the changes in the world. So, in his opinion, Philosophical explanations of influential factors in world changes, like Aristotelian explanations, lost their value. This is what was previously stated by Francis Bacon in rejecting final and effective causes to explain the cause of natural events. He stated that the era of believing in religious beliefs has already passed, and with his crude positivism, August Comte believed that science had eliminated religion.

Science gained such a wide scope in the 19th century that valuable explanations of various sciences were presented one after another. In this era, science also had

another stunning effect called technology, which was able to create more prosperity for mankind. These new powers that humans get with science captivated him, while religion could not provide any new achievement for man. Therefore, there was no place for religion in this era. This was an aspect of the atheism of the 19th century.

On the other hand, with his theory of evolution, Darwin dealt another blow to theism. The theory of evolution considered God's conscious presence in the world unnecessary and tried to show that nature, without the need for such consciousness, without awareness of its processes, has caused all kinds of evolution due to accidents and conflicts for survival over millions of years. This evolutionary analysis dealt a fundamental blow to the teleological argument, which was still of interest until then.

Evolutionary atheism, which emphasized the self-sufficiency of nature and its laws, raised a serious question that is still being debated. The main impact of the theory of evolution was on Christian beliefs. The structure of Christian beliefs emphasized the creation of Adam at once, the original sin, the fall of Adam, the incarnation of Christ, and his redemptive death in this process. The teachings of the Bible were such that it was assumed that no more than ten thousand years had passed since the creation of the earth. The hypothesis of evolution questioned the entire process of the universe based on Christian teachings. Therefore, this hypothesis created a type of atheism that harmed both the belief in the existence of God (general atheism) and doubted specific Christian teachings (specific atheism). This kind of atheism made some atheists like Michael Martin (1990: 463–464) join to define “atheist” as someone who lacks the belief that God exists, which refers to believing in God rather than his real-ness.

We cannot ignore the role of Nietzsche's populist views in this era. He presented numerous and scattered views instead of questioning the religious beliefs that, in his opinion, their era had been over. He was able to get many people's attention to his views.

In contrast to these atheistic analyses, theism was not very active. At the beginning of this period, the religious experience of Schleiermacher and in the middle of this period, Kierkegaard's fideism based on his existentialistic view is considered the most important activity of believers in God.

At the end of this era, another factor led to the strengthening of atheistic views. By expanding scientific thinking from mechanics to electricity, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, and optics, and then from physics to chemistry, science succeeded in discovering a wide range of scientific laws in the material world. But the biological affairs in which the issue called life was raised had nothing to do with the scope of the materialistic topics of physics and chemistry, and could not be explained under their rigid scientific laws. On the other hand, psychology was also analyzed with soul and spirit, which was different from materialistic explanations. Especially, the existence of a factor such as free will actions in human beings removes it from the scope of any definite scientific laws. Social relations were not seen as scientifically analyzable, as well.

At the end of the 19th century, with the activities of people like Freud, human behavior was subjected to a series of scientific laws, and scientific psychology emerged. August Comte also tried to present sociology under scientific analysis and based on its laws. As a result, these two sciences were also added to scientific thinking. With evolution, biology also acquired scientific methods for its analysis and was included in the collection of all types of sciences with their laws. So, at the end of the 19th century, scientism developed so much that it was able to gain absolute sovereignty over human thought. On the other hand, religion could not find such expansion and remained in a narrow range. Religion, also, could not have had the huge impact that science, with its technology, had on human life. The effectiveness of religion compared to that of science became so weak that it no longer had a place in scientific meetings. Therefore, the atheistic approach of the 19th century not only questioned the belief in God but also showed the inefficiency and needlessness of religion with its scientific advances.

On the other hand, theists tried to rebuild their religious ideas, especially in the face of science. Instead of justifying the challenging traditional ideas of God, they should change their interpretations of God to a more realistic intervention of Him in the world and remove wrong attitudes from their religious thinking. They tried to bring up the positive roles of belief in God in psychology, such as inner peace, and show the positive social effects of religion on social development. Theists tried to show that Marx's view has paid attention to a specific type of religious ideas and a partial aspect of it, and has ignored the many roles of religion and its positive social effects. So, such efforts of theists led to the development of religious thinking in terms of the psychological and social effects of religion. It was in this way that more precise dimensions of religion were raised in the context of scientific thinking.

The first thing that happened in favor of the theists was the events that questioned the absolute sovereignty of science. At the beginning of the 20th century, with the development of branches in philosophy called the philosophy of science, it was shown that the crude attitude towards science was not so true. Science does not show the reality of the world through observation, hypothesis, several experiments, and introducing a scientific theory, but it analyzes the reality based on our mental and value background. In other words, science is partially what we want to observe in the world. So, not only was its authenticity questioned, but its realism also faced challenges. It was a good opportunity for religious people to get rid of the authoritarian pressure of science.

Also, at the beginning of the 20th century, human beings were intoxicated with their scientific and technological advances, and these two were shown to bring happiness to humanity. But with the occurrence of the First and Second World Wars, in which more than 45 million people were killed, all the dreams that science and technology had made were suddenly doubted, and disillusionment with the absolute authority of science and technology. These issues made human beings think again of seeking refuge in religion.

The fourth stage, *atheism based on the challenge of the meaningfulness of religious propositions*

With the emergence of linguistic analytical philosophies at the beginning of the 20th century, theists faced a new challenge. Analytical and linguistic philosophers, following Wittgenstein I, showed that some propositions that people make are not subject to truth and falsity, but they are such that it is not possible to show the conditions under which the truth or falsity of that proposition can be evaluated. They considered these propositions meaningless. So, the meaning of statements must be determined before their truth and falsity. They presented, first, the criterion of verifiability, then the criterion of falsifiability to distinguish meaningful propositions from meaningless propositions. Wittgenstein stated that with this philosophical analysis, ethical, aesthetic, metaphysical, and even religious propositions cannot be considered meaningful propositions. Ayer (1936), after him, examined this issue in detail about religious propositions and tried to show that religious propositions, both the existence of God and his actions in the world, cannot be meaningful to be able to talk about their truth or falsity. The meaningfulness challenge exposed religious beliefs to new attacks. Logical positivism had found a good excuse to expose religious beliefs to a new challenge. This challenge brought forth a new type of atheism, which was caused by assuming religious propositions to be meaningless. Some thinkers like Anthony Flew and William Rowland expanded this idea through their propaganda.

This kind of atheism made the work of the believers more difficult. They should have shown, first, that the statements they are trying to prove are meaningful; after passing this test, they should prove them or provide evidence that shows that those statements are true and refer to a reality.

However, Logical positivism itself faced contradictions, and its extremism was strongly questioned and declined very quickly. Wittgenstein, who was the founder of the "Picture Theory of Language", realized the problems of this type of view after several years, and in the second stage of his life, he considered the meaning of sentences in the way they are used among people, not the language's picture of reality. "The meaning of a word is its use in the language" (Wittgenstein, 2009: 43). He brought the practical theory of language to the stage. This theory refers to different meanings in different forms of life or language games and family resemblance. Therefore, religious propositions found their meaning in the way of life of religious people. Science, which has a different form of life, could not raise doubts from its perspective about the meaning of religious propositions, which are in a different form of life. Theism was saved from the attacks of positivists with this linguistic turn of Wittgenstein and his followers in the second period of his life, but his view on the meaning of religious propositions led to a kind of fideism that ignored some other aspects of theism.

However, theists should analyze their views with the questions that arose about the meaning of religious propositions. Linguistic philosophical views taught theists that they should explain religious propositions in such a way that they are less caught up in meaninglessness and show the circle of correct meaning

statements. Some superficialities in the expression of religious views should be abandoned, and they should look in favor of clearer and more specific expressions. This refinement was one of the results of the presence of this type of atheism.

Another event happened in the 20th century. Molecular biology could reduce the distance between biology and chemistry and make the presence of physicalism more serious.

In this era, people like Richard Dawkins, using genetics, molecular biology, and evolutionary explanations, brought popular books to the market to bring atheism to ordinary people. Paul Draper (2022) defines these activities as new atheism by saying “It is a popular label for a movement prominently represented by four authors—Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens—whose work is uniformly critical of religion, but beyond that appears to be unified only by timing and popularity.”

The fifth stage, arguing for rejecting the existence of God

In the second era, the arguments to prove the existence of God were questioned by Kant and caused the theoretical way to prove the existence of God to have problems. But the logical requirement of that inability of the arguments was to be agnostic. Bertrand Russell, in his famous debate with the theist Frederick Copleston, which was broadcast on the BBC in the first half of the 20th century and was later written down and is considered a document in the philosophy of religion, takes an agnostic position towards Copleston and said that “I don't consider the proofs authentic, but I can't say that there is no God”. T. H. Huxley defines agnosticism as “the position that neither theism nor atheism is known, or most ambitiously, that neither the belief that God exists nor the belief that God does not exist has a positive epistemic status of any sort” (Huxley 1884 and 1889).

From the second half of the 20th century, some philosophers tried not only to say that God cannot be proven but also to say that we have found ways to prove that there is no God. J.L. Mackie was the most prominent of them. but how? These atheists tried to show that the concept of God and the God that theism shows us have an internal contradiction. Just like a quadrilateral triangle has an internal contradiction, and therefore it can be certain that such a triangle cannot exist. In Mackie's opinion (1983), the definition of God as omnipotent and benevolent, together with the facts of evil in the world, causes either clear contradictions or complex contradictions. So, God cannot exist. This type of atheism was much harder than the previous types, along with more claims than all the previous types. They tried to show that there is a contradiction between these three beliefs. But the first two types were part of the concept of God, and the problem of evil is a reality of the world that is not necessarily included in the concept of God. If they want to show a contradiction, they should show only the concept of God, not a reality in their opinion outside of the concept of God. The requirements of the facts of evil cannot necessarily lead to an idea that contradicts those previous attributes of God. Perhaps, it can be said that there is an opposition between them, not a contradiction.

Theists like Alvin Plantinga (1977) showed that there is no necessary

contradiction between the reality of evil in any way we assume and God's attributes. It is possible to show the attributes in such a way that there is no contradiction. He showed that evil is necessary for God's action in the creation of the world and man with free will. If a human wants to exist on Earth and act by their own free will, there will be a context for doing evil as a requirement. Since God's power cannot be defined in the circle of impossibilities, the existence of a world with free human beings and without evil is impossible. Therefore, the reality of evil in the world does not harm God's omnipotence and benevolence. His statement is called a free will defense.

Other atheists tried to find other ways to find contradictions in the concept of God. Several other types of these claims were also presented, like the contradiction that can exist between Divine foreknowledge and human free will (See Zagzebski, 1991). Some also put forth a claim of divine hiddenness to prove their atheism (See Howard-Snyder and Moser, 2002). Some also brought up evil again, but to show it as evidence for God's non-existence (Row, 1996). Anyway, this was another attack on the belief in God. So, the believer must first prove that his beliefs do not include the contradictions raised against him, then determine the meaningfulness of the existence of God and his attributes, and in the third stage, prove such a God. Although some philosophers do not accept any argument for the existence of God, they also think that the arguments against the existence of God are invalid. Anthony Kenny (1983: 84–85):

I do not myself know of any argument for the existence of God which I find convincing; in all of them, I think I can find flaws. Equally, I do not know of any argument against the existence of God which is totally convincing; in the arguments I know against the existence of God, I can equally find flaws. So that my own position on the existence of God is agnostic.

With this type of atheism, the discussion of evil in the world became one of the most important topics in the philosophy of religion. One of the fruits of this type of atheistic claim for theism was to clarify the meanings of God's attributes and be careful in presenting them correctly and precisely so that they can be consistent with the facts in the real world. Also, the problem of evil, which until now has been in the hidden corners of the minds of some believers and was referred to in various ways in the works of writers and with which they attacked the belief in God, was exposed to philosophical analysis by theists. This problem, instead of being treated with sarcasm through the attack of non-believers, became possible to be explained in rational ways, and made theistic philosophers examine it.

The sixth stage, the negation of the God of monotheistic religions and the tendency to other concepts of spirituality or divinity in other religions

Many people have found connections with other concepts of divine or spiritual affairs due to the conditions created by globalization. The abundance of media, the information network of the world community, easy access to other ideas, and

the direct encounters of the world traveler, all created situations so that many people notice the diversity of religions and many spiritual ideas. Especially, each of them has claimed to be right. This caused doubts about the success of theism of Abrahamic religions and created tendencies towards other types of spirituality or divinity. This type of approach is also considered a form of atheism (Le Poi Devin, 2010). Schopenhauer was one of the first who take these confrontations with other religions seriously, such as Indian or Buddhist religions, and may be considered the founder of this type of atheism.

Theists, on the other hand, paid attention to the diversity of religions and their authenticity and tried to present theories such as religious pluralism or religious exclusivism with different philosophical analyses for these types of differences in religious approaches and provide arguments for explaining them.

The seventh type, *the postmodern atheism*

Postmodern thinkers, who did not understand the metanarratives of the modern era and found the narrow forms of modernity unsuccessful and unsuitable for the contemporary era, tried to take a stand against all kinds of attitudes of the modern era. One of them was religious attitudes, as well as the metanarrative of negation of any divinity. Postmodern thinkers tried to present postmodern theories to justify religious thought between the two meta-narratives of "there is a God in the universe who is the creator of the world" and the meta-narrative of "there is no God in the world and nature is self-reliant". They discarded both meta-narratives. These thinkers talked about "God without being" (Marion, 1982) "the religious" (Caputo, 2002) "secular theology" (Crockett, 2001) "Religion Without God" (Billington, 2002) and presented various post-modern theological views following the ideas of people like Nietzsche, Heidegger, Whitehead, Derrida, and Levinas. Since these attitudes were different from the intellectual foundations of theism, they can be considered an atheistic viewpoint and I called it "postmodern atheism", which changes religious beliefs based on its own theoretical principles.

The eighth type, *the atheism of secular ethics, to solve environmental problems*

At the beginning of the 20th century, when scientific discoveries boasted the absolute power of science and the technological capabilities of man showed his indisputable power, the highest value was to acquire more capabilities in the use of technology for the welfare of mankind and the use of any instruments for the development of discoveries. With the First and Second World Wars, this absolute value of the modern era was gradually questioned. Until the end of the 20th century, the environmental crisis of the use of technology and the fear of the effects caused by scientific advances, especially in some sciences such as genetics, nuclear sciences, etc., received serious attention from scientists. Environmental hazards caused by the use of technology were shown one after another. Therefore, environmental considerations dominated any scientific thinking and technological use. "Environmental ought and ought not" were created limitations for science. This is how moral values find a fundamental role in any scientific thinking and

technological use. Science and technology were limited by ethics. At the beginning of the 20th century, not only was no attention paid to environmental issues, but no restrictions, especially moral issues, could be raised. Scientific materialism was at the peak of its thoughts, along atheism relied on it. With the emergence of ethical values in science in the late 20th century, which is the main element of religion, religion can no longer be ignored. So, a retreat for that kind of early 20th-century atheism occurred. In this new situation, religion could find opportunities to attend scientific meetings. Since ancient times, religions have promoted moral values that could somehow be effective in solving environmental problems.

In contrast to this new attendance of religion, a new type of atheism tried to show that there is no need for religion in this field either, and scientists themselves can provide secular ethics. This type of atheism can be called "secular moral atheism". Ted Peters (1998) talks about scientific imperialism in this context, that science is trying to show that what was considered a part of religion is within the scope of science itself, and science has added these domains to its territory.

This type of atheism made theists realize that they should seriously consider the relationship between ethics and religion and should be able to show the advantages of religious ethics, especially regarding the environment, such as executive guarantees in reward and punishment in the afterlife.

The ninth type, *nihilistic atheism*

One of the consequences of machine life in the modern era was the emergence of nihilism. Nietzsche showed well that this nihilism was caused by modernity and became the hero of nihilism. After the world wars, as a result of the disillusionment and despair caused by them, many thinkers showed nihilistic approaches in their works. The continuation of machinery life made this nihilism a serious issue among Western societies. Accepting nihilism as a school of thought, some rejected any values, especially religious values, and created a kind of nihilistic atheism. For this reason, the discussion on the "meaning of life" in the early 21st century became the concern of many people, and thinkers tried to provide a detailed scientific and philosophical analysis in this field or show different models for it.

This situation allowed believers to show that theism can play a fundamental role in the meaning of life (for example, Mawson, 2016). This type of atheism had a positive result for theism. The theistic thinkers took action to elaborate religious views in response to the question of the meaning of life. They tried to show that they could provide valuable solutions for today's human problems.

Conclusion

The various atheistic approaches that emerged in the modern era demonstrate that theists must analyze and address the rational explanations and philosophical examinations that challenge their beliefs. They need to articulate their position in response to criticisms that atheism, in its various forms, has levelled against theism. In this way, both theists and atheists must scrutinize these issues with philosophical rigor, each presenting their arguments clearly, while the other

responds with rational counterarguments. This dynamic interaction has brought the core themes of the philosophy of religion to the forefront. Consequently, from these engagements between theism and atheism, we can identify the following central themes in the philosophy of religion:

1. The various arguments for the existence of God and the validation or invalidation of each.
2. The relationship between science and religion.
3. Religious experience.
4. The language of religion.
5. The problem of evil.
6. The attributes of God.
7. Reason and faith.
8. Religious epistemology.
9. The diversity of religions and their conflicts.
10. The relationship between ethics and religion.
11. The meaning of life.
12. The environment and religion.
13. Religion and politics.

Each of these themes must be subjected to rational scrutiny in light of existing challenges to respond to atheistic perspectives in the modern Western context. These evaluations often occur within the framework of Western Christian thought. However, since the challenges can be more widespread, Muslim scholars must offer responses and perspectives rooted in Islamic thought. This approach will open a new approach in the philosophy of religion, one that examines its issues from an Islamic perspective.

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روند رویکردهای الحادی غربی از ابتدای دوران مدرن

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اطلاعات مقاله	چکیده
نوع مقاله:	در دوران مدرن در غرب رویکردهای الحادی مختلفی، متناسب با دیدگاه‌های فلسفی هر دوره وجود داشته است. در این مقاله در نظر است روند این رویکردهای مختلف بازنموده شود و نشان داده شود که هر کدام چه چالشی را برای خداباوری ایجاد کرده‌اند. این چالش‌ها معمولاً فرصتی برای خداباوری بوده‌اند تا به پیرایش دیدگاه‌های خود و بازسازی منطقی‌تر باورهای خود بپردازد.
دریافت:	سپس نشان داده می‌شود که چگونه خداباوری در این مسیر رشد کرده است. من این روند را نه مرحله‌ای می‌دانم که هر کدام را در این مقاله تبیین خواهم کرد. در نهایت، بیان خواهد شد که چگونه هر یک از این چالش‌ها عنوان فصلی در فلسفه دین شده‌اند و مباحث فلسفه دین در چه زمینه‌هایی شکل گرفته‌اند. در نتیجه، سیزده محور اصلی فلسفه دین که در نتیجه این چالش‌ها شکل گرفته، نشان داده می‌شود.
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The Aesthetic Origin of “Intuition” and “Immediate Experience” according to Croce and Dewey

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ABSTRACT

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This article endeavors to elucidate the key concepts and views of Croce and Dewey within the framework of a comparative study of their philosophical systems, focusing specifically on aesthetics. The central hypothesis of this research is that the core idea of Dewey's philosophy, termed “immediate experience,” is a pragmatist interpretation of the closely related concept of “intuition” in Croce's aesthetics. Thus, both philosophers emphasize the role of aesthetics as a kind of a priori quality that ensures the unity and coherence of experience and knowledge. The defining difference lies in the fact that Croce, through the idea of “intuition-expression,” emphasizes the epistemological aspect of aesthetics, while Dewey conveys this same a priori quality in an ontological context (the process of the formation of experience). In other words, aesthetics, as an a priori quality, oversees the condition of unity and wholeness in the process of the formation of perception and guarantees the attainment of intuitive experience. In simpler terms, it is only by assuming a kind of aesthetic end (purposiveness without purpose) that the multifaceted and dynamic nature of perception is unified in an immediate and intuitive experience, and the possibility of “living” becomes feasible. A comparison of the views of Dewey and Croce, who belong to two contrasting intellectual traditions, reveals that the aforementioned hypothesis (i.e., the hypothesis that emphasizes the role of aesthetics as an a priori quality in the process of intuition and the formation of experience), regardless of whether its starting point is the realm of the objective (experience) or the realm of the subjective (intuition), leads to a unified conclusion, and its validity can be confidently asserted.

Keywords: John Dewey, Benedetto Croce, Art, Aesthetics, Immediate Experience, Intuition.

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Introduction

As we know, neither Dewey nor Croce regarded aesthetics solely as a branch of philosophy. Instead, they emphasized the role of ideas such as art and beauty within the framework of the "theory of knowledge" and the "process of the formation of experience." From this perspective, their role in reviving the ontological capacities of art and restoring the dignity of aesthetics within the "theory of knowledge" and ontology (the process of the formation of experience) is of great importance. This is because, after Kant, philosophy, by reducing beauty and art to the subjective realm of the judgment of taste, suffered a cognitive rupture between art and reality. Of course, Kant's achievements in identifying and elaborating the idea of aesthetics as a realm in which "judgment" acquires an immanent dimension and finds its criterion of truth within itself are commendable. However, Kant's attachment to the system of transcendental logic (or subjectivism) and the principle of the separation of faculties did not allow him to utilize the methodological capacities of aesthetic judgment to understand the essential structure of experience and the faculty of knowledge itself. John Dewey and Benedetto Croce, like Heidegger and Gadamer, sought to re-establish the link between art and being (experience) while criticizing Kant's aesthetics. The difference between the work of Dewey and Croce is that these two philosophers (unlike philosophers such as Heidegger and Gadamer) did not have an ontological (metaphysical) and hermeneutic reading of art and did not seek to reduce art and aesthetics to the realm of ideas such as truth and meaning. The importance of their work lies in their anti-reductionist approach, which does not separate the realm of art from the realm of experience and intuition. This point is important from the perspective that Dewey and Croce, unlike Heidegger and Gadamer, preserved Kant's aesthetic achievement in the form of the principle of immanence and autonomy of aesthetic judgment – that is, a judgment that finds its end in itself (purposiveness without purpose) and is not at the service of ideas such as meaning (hermeneutics) and truth. Therefore, the relationship between art and lived experience in Dewey and Croce is not a hermeneutical and mediated relationship that requires the expression of theoretical and abstract ideas such as truth, language, or meaning. The relationship between the beautiful and being in Dewey is an essential and immediate relationship that manifests itself in the form of immediate experience and in the realm of praxis. Croce, too, who, unlike Dewey, approaches art with a non-realist approach, emphasizes the essential relationship between art and knowledge in the form of the idea of intuition. The reason for choosing and comparing these two philosophers in this article also goes back to their common approach to art and aesthetics. This means that although Dewey and Croce belong to different and even contrasting intellectual traditions, namely pragmatism and idealism, their views within aesthetics and the theory of art converge and prove a single proposition. This can be a confirmation of George Douglas's idea (1970: 500) that "the categorical attribution of labels such as objectivism to Dewey or subjectivism to Croce can be misleading." But the more important point is that when two philosophers start from contrasting starting points and arrive at a more or less identical idea, it means that this idea can be considered correct with a high degree of certainty. In other words, strengthening the proposition

that Croce's intuition completes Dewey's immediate experience leads to the strengthening of the idea that aesthetics is the a priori quality that can justify the unity and purposiveness of perception. In this regard, it does not matter whether we start the process of explanation from the realm of "knowledge," as Croce does, or from the realm of praxis (experience), as Dewey does. On the other hand, since aesthetics and art have a key position in the philosophy of both philosophers, a comparative study of their views on art and aesthetics can be a key to understanding the philosophical system of both philosophers and the central role of aesthetics in their philosophical system. In other words, emphasizing the convergent and divergent points of these two philosophers with a comparative approach allows us to use the views of one philosopher to understand the other, and this is the inherent characteristic of a comparative study.

Finally, it should be noted that Dewey and Croce are among the philosophers who have been neglected in the academic space of Iran. Among Croce's works, only one book has been translated into Persian, and even more surprisingly, some of his works have not even been (fully) translated into English. Regarding Dewey, the situation is more or less disappointing. However, since he, as an American pragmatist philosopher, wrote in English, the difficulty in analyzing his views is less. On the other hand, the inherent complexity of their philosophy and the difficult literature of these two philosophers has added to the difficulty and made it difficult to provide an accurate understanding of their views that is free from any misunderstanding. Accordingly, we decided to approach these two philosophers with a comparative approach. By focusing on the key concepts of these two philosophers, this comparative study tries to fill the existing gap as much as possible. Therefore, in this article, we first provide a sufficient description of the philosophy of Dewey and Croce and their aesthetics separately, and in the next step, while abstracting and formulating their views, we compare their philosophy in the form of two key ideas: "immediate experience" and "intuition."

Part 1: Benedetto Croce

1-1. An Overview of Croce's Philosophical System

Benedetto Croce (1866-1952) was a Hegelian-influenced philosopher who philosophized within the tradition of idealism. The cornerstone of Croce's philosophical system is his *Philosophy of Spirit* (1912), a four-part work published between 1902 and 1917. This magnum opus, characterized by its idealism and historicism, delves into the nature of the mind or spirit, which Croce considers the foundation of all reality. The main thesis of this work is that philosophy is the science of the mind, and under it, the Italian philosopher rejects traditional metaphysics in favor of a focus on the concrete historical manifestations of the spirit. These four volumes deal with distinct aspects of the spirit through which it expresses itself: aesthetics, logic, economics, and ethics.

Croce was heavily influenced by Hegel but also distanced himself from Hegelianism in important ways. Both philosophers were idealists who emphasized the role of spirit and history in shaping reality. However, as Denis Mack Smith

(1973: 42) emphasizes, "Croce was not a dialectician in the realm of ontology and consequently had no interest in reducing all of reality to the realm of logic, as Hegel did." Accordingly, he saw the historical movement of the spirit as lacking logical finality and emphasized its eternal "becoming" and process. Therefore, one of the key aspects of Croce's philosophical project is his attempt to navigate the tensions between empiricism and rationalism. He rejected both transcendental philosophy and sensationalism, seeking a middle ground that he called immanentism. This approach emphasizes the importance of lived human experience, which occurs in concrete situations and specific historical contexts, as the foundation of knowledge (Ibid: 43). This also shows that Croce's idealism should not be understood as absolute subjectivism. According to the authors of this article, Croce's philosophy should be understood in light of Spinoza's philosophical system and the idea of "expression." In other words, what Croce calls "spirit" is not separate from its expression in the form of history, and this is the same principle of immanence that has acquired an epistemological status in Croce's philosophy and manifests itself in the form of the idea of "intuition." We will discuss the idea of expression and intuition in detail in the following pages.

Croce categorized the activities of the spirit into four distinct "pure ideals": beauty, truth, utility, and goodness. These ideals represent the fundamental forms of human activity and understanding, shaping our interactions with the world and with each other. "Croce argued that these four ideals are interconnected and inseparable, forming a unified whole that constitutes the human spirit. He believed that all human actions are directed towards one of these four aspects of the spirit" (Bergel, 1957: 350). But among these, aesthetics had the upper hand for Croce. Because, unlike Hegel, Croce emphasized the role of individuality and individual creativity in the process of the movement of the spirit, and this led him to pay attention to aesthetics and art as a realm that enables individual creativity. In other words, it can be inferred that since Croce understood being in the realm of becoming, he realized the role of aesthetics as an entry point that enables an immediate and intuitive encounter with being.

1-2. Art and Expressionism

Croce's most influential contribution to philosophy lies in his aesthetic theory, known as "expressionism." But what is expressionism? The history of aesthetics was dominated for centuries by Aristotle's literary theory (Poetics). However, in the modern era, coinciding with the rise of subjectivism in art and philosophy, the theory of imitation gave way to the theory of expression. Generally, this theory stems from the belief that beauty is a secondary quality that emerges in the mind as a result of encountering an object. Since this quality is absolutely internal, the universality and necessity of the judgment issued as a result of this mental quality can only be justified through its universal communicability (not universal demonstrability). As Townsend states, "Expression can be defined as the mind's awareness of its own activity and the projection of this activity in intersubjective contexts and situations" (Townsend, 1993: 122). The peak of such a view can be

discerned in Kant's aesthetic theory. However, what stands out within the framework of expression theory is the role of ideas such as affect and emotion that appear within the audience when encountering a work of art. Therefore, according to expression theory, beauty is not an objective matter but a subjective quality, or in other words, the very activity of the mind. As Tolstoy says, "Art has a purpose, and that is to transmit the artist's feeling to people, a feeling that the artist himself has tested and experienced" (Tolstoy, 1973: 127). Subsequently, Croce, in his prominent work, *Breviario di estetica (Aesthetics Breviary)* (1912), elaborates his theory of "beauty" in the form of the idea of "expression." He distinguishes between the expressive and representational functions of art, rejects representation (*mimesis*) as a passive and aesthetically irrelevant element, and elevates expression as the sole defining characteristic of art.

Art, as much as it is removed from passive imitation, is far from arbitrary and chaotic imagination. It is only through "poetic logic" that art becomes expression and comprehends the universal totality that is unified through artistic expression... However, beauty consists precisely in the real expression – in a unique and unrepeatable work of art – of that intuition which otherwise remains indeterminate and vague in our feelings and mind. In this sense, beauty is simply "successful expression," or rather, "expression" itself – because expression, when it is not yet coherent (unachieved), is not "expression". (Croce, 2007: xxiii)

Croce argues that art, through the artist's intuition, provides a direct and immediate perception of reality, which is then "expressed" through a specific medium. Croce's expressionist theory had a profound impact on twentieth-century aesthetics, influencing thinkers such as R. G. Collingwood (1889–1943) and John Dewey. In the following pages, we will see that Dewey also emphasizes the role of aesthetics as a unifying factor of experience. However, in his emphasis on the role of imagination and the social context of art, he distances himself considerably from Croce.

1-3. Aesthetics as a Type of Knowledge

One of the central tenets of Croce's aesthetics is the autonomy of art. He asserts that art is independent of intellectual knowledge, morality, utility, and pleasure. Art is not a means to an end, but an end in itself, possessing its own intrinsic value (Ibid: 29). Croce rejects any attempt to define art based on its moral, social, or political function. He believes that art should be judged solely on its own terms, based on its expressive power and coherence.

Croce's view of art as a unique form of logic is encapsulated in his concept of "logic of sense" or "aesthetics." This concept suggests that art has its own internal logic, distinct from the conceptual logic of philosophy or science. This

"logic of sense" is rooted in the intuitive and expressive nature of art. Therefore, the autonomy of art leads to the differentiation of art as a form of knowledge from other forms of knowledge. (de Gennaro, 1956: 118)

Croce distinguishes between two types of knowledge: intuitive knowledge, which is the domain of art, and logical knowledge, which is the realm of philosophy and science. According to Croce, intuitive knowledge deals with the particular and the individual, while logical knowledge deals with universals and concepts. He argues that art provides a unique and valuable form of knowledge that cannot be reduced to or replaced by other forms of inquiry. However, it seems that Croce tends to reduce other forms of knowledge to the realm of aesthetics. The important point is that Croce argues that all mental activity, and therefore all reality, is based on an aesthetic foundation. This highlights the central role of art in Croce's philosophical system. This is achieved through what Croce calls intuition, but as Paul Carus says, "one should not understand the idea of intuition in Croce as transcendental possibilities of reason. There is as little connection between this idea and Kant's sensory intuition" (Carus, 1916: 314). Intuition in Croce is actualized concerning a part of the inner powers of man called "affection." Therefore, Croce acknowledges the importance of feeling in art, but he distinguishes it from mere sentimentalism. He argues that feeling in art is not merely a raw emotion, but a "lyrical intuition" that is shaped and transformed by the artist's expressive power. According to Croce, this lyrical intuition is the basis of the unity of art, as it combines form and content into a coherent whole.

1-4. Intuition in Croce

Croce's aesthetic theory revolves around the central idea of art being intuition. He asserts that intuition is a distinct form of knowledge, separate from conceptual understanding and perception. For Croce, intuition is not merely a sensory experience but an act of immediate apprehension of the particular, a direct grasp of the individual and concrete. He argues that this intuitive knowledge is the essence of artistic expression. In this framework, Croce argues that reason presupposes the intuitive state, which is the aesthetic state, but the intuitive state does not presuppose reason (Ibid: 315). This leads to his key insight: all mental activity, and therefore all reality, is built on an aesthetic foundation. Aesthetics has no purpose or destination of its own and does not rely on concepts or judgments. This fundamental aesthetic role is the cornerstone of Croce's philosophy and constitutes his aesthetic theory.

Croce distinguishes art from other forms of mental activity, such as philosophy and history. He argues that philosophy deals with universal concepts and relations, while art is rooted in the realm of individual intuitions. Similarly, he distinguishes art from history, stating that history involves a critical distinction between reality and non-reality, while art operates in the realm of pure images, free from such distinctions.

Croce equates art with "lyrical intuition," highlighting the subjective and

emotional dimension of artistic creation. He sees art as a spontaneous outpouring of feeling, an expression of the artist's unique inner world. But intuition is not merely a sensory perception; it is a type of knowledge that grasps the individuality and uniqueness of an object or experience. For Croce, intuition is an immediate, internal, unique, and creative experience of reality that takes shape prior to any rational, conceptual, or analytical intervention and forms the foundation of any artistic expression.

By relying on the concept of intuition, Croce not only opens the way for a new understanding of art and beauty but also considers this concept as a mental activity whose centrality is not based on conceptual knowledge but on the immediate reception of reality. From this perspective, intuition is not merely a literary or aesthetic term, but a philosophical concept that refers to the ontological and epistemological foundation of human experience. By placing intuition at the heart of his aesthetic theory, he seeks to explain its role as the basis of all creative and artistic expressions. (Warbeke, 1926: 639)

One of Croce's important concerns was to separate or connect the different areas of human experience; he did not want to consider aesthetics as a science absolutely separate from the scientific, ethical, or practical life of man, but rather to show that all these areas ultimately return to human experience and its expressive nature. Therefore, intuition in Croce is a form of perception that enters the scene before any rational or conceptual system and, in a primary, raw, and lively way, forms the basis of all subsequent conceptual statements and formulations. In *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic* (1908), Croce defines intuition as a creative mental activity in which an image of reality is formed without the need for conceptual intermediaries. Intuition here is equivalent to a kind of primary expression. In Croce's view, when the mind encounters reality, it first registers it in the form of an image, an artistic perception, an immediate and internal experience. This image, before entering the network of rational concepts and logical analysis, is realized at a deeper and more fundamental level of experience (Croce, 1992). It is for this reason that Croce says that intuition is "expression" itself. It is here that Croce clarifies the fundamental difference between artistic expression and conceptual expression. Artistic and aesthetic expression is in fact the result of this intuition. Before creating a work, the artist achieves an "intuition"; a complete and vivid image of what he wants to represent. This image not only determines the roadmap of the artist's creativity but is itself a kind of internal expression. In other words, the work of art itself is the external embodiment of an internal intuition that enables the artist to transfer what he has intuitively seen, heard, or felt into an objective and tangible form in a medium (color, sound, word, stone, or any other material) (Wedel, 1924: 490).

Croce's emphasis on the foundational nature of intuition in art stems from his view of art as the pure form of human expression. In his view, if we want to

understand art, we must refer to the moment of its birth in the artist's mind. This moment of birth is intuition. Art does not begin with conceptualization, does not originate from rational reasoning or the application of external rules, but rather from the immediate perception of something that has not yet been framed conceptually. Therefore, art is fundamentally intuitive, and intuition constitutes the nature of art. In the process of artistic creation, the artist deals with intuitive experience: he intuits an idea, image, feeling, or inner state without relying on general concepts and rules, and then engages in a dialogue with it until he finally gives it an objective and tangible form. Thus, intuition opens a path that extends from the creative mind of the artist to the work of art. In Croce's words, art is the manifestation or externalization of intuition.

In a chapter of *The Philosophy of Spirit* titled "Philosophy of Practice," Croce also speaks of intuition and extends it to the realm of human behavior and action. He was aware that creativity is not limited to the realm of art; rather, humans also utilize intuition in practical and ethical domains. In Croce's view, intuition is not just a mental act but a reflection of the profound connection between the mind and reality. Reality, in the first instance, is a reality that we intuitively contact, not a reality constructed after conceptual abstraction and generalization. Thus, intuition is an intermediary between man and reality (Piccoli, 1921).

Any knowledge of nature or society initially passes through the channel of intuition. The concepts and rational arguments that philosophers, scientists, or historians employ are ultimately based on an intuitive image of the world. If intuition were removed from the scene, we would have nothing but empty concepts unrelated to reality. This ontological dimension is of particular importance because it shows that for Croce, intuition is not merely a subjective or internal matter but is rooted in man's relationship with the external world.

Ultimately, it can be inferred that in Benedetto Croce's thought system, intuition is not a peripheral concept but the core of his aesthetic theory and even his philosophy. Intuition is the key to understanding the process of creativity in art, the basis for the formation of concepts in knowledge, the foundation for practical decision-making, and a platform for human connection with reality. The fundamental value of intuition lies in its ability to enable humans to encounter the world directly and immediately, before general and rational concepts intervene.

Part 2: John Dewey

2-1. John Dewey and His Pragmatism

John Dewey (1859-1952), who matured within the tradition of American pragmatism and was influenced by philosophers such as Peirce and James, accepted the fundamental principle of pragmatism first articulated by Charles Sanders Peirce. Peirce stated, "Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (Peirce, 1905: 481). But Dewey did not stop at this point and extended the principles of pragmatism to all realms of human life, including ethics, aesthetics, theory of

knowledge, and education, ultimately using it to justify the very structure of experience and the existence of the living organism: "The brain is, above all else, an organ for doing one thing, not a thing for understanding and comprehending the world" (Dewey, 2012: 324). Therefore, by eliminating the opposition between thought and praxis, Dewey questioned the necessity of an idea called "knowledge" in justifying the relationship between the objective and the subjective. Because within the framework of Dewey's pragmatist ontology, such an opposition was no longer relevant. But what then becomes of thinking or reason? Dewey says, "The first characteristic of thought is to confront the facts and to thoroughly investigate and examine them" (Idem, 1933: 26), and thus places philosophy not in the service of attaining truth but in opposition to it. The task of philosophy in this approach is not to achieve truths but to bring down pre-existing truths. Dewey's statement is a starting point for an attitude in which thinking is removed from the cycle of static and abstract concepts and is considered a practical tool for navigating the world, responding to challenges, and improving living conditions.

Therefore, by eliminating the opposition between thought and action, Dewey draws a line through any form of dualism. But on the other hand, by transcending this duality, Dewey does not resort to abstract concepts such as power or time, as we see in the Continental philosophical tradition. These kinds of abstract concepts still imply a kind of hidden dualism. Because, as a rule, by transcending this duality, no type of abstract concept should remain. For this reason, Dewey is never in the process of designing an ontological system, at least in the sense that we are familiar with in the Continental tradition. For him, what matters is the living organism and its lived experience. Even abstract ideas like "world" or "human" are irrelevant to him. The only thing that is the subject of study from Dewey's perspective is action (praxis). Therefore, Dewey interprets philosophy in the realm of praxis. But as Musial (1967: 9) says, "Praxis should still not be understood as an abstract idea." Praxis itself finds meaning in "experience."

2-2. Dewey's Conception of Experience and Its Relation to Aesthetics

In Dewey's perspective, experience is not a singular and static concept but a dynamic factor that sets in motion the mechanism of life and consciousness. He considers experience to be the result of the active interaction of an organism or living being with its environment in a situation, and he believes that it should be given a position commensurate with the principle of change and transformation. Experience will be obtained in a situation that is not only physical but also a complex totality of biological, social, psychological, and cultural conditions. The totality of these conditions and the mutual "influence, interaction, and passivity" of the living organism with them is what makes up each experience (Banvari Nejad, 2017: 27). John Dewey, with his pragmatic approach, tries to understand how human experiences can be transformed from incoherent, scattered, and continuous situations into coherent, meaningful, and structured moments. From Dewey's point of view, "experience" is comprehensively a continuous flow of engagement of the human mind and body with the environment. But Dewey's

pragmatic approach seeks to find a way to transform this multiplicity and dispersion into a meaningful and guiding understanding. He finds this way in aesthetics and art.

Dewey not only places art in the context of natural and emotional human life and emphasizes the importance of aesthetic experience as a key to understanding what experience is, but he goes further and claims that some cognitive and aesthetic characteristics are also present in the realm of science. His ultimate goal is to invalidate the traditional dualisms between rationality and feeling, between analysis and intuition, and between art and science. He shows that science and art, despite their undeniable differences, in practice overlap with each other, and both can contribute to the enrichment of human life. This overlap is achieved through an integrated approach to experience, an approach that leads us to the understanding that aesthetic experience and scientific experience are two paths to create order, meaning, and quality in human life; paths that are fed from a common source, namely the living being's effort to integrate experience and satisfy its deeper needs. In this regard, Dewey, while acknowledging the importance of the growth and promotion of scientific knowledge, considers aesthetic experience to be more meaningful and richer than purely scientific experience. This position does not mean that Dewey denies the value of scientific experience, but rather emphasizes that scientific experience, although necessary and efficient, is less substantial than aesthetic experience in terms of its depth of connection with psycho-physical complexity and its entanglement with the tangible fabric of life. Science, at least in the conventional sense, deals with phenomena in an abstract, analytical, and goal-oriented way; its purpose is to explain, classify, and predict, and therefore scientific experiences are mostly accumulated in the form of concepts, definitions, laws, and cause-and-effect relationships. In contrast, art and aesthetic experience are linked to the body of human emotions, feelings, and imagination, and in this way, they create an integrated outcome of thought, feeling, body, and environment. Such an experience is always within the fluid flow of life and in a bio-cultural context. From this perspective, aesthetic experience, due to its immediate connection with emotional and perceptual life, has greater authenticity and depth (Piccoli, 1921).

Dewey considers experience to be prior to truth. Experience, as a living and concrete event in which the living being interacts with its environment, is the source of all judgment and meaning-making. In this perspective, what is at the center of attention is not to obtain an absolute and predetermined "truth" but to achieve a "better experience." This improvement of experience is central not only in the field of science but, more importantly, in the realm of art and aesthetics. Art, in Dewey's view, by providing immediate and intense experiences that are directly linked to the life of the living being, allows us to expand the scope of biological meaning and enhance the quality of human life.

2-3. Immediate Experience

At the heart of John Dewey's philosophy of pragmatism lies a fundamental and

central concept, the understanding of which is the key to the understanding of his intellectual system: immediate experience. Immediate experience is a self-motivating, dynamic, and creative experience, and precisely for this reason, it is not dependent on any element outside the system of experience itself. In a concise yet profound description of this dynamic, he says: "Immediate experience arises from the interaction of nature and man. In this interaction, human power is gathered, released, encounters obstacles, fails, and triumphs. The regular pulsations and cycles of need and satisfaction, the rhythms of action and restraint from action are at work" (Dewey, 2012: 25). This quote clearly reveals Dewey's emphasis on the active and constructive nature of experience.

In the same vein, Dewey emphasizes that "aesthetic art is intended to strengthen the immediate experience itself" (Idem, 2012: 474). This means that the main focus in aesthetic experience is on the experience itself and its inherent quality, not on the causes, consequences, or any external factors associated with it. There is a kind of independence and autonomy in pure aesthetic experience that distinguishes it from other experiences. This aesthetic experience, in Dewey's words, is an immediate whole: "All the elements of our being that in other experiences are displayed with specific emphases and incomplete actualizations, merge in aesthetic experience, and this merging is so complete in the immediate wholeness of this experience that each of them is drowned" (Ibid: 409). This statement clearly shows that pure aesthetic experience is achieved when immediate experience is freed from any dependence on external factors. This integration and wholeness bring about a kind of sense of unity and connection with the totality of existence, releasing the individual from the feeling of separation from the surrounding world and understanding him as part of an interconnected whole that is interacting with it. In other words, the union of the individual with the universal, as Dewey puts it, is achieved during periods of harmonious cooperation between man and the world in the form of non-discursive immediate experiences. It is through this non-discursive experience that the concept of intuition emerges.

Dewey, who understands and presents intuition as the attainment of a practical judgment regarding the object in front of him, sees this judgment as a kind of knowledge, not in opposition to action but in line with its enrichment. This knowledge, by providing a deeper understanding of the possible consequences and outcomes of actions, allows us to organize our interactions with the environment in a way that increases the achievement of valuable experiences and avoids potentially harmful experiences. Therefore, intuition as knowledge arising from immediate perception is not a matter of distancing oneself from this kind of experience but of improving its quality and effectiveness. This knowledge arises from and reflects previous experiences and, in turn, shapes future experiences.

2-4. Dewey and Intuition

John Dewey, as a pragmatist philosopher, views the concept of intuition from a new perspective, emphasizing immediate experience and its close connection with action and the environment. He challenges traditional and idealistic

understandings of intuition, which consider it a mysterious, innate power separate from experience. Dewey firmly rejects the essentialism of beauty and the idea of direct and immediate intuition of essences. Instead, he considers intuition to be a process of suggestion or spontaneous insight that is rooted in our concrete and continuous interaction with the environment and is shaped by our accumulated experiences and knowledge. This experiential and dynamic approach forms the cornerstone of Dewey's philosophy, and his understanding of intuition is entirely nourished by this origin.

Intuition often emerges in the context of immediate and concrete experience with a feeling of imbalance, disharmony, or the existence of a problem that needs to be solved. This tense and problematic situation sets the stage for the emergence of intuition as a potential response. Intuition, in this framework, is a kind of integrated and unifying understanding that can reorganize and give coherence to a person's previous experience, which is now disrupted. In the next stage, a kind of solution or spontaneous insight, like a leap in the realm of consciousness, sprouts in the individual's mind. This stage is accompanied by a sudden spark of suggestion or an automatic solution to solve the problem or ambiguity in immediate experience. As Dewey beautifully states, "Intuition is the name of that encounter between the old and the new in which the readjustment that exists in every form of consciousness takes place suddenly and by means of an unexpected, sharp, and intense harmony, which in its brilliant instantaneousness resembles the flash of revelation" (Ibid: 398). This intuitive moment often occurs unexpectedly and instantaneously and can be the result of the intersection and combination of previous experiences and new information in the context of the organism's interaction with the environment. Dewey believes that "only the background of organized meanings can bring a new situation from an ambiguous and obscure state to a clear and brilliant state. When the old and the new, like sparks, jump when the poles are aligned, intuition occurs" (Ibid).

Ultimately, it can be said that John Dewey, by providing a new, naturalistic, experience-based, and pragmatic definition of intuition, removes it from the halo of mystery, metaphysics, and the inexplicable and brings it into the realm of concrete human lived experience. In Dewey's thought, intuition is not a divine and supernatural gift but the dynamic and dialectical result of the active interaction of the organism with the surrounding world, its accumulated knowledge and lived experiences, which manifests itself as a spontaneous and sudden insight to solve a problem or understand phenomena in an integrated way, and ultimately, in the context of further action and experience, is put to the test and objectively evaluated.

Part 3: Comparing the Views of Dewey and Croce

Based on the foregoing, a comparative study of the views of Dewey and Croce within the framework of aesthetics can now be achieved. In general, the views of Dewey and Croce, especially where the two philosophers speak of immediate experience and intuition, respectively, can be examined from several perspectives,

which we will address in this section in the form of several dimensions.

3-1. Transcending Kantian Aesthetics

The first point in the comparison between the views of Dewey and Croce is that both philosophers consider art to have a philosophical status and address the ontological and epistemological aspects of art. From this perspective, both Croce and Dewey appear in opposition to Kantian aesthetics. Kant, with a subjective interpretation of beauty, reduced it to a judgment of taste, thus severing the relationship between art, knowledge, and intuition. Dewey and Croce each try in their own way to highlight the capacities of art within the framework of the theory of knowledge and the formation of experience. Croce emphasizes the importance of aesthetics as a form of knowledge that enables lyrical intuition. Therefore, Croce, while emphasizing the epistemological capacities of art, points to its place within intuitive knowledge. From Croce's perspective, aesthetics and art can explain a form of knowledge that, unlike scientific knowledge, is not based on conceptualization.

On the other hand, Dewey also emphasizes the importance of the aesthetic mechanism within the process of the formation of experience. From this perspective, it is through an aesthetic mechanism that the unity of the multiplicity of experience is made possible, and chaotic and multiple experiences are transformed into meaningful and ultimately unique experience. Therefore, it is through aesthetics that intuition and immediate experience become possible. In other words, just as in Croce, intuitive knowledge is made possible through aesthetic experience, in Dewey, it is also through aesthetics that fluid experience acquires meaning and becomes unique experience.

The difference between Dewey and Croce is that Dewey examines the issue in a pragmatic context and emphasizes the ontological aspect of art in justifying the process of unique experience, while Croce, following the philosophical tradition in which he writes, begins with knowledge and confirms the epistemological aspect of art and aesthetic experience. The final point is that although Dewey and Croce, by transcending Kant's subjective aesthetics, emphasize the relationship between art and being, they do not fall into the trap of the theory of truth and meaning. In other words, they preserve the achievement of Kant's aesthetics in the form of what he calls "purposiveness without purpose" in the form of the idea of "the autonomy of art."

3-2. Expression and Action

The intersection between Croce and Dewey can be found in the two ideas of expression and action. As mentioned, both Dewey and Croce, through different paths, arrive at an immanent interpretation of being. Accordingly, although Croce speaks of knowledge, this knowledge is immediate knowledge, which he calls intuitive knowledge. Therefore, within what is called intuitive knowledge, the opposition between the knowing subject and being is eliminated, and in fact, the subject itself becomes one with the process of knowing. This is why the idea of

intuition in Croce must be understood concerning the concept of expression. Intuition is not separate from expression, and in fact, it can be said that intuition is expression. In other words, what is obtained in the form of intuitive knowledge and through aesthetic experience lacks any abstract and conceptual synthesis but is the very "expression."

In Dewey, this opposition is also eliminated through the concept of unique experience or action. In Dewey's thought, there is no such thing as knowledge *per se*, and everything that exists is expressed in the form of action. Thinking or thought and even brain activities are at the service of doing something, and practically, things like understanding and knowledge merely have a nominal existence. Mental activities are not separate from action, and what we call the mind is in unity with action and, so to speak, is expressed in action. But the fact that something is expressed does not mean that there is a duality between that thing and its expression. Ultimately, all that exists is action, nothing else.

The difference between Dewey and Croce from this perspective is that Croce's idea within expression lacks a practical dimension. It seems that Croce, although he has overcome the duality of mind and object through the monism of intuition-expression, is ultimately influenced by the paradigm of idealism that governs his thought and conflates everything in the realm of mind and knowledge. In other words, what is called expression in his thought has a subjective character in the final reading. In Croce, the subject still has primacy, but in Dewey, the two concepts of subject and object are dissolved and united in the form of the concept of action and experience.

3-3. The Primacy of Aesthetics over Science

Another element that connects the philosophy of Croce and Dewey is that both philosophers believe in some way that scientific knowledge itself is based on a kind of aesthetic process. This is why Croce emphasizes the aesthetic character of scientific knowledge and believes that scientific knowledge is not possible without the *a priori* quality that is obtained through intuition and in an aesthetic process.

On the other hand, Dewey not only places art in the context of natural and emotional human life and emphasizes the importance of aesthetic experience as a key to understanding what experience is, but he goes further and claims that some cognitive and aesthetic characteristics are also present in the realm of science. His ultimate goal is to invalidate the traditional dualisms between art and science. He shows that science and art, despite their undeniable differences, in practice overlap with each other, and both can contribute to the enrichment of human life.

3-4. Intuition

3-4-1. The Origin and Nature of Intuition

Dewey, as an empiricist philosopher, considers intuition to be the result of the concrete and continuous interaction of the organism with the environment. He sees intuition not as a supernatural and static gift but as a dynamic and contextualized process that takes shape in the context of lived experience and response to

problematic and stressful situations. Intuition, in this view, is a spontaneous and integrative response to the knots in immediate experience that arises with the aim of re-establishing balance and coherence in the individual's experience and his relationship with the environment.

In contrast, Croce conceptualizes intuition more within an idealistic framework, emphasizing the autonomy of the mind and its creative aspect. He considers intuition to be a kind of internal expression and mental activity during which an image of reality, independent of conceptual intermediaries and rational reasoning, is formed in the individual's mind. Here, the origin of intuition is not merely concrete interaction with the environment but rather the mind itself and its creative power, which can produce new images and ideas in an immediate way and independent of external factors. Croce considers this autonomous and expressive aspect of the mind to be the foundation of art and beauty, and he considers intuition to be the foundation of any genuine and creative artistic expression.

3-4-2. The Relationship of Intuition to Experience, Knowledge, and Action

Dewey emphasizes the close connection between intuition and concrete and contextualized experience. Intuition, in his view, is rooted in immediate experience and is itself tested and refined in the course of subsequent experiences. For Dewey, intuition is not something separate from action but a prelude to effective action in the world and the evaluation of its consequences in the context of experience. Intuition can be a spark for problem-solving or a deeper understanding of phenomena, but its validity and effectiveness are ultimately tested in the crucible of action and its observable results in the real world.

Croce, however, believes in the relative independence of intuition from experience and prior knowledge. In his view, intuition can appear in the individual's mind as an immediate and sudden understanding of a new truth, independent of the individual's experiential and knowledge background. This emphasis on the independence of intuition makes it the source of creativity and innovation in the realm of art. Croce also conceptualizes the relationship between intuition and action more from the perspective of expressiveness and its internal manifestation in the form of a work of art or creative action, not in terms of its evaluation and testing in the crucible of experience, as we see in Dewey.

3-4-3. The Role of Reason and Conceptualization

Dewey does not ignore the role of reason and conceptualization in the process of the development and refinement of intuition. Although intuition initially appears as a sudden and non-conceptual spark in the individual's mind, reason and the power of conceptualization can play a role in its analysis, evaluation, and completion in later stages. Reason and intuition are not two opposing forces but complement each other in the process of understanding and acting in the world. Furthermore, Dewey believes that the background of organized meanings and previous conceptual frameworks plays an important role in guiding intuition and

understanding new situations.

Croce, however, makes a sharp distinction between intuition and concept and places them in two separate realms of mental activity. Intuition is immediate, particular, and specific to cases, while concept is general, abstract, and universal. For Croce, concepts only appear in a secondary stage and after intuition. The mind first achieves an immediate and pictorial understanding of reality through intuition and then, through the processes of abstraction and generalization, creates general concepts from these particular and concrete experiences. Therefore, art, which deals with intuition, is distinct from the realm of conceptualization and rational reasoning.

However, Dewey, concerning the separation of the intuitive stage from the discursive stage, is to some extent aligned with Croce from one perspective. He confirms the Italian philosopher's view that "we only become specifically and comprehensively aware of temporal sequence in music and poetry, and of spatiotemporal coexistence in architecture and painting when we move from perception to analytical reflection" (Dewey, 2012: 274). Thus, Dewey acknowledges that temporal and spatial perception is obtained after the stage of intuition (in Croce's philosophy) or immediate perception (in Dewey's philosophy) and in the stage of reflection. In this way, the American philosopher considers calculative rational perception to be part of the reflective perception that follows intuitive/immediate perception and distinguishes the nature of this type of reflection from the empirical reflection based on the accumulation of previous experiences in the mind, from which intuition arises.

3-4-4. The Scope and Function of Intuition

Dewey considers intuition not to be limited to the realm of art and aesthetics but a pervasive phenomenon in all aspects of human life. Intuition can play a role in problem-solving, decision-making, scientific creativity, ethical action, and generally in any situation where the individual faces new and challenging situations. Dewey even seeks the roots of intuition in fundamental human motivations such as the instinct to build, curiosity, and the desire for social interaction and expression. Croce, however, places more emphasis on the aesthetic aspect of intuition and considers it the foundation of art and artistic creation. Although in the text of "Philosophy of Practice" he also points to the role of intuition in the realm of action and decision-making, his focus remains on intuition as a creative artistic force and the basis of genuine and non-conceptual expression.

3-4-5. Dewey's Critique of Croce

However, while pointing to Croce's theory of the connection between intuition and expression, Dewey considers it an example of imposing philosophical presuppositions on aesthetic experience. In criticizing Croce's view, he says that the intermingling of intuition with expression and the identification of both with art has made it difficult to understand Croce's thought, but this is rooted in the philosophical foundations of his idealism. Croce believes that the only real existence is the mind, and external objects only exist to the extent that they are

known. In other words, the external object is not separate from the knowing spirit. From his point of view, in ordinary perception, objects are considered independent of the mind, but in aesthetic experience, whether art or natural beauty, objects are perceived as states of mind. Therefore, our awareness of artistic objects or natural beauty is not perception but intuition. For Croce, what is praised in a work of art is the perfect imaginative form that clothes a state of the artist's mind. Moreover, intuition is real when it is a representation of feelings. Thus, the state of mind that constitutes a work of art is "expression" in terms of manifesting the inner state and "intuition" in terms of knowing this inner state. Although Dewey does not agree with this theory, his purpose in pointing it out is not merely to reject it. He wants to show how philosophy distorts aesthetic experience by imposing prior theories on it. From Dewey's point of view, Croce has reduced aesthetic experience to a limited framework in which only mental states are authentic, and external objects are merely manifestations of these states. The pragmatist philosopher considers this kind of reductionist view to be the result of the dominance of his own philosophical presuppositions (in this case, idealistic presuppositions) over real experience.

Ultimately, despite the efforts of Dewey and Croce to provide a new and dynamic definition of intuition and free it from the confines of traditional and idealistic definitions, Dewey emphasizes the distinction of his definition from Croce's: "Intuition is neither one of the acts of pure reason in the sense of grasping rational truth nor, as Croce says, does it mean that the spirit grasps its own forms and states" (Ibid: 398). Of course, it cannot be ignored that Dewey and Croce have both focused on the concrete, creative, and expressive aspects of intuition. However, Dewey conceptualizes intuition more in the context of concrete experience, its close connection with action, and its role in problem-solving and deeper understanding of phenomena, while Croce focuses on the autonomy of the mind and its creative power, the relative independence of intuition from experience and prior knowledge, and its unique place in the realm of art and pure expression. These differences are not a sign of contradiction but arise from the different philosophical foundations and concerns of the two thinkers.

Conclusion

In this article, we sought to strengthen the hypothesis that aesthetics is the a priori quality that, by providing the conditions of unity and wholeness, enables immediate perception and experience, which precedes any other type of knowledge, through a comparative study of the views of Dewey and Croce on aesthetics. In other words, our primary perception in the stage of direct and immediate encounter with being is only achievable through an aesthetic pattern as an a priori principle. Our goal in this article was to show that this hypothesis, regardless of whether we start from the starting point of idealism or realism, leads to a unified conclusion by comparing the philosophical systems of Dewey and Croce in the form of the two ideas of immediate experience and intuition. However, there are differences between the thought of Dewey's and Croce

regarding the place of aesthetics in the process of immediate perception, which we pointed out in the third part of this article. Nevertheless, the points of convergence that connect the two philosophers are more than the points of divergence. Ultimately, it seems that although Dewey's idea of immediate experience cannot be considered exactly the same as Croce's idea of intuition, it can be said that Croce's idea of intuition is completed by Dewey's theory of immediate experience. It should be noted that Dewey is a pragmatist philosopher, and when he approaches the idea of intuition, he adapts it to the requirements of his pragmatist philosophy. For this reason, unlike Croce, Dewey does not consider the idea of intuition to be a complete and finished matter but presents it as part of the pragmatic process of experience. However, Croce, due to his idealistic interests, considers intuition to be an independent process that is not separate from the realm of expression.

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خاستگاه زیباشناختی «شهود» و «تجربه بی واسطه» نزد کروچه و دیویی

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در این مقاله تلاش می‌کنیم ذیل یک پژوهش تطبیقی میان نظام فلسفی کروچه و دیویی، به مفاهیم و آرای کلیدی آنها در زمینه زیبایی‌شناسی وضوح ببخشیم. فرضیه اصلی پژوهش آن است که ایده کلیدی فلسفه دیویی، تحت عنوان «تجربه بی واسطه»، تقریری پراگماتیستی از ایده نزدیک «شهود» در زیبایی‌شناسی کروچه است. بدین ترتیب، هر دو فیلسوف بر نقش زیبایی‌شناسی به عنوان نوعی کیفیت پیشینی که وحدت و انسجام تجربه و معرفت را تأمین می‌کند، تأکید دارند. تمایز تعیین‌گر در آن است که کروچه در قالب ایده «شهودبینان» بر وجه معرفت‌شناختی زیبایی‌شناسی تأکید کرده و دیویی همین کیفیت پیشینی را در زمینه اونتولوژیکال (فرایند تکوین تجربه) افاده می‌کند. به دیگر سخن، زیبایی‌شناسی به عنوان یک کیفیت پیشینی ناظر بر شرط وحدت و کلیت در فرایند تکوین ادراک است و ضامن حصول تجربه شهودی. به عبارتی، تنها با فرض نوعی غایت زیبایی‌شناختی (غایت بدون غایت) است که ماهیت بس‌گانه و پویای ادراک در تجربه‌ای بی‌واسطه و شهودی وحدت یافته و امکان «زیستن» میسر می‌شود. مقایسه آرای دیویی و کروچه -که به دو سنت فکری متضاد تعلق دارند- نشان می‌دهد که فرضیه مذکور یعنی فرضیه‌ای که بر نقش زیبایی‌شناسی به عنوان یک کیفیت پیشینی در فرایند شهود و تکوین تجربه تأکید دارد- فارغ از اینکه عزیمت‌گاه آن قلمرو عین (تجربه) باشد یا قلمرو ذهن (شهود)، به نتیجه‌ای واحد ختم شده و می‌توان با اطمینان درباره صدق آن سخن گفت.

کلمات کلیدی: جان دیویی، بندتو کروچه، هنر، زیبایی‌شناسی، تجربه بی‌واسطه، شهود.

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The Role of Philosophical Faith in Karl Jaspers' Existential Thought

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article	<p>This article examines the ontological foundations of Karl Jaspers' concept of philosophical faith. As a comparison with Heidegger's existential ontology reveals, Jaspers places far greater emphasis on the act of philosophizing than on philosophy itself. From one perspective, Jasper's philosophy has a moral and open character; conversely, this openness is threatened by his theory of the encompassing and his dogmatic understanding of Kant's theoretical tools. Jaspers' existential philosophy, and especially his concept of philosophical faith, can be illuminated by confronting it with the existential philosophy of his colleague, Heinrich Barth. Karl Jaspers' existential philosophy draws on the fundamental ideas of the "Marburg School," particularly the two German philosophers Hermann Cohen and Paul Natorp. After World War II, when Heidegger's ontological views cast a shadow over German philosophy, Jaspers and Heinrich Barth, who adhered to Kant and opposed Heidegger's central ideas, could have had a fruitful collaboration, but this cooperation never materialized. Jaspers' existential philosophy led him towards a prophetic stance, but his concept of philosophical faith, which became widely known from his book "Atom" in 1959, continues to attract global attention. In this research, the author has employed a conceptual analysis method of the interpretive and expansive type to elucidate the concept of philosophical faith in Jaspers and has attempted to provide a better understanding of his existential philosophy.</p>
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1. Introduction

The concept of philosophical faith can only be correctly understood if philosophy itself is grasped. Jaspers' primary concern is to delineate the uniqueness and originality of philosophy, or as he puts it, to elucidate philosophy. For Jaspers, this elucidation does not occur through an external factor to philosophy; rather, philosophy elucidates itself. This self-elucidation of philosophy from within is philosophy's most important task.

The value and importance of philosophy are so great that they cannot be measured by any standard. To better understand the role of philosophy, we must compare it to organized religions and the violence that has been committed in the name of religion. Throughout history, major religions, especially Christianity, have led to a great deal of violence. Wars, torture, and discrimination committed in the name of religion are numerous. However, in the face of all this violence, philosophy has continued to exist. The fact that philosophy has survived in such circumstances is a miracle. But will this miracle continue forever?

Jaspers believed that philosophy is far more than a simple university course. He did not want to see philosophy merely as one of the university subjects, like literature or history, to be taught. In his view, philosophy is something very special and different. At that time, a philosophical movement called Neo-Kantianism was very prevalent in many German universities. This movement saw philosophy in a specific and limited way. But Jasper disagreed with this view. In 1931, with the publication of his book "The Spiritual Condition of the Age", Jaspers demonstrated that philosophy can also be influential in everyday life (Jasper, 1931). After World War II, Jaspers gained significant fame with the publication of his book "The Question of German Guilt" in 1946, in which he discussed the issue of collective guilt. During the Nazi regime, Jaspers faced severe pressure and even risked his life. He was banned from working due to his beliefs. However, Jasper did not yield, and after World War II, he became a cipher of honesty and integrity. Even when he moved to Switzerland in 1948 and took up a position at the University of Basel, many of his supporters were surprised. But Jaspers did not give up and wanted to explain philosophy to people in simple language. He used radio, books, and lectures to discuss important issues such as the future of Germany and the threat of the atomic bomb. In the 1960s, intellectuals and theorists who believed in critical theory and Marxist discourse played a significant role in shaping the discourse and debate in society. Jürgen Habermas was one of the most prominent figures in this intellectual current, and by emphasizing the importance of rational and logical dialogue, he sought to penetrate the public sphere. While Habermas emphasized the power of impartial arguments and debates, Jaspers believed that the honesty and seriousness of the individual in conveying concepts were very important. For this reason, Jaspers was known as the political conscience of Germany and had a great influence on public opinion until the 1960s. In the 1960s, this public role was taken over by representatives of the neo-Marxist "critical theory" and "discourse theory", particularly by Habermas, who continued to defend its benefits in the public sphere. While

discourse theory emphasized the power of impartial, rational, and linguistic arguments, Jaspers' communicative interventions were all based on his personal "honesty" and "seriousness". Therefore, he became the political conscience of the Federal Republic of Germany until the 1960s.

Let us return to the main question: What is philosophy? Instead of this question, Jaspers focused more on two others: firstly, "What is philosophizing?" and secondly, "How should one philosophize?" Jaspers almost sets aside the question of "what" and instead turns to the question of "how". This change of question makes a significant difference: What is Jaspers' conception of traditional authoritative philosophy? He presented his views comprehensively in a three-volume book entitled *Philosophy* (Idem, 1970). However, the title of this book indicates that he not only describes philosophy in the strict sense but also examines different methods of philosophizing. In fact, Jaspers seeks to analyze this specific activity, namely philosophizing. He believes that the root of this activity lies in the very nature of human existence. Jaspers argues that all individuals, regardless of their education and background, can and should realize that philosophizing is part of human existence. In his book *Way to Wisdom: An Introduction to Philosophy*, written for the general public, he explains what philosophy is and how it differs from academic philosophy courses. According to Jaspers, true philosophy is more than learning philosophical concepts in a classroom; true philosophy means a deep search and reflection on the world and humanity's place in it. He calls this kind of philosophy "world philosophy" and distinguishes it from "scholastic philosophy", which is limited to learning concepts. This distinction shows that Jaspers himself, as a philosopher, was seeking to discover truth through free and creative thought. He, who had initially studied medicine, later obtained a doctorate in philosophy and qualified to teach the subject at the University of Heidelberg. Since agreeing with Heidegger in the 1920s, he had a negative view of the prevailing academic philosophy. However, he always considered himself a responsible member of the university and valued preserving academic values in Europe.

To delve into the fundamental roots of philosophy, we must undertake a radical and fundamental shift. This shift involves relinquishing all our certain beliefs and knowledge, as well as everything we take for granted in our daily lives. We must even distance ourselves from reality itself and seek something beyond it. Jaspers suggests that this is akin to a mystical experience; it requires liberation from all worldly constraints (Idem, 1970: 33). Kierkegaard viewed this as a form of spiritual regeneration, transforming the individual into an entirely new being. Jaspers finds the original roots of true philosophy in the thought of philosophers such as Plotinus, Cusanus, and Nagarjuna. These philosophers sought knowledge beyond the limitations of reason. Like Kant and Kierkegaard, he believes that to attain deep knowledge of existence, one must proceed through philosophical doubt and personal experience. This is an active and engaging method.

To understand Jaspers' ideas more precisely, we should refer to one of his radio speeches. Although Jaspers sought knowledge beyond the material and objective world, at the heart of his philosophy lies human existence and direct experience

of being. In other words, he believed:

Philosophy, instead of merely pursuing abstract concepts beyond experience, should engage with human experience of life and the world. (Ibid: 15)

Next, we aim to delve deeper into Jaspers' conception of philosophy and philosophizing, to demonstrate how he encouraged his audience to courageously engage in philosophical inquiry. He did so because he believed that philosophizing, whether consciously or unconsciously, is an inevitable part of human existence. Jaspers writes on the first page of his book, *Philosophy*:

Philosophy is the human method of understanding existence over time, and it is only in this manifestation, not in its essence, that it becomes comprehensible to us. In philosophizing, faith that is not based on revelation is expressed, inviting others on the same path. (Ibid: 1)

2. Existence and the Quest for Being

All of Jaspers' philosophy revolves around the search for the meaning and nature of existence (Ibid: 4). He believes that there's an insurmountable gap between 'real' or 'absolute' Being (Ibid: 32) and human experience of the world. However, all thoughts, conversations, dreams, and everything humans experience are somehow connected to this absolute existence. He introduces two key concepts: acceptance into being and Failure of being. According to Jaspers, humans are constantly striving to find meaning in existence and connect with it. However, this endeavor is always accompanied by failures, and humans are not fully capable of comprehending the depth and nature of existence. He believes that existence has always been and always will be, but at the same time, humans must continually strive for existential certainty. In other words, they must try to understand the nature of existence with greater assurance. According to Jaspers, the search for the meaning and nature of existence is unending. This implies that no matter how hard humans try, they cannot definitively and completely answer their existential questions. As Jaspers states, our existence itself remains incomplete as long as we have not fully comprehended existence. In other words, we are perpetually searching and discovering, never reaching a final destination. He also maintains that philosophy cannot put an end to this quest. While philosophy can help us think more deeply and ask new questions, it cannot provide definitive and final answers to all our inquiries (Ibid: 21).

This constant search for meaning and the nature of existence, which the philosopher John Patuska also highlighted, is not only a fundamental characteristic of human existence but also intrinsically illuminates and reveals this very existence. This statement implies that humans naturally seek to understand the meaning and purpose of their lives. This search is not merely an innate human need but also leads humans to better understand themselves and the world around

them. This quest transforms humans from potential beings into actual beings. In other words, through this search, humans evolve from a potential, undefined state to a more actual and defined state. Philosophy is built upon this very foundation. Philosophy strives to answer these fundamental questions through thought and analysis, helping humans to achieve a deeper understanding of their existence. Jaspers states:

To philosophize means to think seriously about existence.
(Ibid: 299)

In other words, philosophy teaches us how to think more deeply about ourselves and the world around us.

While philosophizing is connected to existence and being, it is itself an ontological issue. This means that philosophy not only studies human existence and the world around it, but it also constantly seeks to answer questions about the nature of existence and being. Jaspers, like Heidegger in 'Being and Time', places a strong emphasis on the search for the meaning of existence. Both philosophers are interested in the fundamental question of what existence is and seek to find an answer. However, Jaspers and Heidegger employ different methods to arrive at this answer. Although both philosophers address the same central question, their approaches to examining this question differ. Jaspers offers various definitions of existence. Sometimes he provides very specific definitions of existence, and at other times his definitions are more general. For instance, referring to Kierkegaard, he states:

Existence is something that concerns itself and is always seeking something beyond itself. (Ibid: 13)

In another instance, Jaspers argues that we humans are, in fact, existence, and this existence of ours can be eternal or not. It depends on our own decisions. Moreover, he believes:

We humans can attain a more complete existence. (Ibid: 296)

Like Jaspers, Heidegger takes an indirect approach to existence. However, unlike Jaspers, Heidegger is not interested in the 'philosophy of existence' but rather in the structures that constitute existence, what he calls 'ontology' (Heidegger, 2019: 17). For Heidegger, Dasein is a unique being. This being, in its very being, has a deep connection with existence. In other words, humans can understand existence through understanding themselves. In fact, understanding who humans are is equivalent to understanding the nature of existence (Ibid: 16). Heidegger further expands the concept of 'Being,' stating that by 'being' he means the totality of existence and everything that exists. He then introduces 'Existence' as a part of this being with which humans have a direct relationship. Heidegger poses the question of the meaning of existence as both an ontological and epistemological question. In simpler terms, he wants to understand what this 'being' is and how we can know it.

Interestingly, Heidegger establishes a deep connection between this grand philosophical question and everyday human concerns. He argues that when we worry about our future or fear death, we are actually addressing this same question about the meaning of 'being.' In other words, our anxieties about life and death are, in essence, a search to understand the nature of existence. To put it simply, Heidegger merges two great philosophical ideas to answer more fundamental questions about life and the world. He combines the philosophy of life, which deals with personal experiences and the meaning of life, with ontology, which studies the nature of reality. By doing so, he creates a new philosophical method called 'fundamental ontology.' In this method, Heidegger focuses not on objects and things but on human experience of the world and the meaning that humans give to existence. Heidegger's primary goal is to understand the meaning of 'being.' He wants to know why we exist and what the world around us is like. For this reason, he chooses human existence as the starting point for his inquiry. He believes that by examining human experience of the world, we can gain a deeper understanding of the nature of reality. So, in summary, Heidegger aims to answer questions such as 'Who are we?', 'Why do we exist?', and 'What is the world?' by combining the philosophy of life and ontology.

While Heidegger delved deep into the human experience of existence in his 'Being and Time,' Jaspers took a different approach to understanding the origin and roots of human existence. Instead of relying on logical analysis, he used intuition and direct understanding to illuminate this subject. For this reason, some argue that instead of 'hermeneutics of origin,' the term 'elucidation of origin' is more suitable to describe Jaspers' method. In simpler terms, Heidegger sought to understand the nature of existence from a philosophical perspective, while Jaspers was more interested in understanding the personal experience and meaning that humans give to existence. This difference can be described using the terms 'ontology' and 'ethics.' Ontology studies the nature of being, while ethics studies human values and duties. Jaspers believed that by understanding the origin of human existence, we can gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us, and this understanding helps us make better ethical decisions. This fundamental difference shapes the entire philosophy of both thinkers. Despite their apparent similarities, Heidegger and Jaspers pursue different goals. Heidegger seeks to transcend the limitations of metaphysical thinking, while Jaspers attempts to integrate metaphysics into the flow of human life and experience. According to Jaspers, practical reason (as Kant defined it) plays a significant role in this process. In one of his major works, Jaspers states that 'existential philosophy is rooted in and dependent on metaphysics.' He also says, 'Philosophy is origin,' or more precisely, 'Philosophy is the awareness of being that originates from another source.' In other words, Jaspers believes that philosophy not only examines the world and existence but also originates from a deeper, more mysterious source. This source transcends our everyday experience and refers to a kind of awareness of a fundamental being.

This transcendent source is often referred to as the 'transcendent.' However, when we speak of a 'source,' questions arise about whether it is irreducible or self-

revealing. Jaspers' philosophy seeks to draw from both this transcendent source and the concrete conditions of everyday life in order to achieve an unambiguous expression, becoming a part of life itself. This view of philosophy, rooted in life, was beyond the prevailing academic philosophy of the time. Initially, Jaspers was unaware that his philosophy differed fundamentally from that of Heidegger. Later, in his writings, he explained the fundamental difference between the two philosophies. In essence, Jaspers sought a philosophy that addressed both the spiritual and transcendent dimensions of human existence and the concrete conditions of human life.

Philosophy manifests itself in real life, in the judgments and decisions we make, and in all our interactions with others, penetrating to the depths of our being. In other words, philosophy is not only found in books and classrooms, but it is present in all aspects of our lives. In this regard, I completely disagree with Heidegger. According to Heidegger, philosophy should be in books and writings or in the mind of a philosopher. He sometimes separates philosophy from everyday life and views it as something separate and independent. Heidegger sees the world of philosophy as a calm and quiet place where the philosopher is distant from the problems and concerns of everyday life. But in my view, these two worlds cannot be separated. Everything a philosopher arrives at in this calm and quiet space should have an impact on our lives and the world around us. (Jaspers, 1978: 246)

3. The Elucidation of Existence and the Step toward the Encompassing

In 1935, Jaspers delivered a series of lectures on 'Reason and Existenz' (Idem, 1960a). In these lectures, he expanded his philosophical theory, which he had presented in 1931, with a new concept called the 'Encompassing' (Idem, 1947: 158). The question now arises as to whether this new concept has made Jaspers' theory more complete or whether it has limited or even changed its nature. Some argue that this new concept has moved Jaspers' philosophy towards a more traditional type of philosophy that focuses more on the existence of objects and general concepts than on the personal experience of the human being. If we look at Jaspers' earlier writings, this criticism is somewhat thought-provoking. The second volume of Jaspers' *Philosophy*, which examines human existence, is the most important part of this three-volume book. In this volume, Jaspers speaks extensively and deeply about how human existence is formed and its nature. Concepts such as relationships with others, the passage of time, freedom, the boundary situations of life, and important decisions are all part of this examination and have contributed to the fame of Jaspers' philosophical method. Instead of using terms like 'existentials' or 'structures' that are common in other philosophies, Jaspers employs the term 'aspects'. He contends that these aspects are not merely parts of human existence but represent moments when a human being attains a profound understanding of themselves. Jaspers' comprehensive philosophy places a particular emphasis on the individual and their

personal experiences, an approach rooted in the philosophies of Descartes and Kant. Although many critics argue that Jaspers' philosophy lacks a systematic structure, his method of clarification renders this criticism baseless. Jaspers believes that understanding the nature of human existence does not require complex and theoretical arguments, just as Kant did not rely on abstract arguments to prove his ethical theory. For Jaspers, existence is sufficient in itself and proves itself through real, lived experience.

Jaspers repeatedly emphasized that both human existence and those entities beyond the material world (what he terms 'modes of being of the encompassing') have their own unique logic that is inaccessible to ordinary methods of understanding. This logic can only be grasped through the method of existential clarification. He argues that to comprehend the world fully, one must adopt a far broader horizon encompassing everything. This horizon, like an invisible boundary, surrounds all. Yet, it is neither visible nor tangible; it can only be apprehended through specific experiences that transcend the ordinary. These experiences enable us to access that which lies beyond the material, measurable world. Everything beyond the material, observable world—such as spiritual concepts, the existence of God, or ethical values—can be viewed as parts of a larger whole. All our experiences, even the most expansive and profound, are limited. To consider them as the totality of truth leads to a dead end. These experiences can be categorized into two types: those that define us as living, conscious beings, such as existence, consciousness, and spirit; and those that transcend us, like the world and what we call the 'transcendent'. Between these two lies 'reason', acting as a bridge connecting these experiences. This reason is not a fixed and definite cognitive tool, but rather a flexible and evolving one. Jaspers terms this overall understanding of the structure of human experience 'basic knowledge.' He asserts that comprehending this knowledge is essential for a profound understanding of human existence.

However, this fundamental knowledge renders the concept of 'existence,' which is of paramount importance to Jaspers, somewhat obscure. When we say that existence is a particular state of the encompassing, it seems as if we are limiting existence. Whereas, existence should be something that encompasses all limitations. Additionally, Jaspers seeks to preserve philosophy as an independent activity. That is, philosophy should not aim to directly discover reality but rather should help us understand ourselves better. Thus, according to Jaspers, we do not need anything other than ourselves to understand existence and philosophy. By reflecting on ourselves and our experiences, we can attain a deeper understanding of existence and philosophy. When everything we thought revealed reality to us (like science and everyday experiences) was called into question, we needed to find a new way of understanding the world. Jaspers argues that in such circumstances, something called 'philosophical faith' becomes significant. This faith is not blind faith but rather a faith that arises from deep philosophical reflection. This faith helps us better understand our own existence and move toward growth and development. However, this faith is like a delicate plant. It

must be nurtured and cared for. If we do not pay attention to it, it may wither away. It's like a spring that dries up if it does not receive water.

Jaspers argues that to comprehend complex, transcendental concepts like 'revelation', we must employ a specific foundational knowledge. He likens this foundational knowledge to armor that protects us from the complex and incomprehensible ideas that emanate from the transcendent realm. By employing what he terms 'transcendence', he can decode religious insights and access realities that we cannot directly perceive, realities that seem to message us from another world. While Jaspers holds a non-objective understanding of existence, his relationship with this dimension is dual: on the one hand, he strives to simply set aside all beliefs and dogmas and seek pure truth. On the other hand, he recognizes that it is precisely the ambiguity and complexity of religion and religious beliefs that drive him towards philosophy and the search for the meaning of life. In other words, Jaspers believes that the darkness and obscurity of religion help him attain a deeper understanding of existence.

4. Critique of post-Kantian Philosophies: Fichte, Schelling, Hegel

Jaspers recognizes that darkness and ambiguity exist not only in religions and religious beliefs but also throughout the history of German thought post-Kant. By examining the works of Schelling, he demonstrates how German philosophers have strayed from the original path of Kantian thought. At that time, the greatness and destiny of Germany were intertwined.

The great truth in German Idealism resided in understanding the need to complement, appropriate, and continue Kantian philosophy against Kantian orthodoxy. But it was a particular German fate to approach this task by forsaking the Kantian way of thinking ... Sorcery took the place of high philosophy, and, since it also contained a truth, had even greater seductive power. (Jaspers, 1955: 313)

Schelling says:

One has always sensed how profound the break between the Idealists and Kant was, but perhaps not made it perfectly clear until now... (Ibid)

And finally:

The break in the mode of thought took effect in one particular area of German education in the 1790s ... Prior to this break, the spirit of Lessing, Goethe, Kant, and Humboldt abided ... With the break something quite different arose, the spirit of sorcery, subsequently known as Romanticism; in philosophy this spirit reached its utmost expression in Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. (Ibid: 314).

These changes provoked intense reactions, particularly among materialists and positivists who claimed to hold a scientific viewpoint. Following these events, philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Marx launched critiques of this intellectual trend. Even neo-Kantian philosophies, which sought to return to Kant's philosophy, were unable to bridge this divide. Jaspers viewed this rejection of Kant's philosophy and disregard for its values as a profound and enduring catastrophe. Jaspers not only criticized Schelling but also leveled severe criticisms against Heidegger. In one of his notes about Heidegger, he wrote...

He lacks a consciousness of truth in favour of self-exorcizing sorcery, which leaves behind a void ... He adheres to Schelling, Eckhart, and gnosis lacking an awareness of origin and suffering an impoverishment of former sense; verbatim borrowing in decisive places. (Idem, 1978: 102)

Jaspers believed that both Schelling and Heidegger were influenced by a kind of magical and **mystical** thinking. He thought that this thinking led Heidegger to make serious political mistakes. However, it seems that Jaspers was not alone in these criticisms, as another philosopher, Heinrich Barth, shared his views and also criticized Heidegger.

5. Jaspers and Heinrich Barth

The most significant part of Jaspers' book on revelation is an essay he wrote to celebrate the 70th birthday of his friend and colleague, Heinrich Barth (1890-1965). In this essay, titled "Philosophical Faith and Christian Revelation", Jaspers explores the relationship between philosophical faith and Christian revelation. (Idem, 1960a: 12) This essay is shorter and more focused than his more comprehensive book on the subject. In addition to Jaspers, other philosophers such as Karl Barth, Hermann Diem, Emil Brunner, Fernand Brunner, Alfred de Quervain, and Gerhard Huber also contributed to the Festschrift honoring Heinrich Barth. This list of contributors highlights Barth's significance at the time, even though he has not received the recognition he deserves today. (Idem, 1962: 498) Barth's name appears multiple times in Jaspers' writings, even in his correspondence with Hannah Arendt. (Arendt et al, 1985: 129) On the other hand, Heinrich Barth explicitly disagreed with Jaspers' views on faith and history in one of his writings (Barth, 1950: 434), although their overall perspectives were quite similar. From the outset, the personal relationship between Jaspers and Barth was marked by tension. Barth had long hoped to secure the philosophy chair at the University of Basel, but the position was ultimately offered to Jaspers. Later, when Barth was up for full professorship, Jaspers opposed his appointment. Heinrich Barth was a follower of the Marburg School of philosophy. He attended the lectures of great philosophers such as Hermann Cohen, Paul Natorp, and Ernst Cassirer, and in the 1920s he became involved in the "critical idealism" movement. Barth sought to develop his own philosophy of existence based on Kant's ideas about practical reason and the teachings of the Marburg School (Cohen, 1931: 454).

However, Karl Jaspers had a completely different approach. He wanted to revolutionize philosophy and religion, transforming traditional viewpoints. Barth says of this: 'When I was studying philosophy at the University of Basel in 1949, Karl Jaspers was a very famous and popular professor. His lectures were so captivating and engaging that the university halls were always full of students. He spoke with great confidence about various philosophies, even those beyond European philosophy. He was tall and dignified, with a very distinguished and conscious demeanor. In other words, he was a very influential and inspiring figure.' Unlike Jaspers, Heinrich Barth had a difficult time. He was severely disabled and taught at very inconvenient hours, such as 7 AM in the summer. He always had his head buried in his books and spoke in a soft voice. He was not at all interested in small talk or self-promotion. For this reason, the number of students who attended his classes was very small. His classes were held in a small, dark room. In his classes, students had to take careful notes and read and interpret philosophical texts in the original language themselves. Many students didn't even know that Jaspers had another colleague named Heinrich Barth. This is not so surprising, as Barth's writings were very hard to find and few people read them. Following the severing of ties between Switzerland and Germany in 1933, Barth's significant work, 'Philosophy of Practical Reason' (published in 1927), was nearly forgotten. (Barth, 1927: 434). Even his substantial two-volume 'Philosophy of Appearance' was mistakenly believed by many to be a much smaller book (Idem, 1947: 434). Nevertheless, both volumes demonstrate that all our knowledge of the world begins with the appearance of phenomena. This appearance, or phenomenon, in philosophical terms, even if not the ultimate starting point, serves as the foundation for all our cognition. This focus on appearance is what fundamentally distinguishes Heinrich Barth's philosophical perspective from that of Jaspers, as well as from the theology of his brother, Karl Barth. Barth's important work, 'Outlines of a Philosophical System', published in the year of his death, 1965, delves into this very topic. However, it was quickly relegated to the status of an outdated work associated with existentialism, and received little attention.

Both Jaspers and Barth were profoundly influenced by Plato, Augustine, and Kant. In fact, Jaspers **considered** these three to be the principal founders of philosophy (Jaspers, 1959: 319). Barth emerged from the Marburg School of philosophy, while Jaspers strongly opposed the Southwest German Neo-Kantianism, particularly the views of Heinrich Rickert. Both philosophers had a deep interest in the Bible and its teachings, which significantly influenced their thought. However, the primary difference between these two philosophers lies in their respective perspectives on Christianity. Jaspers argued for a return to the original and fundamental roots of Christianity, namely the teachings of the Bible. Yet, he believed that over time, churches and religious institutions had deviated from these roots and distorted the essential teachings of Christianity. Barth, too, accorded significance to the Bible, but his views regarding churches and religious institutions differed, setting him apart from Jaspers.

Both Jaspers and Barth adopted and expanded upon the idea of a philosophy of

existence, first introduced by Schelling and later by Kierkegaard, to develop a thought about human existence. Jaspers speaks of the concept of 'possible existence', meaning that humans can attain various forms of existence. On the other hand, Barth is interested in how human existence becomes manifest and connects with reality. He believes that our knowledge of the world and ourselves is an existential event, and it is within this event that our existence takes shape.

The existential philosophies of both philosophers are grounded in duty and responsibility. They both argue that for humans to live a meaningful life, they must feel that they have **duties** to fulfill. This duty helps humans to understand the deeper reality of their existence. They believe that this existential reality, which transcends the material and observable world, cannot be explained through simple logic and reasoning. To comprehend this reality, one must employ specific and unique methods that allow us to indirectly approach this reality.

Both philosophers believed that philosophy should be independent of religion and grounded in reason and experience. They argued that philosophical knowledge should not be **influenced** by religious beliefs. Given that these two philosophers were contemporaries and colleagues with many shared views, the question arises as to why a more significant and collaborative relationship did not develop between them. One possible reason for this is the existence of minor disagreements between them. In his later years, Jaspers became increasingly rigid and inflexible in his philosophical views. He was deeply committed to his own philosophical system and subjected any other philosophy to careful and meticulous criticism. If we want to express the fundamental difference between the philosophies of Jaspers and Barth in simple terms, we can say that Jaspers had a broad and universal view of philosophy. He sought to examine all the world's philosophies within a unified framework and to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the history and philosophy of humankind. In other words, Jaspers was searching for a universal philosophy. Barth, however, had a deeper and more precise approach. He was more interested in the roots and foundations of philosophy and sought to understand how each philosophy had developed and on what basis it was grounded. Instead of seeking a universal philosophy, Barth aimed to analyze different philosophies individually and in detail. While Jaspers believed that European philosophy was nearing its end, Barth, by examining concepts such as emergence, the act of emergence, and the transcendental basis of understanding, was able to discover new and unknown dimensions of philosophy. Through this, he expanded the boundaries of philosophy and introduced novel perspectives in this field.

6. Philosophical Faith and Reading Cipher-Script

Barth held a complex and somewhat contradictory view of the work of his compatriot, Jaspers. On the one hand, he had great respect for Jaspers' significant achievements and **shared** some fundamental beliefs with him. On the other hand, he doubted whether Jaspers' philosophy could provide answers to all philosophical questions, particularly those related to religion. One of the most significant differences between the two philosophers was their respective views on religion. Jaspers believed

that religious faiths based on revelation (such as the Abrahamic religions) had value, but Barth disagreed. Barth thought that Jaspers did not give enough importance to the religious beliefs of ordinary people and viewed them with a degree of condescension. This disagreement reveals an internal tension within Barth himself. He wanted both to respect philosophy and to value the religious beliefs of people. In other words, he sought to give value to both reason and faith.

While Jaspers acknowledged the uniqueness of each individual and experience throughout history, he also believed that all humans possess the potential to reach the highest level of existence, even if the path to this goal varies across cultures. In his writings, he references ancient ideas such as Neoplatonism and Sufism, which seek a form of self-improvement and salvation. Regardless of whether Jaspers' ideas are justifiable, a crucial aspect of his philosophy is the assertion that humans are not merely part of the world. In other words, humans cannot be fully explained by the laws and concepts of the material world. Humans possess a spiritual dimension that transcends matter. This idea that humans originate from a unique and distinct source suggests that humans are more than just material beings. Jaspers uses the term "enclosure" to describe something that is both a profound and fundamental truth. This truth pertains to the nature of human existence and suggests that human existence is distinct from all other things. Jaspers elucidates this distinction through the concept of "freedom". He posits that human freedom is not something that can be deduced from other things but is rather a self-evident fact. Just as we do not need to prove our own existence, our freedom requires no proof. This idea of freedom helps us transcend the limitations of the material and predetermined world. In other words, we humans are beyond natural and social laws and are capable of making choices and decisions. Additionally, Jaspers argues that despite this freedom, each human is a unique and distinct individual. Human freedom does not imply that all humans are the same but rather signifies each individual's ability to choose their own life path. This characteristic of individual uniqueness is crucial for understanding the nature of human existence. To preserve this uniqueness, humans must avoid anything that seeks to mold them into a specific and limited form. Paradoxically, it is these very things that limit humans, such as rigid and closed religious beliefs, irrational beliefs, and superstitions, that can actually help us discover our true selves. When confronted with these things, we are forced to struggle against them and overcome them. This struggle leads us to understand ourselves and the true nature of our existence. In other words, it is these challenges and problems that help us know ourselves better and discover our authentic selves.

Jaspers argues that when we move beyond accepting ready-made beliefs and start questioning and thinking for ourselves, we are essentially developing a form of "philosophical faith". This philosophical faith drives us to seek deeper meanings beyond the surface appearance of things. To reach this deeper meaning, we must distance ourselves from what Jaspers calls the "arbitrary suspension of phenomena". This means we should not allow events and things to passively influence us without our conscious consideration. Instead of letting life's circumstances dictate and limit

us, we can view them as "enigmas" and seek their hidden meanings. This process helps us transcend the limitations of the material world and attain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. However, the lofty goal of penetrating the depths of existence and all dimensions of reality transforms those who pursue it into ciphers of a higher reality. This implies that the power of transformation lies entirely within the individual, and any suggestion of self-aggrandizement should be seen as a form of awareness and a shift in perspective. However, a crucial point Jaspers makes is that he does not advocate for the destruction of religious knowledge or ciphers. His primary concern is that these ciphers themselves may be misinterpreted or given undue importance. Instead of seeking to simplify or fully comprehend these concepts, Jaspers aims to find a new way of looking at them. He is searching for a novel mode of thought, one capable of accommodating complex and ambiguous ideas. In simpler terms, rather than attempting to reduce these concepts to something we already understand, he wishes to accept and understand them as they are. Of course, this does not imply that the fundamental nature of these concepts changes.

From an ontological perspective, ciphers both exist and do not exist. They are like something that sometimes points beyond themselves and sometimes becomes the material thing. In either case, they eventually disappear. Therefore, there must be something that **preserves** this peculiar state of ciphers so that they can reveal existence to us. When someone seeks to find their identity and emerge from a state of anonymity, these two states converge, causing human existence to turn both inward toward itself and outward toward something greater and beyond. It is universally acknowledged that within every human being, there exist dark and ambiguous elements, which may even be negative. Humans continually strive to integrate this dark aspect with the rest of their existence. The question then arises: why do we need these ciphers? Kant, in his "Critique of Judgment", uses these ciphers as a means of understanding the beauty of nature. He suggests that nature communicates with us through these ciphers. However, Jaspers argues that these ciphers are not solely for understanding nature. Rather, everything in the world can be a cipher in some way. To fully grasp this concept, we must approach it from a personal and existential perspective. This may remind us of the once-popular notion of an "Individual mythology". However, over time, these ciphers evolve into significant cultural icons that influence our daily lives. The question arises: can these ciphers alter our lives and impact us? Are they merely reflections of our inner experiences, or can they lead to a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world? In his later philosophy, Schelling sought to uncover hidden and profound truths that resembled the mysterious knowledge of esoteric traditions. He believed that understanding these truths required paying attention to specific ciphers. Kierkegaard did something similar, albeit in a different way. In his pseudonymous writings, he expressed his philosophical ideas in an enigmatic manner to provoke deeper thought in the reader. Jaspers, in his book on the atomic bomb, employs the concept of eternity as a cipher (Jaspers, 1960b: 493). Through this, he aims to delve into the profound meaning of existence and life. This cipher alludes to the possibility of

humanity's complete self-destruction and the terrifying threat of nuclear weapons. This threat has shaken the foundations of the material world and overshadowed its brilliance.

7. The Politics of Philosophical Faith

Jaspers argues that the world has reached a point where human reality and world reality have become intertwined. He sees this significant shift as a reason for a fundamental change in our way of thinking. In other words, we must radically question and transform our entire approach to thought. This radical shift in thinking (Ibid: 298) is rooted in freedom and can help us overcome the great challenges facing humanity. Jaspers calls this transformation a revolution in thought (Ibid: 321) and believes it is essential for human survival and progress. He also emphasizes the importance of global communication for solving global problems and argues that we must move beyond rigid and limiting religious beliefs to achieve a shared understanding of the world.

The nuclear threat has transformed the abstract concept of the "entire world" into a tangible, global reality that affects all humanity. Understanding and awareness of the entire world now means understanding and being aware of planet Earth and all its beings, and this understanding must be achieved through thought, social institutions, and global cooperation (Ibid: 301). In this critical situation, even the concept of "philosophical faith", which seems to be the weakest element of power, must compete with religious powers that promote violence and dominate politics. Unlike Heidegger, who believed that human destiny is unchangeable, Jaspers asserts that we can **change** our future. He disagrees with Heidegger's view that humans are helpless in the face of powerful forces and believes that his own writings are part of this great change. He is aware of the idealism of this endeavor but despite the low probability of success, he does not consider it entirely hopeless. As a last resort, he suggests following in Schelling's footsteps and founding a philosophical religion. Furthermore, Jaspers does not believe in a single, universal religion or wisdom, even though logic, which is the source of all beings, might suggest such a possibility. Ultimately, what remains is the continuous and universal movement of reason, which is constantly recreating itself. Reason should not be used as a tool or expected to serve us. Reason is like an open book or a shared treasure among us all, not yet recognized as an absolute principle. As Hegel states in "Phenomenology of Spirit", or as Jesus Christ said:

The kingdom of God is within you. (Hegel, 1948: 64)

Philosophical faith refers to faith in oneself and one's roots. This faith, through self-knowledge, also leads to faith in philosophy as the sole pure and fundamental truth of the existence of reason. For this reason, Jaspers emphasizes the awareness of "presence," an awareness that can only be understood when we recognize its eternal aspect in this **very** moment and place. With this thought, Jaspers transforms the idea of eternity into a clear and guiding cipher.

The existence of technologies capable of ending human life has given new

dimensions to philosophical faith. The individual's understanding of life is now juxtaposed with humanity's struggle to maintain the conditions necessary for its survival. Individual death and the annihilation of all humanity have become closer, particularly in the minds of the sick and power-hungry like Hitler. It is said that Adolf Hitler remarked, "We may perish, but we will take the world with us". The individual lifespan and the lifespan of the world are intertwined in the obsessions of individual power, converging at an absolute point. Philosophical faith opposes this absolutist viewpoint that the world can be completely controlled. If we face the possibility of the complete annihilation of the world, then the material nature of the world becomes of paramount importance to us. In these circumstances, our existence as beings living in the world becomes objectively and tangibly apparent. Philosophical concepts such as "being-in-the-world" in Heidegger's philosophy and "incarnation" in Barth's theology become more significant in such situations, showing us that our existence is directly linked to the existence of the world.

Jaspers argues that when confronted with significant and defining events, such as revelations, dark and absolute aspects of violent politics become apparent. These aspects are so deep and complex that they cannot be easily understood. However, even mistaken or **misunderstood** events cause individuals to introspect and question their own existence. Moreover, the threat of human annihilation drives us towards concrete and practical actions. Today, public discourse in the media is influenced by these two aspects: the dark and complex dimensions of violence and the need for practical action to prevent annihilation. Fears of violence stemming from religious fundamentalism, as well as the proliferation of nuclear weapons, both in the hands of governments and terrorist groups, have significantly increased. These threats have intensified considerably since the publication of Jaspers' book on the atomic bomb and the future of humanity in 1960 and the end of the Cold War in 1989. However, we can no longer simply attribute these threats to the competition between two superpowers. New asymmetric wars and covert intelligence agency wars against global crime have completely transformed the shape of global politics.

Today, philosophical faith, rooted in the history of religion and culture, faces a serious challenge: **the** growing political role of religion and culture in the contemporary world. While globalization of markets and technology is expanding, religion and culture, as a reaction, have turned into islands for preserving identity and specific perspectives. This reaction has created significant differences between civilizations and even within each civilization. In these circumstances, dialogue between different religions and cultures has become more of a dream, while violence and conflict between different ethnic groups have become a bitter reality. Can philosophical faith do anything in the current situation? When conflict erupts, philosophical faith seems to have no power. However, there are shining examples like Gandhi who show that this is not the case. Of course, Jaspers says that Gandhi was in a unique situation and cannot always be considered a model. But even if **philosophical** faith exists only in the hearts of individuals, it can still be a great hope. Precisely because religion and culture have become factors of

turmoil, a kind of thinking that both encompasses and questions them offers an opportunity to find ways to peace. This opportunity exists because philosophical faith does not rely on any fixed and unchanging principles and can, using logical thinking, find solutions to problems even in very difficult circumstances.

What we have discussed may seem self-evident, but it is nonetheless an important necessity. To accept this simple necessity, we must change our perspective and fundamentally transform our way of thinking. We must acknowledge that this necessity is so crucial that nothing else can replace it. Religion and culture are based on fixed and unchanging beliefs, but philosophical faith has only one constant belief: the belief in **rationality**.

While philosophical faith may make one feel isolated and alone, it also opens a window to connection with others. In his book, *Philosophy*, Jaspers placed communication at the center of existential enlightenment. He envisioned a day when all beings could unite in a philosophical community. Jaspers expanded on this idea and spoke of a universal philosophy. He believed that philosophy should also address human history and provide a deeper understanding of human existence throughout history. He believed that this philosophical quest would never end. But this infinity indicates that philosophical faith will continue to thrive and has a bright future ahead.

Conclusion

Karl Jaspers' concept of philosophical faith is central to his existential philosophy. Jaspers believed that philosophy, through the act of philosophizing and the search for existence, can lead to a deeper understanding of reality. For Jaspers, philosophical faith signifies a profound and unwavering belief in a reality that transcends sensory and rational experience. This faith is grounded neither in revelation nor in traditional religious beliefs, nor solely in rational arguments. Instead, it is rooted in individual existential experience, allowing humans to explore the hidden dimensions of their existence and the world. Jaspers argued that deep within human existence lies a search for a meaning beyond everyday life. This quest enables individuals to discover and believe in the truth of their own existence. Rather than relying on pre-determined answers, philosophical faith empowers individuals to address fundamental questions about being, meaning, and purpose in life. Jaspers contended that philosophical faith points to aspects of reality that extend beyond the grasp of pure reason. This does not negate reason but rather complements it with other dimensions of human experience. He also believed that philosophical faith helps individuals establish deeper connections with others and fosters a better understanding of themselves and the world around them. Karl Jaspers' existential philosophy, and particularly his concept of philosophical faith, can be illuminated by a comparison with the existential philosophy of his contemporary, Heinrich Barth. Both philosophers contributed to the development of existentialism by emphasizing individual experience and the significance of human existence. However, their approaches to this philosophy differed. Both philosophers stressed the importance of the independence of

philosophical inquiry from revelation and were critical of mystical approaches in philosophy. Jaspers engaged more broadly with the history of philosophy and religions, while Barth was more interested in analyzing fundamental philosophical concepts. In essence, Jaspers viewed religion as a personal experience and a source for understanding human existence. He believed that religion could help individuals answer life's fundamental questions. Heinrich Barth, on the other hand, was more interested in the philosophical analysis of religious concepts and paid less attention to personal religious experience. Jaspers leaned towards biblical religion, while Barth was more inclined towards critical philosophy and Marburg idealism. Jaspers sought to develop a universal philosophy, whereas Barth focused on analyzing the foundations of philosophy from Plato to the present. In conclusion, by examining the ideas of these two philosophers, we can find new answers to fundamental questions about life, existence, and being.

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نقش ایمان فلسفی در اندیشه وجودی کارل یاسپرس

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اطلاعات مقاله	چکیده
نوع مقاله: مقاله پژوهشی	این مقاله به بررسی مبانی هستی‌شناختی مفهوم ایمان فلسفی کارل یاسپرس می‌پردازد. چنانکه مقایسه با هستی‌شناسی وجودی هایدگر روشن می‌کند، یاسپرس بسیار بیشتر بر عمل فلسفه‌ورزی تأکید می‌کند تا خود فلسفه. از یک منظر، فلسفه یاسپرس جنبه‌ای اخلاقی و گشوده دارد؛ از سوی دیگر، این گشودگی به واسطه نظریه او درباره فراگیر و درک جزمی او از ابزارهای نظری کانت تهدید می‌شود. فلسفه وجودی یاسپرس و به‌ویژه مفهوم ایمان فلسفی او را می‌توان با رویارویی با فلسفه وجودی همکارش، هاینریش بارث، روشن کرد. فلسفه وجودی کارل یاسپرس از ایده‌های اساسی «مکتب ماربورگ»، به‌ویژه دو فیلسوف آلمانی به‌نام‌های هرمان کوهن و پل ناتورپ سرچشمه می‌گیرد. بعد از جنگ جهانی دوم، وقتی هایدگر با دیدگاه‌های هستی‌شناسانه‌اش بر فلسفه آلمان سایه انداخته بود، یاسپرس و هاینریش بارث که هر دو به کانت اعتقاد داشتند و مخالف ایده‌های اصلی هایدگر بودند، می‌توانستند همکاری مثمر ثمری داشته باشند، اما این همکاری هرگز محقق نشد. فلسفه وجودی یاسپرس او را به‌سمت یک حالت نبوی سوق داد، اما مفهوم او از ایمان فلسفی که از کتاب <i>تم</i> او در سال ۱۹۵۹ به‌طور عمومی شناخته شده است، همچنان توجه جهانی را به خود جلب می‌کند. نویسنده در این پژوهش با استفاده از روش تحلیل مفهومی از نوع تفسیر و بسط مفهوم، به روشن‌سازی مفهوم ایمان فلسفی یاسپرس پرداخته و سعی کرده است درک بهتری از فلسفه وجودی وی ارائه دهد.
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Hegel and the Problem of Epistemology in the Introduction to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*

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Article Info ABSTRACT

Article type: Research Article Received: 2025/03/24 Accepted: 2025/04/14	<p>One of the main preoccupations of modern philosophers, especially after the Enlightenment, was the significant epistemological challenges rooted in the views of their predecessors regarding human understanding and its limits and boundaries. In his various works, especially in <i>The Phenomenology of Spirit</i>, Hegel addresses some of these challenges following philosophical discussions and in his distinctive metaphysical language, attempting to resolve them. In this work, he highlights the difficulty of finding a criterion to distinguish a true proposition from a false one and finding a standard for differentiating truth from falsehood, while addressing its epistemological consequences, such as skepticism. To overcome the epistemic skepticism inherited from Plato, Hegel seeks to rely on the rational nature of reality. By stating that reality is rational, Hegel primarily means that there is nothing within reality itself that is inherently doubtful, truly incomprehensible to reason, contradictory, or inexplicable. From his perspective, philosophy must teach us this; otherwise, we will fall into skepticism and the despair brought about by epistemological theories inherited from the past. In the present essay, we will attempt to outline the epistemological challenges and some of Hegel's critical perspectives on past philosophers, based on his explanations in the introduction to <i>The Phenomenology of Spirit</i>.</p>
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Keywords: Hegel, epistemology, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Kant, Skepticism.

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Introduction: Fundamental Questions

From the very beginning of philosophical thought, a fundamental issue—or more precisely, a series of issues—regarding human knowledge of reality (or objects) has emerged, compelling philosophers to seek answers to them. Issues such as: What can I know? And more fundamentally, is human reason even capable of knowing anything? How can I consider a belief to be true and correct? What are the limits of human knowledge, and how can these boundaries be defined? And many other similar questions. Of course, no doubt, raising such issues did not arise for humans at the very first moment of thinking. Questions like these are already preceded by a certain level of reflection and self-awareness in humans. The initial theoretical form of human epistemological questions has often been: Which judgments about *x* are true? Or, in a more concise form, is *x* true or false? The answer to such questions, of course, consisted of propositions about *x* or the affirmation (or denial) of *x*. However, humanity did not stop at this stage, and gradually the question (which was, in fact, the philosophical aspect of the discussion) arose: What can I know about *x*? Can I achieve the knowledge to determine whether *x* is true or false? Several reasons can be cited for this shift in human inquiry from the first set of questions (concerning objects) to the second set (concerning knowledge, its nature, and its limits). First, humans are constantly confronted with different beliefs among various people, or even within the same person at different stages of their lives. In short, human beliefs are continually replaced by others. In this context, it seems essential to find a criterion for distinguishing true and correct beliefs from false and incorrect ones (Westphal, 2003: 32). This is precisely the idea that compelled Descartes to seek a criterion for distinguishing true knowledge from false knowledge before climbing the trunk of the tree of knowledge and harvesting its fruits. However, the search for a criterion with such characteristics is doomed to failure from the very beginning (Descartes, 2024).

Finding a criterion to distinguish truth from falsehood requires, first, that we independently recognize and distinguish truths from falsehoods without this criterion. Only then can we examine the criterion itself and determine whether it is sufficiently effective in all these cases. In other words, seeking a criterion to distinguish and recognize truth from falsehood is dependent on this very act of distinguishing and recognizing (Hegel, 1977: 31). It is no wonder that Descartes, unable to find the aforementioned criterion independently, felt compelled to resort to the honesty and integrity of God. It must be said that the ultimate result of this search is skepticism. Of course, Descartes was not in pursuit of skepticism, but rather in pursuit of certainty. Therefore, Cartesian skepticism is a method of skepticism, not the ultimate goal of philosophical and epistemological reflection. The goal of this method is to build a solid foundation, not to destroy any kind of epistemic structure. Unlike "skeptics who doubt just for the sake of doubting, Descartes' goal is 'to reach certainty to set aside the soft sand and dirt until one reaches the stone or clay" (CSM 1:125).

He expresses elsewhere: 'Now reason leads me to think that I must avoid endorsing views that are not entirely certain and indubitable, just as I avoid views that are clearly false. Therefore, in order to reject all of my opinions, it is enough

to find at least one reason for doubt in each of them." (CSM 2:12), (Leventhal, Phillips & Burns, 2016).

Knowledge and Skepticism

Based on another way of thinking about the problem facing knowledge, one could argue that true knowledge is based on reason and a premise that justifies it. Now, one can direct the question toward the very same reason or premise and inquire about its validity. There are two possible responses: either one does not base this reason and premise on another reason and premise, or one considers it to be based on other reasons and premises. In the first case, according to Hegel, we are merely faced with an assumption. In the second case, the reason and premise must ultimately lead to a reason and premise that I have taken as self-evident; otherwise, my reasoning would regress infinitely. However, even in this case, we have arrived at nothing more than a mere assumption. According to Hegel, the problem here is that once an assumption is introduced, it becomes impossible to explain for preferring one assumption over another—or even over its negation (Inwood, 2013). It may be criticized against Hegel that some of our assumptions are undeniable, as they themselves serve as their own justification, or, as contemporary epistemologists would put it, they are self-sufficient. Specifically, in this regard, one could cite immediate sensory experiences, as well as intuitive propositions or presential knowledge, which can be used as the foundation of knowledge. However, Hegel would claim that he rejected this view of empiricism in his discussion of sensory certainty in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. According to Hegel, even sensory perception is not immediate and therefore not certain. In this regard, Hegel is more aligned with the Platonic tradition than with the empiricist tradition of figures like John Locke. Certainty based on the senses, in terms of cognition, is the most abstract and, in terms of truth, the poorest type of certainty (Mojtahedi, 1992: 52). In this regard, the path of this way of thinking should be seen as leading toward the Platonic-Hegelian skepticism or pessimism regarding the sensible world and sensory perceptions.

On the other hand, the common conception of the state and relationship of our cognitive faculty concerning the object of knowledge places an unbridgeable gap between the two - a gap and rupture between the knowing subject and the realm of objects (the objects of knowledge), which exist independently and distinct from the knowing subject. Thus, it is impossible to determine whether the states and conditions in the knowing subject, called knowledge, correspond to the object and its true nature or not. Here, and especially considering Kant's refinements, it seems difficult to regard the mind as a mere mirror that only and accurately reflects external reality reliably. The human cognitive apparatus is equipped with tools and instruments (Kantian categories) that shape what it acquires from the object (the matter) in such a way that, ultimately, the formed image is a result of the combination of matter and form. Since it was possible that these cognitive tools (categories) could be entirely different from the ones we currently possess, my image of the world is merely one of the many possible images that could have been formed based on the existence of different categories.

All these various ways of thinking about issues related to human knowledge were the result of philosophical developments from the time of Plato, and especially from the era of Descartes onward, which Hegel inherited. It was a skeptical situation that Hegel, as a philosopher, sought to engage with intellectually.

Hegel and the Rational World

The problem facing Hegel can be understood more seriously when we consider the overall goal and intent of Hegel's extensive and elaborate system. The ultimate goal and purpose of philosophy, according to Hegel, is to convey the idea that the world is rational—an effort to bring this "rationality to the level of consciousness" so that humans may attain a fully adequate understanding of reality (Hegel, 1977: 12). "Nature is rational within itself, ... Knowledge must examine and explore this actual reason that is present within it and comprehend it conceptually—that is, it should not engage in studying mere forms and possibilities that are visible on the surface but rather investigate the eternal harmony of nature, which is conceived as the law of *thing-in-itself*." (Ibid). Hegel's assertion that reality is rational primarily means that there is nothing within reality that is inherently doubtful to reason, truly incomprehensible, contradictory, or incapable of being explained. According to Hegel, when we achieve such an understanding of the world, we attain "absolute knowledge"; otherwise, our knowledge remains "limited" or "conditional." This is where the problem begins. The fact that the world is rational does not necessarily mean that we possess this knowledge or attain absolute knowledge. Attaining absolute knowledge depends on how we perceive the world. If we do not view the world correctly, it will appear to us as containing incomprehensible, contradictory, and alien elements, leading to despair and disappointment. Hegel's project is an attempt to provide a way of viewing things and the world in which such problems no longer remain unsolvable. Through this perspective, the world can be revealed to us as it truly is, free from these difficulties. Therefore, according to Hegel, the greatest service philosophy can provide is to help us overcome this despair by offering a new way of thinking about reality—one that allows us to once again perceive the world as a rational place, where we feel "at home". The "I" is at home in a world that it knows, and the more it understands it, the more at home it is (Stern, 2002: 36). In other words, according to Hegel, the goal of knowledge is to rid the objective world, which stands before us, of its alienation, so that we may feel at home in it.

In his view, to achieve this goal, it is essential for reason to adopt a reflective stance, recognizing and avoiding those forms of thought that lead us to an irrational or impractical understanding of the world, which prevent the rationality of the world from revealing itself to us. Philosophy must aim to correct perspectives that present the world as a place full of unsolvable mysteries and demonstrate how these views arise from a form of deviation in thinking that must be overcome. If philosophy fails to fulfill this role, we will either conclude that the world is inherently irrational or that even if the world is rational, it does not appear so to us. In either case, a person can never feel at home. According to Hegel, one of the forms of thinking that leads to skepticism and despair is epistemology, which gained significant strength from Descartes onward, particularly with Kant.

Forces and Limits of Knowledge

The problems mentioned regarding knowledge naturally suggest the solution that an individual must temporarily refrain from contemplating their beliefs about the world and objects, and before anything else, investigate and examine their cognitive and epistemic faculties to determine whether these faculties are fundamentally capable of knowing anything or not. And if they are capable, is there a limit or boundary to this knowing, or does human knowledge encompass an infinite domain? In Hegel's terms, this situation can be likened to that of a scientist who, before using scientific tools and instruments, sees it as their duty to examine and scrutinize them (Hegel, 1977: 46). Hegel rightly regards Kant as the prominent representative of this position, and it is precisely on this point that Hegel, from the very beginning of the *Phenomenology* (Introduction), opposes Kant.

The Introduction to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*

The Introduction to *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, like its preface, has a dialectical intention and purpose. Here, Hegel also seeks to demonstrate why and how a new approach should be adopted in contrast to the incorrect approaches of the philosophers preceding him. If philosophy cannot fulfill its promise of finding reason in the world by presenting a new beginning, the consequences are clear: the forces against philosophy, with their victory, will herald a return to skeptical irrationalism. A return to this self-centered opinion, which understands how to diminish any truth, to direct attention back to itself, and takes pleasure in the understanding that it knows how to dissolve any thought, always finding the same barren ego in place of any content. (Ibid: 52)

In any case, although Hegel's argument in the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* against this irrationalism considers it largely a result of 'immaturity' and the 'empty formalism' which philosophers after Kant suffered from, he attempts to present a more fundamental challenge, namely that irrationalism should be regarded as the result and product of a 'natural assumption' in the method of philosophical inquiry. (Ibid: 46) From Hegel's perspective, once this natural assumption is accepted, there is no escape from skeptical irrationalism. Therefore, he attempts to demonstrate why this natural assumption is not truly natural, but rather an unjustified trick.

At the beginning of the *Introduction*, Hegel explains and elaborates on this problematic assumption. This assumption is based on the idea that, before embarking on the task of 'finding reason in the world,' it is necessary to take a step back and examine whether our reason can understand this matter. Otherwise, there is the fear that we might engage in a project whose outlook is entirely devoid of any hope of success. Hegel, in another place, quotes a statement from Locke and his recommendation of this method (Hegel, 1998: 65). John Locke believed it was necessary for us to examine our understanding, scrutinize our faculties, and understand what they have corresponded and aligned with' (Locke, 1975: 46). As Locke states in the Introduction to *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Section 1): "The understanding, like the eye, while it enables us to see and perceive

other things, does not observe itself; it requires art and effort to place it at a distance and make it the object of its own examination." No matter how many difficulties may arise on the path of this investigation, for whatever reason we have been kept in ignorance and darkness about ourselves up to this point, in my opinion, the light that this investigation can shed on our minds and the understanding we will gain of our own understanding will not only be pleasant, but will also provide many benefits in guiding our research concerning the objects of our knowledge" (Ibid: 47). This perspective was, of course, not unique to Locke, and in fact, the foundation of this method and natural assumption was established by Descartes: "To prevent ourselves from remaining in a state of uncertainty regarding the powers of our minds, and to avoid wasting our mental efforts on confused and erroneous paths, it is necessary that, before engaging in the study of knowledge concerning specific objects, we once in our lives carefully examine what kind of knowledge the human mind is capable of acquiring" (Descartes, 1985: 30). Although Hegel does not explicitly mention any philosopher in the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, it can be understood that his critique is particularly aimed at Kant. This is because, although Locke cannot be considered a skeptic or an idealist, Hegel believes that Kant, in the end, was both a skeptic and an idealist. In fact, given the starting point of Locke's philosophy, this was absolutely inevitable in Kant's philosophy. Because once this approach is accepted, our understanding of knowledge becomes our understanding of a 'tool' or 'medium' with its inherent limitations. We are inevitably confronted with the idea that our cognitive faculties stand between us and reality, such that our access to reality, or what Kant calls the *thing-in-itself*, appears impossible. In clearer terms, if knowledge is a tool, how can we be certain that this tool is not defective or distorting? Even if we cannot speak of the tool as being either healthy or defective in this regard, we still cannot know whether this tool has altered reality or not. For Hegel, even if we set aside the metaphor of a tool and consider knowledge merely as a passive medium, reality still passes through this medium. In other words, no matter how much we reach out toward reality, we encounter the reality that has passed through our cognitive faculties (the phenomenon), not reality itself. With this conception of knowledge, in short, it must be said that we have no access to the *thing-in-itself* or, in Hegel's terms, to the Absolute.

According to Hegel (and, of course, many other thinkers after Kant, both those belonging to the tradition of German Idealism, such as Fichte and Schelling, and those like Nietzsche who fundamentally view Kant and his philosophy with skepticism), the concept of the 'thing-in-itself' is one of the greatest weaknesses of Kant's philosophy. In Hegel's viewpoint, it is easy to see that an abstract entity like the "thing-in-itself" is, in itself, the product of purely abstract thinking. But why does Hegel despise this concept? The clearest reason for Hegel's skeptical view of the thing-in-itself can be found in his intention behind the concept of 'knowledge'. Hegel considers only knowledge worthy of the title 'knowledge' which is not limited by any boundary. This is the so-called 'absolute' knowledge, which must be found in the broad concept that he has dedicated his intellectual system to carefully explaining the process of its development. According to Hegel's conception of this knowledge,

nothing should and can limit or condition this knowledge in any external way.

This very brief and improvisational description of Hegel's philosophical project, despite its brevity and superficiality, shows that he must remove the dark shadow of the concept of the thing-in-itself from his philosophy, so that the absolute, speculative knowledge he speaks of becomes the knowledge of what truly is, not what is merely attainable for the subjective faculties of the cognitive apparatus, as a tool.

For this reason, although not explicitly stated, according to many interpreters in an implicit manner, he attempts to clarify his stance on this concept in the very first chapter of his system of knowledge, that is, in the chapter on consciousness in the book *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Hegel and Skeptical Anti-Rationalism

However, Hegel never intends to follow this line of thought or slide into the slope of skeptical anti-rationalism. Therefore, he seeks a solution to this problem. According to Hegel, if we regard knowledge and cognitive faculties as mere tools, we can never avoid their inevitable consequence — skepticism. Kant mistakenly believed that by detaching from and distancing oneself from cognitive faculties and examining them—just as a scientist examines their tools to identify the deficiencies and distortions they create in reality, one could achieve a desirable outcome (Singer, 1379: 47). For example, one can refer to an astronomer and their instrument. Since the astronomer is familiar with their tool—the telescope—and its laws, they know that the image of the sky appearing in the eyepiece is inverted due to the laws of light and lenses, and thus, they can easily account for this issue. But when it comes to knowledge, can the same approach be applied?

Hegel traces the hidden contradiction in epistemology precisely at this point. In the case of an instrument, such as a telescope, it is not the instrument itself that examines the instrument; rather, the astronomer analyzes its structure without relying on the instrument itself.

According to Hegel, this detachment is impossible. Any act of knowing requires the use of cognitive faculties, whether it is the knowledge of the world and objects, or the knowledge of oneself, cognition, and human epistemic faculties. Detaching from knowledge and objectifying it cannot be understood as the elimination or subtraction of the very act of knowing. In this case, how can knowledge assess and examine itself when, for this assessment and examination, it can only and exclusively rely on itself? Or as Nietzsche states, "How can a tool critique itself when, for critique and assessment, it can only use itself?" (Nietzsche, 1967: 486).

Therefore, according to Hegel, one must take a step back and question the very recommendation of these philosophers to prioritize the discussion of knowledge (a recommendation that can be called a 'critical epistemological method'), meaning to challenge the natural assumption. We are neither forced nor obligated to assume this inherently contradictory assumption. If these philosophers' argument for the critical epistemological method was that this method is without any presuppositions because it does not assume any presupposition about the cognitive faculties' ability to know

the world, then it must be acknowledged that they have erred. The 'critical epistemological method' is, in fact, not without presuppositions. This method already assumes an instrumental view of knowledge, as well as the assumption that we can step back and successfully examine this very instrument. Apart from assuming the existence of something called reality, this method also assumes that the knowing subject is separate and distinct from reality, since knowledge is regarded here as an instrument or intermediary between us and reality. In Hegel's terms, as stated in *Logic*, if the claim is that before engaging in the knowledge of the 'true existence of things,' we must evaluate the limitations of our reason, then it must be said that before even beginning this evaluation of reason's limitations, we must also assess and examine reason's capability and limitations for undertaking such an inquiry and knowledge. And in this way, the issue continues infinitely, because 'the examination of knowledge and cognitive faculties is only possible through them.' Hegel's statement here is worth quoting:

Kant says that we must first become familiar with the tools, and then proceed with the task for which we intend to use them, because if the tools are inadequate, all our efforts will be in vain... But the verification of knowledge is only possible through the act of knowing itself. The examination of this (so-called) tool is precisely the act of knowing it. But knowing before acquiring knowledge is as invalid as the Scholasticus' wise decision to refrain from entering the water before learning how to swim. (Hegel, 1991: 10)

Hegel's argument against this view of Kant in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* is quite straightforward: Why should we need to be certain of this kind before starting our investigation? Why shouldn't we start our research and see how far we go? Thus, Hegel recommends that before placing any trust in the natural assumption, and before conducting preliminary research on our cognitive faculties and doubting their ability, we should doubt even this very skepticism.

Critical Epistemological Method

It is very important to note that Hegel's primary goal is to confront the critical epistemological method, which considers this assumption as the 'natural assumption.' This means that the priority of research into the nature of our cognitive faculties is regarded as an obvious starting point, grounded in common sense, for any philosophical endeavor. According to the proponents of this view, with this preliminary research, we can guard against the danger of "perceiving the clouds of error instead of the sky of truth," and preserve ourselves from the fear of having assumed something.

Given what we have discussed, it is indeed not easy to understand how Hegel can resist other arguments that lead to the same critical method of cognition; especially those arguments that are based on the claim that there is positive evidence suggesting that our cognitive powers are limited, as we can clearly observe the flaws

and limitations of these powers in certain discussions (for example, discussions related to metaphysics or theology). Given this evidence regarding the limitations of our knowledge, it seems reasonable to first understand the limitations of our cognitive faculties and, after recognizing these limitations, attempt to avoid stepping beyond their scope. This expression of the critical epistemological method, using Hegel's own example, is akin to a person who, having been drowning amid the violent waves of the sea, now, after being saved from those overwhelming waves, finds it necessary to first assess their abilities, possibilities, and limits in swimming to avoid such an incident in the future. Thus, it cannot be said that Hegel's argument here would find fault with this way of presenting the critical epistemological method. Of course, in some of his other works, Hegel presents more serious and significant critiques of Kant's claim that metaphysical thinking reflects the limitations of reason in knowing something like the *thing-in-itself*.

Two Fundamental Principles

Given what has been stated, it can be said that the two fundamental principles of Hegel's philosophy are: first, the emphasis on the unity of reason and existence, or the unity of the realms of affirmation (*ithbat*) and existence (*thobut*) (in the terminology of Islamic philosophy), meaning that these two realms correspond with each other; and second, the emphasis on the idea that human reason (the intellect of the human species in its historical development) is capable of discovering this correspondence without any external assistance. With the first principle, Hegel aims to eliminate the dualism between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, a division that has become problematic in modern epistemology. According to him, Kant's response, which posits that within the world of the object, there is a dualism between appearance or phenomena and the rational essence or nomen (the *thing-in-itself*), and that our objective knowledge (objectivity) is limited to the world of phenomena and characterized by appearance, is not acceptable. Such a solution still keeps us distant from the world of the *nexus of things* (the absolute, according to Hegel), and Hegel is not content with anything less than this level of knowledge. Such a solution actually still keeps us distant from the world of *the nexus of things* (the absolute, according to Hegel), and Hegel is not content with anything less than this level of knowledge.

Kant had assumed that the antinomies of pure reason indicate that there are domains that are closed off to our reason. For example, regarding whether the universe is finite or infinite, according to Kant, one can present dialectical arguments for both sides. The fact that both sides of these arguments are proven actually supports the idea that neither side is conclusively proven. According to Kant, the only logical conclusion from these proofs is that we cannot answer questions such as the finitude or infinity of space and time in the universe. Such antinomies indicate the incapacity of human reason to comprehend the domain that Kant calls the realm of the irrational essence or the *thing-in-itself*. A domain that will remain unknowable to human reason. However, Hegel never intends to arrive at such a conclusion. According to Hegel, the antinomies of pure reason do

not actually prove that our reason is limited to the realm of appearances and phenomena. Hegel's most important and prominent critique of Kant's epistemology is summed up in his emphasis on the non-existence of the *thing-in-itself*. In Hegel's viewpoint, the assumption of the *thing-in-itself* inherently carries extreme incompatibility and contradiction within itself:

On one hand, the claim that understanding only knows appearances, and on the other hand, the emphasis on the view that this knowledge is something absolute, meaning that knowledge cannot go beyond this point, and that this is the natural, absolute limit of human awareness, ultimately contradict each other... A person only has awareness of something as a defect, a limit, when they simultaneously feel that they are beyond it (Hegel, 1991: 60).

Contrary to Kant's view, Hegel believes that the elements and conditions necessary for understanding this unity between the world of existence and reason lie within our reason, although by "reason," he does not mean my individual reason, but rather historical reason. Therefore, it can be said that the goal of Hegel's epistemology is to reach a point where there is no longer any gap between knowledge and the thing-in-itself. So, Hegel considers the thing-in-itself to be a contradictory concept and dismisses it, and the result of such a stance is nothing other than Hegel's absolute idealism. However, the extent to which Hegel has succeeded in overcoming the dualism he sees in the philosophies before him, and whether he has been able to realize the ultimate unifying goal of absolute idealism, is something that has not gone unnoticed by contemporary philosophers as well as by those in later periods, and of course, this itself requires an independent and detailed study.

Conclusion

Based on what we have discussed in this essay, we can say that Hegel, in the epistemological discussions presented in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, seeks to overcome the subject-object split in Kantian epistemology within the modern system of knowledge, which, according to Hegel, has been partially inherited from Plato. Hegel, by emphasizing the unity of reason and existence, means that these two realms are ontologically aligned with each other. Furthermore, by reflecting on the fact that human reason, in its historical development, can discover this alignment without relying on any external tools or assistance, Hegel's primary aim is to eliminate the dualism between the knowing subject and the object of knowledge, which has become a problematic issue in modern epistemology. According to Hegel, Kant's response, which posits an ontological split between appearance and the rational essence (the *thing-in-itself*) within the realm of phenomena or objects, and claims that our objective knowledge is limited to the world of appearances and characterized by the attribute of appearance, is not acceptable. Such a solution, in fact, still keeps us detached from the realm of the *thing-in-itself*, or Hegel's absolute, and he is not satisfied with anything less than this kind of knowledge. Since our analysis in this article was limited to the introduction of *Phenomenology of Spirit*, a discussion on Hegel's critique of Kant's *thing-in-itself*, which may be even more prominent than his critique in the introduction of *Phenomenology of Spirit*, requires a separate occasion.

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هگل و مسئله معرفت‌شناسی در مقدمه پدیدارشناسی روح

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اطلاعات مقاله	چکیده
نوع مقاله: مقاله پژوهشی	یکی از دلمشغولی‌های اصلی فیلسوفان دوره جدید بویژه پس از عصر روشنگری، چالش‌های معرفت‌شناختی مهمی بود که ریشه در دیدگاه‌های فیلسوفان پیش از آنها در باب فاهمه آدمی و حدود و ثغور آن دارد. هگل در آثار مختلف خود، بویژه در <i>پدیدارشناسی روح</i> ، به تناسب مباحث فلسفی و با ادبیات متافیزیکی خاص خودش، به برخی از این چالش‌ها توجه کرده و سعی دارد برون‌رفتی برای آنها بیابد. او در این اثر، به دشواری یافتن معیار گزاره صادق از کاذب و نیز یافتن معیار حقیقت از ناحقیقت اشاره می‌کند و پیامدهای معرفت‌شناختی آن همانند شکاکیت-را متذکر می‌گردد. هگل برای فائق آمدن بر این شکاکیت معرفتی‌ای که از افلاطون به وی به ارث رسیده بود، تلاش می‌کند از عقلانی‌بودن واقعیت کمک بگیرد. مراد او از اینکه واقعیت عقلانی است، در درجه اول این است که در خود واقعیت چیزی نیست که برای عقل، شک‌برانگیز، حقیقتاً غیرقابل فهم، متناقض یا تبیین‌ناپذیر باشد. از نظر او، این را باید فلسفه به ما بیاموزاند و گر نه دچار شکاکیت و ناامیدی حاصل از تئوری‌های معرفت‌شناختی خواهیم شد که از گذشته به ما رسیده‌اند. در جستار حاضر، سعی خواهیم نمود با توجه به تبیین‌های هگل در مقدمه <i>پدیدارشناسی روح</i> ، چالش‌های معرفت‌شناختی و برخی نگاه‌های انتقادی او به فیلسوفان گذشته را بیان کنیم.

کلمات کلیدی: هگل، معرفت‌شناسی، پدیدارشناسی روح، کانت، شکاکیت.

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

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article type: Research Article	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 20th 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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